

Two devotees feared drowned during Ganesh idol immersion in Siddipet

Siddipet: The devotees of Lord Ganesha were feared to have drowned in a lake at Rudraram in Akberpet-Bhumpally mandal on Saturday.

They devotees have been identified as Ramesh (35) and Naveen (25), both residents of Rudraram.

The residents of the village installed an idol as part of the festivities. They went in a procession to the lake for the immersion in Pedda Cheruvu lake located on the outskirts of the village. While immersing the idol, the duo drowned in the lake. Efforts are on to retrieve the bodies.

Heavy demand drives competition for Rs 300 darshan tickets: TTD

Hyderabad: The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) on Saturday appealed to devotees not to believe false information circulated on social media. It urged the devotees to understand that unsuccessful booking attempts during peak demand do not necessarily indicate a system failure. The release of Rs 300 Special Entry Darshan (SED) tickets led to intense competition, with lakhs of devotees attempting to book tickets simultaneously.

Jagtial CDPO held by ACB while taking Rs 63,000 bribe

Jagtial: A Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) from the Integrated Child Development Scheme was arrested by Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials while she was allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 63,000 in Metpalli mandal centre on Saturday.

ACB officials said that the accused CDPO Daraju Padma was caught red-handed after she directly received the bribe from an Anganwadi worker for not making adverse remarks during her inspection of Anganwadi centres. A case has been registered against her. She was produced before a special court for ACB cases in Karimnagar for judicial remand.



New Delhi, Sept 26

In the eye of a storm over reports of internal division over the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls across states, the Election Commission (EC) met here on Saturday and said all SIR-related decisions were taken unanimously.

The EC also defended Form 6 for fresh voter enrolment, saying its validity had been upheld by the Supreme Court.

CEC, ECs meet in dissent shadow, say all SIR decisions unanimous

For non-SIR period, forms prescribed under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, would continue to be used, the EC said.

In this first meeting of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners SS Sandhu and Vivek Joshi since a media expose, the full commission also issued a slew of measures to ease voter registration under the SIR, and assured mechanisms for greater oversight of ECINET, the digital platform for citizens, which has also been under the scanner for "tight central controls".

While admitting that field officers have role-based access to the ECINET system in accordance with their statutory powers, the EC said a committee headed by a senior Deputy Election Commissioner and including an independent expert from an IIT or IIIT would review ECINET to ensure compliance with the provisions of the

relevant Acts and Rules and submit a report to the commission.

In important pro-people orders today, the EC extended deadlines for filing of objections and claims under the SIR in Delhi (until October 30) and Maharashtra (until October 12).

The period of disposal of notices and claims and objections has been extended till November 30 in Delhi and November 10 in Maharashtra.

Further, the EC said Booth Level Officers (BLOs) would ensure doorstep collection of documents from voters who had received notices during the ongoing SIR because of unmapped records or logical discrepancies. "BLOs will visit the homes of such persons for collection of documents and thereafter upload them to ECINET, for decision by the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO). Such persons need not be called to the ERO/AERO office for a hearing. Only in exceptional circumstances, as decided by the ERO, the hearing will be held preferably online," the EC said.

It said an elector could authorise any adult family member to attend hearings on their behalf.

On the contentious issue of Election Commission-

ers writing to the Cabinet Secretary, the EC clarified today that the letter (mentioned in a media report) was not related to any policy matter of the commission or IT division.

"It was related to the work of an officer on deputation to the EC. The work redistribution orders issued by the officer concerned were not actually implemented after the orders of the two commissioners, and the oversight over the IT division by the Deputy Election Commissioner was never withdrawn," the statement from the poll panel said.

Media reports had claimed Sandhu and Joshi wrote separately to Cabinet Secretary TV Somanathan after issuance of a work allocation order within the poll body that "threatened to concentrate the powers" at the EC centrally to add or delete names.

The same report also said Sandhu and Joshi objected 14 times in 10 months to decisions on the SIR and said these were issued without their knowledge or recommendation.

Strict compliance with commissioners' directions

For all commission meetings, an agenda will be circulated in advance and minutes issued

Modi, Yogi meet as UP gears up for Rajya Sabha, Legislative Council polls

New Delhi, Sept 26

PM Narendra Modi's more than hour-long meeting with Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath in Delhi on Saturday came at a politically consequential point for the state, with the October 16 Rajya Sabha election and October 23 MLC polls forming the first electoral checkpoints before the 2027 Assembly battle.

The timing matters because the Election Commission has scheduled voting for 10 Rajya Sabha seats from UP on October 16, followed a week later by elections to 11 Legislative Council seats from teachers' and graduates' constituencies.

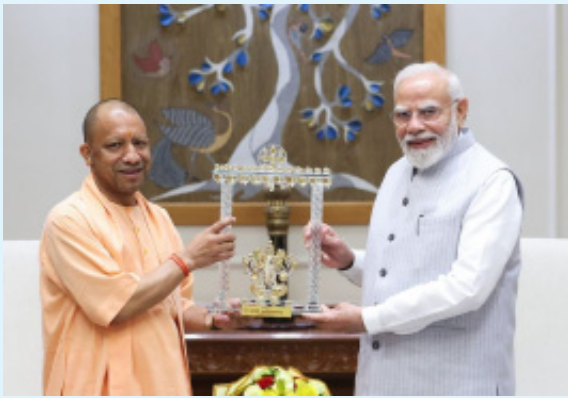
The Modi-Yogi meeting puts the spotlight not merely on the immediate Upper House numbers, but also on how the BJP intends to use these contests to test its candidate selection, caste and regional balancing, alliance management and booth-level organisation.

The BJP currently holds eight of the 10 Rajya Sabha seats going to polls, while the SP and BSP hold one each. Based on the present Assembly arithmetic, the BJP-led alliance is positioned to retain a large share of the seats, although the final contest will depend on candidate choices and voting dynamics.

The RS contest is an MLA-driven election, while the MLC polls will directly test the BJP's reach among specific voter groups. The back-to-back contests give the party two different tests within days.

The Modi-Yogi engagement brings government delivery, party organisation and the 2027 electoral roadmap into the same frame.

In the election for these 10 Rajya Sabha seats, mem-



bers will be elected by UP MLAs through proportional representation using the single transferable vote. With 397 effective MLAs at present, the first-preference formula means a candidate needs 37 votes to secure one seat. In simple terms, 37 votes are needed for one seat, 74 for two, and to win all 10 seats, a party would need 370 MLAs to vote in its favour.

The BJP has 256 MLAs in the UP Assembly and, with its NDA allies, the tally reaches 289, giving the alliance a strong mathematical base for seven seats and a route towards an eighth, depending on the final distribution of votes and candidates. The SP has 101 MLAs and Congress has two, giving the Opposition bloc 103 votes, enough for two seats. The remaining arithmetic is where the BSP's fate becomes politically significant, as it cannot reach the 37-vote threshold on its own, with its count standing at zero in the UP Assembly.

Revanth Seeks Bharat Ratna for Manmohan

Hyderabad, Sept 26

: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Saturday urged the Centre to confer the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian award, posthumously on former prime minister Dr Manmohan Singh and establish a memorial with a knowledge centre in his name in New Delhi.

Revanth Reddy made the demand after unveiling a statue of Dr Singh at Wipro Junction in the Financial District here on the former prime minister's birth anniversary. He said Dr Singh, then the finance minister, had pulled India out of the severe economic crisis of the early 1990s through landmark economic reforms and laid the foundation for the country's subsequent growth.

Revanth Reddy said the liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation policies that Dr Singh introduced during that period had opened up the Indian economy to global investments and helped transform Hyderabad into a major IT and financial services hub. He said several global companies, including Google and Microsoft, had established operations in the Financial District.

The Chief Minister said the Financial District now contributed nearly 49 per cent of Telangana's GDP, while Telangana accounted for about five per cent of the country's GDP. Installing Dr Singh's statue in the heart of the Financial District was therefore an appropriate tribute to his contribution.

Revanth Reddy said Dr Singh's contribution extended beyond economic reforms, recalling legislation and programmes enacted during his tenure as Prime Minister, including the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Right to Information Act and Right to Education Act. The RTI Act, enacted in 2005, created a statutory framework for citizens to seek information from public authori-



ties.

He also credited Dr Singh and then UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi with facilitating the creation of Telangana state. Revanth Reddy said the statue incorporated a reference to Dr Singh's signature on the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014 creating Telangana state and recalled the then-Prime Minister's role in fulfilling the decades-old aspiration for a separate state.

"Some issues should be decided by rising above politics," Revanth Reddy said, questioning why there should be any objection to conferring the country's highest civilian honour on Dr Singh. He said political considerations should not come in the way of honouring leaders who have made significant contributions to the nation.



New Delhi, Sept 26

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) allies on Saturday welcomed the Election Commission's statement, claiming it had put to rest misconceptions surrounding the electoral process.

While the BJP attacked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for blaming the EC for his electoral setbacks and misleading the public, NDA allies N Chandrababu Naidu and Chirag Paswan said the poll panel had clarified all doubts, strengthening public confidence in democratic institutions.

"The unanimous clarification issued by the EC, led by CEC Gyanesh Kumar along with Election Commissioners SS Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, reaffirms the integrity and credibility of our constitutional institutions and

Doubts over poll process cleared: NDA allies hail Election Commission

puts to rest all misconceptions surrounding the electoral process. Decisions relating to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls are taken collectively and in strict adherence to established institutional protocols," said Naidu.

He said attempts to undermine global confidence in India's democratic framework and electoral processes for short-term political gains were deeply unfortunate.

Responding to Naidu, TMC MP Mahua Moitra said the ECI's statement amounted to "an admission of guilt" rather than a clarification. Paswan said the EC had clearly stated its position on all key issues point by point. "The process of the SIR, the unanimity among all three Election Commissioners, and the facts relating to the meeting with the Cabinet Secretary have all been clearly explained," he said.

Ganesh Festivities Conclude Peacefully; Preparations for 2027 Begin Immediately: CP Sajjanar

Hyderabad: Minutes after the Ganesh festivities concluded, the entire event having been completed with little to no untoward incidents, city police commissioner V.C. Sajjanar on Saturday said the police would begin preparations for the next year's celebrations to conduct them in an even more refined manner.

Speaking to the media, Sajjanar said the police for the first time had used advanced crowd monitoring technology during the Ganesh immersion procession. "The most prestigious mega event in Hyderabad has concluded under very peaceful conditions," Sajjanar said. He had his team of senior officials broke out into a brief jig after the event. "Our officers and personnel functioned without sleep for the past 48 hours, remaining stationed on the roads to discharge their duties," Sajjanar said. "After this experience we have formed special teams. We will conduct a detailed de-briefing session to draw from these experiences. We will begin formulating plans right away to organise the 2027 Ganesh festival in an even more refined and peaceful manner,"



Apart from the lakhs of people from the four police commissionerates of Hyderabad, Cyberabad, Malkajigiri and Future City, a large number of devotees had arrived from across Telangana, neighboring states, and even abroad to witness the procession. "I specially thank everybody," the commissioner said. "Over the past two months, key stakeholders alongside the government, including the GHMC commissioner, the HYDRABAD commissioner, officials from the R&B department, southern discom, district health office, RTC, HMWS&SB and others rendered extraordinary cooperation," he said. Sajjanar said 20,000 personnel from the city police and over 8,000 additional personnel drawn from other districts were deployed for bandobast. "I also extend special thanks to the DGP for allocating these additional forces to us."

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Clean energy goal, still a long way to go

Depleting coal inventories at thermal power plants are a cause for concern, as they highlight the country's vulnerability and dependence on fossil fuels. They underline the need to speed up the transition to renewable and clean energy sources. The Central Electricity Authority recently observed that 53 thermal power plants were holding 25 per cent or less of their required coal stock. Official data also shows that 74 coal-fired power plants had critically low stocks as of September 19, up from around 60 a week earlier. Transport bottlenecks, logistical inefficiencies, and seasonal disruptions affect the timely supply of coal to power plants. Peak electricity demand has remained between 230 gigawatts and 250 gigawatts (GW), after reaching a record 270.70 GW in May. Erratic monsoon rains disrupted coal shipments, while hotter weather pushed power consumption higher. Power utilities have consequently increased coal imports, which reached a 15-month high in August. Maintaining adequate fuel stocks may be necessary in the short term, but the more durable solution lies in making clean electricity carry a larger share of the country's growing demand. Renewable capacity must be accompanied by stronger transmission networks, substantially greater energy storage and a more flexible electricity system. India's energy policy now faces a dual task: ensuring uninterrupted power supply today while building the infrastructure that can reduce dependence on coal tomorrow. Though the new climate targets set by the country signal its commitment to the clean energy pathway, the task of phasing out fossil fuels is quite daunting. There are many challenges ahead: scaling up renewable energy requires huge investments in grid modernisation, energy storage solutions and grid flexibility to handle intermittent supply.

Walkers International to Hold 5K Gandhi Jayanti Walkathon at People's Plaza



Hyderabad Correspondent, September 26 (Indian Chronicle): The 5K Gandhi Jayanti Walkathon will begin at 6 am from People's Plaza on Necklace Road on October 2, as part of the 40th anniversary celebrations of Walkers International, organisers announced at a programme held at the Hyderabad Press Club. The event is aimed at promoting walking, fitness and preventive healthcare, with the organisation calling on people of all age groups to participate and adopt an active lifestyle. The anniversary celebrations will be held under the theme "Health is Wealth – Walk Your Way to Health." Walkers International said it has brought together around 3.5 lakh people through nearly 1,700 clubs across 10 countries over the past four decades, with a focus on regular walking, physical fitness and community well-being. International President for 2026, Dr P.V. Ravi Raju, is leading the organisation. The Gandhi Jayanti event is expected to bring together youth, women, families and senior citizens, with organisers highlighting walking as an affordable and accessible way to maintain health. Event Chairperson and IP 2016 Krishna Kumari Sunkara, Dr K. Ramanandam, Nagabhushanam, S. Muralikrishna, Y. Srinivasa Chary, K. Sampath Reddy, K. Krishna, K. Saibaba, Dr B.G. Reddy and Chief Coordinator V. Madhava Rao participated in the programme.

Kommarreddy Ramakanth Reddy's Son Suchith Reddy Wins Main Laddu for Rs. 1.26 Lakh at McDowell Colony Auction



““BODUPPAL, SEPTEMBER 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The laddu auction held as part of the Ganesh Navaratri celebrations at McDowell Colony in Boduppal was conducted with great enthusiasm. In the auction, Suchith Reddy (Lucky), son of Kommarreddy Ramakanth Reddy and Sindhuri, won the main laddu for Rs. 1,26,000. The smaller laddu was won by Anand Reddy for Rs. 10,500."The programme was attended by Colony Chief Advisor and senior leader Bommakku Balaiah, Colony President D. Prasad Reddy, Secretary Medi Malles h, Advisors Vellanki Srinivasa Rao and Depa Yadireddy, and Sai Baba Temple Committee President K. Padma Ramakrishna Raju.Executive Committee members M. Krishna Reddy, Narra Basha, Ramakanth Reddy, Anand Reddy, G. Sadashiva Rao, Prabhakar Maruthi, V. Tirupathi Reddy, Gunti Srinivas, A.T. Krishna Kumar, K. Narasimha Chary, L. Sudarshana Chary, K. Prabhakar, Ganesh Yadav and Arugonda Shiva, along with a large number of colony residents and devotees, participated in the event.

Celebrating RJC Degree College Fresher's Day



The local RJC Degree College was celebrated in a private function hall in the city on Saturday. Chairman of

the college Gundala Krishna attended the program as the chief guest and first started the program by lighting the torch. On this occasion, Krishna said that students can achieve anything if they set a goal in life and work hard according to the plan. He said that RJC Degree College, which was started 28 years ago, has achieved many successes during its tenure. Many students of their college have settled in the fields of science, education, arts, sports, business, politics and government jobs. Besides this, RJC has the honor of achieving state level ranks. He said that the honor of getting placements in multinational companies at the degree level also goes to his college. He suggested that the students of the current year should continue the success of the students of the college so far. For this, if the students understand what the teachers said and work hard according to the plan, they will achieve it. Today's students are the future of the country tomorrow.

He wished to fulfill and thereby bring a good name to the teachers who taught you. Then prizes were given to many students who won in various departments and examinations this academic year. The students of the college honored Krishna who was the guest of the program and presented mementos. Finally, the classical, Western, break, group, solo and other dances performed by the female students were impressive. In the program Principal A. Lingaiah, In-charge Luanjaneulu, Sunanda and others participated

PARAMESWAR REDDY Congratulates Officials for Successfully Managing Ganesh Immersion Arrangements

“UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal Assembly Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy congratulated the officials and staff of the Malkajigiri Municipal Corporation (MMC) for their efforts in successfully managing the arrangements for the Ganesh immersion programme. On the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy met Malkajigiri Municipal Commissioner Vinay Kumar Reddy and Sanitation In-charge Raghu Prasad and congratulated them for successfully overseeing the immersion arrangements. He said the efforts of the officials and staff in ensuring the smooth completion of the immersion programme were commendable. "Senior Congress leaders Darpalli Rajasekhara Reddy, Ramanthapur and Beerappagadda Division presidents Sandeep, Agam Reddy and Rafiq, Kompally Balraj, Vallapu Srikanth Yadav, Mulkala Palli Rajesh Mudiraj, Kapra Sai Goud, Gangaputra



Vijay Bhaskar, Shaga Sridhar, Balaram, Manchala Raghu, Bhaskar, Anup Chari, Kiran, Mani, Nagayya, James, Gandhi, Srinivas Goud, Gattaiah, Bikshapathi and others participated in the programme.

Funds Sought for Development Works-



-PARAMESWAR REDDY Urges MMC Commissioner to Allocate Funds“UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal Assembly Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy urged the authorities to allocate funds for pending development works in the Uppal constituency and take up the works at the earliest. "On Saturday, Parameshwar Reddy, along with several residents of various colonies, met Malkajigiri Municipal Corporation (MMC) Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy and submitted a representation seeking immediate action on the pending works. "During the meeting, he explained the details of various long-pending development works in the Uppal Circle to the Commissioner. He also submitted details of the works approved by District In-charge Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu and requested that the required funds be sanctioned and the works commenced

without further delay."--Major Development Works Proposed"Parameshwar Reddy sought the construction of CC roads in Sri Sai Colony, Sessa Sai Nagar, Amrutha Colony, Mallikarjuna Nagar, Uppal Hills, Old Village and Lakshma Reddy Colony. "He also requested the completion of pending works, including the installation of a lift, flooring and elevation at the Mudiraj Association Community Hall in Uppal Sri Sri Nagar. He sought the construction of a Senior Citizens' Building and necessary development works at the Navodaya Youth Association building in Gandhinagar. He further requested the development of the Christian Cemetery, Kuruma Association Cemetery, Mudiraj Cemetery and Reddy Cemetery in Chilkanaagar. "Parameshwar Reddy also urged the authorities to construct a central median on the Uppal-Sri Sri Nagar main road and undertake comprehensive development of the stormwater network and CC roads in SN Colony."

In addition, he requested the construction of a community hall in Gandhinagar, Ramanthapur, and a stormwater drain in Shantinagar. "Ramanthapur and Beerappagadda Division Presidents Sandeep and Aagam Reddy, along with Rafiq, Kompally Balraj, Vallapu Srikanth Yadav, Mulkallapalli Rajesh Mudiraj, Kapra Sai Goud, Gangaputra Vijay Bhaskar, Shaga Sridhar, Balram, Manchala Raghu, Bhaskar, Anoop Chari, Kiran, Mani, Nagaiah, James, Gandhi, Srinivas Goud, Gattaiah, Bhikshapathi and others participated in the programme.

Negligence in Duties Will Invite Disciplinary Action

Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September 27. "WANKIDI: Teachers working in Tribal Welfare schools should perform their duties with dedication, discipline and a strong sense of responsibility. Tribal Welfare Department Deputy Director Jadhav Ambaji said. He warned that employees who show negligence, lack of punctuality or indifference towards students' education would face disciplinary action as per the rules. The Deputy Director was speaking at a review meeting held with teachers of Asifabad, Wankidi and Movad school complexes at the Wankidi School Complex on Saturday. He reviewed school performance, teacher and student attendance, teaching methods, academic standards, school management and maintenance of records. Jadhav Ambaji said primary education forms the foundation for students' future and teachers should identify the learning levels of individual students and provide teaching accordingly. He directed teachers to give special attention to Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) and continuously assess students' reading, writing and mathematical skills. "He instructed teachers to attend schools on time and devote their full working hours to teaching. He also stressed the need to monitor mid-day meals, cleanliness, drinking water, student



safety and proper maintenance of school records. He said continuous monitoring of the performance of schools would be undertaken and deficiencies identified during inspections should be rectified immediately. Repeated negligence would invite disciplinary action as per the rules. The meeting was attended by ACO Purka Uddhav, District Sports Officer Madavi Shekhu, ATDO Chiranjivi, headmasters Madugula Narayanamurthy, Soyam Indrabai and Pawar Limbar Rao, as well as SCRP's Rathod Ravinder, Kudmeta Ananth, Korvetha Manohar and teachers from the respective school complexes.

Service Spirit at a Young Age Appreciable: Manthani CI Budde Swamy

"Manthani, Sep 26 (Indian Chronicle): Teaching children the spirit of service and compassion at a young age is highly appreciable, said Manthani Circle Inspector Budde Swamy. "On the occasion of the fifth birthday of Thati Sai Vardhan, son of Thati Vijayakumar Swamy, popularly known as Police Constable Vijay, of Ekalspur village in Manthani mandal, a distribution programme of essential commodities was organised at the Manthani CI office on Saturday. "As part of the initiative, essential commodity kits containing nine different types of household items were distributed to five underprivileged families from Ekalspur village. The kits were handed over by CI Budde Swamy and SI Sandeep

Kumar. "Speaking on the occasion, CI Budde Swamy appreciated the family for celebrating the child's birthday by extending help to needy families instead of organising lavish celebrations. He said such service-oriented activities were inspirational to society and could encourage others to undertake similar initiatives.

