

Telangana SIR: 47 lakh electors yet to complete hearings, names may be removed

Hyderabad: Names of the electors, who fail to turn up for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls hearings, are likely to be removed from the final electoral list in the State.

Even as the voters have been given the flexibility of sending any adult family member to attend the SIR hearings on their behalf, a staggering 47 lakh electors in the State are yet to complete hearings as of Thursday.Book Walking ToursAccording to the Telangana Electoral Office official sources, election officials will be serving fresh notices on electors who fail to turn up the hearings on the designated day and time. Such a provision will be available until the notice, claims and objections phase ends on November 5.

Man allegedly stabbed to death by two friends in Upparpally

Hyderabad: A young man was allegedly stabbed to death by two of his friends at Happy Homes in Upparpally under Attapur police station limits on Thursday.

The victim, identified as Waseem, was reportedly attacked with knives following an argument among the friends around 6 pm, in full public view.

According to police sources, Waseem and the suspects had previously been booked in cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. They allegedly developed a grudge against Waseem on suspicion that he was leaking information about their drug selling activities.

Mahadev betting case: CBI arrests key suspect at Hyderabad airport after arrival from Dubai

Hyderabad: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday arrested Abhishek Kumar, one of the key suspects in the Mahadev Online Betting App case, shortly after he arrived at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) from Dubai.

Kumar, who was wanted in connection with the case, allegedly played an active role in running online betting and gambling operations under Mahadev Book, coordinating betting panels and collecting funds.



Telangana govt sets up bureau for traffic, road and rail safety

Hyderabad, Sep 24 (IANS) The Telangana government has established the Telangana Traffic Management, Road and Rail Safety Bureau (TG-TMARS).A Government Order (GO) issued on Thursday created this specialised bureau under the Telangana State Police for traffic management, enforcement, highway patrolling, road crash investigation, enforcement analytics and prosecution, and policing of rail travel safety within the State.Telangana, with a road network exceeding 32,000 km and a registered vehicular population of over 1.8 crore, faces growing congestion and crash challenges. The GO noted that traffic wings of Police Commissionerates and Districts currently function without a common command for standards, technology, training, analytics and review.

An officer of the rank of Additional Director General of Police or Inspec-

tor General of Police will head the Bureau as Director, TG-TMARS. It will function under the overall supervision of the State Road Safety Council chaired by the Chief Minister, and its personnel will be under the administrative and disciplinary control of the Director General of Police.TG-TMARS aims to ensure scientific traffic management across Telangana, particularly in the Core Urban Region. Its mission includes ensuring safe and orderly movement of persons and vehicles, enforcing traffic and railway laws uniformly, patrolling highways, investigating crashes professionally, prosecuting offences, analysing enforcement and crash data, and standardising the functioning of traffic police stations and wings.

CEC must quit; Modi, Shah will face probe over vote chori: Rahul Gandhi

New Delhi, Sept 24

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Thursday demanded the immediate resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were at the top of a conspiracy to “steal elections”, claiming there was now enough information to establish with “100 per cent certainty” that elections in the country were being “rigged”.

In one of his strongest attacks yet on the Election Commission and the government, Gandhi said Kumar should “turn approver” and warned that those responsible for undermining the electoral process would eventually be punished. He said “deshdrohi” will be punished and Modi and Shah would be investigated over the alleged manipulation once the system was “repaired”.

Gandhi’s press conference came a day after reports said that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had formally raised objections at least 14 times over the past 10 months on matters ranging from additions and deletions in electoral rolls and changes to Form 6 to the SIR process and access to the voter database.



Opening his presentation with videos of Modi and Shah expressing confidence about the BJP remaining in power, Gandhi questioned how political leaders operating in a democracy could speak with such certainty about their future in government.

He argued that anti-incumbency was the biggest political force in India, pointing out that even former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, despite being at the height of her popularity after the Bangladesh war, faced anti-incumbency within a few years.

Telangana targets 5 GW hyperscale data centre capacity by 2029: Sridhar Babu

Hyderabad, Sept 24

Amid concerns being expressed over water and power consumption by data centres, IT Minister D Sridhar Babu said the Telangana government was targeting 5 GW of hyperscale data centre capacity by 2029.History

He inaugurated Microsoft’s India South Central datacenter region here on Thursday. Microsoft opened its India South Central datacenter region in Telangana, with the region designated as a strategic hub for Asia and the Global South.

Addressing the occasion, Sridhar Babu said, “I am proud that Microsoft is helping build one of India’s most advanced technology clusters here. We are seeing strong investment in hyperscale and AI infrastructure, while global innovation centres and GCCs continue to grow rapidly.”City & Local Guides

The Minister further said, “We are building on this foundation with an ambition for Telangana to reach 5 GW of data centre capacity by 2029 and attract around \$30 billion in investment.”

Microsoft’s expansion comes as Telangana’s hyperscale and AI infrastructure ecosystem crosses



a new scale, with more than 300 MW of data centre capacity already operational and 2 GW under development across Telangana.

Microsoft’s India South Central region also reflects a focus on responsible infrastructure. The region operates with effectively zero water use for cooling, while Microsoft is working with local partners on groundwater recharge, rainwater harvesting and watershed resilience, a press release said.

Cop on Ganesh immersion duty dies in hit-and-run case in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, Sep 24 (IANS) A Sub-Inspector of Police on duty during Ganesh immersion was killed in a hit-and-run case in Hyderabad, police said.

The incident occurred at NTR Marg on the banks of Hussain Sagar Lake when the SI was crossing the road with another police official in the early hours of Wednesday.

A speeding two-wheeler hit K. Venkanna (57), resulting in injuries to his head and other parts of his body. After treatment at a private hospital, the SI had personally visited the Saifabad Police Station to lodge a complaint. He later called a friend and left for his village in Warangal district.

The SI took ill in the afternoon and was taken to MGM Hospital in Warangal, where doctors revealed that he suffered a blood clot in the brain. The police official succumbed on Wednesday evening while undergoing treatment.

Venkanna was serving as SI at Kothagudem II Town Police Station in Bhadradi Kothagudem district. He was called to Hyderabad for duty during Ganesh immersion and was posted at Hussain Sagar Lake in the heart of the city.He was on the night duty at NTR Marg, a key point for idol immersion. Around 2 a.m., when he was crossing the road with another policeman, a speeding bike hit him. The SI fell on the ground and sustained injuries while the bike rider sped away. The visuals were captured on the CCTV. A case has been registered at the Saifabad Police Station. Police initiated a probe to trace the motorcyclist.



‘Supreme slap to Rahul Gandhi, Revanth Reddy’: KTR on SC verdict

Hyderabad, Sep 24 (IANS) Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao on Thursday described the Supreme Court verdict upholding the Telangana High Court’s decision to disqualify Danam Nagender as a “supreme slap” to the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi and Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy.

Reacting to the dismissal of Nagender’s petition challenging his disqualification under the anti-defection law, Rama Rao posted on X that the former Khairatabad MLA’s attempt to escape disqualification had been rejected.

He said the Supreme Court found no ground to interfere with the High Court’s decision.

Rama Rao alleged that Rahul Gandhi and Revanth

Reddy believed they could “steal a mandate through defections and hide behind the Speaker.”

He said the verdict exposed attempts to protect defections through the Speaker’s office.

Referring to the proposed by-election in Khairatabad, he remarked, “The people of Khairatabad will soon give their verdict on three years of betrayal, broken promises and misrule.”

Suggesting wider political implications, he added, “One wicket down, more to follow soon.” In a direct attack on Rahul Gandhi, he concluded his post with the remark, “Mark my words, MLA Chor @RahulGandhi.”

BRS Deputy Leader in Assembly T. Harish Rao also welcomed the verdict, calling it a slap in the face to Congress’s duplicity on “saving the Constitution.”

Rain Kills 8, Leave Trail Of Destruction Across AP

Amaravathi, Sept 24 : Incessant rain caused by a deep depression over the Bay of Bengal claimed eight lives in different incidents and disrupted normal life across Andhra Pradesh over the past 48 hours.

Two women were killed of electric shock at Gollaveedhi in Nathavaram mandal of Anakapalli district. The deceased were Gompa Manga, 55, and Rongala Janaki, 28.

In Bapatla, a power line snapped and fell on the road following overnight rain. Mudraboyina Ramadevi, 52, and her son Venkateswarlu, 32, were on their way to their agricultural field on Thursday morning. Ramadevi accidentally stepped on the live wire and suffered an electric shock. Venkateswarlu rushed to save her but also suffered the same.

In Pedakallepalli of Krishna district, a woman, Samrajyam, 55, died after coming into contact with a snapped power line. In Kakinada district, eight-year-old Lakshminarayana died after a house wall collapsed due to heavy rains at Chinavalasa in Tallarevu mandal.

In Pedakatha village of Dattirajeru mandal in Vizianagaram district, two elderly persons, Samireddy

Paradesamma, 65, and Nangireddy Lakshmunaidu, 63, died amid intense rain.

In Visakhapatnam, a retaining wall at LBS Nagar collapsed, following which five families comprising about 14 members were shifted to Dronamraju Kalyanamandapam nearby.

Heavy rain also inundated the cellar of an apartment complex at Kommadi in Madhurawada. Police launched a rescue operation and evacuated around 80 residents to safer locations.

Visakhapatnam collector Abhishik Kishore said 71 trees were uprooted in the city, of which 65 had been cleared. In ASR district, 71 kucha houses were damaged in the rains and overflowing streams disrupted road connectivity.

A car carrying PACS chairman and Telugu Desam Nunna president Kalakoti Srinivasa Reddy and his wife was swept away by floodwaters after the Pedda Vagu overflowed near China Kanchi in NTR district on the Vikas Group of Institutions-Nunna road on Thursday.

The couple escaped unhurt.

The coastline along RK Beach Road in Visakhapatnam suffered severe erosion, with the Coco Arena area also affected.

Heavy rain and adverse weather conditions disrupted flight operations, with several flights diverted to other airports and others reportedly cancelled. Passengers faced inconvenience due to the disruptions.

In the Visakhapatnam region, the RTC cancelled 170 bus services.

The government declared a holiday on Thursday for educational institutions in Vizianagaram, Parvathipuram Manyam, Visakhapatnam, East and West Godavari and Eluru districts. Collectors of Visakhapatnam, Anakapalli and Eluru also announced holidays for all district schools on Friday.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu reviewed the weather situation and directed districts to remain alert as rain was expected to continue on Friday. He asked officials to restore road connectivity immediately where roads were affected by heavy water flow and alert residents in areas vulnerable to landslides.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Hormuz is open, but far from normal

The Strait of Hormuz is neither closed nor functioning normally. That distinction has become increasingly important as Washington and Tehran wage a parallel battle over what the strait's shipping data actually means.

On September 1, the United States escorted about 40 commercial vessels carrying an estimated 18 million barrels of oil through Hormuz. President Donald Trump subsequently claimed that oil volumes were "back" at 18 million barrels a day, against a pre-war average of about 20 million. But a single wartime peak is not the same as restored normality.

The subsequent data tells a different story. Kpler recorded only seven commodity vessels crossing on September 7, down from eight the previous day. By September 17, just three commercial vessels crossed. Over the weekend of September 19-20, only 17 commodity vessels transited the strait, compared with a pre-war average of about 125 vessels a day.

These figures are imperfect because some ships have switched off their Automatic Identification System transponders, but the scale of the decline is difficult to reconcile with the suggestion that Hormuz has returned to normal.

This is where the competing narratives become revealing. The Trump administration has an obvious incentive to demonstrate that its costly military effort to escort tankers is restoring freedom of navigation. Iran, for its part, has an equally strong interest in maintaining that it retains leverage over the strait. The disagreement is therefore not simply about ships and barrels. It is also about strategic signalling.

MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Congratulates Powerlifter Ajay Banerjee



"Mallapur, September 24(INDIAN CHORNICLE):"Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy congratulated powerlifter Ajay Banerjee for his outstanding performance at the AWPC World Powerlifting Championship-2026, where he won two gold medals and one silver medal at the international-level competition. "Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that Ajay Banerjee's achievements were a matter of pride not only for the Mallapur area but also for Telangana and the country. He said that athletes who move forward with determination, discipline and dedication can achieve remarkable success at the international level."The MLA wished Ajay Banerjee continued success in powerlifting and expressed hope that he would win more medals in upcoming national and international competitions. "Former Corporator Pannala Devender Reddy and senior leader Saijen Shekhar also conveyed their heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Ajay Banerjee. "Residents of Gulmohar Gardens G Block, including MD Usman, Durgaprasad, President Dhananjay Kulkarni, Lakshmi Charan, Nuthana Lakshmi, Prabhakar, Mukesh Agarwal, Sanjeet, Pawan Sharma and Vamsi Krishna, along with local leaders Tanda Vasudev Goud, Lingala Rajesh Goud and Ramana, were present on the occasion.

Allpets Opens Second Veterinary Clinic in Hyd



Hyderabad, September 24 (Indian Chronicle) : Allpets Clinic has opened its second veterinary centre in Hyderabad's Nallagandla, founded by renowned actor Sushanth A, Allpets founder and CEO Dr.Jasleen Kaur said in a statement on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, co-founders A.Arun Kumar and M. Thirumalai said the new centre will offer a range of services, including consultations, vaccinations, diagnostics, treatment, surgeries, pharmacy and emergency care. Allpets has already served more than 15,000 pet owners and plans to establish 10 more clinics across South India over the next 12 months, they said. The company aims to build a multi-city veterinary healthcare network across the country, they added.

SP Nitika Pant Inspects Ganesh Immersion Arrangements Amid Rain



"Ganesh immersion procession continues peacefully""Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.25. ""Asifabad, District Superin-

tendent of Police Nitika Pant, IPS, inspected the arrangements made for the Ganesh immersion celebrations at the Peddavagu areas in Kagaznagar and Asifabad on Thursday. Despite the rain, the SP visited the immersion points and reviewed the immersion process, police security arrangements, traffic management and other safety measures. In view of the rainfall, SP Nitika Pant instructed police officers and personnel to remain highly alert and ensure that all necessary safety measures are implemented to prevent any untoward incidents. She directed the personnel deployed on duty to work in coordination and remain vigilant until the immersion process is completed. The SP appealed to devotees and Ganesh mandap organisers to follow police instructions and safety guidelines and extend their cooperation for conducting the immersion peacefully and safely. SP Nitika Pant stated that the Ganesh immersion programme is continuing peacefully across the district and that the district police have taken all necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of the public.

Immediate Action Needed on Dangerous Electricity Wires

Despite repeated requests for five months, no action taken; complaint to senior officials if issue is not resolved: Saizen Shekhar"

"Nacharam, September 24(INDIAN CHORNICLE):""BRS State Leader Saizen Shekhar demanded immediate action to make the dangerously hanging electricity wires near the first-floor balcony of KUN Reddy's building in Sri Raghavendra Nagar Colony, near the turning towards Johnson Grammar School on the Nacharam main road, safe. "The electricity wires are located extremely close to the balcony, posing a potential risk to the residents of the building as well as pedestrians and motorists passing through the area, he said. "Saizen Shekhar stated that he had been repeatedly approaching Nacharam Electrical AE Nagaraju for the past five months, requesting that the issue be resolved. However, despite repeated assurances, no permanent solution has been provided so far. "He said he had requested the officials to install safety pipes and, if necessary, provide angles and supporting structures to ensure that the wires remain at a safe distance and prevent accidental contact or short circuits. "Every time, we were assured that the contractor would be sent and the work would be completed soon. Even the contractor's contact number was provided at one point. However, despite all these assurances, no action has been taken so far," Saizen Shekhar said. "He questioned the delay in addressing an issue directly related to public safety. "Officials should take preventive measures before an accident occurs, rather than responding after a tragedy. How is it justified to keep



an issue concerning people's lives pending for months?" he asked. "He further questioned who would be responsible if an accident occurs in the future due to the unsafe electricity wires. He urged the electricity department to immediately inspect the location and take necessary safety measures. "Saizen Shekhar requested AE Nagaraju to provide safety pipes and supporting structures wherever necessary and permanently relocate or secure the wires at a safe distance to prevent any danger to the public. "He warned that if the issue is not resolved immediately, the matter would be brought to the notice of senior officials of the electricity department through a written complaint. "Vittal Yadav, Katta Buchanna Goud, Srinivas Yadav and others were present.

Former Corporator Jeripothula Prabhudas Inspects UGD Works in Laxmi Nagar Colony

"HB Colony, September 24(INDIAN CHORNICLE) :""Former Corporator Jeripothula Prabhudas inspected the ongoing Underground Drainage (UGD) construction works in Laxmi Nagar Colony, under the Meerpet-HB Colony Division. "During the inspection, he personally reviewed the drainage-related problems being faced by local residents and interacted with them to understand the issues in detail. He subsequently brought the concerns to the notice of the concerned Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWS&SB) officials and discussed the progress of the works and the measures required for resolving the problems. "Jeripothula Prabhudas stated that he would coordinate with the concerned officials to expedite the UGD works and ensure that the issues are resolved at the earliest without causing inconvenience to the residents. "He further assured that he would continue to work



towards resolving basic infrastructure-related issues faced by the people in the locality.

Annadanam at SBH Colony and Ganesh Immersion at Mande Market



IRSHAD KHAN (UPPAL KHAN)""BEERAPPA GADDA, SEPTEMBER 24 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Congress leader Irshad Khan (Uppal Khan) visited the Ganesh idol installation at SBH Colony in the Beerappagadda Division of Uppal Constituency. On the occasion, he offered special prayers to Lord Ganesha and participated in the annadanam (food distribution) programme, serving food to devotees. Later, Irshad Khan participated in the Ganesh immersion programme held at Mande Market and conveyed his greetings to devotees and the organisers of various Ganesh pandals. He said that conducting the Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations with devotion and in a peaceful atmosphere was commendable. "Speaking on the occasion, Irshad Khan said that Ganesh Chaturthi is a spiritual and social festival that brings people together in unity. He appreciated the collective efforts of local residents, youth, women and Ganesh pandal committee members in successfully conducting the celebrations. He appealed to everyone to celebrate festivals with peace, brotherhood and unity. "TPCC SC Cell Vice President Thummala Sandeep Bhushan, senior Congress leaders Dr. Atla Anjaiah, Gaddam Rohith, Manning, Vishnu, Pawan, Rajasekhar, Laxman and Rajesh, along with other Congress leaders and party workers, participated in the programmes. Colony elders, Ganesh pandal committee members, youth, women



and a large number of local residents were also present. Irshad Khan (Uppal Khan) conveyed his special appreciation and greetings to all Ganesh pandal organisers, devotees and the people of Beerappagadda Division for successfully conducting the Ganesh Navaratri celebrations.

Kaushik Reddy hails Supreme Court verdict upholding Danam Nagender's disqualification

Hyderabad: Hailing the Supreme Court's decision upholding Danam Nagender's disqualification, BRS MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy declared that it vindicated the BRS legal battle against defections. He said the party's legal cell had been fighting for the disqualification of defected MLAs since March 24, 2024. Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan on Thursday, Kaushik Reddy said the BRS approached the Speaker on March 18, 2024, after Danam joined the Congress, and moved the High Court on April 10.

PARAMESWAR REDDY Offers Special Prayers at Several Ganesh Mandaps in Uppal and Ramanthapur



"UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 24 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Congress Party Uppal Constituency In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy on Thursday visited several Ganesh mandaps in the Ramanthapur and Uppal divisions and offered special prayers to Lord Ganesha. "As part of his visit, Parameshwar Reddy visited Ganesh mandaps set up in Indira Nagar, Rajendra Nagar, RTC Colony and Old Ramanthapur in Ramanthapur. He also visited Ganesh mandaps organised by the Mahankali Youth Association and Mahankali Friends Association in Uppal and offered prayers to Lord Ganesha. At the mandaps, the organisers felicitated Parameshwar Reddy by presenting him with a shawl. He interacted with the organisers and devotees and enquired about the arrangements and conduct of the Ganesh festivities. Ganesh mandap organisers, devotees and local residents participated in the programme in large numbers.

No to GO 240... We Want Our Lands Back--UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Raises Farmers' Concerns



"UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 24 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Amid growing concerns among farmers in the Uppal constituency over GO No. 240, issued by the government for the acquisition of lands as part of the Musi Riverfront Development Project, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy met Medchal-Malkajigiri District Collector Manu Choudhary on Thursday along with the affected farmers. "During the meeting, the farmers voiced their objections, stating, "We want our lands back. We do not want any compensation. We do not want GO 240." They conveyed their concerns and views to the MLA, who subsequently explained the farmers' grievances to the Collector. "MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy urged the authorities to take necessary measures to protect the interests of the farmers. He said the government needs to provide complete clarity on the proposed acquisition of lands located within approximately one kilometre of the Musi River. The MLA particularly sought clarity on the policy to be followed in the case of farmers owning small landholdings, landowners whose properties have already become residential areas, and farmers possessing vacant plots. "He appealed to the Collector to consider the objections raised by the farmers and take appropriate measures to ensure justice in matters concerning their lands.

MP Etala Rajender Felicitates Telangana Sampath and Extends Birthday Wishes



"CHILKANA NAGAR, SEPTEMBER 24 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):Telangana Sampath, a veteran activist of the second phase of the Telangana movement and BJYM State leader, paid a courtesy visit to Malkajigiri Member of Parliament Etala Rajender on the occasion of his birthday and sought his blessings. On the occasion, MP Etala Rajender felicitated Telangana Sampath by presenting him with a shawl and conveyed his heartfelt birthday wishes. He blessed Sampath and expressed his hope that he would continue to rise to greater heights in the future. "Etala Rajender also wished Telangana Sampath a long, healthy and happy life filled with prosperity and success, extending his warm birthday greetings.

CM to inaugurate new Karimnagar Collectorate on Sept. 30

Ponnam Prabhakar reviews arrangements; officials asked to ensure security and smooth traffic management.



Karimnagar September 24, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): State Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Thursday directed officials to make comprehensive arrangements for Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's visit to Karimnagar on September 30 for the inau-

guration of the district's new Integrated Collectorate building. Mr. Prabhakar, who reviewed the arrangements at the Collector's chamber along with Manakondur MLA Kavvampalli Satyanarayana, Choppadandi MLA Medipalli Satyam, Collector Chitra Mishra, Police Commissioner Gaush Alam and Municipal Commissioner Praful Desai, called for coordinated efforts by all departments.

He directed officials to beautify the main entrance and the Collectorate premises and erect welcome arches at appropriate locations. The inauguration should be conducted in a festive atmosphere, he said. The Minister asked the police and other departments to give particular attention to security and traffic management during the Chief Minister's visit. An advance traffic plan should be prepared to minimise inconvenience to the public, he said. Later, Mr. Prabhakar inspected the Collectorate building and the venue being prepared for the unveiling of a Telangana Thalli statue. He also reviewed arrangements for the public meeting, the new Collector's chamber and conference hall. He inspected the newly constructed helipad and obtained details from officials about the arrangements for the Chief Minister's arrival. Mr. Revanth Reddy is scheduled to inaugurate the Collectorate and subsequently interact with district officials before proceeding to Rajanna-Sircilla district. Additional Collector (Revenue) Srinivas Reddy, DRO Swamy, RDO Sharmila, Library Chairman Sattu Mallesham and other public representatives and district-level officials participated in the review.

KANDI SHRAVAN KUMAR REDDY Visits Ganesh Idol Installed by Sri Vinayaka Friends Association“

“HABSIGUDA, SEPTEMBER 24 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Habsiguda Division Congress Party President Kandi Shraavan Kumar Reddy visited the Ganesh mandapam set up by the Sri Vinayaka Friends Association at Gandhi Girijan Basti (GG Colony) in Habsiguda Division. “At the invitation of the festival committee members, Kandi Shraavan Kumar Reddy attended the programme as the chief guest. The committee members warmly welcomed him and felicitated him by presenting a shawl. “Later, he offered special prayers to Lord Ganesha and participated in the Annadanam (free food distribution) programme. “Festival committee members Suman Naik, Shankar Naik, Sharath Naik, Ganesh Naik, Gopi Krishna



Naik (Sonu), Vinay Naik, and others were present at the programme.

Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha District Meeting on September 27“

“Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.25. “Asifabad: A district-level meeting of the Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha will be held on September 27 at 12:30 PM at the Lumbini Deeksha Bhoomi in Asifabad district headquarters, district president Upasak Dr. Ashok Mahulkar said. “North Telangana State Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha President Upasak Gadapale Prabhakar (Deputy Collector) and General Secretary Upasak Pragmy Kumar Ratna Jhade will attend the meeting. The meeting will discuss changes and additions to the district committee, review the activities conducted by the district committee so far, and review the committee's accounts and expenditure. Other issues will also be discussed with the permission of the president. Buddhist community members, Buddhist Upasakas, Ambedkarite activists, workers and followers from across the district have been requested to attend the meeting in large numbers and



make it successful. District Vice President V.S. Prahlad Vainesh, General Secretary Durgam Vistharu, Organiser Upasak C.H. Tukaram, Cashier Durgam Tirupathi, Joint Secretary Pergu Atma Ram, Shyam Rao Durge, Pullaiah Kamble, Santosh, mahathma Rajendraprasad Jhade and others will participate in the meeting.

Only Ganesh Idols Below 17 Feet Allowed on Amberpet Flyover

Traffic Police Issue Key Advisory to Devotees Travelling from Uppal Junction and Ramanthapur to Tank Bund

“UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 24 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “Uppal Traffic Police Inspector G. Nagaraju has advised devotees transporting Ganesh idols from Uppal Junction and Ramanthapur to Tank Bund for immersion to strictly follow traffic regulations. “He stated that the height of the gantry/girder on the Amberpet Flyover is 17 feet. Therefore, only Ganesh idols whose total height, including the transporting vehicle, is below 17 feet will be permitted to pass over the flyover. “Devotees transporting Ganesh idols above 17 feet in height have been advised not to use the Amberpet Flyover and instead take alternative routes to Tank Bund. Inspector Nagaraju made it clear that vehicles exceeding the prescribed height limit would not be allowed to pass through the flyover. “In view of the expected traffic congestion on major city roads during the Ganesh immersion processions, the police advised devotees to plan and confirm their travel routes in advance. Organisers transporting large idols have been urged to take into consideration the height restrictions of flyovers, gantries, overhead electrical lines and other structures along their



routes. Inspector G. Nagaraju appealed to devotees and organisers to cooperate with the traffic police and strictly follow police instructions and traffic regulations to ensure that the Ganesh immersion processions are conducted safely and peacefully.

People should be alert about untimely rains

Time to time review on the phone with the authorities on the Munner flood situation ““Do not touch electric poles, wires – Parents should pay special attention to the safety of children”” Chairman of Khammam Suda Mr. Puvvalla Durga Prasad suggested that the people of Khammam city should be alert in the wake of untimely rains. ““People have been requested not to touch wet electric poles, electric wires and other electrical equipment under any circumstances during the rains. Parents have been asked to take special care to ensure that children do not go into rainwater and stay away from electric poles and wires. ““On the other hand, the chairman is talking to the officials of the relevant departments on the phone from time to time and getting the details about the Munneru flood situation. The authorities are constantly getting information about the rainfall, flood surge and water level situation in the upper areas of Munneru stream, Akeru and Paleru catchment areas which meet Munneru and Khammam Rural, Polepalli, Tirhala and other surrounding areas. ““Suda Chairman asked the concerned authorities to continuously monitor the situation in the three catchment areas and take early action if there is a possibil-



ity of flood surge anywhere. It has been suggested that the officials of Municipal, Revenue, Police, Electricity, Irrigation etc departments should be alert in coordination so that people do not face any problems. ““People's safety should be given top priority. Everyone should exercise caution during rains and follow the instructions of the authorities,” Suda Chairman Mr. Puvvalla Durga Prasad appealed to the people.

AIKMS Releases Posters for 4th National Conference



Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.25. “Asifabad, September 24, 2026: Posters for the 4th National Conference of the All India Kisan Mazdoor Sangh (AIKMS), scheduled to be held in Khammam from September 28 to 30, were released at Janakpur in the Asifabad district headquarters on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, AIKMS district convener Ratnam Poshanna said the national conference would formulate future struggles against what the organisation described as anti-farmer policies of the Central and state governments. He called for united struggles to protect the welfare and rights of farmers and workers. He urged farmers from the Chennur region to participate in large numbers in the three-day national conference. He said farmers, agricultural labourers and poor families were facing several challenges, including inadequate remunerative prices for agri-

cultural produce and declining employment opportunities. Poshanna demanded immediate drought-relief measures, remunerative prices for agricultural produce, implementation of the promised Minimum Support Price (MSP) based on production costs plus 50 per cent, and legal backing for MSP. He also called for measures relating to farm loan waivers, crop loans, compensation for losses caused by natural calamities and crop insurance. He stressed the need to strengthen the employment guarantee scheme and rural employment opportunities. He also demanded continuation of the existing 35-kg rice provision for poor families under the Antyodaya scheme. “Expressing concern over the Electricity Amendment Bill-2025, he called for protection of the rights of states in the power sector and urged that measures such as smart meters and prepaid charges should not impose an additional burden on farmers and ordinary consumers. He also demanded continuation of free electricity supply for agriculture in Telangana and opposed measures to privatise the power sector. He called upon farmers, agricultural labourers, workers, poor people and other sections of society to unite in struggles for the protection of people's rights, farmers' livelihoods, employment and welfare. AIKMS mandal leaders Kanaji Veeranna and Rapalli Rajanna, PDSU district general secretary Jagajampula Tirupathi, IFTU district leader Bandari Tirupathi, AIKMS leaders Ravi, Sanjeev, Jade Vilas, Alik Bhai, Pulli Rajanna and Jade Tirupathi, among others, participated in the programme.

Butterfly Hospitals Inaugurated at Gachibowli

Butterfly Hospitals proudly announces the inauguration of its new state-of-the-art hospital in Gachibowli, Hyderabad, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to delivering comprehensive and high-quality healthcare for women and children. “The new facility, inaugurated under the theme “A Celebration of Hope & New Beginnings,” aims to provide advanced medical services under one roof, reinforcing the hospital's vision of “Complete Woman and Child Care.” “Distinguished Dignitaries” “The inauguration ceremony will be graced by D. Sridhar Babu Garu – Minister for Information Technology, Electronics, Communications, Industries and Commerce, Government of Telangana, Harkara Venugopal Rao Garu – Advisor to the Government of Telangana, Manjula Ghattamaneni – Actor, Producer, Director, Arekapudi Gandhi Garu – MLA, Serilingampally Assembly Constituency & Shaik Hameed Patel Garu – Corporator, Kondapur. “A Commitment to Accessible and Quality Healthcare” “Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Vasanth Kumar Chakilam, Managing Director of Butterfly Hospitals, emphasised the hospital's commitment to making advanced healthcare services for women and children accessible with advanced services. “Our goal is to provide comprehensive women and child healthcare services that combine advanced medical expertise, high-quality treatment, and accessibility. Through our new facility in Gachibowli, we aim to bring specialised healthcare closer to families and ensure that every mother and child receives the care they deserve,” said Dr. Vasanth Kumar Chakilam. “Free Consultation Drive Announced” “To commemorate the inauguration, Butterfly Hospitals has announced a Free Consulta-



tion Drive, offering patients an opportunity to receive expert medical guidance from experienced specialists. “The initiative reflects the hospital's commitment to improving access to quality healthcare and encouraging timely medical consultations for women, children, and aspiring parents. “Advanced Facilities for Women & Children” “The newly inaugurated hospital features modern medical infrastructure, advanced diagnostic and treatment facilities, and a dedicated team of experienced healthcare professionals. “With a strong focus on ethical medical practices, patient safety, and compassionate care, Butterfly Hospitals aims to provide comprehensive services across obstetrics, gynaecology, paediatrics, neonatology, and other specialised healthcare disciplines. “The new facility will serve families in Gachibowli and surrounding areas, providing quality healthcare.

Officials Must Attend Meetings with Department Reports

“Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.25. “Koutala: All departmental officials must attend Mandal Praja Parishad meetings with complete reports of their respective departments, District Library Organisation Chairman Anil Kumar said. He was the chief guest at the Mandal Praja Parishad meeting held at the Koutala MPDO office on Thursday under the chairmanship of MPDO Kota Prasad. “Speaking on the occasion, Kamble, Anil Kumar said sarpanches and public representatives from villages attend the meetings to raise various issues, and the absence of officials was not appropriate. He directed officials attending the meetings to provide complete departmental reports to the members. He said failure to submit reports reflected negligence and urged that the matter be brought to the attention of higher authorities for necessary action. He also instructed officials to inform representatives of all 17 departments in advance about Gram Sabha meetings and ensure their mandatory attendance. Officials should coordinate with one another and take steps to resolve public issues raised during the Gram Sabhas on the spot. “Development Works Hit by Pending Bills” “Several sarpanches expressed concern that bills for development works completed in villages had not been cleared even after several months. They said the pending bills were creating difficulties in taking up new development works and that available funds could not be fully utilised. Officials also brought to the meeting's attention the increasing stray dog menace in several areas of the mandal. The issue of lack of suitable land for panchayat buildings in



some villages was also discussed. DCMS Vice-Chairman Komuram Manthaiiah requested sanction of a new library building in place of the dilapidated library building at the mandal headquarters. Responding to the request, Anil Kumar assured that necessary steps would be taken soon. Market Committee Chairman Siddulu Devaiah, officials from various departments and public representatives attended the meeting.

C.N. Reddy Extends Greetings to Women's Commission Chief Nerella Sharada“



“Hyderabad Correspondent, September 24 (Indian Chronicle): Former Rahmath Nagar corporator C.N. Reddy met newly appointed Telangana State Commission for Women chairperson Nerella Sharada and conveyed his greetings on Thursday. During the meeting, Reddy wished Sharada success in her new responsibility and expressed

confidence that she would work towards strengthening support and services for women. He said her experience and efforts could help address issues faced by women and ensure greater attention to their concerns. Reddy also extended his best wishes for her tenure and hoped she would effectively discharge her responsibilities in the larger interest of women and the public.

Lexus India launches Lexus ES 350h in Hyd

GNS News Agency, Sept 24 Hyderabad: Lexus India has announced the launch of the all-new Lexus ES 350h in Hyderabad during an event held here. The launch event was attended by Lexus India Zonal Heads Ashish San and Manu Sharma, and Lexus Hyderabad MD Harshavardhan and Director Niharika.

Powered by a 2.5-litre self-charging strong hybrid electric powertrain, the car offers refined performance, efficiency and Lexus' renowned craftsmanship. It is also available in a fully electric version. The car price starts at Rs 66.10 lakh (ex-showroom). For more details and test drives, visit Lexus Hyderabad, Journalist Colony, Jubilee Hills.

Raja Bhaiya cleared again, senior officer's family loses second bid to try him for killing



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

In 2013, Deputy Superintendent of Police Zia-ul-Haque went to Balipur village in Uttar Pradesh's Pratapgarh following unrest over the murder of village Pradhan Nanhe Yadav, who was allegedly shot dead by his rivals. Hours later, Haque, then posted as Kunda's circle officer, was killed — he was beaten during the violence. His wife, Parveen Azad, filed an FIR against then Uttar Pradesh minister and Kunda MLA Raghuraj Pratap Singh, alias Raja Bhaiya, and four others. More than 13 years later, a special CBI court has accepted the agency's closure report against the five, ruling that there were insufficient grounds to proceed against them. Azad declined to comment and disconnected the call, while Haque's parents' phones were switched off. Their lawyer too refused to comment. In her FIR, Azad had alleged, "On the directions of Raja Bhaiya, Nagar Panchayat Chairman Gulshan Yadav; minister's representative Hari Om Srivastava; his driver Rohit Singh; and supporter Guddu Singh first assaulted my husband with sticks and rods and later shot him dead." In its order dated Saturday, the court said the grounds raised by the complainant (Azad) in the protest petition did not have sufficient merit and that there was no evidence on record on the basis of which cognisance could be taken of any offence against the accused. "The complainant has further failed to show any documentary or oral evidence to establish that the persons named in the present case were involved in the commission of the alleged offence," it said.

On the morning of March 2, 2013, Nanhe Yadav was murdered near a tea stall in Balipur village. His brother, Phool Chand Yadav, reported the incident to Hathigwan police station and a case was registered against four persons. When Nanhe Yadav's body was brought to Balipur, his supporters and family members reportedly grew agi-

tated and allegedly attacked the police party that accompanied the body. The officers ran to save themselves. Haque also attempted to flee, but his foot slipped into a drain and he fell. Villagers, along with Nanhe Yadav's supporters and family members, allegedly assaulted Haque with sticks and other weapons. Nanhe Yadav's brother, Suresh, allegedly assaulted Haque with the butt of his double-barrel gun. But the butt struck the ground, causing the firearm to go off. A bullet hit Suresh in the thigh and he died while being taken to hospital. Two FIRs were initially filed at Hathigwan police station over Haque's death. Two more FIRs were subsequently filed over the deaths of Nanhe Yadav and Suresh. The CBI investigated all the cases.

In the case relating to Suresh's death, the CBI filed a closure report saying he died when his own double-barrel gun discharged accidentally during a scuffle. Suresh had himself been an accused in Haque's murder case. In the case relating to Haque's death, one FIR was filed by Manoj Kumar Shukla, the then Station House Officer of Hathigwan, naming 10 persons. The second was filed by Haque's wife. The agency clubbed the two cases and eventually filed a chargesheet against 12 persons. One had died by then, while another was declared a juvenile. The court sentenced the remaining 10 accused to life imprisonment in October 2024, holding them guilty of murder, rioting and other offences.

Case against Raja Bhaiya In the case naming Raja Bhaiya and the other accused, the CBI filed a closure report in July 2013. Azad filed a protest petition against it in September that year. She argued that her husband had been killed in a planned manner and that the agency had failed to probe deeply into the case, overlooking vital evidence. In July 2014, the court rejected the closure report and ordered further investigation into the matter. It had observed that when Haque was attacked, there was no action from the accompanying police force despite weapons being available to them. It also noted that it was difficult to believe that only Haque was beaten so severely while the other police personnel sustained no more than minor injuries and scratches, as evident from the medical records. The court questioned why none of the police personnel present at the time had attempted to save the Circle Officer. The court also observed that it remained unclear why only Raja Bhaiya's polygraph test had been conducted, while no such test was administered to the other persons named in the FIR filed by Azad. The CBI subsequently conducted the further investigation and filed another closure report before the local court in Lucknow on December 22, 2023.

Fake boss orders urgent transfer, Gujarat man sends Rs 3 crore to fraudsters

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

An employee of an Ahmedabad-based firm was allegedly defrauded of Rs 3 crore last week after cybercriminals impersonating his employer instructed him to make an urgent fund transfer. Prompt action by the police and the national helpline enabled authorities to trace and freeze Rs 2.94 crore of the stolen amount. The modus operandi, known as a 'boss scam', exploits employees' tendency to follow workplace instructions without verifying or requesting written authorisation. On September 18, the complainant was in his office when he received messages from an unknown phone number displaying his boss's photograph. The impersonator allegedly directed the employee to transfer Rs 3 crore from the company's bank account to another specified account. "It was only when the employee had transferred the amount, and he sent the confirmation of payment on his boss's actual phone, that he realised he had been conned," said DySP Tapansinh Dodia, Deputy Superintendent (DySP), of the Ahmedabad Rural police. Following his employer's instructions, the employee immediately reported the incident to the Changodar police station. Officers helped



him contact the 1930 helpline to initiate swift action to freeze the beneficiary accounts. However, cybercriminals had already withdrawn Rs 6 lakh from a bank in Jammu and Kashmir. Following a court order obtained on Tuesday, the police arranged the return of Rs 2.88 crore to the company. The remaining Rs 6 lakh currently frozen in another account will be released later, according to DySP Dodia.

He came to Mumbai 2 days ago. Now, CID is probing his 'custodial death' at CSMT

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Imran Shaikh had arrived in Mumbai looking for employment. Two days later, he was found unconscious inside a toilet at the Railway Protection Force (RPF) post at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) and later declared dead at St George Hospital. His family has now alleged custodial death, prompting an investigation by the Crime Investigation Department (CID).

On September 20, Imram Shaikh, a resident of Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh, had approached the RPF post at CSMT, seeking help and information about trains. According to Shaikh's relatives, an argument broke out between him and the RPF personnel, who allegedly assaulted him. "The RPF personnel misbehaved with him," one of his relatives has alleged. Railway officials, however, have denied the charges. They claimed that Shaikh attacked an RPF employee. Injured in the scuffle, Shaikh was later kept at the RPF post and taken to a toilet around 12:30 pm, according to the Central Railway officials. When he did not come out of the toilet for 10 minutes, RPF personnel broke open the door and found him lying unconscious. Police suspect that he may have consumed phenol (used as a disinfectant) inside the toilet. The Government Railway Police (GRP) registered an Accidental Death Report (ADR) in



connection with the incident and sent his body to JJ Hospital for a post-mortem, which is awaited to determine the exact cause of his death. The CID probe will examine the circumstances leading to Imran Shaikh's death inside the RPF post. Prashant Waghunde, Superintendent of Police, CID Konkan Range, has reportedly started the investigation. Shaikh was carrying unreserved railway tickets for the Khandwa-Dadar and Dadar-CSMT routes. His movements before he reached the railway station are being examined. Shaikh is survived by his wife and two children.

Govt mandates BIS certification for smartphone screen protectors from April 2027

The move is expected to curb sales of low-quality smartphone screen protectors and help domestic manufacturers like Optimus Infracom, which has started production in India. "The provisions of Electronics and Information Technology Goods (Requirement of Compulsory Registration) Order, 2021, shall apply to the goods or articles as specified in column 2 (Screen Protectors for smartphones), added to the schedule of the said order by virtue of this notification, for conforming to the corresponding Indian standard as specified in column 3 (IS 19348:2025), with effect from 1st April, 2027," a notification dated September 21 said. Smartphone screen protectors are the 66th item to be notified under the rule. Other items in the list include smartphones, laptops, mobile and laptop chargers, LED televisions, microwave ovens, printers, and set-top boxes, among others. "The introduction of manda-

tory BIS standards for screen protectors marks an important milestone for the category and a welcome step towards building a quality-led, Made-in-India ecosystem.

"At Optimus Infracom, we are building on our existing screen-protector manufacturing capabilities, with a planned additional capacity of 2 crore units, to meet emerging demand and contribute to the growth of the domestic ecosystem," Optimus Infracom executive chairman Ashok Gupta said. Optimus has set up a production unit in Noida to manufacture tempered glass screen protectors using technology from US material technology firm Corning and expects to start shipments from January 2027. The company expects Rs 1,800-2,000 crore revenue in the current financial year from its tempered glass screen protectors business.

\$70,000 ransom, 43 days of fear: How Punjab man kidnapped in Kenya returned



He had already been beaten, stripped of his belongings, including his phone, his clothes and euros worth Rs 50,000, and allegedly tortured on camera. The videos had been shown to his family in Punjab, who were threatened with a ransom demand of US\$70,000. So when the footsteps inched closer that night, Rakesh thought the worst had finally arrived. "The face of my four-year-old daughter flashed before my eyes. Who would give her the best future if I was not there?" he recalled. It was the local Kenyan police. For Rakesh, the moment was the first turn in a nightmare that would last for more than a month. The 30-year-old mason from Bhaini village in Punjab's Jalandhar district had left India just six days earlier, on August 4, travelling from Jaipur to Sharjah with Italy as his final destination. Instead, he had ended up in Kenya, allegedly kidnapped by a network of agents led by 'Khan Baba' and held for ransom. Forty-three days after leaving home, Rakesh finally returned on September 17. "The moment I walked into my home and saw my four-year-old daughter again... it was the happiest moment of my life," he said.

How Rakesh left for Italy Rakesh, who had studied up to Class 12, was working as a mason like his father, Kashmir Singh, when an acquaintance from his wife's village, Bhar Singh Pura in Phillaur, suggested that he try going abroad. A local agent, Balwinder Singh, subsequently approached him and promised to facilitate his travel to Italy, Rakesh's family said. The alleged arrangement was that he would initially spend around Rs 2 lakh on his ticket and other expenses. The remaining Rs 7.5 lakh was to be paid after he reached Italy. It was supposed to be a route to a job and a better future. Instead, it became a journey into captivity. Rakesh said he was later told that Italy-based agent Parmjit Singh had facilitated his visa through Kenya and

that he would first have to travel there. After reaching Kenya, locals took him to another location from the airport, Rakesh said.

He would realise only later that this was not a transit point. His passport, mobile phone, euros worth around Rs 50,000 and other belongings were taken away. Punjab man immigration fraud Kenya Italy Rakesh Kumar hoped that his travel to Italy would secure a better future for his family. Instead, days later, they would watch him being tortured by his captors. (Photo: Special arrangement)

The videos that came home to Punjab Rakesh said his hands were tied and he was beaten while his captors recorded videos. On the evening of August 6, a video call was made to his family. Kashmir Singh watched as his son was allegedly tortured on a phone screen thousands of kilometres away. The demand was US\$70,000, Kashmir Singh said. The person making the calls never showed his face, according to the family. Instead, he identified himself as "Khan Baba" and told them that he never released anyone without money. According to the family, the caller also claimed that Parmjit Singh owed him money and that Rakesh would not be released until the amount was paid. The name was particularly alarming because it was not unfamiliar to the family. Recent immigration fraud cases in Punjab have drawn attention to a man identifying himself as 'Khan Baba', with families of men trapped abroad describing ransom calls and threats in his name. The police have been examining complaints and call recordings to trace the person. According to Kashmir Singh, his nephew in Italy, Mani Kumar, sent a letter to the Indian Embassy and the Ministry of External Affairs. Kashmir Singh also lodged an FIR against Balwinder Singh, Balwinder's sister Kiran, Parmjit Singh, as well as Khan Baba. For Rakesh, the fear continued. So did the wait. Then came the night that Rakesh thought would be his last. "For a man who had spent days under the control of people demanding money for his release, the sound could mean only one thing. They had come to kill us," he said.

The operation resulted in Rakesh and another man being rescued and several alleged agents, including three men and two women, all locals from Kenya, being taken into custody. Although Rakesh was rescued within days, he remained in police custody for around another 37 days till his innocence was proven and formalities were completed. "The 43-day journey that had begun with the hope of reaching Italy became a countdown to return home. Those were the longest 43 days of my life," said Rakesh.

16 Bengal roads, including border corridors, set for national highway upgrade

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

The Centre has begun the process of upgrading 16 state highways in West Bengal to national highways after Public Works Minister Ajay Poddar presented a proposal to Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, according to government sources. They said the Centre has responded positively to the state's request to upgrade these 16 roads, totalling about 2,000 km. A senior Public Works Department (PWD) official said, "It is now just a matter of time. We believe the process will start on the ground within a couple of months. It is a positive part of a 'double-engine' government. It not only improves West Bengal's infrastructure and road-transport system but also helps reduce the cost of maintaining such roads. We can then concentrate on more remote areas' roads with those expenditures."

He added, "The state government is desperately trying to do rapid industrialisation and employment generation in the state. To do that, infrastructural development is very important. If 16 important state highways become national highways, it will remarkably increase the infrastructural strength of the state." According to the state administration, these 16 important roads are spread across the state. The most important among them is the road connecting the border areas of Malda-Gour and Mahadipur. If these roads are declared national highways, their importance will increase significantly, and they will receive higher priority for expansion and maintenance.

Strategic importance of border roads Additionally, the state has requested that the border road connecting Chakdaha, Bongaon, and Petrapole be designated as a national highway. The list of roads includes Durgapur-



Bankura, Purulia-Barakar, Mohammad Bazar via Sainthia to Kandi, and the road from Asansol Jubilee More to Jamtara Road. An official said, "Border roads have become important as the political situation of Bangladesh has become volatile in recent days. West Bengal borders not only Bangladesh but also Nepal and Bhutan. So, border roads in West Bengal are also strategically important." State administration sources said an industrial estate is being developed in Raghunathpur in Purulia. In that context, a senior official said that upgrading the Purulia-Barakar Road to a national highway is important. The list also includes the road connecting to the pilgrimage site Gangasagar, and the state government has already allocated funds to build the proposed Gangasagar bridge. Incidentally, soon after coming to power, the government transferred responsibility for overseeing the state's seven national highways from the Public Works Department's National Highways wing to the National Highways Authority and the National Highways Development Board.

Haryana farmers block NH seeking early paddy procurement; cops use tear gas

Demanding that the government start paddy procurement without further delay, Haryana farmers blocked Delhi-Chandigarh National Highway-44 near Shahabad in Kurukshetra district for some time on Tuesday, prompting the police to use tear gas and water cannons to disperse them.

The Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni) had announced that it would block the national highway on September 22 if paddy procurement did not begin by then. The announcement followed officials' assurance that they would consider advancing procurement. "The produce of farmers is lying in mandis. Farmers are being forced to wait in the absence of procurement by government agencies at minimum support prices (MSP)," said Gurnam Singh Charuni, president of the organisation. He added, "As no procurement of paddy has begun till September 22, the farmers don't have any option but to come to the roads to seek fulfilment of their legitimate demand." Before the blockade, administrative officials held talks with Charuni on Tuesday morning in an attempt to pacify the farmers. He said the farmers had initially demanded that procurement begin from September 15, before agreeing to the September 22 start date. Heavy police deployment was made in the area to maintain law and order, while local administrative and police officials reached the spot. Alternative local routes in Kurukshetra and adjoining areas also remained open, according to sources. On September 15, the Haryana government requested the Centre to advance procurement to September 20 from October 1, citing the early arrival of the crop and farmers' demands. Under the Centre's schedule, government procurement of paddy at MSP in Haryana is scheduled from October 1 to November 15, 2026.

"Paddy arrivals have already started in various mandis of the State, and farmers are facing difficulties in disposing of their produce during the initial period of the season," the government said in a letter to the Centre. Farmers have argued that some early-maturing non-basmati varieties are already ready for harvesting and have started arriving in mandis. They fear being forced to sell their produce below the MSP in the absence of government procurement. For the kharif marketing season 2026-27, the MSP has been



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fixed at Rs 2,441 per quintal for common paddy and Rs 2,461 for Grade A paddy. Quality, moisture requirements and farmers' demand Officials cited quality and moisture requirements for procurement. They point to the prescribed 17 per cent moisture limit, arguing that freshly harvested paddy can have higher moisture levels and may therefore not immediately meet procurement specifications. However, farmers have maintained that their demand is only for the procurement of dry paddy that has already arrived in the mandis.

Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shyam Singh Rana has said the government would ensure that farmers do not face difficulties in selling their produce. He also said that private exporters were already procuring basmati rice in the mandis. The minister earlier said that 24 lakh acres of paddy had been registered on the state government's Meri Fasal Mera Byora portal, of which 19.34 lakh acres had been verified through satellite imagery, with verification of the remaining area to follow.

PM Modi expected to visit Canada in December, looking forward to hosting him: Mark Carney



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

New York: Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney has said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to visit Canada in December. This comes as the two nations seek to conclude a trade deal by the end of 2026. The Canadian Prime Minister said that the trade negotiations with India were making “good progress”. He also stated that the India-Canada bilateral ties are “exceptionally important” across various sectors. “We’re making good progress in our trade negotiations with India. It is an exceptionally important relationship, on many, many levels... He (PM Modi) will be visiting Canada around that time. I very much look forward to hosting him,” Carney said during a press briefing on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Tuesday (local time). Earlier this week, Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Anand said that she looks

Jaishankar calls for stronger Global South solidarity at UN

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

United Nations: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has called for strengthening Global South solidarity to meet the challenges of the crises hitting it hard. Chairing the High-Level Meeting of Like-Minded Global South Countries and Friends convened by India on Tuesday, he said, “For the Global South, there has never been a moment as critical as right now for solidarity”.

Solidarity is essential to bring about change and empowerment because “the Global South today may be in the front row of the global crisis, but is in the back row of decision-making”, he said. “The Global South needs to be part of decision-making structures that deliberate on issues that directly pertain to our future”, he said. He emphasised that “closer economic cooperation among Global South is necessary to buffer us against the fallout of overlapping global crises.” He listed several priority areas where the nations of the Global South need to act due to the fallout from crises or the exercise of power by the North. “Choke points” in supply chains, finance, or connectivity should not be legitimised while the seas must be secured for all with guarantees for the safety of commercial shipping and seafarers under international law.

The Global South must “must swiftly address challenges” to food security, particularly the supply of grains and fertilisers, he said. The Global South should work for

India, Saudi Arabia discuss community welfare, consular issues in Jeddah



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Jeddah: India’s Consul General in Jeddah, Fahad Suri, on Tuesday met Fareed bin Saad Al-Shehri, Director General of the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Makkah Al-Mukarramah Region Branch, with the two sides discussing ways to strengthen bilateral ties, community welfare, consular matters and other issues of mutual interest. “Consul General of India in Jeddah, Shri Fahad Suri, met H.E. Fareed bin Saad Al-Shehri, Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Makkah Al-Mukarramah Region Branch, and discussed, inter alia, ways to further strengthen bilateral ties, community welfare and consular matters, and other mat-

Man allegedly shoots wife, two priests dead in Azamgarh

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

Azamgarh: man allegedly shot dead his wife and two other persons at his residence in a village here on Tuesday before locking himself inside a room with his children, with police surrounding the house and making efforts to apprehend the accused, a senior officer said. Azamgarh Senior Superintendent of Police Anil Kumar said information was received that a person in Shambhupur village under Ahraula police station fired at three persons, including his wife, using a licensed weapon on Tuesday evening. “The wife of the accused and two other persons have died.” As per the information gathered so far, the accused has locked himself inside a room along with his children. Efforts are on to bring the children out safely, Kumar said.

He added that the law and order situation in the area was under control. According to police sources, local resident Arvind Singh returned home around 6 pm on Tuesday and found his wife Babita Singh (32) engaged in a religious ritual with two priests — Mahendra Pathak (60) and Akhilesh Mishra (50).

Arvind allegedly flew into a rage on seeing the religious ceremony and began verbally abusing his wife and the two priests. The dispute escalated after his wife objected. Subsequently, Arvind allegedly pulled out his licensed firearm and shot his wife, Babita Singh, first. He then allegedly shot both priests. After the incident, the accused locked himself inside the house. Upon receiving in-

formation, police teams from several stations arrived at the scene and surrounded the house, police sources said, adding that efforts were on to apprehend the accused and bring the children out safely.

forward to meeting External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar and discussing the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

“The Canada-India bilateral relationship is growing and the conclusion of the CEPA before the end of the year is key to our overall strategy. I look forward to speaking with @DrSJaishankar this week during @UN high level week,” Anand posted on X. Meanwhile, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal had a productive meeting with Maninder Sidhu, Minister of International Trade, Canada, earlier this week on advancing the CEPA. “I just finished round four of trade negotiations with my team in India. These negotiations require sustained, face-to-face cooperation, and I look forward to meeting with Minister Goyal again in the coming weeks as we continue to build momentum toward a CEPA agreement,” Sidhu posted on X. “Canada and India had \$30.8 billion in two-way trade in 2024. Our goal is to more than double that to \$70 billion by 2030.” “From agriculture and agri-food to energy, critical minerals, AI and tech, aerospace, and defence, a CEPA can open more doors for Canadian businesses in one of the world’s largest and fastest-growing markets,” said Sidhu. Both sides reaffirmed “our leadership’s commitment to expedite negotiations and conclude CEPA at the earliest, unlocking new opportunities across trade in goods, services, and investment, among others,” Goyal posted on X. The minister further stated he is confident that an early conclusion of India-Canada CEPA will help realise our shared vision of significantly increasing bilateral trade and deepening the India-Canada economic partnership for mutual benefit.



“fair economic and trade practices, which enhance our production capabilities and do not reduce us to be mere consumers” and “our right to industrialise must not be denied”. He suggested reducing dependence on the North for technology and frameworks for international cooperation. Artificial Intelligence must remain “human-centric” and “we should share indigenous-developed tools and frameworks for the benefit of Global South members”, he said. Instead of relying solely on the Global North, alternative “frameworks such as the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and others could bring about much-needed progress on climate action”, he said.

ters of mutual interest,” the Consulate General of India in Jeddah said in a post on X. On September 14, Consul General Suri visited Indian nationals undergoing treatment at a local hospital after they were injured during the recent Houthis group-launched ballistic missile and drone attacks targeting several Saudi cities. Download Interactive Maps

“Consul General Shri Fahad Suri visited Indian nationals undergoing treatment at Dr Soliman Fakeeh Hospital, Jeddah, who were injured in the recent incidents in Jazan. The CG enquired about their health and well-being, interacted with the patients, and assured them of the Consulate’s full support and assistance,” the Consulate General of India in Jeddah — which also covers the cities of Mecca, Madinah, Yanbu, Taif, Tabuk, Qunfudhah, AlBaha, Abha, Jizan and Najran — posted on X. “The Consulate remains in close touch with the hospital authorities and the affected nationals and their family members,” the social media post added. Yemen’s Houthis group had said on September 14 that it had launched dozens of ballistic missiles and drones at a major military air base in southwestern Saudi Arabia, marking a significant escalation in the widening cross-border confrontation. In a statement carried by Houthi-run al-Masirah TV, military spokesperson Yahya Saree said the group fired dozens of ballistic missiles and drones at King Khalid Air Base in Khamis Mushait, a southwestern Saudi city near the Yemeni border.



A man allegedly shot dead his wife and two priests during a dispute over a religious ritual in Uttar Pradesh’s Azamgarh district. Police surrounded the house after he locked himself inside with his children and launched efforts to arrest him

formation, police teams from several stations arrived at the scene and surrounded the house, police sources said, adding that efforts were on to apprehend the accused and bring the children out safely.

MEA asks Pakistan to take credible action against cross-border terrorism



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

New Delhi: Pakistan must take “credible action” against cross-border terrorism before the world believes Islamabad would do what it says, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Tuesday. During his bi-weekly briefing, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal was asked how New Delhi viewed the comments by Pakistan’s Chief of Defence Forces, Field Marshal Asim Munir, who said the armed forces were determined to defeat terrorism amid the rising threat of militancy in the country. “Pakistan needs to demonstrate action and firm commitment. And it must take credible action against cross-border terrorism before the world believes it would do what it says,” he said. India after the Pahalgam attack last year, has maintained that Islamabad should credibly and irrevocably abjure its support for cross-border terrorism. Geographic Reference

Karnataka Lokayukta raids 33 locations of government officers, finds Rs 29 crore in assets

GNS News Agency, Sept 24

The Karnataka Lokayukta Police on Tuesday conducted simultaneous searches at over 33 locations linked to six government officers and two retired officers in disproportionate assets (DA) cases and identified assets worth over Rs 29 crore, officials said. The searches were conducted at the residences, offices and premises linked to relatives of the officers across Bengaluru, Chikaballapur, Kalaburagi, Bengaluru South, Mandya, Kodagu, Dharwad and Bidar and led to the identification of properties, vehicles, gold and silver ornaments, cash and other assets.

The raids were conducted on the premises of Shivaraju M, Hostel Superintendent, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Maddur; H M Ranganath (retired) assistant engineer, Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), Shivajinagar; Rajeshwari Babalad, Assistant Executive Engineer, Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited (GESCOM); H R Ramesh, Municipal Commissioner, Kodagu; Kiran Baindur, Assistant Executive Engineer, Hubli Electricity Supply Company Limited (HESCOM), Dharwad; Darshan Gowda G, Karnataka Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Deputy Commissioner’s Office, Chikaballapur; Manik Rao, retired agriculture officer, Bidar; and Sridevi, District Registrar, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru. Officials said the searches identified immovable properties worth Rs 17.98 crore and movable assets valued at Rs 11.63 crore. Sridevi was found to have the highest asset value, around Rs 6.81 crore, including two sites, two houses, agricultural land valued at Rs 2.5 crore, and a garment factory valued at Rs 2.3



crore. In the case involving former assistant engineer H M Ranganath, officials identified movable assets worth around Rs 3.96 crore, including cash, gold and silver ornaments, vehicles, fixed deposits and other articles. His total assets were valued at around Rs 5.70 crore. In Mandya, Lokayukta teams identified immovable properties worth Rs 2.16 crore and movable assets worth Rs 1.66 crore linked to Shivaraju M. The properties included five sites, five houses, a commercial complex, a farmhouse, and six acres of agricultural land. Searches linked to Rajeshwari Babalad in Kalaburagi identified assets worth around Rs 2.20 crore, while Kiran Baindur was found to have assets worth around Rs 2.80 crore. Lokayukta said documents and other materials seized during the searches were being examined to establish the officials’ income, expenditure, and sources of the assets.

Nandini milk prices to increase? Karnataka CM seeks data from other states

Chief Minister D K Shivakumar has sought details of milk pricing in other states after milk unions in Karnataka demanded an increase in milk prices to bridge gaps in production costs. The development came after a delegation of Karnataka State Cooperative Milk Producers’ Unions demanded a Rs 8 to Rs 10 per litre increase in the price for the state’s Nandini milk.

In the meeting with the federation—the chief minister’s brother, D K Suresh, is one of the milk union presidents—Shivakumar sought details on the increase in the cost of producing milk in the last 10 years and sales by unions and private milk suppliers. During the meeting, Suresh, president of the Bengaluru Milk Union, said the cost of milk production had risen significantly due to higher costs of animal feed, fodder, and medication for dairy farming. “In the current drought situation, agricultural income has fallen sharply due to crop failure, and dairy farmers are facing difficulties due to reduced availability of fodder,” he said.

Procurement prices in Karnataka lower “Cooperatives and private dairies of various states are continuously increasing the prices of milk and milk products. In the interest of consumers, we have not increased the prices of milk for the last one and a half years. Private institutions are trying to store more milk, and unions are having to face fierce competition for milk storage,” Suresh said.

Highlighting the difference in milk procurement prices, Suresh added that in Karnataka, toned milk is purchased



from union producers at Rs 35 per litre. “In neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, it is being purchased at Rs 41.5 per litre; in Maharashtra, it is Rs 41; and in Tamil Nadu, it is purchased at Rs 42.24 per litre,” he said. The selling price of milk is also lower by nearly Rs 12 per litre in Karnataka compared to its neighbouring states, he added.

Last price increase in 2025 The Congress government in Karnataka had previously increased milk prices on April 1, 2025, by Rs 4 per litre following sustained pressure from milk producers. The government had said the entire hiked amount would be transferred to milk producers. After the hike, toned milk (blue packets) costs Rs 46 per litre and homogenised toned milk Rs 47. Similarly, cow milk (green packet) costs Rs 50 per litre, special milk (orange packet) Rs 50 per litre, and curd Rs 54 per litre.

Khelo Telangana initiative launched to promote sports and fitness culture across State

Hyderabad: With the objective of expanding the culture of sports across Telangana and promoting a healthier society through regular physical activity, the Department of Sports and the Sports Authority of Telangana (SATG) are launching the “Khelo Telangana” initiative. City & Local Guides

The official poster of the programme was unveiled by Minister for Sports and Youth Services V. Srihari at the State Secretariat. Speaking on the occasion, the Sports Minister said the initiative aims to create widespread awareness about fitness and encourage people of all age groups to dedicate at least 30 minutes every day to physical activity. The Minister emphasised that regular exercise is essential for building a healthy and productive society and that the government is committed to making fitness a people’s movement.

As part of the initiative, the “Khelo Telangana Bandhan” campaign will motivate citizens to make walking, jogging, running, yoga and other fitness activities an integral part of their daily lives. The campaign seeks to inspire greater community participation in fitness activities and foster a culture of healthy living across the State. A major highlight of the

programme is the “9+9+9 Fitness Challenge”. Participants are required to upload a 27-second video showcasing their fitness activity on social media, tag nine friends and encourage them to invite nine more participants to take up the challenge. The initiative is designed to create a statewide chain of participation and spread awareness about the importance of physical fitness.

To strengthen the sporting ecosystem and transform sports into a mass movement, the Department plans to organise leagues and competitions in a wide range of disciplines, including wrestling, boxing, volleyball, table tennis, judo, basketball, athletics, football, cycling and yoga. Officials stated that opportunities will be provided from the school level onwards, covering all age groups, with a focus on encouraging participation, identifying talent and nurturing future champions. The initiative is also expected to contribute significantly to promoting sports culture and fitness awareness throughout Telangana. The programme was attended by Sports Advisor to the Government of Telangana A.P. Jitender Reddy, Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan, SATG VC and MD Dr A Sonibala Devi, Telangana Olympic Association Secretary P Malla Reddy and other senior officials.

World’s top 10 cities by economic strength: New York is the world’s largest economic city



World’s top 10 cities by economic strength: The Oxford Economics Global Cities Index has released its ranking of the largest cities in the world according to their economic strength. The index ranks 1000 cities across the world based on five major factors: Economics, Human Capital, Quality of Life, Environment and Governance. The most significant factor among these is Economics which captures not just the size of a city’s economy, but also its stability, growth path, and equity of wealth distribution. The report was designed by combining different measures, rather than solely focusing on a single one that reflects the growth of

the city’s economy. These measures incorporated GDP size, GDP growth, economic stability, GDP per capita, employment growth and economic diversity.

In the current ranking, New York bagged the top position in the Global Cities Index. Oxford Economics mentioned that New York is the largest metro economy in the world, nearly twice the size of the second-biggest cities (in terms of economy), namely Tokyo and Los Angeles. Even though the city has pretty stable long-term GDP dynamics, New York’s economic diversity is lower compared to others on the list, reflecting the massive role of its finance sector.

The study also noted that nine of the top 10 cities are in the US, with London being the only non-US city on the list. Los Angeles ranked No. 2 on the list with a broad economic base covering entertainment, tech and aerospace. This has led to a higher rate of GDP per person. San Jose was placed at third place with headquarters of firms like Apple, giving it the highest GDP per person of the 1000 cities ranked on the list. Seattle, San Francisco, and Dallas were ranked at No. 4, 5, and 6 respectively. London was placed at No. 7 while Washington DC and Boston were placed at No. 8 and 9 respectively. Houston closed out the top 10 list. Meanwhile, Delhi was placed at #268 and Bengaluru on 311th place on the 1000 cities list.

World Cup-winner Mark Wood retires from international cricket

Fast bowler Mark Wood has announced his retirement from international cricket. The 36-year-old and was an integral part of the England teams that won the 2019 World Cup and the 2022 T20 World Cup.

Wood has often been dogged by injuries throughout his career, and said that this time, he has “lost the battle” to come back from it. He further said that it was the “natural time” to retire at the end of his central contract with England. “I’ve always tried to be resilient and come back from injury to prove people wrong and show everyone what I can do,” Wood said in a statement. “Unfortunately this time I lost the battle. On medical advice, test cricket and 50-over cricket are not possible, so the England dream has slowly been ground out of me over the past year.”

Wood further said that playing for England has been a dream come true. The little lad in me would be so chuffed to have played so much for England,” he said. “To travel the world, meet incredible people and play against the best, is something I feel incredibly lucky to have done, doing some-



thing I have loved.”Wood finishes his 11-year international career with 119 wickets from 38 tests and 54 wickets in 38 T20s, with nine coming in England’s World Cup-winning campaign in Australia in 2022. Of his 80 wickets in 70 ODIs, 18 came at the 2019 World Cup where he topped speeds of 95 mph as England won the 50-over trophy for the first time.

‘No human right to illegal immigration’: Trump says UN nations have right to remain sovereign



US President Donald Trump told the United Nations General Assembly that there is “no human right to illegal immigration” and argued that countries have a right to protect their sovereignty, using his address to defend his administration’s immigration policies and criticize what he described as the promotion of mass migration.

“There is no human right to illegal immigration, but there is a right to remain a sovereign nation. We want to remain a sovereign nation, and so should you,” Trump said during his address in New York. Trump also criticized the United Nations and UNESCO while linking migration to the preservation of national cultures and heritage. “It is deeply ironic that the United Nations has an entire institution, the UNESCO group of people and countries, devoted to protecting cultural heritage, yet with their ceaseless promotion of mass migration, these globalists are actively destroying the greatest cultures and most extraordinary heritage in all

of history,” he said. The US Department of State subsequently highlighted Trump’s sovereignty and immigration remarks in a post on X. Trump attacks mass migration, defends national sovereignty Trump’s comments reflect a central theme of his administration’s approach to immigration: that individual countries should retain control over who enters their territory and under what conditions. Also read: \$20 billion H-1B fraud? Trump administration alleges there was foreign labor fraud, warns ‘handcuffs are coming’ His remarks at the UN came as his administration has pursued tighter immigration enforcement and restrictions on illegal entry into the United States. Trump framed the issue primarily as one of national sovereignty, arguing that governments have the authority to determine their own immigration policies rather than being bound by international pressure. His reference to UNESCO also broadened the argument beyond border enforcement, as he connected migration with national identity and cultural heritage.

Trump rejects global AI controls Trump also used the UN speech to reject international efforts to establish what he described as a global framework for controlling artificial intelligence. “The United States also totally rejects any attempt to construct a globalist scheme to control” artificial intelligence, Trump said. He proposed referring to artificial intelligence as “Superintelligence”, arguing that the term “artificial” makes the technology sound less capable than it is. Trump’s comments placed immigration and AI within the same broader argument: that the US should retain control over its domestic policies and technological development rather than surrendering authority to international institutions.

Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran's TVS Motors link emerges amid row over re-appointment

Family members of Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran hold business relations with TVS Motor Co. Ltd, documents showed, raising governance questions after a decisive vote by the automaker’s chairman-emeritus Venu Srinivasan won a fresh term for Chandrasekaran. Neither Srinivasan nor Chandrasekaran updated the Tata Sons board about this external relationship, an executive aware of the matter said, in a potential violation of the Tata Code of Conduct. While Tata Sons said the formation of the family members’ company was disclosed and that there was no need to disclose the specific business transaction, Tata Trusts said Srinivasan made no such disclosure to it, deepening the rift at the helm of India’s largest conglomerate.

Tata code sets rules for conflict disclosures Srinivasan is a vice-chairman of Tata Trusts and a member of Tata Sons’ nomination and remuneration committee (NRC), which reviews Chandrasekaran’s performance. The Tata code of conduct defines a conflict of interest as happening when an employee “can get an unfair benefit, for themselves, a family member, or someone close, by making or influencing decisions about any deal”. It requires executive directors to tell the board about real or possible conflicts. Chandrasekaran’s son Pranav, and wife Lalitha, are directors of Hanno One Warehousing Pvt. Ltd, which was established in March 2025, according to ministry of corporate affairs records. Over an eight-month investigation, Mint reviewed documents showing Hanno Infra LLP owns 99.99% of the company, with Lalitha signing on behalf of the LLP. Pranav, 28, a Yale graduate, owns one share directly. Financial details of both Hanno One and Hanno Infra are not available. In June 2025, three months after Hanno One was founded, TVS Motor leased 17 acres of farmland

in Uddanapalli village in Tamil Nadu’s Krishnagiri district to the company, state registration records showed. That November, HDFC Bank offered Hanno One a ₹60 crore construction loan, backed by its lease rights and the building to be built, according to the bank’s term sheet, which Mint reviewed. The process of how the company stitched its business partnership with TVS Motor and its bank borrowing was revealed in an eight-month investigation by Mint. The term sheet estimates the cost of the 3.3 lakh sq. ft ‘TVS Motors Warehouse Project’, slated to finish by March 2027, at ₹106.3 crore. The terms of the TVS lease, including the rent, are not public. “Hanno One Warehousing P Ltd was a company incorporated on 10th March 2025 by wife and Son of Mr. N Chandrasekaran. In April 2025, a disclosure was made of this to all companies in which Mr. N Chandrasekaran is the chairman,” said a spokesperson for Tata Sons. “TVS Motors is an independent listed entity and one of India’s large companies. It has no dealings with the Tata Group of companies.” “A transaction between TVS Motor and a company which is run by his son, who is an independent entrepreneur, is not required to be disclosed to Tata Sons or any of the Tata companies,” the spokesperson said. “The Tata Trusts can confirm that no such disclosures were made to the trustees in this regard by Mr Srinivasan,” said a spokesperson for Tata Trusts. “We are given to understand that no such disclosures were made to the board of Tata Sons either, but since the Trusts do not have independent access to proceedings of the board, apart from their nominee directors having access to board papers, we cannot definitively comment on this”. “If the allegations are proven to be true, the Trusts will evaluate the nature of their institutional response to these and act appropriately,” the spokesperson added.

An Indian postcard from Venice: Why a pavilion at ‘Olympics of the art world’ matters



WHAT’S HOME? Or the idea of it? As delicate and haunting as Sumakshi Singh’s white threads that hold up fragments of a broken home, as real as 33 Link Road, Delhi, the artist’s now-demolished house where she spent her summer vacations in the 2000s, the one her grandparents, Partition refugees from Pakistan, built in 1951. Her installation, Permanent Address, is one of five artworks that are part of the India pavilion at this year’s Venice Biennale, one of the oldest, largest, and most prestigious contemporary cultural and art events in the world. India’s presentation, titled ‘Geographies of Distance: Returning Home’ and curated by Amin Jaffer, marks the country’s return to the event, the ‘Olympics of the art world’, after seven years.

