

Hyderabad court sentences man to life imprisonment for 2020 SR Nagar murder

Hyderabad: A local court on Thursday sentenced a man identified as Raju Naik to life imprisonment and imposed a total fine of Rs 16,000 for the murder of P. Ramesh (50) in SR Nagar in 2020.Ramesh had gone missing after leaving his Vikaspuri Colony home on February 1, 2020.Book Grief CounselingThough a WhatsApp message was later sent from his phone, subsequent calls went unanswered and the phone was switched off.The SR Nagar police investigated the case and subsequently arrested Raju Naik.

Biker Dies After Being Hit by Vande Bharat Near Ghatkesar

Hyderabad: An unidentified motorcyclist aged around 20 to 25 years died after Secunderabad –Tirupati Vande Bharat Express hit him on the tracks between Ghatkesar and Bibinagar railway stations on Thursday. The incident occurred around 6.10 am when Vande Bharat Express, which left Secunderabad station and was heading towards Tirupati, hit the biker near Aushapur.



BJP to mark PM Modi’s 25 years in public life with nationwide outreach

New Delhi, Sept 18

The ruling BJP will mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 25 years in public life by conducting massive public outreach programmes across India and lighting diyas as a mark of gratitude to the PM for his "life of service".

BJP president Nitin Nabin on Wednesday announced the campaign, which will run from September 17, PM Modi's birthday, to October 7, the day he first took oath of public office in 2001 as Gujarat Chief Minister.

The programme will start with what Nabin described as "Aashirwad ka Diya", where BJP workers at all booths across India will engage with beneficiaries of government schemes and light lamps to "express gratitude to PM".

The same event, Nabin said, will also see people taking the pledge of Viksit Bharat.

"The event will also see BJP hold its outreach with ASHA and Anganwari workers and also hold street plays depicting real-life stories of change which has happened in the life of many beneficiaries of government schemes," said Nabin.

Another important part of the programme would be the Sewa Kalash Yatra between Modi's birthplace Vadnagar in Gujarat and his Lok Sabha segment Varanasi, with BJP workers in groups of 40 each travelling to and from these two towns, engaging random people, farmers, Anganwadi workers and other citizens along the way.

The yatras between Vadnagar and Varanasi will be led by youth, Nabin said.

Russia-Iran sanctions Bill to hit ties, India warns US

New Delhi, Sept 17

Hours after the US Congress passed the Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act, India on Thursday said it had already conveyed to Washington the potential implications of the legislation for bilateral ties and the international energy market, and that it would take all necessary measures to protect its trade and economic interests.

"This issue has been discussed at high levels in recent months with various US interlocutors," the government said, adding that India had "very clearly articulated" the potential implications for the bilateral relationship as well as the international energy market.

The statement came as the US Congress passed the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026, empowering President Donald Trump to impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on countries buying Russian oil and gas, potentially putting Indian exports under renewed pressure.

The government said it was monitoring further developments but stressed that India's energy policy would continue to be guided by the need to ensure energy security for its 1.4 billion people.

"India remains firmly committed to ensuring energy security for its 1.4 billion people. It will continue to do so through diversified sourcing and on the basis of evolving market dynamics," it said.

The legislation was passed by the US House of Representatives by 262-159, after clearing the Senate by 86-11 last month, and now goes to Trump.

It gives the US President authority to impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on goods from countries that meet specified conditions relating to purchases of Russian crude oil and natural gas. India and China are among the major buyers potentially exposed to the provision.

Telangana CEO Announces Schedule for Graduate MLC Constituency Voter Rolls

Hyderabad, Sept 18

The Chief Electoral Officer of Telangana has released the schedule for preparing new voter lists ahead of elections to two Graduate MLC (Legislative Council) seats set to fall vacant in the state.

The two constituencies involved are the Mahabubnagar-Rangareddy-Hyderabad Graduates' constituency and the Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Graduates' constituency, where vacancies are expected to arise as the terms of office for MLCs Vani Devi and Teenmar Mallanna are set to expire in March 2027.

To prepare for the polls, authorities will draw up fresh voter rolls, requiring eligible graduates to register their names through Form-18.

Key dates in the schedule:

- September 28: Public notice to be issued
- October 15: First re-publication in newspapers
- October 25: Second re-publication in newspapers
- November 6: Last date to submit Form-18 applications
- November 20: Printing of the draft voter list to be completed

- November 25: Draft voter list to be published
- November 25 – December 10: Window for receiving claims and objections from voters
- December 25: Deadline for resolving claims and objections
- December 30: Final voter list to be published

Notably, graduates who are already registered as voters will also need to submit a fresh Form-18 application as part of this process.



Under PM Modi, 33% womens quota in legislatures will become a reality: Shah

New Delhi, Sept 18

The ruling BJP on Thursday marked the 76th birthday of PM Narendra Modi with prayers across temples, gurdwaras and dargahs, besides using the occasion to kick start a month-long public outreach to celebrate PM's 25 years in public life.

BJP stalwarts - Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and party president Nitin Nabin led PM's birthday celebrations from three locations today -- Varanasi, Vadnagar and Ujjain.

NDA allies including N Chandrababu Naidu (TDP), Chirag Paswan (LJP) and Eknath Shinde (Shiv Sena) also joined in the revelry.

In Gujarat's Vadnagar, the birthplace of Modi, Shah raised hopes around the long pending agenda of political representation to women. "Under PM Modi's model, opportunities for women have increased in the Armed Forces, police, science, startups, drones, and sports. Despite the opposition's obstacles, under PM's leadership, 33% reservation for women in the legislatures will certainly become a reality," Shah said after flagging off a special bike rally wherein 500 youth on 250 motorcycles will carry the message of Modi's 25 years of work to the people across seven states.

The bikers will carry with them waters from Sharmishtha lake in Vadnagar and will reach PM's parliamentary constituency Varanasi on October 7, the day PM completes 25 years on politics. It was on October 7, 2001 that Modi took oath as Gujarat CM.

Shah while addressing a rally in Vadnagar said Modi's life was an example of a man who surmounted all odds to serve the nation.

"It is essential to take the message of PM's life and struggles to every youth so that the new generation is inspired to serve the country," he said adding that despite rising from poverty, Modi never gave in to allurements."Even PM's opponents cannot accuse him of corruption," the home minister said, adding that PM guided the country out of despair to towards hope."Despite being born in a small village, PM Modi without any sense of bitterness or frustration, presented before the nation the vision of inclusive development and brought 25 crore people above the poverty line.





Nizamabad YouTuber Vaishnavi’s husband hacked to death by unidentified assailant

Nizamabad: In yet another gruesome incident in the State, Chittari Haribabu, husband of deceased YouTuber Vaishnavi, was hacked to death at Rajarajendra crossroads in the town on Thursday by an unidentified person.Haribabu, 26, was accused in the murder of Vaishnavi, 19. She was four months pregnant when she was killed in March this year. Following a complaint from her father, police had registered a case against Haribabu. He was currently out on bail.Since then, Haribabu had been living with his mother and earning a livelihood by selling corn. As usual, he arrived at Rajarajendra crossroads on Thursday and was quenching his thirst at a roadside eatery.Suddenly, a person alighted from a car and walked towards Haribabu before attacking him with a weapon. After ensuring that Haribabu had died on the spot, the assailant fled in a car that was waiting on the other side of the road, according to reports.

SC Defers Dara Singh Remission Plea by Three Weeks

Bhubaneswar: The Supreme Court on Thursday deferred for three weeks the hearing on the premature release plea of Rabindra Kumar Pal alias Dara Singh after the Odisha government informed it that the State Sentence Review Board (SRB) had rejected his remission plea.

A division bench of Justices Manoj Misra and Vijay Bishnoi allowed Singh to amend his petition to challenge the SRB's decision. The Board rejected his remission plea in an order dated August 31.

Singh, 67, is serving a life sentence for the 1999 murder of Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two minor sons, Philip, 10, and Timothy, 6, in Keonjhar district.

Staines and his sons were burnt to death after their vehicle was set on fire while they were sleeping.

Singh was sentenced to death by a trial court in 2003. The High Court of Orissa commuted the death sentence to life imprisonment in 2005, a decision subsequently upheld by the Supreme Court.Singh had approached the apex court seeking consideration of his premature release under Odisha's 2022 remission policy. He has spent more than 26 years in prison and became eligible for consideration under the policy's provisions.

Congress MPs, MLCs likely to visit KCR’s Erravalli residence on Friday

Hyderabad:, Sept 17: Amid verbal duels over lands and properties owned by ruling and opposition leaders, a group of Congress MPs and MLCs are likely to visit BRS chief K Chandrashekhra Rao's residence at Erravalli in Siddipet on Friday.

It is learnt that the MPs and MLCs would board a bus specially arranged for them at the CLP Office on the Assembly premises. They are expected to check land records at the local revenue office and the Collector's Office in Siddipet before heading to the BRS chief's residence.Geographic Reference

"There is a buzz in Gandhi Bhavan that Nagarkurnool MP Mallu Ravi will lead the group. But, so far, there is no official confirmation about the visit," a senior Congress leader said.

The proposed visit by Congress elected representatives to Erravalli assumes significance as the Assembly session is continuing on Friday. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had already directed officials to conduct a detailed probe into land parcels around the BRS president's farmhouse in Erravalli.

A team of officials had already visited Erravalli on Thursday and conducted a survey. However, local farmers are learnt to have questioned the officials over the survey of their lands and stressed that they had been cultivating the fields for decades.It may be recalled that a few Congress leaders march towards the BRS president's farmhouse last week had triggered a political controversy. The police was accused of obstructing the BRS cadre from reaching Erravalli but extended escort to the Congress leaders. The entire episode had created law and order situation in region and parts of Hyderabad with BRS staging protests over police officials overzealous attitude.Campaigns & Elections

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

West Bengal's universities face a new test under Suvendu Adhikari

Two particular days this week show what West Bengal's new government thinks a university is for. On September 17, Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari, dressed in saffron, led Naga sadhus and BJP workers on a three-kilometre march to the gates of Jadavpur University and vowed to 'uproot' students who raise azadi slogans. The next day, his government passed a law allowing the state to transfer university teachers from one campus to another, and he used the same Assembly session to order the arrest of people who had burned posters of a travelling godman. Students threatened, teachers made transferable, a baba protected—this is the new hierarchy in Bengal. It is not what Bengal voted for. The BJP won 207 of 294 seats and 46 per cent of the vote on promises of clean recruitment (WBSSC), more jobs, women's safety (with an emphasis on the RG Kar case), infrastructure development, more inward investment and finances. This week, more than 1,000 teachers who lost their jobs in the 2016 recruitment scam sat on the road outside Bikash Bhavan, urging the Chief Minister to fast-track fresh recruitment as he had promised before the election. Instead, the current government has created further issues over OBC identification and classification, and the matter in court is becoming more complex; the next hearing will take place after 8 months. This matter could have been the first on his desk. However, most of his focus appears to be elsewhere—towards Jadavpur University. On the night of 20 August, a crowd carrying sticks and rods entered Jadavpur after midnight, burned student organisations' flags and besieged students who were locked inside the administrative building. The ABVP denied involvement; an Alt News analysis of campus CCTV footage found senior ABVP members and BJP-linked workers at the scene.

Telangana Liberation Day Celebrated Grandly in SiddiqNagar.



Serilingampalli Zone AnjanyyaNagar division: A grand event to hoist the national flag was organized in SiddiqNagar Colony, falling under the Anjaiah Nagar division, to mark Telangana Liberation Day. "This event was held in response to the call given by the Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi, which urged everyone to hoist the Indian national flag and sing 'Vande Mataram' in front of every Ganesh mandap (marquee) on September 17th." The flag-hoisting ceremony took place at the Siddiq Nagar Colony Ganesh mandap under the leadership of Kaila Rajender Reddy, a member of the Sri Chhatrapati Shivaji Sena. "Anjaiah Nagar division leader Anjaneyulu Sagar attended the event as the chief guest and hoisted the national flag. He subsequently paid his respects to the flag." "Speaking on the occasion, Anjaneyulu Sagar stated that unity is the key to overcoming various societal challenges and achieving success." "He called upon the youth to draw inspiration from Telangana Liberation Day, move forward unitedly, and fight collectively to resolve their issues." Leaders including SiddiqNagar General Secretary Kaila Ravindra Reddy, Sadar Ramu, Lakshmaiah Sagar, Bhim Sagar, Sampath Reddy, Ganesh, Rohit Sagar, Abhilash, and Sai participated in the event.

Clean Technology Key to Greening MSMEs



"Hyderabad, September 17 (Indian Chronicle) : The role of energy efficiency, electrification, clean technology and digital solutions in steering India towards a net-zero economy was discussed at the CII 25th Energy Efficiency Summit-2026 held in Hyderabad. Industries committed to investments of ₹3,590 crore in electrification, process improvement, waste heat recovery, AI, IoT and digitalisation. BEE Director General Krishna Chandra Panigrahi emphasised the importance of energy efficiency and electrification. CII Summit Chairman and BLPI-Industry AI Founder and CEO Tejpreet Singh Chopra said MSMEs could improve energy efficiency through AI and digital technologies. CII Godrej GBC Executive Director P.V.Kiran Ananth said 720 industries had invested ₹5,700 crore over the past three years and achieved savings of over ₹7,100 crore. The 'Indian Heat Pump Atlas', jointly developed by CII and BEE, was also unveiled at the summit.

BJP Senior Leader Kanchi Mahender Participates in Telangana Liberation Day Celebrations



"Fatenagar: Telangana Liberation Day celebrations were held in a grand manner in the Fatenagar Division. On the occasion, BJP senior leader Kanchi Mahender unfurled

the national flags installed at Fatenagar Bridge Road and Madhavi Nagar. He extended Telangana Liberation Day greetings to the people and distributed sweets as part of the celebrations."

On the same occasion, marking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday, Kanchi Mahender performed special prayers and rituals at the Sri Sri Sri Pochamma Temple in Fatenagar. He offered prayers seeking the blessings of the goddess for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's long life, good health and continued service to the nation, and wished that he be blessed with the strength to take the country further on the path of development. "Naseer, Balesh, Suresh, Ashok, Shiva, Aravind, Ravi, Radheshyam, Usha, Sunitha, Lakshmi, Raghu, Vineeth, Kamal, Raju, Balaraj, Srinivas, Gopal, Bunny and other Fatenagar Division leaders and party workers participated in the programme.

Grand Annadanam Held at Nalla Pochamma Temple

A grand Annadanam (free food distribution) programme was organised today at the Nalla Pochamma Temple in Indira Nagar, at the Ganesh pandal set up on the temple premises. The programme was organised under the leadership of temple committee members Balayya and Padma. "On the occasion, special prayers were offered to Lord Ganesha, following which Annadanam was served to devotees. A large number of devotees and local residents participated in the programme and received the sacred prasadam." Temple committee members, leaders and activists from various political parties, along with a large number of local residents, participated in the programme. "With devotional and service-oriented activities being organised as part of the Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations, the festivities are continuing in a spiritually charged atmosphere.



CII Summit Focuses on Cleantech Adoption for Greening MSMEs

"Hyderabad, September 17 (Indian Chronicle) : A special session on greening Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) was held at HICC as part of the 25th Energy Efficiency Summit-2026 organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the organisers said in a statement on Thursday. The Greening Marketplace Portal was launched by D.Srinivas Naik, Additional Director, Industries Department, along with Joint Director Madhukar Babu, Summit Chairman Tejpreet Singh Chopra and RICH Director Srinivas Cherla. The speakers highlighted the need to leverage technology and partnerships to improve energy efficiency, productivity and competitiveness among MSMEs. Under the RAMP initiative, around 2,000 MSMEs in Telangana will undergo Resource Efficiency and Cleaner



Production (RECP) assessments through a technical partnership between RICH and CII, the organisers said.

CBI Probe Sought into Land Encroachments : Ajay Kumar Yadav



"Hyderabad, September 17 (Indian Chronicle) : Praja Party Telangana state president Dr.Dasari Ajay Kumar Yadav has demanded that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy order a CBI inquiry into alleged encroachments of government, assigned, endowment, Waqf, Bhoodan, Inam, tank-bed and forest lands across Telangana. He urged the government to take over lands allegedly held in the names of former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's family members and benamis and distribute them among landless poor. He also demanded that the government take possession of Bhoodan and assigned lands in Shamshabad allegedly encroached upon by the My Home Group. Ajay Kumar Yadav called for the government to disclose details of encroached lands across the state and enact a special law barring elected representatives involved in land encroachments from contesting elections. He also criticised Telangana Rakshana Sena president Kavitha.

'BJP-BRS understanding delaying Kaleshwaram probe'

Karimnagar Smart City irregularities were also ignored, says former SUDA chairman.



Karimnagar September 17, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): Former SUDA chairman Komatireddy Narendra Reddy on Thursday alleged that an "understanding" between the BJP and the BRS was responsible for the delay in the CBI inquiry into alleged irregularities in the Kaleshwaram project. Addressing a press conference here, Mr. Narendra Reddy demanded that Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar explain why the investigation had not made significant progress even a year after the State Assembly passed a resolution referring the matter to the CBI. He also criticised Mr. Sanjay for allegedly distorting the remarks of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on the alleged land dealings of BRS leaders and the KCR family. "If the Chief Minister exposes such issues on the floor of the Assembly, why should Mr. Sanjay distort them?" he asked. Mr. Narendra Reddy alleged that Mr. Sanjay had not raised the issue of alleged irregularities in Karimnagar Smart City works when he was the MP, despite the Congress repeatedly raising concerns over them. He accused BJP leaders of taking credit for development works in Karimnagar by projecting that the funds had been brought entirely by the Centre. He said Ministers D. Sridhar Babu, Ponnann Prabhakar and Adhuri Lakshman Kumar were taking steps to ensure the State government's contribution and attention to various development works. Mr. Narendra Reddy also criticised the BJP for "merely inaugurating

works" and urged its leaders to bring special funds from the Centre for Karimnagar's development. On arrangements for Ganesh immersion, he said Mr. Ponnann Prabhakar had discussed the release of water with officials. He alleged that the BJP and BRS were attempting to turn the issue of water release into a controversy despite preparations for the immersion being under way. Corporators Parvatham Malleshham and Jagan Reddy, and Congress leaders Gundati Srinivas Reddy, Kalvala Ramachandram, Danna Singh, Mahalakshmi, Asthapuram Tirumala, Raj Kumar, Masum Khan, Anjaiah and Sairam were present.

MLA Marri Rajasekhara Reddy Extends Birthday Wishes to Aayansh Goud

Alwal, September 17: Indian Chronicle "Aayansh Goud, son of BRS leader Abbagoni Bhaskar Goud of Ambedkar Nagar, Macha Bollaram, met Malkaigiri MLA Marri Rajasekhara Reddy on the occasion of his fourth birthday and received his blessings." The MLA conveyed his warm birthday wishes to Aayansh Goud and blessed him to lead a long, healthy and happy life filled with prosperity and success. Later, the MLA joined Aayansh in cutting the



birthday cake and personally fed him a piece of cake, making the occasion special. BRS leaders Doli Ramesh, Pawan, Prashanth Reddy, Bhaskar Goud, Javeed and others were present at the programme.

AP Student Wins James Dyson Award for Braille Printer



"Hyderabad, September 17 (Indian Chronicle) : Lingampalli Himaja, a student from Chintalapudi in Eluru district, Andhra Pradesh, has been named the Indian national winner of the James Dyson Award 2026 for her voice-enabled Braille printer, 'Rudhra'. Himaja, from Sri Vishnu Engineering College for Women, will receive a cash prize of approximately ₹6 lakh. Anvika Shetty of the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, won the first runner-up position for 'Viability X', while Shakeel Akhtar S of Anna University was named the second runner-up for 'Trike 2'. All three innovations will represent India at the international round of the James Dyson Award. The final winners will be selected by Sir James Dyson.

Grand Celebrations Narendra Modi Birthday



"BJP LB Nagar In-charge Sama Ranga Reddy""LB Nagar, September 17""Grand celebrations were held on the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday under the leadership of Uday Kiran, the management of Bharosa Hospital. The speakers praised Modi's contribution to the development of the country and his service-oriented initiatives. "BJP LB Nagar Assembly Constituency In-charge Sama Ranga Reddy attended the programme as the chief guest. Uday Kiran felicitated him with a shawl and had him cut the birthday cake. On the occasion, Sama Ranga Reddy expressed his wish that Modi continue serving the country for many more years and serve as Prime Minister for two more terms. "BJP Hastinapuram Division President Erukula Mallesh Goud, Navaneeth, hospital staff, party leaders, workers and supporters

AI-Human Intelligence Fusion Key to Future Leadership



"Hyderabad, September 17 (Indian Chronicle) : The CII Indian Women Network (IWN) Telangana organised its 12th Leadership Conclave, 'Power of AI: Own Your AI', in Hyderabad. Telangana Labour, Employment, Training and Factories Secretary Harichandana Dasari, CII Telangana Chairman M.Gautham Reddy, and Cyient Founder Chairman and Board Member Dr. BVR Mohan Reddy addressed the gathering. The speakers highlighted the need to increase women's workforce participation, promote inclusive growth and develop new skills in the era of AI. Dr.BVR Mohan Reddy said AI should be used as a tool to augment human intelligence rather than replace it. IWN Telangana Chairperson Sonia Srikanth delivered the welcome address, while Vice Chairperson Tanuja Abburi proposed the vote of thanks.

Ganesh Festivities Should Be Celebrated Peacefully



Chilkalguda Inspector Ramakrishna ""Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad, September 17:""Chilkalguda Inspector Ramakrishna attended as the chief guest at the Ganesh pandal set up by Team Yuva Friends Association in Chilkalguda for the 22nd consecutive year. He also performed special prayers on the occasion. "Speaking on the occasion, Inspector Ramakrishna urged everyone to celebrate the Ganesh festivities together in a spirit of harmony and joy. He advised organisers and devotees to take necessary precautions to prevent any untoward incidents. He assured that the Chilkalguda police would extend full cooperation to the pandal organisers. "Team Yuva president Kiran and members Balu, Ravikanth, Durga, Chandu, Sharath, Sridhar Reddy, Sunny, Sai, Teja, Shanmukh, Srikar, Vedakanth, Ashwin, Yagnadath and others participated in the programme.

Telangana represents a long struggle for identity, says Laxman Kumar

Minister recalls armed peasant struggle; lists welfare and development initiatives in Karimnagar.



Karimnagar September 17, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): Telangana represents a long struggle for identity and cannot be viewed merely as a geographical region, Minister for Social Welfare Adhuri Laxman Kumar said here on Thursday.Addressing the Telangana Praja Palana Dinotsavam celebrations at the Police Grounds, Mr. Kumar recalled the decades of struggles in the region, including the Telangana armed peasant struggle and the movement that culminated in the formation of Telangana State.The Minister unfurled the national flag after paying tributes at the Martyrs’ Stupa. Choppadandi MLA Dr. Medipalli Satyam, Manakondur MLA Kavvampalli Satyanarayana, Collector Chitra Mishra and Police Commissioner Gaush Alam were among those present.

