

Brain-dead youth's organs save four lives in Telangana

Hyderabad: Relatives of a 23-year-old man, Gopagani Madhu, an accountant at a private hospital and a resident of Valigonda, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, who was declared brain dead, donated his organs to patients in need under the Jeevandan organ donation initiative. On October 22, Madhu met with an accident while travelling on his two-wheeler at Valigonda and was shifted to a private hospital there before being moved to Hyderabad for advanced treatment. After emergency treatment, Madhu was declared brain dead on October 27. His father Gopagani Venkatesham made the heartfelt decision to donate his son's kidneys, liver and lungs and help four patients in need. Jeevandan Telangana has extended its gratitude to the family of Gopagani Madhu, whose noble decision has saved lives.

TGPSC notifies recruitment for 103 posts of planning, statistical officers

Hyderabad: Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC) on Wednesday issued a notification for recruitment to 103 posts of Mandal Planning and Statistical Officers /Assistant Statistical Officers in the Directorate of Economics and Statistics.

Applications have been invited online from qualified applicants through a prescribed online application form to be made available on Commission's website [<https://www.tgpsec.gov.in>] from October 30 to November 27.

For a detailed notification, qualifications and other required information, candidates can visit the TGPSC website.

JIH Hyderabad to host three-day exhibition on harmony, countering hate from Oct 30

Hyderabad: Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH), Hyderabad, will organise a three-day public exhibition and seminar titled "Beyond The Divide – Countering Hate. Building Harmony" at the Exhibition Grounds, Nampally, from October 30 to November 1.

Dr. Mubashir Ahmed, City President of JIH Hyderabad, said the event aims to promote social harmony and counter misinformation, stereotypes, prejudice and polarization through dialogue, factual understanding and mutual respect.

Telangana submitted report on drought situation to Centre: Dy CM



Hyderabad, Oct 28 (IANS) Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said on Wednesday that a report on the drought situation in the state had already been submitted to the Centre and, if necessary,

the government would take an all-party delegation to Delhi to meet Union Ministers for the assistance required by the state.

He stated that the state government was taking all necessary precautionary measures to tackle the rainfall deficit and drought-like conditions arising from the impact of El Nino.

He was speaking at an all-party meeting called by the government to discuss measures to tackle the impact of El Nino and the prevailing rainfall deficit.

Cabinet Sub-Committee members and state ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Tummala Nageswara Rao, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Danasari Seethakka and Vakiti Srihari attended the meeting, along with Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju and nodal officer Ramakrishna Rao.

Representatives from various political parties participated in the meeting and offered suggestions on mea-

sures to support farmers and solutions to drinking water and irrigation problems.

Those present included Anjan Kumar Yadav and Farmers' Commission Chairman Kodanda Reddy from the Congress; Vinod Kumar, L. Ramana and Singireddy Niranjan Reddy from the BRS; BJP Legislature Party Leader Aleti Maheshwar Reddy and MLC Komurayya; AIMIM president and MP Asaduddin Owaisi and Assembly Floor Leader Akbaruddin Owaisi; CPI National Secretary Palla Venkata Reddy and State Secretary Koonamneni Sambasiva Rao and CPM State Secretary John Wesley.

The Deputy Chief Minister stated that the government would move forward with a coordinated action plan, taking into consideration suggestions from all political parties to effectively address the challenges posed by El Nino.

He appealed to all political parties to cooperate with the government in the larger public interest, setting aside political criticism while dealing with a potential crisis.

He said the meeting had been convened by inviting all political parties in the true spirit of democracy. The suggestions put forward by the leaders had been recorded, and the government would make every possible effort to incorporate feasible recommendations into its action plan.

He recalled that the impact of El Nino had been discussed earlier in the Legislative Assembly and that the government had organised various meetings and seminars and consulted scientists and experts. A committee had also been constituted to study the issue, while steps were being taken to raise public awareness. He said the government was assessing the conditions likely to arise in the coming months and preparing in advance to address the challenges. Bhatti Vikramarka pointed out that if the rainfall deficit were confined to Telangana alone, there might have been a possibility of reservoirs receiving water from neighbouring states. However, rainfall deficits in neighbouring states and other parts of the country were a matter of concern.

Congress accuses Centre of blocking trains for Nov 1 Delhi rally

New Delhi, Oct 28 (IANS) AICC General Secretary KC Venugopal on Wednesday alleged that the Modi-Shah government had become "nervous" and was attempting to prevent people from across the country from reaching Delhi for the INDIA Bloc's November 1 'Delhi Chalo' march and mega rally.

In a post on X, Venugopal claimed that Indian Railways had denied trains for Congress MPs, MLAs and karyakartas from Telangana despite repeated requests.

He said the party's leaders had begun a protest at the South Central Railway General Manager's office against the alleged obstruction.

"Modi-Shah are so nervous, they have started blocking people from all over India who have begun moving to Delhi for the November 1st Delhi Chalo March and Mega Rally," Venugopal wrote.

He accused the authorities of using such tactics to suppress the public upsurge against what the opposition terms "Vote Chori" and demanded that adequate trains be arranged to meet the growing demand ahead

of the November 1 programme.

The Congress leader said the party had made multiple requests for special trains from Telangana, but the Railways had delayed and ultimately refused the arrangements. Party leaders and workers staged a demonstration at the South Central Railway headquarters in Hyderabad to press their demand.

The INDIA Bloc has announced a major mobilisation in Delhi on November 1, including a large rally at Ramleela Maidan, as part of its campaign against alleged electoral irregularities and the functioning of the Election Commission.

Opposition parties have been urging supporters from different states to converge in the national capital for the programme.

Venugopal's statement reflects the opposition's charge that the Centre is trying to restrict participation in the rally by creating logistical hurdles.

The Congress maintains that the denial of trains is a deliberate attempt to suppress public expression and



weaken the mobilisation.

Railway authorities have not issued an immediate official response to the specific allegations regarding the Telangana requests.

The protest at the South Central Railway office is expected to continue until the party's demand for additional trains is addressed.

As the countdown to November 1 intensifies, the opposition is likely to step up pressure on the Railways and the Centre to ensure smooth travel arrangements for participants from various states.

Telangana transfers 12 IAS officers including Jayesh Ranjan

Hyderabad, Oct 28 (IANS) The government of Telangana on Wednesday transferred 12 senior IAS officers including Special Chief Secretary to Government, Metropolitan Area & Urban Development (HMDA Limits) Jayesh Ranjan, days after he reportedly applied for voluntary retirement.

Jayesh Ranjan, the 1992 batch IAS officer and one of the well-known bureaucrats, has been posted as Special Chief Secretary, EFS & T Department and also placed in Full Additional Charge (FAC) of the post of Director General, EPTRI vice Shailaja Ramaiyer.

Ranjan has also been relieved of FAC of the Special Chief Secretary to Government, Sports and Director, Heritage Telangana and Special Officer for Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Cyberabad Municipal Corporation and Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation.

The development came a day after Ranjan confirmed that he has initiated the process of seeking voluntary retirement nearly 11 months before his scheduled superannuation.

A Government Order was issued by Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju on Wednesday, transferring 12 top IAS officers.

Vikas Raj, IAS (1992), Special Chief Secretary to Government, Transport, Roads & Buildings Department, has been transferred and posted as Special Chief Secretary to Government, Energy Department, vice Navin Mittal.

Navin Mittal (1996) is now posted as Special Chief Secretary to Government, PR & RD, RWS & RSAD Department vice M. Dana Kishore.

The 1995 batch IAS officer A. Vani Prasad, Special Chief Secretary to Government, YAT&C Department, is placed in FAC of the posts of Special Chief Secretary to Government, Sports and Director, Heritage Telangana.

Shailaja Ramaiyer (1997) posted as Principal Secretary to Government, Revenue (Endowments) Department.

Rahul Bojja (2000), Principal Secretary to Government, Revenue (DM) Department is placed in FAC of the post of Principal Secretary to Government, Tribal Welfare Department, relieving Sabyasachi Ghosh from FAC.

According to the GO, Rahul Bojja shall continue to hold the FAC post of Principal Secretary to Government, BC Welfare Department.

Ilambarathi K. (2005) is posted as Secretary to Government, Transport, Roads & Buildings Department vice Vikas Raj. Imambarathi shall continue to hold FAC post of Secretary to Government, AH, DD&F Department.

Sarfraz Ahmed (2009), Metropolitan Commissioner, HMDA, is placed in FAC of the posts of Secretary to Government, Metropolitan Area & Urban Development (HMDA Limits) and Special Officer for Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Cyberabad Municipal Corporation and Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation vice Jayesh Ranjan.

Shruti Ojha (2013) is posted as Special Chief Secretary to Government, WCD & SC Development.

Cyclone 'Arnab': Govt advises airlines to adhere to operational guidelines, inform passengers

New Delhi, Oct 28 (IANS) As the very severe cyclonic storm 'Arnab' made a landfall, the Civil Aviation Ministry has advised airlines to adhere to operational guidelines regarding adverse weather and inform passengers on delays or cancellations and comply with applicable norms of re-booking and refunds.

The ministry organised a review meeting to assess the situation and ensure aviation safety.

Flights to and from coastal Andhra Pradesh and southern Odisha (including Bhubaneswar) are expected to be most affected.

"Hyderabad, Varanasi, Prayagraj and Gorakhpur may see knock-on delays depending on the storm's track. MoCA stressed inter agency coordination between stakeholders like AAI, DGCA, BCAS, IMD, airline and airport operators, NDRF, disaster management authorities of AP, Odisha and WB and others to ensure passenger safety," according to an official statement.

In Visakhapatnam, operations were suspended since the afternoon of October 27. While in Vijayawada and Rajahmundry, all flights were suspended after 7 pm on October 27. Delhi-Bhogapuram-Delhi service stands cancelled on October 28.



Air India reported six cancellations on Delhi-Visakhapatnam-Delhi (27 Oct) and Delhi-Vijayawada-Delhi (28 Oct). Air India Express reported 13 cancellations, mostly Visakhapatnam flights to and from Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Vijayawada, plus Varanasi-Bangkok and Bangkok-Visakhapatnam.

All IndiGo flights were suspended at Visakhapatnam, and at Vijayawada and Rajahmundry after 7 pm on October 2



Hyderabad, Oct 28 (IANS) Telangana BJP President N. Ramchander Rao on Wednesday urged Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi to stop spreading what he described as lies and false narratives about electronic voting machines (EVMs) and alleged vote theft, saying the BJP's victory in a ballot paper election had exposed the Opposition's claims.

His remarks came after a setback for the ruling Congress in Karnataka, where the JD(S) on Tuesday wrested the Bengaluru Teachers' Constituency seat in the Legislative Council from the party. National Demo-

Ballot paper victory exposes Rahul Gandhi's false narratives: Telangana BJP chief

cratic Alliance (NDA) candidate A.P. Ranganath defeated sitting Congress MLC Puttanna in the election, which was conducted through ballot papers. Speaking to IANS, Rao said, "Mr. Rahul Gandhi should, at least now, stop spreading lies and giving false narratives. The ballot paper elections have again proved that the BJP has won. Now, what does Rahul Gandhi have to say? He used to blame EVMs whenever the BJP won. Now, the BJP has won in a ballot paper election as well." He alleged that Gandhi was repeatedly making false claims about EVMs and vote theft. "Again and again, he is spreading falsehoods with regard to EVMs or vote theft. He talks about vote theft, but unfortunately, it is a theft of logic. He has no logic left," the BJP leader said.