The five artworks, all rooted in Indian craft traditions and material such as clay, bamboo, embroidery, papier-mâché and cotton, explore the idea of home. Besides Sumakshi Singh’s embroidered recreation of a lost home, there is Ranjani Shettar’s floating garden, Asim Waqif’s bamboo scaffolding that mourns the slow erosion of rural architecture, Skarma Sonam Tashi’s Ladakhi homes that rises like a settlement resting on a mountain slope, and Alwar Balasubramaniam’s display of cracked soil sourced from rural Tamil Nadu.

Critics and patrons, including Saffronart’s Minal Vazirani and former British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, and the global media have described the India pavilion as “dazzling”, “spectacular” and a must-see, with the artworks being hailed for their innovation and craftsmanship. Is this then Indian art’s golden moment? What does this success entail and, more importantly, does India have a roadmap for a sustained presence at the Biennale?

To pull off an art show While Indian artists have regularly showcased in their individual capacities at the Venice Biennale’s central exhibitions, this is only the third time in the 131-year history of the art event that India has participated with a national pavilion. A national pavilion, one that is organised and funded by the government to showcase its own contemporary artists, is the ultimate exercise in soft power and cultural diplomacy. Even smaller countries like Uruguay and Angola either have permanent pavilions at Venice or participate consistently.

China, for instance, has been consistently showcasing its state pavilion since 2005. Though the country is not among the 30 that own permanent buildings at the historic Giardini public park in Venice, the China pavilion has for long had a permanent home at the Arsenale, a complex of former shipyards and armouries that offers spaces on rent during the six-month-long biennale. It’s at the Arsenale, inside a brick-walled former maritime warehouse that’s a five-minute walk from the China pavilion, that India is hosting its pavilion this year. The last time India put up a pavilion was in 2019, when the Ministry of Culture partnered with the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) under a public-private partnership model. This time, the government has gone with two institutional partners — Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) and Serendipity Arts. Culture Secretary Vivek Aggarwal says the process of setting up a national pavilion involved months of discussions and evaluation. “We received multiple expressions of interest and carefully assessed proposals against the vision that the government sought to present at Venice,” he says. Ministry officials say the proposal by Amin Jaffer, the London-based curator who was eventually chosen to head the India pavilion, dealt with Indians as migrants — from the time they travelled as traders and seafarers thousands of years ago to the present. Officials say that with the theme of ‘Returning Home’, they expected visitors to walk in through the India pavilion, pause and reflect on their own sense of belonging.

Jaffer, who was born in central Africa and raised in North America and Europe but whose ancestral roots go back to Kutch, Gujarat, says he has drawn from his personal history to ask “whether belonging is determined solely by geography or can also be sustained through memory, practice and emotional attachment”. When Jaffer initially submitted his proposal, it was for a single artist. “But the Ministry felt India’s diversity called for a multi-artist presentation. I then developed the proposal further, expanding its narrative,” he says, talking of how the other four artists came on board. If the ministry set the ball rolling, the private players, NMACC and Serendipity, with their experience in delivering projects of international scale, took over. Each of the installations on display required both artistic creativity and engineering ingenuity.

For instance, Asim Waqif’s Chaal uses 12 tonnes of bamboo, sourced largely from Assam and West Bengal, all of which were bent and tied, not screwed or pasted together, to form a 30-foot-high scaffolding-like structure. Waqif’s work is a commentary on the disappearance of rural architecture, with construction rules that favour steel and aluminium in place of bamboo for scaffolding and formwork. “I use one simple lashing technique — tying two bamboo, sometimes whole and sometimes split, together with a composite nylon strap used in shipping. We don’t make any holes in the bamboo or use joinery, nuts or bolts,” says the Delhi-based, Hyderabad-born Waqif, explaining how his team, along with “three Italian riggers who are trained in climbing and ropes and knots”, built the installation.

Ongoing geopolitical events led to logistical challenges, particularly in the shipment and installation of Waqif’s bamboo work. Ministry officials say several species of bamboo and nearly 10-12 tonnes of material had to be transported and installed within very specific timelines ahead of the biennale that was to start in May. But in February, the US-Iran war broke out and the artworks and other objects had to be flown in, instead of shipped as planned earlier. Sumakshi Singh’s work, in which she embroidered an entire house on water-soluble fabric, also called for a high degree of sophistication and logistical planning. For the installation, she recreated the house down to the tiniest of details, from the gates and the stairs to the walls, doors and windows. “Even the chatkanis (door bolts),” she says. The Ladakh-born Skarma Sonam Tashi says that before he could start working on the project, a trip to Venice was organised for him and the others to see the venue. “Once that happened, I knew exactly what I wanted to make. Because my studio in Delhi’s Garhi was small, I had to rent a bigger apartment to work. Thankfully, I faced no logistical issues and my work reached Venice in about a week,” he says. His Echoes of Home is a prototype of a settlement of

Ladakhi homes that are traditionally built using earth, stone, timber, and collective knowledge that’s passed down generations. For his work, Tashi used recycled materials, including papier-mâché, egg trays, cardboard and old paper. The installation of Ranjani Shettar’s monumental floral vine suspended from the ceiling and Alwar Balasubramaniam’s two-panelled installation of cracked earth, including one that covers an entire wall at the pavilion, too, required constant innovations. Shettar and Balasubramaniam could not be contacted for this story.

“A presence at Venice requires much more than selecting artists. It requires curatorial expertise, production capabilities, international partnerships, sustained funding and the ability to build audiences and relationships around the work. We were able to help by committing resources over a sustained period rather than for a single moment,” says Sunil Kant Munjal, Founder and Patron, Serendipity Arts, one of the primary organising partners at the pavilion. Pietrangelo Buttafuoco, President, Venice Biennale, says India’s presentation at the biennale reflects “a mature awareness in the way India is represented”.

“It is a perfect expression of what India represents today — grounded in its ancient heritage, with a proud gaze towards tradition while at the same time looking firmly to the future,” he says. India in Venice, now and then

The first time India had a national pavilion was in 2011. That year, the UPA government, which had drawn flak for reportedly failing to accept the biennale’s previous invitation in 2007, was determined to make it work. According to Jawhar Sircar, who was Culture Secretary from 2008 to 2012, “Until then, going to an art biennale was not part of the government routine. Many Indian artists would go themselves. But then, India as a nation was absent.”

Indeed, for decades, Indian artists, supported by private patrons, have made their presence felt at the biennale. This year, too, Amar Kanwar’s Co-travellers, Dayanita Singh’s ARCHIVIO and Nalini Malani’s Of Woman Born, have received much acclaim at the biennale. But for long, a national presence at the biennale remained missing or uneven. In 2015, artist Dayanita Singh had said in an interview how she felt “ashamed” at the absence of an India pavilion at the biennale, saying it showed where India placed its contemporary art.

In 2011, Sircar teamed up with Ashok Vajpeyi, then chairman of the Lalit Kala Akademi, to choose historian, poet and art critic Ranjit Hoskote as the curator. “No one laid down a brief for me. I was free to come up with any concept and any choice of artists. I am grateful to have had a great deal of freedom,” says Hoskote, who ambitiously titled the presentation, ‘Everyone Agrees: It’s About to Explode’. For India’s debut, Hoskote provocatively looked at who had the right to call themselves Indian. The pavilion was as bold in its theme as in its choice of artists. The absence of some of the biggest names then came in both for praise and criticism. “Because of my own ancestral past, which is diasporic within South Asia, as well as my political and aesthetic concerns, I’m always wary of large entities that claim to define one’s identity. So I naturally gravitated to four artist positions that resisted what other people were telling them about their identity, or where they belonged,” Hoskote says. For Sircar, “the best thing was that we learned how to do it”. However, what could have been a marquee moment became a blip as India went back to Venice only after eight years.

When it did so, in 2019, the NDA government decided that the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was the occasion for it. The artists at this year’s Venice Biennale. (Credits: Joe Habben) The artists at this year’s Venice Biennale. The Ministry of Culture brought on board KNMA as the principal partner and financial backer, while CII managed co-organisation, corporate advocacy, and execution. The presentation, titled ‘Our Time for a Future Caring’, explored the continued relevance of Gandhi in a world navigating conflict. Despite featuring works by leading Indian artists, including Jitish Kallat, Atul Dodiya, M F Husain and Shakuntala Kulkarni, the pavilion was largely dismissed by critics as “government-mandated”, “unoriginal” and “bureaucratic”. Roobina Karode, Artistic Director and Chief Curator, KNMA, who curated the 2019 India pavilion, recalls feeling restrained. “I did bring it up with the ministry that a given theme wasn’t the standard practice for a national pavilion at Venice. I was told the funds were coming from ‘Gandhi’s 150 year commemoration’. So I convinced them that the curation must have a critical lens,” she says.

Part of the praise coming Jaffer’s way is in the perception that his curation at this year’s biennale feels “innovative” vis-a-vis the “safe” 2019 presentation. Critics point to how India’s pavilion in 2011, curated by Hoskote, may have been far more radical. Hoskote had presented Desire Machine Collective’s Residue, a short film shot in a defunct thermal power plant on the outskirts of Guwahati, had taken a dig at the Indian State’s thoughtless and rampant industrialisation.

Though Jaffer explores similar themes, as New York-based critic Aruna D’Souza points out, “the show seemed determined not to offend. While both Waqif’s and Tashi’s work argued for reembracing regional architecture as a sustainable solution to the current climate crisis, I wouldn’t say either of the works can be called political, really.” The entrance to the Central Pavilion, in the Biennale Garden (Credits: La Biennale di Venezia) The entrance to the Central Pavilion, in the Biennale Garden (Credits: La Biennale di Venezia) The Venice Biennale has a rich history of political subversion, with artists often using the state-funded platform to challenge their own governments. In 1993, artist Hans Haacke’s ‘Germania’ was an indictment of the German government’s inaction in the wake of racial violence against immigrants in the country.

Where does India go from here?

Despite these contradictions, the Venice Biennale and the soft power it represents make it vital for the country and its artists to be seen there. “Continuity and consistency over time,” Buttafuoco notes, “certainly carry their own significance”. Culture Secretary Aggarwal says India has already confirmed its participation in the 2028 edition of the Biennale. He says India now plans to build on the success of the biennale and is preparing to host its own India Art, Architecture and Design Biennale (IAADB) in Delhi from December 4, 2026, to March 21, 2027, and exploring the possibility of bringing the India pavilion from Venice to IAADB. Sircar says that with India determined to go back to Venice, getting a permanent space at the biennale would not only be “more economical but... it compels you to return”. However, getting a permanent space in the Giardini park is increasingly difficult. Besides the cost involved, the space itself is saturated and its historic status means building concessions are hard to get. Getting a space would thus require navigating a labyrinth of diplomatic, legal and administrative clearances, which is what Qatar did, in 2025. Before that, the last country to enter Giardini was three decades ago: South Korea in 1995. A permanent address for the

NMIA to transform Mumbai into multimodal aviation hub



In over a month from now, the much-awaited Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) will be inaugurated. Even though it may take around 45-days for operations to commence after the inauguration scheduled in the end of September, the airport will add a new dimension of connectivity for people travelling to and from the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). The greenfield airport that is set to emerge as a crucial second air hub for the region and transition Mumbai from a single-airport to a multi-modal aviation hub. It will not only decongest the current Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) but also provide a boost to economic activity in the region. To be officially named 'D B Patil International Airport' and developed through a public-private partnership (PPP), it is a joint venture between Navi Mumbai International Airport Private Limited (NMIAL) and City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) of Maharashtra. NMIAL, a subsidiary of Adani Airport Holdings Ltd, has a 74 per cent stake, while CIDCO owns the remaining 26 per cent. According to CIDCO, this alliance is a mutual commitment towards creating a robust, efficient and eco-friendly gateway to cater to the region's growing air traffic needs for generations to come. Phases and investments

The initial stages have already received an investment of nearly Rs 20,000 crore and will have one common terminal for domestic and international operations and one of the two proposed runways. This phase will be capable of serving 20 million passengers per annum (MPPA), thereby enhancing the aviation capacity of the MMR.

"Phase 1 will have 42 aircraft stands — 29 contacts and 13 remote — designed to handle 20 million passengers a year. We are aiming so that 95% of passengers go from arrival to curbside within 45 minutes," said Prabhat Mahapatra, Chief Operating Officer, NMIA. Inspired by the design of India's national flower lotus, the airport will be developed in multiple phases. After the inauguration of the initial phases by September end, the Adani Group will start investments for the third phase as well, which is expected to incur an additional investment of Rs 30,000 crore. The next phase, expected to be completed by 2029, will involve setting up a second terminal and a second parallel runway, increasing the airport's capacity to 50 MPPA.

This investment will also fund key infrastructure such as the Automated People Movers (APMs) for intra-airport travel, providing smooth transit to passengers. The enabling work for the third phase has already been completed, reflecting a forward-looking approach towards the project's long-term vision. Upon completion of all five phases of this mega project, the second airport in MMR will have the capacity to service a whopping 90 MPPA with two runways and four terminals. Talking about the action plan for the next phase of NMIA, Arun Bansal, Chief Executive Officer for Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) said, "Immediately after Phase 1 is operational, we will work on the next phase to add a second runway and new terminal, bringing capacity from 20 to 50 million passengers. Eventually, the east and west terminals together will take us to 90 million." yAAHL officials say that NMIA is not just a large airport, but its development is led by a firm philosophy of a green airport. The airport has proposed to have a 47 MW solar power in its terminal phase and this will help it significantly reduce its reliance on traditional sources of energy, thereby lowering its carbon footprint.

Moreover, the airport will include low-flow plumbing fixtures to conserve water, a comprehensive rainwater harvesting system to harvest and store water for usage. "We have implemented low-flow fittings and rainwater harvesting, and wastewater recycling are designed into the terminal to drastically cut freshwater use," said Mahapatra.

The larger plan also involves the operation of Electric Vehicles (EVs) on the airside to check emission. The use of the rockfill technology for the apron, runway, and other facilities is an innovative engineering approach that guarantees stability and sustainability, making it a characteris-

tic feature of airport construction. This is a reflection of NMIA's dedication to the development of a contemporary, efficient and eco-friendly airport experience for passengers

The airport also boasts of modern digital integration — a 5G Connected NMIA, with systems driven by data to accelerate turnaround of flights, automated baggage solutions with IATA 753-compliant real-time tracking, and a complete contactless travel experience under the Digi Yatra programme. High-speed internet, robust cybersecurity, and IoT-based monitoring will enable both operational efficiency as well as smart traffic management. A dedicated in-house app, "aviio", will be a one-stop platform for all stakeholders in the airport, facilitating better communication and coordination. The airport terminal will have a kids' play area for domestic flights and an "experimental zone" with interactive digital tunnels and kinetic installations. The installations will tell stories of Mumbai, Maharashtra, and India, providing a tribute to local communities and their heritage. Lounges for business class passengers and commercially important person (CIP) will be divided into zones with about 500-passenger capacity. An 80-room transit/day hotel for overnight stops and extensive baggage services, such as home delivery, cloak rooms and repair, will also be available. A dedicated space at the arrival forecourt will also be developed for both visitors and passengers, providing an exclusive meeting point.

The F&B and retail options are designed to mirror the dynamic culture of Mumbai and beyond. There will be an Artisanal Tea experience and a "Bombay Bond" that convenes well-known Mumbai food and beverage brands. There will be a casual dining food hall with an extensive range of Indian and international cuisines, supplemented by chef-designed concepts, breweries, and bars. There will also be Indian street food concepts provided at the arrival forecourt. The retail area will be around 5,000 square metres, with duty-free shops of 1,800 sqm each at departure and arrivals and there would be around 110 retail and F&B outlets. One of the strongest points of NMIA is its geographical advantage and multimodal connectivity. Located around 37 kilometres from South Mumbai, the airport is destined to be a hub node in the MMR's transportation grid. The existing Sion-Panvel Highway and the recently opened Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) will offer direct, high speed road connectivity from across Mumbai and the wider MMR. The new Ulwe Coastal Road will further integrate this with direct connectivity between NMIA and the MTHL, cutting travel times for commuters substantially. "This will be India's first truly multimodal airport, road, Metro, suburban rail, water taxi, and high-speed train, all linking it," said Bansal.

NMIA is linked to the suburban railway system, and the upcoming Navi Mumbai Metro Line 1 connects to Belapur and Pendhar. In addition, Mumbai Metro Line 2B is being constructed, and planned Metro Line 8 will connect CSMIA directly to NMIA, putting together an integrated urban multi-airport system. There are also plans to bring in water-taxis helping people to reach the airport at ease, at a model similar to Hong Kong, soon. The new airport is projected to have an immense economic impact. In addition to catering to passenger traffic, NMIA has an ambitious cargo plan.

The first phase will have an annual capacity of 0.5 million metric tonnes (MMTPA), with a final designed capacity of 3.2 MMTPA. The cargo terminal will be cashless and paperless, and it will have a semi-automated material handling system and state-of-the-art cold chain logistics for pharmaceuticals and perishables. "Our integrated cargo terminal can handle 0.5 million metric tonnes annually from day one, with seven widebody bays, and will scale to more than 3.2 million tonnes. It will be cashless, paperless, and equipped for cold chain pharma and perishables, said Mahapatra. The airport has also achieved the crucial certifications of IATA-CEIV, RA3, and ACC3, which validate its world-class standards in cargo handling and security. Its strategic location near the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) — only 14 km away — and the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) industrial complex will make NMIA a prime multimodal logistics gateway, stimulating commerce and trade in the region and enhancing India's supply chain efficiency. With the inauguration date approaching, airlines are already queuing up to fly from the new airport. IndiGo and Akasa Air have already expressed their commitment to operate out of NMIA, with talks in an advanced stage with other domestic and foreign carriers. "We are talking to all airlines; IndiGo and Akasa have already committed. Others are in advanced talks. Full Phase 1 capacity will be reached over six to nine months after opening," said Bansal.

Nourish to flourish, the nutrition and cognition link



Imagine that you have a flight to catch at 2 p.m. Given the factors such as the distance to travel, the traffic conditions, and airport check-in time, you are likely to miss the flight unless you leave your house at 12 p.m. The hour between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. is your critical window to make sure that you catch the flight. Similarly, for a child, the first 1,000 days of his life are that critical window — a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to lay the foundation for future success. Brain development and maturation as well as adequate growth through nutrition must happen in this period, failing which the child will never reach their full potential. What the science says

The science is undeniable. By the age of two years, the brain reaches almost 80% of its adult weight. Synapse development peaks during this time, with synaptic density reaching adult levels by preschool age. The development of the frontal lobes, which are believed to control higher cognitive functions (including planning, sequencing and self-regulation), happens in growth spurts during the first two years of life. If the foundational development of the brain and skills is flawed in these earliest days, later developments that build on earlier circuits and skills will be inherently limited. It is not just cognitive development that is defined in the first 1,000 days. Nutritional deficiencies before the age of three are, in some cases, impossible to reverse. Although India has made strides in overcoming nutritional deficiencies in the decades between 1993 and 2021, at the current rate of decline, stunting prevalence (low height for age) will reach 10% only by 2075. Can we double the pace to hit this target by 2047? To succeed, we must seize the critical window of early childhood by combining efforts on nutrition and cognition, giving children the best chance at a bright future.

Nutrition and cognitive development have to go hand in hand. They are, for all intents and purposes, cut from the same cloth. Adequate nutrition is essential for brain function, and without meeting nutritional demands, there can be permanent cognitive damage or disabilities. A birth-cohort study in Vellore, Tamil Nadu, found that early childhood iron deficiency negatively impacts verbal performance and cognitive processing speed at age five and affects expressive language development before the age of two. Research has also indicated that the impact of stand-alone nutrition programmes was low to moderate when compared to com-

bined nutrition and stimulation programmes. Learning is fast and permanent in the first few years. A three-year-old starts speaking in a regional language and never forgets it. Most of us still remember nursery rhymes, thanks to neuroplasticity. Childcare programmes in India

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme, one of the biggest childcare programmes in the world, has the unique ability to prioritise both nutrition and education as pillars of early childhood development. The Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched programmes such as "Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi", which seek to ensure that nutrition and cognitive development go hand in hand. Additionally, the National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation for Children from Birth to Three Years — Navchetana provides structured guidance in the form of simple activities for social and cognitive stimulation based on the age of the child. The framework offers 140 activities tailored to the child's age, presented in a 36-month stimulation activity calendar. It is designed to be used by parents, caregivers and Anganwadi or crèche workers, particularly during home visits. These provide an opportunity to learn through play-based activities supported by caregivers, rather than being 'taught' in a formal sense. Well-conducted home visits using the stimulation calendar will help children under the age of three receive adequate, timely, and nutrient-rich food to support their holistic development and reduce the risk of developmental delays due to nutritional deficits.