"Sai Vardhan's father, Vijayakumar Swamy, said the programme was organised with the intention of teaching his son from an early age that birthdays should not be limited to cutting a cake, but should also be an occasion to help others and share happiness with those in need.

Tributes on Chakali Ailamma Jayanti“



““Veeranari Chakali Ailamma Jayanti celebrations were held at Khammam Municipal Corporation office. On this occasion, they paid tributes to the portrait of Chakali Ailamma by placing flowers. “Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Municipal Commissioner, Municipal officers, employees and staff participated in this program. Speaking on the occasion, officials said that Telangana Veeranari Chakali Ailamma's bravery, fighting spirit and her efforts for social justice were inspiring. “Remembering Chakali Ailamma's ambitions, they said that everyone should emulate the courage, perseverance and fighting spirit shown by her.

Spirit and Ideals of Chakali Ailamma, Who Fought for Land and Livelihood, Remain an Inspiration:



FORMER BRS STATE SECRETARY NERDAM BHASKER GOUD“UPPAL, SEPTEMBER 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The birth anniversary of Chakali Ailamma, a courageous woman who fought for land and livelihood and was a warrior of the Telangana Armed Struggle, was celebrated grandly in Uppal. "The programme was organised under the leadership of local Rajaka community leader Shyam. Activist and former TRS State Secretary Nerdam Bhaskar Goud attended the event as the chief guest. On the occasion, Nerdam Bhaskar Goud garlanded the statue of Chakali Ailamma in Uppal and paid floral tributes to her. Speaking on the occasion, he said that Chakali Ailamma was a great woman who courageously fought for the rights of oppressed communities. "He said that Ailamma's struggle for land, livelihood and self-respect would remain etched in the history of Telangana. Her courage, determination and fighting spirit continue to serve as an inspiration to the present generation, he said. He emphasised the need for everyone fighting for rights and justice in society to carry forward the spirit and ideals of Chakali Ailamma. "Local leaders, activists, admirers of Ailamma and members of the public participated in the programme and paid rich tributes to her.

Baby Girl Delivered Inside 108 Ambulance“



“Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September 27. "Asifabad A woman from Dampur village in Asifabad mandal delivered a baby girl inside a 108 ambulance while she was being shifted to the Mother and Child Hospital in Mancherla. Korakate Vanitha, wife of Jangu, was admitted to Asifabad Government Hospital after experiencing labour pains. As the pregnancy had not reached full term and the baby's weight was reported to be low, hospital staff informed the Rebenna 108 ambulance service to shift her to Mancherla for better treatment. While the ambulance was on its way, Vanitha developed severe labour pains near Mandamarri. EMT Praveen Yadav responded promptly and conducted the delivery inside the ambulance. Vanitha gave birth to a baby girl at 1:48 a.m., during her first delivery. The mother and newborn were safely shifted to the hospital. Vanitha's family members expressed their gratitude to EMT Praveen Yadav and ambulance pilot Komurayya for their timely response and service.

Fusion-2026 Highlights AI, Quantum and Cybersecurity Risks



Dr. M. Ramesh, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Cyberabad, called for greater vigilance against emerging cyber threats linked to Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Computing. "Speaking at Fusion-2026, the Annual Conference of the ISACA Hyderabad Chapter, Dr. Ramesh emphasized the importance of data protection, cybersecurity awareness and coordinated efforts to combat digital and financial crimes." "He cautioned the public about deepfakes, digital surveillance and OTP-related fraud, while stressing the need for responsible adoption of emerging technologies." "The conference, held as part of the 26th anniversary celebrations of ISACA Hyderabad Chapter, brought together cybersecurity, audit, risk and technology professionals." "Key discussions covered AI risk, quantum-



era cybersecurity, quantum security, the DPDP Act and emerging technology risks. A CXO Roundtable also examined future challenges and opportunities in the technology landscape." "SIG Award winners, former chapter presidents, sponsors and volunteers were felicitated during the event." "The event was led by the chapter's Board: Sujay Gankidi (President), Raj Pawar (Vice President), G C S Sarma (Immediate Past President), Rajnish Dasari (Secretary), G Vamsi Krishna (Treasurer), Ramadevi Komanduru (Assistant Treasurer), Ajay Soni (Program Director), Ponnaluru Sowjanya (Director, Membership), Babul Reddy (Director, SIG), Padma Akella (Director, SheLeads Tech), Venkata Pavan Kumar (Director, Certifications), Anjani Kumar (Director, Legal & Compliance), and Advisors Sharon Gaddala and Venugopal Hari.

MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Pays Rich Tributes to Chakali Ailamma on Her Birth Anniversary

"RAMANTHAPUR, SEPTEMBER 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Chakali Ailamma, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy paid rich tributes to the legendary freedom fighter by garlanding her statue at the Dhobi Ghat (Rajaka Association) in Ramanthapur Division. "Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said Chakali Ailamma was a brave woman who fought for land, livelihood and liberation from the oppressive practice of forced labour. He said she would remain etched in history as a courageous woman who showcased the determination and fighting spirit of the people of Telangana to the world. "The MLA called upon the younger generation to draw inspiration from Chakali Ailamma's ideals and fighting spirit. "Rajaka Association Chief Adviser Krishna, President Danaiah, General Secretary Jittu, Honorary President Ravi, Prasad, Bhimesh, Vijay, Satyanarayana, Chinna Rajesh, Shankar, Bikshapathi, Balaraju, Aruna Sai and others participated in the programme. "BRS state leaders Gandham Nageswara Rao,



Suram Shankar, Chand Pasha, Mahender, Mandapati Srinivas Reddy, Ale Ramesh, JCB Raju, Madduri Srinivas, Cheguri Srinu and others also participated and paid tributes to Chakali Ailamma.

THRIVE PAIN CLINIC – WELLNESS & MORE LAUNCHES IN JUBILEE HILLS

Advanced Pain Management, Wellness & Recovery Under One Roof:



In today's fast-paced lifestyle, chronic pain, inflammation, sports injuries and reduced physical wellbeing have become increasingly common. Addressing these growing needs, Thrive Pain Clinic – Wellness & More launched in Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, offering an integrated approach to pain management, rehabilitation, recovery and wellness. "The centre follows a holistic, evidence-based approach, addressing patients from "muscle to mind". Pain is considered an important signal from the body that warrants appropriate evaluation and treatment rather than simply suppressing symptoms. "Thrive brings together advanced interventional pain management, physiotherapy, regenerative therapies and wellness technologies under one roof. The centre focuses on chronic pain management, sports recovery, rehabilitation, inflammation management and overall wellness, with therapies designed to support recovery from the musculoskeletal level to cellular and mitochondrial health. "The centre has been founded by a team of Pain Management Specialists with an Anaesthesia background. "Dr. Dheeraj Kumar – Pain Physician, "Dr. Aparajitha Remalla – Pain Physician" Dr. Spurthi Mallampati – Pain Physician" Dr. Anahita Reddy – Pain Physician "The facility features a state-of-the-art procedure/operation theatre equipped for advanced pain interventions and minimally invasive procedures. Services include interventional pain management, radiofrequency ablation, regenerative treatments, physiotherapy, mental wellness

support, CBT sessions, nutrition counselling, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, infrared light therapy, molecular hydrogen therapy and cold plunge therapy. "A dedicated physiotherapy unit focuses on chronic pain rehabilitation, functional recovery and sports injuries, providing patients with structured rehabilitation alongside medical pain management. "The centre was launched on September 26, 2026, in the presence of distinguished guests, including the chief guest, the honourable DGP of Telangana Mr CV Anand Garu, and guests of honour Member of Parliament (Loksabha) Mrs D.K. Aruna Garu along with medical professionals and well-wishers. "Speaking about the vision behind Thrive, the founders said that the centre aims to create a comprehensive platform where pain treatment, rehabilitation, recovery and wellness can be integrated rather than managed in isolation. "By bringing together interventional pain management, physiotherapy, mental wellness, CBT, nutrition and advanced wellness therapies, Thrive aims to provide a coordinated approach to chronic pain—addressing not only pain intensity, but also physical function, psychological wellbeing, lifestyle and overall quality of life. "A dedicated nutritionist is also part of the multidisciplinary team, providing individualised nutritional assessment and guidance. Nutrition can play an important supportive role in chronic pain and wellness by addressing dietary patterns, metabolic health, body composition and nutritional adequacy, while complementing medical treatment and rehabilitation. "Thrive also incorporates mental wellness and behavioural support as an important part of chronic pain care. Living with persistent pain can affect sleep, stress levels, mood, confidence, daily activity and quality of life. The centre provides mental wellness support and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) sessions to help patients develop practical strategies for coping with chronic pain, improving function and building healthier pain-management habits. "Thrive Pain Clinic – Wellness & More is located at "4th Floor, Bharathi Square, BNR Colony, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad. "The centre aims to establish a new model of integrated care where advanced pain medicine, rehabilitation, regenerative approaches and wellness therapies work together to help individuals manage pain, recover better and improve quality of life.

Let Us Uphold the Ideals of Chakali Ailamma

MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, Former Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen"

"UPPAL, September 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Chakali Ailamma Jayanti celebrations were held in a grand manner in the erstwhile Chilkannagar Division. The programme was organised by the Chilkannagar Rajaka Sangam at Raghavendra Nagar Colony, with Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy and former corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj attending as chief guests. They paid floral tributes to the statue of Chakali Ailamma on the occasion. "Speaking at the programme, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said Chakali Ailamma, a warrior of the Telangana Armed Struggle, was a symbol of backward-class consciousness and women's empowerment. He said she fought courageously for the rights of oppressed sections and that her inspiration would continue to remain an ideal for Telangana society. "He said the life of Chakali Ailamma was a great source of inspiration for women's empowerment and the struggle for social justice. He called upon everyone to draw inspiration from her ideals and work towards equality and social justice in society. "BRS state leaders Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, Kokkonda Jagan, Eddula



Kondal Reddy, Jalli Mohan, Banala Narayana Reddy, Muddam Srinivas Yadav, Ramanjaneyulu, Balakrishna Goud, Satya Raj Goud, Masa Shekhar, Kompally Ravinder, MD Shafi, MD Haneef, Uppal leaders Niranjana, Kaladige Shekhar, Narsing, Ram Reddy, Rajaka Sangam leader Koluri Shyam and others participated in the programme.

Election Promises Made to Journalists Must Be Implemented“

"Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter "Indian Chronicle" September.27. "KAUTALA: Telangana Union of Working Journalists (TUWJ-IJ) Komaram Bheem Asifabad district president Abdul Rahman and general secretary S. Sampath Kumar demanded that the promises made to journalists by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy during the elections be implemented immediately. On Saturday, they unveiled posters for the third district conference of TUWJ-IJ at Kautala mandal headquarters. Speaking on the occasion, they recalled the significant role played by journalists in the Telangana movement and expressed concern that journalists' long-pending issues remained unresolved despite changes in governments. They demanded immediate resolution of issues related to house sites and housing for journalists. They warned that if the issues were not addressed, the journalists' union would be forced to launch agitations in the future. They also called upon journalists to remain united and fight for their rights. The district conference will be held on October 7 at A Day Garden Function Hall in Asifabad district headquarters. The leaders appealed to journalists



from across the district to attend the conference in large numbers and make it successful. "Accreditation Committee member Prakash Goud, TUWJ district vice-president Naveen Goud, district leaders Radhakrishna Chary and Amul Goud, and several journalists including K. Naresh, M.L. Maraiah, Chakinala Suresh, K. Ravinder, Bodduna Srinivas, Nagabhushanam, Vinod, Radha Shyam, Prem Sagar, Tirupati and Vilas were present.

Welfare, social justice and constitutional values in focus

Ministers Ponnam Prabhakar and Vakkiti Srihari highlight support for traditional communities, education and protection of constitutional rights.

Karimnagar September 26, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): The State government would continue to focus on the welfare of traditional occupational communities and disadvantaged sections while upholding the constitutional values of equality and social justice, Ministers Ponnam Prabhakar and Vakkiti Srihari said in Karimnagar on Saturday. Addressing the general body meeting of the Karimnagar District Sheep Breeders Cooperative Society at Indira Gardens, Mr. Srihari said the government was committed to the social, economic and political advancement of the Golla Kuruma community and would introduce further measures to support sheep and goat breeders.

He launched the sheep and goat insurance scheme by unveiling its posters. Under the scheme, breeders would pay an annual premium of ₹13 for each sheep or goat, with the government bearing the remaining cost. The scheme would provide relief to breeders who migrate for extended periods with their livestock and face various risks, he said. Mr. Srihari said the government would take steps to address the loans of sheep breeders and ensure greater transparency in the implementation of welfare measures. He also urged breeders to increase livestock production to meet the demand for sheep and goats.

Mr. Prabhakar said the government would propose extending pension benefits from the age of 55 to members of traditional occupational communities. A proposal for waiver of NCDC loans would also be placed before the Chief Minister, he said, adding that steps would be taken to establish a wholesale meat market in Karimnagar. The Ministers later unveiled a statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Bus Station. Mr. Prabhakar recalled that the bus station was named after Dr. Ambedkar in 2013, when he was a Member of Parliament. The installation of the statue would enable commuters to recall Dr. Ambedkar's contribution to the Constitution and his work for social justice, he said.

Mr. Srihari said protecting the rights guaranteed by the



Constitution was the responsibility of every citizen and that comprehensive development was possible only when all sections of society progressed. The Ministers also paid floral tributes to Chakali Ailamma on her birth anniversary by garlanding her statue on the Collectorate Road. They recalled her struggle against feudal exploitation and for land, livelihood and self-respect. Mr. Prabhakar urged members of the Golla Kuruma community to preserve their traditional occupation while giving priority to their children's education. Mr. Srihari called upon the younger generation to draw inspiration from the ideals of Dr. Ambedkar and the struggles of Chakali Ailamma. Collector Chitra Mishra, Police Commissioner Gautham Alam, Mayor Kolagani Srinivas, MLAs Medipalli Satyam and Kavvampalli Satyanarayana, former MLA Arepalli Mohan and other public representatives and officials participated in the programmes.

Special Prayers Offered to Lord Ganesha at Marrichettu Uppal Congress In-charge Parameshwar Reddy Participates in Shobhayatra“

"CHILKANAGAR, SEPTEMBER 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal Assembly Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy offered special prayers to Lord Ganesha at the grand Ganesh pandal set up under the leadership of Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj, former President of the Chilkannagar Divisional Congress Party, at Marrichettu in Chilkannagar Division. "Later, Parameshwar Reddy participated in the Ganesh Shobhayatra organised on the occasion. "On the occasion, Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj and his team accorded a warm welcome to Parameshwar Reddy and felicitated him with a shawl. The leaders and party workers expressed their wishes for the Ganesh festivities to be conducted peacefully and with devotion and religious fervour. Chilkannagar Divisional Congress Party President Nallavelli Mahender, senior Congress Party leaders, party workers and local residents were among those who participated in the programme.



Funds Should Be Allocated for Development of Malkajgiri Corporation“DCC President Thotakura Vajresh Yadav Submits Representation to Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy

"BODUPPAL, SEPTEMBER 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Medchal–Malkajgiri District Congress Committee President and Medchal Constituency In-charge Thotakura Vajresh Yadav on Saturday met Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation Commissioner Vinay Krishna Reddy and submitted a representation seeking allocation of funds for various development works to be undertaken in the Boduppal and Ghatkesar Circles under the corporation. "Vajresh Yadav urged the Commissioner to sanction funds on a priority basis for essential infrastructure works in Boduppal and Ghatkesar Circles, including roads, drainage, parks, sanitation, open gyms and other civic development works required by the people. "He appealed to the Commissioner to expedite pending development works keeping public issues in view and to prepare proposals for new development works in areas where they are required, along with allocating the necessary funds. Vajresh Yadav said that the Congress government is working with the objective of providing better basic infrastructure to the people and assured that efforts would be made to extend the necessary support for development works across the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation



limits. "During the meeting, he brought several issues related to the development of various areas under the corporation to the Commissioner's attention. Edulabad Division Congress Party President Samala Amar, Medipally Division Congress Party President Thungathurthi Ravi, Ghatkesar Division Congress Party President Bokka Prabhakar Reddy, Nagaram Division Congress Party President Bhumayya Yadav, former Chairperson Malli Pavani Jangaiah Yadav, Vishwanatham, Uday Kumar Reddy, Jeevan Reddy and others were present.

‘No non-academic duty for teachers’: Punjab education secretary’s stern order to DCs



GNS News Agency, Sept 26

With the issue of government teachers’ deployment for non-academic duties in Punjab snowballing into a major issue ahead of 2027 Punjab assembly polls, the state education secretary Sonali Giri in a stern letter has directed the deputy commissioners across the state to ensure that no teacher is burdened with any non-academic work, and they should just teach.For almost a year now, government teachers in Punjab have mostly remained out of schools, for several non-academic duties. Apart from the Election Commission’s SIR and BLO duty and Centre’s Census 2027, the state government also deployed them for conducting Drug Census.

Teachers were also deputed on duties related to AAP government’s populist schemes such as registering women for Maawan Dheeyan Satkaar Yojana, making health insurance cards, taking children to religious programmes organized by the government, etc.The latest nail in the coffin for AAP government was the outburst of teachers when they were put on duty to make new ration cards in some districts. Teachers announced that they will boycott ration card duties, and from now one “they will only teach and do nothing else.”Giri, in the letter to the deputy commissioners, wrote that teachers being deployed for non-academic work was now having serious implications on education,

and from now on, they won’t be given any such duties.“It has been observed that teachers of the School Education Department are being requisitioned at the district/sub-divisional level for various administrative and other non-teaching duties even for unjustified longer periods. The matter requires immediate attention,” wrote Giri, adding that a large number of teachers have already been deployed for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.SIR exercise is scheduled to conclude on 30.09.2026. Accordingly, with the exercise now nearing completion, continued deployment of teachers beyond the requirement of SIR may be curtailed so that they can resume their primary academic responsibilities in schools,” she wrote.“However, continued deployment of teachers for multiple assignments outside schools is now seriously affecting classroom teaching, academic continuity and learning outcomes of students. The primary responsibility of a teacher is towards his/her students and repeated withdrawal of teachers from schools inevitably results in loss of instructional time which cannot be adequately compensated later,” wrote the secretary to DCs.

Referring to Section 27 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 and the relevant judicial directions, she wrote: “...Teachers are not to be deployed for non-educational purposes except for duties relating to elections, decennial census and disaster management.”“It is, therefore, directed that henceforth no teacher of the School Education Department shall be requisitioned or deployed for any non-teaching or administrative duty other than duties specifically permissible under law, namely election-related duties, census duties or disaster-management duties,” she added.“Teachers already undertaking substantial election-related responsibilities should not simultaneously be burdened with additional district-level assignments unrelated to these statutory duties..... All Deputy Commissioners are, therefore, requested to issue clear instructions... that no requisition for teachers for surveys, verification exercises or any other miscellaneous duty shall be made,” adds the letter.

2 UP cops, 2 CRPF men arrested for raping woman at farmhouse

Two Uttar Pradesh policemen and two Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel have been arrested for allegedly raping a woman at a farmhouse in Amroha on Wednesday morning.Officials said the farmhouse belongs to an independent MLA from Uttarakhand and that two rooms had been booked there by the accused policemen.According to police, the woman locked herself inside a room after allegedly being raped by three of the men. When the fourth man entered the room, she managed to push him out and bolt the door from inside.The four men then allegedly banged on the door and threatened her, asking her to open it. The woman quickly searched online for Amroha police’s number and called them.

A police team rushed to the farmhouse and rescued the woman. The four accused had fled, but were arrested within hours, police said.The accused are a sub-inspector and a constable posted at Hasanpur police station and a CRPF inspector and a head constable.According to the initial investigation, the woman met the CRPF head constable in Sonipat, Haryana, on September 21, after being introduced to him by a common friend.He picked her up in an SUV, and the CRPF inspector joined them on the way.They reached Amroha on Tuesday and headed to the farmhouse. On the way, they met the UP Police sub-inspector, who was in his car.The woman told police that two rooms were



booked at the farmhouse.Later, the UP Police constable arrived with food and liquor.After the men had eaten and drunk, the two CRPF personnel and the sub-inspector entered the woman’s room, where they allegedly sexually assaulted her.Amroha Superintendent of Police, Lakhan Singh Yadav, told mediapersons that all four accused were arrested and will be produced before a local court on Thursday.The two Amroha policemen have been suspended and departmental proceedings to dismiss them from service have been initiated. A report has also been sent to the CRPF regarding its two personnel, he added.

In Karnataka job fraud case, court cites flight risk to reject middleman’s bail plea

GNS News Agency, Sept 26

A special court in Bengaluru on Tuesday rejected the bail plea of a middleman, arrested in connection with the alleged irregularities in the recruitment of veterinary doctors by the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC), over his attempt to fly to Uzbekistan during the investigation.The court rejected the bail plea of Basavaraj Kannale, 36, who was arrested on August 30 at Delhi airport, based on prima facie evidence from the Karnataka Police Crime Investigation Department (CID) unit of his role in leaking exam questions to over a dozen aspirants who wrote exams for 400 veterinary doctor vacancies.Kannale is accused of procuring the questions for the exam, held on January 8 and 9, 2026, from KPSC exam controller Gyanendra Kumar Gangwar, an IAS officer who has also been arrested. He allegedly collected nearly Rs 40 lakh each from nearly 20 candidates to provide leaked questions.

“Failed to prove it was a pre-planned tour”The Karnataka CID arrested Kannale at New Delhi airport while he was there to catch a flight to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, for a two-week trip. This came as the CID issued a lookout circular for him based on an investigation into the alleged scam in the KPSC recruitment of veterinary doctors.“The air tickets prove that the petitioner was travelling to Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The said document also shows several persons were travelling to the same places. But the tickets were booked from August 11 to August 25, 2026. But the present case was registered on August 24, and hence at this stage the petitioner has failed to prove that it was a pre-planned tour and not an intentional travel,” the special court said.Senior Advocate Aruna Shyam, who appeared for Kannale, argued that his wife is due to deliver a child soon and he would be needed at the time of the delivery.