Rao also criticised the Congress over its allegations

of voter deletions in Delhi, claiming that the party had failed to provide evidence to substantiate its charges. "Yesterday, in Delhi, they claimed that many votes had been deleted. However, they have not provided proof of which votes were deleted so far," he said. He added that voter names could be removed from electoral rolls for several reasons, including the death of voters, duplicate entries and changes in residence. Rao also pointed out that people whose names had been deleted could seek their inclusion in the electoral rolls through the prescribed process. "Again and again, Rahul Gandhi is repeating the same lies. People have now understood that vote theft and EVMs are merely excuses. The Congress has been out of power for 12 years, and out of frustration, it is trying to create anarchy," Rao alleged.



HM Amit Shah calls on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan

New Delhi, Oct 28 (IANS) Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah on Wednesday called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

The President's office shared photographs of the meeting on social media, confirming the interaction between the two leaders.

"Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation Shri Amit Shah called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan," the President of India's X handle posted this message. However, no official details regarding the agenda or the subjects discussed during the meeting were released.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Biofortification, an effective weapon to fight malnutrition

Despite rapid progress in agricultural production over the years, India continues to confront major public health challenges, including malnutrition and micronutrient deficiency, which experts call 'hidden hunger'. Though the Green Revolution of the 1960s, driven by high-yielding varieties and improved agricultural technologies, helped India move towards foodgrain self-sufficiency, the emphasis on yield often came at the cost of nutritional quality. Public awareness of the importance of micronutrients in the diet also remains inadequate. This is where biofortification can play a significant role in tackling malnutrition. Crop biofortification—the process of enhancing the nutrient content of crops at the cultivation stage—offers a self-sustaining, cost-effective, and long-term solution. It is the process of increasing the nutritional quality of food crops by enhancing their content of micronutrients such as iron, zinc, vitamin A, as well as protein through conventional plant breeding. Under industrial fortification, in which nutrients are added during processing, or supplementation, which involves providing nutrients through pills, biofortification aims at making crops naturally richer in essential nutrients. Over 60% of Indians depend on cereal-based diets. If staple foods themselves contain iron, zinc or protein, these nutrients can reach rural, low-income households through daily meals without requiring major changes in eating habits. The current NFHS (National Family Health Survey) data shows that nearly 67% of children and more than half of women in India are anaemic, alongside widespread zinc, vitamin A, and protein deficiency. Indian agricultural scientists have already developed and released over 205 biofortified varieties across 15 field crops, including rice, wheat, maize, millet, soybean, and groundnut. They need to be popularised more widely.

India ranks first globally in crop biofortification research publications. Research has also translated into substantial field-level adoption. However, limited consumer awareness, uneven seed availability, weak market linkages, and insufficient integration into nutrition programmes continue to constrain the reach of biofortified crops. Addressing these barriers requires coordinated action across agricultural research, extension, public health, and food systems. Unlike supplementation and food fortification programmes that require sustained investment, biofortified seeds can be replanted and cultivated repeatedly, making them highly cost-effective. The best way to popularise biofortified varieties is to include them in government welfare programmes such as the Public Distribution System, PM POSHAN (mid-day meals), and Anganwadi supplementary nutrition. By combining scientific crop development with institutional procurement and

targeted extension services, biofortification can transform India's agricultural output from mere tonnage into a sustainable driver of public health and nutrition security. Crop biofortification offers a sustainable, affordable, and agriculture-based solution to India's twin challenges of malnutrition and hunger. By integrating biofortified crops into farming systems, public nutrition programmes, and consumer markets, India can improve nutritional outcomes, strengthen food security, and move closer to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals related to zero hunger and good health. Success will depend on coordinated efforts involving research, seed distribution, awareness generation, policy support, and effective market development.

DMWO stresses academic standards at minority residential college

Jalaluddin Akbar calls for 100% attendance and pass percentage; inspects facilities and food quality.



Karimnagar October 28, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): District Minority Welfare Officer Jalaluddin Akbar has directed the authorities of minority residential educational institutions to ensure quality education, adequate facilities and improved academic performance among students. During a surprise inspection of the Minority Residential College on the outskirts of Magdampur village in Karimnagar mandal on Wednesday, he examined classrooms, student facilities, the quality of food served and institutional registers. Mr. Akbar interacted with students to assess the facilities available to them and elicit their views on food quality and classroom instruction. He advised them to maintain discipline and personal hygiene. Stressing the need to improve learning outcomes, he asked teachers to pay individual attention to students and work towards achieving 100% attendance and a 100% pass percentage. He said the residential institutions had been established to advance the educational prospects of minority students and equip them for a better future. He called for regular monitoring of teaching standards and student performance, besides periodic reviews of their academic progress and timely resolution of their grievances. Mr. Akbar also directed the college authorities to adopt a student-friendly teaching approach and ensure the all-round development of students.

MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Takes Special Initiative to Upgrade All PHCs in Uppal Constituency



“UPPAL, OCTOBER 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy is taking special initiative to upgrade all Primary Health Centres (PHCs) in the Uppal constituency with the objective of providing better healthcare services to the public. He is focus-

ing on improving infrastructure at existing PHCs and initiating steps for the construction of new buildings wherever necessary. “As part of this initiative, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy met Medchal District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO) Anand and brought to his attention various issues concerning the present condition of PHCs across the constituency, their upgradation, improvement of infrastructure and the construction of new buildings. “The MLA emphasized that strengthening Primary Health Centres is essential to ensure that quality healthcare services reach people more effectively. He urged the concerned officials to provide the necessary facilities at PHCs, review the condition of existing buildings and take appropriate measures to improve healthcare services for the public. “He further stated that efforts would be made to develop all PHCs in the Uppal constituency in coordination with the officials of the concerned departments. BRS leaders Gandham Nageswara Rao and Somashekar Reddy, among others, were present on the occasion.

Basic Infrastructure Must Be Provided at Indira Nagar Government School



Students' Problems Must Be Resolved Immediately: Prajavani Voluntary Organisation “RAMANTHAPUR, OCTOBER 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Representatives of the Prajavani Voluntary Organisation have urged the government to provide essential infrastructure at the Indira Nagar Mandal Parishad Primary School in Ramanthapur, under Uppal Circle. After visiting the school and inspecting the existing conditions, they highlighted the difficulties faced by students and called on the concerned authorities to resolve the issues immediately. “Speaking on the occasion, the organisation's representatives said that more than 100 students were studying at the school, from pre-primary classes to Class V. They expressed concern that the school lacked sufficient classrooms to accommodate all the students. Al-

though six classrooms were required, only two were currently available, forcing many students to sit on the floor during lessons. They also pointed out that desks and tables had not been provided to ensure comfortable seating arrangements for the children. “The representatives stated that the school required four teachers to provide quality education, but two additional teachers needed to be appointed to meet the requirement. They also expressed concern over the absence of a compound wall, which posed challenges to student safety. “Highlighting other deficiencies, they said that toilet facilities were inadequate and urged the authorities to arrange a borewell to ensure a reliable drinking water supply. They also called for proper facilities for students to eat their midday meals and wash their hands after eating. “Criticising the authorities for allegedly neglecting basic infrastructure in government schools, the organisation's representatives said that students were being forced to study under difficult conditions due to a lack of essential facilities. They questioned why the problems faced by students at the grassroots level were being ignored despite claims by the government that public schools would be developed on par with corporate educational institutions. “The representatives urged the District Educational Officer to visit the school, assess the problems firsthand and take immediate steps to provide the required infrastructure and improve the learning environment for students. “Prajavani Voluntary Organisation President Erram Srinivas, Secretary Vijay Kumar, Vice-Presidents Ravinder Rao and Bikshapathi, among others, participated in the programme.

Anti-Drug Awareness Poster Unveiled Under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan in Peddapalli



“Minister Sridhar Babu, Government Whip Vijayaramana Rao and Other Dignitaries Call for a Drug-Free Society” “Peddapalli, October 28: As part of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (Drug-Free India Campaign), an anti-drug awareness poster was unveiled in Peddapalli on Wednesday by Telangana IT Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Government Whip Vijayaramana Rao, Ramagundam MLA Makkan Singh, and Peddapalli District Collector Koya Harsha. “Speaking on the occasion, the dignitaries emphasised the importance of creating public awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and encouraging young people to stay away from narcotic substances. “They highlighted the need for collective efforts to prevent drug addiction, protect the younger generation and build a healthy, drug-free society. They also urged people to take an active

role in spreading awareness about the dangers of substance abuse. “The programme was attended by Indian Red Cross Society Peddapalli District Chairman Errabati Venkateshwar Rao, Vice-Chairman Sadula Venkateshwarlu, State Managing Committee Member Kaveti Rajagopal, District Treasurer Pampati Srikanth, Nimmanapalli Sarpanch Velpula Ramesh, Peddapalli Public Prosecutor DVS Murthy, District Committee Members Velpuri Sampath Rao and Umesh, along with several other representatives and participants. “The organisers called upon the public to actively support the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan and spread its message across communities. “Say No to Drugs Choose a Healthy Life. Protect Our Youth and Build a Drug-Free Society, they appealed, stressing that public participation and awareness are essential to eliminating drug abuse and safeguarding future generations.

CC Road Works Worth Rs. 2.50 Crore Launched in Kapra Division



UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Lays Foundation Stone “KAPRA, OCTOBER 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “As part of the ongoing development of the Uppal Assembly constituency, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy laid the foundation stone for the construction of cement concrete (CC) roads in various colonies of Kapra Division at a total estimated cost of Rs. 2.50 crore. “Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that priority was being given

to improving basic infrastructure across all divisions of the constituency. He stated that efforts were being made to provide better road facilities and ensure convenient transportation for residents. He added that road-related problems in various colonies were being addressed in a phased manner. The CC road works in Kapra Division will be undertaken in the following colonies: “Sainik Enclave: Rs. 27 lakh “Bhaskar Rao Nagar: Rs. 50 lakh “Saibaba Officers Colony: Rs. 27 lakh “Akash Joseph Colony: Rs. 46 lakh “Saipuri Colony: Rs. 50 lakh “RK Enclave: Rs. 50 lakh

The completion of these works is expected to improve road connectivity, facilitate smoother transportation and address long-standing road-related problems in the respective colonies. Bandari Lakshma Reddy reiterated his commitment to identifying public needs, allocating funds for development works and ensuring the overall development of the Uppal constituency across all sectors. “BRS party leader Bairi Naveen Goud, other party leaders, officials, party workers, representatives of colony welfare associations and local residents participated in the programme.