Areas that need improvement Though an army of almost 14 lakh Anganwadi centres and workers is at the frontlines of the battle to ensure that children get adequate nutrition and stimulation, especially in the first 1,000 days, more needs to be done. The ICDS programme needs to enhance its coverage and achieve saturation of its target populations with high-quality services in health, nutrition and early learning. It needs to leverage advancements in technology, expand and enhance services in urban areas, and improve the access, capacity and delivery of pre-primary education, including evaluation and measurement of the health, learning and psychosocial well-being of children under six years. Finally, to empower women to join the productive workforce, we need to expand the crèche provision by exploring multiple models including publicly-run, community-run and public-private partnerships. We must remember we are what we eat and what we think — and what is lost in the early years can never be regained. Investing in early childhood nutrition and stimulation is not just about health. It is about empowering children and women to reach their full potential and meeting the evolving needs of society. Investments in early childhood and investment are particularly urgent as we progress towards increased automation, mechanisation and an accelerated pace of technological advancement, which is likely to lead to less employment for low-skilled and unskilled workers. Nina Badgaiyan is Senior Public Health Expert (Consultant) at the Asian Development Bank. Namya Mahajan is Co-founder at Rocket Learning

Land of hope and despair: crop failure and rising debts push farmers to suicides in Andhra

Every morning, 40-year-old Aitamraju Anjamma wakes up to the dreadful prospect of finding moneylenders at her doorstep. "They come every day, without fail," she says, in a voice trembling with grief and gloom. In the message inbox of her phone are countless reminders from a bank about missed repayment deadlines for agricultural and home loans. How much?, Which bank? she doesn't know. Such matters used to be handled by her husband, Aitamraju Venkateswarlu, who is no more. A resident of Rachamalla Padu village in Veldurthi mandal of Palnadu district, Anjamma stopped going to agricultural work five years ago owing to her declining health. She doesn't have any income apart from the pension under the NTR Bharosa scheme received by a relative, who stays with her. This and a sum sent by her brother, a watchman in Hyderabad, keeps fire in the hearth. Though Anjamma herself is eligible for a pension of ₹4,000 under the NTR Bharosa scheme, she is yet to receive any. As of now, she owes a debt of around ₹32 lakh to over 15 people. It was the same pressure that is believed to have driven Venkateswarlu to end his life on June 11, 2024. He cultivated chilli, cotton and paddy and found himself under a heavy yoke of debt following successive crop failures and fluctuating market prices over the previous three years. Since the death of her husband, Anjamma, mother of three children, has spent sleepless nights, dealing with grief and anxiety, which deteriorated her health further. "Currently, except for our house and an acre of land, we don't have anything," she says. Anjamma's is not an isolated case. Between January 1, 2014, and February 3, 2025, there were 399 suicides in the region falling within the administrative limits of Palnadu, which was carved out of Guntur district in 2022. All of them are owing to 'debt' or 'loss in cultivation', showed a Right To Information (RTI) response from the District Crime Records Bureau to an application filed by B. Kondala Reddy of the Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV), an organisation working towards ensuring sustainable livelihoods for agricultural communities in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. According to Mr. Kondala Reddy, farmer suicides are rising in the State, and most of them are being reported from the two regions of Palnadu-Bapatla and Kurnool-Anantapur. "Many farmers' organisations have put the number of total farmer suicides in A.P. in 2024-25 at 300. But the government's official figure stands at 39, which is a gross underestimation of reality," he says, pointing to the National Crime Records Bureau data for the State in 2020 and 2021, when 889 and 1,065 people in the farm sector, both farmers and tenant farmers, died by suicide. According to Palnadu District Agricultural Officer Murali, 119 farmers ended their lives between 2022 and August 2025, and ex gratia was paid in 77 cases; the rest will be covered soon. But it is yet to be known how many families affected by suicides that took place between 2014 and 2021 have received ex gratia. A team of activists from the Human Rights Forum (HRF), an organisation working on human rights violations in A.P. and Telangana, and RSV visited nine of these families earlier this month. They found that most were tenant and small farmers, owning one or two acres of land and cultivating chilli and cotton. Eight of these families are yet to receive the ex gratia of ₹7 lakh instituted by the Government Order (G.O.) 43. Anjamma's family, too, has not received the ex gratia. A mechanism crippled by noncompliance According to a G.O. issued on October 14, 2019, a mandal-level committee led by a tahsildar should visit the suicide-affected family and submit a preliminary report within 24 hours to a division-level committee led by the Sub-Collector. The division-level committee should then "complete the verification process and furnish final recommendations for sanction of [the] ex gratia within 7 days." Of the eight families that the teams visited and later The Hindu spoke to, only one family

said that these official teams visited them. As for, Anjamma, days are spent stressing over how to clear her debts. "Even if we put our one-acre land on lease, we won't get more than ₹9,000 a year," she says, adding that tenancy rates plummeted over the past few years owing to declining land value, which, in turn, was due to crop failures. She pins her hopes on her son, pursuing MSc. in molecular biology at Central University of A.P. in Anantapur and her daughter, studying at a government degree college in Guntur. When The Hindu spoke to the son, who was unwilling to be named, he says there is not enough money to pay the laboratory fee of ₹30,000. Passionate about science since childhood, he wants to pursue Ph.D., but financial constraints force him to think about part-time jobs instead. The root cause Aitamraju Venkateswarlu used to cultivate two commercial crops on seven acres, one, their own, and six taken on lease. Sometimes, when there was enough water, he would cultivate paddy, too. Things were better for Anjamma's family until three years ago. In 2022, prices of a quintal of chilli touched an unprecedented ₹25,000. Buoyed by this, many began cultivating chilli on more acres. After peaking, the rates began to fall. In 2023, when the rates touched ₹15,000, farmers were still hopeful. But then it came crashing down, says Kakani Venkateswarlu, a trader in Guntur. Now, in the chilli market of Guntur, the price stands around 10,000-12,000. Rising input costs, borewell failures, high tenancy rates, repeated pest infestations, erratic rains and non-remunerative prices for cotton and chilli have dealt a body blow to farmers in Palnadu district, the top producer of the red chillies in Andhra Pradesh. "Though the government does come up with market intervention regularly, it does so after the damage has been done. In the case of cotton, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) is available, but not many get it owing to the produce not meeting the quality standards set by the government," says K. Anuradha, HRF-A.P. executive committee member. Chilli, the major horticulture crop of Palnadu, was grown on around 40,000 hectares in 2024-25, down from the 52,016 hectares in 2023-24, as per data available in the District Handbook of Statistics. Horticulture officials attribute the decline to thrips infestation and believe that the area under cultivation may come down further this year. Sowing of chilli begins in late kharif in Palnadu, from mid-August till September end, and its a costly affair compared to cotton. While per acre expenses, excluding tenancy rate, remain around ₹50,000 for cotton, for chilli, it goes up to ₹2.5 lakh, including tenancy rate (which needs to be paid upfront). Most farmers are dependent on canals for irrigation, and harvesting begins in January. "In 2021-2022, there was an increase in thrips infestation. Last year, when the district received rains in October, during the flowering stage of chillies, the infestation increased again, causing huge losses for farmers," says a district official, seeking anonymity. As for cotton, pink bollworm and other pests make cultivation risky. "Farmers don't know how to keep the pests away. Due to the infestations, the yield per acre of cotton has come down from 10-15 quintals to 6-7 over the past few years," says S. Rajamani, principal scientist (cotton), Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University. "For many of us, chillies are the only hope," says Nagendra Babu, a farmer from Telukutla in Gurazala, on being asked why they go for chilli. A good chilli crop should yield 20-25 quintals an acre, but farmers can break even only if a quintal fetches a price of ₹15,000 or more, he adds. At Nagendra Babu's village, the annual tenancy rate is ₹20,000 an acre. If there is a borewell, the rate goes up to ₹30,000. Gundala Nagendramma holding a photo of her son, Gundala Anjaneyulu, who died by suicide on August 17, 2024, due to crop failure and mounting debts, at Telukutla village in Gurazala mandal of Palnadu district. Gundala Nagendramma holding a photo of her son, Gundala Anjaneyulu,

U.S. tariff impact: India sees Asia's biggest earnings downgrades



Indian companies have seen the steepest earnings downgrades in Asia, with analysts slashing forecasts as steep U.S. tariffs heighten risks to growth even if proposed domestic tax cuts help cushion the impact. According to LSEG IBES data, forward 12-month earnings estimates for India's large and mid-cap firms have been cut by 1.2% in the past two weeks, the sharpest in Asia.

The cuts follow a lacklustre season of quarterly earnings reports extending a bout of weakness among listed firms which

kicked off last year and has hurt benchmark equity indexes. India's economy is largely domestic and firms which are part of the Nifty 50 index earn only 9% of revenue from the U.S. but the tariff hike to as high as 50% on exports to the world's largest economy presents a risk to economic growth. Analysis by MUFG indicates that a sustained 50% tariff could cut India's GDP growth by 1 percentage point over time, with the biggest hit to employment-sensitive sectors such as textiles. Looking to buoy domestic consumption, Prime

Minister Narendra Modi recently announced sweeping tax reforms to boost the economy in the face of a trade conflict with Washington. "It's a little bit of an interesting time given what's happened with the tariffs that have been imposed on India," said Rishabh Rasid, global market strategist at J.P. Morgan Asset Management. Valuations are still elevated and "we could potentially see the tariff triggering a broad valuation re-rating downwards and make some of the domestic-oriented stocks attractive," she said. Earnings growth for In-

dian companies has been in single-digit percentages for five consecutive quarters, below the 15%-25% growth seen between 2020-21 and 2023-24. Following the April-June earnings announcements, forward 12-month net income forecasts for automobiles and components, capital goods, food and beverages, and consumer durables sectors saw the deepest cuts in earnings estimates, each down about 1% or more, the data showed. The government's plans to lower consumption taxes are also expected to boost the country's GDP growth.

Economists at Standard Chartered pencil in a boost of 0.35-0.45 percentage points in the fiscal year ending in March 2027. India's real GDP growth averaged 8.8% between fiscal 2022 and 2024, the highest in Asia-Pacific. It is projected to grow at 6.8% annually over the next three years. Bank of America's latest fund manager survey shows that India has tumbled from the most-favoured to the least-preferred Asian equity market in just two months.

Ada Lovelace: the Enchantress of Numbers



Women in STEM is a popular term you would have heard, and it is well-celebrated in the modern age. However, what about the women who laid the stepping stones for the term? Women who not only broke gender barriers but also played an important role in laying the foundation in several modern fields. One such icon was Ada Lovelace. Augusta Ada King, Countess of Lovelace, more commonly known as Ada Lovelace, was the daughter of the poet Lord Byron and his wife, Anne Isabella Milbanke. She did something most women deemed impossible then. She became the world’s first computer programmer. Even though recognised much later, her visionary notes on Charles Babbage’s Analytical Engine included what is recognised as the first computer algorithm, earning her that title.

Being a single mother, Lady Byron was sceptical of several skills thought to be irrational — specifically subjects like the arts — which she associated with Lord Byron. In order to prevent Ada from having any poetic tendencies, Lady Byron made sure that her daughter received a rigorous education in science and mathematics, which were very uncommon for girls in her era. Ada had a natural aptitude for numbers and reasoning from a young age. Among her tutors were renowned mathematicians like Augustus De Morgan, a well-known logician, and Mary Somerville, one of the first female members of the Royal Astronomical

Society. Ada’s life changed dramatically when she met Charles Babbage, the inventor and mathematician who is frequently referred to as the “father of the computer”, when she was just 17 years old. Babbage was then developing the Difference Engine, a mechanical device used to perform mathematical calculations. Ada was fascinated by his ideas and demonstrated a thorough understanding of his work.

They developed a strong intellectual bond, and Babbage was impressed by her perceptions and critical abilities. He affectionately referred to her as “The Enchantress of Numbers”. Babbage and Lovelace’s friendship and collaboration would become one of the most significant intellectual partnerships of the 19th Century. Babbage later started working on the Analytical Engine, a general-purpose computing machine. It contained many features that we see and use in modern computers, including an arithmetic logic unit and integrated memory. In 1842, based on a lecture Babbage gave in Turin, Italian engineer Luigi Federico Menabrea wrote a paper in French about the Analytical Engine. Lovelace was commissioned to translate this paper into English. But she went far beyond a mere translation.

Her notes were three times longer than the original text and offered profound insights into the potential of the machine. She described how the engine could be programmed to perform tasks beyond pure number-crunching—such as composing music—highlighting her prescient understanding of computing as a universal machine. Lovelace most famously included a technique for using the Analytical Engine to calculate a series of Bernoulli numbers. This is widely regarded as the first algorithm ever intended to be executed by a machine, making her the first computer programmer in history. Ada Lovelace Day, celebrated annually in October, promotes the achievements of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The U.S. Department of Defence named a programming language “Ada” in her honour in the 1980s. She was also aware of machines’ limitations and emphasised the difference between human creativity and machine processing, which is still relevant in discussions about automation and artificial intelligence today. But in the late 1840s, her health began to decline, and in 1852, she passed away from uterine cancer. She was buried next to her father, Lord Byron, in Nottinghamshire’s Church of St Mary Magdalene, as she requested. For many years after her death, Ada Lovelace’s contributions were largely forgotten. It wasn’t until the mid-20th Century, with the rise of computer science as a discipline, that her work was rediscovered and properly recognised. In a field where women have been traditionally

‘Disclose PEDs to insurers’

For now, hiding a pre-existing disease (PED) from an insurer before buying a health policy might seem to be an advantage with a lower cost premium. However, the reality is that it can lead to rejection of the claim or even policy cancellation. In both cases, the policyholder must pay exorbitant medical bills from his/her pocket. When one buys cover, he/she is entering into a contract with the insurer. All the medical insurance policies are developed on a legally-binding principle – ‘utmost good faith’ so the insurer and the policyholder must be transparent and honest. While buying the policy, the policyholder has an obligation to disclose all relevant details regarding his/her health conditions, including PEDs. If even a small piece of information on PEDs is not disclosed, it means the policyholder has violated the fundamental legal principle, thereby forcing the insurer to reject claim or even cancel the policy itself. The premium the policyholder has paid till then will go down the drain.

What are PEDs?

A PED is a disease/medical condition existing in an individual even before buying a policy. Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) guidelines say illness/disease is treated as a PED if it was diagnosed within three years (36 months) prior to the purchase of the policy by a recognised doctor. (Previously it was 48 months but IRDAI brought it down to 36 months, effective from April 1, 2024.) In common insurance parlance, if an individual knows he has a health issue before buying the policy, it is considered a PED and must be disclosed. V. Mangala, senior subject-matter executive, Aionion Insurance Marketing Pvt. Ltd., says, “It must be noted not every visit to a doctor is treated as a PED. For instance, if you consult a doctor for normal fever, cold, cough, etc. you need not reveal these details. PEDs are those ailments that have a major impact on your general health in the long run. Say, for instance, BP, cholesterol, thyroid, asthma, piles, diabetes, lumbar issues, previous surgery or heart attacks, epilepsy etc., these must necessarily be divulged to the insurer.”

Waiting period

Another concept while buying health



insurance policy is the waiting period. Most insurers in India cover pre-existing diseases but only after the waiting period gets over. If any medical emergency occurs during the waiting period, especially related to the PED, then in almost all cases, the claim would naturally be rejected by the insurer. Though the concept of wait period is there in all insurers, the wait time might differ across insurers. Generally, majority of the insurance companies provide coverage to PEDs after a waiting period of two to three years.

Ms. Mangala says, “In some insurance companies, riders are sold separately at an additional premium. These riders reduce the waiting period, and some insurance companies also cover PEDs from Day 1 with or without a rider, of course, the premium will be high. Therefore, before buying a policy, whether an individual health insurance policy or a family floater policy, the policyholder must choose a policy that has no/lower waiting period.”

Co-payment clause

Some insurers might offer PED coverage with a ‘co-payment’ clause. Based on the co-payment agreement, the policyholder must pay an agreed portion of the total claim amount; only then will the insurance company settle the remaining claim amount. Ms. Mangala says that it is always advisable and cost-effective to choose a policy without the ‘co-payment’ condition so that the entire claim amount would be settled by the insurance company.”

Global warming changing cloud patterns. That means more global warming

Melbourne: At any given time, about two-thirds of Earth’s surface is covered by clouds. Overall, they make the planet much cooler than it would be without them. But as Earth gets warmer, mostly due to the rise in greenhouse gases in the atmosphere from humans burning fossil fuels, clouds are changing too.

And that might already be causing more warming – adding to the greenhouse heat boost, and changing clouds even more. Over the past few years, the world’s average temperature has increased more than climate scientists were expecting. In our latest research, led by NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, we show that changes in clouds have made a significant contribution to turning up the thermostat. Clouds and climate

Clouds help to keep Earth cool by reflecting sunlight back out to space before it can reach the ground. But not all clouds are equal. Shiny, white clouds reflect away more sunlight – especially when they are closer to the equator, in the parts of Earth that receive the most sun. Grey, broken clouds reflect less sunlight, as do clouds closer to the poles where less light falls.

Research published last year showed that Earth has been absorbing more sunlight than the greenhouse effect alone can explain. Clouds were involved, but it wasn’t clear exactly how. Bright cloud zones are shrinking. A new study shows what is happening. The areas covered by highly reflective clouds are shrinking. At the same time, the areas containing broken, less reflective clouds are growing. The net effect is that additional energy from sunlight is reaching Earth’s surface. Here it is absorbed, leading to extra heating. The effect of changes in the properties of the highly reflective clouds, caused by things such as changes in the amount of aerosol pollution in the atmosphere. were found much smaller than the effect of the change in area.



In the big picture, Earth’s wind patterns are driven by hot air rising near the equator and the rotation of the planet. This creates huge, looping currents of atmospheric circulation around the globe. Local weather systems – the kind that determine the location and type of clouds – depend on these major, large-scale wind systems. The major circulation patterns in the atmosphere are changing as a result of global warming. We found much of the cloud action is taking place at the edges of these major wind systems. Highly reflective clouds are on the decline in a region near the equator called the intertropical convergence zone, and also two other bands called the storm tracks, which lie between 30 and 40 degrees of latitude. At the same time the subtropical trade-wind regions, home to ever-present but less reflective broken clouds, are expanding. A feedback loop

In short, the global warming induced by increased greenhouse gases changes the major wind systems on Earth. This in turn reduces the area of highly reflective clouds, leading to additional warming. Warming changes wind patterns, which changes cloud patterns, which results in more warming.

Endocrine disruptors in plastic waste: a new public health threat



Plastics have revolutionised modern living with their convenience and affordability, but this same ubiquity is spawning an invisible, long-term health crisis. Beyond choking oceans and clogging landfills, plastics are now infiltrating our bodies through microplastic particles and a cocktail of endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs). The evidence is clear and deeply concerning: these substances are interfering with our hormonal systems, damaging reproductive health and increasing our susceptibility to chronic diseases, including cancer. India, now the world’s largest generator of plastic waste, stands at the epicenter of this escalating public health emergency. Microplastics in the human body: from the environment to the bloodstream

Once considered inert pollutants, microplastics—plastic particles smaller than 5 mm—are now recognised as biologically active. A 2022 study by Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam detected microplastics in the blood of 80% of human participants. Further, a 2024 study published in Nature Scientific Reports reported the presence of microplastics in nearly 89% of blood samples in India, with an average concentration of 4.2 particles per milliliter. These particles have also been found in human lungs, hearts, placentas, breast milk, ovarian follicular fluid, and semen. Alarmingly, testicular tissue in Indian men was found to contain three times more microplastics than that in dogs.

The plastics in our lives are not chemically neutral. They often contain EDCs such as: Bisphenol A (BPA) and BPS: Used in water bottles, food containers, and thermal paper. - Phthalates (e.g., DEHP, DBP): Used to soften plastics and found in cosmetics, toys and IV tubing. - PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances): Found in food packaging and non-stick cookware. These chemicals mimic or block natural hormones such as estrogen, testosterone, thyroid hormones, and cortisol. They interfere with receptor binding, disrupt gene expression in reproductive organs, and induce oxidative stress, inflammation, and apoptosis (cell death). Animal studies published in Food and Chemical Toxicology (2023) showed that even low doses of polystyrene microplastics (20 µg/L) disrupted testosterone levels, impaired sperm production, and damaged the blood-testis barrier. Similar effects were observed in ovaries, where microplastics reduced anti-Müllerian hormone levels, triggered oxidative stress pathways, and induced cell death. Recent clinical studies from China and India have linked the presence of microplastics in semen to reduced sperm count, concentration and motility. Exposure to BPA and phthalates has been associated with lower testosterone levels and elevated luteinizing hormone (LH) levels—both indicators of endocrine disruption. A global review published in Science of the Total Environment further supports the connection between microplastics and male subfertility. Notably, a 2023 study in Environmental Science & Technology Letters reported a strong correlation between microplastic levels in semen and decreased sperm count, motility, and abnormal morphology in Chinese men. In India, studies have documented a 30% decline in average sperm count over the past two decades.

A study published in Ecotoxicology and Environmental Safety (2025) found microplastics in 14 out of 18 follicular fluid samples collected from women undergoing fertility treatment in Italy. These particles, along with their associated endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs), were found to compromise egg quality and were linked to menstrual irregularities, reduced estradiol levels, and an increased risk

of miscarriage. Epidemiological studies have also linked exposure to phthalates and BPA with conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), endometriosis, and spontaneous abortions. These associations have been further supported by findings published in Advances in Pharmacology (2021) and Frontiers in Cell and Developmental Biology (2023). The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) now classifies several plastic additives as probable human carcinogens. Case-control studies from India have shown that women with elevated levels of DEHP in their urine face nearly a threefold increased risk of breast cancer (odds ratio = 2.97). Exposure to BPA and phthalates has also been linked to higher incidences of prostate, uterine, and testicular cancers.

In addition to their carcinogenic potential, these endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) have been implicated in metabolic disorders. By mimicking cortisol, altering insulin sensitivity, and promoting fat storage, EDCs contribute to the development of obesity and type 2 diabetes. Moreover, PFAS exposure has been associated with metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease, and thyroid dysfunction, as reported in a 2024 study published in Frontiers in Public Health. India generates over 9.3 million tonnes of plastic waste each year. Of this, approximately 5.8 million tonnes are incinerated, releasing toxic gases, while 3.5 million tonnes end up polluting the environment. Studies have shown that residents in cities like Mumbai are exposed to between 382 and 2,012 microplastic particles daily through air, food, and water. In Nagpur, doctors are reporting an increase in cases of early puberty, respiratory problems, obesity, and learning disorders in children—conditions increasingly linked to plastic pollution. Recent testing by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) detected phthalate concentrations in drinking water samples from Delhi, Jabalpur, and Chennai that exceeded European Union safety limits. Despite progressive policies like the Plastic Waste Management Rules (2016, updated in 2022 and 2024), enforcement remains inconsistent. Current regulations do not account for low-dose effects or the complex interactions of EDCs, nor do they address the specific vulnerabilities of children and pregnant women.

The health burden associated with EDCs in India is staggering, costing over ₹25,000 crore annually due to increased healthcare spending and lost productivity. The poorest populations, often living near waste dumps or working in the informal recycling sector, bear the brunt of this crisis. Globally, the U.S. reports healthcare costs of \$250 billion annually linked to plastic-related chemicals, according to the Endocrine Society. Biomonitoring and surveillance are crucial for establishing national programmes that measure endocrine-disrupting chemical (EDC) levels in blood, urine, and breast milk. Longitudinal studies must be funded to assess the health impacts of EDC exposure on fertility, neurodevelopment, and chronic diseases. In addition, public awareness needs to be improved, and behaviour changes should be encouraged, such as educating people on the risks of microwaving food in plastic containers and promoting the use of glass, stainless steel, and EDC-free alternatives. It is also important to advocate for antioxidant-rich diets to help counteract oxidative stress.

Further actions should include enforcing plastic segregation, recycling, and safe disposal, while investing in microplastic filtration systems for water treatment plants. Additionally, incentivising the development of biodegradable, non-toxic materials is essential to reduce EDC exposure. Plastic pollution is no longer a distant environmental concern; it is a biological invasion with profound implications for human health. The infiltration of microplastics and plastic-derived EDCs into our bodies is triggering hormonal disruption, reproductive dysfunction and chronic diseases. The science is undeniable, and the time for action is now. For India, the world’s most exposed population, this is more than a policy issue—it is a generational imperative. We must address this silent epidemic through science-driven regulation, robust monitoring, public education, and systemic change. The health of our people, especially our children, depends on it.

Revisit digital search powers under the I-T Bill 2025

The Finance Minister recently introduced a proposal in Parliament to allow tax authorities to access, under the Income-Tax Bill, 2025, an individual’s “virtual digital space” during search and seizure operations. The justification is straightforward: as financial activity moves online, so must enforcement. However, this glosses over the far-reaching implications of such a shift, which raises significant concerns about privacy, overreach, and surveillance.

A blurring, open-ended

Currently, India’s tax law already provides for search and seizure under Section 132 of the Income-Tax Act, 1961. But those powers are limited to physical space such as a house, office, and locker. Since such operations are based on suspicion of undisclosed income or assets, there is a connection between the objective, which is finding undisclosed income and getting access to physical assets.

The new Bill, however, blurs this link by including an individual’s digital presence which is not only vast but often contains much more than what is relevant to a tax investigation. Without clear limits, such access can lead to disproportionate intrusion. For example, under the existing regime, what could be searched was what concerned only the individual under investigation. In contrast, digital spaces involve multiple stakeholders. Accessing a social media account also exposes friends, family, and professional contacts, through photographs and posts.

The proposed definition of ‘virtual digital space’ includes access to emails, personal cloud drives, social media accounts, digital application platforms, and more. Crucially, the phrase “any other space of similar nature” makes the list open-ended, potentially covering a wide range of digital platforms. Additionally, the proposed provision empowers tax authorities to override access codes to gain entry into electronic devices or virtual digital spaces. It still remains unclear though how this power will be operationalised in practice particularly in cases involving encrypted messaging apps such as WhatsApp, as explicitly cited by the Finance Minister in Parliament. The problem becomes even more of a concern when the individual involved is a professional whose work requires confidentiality. For instance, journalists whose devices and emails hold sensitive information, including confidential sources, unpublished material, and protected communications. If a search is conducted on flimsy or overly broad grounds, it not only violates their privacy but also endangers their ability to undertake reporting. Recognising the risks, the Supreme Court of India, in 2023, circulated interim guidelines on the seizure of digital devices and directed the Union Government to contemplate formulating necessary protocols. Moreover, the judicial interpre-



tation of “reason to believe” emphasises the need for tangible material beyond mere suspicion. Even under existing law, courts have construed that the provision ought to be exercised strictly, acknowledging that search and seizure is a serious invasion of privacy. A violation of transparency, accountability

Yet, the proposed provision goes against these principles and is devoid of guardrails, judicial oversight, and has a lack of understanding of the stakes. It fails to acknowledge, let alone address, the sheer breadth and layered sensitivity of information stored on electronic devices. In line with the current law, the proposed provision prohibits disclosure of the “reason to believe” clearly violating principles of transparency and accountability. Globally, privacy and transparency standards in search and seizure, especially where digital devices are involved, are grounded in statutory protections and procedural safeguards. In Canada, Section 8 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the right to be secure against “unreasonable search or seizure”. It is designed to prevent unjustified searches and sets a three-part default standard: prior authorisation; approval by a neutral and impartial judicial authority; and reasonable and probable grounds. In the United States, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, adopted by the Internal Revenue Service, affirms that taxpayers have the right to expect that any inquiry or enforcement action will be legally compliant and will not be more intrusive than necessary following due process rights, including search and seizure protections. The U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Riley vs California also necessitated a warrant before accessing digital data, given the deeply personal nature of information stored on phones and devices. Contradiction of proportionality

test

In contrast, India’s proposed Income Tax provision grants sweeping access to digital personal data without warrants, relevance thresholds, or any distinction between financial and non-financial information.