Public Prosecutor K L Bhagyalakshmi argued that Kannale was citing his wife’s advanced stage of pregnancy only to obtain bail, since investigations into his travel plans indicated he was flying to Tashkent without her.The Karnataka CID also presented evidence of communications and financial transactions between Kannale and Gangwar to argue that the middleman collected funds from KPSC aspirants and paid the IAS officer to leak the entrance exam questions.

“The respondent has made out prima facie materials against the petitioner regarding the alleged offence and also made out that if bail is granted there is a risk of absconding of the petitioner and thereby impeding further investigation,” the court said in its order.“Such alleged unfair practices in selection of veterinary officers would encourage corruption and the poor deserving meritorious doctors are deprived of jobs. At this stage, the petitioner has not made out valid reasons to release him on bail,” the special court ruled.

The CID probe found that Gangwar, a 2016-batch IAS



The special court also considered evidence of communications and financial transactions between the middleman and KPSC exam controller Gyanendra Kumar Gangwar.

officer, leaked the entrance exam questions to a middleman, who in turn provided them to paying candidates and trained them to answer them at a resort in Bengaluru a day before the exam.The probe into the money trail has found that bribes paid by aspirants were used to buy Rs 52 lakh worth of jewellery for a friend of Gangwar’s, CID told the court on September 17 and 18 during a bail hearing for Kannale.On Wednesday, during a bail hearing for the now-suspended IAS officer, CID told the court that the jewellery Gangwar’s friend bought with money from the veterinary exam fraud was recovered in Uttar Pradesh from the woman at Gangwar’s instance, which it said established his link to the bribe paid by aspirants.

CID produced records of bank accounts in Karnataka’s Bidar through which it said the money paid by the aspirants was moved. It also produced CCTV footage of Gangwar and a woman buying gold jewellery worth Rs 28.94 lakh and diamond jewellery worth Rs 23 lakh at a showroom near Bengaluru’s Commercial Street in March and July, respectively.For the first jewellery purchase by the IAS officer on March 10, Rs 18 lakh was paid from the account of Kannale’s associate, identified as Rajashekhkar, and Rs 8 lakh from another associate, Umesh B R, CID told the court.“They paid only Rs 3 lakh for the jewellery worth Rs 52 lakh. The rest was paid by Kannale through associates,” the state prosecutor said during bail arguments.Dr S Manjunath, an unsuccessful candidate, filed a First Information Report on July 24, alleging that 29 aspirants with poor academic records scored above 450 out of 600 in the entrance exams for veterinary doctors. Out of 1,400 candidates who appeared for the exams, 329 were eventually selected.

Punjab minister Sanjeev Arora may contest 2027 Assembly polls from jail



GNS News Agency, Sept 26

Even though appointments have been made for several other constituencies across Punjab ahead of the 2027 polls, the AAP has not appointed any new faces as the halka (assembly constituency) in-charge for Ludhiana West — the constituency of jailed cabinet minister Sanjeev Arora.His office staff and family members are keeping track of the development projects in his constituency.Jatinder Khangura, AAP district president for Ludhiana (urban), told The Indian Express that “the party is backing Arora through thick and thin” “as he has done no wrong and has been arrested due to vendetta politics”. “He and his family and staff are keeping a tab on the development works, and councillors are also coordinating. We are not looking for any new face for Ludhiana West.”The Enforcement Directorate (ED) arrested Arora in May this year in an alleged multi-crore money laundering case. He is lodged in Bhondsi jail, Gurugram.

The AAP has termed Arora’s arrest as a “vendetta” by the BJP-led Centre. At the time of his arrest, Arora held the key portfolios of power and industries in the Punjab cabinet. He continues to be a cabinet minister but without any portfolios.The AAP Punjab general secretary and media in-charge, Baltej Pannu, said: “We are not looking to replace Arora with any other face from Ludhiana West. It will be entirely his decision if he contests or if someone from his

family contests; we will back the Arora family’s candidature from Ludhiana West. We are hopeful he will be bailed out by then.”Arora’s son Kavya Arora, a businessman, and daughter Ketki Arora have not expressed any interest in entering politics and contesting from his constituency, the party told The Indian Express. Kavya, who handles the family business, said he and his sister are not inclined towards politics as of now. “Our office staff are handling all the work in my father’s constituency... My mother and sister-in-law keep meeting people... He can contest even from custody if the party says so...”Punjab AAP state chief Aman Arora said the party’s national convener Arvind Kejriwal and Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann will take the final decision.Arora was nominated to the Rajya Sabha by the AAP from Punjab in 2022, but he resigned in 2025 to contest the bypoll from Ludhiana West after AAP MLA Gurpreet Gogi passed away. Arora defeated Congress’s Bharat Bhushan Ashu.Arora is the richest politician in Punjab, cutting across party lines, with individual assets worth Rs 278 crore, according to the election affidavit filed during the Ludhiana West bypoll, 2025. Including his wife Sandhya Arora’s assets, the couple’s combined wealth stands at Rs 302.11 crore.Ludhiana West is an upscale urban constituency with a mix of Hindu and Sikh voters, mostly involved in businesses and trading.Ashu, a two-time former Congress MLA from here, was the Food and Civil Supplies Minister in the 2017 Congress government. Ashu too spent over a year in jail after the AAP came to power in 2022, and he was arrested by the Punjab Vigilance Bureau for an alleged multi-crore foodgrain tenders scam. However, the High Court had quashed the vigilance FIR. Ashu had termed the case against him as a vendetta by the AAP.An AAP councillor said: “If Arora contests from jail, then it will be a direct contest between two ministers, who both went to jail. Both will seek sympathy votes, terming their arrests as vendetta. A lot will also depend on the BJP candidate as the saffron party has some support base in Ludhiana city.”

‘Everything has ended for us’: Delhi Race Club workers lose jobs, some lose homes

GNS News Agency, Sept 26

He first cleaned the stables, and gave the horses a bath and a massage. “Then, I’d put the saddles on them and take them out for a walk. The jockey would then wait while I prepared Ashwa Bravo for a race. I would bring it back at 3 pm. At night, I’d make rounds to refill their water and check if they needed anything,” said Kaleem.On Tuesday, the 48-year-old stood amid the rubble of the horse-wash rack, staring at the row of partially demolished stables where he had spent 20 years caring for racehorses.

Following the Centre’s takeover of the Delhi Race Club and Jaipur Polo Ground, near the Prime Minister’s residence in Lutyens’ Delhi, Kaleem and others who live in three nearby settlements — Bhai Ram Camp, DID and Masjid Camp — have lost the only jobs they knew.‘Horses are gone, so is our work’: Human cost of Delhi Race Club takeover A row of partially demolished stables at the Delhi Race Club.

Kaleem, a resident of Bhai Ram Camp, said around 1,500-2,000 residents of the three camps were employed here as caretakers, grass cutters and caddies. From having a fixed income, they are now left struggling, depending on daily-wage jobs.“I used to earn around Rs 19,000 a month, but now I am trying to find work at construction sites. A few times, I get work at the Air Force station, but it does not even pay Rs 500 a day,” Kaleem said.Earlier in the day, Kaleem and another ex-employee Tara Chand, 40, had gone looking for work together. Chand had worked at the club maintaining the betting register and earned around Rs 18,000 a month.‘Horses are gone, so is our work’: Human cost of Delhi Race Club takeover The iron benches where spectators once sat were rusted and, in places, uprooted, with tall grass growing around them. Picking up a small square book with a photograph of a horse on its cover, titled ‘BOL Race Card,’ he said, “We’ve grown up selling these race cards at traffic signals for Rs 50. We used to get Rs 5 as our cut.”

Kaleem’s own connection to the Race Club went back even further. His father had worked as a “sais”, a local term for people who cared for horses. “He was their union leader, so I grew up watching him care for them.”“I was very sad when the horses — 200-250 of them — were sold,” he added.On August 11, the Estate Officer of the Land and Development Office (L&DO), which comes under the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, issued an eviction order to the Club under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorized Occupants) Act. It directed the club to vacate the premises within 15 days, terming them to be “unauthorised occupant” of the land.Last month, the Supreme Court dismissed the Club’s appeal against a High Court order, which had vacated a stay on the eviction proceedings initiated by the Centre. A district court also refused to grant any interim stay on the eviction proceedings.‘Horses are gone, so is our work’: Human cost of Delhi Race Club takeover A total by the Land and Development Office on the premises. A guard is stationed next to it.For several former staff, the uncertainty surrounding their homes has dealt a double blow.



Nearly 700 families across three camps have got eviction notices. In court, the Centre said clearing these unauthorised structures was necessary to strengthen defence infrastructure and protect high-security installations.Their new homes are nowhere close — they are 45 km away in Savda Ghevra, a resettlement colony in Northwest Delhi.That distance has become a problem for those still looking for work around Lutyens’ Delhi. “How will we travel for work here from there?” asked Chand. “My children are in school... Everything has ended for us.”As of May 2026, while the litigations were pending at Delhi High Court, 192 dwellers had accepted the allotment letters and 136 had taken possession of the flats at Savda Ghevra.

‘Horses are gone, so is our work’: Human cost of Delhi Race Club takeover On August 11, the Estate Officer of the Land and Development Office issued an eviction order to the Club. (Express Photo by Abhinav Saha)For one family in Masjid Camp, the move proved difficult.A woman in her late 40s was waiting anxiously for her husband. He had lost his job at the club and was now working as a caddie at the nearby Delhi Golf Club. But he was paid only when he assisted someone.“Aas laga ke baithe rahete hai ki aajaaye number, teen din se aaya nahi hai, abhi bhi vo kahde honge line main (I sit here hoping that his turn will come, but it hasn’t for the past three days. He must be waiting),” she said.The family had shifted to Savda Ghevra three months ago, but her husband was unable to find work there. “He is a BA graduate from Dyal Singh College but hasn’t been able to find a skilled job,” she said.Then, there was the question of her son’s school. “My son is in Class 12. We would leave at 6 am for school but couldn’t reach even by 8 am. So we shifted back last month,” she said.Meanwhile, a bouncer who had been hired on contract still had a job. But his duties had changed: he now guarded the security staff and iron rods at the site.“There used to be 10 of us, but now we’re just three left,” he said, speaking on condition of anonymity.At the Club, Kaleem and Chand walked from their homes abutting the Club, past the razed stables, and looked across the 53-acre grounds. The iron benches where spectators once sat were rusted and, in places, uprooted, with tall grass growing around them. Guards remained at the site.

Maharashtra government proposes replacing 10-year transfer bar on Dharavi homes

Dharavi urban renewal scheme, Maharashtra government transfer bar on Dharavi homes, Maharashtra government, Dharavi Redevelopment Project, Dharavi Redevelopment Plan, Dharavi slums, Mumbai news, Maharashtra news, Indian express, current affairsUnder the proposed amendment, transfer restrictions would instead be governed by the Maharashtra Rent Control Act until a cooperative housing society is formed, and thereafter by the Maharashtra Cooperative Societies Act. (File)The Maharashtra government proposed replacing the 10-year restriction on the sale, lease or transfer of homes to be allotted under the Dharavi urban renewal scheme, changing the rules governing how beneficiaries can deal with their homes after allotment.Under the proposed amendment, transfer restrictions would instead be governed by the Maharashtra Rent Control Act until a cooperative housing society is formed, and thereafter by the Maharashtra Cooperative Societies Act.The proposal is among four changes to Regulation 33(9)(A) of the Development Control and Promotion Regulations (DCPR), 2034, governing redevelopment in the Dharavi Notified Area.At present, a home allotted under the scheme cannot be sold, leased, assigned or transferred for 10 years from the date of possession, except to a legal heir. A breach can result in the tenement being taken over by the Dharavi Redevelopment Project (DRP) or Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) The

proposal is contained in a notice issued by the Urban Development Department on July 1 under Section 37(1AA) of the Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning Act. It has not yet taken effect.The notice had invited objections and suggestions, with the Deputy Director of Town Planning, Greater Mumbai, authorised to hear them and submit a report to the government.The draft also proposes allowing the final carpet area of a renewal tenement to vary by up to 5 per cent from the entitled area to facilitate the construction grid.The remaining two changes bring the Dharavi urban renewal scheme under existing provisions on road width and parking.Under the road-width rules, a 9-metre-wide road is considered adequate for buildings up to 120 metres high, while a 13-metre-wide road is required for buildings above 120 metres, subject to a no-objection certificate from the Chief Fire Officer. The proposal does not change these requirements but adds the Dharavi scheme to the list of schemes covered by them.The existing parking norms would similarly apply to the Dharavi scheme. They require one parking space for every eight homes with carpet area up to 45 sq m; one for every four homes above 45 sq m and up to 60 sq m; one for every two homes above 60 sq m and up to 90 sq m; and one for every home above 90 sq m.The government said the changes are being proposed in the public interest and to facilitate the “effective implementation” of the Dharavi redevelopment project

After ‘pedestrian first’ row, BMC faces fresh pushback on demolition drive in Mumbai



GNS News Agency, Sept 26

BMC demolition drive in Mumbai, BMC demolition drive pushback , BMC demolition drive in Mumbai pushback, BMC demolition drive, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation BMC, BMC, Mumbai news, Maharashtra news, Indian express, current affairs On September 19, the BMC announced an intensive three-month drive against 39,111 unauthorised housing structures in Mumbai's slums, beginning October 1. Mumbai civic body's decision to demolish illegal structures and encroachments 14 feet or taller triggered fresh friction between the civic administration and elected representatives, with corporators across party lines alleging they were not consulted before the drive was announced.

During a standing committee meeting on Wednesday, corporators objected to the proposed action, urging the administration to roll it back as they questioned the basis on which structures were being shortlisted for demolition. The latest confrontation comes days after a BJP corporator wrote to civic chief Ashwini Bhide, alleging that elected rep-

resentatives were not consulted during the implementation of the BMC's "pedestrian first" policy, under which footpaths were being reclaimed by removing illegal encroachments.

"Everyone who lives in these 14-foot houses belongs to marginalised communities and has been living here for decades. Many members from the indigenous East Indian Community (Gaathan) also stay in these houses. On what basis are the structures that are going to be demolished being shortlisted? Is it not unfair to the people staying in these shanties for so many decades if their houses are razed overnight," Yashodhar Phanse, senior Shiv Sena (UBT) corporator and member of the civic body's standing committee, said. "The group leaders from the political parties were not at all consulted before coming up with this contentious proposal. We only came to know about this proposal after it was reported in the media and being people's representatives, we (corporators) should have been consulted," Ashraf Azmi, senior Congress corporator and leader of the party in the BMC, said. The objections also come days after BJP corporator and leader of the House in BMC, Ganesh Khankar, wrote to Bhide seeking a rollback of the plan.

In his letter, Khankar highlighted the socioeconomic impact of the proposed demolition drive, stating that nearly 40 per cent of Mumbai's population resides in slum pockets. He said administrative notices issued had already triggered panic and an "atmosphere of fear" among residents of the affected structures. On September 19, the BMC announced an intensive three-month drive against 39,111 unauthorised housing structures in Mumbai's slums, beginning October 1. The announcement followed two fatal incidents involving illegal structures.

Dalit youth found dead inside police station in UP, family says he was tortured, hanging staged



GNS News Agency, Sept 26

Policemen and family members of a minor girl were booked for murder and under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act after a Dalit youth was found hanging inside a room of Patti police station in Pratappgarh district of Uttar Pradesh on Monday. The youth was facing an abduction case filed by the girl's father after two had allegedly eloped. Pratappgarh Superintendent of Police Deepak Bhukar suspended Patti SHO Anand Pal Singh and investigating officer Omkar Singh for alleged negligence in the discharge of their duties. According to Patti Circle Officer Pradeep Singh, the girl's father had lodged a case alleging that the youth had abducted his 17-year-old daughter with the intention of marrying her. The two belong to the same village. The girl was recovered from Ghaziabad and her statements were recorded before the police and a magistrate. "She stated that she had gone with the youth on her own volition and wanted to live with him. Since she is a minor, the law does not allow her to take this decision until she is a major,"

Singh told The youth had not been arrested and walked into the police station on Monday, the CO said. He was not kept in the lock-up but was sitting in a room where the investigation officer was questioning him about the abduction case. The officer left the room for some work and, on returning, found the youth hanging from an iron rod attached to a bathroom ventilator, Singh said. According to police, the youth used a strip apparently torn from a blanket in the room. He was taken to a hospital, where he was declared brought dead. Singh said the SHO and the sub-inspector were suspended as they were responsible for keeping watch on the accused while he was at the police station. The CO said that this was the second time the youth and the girl had allegedly eloped. On the earlier occasion too, the girl was recovered and had said that she had left on her own and wanted to live with the youth. She was handed over to her parents as she was a minor.

This time, after the girl was recovered, the youth went to the police station and claimed that they had married and were living as a married couple, Singh said. The youth's family, however, alleged that he had been tortured by the police at the instance of the girl's father and that the hanging was staged to conceal his death. On the basis of the family's complaint, the policemen and members of the girl's family were booked, the CO said. "The investigation will establish the allegations against them," he added. The case has been registered under BNS sections 103(1) (murder) and 351(3) (criminal intimidation), along with provisions of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. The Pratappgarh Police said CCTV footage and other evidence had been secured. The District Magistrate has recommended a magisterial inquiry into the death.

Family alleges police tried to move them out of Mumbai; cops deny

GNS News Agency, Sept 26

A day after IIT Bombay student Sahil Wakode's father announced that he would begin a hunger strike if no one was arrested in the case over his son's death by suicide, his lawyer on Wednesday alleged that Mumbai Police tried to take the Wakode couple out of the city against their wishes. Police, however, denied the allegation, saying the couple had themselves asked to be taken to Yavatmal.

The allegation came a day after Ravindra and Sonali Wakode addressed the media outside the IIT-Bombay main gate and demanded action in the case. Their lawyer, Nikhil Kamble, said the couple had planned to stay in Mumbai but were taken away in a private vehicle early Wednesday. "I saw that they were asked to get into a private car in a rush. Wakode planned to remain in the city. But despite their plan, the police tried to forcibly take them out of Mumbai," Kamble alleged. IIT Bombay suicide, IIT-B student dies by suicide, iit Bombay student dies by suicide, IIT Bombay, IIT Bombay students protest, ChatGPT, examination question paper on ChatGPT, Mumbai news, Maharashtra news, Indian express, current affairs "I saw that they were asked to get into a private car in a rush. Wakode planned to remain in the city. But despite their plan, the police tried to forcibly take them out of Mumbai," Kamble alleged. (Express photo by Sankhadeep Banerjee) He said the couple had initially been travelling in their own vehicle but were asked by police personnel in plain clothes to shift to another car. "They were told by the official that he was taking them home," he alleged. According to Kamble, the couple had reached Washim district by early Wednesday. He said the move appeared to have followed their interaction with the media on Tuesday evening. Earlier in the day, the parents had recorded their statements before the Crime Branch in Bandra and later addressed the media outside IIT-Bombay.

Students protest against alleged institutional murder as Sahil Wakode, a second-year student of IIT Bombay died by suicide on Friday, inside the IIT-B Powai campus in Mumbai on 19 September 2026. (Express photo by Sankhadeep Banerjee) Students protest against alleged institutional murder as Sahil Wakode, a second-year student of IIT Bombay died by suicide on Friday, inside the IIT-B Powai campus in Mumbai on 19 September 2026. (Express photo by Sankhadeep Banerjee) Ravindra Wakode had said he would begin a hunger strike from Wednesday if



there was no arrest in the case. A Mumbai Police officer denied that the family had been forcibly taken to Yavatmal. The officer said that after the couple addressed the media near the Crime Branch office in Bandra, they told police they wanted to go to IIT-Bombay in Powai. "They told us that they wanted to be taken to Yavatmal and hence we organised the same," the officer said. The officer also denied that the couple was taken out of Mumbai because the father had threatened to stage a hunger strike.

The Wakodes have alleged that their son was subjected to caste-based discrimination on campus. An FIR was registered following a complaint by his father, naming Professor Suryanarayana Doola, who was the invigilator in the classroom where Sahil was allegedly found using a phone during a mid-semester examination on September 18. Sahil died by suicide hours later. The death of a second-year BTech student at IIT Bombay after an examination-related incident sparked a major campus protest, with students questioning the institute's handling of the episode. The death of a second-year BTech student at IIT Bombay after an examination-related incident sparked a major campus protest, with students questioning the institute's handling of the episode. Meanwhile, protests inside and outside IIT-Bombay continued for the fifth day on Wednesday, even as regular classes resumed on campus. A section of students continued their sit-in protest inside the campus. Political outfits, including the Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi and Yuvak Congress, also held demonstrations outside the institute's main gate. The mid-semester examination that was postponed following Sahil's death is likely to be conducted over the coming weekend, according to students.

ED raids AAP minister Hardeep Mundian's nephew in Ludhiana



GNS News Agency, Sept 26

The Directorate of Enforcement conducted a raid at the residence of minister Hardeep Singh Mundian's nephew Gurpreet Singh Saini in Sahnewal of Ludhiana district, in an alleged money laundering case. Mundian, the AAP MLA from Sahnewal, is the revenue minister in the Bhagwant Mann-led Punjab government. The raid in Sahnewal was ongoing till the filing of this report. A source from the ED told the The Indian Express that the "financial transactions of the minister's relative were being investigated."

"Directorate of Enforcement has initiated search and survey operations under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 at 26 premises across Delhi, Mohali, Chandigarh, Panchkula and Ludhiana in the case relating to M/s Tirupati Infra Projects Pvt. Ltd. The action covers the promoters, directors and associated persons of M/s Tirupati Infra Projects Pvt. Ltd., M/s Remigate Buildstates (India) Pvt. Ltd., M/s MB Infra Build Pvt. Ltd., M/s Mera Baba Reality Associates Pvt. Ltd. and M/s Mera Baba Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd.," said a source from the ED.