Recalling September 17, 1948, Mr. Kumar said it marked the end of the Nizam’s rule in Hyderabad State and the subsequent integration of the region with India. The State government had decided to observe the date as Telangana Praja Palana Dinotsavam, he said.Paying tributes to those who had participated in the struggles, the Minister said the government was pursuing welfare and development programmes in accordance with the aspirations of the people.Mr. Kumar said ₹206.82 crore had been credited to 1,92,628 farmers under Rythu Bharosa for the current kharif

season. Another ₹71.17 crore had been paid as bonus to 28,659 farmers who had sold fine varieties of paddy during the previous rabi season.Under the Indiramma housing programme, 10,969 houses had been sanctioned in the first phase, with 8,974 houses under construction at various stages. The government had released ₹222 crore to beneficiaries based on the progress of construction, he said.The Minister said 1.58 lakh beneficiaries had received 11.93 lakh LPG cylinders at ₹500 each under the subsidised cooking gas scheme. Under Gruha Jyothi, zero electricity bills were being issued to consumers using up to 200 units, with the government having so far paid ₹190 crore towards 1,73,627 services in the district.As many as 47,798 new ration cards had been issued and 98,482 family members had been newly added to ration cards, he said.Under Rajiv Aarogyasri, 25,088 persons had undergone free surgeries during the year, for which ₹72.50 crore had been paid to network hospitals, Mr. Kumar said.A 100-bed regional hospital constructed at Choppadandi at a cost of ₹37 crore was ready for inauguration. A 30-bed community health centre at Manakondur, taken up at ₹17.5 crore, was under construction.A new AYUSH hospital building would be constructed at Kothapalli at a cost of ₹15 crore, while construction of a nursing college building on three acres at the Kothapalli Medical College campus, at a cost of ₹26 crore, was nearing completion.The district administration had utilised ₹2.98 crore in CSR funds for providing ambulances and medical equipment to government hospitals. Another ₹55 lakh had been sanctioned from DMFT funds for improving infrastructure at the Government General Hospital, he said.Mr. Kumar said 3,822 students were pursuing education in minority welfare residential schools and hostels, while 2,214 students were being provided accommodation and other facilities through the Scheduled Castes Development Department.Under the BC Welfare Department, ₹13.82 crore had been provided towards fee reimbursement and scholarships to 9,652 students during the current academic year.Nutrition was being provided through 777 Anganwadi centres to 7,677 pregnant and lactating women and 40,135 children aged between seven months and six years, he said.The Minister also referred to the government’s initiatives in land resurvey, promotion of alternative crops, sanitation and infrastructure development.Mr. Kumar thanked elected representatives, officials, police personnel, judicial officers, employees, voluntary organisations, freedom fighters, journalists and the people of Karimnagar for their cooperation in the district’s development.”

Famous ‘Rajadhiraaj Yatra – Krishna Leela Aapke Dwar’ to Be Held in Hyderabad from October 2 to 4“



“Grand theatrical production celebrating the timeless stories and leelas of Lord Krishna to be staged at Shilpakala Vedika.”“Raag Rang Raas founders Ritu Shah and Romit Shah unveil Hyderabad edition; production features 120+ member cast and crew, 500+ costumes and 20 original songs”“Hyderabad, September 17, 2026: The Hyderabad edition of Dhanraj Nathwani’s ‘Rajadhiraaj Yatra – Krishna Leela Aapke Dwar’, a grand theatrical production celebrating the timeless stories and leelas of Lord Krishna, was unveiled at a curtain-raiser event held at Hotel Plaza, Begumpet, Hyderabad, on September 17.”“The spectacular production will be presented in Hyderabad from October 2 to 4, 2026, at Shilpakala Vedika, Hitech City. The Hyderabad presentation is expected to attract more than 10,000 audiences over the three-day event.”“The Hyderabad edition is being brought to the city by Raag Rang Raas, founded by Ritu Shah and Romit Shah. The founders said the presentation marks an important step in their journey of bringing large-scale cultural and artistic experiences to Hyderabad.”“Speaking on the occasion, Ritu Shah, Founder, Raag Rang Raas, said, “Rajadhiraaj is a unique theatrical experience that brings together the timeless stories of Lord Krishna through music, dance, theatre and visual storytelling. We wanted to bring this extraordinary production to Hyderabad because the city has a deep appreciation for art, culture and tradition. We hope audiences across generations will connect with the emotions and stories presented through this production.”“Romit Shah,



Founder, Raag Rang Raas, said, “This is the first-of-its-kind presentation of Rajadhiraaj in Hyderabad, and the production has already received an encouraging response across India. Bringing it to Hyderabad is an exciting opportunity for us to create a memorable cultural experience for the city. With its scale, music, performances and storytelling, Rajadhiraaj offers audiences a different way to experience the timeless journey of Shri Krishna.”“Rajadhiraaj Yatra – Krishna Leela Aapke Dwar’ has already travelled across Ahmedabad, Surat, Bengaluru, Chennai, New Delhi and Dubai, with 33 sold-out shows and more than 37,000 tickets booked to date. The production features a 120+ member cast and crew, 500+ costumes and 20 original songs, bringing together theatre, music, dance and elaborate production elements.”“The production is conceptualised and brought to life by Dhanraj Nathwani and presents the journey of Shri Krishna through a large-scale theatrical format. The Hyderabad presentation will offer audiences an opportunity to experience Krishna’s stories and leelas through storytelling, music, movement, costumes and stagecraft.”“The curtain-raiser and poster launch event was attended by Amit Shah, Mansi Shah, Vedika Shah, Devansh Shah, Heshah Shah and Aryaman Shah.”“Rajadhiraaj Yatra – Krishna Leela Aapke Dwar’ is Presented by MEIL, Powered by BHRÚNDA, MPL and Kamal Watch Co., with HolidayBazaar as the Travel Partner.”“Tickets for the Hyderabad presentation are available on BookMyShow.

Praja Palana Day observed at Karimnagar police headquarters.



Karimnagar September 17, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): Telangana Praja Palana Day was observed at the Karimnagar Police Commissionerate headquarters on Thursday, with Police Commissioner Gaush Alam, IPS, unfurling the national flag.The Commissioner received the police guard of honour and conveyed his greetings to the police personnel on the occasion. Additional DCP

Venkataramana unfurled the national flag at the CPO office.Speaking at the programme, Mr. Gaush Alam said Praja Palana Day was being observed to commemorate the historic occasion of the Telangana region becoming an integral part of the democratic Indian Union.He said public welfare, adherence to the rule of law and maintenance of peace and security were among the primary responsibilities of the police. He called upon officers and personnel to ensure that police services reached citizens at the grassroots level in a transparent and efficient manner and that people received speedy justice.Additional DCPs, ACPs, inspectors, reserve inspectors, administrative officers and other personnel of the Commissionerate attended the programme.

Expert urges Telangana Governor to return CURE Bill to Assembly

Hyderabad: After opposition parties raised concerns over certain provisions in the Core Urban Region (Integrated Governance) Bill, experts have appealed to Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla to return the Bill to the Assembly, citing issues with a few clauses.As flagged by some legislators in the Assembly, experts have found fault with the constitution of the Apex CURE Governing Council, which does not comprise elected representatives of the corporations.

Inter-District Theft Gang Arrested in Rebbena “Gold, Silver and Car Seized from Four Suspects



“Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, Kumram Bheem Asifabad, September 17: Police have arrested four persons allegedly involved in a series of house burglaries in Rebbena and neighbouring areas.”Following the theft at a house in Khairgaon village, Rebbena mandal, on September 7, the district police formed three special teams on the directions of SP Nithika Pant, IPS, under the supervision of DSP B. Ashok and Rebbena CI M. Sanjay.”During vehicle checks at Kagaznagar X Road, police intercepted a suspicious Swift Dzire car and found gold, silver and equipment allegedly used for breaking locks. Four persons in the vehicle were taken into custody and questioned. Police said they con-



fessed to their alleged involvement in thefts in Tandur, Khairgaon, Jakulpalli and Rebbena areas.”The arrested persons were identified as Upatla Pranay (30), Mancherla Satish Kumar (29), Rajesham (32), and Shaligama Krishna (32), all residents of Tandur.”Police seized 10.3 tolas of gold, 30 tolas of silver, four mobile phones, the Swift Dzire car and lock-breaking equipment from their possession.”The accused will be produced before the court and remanded as per court orders, police said.”SP Nithika Pant, IPS, congratulated DSP B. Ashok, CI M. Sanjay, SI Venkata Krishna, HC Ravi Kumar, PC Naushad and PC Venkatesh for their efforts in solving the case.

Relay Hunger Strikes Begin in Alwal Over Telangana Activists’ Pending Promises“

“Government Will Be Questioned in Assembly if Promises Are Delayed: Former Minister Srinivas Goud”“Alwal, September 17(INDIAN CHRONICLE)““Relay hunger strikes began at the Alwal protest camp on Thursday, demanding that the Congress government immediately implement the assurances made to Telangana movement activists during the elections. Former Minister Srinivas Goud, Malkajigiri MLA Marri Rajashekar Reddy and former corporator Shanti Srinivas Reddy attended the programme and expressed solidarity with the protesting activists.Speaking on the occasion, MLA Marri Rajashekar Reddy said that many activists had made significant sacrifices during the Telangana movement, but their issues had still not been adequately addressed even after the formation of Telangana state. He said several activists had faced loss of employment and property and endured hardships along with their families during the movement. He urged the government to recognise their struggles and fulfil the assurances made to them.He also stressed the need to support the families of martyrs who participated in the Telangana movement irrespective of age and lost their lives in the struggle. Rajashekar Reddy said he would continue to extend his support and work towards securing justice for the movement activists.Former Minister Srinivas Goud demanded the immediate implementation of the assurances given by the Congress party to Telangana activists during the elections. He appealed to the government not to delay the process and disappoint the activists. He questioned the delay in fulfilling the promises despite the government having substantial land resources.Goud said that if the government continued to delay the resolution of the activists’ problems, the issue would be raised during the forthcoming Assembly



sessions and the government would be questioned on the matter.”JAC leader Surender Reddy recalled the significant participation of Alwal residents during the Telangana movement when the agitation intensified across Hyderabad. He alleged that the government was making one statement publicly while acting differently in practice.He demanded that the proposal to recognise only those who had cases registered against them during the movement as activists be withdrawn. He urged the authorities to examine police records and other official documents from the movement period to identify eligible activists and implement the assurances made to them.The relay hunger strike was attended by Surender Reddy, Putnala Krishna, Doli Sudheer, Anil, Santosh, Rasheed, Veeraswamy, Mallesh, Nirmal JAC Chairman Sama Kiran Kumar Reddy, Parameshwar, Dommati Kiran, Keerthi Srinivas, Muthyalu, Narsimha, Ramaiah, Ganesh and others.

Gayathri Junior College Students Secure Premier MBBS Seats in All-India Counselling...

“PEDDAPALLI, Sep 17(Indian Chronicle): Two outstanding students from Gayathri Junior College,Peddapalli, have brought immense pride to the institution by securing prestigious MBBS seats in the Phase-2 state-level allotment conducted by the All India Medical Council.”P.Balaji clinched a stellar state rank of 1,326, while P.Sindhu achieved an impressive rank of 2,889, cementing their paths toward medical careers.”Expressing immense pride in their achievements,Allenki Srinivas,Chairman of Gayathri Educational Institutions warmly congratulated the top achievers. Chairman Srinivas highlighted the college’s unwavering commitment to transforming dedicated students into high-achieving medical professionals through structured guidance and quality education.He encouraged the duo to excel academically and serve society with dedication in the healthcare sector.”Expressing their heartfelt gratitude, Balaji and Sindhu credited their success to the expert mentorship, strategic guidance, and continuous encouragement provided by the college faculty throughout their preparation.



Telangana Liberation Day Celebrated Grandly in Ramanthapur:Former MLANVSS Prabhakar Attends as Chief Guest“



“Massive Rally Held from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Statue to Bharat Mata Statue”“RAMANTHAPUR, SEPTEMBER 17 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Telangana Liberation Day was celebrated grandly under the auspices of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel statue on Ramanthapur Main Road on Thursday. Former Uppal MLA NVSS Prabhakar attended the programme as the chief guest.”The event was organised to reflect national spirit, patriotism and unity. On the occasion, floral tributes were paid to the statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, followed by the hoisting of the national flag and the singing of the national anthem.”A massive rally was subsequently taken out from the Patel statue to the Bharat Mata statue at Ramanthapur Mini Tank Bund. The area witnessed an atmosphere of patriotic enthusiasm as participants carried national flags and raised slogans of patriotism.”Speaking on the occasion, NVSS Prabhakar said that Telangana Liberation Day holds great significance in the history of Telangana. He stated that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel’s determination, leadership and dedication to national unity continue to inspire every Indian.”He called upon everyone to move forward with responsibility to safeguard national integrity, unity and democratic values. He also urged people to always remember the sacrifices of the martyrs



and activists who fought for freedom, democracy and the rights of the people.”Former Habsiguda Division Corporator Kakkireni Chetana Harish, former Ramanthapur Division Corporator Bandaru Srivani Venkata Rao, Ramanthapur Division President Vangala Santosh Gupta, OBC District General Secretary Vallapu Jagan Yadav and senior BJP leaders Burra Rajeshwar, Revu Narasimha Kuruma, Thalla Balakrishna Goud, Kompally Upender, Tindera Hanumanth Rao, Itukala Venkatesh, Nandikishore Yadav, Chandramouli, Sankuri Kumaraswamy, Darshanala Sudhakar, Palugula Anjaiah Patel, Masi Reddy Prabhakar Reddy, CH Ramulu, Maheshwar Reddy, Adi Satyanarayana, Uligonda Narayana Das, Gundu Bikshapathi, Upender Yadav, Venkat Reddy, Boddupalli Anand, Vemula Tirupathaiah, Ramabrahmam, Ogirala Siddhartha, Parri Srinivas, Vallapu Tilla Yadav, Pabbala Ramu, Parvathalu, Nagesh, Lingam, Murali Mohan, Dr Yadagiri and Mukesh, among others, participated in the programme.”Women leaders Ambati Bhagyalakshmi, Bhogala Aruna, Suvarna Shinde, Keerthi and Ramadevi, along with leaders and party workers from Habsiguda and Venkat Reddy Nagar divisions, attended in large numbers and contributed to the success of the programme.”

Enduring ‘myth’ about a Pak commander’s death in 1965 war



GNS News Agency, Sept 17

On the Amritsar-Khemkaran road, just outside Chima village in Punjab’s Tarn Taran district, there is a memorial to the gallant action of the troops of 4 Grenadiers who helped blunt the Pakistani armoured offensive in the Battle of Asal Uttar in the 1965 war.Each September, well-deserved homages are paid to these brave grenadiers who laid down their lives, especially Company Quarter Master Havildar Abdul Hamid of the battalion, who was awarded the Param Vir Chakra. Special mention is also made of the battalion’s action in which Pakistani artillery commander Brig A R Shami was killed. However, a mention is also made of the killing of Maj Gen Naseer Ahmad Khan, the general officer commanding (GOC) of Pakistan’s 1 Armoured Division, in the same incident even though there is scant evidence of it.Various accounts written by Indian and Pakistani army officers have shed enough light on what happened on that fateful day of September 10, 1965, yet a misconception prevails about the chain of events. In his book, The Way it Was: Inside the Pakistan Army, Brig Z A Khan, a cavalry officer, writes that Brig Shami and Brig Bashir Ahmed, commander of the 5 Armoured Brigade, were tasked by the chief of the general staff of the Pakistani Army on Sept 10 to advance and reconnoitre because he was upset over the lack of progress of the 1 Armoured Division. He decided that Chima should be captured by the 24 Cavalry and 5 Frontier Force regiments.

To put this into effect, the commander of the 5 Armoured Brigade, the divisional artillery commander, and the officer commanding the SP Field Regiment supporting the brigade moved forward on the Khem-Kharan-Bhikkiwind Road. They were ambushed, and Brigadier Shami, the divisional artillery commander, was killed. The reserve squadron of the 24 Cavalry regiment tried to clear the ambush site but, without infantry, could not do so. The news of the ambush spread and the troops started moving back, bringing the operations to a standstill. “The GOC 1 Armoured Division, while moving through Khem Karan, ordered 1 FF to clear the town and it was finally done,” writes Brig Khan.From this account, it is clear that the GOC was still alive and in action on the day Brig Shami got killed. Earlier, on September 9, Lt Colonel Sahibzada Gul, commanding officer of the 6 Lancers regiment, was shot dead near Valtoha while standing on the turret of his tank and observing the Indian positions. Major I B Khan, the second-in-command, refused to assume command and none of the squadron commanders rose to the occasion. “6 Lancers became paralysed. 24 Cavalry advanced to Bhure Kuhna, there. Under Indian shelling, the commanding officer collapsed and this regiment also went out of control,” says Brig Khan.The killing of Lt Colonel Gul or Brigadier Bashir could explain the radio message intercepted by Indian troops the following day, which said “Bara Imam Mara Gaya (senior officer has been killed)”. Since the shoot-up of Brig Shami and Brig Bashir had happened the same day, it may have been supposed that the GOC of the 1 Armoured Division was also conducting a reconnaissance and was among those killed or fatally wounded.

There is also the eyewitness account of the reserve squadron commander of the 24 Cavalry regiment, Maj (later Colonel) Samiuddin. He had advanced close to Asal Uttar and was observing the episode of Brig Shami fetching up in a jeep on the road to Bhikkiwind in a gung-ho manner. In a podcast with Pakistani military historian Major Agha Amin,

Colonel Samiuddin said that Brig Shami took Brig Bashir along with him, asking why the troops were not advancing despite there being nothing in front of them. Maj Sami says the shoot-up happened beyond his eyesight but added that Brig Bashir managed to escape with minor injuries. He said he got the brigade commander put on one of his tanks and taken to the rear at Khem Karan.Brig Z A Khan also mentions that the GOC of the 1 Armoured Division and the commanders of the 4 and 5 Armoured Brigades were relieved of their commands on September 11 and most of their staff officers were transferred. The Pakistani accounts, thus, state that not only was the Pakistani GOC giving fresh orders on September 11, a day after being allegedly shot dead or fatally injured in battle, but he was also dismissed from command the same day.

Major General (retd) V K Singh, who has written a history of the Corps of Signals, has mentioned the version of events of the day as narrated by Major Naresh Rastogi, officer commanding of the 7 Brigade Signal Company, on September 9 and 10. Major Rastogi says that it was learnt on September 10 that the Pakistani commanders expected the road to Delhi to be clear and were advancing in jeeps, protected by armour, to reach Harike.Major Rastogi further recounts that the same evening Radio Pakistan announced the decoration of Hilal-e-Jurrat for their GOC. He adds that Brig Shami was killed and his jeep with his body was captured along with their operations order and fully marked artillery map. “The body of another commander, perhaps the armoured brigade commander, had been taken away,” he says.Here again there is conjecture about the killing of Brigadier Bashir, but Major Rastogi says nothing about the killing of GOC 1 Armoured Division in this account.Lt Gen Harbaksh Singh, the then western Army commander, wrote in his book, A Soldier Remembers, that at about 2.30 pm on September 10, one of the Indian Army’s artillery observation posts picked up a wireless message from the enemy saying that Pakistan’s divisional commander was coming ahead, along the road, to find out what was delaying the advance.

“Our side got ready to receive the party, and the General Officer Commanding and other Officers with him in the jeep, which was completely smashed, were either killed or wounded. The wounded General Officer Commanding Pakistan Division was taken away by the Pakistan Armour, while we picked from the area the body of the gunner officer with him, his Commander Artillery Brigade, Brigadier AR Shammi, along with his cap and personal diary. The next day when I was present in the area, and at my instance, his dead body was given a military funeral in the field,” wrote Lt Gen Harbaksh Singh.In his excellent book 1965: A Western Sunrise, Shiv Kunal Verma also describes the ambush by the 4 Grenadiers who shot Brig Shami dead. However, he mentions that the second brigadier escaped. “A shocked and dazed Bashir, miraculously unhurt, had crawled out of the jeep and disappeared into the nearby sugarcane field,” writes Verma.Verma goes on to mention that later the same day, a Pakistani radio message was intercepted—‘Barra imam mara gaya’ (the seniormost officer has been killed). This was interpreted as the killing of the GOC of the 1 Armoured Division, Major General Naseer Ahmed.In the words of Maj Agha Amin, Brigadier Shami was killed because he was disoriented in the confusion of battle and travelled too far forward under the assumption that he was in territory held by his own troops.The above accounts make it clear that many assumptions made in the heat of the battle have proven incorrect, as subsequent records show. However, there have been no tears shed for the disgraced Maj Gen Naseer since he was not a much-liked man in his division.Brig Z A Khan states that in 1965 Maj Gen Naseer had already commanded the division for about three years but had failed to get the cooperation and respect from the division.According to Khan, Maj Gen Naseer came to be known as the general who relied on informers. Under his leadership, equipment maintenance declined, and hundreds of vehicles broke down on the roads as the division moved to its wartime positions. Many others were left in garages because they were no longer roadworthy.

IIT Mandi caste poster probe clears students of intent, rules out SC/ST act provisions

GNS News Agency, Sept 17

The controversy erupted after a photograph and a video purportedly showing the poster displayed during a student-organised Janmashtami programme at IIT Mandi on September 4 were circulated on social media, triggering outrage and criticism of the institute administration. The controversy erupted after a photograph and a video purportedly showing the poster displayed during a student-organised Janmashtami programme at IIT Mandi on September 4 were circulated on social media, triggering outrage and criticism of the institute administration.A three-member inquiry committee, constituted by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi to examine an alleged controversial casteist poster displayed during a Janmashtami programme on the campus, has found “no evidence of any intention to target, insult or hurt any individual or community”, The Indian Express has learnt.

The committee, assisted by six members of the institute’s Reservation Cell throughout its proceedings, also concluded that “the case does not attract provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989”.IIT Registrar Dr Kumar Sambhav Pandey told that the committee on Saturday submitted its report to Director Laxmikant Behera, who had on September 6 constituted the committee to probe the alleged poster incident.“The committee recommended that the students concerned be counselled and sensitised, rather than subjected to disciplinary proceedings. It also identified the absence of a clearly defined procedure for organising such events on the campus, as an institutional gap requiring priority attention,” a senior faculty member said.The faculty member said the probe committee drew five principal findings. “These findings include that the event was not organised by the institute, and no officially recognised student body was involved in it. No institute funds were used. The expenses were met through voluntary contributions. The poster was not reviewed, approved or endorsed by any authority of the institute. Its content reflects an individual student’s own interpretation and does not represent the position or views of the institute. The committee found no evidence of any intention to target, insult or hurt any individual or community. The committee observed that the provisions of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 are not found to be attracted in the instant case.”“Indeed, the student who displayed the poster was identified,” he added.The controversy erupted after a photograph and a video purportedly showing the poster displayed during a



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student-organised Janmashtami programme at IIT Mandi on September 4 were circulated on social media, triggering outrage and criticism of the institute administration.