India Must Advance in Global Competition Through Advanced Manufacturing



“Hyderabad, October 28 (Indian Chronicle) : Industry leaders have called for transforming India's manufacturing sector into a globally competitive ecosystem by accelerating the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics and automation, strengthening domestic value addition, empowering MSMEs and promoting skill development. They were speaking at the National Conference on Advanced Manufacturing, organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The conference highlighted the need for India to embrace advanced technologies, strengthen domestic manufacturing capabilities and equip its workforce with future-ready skills to compete effectively in the global market. The event was attended by Naveen Mittal, IAS, Special Chief Secretary to the Telangana Energy Department; Rahul Garg, Chairman of the CII Advanced Manufacturing Special Task Force and Founder and CEO of Moglix; Dr. B.V.R. Mohan Reddy, Founder and Chairman of Cyient; Anand Ramamoorthy, Managing Director of Micron India; M. Gautam Reddy, Chairman of CII Telangana; Dileep Sahni, Managing Director of Rockwell Automation India; and Gaurav Maheshwari, Vice-Chairman of CII Telangana.

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Whirlpool Launches Advanced AI-Powered Refrigerators



“Hyderabad, October 28 (Indian Chronicle) : Whirlpool India has introduced India's first 6th Sense AI-powered freshness detection technology in its Luxurium four-door refrigerators to alert consumers before fruits and vegetables become overripe. Whirlpool India Marketing Vice President Nakul Tiwari announced the launch in a statement released in the city on Wednesday. He said the technology uses an iFresh sensor to monitor ethylene gas levels every 10 seconds and detect changes in the freshness of stored produce. The AI-powered system also adjusts alerts based on consumers' usage patterns. The innovation aims to help households reduce food waste and manage fresh produce more efficiently, he added.

BRS accuses Congress of restricting Musi public hearing

Hyderabad: The BRS on Wednesday accused the Congress government of turning the public hearing on the Musi Riverfront Development Project into a private hearing. The party said its representatives were placed under house arrest and prevented from participating, while the government failed to address concerns over displacement, rehabilitation and alleged irregularities.

Ensure Robust Preparations for Census 2027 in the District

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Collector Anurag Jayanti"



"(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau – Indian Chronicle – October 28): Bharati Holikeri, Director of Census Operations for Telangana, has instructed officials to make comprehensive and meticulous arrangements for the conduct of Census 2027 in the district. "A review meeting regarding the execution of Census 2027 was held on Wednesday, attended by the Director of Census Operations for Telangana, Bharati Holikeri, and District Collector Anurag Jayanti. During the session, Bharati Holikeri outlined the necessary preparatory measures, including the creation of enumeration blocks, the self-enumeration process, and ensuring that every individual is covered under the census. "Ensuring Every Individual is Registered in the Census" "Officials have been directed to pay special attention to ensuring that every individual and every family is registered in the census. Comprehensive field-level verification must be carried out to ensure that no one is left out and that no individual's details are recorded more than once. Charge officers, additional charge officers, and relevant staff are expected to work in close coordination to enhance the accuracy of the census data. "To ensure the successful conduct of Census 2027, emphasis has been placed on proactive planning, robust arrangements, precise design, public awareness regarding self-enumeration, and ensuring the inclusion of every single person in the census process.



no scope for errors in the population data. "Raising Public Awareness About Self-Enumeration" "Officials have been instructed to conduct extensive outreach to raise awareness about the 'self-enumeration' process, which allows individuals to register their family details online. Necessary support should be provided to ensure the public can effectively utilize this facility. Data captured through self-enumeration will be incorporated into the broader census process, in accordance with established guidelines. "Ensuring Every Individual is Registered in the Census" "Officials have been directed to pay special attention to ensuring that every individual and every family is registered in the census. Comprehensive field-level verification must be carried out to ensure that no one is left out and that no individual's details are recorded more than once. Charge officers, additional charge officers, and relevant staff are expected to work in close coordination to enhance the accuracy of the census data. "To ensure the successful conduct of Census 2027, emphasis has been placed on proactive planning, robust arrangements, precise design, public awareness regarding self-enumeration, and ensuring the inclusion of every single person in the census process.

Congress party candidate Ramreddy Sarvottam Reddy should work for the victory of graduates in the MLC elections



- Former Municipal Chairman Barre Jahangir ""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. October 28):- Former Municipal Chairman Barre Jahangir and senior Congress party leaders have called for party leaders and activists to work in coordination for the victory of Congress party candidate Ramreddy Sarvottam Reddy in the Khammam-Warangal-Nalgonda graduates' MLC elections. On Wednesday morning, along with former Municipal Chairman Barre Jahangir, they went to the houses of graduates in Ward 23 of Bhuvanagiri town and created awareness

about the vote registration process. Speaking on the occasion, he urged that every graduate who has passed till 2023 who is eligible for the graduates' MLC elections should register as a voter. She advised the educated to use their right to vote without neglecting it and to strengthen democracy. She said that the state government under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka is giving priority to the welfare of the educated, unemployed and youth. She called on the graduates to stand by Ramreddy Sarvottam Reddy, an educated person who has achieved a gold medal in his intermediate along with knowledge in the field of education and a political family background. She urged the Congress ranks to work at the field level to ensure that every eligible vote is registered with the slogan of "The vote of graduates is the key.. The goal is to support the right leadership." Barre Pujita-Jahangir said that from vote registration to elections, we should move forward in coordination and pave the way for Sarvottam Reddy's victory. Bandaru Ravivaradhan, SC, ST, Vigilance District Committee members, NSUI leaders Nomula Tarun, Udutha Durga Prasad, Jangiti Varun Teja, Barre Kranthi, Kadari Anil, Borigaon Radhika, Guddenki Maheshwari, Bandela Ramana, Edla Bhargavi, Bhushapaka Mamata, Barre Mahender, Gope Babu, Naini Bittu and others participated in this program.

Chalo Delhi program should be successful

"Palakurti Constituency Congress Party Ajwarvar Potnak Pramod Kumar



""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. October 28):- With the aim of making the 'Chalo

Delhi' program, which will be held on November 1 as per the call of AICC, a meeting of district leaders was held at Vivera Hotel in Bhuvanagiri under the chairmanship of Congress Party District President, Government Whip and MLA Birla Ayilaiah. In this program, Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy, Palakurti Constituency Congress Party Ajwarvar Potnak Pramod Kumar, AICC Observer Sriram Bhupal Reddy, TPCC Vice President Vinod Reddy, and Suryapet District Congress Party President Gudipati Narsaiah participated. Protesting irregularities in the Special Comprehensive Amendment (SIR) of the Voter List and the anti-people policies of the Central Government, CEC Gyanesh Kumar has called on party cadres to make a huge rally to be held in Delhi on November 1 under the leadership of Lok Sabha Opposition Leader Rahul Gandhi a success, demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Land to Be Allocated for Government Degree College in Uppal



— MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Urges District Collector Manu Choudary ""UPPAL, OCTOBER 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy met Medchal-Malkajigiri District Collector Manu Choudary, IAS, and urged him to allocate suitable land for the establishment of a Government Degree College in the Uppal constituency. During the meeting, the MLA highlighted the need to establish a government degree college in the area to make higher education more accessible to local students. He explained that students in the Uppal constituency are facing difficulties in pursuing higher education due to the lack of a government degree college in the region. He emphasized that establishing a government degree college in Uppal would greatly benefit students, particularly those from

economically weaker sections, by providing them with affordable access to higher education close to their homes. "The MLA requested the District Collector to identify and allocate suitable land for the construction of the college and take the necessary steps to expedite the establishment process. "He further stated that the proposed college would provide local students with better opportunities to pursue quality higher education and benefit those who cannot afford to travel to other areas for their studies due to financial constraints. Bandari Lakshma Reddy appealed to the concerned officials to examine the proposal and initiate appropriate measures for land allocation to facilitate the establishment of the Government Degree College in Uppal.

Bhuvanagiri Town 11th Ward Rs. 4.00 lakhs sewerage works started

- Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar ""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. October 28):- Bhuvanagiri Chairperson Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar broke coconuts and started the work for the construction of internal sewerage works in the local 11th ward of Bhuvanagiri town with funds of Rs. 4.00 lakhs from the 15th Finance Commission. Ward Councilor Ganji Srivani Ganesh, officials, Municipal Engineer, MAE, ward people, leaders, officials, staff and others participated in this program.

Three Men Given Swachh Bharat Punishment for Creating Public Nuisance

— Strict Action Against Those Violating Rules: MEDIPALLY CI JALANDHAR REDDY ""MEDIPALLY , OCTOBER 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Three men who created a public nuisance within the limits of Medipally Police Station were ordered by a court to participate in a Swachh Bharat cleanliness drive as punishment. The police registered cases against the individuals for creating a nuisance in public places and produced them before the court. "According to police, B. Naresh (27) allegedly created a public nuisance on October 21, 2026, while G. Karunakar (34) and M. Srinivas (36) were involved in similar incidents on October 24. The police registered cases against all three and produced them before the court. After hearing the cases, the honourable judge directed them to participate in the Swachh Bharat cleanliness programme for one hour. "Speaking on the occasion, Medipally Police Station Inspector D. Jalandhar Reddy warned that strict action would be taken against those who create public disturbances and cause inconvenience to others. He urged citizens to act responsibly and refrain from activities that disturb public peace and law and order.



ZPHS Arenda Drives E-Waste Collection Campaign

Headmaster Emphasizes Environmental Hazards and Safe Disposal. ""



ARENDA, October 28, 2026 — Zilla Parishad High School (ZPHS), Arenda, successfully organized an E-Waste Collection Drive within the school premises. Demonstrating great enthusiasm, students actively participated by collecting discarded, non-functional electronic items from their households and presenting them in the presence of the teaching staff. "Addressing the assembly during the

event, School Headmaster Mr. E. Narasimha Rao highlighted that no resource is entirely useless if managed responsibly. He urged students to use everyday appliances meticulously at home and in their neighborhoods. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of disposing of broken or obsolete electronic items systematically by depositing them into the school's designated E-Waste Bin, rather than discarding them carelessly. "Elaborating on the critical health and ecological risks, Mr. Narasimha Rao warned that hazardous substances such as lead and mercury released from electronic waste contaminate groundwater systems. He pointed out that toxic exposure to these heavy metals severely impairs the human central nervous system, kidneys, and brain development. Consequently, he exhorted the students to act as environmental ambassadors and create awareness among their parents and local communities. "The awareness drive witnessed active participation from Cluster Resource Person (CRP) Mallanna, as well as teachers Suvartha, Mamata, Padmaja, Giyajuddin, Sreelatha, Sreevani, Sahindar, and Raju, alongside the entire student body and teaching faculty.