"Simultaneously, surveys under Section 16 of the PMLA, 2002 are being conducted at the offices of the Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA) and of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Government of Punjab, to gather evidence regarding the accused entities from GMADA. Tirupati Infra Projects Pvt Ltd is involved in a bank fraud to the tune of Rs 290 crore concerning a project, Radisson Blu hotel at New Delhi's

Paschim Vihar and illegal waiver of statutory dues from GMADA in the matter of Remigate Buildstates (India) Private Limited and re-allotment of cancelled plot. Pecuniary benefits amounting to 57 crore was granted for waiver of statutory dues to M/s Remigate Infra Developers Private Limited," it added. "Investigation also revealed that a private consultancy firm acted in close association with the GMADA officials facilitating irregularities in land acquisition. Compensation payments granted thereby is also under investigation. Financial transactions of Gurpreet Singh Saini, relative of Cabinet Minister Hardeep Singh Mundian, are also under investigation," an ED source said.

Musheerabad man sentenced to five years in jail for sexual harassment of minor girl

GNS News Agency, Sept 26

Hyderabad: A POCOS court in the city has sentenced a 27-year-old man to five years of simple imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 9,000 for sexually harassing an 11-year-old girl in Musheerabad.

According to the police, the victim's mother lodged a complaint on June 4, 2023, stating that V Manikanta, their neighbour, had been behaving inappropriately with her daughter for several days. He allegedly pulled her hair, held her hands and legs, made inappropriate remarks about her clothes and touched her cheeks.

The case was investigated by the Musheerabad police, while the victim was provided counselling and emotional support through the Bharosa Centre. The coordinated efforts of the investigating officer, police personnel, prosecution team and Bharosa Centre staff contributed to securing the conviction, the police added.

BJP nominates 14 to Surat Municipal School Board

FOUR PERSONS from Surat are among 14 names nominated by the state BJP on Wednesday as potential contenders to run the Municipal School Board, Surat (MSBS). These include a co-convenor of the Patidar Anamat Andolan Samithi and other party functionaries; some who run schools and medical stores; former syndicate members of the Veer Narmad South Gujarat University (VNSGU), including a former president of its women's wing. Earlier, over 300 BJP functionaries had expressed interest to the party brass in connection with a place on the MSB, Surat.

The BJP list includes the name of advocate and notary Kiran Ghoghari, who notarised the affidavits of three proposers for Congress leader Nilesh Kumbhani for the parliamentary election of the Surat seat with the district election office in 2024. The three proposers of Kumbhani had notarised affidavits, claiming that the signatures on the nomination form of Kumbhani were not theirs and were "forged". On such notarised affidavits of Ghoghari, the BJP candidate Mukesh Dalal was declared winner uncontested in the 2024 parliamentary election from Surat seat.

In April, the election to 120 seats of the Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) were conducted and results declared. BJP candidates (the party had 93 councillors after the 2021 election) won 115 seats, while four seats went to AAP (down from 27 seats in the previous elections), and a single Congress candidate won (Congress scored zero in the previous election). After the municipal election, a new board is set up in the MSB, Surat, which has also simultaneously completed its term. On September 9, notification for the MSBS poll was issued, with the last date for submission of forms being September 23. The verification of forms will be done on October 1 and the election will be held on October 9. There are a total of 15 members (including the Surat district education officer) to run the MSB, of whom 12 are elected and three are nominated by the state government. The nominated candidates have to go through the election process, and the voters are elected councillors of the SMC. A candidate needs seven votes to win, sources in the MSBS said. There are only four AAP councillors and a single Congress councillor.

Mamata Banerjee seeks repoll; alleges EVM hijacking, state-sponsored poll manipulation

GNS News Agency, Sept 26 Former West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on the EC, demanding the arrest and criminal prosecution of CEC Gyanesh Kumar. She also sought fresh Assembly polls in the state with the pre-SIR voter list and announced that leaders of the opposition INDIA bloc will launch a nationwide movement to "protect democracy". Banerjee made the remarks in a Facebook Live, following The Indian Express investigation that revealed that two of the three election commissioners had formally objected, at least 14 times over the last 10 months, to decisions and orders linked to the SIR of electoral rolls.

Alleging "systemic voter deletion, EVM hijacking and state-sponsored poll manipulation", she said millions of legitimate voters were disenfranchised in Bengal prior to the polls. "Today, the entire country is in turmoil over CEC Gyanesh Kumar, and my first demand is that he should be arrested and criminal proceedings should be initiated against him," she said. The TMC chief also said that the Opposition



had moved an impeachment notice against the CEC earlier this year, but it was turned down in Parliament. "All parties are together in this battle. We submitted an impeachment notice against the CEC, but it was rejected... This is no longer merely about impeachment; criminal action is required."

TV actress held for Rs 5.5 lakh extortion in Chennai

GNS News Agency, Sept 26

Chennai: A 28-year-old television actress was arrested for assaulting her acquaintance, a stock trader, and extorting Rs 5.5 lakh from him under the pretext of funding a short film, police said here on Wednesday. Actress Varshini Venkat, along with her friends, invited Tharun to invest money in a short film they were producing, but he refused.

On August 22, when Tharun returned to his lodge in the early hours after going out, Venkat along with her friend Sanjay and two others, who were present, assaulted him and forced Tharun to hand over Rs 50,000 in cash. Later, upon receiving extortion calls from Sanjay, Tharun transferred Rs 3 lakh to Venkat's bank account and Rs 2 lakh to Sanjay's bank account. After paying a total of Rs 5.5 lakh, Sanjay continued to threaten him, demanding an additional Rs 27 lakh. Based on a complaint lodged by Tharun, Guindy police registered a case and initiated an investigation. Upon verifying the complainant's bank records, it was confirmed



that money had been transferred to Venkat's bank account. The police arrested the accused, Varshini Venkat (28), residing in Mylapore, on Tuesday and seized an iPhone. After inquiry, the actress was produced before the court and remanded to judicial custody. Search is on for the actress' friends involved in the crime.

US signals openness to limited Russia-Ukraine ceasefire on energy, grain



GNS News Agency, Sept 26

United Nations: The United States is willing to explore a limited Russia-Ukraine ceasefire covering energy and grain, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said, while cautioning that both sides use attacks on energy targets as part of their war effort. "I think both sides have expressed an interest in some limited ceasefire that involved grain and energy," Rubio told reporters during the United Nations General Assembly.He said Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky had raised the idea publicly and in talks with US officials. Rubio did not announce a proposal or say that Russia and Ukraine had agreed to negotiate one.He said the subject had featured in US conversations with both sides, including a meeting involving Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner in Moscow and talks with Zelensky. Washington would be willing to help if it could play a constructive role, he said.

A limited arrangement would not end the war, but might

ease some of the pressure it has placed on other countries and provide a starting point for wider talks. Rubio said the difficulty lay in what energy targets mean to each side.Ukrainian strikes on Russian refineries and oil and gas facilities hit a source of revenue. Russian attacks on Ukraine's electrical grid threaten power supplies as winter approaches. "So when you talk about energy, it means two things to different people," he said.Both countries see those targets as serving military aims, Rubio said. That makes a narrow agreement hard to reach even if each side sees a possible benefit. He said strikes affecting oil and gas had a global impact, while attacks on Ukraine's grid had immediate consequences for people living there.Rubio did not say whether Washington had asked either side to halt specific strikes.Asked whether the United States had pressed Russia as well as Ukraine, he replied: "How do you know we haven't asked Russia to stop?" He said Ukraine would regard protecting its electricity supply as central to its interests.Russia, meanwhile, was facing strikes deep inside its territory against key industries. Those competing concerns were a reason to pursue talks, he said, even though they made a deal difficult. Rubio described recent US contacts as a continuation of earlier discussions.He declined to give a detailed account and warned against treating the conversations as a breakthrough. "I think it was significant that at least there was a conversation," he said.He also said no new summit between Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin had been discussed. Washington had invited Putin to the G20, Rubio said, and the gathering could offer a chance for the two presidents to speak if Putin attended. He did not link that possibility to a ceasefire agreement.

Hundreds of trucks jam Turkiye-Iran border crossing as US blockade pushes trade overland

GNS News Agency, Sept 26

Gurbulak Border Crossing: Hundreds of trucks idle along the road into Iran from Turkiye's mountainous eastern border. Bustling even in normal times, the countries' largest crossing is now a make-or-break economic lifeline for Tehran as the US navy blockades its ports.Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has pressed to accelerate overland trade as the blockade limits the vast majority of imports while cutting off the oil and gas sales that largely keep the economy alive.It's the latest test of Iran's endurance. Frustrated Iranian truck drivers spoke to The Associated Press at the Turkiye border crossing, where lines now stretch for miles.

"I've been driving through this border gate for 15 years. I've never had to wait as long as now," said Muhammed Riza Shiri, 55, who had waited four days to carry his load of rubber into Iran. "We had to wait at the end of a seven-kilometer (4.3-mile) line. We used to wait, maximum, for three days here. Because of the war, the waiting times exceed five days."Iran accuses the US of trying to weaken the country."They are trying to create difficulties wherever they can, and they are holding nothing back. They are closing off routes, shutting down air routes, blocking land routes and trying to fuel internal divisions," President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tuesday.Iran insists the pressure will not change its stance in negotiations with Washington. Tehran wants the U.S. blockade to end before it allows commercial shipping to flow again through the Strait of Hormuz, where Iran's grip has shaken global markets and oil prices.Iran had relied on the gulf for over 80% of its tradelran has a huge challenge as it tries to shift trade from sea to land. Its economy relied on the gulf for over 80% of its trade before the war, according to Iran economist Mohammad Farzanegan.Now Iran's land crossings with Turkiye to the west and Pakistan to the east are crucial in connecting with Europe and Asia. Drivers carry goods that are vital to Iran's petrochemical and other manufacturing that were badly damaged by U.S. and Israeli strikes.

But the land crossings are badly strained."Logistics, capacities of these borders are limited. Regulations, border controls, corruption, all these things would make the transit much more difficult and time-consuming," Farzanegan said. Overland trade "would not basically be able to substitute or compensate for the blockade."At Turkiye's Gurbulak border, truck waiting times have more than quadrupled since the war began, according to data from the International Transporters Association, which represents Turkiye's international logistics sector.One Iranian official said the number of trucks has shot up.

"Instead of 200 trucks, there are 1,200 trucks at the border, and the destination country does not have the capacity to accept this number of trucks," Amir Roshanbakhsh Ghanbari, deputy head for a government agency that promotes Iranian trade, said in an interview with a semiofficial news outlet, ILNA.Ghanbari blamed the border backup in part on neighboring countries."Destination countries are not willing to develop infrastructure because it is not clear how long this situation will continue."But an AP reporter visiting the Turkiye border crossing on Tuesday saw road work aimed at building extra lanes. Two staffers from a local road authority, who spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to comment publicly, said Turkiye was improving border infrastructure based on a three-year-old plan.Some truckers are protesting the delaysA Telegram



channel linked with groups representing Iranian truckers and other transportation drivers is flooded with messages protesting conditions. Their low-wage work is further squeezed after Iranian authorities raised fuel prices and tightened fuel quotas."With the rising costs, increased maintenance expenses, high prices for tires and parts and, on the other hand, reduced cargo loads and decreased driver income, it has become very difficult for many of us to continue working," one message read, warning truckers "will not remain silent in the face of this increased pressure on drivers."Akbar Sadigi, 42, an Iranian truck driver from Tabriz waiting at the crossing, said longer waiting times have cut his twice-monthly trips to once a month."I make half of what I used to make because of this," he said. Fuel prices for his truck have risen by 25% in Iran since his last trip, he added.

"Some Turkish drivers can bribe and get ahead of the line. Our money is worth nothing here. We can't do that," Sadigi said.Drivers said the customs line is even longer on the Iranian side, with wait times in the past month ranging from 12 to 25 days. Many blamed longer inspections by Turkish authorities of trucks leaving Iran.Akbar Yahyai, an Iranian truck driver who said his loads vary from machinery parts to chemical components, said he had been waiting four days."It's a shame for us drivers here. There is no toilet or shower we can use here while waiting. You can see it from how we look and smell," he said, adding that he barely makes enough money to eat.Iran and its neighbors try to address the problemIran's leaders have acknowledged the high stakes. The economy shrank by over 10% in the three months following the start of Iran's calendar year on March 20, compared to the same period the previous year, according to its statistics agency. Iran's non-oil economy shrank by 4.6%.The value of Iran's currency, the rial, has sunk and inflation has soared since the U.S. and Israel launched their war on Iran on Feb. 28. Weeks before that, plummeting economic conditions had sparked anti-government protests that led to a deadly crackdown.Officials in Iran and its neighbors said they are trying to speed up border crossings."The Turkish customs have deceased the waiting times of vehicles coming from Iran from 30 to 22 days by increasing the number of lanes at fuel measurement stations and doubling X-ray scanning machines," Ersin Simsek, Gurbulak representative of the International Transporters Association, said in a phone interview.And at the border between Iran and Pakistan, drivers also have reported delays. Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni this week said the countries plan to boost flows by keeping crossings open 24 hours a day.They also have agreements to open a new crossing at Kuhak, Iran's state news agency reported Momeni as saying after his Pakistani counterpart visited Tehran on Monday.

UN launches plan to help developing nations turn critical minerals into jobs



United Nations: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched a support mechanism to help mineral-rich developing countries turn demand for clean energy resources into jobs and industrial growth, with six countries selected for initial assistance.Guinea, Indonesia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe will be the first beneficiaries of the Country Support Mechanism on Critical Energy Transition Minerals, the United Nations announced in New York on Wednesday (local time).

The initiative will provide technical assistance and help countries strengthen governance, process more minerals locally and protect communities and the environment. "The countries that hold the critical minerals powering the energy transition must be the first to benefit from them," Guterres said.The announcement addresses a central challenge for resource-rich economies: how to secure a larger share of the gains from minerals used in clean energy technologies instead of remaining suppliers of raw materials.Copper, lithium, nickel, cobalt and rare earth elements are used across technologies including wind turbines, solar panels, electric vehicles and battery storage, the UN said.It projected that demand for critical minerals would al-

most triple by 2030 as the world shifts towards renewable energy. The UN Development Programme and the UN Development Coordination Office will lead the mechanism, bringing together expertise from across the UN system.Teams working through UN resident offices will identify each country's needs and coordinate tailored assistance. Priorities include governance, local processing, industrial development and environmental and human safeguards.

The work will follow principles and recommendations developed by the Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals. Zambia's Foreign Minister Mulambo Haimbe said his country wanted to move beyond increasing copper output to generating greater economic value at home."We want Zambians to be full participants in, not simply suppliers to, the global clean energy and technology transition," he said.Haimbe said that ambition required stronger governance, investment and partnerships to help resource-rich countries expand their role in mineral supply chains. UN Development Programme Administrator Alexander de Croo said mineral wealth could help transform economies, provided value creation, environmental protection and good governance advanced together.UN Environment Programme Executive Director Inger Andersen said her agency would contribute expertise on responsible sourcing, environmental protection and more circular use of resources. The mechanism forms part of a broader UN task force on critical energy transition minerals.The task force is co-led by the UN Development Programme, the UN Conference on Trade and Development and the UN Environment Programme. The announcement outlined technical and institutional support but did not specify a funding amount for the new mechanism.

At UNGA, Zelenskyy says Russia using Indians in Ukraine war

United Nations: Russia uses citizens of India and over 40 other countries to fight in its war against Ukraine, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told the UN General Assembly, urging the countries to not let Russian President Vladimir Putin "drag you into this war."... And right now, I want to speak not to Europe. I want to speak to those countries whose people Russia may try to use in another absolutely brutal campaign," Zelenskyy said Wednesday in his address at the General Debate of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly.

He said Ukraine gets prisoners of war hailing from several nations, not just from North Korea."We know that Russia uses citizens of 47 countries in its war. In this war, Ghana, Nepal, Tajikistan, India, Yemen, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Cuba, Belarus, Sudan, South Africa, and many, many others. And from time to time, we receive requests to send particular POWs (Prisoners of War) back home," Zelenskyy said.South Asians & DiasporaHe said Ukraine knows that people from other countries fighting in the war are dying on the battlefield."We also see people dying on the battlefield, who are not Russians, people from your countries, 47 countries, who ended up in Russia through deception and tricks."

Appealing directly to every representative of the 47 countries, he said, "You know what Russia is doing with your people, your citizens. Take care of them and do not let them end up on another front. Do not let (Russian President Vladimir) Putin drag you into this war. Do not let Russia put out its fires, cover up its shame, and pay for its madness with the lives of your people. Limit his room to act. Limit his money. Limit his war."Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri had said earlier this month that the issue of Indian citizens being recruited into the Russian armed forces has been discussed between India and Russia "at various levels on various occasions".

"At last count, we had information about 227 Indian nationals who had been recruited into the Russian army," Misri had said."Out of that, we have information that 139 of



our nationals have been discharged from the army. And unfortunately, of course, we have information also about 51 people who have perished so far."

Zelenskyy expressed gratitude to every country that stands with Ukraine and helps its people and urged nations to limit trade with Russia, as that will impact Moscow's revenue sources to fuel the war."Sanctions, support packages, our joint weapon production – all of these matter. All of this makes us stronger. When someone gives Russia more money through trade, they give this war more time. That is exactly why we insist on limiting trade with the aggressor, and why we are burning Russia's revenues ourselves," he said.Zelenskyy added that the world has seen more than once how the abuse of the veto at the UN weakens the world and pushes peace further away."When Russia has money, it always says no to diplomacy, and this is also a kind of veto on peace...And when someone in the world weakens sanctions against Russian oligarchs, it may make life more comfortable for rich Russians, but it also gives the war more time, more time for Putin to send poor people into the kill zone. So Russia's revenues must remain a target. Russia's budget deficit is now bigger than in any other year, and most Russian regions are already bankrupt," he said.

Trump welcomes Xi to Washington looking for a trade win

WASHINGTON, US President Donald Trump welcomes Chinese President Xi Jinping to the White House on Thursday for a lavish state summit expected to be heavy on symbolism but light on substance, with ?both leaders keen to showcase stable ties despite a deep underlying rivalry.It will be the year's second meeting of the leaders of the two biggest economies, but Xi's first ?visit to Washington in more than a decade.

Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here.Trump greeted Xi on arrival on Wednesday evening, the first time a US president has welcomed a foreign leader at Joint Base Andrews in 11 years, when President Barack Obama welcomed Pope Francis in 2015, according to C-SPAN, which tracks presidential events.In a statement on arrival carried by China's Xinhua news agency, Xi voiced hope for a more stable relationship with the United States, saying Beijing and Washington should be "partners, not rivals" and that the "historical logic ?of peaceful coexistence" between the two countries had not changed.For Trump, who relishes ceremony and prizes his ties with powerful leaders, the visit is as much a matter of national prestige as ?an opportunity for high-stakes diplomacy.The US president aims to reciprocate the grand welcome he received in China in May and impress Xi with a ceremony spanning the ?White House South Lawn, State Floor and Rose Garden.Analysts say tangible outcomes are likely to be limited to an extension of a trade truce expiring in November and an agreement to ?examine threats posed by artificial intelligence.US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told Fox News on Wednesday after talks with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng that they had agreed to extend until January 10 an agreement that paused a ?trade war that saw mutual tariffs top 100%.People familiar with the plans say the talks could also yield deals to lower some tariffs, combat drug trafficking and expand military-to-military dialogue, while Trump is expected to seek the release of Americans and others detained in China.Former Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell said the summit was less about substantive negotiations than a chance for two forceful leaders to project strength."This is really the historical reincarnation of what we often referred to in ?antiquity as single combat - really powerful guys, each representing their civilizations, kind of measuring and going toe to toe," said Campbell.KEEPING TIES STABLEXi appears to be in a stronger position, having overseen a surge in China's ?trade and controlling supplies of rare earth minerals that give him



a powerful source of leverage.Both leaders see advantages in keeping relations stable, with Trump mired in the unpopular Iran war and Xi grappling with domestic economic challenges.But beneath ?the surface are ?challenges that could reignite tensions, including disputes over Taiwan, export controls and AI.Taiwan, a democratically governed island claimed by China, is the most contentious of these.US allies in Asia are concerned Trump may be tempted to soften Washington's support for Taipei to lock in economic wins with China.Xi is expected to press Trump to halt Taiwan arms sales and could do this during a planned visit by the two to the US National Archives on Friday, sources briefed told Reuters. In return, China is offering help to put pressure on Iran, the sources added.After the May summit, Trump said he was holding in abeyance an arms package worth some \$14 billion ?and called it a "very good negotiating chip."The leaders will ?likely discuss the Iran war, but there has ?been little sign Beijing is willing to exert pressure on its ally to yield to US demands, despite the disruption the conflict has caused to energy supplies and tradeTrump is seeking trade wins ahead of the midterms and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said this month the countries will ?make "some announcements on agriculture and non-tariff barriers."Greer said on Monday China is making progress on a commitment to buy 200 BoeingAnalysts say AI could be an area for cooperation, given its implications for national security, economic competitiveness and military capabilities, and shared US and Chinese concerns about misuse.Bessent discussed AI with He Lifeng at the weekend, and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said there was nascent thinking about "the equivalent of a hotline that we had during the Cold War" to avoid dangerous incidents that "could impact economies or societies and even lead to a conflict between nation-states."