As Unesco honours historic Maratha forts, 5 in Mumbai crumble in silence despite storied military legacy



At the heart of Mumbai’s Dharavi, where bustle and cacophony dominate daily life, a small directional sign points into a narrow lane, Kala Qilla Road. Like countless bylanes in this slum sprawl, it is cramped and chaotic, lined with hawkers, fruit sellers, and tiny shops. At the very end of this lane, tucked behind a row of hutments, looms a massive black, rectangular structure — the Riwa Fort, known locally as Kala Qilla for its charcoal hue.

At one corner of the fort, half-hidden behind a stack of plastic containers and parked two-wheelers, stands an information plaque declaring the site a ‘State Protected Monument’ in gold lettering. The words appear at odds with the reality around it. The fort’s stone walls are coated with algae, and creepers push their way out of cracks, silent evidence of years of neglect. Using the walls as a ready-made base, Dharavi’s hutments have grown into an informal boundary around the monument. The story of Riwa Fort is not unique. In July this year, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) granted World Heritage status to 12 forts under the collective concept of the ‘Maratha Military Landscape of India’. Eleven of them are located across Maharashtra’s Raigad, Pune, Satara, Ratnagiri, Kolhapur, Sindhudurg, and Nashik districts, while one stands in Tamil Nadu’s Villupuram district. Mumbai, too, is home to six forts of historical and military importance. Of these, five — Riwa, Sewri, Worli, Mahim, and Bandra — fall under the custody of the state’s Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, while the Sion Fort is overseen by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Like the newly recognised Maratha forts, the six in Mumbai also boast a storied military legacy, with links stretching from Yadava ruler Raja Bimba and Mughal emperor Aurangzeb to the Portuguese colonists, the East India Company, and even the Seven Years’ War of the 18th century. Yet, as a recent visit by The Indian Express revealed, five of Mumbai’s six forts are in a precarious state, Riwa Fort included. Records from the state government, along with responses to Right to Information (RTI) queries filed by The Indian Express, confirm the neglect: most of these forts have seen no restoration or conservation efforts in more than a decade. The forts and their present-day condition

The origins of the Riwa Fort, which stands at the heart of Dharavi’s slums, date back to the 18th century. Just above the Archaeology Department’s information plaque is a nearly defaced inscription that proclaims the fort’s history, “Built by order of the Honorable Horn Esq President and Governor of Bombay in 1737.” According to records, John Horne served as the 19th Governor of the erstwhile Bombay between 1734 and 1739.

In the 18th century, Dharavi was a marshland on the banks of the Miithi River (Mahim Creek), separating the British-controlled seven islands — Isle of Bombay, Colaba, Little Colaba, Mazagaon, Parel, Worli, and Mahim — from the Portuguese-held Salsette Island. Salsette comprised what is now Mumbai’s dense suburban belt between Dahisar and Bandra. “The seven islands, which were initially under Portuguese control, were handed over to the British as part of the famous dowry to King Charles II of England in 1665. Following this, between 1672 and 1692, the British were attacked by the Dutch, Mughals and Siddis of Janjira. This prompted the British to strengthen their fortifications and in 1737, the administration commissioned the construction of the Riwa Fort,” said Sandeep Dahisarkar, archaeologist and author.

Today, the fort stands in a dilapidated state. There are no defined entry or exit points, which historians say is because it functioned as a military watchtower overlooking the Sion Fort. Local residents have built makeshift stairs to reach the upper deck, where some have set up poultry farms. The floors and walls appear unstable, with stone

slabs jutting out. Ropes are strung across the deck for drying clothes. “The slum pockets are very congested, so we don’t get sunlight here very easily. Therefore, we put our clothes for drying at the deck of the fort after washing them,” said Shanti Mishra, 49, a Dharavi resident of over two decades. Living adjacent to one of the staircases that leads to the upper deck, she added that in winter, local residents also use the fort for drying lentil dumplings and pickles. “Often, tour guides bring tourists over here to show this place, so we know for a fact that this structure has importance. However, nobody has ever restricted us from using this fort for our chores,” Mishra added. Seven kilometres away, at Mumbai’s western shoreline, stands the Mahim Fort. Believed to date back to the 13th century, it is considered the oldest of the city’s surviving forts. Declared a State Protected Monument in 1975 and given Grade I heritage status, it nevertheless became heavily encroached. Until 2022, as many as 276 families lived illegally inside its precincts. That year, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), acting on state government orders, relocated the families. Since then, the fort has been closed to the public, but its condition remains precarious. Walls are corroded, sections of the boundary wall have collapsed, and the main entrance is unstable.

“Since people would live inside earlier, miscreants wouldn’t gather here. Now that the entire place is empty, people would come and gather here at night. After the local residents raised this issue with the police, the fort was shut down,” said a local resident. Authorities note that decades of unauthorised alterations, including the destruction of staircases and bunkers, have scarred the structure permanently. Officials also point out that the deterioration accelerated after Independence, with large-scale encroachment beginning in the 1950s. Across Mahim Bay, facing the Arabian Sea, stands the Worli Fort, dating back to the 16th century. Its black, rectangular form offers an unhindered view of the coast and has often been used as a backdrop in Hindi films. Yet the site is heavily encroached. Inside, a small temple has been established by local residents, while duplex slum units have been built directly onto its outer walls. The fort’s decks and basements double as drying and storage areas for the nearby fishing community. Approaching the fort is also difficult: it lacks a direct road and can only be reached via a narrow kutchra road from the Worli Koliwada bus stop.

On the city’s eastern edge stands the Sion Fort, built in the 17th century atop a hillock near the railway station. The fort, a Grade I heritage structure, houses the regional office of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at its base. Unlike other forts, it has no encroachments, but its condition remains poor, with walls and floors weakened by time. Stone blocks are coming loose in several areas, and the structure shows signs of neglect.

About five kilometres away, overlooking the creek and the newly built Atal Setu, is the Sewri Fort, also from the 17th century. Here, some hope of revival exists. The state Archaeology Department has initiated restoration work, and when The Indian Express visited, the site was closed to the public as repairs were underway. Floors and roofs were being reinforced, while the southern wall, described by contractors as being “on the verge of collapse,” was also slated for repair. In contrast, the Bandra Fort in the western suburbs stands in relatively better condition. Built by the Portuguese in the 17th century, it has been partially restored and was reopened to the public last year, making it one of the few forts in Mumbai to see any significant conservation effort. No maintenance, lack of manpower

Despite their historical significance, Mumbai’s forts remain in precarious condition. Records from the state Archaeology Department and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) reveal that no comprehensive maintenance plan has been implemented for conserving these structures. In an RTI response to The Indian Express, the state archaeology department admitted that no maintenance work had been carried out at the Worli and Mahim forts between 2014 and 2025.

Another RTI reply showed that in 2019, the department allotted Rs 84 lakh for the restoration and conservation of the Riwa Fort in Dharavi. However, only basic cleaning of the fort’s decks could be undertaken before the project stalled. “There is a big tree that has grown from the cracks of the fort, and we had to cut it down in order to go ahead with the maintenance work. However, the BMC didn’t give us permission to take down the tree, stating that it will be dangerous. Meanwhile, the entire periphery of the fort was

The Deep State’s Asian playbook: Why India must stay vigilant

South Asia is on fire; governments have been toppled amid waves of public fury, including Nepal. But the unrest follows a troubling pattern: states moving closer to India or China suddenly face chaos, often amplified by foreign toolkits and U.S. “Deep State” interventions under the guise of democracy promotion. India is not immune. As the opposition peddles unproven “vote chori” claims and echoes external narratives, the risk of manipulation grows. The real test is whether India’s political class can unite to safeguard democracy and sovereignty before it is too late. The political fires burning across South Asia are not random sparks. They are part of a disturbing pattern where foreign toolkits exploit discontent to topple governments. From Colombo to Dhaka, from Islamabad to Kathmandu, we are watching unfolding of the same playbook. The danger for India is real.

This is the moment when our opposition parties must stop playing with matches in a dry forest. They can dislike Narendra Modi. They can prepare to defeat him in 2029. But they cannot open the gates for outside forces looking to destabilise India from within. Sri Lanka was the first domino. In 2022, economic collapse and street rage forced the president to flee. Two years later, Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh was pushed into exile after violent protests. Imran Khan’s fall in Pakistan came amid orchestrated turmoil. Indonesia has been kept on boil. And this week, Nepal exploded, its prime minister resigning after mayhem that shook the Himalayan state to its core. Different countries. Different leaders. Different triggers. Yet a common script: mass anger, collapsing trust in elites, cries of corruption and inequality, and sudden explosions of youth-led fury. These alignments make one thing clear: whenever a state drifts from Washington’s orbit, unrest follows. Coincidence? Hardly.

For decades, America’s “Deep State” — the entrenched network of security, intelligence, and bureaucratic elites — has shaped outcomes abroad. It claims to promote democracy. This creates spaces for chaos, allowing extremist ideologies and pliable regimes to take root. Nepal is the latest case study. Analysts say the unrest was sparked by the government’s September ban on multiple social media platforms. True — but that is not the full story. The protests were overwhelmingly youth-led, coordinated online, and carried slogans that echoed global activist playbooks. Commentators on Indian channels were quick to suggest: “Nepal ke youth ne kar diya, ab India ki baari.” Even opposition parties like Congress, Samajwadi Party and RJD echoed such views. The similarities with India — youth unemployment, corruption, accountability gaps — are being exaggerated to create a sense of impending crisis here. What is left unsaid: India remains the fastest-growing major economy. Flaws exist, yes. But to call India an “anarchy in waiting” is absurd. The tragedy is that India’s opposition seems eager to play chorus. Having failed to convince voters for nine years, it now clings to the “vote chori” theory. No evidence offered. No authentication attempted. Just rhetoric. The BJP claims this campaign has foreign fingerprints, crafted abroad to erode trust in Indian democracy. The Congress mocks the charge. But the echoes are troubling. Rahul Gandhi’s messaging often sounds uncannily aligned with U.S. talking points. His claim of a “dead economy.” His parroting of “Vote Chori.” His bizarre threats that youth will beat Modi with sticks. His silence or absence during critical moments—Punjab floods, the Vice-

Khalid Jamil’s pragmatic approach is the way forward for Indian football.

Resolute, defensively solid, substance over style, and making the most of every opportunity — that is how Khalid Jamil played his football and that is also how his Indian team has gone about business so far. Khalid, who was born in Kuwait and moved to India after Iraq’s invasion of the West Asian country, was a naturally gifted player and did not take long to attract the attention of Kolkata giants Mohun Bagan and East Bengal. Strength of conviction

However, being a devout Muslim, he rejected both teams due to their sponsorship deals with the United Breweries Group. It is that strength of his convictions that has helped the former India midfielder progress from an injury-riddled playing career to multiple successful managerial stints at clubs across the country. Since taking over as the Indian head coach, Khalid has shown an ability to adapt and improvise, rather than complain and throw in the towel. When Mohun Bagan Super Giant refused to release seven players for India’s CAFA Nations Cup campaign, he expressed disappointment but swiftly moved on from the issue. The many foreign coaches who preceded him — Wim Koevermans, Stephen Constantine, Igor Stimac and Manolo Marquez, the most recent — ran Sunil Chhetri into the ground, citing a lack of adequate attacking firepower in the country. Khalid, however, decided against calling up the veteran and chose to test other players in competitive settings without Chhetri’s larger-than-life shadow looming over them from the bench.

Yes, Irfan Yadwad failed to deliver as the No. 9. So did Vikram Partap Singh, Ashique Kuruniyan, Lallianzuala Chhangte, Manvir Singh and Naorem Mahesh when tasked with leading the line. Yes, 41-year-old Chhetri might lead the Blue Tigers against Singapore in the AFC Asian Cup qualifiers on October 9. But Khalid has shown that he is willing to back the right player, giving Indian strikers across clubs the sort of confidence boost that has been missing in recent years. Mohammedan SC head coach Mehrajuddin Wadoo, who has crossed paths with Khalid in his playing days, believes that the 48-year-old’s knowledge of the country’s football landscape puts him in good standing as the India head coach.

“Khalid’s experience in the country, both as a player and coach, is helping the Indian footballers to grow because he understands Indian football. It is always an advantage for players when you have an Indian coach. Because of the communication and because of the understanding of Indian football,” he told The Hindu. “Foreign coaches, when they come to the national team or when they come to India, they take time to understand the philosophy, the culture and the football. But for an Indian coach, it is already there by default. Someone like Khalid has that, since he has been in the system from his childhood.” Another former India international, who wished to remain anonymous, gave an insight into how Khalid has gone about his job so far. “He has been speaking with players one-on-one, personally guiding them in various things, and has even taken a hands-on approach to his coaching sessions. Players have loved that, as of now.” Maximising defence

Where successive coaches grappled with the idea of getting results while playing easy-on-the-eye football, Khalid has been more pragmatic. Knowing that India was the third-lowest-ranked side at the CAFA Nations Cup, the team set up in a way that maximised its defensive strengths, one of the hallmarks of his teams over the years. Khalid even took a leaf out of Rory Delap’s playbook, utilising Rahul Beke



President’s election. They all raise questions. This is not healthy opposition. This is reckless politics that risks playing into foreign hands. We have seen it before. The farmers’ protest that turned violent at Red Fort. The raising of the Waqf Board issue. The aggressive push for caste census. Each attempt designed to inflame. Each one amplified by social media wings working overtime. Yet each has failed to dent the basic trust people place in India’s democratic process. But here lies the danger: even failed agitations create fertile ground for external actors. They do not need outright victory. They only need to plant doubt, sow cynicism, and weaken institutions. Look at the numbers. Reports say over \$60 million in U.S. aid has been pumped into Nepal under the banner of “strengthening democracy” and “empowering civil society.” Sounds noble. But it effectively bankrolls activists, media houses, and NGOs that can shape narratives and fuel movements. India has not been spared similar attempts. The U.S. embassy reportedly invited “influencers” after the BJP secured 240 seats — part of a strategy to cultivate new opinion-shapers through tours, awards, and training. This is soft regime-change work. It is subtle. It is disguised as partnership. But it aims to mould domestic politics. India is not Sri Lanka or Nepal. Our scale, diversity, and democratic depth make us resilient. But that does not mean immune. Washington is already uncomfortable with India’s tough stance on tariffs and its refusal to be a junior partner in the global order. The Deep State, when displeased, looks for pressure points. Civil society, social media, and opposition parties become easy targets. The question is: will our opposition recognise the danger? Or will its desperation to unseat Modi make it a willing pawn? The opposition has every right to challenge Modi. That is democracy. They should build a credible alternative, win hearts, and defeat him in 2029 if they can. But inviting, echoing, or amplifying foreign interference is a betrayal. Respect institutions. Stop theatrics. Compete fairly. That is the only way to strengthen India. The youth of South Asia have been weaponised by others’ agendas. Today’s Nepal stands testimony. Tomorrow it could be somewhere else. But India must not trek that path. Swami Vivekananda’s ‘arise, awake’ call is more relevant than ever before. Our young people must direct their energy toward overcoming corruption, inequality, and social injustices — not toward tearing down their own country in the name of imported slogans. India’s destiny cannot be outsourced. Our democracy cannot be subcontracted. Our sovereignty cannot be pawned. The Deep State is playing its game. The question is whether India’s leaders — government and opposition alike — are wise enough to see it.



and Muhammed Uvais’ athletic abilities to effortlessly make accurate long throws. The result? All three goals scored under him have come either directly from them or in the phases of play immediately after. India has gone from struggling to compete against better-ranked teams to finding ways to go toe-to-toe with them — host Tajikistan and Oman, sitting 27 and 54 places above India, respectively, were both sent packing during a bronze-winning campaign. Former India coach Syed Nayeemuddin, who gave Khalid his national team debut in 1998, recalled how he was always eager to learn and get better. The 81-year-old stated that while Khalid was not among the most flashy of players he trained over the years, he was among the hardest working and most disciplined — qualities Nayeemuddin believes have helped him build a successful coaching career.

Experience speaks: Dronacharya awardee Syed Nayeemuddin says criticism of Khalid’s style of play is “nonsense”. The 81-year-old backs the India head coach to achieve success on the global stage. Experience speaks: Dronacharya awardee Syed Nayeemuddin says criticism of Khalid’s style of play is “nonsense”. The 81-year-old backs the India head coach to achieve success on the global stage. | Photo Credit: Ramakrishna

“I saw him playing in Bombay and he immediately caught my eye. After coming into the national squad, he was very, very disciplined, worked hard, always arrived well before time and was disciplined, both on and off the field. He played real top-class football, respected everyone, be it coaches or his teammates, or even opponents. And he has been the same as a coach,” the Dronacharya awardee said. Nayeemuddin said Khalid showed early signs of being a good leader and backed him to achieve success on the global stage, even if football purists scoff at his methods. “Do not listen to criticism about his style of play. It is nonsense. Everyone sitting at home can easily talk. It is easy to comment. Only a coach knows what the strengths and weaknesses of his players are, and a good coach will ensure that opponents do not exploit those weaknesses,” Nayeemuddin emphasised. “To play stylish football, you need at least three to five years. Players cannot turn over a new leaf overnight. And to be in the role for that long, you need results first.” His football might not be everyone’s cup of tea, but for Khalid, a team’s success is built on defensive solidity. “I tell my players to focus on defending, stay tight man-to-man, and maintain their shape. Beyond that, they have the freedom to play their natural game,” he said at a press conference. Under Constantine, while India broke into the top 100 of the FIFA rankings and qualified for the Asian Cup, there was widespread criticism for his counter-attacking style. Under Stimac, India lacked a clear tactical plan and effective in-game management.

Being in the race...And in with AI

A few weeks ago, I won a small, gleaming cup at a local chess tournament. Engraved on its base was a single word: “Runner.” At first, it stung. Runner-up. Second place. A polite way of saying I didn’t quite win. The word felt oddly familiar. For years, my wife has joked that I’m a “runner” always busy, always chasing a deadline, always on the move. I’d always taken it as a gentle tease, a sign I was constantly playing catch-up, forever a step behind.

That night, as I held the trophy, that old feeling crept back. My wife, Swathi, saw the look on my face and said something that completely changed not only how I saw that cup, but how I viewed the future. She said “You’re not a runner because you’re behind. You’re a runner because you’re in the race.” Her words resonated deeply. It’s easy to feel like we’re always trying to catch up, especially with the rapid rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI). But what if the point isn’t to be first? What if the point is simply to be in the race? “A runner isn’t just about who crosses the finish line first,” she explained gently. “A runner is someone who keeps showing up; One who keeps moving forward, no matter how tough the path. A runner is someone who simply never stops trying.” That single sentence was a revelation. Suddenly, the word wasn’t a brand of defeat but a badge of resilience. And it made me think deeply about our collective relationship with Artificial Intelligence. Most conversations about AI are tinged with fear. We see it as a new competitor in the human race, a machine intelligence that might one day push us into second place in our own jobs, our own creativity and our own lives. We worry about being outpaced and left behind. But what if we’re looking at it all wrong? What if AI isn’t our competitor, but our partner in the race? A runner doesn’t compete with a car; a runner uses the car to go farther and faster than their own two feet could ever take them. AI is our car. It is not here to replace us; it’s here to run with us. It’s the ultimate running partner, a tool that can help us navigate new terrain, make smarter decisions, and push past limits we once thought were absolute. This isn’t a far-off, futuristic concept. This partnership is already transforming our daily lives in profound ways.

Think of a doctor in a rural clinic. With an AI-powered diagnostic tool, they can analyse a patient’s scans and com-



pare them against a global database of millions of cases in seconds, spotting subtle anomalies that might have otherwise been missing. The AI isn’t the doctor; it’s the superhuman assistant, providing insights that allow the human expert to deliver world-class care, no matter the location. Consider a student struggling with a complex subject like calculus. An AI tutor can provide personalised lessons, adapting to their unique learning pace, offering encouragement, and explaining concepts in a dozen different ways until one finally clicks. It doesn’t replace the teacher but acts as a tireless, patient guide, ensuring no one gets left behind on their educational journey. Even in creative fields, AI is not an adversary but a collaborator. A musician can use it to generate a hundred different chord progressions to break a creative block, or an architect can visualize a dozen structural variations for a building in minutes. The AI provides the raw material, the spark of inspiration, from which human creativity can forge something truly meaningful and new. This is the new definition of a “runner” in the 21st century. The challenge for our generation is not to outrun technology but to learn how to run alongside it. It calls on us to cultivate curiosity over fear and to focus on our uniquely human skills—empathy, critical thinking, and moral judgment—that AI can augment but never replicate. Now, when I see that cup on my shelf, I don’t see “second place.” I see a powerful reminder. The real winners in this new era won’t be the ones who stand still, fearing what’s next. They will be the runners, the ones who embrace the chase, adapt to powerful new tools, and just keep moving forward, together.

India hopes to build domestic smartphone brands. Nothing's CMF wants a share of that

For CMF, Pei said the focus would therefore be on developing products in India rather than simply manufacturing them in the country. For CMF, Pei said the focus would therefore be on developing products in India rather than simply manufacturing them in the country. Smartphone maker Nothing's Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Carl Pei has said the company will spin off its CMF sub-brand into a standalone Indian company, with the new entity to be majority-owned by Indian shareholders and headquartered in India. Nothing will retain a stake and continue as a shareholder and partner, while CMF will have its own team and research and development operations in the country.

In an open letter, Pei said the move was aimed at building a global consumer electronics brand from India, arguing that the country's next stage of growth in the sector would have to go beyond manufacturing and focus on product engineering, R&D and intellectual property. "CMF becomes Indian," Pei said, adding that the new company would be "majority Indian owned, headquartered in India, with its own team and R&D in the country". Nothing's engineering capabilities, operating system, supplier relationships and global brand infrastructure would continue to be part of the partnership. Pei's announcement comes shortly after the Indian government notified its new Rs 62,500 crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS), which explicitly seeks to encourage Indian-owned mobile phone brands and domestic design and R&D. The scheme has two target segments: one for mobile phone manufacturing and another specifically for Indian brands. Under the Indian-brand segment, eligible companies can receive an incentive of 5% on eligible sales, along with an additional 3% incentive linked to Indian design and R&D. There is also an additional incentive of up to 1.5% for domestic sourcing of key components and sub-assemblies.

Push for Indian brands To qualify as an Indian brand under the scheme, a company must be incorporated in India, hold its intellectual property and trademark in India, have management control with Indian citizens and have more than 51% shareholding held by Indian citizens. It must also



have in-house R&D and design capabilities in India.

The government has said the scheme is intended to move India beyond being a manufacturing base and encourage Indian ownership of brands, technology and intellectual property. India currently manufactures almost all mobile phones sold domestically and is the world's second-largest mobile phone manufacturer by volume, but has little to show for in terms of domestic smartphone brand successes. Pei said India had already built much of the manufacturing base needed to become a global electronics hub, but lacked a globally competitive consumer electronics brand with substantial in-house engineering capabilities. He pointed to Japan, South Korea and China as examples of countries that developed global brands after building manufacturing ecosystems. He also contrasted India's current position with its smartphone market a decade ago. According to him, Indian brands accounted for close to half of smartphone sales in 2015 but subsequently lost ground to foreign brands that brought stronger engineering capabilities, including improvements in cameras, design and hardware-software integration. He said Indian brands had fallen to less than 1% of the market by 2025. For CMF, Pei said the focus would therefore be on developing products in India rather than simply manufacturing them in the country. He identified areas including industrial design, camera systems, operating systems, antennas and the co-engineering of displays, chipsets and camera modules as examples of what he considers "real R&D".

RIL eyes AI ecosystem and private satellite constellation

Reliance Industries Chairman and MD Mukesh Ambani on Friday unveiled the company's plan to build a sovereign artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem in India through its newly-launched Reliance Intelligence initiative. "Reliance Intelligence is building India's sovereign AI backbone in Jamnagar. This cutting-edge infrastructure will be powered entirely by clean energy from Reliance's own solar generation from the Kutch renewable platform," Ambani said at the RIL AGM. "The first 120 megawatts will be commissioned by the end of 2026," he said. In addition, RIL is operationalising an initial fleet of advanced NVIDIA GB300 GPUs. "This next-generation compute capacity is equivalent to more than 75,000 H100 GPUs on an AI-inference basis," he said. As the first 120 megawatts becomes fully operational, this capacity can scale to over two lakh H100-equivalent GPUs, he said. "This capacity places Reliance among the largest AI infrastructure platforms being built anywhere in the world. When compute becomes affordable, innovation becomes inevitable," he said.