60 Grams of Ganja Seized in Peerzadiguda

Medipally Police Arrest Man for Alleged Ganja Sales ""MEDIPALLY , OCTOBER 28 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Medipally police apprehended a man allegedly involved in selling ganja in Peerzadiguda and seized 60 grams of the contraband from his possession. The incident took place on October 27 at Road No. 2 in Adarsh Nagar Colony, within the limits of Medipally Police Station. "According to police, they received credible information at around 6 p.m. on October 27 that a person was selling ganja at an open plot in Adarsh Nagar Colony. After informing senior officials, the police team reached the spot in the presence of two independent witnesses. "Upon noticing the police, a suspicious man carrying a blue plastic cover allegedly attempted to flee. The police apprehended him and questioned him, during which he reportedly admitted to possessing ganja. A search of the plastic cover conducted in the presence of the witnesses revealed dried ganja. "The accused was identified as Mothipalli Venkat Raj, 40, a resident of Adarsh Nagar Colony in Peerzadiguda. Police said that he worked as an auto-rickshaw driver and allegedly turned to selling ganja in the hope of earning quick money. "According to his statement, the accused had purchased 100 grams of ganja for ₹2,000 from unidentified



persons near Uppal X Roads about a week ago. He allegedly sold around 40 grams and was attempting to sell the remaining 60 grams when the police apprehended him. "Police further stated that cases had previously been registered against the accused. In July 2026, a case was reportedly registered against him at Medipally Police Station under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in connection with ganja consumption and sale. "Further legal proceedings are underway in connection with the case.

Petition submitted to the Municipal Commissioner to take preventive measures to prevent drinking water problems

31st Ward Councilor Sumayya Tabassum Shafiq Ahmed"

""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. October 28):- ""31st Ward Councilor Sumayya Tabassum Shafiq Ahmed, Banoth Jyoti, Banoth Anusha and others submitted a petition to the Municipal Commissioner to ask the municipal authorities to take preventive measures to prevent drinking water problems in Bhuvanagiri town due to the effect of El Nino. Speaking on the occasion, they requested that a strong plan be formulated from now on, keeping in mind the conditions where the intensity of the sun increases and pressure is created on water resources, so that the people of the town do not face any difficulties in drinking water supply. "In particular, in case of any disruption in the water supply of Hyderabad Metro, the urban people should identify and keep alternative water sources ready so that they do not face any problems. They appealed to take steps such as installing boreholes in the necessary areas, repairing the available boreholes, preparing water tanks, and preventing water wastage. They also asked to examine the possibilities in the vicinity of the Bhuvanagiri urban lake and develop alternative water sources, and to make advance arrangements to supply water through tankers in the necessary areas. They stated that instead of taking action after the intensity of summer increases, people



can avoid drinking water problems by preparing and implementing a plan in advance. They urged the authorities to take appropriate measures immediately, giving top priority to the drinking water needs of the people.

Youth Found Dead Peerzadiguda

Found Hanging in Bedroom ""Medipally, October 28 (Indian Chronicle): ""A youth was found dead at Shankar Nagar Colony in Peerzadiguda, Medchal-Malkajigiri district, causing concern in the locality. ""According to the complaint lodged with the police, Bijja Yogeshwar Kumar (18), who had completed his ITI course, was looking for employment. He was sleeping at home while his parents had gone to work night shifts. "In the early hours of October 27, at around 2 a.m., a family member reportedly woke up and found Yogeshwar hanging inside his bedroom. However, according to the complaint, when the family member woke up again at around 8:30 a.m., the bedroom door was found locked from the inside. Despite repeated calls, there was no response. Upon looking through the window, the family member saw Yogeshwar hanging and immediately alerted the 108 emergency service. ""The 108 emergency personnel

arrived at the scene, opened the door and examined the youth, confirming that he had already died. ""The complainant stated that there were no suspicions against anyone regarding his brother's death. Medipally police have registered a case and are investigating the incident.

Telangana ACB traps inspector, petrol pump technician in bribery case

Hyderabad: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials on Wednesday caught a Legal Metrology Inspector from Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district and a private person for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 20,000. According to the ACB,

PhonePe Launches ‘Tatkal NPS’ in Partnership with Leading Banks, Enabling Micro-Investments in Retirement Planning

Hyderabad: PhonePe, today announced the launch of ‘Tatkal NPS’ (National Pension System) on its platform, partnering with prominent banking institutions to democratize long-term retirement planning. Expanding its comprehensive financial services suite, this offering enables millions of users across India to open a government-backed pension account with micro-contribution starting at just ₹250. With this launch, users can now securely create their NPS account through an intuitive, 100% digital journey, thus eliminating barriers to opening a pension account. To deliver this frictionless experience, PhonePe has integrated with India’s leading banking institutions with plans to expand coverage across the banking sector. The Tatkal NPS facility, an innovation developed by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), enables the seamless re-use of existing Bank KYC through a secure, one-time OTP authentication. This framework enables PhonePe to provide its users with an effortless, paperless onboarding experience, allowing them to create their Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) in minutes. Tatkal NPS caters to a nationwide audience, including first-time planners, millennials, and Gen-Z. By lowering the investment threshold to ₹250, PhonePe is tapping into India’s

positive demographic dividend and enabling this population cohort to start building their pension and retirement security right from an early stage. Specifically, this offering serves as a crucial, disciplined retirement vehicle for cohorts such as gig economy workers, independent freelancers, and small business owners, who often lack access to mandatory corporate retirement schemes. Speaking on the launch, Deep Agrawal, VP and Head of Payments at PhonePe said, “At PhonePe, our vision is to empower every Indian to accelerate their financial progress by unlocking seamless access to financial services. The launch of Tatkal NPS marks a significant milestone in bringing long-term financial planning and retirement security to the masses. By simplifying the process into a seamless, 100% digital journey and partnering with India’s most trusted banks under the aegis of PFRDA, we are making regulated retirement planning accessible to the heart of Bharat with absolute confidence, safety, and convenience.”



IIT Kanpur's Entrepreneurship Cell Concludes UpStart 2026 Regional Pitching Rounds in Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad

Hyderabad: Entrepreneurship Cell, IIT Kanpur has successfully concluded the initial multi-city regional rounds of its flagship startup pitching competition, UpStart 2026. Designed to support, accelerate, and empower emerging startups across India, the national business model competition hosted intensive screening and mentoring sessions in Delhi-NCR on 10 October 2026, followed by simultaneous editions in Bengaluru and Hyderabad on 24 October 2026. The inaugural Delhi-NCR edition was organized at the SIIC office, IIT Kanpur Outreach Center in Noida, and witnessed the participation of 20 selected startups. The founders presented their business models to delegates and prominent investors from Advantedge, Growx, Titan, IAN, and Dynamic Orbits. Following the in-person Delhi kickoff, the Bengaluru and Hyderabad chapters were conducted simultaneously in an online mode. These virtual regional rounds witnessed the combined participation of 15 early-stage ventures and 15 prominent investors and venture capital firm representatives. The participating entrepreneurs pitched their business models and engaged in detailed discussions with industry leaders from firms including Hyderabad Angels, Impel Ventures, Venture East, ADP, NoQ Digital, and IAN Ventures. Across all three cities, the UpStart 2026 regional

rounds featured early-stage ventures spanning diverse focus sectors such as fintech, health tech, deep tech, Web3, and cybersecurity. Functioning as an intensive business model incubator rather than a conventional pitching competition, the events provided founders with face-to-face mentoring, detailed brainstorming sessions with expert panels, networking opportunities, and avenues for on-spot funding. Startups selected from these regional rounds will advance to an intensive multi-week mentorship framework guided by industry veterans to equip them with scaling strategies ahead of the finale. Sharing insights on the successful conclusion of these regional events, Gunjan, Manager-Events, Entrepreneurship Cell at IIT Kanpur, stated: “India is at the cusp of a startup revolution, and early-stage founders require more than just capital to succeed. They need structured validation, hands-on mentorship, and direct market access. The regional editions of UpStart 2026 featured highly innovative ideas, and IIT Kanpur is committed to evaluating business fundamentals rigorously while connecting these high-potential innovators with active investors. We look forward to seeing similar determination and conviction in the upcoming regional locations.”

Ai+ Smartphone Announces Price Hike of Across Select Models from November 15 Consumers have until November 14 to purchase

Hyderabad: Ai+ Smartphone today announced a price hike across select models in its smartphone portfolio, effective November 15, 2026. As cost pressures persist, particularly in price-sensitive segments, Ai+ Smartphone has continued to evaluate their impact while working to maintain affordability for consumers. However, with input costs remaining elevated, the company has undertaken another measured pricing adjustment to maintain a sustainable balance between affordability and product experience. With prices set to increase by up to ₹3,000, now is the best time for consumers to purchase their preferred Ai+ smartphones at current prices, before the revised pricing comes into effect. Under the revised pricing, select variants of the Ai+ Pulse 2 FE, Pulse 2, Nova 2 5G, Nova 2 Neo 5G, Nova 2 Power 5G, Nova 2 Pro 5G and Nova 2 Ultra 5G will see price increases ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹3,000. The Ai+

NovaFlip 5G will remain unchanged at ₹49,999. Ai+ Smartphone is a next-generation brand built in India, delivering reliable and high-performance mobile experiences. Powered by NxtQuantum OS, India’s first sovereign mobile operating system, the brand focuses on delivering a clean design, ensuring long battery life, and maintaining trusted software performance, all while keeping prices accessible without compromising the user experience. About Ai+ and NxtQuantum Shift Technologies “NxtQuantum Shift Technologies is a deep-tech Indian company building secure, sovereign digital platforms for a digital-first world. Founded by Madhav Sheth, the company develops NxtQuantum OS, India’s first sovereign operating system, and is committed to building technology that is designed, engineered, and developed in India while remaining globally competitive.

5 Storage Essentials to Upgrade Your Digital Life This Diwali

hyderabad Diwali is a time for celebrations, travel, new purchases and capturing moments with family and friends. And whether it is storing festive photos, transferring files between devices, backing up creative projects or expanding a gaming library, having the right storage can make a difference. This festive season, here are five storage essentials from Sandisk to consider for different digital needs. Make Space for Every Diwali Memory Family gatherings, festive decorations and holiday travel can quickly fill up a smartphone or tablet. The SANDISK Ultra Lite microSD Card gives compatible Android smartphones, tablets and other microSD-enabled devices additional room for photos, videos and files. It offers read speeds of up to 100MB/s1 and supports Full HD video recording. Users can also manage and back up stored content through the Sandisk Memory Zone app2, making it easier to keep festive memories organised. Transfer Festive Photos Across Devices Without the Hassle Moving photographs, videos and documents between a smartphone and computer can be inconvenient when the devices use different ports. The SANDISK Ultra Dual Drive Go USB Type-C features both USB Type-C and Type-A connectors, enabling file transfers across compatible devices. Available in capacities of up to 2TB3, the drive features a swivel design that helps protect its connectors when not in use. Its keyring

hole also makes it convenient to carry while travelling or commuting. Add Extra Storage Without the Added Bulk For users who want additional storage without a large drive protruding from their device, the SANDISK Extreme Fit USB-C Flash Drive offers a compact option for compatible USB-C computers, tablets and other devices. Available in capacities ranging from 64GB3 to 1TB3, it can store frequently accessed documents, photographs and videos. The 128GB3 and higher-capacity models deliver read speeds of up to 400MB/s1, combining faster transfers with a discreet, space-saving design. A Travel-Ready Storage Companion for India’s Growing Creator Community Photographers, videographers and content creators frequently work with large, high-resolution files and need reliable storage that can keep pace with mobile workflows. The SANDISK Extreme Portable SSD is designed for backing up projects, transferring content and carrying creative work between locations. The model offers projected read speeds of up to 2,000MB/s1 and password protection backed by 256-bit AES hardware encryption4. It also carries an IP65 rating for water and dust resistance and is designed to withstand drops of up to three metres, making it suitable for work on the move.