Bridge collapses across Palavaagu stream in Kothagudem, no casualties reported

GNS News Agency, Sept 26

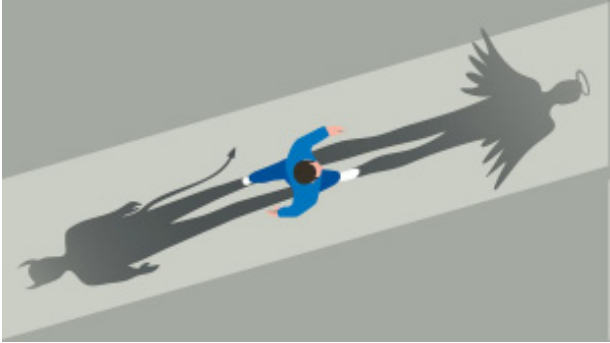
Kothagudem: A bridge across the Palavaagu stream at Rajupet in Mulakalapalli mandal in the district collapsed, severely disrupting vehicular movement on the Paloncha-Dammamet road.

A sudden surge of flood waters in the stream during late evening hours was said to have washed away a part of the bridge while the remaining portion was badly damaged as it developed a huge crack. No loss of life was reported in the incident.The locals who noticed the bridge collapse immediately alerted the residents in surrounding villages by sharing messages on social media not to venture on to the road stretch. Motorists faced significant inconvenience due to the damage to the bridge that connects many villages.The police put up barricades on either side of the bridge and advised the public to take alternate routes to reach their destination. Meanwhile, Mulakalapalli mandal received 47.3 mm of rainfall from between 8.30 am and 9 pm on the day.



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The silent toll of institutional complicity - moral injuries



On April 13, 1919, colonial soldiers from the 9th Gurkha and 54th Sikhs infantry regiments stood at the entrance of Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar and, on Brigadier-General R. E. H. Dyer’s orders, opened fire on a peaceful crowd gathered for Baisakhi and to protest the Rowlatt Act. Over ten minutes, more than 1,650 bullets were fired by the soldiers (recruited from Nepal and Undivided Punjab) into the trapped gathering, killing hundreds, including women and children. While General Dyer was “forced into retirement”, the emotional aftermath for the soldiers who executed the firing remains undocumented. What, then, did those who fired feel inside their minds and hearts as they shot at unarmed civilians? Was there guilt? Shame? Anxiety? Or was the act simply normalised within a chain of command, leaving no inner mark at all? No testimonies, letters, or psychiatric records exist to reveal their inner world. For decades, such questions remained unasked. Wars came and went—World War II, Korea, Vietnam—yet the psychological toll on those ordered to commit or witness violence stayed in the shadows. In the 1980s, philosopher Andrew Jameton introduced the concept of ‘moral distress’, particularly in healthcare settings. In the 1990s, psychiatrist Jonathan Shay identified ‘moral injury’ in Vietnam veterans, suffering rooted not in fear, but in moral betrayal.

Unlike PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), symptoms of which are startling flashbacks, hyper-arousal, and nightmares, stemming from fear in life-threatening situations, moral injury is rooted in shame, guilt, disgust, and spiritual conflict after actions that violate deeply-held beliefs. It is about what one has done, seen, failed to stop, or been required to participate in. Moral injury occurs through three elements: betrayal of what is morally right, by someone in legitimate authority, in a situation of extreme significance. Later, in 2009, Brett Litz and colleagues broadened it to include perpetrating, witnessing, failing to prevent, or learning about acts that transgress deep moral beliefs. Modern definitions emphasise both cognitive and emotional components: feelings of intense guilt or shame, loss of trust (in self, others, institutions), spiritual or existential crises, self-condemnation, difficulty forgiving oneself, and a collapse of meaning or purpose. Scientists also note behavioural outcomes: self-sabotage, social withdrawal, substance use, demoralisation, and increased risk of suicide. Psychological risk factors include shame-proneness and neuroticism; protective factors include self-esteem, supportive relationships, and belief in justice and forgiveness. Studies of veterans show standardised tools (like the Moral Injury Symptom Scale—Military Version) measure exposure to morally injurious events and symptoms such as guilt, loss of faith, and shame-driven alienation. Importantly, research confirms moral injury is distinct from PTSD—even when both occur, treatments that only address fear-based trauma often fail to heal the wound created by moral conflict. Traditional PTSD therapies reframe frightening memories, but moral

injury usually requires “forward-looking” interventions that help individuals accept moral responsibility while rebuilding purpose and self-forgiveness. The burden of moral codes

Colonel Paul Tibbets, who piloted the Enola Gay and bombed Hiroshima in August 1945, expressed no regret, believing his act ended the war and saved lives. In contrast, Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE felt remorse after the Kalinga War and undertook a deep moral reckoning, despite being the authority responsible. This highlights that moral injury is subjective, rooted not in the act itself but in personal moral beliefs. The risk of moral injury varies from individual to individual and culture to culture, depending on how strongly actions clash with personal or institutional values. It is about how deeply that act clashes with one’s personal moral framework. During the COVID-19 pandemic, (many, though not all) healthcare workers experienced similar inner conflict. They were harmed by impossible choices regarding whom to save and whom to turn away. For some, the inability to meet their moral duties led to lasting guilt, helplessness, and a sense of betrayal by the very systems they served. Although the term is little known in India, the same moral conflicts occur daily in police, medical and journalistic offices and bureaucratic settings. A junior police officer told to falsify records in an undisclosed custodial death, a doctor forced to ignore malpractice in an organ transplant scam, a journalist ordered to sensationalise grief for TRP, an officer coerced into turning a blind eye to sexual harassment charges or corruption—all are at risk of moral injury. These scenarios mirror the components defined in literature: transgressions of deeply held moral codes, authority-imposed betrayal, internal moral dissonance, and emotional turmoil. But the phenomenon rarely enters public discussion—research in India on moral injury is minimal.

Healing an ethical wound Though moral injury isn’t an official psychiatric diagnosis, it is increasingly treated seriously within mental health fields. There is no universally accepted treatment for moral injury; responses vary widely. Even cognitive behavioural therapy has limitations. Recognition remains the first step toward developing effective, individualised interventions through research. Critically, institutional acknowledgement matters: moral injury only begins to heal when wrongdoing is named, responsibility is accepted, and support is offered; not judgment or ostracism. Why recognition helps Public attention often fixes on the victim, and rightly so. But without recognising the psychological injury borne by those within the system—especially those coerced into complicity—we lose part of the story. Moral injury creates professionals numbed to empathy, disengaged or cynical, and institutions that tolerate ethical compromise. If unaddressed, it erodes conscience, accountability, and institutional moral integrity. Moral injury rooted in guilt can disrupt sleep, impair focus, and increase mistakes at work. Over time, those suffering a moral injury may turn to addictive behaviour, reflecting a silent struggle that alters both daily function and emotional well-being. India needs systemic reform for accountability and compassionate recognition of the moral costs borne by individuals. How do we understand the suffering of someone who is both complicit and wounded? How can we acknowledge that some of the brutality we see may emerge not just from cruelty but from repeated moral injury that’s never addressed? If we hope to build humane institutions, we must learn to see—not just the visible harm done to victims—but also the invisible harm done to those within the system who lose parts of themselves while protecting it. What may seem externally as carelessness or burnout could be the prolonged impact of an unhealed moral wound.

New light on a powerhouse

My mother was very possessive and finicky about her kitchen; she always left it sparkling clean and locked it at night before going to bed, perhaps to prevent unauthorised access to leftover ice-cream in the refrigerator. A year after my marriage, she handed over the kitchen keys to my wife. By then, she was convinced that my wife understood the harms of night-time coffee and took it seriously. The kitchen continues to be securely locked at night, with the access code unavailable. By the time of the handover, the tremor in mom’s hands was becoming more difficult to hide, her drooling speech more obvious. In the next six months, she needed help to walk, and by the year-end, she was confined to bed and unable to recall my name. A rapidly progressive type of Parkinson’s disease was eating up my mom’s brain from the inside. She died on July 1, 2010, Doctor’s Day.

Some 1.5 billion years ago, a free-floating single unicellular anaerobic organism (a single-cell life form that lived out of fermented product, not oxygen) accidentally engulfed a passing-by aerobic (oxygen-living) bacterium. For some unusual reasons, the “gentleman” organism did not kill or digest the bacterium, and instead, let it live and thrive inside its cytoplasm. The thankful bacterium continued to produce nutrients using oxygen and supplied it to the organism in return for a safe habitat. This endosymbiosis turned the bacterium into a modern-day “mitochondrion”. The mitochondrion is the powerhouse (the kitchen) of the cell. It produces ATP (energy) by taking in nutrients and oxygen. It also carries its own 37-gene DNA that gives it a degree of autonomy. Interestingly, the mitochondrial DNA comes entirely from the mother. This acquisition of mitochondria is the biggest evolutionary jump in the development of complex multicellular life. New research indicates that mitochondria are not just a “battery pack”, but a cellular motherboard.

Parkinson’s disease is a neurodegenerative disease thought to be the result of a reduction of a neurotransmitter called dopamine in specific areas of the brain. Present-day treatment aims at increasing the amount of dopamine while treating associated disabilities. New research now points to a possible defect in the mitochondria.

The brain claims only 2% of our body weight but uses 20% of our total energy expenditure. This is the reason the energy-hungry brain neurons carry over 2 million mitochondria per cell (compared with hundreds in a liver cell, and thousands in a hard-working muscle cell). In an article and an interview published in Scientific American in May, researcher Martin Picard from Columbia University suggested that a defect in mitochondria might be a key driver of Parkinson’s disease. Already, researchers have identified abnormal mitochondrial function in PINK1 and PRKN, two types of genetic Parkinson’s disease. The disease has no known treatment. A recent update from the University of Michigan indicates that regular exercise, a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, and reduction of mental stress can contribute to its prevention. Early treatment of hypertension, diabetes and lipids helps. Interestingly, caffeinated drinks (coffee) seem to be beneficial too. The cellular kitchen (aka mitochondria) turns out to be so much more than a powerhouse; it is an HQ where ideas evolve, and plans are drawn

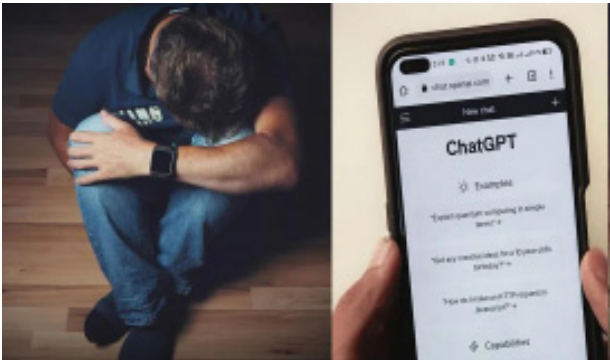


and strategies laid out. The mitochondrial gene passed from mother to children ensures that the coffee-addict father or the ice-cream crazy child has to obey the rules, both at home and in biology. The mitochondria seem to have a profound effect on cellular function and survival. Mitochondria-directed therapy might be the key to hitherto non-curable neurodegenerative and cardiovascular diseases. But our present kitchen admin is yet to be convinced about the protective effects of coffee. Our kitchen continues to be locked at night.

Tropical rain destabilises oceans only when it falls lightly: study

When it rains over the ocean, does it make the surface water more buoyant? Scientists have long assumed so because rainwater is fresh and freshwater is lighter than seawater. However, a new study by researchers at the University of Washington in Seattle, US, has found that the answer is actually more complicated. The study was published in July. Rain in the tropics often comes with large clouds and cold, dry air called cold pools. These cold pools can actually cool the ocean’s surface by blocking sunlight and increasing the transfer of heat from the water to the air. So instead of making the surface lighter, which would help mix waters in the ocean, rain sometimes makes the surface heavier and more stable. The researchers used data from 22 buoys across the equatorial oceans that measure rainfall, sea surface temperature, wind speed, and heat transfer. The duo analysed more than 31,000 hours of rainfall events from this data, focusing on the buoyancy flux, which combines the effects of heat and freshwater. If the buoyancy flux is positive, the ocean surface is less stable and promotes mixing. They found that during light rain (0.2-4 mm/hr), buoyancy flux was often positive, meaning it tends to destabilise the ocean and promote mixing. But during heavier rain, the buoyancy flux was almost always negative, meaning the ocean surface was more stable. This is because heavy rain is usually accompanied by stronger cold pools that pull heat out of the ocean more effectively.

Validation, loneliness, insecurity: Why youth are turning to ChatGPT



New Delhi: An alarming trend of young adolescents turning to artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots like ChatGPT to express their deepest emotions and personal problems is raising serious concerns among educators and mental health professionals. Experts warn that this digital “safe space” is creating a dangerous dependency, fueling validation-seeking behaviour, and deepening a crisis of communication within families.

They said that this digital solace is just a mirage, as the chatbots are designed to provide validation and engagement, potentially embedding misbeliefs and hindering the development of crucial social skills and emotional resilience. Sudha Acharya, the Principal of ITL Public School, highlighted that a dangerous mindset has taken root among youngsters, who mistakenly believe that their phones offer a private sanctuary.

“School is a social place – a place for social and emotional learning,” she told PTI. “Of late, there has been a trend amongst the young adolescents... They think that when they are sitting with their phones, they are in their private space. ChatGPT is using a large language model, and whatever information is being shared with the chatbot is undoubtedly in the public domain.” Acharya noted that children are turning to ChatGPT to express their emotions whenever they feel low, depressed, or unable to find anyone to confide in. She believes that this points towards a “serious lack of communication in reality, and it starts from family.”

She further stated that if the parents don’t share their own drawbacks and failures with their children, the children will never be able to learn the same or even regulate their own emotions. “The problem is, these young adults have grown a mindset of constantly needing validation and approval.” Acharya has introduced a digital citizenship skills programme from Class 6 onwards at her school, specifically because children as young as nine or ten now own smartphones without the maturity to use them ethically. She highlighted a particular concern — when a youngster shares their distress with ChatGPT, the immediate response is often “please, calm down. We will solve it together.” “This reflects that the AI is trying to instil trust in the individual interacting with it, eventually feeding validation and approval so that the user engages in further conversations,” she told PTI. “Such issues wouldn’t arise if these young adolescents had real friends rather than ‘reel’ friends. They have a mindset

Why soft skills are essential to success

One thing that endures at a time when information is readily available online and technical know-how is always changing is the value of interpersonal relationships. The real differentiator in achieving both personal and professional success are the abilities that enable us to lead teams, negotiate relationships, comprehend viewpoints, and communicate clearly. Contrary to popular belief, “soft skills” are typically the most difficult to acquire but often the most necessary for success. Hard vs. soft Hard skills are the teachable, measurable abilities, such as coding, data analysis, or financial modelling that are often acquired through formal education or training programmes. In contrast, soft skills refer to attributes like emotional intelligence, adaptability, creativity, problem-solving, leadership, and effective communication. They are not just about what you know, but how you interact, think, and respond. They influence how well you work with others, how you respond to challenges, and how effectively you lead or contribute to a team. There’s a reason why soft skills are difficult to develop. Unlike hard skills, which follow a logical path of instruction and practice, soft skills are deeply rooted in behaviour, mindset, and personality. They are shaped by experiences, upbringing, environment, and culture. This makes them less straightforward to teach or even to assess.

For example, developing empathy isn’t just about attending a workshop. It involves becoming more self-aware, listening without judgement, and being open to diverse experiences. Similarly, learning how to manage conflict, give constructive feedback, or navigate workplace politics requires a blend of patience, reflection, and consistent effort over time. Moreover, there is often no one-size-fits-all model for soft skills. What works in one setting or culture might be ineffective in another. This nuanced, context-dependent nature makes soft skills a lifelong learning journey rather than a box to be ticked. Many high-performing individuals hit roadblocks in their careers not because they lack technical knowledge, but because they struggle with people skills. Lack of soft skills can lead to miscommunication, toxic work environments, poor leadership, and even loss of clients or opportunities. As workplaces become more collaborative and global, the ability to build trust, adapt quickly, and relate to others is not optional, it’s critical. What to do

COVID and flu may trigger relapse in breast cancer survivors: Study

New Delhi: Common respiratory infections, including Covid-19 and influenza, can awaken dormant breast cancer cells that have spread to the lungs, setting the stage for new metastatic tumours, according to a new study. The findings published in the journal Nature, based on mouse studies as well as meta-analysis of human patients, support research showing increases in death and metastatic lung disease among cancer survivors infected with SARS-CoV-2 — the virus that causes Covid. “Our findings indicate that individuals with a history of cancer may benefit from taking precautions against respiratory viruses, such as vaccination when available, and discussing any concerns with their health care providers,” said Julio Aguirre-Ghiso, from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, US. Previous evidence suggests that inflammatory processes can awaken disseminated cancer cells (DCCs) — cells that have broken away from a primary tumour and spread to distant organs, often lying dormant for extended periods. An increase in cancer death rates during the Covid pandemic bolstered the idea that severe inflammation may be waking up the dormant

that if a picture is posted on social media, it must get at least a hundred ‘likes’, else they feel low and invalidated,” she said. The school principal believes that the core of the issue lies with parents themselves, who are often “gadget-addicted” and fail to provide emotional time to their children. While they offer all materialistic comforts, emotional support and understanding are often absent. “So, here we feel that ChatGPT is now bridging that gap but it is an AI bot after all. It has no emotions, nor can it help regulate anyone’s feelings,” she cautioned. “It is just a machine and it tells you what you want to listen to, not what’s right for your well-being,” she said. Mentioning cases of self-harm in students at her own school, Acharya stated that the situation has turned “very dangerous”. We track these students very closely and try our best to help them,” she stated. “In most of these cases, we have observed that the young adolescents are very particular about their body image, validation and approval. When they do not get that, they turn agitated and eventually end up harming themselves. It is really alarming as the cases like these are rising.” Ayeshi, a student in Class 11, confessed that she shared her personal issues with AI bots numerous times out of “fear of being judged” in real life.

“I felt like it was an emotional space and eventually developed an emotional dependency towards it. It felt like my safe space. It always gives positive feedback and never contradicts you. Although I gradually understood that it wasn’t mentoring me or giving me real guidance, that took some time,” the 16-year-old told PTI. Ayushi also admitted that turning to chatbots for personal issues is “quite common” within her friend circle. Another student, Gauransh, 15, observed a change in his own behaviour after using chatbots for personal problems. “I observed growing impatience and aggression,” he told PTI. He had been using the chatbots for a year or two but stopped recently after discovering that “ChatGPT uses this information to advance itself and train its data.” Psychiatrist Dr. Lokesh Singh Shekhawat of RML Hospital confirmed that AI bots are meticulously customised to maximise user engagement. “When youngsters develop any sort of negative emotions or misbeliefs and share them with ChatGPT, the AI bot validates them,” he explained. “The youth start believing the responses, which makes them nothing but delusional.” He noted that when a misbelief is repeatedly validated, it becomes “embedded in the mindset as a truth.”

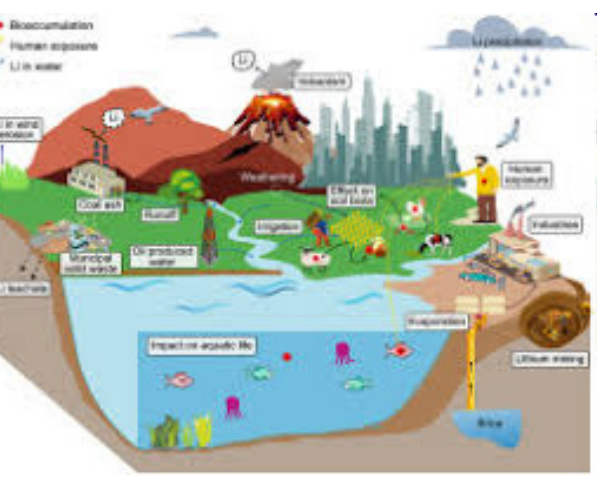
This, he said, alters their point of view — a phenomenon he referred to as ‘attention bias’ and ‘memory bias’. The chatbot’s ability to adapt to the user’s tone is a deliberate tactic to encourage maximum conversation, he added. Singh stressed the importance of constructive criticism for mental health, something completely absent in the AI interaction. “Youth feel relieved and ventilated when they share their personal problems with AI, but they don’t realise that it is making them dangerously dependent on it,” he warned. He also drew a parallel between an addiction to AI for mood upliftment and addictions to gaming or alcohol. “The dependency on it increases day by day,” he said, cautioning that in the long run, this will create a “social skill deficit and isolation.”



Fortunately, soft skills can be developed with intention and consistency. Here are some ways to begin: Self-reflection: Regularly assess your own behaviours and communication style. Journaling or seeking feedback can help identify areas for improvement. Practise active listening: Truly listening — not just waiting to speak — is a foundational soft skill that improves empathy and collaboration. Take the initiative: Volunteering for leadership roles, presentations, or group projects helps build confidence and adaptability. Seek mentors: Learning from those who demonstrate strong soft skills in action can offer valuable insights. Engage with diverse groups: Exposure to different perspectives fosters openness, empathy, and better communication. Most importantly, building soft skills requires a growth mindset; the belief that you can improve through effort, learning, and persistence. While AI and automation remake industries, hard skills will keep changing and evolving. But empathy, creativity, complex decision-making, leadership ... these are human abilities that cannot be automated or imitated by machines. A World Economic Forum report identifies critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and teamwork as important skills for the future workforce. With the increasing competitiveness in the job market, these “soft” skills will be what differentiates applicants from one another. Soft skills don’t necessarily come with degrees or certificates, but they are often the key to long-term success. Though they can be tricky to learn, as they demand patience, vulnerability, and awareness of yourself, the payoff is enormous.