The poster, titled “Bhagavad Gita — The Timeless Wisdom”, was displayed outside the institute auditorium. It divided society into Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras, describing their respective roles as “spread God’s message”, “protect society and spirituality”, “drive economy, support others” and “serve higher classes”. It also carried a verse stating that the four divisions of human society were created according to the “three modes of material nature and the work associated with them”.The poster also triggered strong objections from members of the community, with concerns being raised over its content and its perceived casteist implications.The matter led to protests and expressions of concern over caste discrimination and the need to ensure dignity and equality for students, and the institute faced criticism and demands for action against those responsible for displaying the poster.On September 6, Behera constituted the inquiry committee to establish the circumstances under which the poster was displayed. The institute’s Reservation Cell was associated with the inquiry.

BEST electric bus catches fire in Mumbai’s Chembur; driver spots smoke in time



GNS News Agency, Sept 17

A Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) electric bus caught fire near Chembur Camp in Mumbai, close to the monorail station, around 8 am on Sunday. No injuries were reported.The wet-lease bus, operated by Shree

Maruti Travels (Daga Group) out of the Deonar depot, was travelling from Mahul Gaon to Trombay on route A-365 when the driver noticed smoke emerging from beneath the cabin. An inspection revealed a spark in the battery box, causing a short circuit that ignited the fire.

Staff used all three onboard fire extinguishers to put out the blaze within 15 minutes. After the fire was controlled, the Mumbai Fire Brigade (MFB) arrived, disconnected the battery, and removed it as a precaution. Local police, BEST Undertaking personnel, and municipal ward staff also responded to the site.This incident follows several recent fires involving the BEST fleet. In May, an empty electric double-decker bus operated by Switch Mobility caught fire at the Kurla depot after being removed from service due to a technical fault. Later that month, two CNG-powered BEST buses caught fire at the Sion-Pratiksha Nagar depot within an hour of each other.Following those incidents, BEST ordered fleet-wide safety inspections and mandated strict verification before releasing any vehicle into service.

‘Unemployment state’s prime concern’: Bombay HC asks Maharashtra to end long-term contractual hiring



The Bombay High Court on Friday asked the Maharashtra government to ensure ‘ad-hocism in public employment is consigned to history’ and issue a ‘directive to all the municipal corporations to do away with long-term contractual appointments and grant regularisation as per past Supreme Court judgements’.In doing so, the Court ordered the Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation (VVMC) to absorb over 450 medical officers and paramedical staff working on a contractual basis for years and regularise them.

A division bench of Justices Girish S Kulkarni and Aarti A Sathe on Friday quashed January 2026 communications by the Urban Development Department and VVMC requiring contractual staff to take a fresh written examination and directed the civic body to grant regularisation within two weeks. Advocates Abhijeet Desai and Mohini Rephade for Maharashtra-domiciled petitioners including MBBS/BAMS

Heavy downpour, thunderstorms set to hit parts of Maharashtra; Yellow alert in Mumbai

GNS News Agency, Sept 17

Mumbai and its adjoining districts are under a yellow alert, following an intense spell of rain. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), thunderstorm accompanied with lightning, heavy rainfall & gusty winds (40-50) at isolated places.The IMD has issued a five-day weather forecast for Maharashtra, forecasting intense heavy rainfall, active thunderstorms, and high-speed winds across several key districts.According to the bulletin issued on September 13, severe weather conditions will trigger localised inundation, disrupted transport networks, and agricultural stress across parts of Konkarn, North Maharashtra, and Central Maharashtra.Heavy rain alert: High risk in Dhule, Nandurbar, and Nasik GhatsThe IMD has highlighted severe rainfall warnings for Day 1 in the following regions.Dhule & Nandurbar: Heavy to very heavy rainfall accompanied by lightning and gusty winds reaching is very likely at isolated places.Ghat Areas of Nasik: Expect heavy to very heavy precipitation alongside thunderstorms and gusty winds. Heavy rainfall is expected to persist in this area into Day 2.Mumbai, Thane, Palghar, and Jalgaon: Very likely to witness thunderstorms accompanied by lightning, heavy rainfall, and gusty winds at isolated locations.

Coastal districts, including Raigad, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg will observe moderate to light rainfall along with thunderstorms and gusty winds. Weather conditions across Vidarbha-including **Akola, Amravati, Buldhana, Chandrapur, and Gadchiroli — will also involve isolated heavy rain and thunderstorms during the initial 24-hour period before conditions ease significantly from Day 2 onward.Yellow, orange Alerts in MaharashtraThe IMD has forecast Orange and Yellow alerts for several districts for Sunday and MondayThe districts under a Yellow Alert for thunderstorms, lightning, heavy rainfall, or gusty winds include Konkarn Region: Palghar, Thane, Mumbai, Raigad, Ratnagiri North / Central Maharashtra: Jalgaon, Nasik (Plain areas), Ahilyanagar, Pune (Plain areas), Ghats of Pune, Satara (Plain areas), Ghats of Satara, Ghats of Kolhapur Marathwada Region: Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Jalna, Parbhani, Beed, Hingoli Vidarbha Region: Akola,



Amravati, Buldhana, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara, Gondia, Nagpur, Wardha, Washim, YavatmalParts of Dhule, Nandurbar, and the Ghats of Nasik are under an Orange Alert on Sunday.On Monday, a yellow alert will remain enforced in:The meteorological office warned of multiple impacts stemming from intense precipitation and lightning. Localised flooding of low-lying urban areas, potential flash floods, disruption to road, rail, air, and ferry transport, and temporary outage of utility services like water and electricity are likely.Squally weather and rough sea conditions are likely along the Konkarn coast.The IMD has also warned of the risk of landslides, mudslides, and rockfalls in hilly or vulnerable terrains, along with tree uprooting and damage to unmaintained structures.To mitigate safety risks and crop damage, the IMD has issued clear guidelines:The IMD has advised people to check traffic updates and advisories before stepping out. Avoid sheltering under tall trees or residing in unsafe structures during severe weather.The weather department has also urged people in the affected areas to unplug electronics, stay out of open water bodies, and avoid working in open fields during active lightning.Farmers have been advised to harvest matured crops immediately and secure stored grains in dry facilities. “Ensure proper drainage channels in fields to clear excess water, pause chemical spraying or irrigation, and keep livestock protected indoors,” the latest IMD bulletin read.

Telangana farmers protest power disruptions, low voltage and crop losses

GNS News Agency, Sept 17

Hyderabad: Farmers are staging protests across the State, including in Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy’s home district of Palamuru, over disruption in power supply and the impact on their crops due to inadequate water availability.For the past few days, farmers from several districts have been taking to the streets and staging protests at power substations. The protests come amid repeated claims by the Congress government of ensuring continuous power supply to the farming community.In Jogulamba Gadwal district, farmers from Nandine and neighbouring villages staged a protest at a substation in the village. Raising slogans against the State government, they alleged that electricity department officials were not addressing their grievances despite repeated appeals.

The farmers complained of frequent power disruptions and said there was no fixed schedule for power cuts. They

said the situation had become more serious amid deficit rainfall, forcing many farmers to depend on borewells to provide water to their crops.However, frequent power disruptions were damaging agriculture pump sets and affecting water supply to the fields, they said. If the situation continued, the crops would wither, resulting in huge losses to farmers.The problem was not confined to one particular region or district. Farmers from Nizampet in Sangareddy district squatted on the road in protest against inadequate power supply and low voltage. The protest affected traffic movement in the area.

Similarly, farmers from Nachahalli Krishnagiri, Peddagudem Thanda, Savaigudem and other villages in Wanaparthy district took to the streets on Saturday. They raised slogans against the electricity department and insisted that they would not withdraw their protest until the officials ensured uninterrupted and quality power supply.

Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi meet Malaysian PM Anwar Ibrahim in New Delhi



GNS News Agency, Sept 17

New Delhi: Lok Sabha leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi and Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra held a breakfast meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in the national capital on Sunday. Sharing pictures from the meeting on X, the Congress party wrote, "LoP Shri Rahul Gandhi, along with Congress General Secretary Smt. Priyanka Gandhi ji, met H.E. Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia, for a breakfast meeting in New Delhi." Anwar Ibrahim is on an official visit to India to attend the two-day BRICS Summit being held in New Delhi.

During his visit, he attended the BRICS Summit's session on 'Inclusive Global Governance and Strengthening Multilateralism' in New Delhi on Saturday. He joined leaders of other BRICS member countries in a tree plantation drive in New Delhi. Anwar Ibrahim attended the gala dinner hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday evening. Anwar Ibrahim also held bilateral talks with PM Modi, Ethiopian counterpart Abiy Ahmed Ali, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi.

During the meeting, PM Modi and Anwar Ibrahim expressed their continued commitment to advancing the India-Malaysia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Anwar Ibrahim conveyed Malaysia's concurrence to the establishment of the Consulate General of India in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, according to the statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). "Prime Minister Modi warmly welcomed Prime Minister Ibrahim to India and appreciated Malaysia's participation in the BRICS Summit as a Partner Country. The leaders took stock of the outcomes of Prime Minister Modi's visit to Malaysia in February 2026 and reviewed the progress in bilateral cooperation across a range of areas, including trade and investment, defence and security, semiconductors, infrastructure, digital economy, energy, fintech, education, tourism and people-to-people ties," the MEA mentioned in a statement. Both leaders discussed key regional and global issues of mutual interest. PM Modi appreciated Malaysia's continued support in strengthening India-ASEAN ties. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim of Malaysia on the sidelines of 18th BRICS Summit. Building on Prime Minister Modi's visit to Malaysia in February 2026, the leaders reviewed the progress in bilateral cooperation across a range of areas, including trade and investment, defence and security, semiconductors, infrastructure, digital economy, energy, fintech, education, tourism and people-to-people ties. The leaders exchanged views on key regional and global issues of mutual interest," the MEA posted on X. After concluding his engagements in New Delhi, Anwar Ibrahim is scheduled to travel to Kerala to meet India's Grand Mufti. "My itinerary in India also includes a visit to Kerala to meet the Grand Mufti of India to exchange views on community development, education, and religious affairs. Following the Diplomatic Mission in India, I will then proceed to Male, Maldives, to undertake an official visit at the invitation of President Dr Mohamed Muizzu. May all matters be facilitated and this visit bring tangible benefits to the people and the nation," Ibrahim posted on X.

FPI selling at Rs 14,474 crore this month to date, escalating Middle East tensions key trigger

GNS News Agency, Sept 17

Mumbai: Foreign portfolio investor (FPI) flows turned negative this month after positive flows in July and August, registering Rs 14,474 crore through the exchanges (up to September 12). However, the trend of FPI investment through the primary market has been continuing in September also as per early indications, according to analysts. FPI investment through the primary market stood at Rs 1,336 crore (till September 12 this month), taking the total investment through the primary market this year to Rs 47,183 crore, according to the exchange data. Meanwhile, Indian equity markets remained under significant pressure during the week, with the Nifty 50 extending its weekly losing streak to five consecutive weeks. Escalating tensions in the Middle East triggered a sharp rise in crude oil prices and intensified concerns over inflation, global interest rates and economic growth. The sell-off was broad-based, with major sectors ending lower during the week. Crude oil emerged as the dominant headwind for domestic equities, said market participants. Foreign institutional investors remained cautious, with continued FII selling emerging as an important headwind for domestic equities. In contrast, domestic institutional investors (DIIs) recorded net purchases of Rs 6,419.46 crore last week, providing a meaningful cushion against foreign selling and helping limit further downside in the domestic equity market.



Going forward, FPI flows will be significantly influenced by the Iran-US conflict and the consequent impact on crude prices. Elevated crude prices (Brent is above \$108) and higher inflation implies tighter monetary policy, which means bond yields will rise further, said analysts. Global macro-economic and geopolitical risks are likely to keep Indian equities on edge in the week ahead, with crude oil prices, developments in the Middle East and shifting expectations for U.S. monetary policy emerging as the key drivers of market sentiment.

Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange Patil to reach Mumbai on Sept 20 with protesters



GNS News Agency, Sept 17

Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange Patil said he and his supporters will reach Mumbai on September 20 for an agitation over their demands. Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange Patil said he and his supporters will reach Mumbai on September 20 for an agitation over their demands. Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange Patil on Saturday announced that the agitation will be held in Mumbai when he and his supporters reach there on September 20.

Speaking to reporters in Antarwali-Sarati, Jarange-Patil stopped short of announcing his departure to Mumbai. He, however, indicated that his first halt will be in Patoda area on September 16. His associates said he would most prob-

ably move out of Antarwali Sarati in Jalna district on September 15. Jarange said Maratha protesters will reach Mumbai on September 20 making scheduled halts along the way. The activist said they plan to cover nearly 100 km daily before each night stop. Jarange asked everyone to maintain peace until they return from Mumbai with their demands met. "No one should resort to stone-pelting or arson. All those heading to Mumbai must follow the path of peace. We want to protest democratically and secure our rights," he said.

"Just because someone antagonises us doesn't make them big, nor do we need to react to them... We might take a slight detour that adds just 100 to 150 km, but our goal is to reach Mumbai and win. Our first night halt will be in Beed district, the second in Shrigonda, the third at Hadapsar in Pune, the fourth in Khopoli (possibly followed by a halt in Koparkhairane), and the fifth at Azad Maidan in Mumbai." He urged people in the districts through which they pass should come onto the streets to bless them and then return home. "We are fighting for your children. Those who own four-wheelers should bring their vehicles to take us up to Mumbai. Drop us at the borders of Mumbai and return to your duties. Leave your vehicles with us up to the city limits; we will head to Azad Maidan from there while your cars can return home safely. You only need to cover four days' worth of diesel. While it costs fuel for you, it will secure a golden future for the children of the Maratha community," he said.

ClimbOn Adventure Club conducts rappelling at Mancherial's Gandhari Khila

GNS News Agency, Sept 17

Mancherial: A group of four members from Hyderabad-based ClimbOn Adventure Club, conducted rappelling at Gandhari Khila on the outskirts of Bokkalagutta village on Saturday. The Club is affiliated with the Indian Mountaineering Foundation. Madhu, Pavan, Sushanth and Rajamouli organized rappelling at a 225-foot high peak of the fort. They opined that the historical place was suitable for rappelling competitions. They observed that the fort could attract adventurers from across the country if basic amenities were created. The spot had potential to become a major destination for adventure activities, they noted, adding that the event was aimed at assessing conditions at the fort.

The members thanked the forest department and YHAI, Bellampalli unit, for extending their cooperation in conducting the activity. Gandhari fort is believed to have been built by a tribal king Medaraju, who had ruled over the region, by taking assistance from Kakatiya rulers in 900 AD.



It houses a temple of Maisamma. Similarly, it has idols of Kala Bhairava Swamy, Lord Siva, Lord Ganesh, Hanuman, 10-headed Naga Sheshu and idols of various deities chiseled out of rocks.

800 child labourers rescued across Karnataka days after CM Shivakumar's market visit



The drive came days after Chief Minister D K Shivakumar visited the APMC market in Bengaluru, where he noticed child labourers and subsequently 29 of them were rescued. On Saturday, the drive was conducted across all

962 police station limits in the state. According to official sources, 503 children were rescued in Bengaluru, the highest number in the state. Bengaluru was followed by Vijayapura with 72 children rescued, Tumakuru (33), Koppal (27), Kalaburagi (22), Ballari (15) and Mysuru (13). The raids were primarily conducted on garages, marts, repair shops, hotels, markets, bars and restaurants. Screenshot The highest number of children were rescued in Bengaluru. A senior police officer said, "The raids have not ended but will continue. The legal action has already been initiated by registering FIRs and, in some cases, notices have been issued. The labour department and child welfare committee members were also part of the raid." The owners of establishments where child labourers have been found were booked under the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act.

Phone seized from Prajwal Revanna in jail had over 145 porn clips, OTT movies: Police

GNS News Agency, Sept 17

A forensic examination of a mobile phone and pen drive seized from the high-security cell of convicted former MP Prajwal Revanna and undertrial prisoner Prathap Rai at the Bengaluru central jail revealed explicit videos, OTT movies and unauthorised communication with people outside the prison, the police said Saturday. According to the forensic report submitted to investigators, the mobile phone contained more than 145 video clips, including pornographic content, OTT series and movies, while the pen drive had over 100 such clips. Analysis of the phone's call records also reportedly showed unauthorised communication with Revanna's family members through intermediaries, as well as direct calls to a female friend, an officer said. Prajwal Revanna is serving a life sentence at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison after being convicted in a rape case, while Rai is an undertrial in a case under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act. The police seized the phone, SIM card, charger and a notebook during a surprise inspection of the Security Division barracks by the Central Crime Branch (CCB) on August 11. They then extracted and examined the device's data as part of the investigation.

The notebook recovered from the cell contained six to seven phone numbers, including those of family members and a female friend. Revanna denied owning the mobile phone, claiming it was shared among inmates on a rotational basis. "However, he admitted that the notebook re-



covered from the cell belongs to him," the officer said. The police said they would issue notices to the people whose numbers were found in the phone's call history and examine the circumstances of the alleged communications. The Electronic City division police arrested five people Friday in connection with the alleged smuggling of the contraband into the prison. According to police, a prison warden allegedly facilitated the mobile phone's entry, while another inmate arranged the SIM card. The arrests followed the seizure, after which police registered an FIR at Parappana Agrahara police station. Investigators are now probing the wider prison network involved in bringing and operating unauthorised electronic devices inside the facility.

A spokesperson par excellence and a Congress loyalist till end



GNS News Agency, Sept 17

Senior Congress leader Ratnakar Mahajan, who earned the moniker of "scholarly spokesperson" in political circles, passed away at his residence in Rakshak Society in Pimpri-Chinchwad late Friday evening. He was 80. Political leaders and close associates remembered him as someone who had a scholarly approach, calm demeanour and effectively articulated his party's position without shouting or using objectionable words against opponents. The final rites of Mahajan were performed at Vaikunth crematorium on Saturday afternoon.

Mahajan, who was imprisoned during the Emergency, had served as executive chairman of the Maharashtra State Planning Board. He was first joined the Janata Dal in the nineties, then joined the Congress but left the party to join the NCP when it was founded in 1999. He then returned to the Congress where he served as senior spokesperson and vice-president of MPCC and remained loyal to the party at a time when some key leaders left. In 2010, when Mahajan called for unification of the Congress and NCP as both had similar ideology, it caused an uproar in political circles. Mahajan had to then resign from the NCP.

Born in 1946 in Indapur, Mahajan completed his higher education from Pune. Besides dabbling in politics, he was also involved in social work. Mahajan, who was known as a

socialist thinker and political analyst, was inspired by socialist ideology and was jailed during the Emergency. He was deeply influenced by progressive thinkers such as Jayaprakash Narayan, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia, S M Joshi, N G Goray, and G P Pradhan, translating the ideals of Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Mahatma Gandhi into practical action throughout his public life, said his close associates.

"The passing of senior Congress leader Ratnakar Mahajan is a monumental loss to Maharashtra's social, political, and intellectual spheres. Influenced by socialist philosophy alongside Gandhian thought, Dr Mahajan preserved his ideological stance and commitment to values throughout his life. Maharashtra has lost a scholarly and restrained leader," said Harshvardhan Sapkal, president, MPCC. Sapkal said that as a thinker, advocate of scientific temper and devout follower of secular thought, Dr Mahajan dedicated his life to guiding society intellectually. NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar said, "The news of the passing of senior Congress leader, spokesperson, and progressive thinker Dr Ratnakar Mahajan is extremely heartbreaking. Today, I paid my last respects to his mortal remains and shared in the grief of his family." Through his scholarly approach, fluent Marathi and logical reasoning, Pawar said Mahajan forged a distinct identity within the socialist movement, Rashtra Seva Dal, and the public life of Maharashtra. "His contributions to the political, social, and intellectual spheres will always be remembered," he said. Several other political leaders also paid tributes to Mahajan. Throughout his long tenure in public life, he left an indelible mark with his intellect, vast knowledge, and ideological maturity, said Prashant Jagtap, president, Pune City Congress. "Examining various social, political and contemporary issues with a critical eye, he always presented his thoughts in a balanced and precise manner. Mahajan's skill in communicating even complex subjects to the common people in simple language was truly commendable. With his departure, the intellectual world of the Congress party has suffered a great loss, and public life has lost a knowledgeable and balanced personality," Jagtap said.

Three minors detained after vandalism inside Shiva temple in Bihar's Nalanda

Patna: Three minors, aged between four and five years, have been detained in connection with the vandalism inside a Shiva temple in Bihar's Nalanda district, officials said on Sunday. The incident took place on Saturday at a Shiva temple in Sherpur of Nalanda district. According to locals, some children allegedly pelted stones and bricks within the temple premises and also attempted to damage the idol inside the temple. The entire incident was reportedly captured on CCTV cameras installed on the temple premises. The footage allegedly showed the children entering the temple premises, throwing stones and also urinating inside the temple. Following the incident, locals maintained restraint and immediately informed the police rather than allowing the situation to escalate. Considering the sensitivity of the matter, Nalanda Police took prompt action and, after examining the CCTV footage, detained three children for questioning. Local youth Suraj Kumar said that when he reached the temple on Saturday, he found several bricks and stones scattered across the premises. Initially, the residents did not pay much attention to the matter and proceeded to clean the temple premises. "Later, when we checked the CCTV footage, we were shocked. Some children were seen throwing bricks and stones at the temple, urinating near the Shivalinga, and even using abusive lan-

guage," he said.