SAP India Doubles Down on AI Skilling to Prepare Two Million People for the Future of Work by 2030

Hyderabad: SAP SE (NYSE: SAP) today announced more programs designed to achieve SAP’s ongoing goal of equipping two million people in India with AI-ready skills by 2030, helping address the country’s demand for digital talent, and preparing people for opportunities in an AI-powered economy. Building on its extensive established learning, certification and workforce-development programmes, SAP will work with academic institutions, industry partners, government bodies and community organisations to expand access to practical skills in AI, cloud, data and enterprise technologies at scale. With 28% of the world’s STEM workforce and 23% of global software engineering talent, India is strongly positioned as a leader in the AI economy. Demand is already evident across SAP’s learning ecosystem, with India accounting for approximately 48% of SAP’s certified learners worldwide, underscoring its role in SAP’s global talent ecosystem. The India commitment

contributes to SAP’s global pledge to equip 12 million people worldwide with AI-ready skills by 2030, and connects technology education with the practical expertise needed to apply AI in business and industry. The foundation of India’s strength in technology has always been its people. Preparing Indian talent for the next wave of innovation requires sustained investment in how people learn, apply their skills, and apply that in their careers,” said Manish Prasad, President & Managing Director, SAP Indian Subcontinent. “SAP India already provides a strong foundation. Of the 2 million people we expect to train in AI skills before 2030, nearly 13% have already participated through certification, student education and community programmes. These include employees of SAP customers, partners and employees who are already building professional expertise; as well as students exploring SAP technologies, and underserved communities gaining access to STEM learning. The 2030 commitment will help more people build the capabilities to contribute to India’s AI-led growth.”

Gayatri Danthuri Explores Resilience, Memory and Transformation Through ‘Marked Wings’ at Dhi Contemporary

Hyderabad: Dhi Contemporary, Hyderabad, presents Marked Wings, a solo exhibition by printmaker Gayatri Danthuri, on view from October 27 to November 27, 2026, at its gallery in Madhapur. Through intricate prints and evocative imagery, the exhibition explores memory, vulnerability, resilience and transformation, reflecting on how lived experiences leave lasting impressions on individuals and the world around them. Working primarily with woodcut and aquatint, Danthuri examines the marks left by survival and change. In her works, wings become symbols of movement and freedom shaped by experience. Scars, patterns and textures emerge as records of encounters endured, vulnerabilities acknowledged and strength gradually developed. The idea behind Marked Wings is to explore how our experiences shape us and become part of who we are. I see marks not simply as signs of pain or imperfection, but as evidence of change, resilience and renewal. Through the imagery of wings, I wanted to reflect on the idea that freedom and transformation do not mean leaving our past behind, but learning to carry it differently,” said Gayatri Danthuri, artist. The exhibition highlights the expressive possibilities of printmaking as both a technical process and a metaphor for lived experience. In woodcut, carved surfaces preserve the gestures of removal, allowing absence to become a form of



expression. Aquatint introduces tonal depth and subtle gradations, creating atmospheric compositions that evoke the complexities of memory and emotion. Together, these techniques establish a delicate balance between fragility and endurance. Rather than presenting transformation as an erasure of the past, Marked Wings considers how individuals learn to carry their experiences with tenderness, dignity and hope. The exhibition invites viewers to reconsider vulnerability not as weakness, but as a condition through which resilience can emerge.

Over 900 kg adulterated sweets destroyed in Delhi festive season crackdown

GNS News Agency, Oct 28

The Delhi government’s Food Safety Department destroyed over 900 kg of sweets and other food items over the weekend during inspections of sweet-making units and markets in the city ahead of the festive season this year. This includes recent seizure of 402 kg of food products including sweets such as rasgulla and milk cake in Nihal Vihar in West Delhi, and of 520 kg of spoiled khoya and chhena, dairy items used for making sweets, at Mori Gate Khoya Mandi in Kashmere Gate. The crackdown is taking place alongside the traditional rise in demand for sweets during the festive season, with the department intensifying inspections to prevent adulterated, spoiled and unhygienically prepared food items from reaching consumers.

Food samples from both locations were collected for laboratory testing, and further action will be taken under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, based on the inspection findings and test reports, said a government official. According to the office of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, she has directed the food safety department to continue surprise inspections, regular monitoring and sample testing, and take strict action against those found violating food safety norms. In Nihal Vihar, food safety teams inspected 13 premises on Saturday, including unlicensed rasgulla-making units, other sweet manufacturers and sweet shops. During the inspections, around 402 kg of food items were destroyed, including 265 kg of rasgullas, 45 kg of chhena, 80 kg of milk cake and 12 kg of grated coconut, according to a statement from the government. The teams also collected samples of chhena, milk cake, rasgullas, motichoor



laddoos, flour laddoos, rasbhari and paneer for testing. According to a government statement, the department had faced difficulties locating sweet-making units in the area during an earlier operation on August 26. It said that the sweet makers had then shut their shops in different lanes and officials had been able to identify only three premises. This time, the department conducted surprise inspections on a holiday, deploying teams simultaneously across different lanes to prevent establishments from receiving prior information about the operation. In a separate drive at Mori Gate Khoya Mandi, officials destroyed around 370 kg of khoya and 150 kg of chhena. The items had been found abandoned and spoiled, and were emitting a foul smell, said a government statement. The department had also carried out an operation at the same market on September 4, during Janmashtami, when around 3,050 kg of khoya and paneer were destroyed.

Ahead of winter, Delhi reaches out to cops from NCR cities to tackle vehicular pollution



Diversion of trucks at borders, deployment of traffic personnel at congestion-prone stretches, restriction of entry of non-compliant interstate buses, intensified traffic management at NCR borders — these are among the key measures being carried out by the Delhi government in coordination with police officers from nearby NCR districts to tackle vehicular pollution ahead of winter. The measures were discussed at a virtual meeting chaired by Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa on Sunday along with senior traffic police and officers from Noida, Faridabad, Gurugram, Sonapat and Bahadurgarh. Delhi Police Special Commissioner (Traffic) and the Delhi Transport Commissioner also attended the meeting to review preparations for tackling air pollution during the winter season.

Under the proposed measures, traffic personnel will be deployed at congestion-prone stretches, particularly near NCR borders, to improve traffic flow and reduce vehicular

emissions caused by prolonged congestion. Enforcement of Pollution Under Control (PUC) norms will also be tightened, officials said. Polluting vehicles will be stopped, with action including impounding and maximum permissible penalties, wherever applicable.

Further, officials said that the government will also enforce directions on diverting trucks not destined for Delhi through the Eastern and Western Peripheral Expressways. Restrictions on overage diesel and petrol vehicles, as prescribed under applicable orders of the National Green Tribunal and the Supreme Court, will be implemented. Inter-city and interstate buses entering Delhi-NCR will have to comply with applicable fuel and emission standards, officials said. Buses running on fuels other than electricity, compressed natural gas (CNG) or BS-VI-compliant diesel will not be permitted to ply in the region, in accordance with applicable directions. To inform motorists and transport operators about the curbs, the Transport Department and other agencies will put up banners and display boards at border checkpoints. Awareness campaigns will also be conducted through print, electronic and social media to encourage the use of public transport. Officials also said that the Delhi Traffic Police informed the meeting that more than 10,000 challans related to traffic and pollution violations are being issued daily on average as part of its ongoing enforcement drive. The government will also intensify water sprinkling, mechanical road sweeping and dust suppression measures across the city, officials said. Additional district-level enforcement teams will be deployed as further restrictions under the Winter Action Plan and Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) come into force, they added.

Hyderabad records minimum temperature of 14.8 degrees Celsius as nights turn cooler

Hyderabad: There is a distinct nip in the air in Hyderabad and districts of Telangana as night and early morning temperatures have dropped quite significantly in the last 24 hours. Driven by clear skies and northerly wind flows following the monsoon’s withdrawal, the rapid nighttime cooling has created a unique weather with cold breezy wind flowing across the twin cities. In the last 24-hours, between Sunday evening and Monday morning, the lowest temperature of 14.8 degrees Celsius was recorded at Patancheru, according to Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS) data. After Patancheru, the TSDPS data indicated that Ameerpur area recorded 14.9 degree Celsius, while BHEL and HCU Serlingampally recorded 15.1 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperatures in the residential zones within the core regions of Hyderabad

ranged between 17 degree Celsius and 19 degrees Celsius. During the day, thanks to sunny conditions, the maximum temperatures are hovering between 30 degree Celsius and 32 degrees Celsius. However, by evening, clear skies over Hyderabad and rest of the districts is allowing day’s heat to escape quickly, paving the way for quick night time cooling. Data from the Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS) indicates that night and early morning temperatures have started sliding downward across many parts of the state, giving residents a distinct taste of cooler weather. Some of the other regions that recorded low temperatures in Hyderabad include Rajendranagar (15.4), Ibrahimpatnam (15.4), Moula Ali (15.8), Shamirpet (16.6). Temperatures

Hundreds of Hyderabad Umrah pilgrims stranded in Saudi Arabia amid flight cancellations



GNS News Agency, Oct 28

Hyderabad: Several hundred Umrah pilgrims from Hyderabad are stranded in Saudi Arabia following flight cancellations and have appealed to Indian authorities to arrange alternative flights and provide food and accommodation until they can return home. They had left for the pilgrimage early this month, when the security situation in the region was relatively calm. However, recent developments and flight disruptions have left many uncertain about their return. "We have sought help from the consulate but have not received any response. We request its intervention to facilitate our earliest possible return to India. The money we brought with us has run out, and the government should step in to help us," a pilgrim stranded in Makkah told reporters, adding that several elderly people are also stranded.

However, some tour operators said their groups had not faced any major difficulties so far. Mohammad Faiyaz Ali of Al Mizaan Tours and Travels, Masab Tank, who is in Saudi Arabia with a group of around 100 pilgrims, said Umrah rituals were continuing as usual. "There are certain disruptions in flights. Tour operators are taking up the issues with local authorities and trying to resolve them. So far, our group has not faced any problems," he told Telangana Today.

Hyderabad MP and AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi has urged the union government to intervene and ensure the safe return of Indians stranded in Saudi Arabia. He called for coordination with airlines to arrange alternative flights, including deploying larger aircraft or operating special services if necessary. Around 4,000 Indians are reportedly stranded in Saudi Arabia, including an estimated 1,500 to 1,800 from Telangana.

The disruptions come amid heightened security concerns following reported drone and missile attacks attributed to Yemen's Houthi movement. Flight operations have been affected, leaving Indian pilgrims in Makkah and Madinah uncertain about their return schedules. The Indian Consulate in Jeddah is coordinating with Saudi authorities, airlines and tour operators to facilitate the pilgrims' return and address their immediate needs. Indian nationals have also been advised to follow local authorities' safety instructions. Umrah, a pilgrimage to Makkah that can be performed throughout the year, draws thousands of Indians to Saudi Arabia annually.