DCCs, Aguirre-Ghiso said. The team tested the hypothesis on mice and exposed them to SARS-CoV-2 or the influenza virus — both triggered the awakening of dormant DCCs in the lungs, leading to a massive expansion of metastatic cells within days of infection and the appearance of metastatic lesions within two weeks. Molecular analyses revealed that the awakening of dormant DCCs is driven by interleukin-6 (IL-6), a protein that immune cells release in response to infections or injuries. This suggested that using IL-6 inhibitors or other targeted immunotherapies might prevent or lessen the resurgence of metastasis. Further, to understand the implications in humans, the team analysed two large databases and found that respiratory infections in cancer patients in remission are linked to cancer metastasis. “The effect was most pronounced in the first year after infection,” said Roel Vermeulen, from Utrecht University, The Netherlands. The rapid progression to cancer mirrors the observed quick expansion of dormant cancer cells in animal models. Our findings suggest that cancer survivors may be at increased risk of metastatic relapse after common respiratory viral infections,”

From mines to minds: how lithium shapes energy and psychiatry



In a significant stride towards bolstering strategic resources, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent visit to the United States last month culminated in the launching of a collaborative initiative focused on recovering and processing critical minerals, notably lithium. This partnership underscores the rising importance of lithium in various sectors, from energy storage to pharmaceuticals. Lithium, denoted by the symbol Li, has atomic number 3 and is a silvery-white alkali metal. It was discovered in 1817 when Swedish chemist Johan August identified it within the mineral petalite. In 1821, William Brande successfully isolated lithium in its elemental form through the electrolysis of lithium oxide.

Due to continuing exploration, measured and indicated lithium resources have increased substantially worldwide, totalling about 105 million tons as per the U.S. geological survey in 2024. Major lithium reserves are concentrated in South America’s ‘Lithium Triangle’—encompassing parts of Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile. Australia is the leading producer, extracting lithium from hard-rock spodumene deposits. India’s lithium deposits are in Reasi (Jammu & Kashmir) and Mandya (Karnataka), with exploration ongoing in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Himachal Pradesh. The recent Indo-U.S. initiative aims to recover and process lithium. In 1859, Alfred Baring Garrod published a paper in The London and Edinburgh Monthly Journal of Medical Science examining lithium’s potential to dissolve uric acid crystals, proposing its use for gout treatment. The hypothesis stemmed from chemical observations rather than clinical trials. While lithium salts showed promise in vitro, therapeutic applications were limited by toxicity and impractical dosing. The study marked one of the earliest discussions on lithium’s physiological effects, but its medical relevance remained uncertain. In 1949, Australian psychiatrist John Cade published a seminal paper in the Medical Journal of Australia detailing his discovery of lithium’s antimanic properties. Cade hypothesised that mania was linked to a metabolic imbalance and conducted experiments, injecting guinea pigs with urine from manic patients, observing toxic effects. He administered various compounds to identify the poisonous substance, noting that lithium carbonate has a calming impact on the animals without sedation. Translating these findings to clinical practice, Cade treated ten patients with mania using lithium salts, reporting significant mood stabilisation and reduction in manic symptoms. This groundbreaking study introduced lithium as an effective treatment for mood disorders like acute mania and bipolar disorder.

Melbourne’s Noack and Trautner (1951) and French psychiatrists Despinoy and De Romeuf (1951) independently tested lithium in manic patients, reporting effectiveness. De-

spite initial scepticism and concerns over toxicity, further studies, notably by Danish psychiatrist Mogens Schou in the 1950s and 60s, confirmed lithium’s efficacy as a mood stabiliser. By 1970, lithium was approved for the treatment of bipolar disorder in the United States.

Mechanism of action and ongoing mysteriesLithium’s exact mechanism in stabilising mood disorders is not fully understood. It is hypothesised that it influences neurotransmitter activity and intracellular signalling pathways, by competing with sodium ions due to their chemical similarities as alkali metals. This competition may alter neuronal excitability and neurotransmission. Despite its long history of use, the precise biological underpinnings of lithium’s mood-stabilising effects continue to be a research subject. Lithium has a narrow therapeutic window (0.6–1.2 mEq/L), requiring regular monitoring to prevent toxicity. It is absorbed orally, distributed evenly in total bodywater, and is excreted unchanged via kidneys, necessitating renal function monitoring. It is not used in pregnant women.

With lithium, the difference between an effective dose and a toxic dose is small. At therapeutic levels, lithium stabilises mood, but even slight elevations can lead to toxicity, causing neurological, renal, and cardiac complications. Lithium also interferes with thyroid function, leading to hypothyroidism. Over time, this can lead to fatigue, weight gain, and depressive symptoms, further complicating bipolar disorder management. Lithium exemplifies the Paracelsus’ principle—“the dose makes the poison”—whereby a slight deviation from the therapeutic range can turn it from a life-saving mood stabiliser into a toxic agent. It also has a delayed onset of action—often requiring weeks to show full effects—which means that more rapid-acting medications are usually preferred in acute manic episodes. Second-generation antipsychotics have emerged as viable alternatives to lithium due to their mechanism of action and better safety profile. Unlike lithium, which acts as the source of bipolar disorder by inhibiting sodium-GPCR protein pumps in neurons, SGAs act at a downstream level by modulating neurotransmitter activity, particularly dopamine and serotonin. This difference means that while lithium exerts its effects at the root of the disorder by stabilising neuronal activity, SGAs regulate the symptoms more directly by blocking excessive neurotransmitter action. Despite the increasing use of SGAs, lithium remains the drug of choice for specific bipolar disorder presentations, manic episodes and suicidal tendency prevention. It is most effective for classic euphoric mania and bipolar disorder with a strong genetic component. Lithium uniquely reduces the risk of suicide in bipolar patients, a benefit that SGAs do not replicate. Its mood-stabilising properties are particularly valuable in preventing relapses, ensuring long-term remission, and managing treatment-resistant cases. What prompted John Cade to hypothesise lithium for mood stabilisation remains a greater mystery than the unknowns surrounding its mechanism of action. His work was published in 1949 when the relationship between medical research and ethics fundamentally differed from today’s standards. Cade’s experiments immediately after WW-2 reflected an era where scientific curiosity often operated in a vacuum, independent of ethical considerations. With the establishment of modern research ethics, including informed consent, clinical trial regulations, and oversight committees, such an experiment—would not even be possible today. Yet, these historical inquiries remind us that medical advancements have often emerged from unconventional and ethically questionable explorations. In addition to its role in psychiatry, lithium is indispensable in battery technology, nuclear energy, ceramics, and lubricants. It plays a crucial part in carbon neutrality by enabling renewable energy storage.

Trouble at the Centre of Excellence: Why Jadavpur University remains on the boil?

On March 12, the Minister of State for Education Sukanta Majumdar informed the Parliament that Jadavpur University is set to lose the status of Institute of Eminence (IoE) due to a fall in budgetary allocation. Mr. Majumdar, who is also West Bengal BJP president in response to a question by another BJP MP Samik Bhattacharya mentioned that the Empowered Experts Committee (EEC) considered the revised proposal of the Jadavpur University and observed that there was a steep decline in the budget from the earlier projected amount of ₹3,299 crore to ₹606 crore. Such a steep decline in the budget was not conducive to realise the target set for the IoE Institutions. While the question was raised and replied to by two senior BJP leaders from West Bengal, the development could not have come at a worse time. Jadavpur University, the highest-ranked university in West Bengal, has been on the boil over the past three weeks. Recent violence at the university

Days before the start of the new academic session, violence erupted at the university when West Bengal State Education Minister, Bratya Basu, came face to face with a group of students on March 1. The students who had blocked the Minister’s car were demanding that the student’s union election be held at the university. After a commotion for a few minutes, the Minister’s car drove over the protesting students and some protesting students came under the wheels of the Minister’s car. While the protests and blocking of the Minister’s convoy was not something new at the state-run university, the fact that the wheels of the Minister’s car injured students was unprecedented. For more than two weeks the university witnessed protests and academic activities remained suspended. Nine FIRs have been registered, eight of which against students and one at the instruction of the Calcutta High Court against the Minister, his driver, and another professor at the university. Set up in 1955, Jadavpur University is considered an outcome of the country’s freedom movement and is the highest-rated university in West Bengal, which till decades ago boasted of top-rated educational institutions in India. As per the latest National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking by the Ministry of Education released in August 2024, Jadavpur University ranked at the ninth position across the country on the list of universities. The university has excellent humanities, science and technology professors and has several interdisciplinary schools and centers that are engaged in inter-disciplinary research. It is not only politics and protests but also fund constraints that are hampering the development of the university. The Jadavpur University Teachers Association (JUTA) has raised the question that ₹1 crore was crowd-funded for applying for the IoE status. JUTA in a statement in January 2025 said that the university spent ₹34.97 crore from its coffers for “non-salary maintenance-related expenditures” and it will have to borrow funds in future if the situation continues. The university is completely dependent on State funding and has missed the opportunity to generate resources through self-financing courses or other means like engaging with its vast alumni network. With no central funds in sight and the state government stressed of funds due to other financial commit-



ments such as cash incentive schemes for women and children, the JU might have to grapple with funds crunch for a while. Politics at the universityAt the centre of the controversy is the politics at the university. Jadavpur University has been a bastion of student unions with Left ideology for the past several decades. The campus saw violence during the turbulent Naxal movement of the 1970’s. Despite being in power for almost 14 years in West Bengal, Trinamool Congress that has not been able to establish itself among the students of this premier university. The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the student wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, has also tried to establish a presence in the university but without much success. March 2025 is not the first time Jadavpur University has made headlines for the wrong reasons. In September 2019, almost a similar situation had emerged when the students laid siege to the convoy of the then Union Minister Babul Supriyo inside the university campus. Mr. Supriyo, who was a BJP MP then, was rescued by then West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar. Beyond the colourful graffiti adorning the walls of the university campus and the slogans of revolution painted all around, student politics has often taken difficult turns, from the occasional laying siege at the office of Vice Chancellors and authorities to the ‘Hok Kolorob (Let there be Noise) movement in 2014 when the siege went to 150 hours. In August 2023, a first-year student allegedly fell to death while being ragged by his seniors. Thirteen students were arrested in connection with the case that is being heard in the Calcutta High Court. There is much more than aggressive student politics that needs to be addressed by all the stakeholders of the university. The students protest surveillance on the campus and oppose setting up a police outpost, but block movement of others and gherao Vice Chancellors and other constitutional functionaries visiting the institute. The authorities on the other hand try to keep passing the buck. When the Education Minister’s car was surrounded by students on March 1, 2025 the University Vice Chancellor Bhaskar Gupta was nowhere to be seen. He later fell ill and was hospitalised for a few days. Even in the past when there was a ragging death at the campus hostel or a Union Minister convoy was stopped, the university authorities were not seen handling the issue proactively and shifted the blame to institutional lapses. The different teachers’ associations seem to be more committed to the different ideologies they represent and their actions are more inclined in the interest of the ideology rather than the interest of the university.

A land where ambition grows minus an outbound ticket



The recent drama over the unceremonious repatriation of Indians who attempted illegally to enter the United States of America, and who ended up handcuffed and manacled in an American military aircraft that dumped them on the tarmac in Amritsar, raises a whole series of issues. Migration, after all, is not merely a policy issue. It is a human story, woven into our collective memories and dreams. Immigration has long been an integral part of human history, shaping civilisations, economies, and societies across the globe. India, with its rich tradition of global engagement, has long seen its people traverse continents in pursuit of opportunity, new lives, better futures. Every year, millions of Indians embark on this journey, making India the country with the highest number of emigrants in the world. Today, Indians are no longer just workers abroad; they are leaders, shaping global industries. With Sundar Pichai at Google, Satya Nadella at Microsoft, and a host of others born and raised in India heading Fortune 500 companies, Indian migrants drive innovation and economic power in the West. History proves that migration has always been a force multiplier, enriching both migrants and host nations. Yet, in an era of rising walls, both physical and political, migration faces unprecedented scrutiny.

For decades, the lure of the American Dream has beckoned young Indians with the promise of economic opportunity, social mobility, and the prospect of a better future. While the IT engineers in Silicon Valley went on scholarships or work visas and stayed on, the Sikh cab drivers navigating the streets of New York may have found less conventional means of entry. But these illegal migrants are not fugitives but opportunity-seekers wanting a fair shot at prosperity. With remittances to India crossing \$120 billion in 2023, migration fuels a cycle where families seek to replicate the success of relatives abroad. It is the vast expanse of opportunity in major U.S. cities, the promise of work under the radar, and the prospect of eventual amnesty (like so many before them) that draws them in. An estimated 7,25,000 undocumented Indian migrants — nearly one in four of all Indians in the U.S. — live and work clandestinely in the U.S. There is a painful paradox at the heart of India’s illegal migration story. We celebrate tech billionaires while youth unemployment soars, showcase gleaming infrastructure while millions struggle for dignified work. India’s growth story features booming statistics, shrinking opportunities, and a rising economy still unable to assure its own people that their future lies at home. The lure of foreign shores is sometimes about ambition, sometimes about survival. This has birthed a thriving network of unscrupulous agents weaving fantasies of western riches, convincing even people from India’s most prosperous States to leave. Gujarat — a State championed as an economic success story, the launchpad of the Prime Minister’s rise — sees thousands risking everything to migrate. Punjab, too, is revered as India’s breadbasket; it feeds the nation, yet its youth are leaving in droves. Rising unemployment, dwindling agricultural returns, and an insidious drug crisis have eroded hope, leaving many with little choice but to seek their fortunes abroad, legally or otherwise.

In their desperation, many Indians turn to shadowy networks, paying staggering sums to be smuggled across borders. What was once the path of young, single men now sees entire middle-class families — the bedrock of India’s ambitions— risking everything for a fresh start abroad. The Gujarati family that froze to death trapped in a snowdrift on the Canadian-U.S. border in January 2022 was upper middle-class at home. Some of those who were sent back

by the U.S. had paid a crore of rupees to get there. Who would have imagined that people with a crore of rupees would not thrive in India? Why is India, one of the world’s fastest-growing economies, a rising geopolitical force, and a nation with unparalleled human capital, still unable to provide enough opportunities for its own people? Why has the pursuit of dignity, stability, and economic security led millions of Indians to distant shores, even where they are not welcome? These are uncomfortable questions — ones we can no longer ignore. More mirage than dream. There is also the question of what they find when they get there. The American Dream, once seen as a golden ticket, is increasingly a mirage. Many find themselves trapped in an endless cycle of uncertainty — living in fear of deportation, working in jobs that barely sustain them, struggling to integrate into societies that, at times, view them with racist suspicion. And for many who leave, the struggle does not end when they cross the border — it follows them, sometimes in the most tragic ways. We hear of migrants working endless hours in exploitative conditions, of families back home waiting for news that never comes. And now, for many, the journey merely ends in humiliating deportation. The United States is well within its legal authority to return those who have entered its territory unlawfully. They have been doing so: the Biden administration deported 1,100 Indians in the last fiscal year. Since October 2020, nearly 1,70,000 Indian migrants have been detained by U.S. Customs and Border Protection while attempting to cross the border illegally, largely from Canada or Mexico; they are all subject to deportation. However, the manner in which this process is conducted has been dismaying. Deportation must be carried out with dignity and a respect for human rights. The recent images of shackled and handcuffed migrants being loaded onto military aircraft, suggesting more a criminal extradition of felons than an immigration enforcement measure, have understandably agitated Indians. Colombia and Mexico have rejected such treatment of their citizens, rightly arguing that deportation is an administrative process, not a punitive spectacle. Humiliating individuals to deter others serves no just purpose — it merely erodes dignity and distorts perceptions. We must ask: should a democracy treat another’s citizens this way? Does border enforcement justify undermining the very values the deporting nation upholds? Diplomacy is not just policy but also a reflection of national character. While India does not, and should not, endorse illegal immigration, we cannot be silent spectators to the mistreatment of our citizens. A nation’s stature is not just economic clout or international reach but the respect its passport commands. True global engagement is not just about alliances and trade deals; it is about setting an unwavering standard — wherever an Indian stands, their nation stands with them. Another paradox: We hail the aspirational young Indian, but he prefers to fulfil his aspirations abroad. India must not be a place migrants are forced to return to, but one they want to return to. Those coming back are not just deportees but skilled, ambitious individuals whose aspirations can drive India’s growth. We must make opportunities accessible to all, not concentrated among the privileged. Inclusive growth, innovation, and investments in infrastructure, education, and entrepreneurship must be national imperatives. More than just jobs, India must offer careers that inspire people to stay, build, and invest in their future here. As the world builds walls, India must build bridges — to opportunity, prosperity, and a future where migration is an option, not a necessity. If India is to truly rise, it must become a nation where people do not feel compelled to leave, but empowered to stay. India must not just be the world’s largest exporter of talent but a magnet for it — a place where ambition flourishes without an outbound ticket, where success is celebrated at home, and where prosperity is not a foreign fantasy but a reality shaped on our own soil. Let us make India, once again, a land of hope. Not because the world is rejecting our people, but because, if we do the right things, they will have no need to look elsewhere. Shashi Tharoor is a fourth-term Member of Parliament (Congress), Lok Sabha, for Thiruvananthapuram, Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, and the Sahitya Akademi Award-winning author of 26 books, including Pax Indica: India and the World of the 21st Century (2012). The writer is grateful to Urjasvi Ahlawat for her assistance.

How can India meet its rising power demand?

As the fastest-growing major economy in a rapidly heating world, India’s electricity demand is growing fast. Since FY21, India’s electricity consumption has risen at approximately 9% per annum, compared to an average of 5% annually in the preceding decade. The Central Electricity Authority (CEA) had projected electricity demand to grow at a 6% CAGR between 2022 and 2030. However, recent trends suggest a strong likelihood of overshooting these estimates. Can India’s power sector keep up with this demand and transition to renewables at the same time?

What’s driving India’s electricity demand? Besides economic growth and urbanisation, climate change-induced heat stress, marked by increasingly hotter summers, is one of the key factors driving electricity demand. Currently, industries, households, and agriculture comprise 33%, 28%, and 19% of total electricity use in India, respectively. Yet, household electricity demand has grown the fastest over the past decade. The summer of 2024 witnessed a 40-50% year-on-year growth in room air conditioner sales, driven by rising incomes and record-breaking temperatures. All-India peak demand crossed 250 GW on May 30, 2024, which was 6.3% higher than projections. In 2025, after recording the warmest-ever February in 125 years, India must now brace for extended heatwaves and a peak electricity demand growth of 9-10%.

How has India met rising demand so far? Since the early 2000s, power generation capacity has quadrupled to 460 GW, making India the third-largest electricity producer globally. Driven by the imperatives of clean energy transition, India’s power sector is undergoing a major shift with the rise of Renewable Energy (RE) technologies like solar and wind. In 2010, the Indian government set a target of 20 GW of RE by 2020, which was revised upwards in 2014 to 175 GW by 2022. In 2021, India further amped its target to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel power capacity by 2030. The government has continuously adopted several long-term and short-term measures to meet the spikes in demand. For instance, to manage the peak in 2022, it increased coal allocation to the power sector and prioritised its transportation through railways. It also directed imported coal-based power plants to operate at full capacity. States that have added substantive solar capacities utilised the surplus solar power to meet day peaks. Nights peaks continue to pose a challenge. In many ways, 2024 was a landmark year — India added a record 28 GW of new RE ca-

capacity, bumping up the share of RE in the electricity mix to 13.5%. The share of coal in the capacity mix fell below half, though it still caters to 75% of power demand. India’s RE capacity now stands at 165 GW. Another 32 GW of RE is expected to be commissioned in 2025. In the following five years, India would need to add about 50 GW of RE every year to meet its 2030 goal.

Why should India further raise its clean energy ambitions?

Episodes of power shortages in the last two years amid rapid growth in demand pose an important question. How should India act and plan to meet its rising energy demand reliably and cost-effectively? A new study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) answers this question by simulating six scenarios of India’s power sector in 2030. CEEW found that failure to achieve 500 GW of clean energy capacity by 2030 will lead to power shortages and higher power costs, even if demand grows moderately. For instance, 0.26% of the demand will not be met if we achieve only 400 GW. Just this small percentage alone could impact the power supply to ~1 million households for 2.5 hours daily. States in northern India would be the worst affected because of network constraints. If demand grows faster (at 6.4% CAGR between 2023 and 2030 instead of 5.8%) and the 500 GW target is achieved, India will still need additional generation capacity to avoid major power shortages. Here, India has two choices — add six GW of new coal (beyond the under-construction capacities now) or 100 GW of new RE capacity (beyond the stated 500 GW). The first choice will meet the demand, but the coal fleet will remain under high stress with a likelihood of increased downtime. This could result in sudden shortages and increased costs. The study finds that the latter choice of 100 GW of new RE capacity, distributed across States, is a better option.

How can India aim for 600 GW by 2030? India must achieve 600 GW of clean energy by 2030 to keep pace with demand. This will help the country deliver reliable power at lower costs, saving up to ₹42,400 crore (\$5 billion) in procurement costs in 2030 alone. It will also yield higher social and health benefits, with 1,00,000 new jobs (during 2025-2030) and up to 23% lower emission of air pollutants in 2030. However, a 600 GW target would require 70 GW of RE addition annually until 2030 which may sound wishful.

‘Trusts not adequately briefed on RBI talks’



Tata Sons' extended engagement with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) over its regulatory status has raised concerns within the Tata group over whether the Tata Trusts — the company's controlling shareholder — were adequately kept informed of the discussions with the regulator and options considered during the process. Sources familiar with the developments say the Tata Trusts were not given adequate updates on the submissions made to the RBI, hearings held with the regulator or the course that the regulatory process was taking. The question being raised is whether the Trusts, which hold about 66 per cent of Tata Sons, were kept informed of the representations being made on the company's behalf and of the alternatives being discussed with the regulator.

Tata Sons had sought to surrender its registration as a Core Investment Company (CIC), a move that would have allowed the group's principal holding company to remain unlisted. The RBI had classified Tata Sons as an upper-layer non-banking financial company (NBFC-UL) in September 2022, a classification that carries a requirement to list within the prescribed timeframe. Tata Sons subsequently pursued deregistration as a CIC as a route to avoiding a public listing. In August this year, the RBI said the deregistration application was still under examination. That effort, however, ended on September 12 when the RBI rejected Tata Sons' application to surrender its registration and directed the company to take the necessary steps to ensure full compliance with the applicable regulatory requirements. The decision effectively put the company back on the path towards a stock market listing.