"Our Google partnership has deepened into a truly AI-first collaboration. For hundreds of millions of Jio users, Google AI Pro, powered by Gemini, is already accessible free of cost. Our second major partnership is the joint venture with Meta, which operationalises the LLaMA open-source AI for Indian enterprises," Ambani said. He said Reliance Intelligence will deliver sovereign hosting within India, with full model transparency and portability that allows every enterprise to own its AI journey. It will be accessible in 22 Indian languages. Evaluating satellite constellation for connectivity Jio Platforms is evaluating the development of a sovereign Low Earth Orbit satellite constellation for India. "We are also partnering with the leading global constellation providers by leasing satellite capacity, so that we can accelerate service availability while building our own long-term sovereign capability," RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani said. He said this dual approach will enable Jio to



meet India's connectivity needs faster, while laying the foundation for the Indian satellite broadband platform of global scale.

"To anchor this ambition, Jio is also building its own ground station infrastructure in India," he said. "These ground stations will support our partner constellations, as well as our own future satellites, creating an end-to-end satellite broadband ecosystem from space to ground," Ambani said. "With this initiative, Jio is strengthening India's atmanirbharta in space, placing India firmly on the global satellite broadband services map," he said.

"There are still remotest villages, island communities, and border outposts where the Jio network cannot reach. For them, satellite connectivity will be the bridge to the rest of India," Ambani said. Reliance Foundation, part of the RIL group, is planning to set up a university that will raise India's global standing in higher education, a garden and a medical city that will bring world-class healthcare to the heart of Mumbai. "We have received approval from the Government of Maharashtra to establish a State Private University. Our upcoming permanent campus at Dronagiri, spread across 410 acres, will be truly world-class," Chairperson Nita Ambani said.

RBI could implement 2 rate hikes in 2026 amid sticky inflation: Report



New Delhi: Global financial services firm Nomura's Head of Global Macro Research, Rob Subbaraman, has said he expects the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to raise interest rates in both October and December monetary policy meetings as inflation pressures build. India's growth remains resilient, with Nomura forecasting 7 per cent GDP growth for FY27, while inflation is expected to breach 6 per cent in the coming months, he said, according to NDTV Profit.

Subbaraman highlighted prospects for India to attract more global investment and gain space on the global value-chain chart, particularly through higher-end manufacturing. India holds immense opportunities across sectors but could face laggardness in select sectors if the AI investment narrative remains very strong in the US and Northeast Asia. India could attract more capital, with FCNR-B deposits seeing stronger-than-expected flows, along with possibility of a strong balance-of-payments surplus, he said. Markets are watching diplomatic developments at the UN General Assembly and the expected meeting between US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping this week.

On global policy, Subbaraman said at least one more US Federal Reserve rate increase is expected this year, likely in December. He flagged the risk of more increases if inflation remains elevated, adding that the latest FOMC projections point to a broadly hawkish policy direction. Of 18

policymakers, 12 expected one more hike this year; four see two more and only two expect no further increase. The Fed last week raised its policy rate by 25 basis points to 3.75 per cent-4 per cent. Subbaraman said markets are hoping diplomacy can ease global tensions and US-China trade restrictions that could lower energy costs and long-term yields. He noted that Iran retains leverage because high energy prices put pressure on the US economy and warned that elevated fuel costs are squeezing downstream oil businesses with US gasoline prices nearing \$4.50 and diesel prices at record highs near \$6.50.

Google faces \$463 million GDPR fine over location data breaches

Dublin: Google has been fined 403 million euros (USD 463 million) for breaching the European Union's strict privacy rules because it mishandled users' location data, the bloc's data privacy watchdog said

Ireland's Data Protection Commission said its investigation found Google did not lawfully or fairly process location data in users' Web & App Activity, a Google setting that tracks browsing and search history, and in their Location History, a service that maps places they've been with their mobile phones. Regulators also found the company failed to be lawful, fair and transparent when it processed personal data in its Location Accuracy feature in the Android mobile operating system. Ireland is the lead regulator for Google in the 27-nation EU because the US tech giant's European headquarters is based in Dublin. The investigation, which opened six years ago, examined how Google applied the EU privacy rule book, known as the General Data Protection Regulation, from the time it took effect in 2018 until February 2020. "This case centres around historical policies that have since been updated," Google said in a statement. "

Can this new endometriosis drug change therapy? What women need to know

A new experimental drug could eventually offer women with endometriosis — a painful condition in which tissue lining the uterus overgrows outside it to cause extreme pain, bleeding and fertility problems — some relief. They may not need to rely on hormone pills, oral contraceptives or surgery. The US (FDA) had cleared ENDO-205, a first-in-class, non-hormonal targeted peptide therapy for a Phase 1 clinical study in healthy premenopausal women of reproductive age. This drug works without suppressing reproductive hormones, is designed to target endometriosis lesions directly, raising the possibility of treating the disease while avoiding some of the hormonal effects associated with current medicines.

"In summary, it addresses endometriosis as a systemic inflammation disorder. So far it was considered a hormonal or period-only disease. Existing hormonal treatments, including combined oral contraceptives and progestins, work by modifying hormone signalling that affects fertility. ENDO-205 is being developed with a different proposed mechanism," says Dr Anshumala Shukla-Kulkarni, head of Minimally Invasive Gynaecology and Gynaecology Laparoscopic and Robotic Surgery at Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, Mumbai. At this stage, researchers will primarily look at safety, tolerability, how the body processes the drug and appropriate dosing. Whether it actually treats endometriosis will have to be established through later trials.

What is ENDO-205?

ENDO-205 is a peptide — a short chain of amino acids that can interact with cells and tissues. The peptide is designed to remain inactive in normal, neutral tissue but become activated in the more acidic environment associated with endometriosis lesions. Once activated, it enters abnormal endometriosis cells and triggers their destruction. As Dr Kulkarni explains, "In normal neutral tissues it is inactive. When inflammation rises, the pH drops to acidic levels, which activates the peptide."

What does 'non-hormonal' mean?

Most established medical treatments for endometriosis work, at least partly, by modifying hormonal signalling or reducing the effects of reproductive hormones. A non-hormonal treatment aims to act directly on the disease process instead. That could eventually matter for women who need treatment while wanting to preserve reproductive function. But it is too early to conclude that ENDO-205 will preserve ovarian function, menstrual cycles or fertility. Those outcomes will need to be assessed in clinical trials.

Could ENDO-205 reduce endometriosis pain?

Not necessarily. Endometriosis pain is complex and can involve inflammation, nerve changes, adhesions and



damage to affected organs. "If the lesions regress, there could be an improvement in symptoms, but pain in endometriosis is multifactorial. So, it is difficult to say at this stage whether it will stop pain," Dr Kulkarni says. The makers have reported encouraging preclinical findings involving lesion targeting and reduction. However, laboratory and animal results cannot establish whether ENDO-205 will reduce pain or improve quality of life in people with endometriosis.

What will the clinical trials need to show?

The planned Phase 1 study in healthy premenopausal women will primarily assess safety, tolerability and appropriate dosing. It is not designed to prove that ENDO-205 treats endometriosis. Later studies involving people with the disease will need to determine whether it reduces lesions, pain or disease progression, how long any benefit lasts and whether lesions recur. Researchers will also need to examine ovarian function, ovulation, fertility and pregnancy outcomes.

Could it replace hormonal treatment or surgery?

If future trials demonstrate that the drug is safe and effective, it could potentially become another treatment option, and researchers could then investigate whether it reduces the need for other treatments. Dr Kulkarni says such an approach could be particularly significant if endometriosis is identified and treated before substantial organ damage occurs. "It could potentially replace hormonal medication and surgery, especially if given in the early stages before organ damage, if the human trials demonstrate that it is safe and effective," she adds.

Will the drug be available in India?

If the drug eventually proves safe and effective in human trials and its developers seek approval in India, it would have to undergo the applicable Indian regulatory process, including requirements of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO). "It is a long wait, but it is a great start to think beyond hormones and treat endometriosis as an inflammatory disease," Dr Kulkarni said.

Actor Hayden Panettiere's death linked to fentanyl: What makes the opioid so dangerous?

The death of Hollywood actor Hayden Panettiere of 'Heroes' and 'Nashville' fame has once again drawn attention to the dangers of fentanyl, a synthetic opioid so potent that even an amount too small to see can carry a serious overdose risk. Panettiere, 36, was found unresponsive at a residence in Greenville, South Carolina. The Greenville County Coroner's Office has now ruled her death accidental and said it was caused by the toxic effects of fentanyl, along with 4-ANPP, alprazolam, methocarbamol and quetiapine. The autopsy found no trauma that contributed to her death.

What is fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a potent, fast-acting synthetic opioid, meaning it can be chemically manufactured in a laboratory. To compare, opioids such as morphine and codeine are derived from the opium poppy plants. These are a class of medication usually used for the management of severe pain in cancer patients or those who have undergone various surgeries. These drugs can be extremely addictive. What makes fentanyl a bigger problem is the fact that it can be 30 to 100 times more potent than heroin or morphine and is fast acting, leading to a rapid and high number of overdose deaths. Illegally manufactured fentanyl can be sold as a powder or pressed into counterfeit pills made to look like other prescription medicines. A person taking an illicit or counterfeit product may not know that it contains fentanyl. That unpredictability is one reason fentanyl has become such a major contributor to fatal overdoses.

Why is fentanyl so dangerous?

Like other opioids, fentanyl acts on opioid receptors in the brain and nervous system. These receptors influence pain, breathing and other body functions. In an overdose, the drug can suppress the brain's drive to breathe. Breathing may become extremely slow or stop altogether, depriving the brain and other organs of oxygen. Without rapid treatment, this can lead to brain injury and death.

Its high potency means that the margin between an amount that produces an opioid effect and an amount that causes dangerous respiratory depression can be much narrower than with less potent opioids. However, there is no single amount that can be described as a universally fatal dose. The effect depends on factors including opioid tolerance, individual health, the way the drug is taken and whether it is combined with other substances.

Why can mixing drugs increase the risk?

Panettiere's toxicology report listed fentanyl alongside several other substances, including alprazolam, a benzodiazepine, and methocarbamol, a muscle relaxant. Combining opioids with other drugs that cause sedation can increase the risk of dangerous respiratory depression.

What does a fentanyl overdose look like?

An opioid overdose can cause: Very slow, shallow or stopped breathing Extreme sleepiness or inability to wake up Pinpoint pupils A limp body Choking, gurgling or unusual breathing sounds Pale, blue or cold skin If someone is unusually difficult to wake and opioid overdose is possible, it should be treated as a medical emergency.

Can naloxone reverse a fentanyl overdose?

Naloxone, also known by the brand name Narcan, can rapidly reverse an opioid overdose by blocking the effects of opioids such as fentanyl. It can restore normal breathing within minutes when an overdose has slowed or stopped breathing, although more than one dose may be needed with potent opioids such as fentanyl. Emergency medical help should still be called, even if the person responds to naloxone. The key is speed: naloxone does not replace emergency medical care, and its effects can wear off while the opioid remains in the body.

What is the health impact of fentanyl addiction?

An estimated 74,702 people died of fentanyl overdose in the United States in 2023, according to the country's Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This, however, was a decline over the previous year's 76,226



deaths. The CDC said that it was the first time there was a decline in overdose deaths since 2018. Nevertheless, fentanyl-related overdoses resulted in more than 69% of the total overdose deaths in the US.

What of fentanyl use in India?

In India, heroin and its derivatives like smack continue to be the most common opioids leading to addiction. An estimated 63 lakh people are addicted to heroin as compared to 25 lakh to pharmaceutical opioids, according to a 2019 survey called Magnitude of Substance Use in India by the AIIMS National Drug Dependence and Treatment Centre.

After Meta, Google to report CSAM directly to Indian authorities

New Delhi: After Meta, US tech giant Google will report content flagged as child sexual abuse material (CSAM) directly to Indian authorities, contrary to the long-standing global practice of routing such reports through a US non-profit organisation.

Meta announced a similar change last week after Indian officials pressed major tech firms in recent weeks to speed up reporting, citing concerns that the existing system delays reports considerably. Google "invests significantly to detect, deter, remove, and report child sexual abuse material," a company spokesperson said, describing the change as part of the company's "ongoing discussions with the government of India." Meta and Alphabet's Google used to send tips to the US-based National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), which then relayed them to local law enforcement, according to reports.

Such a practice could cause dangerous delays in cases where children may be at immediate risk as reports pass through an intermediary before reaching domestic police who can act on the ground. The US non-profit that erstwhile used to receive such reports first-hand runs the CyberTipline portal, which recorded nearly 21.3 million reports from around the world of suspected child sexual exploitation in 2025.

India remains the largest market by user count for both Meta's Facebook and Google's YouTube. Meta's shift in policy comes after weeks of friction with New Delhi, including an apology last month by CEO Mark Zuckerberg over the spread of child sexual abuse material on the company's platforms.

Technology and law enforcement officials in the United States, the European Union and elsewhere have urged platforms to bolster detection and reporting. However, most countries continue to route reports through the US non-profit as the primary international clearing house. The Central government, in July, directed Google to take down multiple Firebase web development accounts that were impersonating the websites and mobile apps of major public- and private-sector banks and other financial institutions.

India thrash Korea 63-31 to extend unbeaten run in 2026 Asian Games Kabaddi



Hyderabad: India kabaddi men's team continued its unbeaten run at the 2026 Asian Games with a commanding 63-31 victory over the Republic of Korea in their second Group A fixture at the Tokai Citizens Gymnasium on Tuesday morning. Captain Sunil Kumar's side, many of whose raiders and defenders are familiar names from the Pro Kabaddi League, took early control of the contest and never let go. The Indian raiding unit was clinical throughout,

picking up 38 out points across the match against Korea's 23, while the defence backed that up with a string of successful tackles that repeatedly stalled Korea's attacking rhythm.

India raced to a 34-14 lead at the interval, built on 23 out points and seven bonus points in the opening half alone, along with two All-Outs that Korea simply had no answer for. Korea's raiders struggled to find gaps in the Indian defensive line, managing just 10 touch points of their own before the break.

The second half followed a similar pattern, with Korea showing marginally more fight but never threatening a comeback. India added a further 29 points after the restart, inflicting one more All-Out and stretching their bonus-point tally to 17 for the match, while Korea's response yielded 17 points but nothing close to the scale needed to peg back the deficit. With the win, India remained firmly on course to top Group A, having now beaten hosts Japan and Korea in successive outings. The men's team next takes on Bangladesh on September 23 in Group A action as they continue their pursuit of a ninth Asian Games gold medal in the last ten editions.

CSK MD Viswanathan confirms Dhoni's role in Zaheer's appointment

New Delhi: Legendary former India captain MS Dhoni was actively involved in the decision to appoint former India pacer Zaheer Khan as the new head coach of Chennai Super Kings (CSK), franchise managing director Kasi Viswanathan said on Monday. History Five-time champions CSK on Monday named 47-year-old Zaheer as their head coach for IPL 2027, filling the high-profile vacancy left by former New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming, who parted ways with the franchise after an 18-year association. Apart from Dhoni, CSK's cricket management team included owner Rupa Gurunath and captain Ruturaj Gaikwad. "See, basically, the cricket management took this decision. They wanted Mr Zaheer Khan as the head coach based on his experience. He has played over 100 games in IPL and was an all-round player.

"So, they preferred that he will be a good option for them and we abided by what the cricket management wanted. Definitely, he (MS Dhoni) was part of the decision when this was taken. Without his advice, we don't do anything," Viswanathan told IANS on Monday. Asked about Dhoni's future as a player after he did not play a single game for CSK in IPL 2026 due to fitness issues, Viswanathan said, "See, basically, he continues to be a player for us. That is the only thing I can say." Viswanathan also confirmed that Zaheer, a member of India's 2011 ODI World Cup-winning team, would have complete autonomy in selecting his backroom staff.

"He will decide on the support staff," he said. As of now, CSK's support staff includes Mike Hussey, Sridharan Sriram, Rajiv Kumar, Eric Simons and James Foster. Zaheer, who was previously a trainee at the MRF Pace Foundation in Chennai, served as Director of Cricket Operations and Head of Global Development at Mumbai Indians from 2018 to 2022 before taking up a mentoring role with Lucknow Super Giants in IPL 2025. As a left-arm pacer, Zaheer represented Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals, claiming 102 wickets in 100 matches at an average of 27.27. However, this will be Zaheer's first stint as head coach of a cricket team. He



can focus solely on CSK as he has no other franchise T20 cricket coaching commitments. Outside coaching and mentoring, Zaheer co-owns Antwerp Anchors in the European T20 Premier League in Belgium, Jaffna Kings in the Lanka Premier League in Sri Lanka and Vancouver Anchors in the Super60 league in Canada. Asked how long negotiations lasted before Zaheer agreed to join CSK, Viswanathan chose not to disclose details. "That is the process everybody goes through. Those are all things which we need not tell," he said. The search for Fleming's successor was far from simple, especially with 2027 being the final season of a three-year cycle. It is understood that extensive conversations were held with various candidates after Fleming left CSK to become England men's Test head coach. The insistence on an Indian head coach with previous IPL experience, given the familiarity with Indian conditions and local players, as well as Zaheer's previous association with Dhoni as an India teammate, were factors in his appointment, according to the report. History Notably, CSK's official statement announcing Zaheer's appointment did not mention a multi-year deal, indicating that it will initially be a one-year stint. Zaheer's immediate task will be to map out the team's retention strategy and identify targeted players ahead of the mini-auction in December. Having missed the playoffs for three consecutive seasons, CSK will look to return to the playoffs in the 2027 season before the next mega auction.

'Our team has opened the gate of gold medals': India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur



GNS News Agency, Sept 24

India team members poses on the podium at the medal ceremony for their team's win over Sri Lanka the The Final match between Sri Lanka Women and India Women at Korogi Sports Park, Nisshin, Japan, on September 22, 2026. India team members poses on the podium at the medal ceremony for their team's win over Sri Lanka the The Final match between Sri Lanka Women and India Women at Korogi Sports Park, Nisshin, Japan, on September 22, 2026. (CREIMAS) India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur said that after the women's cricket team opened the country's gold medal account on Tuesday after their win vs Sri Lanka, she hoped that it will open the floodgates for more gold for the nation in the Asian Games.

"It feels good to get a gold medal. For any athlete, it's a dream. Our team has opened the gate of gold medals. The more gold medals India wins, the better for us. We are going back (to India) tomorrow. But, we will definitely follow (other events)," Harmanpreet said after India defeated Sri Lanka by 147 runs to retain the title they had won 3 years ago in the 2023 Asian Games. "It's a big thing for me, and for the team (to win gold). Since we came here, we had only one aim — to take the gold medal from here. We want to see our flag fly high and the national anthem sung. But, we didn't know, we will be the first one to get the gold. I am sure the other athletes will win a lot of gold medals," she added.

Asked where does Asian Games victory rank in terms of achievements, she said, "As a cricketer, we always wanted to be part of the Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and Olympics because we have always participated in bilateral series, World Cup and Asia Cup. But we didn't know how it feels when you play for a medal. We didn't have much experience with those things. But thankfully, we got a chance to play in the last two editions. Before us, so many cricketers came, but they didn't get that chance. I am sure in future, facilities-wise, stadium-wise and crowd-wise, these things will improve," she said. Harmanpreet was delighted to have the chance of keeping the gold medal at home. "And now, at least we can also frame two medals back home because when we win trophies, they go to the (BCCI) office. They don't come back to us. But this is something which belongs to us," she said in a lighter vein.

Transport for shooters, additional rooms: SAI's steps for athletes in Asiad

A dedicated Reception and Assistance Team, comprising representatives from the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), SAI and the Embassy of India in Japan, were deployed to assist the Indian contingent at the Asian Games. A dedicated Reception and Assistance Team, comprising representatives from the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), SAI and the Embassy of India in Japan, were deployed to assist the Indian contingent at the Asian Games.

Indian athletes had suffered through a boatload of obstacles after landing in Japan for the Asian Games, waiting endlessly in the assembly area for room allocation to inadequate food options as well as the hassle for commuting to distance from accommodation and training facilities. Keeping in mind all these shortcomings, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) has strengthened its on-ground support for the Indian contingent through a range of logistical and athlete-support measures. A dedicated Reception and Assistance Team, comprising representatives from the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), SAI and the Embassy of India in Japan, were deployed at the airport to welcome the arriving

athletes, coaches and support staff as well as to assist with arrival formalities and provide refreshments and guidance for onward travel to Games venues and accommodation. Some of the measures that SAI took was to arrange transport services to support the Indian shooters for them to travel to and from competition venues. Cars have been arranged to enable medical teams to move efficiently between competition venues and provide timely assistance. SAI also made room arrangements for coaches and support staff who could not be accommodated by the organising committee due to limited availability. Earlier, India's high performance manager Ronak Pandit had posted a clip on social media where he spoke about how he would rather travel in Mumbai's local trains rather than Nagoya's otherwise comfortable buses that have been designated to take the players and officials to the playing venues. He said that he had no idea when he would reach his desired destination and if he would reach it in the first place. Ronak also gave the example of some Indian shooters and coaches needing to be at the shooting ranges by 9 am, but reaching at 11.30 am due to transportation issues.

Vakiti Srihari reviews preparations for Khelo India Youth Games-2026



Hyderabad: Telangana Sports and Youth Services Minister Vakiti Srihari directed officials to ensure that the Khelo India Youth Games-2026 are organised in a prestigious and successful manner, adhering to the highest standards. At a review meeting here on Monday, the Minister called for comprehensive facilities and seamless execution so that Telangana earns appreciation across the country for the conduct of the Games and the hospitality extended to participants.

Sports Advisor to the State Government A.P. Jithender Reddy, Special Chief Secretary (Sports) Jayesh Ranjan, and Dr A. Sonibala Devi, Vice-Chairperson and Managing Director of the Sports Authority of Telangana (SATG), attended the meeting. Srihari said hosting the Khelo India Youth Games was a prestigious opportunity for Telangana and directed all departments and stakeholders to work together

to ensure the smooth conduct of the Games. Send Money Overseas The Minister asked officials to ensure that athletes, coaches, technical officials and other personnel arriving from across the country face no inconvenience. He stressed the need for adequate facilities covering accommodation, transportation, food, security, medical services, sporting venues, sports equipment and other essential requirements, leaving no scope for lapses. Srihari said the Khelo India Youth Games should not be viewed merely as a sporting event, but as an important platform to showcase Telangana's sporting potential and organisational capabilities to the nation.

Download Interactive Maps Jayesh Ranjan informed the meeting that an Organising Committee, under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister, would be constituted, with 17 sub-committees functioning under its supervision. He said officials from various government departments would be included in the committees to strengthen inter-departmental cooperation and ensure effective execution of responsibilities. Sports Advisor A.P. Jithender Reddy suggested that representatives of the concerned sports associations be given appropriate representation in the sub-committees. He also stressed the need to procure the required sporting equipment well in advance, ensure its safe storage and make it readily accessible to athletes whenever required. Dr A. Sonibala Devi briefed the meeting on the measures already initiated by the Sports Authority of Telangana for the Khelo India Youth Games-2026, the arrangements currently underway, coordination among various departments and the proposed course of action.

Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma: Destructive pair leads India to first Asiad gold

Ask who has worn the crown of best opening pair, and the answers scatter in every direction. "Best", after all, is a subjective term, and cricket's own architecture — split neatly by formats — allows myriad choices. In T20Is, though, there is little room for debate. At the summit, stands Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma. Their 99-run opening stand set the template for India's 147-run demolition of Sri Lanka, and with it, the nation's first gold medal at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games. Sri Lanka, in their last couple of T20Is against India, have had to face the wrath of the opening pair that has scored the most runs in this format. A 162-run partnership in December last year, and more recently, a 129-run stand in the final of the Women's Asia Cup.