Teddy tigers and preserved embryos: Museum in Corbett tries to keep them 'alive'

GNS News Agency, Oct 28

Ramnagar: Way back in 1902 the then US President Theodore Roosevelt refused to shoot a captive and tied-up bear during a shooting trip. It inspired a political cartoonist working with the Washington Post sketch a cartoon to depict the incident. The cartoon went viral, long before it became a household term in the age of social media, and a small toy shop owner in Brooklyn decided to create and sell a small stuffed bear, naming it 'Teddy's Bear' after the president's nickname 'Teddy'.

The name soon got traction and 'Teddy Bear' soon became a noun for a soft stuffed toy. More than a century has passed since then, and a small museum in Ramnagar, on the outskirts of India's oldest national park, Jim Corbett Forest Reserve, now showcases many 'teddy tigers' and other 'teddys'. The only difference being that these 'teddys' are actual-size recreations stuffed inside the real skin of tigers and other animals who have died during a conflict or for natural reasons. The museum also preserves embryos of stillborn animals, including a tiger and a cobra. Taxidermy, as the craft is called, takes a lot of effort and medical help to preserve these pelts and create the stuffed animals, but these life-size models serve as a specimen of human-animal coexistence, as difficult as it may be. The oldest exhibit is of a tiger that died on March 7, 1977, at Gairal. The big cat died in an interspecific fight with an elephant. The fight is said to have continued through the night, and the tiger was found crushed to death by the tusker the next morning, a forester working there, Dharampal Negi, told PTI. Then there is a tigress that was found dead on December 28, 1982, at Sajgarhi Sot. An autopsy revealed that the death was due to pneumonia. The tigress is displayed with a taxidermied cub by her side. A tiger that died a natural death on February 25, 1986, at Pipal Parao, outside the tiger reserve, is also on display, mouth open in a snarl. Not all exhibits reflect the nature's course. Two pantheresses on display were declared man-eaters and shot dead. One, killed on December 6, 1983, in the Salt area of Almora, had killed six children, according to details shown alongside its glass 'cage'. The other, shot on August 11, 1986, at Kathpudia in Ranikhet, had killed two people and a score of cattle. Such cases highlight the conflict between people and the big cats in the hills of Uttarakhand, where leopards frequently stray into villages.

Apart from the big cats, the museum also keeps preserved specimens in glass tanks. These include the foetus of a leopard, about 80-90 days old, found stillborn in the



Dhara forest range in 1985, and that of a tiger, about 30 days old, found near Sajgarhi Sot in 1982. A spotted deer foetus of about five months, found in the Dhangadi forest range in 1980, and a king cobra found dead during patrolling in the Dhela forest range are also on display. "Preserving these specimens takes constant care. Every exhibit is checked regularly so that it can be shown to visitors for years to come," Negi said. "Each of these animals has a story, and many of them show how difficult coexistence can be. We want visitors, especially children, to understand that and learn to respect wildlife," he added. "The museum showcases several exhibits of the park's rich wildlife, including preserved specimens of animals that are native to the region, like tigers, leopards, elephants, and crocodiles. The taxidermied animals, skulls, and bones give visitors a closer look at the fauna that roams within the park," said an attendant working at the museum located at the Dhangarhi gate of the Jim Corbett Park.

The process mostly involves cryopreservation and taxidermy. Cryopreservation helps with the long-term storage of biological materials by cooling them to extremely low temperatures at which metabolic and biochemical processes are effectively slowed or halted. It minimises ice crystal formation and cellular damage during freezing and thawing processes. Taxidermy, on the other hand, involves creating lifelike replicas of animals by using their skins and other structures that do not spoil or decompose them. The process dates back to an ancient custom of preserving hunted animals as trophies, but now it is more about preserving dead animals in museums to tell people about natural history. It requires using a lot of chemicals to preserve skins, hair, and feathers from decay, while stuffing the sewed-up skins with hay or straw, or at times even concrete to give them realistic structures.

Google Cloud outage in London disrupts Revolut, other online services



GNS News Agency, Oct 28

New Delhi: Google Cloud services in London experienced network disruptions on Tuesday following a power-related incident, affecting multiple services and prompting reports of outages across several online platforms, including British digital banking app Revolut. Google confirmed that multiple services were experiencing issues in its Europe-west2 region, which is based in London. The company said the disruption began around 7 am British Summer Time (BST) and was linked to a power event affecting its Europe-west2-b zone.

In an update on its Cloud Status page, Google said the power incident had been mitigated, adding that partial recovery of infrastructure services was expected within 30 minutes, followed by the restoration of remaining services. However, the company said its engineering team was continuing to investigate the broader disruption and apologised to affected customers. The outage triggered reports of service disruptions across several platforms. Revolut, the UK-based online banking company, reported issues affecting multiple services, with thousands of customers reporting problems accessing its services.

Revolut said customers' money and data remained safe and that it had been working to resolve the issue since

it was identified in the morning. The company also apologised to customers for the inconvenience caused. Halifax also acknowledged reports of problems with its mobile application and website. In a response to a customer on social media platform X, the bank said it was aware that some customers were experiencing difficulties and was working to restore normal services. It advised customers that they could still contact the bank by telephone if required. Halifax did not confirm whether its service disruption was directly linked to the Google Cloud incident. UK-based budgeting application Emma also reported an outage, attributing it to the Google Cloud disruption affecting services in London since 7 am. The company said the issue was technical rather than security-related and that it was monitoring the situation, promising to provide updates once its application was operational again. Website monitoring platform Downdetector also recorded an increase in user-reported problems across several websites and online services on Tuesday morning. However, it was not immediately clear whether all the affected platforms relied on Google Cloud infrastructure or whether their reported issues were directly connected to the incident.

IMD forecasts intense rain in Telangana from October 27

Hyderabad: After a prolonged dry spell, Telangana is likely to receive heavy rainfall, thunderstorms and gusty winds from Tuesday, October 27, with extremely heavy rain forecast in isolated areas on Wednesday, October 28.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), Hyderabad, has warned of extremely heavy rainfall in parts of Telangana on October 28, under the influence of a developing weather system over the Bay of Bengal.

'Won't back down until we get a union': Students' strike at Jamia enters 14th day



GNS News Agency, Oct 28

Over 100 security personnel on duty, students trying to enter the varsity by climbing walls covered in barbed wires and metal spikes, alleged scuffles between protesters and security personnel, rallies and sloganeering as protesters on hunger strike kept themselves locked inside the Department of Political Science to ensure that their fast could not be broken: these were the scenes at Jamia Millia Islamia in Southeast Delhi on Sunday as the students' protest seeking reinstatement of its union entered the 14th day. Even as the varsity shifted the classes online on Saturday, tension did not abate in and around the campus with over 500 students gathering to back the stir on Sunday.

The protest site, near Gulistan-e-Ghalib, the library and the canteen were cut off from outside. No students were allowed inside. Security personnel — from Delhi Police, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) — were deployed both inside and outside the campus. "About 150 to 200 security personnel were deployed outside the campus. Three people, who were not students, were detained from outside," a senior police officer said. The officer added that an FIR has been filed over the chaos during protest on Friday. After the university authorities had lodged a formal complaint with the Delhi Police against Congress Lok Sabha MP Masood, Rajya Sabha MP Imran Pratapgarhi and others, they have been named in the FIR. They were accused of trespassing on the campus and inciting unrest. Security personnel — from Delhi Police, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) — were deployed both inside and outside the campus. (Express Photo by Tabshir Shams) Security personnel — from Delhi Police, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) — were deployed both inside and outside the campus.

On Sunday, the students wrote an email to Vice-Chancellor Mazhar Asif and said the hunger strike by five students would be called off only after receiving a written assurance on the acceptance of their demands. The main demand is the restoration of Jamia Millia Islamia Students' Union (JMSU), with a fixed election date and schedule. The last time the university held a student union poll was in 2005. Protesters have rejected the administration's proposal to draft a union constitution first and set a deadline for the process. Lubaib, a PhD scholar and one of the organisers of the protest, told The Indian Express, "They (The univer-

sity) shifted classes online to stop the mobilisation. They have also started vacating the hostels, but it has had no effect on our resolve. Students being stopped outside are still joining us, by climbing the wall." He added, "We wrote to the Vice-Chancellor today. We have also approached the administration informally, hoping they would talk to us, but they have not responded. We will not back down until we get a students' union."

Seeking an urgent meeting with the Vice-Chancellor and polls by November 30, protesters have claimed that the committee that the administration formed to engage with them has not given a concrete, time-bound commitment. Protesters said they have drawn inspiration from Aligarh Muslim University, where the administration announced union elections after a prolonged hunger strike by students. According to a varsity official, the administration has so far held four rounds of talks with the protesters. "The sequence has to be followed: first a constitution, then the electoral roll, then the election date," the official said, adding "After a 20-year gap, and with the Lyngdoh Committee recommendations and University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations having changed, this cannot be done in haste. A draft constitution committee has been formed and notified, and we are responding positively to the students' demands." Protesters have cited the Supreme Court's 2006 judgment in University of Kerala v. Council of Principals, Colleges, Kerala and Others, and the Lyngdoh Committee recommendations, to argue that drafting a constitution should not delay announcing elections. In the letter on Sunday, they also demanded unconditional revocation of all disciplinary action since October 12, when the protest started, including rustication, suspension, campus bans and show-cause notices. They have also sought the removal of the Chief Proctor and Security Advisor, citing the treatment of students during the agitation.

Scuffle between students and security personnel and similar tense scenes unfolding along Jama Masjid Road near the Central Mosque, and near the Department of Nanotechnology with students trying to scale the walls marked the afternoon of the 14th day of the protest. Around 1 pm, students from the boys' hostel marched to Gate No. 4 and were stopped. Some were driven away in police vehicles, protesters claimed. However, there was no official confirmation on detentions. Near the Central Mosque, the walls were topped with metal spikes and rods. Students scaled these walls anyway. Among them was Jaffer, a student of political science. His grey trousers tore on the way up and he got a minor bruise on his thighs. He jumped down on the other side, and he was in. Inside, hundreds of students stayed around the protest site. Rallies went out throughout the day. "Our resolve has only grown stronger," Ebin, one of the students on hunger strike, said, adding, "We will not leave this place until our demands are met." For some, staying near the protest site has meant going without proper food and sleep. Shoyeb, a PhD scholar in law, walked out through a gate in the evening that remained closed to other students. Speaking in a half-spent voice, he said, "I have been inside for two days. I haven't eaten much. I'm very tired and dehydrated. I'm going back now to eat something and rest. I will come back at night and climb the walls to get in."

On last day of SIR camps in Delhi, BLOs wait, go door to door



GNS News Agency, Oct 28

At the MCD school in east Delhi's Chilla village, the Booth Level Officer (BLO) says he has not received even a single Form-6 application to enroll new voters through the day. In New Moti Bagh, the BLO says he visited 42 houses over five hours and got four Form-6 applications. In Sarai Kale Khan village, the BLO waited at the local MCD school "from morning to around noon" with other BLOs, "but no one came" to get enrolled. Even on the last day of the Election Commission's special camps being held across Delhi to enrol voters left out of the rolls in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), BLOs mostly found themselves waiting for residents. The few that came forward, they said, were those who wanted help to resolve notices they were issued for not being able to link to the 2002 electoral roll.