The issue now is not merely what decision the RBI ultimately took, but what transpired during the several years that Tata Sons was engaged with the regulator. "It appears the Trusts did not have a clue about the talks with the RBI," said a source. The concern, according to people aware of the matter, is fundamentally one of process. The Trusts apparently wanted Tata Sons to explore all possible regulatory and legal avenues that could reconcile compliance with the RBI's requirements while preserving the company's existing ownership and structure. That position did not necessarily amount to a refusal to engage with the regulator. Tata Trusts have opposed the listing of Tata Sons and have urged the company to examine alternatives. The Trusts had not

agreed to a stock-market listing and wanted other options to be explored following the RBI communication.

The RBI's decision has nevertheless changed the immediate regulatory landscape. Following the rejection of the deregistration request, the Tata Sons board on September 17 decided to proceed with a listing of the holding company in line with the RBI's directive. The board's decision was taken alongside a separate resolution extending N Chandrasekaran's tenure as executive chairman for another five years. The September 17 board meeting also brought the differences between Tata Sons and the Tata Trusts into the open. Tata Trusts chairman Noel Tata opposed Chandrasekaran's reappointment, while Tata Trusts nominee Venu Srinivasan supported it. The Trusts have subsequently challenged the validity of the board's decision and questioned the use of a casting vote to establish a majority. The listing decision has similarly become a point of disagreement. The Trusts have said they did not agree to the listing and wanted the board to explore alternatives following the RBI's communication. Tata Sons, on the other hand, has decided to proceed with the listing process to comply with the regulator's directive.

Against this backdrop, the central question concerning the earlier RBI engagement is one of disclosure and shareholder consultation: Were the Tata Trusts, as the majority shareholder, kept fully informed about what was being submitted to the RBI, the hearings and discussions with the regulator, and the alternatives being considered? If the engagement with the regulator lasted five or six years, the question now being raised within the group is not simply why the RBI ultimately rejected Tata Sons' request. It is also what options were explored during those years, what representations were made to the regulator, when those representations were made, and whether the controlling shareholder was adequately informed of the process. The September 17 board decision has now moved the question into a new phase. Tata Sons has chosen to proceed with the listing, while the Trusts have maintained that alternatives should be examined. The company's next steps will therefore have to be viewed against both the RBI's regulatory direction and the continuing differences between Tata Sons and its controlling shareholder over the future structure of the group.

Venu Srinivasan was not prevented from voting on listing-related matters. Concerns were raised over his public support for listing while Tata Sons' application for deregistration as a CIC was still pending with the RBI. "The issue should have been formally discussed by the Tata Sons and Trust boards. The Articles of Association require the affirmative votes of both Trust-nominated directors, since there are two such directors, and that a casting vote cannot substitute for a specifically required affirmative vote," said the source. The trusts say the Articles form the constitutional basis of Tata Sons and must be followed, particularly when decisions could fundamentally alter the company's ownership and governance structure.

PSU banks to remain open on Sunday ahead of 3-day strike from September 28



Bank Strike in September 2026: Public sector banks and regional rural banks will function as normal on September 27, Sunday ahead of the three-day nationwide bank strike called by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU). The Ministry of Finance said in a statement on Wednesday that the decision was being taken to ensure "genuine banking needs" of the public are not hindered for an extended period, with the strike lasting from September 28 to September 30.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given its approval for all bank branches, offices, ATM-linked branches, and currency chests to remain "fully operational" on Sunday, the ministry said. "The Government and bank managements

have appealed to unions to defer the proposed strike, and have also taken measures to ensure that essential banking services continue un-interrupted," it added.

The three-day strike comes amid demands to implement a five-day working week for banks. In a letter dated September 22, the All India Bank Officers' Confederation said there had been no response to this demand "which was agreed and signed in March, 2024 under the last wage revision settlement". "From UFBU we expressed our strong resentment and protest against the various measures being taken by managements and other authorities to intimidate employees and officers, particularly scale IV and above officers and Probationary officers, not to join the strike which is clear case of Unfair Labour Practice under Sec. 84 of the Industrial Relations Code. We pointed out that such threats, coercions and pressures will only prove counterproductive and hence such attempts are avoidable," the letter further said. Currently, bank branches are open on the first, third, and fifth Saturdays of every month. The UFBU says it represents 90% of the banking workforce. The letter came after a conciliation meeting conducted by the Deputy Chief Labour Commissioner — attended by representatives from UFBU, the Indian Banks' Association, the finance ministry's Department of Financial Services, and bank management — did not lead to a solution. The aforementioned letter said it was mentioned at the meeting that '5 days banking' is being considered by the government.

Why Indians travel: Religion drives overnight trips, medical trips most expensive



Households from Tamil Nadu account for almost a quarter of all overnight trips made by Indians for holidays, comfortably higher than Maharashtra in second and Karnataka in third. Meanwhile, families from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Bihar are together responsible for more than 30% of all 'health and medical' related overnight trips, a new government survey conducted from July 2025 to June 2026 showed, with the numbers also indicating a growing divide in the travels of rural and urban Indians. The previous survey was conducted from July 2014 to June 2015.

As per the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's (MoSPI) Domestic Tourism Expenditure Survey — released on Wednesday — an estimated 10 crore overnight trips were made in the 365 days prior to households being quizzed. These were for a variety of 'leading purposes', or main reasons: holidaying, leisure and recreation; pilgrimage and religious; health and medical; and shopping. And while households who travel are doing so more frequently now, the fraction of rural families taking trips has reduced. Rural families holidaying less as per the latest survey, the percentage of rural households who took at least

one overnight trip declined to 35.2% from 36.6% in 2014-15. Meanwhile, the percentage for urban households rose from 35.7% to 37.7%. Further, for every 100 rural households, the number of overnight trips for holidays and recreation completed in the last 365 days declined to 4 in 2025-26 from 5 in 2014-15. For urban families, the number increased from 12.7 to 13.5. As such, urban households are taking more holidays than before, while rural families are taking fewer such trips. The latest Domestic Tourism Expenditure Survey covered 2.46 lakh households from across the country, except villages in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands which are difficult to access. Of the surveyed households, 1.43 lakh were from rural areas and 1.04 lakh from urban. MoSPI cautioned that the results of the latest survey are not "strictly comparable" with the 2014-15 one. This is because the 2025-26 survey sought information on overnight trips for 'pilgrimage and religious activities' in the reference period of 365 days prior to the household being questioned. Meanwhile, the 2014-15 survey's questions on 'pilgrimage and religious' pertained to the 30 days before the visit by MoSPI officials. However, MoSPI itself compared the results of the 2025-26 and 2014-15 surveys. In a press statement issued on Wednesday, it said the number of overnight trips per 100 'tourist households' — those who made at least one overnight trip in the last 365 days — had increased from 118 in 2014-15 to 127 in 2025-26 for rural areas. For urban, the ratio had increased from 121 to 132. As explained above, the 2014-15 figures of 118 and 121 mentioned by the statistics ministry do not include overnight trips made for 'religious and pilgrimage' purposes as the previous survey had asked this question for the prior 30-day period. In 2014-15, 8 overnight trips per 100 tourist households were made in rural areas in the previous 30 days, while 11 were made by urban households.

Bengal orders FIRs over missing Covid-time equipment at 64 health centres



The West Bengal government recently issued strict instructions to district health authorities following reports of missing and stolen medical equipment across dozens of state-run health centres. All district chief medical officers of health (CMOH) have been instructed to file FIRs after officials claimed that medical equipment worth crores of rupees, procured with Central grant funds during Covid, went missing or was embezzled. According to an official directive issued by the Health Department, essential items, including batteries, wire boxes, and critical machinery components, have gone missing from at least 64 public health facilities. The affected locations comprise 50 sub-centres (SCs), 13 block primary health units (BPHUs), and one primary health centre (PHC). The missing assets were pro-

cured under the 15th Finance Commission Health Grants (XV FC-HG) and delivered by the West Bengal Medical Services Corporation Limited (WBMSCL).

Department officials stated that the absence of these critical components has halted the installation and commissioning of necessary medical machinery across several facilities. "Facility custodians must immediately file an FIR with local police authorities upon detecting any missing or stolen equipment. A full incident report including facility details, item descriptions, delivery dates, discovery dates, and designated custodian names must be submitted to the Health Department through the respective chief medical officer of health (CMOH)," read the order copy. Facility-level investigations will be conducted to fix individual responsibility, and administrative proceedings will be initiated against custodians found negligent in their duties. The state government has also authorised direct financial penalties to recover lost public funds.

"Where permitted under service rules, the government will seek full recovery of the cost of lost or stolen items directly from the salary or remuneration of negligent personnel. District CMOHs have been instructed to pass these directives to all block medical officers of health (BMOHs), community health officers (CHOs), and facility heads for strict compliance, alongside maintaining rigorous stock and movement registers for all state-supplied equipment," the order further said.

WHO chief says 'matter of time' before US joins top health agency



"The US leadership is very important and I want to assure you that we have continued to communicate from our side. It is a matter of time until the US joins the WHO," Dr Ghebreyesus told reporters at a Health Coverage Fellowship programme conducted by the Centre for Health Communication at the Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health in Boston. The US formally notified the WHO of its withdrawal in January 2026, citing concerns over the agency's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ghebreyesus, whose second term as WHO director-general ends next year, has rejected several claims made by the US administration.

Why US funding matters to WHO The financial stakes are significant. The US has historically been WHO's largest donor, providing both assessed contributions and voluntary funding. During the 2022-23 biennium, the US contributed \$1.284 billion, according to WHO.

US funding has supported programmes ranging from emergency response and polio eradication to HIV, tuberculosis, immunisation, maternal and child health and other public health initiatives. WHO has said the loss of US support has created major funding gaps, forcing the agency to reprioritise programmes and contain costs. The importance of the US, however, extends beyond money. Dr Ghebreyesus pointed to the expertise and global reach of institutions such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health. "No other organisation can replace what WHO does," its chief said, pointing to its role in coordinating responses to major health crises such as Ebola. "We prefer to play a positive role because US leadership is important," he said.

Pandemic preparedness remains a concern Speaking ahead of the second United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) high-level meeting on "Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response" on September 25, Dr Ghebreyesus said the world must not lose sight of the lessons of COVID-19, when health systems were overwhelmed and inequalities were exposed. "Of course, we can never say that the world is prepared enough for the next pandemic," he said, while adding that global health security has nevertheless been strengthened since COVID-19.

Science uncovers how brain interprets artistic beauty

Cambridge: Stand in front of Turner's Sun Rising Over Water (1825-30) and something odd tends to happen. The painting holds you, even though observers might struggle to say why. Maybe it is the colour, the balance, the composition, or the strange stillness the artwork seems to carry. Try Nootropic Supplements Whatever it is, you feel it long before you can explain why. And the stranger next to you, looking at the same canvas with the same awe in their eyes, very likely feels it too.

We often say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Yet show almost anyone a misty Chinese Song-dynasty mountain landscape, or the softly brushed figure of the Mona Lisa, and nearly everyone agrees that something striking is unfolding before them. Commission Custom Prints

Beauty feels intensely private, and, at the same time, we keep discovering that we collectively share it. That contradiction is one of the longstanding puzzles in "neuroaesthetics" — the science of how the brain responds to art and beauty. How does our sense of beauty actually take shape in the brain? In our latest study, published in Nature Communications, we tried to map that shared experience. We found that instead of representing it as a single entity, the brain instead splits aesthetic experience into two major strands. One strand handles what an image shows, whether a landscape, an object or a figure. Try Organic Skincare The other tracks how much pleasure it gives us, drawing on the same circuits that respond to food or money. These two separate neural systems combine to shape every judgment of beauty we make when viewing visual artworks. Neuroscientists have long argued about this question, from positions that compete as often as they overlap. One camp focuses largely on perception, on how the brain takes in composition, contrast and form. Another emphasises evaluation and reward, placing beauty in the brain's value circuitry. A third looks to the brain systems behind imagination and self-reflection. Each account cap-

tures something real, but they had rarely been tested together in a single study. We asked 34 volunteers to look at 96 traditional Chinese watercolour paintings inside a 7T MRI scanner, powerful enough to pick up the small shifts in blood flow that track the brain's activity. Once they were out of the scanner, each participant rated how the paintings made them feel. Instead of working straight from those raw ratings, however, we borrowed a tool from somewhere less obvious: the recommendation engines that power services such as Netflix and Spotify. Known as collaborative filtering algorithms, these tools excel at detecting patterns of agreement buried in people's preferences. When applied to our aesthetic ratings, they pulled out two dimensions running underneath everyone's responses. The first sorted the paintings from most figure-like to most landscape-like, a measure of what each picture conceptually depicts. The second sorted them from most disliked to most liked across all participants, a measure of emotional value, or hedonic value (the sensory enjoyment someone gets from an experience). Despite their complementary contribution to the overall aesthetic experience, the brain kept these two dimensions remarkably separate. Visual content was read out along the visual pathways, the familiar circuits that let us tell a face from a scene.

Hedonic value, on the other hand, was decoded somewhere else, within deeper regions that handle reward and pleasure. Put simply, the brain seems to judge a visual painting with much the same machinery it uses to judge the rest of the world around us. We also found that how strongly the brain encoded this two-dimensional aesthetic landscape depended on a person's expertise in visual arts. In particular, the difference showed up in the default mode network, a system of connections in the brain tied to imagination, consciousness, self-reflection and meaning-making that several leading theories place at the heart of aesthetic experience.

Indian tennis player Parikshit Somani suspended over doping violation



New Delhi: Indian tennis player Parikshit Somani has been suspendedGNS News Agency, Sept 26 for four years after flunking a dope test during an ATP Challenger tournament in Astana last year.An independent tribunal of the international tennis integrity agency handed the player suspension.The 26-year-old Somani, who reached a career-high doubles ranking of 256 in July 2023,

Indian tennis player Parikshit Somani suspended over doping violation



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on July 31, 2025. Somani was handed a provisional suspension on September 23, 2025.“In February 2026, the player asserted that he had consumed food prepared by a family member, which had been contaminated by the family member’s medicine during the food production process.”This became the basis of Somani’s explanation at a hearing before an independent tribunal on 19 August 2026. Having considered expert scientific opinions presented by Somani and the ITIA, the independent tribunal concluded that the food contamination theories were ‘scientifically implausible’, ‘highly speculative’, and ‘unconvincing’,” said an ITIA release.The tribunal determined that Somani had not established the source of the prohibited substance found in his sample, and therefore no mitigating circumstances apply.Time served under provisional suspension is credited against the sanction. As such, Somani’s suspension will end on September 22, 2029.While suspended, Somani is not allowed to play in, coach at, or attend any events organised or sanctioned by World Tennis, WTA, ATP, the Grand Slams, or any national association.

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Hyderabad sailor Anikait wins Open Skiff U-17 title at Fotna Cup

GNS News Agency, Sept 26

Hyderabad: Teenager Anikait from Hyderabad, grandson of legendary sailor C S Pradipak, continued his family’s rich sailing legacy by making a mark at the Fotna Cup 2026, winning the Open Skiff Under-17 category at the Royal Madras Yacht Club after a closely fought championship. The regatta saw around 80 sailors from the Armed Forces and the civilian sailing community competing across six classes of boats, including multicrew yachts — J80, Omega and Enterprise — and single-hander classes — Open Skiff, Olympic class ILCA and Optimist.“Anikait took an early lead by winning all three races on Day 1. On Day 2, in high winds and strong conditions, his sail tore in Race 1 and he was forced to retire. Showing great composure, he bounced back in the remaining races to win the title by two points overall,” his proud mother Meghana Pradipak said.

“The win is special as Anikait represents the third generation of sailors in his family, continuing a proud sailing legacy. His grandfather, C S Pradipak, an Arjuna Awardee, was an Asian Games and Commonwealth Games medalist who put Indian sailing on the world map,” said Meghana, herself a two-time national champion and an Asia-Pacific bronze medallist. Anikait’s uncle, Arjun Pradipak, is a Commodore and coaches many young sailors at the Secunderabad Sailing Club. Many of them have won na-



tional and international regattas.“Anikait, a student of Keystone Academy, trains at the Secunderabad Sailing Club and balances studies with sailing. He now plans to compete in as many championships and training camps as possible, both in India and abroad, to improve his performance internationally,” Meghana told Telangana Today.“One of the biggest challenges faced by young sailors is the high costs associated with the sport, such as chartering sailboats, coaching fees, sailing equipment, travel and accommodation. Support for these young sailors at this stage would help them access the best facilities and represent India at the highest level,” Meghana said.

UFL open to players caught in NFL, college limbo



- The United Football League is willing to provide a landing spot for players whose eligibility disputes have left them unable to play in either college football or the NFL.The UFL told Front Office Sports on Wednesday ?that former Ole Miss players Dae’Quan Wright and Zxavian Harris would be eligible to participate in its 2027 season, which begins in April.

The Reuters Inside Track newsletter is your essential guide to global sports news. Sign up here.Both players went undrafted this spring and spent time with NFL teams before trying to return to college and join LSU. Their unusual path ultimately left them without a place to play this fall.

“We’re a pro league, right?” UFL co-owner Mike Repole told Front Office Sports. “We want those college players that can’t make the NFL (to) come to the United Football League.”Wright, a tight end, was waived by the Cleveland Browns during the preseason after originally signing with the Philadelphia Eagles. Harris, a defensive tackle, was waived by the New Orleans Saints in August.The pair later became part of a Louisiana lawsuit challenging college eligibility rules and received court protection that could have allowed them to play. LSU nevertheless kept both off its roster amid a separate legal battle with the Southeastern Conference over restrictions on former professional players returning to college.The NFL then informed its teams that Wright and Harris could not visit. work out ?for or sign

What happened was not because of me: Roshibina on selection controversy before Asiad



Nagoya: Elated that she could justify her controversy-mired inclusion with a second successive Asian Games silver, Indian wushu player Roshibina Devi refused to dwell on the accusations of unfair selection levelled by injured omitted player Divyanshi Choudhary, asserting that “what happened was not because of me”.The 25-year-old Roshibina scored a hat-rick of medals at the continental showpiece as she had won a bronze in the 2018 edition. This time, her silver came following a 0-2 defeat to Zhang Xiaoyu of China in the women’s 60kg final here on Thursday.“What happened was not because of me. It was the federation’s decision. Whatever decision the federation (Wushu Association of India) took, I think it was a good decision,” Roshibina said after the final bout.“I will ignore it (the accusation). I just want to focus on my goal,” said the player from Manipur.“It’s all right if somebody wants to be negative to me. In every situation you have to be strong and ignore the negative environment and just trust yourself and believe in yourself and bring your best energy.”Divyanshi, who had beaten Roshibina in the Asian Games trials in Srinagar in June, was dropped from the squad after an ACL injury. She accused the federation of playing favourites and alleged that Roshibina had been working against her to get into the Asian Games

Gambhir says Samson’s England omission was toughest T20 coaching call



New Delhi: India head coach Gautam Gambhir has revealed that leaving out Sanju Samson for teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi during the T20I series in England left him awake all night, adding that it was the toughest decision he had to make in his coaching tenure in the shortest format.

India had to drop Samson, the Player of the Tournament in this year’s T20 World Cup triumph, after the first T20I of the five-match series in England in July, which the visitors lost. He was replaced by Sooryavanshi, who made his T20I debut in Manchester. Samson returned to the playing XI at the expense of Sooryavanshi in the 3-0 series win over Afghanistan, hitting consecutive fifties.“In two years of my journey, that was the only night I could not sleep, and I told this to Sanju because I knew that it was probably the toughest decision in my coaching tenure in the T20 format because someone who was Player of the Tournament, and then you have to leave him out after three or four games. And the reason was probably that Vaibhav was in that kind of form as well, and we had to win the series.

“Because ultimately you are there and, when you are playing for India or when you are coaching India, you want to win each and every series possible. I had a very, very honest conversation with him and I told him that that is one of the reasons why, because Vaibhav was in that kind of form, and we needed someone to score runs at the top. We needed that little bit of a platform at the top as well. And he was fine with it. And that’s a conversation that Sanju and I had, and he took it in good spirits,” said Gambhir to JioStar ahead of the start of India’s home season comprising three ODIs and five T20Is against the West Indies.At the same time, Gambhir clarified that young players like Sooryavanshi must bide their time to get into the playing XI.“I know it is (tough). But then, I made him understand that I know you’re in good form, but sometimes players who have done well for a long time will have to wait for their opportunity.

“There’s one more thing — social media or outside noise doesn’t decide the playing XI. The playing XI is decided by who, in that dressing room, the coach and captain

Sehrawat’s record caps another India goalfest vs Thailand | Hockey

The Indian women’s hockey team has been growing in confidence since June. They won the Nations Cup to earn promotion to the top-flight FIH Pro League, then they finished an impressive fifth at the World Cup last month.

Their campaign at the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya started with comprehensive wins over minnows Uzbekistan (19-0) and Indonesia (13-1). On Wednesday, at the Gifu Prefectorial Green Stadium, another goalfest was expected of them. And they delivered, beating Thailand 20-1.

India knows though, that these results are coming against teams well below their standard, and there are bigger challenges ahead as they head to the latter stages of the tournament. And so they celebrated each goal with a smile and a few high-fives.Then came that goal by Deepika Sehrawat towards the end. It was her ninth of the day, and it helped her break her own record of scoring the most goals by an individual player in a women’s hockey match at the Asian Games.Teammates rushed towards her to offer a hug in celebration for a personal milestone.But the bigger picture still remains unchanged.

The team may be in good form, but the target at the Asian Games is to win the country’s first gold medal in the women’s hockey tournament since the event was introduced to the Asiad roster in 1982. And with that gold comes the coveted quota for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.Matches against minnow teams may have come

team.Divyanshi had also alleged that she was being harassed “because Roshibina wanted to go”.