If they were to have any real stake in proceedings at Korogi Sports Park on Tuesday, they needed to be third time lucky. They were not. Consecutive sixes off left-arm spinner Sugandika Kumari in the third over — a match-up that made precious little sense from Chamari Athapaththu's end of the equation — announced Mandhana's intent in the simplest of terms. Hamari went with pace in the next over, entrusting Mithali Ayodha with the task of breaking the partnership, but the teenager did not have any answers against the leading run-scorer of women's T20Is. There was, in essence, a reversal of roles from the meeting in Dubai nine days prior. While Shafali had lit the fuse in the Asia Cup final, Mandhana sparked the onslaught on Tuesday — the pair's telepathic ability to seamlessly trade roles in the aggressor-anchor set-up being among the many reasons responsible for their dominance.

With her opening bowlers offering little resistance, Chamari eventually took the ball herself in the fifth over, standing directly in the firing line. Minutes later, she would regret her action, for the over yielded fire aplenty. Three sixes — two off Shafali's bat, and the other off Mandhana's. The powerplay produced 67 runs — only two shy of what Sri Lanka would eventually muster — while the ease of fielding restrictions did not necessarily translate to an ease of carnage by the Indian openers. Mandhana recorded her 37th T20I half-century in the final — yet another exhibit in her growing case file as a player for the big occasions. Notably, was her fifth fifty in an eleventh T20I final appearance, and also the third consecutive, having recorded half-centuries in the previous two Asia Cup finals. Her average and strike rate in finals — 39.1 and 136.23 —



sit comfortably above her respective career figures of 31 and 127.47. In that same over, however, Chamundi Praboda denied what would have been the seventh triple-figure T20I partnership by the pair, and the 22nd T20I half-century for Shafali. In an attempt to reverse sweep the left-arm spinner, Shafali holed out to backward point.

Captain Harmanpreet Kaur's stay was brief, in which she scored a 17-ball 19. Richa Ghosh, however, conjured the kind of knock that first announced her as indispensable to this side. The wicketkeeper-batter scored 49 runs off 22 deliveries, 40 of those coming from boundaries, in what was the first instance of her scoring north of 40 since December 2024. The score India had accumulated — 221/4 — happens to be their highest-ever in this format. The next hour or so was, hence, academic. As if she had not inflicted enough damage on the Lankans with the bat, Shafali starred with the ball as well, dismissing Imesha Dulani and Hasini Perera inside the powerplay.

Moments later, Deepti Sharma accounted for the one Lankan batter capable of mounting any real resistance — Chamari Athapaththu. What unfolded thereafter could be described by various metaphors, perhaps the most suitable being crumbling like a house of cards — seven wickets in a span of 26 runs. A gold medal aside, it also marked India's biggest victory in terms of runs in women's T20Is. At the heart of it all sat a pair now utterly alone at the summit of the format. Shafali Verma and Smriti Mandhana have amassed 4,080 T20I runs together as an opening partnership. To contextualise their supremacy — not a single pair has been able to breach even 3000. Neither among women, nor among men.

The site of India's maiden gold: Between a bench and baseball cage

There is a toilet, a bench and a baseball cage, the only permanent structures. And then there is the cricket pitch — the latest addition. Korogi Athletic Park is almost too open, too green, too tranquil to be an international sporting venue. Even Harmanpreet Kaur, the India captain, knew this was a nation hardly associated with cricket. "But knowing Japan, we knew they would manage something," she said.

They had managed something that looked quite a lot like a quaint English county ground. On Tuesday afternoon, in this unlikely setting in the middle of a public park in Nisshin, on the outskirts of Nagoya, India won the first gold medal of its Asian Games campaign. They beat Sri Lanka by 147 runs, so comprehensively that the suspense had disappeared long before the celebrations. When the celebrations finally came, Radha Yadav and Renuka Thakur started sprinting towards the middle with the Indian flag. Then they slowed to a walk, almost as if they had realised there was no need to hurry. The final had been so one-sided that even the celebration seemed to have time to spare. But the people watching did not seem to mind. A Sri Lankan family had driven for a couple of hours from Nara to be here. There were Indians from England, on holiday in Seoul, who had made their way to Nisshin to watch India play. And then there were the Japanese. For many of them, this was their first cricket match. "I have come to watch because my daughter has married a Sri Lankan man," said one spectator. An elderly couple, Naofumi and Chisato, had seen children practice baseball hits here, and came for cricket just out of curiosity. "We know nothing about it," Naofumi said.

They had been handed a beginner's guide in Japanese explaining the rules and were repeatedly looking down at them, then back at the field, trying to make sense of what had just happened. A wicket, a boundary, a change of bowler — moments that require no explanation to a cricket audience were being learnt in real time. Mimi Hirayama, the public announcer, was helping them along. "Mainly rules, because the Japanese audience is not familiar with this sport," Hirayama said. "But they are very familiar with baseball. So I'll keep giving them my hints to understand what's going on." So a six became a home run. "And when the batter hits four, it's like a three-base hit or something like that," Hirayama said. A beginner's guide in Japanese explaining the rules of the game. A beginner's guide in Japanese explaining the rules of the game. It was an ingenious way of introducing cricket to an audience that already understood



another bat-and-ball sport. Hirayama could make the comparisons because she had spent many years in England and was familiar with cricket. Before the Games, she also watched matches involving India and other countries to learn more about the sport. For a few hours, then, Korogi contained several different versions of cricket fandom at once: Indians celebrating, Sri Lankans supporting their team, an overseas diaspora making an unexpected detour, and Japanese spectators discovering the game through baseball. It was an unusual scene for a ground that, until recently, was not a cricket ground at all. Korogi is a public ground that has facilities for baseball, tennis and football, which is where the teams trained, too. When cricket was added to the Asian Games programme at the last minute, Indian Olympic Association president PT Usha said she helped finalise this ground as the venue. And so, the baseball ground was converted for the Games between September last year and March 2026. The 305 million yen (approximately Rs 18 crore) project involved relaying 14,984 square metres of grass, installing practice nets and building an equipment store. It hosted six matches of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup East Asia-Pacific Qualifier in May as its first major test.

Now it has hosted an Asian Games final — and India's first gold of these Games. Harmanpreet said the only adjustment the team had to make was playing on the hybrid pitches. "But we knew how the pitch would behave because recently in England, we played on hybrid pitches too. The other facilities weren't of top level but they managed it pretty well, she added. Once the flags come down, Nisshin mayor Hiroki Kondo said the cricket will continue. "This is the second ground in Japan after Sano. After the Asian Games we will continue playing cricket here along with baseball," Kondo said. India team members poses on the podium at the medal ceremony for their team's win over Sri Lanka the The Final match between Sri Lanka Women and India Women at Korogi Sports Park, Nisshin, Japan, on September 22, 2026.

‘Chased only one kind of success’: Parvathy on Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar hitting Rs 25 cr



Director Shahad’s Parvathy Thiruvothu-led Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar has created a strong impression among the audience, despite facing stiff competition from director Girish AD’s Nivin Pauly-Mamitha Baiju starrer Bethlehem Kudumba Unit, still continuing its blockbuster run, and Nahas Hidayath’s Dulquer Salmaan-starrer I’m Game, which released just a week prior to the former.Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar’s makers recently announced that the crime thriller has finally crossed the Rs 25 crore mark worldwide, a major achievement considering the film doesn’t feature any superstars.Parvathy hasn’t just made up for not having any releases in 2025; she’s also underscored that her fan base remains unwavering, with a certain trust in the projects she associates herself with. In fact, she says her definition of success has always been winning the audience’s trust in that manner, making them feel, “If Parvathy’s in a movie, something must be there in it.”

Parvathy Thiruvothu discusses Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar“Throughout my career, I’ve chased only one kind of success. Things like a film becoming a hit are clearly not in my control. What I believe is in my control is giving a 100 per cent sincere performance every time. So, the definition of success for me is when people say, ‘If Parvathy’s in a movie, something must be there in it.’ It’s like an award. That trust is built over time,” she tells SCREEN in an exclusive interview. “Be it a lead character, a supporting character, or even a cameo, if I choose to be a part of a movie, that’s because I liked the movie. I would like to hear people say that even if my part is small, ‘Parvathy has taken up that role, which means something must be interesting about the movie.’ Thus, not only am I being given the honour of entertaining the audience as the character, but I am also being given the validation that my choices are good. And I’m glad that notion is paying off for the audience,” she adds.

Handling career lows and gaining people’s

trustExpressing her elation over the success of Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar, particularly after facing a few consecutive setbacks, she says, “I’m on top of the world and feeling very grateful. Time gives you different perspectives on what success means. Along with the successes, there were also very hard-hitting low points in my career. After some of those (low points), to arrive at a place where one of my films has worked for the audience in every capacity possible is wonderful.”Parvathy notes, “It’s rare for every department in a movie — the performances, editing, screenplay, music, and climax — to be praised. There’s nothing in Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar that the audience has not liked. Right now, I am like that child whose dreams have come true. And I’m not holding back. I’m on Instagram, reading every story and message coming to me, and celebrating this.”Since Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar opened to generally favourable reviews, was Parvathy able to dissociate herself from the work and enjoy her film as a viewer? The actor says that she mastered it over time and that director Anjali Menon’s Bangalore Days (2014) played a key role in shaping her viewing habits in that direction.“I’ve gotten better at it over time. Initially, I couldn’t watch my performances objectively. Bangalore Days changed that for me. That film wasn’t all about me, right? My character comes in and goes. I watched the movie for the main storyline featuring the other characters. There, I really enjoyed shifting my perspective to watch the film, not just my character,” she says.“After that, I told myself I should enjoy my own movies. Internally, I shifted the gear a little. I was like, ‘You’ve done your job and finished playing the character; now, don’t make it all about yourself. Watch the movie for what it is and for the team.’ Since then, I have been able to objectively analyse what worked and what didn’t,” she points out.Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar has grossed over Rs 25 crore worldwide. Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar features Unnimaya Prasad, Sidharth Bharathan, Parvathy Thiruvothu, and Mathew Thomas. (Credit: Instagram/@mathewthomass)However, she maintains that in Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar’s case, it wasn’t the same, as she hadn’t seen the movie in full before its release and, hence, wasn’t fully sure how the final cut had turned out.“I was quite nervous because I hadn’t watched the movie at all. I had watched Ullozhukku (2024) before it was released. I knew what was going out to the audience. However, I had only watched snippets of Pradhama Drishtya Kuttakkar during dubbing. I knew they were cooking up something really exciting in the edit as well. So I was as excited as the audience was. There were changes in the edit, and some really fun and amazing stuff that they did in the second half, which even I wasn’t completely privy to. So I was watching, gasping and getting shocked as much as anybody else in the theatre,” she adds.

‘Have several doubts about Vijay’: Prakash Raj reacts Tamil Nadu CM’s first 120 days in office

Despite taking potshots at Vijay in the run-up to the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections earlier this year, after which he became the Chief Minister, veteran actor Prakash Raj recently pointed out that it is too early to assess his government’s performance. He also noted that the Vijay government should be allowed at least a year as a grace period before being held accountable for its purported failures.“Vijay is the Chief Minister not only for those who voted for him but also for those who did not vote for him. He should be given more time. At least one year should be allowed before commenting on the performance of his government,” news agency ANI quoted him as saying in Tiruchirappalli.

He further stated that protests under the current government should be viewed in the broader context of people voicing their demands, regardless of who is in power.Prakash Raj added, “I have several doubts about Vijay. I had spoken about them even before the election. But they (TVK) have won and formed the government. It has been only 120 days, so we cannot arrive at any conclusion now. We have to give them time. If they do not perform properly even after one year, I will question them.”Don’t Miss | As Bethlehem Kudumba Unit earns Rs 321 cr, co-producer Fahadh Faasil decodes its success“I am waiting until the first Budget. There is no need to criticise them immediately. Just because we do not like those in power, we should not rush to criticise them. We must respect democracy and the people,” he observed.

When asked for his view on Vijay’s recent foreign trip and his meeting with actor Ajith Kumar during the Michelin Le Mans Cup race at Silverstone in the United Kingdom (UK), where the latter raced, Prakash Raj said there is nothing wrong with such activities. “What I would look at is whether he accomplished the purpose for which he went. He has said that he has brought in investments worth several thousand crores,” he noted.Prior to the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, Prakash Raj had torn into Vijay’s political ambitions, alleging that he was “exploiting” people’s



love for him. The veteran actor also questioned how Vijay could aspire to become the state’s chief minister without ever standing up for the people.“Have you even spoken politics at my level? In all these years, did you ever stand up for Tamil Nadu, or its people, their language or dignity? People have showered love on you because of your talent, not for your politics. And you are exploiting it. Politics is different; cinema is different. That love is different. This is different,” The News Minute quoted him as saying while campaigning for CPI(M) candidate N Pandi in Palani.Vijay and Prakash Raj have acted together in movies such as Ghilli (2004), Pokkiri (2007), Villu (2009), Sivakasi (2005), Aathi (2006), Varisu (2023), and Jana Nayagan (2026).

Parineeti Chopra reacts to husband Raghav Chadha’s sweet gesture

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Parineeti Chopra has reacted to the heartwarming social media post by her husband, politician Raghav Chadha, which he had shared for her earlier in the day, ahead of the promotions of her upcoming streaming title ‘Shaque: Trust No One’.On Monday, the actress spoke with IANS along with Tahir Raj Bhasin and Soni Razdan during the promotions of the series in the BKC area of Mumbai.

Talking about her husband’s sweet gesture, the actress said, “It was a very sweet surprise because his entire social media feed is filled with political content, governance”. She told IANS, “So this was a very sweet surprise, very filmy, almost romantic and a thoughtful surprise from him. He is just all hearts. These are the sweet little things that he does that really take away my heart. It can put you in a great mood and can remind you of your partner and them standing behind you. All these things can really encourage a woman just to smile”.

On Monday, Raghav Chadha extended his support to wife Parineeti Chopra ahead of her OTT debut with ‘Shaque’.

He membered the time he visited the shoot in Shimla and met the team. Claiming that Parineeti seemed to have had a great time working on the drama, the politician praised the team’s warmth and talent.

Posting the recently released trailer of ‘Shaque’ on his official Instagram handle, Raghav penned, “So proud of you @parineetichopra... I know how much you gave to Shaque, especially through a time that was already very special for us. Having spent some time at the shoot in Shimla, I also got to see the warmth and talent of the team behind it. An exceptionally talented bunch, and clearly one you had a lot of fun working with (sic)”. “Wishing you and the entire Shaque team all the very best. I have a feeling this one is going to keep people guessing. Can’t wait for everyone to watch it on 24th September”, he added.

Parineeti had an adorable reaction to Raghav’s post. Expressing her gratitude for the support she had been getting from her ‘protective husband’, the ‘Chamkila’ actress commented, “This is the sweetest! Thanks Ragai. People need to know what a big support and protective husband you were during this time (sic)”.

India’s reigning star Noor Jehan built Pakistan’s film industry, earned 5x more than peers



Noor jehan, often credited as ‘Pakistan’s Lata Mangeshkar’ in India, she was Malika-e-Tarannum (Queen of Melody) to her followers across the border. Familiar to the current generation as the voice behind ‘Sanu Nehr Vale Pul’,or the Faiz Ahmed Faiz creation ‘Mujhse Pehli Si Mohabbat’, Noor Jehan started her career in Bombay (now Mumbai) in the 1930s, and went to Pakistan after the Partition. There, she emerged as one of the most respected and celebrated singers from the subcontinent. Amid comparisons between them, Lata Mangeshkar herself credited her as the ‘role model’. After Noor Jehan died, Mangeskar said in an interview, “Everyone has role models. And I have no qualms in admitting that Noor Jehan was mine. We listened to Noor Jehan in childhood and grew with her notes in mind.”

From a child actor to the biggest star in pre-Partition IndiaNoor Jehan started working in the movies in the 1930s as a child artist, and by the 1940s, she was playing lead roles. She started her career in Bengal, moved to Bombay as a young actor, and with the 1942 film Khandaan, she became a star. The film also starred Pran. Khandaan brought Noor Jehan the kind of stardom that many heroines had not experienced until then. She was singing her own songs, was a stunning beauty with oodles of charm, and was an enchantress on screen. Her vocals left the audience mesmerised, and not just them; even her film Khandaan’s director, Shaukat Hussain Rizvi, was completely in awe of her.Their relationship started on set despite the producer raising his objections, as he feared that his film could suffer if their romance went bad. As per Aijaz Gul’s book Noorjehan: The Melody Queen, producer Dalsukh M Pancholi sued Rizvi, saying that he had kidnapped Noor Jehan. In court, Noor Jehan presented herself and dismissed the matter, saying Rizvi was like her brother. When her actual brother beat her up to get her to break up with Rizvi, she secretly married the man she loved. And later, when the family sued Rizvi, complaining that he was holding her hostage, her husband counter-sued them and made them leave the city.

The success of Khandaan led Noor Jehan to work in many films in Bombay, the most notable being the Dilip Kumar-starrer Jugnu. She had had a few hits, and was starting to become one of the most bankable names in the industry as she, unlike many others, had the two skills that were most loved in the movies – acting and singing. But when all seemed to be going well for Noor Jehan, it was declared that the country would be divided into two. And she decided to come back home, and for her, that home was Pakistan, for that’s where she was born.

Films were the last thing on anyone’s mind in Pakistan as the newly built country was still finding its feet. Many prominent film industry folks, including Mehboob Khan, spent some time in Lahore but realised that the infrastructure they had in Bombay was a distant dream here. They came back to India, but not Noor Jehan. She took on the challenge, and along with her husband, who at one point wanted to start an electric bulb factory, decided to build the industry from scratch. Lahore had a flourishing film industry before Partition, but that wasn’t the case now as the city had gone through immense turmoil in the preceding months. Studios were burnt down, and to start it all up again required some hard labour. Noor Jehan and her husband bought an old studio, and built it up again.Three years later, Noor Jehan became the first woman to direct a film, and became one of the pioneers of the Pakistani film industry. Her film Chan Way, which also starred her and featured her vocals, was a massive hit, and became one of the earliest hits of Pakistan.Noor Jehan was already a mother of three by this time but knew how to strike the perfect work-life balance. She was a full-time working mother who hired enough help to manage everything with ease. She was running a studio, directing and acting in films, singing,

‘They came from a womb’: Richa Chadha hails Salman Khan for speaking against body-shaming

During the Bigg Boss 20 Weekend Ka Vaar episode, superstar host Salman Khan spoke out against the culture of trolling and body-shaming, particularly the way women are targeted for their postpartum weight. While Salman did not directly take Katrina Kaif’s name, his comments came days after the actor faced ruthless trolling following her appearance at the Ambani family’s Ganpati celebrations.

Richa Chadha, who welcomed her first child in 2024, and is awaiting the release of her non-fiction project, Musafiri, has now praised Salman for addressing the issue. Speaking to News18, Richa said she was unaware of Salman’s comments until she was told about them. “I didn’t know he spoke about it but it’s great! It’s a magnanimous thing to do. One shouldn’t pay heed. Poor men are so limited in their thinking capacities and they’ll never have the profound experience of giving birth.”Richa, who has often spoken openly about body image and the pressure placed on women, went on to question men who troll women over their appearance. “They (men) cannot exist without us. All of them came from a womb. In the natural order of things, if you start to make fun of mothers, it backfires very badly. Every single individual, who sat with a stupid paunch and a receding hairline and made comments on women’s bodies, is unhappy with

and being a mother – and she did it all. Of course, one can now imagine that this wasn’t seen honourably by the larger society, for who could imagine a woman in the 1950s who was financially independent and did not seek her husband’s permission to make her own decisions?It was only a matter of time before rumours about her affairs were circulated and men who considered themselves to be the decision makers of society started pulling her down, but Noor Jehan stayed put. Unlike many of her contemporaries, she was rather wise about her money and made sure that her home was in her name, and even the studio she had set up with her husband was co-owned by her.As she got more and more famous, the cracks in her marriage started to widen, and eventually, it ended in divorce. However, shortly after, Noor Jehan married again. In 1959, she married up-and-comer Ejaz Durrani, who was on his way to becoming a major star in Pakistani movies. From this marriage, she gave birth to three daughters. Ejaz wanted Noor Jehan to quit acting in movies, and she agreed. It seemed quite uncharacteristic for her to bow down to someone else’s whims, and thus, her fans have come to believe that since she had had a good run in the movies, she now wanted to focus on singing.

After she quit acting, Noor Jehan’s musical career saw a new level of success. Until quitting films in 1961, Noor Jehan had been known for playback singing, primarily for her own movies, but now, sky was the limit, and she made the most of it. While other singers would get paid PKR 350 (roughly PKR 70,000, adjusted for inflation) per film song, she would earn PKR 2,000 (roughly PKR 4 lakh, adjusted for inflation), as per Aijaz Gul. She was known for her Urdu and Punjabi songs, and started travelling the world with her music.A decade or so later, her marriage with Ejaz ended as well. The men left, but Noor Jehan was still standing by her children, with her finances in place. Since she had always been extremely particular about being financially independent, Noor Jehan never found herself in a spot where she had to worry about her or her children’s future.

When Noor Jehan pulled a producer by the ear, escorted him out to her studio

While this saved her from a lot of troubles that women of that era had to face, this also meant that the men with bruised egos wouldn’t think twice before dragging her name through the mud. Everything – from secret affairs to accusations about her character – became gossip, and as usually is the case, such gossip travelled well, even if it wasn’t true. In a video shared on her 20th death anniversary on her daughter Hina Durrani’s YouTube channel, three of her daughters recalled that their mother “was a very brave woman to survive in that industry. She went with dignity and made sure everyone respected her.” Everyone knew no one could mess with her.Once, her daughter recalled, a film producer barged into her recording studio and requested that she sing for him as he had invested money in the film she was recording for. Noor Jehan got up, pulled him by the ear, and escorted him out, as everyone watched in stunned silence. She knew when someone was appreciating her art versus when they were trying to cross a line.noor jehan net worth, success story Noor Jehan was a woman in a man’s world, and she knew she had to make them respect her. (Photo: Express Archives)Noor Jehan didn’t marry a third time and lived an extremely busy life with her work and her six children. And despite being a workhorse, she pampered her children to no end. She sent her three young daughters to boarding school when her second marriage was going through a tough time as she had the foresight to protect them against domestic disturbance. But even when the children lived away, she would constantly treat them with gifts. For instance, when she would send mangoes to her daughters, she would send enough for the entire school. As per Aijaz Gul, in the 1970s, she would give an allowance of PKR 35,000 per month (roughly PKR 50 lakh, adjusted for inflation) to each of her children, which was a massive amount in those days.The relationship wasn’t just transactional, as she had a special connection with each of her kids, and almost all of them cared for her until her last days. Her last six years were spent in and out of hospitals in Pakistan, London and the US, but through it all, her children were by her side. She knew that her property could cause a rift between them after her passing so she sold most of assets before her death, and distributed the money amongst her children. She lived a lavish and luxurious life, a life she had made for herself.In 1982, Noor Jehan got a chance to visit India, the only visit she made since Partition, and as per own admission, she was in tears when she landed. In a chat with Dilip Kumar on Doordarshan, she recalled the days they spent filming together back in the 1940s. Her daughters recalled that when she was leaving from Pakistan, there was a problem at immigration as they believed that her documents were incomplete. She got emotional as she knew that this was her only chance to visit India and as she landed, she received a warm welcome from the entire film industry, including Lata Mangeshkar.In 1996, Noor Jehan recorded for the last time, but decades later, her voice still echoes in the homes of countless South Asians all over the world. She passed away in 2000 at the age of 74.

their own body,” she said.Salman had addressed the issue during the Bigg Boss 20, Weekend Ka Vaar episode, pointing out how trolls comment on everything from a person’s body and weight to their family and appearance. “You comment on their body, weight, looks, family, and on someone’s smile as well as flaws. You troll someone for becoming a mother. Bhaddi lag rahi hai, moti ho gayi hai, buddha ho gaya hai, (Looking shabby, fat, old) all of this is going on. It’s something dirty that we should not even acknowledge,” Salman said.He added, “What do you want to troll, and why do you want to troll somebody who got pregnant? Everyone puts on weight after pregnancy. When she resumes filming, she will get back in shape. She wants to spend time with her family.”Richa has herself faced comments about her postpartum weight. She has previously spoken about developing an eating disorder amid the pressure to maintain a certain body size and fit into industry expectations. She had also called out trolls for targeting Aishwarya Rai Bachchan over her postpartum weight gain.Salman’s comments received support from several members of the film industry. Varun Dhawan and his father, filmmaker David Dhawan, thanked the actor for speaking about what they described as an issue that has affected the industry. During the episode, Salman had also spoken about Varun and Sohail Khan