Delhi had around 1.45 crore electors before the SIR began. When the draft electoral roll was published on August 31, around 97.5 lakh names were retained, while around 47.5 lakh electors were classified as "uncollectible" after BLOs found them to be ASDD (absent, shifted, deceased or having duplicate entries). So far, only around 4.7 lakh people have applied to be included in the electoral roll through Form-6 applications in Delhi. Manoj Jeena, who works in a transformer factory in Loni, his wife Meenati and their two daughters had been issued notices for not being able to link themselves to the 2002 electoral roll, when the SIR last happened. "I was a voter then, but I don't remember any details and whether I was registered in Delhi or my village back then, which is why I did not fill that column," said Jeena, who had been called by the BLO at Chilla.

The BLO said that there are very few registered addresses in the village. In the electoral rolls, in place of house numbers, most addresses of electors mention just "CV" or "Ch". "It is nearly impossible to locate electors in this area, that is why we are calling them to camps to resolve their notices," the BLO said. On September 29, the Election Commission directed the 20 states and Union Territories where the SIR has been completed to run a "special drive" to enrol voters "left out" of the rolls. The move came days after an investigation by The Indian Express, published on September 23, revealed that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had objected on record 14 times in 10 months to steps taken by the Commission under Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, including adding new voters and deleting names. In Delhi, such camps were being organised on most weekends, since September 20, at government schools and offices for residents of nearby areas who want their names included in the electoral rolls after being struck off the draft rolls. Today marked the final day of these special camps — although all SIR-related ap-

plications can still be filled and submitted till October 30.

Nineteen-year-old Harsh Kumar, who studies at KCC College in Noida and recently became eligible to vote, was among the few who had come to the Chilla camp to be enrolled as a fresh elector. He has an Aadhaar Card and an electricity bill as proof of date of birth and address. It should have been easy to enrol him. However, the BLO got stuck at the declaration section that seeks the status of the applicant's parents vis-a-vis the last SIR. Harsh's father Vinod was not even in the BLO's list of electors. The BLO told Harsh to get his father's Voter ID and, in the meanwhile, started looking for his father's name in lists of other BLOs. "How many times will we have to come with documents just to get enrolled?" asked Harsh. Nearly 20 km to the west in New Moti Bagh, where a number of bureaucrats reside, BLO Deepak Grover faced other challenges. "In this area, people don't come for camps, so we have to go door to door and ask people if anyone wants to get enrolled in the electoral rolls," he said. Grover started his morning at 10 am, ringing bells in the GPRA New Moti Bagh, going to every house, every floor and every tower with an introduction and one question: "I have come from the election office. Does anyone want to get enrolled as a voter here?" At three houses, staff members told the BLO to go away and come later. At a fourth house, a senior bureaucrat welcomed Grover inside his home as he got a Form-6 filled for his daughter-in-law. At Sarai Kale Khan village, BLO Mukesh Chand Meena had to handle both the special camps and house-to-house visits. "I had even called some people who had been issued notices, but they told me they wouldn't come," he said. He is tired after months of BLO work. "I don't know when this will get over," Meena said, as he packed up his stationery and got ready for house-to-house visits. By the evening, he was able to resolve around five notices and conduct verification of one Form-6 applicant.

Diwali sweet prices leave bigger hole in families' budgets

Hyderabad: This Diwali, the sweetness of celebrations is set to leave a bigger hole in families' budgets as the prices of sweets have risen by 20 to 25 percent ahead of the festival. From traditional sweets to dry fruits, the cost of filling festive boxes is set to burden households. A kilogram of gulab jamun and kalakand, which are among the most popular sweets during the festivities, now costs between Rs. 900 and Rs. 1,200. Other commonly consumed sweets, including rasgulla, soan papdi, rasmalai, balushahi and motichoor laddu, are priced between Rs. 800 and Rs. 1,100 per kg. The price rise comes amid higher sugar prices, which have increased by 17 to 20 percent over the past couple of months. A kilogram of sugar now costs between Rs. 60 and Rs. 70, as against Rs. 45 in July and August. "Ingredient prices and the cost of production have gone up considerably over the past couple of months. We have no option but to pass on the increased costs to customers," said a manager at a sweets outlet in Himayatnagar.

Dallas police searching for endangered missing teen; mom says she was 'anxious' about school evaluations



Natalie was last seen on foot at 10:08 p.m. Wednesday, October 21 in the 9300 block of Whistle Stop Place in the Lake Highlands area of Dallas. She has been described as 5 feet 3 inches tall, weighing approximately 135 pounds.

She has brown hair and hazel eyes. Natalie was last seen wearing a gray hoodie, blue jeans, and white shoes. 'She's on the spectrum, but high functioning' Natalie's mother, Megan Bernhardt, said that her daughter has autism, and is concerned that she could put herself in danger without realizing it. "She's on the spectrum, but high functioning," Bernhardt said. Bernhardt said that Natalie was anxious about school evaluations scheduled for the next morning. "She was feeling anxious about those and ended up just taking off from home. And I wasn't able to catch her in time and stop her," Bernhardt said. The mother said she believes that Natalie may have left the neighborhood on the light rail. The Lake Highlands DART station is just a short walk from the apartment complex where Natalie lives. Bernhardt said that Natalie has jumped on the train before, but has never been missing for this long. "Her thought process just is a little bit different from other people's at times," Bernhardt said. Bernhardt said that she is worried her daughter may not be able to recognize certain dangers, like getting into a stranger's car. "She doesn't always have those same sort of fears or concerns in making those choices," she said.

Brazil heads back to the future as Flavio Bolsonaro refuses to recognize Lula win

SAO PAULO, Brazilian 'right-wing Senator Flavio Bolsonaro has followed his imprisoned father's lead by refusing to concede defeat to leftist ?President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who won a historic fourth term in Sunday's presidential election. Bolsonaro, the son of former President Jair Bolsonaro, called into question a late-Sunday decision by a Lula-appointed Supreme Court justice that extended voting by two hours over alleged voter transport irregularities. He said ?he would ask for the result to be annulled.

The Misinformation Monitor newsletter rounds up international misinformation narratives, with a "Real or Fake?" quiz in every edition. Sign up here. "It is impossible to recognize the election results, given the ?circumstances under which things unfolded," Bolsonaro told journalists. Yet the scale of the loss, with Bolsonaro trailing ?Lula by over 4 million votes, makes it unlikely his efforts to annul the vote will succeed, analysts said. His ?petition is also undermined by the fact that his campaign also sought a voting extension due to heavy rains in the ?conservative-leaning south. Still, Bolsonaro's refusal to concede could spark a wave of protests in a country where faith in the electoral system, and in judicial independence, has been strained in recent years, observers say. Jair Bolsonaro plunged Brazil into a deep democratic crisis after the election in 2022, when ?his supporters stormed government buildings in protest against the result. He later received a 27-year sentence for plotting a coup.

LULA ?DEFIES EXPECTATIONS Lula's victory defied polls, precedent and global anti-incumbent sentiment to put the brakes on a wave of right-wing election victories across Latin America. The result will disappoint the administration of US President Donald Trump, whose State Department led a campaign to return the Bolsonaros to power. Brazilian presidential candidate Flavio Bolsonaro of the Liberal Party (PL) arrives to speak after losing the presidential runoff election, in Brasilia, Brazil October 25, 2026. REUTERS/Agustin



Marcarian Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab Financial markets also expressed initial concerns at the shock result. A Tokyo-listed exchange-traded fund tracking Brazil's Bovespa index (1325.T), opens new tab dived nearly 15% in Asia trade on news of Lula's victory, while analysts expected the Brazilian real to fall against the US dollar. Lula ?had trailed Bolsonaro in the ?first round, but managed to convince voters to come out for him in the runoff. Speaking at a hotel in São Paulo late on Sunday, he took a conciliatory tone. "I won't speak of national unity, because that doesn't always fit the reality of this country. No one is obliged to like ?the elected president, ?but he was put in place to govern for everyone," Lula said. 'COUNTLESS' CHALLENGES During the campaign, Lula pointed to his track record of cutting poverty and inequality while also highlighting record low unemployment, illiteracy and deforestation, but his fourth term may prove challenging. He will have to work alongside a Congress packed full of Bolsonaro allies after a surge of right-wing voting recast Brazil's legislature in favor of the president's enemies. "The challenges are countless," said Carlos Melo, a political science professor at Insper in São Paulo.

Houthis say they attacked Saudi oil pumping stations, Riyadh airport as fighting intensifies



Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis said on Monday they had ?attacked Saudi Arabia's East-West crude oil pumping stations and Riyadh airport, as rising hostilities choke oil supplies and threaten to erupt into a larger conflict. The Saudi-led coalition in Yemen said earlier it had destroyed two ballistic missile launchers in the capital Sanaa, including one used to fire a ?missile towards Riyadh that the coalition said it had intercepted. The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. There was no immediate Saudi confirmation of the Houthi attacks. The ?Houthis have been firing ballistic missiles and drones at Saudi airports, ports and oil installations, turning ?US ally Saudi Arabia into a pressure point in the wider war.

The Houthis also said they had struck Riyadh's King ?Khalid International Airport, which resumed operations at two terminals on Sunday after an attack claimed by the group earlier this month killed 13 people, ?the deadliest in the kingdom in more than a decade. Top officials from the Mecca Pact countries Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan are set

Protests sweep Italian cities, clashes reported

GNS News Agency, Oct 28 Rome: Protests over rising living costs, military expansion and increased arms spending swept across several Italian cities, with clashes between demonstrators and police reported in multiple locations, according to Italian media. In Bologna, clashes broke out between some demonstrators and police on Saturday evening, the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera reported.

Emergency medical services received 17 calls for assistance, and six people were taken to hospital by ambulance, Xinhua news agency reported. In Rome, demonstrators set off from Piazza della Repubblica on Saturday afternoon for an anti-war march, according to the ANSA news agency. Clashes erupted between protesters and police in the city center later in the evening, prompting police to use water cannons and tear gas in an attempt to disperse the crowds. In Turin, demonstrators protesting mainly against

to meet Iranian officials in Tehran on Monday to discuss regional coordination, two people with knowledge of the matter said. The planned talks would be the ?first high-level contact between Iran and all members of the three-nation bloc since Saudi Arabia came under escalating attacks from ?Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis. Saudi Arabia temporarily shut down its 1,200-km (746-mile) East-West pipeline in September as a precaution after a drone attack that Riyadh and ?Baghdad ?said originated in Iraq. The pipeline has served as a key route for Middle East oil exports while the Strait of Hormuz has been largely shut by the war. The Houthis also said on Saturday they had targeted the East-West pipeline, crude oil pumping stations, an Aramco facility in Yanbu and the Rabigh refinery. There was no Saudi confirmation of those claims. The Saudi coalition said on ?Monday it had also carried ?out a military operation against ?Houthi targets in Yemen, destroying five tunnels used to store ballistic missiles, four ballistic missile launchers and a missile storage facility. The operation also targeted Houthi supply lines, fighters and military equipment ?along front lines inside Yemen, coalition spokesperson Turki al-Maliki said, pledging continued "deterrent operational measures" to protect ?civilians. Saudi Arabia has ?intensified its strikes on the Houthis since the group captured strategic areas along Yemen's Red Sea coast last month, advancing towards the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a key global shipping route for Gulf oil producers on the other side of the Arabian Peninsula from the ?Strait of ?Hormuz. The latest fighting has effectively ended a UN-brokered truce that had largely held ?since 2022. Saudi Arabia led a coalition into Yemen's civil war in 2015 to back the internationally recognised government, a year after the Houthis seized the ?capital Sanaa.

increased military spending and rising fuel prices clashed with police on Saturday evening.