Responding to the charge, the Wushu Association of India (WAI) produced her MRI report that revealed a partial high-grade ACL tear and justified replacing Divyanshi with Roshibina.Roshibina said she got to know about her inclusion in the Asian Games team only a few days before the squad’s departure and she could have done better if there was more time in hand to prepare.“There was a lot of disturbance when I came here for the Asian Games. I did not get much time to prepare. If I had more time, I would have done better,” she said.

“But I’m very happy with the silver, even though I did not get what I really wanted (gold). I’m happier for this silver than I was after Hangzhou (Asian Games) in 2023. That was a difficult time for me (as ethnic violence was happening at that time). Now I am stronger.”Asked to elaborate on what was disturbing her, she said, “I was not in the team initially (after losing in the trial). That was it.”She said Indian wushu players will need to work on their mental fortitude to be able to beat the Chinese players who have been dominating the sport.“We have to improve our mentality. We have a two-time world (junior) champion Aryan. He has already defeated the Chinese. The juniors think that there is pressure. We (seniors) will show them that we can beat the Chinese.”The juniors will feel that we can do it. There are a lot of good players in wushu. I am sure that they will do better.”Roshibina’s right knee was taped during the fight and she also took a hit on her nose.“It is a minor thing (taped) from the semifinal bout. And, I don’t know when it was hit. I do not know what pain is. I forget all the pain during fights,” she said.Asked how important the silver medal is for her, Roshibina said, “This is my third Asian Games medal. All wushu players hope that they will also get a medal. They want to win a medal like me.”I want to inspire all the players. I want to be like them. I will do my best in the upcoming Games.”

feel can win us the match, what the best playing XI is, and who have done well for such a long time. Because if Vaibhav plays today, then it’s going to be a tough conversation between me and whoever we leave out, whether it’s Abhishek or Sanju.“So we can’t suddenly ignore a combination that has created such an impact over the last one and a half to two years, that after three or four failures we drop them and play a young player who is very talented and is also in very good form.”So sometimes you will have to wait for your opportunity, and we still want to create that security in that dressing room. Because it is very easy for me to take popular decisions, but it is probably the toughest thing for me to take the right decisions, and we’ve taken the right decision of continuing with Sanju and Abhishek,” he explained.Gambhir further praised T20I skipper Shreyas Iyer for his selflessness as a leader. The duo worked closely as captain and mentor during the successful IPL 2024 campaign for Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR).

“Look, my first experience with Shreyas was when I actually went to KKR in 2024. Obviously, he was captaining there and the best thing I liked about Shreyas was that he was actually, at times, willing to leave his position as well at No. 4.“He was so flexible that he was okay if someone went ahead of him, and it happens very rarely that a captain, who is probably your main batter as well, sacrifices his position for the team’s cause, whether for someone else for impact or from a left-hand-right-hand combination point of view. He is willing to sacrifice his position.“That is when I realised that the first and foremost quality of a good leader — I’m not going to talk about captaincy — is how selfless you are, and Shreyas has that quality. That probably was the massive tick that Shreyas can carry for the rest of his journey as a captain.“Because you can be hardworking, you can be disciplined, you can be fit, you can be the No. 1 batter. But if you are not selfless, then all those other things stand for nothing. But Shreyas, I think he’s got all the other things, and on top of that, he’s got that selflessness as well,” he added.Gambhir signed off by asserting that short-term stumbles should not trigger knee-jerk reactions in India’s T20I set-up.

“For two years, imagine, you imagine we won the World Cup — which team in the history of sport has gone undefeated from one World Cup to the other and gone on to win the World Cup?”It didn’t take these guys 17 years to win the second World Cup. It took these guys only 17 months to win the third World Cup. Suddenly, one bad series or three bad games here and there does not make them a bad player or does not make us a bad side. So it was very important for us to have that continuity.“Watch the three-match ODI series of the West Indies tour of India from September 27 to October 3, 2 pm onwards, live on JioHotstar and Star Sports Network.

early for India, yet they still need to be won. And once again, the Indian team got off to a flying start with Sehrawat scoring in the second minute through a penalty corner.The team’s designated drag-flicker, in fact, scored each of her nine goals through penalty corners.There was no keeping away Navneet Kaur from scoring though. The bonafide goalscorer scored four goals — one in each quarter — while Rutuja Pisal also picked up a hat-trick with two first quarter goals and her last coming in the 47th minute.Lalremisiami, Sakshi Rana, captain Salima Tete, veteran Neha Goyal chipped in with goals as Thailand struggled to string together any passes to threaten the Indian goal.In fact, the Indians did not face any circle entries in their own half throughout the first half.

In the 57th minute though, there was a major celebration on the pitch. A rookie error in defence saw a wayward pass being mistrapped by an unchallenged Lalthanluangi, with the ball striking her foot and giving Thailand its only penalty corner of the match.Supansa Samanso slammed a drag-flick hard towards goal, and a deflection off the Indian stick saw the ball hit the back of the net.Thailand trailed by 19 goals at the time, but there was a volley of celebration from the players and coaching staff.Moments later, the Indians celebrated Sehrawat’s Asian Games record to bring to an end a comfortable outing.India now tops Pool B with three wins in as many matches, having scored 56 goals and conceding two.

: Nani stands out in Srikanth Odela’s film that relies on tired tropes



The Paradise movie review and ratings: Before The Paradise, director Srikanth Odela and actor Nani came together in Dasara, and there was a reason that it worked: no one saw it coming. A debut director, a promising star in an unfamiliar avatar, a story set in the coal mines of Singareni, and a raw appeal made Srikanth Odela the most exciting new director in Telugu cinema, and got Nani the label of a mass hero. The film’s success made them trustworthy and bankable names. But The Paradise is what happens when that bankability meets a budget that’s five times bigger, multi-fold expectations, and a screenplay that has nothing new to say. But the story at the centre of all this ambition is a template: an oppressed community, a tyrannical landlord, a reluctant hero who rises, a rebellion that ends in blood, told in a manner so familiar that you can predict the next scene before it arrives.

The Paradise is set in 1980s India and revolves around the Savaari, a marginalised tribe that continues to live without legal identity or citizenship even after independence. They exist in the shadow of Shikanja Malik, played by Mohan Babu, a ruthless feudal monarch who treats the community as his property. The Savaari have no documents, no rights, no voice and no means of escape. In this world, we meet Jadal, played by Nani. As Jadal grows up, he becomes the reluctant figure around whom the community’s fight for identity and recognition begins to coalesce. The story follows his transformation: from a man surviving within the system to a man willing to burn the system down.

Nani is the reason to watch The Paradise, and he knows it. The physical transformation is significant. The braids, the beard, the leaner body, the changed gait – all of it communicates a character who has been shaped by his environment. He handles the action sequences with a conviction that suggests genuine training and physical commitment. The problem is not Nani, it is that the film around him does not rise to the level of his effort.

Mohan Babu, as the feudal antagonist Shikanja Malik, is criminally underused. He has the presence and the gravitas for a role like this, but the screenplay gives him very little to work with beyond establishing menace in his introduction and then disappearing for long stretches. For a film that positions the Jadal-Shikanja conflict as its spine, the villain gets surprisingly little screen time and even less character development. Raghav Juyal, making his Telugu debut as Vikram Malik, is similarly wasted. His character has no arc, no complexity and no moments that justify the casting of an actor with his physicality and screen presence. Sampoorish Babu, who could have provided much-needed relief, is given nothing to do.

The problem of the film, rather, the problem of Srikanth Odela is that he cannot write good female characters around the story. Kayadu Lohar tries, but the role is severely underwritten. Sonali Kulkarni starts strong as Jadal’s mother but fades as the film progresses. The production values are outstanding. Avinash Kolla’s production design creates a

world that feels oppressive and authentic. The sets, the costumes, the landscape – all of it is detailed and convincing. You believe the world that’s created on screen. Cinematography by CH Sai is solid, with the light sequences and landscape shots being particular highlights. The film looks expensive and grand, which makes the screenplay’s shortcomings even more frustrating. When the frame is this good, the story needs to match it. Nani in a still from the film, Paradise. Nani in a still from the film Paradise. Anirudh Ravichander’s songs work but his background score struggles to elevate the material. It is probably the weakest compositions and work in Anirudh’s discography.

The sound mixing is a notable problem. Dialogues are inaudible in several scenes, particularly in the more chaotic action sequences. The transitions between scenes and chapters are abrupt, cutting away before emotional beats have landed. Navin Nooli’s editing is devilishly uneven. The pacing in the second half is particularly loose, with scenes that repeat information and emotional notes that have already been established. The action choreography by Ram-Lakshman, Real Satish and Maibam Nabakanta is the film’s most consistent technical achievement. The fight sequences are designed with variety and shot with impact. They are the portions of the film that deliver on the promise of the teasers and glimpses.

Why The Paradise does not work The Paradise’s problem is its screenplay, and the problem with the screenplay is that it has nothing new to say about a subject that Indian cinema has been telling stories about for decades – oppressed community, a tyrannical landlord and a reluctant hero aspiring for rebellion and blood. This is the skeleton of a hundred Telugu, Tamil and Hindi films. For this template to work in 2026, the filmmaker needs to bring either a fresh perspective, exceptional writing, a unique structural device or character work deep enough to make the familiar feel personal. Odela brings none of these. The chapter-wise narration is a structural choice, not a creative one, because the chapters are not distinct enough to justify the format. The characters beyond Jadal are stereotypes, not people. The references to Telangana political history, while earning whistles in specific theatres, do not add depth to the story. And the relentless violence, which should be the film’s emotional hammer, becomes numbing because it is not connected to character moments that make you care about who is being hurt.

After Dasara, the question was whether Srikanth Odela could scale up without losing the rawness and specificity that made his debut work. The answer, based on The Paradise, is: not yet. The scale is there. The rawness has been replaced by spectacle. And the specificity has been drowned in a template.

The Paradise is a film that reads like a first draft. Nani’s physical commitment and sincere performance, the first half’s action set pieces, Anirudh’s songs and the production design prevent it from being a disaster. But the repetitive screenplay, the underused supporting cast, the flat second half, the anticlimactic climax and the poorly written heroine track leave the film well short of what Dasara promised. Odela’s second film would be. The expectations were massive. They were also justified, given what Odela achieved with his debut. But The Paradise does not meet them. With mindless violence and blood, the movie just doesn’t give anything to hold onto. Nani deserved a better screenplay. Mohan Babu deserved more screen time. The Savaari community deserved a story that treated their struggle as more than a backdrop for action sequences. And Srikanth Odela, who showed with Dasara that he could tell stories nobody else in Telugu cinema was telling, owed his audience a film that did not feel like every other film they have already seen. The action will get you through the door. The template will make you wonder why you walked in.

Parineeti Chopra defends Katrina, calls out trolls shaming new moms



After Katrina Kaif was trolled for her recent appearance at the Ambani’s Ganesh Chaturthi celebration, many Bollywood celebrities rallied in her support. Now Parineeti Chopra, who also welcomed her baby boy in October 2025, has said that people commenting on new mothers’ bodies are “completely illiterate.”

Parineeti welcomed her baby boy Neer just a few months ago and in a recent chat with Zoom, she questioned why physical changes associated with pregnancy and childbirth are being spoken about negatively. The actress said, “So when you look at a woman, you’re like, ‘Oh my God, did you have a baby?’ And she’s like, ‘Yeah, look at my stretch marks. I just had a baby.’ I mean, and I’m like, ‘Wow, congrats. How is your baby?’ Absolutely. Right? How has that turned negative? Who the hell are you to tell a postpartum woman, ‘Abhi tumko 6 mahina ho gaya baby, abhi tum wapas aa jao (Now it has been 6 months, now you get back to normal)’?” Talking about celebrating her stretch marks, Parineeti said, “I look at my stretch marks like, ‘Oh my God, you know why I have the stretch marks? I made a baby.’ I find it so beautiful. When did that stretch mark, or any change in your body, become negative? Please live your life and just ignore these uneducated people.”

Earlier this week, talking to IANS, Parineeti Chopra also shared her views on the trolling that Katrina Kaif recently faced. She said, “I don’t deal with it because I don’t even look at it. If it happens to me, mostly I’m not aware of it because I don’t spend that much time on social media. And even if I’m aware of it, it makes no difference to me. I’m just too true to my life, my time, my family, my friends,

and my own life. I really couldn’t be bothered about unknown people talking about me. It has nothing to do with me. I have no time for this nonsense.” She further added, “I find it absolutely bizarre that, especially postpartum women, are even discussed. I don’t understand why. I just don’t get it. I genuinely don’t get it. If a woman has produced a baby and there’s evidence of that on her body, why is that negative? Isn’t that beautiful evidence? Producing a baby within nine months required these changes to happen in your body. Why are they discussed? I’d look at a postpartum woman and say, ‘Oh my god! You produced a baby? That’s beautiful. How’s the baby?’ I see it like that. How can you say something negative about something as stupid as weight? Oh lord! Clearly, they don’t have lives, education, or basic human decency. I don’t have time for all this, and no woman should waste a single breath of hers to even listen to them.”

Backing Katrina Kaif, Salman Khan had also said on Bigg Boss 20 Weekend Ka Vaar, “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.” Parineeti Chopra and Raghav Chadha welcomed their first son, Neer, in October 2025. Katrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal welcomed their son Vihaan in November 2025. On the work front, Parineeti Chopra will be seen in Shaque: Trust No One; the web series will be released on Netflix India on September 24.

Nag Ashwin talks about ‘Kalki 2898 AD’ winning National Award win

Mumbai: Filmmaker Nag Ashwin said winning two National Awards for his 2024 film “Kalki 2898 AD” was particularly gratifying as the film managed to balance its ambitious scale with an emotional connection with mainstream audiences.

The Nag Ashwin directorial was feted with two honours Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment and Best Special Effects, setting a benchmark for visual-effects-heavy Indian cinema.

Asked if the honour made him reflect on whether the film’s greatest achievement was creating a technically ambitious world or making that world emotionally accessible to a mainstream audience? Nag Ashwin told

Richa Chadha feels 2026 is the year of Ali Fazal: ‘He lived in a shanty, had just a bicycle’



A couple of years after becoming a mother to her and husband Ali Fazal’s daughter Zuneyra Ida Fazal, Richa Chadha is taking it slow. She’s shooting for a Netflix India show, and is all set to launch her travel show Musafiri on her new YouTube channel this Friday on September 25. The weekly series is both written and narrated by Richa, the first season of which explores Mumbai in all its rich cultural, architectural, and anthropological glory. The series starts with a confession that she felt the need to make it after motherhood changed her forever.

While she’s always been vocal against environmental and sociopolitical excesses, she’s found another reason to double down on that. “Questioning the world also comes from motherhood. That’s why people ask, ‘What will we leave behind for our children?’ This is a big reason for me to do the show. I’ve had this research document for 12 years, but I finally acted on it after becoming a mom,” Richa tells SCREEN in an exclusive interview. The first two episodes of the show explore gems hiding in plain sight — an Armenian church in Kala Ghoda and Gilbert Hill in Andheri, a 66 million years old rock formed by cooling molten lava from a volcanic eruption.

Richa admits that while content creators like Archana Puran Singh and Farah Khan now make more money a year through YouTube than they do from their respective film careers, she doesn’t have a revenue model for her travel show yet. In fact, Phull Stop, her new YouTube channel on which Musafiri will stream, has just been started from scratch. “I feel I make money, yaar. I’m not chasing money otherwise I’d do a platform deal before putting it out. But instead, I have a new channel with no subscribers that I’m launching it with. But I feel people would take to it because there’s a lot of curiosity around India,” argues Richa. While she has no sponsors onboard yet, she wouldn’t mind seamless brand integrations because her travel show does have the scope for that. “The fourth episode is about how Mumbai got rich, and it’s all about the big business families. It’ll mention the Wadias and the Tatas. So, if it’s a seamless integration, I’d be up for it,” says the actor. More seasons of the show will explore other cities of India and the world. “As of now, it’s just Mumbai. Because we don’t have the money for boarding and lodging of my crew in other cities,” she adds, channeling her signature candid humour.

Richa becoming a mother coincided with her and Ali starting a production house, Pushing Button Studios, which has also bankrolled Musafiri. The banner, which also produced Shuchi Talati’s 2024 critically acclaimed coming-of-age film Girls Will Be Girls, is still in a nascent stage. Richa admits balancing both her babies — her daughter and her production house — is no cakewalk. “It’s very difficult. I cry out of frustration. I’ve come back from something so transformative, and now have to multitask like a pro. “This is just that phase of my life where I have to raise a child, run a

production company, focus on my acting career, and get back to my own health,” she says.

Richa recalls obsessively raising her first baby — her production house — till moments before she delivered her second. “I was unable to relax even on an epidural because I realized, ‘Oh my god, this email has grammatical errors!’ So, I snuck my phone into my hospital gown, went to the washroom, and started to type out while taking a leak. Only then I went for my delivery. I felt like I was just buzzing for a few months after that, and then my health forced me to take rest. But this is also the modern surroundings that you almost feel guilty taking a break for yourself. It’s capitalism,” asserts Richa. What helped Richa was a realization that probably every mother goes through after giving birth — that their life is not their alone anymore. “In the very first few days after giving birth, I realized as far as this relationship is concerned, the ‘selfish’ part of my personality will just have to melt away. I’m just a service provider for this being, who’ll need to be fed every few hours. Whether I’ve had sleep, rest or food, it doesn’t matter. When that dawns on women, that there are no off days on this job, it’s a big shift to realize that this one thing is insular and everything will cater to this being now,” confesses the actor.

But taking a backseat from her primary occupation of acting hasn’t stopped Richa from championing Ali, who’s arguably had his career-best year with three critically acclaimed and commercially successful consecutive projects — Prosit Roy’s Prime Video India crime show Raakh, Shakun Batra’s segment in Netflix India’s romantic anthology Lust Stories 3, and most crucially, Gurmeet Singh’s crime thriller Mirzapur: The Movie, which has amassed over Rs 220 crore at the domestic box office so far. “What a year he’s having! How can I not champion him?,” says an elated Richa.

With a slower return to acting, and her partner’s career flourishing, is her state of mind not more complex than just harbouring boundless pride? “Of course, it’s more complex than just being supportive, but not this year. We’ve been together for a long time. We’ve been married for six years. When I see the culmination of all the hard work he’s done over the years in 2026, there’s no complexity. There’s just pure happiness. I’ve seen him at the time when he lived in a shanty and owned a bicycle. He’s not only my partner, but also my friend. To see him overcome everything is just a very different feeling. I feel like maine iss din ke liye isko paal pos ke bada kiya hai,” says Richa.

Richa hails it as a collective win because not just Ali, but also she has been at the receiving end of naysaying towards him. “When I announced my relationship, two members from the film industry called me and said, ‘Iss ladke ka kuchh nahi hoga’. From everyone writing him off to almost making fun of him when his film with Judi Dench came out, to see him get both critical love and box office success, I’m very happy,” she adds, referring to Stephen Frears’ 2017 Hollywood period film Victoria & Abdul. “I can tell you that two people had said about that film, ‘Isko kaise mil gaya?’ To hold your own in front of Judi Dench is very hard,” argues Richa. Richa, who was last seen in Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s 2024 period show Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar, says she’s finished shooting for another Netflix India series. “It was very difficult. The first day of shooting was in December or January. I was very energetic in the morning, but after lunch hours, I almost slept off in my chair. I had to pop a lot of multivitamins to get back. Physically, it was very challenging,” admits the actor, but adds that it helped she could do it at her own pace. “They were also aware I’m a new mom, so they made me work for eight hours instead of 10. They kept the shooting close to my place, so I could bring my daughter along. I wanted the first project to be very comfortable because my body couldn’t take it otherwise,” she adds.

‘Had no idea there’s so much poverty in India’: Amitabh Bachchan said after election win



gleaned, when the Gandhi family tried to pin the Bofors bribe-taking on the Bachchans, he was very upset because his father was very upset. He couldn’t look himself in the mirror anymore. He could’ve won again but he just decided it’s not for him,” claimed Tavleen, referring to the infamous Bofors scandal in the 1980s.

Swedish arms manufacturer AB Bofors allegedly paid bribes worth Rs 64 crore to top Indian politicians in order to secure the bid to supply more than 400 units of 155 mm FH-77B field howitzers for the Indian Army. Those implicated in the scandal included then-PM Rajiv Gandhi and his family friend and Italian businessman Ottavio Quattrocchi among others. “I think that was the real reason for the falling out because Rajiv didn’t defend him and didn’t try to disabuse the rumours because he was worried about his wife’s family, and Quattrocchi getting the blame,” claimed the reporter. Quattrocchi was then a close family friend of Rajiv’s wife Sonia Gandhi, who was born in Italy. While Amitabh quit politics in the late 1980s, even referring to it as a “cesspool”, his name was cleared in the Bofors scandal only over 20 years later in 2012, when the Swedish chief investigator stated that the allegations against Amitabh and his family were planted by Indian investigators. Amitabh’s wife and fellow veteran actor Jaya Bachchan continues to serve as a Rajya Sabha MP.

Amitabh Bachchan recalls simple wedding with Jaya

Mumbai: Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan recently opened up about his marriage to actress-politician Jaya Bachchan during an episode of Kaun Banega Crorepati 18. He revealed that the couple’s decision to tie the knot was made rather spontaneously, without either of them going through an elaborate process of seeking approval from their families. The conversation began when contestant Aheli Roy from Kolkata asked how he had managed to convince his mother-in-law and win over Jaya’s family before their marriage. Responding to her question, Amitabh recalled that he and Jaya simply decided one day that they should get married. “Humne unko kuch nahi kaha. Humne bas Jaya ji ko ek din bola ki shaadi kar leni chahiye. Toh unhone kaha, haan kar leni chahiye aur bas tay ho gaya. Humne kisi se bhi baat nahi ki. Shaadi tay hone ke baad Jaya ji gayi, apne mata-pita ko bataya hoga. Humein yeh bhi maloom nahi unhone kya bola hoga, lekin woh log maan gaye aur aa gaye.