Suraj Kumar said that the residents immediately informed the administration to prevent the situation from deteriorating further. He also alleged that the pathways leading to the temple had been encroached upon, while the closure of one of the roads had made it difficult for people to access the temple. According to Suraj, the surrounding conditions have affected access to the temple, and he claimed that similar incidents had taken place there in the past as well. Aman Kumar, who performs puja at the temple, said, "The area is predominantly Muslim, and we only have one temple in the area. Miscreants often gather there. The children deliberately threw stones at the temple gate and urinated inside. Thefts have also occurred at the temple before. These incidents continue to hurt the sentiments of local Hindu devotees." The temple is located in Ward No. 41 of the Bihar Sharif Assembly constituency. The newly constructed temple was formally inaugurated by Bihar Sharif MLA Sunil Kumar on Mahashivratri this year. The temple was constructed at a cost of Rs 14,90,000, and regular prayers have been conducted there every morning and evening since its inauguration. Officials said that construction work at the temple is still not completely finished and that a boundary wall has not yet been constructed,

Iraq says Saudi pipeline attack originated from its territory



Baghdad: Iraq said attacks on a key Saudi oil pipeline were launched from its territory, as US President Donald Trump appeared to blame Iran.Meanwhile, the number of displaced people in Yemen is rising quickly after a swift advance by Iran-backed Houthi rebels threatens a key alternative to the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab el-Mandeb. And Lebanon and Israel will hold new direct talks next month.Here's a look at the latest news in the Middle East.Iraq dismisses commander over Saudi pipeline attacksPrime Minister Ali al-Zaidi ordered an investigation into the operations command in Maysan province, which borders Iran, and dismissed its commander after authorities determined that the attacks on the Saudi pipeline were launched from the province, the government said.

The Saudi Foreign Ministry blamed the attacks on drones that came from Iraq and said the kingdom would not retaliate to give the Iraqi government "an opportunity to take the necessary measures."The East-West pipeline has been vital to Saudi Arabia's oil exports since the Iran war disrupted shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. According to the International Energy Agency, Saudi oil exports through the Red Sea port at the pipeline's end have more than doubled.Regional officials have told The AP that the Houthis and the Iraqi militias recently coordinated attacks on Saudi oil facilities.Trump says Iran is 'probably' behind Saudi pipeline attack

Asked if he thought Iran was behind the attack that closed the East-West pipeline, Trump told reporters: "Well, I think they are. Probably they are."Trump said his administration has "had discussions" with the Houthis, though he did not say when. "The Houthis called us, and they don't want to fight with us," he said. "They would much prefer not having us involved, and they're letting most ships go through."The Houthis have said they are only targeting neighbouring Saudi Arabia's shipping.Asked about a recent call with Saudi's crown prince, Trump said: "He's a good friend of mine, and I can just say everything's going to work out fine and dandy. It's going to be very good."People fleeing in Yemen describe a hysterical panic

Thousands of people have fled the Houthis' advance. In Aden, held by Yemen's Saudi-backed internationally recognised government, residents have opened their homes. In one, dozens of men lay on a floor carpeted with thin mattresses and sheets."We set out in hysterical panic on a motorcycle, not knowing where we were heading," said Alaa Ali Salem, who fled from al-Khawkhra district. "The roads suddenly became extremely congested, and while I was driving, the motorcycle overturned. My wife, my children and I were all injured."The International Organisation for Migration said at least 76,000 people have fled since July as fighting escalates between the Houthis and government forces, up from 46,000 just days earlier. Some fear a

return to the civil war that killed 1,50,000 before a 2022 ceasefire."I saw the soldiers as they were withdrawing. They told us we must escape," said a tearful Durrah Ali Hassan, who took shelter in a relative's house. She said she was worried about the toll of the chaos on her pregnant daughter, who had been bleeding and was now in a coma at a hospital.Lebanon, Israel to hold new talks next month

Lebanese and Israeli negotiators are scheduled to meet in Rome in October for US-brokered talks. A planned round this month was postponed without explanation.The US State Department said Lebanese and Israeli ambassadors to the US will meet at its headquarters in Washington next week to discuss ongoing developments and the continued implementation of the framework agreement reached in June.Lebanon and Israel have held seven rounds of talks in Washington and Rome over the past months in search of a way to calm the latest fighting between Israeli forces and the Lebanon-based Hezbollah militant group.Lebanon's president made a rare visit to a southern city Saturday, close to where Israel captured a strategic hill.Iran's president meets with Abu Dhabi crown princeIranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Khalid bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan held talks on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in New Delhi, according to a UAE government statement, signalling efforts to maintain engagement despite growing instability across the region.Iran has sharply criticised the security partnerships some Gulf states maintain with Western powers, while the UAE has backed efforts aimed at containing Iran's military influence.Oil spill in Gulf of Oman doubled: environmental groupA large-scale oil spill, believed to be from a tanker struck by the US military, doubled in size between Wednesday and Thursday, endangering two protected areas off Oman and Iran, said Nina Noelle of Greenpeace Germany.The tanker RIESCO was one of four attacked Tuesday in the Gulf of Oman: A fifth was destroyed in the Strait of Hormuz off Iran's Kharg island.The visible area of pollution measured about 400 square kilometres on Thursday, Noelle said. Satellite images reviewed by The AP showed the spill stretching almost 70 kilometres.The spill is located between the Musandam protected area on the Omani side, which includes one of the region's most important seabird breeding islands. On the Iranian side is the Hara-e Roud-e Gaz Protected Area in Hormozgan province that includes mangrove forests.

Video shows Israeli troops firing on Palestinians in West BankIsraeli troops opened fire at a group of Palestinians who did not appear to be posing a threat in the occupied West Bank, wounding one man, according to video obtained by The AP.The video, shot by a witness, showed the man falling near the Palestinian village of Faqqua. At least 14 shots were fired and continued as men rushed to move the man to safety before tying a tourniquet around his leg.Mahmoud Shahin, a resident, said the Palestinians had rushed to the area after receiving reports that Israeli settlers had arrived with sheep. He said Israeli soldiers then came and began firing in the air and toward the Palestinians.He said the man was undergoing surgery in Jenin.Israel's military said the video was authentic and confirmed its forces had fired toward the Palestinians, wounding one man, and said commanders would review the incident.Settler violence in the West Bank has surged under the ultranationalist government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The international community largely considers Israeli settlements to be illegal.

Iran, Iraq, Turkey call for preventing escalation of tensions in West Asia

GNS News Agency, Sept 17

Tehran: Iran, Iraq and Turkey have stressed the need to prevent an escalation of tensions in the West Asia region. The issue was highlighted in separate phone calls between Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi and his Turkish and Iraqi counterparts on Saturday, according to statements released by the Iranian Foreign Ministry early Sunday.During a phone conversation between Araghchi and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, the two sides discussed the latest regional developments and underscored the need to prevent further escalation of tensions and the expansion of regional conflicts, Xinhua news agency reported.

They also called for continued consultations and diplomatic efforts to help ensure regional stability and peace. In a separate phone call, Araghchi and Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein reviewed bilateral issues, regional developments and ongoing processes, stressing the importance of maintaining stability and security along their common border and continuing coordination.They also underscored the need for responsible approaches to regional developments and called for efforts to prevent the escalation and spread of conflicts in the region.Meanwhile, Iran and Oman have agreed on the details of new entry and exit routes for the Strait of Hormuz and will brief Gulf countries on the outcome of their consultations at a regional meeting in Muscat on Monday, Iranian officials said on Saturday.Citing a source



close to Iran's negotiating team, the semi-official Tasnim news agency said that the understanding was reached after "intensive technical and diplomatic talks between Iran and Oman, which culminated in a final agreement in late August." Under the understanding, the Gulf's entry route "lies entirely within Iran's territorial waters," and a portion of the exit route also falls "within Iranian territorial waters," the source said.The source stressed that the route would operate under Iranian arrangements and the waterway's southern route will be closed once the new system becomes operational, noting that the United States had insisted that the southern route must be opened.

Indian-origin woman shot dead by stalker in US

A 38-year-old Indian-origin woman, Shalini Thakur, was fatally shot outside a Sacramento restaurant by Rohit, a 22-year-old undocumented immigrant from India who had allegedly stalked her for months.Washington: A 38-year-old Indian-origin woman has been shot dead outside a restaurant in the US state of California by a 22-year-old man from India who had allegedly stalked her for months, the US Department of Homeland Security said.The incident took place on September 8 at a shopping centre in Sacramento.Rohit, an undocumented immigrant from India, approached Shalini Thakur at her car. When she tried to run away, Rohit chased her down, pulled out a gun, and shot her multiple times, the DHS said on Friday.After she had fallen to the ground, he shot her again in the head at close range before fleeing in his vehicle, it said.Authorities tried to call the driver out of the car before discovering that he had died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, the Sacramento County Coroner's Office was quoted as saying by Fox40.com.A spokesperson for DHS said Thakur's killer, Rohit, was from India and entered the United States through Arizona in 2023.He was arrested by the US Border Patrol and released by the Biden administration, according to the spokesperson.The exact details around his immigration



status were not immediately clear as of Friday.Further investigation determined that Rohit had been harassing and stalking Thakur since at least January, after she discovered an Apple AirTag under the hood of her car. Rohit had also reportedly deflated the air in her car and followed her to work so he could offer her help, the report added.He had also obtained a copy of her apartment key and entered her home as she slept, SCSSO said.

Congo says Ebola outbreak 'under control' despite persistent risks



GNS News Agency, Sept 17Kinshasa: The government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) said that its ongoing Ebola outbreak is "under control" and has passed its peak, although local flare-ups, continued transmission and the spread of the disease to a seventh province point to persistent risks."The 17th Ebola outbreak is under control, and the peak was reached at the beginning of the third week of August 2026," government spokesperson Patrick Muyaya said while reading a report from a cabinet meeting on Friday, citing Health Minister Roger Kamba.

According to the government, all major indicators point to a decline in cases, with 10 health zones affected before the latest expansion of the outbreak reporting no new cases for at least 21 days, while transmission has slowed in several regions in the eastern province of Ituri, the epicenter of the outbreak, reports Xinhua news agency.The authorities nevertheless called for continued vigilance and strict contact tracing, saying close surveillance remains necessary in regions where recent flare-ups have been reported. Former

Congolese Health Minister Jean-Jacques Mbungani Mbanda, now a member of parliament, urged caution over the assessment, saying on Saturday that the downward trend in some areas should not be taken to mean that transmission has been brought under control everywhere.

In an outbreak involving multiple transmission foci, different areas may reach their peaks at different times, he said, adding that the epidemic curve reflects detected cases and could be affected by infections that remain unidentified in communities. In its latest weekly report on Tuesday, the World Health Organization said the outbreak "remains uncontrolled and increasingly heterogeneous," with transmission easing in some areas while intensifying or spreading geographically elsewhere."The outbreak is increasingly geographically heterogeneous rather than showing a uniform decline," it said. The DRC government has also confirmed Thursday the first Ebola case in the northwestern province of Sud-Ubangi, making it the seventh province affected. Sud-Ubangi does not border any of the six provinces where confirmed Ebola cases had previously been reported.

According to Mbanda, the patient, a 23-year-old man who later died, had traveled extensively before arriving in Sud-Ubangi, with an itinerary spanning several provinces, neighboring Rwanda and Uganda, as well as both road and river routes. As of September 10, the DRC had recorded 7,022 confirmed Ebola cases, including 3,398 deaths, with a case fatality rate of 48.4 percent.The outbreak has now affected 62 health zones across seven provinces. The current outbreak, declared in May, has become the largest and deadliest Ebola epidemic in the DRC's history and the second-largest globally, behind the 2014-2016 epidemic in West Africa.

Iran, Oman agree on details of Hormuz Strait's new entry, exit routes

GNS New Agency, Sept 17

Tehran/Doha: Iran and Oman have agreed on the details of new entry and exit routes for the Strait of Hormuz and will brief Gulf countries on the outcome of their consultations at a regional meeting in Muscat on Monday, Iranian officials said. Citing a source close to Iran's negotiating team, the semi-official Tasnim news agency said that the understanding was reached after "intensive technical and diplomatic talks between Iran and Oman, which culminated in a final agreement in late August."Under the understanding, the Gulf's entry route "lies entirely within Iran's territorial waters," and a portion of the exit route also falls "within Iranian territorial waters," the source said.

The source stressed that the route would operate under Iranian arrangements and the waterway's southern route will be closed once the new system becomes operational, noting that the United States had insisted that the southern route must be opened."The understanding in no way means that the Strait of Hormuz will be opened," the source said, adding that Iran has seven conditions for reopening the waterway and has conveyed them to the United States.

The source underlined that the waterway will remain closed unless those conditions are implemented, with reopening depending entirely on the US behavior, Xinhua news agency reported. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei announced on Friday that Gulf littoral states' foreign ministers are scheduled to meet in Oman on Monday to exchange views on regional issues, including the Iran-Oman talks on designating safe routes in the Strait of Hormuz.Speaking to media on Saturday, Baghaei said the gathering would "hopefully" be attended by foreign ministers from Gulf states as well as Iran and Iraq. "As part of



the agenda, we are going to brief the delegations about the results of the Iran and Oman consultations regarding the safe passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz," he said, adding that the two countries had conducted the consultations as "the two coastal states of the Strait of Hormuz."Late last month, Iran and Oman said in a joint statement that they had exchanged views on a proposed phased framework that includes establishing a temporary joint shipping corridor in the strait.Following US-Israeli strikes on Iran on Feb. 28,

Tehran restricted passage through the strategic waterway, while US forces imposed a naval blockade targeting vessels traveling to or from Iranian ports.The Strait of Hormuz, linking the Gulf with the Arabian Sea, is one of the world's most important routes for oil and gas shipments. Oman and Iran sit on opposite sides of the strait and have maintained consultations over maritime security and navigation in the strategic waterway.

Putin departs New Delhi after attending BRICS Summit, meeting PM Modi

New Delhi: Russian President Vladimir Putin departed from New Delhi on Sunday after attending the 18th BRICS Summit hosted by India.Union Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs, Kirti Vardhan Singh, saw off President Putin."Honoured to see off H.E. President Vladimir Putin at Delhi airport following his visit to India for the BRICS Summit. India deeply values its Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership with Russia and remains committed to further advancing our multifaceted cooperation," Singh posted on X.Putin participated in the two-day BRICS Summit at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, which brought together leaders from BRICS member and partner countries, along with outreach invitees.

Addressing the 18th BRICS Summit session on Saturday, Putin said that the partnership within BRICS is invariably built on the principles of equality, good neighbourliness and mutual consideration of interests, while respecting the cultural and civilisational diversity, history, traditions and values of its members. He said it was therefore quite logical that the authority and influence of BRICS in the world continue to grow steadily."The Association has rightfully established itself among the key centres of global governance, and the prospects for developments in international politics and security, economics, and humanitarian cooperation largely depend on our collective decisions and actions," said Putin.

The Russian President further said that the BRICS session on 'Inclusive Global Governance and Strengthening Multilateralism' is highly relevant in this regard."Indeed, in the conditions of an emerging multipolar world, it is more important than ever to work together to strengthen the true world order multilateralism, involve more countries in global mechanisms management, in the activities of key international political and economic structures, in search of answers to acute challenges and threats, in support of international peace and stability for the sake of achieving shared prosperity and well-being," Putin noted.Putin arrived in New Delhi on Friday to attend the 18th BRICS Summit and also held bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.During the meeting, both leaders discussed bilateral cooperation in key sectors and also the ongoing conflicts in West Asia and the Black Sea region.PM Modi also gifted Putin the Russian translation of the Thirukkural, written by the great Indian Tamil poet and philosopher Thiruvalluvar, which contains extensive writings on agriculture and farmers.According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the two leaders reviewed progress in bilateral cooperation in political, economic, defence, energy, space, skill mobility and people-to-people domains."They welcomed Russia's International Industrial Exhibition 'INNOPROM India', which was held for the first time in India from 9-11 September



2026 and underscored its importance in further expanding trade and industrial ties. The two leaders also visited the INNOPROM India exhibition and interacted with the participants," the MEA stated.

Search underway for Indonesian passenger ship carrying 240 people after it loses contact

GNS News Agency, Sept 17

Jakarta: Indonesian rescuers launched a search operation on Sunday after a passenger ship carrying 240 people lost contact in the Java Sea while travelling from East Java to South Kalimantan on Borneo island, officials said.



The Search and Rescue Office in Banjarmasin, the capital city of South Kalimantan province, said they received a report the Virgo Transport 8 had experienced a communication failure while en route to the city from Surabaya, Indonesia's second largest city in East Java province.Initial information indicated the vessel's last known position was in the Java Sea, about 148 kilometres from a pier in Banjarmasin.There were no immediate reports of casualties.

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 back-

ward flow and allow lymph to move progressively towards the larger lymphatic ducts and, ultimately, back into the bloodstream. Respiration, arterial pulsations, changes in tissue 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 in

Breathing 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.

How IVF helped a 30-year-old with high blood sugar become mother

Her blood sugar was 224 mg/dL, HbA1c was 7.1%: How IVF helped a 34-year-old become momA woman with diabetes may conceive normally, but poorly controlled blood glucose around conception can increase the risk of pregnancy complications.

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. The 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. But the embryo transfer was only one part of the plan.

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.

Why does blood sugar rise during the flu even when you’re eating less?



A patient arrived at my clinic with classic flu symptoms — fever, cough, body aches and overwhelming tiredness. But there was one thing that worried him more than the flu itself: his blood sugar had suddenly gone much higher than usual, even though he had barely eaten. For people living with diabetes, this is an important concern. Influenza can be more serious because infections can make blood sugar harder to control and increase the risk of complications. The good news is that being prepared, monitoring your health closely and seeking help early can make a big difference.

When the Flu Sends Blood Sugar SoaringIt may seem surprising that blood sugar can rise when you are eating less. But during an infection, the body releases stress hormones to help fight the illness. These hormones can raise blood glucose levels. That is why it is important to check your blood sugar more often than usual when you have the flu, following your doctor’s sick-day plan. Keep a record of your readings and contact your doctor if your levels remain much higher or lower than normal. A poor appetite can make people wonder whether they should stop their diabetes medicines. The answer is: not without speaking to your doctor. What happens to your medication during an illness depends on the medicines you take, your blood sugar readings, and how well you are eating and drinking. Some medicines may need to be adjusted while you are unwell, but these changes should be made with medical guidance.

No Appetite? Focus on Fluids FirstWhen the flu takes away your appetite, you do not need to force yourself to eat large meals. Small portions of foods you can tolerate may

Antibiotic-resistant infections kill more patients and cost more, finds major India study

A major study of hospitalised patients across India has found that infections caused by antibiotic-resistant gram-negative bacteria are more likely to be fatal and more expensive to treat than infections caused by drug-susceptible strains. Gram-negative bacteria are a group of bacteria that can cause infections in different parts of the body, including the lungs, urinary tract, wounds and bloodstream. They include common hospital pathogens such as Escherichia coli, Klebsiella pneumoniae, Acinetobacter baumannii and Pseudomonas aeruginosa. These bacteria can be particularly difficult to treat when they develop resistance to antibiotics. One important group of antibiotics used for serious infections is carbapenems. When these bacteria become resistant to carbapenems, doctors have fewer effective medicines available to treat patients.

The researchers, part of the Indian Council of Medical Research’s antimicrobial resistance surveillance network, looked at four major Gram-negative bacteria: Escherichia coli, Klebsiella pneumoniae, Acinetobacter baumannii and Pseudomonas aeruginosa. They compared patients in tertiary hospitals infected with carbapenem-resistant bacteria with those infected by susceptible strains of the same bacteria.

Why is the study significant?

Studying these infections is important because antibiotic resistance can affect both patient survival and the cost of treatment. While many studies monitor how resistant bacteria are in laboratory samples, fewer studies look at what happens to the patients who actually have these infections. This study therefore provides important information on whether resistant infections are linked to higher deaths, longer hospital stays and greater antibiotic costs across different hospitals in India. The study, conducted across 20 tertiary-care hospitals between April 2022 and April 2025, analysed data from 159,336 hospitalised patients. Of these, 26,213 had confirmed gram-negative bacterial infections, and 16,025 — or 61.1% — had infections resistant to carbapenem antibiotics.

Resistant infections were more likely to be fatalThe difference in mortality was seen across all four bacteria. Among patients with E. coli infections, 24.4% of those with carbapenem-resistant infections died, compared with 17.3% among those with susceptible infections. For K. pneumoniae, mortality was 31.2% in the resistant group versus 23.5% in the susceptible group. The gap was 37.9% versus 32.8% for A. baumannii, and 28.9% versus 20.2% for P. aeruginosa. In relative terms, patients with carbapenem-resistant E. coli had a 41% higher risk of death than those with susceptible E. coli. The corresponding increase was 33% for K. pneumoniae, 16% for A. baumannii and 43% for P. aeruginosa. The researchers also calculated population attributable fractions for mortality. These ranged from 11.1% for A. baumannii to 18.7% for P. aeruginosa. However, the authors caution that these estimates should not be interpreted as the exact number of deaths that could be prevented by eliminating resistance because the analysis could not fully account for factors such as severity of illness, timing of appropriate treatment and other clinical variables.

Bloodstream infections were particularly deadlyThe situation was even more serious when the infection had entered the bloodstream. Among bloodstream infections, mortality among patients with carbapenem-resistant bacteria ranged from 39.3% for E. coli to 50.8% for A. baumannii. For K. pneumoniae, mortality was 44.8%, while it was 46.4%

be easier. Fluids, however, are especially important. Take frequent sips of water or other suitable drinks to stay hydrated. Dehydration can make blood sugar management more difficult and may add to the strain caused by the infection. That Cold Medicine Isn’t Always as Harmless as It LooksA quick trip to the pharmacy for an over-the-counter cold or flu medicine may seem harmless, but not every product is suitable for someone with diabetes. Some cold and flu medicines contain ingredients that can affect blood sugar or interact with other medicines you may already be taking. Check with your doctor before starting an over-the-counter remedy.

Could an Antiviral Help You Recover Sooner?

People with diabetes are considered to be at higher risk of complications from influenza, so antiviral treatment may be recommended in some cases. Timing matters. Antiviral medicines work best when started early, so if flu symptoms have just appeared, speak to your doctor promptly. They can assess your symptoms and decide whether antiviral treatment is appropriate. Most cases of flu can be managed with appropriate care, but certain warning signs should never be ignored. Seek medical attention promptly if you develop difficulty breathing, chest pain, severe weakness, confusion, persistent vomiting, signs of dehydration, or very high or very low blood sugar. If you are unable to keep fluids down, do not wait for the situation to get worse. People with diabetes can become unwell more quickly during infections, making early medical advice especially important.

Why the Flu Shot Deserves a Place on Your Diabetes Checklist

One common misconception is that flu vaccination is mainly important in colder countries. That is not the case. Influenza also circulates in India, and people with diabetes can be at greater risk of complications. The flu vaccine also does not provide lifelong protection. Influenza viruses continually change, and vaccines are updated periodically to protect against strains expected to circulate. Seasonal flu vaccination should therefore be taken as recommended rather than assuming that one dose is enough for life.

One More Vaccine to Put on Your Radar

There is another vaccine people with diabetes should discuss with their doctor: the pneumococcal vaccine. Diabetes can make people more vulnerable to serious infections such as pneumonia. Unlike the flu vaccine, pneumococcal vaccination is not generally required every year. Depending on the vaccine and your individual health profile, it may be given once and repeated only after several years if recommended. Your doctor can guide you on the schedule that is right for you. The Best Flu Strategy Starts Before You Get SickManaging flu is not only about knowing what to do after you fall sick. Prevention matters too. Along with vaccination, simple habits can lower your risk: wash your hands regularly, avoid close contact with people who are sick, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and stay home when you are unwell. Most importantly, do not wait until you feel seriously ill before asking for help. Having diabetes does not mean you need to fear the flu. It means you need to be a little more prepared.



for P. aeruginosa. In comparison, mortality among patients with susceptible bloodstream infections was 23.8% for E. coli, 36% for K. pneumoniae, 42.6% for A. baumannii and 32.8% for P. aeruginosa. More than 85% of bloodstream infections across the four bacteria were classified as healthcare-associated, highlighting the importance of infection prevention and control in hospitals.

Resistant infections also cost more to treatThe study found that antibiotic treatment was more expensive when the bacteria were resistant to carbapenems. For E. coli, the average antibiotic cost was approximately ₹39,846 per patient for resistant infections, compared with ₹20,034 for susceptible infections. For K. pneumoniae, the corresponding figures were ₹55,688 and ₹47,918, respectively. For A. baumannii, treatment costs were approximately ₹62,150 for resistant infections compared with ₹41,372 for susceptible infections, while treatment for P. aeruginosa cost approximately ₹66,599 for resistant infections compared with ₹48,392 for susceptible infections. Overall, the researchers found that antibiotic treatment costs for carbapenem-resistant infections were about 1.1 to two times higher than for susceptible infections. They point out, however, that these figures include only antibiotic costs and do not include hospital beds, diagnostic tests, doctors’ fees or supportive care. The costs were calculated using national rates for antibiotics available under the government’s JanAushadhi scheme, which are generally lower than market prices. This means the actual financial burden could be higher. Why does resistance make infections harder to treat?

Carbapenems are important antibiotics used to treat serious bacterial infections. When bacteria become resistant to them, doctors have fewer effective treatment options. The study found that newer antibiotics such as ceftazidime-avibactam were used more frequently than polymyxin-based treatment for carbapenem-resistant E. coli and K. pneumoniae. In bloodstream infections caused by these bacteria, ceftazidime-avibactam was associated with lower mortality than polymyxin B. But the researchers caution against interpreting these findings as proof that one drug is universally better than another. The study did not have patient-level information on several factors that can strongly influence outcomes, including how sick the patient was, how quickly appropriate treatment was started, the source of infection and the specific resistance mechanism. A warning about hospital-acquired infectionsThe majority of infections involving the four bacteria were healthcare-associated: 85% of E. coli, 91.6% of K. pneumoniae, 95.1% of A. baumannii and 91.9% of P. aeruginosa infections fell into this category. The researchers also found that factors such as the presence of a luminal medical device and recent surgery were more common among patients with resistant infections.

What’s the biggest challenge in DNA analysis? | Explained



The story so far: At least 270 people, most of them passengers, were killed on June 12 when Air India flight 171, a London-bound Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, crashed less than a minute after taking off from Ahmedabad airport. Following the accident, deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) analysis is being used to identify the remains of those killed. In the past week, DNA samples from victims' family members have been collected and matched, and most remains have already been identified.

How do DNA samples help?

DNA fingerprinting identifies individuals by analysing unique regions of their DNA. While human DNA is 99.9% identical, the remaining 0.1% includes unique sequences called short tandem repeats (STRs), which are crucial for forensic investigations. DNA profiling focuses on specific regions called genetic markers, with STRs being the preferred markers due to their variability among individuals, except monozygotic twins (identical twins). "Currently, STRs are the most widely used genetic markers for human identity determination and paternity testing. Their use makes it possible to clarify most legal and forensic cases with a generally very high degree of certainty. Identification of human remains is generally performed by comparing the genetic profile of the remains with that of first-degree relatives, usually the parents," explained Dr. Rakesh Mishra, director, Tata Institute for Genetics and Society.

DNA is the molecule that carries the genetic instructions of all living organisms. It's essentially the blueprint that determines an organism's characteristics and how it functions and is passed from parents to offspring. DNA profiling can be used in the identification of skeletonised or highly decomposed human remains. Identification is usually carried out by comparing the genetic profile from the remains with the genotypes of reference samples from relatives, most commonly the parents of the victim, according to an article titled, 'Identification of the Remains of an Adult Using DNA from Their Deciduous Teeth as a Reference Sample'.

What is the process followed to collect, store and match samples during a disaster?

In the case of accident victims, DNA samples may be degraded and contaminated which is the biggest challenge that forensic experts face even though DNA samples can be preserved for a long time. Samples are ideally frozen at minus 20°C, or, in the case of soft tissues (skin, muscles,

etc.), they may be stored in 95% ethanol. "In an accident of this magnitude samples of tissue, nails, bone, body fluid and blood etc. can be used to identify and establish family relation. Technology available today is powerful and sensitive which aids in easy identification," said Dr. Mishra. He added that only trained forensic experts are made to collect samples to ensure that there is no contamination. These samples are then stored in temperature regulated, sterile conditions and matched swiftly. "In this case, establishing family pattern is enough. The STR process is used in this case to establish family relationship. Through this family pattern is established and based on this identity is ascertained," he said.

Experts noted that after sample collection, using Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) the extracted DNA is amplified with specific primers targeting the STR regions of interest. The amplified DNA fragments are separated based on size using gel electrophoresis. The size and number of repeats in each band are analysed to generate the distinctive DNA profile with advanced computerised systems. The generated profile is then compared to other DNA profiles in a database to find any matches.

What are the difficulties in the process?

An article titled, 'Challenges and solutions in DNA fingerprinting: Sample quality, data analysis, and interpretation', noted that DNA fingerprinting, which is a pivotal tool in forensic science, paternity testing, and genetic research, faces significant challenges in sample quality, data analysis, and interpretation. It states that the sample quality is the bedrock of DNA fingerprinting. "The integrity of the DNA sample dictates the accuracy of the result. Challenges arise from various sources, such as environmental degradation, contamination, and the complexity of handling mixed or limited DNA samples. These issues can lead to ambiguous or erroneous results, posing significant obstacles in forensic investigations," it states. It adds that continued training and education of those in the field is vital.

Contamination, interpretation challenges, including ethical concerns, privacy issues, and the potential for misinterpretation of results is acknowledged in this paper. It recommends the use of advanced techniques for DNA collection and recovery, developments in software for more precise data analysis, and the implementation of standardised protocols for interpretation. It also highlights the role of automation in enhancing accuracy and the importance of professional training.

When has DNA fingerprinting been crucial?

Several mass fatality events, including natural disasters and terrorist attacks, have forced authorities to use DNA analysis to establish identity. Most recent include the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2009 Victorian Bushfires (Australia) where severely burned or fragmented bodies had to be identified, and the 2014 MH17 crash (Ukraine) which resulted in the loss of all 298 people on board. DNA fingerprinting was also used to identify victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Beside this, it is also a standard tool for identifying individuals in various criminal cases.

No increase in radiation off sites that US hit: IAEA



Tel Aviv: The International Atomic Energy Agency said on Sunday that there has been “no increase in off-site radiation levels” after US airstrikes on Iranian nuclear sites. The UN nuclear watchdog sent the message via the social platform X on Sunday. “The IAEA can confirm that no increase in off-site radiation levels has been reported as of this time,” it said. The “IAEA will provide further assessments on situation in Iran as more information becomes available.”

The United States struck three sites in Iran early on Sunday, inserting itself into Israel's war aimed at destroying the country's nuclear program in a risky gambit to weaken a longtime foe despite fears of a wider regional conflict. Addressing the nation from the White House, President Donald Trump asserted that Iran's key nuclear were “completely and fully obliterated.” There was no independent damage assessment. It was not clear whether the US would continue attacking Iran alongside its ally Israel, which has been engaged in a nine-day war with Iran. Trump acted without congressional authorization, and he warned that there would be additional strikes if Tehran retaliated against US forces. “There will either be peace or there will be tragedy for Iran,” he said. Iran's top diplomat, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, warned in a post on X that the US attacks “will have everlasting consequences” and that Tehran “reserves all options” to retaliate.

Iran's ambassador to the United Nations called for an emergency Security Council meeting to discuss what he described as the US's “heinous attacks and illegal use of force” against Iran. Ambassador Amir Saeid Iravani said that the UN's most powerful body must “take all necessary measures” to hold the US accountable under international law and the UN charter. Early Sunday morning, Israel alerted the public of an Iranian missile launch and urged people to take shelter. Sirens sounded in Jerusalem a short while later and a series of booms were heard. Iranian has been firing missile barrages at Israel since the war began but they have decreased in size as Israel targets Tehran's missile launchers.

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran confirmed that attacks took place on its Fordo, Isfahan and Natanz sites, but it insisted that its work will not be stopped. Iran said there were no signs of radioactive contamination at the three locations and no danger to nearby residents. Iran has maintained that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only, and US intelligence agencies have assessed that Tehran is not actively pursuing a bomb. However, Trump and Israeli leaders have claimed that Iran could quickly assemble a nuclear weapon, making it an imminent threat.

The decision to directly involve the US in the war

Burning at both ends: how smoking hits health, raises term insurance premium

American actress and singer Liza Minnelli once quipped, “Smoking is one of the leading causes of statistics.” As witty as it sounds, the grim truth is hard to ignore, tobacco use remains one of the top causes of preventable death globally. According to the World Health Organization, it is responsible for more than eight million deaths worldwide each year, including approximately 1.35 million deaths annually in India. The health consequences of smoking are well documented. From lung cancer and cardiovascular disease to stroke and chronic respiratory issues, tobacco use leads to severe, often irreversible, damage. But what's less discussed is the financial burden it can bring, particularly when it comes to term life insurance. Why smokers pay more

When you apply for a term insurance plan, one of the first things insurers assess is your smoking status. And the difference in premium can be staggering. For instance, a 35-year-old male living in Delhi could pay as much as 80–100% more for the same term plan if he is a smoker compared with a non-smoker. For instance, a 35-year-old non-smoker will pay a monthly premium of ₹1,453 for a ₹1 crore term policy, while a smoker will pay about ₹2,905. That's because smoking significantly reduces life expectancy, increasing the risk for insurers. Life-threatening issues Smokers are more prone to a host of life-threatening conditions, including various cancers, heart disease, and chronic respiratory ailments. This elevated risk translates into higher premiums, as insurers factor in the likelihood of early claims. Smoking habits outweigh job risk in premium assessment. While your profession also plays a role in determining your insurance premium, smoking is often a more critical factor. For example, a smoker working a low-risk job like a software engineer may still end up paying a higher premium than a non-smoker in a high-risk occupation, such as a construction worker or merchant navy officer. Insurers typically categorise applicants into two groups, smokers and non-smokers, regardless of other lifestyle or occupational risks.

There's a common misconception that smokers are ineligible for term insurance. That's simply not true. Smokers are eligible and, in fact, have even more reason to secure financial protection for their families. Given the elevated health risks, buying term insurance ensures that your loved ones are financially safeguarded in your absence. Disclose smoking habits upfront. It's crucial to be transparent about your smoking habits while purchasing a term plan. Non-disclosure or misrepresentation can lead to serious consequences. If an insurer discovers withheld information, often through mandatory medical exams or tests that detect nicotine, the same may lead to claim rejection, cancellation of the policy, or even allegations of insurance fraud. Frequent evaluation

Insurers don't just ask whether you smoke, they also evaluate how frequently and in what form you consume tobacco, whether it's cigarettes, cigars, or chewing tobacco. Definitions of “smoker” also vary across insurance providers. Some classify anyone who has smoked within the last 12 months as a smoker, while others may extend that window to three years. Also, consider quitting for better rates and better health. If you're considering buying term insurance, quitting smoking can help reduce your premium costs significantly. Some insurers even offer revised premiums if you quit smoking after purchasing the policy, sub-

comes after more than a week of strikes by Israel on Iran that aimed to systematically eradicate the country's air defenses and offensive missile capabilities, while damaging its nuclear enrichment facilities. But US and Israeli officials have said American stealth bombers and the 30,000-pound (13,500-kilogram) bunker-buster bomb they alone can carry offered the best chance of destroying heavily fortified sites connected to the Iranian nuclear program buried deep underground.

“We have completed our very successful attack on the three Nuclear sites in Iran, including Fordow, Natanz, and Esfahan,” Trump said in a post on social media. “All planes are now outside of Iran air space. A full payload of BOMBS was dropped on the primary site, Fordow. All planes are safely on their way home.” Trump added in a later post: “

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised Trump's decision to attack in a video message directed at the American president. “Your bold decision to target Iran's nuclear facilities, with the awesome and righteous might of the United States, will change history,” he said. Netanyahu said the US “has done what no other country on earth could do.” Israel announced on Sunday that it would close the country's airspace to both inbound and outbound flights in the wake of the US attacks. The war has disrupted air travel throughout the Middle East. The White House and Pentagon did not immediately elaborate on the operation. US military leaders are scheduled to provide a briefing at 8 am Eastern. The attack used bunker-buster bombs on Iran's Fordo nuclear fuel enrichment plant that is built deep into a mountain, a US official said. The weapons are designed to penetrate the ground before exploding.

In addition, US submarines launched about 30 Tomahawk missiles, according to another US official who also spoke on condition of anonymity. The strikes are a perilous decision, as Iran has pledged to retaliate if the US joined the Israeli assault, and for Trump personally. He won the White House on the promise of keeping America out of costly foreign conflicts and scoffed at the value of American interventionism. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was “gravely alarmed” by the “dangerous escalation” of American strikes. “There is a growing risk that this conflict could rapidly get out of control — with catastrophic consequences for civilians, the region, and the world,” he said in a statement. Trump told reporters Friday that he was not interested in sending ground forces into Iran, saying it's “the last thing you want to do.” He had previously indicated that he would make a final choice over the course of two weeks.

The military showdown with Iran comes seven years after Trump withdrew the US from the Obama-administration brokered agreement in 2018, calling it the “worst deal ever.” The 2015 deal, signed by Iran, US and other world powers, created a long-term, comprehensive nuclear agreement that limited Tehran's enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Trump decried the Obama-era deal for giving Iran too much in return for too little, because the agreement did not cover Iran's non-nuclear malign behaviour. Trump has bristled at criticism from some of his MAGA faithful who have suggested that further US involvement would be a betrayal to supporters who were drawn to his promise to end US involvement in expensive and endless wars.

Organ transplants hit by fund constraints and infrastructural deficiencies: report

A report released by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has revealed that the organ transplantation programme in the country has been crippled by multiple issues, especially insufficient funding, shortage of specialised doctors, and procedural delays. The report dated June 19, 2025, which followed a high-level meeting of senior health officials to review the status of organ transplantation activities in government hospitals and identify the key challenges, pointed to infrastructural deficiencies, especially shortage of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds and lack of financial support to patients who required lifelong medication that was expensive.

Explaining the bottlenecks and other issues faced by State-owned institutions, the report said only 13,476 kidney transplants were performed, both in government and private hospitals, against the recommended 1 lakh cases last year. The capacity of government hospitals was not adequate to meet the target of organ transplants and creation of new centres were “definitely” required. The report elaborated on the lack of facilities in government healthcare institutions, saying a significant number of government hospitals had reported the absence of dedicated infrastructure for organ retrieval and transplantation, including specialised transplant operation theatres (OTs) and dedicated Transplant Intensive Care Units (TICUs). Existing OTs and ICUs were frequently overburdened with general patient loads. A critical and frequently cited issue was the shortage of ICU beds, which were essential for maintaining potential brainstem dead (BSD) donors and for post-operative care of recipients. In many trauma centres, beds were unavailable for potential donors due to high patient volume.

Many institutions, including several All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), lacked in-house Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA) cross-matching laboratory facilities. The dependency on external laboratories was causing significant delays and logistical challenges in the transplantation process. Several government hospitals had stated that their current facilities required substantial logistical and infrastructural upgrades to meet the standards necessary for performing complex transplant procedures. The report compiled by the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation, which convened the meeting, said the shortage of specialised faculty coupled with frequent transfer of trained personnel, was disrupting the continuity and establishment of transplant programmes. A major bottleneck was the scarcity of dedicated and trained transplant surgeons, nephrologists, urologists, anaesthetists, neurosurgeons/ neurologists and intensivists within the government hospitals. Experts representing various government institutions in different States flagged issues relating to delays in obtaining formal approval and constitution of the BSD Committees, which was essential to initiate deceased organ donation programme. The handling of medico-legal cases, particularly involving trauma patients who represented the largest pool of potential donors, was often cumbersome and lacked a streamlined process, thereby discouraging organ donation. On the paucity of funds, the report said some hospitals had reported inadequate funds to initiate or restart specialised transplant programs, such as lung transplantation, which necessitated expensive equipment and preservatives. A significant concern was the high cost of immunosuppressant drugs, which patients must take for life. The financial support available under current schemes was often limited to the first year, imposing a substantial burden on patients thereafter. It was highlighted that there were no formal incentives for transplant and organ donation teams (surgeons, nurses, coordinators etc) on a case-by-case basis. Such incentives could motivate them to increase the number of transplants. The non-inclusion of liver and heart



transplantation and the associated lifelong follow-up costs in major Central health schemes like Ayushman Bharat were identified as significant barriers for underprivileged patients. The report “strongly recommended that liver and heart transplantation, including the lifelong cost of immunosuppressants for post-transplant recipients, be comprehensively included under the central Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana [AB-PMJAY] scheme”.

India slams OIC for ‘incorrect’ remarks that reflect ‘Pakistan’s influence’

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation called for strict adherence to bilateral pacts between India and Pakistan, including the Indus Waters Treaty, and stressed the need for a broad-based dialogue for the peaceful settlement of all outstanding disputes. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation called for strict adherence to bilateral pacts between India and Pakistan, including the Indus Waters Treaty, and stressed the need for a broad-based dialogue for peaceful settlement of all outstanding disputes. “India categorically rejects the unwarranted and factually incorrect references at the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers’ meeting,” the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement. “These statements, driven by Pakistan, which has turned terrorism into statecraft, reflect the continued misuse of the OIC platform for narrow political ends,” it said. The MEA said the OIC's repeated “failure” to acknowledge the real and documented threat of terrorism emanating from Pakistan, most recently evidenced in the heinous Pahalgam attack, reflects a “wilful disregard” for facts. It said, “The OIC has no locus standi to comment on India's internal affairs, including Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral and sovereign part of India — a fact enshrined in the Indian Constitution and irreversibly settled.” “The OIC should reflect deeply on the perils of allowing Pakistan's propaganda to hijack and politicise its agenda. Any other course can only undermine the OIC's credibility and relevance,” the MEA said.



ject to evidence and re-evaluation over time. It's an opportune moment to reflect on how quitting smoking can improve not just your health, but also your financial well-being. A single decision, like giving up tobacco, can ripple into long-term benefits for both you and your family.

Kittu Park: for a stroll by the pond at Chennai's West Mambalam

One might think a waterbody at Mambalam in Chennai would be a rare sight, especially considering the area's perennial water shortage issues. Yet, located in this busy neighbourhood is Kittu Park, a greenspace built around a pond. The park, frequented by Mambalam residents, is located on Elliamman Koil Street.

Kittu Park was once the temple tank of Kothandaram Temple nearby. In the last few years, it has been renovated into a public park. The area around the park was historically a site for poojas associated with the Ayodhya Mandapam and Elliamman temple bhajans. Today, however, it has a play area for children at the entrance, beyond which there is a pond with ducks, surrounded by a walkway. Interestingly, while jogging is prohibited in the park (violators may be handed over to the police, according to the signage), feeding the ducks is allowed. R. Ramesh, a regular walker, shares, “In Mambalam, there isn't much space to walk around since the area is always crowded. Parks like this are one of the few options available for a peaceful walk.” He also notes that many visitors feed the ducks various snacks, particularly bread and biscuits, and believes this practice should be better regulated.

Parents with young children appreciate the park's play equipment, but some say it may need maintenance in the coming months to keep it in good condition. They say that proper upkeep is important for the park's continued enjoyment. While Kittu Park may not be as expansive as other greenspaces around West Mambalam and T. Nagar, it still serves its purpose well with its wide, circular walkway and benches for rest. One downside, however, is parking. The area around Elliamman Koil Street tends to be congested, as walkers often park their bikes on the street. “After 6.30 p.m. it is tough to get a spot to park two-wheelers, so we leave them in the neighbouring bylanes.

New climate data set for India unveiled by Azim Premji University



The average annual maximum temperature will experience an increase of 1.5 degree Celsius by 2057 under 'the middle of the road' emission scenario while the more extreme 'fossil-fueled development' emission scenario predicts this temperature rise will occur a decade earlier, by 2047. This is one of the many key findings of the Azim Premji University's new climate data set for India, which was unveiled on November 17.

According to the Climate Change Projections for India (2021-40) report, the projections examine two IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) scenarios: SSP2-4.5 (moderate emissions and adaptation) and SSP5-8.5 (high emissions with heavy fossil fuel reliance). In other words, the 'middle of the road' emission scenario assumes that society will take moderate steps to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change, which will lead to moderate effects in the future. The 'fossil-fueled development' emission scenario presumes that society will continue to rely heavily on fossil fuels for energy, leading to a future with very high emissions and severe impacts.

Another finding is that India's average summer maximum temperature will have a 1.5-degree Celsius increase by 2043, according to the 'middle of the road' emission sce-

nario and by 2041 for the 'fossil-fueled development' emission scenario. Under the low emission scenario, 196 districts in India will experience a summer maximum temperature increase of at least one degree, with 70 districts projected to experience a similar annual maximum temperature change. "The highest change is expected in Leh at 1.6 degree Celsius for both summer and annual maximum temperatures. The winter minimum temperature is projected to change by 1.5 degree Celsius or more for 139 districts, while 611 districts will see a 1 degree Celsius or more temperature change," the report states. Similarly, under the high emission scenario, 249 districts will experience an annual maximum temperature change of one degree Celsius or more, and 16 districts, mostly in the Himalayan States, are projected to experience an annual maximum temp change by 1.5 degree Celsius or more with the highest being at Leh at 1.8 degree Celsius. "517 districts will experience a summer maximum temperature change of one degree Celsius or more, and 17 districts will experience a summer maximum temperature change of 1.5 degree Celsius or more, with the highest being at Leh at 1.7 degree Celsius.

The winter minimum temperature is projected to change by 1.5 degree Celsius or more in 162 districts with the highest being 2.2 degree Celsius in Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh," the report added. With regard to change in precipitation patterns (2021-2040), the report said that the western part of India will experience a significant increase in precipitation, compared to most of the eastern and north-eastern parts of the country. "Change in precipitation patterns (2021-40), the arid States such as Gujarat and Rajasthan exhibit a higher annual precipitation ranging from 20% to 40% under SSP2-4.5, and a 20% to 50 % change under SSP5-8.5. Under both the scenarios, 24 to 25 districts spread across the coastal States and eastern Himalayas will experience more than 31 degree Celsius summer wet bulb temperature, posing serious threats to human health," the report said.

Why countries struggle to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies | Explained

Fossil fuels are the leading driver of climate change, yet they are still heavily subsidised by governments around the world. Although many countries have explicitly promised to reduce fossil fuel subsidies to combat climate change, this has proven difficult to accomplish. As a result, fossil fuels remain relatively inexpensive, and their use and greenhouse gas emissions continue to grow. I work in environmental and energy law and have studied the fossil fuel sector for years. Here's how fossil fuel subsidies work and why they're so stubborn.

What is a subsidy?

A subsidy is a financial benefit given by a government to an entity or industry. Some subsidies are relatively obvious, such as publicly funded crop insurance or research grants to help pharmaceutical companies develop new drugs. Others are less visible. A tariff on an imported product, for example, can subsidise domestic manufacturers of that product. More controversially, some would argue that when a government fails to make an industry pay for damage it causes, such as air or water pollution, that also amounts to a subsidy. Subsidies, especially in this broader sense, are widespread throughout the global economy. Many industries receive benefits through public policies that are denied to other industries in the same jurisdiction, such as tax breaks, relaxed regulations or trade supports. Governments employ subsidies for political and practical reasons. Politically, subsidies are useful for striking bargains or shoring up political support. In democracies, they can mollify constituencies otherwise unwilling to agree to a policy change. The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, for example, squeaked through Congress by subsidizing both renewable energy and oil and gas production. Practically, subsidies can boost a promising young industry such as electric vehicles, attract business to a community or help a mature sector survive an economic downturn, as the auto industry bailout did in 2008. Of course, policies can outlive their original purpose; some of today's petroleum subsidies can be traced to the Great Depression.

How are fossil fuels subsidised?

Fossil fuel subsidies take many forms around the world. For example: In Saudi Arabia, fuel prices are set by the government rather than the market; price ceilings subsidise the price citizens pay for gasoline. The cost to state-owned oil producers there is offset by oil exports, which dwarf domestic consumption. Indonesia also caps energy prices, then compensates state-owned energy companies for the losses they bear. In the United States, oil companies can take a tax deduction for a large portion of their drilling costs. Other subsidies are less direct, such as when governments under-price permits to mine or drill for fossil fuels or fail to collect all the taxes owed by fossil fuel producers. Estimates of the total value of global fossil fuel subsidies vary considerably depending on whether analysts use a broad or narrow definition. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD, calculated the annual total to be about US\$1.5 trillion in 2022. The International Monetary Fund reported a number over four times higher, about \$7 trillion.

Why do estimates of fossil fuel subsidies vary dramatically?

Analysts disagree about whether subsidy tabulations should include environmental damage from the extraction and use of fossil fuels that is not incorporated into the fuel's price. The IMF treats the costs of global warming, local air pollution and even traffic congestion and road damage as implicit subsidies because fossil fuel companies don't pay to remedy these problems. The OECD omits these implicit benefits. But whichever definition is applied, the combined



effect of national policies on fossil fuel prices paid by consumers is dramatic. Oil, for example, is traded on a global market, but the price per gallon of petrol varies enormously around the world, from about 10 cents in Iran, Libya and Venezuela – where it is heavily subsidised – to over \$7 in Hong Kong, the Netherlands and much of Scandinavia, where fuel taxes counteract subsidies.

What is the world doing about fossil fuel subsidies?

Global leaders have acknowledged that subsidies for fossil fuels undermine efforts to address climate change because they make fossil fuels cheaper than they would be otherwise. In 2009, the heads of the G20, which includes many of the world's largest economies, issued a statement resolving to "rationalise and phase out over the medium term inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption." Later that same year, the governments of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, or APEC, made an identical pledge. In 2010, 10 other countries, including the Netherlands and New Zealand, formed the Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform group to "build political consensus on the importance of fossil fuel subsidy reform." Yet these commitments have scarcely moved the needle. A major study of 157 countries between 2003 and 2015 found that governments "collectively made little or no progress" toward reducing subsidies. In fact, the OECD found that total global subsidies nearly doubled in both 2021 and 2022.

So why are fossil fuel subsidies hard to eliminate?

There are various reasons fossil fuel subsidies are hard to eliminate. Many subsidies directly affect the costs that fossil fuel producers face, so reducing subsidies tends to increase prices for consumers. Because fossil fuels touch nearly every economic sector, rising fuel costs elevate prices for countless goods and services. Subsidy reform tends to be broadly felt and pervasively inflationary. And unless carefully designed, subsidy reductions can be regressive, forcing low-income residents to spend a larger percentage of their income on energy. So, even in countries where there is widespread support for robust climate policies, reducing subsidies can be deeply unpopular and may even cause public unrest. The 2021-22 spike in fossil fuel subsidies is illustrative. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, energy prices surged throughout Europe. Governments were quick to provide aid for their citizens, resulting in their largest fossil fuel subsidies ever. Forced to choose between climate goals and affordable energy, Europe overwhelmingly chose the latter. Of course, economists note that increasing the price of fossil fuels can lower demand, reducing emissions that are driving climate change and harming the environment and human health. Seen in that light, price spikes present an opportunity for reform. As the IMF noted, when prices recede after a surge, it "provide[s] an opportune time to lock in pricing of carbon and local air pollution emissions without necessarily raising energy prices above recently experienced levels."

sideration of non-essential travel and Level 4 recommends avoiding all travel. The current advisory reflects growing concerns over the spread of vector-borne diseases in the region. If you are pregnant, reconsider travel to the state of Telangana, India, particularly if you are close to delivering your baby. Mothers infected around the time of delivery can pass the virus to their baby before or during delivery. Newborns infected in this way or by a mosquito bite are at risk for severe illness, including poor long-term outcomes," the travel notice said. Status unclear Telangana's Health Department reported 178 chikungunya cases as of August 31, surpassing figures from previous years. Joint swelling, and rash. While most individuals recover within a week, severe joint pain can persist for months or even years in some cases.

With 45 years to go, how sustainable is India's road to net-zero? | Explained



Every year, climate action draws significant attention in the months leading up to the United Nations' annual meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COPs). But the outcome of the 2024 U.S. presidential election will likely have a greater impact on the planet's climate future than COP29 itself, illustrating an important challenge in combating climate change: operationalising global cooperation towards a common cause even when national interests don't align with it. For example, an economically developed country with sufficient resources per capita may not find it necessary to change course — whereas a populous and developing country like India will. A few COPs ago, India committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2070. Since then, it has implemented several policies while others are in the works to support this transition. It is widely acknowledged that this journey will not be without challenges, especially financial ones. However, other resource constraints such as land or water availability also matter, limiting the choices available for a sustainable long-term pathway for India.

Why net-zero at all? With each passing day, climate change is becoming more evident. The scientific consensus is that to avoid devastating and irreversible consequences, the world must keep the global average annual surface temperature rise to within 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels. The current increase is at least 1.1 °C over that in 1880. The Sixth Assessment Report of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimated that from 2020, the remaining (cumulative) global carbon budget for a 50-67% chance of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 °C is 400-500 billion tonnes (Gt) of CO2. Currently, annual global emissions are around 40 GtCO2. This means net global emissions must drop drastically to stay within the carbon budget. Several countries have announced net-zero targets, but we also really need a sharp decline in total emissions.

Is net-zero equitable?

The developed world, having caused the problem of climate change in the first place, is expected to lead this transition and reach net-zero emissions well before 2050, allowing more time for developing countries to balance their development goals with climate action. These expectations aren't being met, however. Developed countries are also expected to help finance climate action, but this hasn't materialised at the required scale either. Developing countries, especially those that are small islands, are bearing more than their fair share of the brunt of climate change. So overall, neither climate change nor climate action is currently equitable. COP29 is expected to build consensus on the level of financing required. India's per-capita emissions are among the lowest in the world. However, according to the World Inequality Database, the per-capita emissions of the richest 10% are 20-times greater than that of the poorest 10% and in absolute terms almost half of the country's total. Climate change more severely affects the economically weaker sections. India's size and diversity mean it's a country of countries, and some of them are more polluting than

India's race to eliminate dog-mediated rabies by 2030: experts stress the need for a 'One Health' approach

India has made significant strides in reducing human rabies deaths over the past two decades. However, achieving the goal of eliminating dog-mediated rabies by 2030 will require accelerated efforts and a focused, 'One Health' approach, experts say. The One Health strategy highlights integrating human and animal health measures to address rabies at its roots. Key steps identified include strengthening both human and animal surveillance systems, ensuring timely and complete administration of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for those exposed to the virus, and scaling up dog vaccination efforts across the country. While rabies cases have declined, experts warn that without these integrated actions, India may struggle to meet the 2030 target.

A recent study published in The Lancet highlights the public health challenge of rabies in India. Using a nationwide, community-based cross-sectional survey, researchers gathered data from 3.37 lakh individuals residing in 78,807 households across 60 districts in 15 states. The survey results estimated that India experiences approximately 9.1 million animal bites annually, with 76.8% attributed to dogs. The annual dog-bite incidence was calculated at 5.6 per 1,000 people. Significant gaps in post-bite care were noted, as 20.5% of dog-bite victims received no anti-rabies vaccination (ARV), and among those who did receive ARV, nearly half of the 1.253 people who started the vaccination course did not complete it. This lapse in vaccination adherence poses severe health risks, as the study estimates around 5,726 human rabies deaths each year, despite an overall reduction in deaths over recent decades. "To make rabies a disease of the past in India, it is essential to prioritise prevention, awareness, and vaccination efforts," says Ranga Reddy Burri, president of the Infection Control Academy of India. "Although human rabies deaths have declined, achieving the goal of eliminating dog-mediated cases by 2030 requires accelerated action. A robust One Health approach, combining human-animal surveillance, timely post-exposure prophylaxis, and extensive dog vaccination is vital. With the increase in pet ownership, responsible pet care and vaccination are also critical to this mission," Dr. Burri adds.

In answer to a question in the Lok Sabha on July 30, 2024 on the stray dog menace in the country, Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Rajiv Ranjan Singh said that in 2023, India reported a total of 30.43 lakh dog bite cases, with 286 fatalities linked to these incidents. This data was gathered under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. "According to the National Centre for Disease Control, 46,54,398 anti-rabies vaccinations were administered to individuals who sustained dog bites throughout the year," the Minister said. The Minister also said that the government had introduced a rabies helpline (15400) in five States, with plans to expand it nationally. Additionally, the Rabies-Free Cities Initiative was launched to create rabies-free zones in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities, with a structured rabies prevention and action plan. Shailaja Tetali, dean of research at the Indian Institute of Public Health (IIPH) Hyderabad, however noted that while the National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) has successfully reduced ra-

others vis-à-vis the climate. Importantly, India lacks the carrying capacity to support the developed world's lifestyle standards for its entire population. If it should, India will run into significant food shortage due to groundwater depletion by the 2040s, extreme heat stress in urban areas due to the ever-increasing vehicular pollution and AC use, irreversible biodiversity loss due to non-ideal land-use changes encroaching on habitats, etc. India's lifestyle aspirations could easily become unsustainable in the long run, jeopardising our access to basic needs. A new consumption corridor

In a scenario where consumption rises unchecked and India electrifies all end-use applications, the power demand could increase nine- to tenfold by 2070. Meeting it entirely via renewable energy will require more than 5,500 GW of solar and 1,500 GW of wind, up from the current 70 GW and 47 GW, respectively. This target is achievable if India's only priority is to expand renewable energy generation capacity. But if India is to maintain food and nutritional security, increase forest cover, and preserve biodiversity as well, these energy targets will become very challenging. By modelling land-use change dynamics over time, the authors have found going beyond 3,500 GW solar and 900 GW wind will demand considerable land trade-offs. In sum, India has a tough balancing act to pull off: availing good quality of life to a large share of its population (which has significant material and energy implications) while working towards its climate adaptation and mitigation goals. To this end, it is important to recognise the pitfalls of economic models. For example, the environmental Kuznets curve hypothesises that beyond a threshold, economic growth can be decoupled from carbon emissions. In reality, even the richest countries haven't achieved this decoupling (other than by shifting their emissions to poorer countries). This is why it is in our best interest to not aspire to achieve the lifestyle standards of the west. Instead, we need to envisage a long-term strategy incorporating 'sufficiency consumption corridors', with a floor well suited to meeting our developmental goals and a ceiling of excess that will help avoid unsustainable growth. Equally, if not more, important are demand-side measures to help maintain this corridor of consumption that will keep us on a sustainable pathway. Our power consumption here could increase six- or sevenfold by 2070. Demand and supply measures Some of these demand-side measures include the use of better construction materials and passive design elements to provide thermal comfort that doesn't require air-conditioning, energy-efficient appliances, public and/or non-motorised transport within urban areas and railways for intercity travel, local products to reduce the demand for long-haul freight, mindful dietary choices, and alternative fuels in industries in addition to some electrification. On the supply side as well, India needs to further decentralise energy production (including by the use of rooftop solar cells and of solar pumps for agriculture). Finally, it should continue to expand its nuclear power generation capacity to diversify its energy mix and to complement a grid becoming more dependent on intermittent energy sources. Nuclear power could also offer a precious low-carbon baseload energy and help the government effectively phase out the national economy's dependence on fossil fuels. As the world tumbles towards its net-zero and other climate-related targets, the leeway for governments to miss some of them or postpone their achievement also shrinks. Of course some things are out of our control — for example who becomes the US President — but the things that we can meet, before we cannot. Ramya Natarajan and Kaveri Ashok work on climate change mitigation at the Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP), a research-based think tank.

bies cases, addressing dog bites requires a comprehensive One Health approach. "To tackle dog bites effectively, we need coordinated efforts across surveillance, resources, training, collaboration, and public awareness," she explains. She highlighted the need for enhanced surveillance of dog bites across both public and private facilities, especially in remote areas. "Every case should be recorded, as data is critical to tackle the issue in underserved regions," she said. Dr. Tetali also stressed on stockpiling anti-rabies vaccines (ARV) to avoid shortages, and filling gaps in veterinary resources to support humane dog population control. Specialised training for para-veterinary staff is essential, as many are often shifted into animal care without preparation. Collaboration among animal welfare boards, municipalities, NGOs, and resident associations is also necessary for effective dog population management. Dr. Tetali added that public awareness is also vital. "People need to respect animals' space and understand the importance of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) after contact with potentially rabies-carrying animal's," she advised, noting that these measures can reduce rabies and dog bite incidents significantly. Awareness remains low According to information in India's National Action Plan for Dog-Mediated Rabies Elimination (NAPRE) booklet, in India, rabies is transmitted commonly by dogs and cats (~97%), followed by wild animals (2%) such as mongoose, foxes, jackals, and wild dogs, and occasionally by horses, donkeys, monkeys, cows, goats, sheep, and pigs. Rodents, rats and bandicoots, squirrels, rabbits, birds, and bats are generally not known to transmit rabies. The presence of unvaccinated free-roaming dogs (FRD) or street dogs, amidst human settlements is a major contributor to the high incidence of rabies in India, which is endemic. Apart from humans, rabies also causes significant mortality among livestock animals such as bovine, cattle and small animals. Kiran Madhala, professor of critical care medicine at Gandhi Medical College, Secunderabad, highlighted key findings from the multicentric rabies survey conducted by World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the Association for Prevention and Control of Rabies in India (APCRI) in 2017 and 2018. "According to the study, almost 40% of participants had never even heard of rabies, which is alarming for a country aiming to control this disease," Dr. Kiran said. He explained that even among those who knew of rabies, one in four was unaware of its fatal nature. "While nearly everyone recognised bites as a means of transmission, only about half considered scratches, and only a third saw saliva contact as potential sources of infection." Dr. Kiran said the perceived risk varies by animal type. "Three-quarters of respondents viewed dogs as a rabies source, yet only about 20% associated the risk with cats or monkeys." Surprisingly, wild animals like mongooses or bats were rarely considered sources, with only 5-10% mentioning them, whereas some mistakenly believed rodents, birds, and even snakes were rabies risks, he added. The Supreme Court of India has issued several rulings and guidelines related to dog bites, addressing public safety, the responsibilities of dog owners, and animal welfare. In the All Kerala Stray Dogs Eradication Group v. State of Kerala & Ors.

HDFC Bank recommends two candidates for MD & CEO, proposes two ED appointments



HDFC Bank has submitted the names of two candidates to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for appointment as its next Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO), setting in motion the succession process at the country's largest private sector lender. The recommendations, in order of preference, come ahead of the end of Sashidhar Jagdishan's current term on October 26, 2026.

According to the bank's regulatory filing, it has sought RBI approval for the appointment of its next MD & CEO for a three-year period. Along with the names of the two candidates, HDFC Bank has also submitted the proposed remuneration for the candidates. The appointment will be subject to approval from the central bank. The bank has sought the reappointment of V Srinivasa Rangan as a whole-time director, designated as Executive Director, along with the remuneration payable to him. His proposed tenure will run from November 23, 2026, to November 22, 2027. HDFC Bank has also proposed the appointment of Jimmy Tata as a whole-time director, designated as Executive Director, for three years from the date of RBI approval, or such other date or period as may be specified by the regulator. In addition, the bank has proposed creating one additional whole-time director position. This will increase the number of whole-time directors on the board to four, apart from the MD & CEO. HDFC Bank said the additional position is intended to

ensure sharper synergy and oversight, including over its subsidiaries, while creating a larger leadership pipeline for succession planning. The position will be filled in consultation with the incoming MD & CEO after the successor takes charge.

The proposals will require RBI approval, while necessary shareholder approvals will be sought in due course. The choice of the next MD & CEO will be closely watched as HDFC Bank enters a new phase following Jagdishan's departure, with the incoming leadership expected to steer the post-merger institution while strengthening governance, oversight and succession planning. Jagdishan's exit comes at a time when HDFC Bank has faced scrutiny over governance and internal practices. In March, the bank's then part-time chairman Atanu Chakraborty resigned, citing certain "happenings and practices" that he said were not in line with his personal values and ethics. The bank subsequently appointed external law firms to examine the concerns raised in his resignation. The firms later said Chakraborty's allegations were not substantiated, while the RBI said its periodic assessment had found no material concerns regarding the bank's conduct or governance. The Indian Express subsequently reported that HDFC Bank's Audit Committee had ordered an internal vigilance investigation into payments totalling Rs 45 crore made to the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation during 2023-24 and 2024-25. The payments were allegedly routed through the bank's marketing department and presented as contributions to a road-safety campaign rather than as differential interest on deposits. HDFC Bank had denied the allegations. In July, the bank's board concluded its internal disciplinary process relating to the MSRDC arrangement. It issued warning letters and imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 1 lakh each on Jagdishan, CFO Srinivasan Vaidyanathan and Group Head of Retail Assets Arvind Vohra. The board characterised the conduct as "business overreach" and said there was no mala fide action, personal enrichment or improper motive.

Need 'orderly & inclusive' energy transition, fossil fuels will continue playing key role: BRICS declaration

The declaration came as leaders of the 11 BRICS countries gathered in India for the 18th BRICS summit, with the grouping seeking to strengthen cooperation and boost growth prospects across the Global South. The Delhi summit's emphasis on resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability moves the focus towards supply chains, health, food security, climate adaptation, digital systems, small enterprises and development finance. India/X) Acknowledging that fossil fuels will continue to play an important role in the world's energy mix, particularly in emerging markets and developing economies, BRICS countries have called for "just, orderly, equitable and inclusive" energy transitions while stressing the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with global climate goals.

In its declaration, issued on Saturday in New Delhi, the countries also stressed the principle of "technological neutrality" and "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities" in pursuing energy transitions, while recognising that countries' pathways would need to take into account their respective national circumstances, needs and priorities. The declaration came as leaders of the 11 BRICS countries gathered in India for the 18th BRICS summit, with the grouping seeking to strengthen cooperation and boost growth prospects across the Global South. Beyond the energy transition, the declaration also focuses on the digitalisation of energy systems and greater cooperation on critical minerals, while emphasising the need for resilient energy supply chains. "We recognize that energy security is a crucial foundation for social and economic development, national security and the welfare of all nations. We highlight the need to enhance energy security by ensuring energy market stability and maintaining uninterrupted flows of energy from diverse sources, strengthening value chains, ensuring resilience and protection of critical energy infrastructure, including cross-border infrastructure," the declaration read.

Countries seek greater cooperation in energy sector in its declaration, the countries also underscored the importance of balanced and diversified energy mixes reflecting national circumstances. They recognised that a wide range of energy sources and technologies including but not limited to renewable energy, bioenergy, fossil fuels, nuclear energy, hydropower, hydrogen, low carbon technologies, energy storage technologies, would play an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and energy security. "We underscore the role of all available energy sources, resilient energy supply chains and enhanced cooperation among BRICS countries through deliberations in the energy track. In this regard, we encourage BRICS collaboration on interoperable standards and certification frameworks for zero/ low-emissions hydrogen and appreciate the ongoing work on the BRICS Joint Re-



port on Hydrogen Value Chains in this regard," the declaration added.

The countries also highlighted the growing role of digitalisation in energy systems including technologies such as artificial intelligence and advanced data analytics. They said it offers significant potential to improve system planning, grid management, renewable integration, operational efficiency and a strengthened cyber-resilient energy infrastructure. "In this regard, we welcome the BRICS Guiding Principles on Smart Grids and Energy Storage. We note the Chairship initiative on establishing the BRICS Digital Centre of Excellence for Smart Grids and Energy Storage under the Smart Grids Workstream of the BRICS ERCP as an enabling voluntary dialogue mechanism to advance cooperation," the declaration said. The countries also reaffirm their commitment to deepen cooperation in the field of competition law and policy among BRICS nations to foster fair, competitive, and resilient market environments across sectors, including critical and emerging areas while respecting each country's national priorities, laws and regulations. "We note the discussion under the theme 'Strengthening Cooperation to Promote Fair Competition, including in Renewable Energy Markets', with a view to support sustainable energy transitions. We further encourage continued cooperation among BRICS competition authorities to identify and effectively address emerging competition challenges, with a view to safeguarding contestable and well-functioning markets that support innovation and promote consumer welfare," it added. On critical minerals, the countries affirm the need to promote "reliable, responsible, diversified, resilient, fair, sustainable, and just" supply chains of critical minerals to guarantee benefit sharing, value addition and economic diversification in resource-rich countries, while fully preserving sovereign rights over their mineral resources, as well as their right to adopt, maintain and enforce measures necessary to pursue legitimate public policy objectives. "We recognize the key role of critical minerals for the development of zero- and low- emission energy technologies, energy security, and resilience of energy supply chains," the declaration added.

No BRICS currency proposal yet, says MEA

New Delhi: There is no proposal for a BRICS currency "as of now", while discussions on trade in local currencies have been underway for some time, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Saturday. In a press briefing, MEA's Secretary, Economic Relations, Sudhakar Dalela, said: "There is no proposal in the BRICS for a BRICS currency as of now." "Discussions on trade in local currencies have been underway for some time," he said.

"We believe local currency settlement is a practical mechanism to reduce transaction costs in bilateral trade. This has been encouraged as complementary to the global payment and settlement system, improving overall global trade across nations," he said. The mechanism can help reduce transaction costs in bilateral trade and is being encouraged as a complement to the global payment system. Dalela further stated that the 'BRICS MSME' co-operation portal, cooperation on global value chains, and logistics frameworks were among the key highlights during the BRICS Summit. He said that BRICS cooperation on DPI, a science and research repository, and collaboration on startups were also the key highlights. Dalela said it had been a year of robust participation and engagement, with more than 350 meetings held under India's BRICS chair. He described it as a "whole-of-nation effort", with BRICS engagement taking place in more than 30 cities across the country. He further informed that there were 150 practical

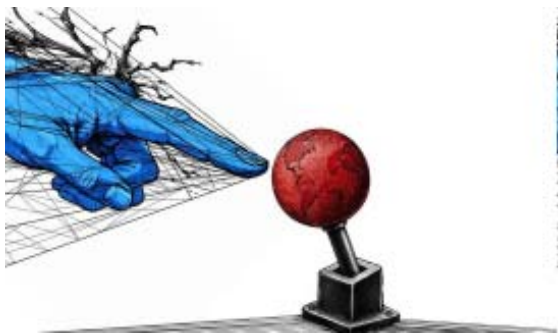
outcomes across four pillars from the BRICS Summit. "Strengthening food and health security, and BRICS cooperation on mental health were some of the important highlights," he said.

The BRICS group of emerging economies on Saturday unanimously adopted the New Delhi Declaration, in which it voiced serious concern over the rise of unilateral tariffs and non-tariff measures that distort trade and are inconsistent with the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The BRICS nations reaffirmed their "unwavering support for reform of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and to strengthening a non-discriminatory, open, equitable, transparent, fair, inclusive, predictable and rules-based multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core". Echoing the aspirations of the Global South to fully integrate into the multilateral trading system, the declaration strongly supports Ethiopia and Iran's bid for accession to the WTO. It acknowledges China for expanding its zero-tariff treatment to cover 53 African countries with which it has diplomatic ties.

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday called on BRICS member and partner countries to deepen economic cooperation by opening markets, simplifying regulatory procedures, linking payment systems and promoting trade in local currencies.

Who tames the powerful? Power and restraint in an anarchic world



In the latest Hollywood blockbuster Spider-Man: Brand New Day, the idea of a 'universal inhibitor'—a device capable of suppressing extraordinary superhuman abilities—offers an irresistible political metaphor. In a world inhabited by beings whose powers exceed the capacity of ordinary institutions to contain them, the central problem is not merely how power is acquired, but how it is restrained. Who controls the inhibitor? Who decides when to activate it? And what happens when the person who possesses extraordinary powers also possesses the means to disable every restraint placed upon it? Strip away the superhero setting, and the dilemma is immediately recognisable. It has followed international relations through empires, revolutions, world wars and the nuclear age. How can the unrestrained and unchecked exercise of power be tamed? Does restraint arise from within, through institutions, political norms and the judgment of leaders? Or is it imposed principally from without, through the countervailing power of other states and the shifting regional and global balance of power?

There is no universal inhibitor in international politics. Within states, constitutions, legislatures, courts, elections and political norms seek to make power answerable and prevent even legitimate authority from becoming excessive. Yet these restraints become far less certain when power travels beyond national boundaries. In an anarchic international system—defined not by chaos but by the absence of a central authority above sovereign states—rules cannot be enforced consistently and equally across all actors.

International law establishes standards of conduct, institutions facilitate cooperation, and diplomatic norms generate expectations of restraint, but none constitutes a world government. Enforcement remains uneven, often reflecting the very distribution of power that these mechanisms are intended to regulate. Consequently, the most powerful states retain a greater capacity to interpret rules selectively, evade their constraints or apply them differently to themselves and others. Excessive power need not manifest itself through territorial conquest. States can weaponise interdependence, restrict access to technology, employ economic coercion or exploit asymmetric dependencies

Internal restraints can influence how states behave internationally. Democratic accountability, political culture, national memory, strategic traditions and public opinion can impose limits on the purposes for which national power is deployed. Even highly capable states do not exercise all the power available to them. Capability is filtered through legitimacy, historical experience and domestic consent. But internal restraint remains inherently uncertain because it is ultimately self-administered. Institutions can weaken, public opinion can change, and nationalism or perceptions of external threat can alter political calculations. What one government considers an unacceptable use of power, another may regard as strategically necessary. For other states, therefore, security cannot rest entirely upon the expectation that the powerful will continue to restrain themselves. The inhibitor, in effect, remains in the hands of the actor whose power it is supposed to contain.

This is why the external balance of power remains central to international relations. Power is often checked most effectively by countervailing power. States moderate their conduct not necessarily because they have become more virtuous, but because other actors possess the capacity to resist, retaliate or impose unacceptable costs. Alliances, military capabilities, economic coalitions and regional partnerships create counterweights, while deterrence rests on the assurance that aggression will not remain cost-free. The balance of power is hardly a perfect mechanism because it can generate arms races, proxy conflicts and security dilemmas in which defensive measures are interpreted as threatening. Yet balancing persists because intentions are neither permanently benign nor fully ascertainable. States consequently respond not simply to declared intentions but to capabilities and concentrations of power. The greater the concentration, the stronger the incentive to hedge, align and balance. A global order founded principally on self-restraint would require weaker states to trust that superior capabilities would not eventually be employed coercively. History offers little basis for building na-

tional security upon such confidence alone. Conversely, an order resting entirely upon external balancing risks becoming trapped in permanent competition, where every restraint is imposed through countervailing force and institutions become instruments of rival power centres. The problem is not choosing absolutely between trust and resistance, but finding a framework in which each can discipline the limitations of the other. The balance of power is no longer merely a balance of armies. It is also becoming a balance of networks, standards, markets, technologies and strategic choices

More durable restraint, therefore, emerges from an interaction between power and rules. External balances raise the costs of excess, while institutions create mechanisms through which competition can be negotiated and moderated. International institutions cannot independently neutralise the power of major states, but they can shape how power is exercised and contested. They provide forums for negotiation, generate information, create reputational costs and enable coalitions to coalesce around shared rules. Their effectiveness, however, ultimately depends upon political support and an underlying distribution of power that prevents any single actor from disregarding them without consequence.

This relationship has acquired greater importance in an era when power itself is becoming increasingly diffuse across multiple domains. Military strength remains central, but geopolitical influence now flows through technology, finance, supply chains, data, energy, infrastructure and control over critical resources. Excessive power need not manifest itself through territorial conquest. States can weaponise interdependence, restrict access to technology, employ economic coercion or exploit asymmetric dependencies. The inhibitors of power must consequently become equally diverse. Resilient supply chains, technological partnerships, economic diversification, regional coalitions and institutional cooperation increasingly perform functions once associated primarily with military balancing. The balance of power is no longer merely a balance of armies. It is also becoming a balance of networks, standards, markets, technologies and strategic choices. These instruments widen the repertoire of restraint by reducing vulnerability and distributing leverage across a broader constellation of actors. For materially less capable states, this transformation is particularly consequential. They can neither presume that norms alone will safeguard their autonomy nor rely exclusively on traditional military balancing. Their room for manoeuvre increasingly lies in strengthening regional institutions, building flexible partnerships and avoiding excessive dependence on any single centre of power. International institutions cannot independently neutralise the power of major states, but they can shape how power is exercised and contested. Contemporary balancing, therefore, rarely resembles the rigid alliance systems of an earlier era. It is increasingly selective, issue-based and spread across multiple domains. States may cooperate with one power on trade, another on technology and a third on security, while simultaneously strengthening domestic resilience. Such diversification is not an abandonment of strategic autonomy but a practical means of preserving it amid an increasingly contested and uncertain global order. The challenge becomes most acute when a dominant power begins to treat restraint as weakness and rules as impediments. At such moments, appeals to responsibility are unlikely to suffice, and other states inevitably begin searching for counterweights. Yet the purpose of balancing should not be to replace one unrestrained concentration of power with another. It should be to restore limits within which competition can be managed, and cooperation sustained.

The central question of international relations is not whether self-restraint or the external balance of power provides the perfect inhibitor. Neither does. Internal restraint without external counterweights may collapse before ambition, while external balancing without political restraint can reproduce the very excess it seeks to contain. Rules require power behind them, but power also requires rules and political judgement if balancing is not to become an endless cycle of confrontation. Unlike the imagined universal inhibitor of the superhero world, geopolitical restraint cannot be activated by a single device or entrusted to a single guardian. It must emerge from a distribution of capabilities that makes domination difficult, institutions that facilitate cooperation, and political judgment that recognises the limits of what power can sustainably achieve. The enduring paradox of international relations is that power remains necessary to restrain power, but power alone cannot cultivate restraint. A stable global order requires both the capacity to confront excess and the wisdom to recognise limits. The most effective inhibitor is, therefore, neither wholly internal nor entirely external. It lies in the uneasy equilibrium between self-restraint and countervailing power; between the discipline a state accepts and the resistance the international system can credibly impose.

RBI rejects Tata Sons' bid to surrender NBFC licence, setting stage for mandatory listing

The Reserve Bank of India has rejected Tata Sons' application to surrender its core investment company registration, effectively forcing the Tata Group's holding company to comply with mandatory listing requirements. Mumbai: The Reserve Bank has rejected Tata Sons' application to surrender its core investment company registration, killing the Tata Group holding company's attempt to avoid a mandatory stock-market listing and setting the stage for it to become publicly traded, sources said on Saturday. The rejection was conveyed in a letter received by Tata Sons' company secretary and chief financial officer on Saturday, the sources said, closing out an application the company filed in March 2024 seeking to deregister as a non-banking financial company. Tata Sons and the RBI did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The decision means Tata Sons will remain classified as an Upper Layer NBFC, a category subject to enhanced regulatory requirements, including mandatory listing. The RBI first classified Tata Sons as an Upper Layer NBFC in September 2022, with such entities required to list within three years. The original deadline for Tata Sons was September 30, 2025. Tata Sons had sought to exit the NBFC framework before that deadline. It repaid more than Rs 21,000 crore of debt in 2024 and applied to surrender its registration, effectively seeking to operate as an unregulated holding company rather than comply with the listing requirement. The RBI kept the application pending and continued to include Tata Sons in its Upper Layer NBFC lists.

The central bank's rejection now removes the key regulatory route Tata Sons had been pursuing to remain private. The company has assets well above the Rs 1 lakh crore threshold under the RBI's revised framework for automatically qualifying large NBFCs for the Upper Layer, making an exemption increasingly difficult. A public listing would mark a fundamental change for the holding company

of one of India's oldest and largest business groups. Tata Sons owns significant stakes in listed and unlisted Tata companies spanning information technology, automobiles, steel, consumer products, aviation, hospitality and financial services.

The move could also bring far greater scrutiny of Tata Sons' finances, capital allocation and investments. A listed holding company would face regular disclosure requirements and greater pressure from public shareholders for clarity on the value of its investments and returns on capital. The roots of the current issue trace back to October 2021, when the RBI introduced a scale-based regulatory framework for NBFCs, sorting lenders into base, middle, upper and top layers with progressively stricter oversight. In September 2022, the central bank placed Tata Sons—alongside firms including Bajaj Finance and Shriram Finance in the Upper Layer category, a classification that carries a hard three-year deadline to list on the stock exchanges, originally due to expire on September 30, 2025. Tata Sons pushed back. It repaid more than Rs 21,000 crore of debt in 2024, becoming debt-free, and filed to surrender its Core Investment Company registration altogether—a move that, if approved, would have let it exit the NBFC framework entirely and remain privately held. The RBI left the application pending through 2025, even as it kept including Tata Sons on successive Upper Layer lists, each time noting the listing did not affect the outcome of the deregistration review. That ambiguity narrowed sharply this year. Revised RBI norms effective June 2026 replaced the earlier scoring-based approach with a single bright-line rule: any NBFC with assets of Rs 1 lakh crore or more sits in the Upper Layer. Tata Sons' standalone assets—reported at over Rs 2 lakh crore as of March 2026—put it well clear of that bar. When the RBI reclassified Tata Sons under the new rules in August.

Dinesh Karthik on Sanju Samson's place in India's XI: 'Where does he stand?'

Former India wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik has questioned where Sanju Samson fits into India's T20I plans following the emergence of teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, while stressing that the Player of the Tournament from India's T20 World Cup triumph remains an important player. "What is the batting order going to look like? Where does Vaibhav Suryavanshi stand, and what about Sanju Samson? How are you going to fit him in? He was such an important player in the World Cup and was dropped midway through that England series. Where does he stand?" Karthik said on Instagram. Samson was dropped for the second T20I against England in Manchester, paving the way for Sooryavanshi to make his international debut and become India's youngest player. Samson returned for the fifth T20I but was left out of the squad for the three-match T20I tour of Zimbabwe.

With India now preparing to face Afghanistan, Karthik felt the bigger question facing the side was establishing a clear identity under Shreyas Iyer, who took over the T20I captaincy from Suryakumar Yadav in June. "I want this Indian T20 team to understand what their identity is. New captain, new vice-captain. They haven't got the result in Ireland or in England. They were absolutely outplayed there. What does it take? What is their plan? What is the bowling looking like? Who are the players you are going to trust? A lot of



this is not just about winning the series; it's about understanding what they need to take out from this series against Afghanistan," he said. India endured a difficult run on their recent tours of Ireland and England and will now have a chance to settle on combinations ahead of the Asian Games. The three-match series against Afghanistan, beginning in New Delhi on Sunday, will be the first of potentially seven T20 matches India play over the next few weeks. Following the series, they will face Japan in a one-off game on September 22 before their Asian Games quarterfinal on September 28. Should they progress, India will then play the semifinal and gold-medal match.

How Asian Games-bound Rahi Sarnobat is rediscovering her mojo at 35



In 2022, Rahi Sarnobat faced nerve pain that left her bedridden. Multiple tests later, a diagnosis was made – neuropathic pain, an ailment that came with no set plan of recovery. (Photo: Rahi Sarnobat Instagram) In 2022, Rahi Sarnobat faced nerve pain that left her bedridden. Multiple tests later, a diagnosis was made – neuropathic pain, an ailment that came with no set plan of recovery. If you belong to the upper echelon of Indian pistol shooters, making it to the national team is nowhere near as tough as making a comeback to that level. The second act is what has always been the real hurdle. Jitu Rai will allude to its difficulty: Saurabh Chaudhary is still trying to regain all that he lost – his partner Abhishek Verma is now a footnote in India's Olympic pistol shooting. Amid those stories of Indian pistol welders waylaid along their path to an Olympic medal, Rahi Sarnobat is scripting her own return – one where she judges success from a different plane to her first stint within the sport.

But first, some context. In 2022, the Maharashtra shooter faced a nerve pain that left her bedridden. Multiple tests later, a diagnosis was made – neuropathic pain were the words uttered to her, an ailment that came with no set plan of recovery. Each body was different, and each path of recovery its own. It took a long time for Rahi to be rid of the pain she was constantly under and when the pain left her body, the desire to get back to a shooting range followed. It's only as recent as 2025 when the Indian pistol shooter was completely off medication. But things would have to be done differently this time around. "Now my technique is different. My body is different. My thinking is different. My approach is different," says Sarnobat.

"Now my priority is listening to my body more. I'm listening to signals which our body and mind give us. I'm listening to that more than ever because I feel that the amount of stress we have in general as competitive athletes is too much," says the 35-year-old. "We tend to ignore these signals because we have to perform. We cannot take off or we cannot take a break. But then eventually it takes a load on the nervous system. And that is what has happened with me. So, now not anymore," she declares. "I feel right now because in this period when I was not well. I have learnt so much about neuroplasticity and neurology. That now I can sense when my body and my mind is under stress. And I know when I have to stop and take one more day of rest. It's not always about taking a break but maybe breaking some pattern and restarting again. Or using meditation, or swimming or music. Something to make my nervous system relax. Because again as I said, if you listen, it's always giving you signals. It's just that we ignore it," says

Sarnobat. Major Achievements: 2018 Palembang Asian Games individual gold medal, 2014 Incheon team bronze; 2014 Glasgow CWG Individual gold, 2010 New Delhi CWG team gold and individual silver.

For many of the 'older heads' in India's shooting team heading to the Asian Games, stress and managing the constancy of losing their spot to a domestic challenger have been the bigger challenges. For Rudranksh Patil, stress led to tremors when entering a shooting range – an issue that opened his eyes to prioritising his recovery. Pistol shooter Anish Bhanwala felt the stress of domestic competitions in his event, but had to tell himself that he was one of the best India had produced and that a break, or choosing to recover, wouldn't change his ability to pick his gun up after time out of the range, and rediscover his old ways. For Sarnobat, the challenge was different. Hers involved the act of regaining stamina at a shooting range. When the shoots of her comeback started to spring, all that was possible was for her to stand for one minute and take aim – hardly the hallmark of an elite shooter.

"My first goal was to reach the quantity and the duration because without quantity I don't think we can really work on the quality. So, that's how I started, and it took me approximately 13 to 14 months to reach the stage where I could shoot for five to six hours. I would say that from the last national championship, I have been able to work on the quality of my shooting and that has resulted in me being the part of the team and getting better results," says Sarnobat. India's shooting team is prone to its changes. A brief glance at the Asian Games squad that went to Hangzhou, and now the one set to fly to Aichi-Nagoya tells the tale. New faces, new names – some athletes with only a year of international competitions to their record before reaching a multi-sport continental event – there are certain events where the inexperience is telling. Sarnobat took her time. She regained her spot in the national team – one which she had never truly lost in the first place. Winning the T4 trials put her right behind Esha Singh and Manu Bhaker in the race to be a top-three 25m pistol shooter, and put her into the Asian Games mix. Part of her return is down to the work done by her neurologist, her physios and personal coach Jelena Arunovic, who fortuitously also works with the Indian pistol team now.

But the comeback to the big leagues has in large part also been down to her willingness to take the challenge of younger, vaunted shooters. Rahi's confidence shot up when she took all the shots that were listed in her name at the national shooting camp in Dehradun – one of the few shooters at the camp that stuck to their quantity of shots. Then there was the quiet confidence that came from within. Knowing what to chop, and when not to change was crucial. "I am the oldest in the team. And as for the young generation, I think I know more ways of not doing certain things," said Sarnobat. "I cannot train in the same pattern or same manner as I did in my 20s. And now it's my 22nd year in the game. So, I have to consider the way I use my body and my mind. I mean even as a person and a shooter, I feel this is a totally different journey. And sometimes I cannot even relate to these two phases of my life," she said. "Earlier if someone gave me advice that my shooting could get better by doing something different, I wouldn't have listened to them. But now it's totally from scratch," she added.



knowledgeled the pressure that comes with representing India but said the team's focus would remain on contributing to the collective effort rather than getting distracted by expectations. "Every game you represent your country, you have a lot of pressure. You have a lot of expectations. I think we always talk about just being there for the team and giving your best," she said. Just go there and execute yourself. I think when we do that, we always bring a lot of positivity on the field. "India will also need to improve their fielding after dropping nine catches in four matches, while Sri Lanka enter the final with confidence after recovering from 33/4 to chase down 131 against Pakistan in the semifinal. Harmanpreet, however, wants her team to remain focused on its strengths and enjoy the occasion. "Nothing new, nothing different, just sticking to our strength, to our plans and, at the same time, enjoying yourself on the field," she said.

'I did not expect anything like this': Rybakina shocked after US Open triumph

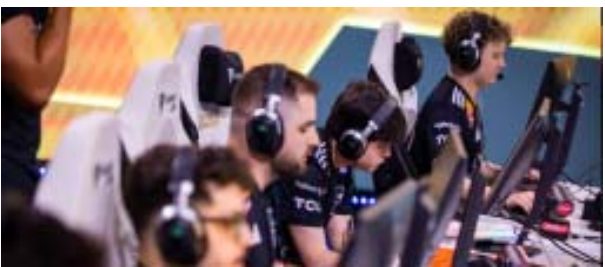
New York: Elena Rybakina admitted she was shocked by her remarkable US Open triumph after defeating two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 in the women's singles final at Arthur Ashe Stadium on Sunday. Rybakina, who feared an Achilles issue could keep her out of the tournament, overcame the physical concerns and a strong fightback from Sabalenka to seal a three-set victory in two hours and 21 minutes and claim her third Grand Slam title. The Kazakh had not even touched her racquet for seven days before the tournament and revealed that her preparations in New York were far from ideal. "Somehow, day by day, we were trying to find a way, adapting to all the challenges I was waking up with every day. I was not touching my racquet for seven days before the tournament," she said.

Despite the uncertainty, Rybakina managed to put together a title-winning campaign after just four days of practice. "Just four days of practice, a lot of belief in yourself and talking with the team nonstop about the tactics, how I played in Canada, how I played in Cincinnati. I mean, it's just so many things. Everything went my way. I'm shocked," she said. Rybakina had already beaten Sabalenka in the Australian Open final earlier this year and completed a memorable Grand Slam season by defeating her rival again in New York. "I did not expect anything like this coming into this tournament. I have been feeling it a little bit with the injury, but somehow everything aligned together on my side," she said. Rybakina also praised defending champion Sabalenka after their latest high-profile battle. "Aryna, you are a wonderful champion. It's so difficult to play against you; you push to such limits. I was dying on the court against you. I was just trying to get all the possible balls," she said. The Kazakh player admitted she was willing to take



risks despite the foot problem that had troubled her before the tournament. "Everything was working today, and in these tight moments I was trying to push myself as hard as possible. On the court I was basically diving on all these balls; I did not care about my foot whatever happened, and it worked," she said. The 2026 US Open title is Rybakina's third Major crown and her third title of the season, taking her career tally to 14. She is now one French Open title away from completing a career Grand Slam. Reflecting on her long wait for success at Flushing Meadows, Rybakina said: "I want to say thank you to such beautiful spectators for an amazing atmosphere. I honestly was coming here for the last ten years, and it was never successful. Nothing close to that. It's just incredible. I am falling in love with New York more and more, and it is amazing for me." Rybakina will debut as world No. 1 in rankings on Monday, bringing an end to Sabalenka's second stint at the top. Her first reign was considerably shorter, just eight weeks in 2023.

In Esports, Olympic standardisation of hardware a game changer



Ask any amateur Indian gamer sweating it out in a study room or a cramped local cybercafe what frustrates them most, and the answer rarely involves their gameplay. It's mostly the hardware. The sudden 200ms ping spike that freezes the screen mid-gunfight. The budget phone overheating until frames drop to a stutter. The cheap earphone that cuts out just as enemy footsteps draw near. In India, gaming has always been about making do, battling unreliable internet and uneven devices. At the highest level, though, professionals build their entire elite gaming career around gear, be it by breaking in a specific mouse over months or tweaking custom keyboard switches, and depending on private servers for practice, where latency — time for a response from a server — is predictable and the environment is better controlled.

Over time, this gear becomes an extension of the player, a comfort zone that allows them to perform at their peak. At the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, that entire comfort zone is stripped away. The evolution has been dizzying. When esports debuted as a demonstration event at Jakarta-Palembang in 2018, it felt more like an upscale cybercafe. Internet connectivity was flaky, players plugged their personal gear straight onto the stage, and when server latency spiked, the standard fix was an admin jogging over to reboot the PC.

By Hangzhou in 2023, where esports became an official medal event, the scale exploded. China invested in purpose-built smart arenas with dedicated, isolated local servers. For the first time, games weren't needed to ping into remote public servers. Rather, they ran on on-site, hardened enterprise rigs delivering near-zero millisecond latency. Now, arriving in Japan for the 2026 Games across an expanded 11 medal events — where India is set to send 15 players across four gaming disciplines — that technical

rigour has solidified into absolute Olympic standardisation. Under Asian Electronic Sports Federation (AESF) oversight, the setup corresponds to an anti-doping laboratory. Players must surrender their personal mouse and keyboards into technical quarantine hours before walking out. Scrutineers scrub onboard memory chips to ensure no hidden shortcut macros exist, test firmware against strict whitelists, and lock the peripherals in anti-static boxes until match time. If a cable looks tampered with or a brand is unauthorised, it doesn't make the stage. For India, where mobile titles like Battlegrounds Mobile India (BGMI) dominate the culture, this level of technical parity is revolutionary. In domestic circuits, a player with an expensive flagship phone has an undeniable edge over someone on a ₹15,000 device battling thermal throttling.

The Asian Games brutally levels that field. In mobile medal events, players are forbidden from touching their own phones. Organisers hand everyone identical, tournament-issued handsets stripped of background bloat. Same goes for a PC, PlayStation or a Nintendo Switch Event. At the scale of the Asian Games, crucially, there will be no unstable Wi-Fi. Every device is hardwired via Ethernet docks directly into the arena's local servers, completely killing ping spikes. At this level, handsets use external bypass power to keep batteries from heating up during long-drawn matches. Even popular accessories like third-party finger sleeves or clip-on triggers are strictly illegal. The stage environment has transformed as well. Soundproof glass booths, once a staple of gaming broadcasts, are gone due to stadium fire codes. Instead, players wear an "audio sandwich": custom in-ear monitors delivering game sounds and white noise, along with aviation-grade ear defenders to physically shut out arena crowds. Even commercial freedom gets reined in. Under Olympic Rule 50, players' usual billboard-style sponsors are banned on the field of play. Referees walk down desks with matte black gaffer tape, covering glowing logos on mice, pads, and jerseys before broadcast cameras go live. From Jakarta's chaotic reboot culture to Hangzhou's smart LAN architecture and now Japan's ironclad standardisation, esports has grown exponentially over time. For the Indian contingent in Nagoya, the playing field has never been more level. There will be no lag, no hardware advantage and no crowd noise banging into the players' ears and only nerve and skill will decide who wins.

Preeti's plans: Utilising body to switch punches at Hsiao-wen; unleashing upper cuts against Uzbeks and Kazakhs

Boxer Preeti Pawar in one of India's top medal hopes at the Asian Games, But she will be in the women's 54kg event at Aichi-Nagoya, where the line-up is almost like the Olympics. Pawar (Instagram) Boxer Preeti Pawar in one of India's top medal hopes at the Asian Games, But she will be in the women's 54kg event at Aichi-Nagoya, where the line-up is almost like the Olympics. Boxer Preeti Pawar has a mountain staring at her at this Asian Games. The line-up for the 54kg is almost like the Olympics. A stack of familiar and seasoned names are tilting their lances at the CWG champion and World No 3; three-time world champion and Tokyo Olympics (51kg) bronze medalist Huang Hsiao-wen of Chinese Taipei, Paris Olympics silver medalist Pang Chol-mi of North Korea and bronze clincher Nazym Kyzaibay (51kg) of Kazakhstan. Not to discount 2023 Worlds bronze medalist Enkhjargal Munkhtsetseg of Vietnam and the sprightly Chinese ace Xuan Zhao.

But Preeti has reasons to be quietly confident. She is the only boxer to have defeated Hsiao-wen twice in a year; she has beaten Chol-mi and Enkhjargal in the Asian Championship this year. She has also scored wins over 2022 world silver medalist Lacramioara Perijoc of Romania, and World No. six Sirine Charaabi of Italy. But her mind is not scanning the big names she could confront; rather she is nibbling lessons from the Hangzhou Games, where she had mustered bronze "The semifinal loss against Chang Yuan taught me a lot of things too," she recounts.

"Yuan lost the final against Chol-mi and then went on to win the Paris Olympics gold, beating Chol-mi in the semis. I wasn't technically strong at that time and I worked on my counter movements as well as body switch punches. I also remember Hangzhou for the win over three-time world medalist Zhaina Shekerbekova in the quarters. She is one of those perfect boxers around," shares Pawar. The 54kg category, which made its Olympics debut in Paris, has been an Asian stronghold. Asians have won as many as five world titles since 2010. Hsiao-wen presents a unique chal-

lenge because she is the tallest among the lot at five feet nine inches. Xuan is an inch shorter, whereas Pawar is only five feet six inches. "Hsiao-wen is a tall boxer and she plays a lot of counters. The wins have taught me not to be in her range and to utilise the body to switch punches as well my counter punches too," she details. "I have not faced Chol-mi yet but she is a technical boxer," she adds. As are Kazakh and Uzbek pugilists. "But the win against Zhaina Shekerbekova taught me how to utilise my upper cut and right counter punches. In Asian championships, Kazakh Elina Bazarova boxed a bit rough too and the key was to keep her close to the ropes and land my counterpunches," Pawar elaborates.

Eye on Olympics Pawar knows that the Asian Games title will not only help her stamp her class in this weight division for the second successive time at the Asian level this year but also put her plans in motion for the LA Olympics. The southpaw, who also trains at IIS Bellary and the Indian Army camp at Pune, keenly watches videos of (Ukrainian boxer) Vasily Lomachenko as well her opponents. To destress, she resorts to paper quilling, which she plans to do in Japan as well. "I am a fan of Lomachenko. We rely on the upper cut in the southpaw stance as well as the right uppercut to land on the opponent's body. I have also worked a lot on my out-of-vision punch right hook," adds Pawar. Her performance against Hsiao-wen has left head coach Santiago Nieva chuffed. "We have seen how Hsiao-wen struggled against Preeti with her pace. She is a long distance boxer but Preeti pressured her with her pace. The Korean is a counterpuncher but she is not the fastest. Preeti has strong basics, which allows her to be both offensive as well defensive. In CWG, focus was more on counterpunches but here, the focus will be on switching between counter as well attacks. They all are very good but we are also good," remarks Santiago. Rest assured that the gaze of the mountain wouldn't flinch her.

Harmanpreet Kaur backs India ahead of Women's T20 Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka

Dubai: India captain Harmanpreet Kaur believes her side's steady improvement across batting, bowling and fielding has put them in a strong position to challenge Sri Lanka in the Women's T20 Asia Cup final at the Dubai International Stadium on Sunday. India have been unbeaten in the tournament and will be aiming to reclaim the continental title after Sri Lanka defeated them in the 2024 final. Harmanpreet said the team has adapted well to the conditions and produced encouraging performances throughout the campaign. "I think so far the tournament has been really, really good for us. We have seen massive improvement, whether it's batting, bowling, or fielding, day by day. We're getting used to these conditions and coming up with some really solid performances," Harmanpreet said in a BCCI video. With the title clash now at hand, the India skipper stressed that the team would not make drastic changes to its approach and would instead focus on remaining positive. "All set for the trophy. Hopefully, we'll come up with some really positive approach," she said. The tournament has also seen several individual milestones for India, with Harmanpreet herself completing 150 matches as captain. The skipper believes having experienced players around her has provided the team with confidence. "Every day we're celebrating some great milestone, whether it's Smriti's runs or me representing the 150th game as a captain. So I think every day, it's good to see that so many girls are coming up with good performances and good milestones," she said. "I think you need a team where you have so many members with so much experience. I think that gives me so much confidence, leading a side which has so many runs behind wickets behind," she added. Harmanpreet ac-



From a warm hug, flagging off the race to Trisha: Inside Ajith and Vijay's Silverstone moment



The Michelin Le Mans Cup race at Silverstone on Saturday turned into a star-studded affair, with two of Indian cinema's biggest stars, Ajith Kumar and Vijay, at the racetrack. Two hours after the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister waved the ceremonial green flag to kick off the race, Ajith's Ajith RedAnt by Virage team finished 38th overall. Before the race began, Ajith was seen welcoming Vijay and his

team. The two stars shared a warm hug before making their way to the arena, greeting fans along the way. At one point, Vijay was also seen urging fans to cheer for Ajith. The duo later posed together for photographers, much to the delight of those gathered at the venue. Their warm interaction also appeared to put to rest years of speculation about a perceived rivalry between the two stars. While those close to Ajith and Vijay have maintained that they share a cordial relationship, their respective fan bases have often pitted them against each other online. The Indian actor and Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu joins us here at Silverstone to support the grid's Indian drivers and experience all the excitement that... pic.twitter.com/xdcscpMStz Adding to the star presence at Silverstone was Trisha, who has worked with both Ajith and Vijay in several films. Earlier in the day, Radhika Sarathkumar had hinted at Trisha's presence in the UK by sharing a selfie with her from London. Wishing Ajith ahead of the race, Radhika wrote, "Caught up with the gorgeous Trisha here in London! Wishing our very own 'Thala' Ajith Kumar the absolute best as he takes on the track this weekend." Radhika was also at Silverstone, where she caught up with Ajith and shared a video of their meeting. Praising the actor's passion and dedication to motorsport, she wrote, "#ajithkumar #ajithkumarracing #silverstonecircuit #london what a pleasure to see Ajith driven by passion, dedication and focus, being an achiever and being humble and handsome as always a great inspiration."

Mahira Khan set to welcome second child at 41, makes TIFF debut with baby bump

Pakistani actor Mahira Khan has announced that she is expecting her second child. The 41-year-old actor shared the happy news on social media. Mahira took to Instagram to share a photo of herself dressed in a stunning white maternity gown. Announcing her pregnancy, she wrote, "We make plans, and then there is ALLAH's plan."

Mahira Khan married businessman Salim Karim in an intimate ceremony in Pakistan in 2023. This will be the couple's first child together. Mahira is also mother to son Azlaan, born in 2010, from her previous marriage to Ali Askari. The pregnancy announcement comes shortly after another major milestone for Mahira Khan. She recently made her debut at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), where she participated in the festival's Community Impact programme and was honoured for her contribution to cinema. Mahira also attended the world premiere of Your Mother Your Mother Your Mother, directed by TIFF Tribute Award recipient Bassam Tariq and starring Academy Award winner Mahershala Ali. For the screening, Mahira looked stunning in a saree and was seen proudly flaunting her baby bump.

However, going public with her pregnancy at TIFF wasn't an easy decision for Mahira Khan. In an interview with Pakistani news website Dawn, the actor admitted that she was nervous about sharing the personal news. Mahira said, "I'm generally quite a private person, so revealing anything personal makes me a little apprehensive. And then, if I'm being completely superficial, I was worried about the clothes! Being pregnant, showing, and then doing a red carpet is a very different experience." However, Mahira said she eventually decided to embrace the moment rather than worry about hiding her pregnancy. "But I thought... this is where I am in my life right now. There was something quite freeing about just embracing it rather than trying to hide it."

Talking about her fashion choices for the TIFF 2026 red carpet and panel discussion, Mahira Khan explained that dressing for the occasion felt more personal this time around. "Strangely, this time around I've been thinking about it as more than just, 'What am I wearing on the red carpet?'" she confessed. "There's obviously a very visible bump coming with me! So, what I wear and how I present myself feels a little more personal this time." During the interview, Mahira Khan also opened up about experiencing pregnancy many years after she first became a mother. "It's very different this time, and definitely more challenging," she said. "The last time I was pregnant I was 24. I'm 41 now, so I'm literally a different woman ... emotionally, physically, in every possible way."

Reflecting on her first pregnancy, Mahira said, "At 24, I think I went through pregnancy with a certain innocence. I was excited, my health was great, and perhaps I didn't think too much about everything that could happen. I just went

Neelam Kothari breaks silence on Govinda's off-screen love: 'I was too young'

Neelam Kothari has addressed speculation about her equation with Govinda, recalling that she was young and had strict parents at a time when the actor had feelings for her. Her husband, actor Samir Soni, also joined the conversation, saying he never dwelled on something that may or may not have happened decades ago.

Neelam Kothari and Govinda worked together in several films during the 1980s and early 1990s, and rumours about their relationship have continued over the years. During the Times Now interview, the host told Neelam that Govinda was in love with her off screen. To this, Neelam recalled that she was very young at the time and did not know that Govinda was married. "I was too young. I didn't know that he was married. I learnt about it later," she said.

Samir Soni, who was sitting beside Neelam, said he never felt the need to hold on to something that happened, or may have happened, 20 years ago. "Something that may or may not have happened 20 years ago, I didn't know about it. So how can I hold on to it? He still claims he was madly in love with you," said Samir. Neelam Kothari explained that a relationship was never really an option for her at that stage of her life. She said her focus was on learning Hindi and working in films. "I was too young and I had very strict parents. So a relationship was never an option."

Neelam also clarified that either of her family members would accompany her to shoots because of her young age, and not because her family believed the film industry was unsafe. "I was always accompanied by a family member because I was very young. It wasn't because the industry was a bad place," the actress said. According to her, everyone on the sets pampered her, and her co-stars treated her like a child. Samir Soni added that actors Jackie Shroff



and Sanjay Dutt were particularly "protective" of her. What is Neelam Kothari doing now? Neelam Kothari, who stepped away from acting after working in several popular films, later ventured into jewellery designing. She returned to the spotlight with Netflix's reality series Fabulous Lives of Bollywood

'Our selection also falters': Salman Khan addresses Bigg Boss 20 casting backlash



Salman Khan-hosted Bigg Boss Season 20 premiered on September 6. While viewers were excited to see the new lineup of contestants, many were left disappointed as only a handful of popular names from the television and film industry made the cut. The milestone season also struggled to make an impact in its first week, drawing criticism over its contestants and lack of memorable moments. Amid the backlash, Salman gave the housemates a wake-up call and also opened up about the show's casting process during the season's first Weekend Ka Vaar. During his weekend interaction with contestants, Salman addressed the backlash this year's contestants have received. The Bigg Boss 20 host said, "We had thought we would handpick contestants, but sometimes our selection also falters. Those who are not seen on the show, their defence mechanism is that they are doing so much in the game, but the truth is whatever you are saying or doing is not worthy of airing."

Salman then turned his attention to individual contestants.

Saif Ali Khan on stabbing incident: 'I am still not 100% over it... knives make me react'



Saif Ali Khan was 'ready to die' as a 'warrior' after stabbing attack. Saif Ali Khan was 'ready to die' as a 'warrior' after stabbing incident. In January 2025, actor Saif Ali Khan was stabbed multiple times during an attempted burglary at his Mumbai home. More than a year after the incident, Saif admits he is still not completely over the trauma. In a recent interview, the actor recalled the physical impact of the attack, which left him almost "paralysed", and revealed that as he lay in a pool of blood, he thought about "dying as a warrior".

"I would happily forgive the accused" During a candid conversation with Bombay Times, Saif was asked how he had dealt with the aftermath of the stabbing. "We have dealt with it remarkably well. I think the person most affected was my wife, who is generally a very sensitive person. We kind of got over it quite quickly. It was insane though. I am still not 100% over it because if I see a knife, it just makes me react," he replied.

Reflecting on how narrowly he escaped more serious injuries, the actor continued, "I start thinking about it. It's just incredibly lucky because the knife broke. It was the worst knife in the history of knife attacks. If he had a proper Rambo knife, I'd be dead. You poke, it can go anywhere. I was cut everywhere, but it didn't kill me. I can't get over

'How did she afford it?': Aishwarya Lekshmi responds to derogatory remarks over Range Rover

After a brief break from Malayalam cinema, actor Aishwarya Lekshmi has made a comeback through debutant director Safar Sana's Aasha, starring Urvashi and Joju George in the lead roles. During the drama thriller's promotion, she sat down with renowned television presenter Ranjini Haridas for an interview, where she discussed some of the toughest phases in her personal and professional life, including a "very hard breakup" and the incessant trolling after the bombing of King of Kotha (2023).

As the conversation progressed, she also recalled gifting herself a luxury crossover SUV to lift her spirits during those trying times, revealing that many mocked her for it as well. Lkening the act to Bollywood star Sushmita Sen gifting herself a 22-carat diamond ring, Aishwarya noted that she takes such good care of herself that her standards are very high. "I bought a car in 2024 with my hard-earned money. This was a phase where I was rebuilding myself after the breakup. It was a very bad phase, and I walked out of projects during that time. Only my friends knew I was going through all this. So, I wanted the equivalent of Sushmita Sen's diamond ring. Since I love cars, I bought myself a Range Rover Evoque in Tribeca Blue colour. I wanted the delivery on February 14 as a Valentine's Day gift to myself. So, if you want to date me, please know that this is what I gifted myself on Valentine's Day, and this is my standard,"

calling them out for failing to live up to their potential. "Aman, you wanted to be the main character energy, right? Then why are you roaming around like a character artiste? You're just giving passing shots, then why is it everyone else's fault and not yours? Has anyone thought that it would be their mistake if they didn't reach a certain stature, instead of blaming the whole world? There are so many beautiful people around the world. Uditi, you have not been brought here because of the way you look. It's because of your personality. The team was very impressed by you, which is why you are on the show."

Salman Khan on Bigg Boss's casting process Salman Khan also reflected on the show's casting process and said, "There are 1000s of people whom the Bigg Boss team meets and interviews. From those, you 16 have been chosen. It takes them eight months to lock celebrities from different fields. Like a lot of people know Scout OP in his format, but others will also know him now. Rohed is from Austria; now people will know him. We have picked people from different walks of life. When you guys came here, people asked what kind of casting this was, but after a week, everyone is loving a few characters. Some people managed to change the negative connotation around them in the first week. The rest should also be doing that."

"Rhiti, at the moment you are like a stone in the house who will soon get covered in moss. Rohed, you came here to win hearts, but I didn't even see you in 2-3 episodes. You don't even have a language barrier like Elli AvrRam or Natalia Janoszsek had. The tradition of Bigg Boss has been that whoever joins the show is not necessarily a star; they are here for their personality. There is a chance for a lot of people who are not celebrities to come to the Bigg Boss house and show their talent and become a star when they leave the show. From here on, your actual personalities will start showing. I am not here to come and judge you. I will just share my opinions, but I want all of you to grab an opportunity and not just wait for one to come to you," Salman added. Bigg Boss 20 features Mahhi Vij, Aasif Khan, Amrapali Dubey, Aman Gandhi, Kanika Mann, Scout OP, Yung DSA, Rohed Khan, Arishfa Khan, Rhiti Tiwari, Isha Rikhi, Uditi Singh, Qazi Touqeer, Love Gill, Mary Kom, and Kushal Tanwar aka Gullu. The latest season streams on JioHotstar every Monday to Sunday at 9 pm and airs on Colors TV at 10:30 pm.

how lucky I was. But there's another side to this, a part of me understands what happened. I would happily forgive this person also."

Saif also empathised with his attacker, reasoning that he might have been desperate for money. "These things happen because of inequality. Because someone is looking for money and he is desperate. I don't think he knew where he was or what he was doing. If he had known, it wouldn't have happened. It's a very unfortunate incident. He was very unlucky, because I think he is in a lot of trouble for a long time. I was almost paralyzed. I couldn't feel my leg for a while. It ticked my spinal cord but didn't cut it. Unbelievable!" Saif said.

"I wasn't okay with being paralysed" Asked whether the attack had changed his perspective on life, Saif shared, "Maybe, something has sunk in later finally in this thick skin, that I want to be a bit more present. I remember lying in the hospital and thinking that I want to have really good wine with my good friends. I want to enjoy my life. It would've been okay if my life had ended because I think warriors have good deaths." The actor further added that he would have preferred to die rather than live with paralysis. "There was a feeling when I was covered in blood, that it's been a great life. I just remember thinking that. It's been absolutely a great privilege and a blast. I just want to hold someone's hand and go. I was okay with that. But, what I wasn't okay with was to be paralysed. I was incredibly lucky."

Saif Ali Khan was stabbed multiple times during an attempted burglary at his Mumbai home in the early hours of January 16, 2025. The actor sustained six injuries, including a major injury to his thoracic spine, as well as wounds to his neck and left hand. He was rushed to Lilavati Hospital, where he underwent emergency surgeries, including a procedure to remove a knife fragment lodged in his spine. Saif was discharged from the hospital five days later. On the work front, Saif's latest film Haiwaan, alongside Akshay Kumar, hit theatres on Friday. Disclaimer: This article contains a personal account of a severe physical injury, a near-death experience, and resulting emotional trauma, which some readers may find distressing. The narrative is provided for informational and editorial purposes only and is not intended to substitute for professional psychological or medical support.

she shared.

Aishwarya Lekshmi said that people were, however, hesitant to believe that she bought the car herself. She added that some even made derogatory comments about it on social media, indirectly asking what kind of shady work she did to afford such a car. The actor, however, stated that those remarks didn't affect her. Don't Miss | Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkarak review: Parvathy's thriller is held back by convenient writing

"One day, when I went for a shoot, one person asked me if it (the car) was a gift from someone. My immediate thought was, 'If I had someone to buy me such gifts, why would I work in this movie?' That was a very weird moment for me. Then I saw the comments on the post (showing her collecting the car from the store), where some asked, 'What kind of work would she have done to buy this car?' But those comments didn't affect me. That (buying the car) was a personal win for me," she added. The Range Rover Evoque's on-road price in Kochi is about Rs 82.78 lakh, according to Carwale. The subcompact luxury crossover SUV comes in both petrol and diesel variants. According to its official website, the Range Rover Evoque can attain a top speed of 230 km/h with a maximum power of 184 kW. It can accelerate from 0 to 100 km/h in 7.6 seconds.