Some protesters threw fireworks and bottles at officers, who responded by firing tear gas. Following demonstrations that escalated into riots and looting last weekend, particularly in Milan, Italian Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi ordered additional police forces to be deployed across the country. The reinforcement was focused particularly on major cities where the largest rallies were expected. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni condemned the violence in a social media post on Saturday evening, stressing the need to protect both peaceful demonstrators and the wider public. "Everyone's safety must be guaranteed: those who wish to demonstrate peacefully, those who work, and those who want to live in their cities without fear," she said. "We must leave no room for those who seek nothing but confrontation and violence."

Ties with India to remain strong regardless of Israel poll results: Political analyst



Tel Aviv/New Delhi: Strong ties between India and Israel are likely to remain unaffected by the outcome of the upcoming Israeli elections, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's close personal relationship with his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu and growing cooperation in defence and technology underpinning the partnership, Israeli author and political analyst Alec Pollard has said. "Whoever wins the election, Israel and India will continue to be good friends and to be close," the Israeli author told PTI Videos, adding that the relationship is highly valued by Israel.

He said that a change in leadership could, however, bring a new dimension to bilateral ties, with a new prime minister's ability to establish a rapport with Prime Minister Modi remaining a key factor. The Israeli elections, scheduled to be held on Tuesday, are expected to be closely contested, with Netanyahu facing questions over the October 7 Hamas attack, exemptions from compulsory military service for the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community, and concerns over Israel's international isolation.

Sri Lanka repatriates 40 Iranian sailors after providing medical care

Colombo: Sri Lanka repatriated 40 Iranian sailors after rescuing them from a distressed vessel off its southern coast and providing them with medical care. "They departed by air early on Saturday," a foreign ministry spokesman told reporters here on Sunday. The Embassy of Iran had funded the logistical arrangements for the departure, he said. All 40 sailors received medical attention before returning to Iran, the spokesman said.

Sri Lankan authorities launched a humanitarian operation after receiving information about a merchant vessel in distress about 24 nautical miles off Galle, a port city on the island nation's southern coast. The repatriation comes amid heightened scrutiny of Iranian vessels operating in waters around Sri Lanka following a series of maritime incidents involving Iranian naval ships and concerns over US sanctions on vessels linked to Iran. In March, Iranian naval vessel IRIS Dena was sunk by a US submarine outside Sri Lankan waters, killing at least 84 Iranian sailors. Sri Lanka subsequently provided assistance to another Iranian vessel, IRIS Bushehr, which was in distress in the vicinity of the incident. The 208 personnel aboard Bushehr were repatriated after Sri Lankan authorities arranged for the vessel to be towed to the eastern port of Trincomalee. In September, Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath said Iranian vessels were among 47 ships that had been operating around Sri Lankan waters but remained outside the country's maritime

Pollard said the October 7 Hamas attack, widely seen in Israel as a major security and intelligence failure, had emerged as a key electoral issue, with many holding Netanyahu responsible. "Netanyahu has been trying to sort of offload that blame onto the security establishment, onto the intelligence establishment, even his political rivals," he said. But he is taking credit for some of the military successes that Israel has had since the Hamas attack, the author noted. "So the question is, will Israel believe that version or not? And that's going to be quite crucial because a lot of people have been personally burned by this," Pollard added. He said Netanyahu's opponents have criticised exemptions from military service for ultra-Orthodox Jews, while reservists face repeated deployments. "Equal conscription of everybody is a major focus. Those who don't serve shouldn't be able to benefit from the welfare state. But the issue is more about the ultra-Orthodox because they're core members of Netanyahu's coalition," Pollard highlighted. The analyst also flagged the unresolved debate over a national commission of inquiry into the October 7 attack and Netanyahu's proposed judicial reforms as significant issues for Israeli voters. He said while "Netanyahu has projected himself as a leader willing to withstand international pressure", the opposition has argued that his far-right coalition partners have contributed to Israel's growing isolation. The election outcome would not bring major changes to Gaza policies, Pollard further stated, adding that Israel cannot afford to return to the security conditions that prevailed before October 7. "There was a ceasefire deal with US President Trump, which said that the hostages will be returned. That did happen, and Hamas will disarm. That did not happen. So as far as Israel is concerned, essentially that conflict is not over," he underlined.



limits. The developments have also raised questions about the implications of US sanctions for Sri Lanka's handling of Iranian vessels. Earlier this month, the Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry said US secondary sanctions announced in August were part of Washington's broader global policy and were not directed specifically at Sri Lanka. Under the secondary sanctions announced on August 24, individuals and entities providing services to vessels subject to US sanctions risk losing access to the US financial system. The ministry's clarification came amid media speculation that Washington had cautioned Colombo against servicing Iranian tankers operating outside its waters.

Vietnam People's Army's delegation of 10 Young Officers visit defence establishments in India



New Delhi: A delegation of 10 Young Officers from the Vietnam People's Army visited India under the Young Officers Exchange Programme, reaffirming the "enduring friendship and growing defence cooperation" between the two nations. During their visit to India, the Young Officers from the Vietnam People's Army visited defence establishments and places of cultural significance in Pune, Ahilyanagar and Deolali.

In a statement shared on X, the Indian Army's Additional Directorate General of Public Information stated, "A delegation of 10 Young Officers from the Vietnam People's Army visited India from 17 to 23 October 2026 under the Young Officers Exchange Programme. The delegation visited defence establishments and places of cultural significance in Pune, Ahilyanagar and Deolali, fostering professional exchanges, mutual understanding and camaraderie. The visit reaffirmed the enduring friendship and growing defence cooperation between India and Vietnam." Last month, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Dhiraj Seth held a meeting with Deputy Chief of General Staff of Vietnam People's Army Lieutenant General Le Van Huong and discussed measures to deepen defence cooperation and military-to-military engagement.

"Strengthening India-Vietnam Friendship. Lieutenant General Le Van Huong, Deputy Chief of General Staff of Vietnam People's Army, during his official visit to India, paid solemn tributes to India's bravehearts at the National War Memorial in New Delhi, followed by a Ceremonial Guard of Honour at South Block," the Indian Army's Additional Directorate General of Public Information posted on X. "The General, then was warmly received by COAS General Dhiraj Seth. Measures to deepen defence cooperation and military-to-military engagement were discussed by the military leaders, reaffirming the shared commitment of both armies to regional stability and peace," it added. Earlier in August, India and Vietnam held high-level defence talks and reaffirmed their shared commitment to enhance defence cooperation under the Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two countries. The two sides exchanged views on regional and international security issues of shared concern. The discussion took place between Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) Air Chief Marshal AP Singh and General Nguyen

Tan Cuong, Chief of the General Staff of the Vietnam People's Army and Deputy Minister of National Defence.

"In the framework of the ongoing official visit to Vietnam, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force, paid a courtesy call on General Nguyen Tan Cuong, Chief of the General Staff of the Vietnam People's Army and Deputy Minister of National Defence. The two sides reviewed the positive developments in Vietnam-India defence cooperation, particularly emphasising the strengthening of cooperation between the two countries' Air Forces, capacity building, and promoting professional exchange activities," the Indian Embassy in Vietnam posted on X. "They also exchanged views on regional and international security issues of mutual concern. The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of Vietnam and India to continue further deepening defence cooperation within the framework of the Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two countries," it added.

Telangana government facilitates return of man killed in Ukraine strike

GNS News Agency, Oct 28 Hyderabad: The Telangana government has initiated steps to bring back the mortal remains of Avilala Sudarshan Goud, a native of Hasanabad village in Jagtial mandal, who was killed in a Russian missile strike in Ukraine on September 1.

His remains are expected to reach Hyderabad in the early hours of October 31, nearly two months after his death. The repatriation was delayed by an investigation into the strike and a criminal case registered in connection with it.

The government intervened after his wife, Bhargavi, approached the CM Prvasi Prajavani in Hyderabad seeking assistance. Jagtial MLA Dr. Makunuri Sanjay Kumar and Minister Adhuri Lakshman Kumar also made representations to the government.

Ahmad Nadeem, Principal Secretary to the General Administration Department (Political), wrote to India's Ambassador to Ukraine, Anjani Kumar, on October 24, seeking assistance in facilitating the repatriation. Mandha Bheem Reddy, vice-chairman of the Telangana Government's NRI Advisory Committee, said. With air travel restricted in Ukrainian airspace, the coffin will be transported by road to Poland. The remains will then be flown from Warsaw to Amsterdam and onward to Hyderabad. The journey is scheduled to begin on October 29, after which arrangements will be made to transport the remains to Hasanabad for the last rites.

Indian cryptography research gears up to face the quantum challenge



NS News Agency, Oct 28

Fundamental research in cryptography that's used worldwide to facilitate internet banking, e-commerce services, and secure messaging systems is now taking root in India as well. The principal goal of those developing or using cryptographic systems is to improve system security. Cryptography — from the English roots of "hidden writing" — is the name for techniques that secure information by converting plain text into ciphertext. It is concerned with the creation and use of encrypted messages that only the sender and the receiver can understand and which a malicious actor who interferes with the communication can't.

Sending secret messages isn't new. Archaeologists have unearthed clay tablets made by the ancient Mesopotamians in which they wrote down cryptic formulae to make ceramic glazes. In the first century BC, the Roman dictator Julius Caesar used the eponymous Caesar cipher to relay messages of strategic value to his generals. More recently, many Polish codebreakers fled their country after Adolf Hitler invaded it in 1939 to work with reputed British mathematicians, including the father of modern computing Alan Turing, to crack Germany's famed Enigma cryptosystem. Turing's work in particular established much of the foundational theory for modern algorithmic computing.

Scientists have devised many sophisticated methods to prevent adversaries from cracking secret codes and gaining unauthorised access to sensitive information. These methods achieve their goals by using algorithms and protocols to protect some data's confidentiality, integrity, authenticity, and non-repudiation. "Hard" problems Cryptographic algorithms convert messages in ways that make it very difficult, very expensive or both to decode them. A common way to achieve this has been to place some sensitive information behind the answer to a very difficult problem. An agent can access the information by solving the problem, so the harder the problem, the more inaccessible the information. "Hence the search for harder and harder problems — for instance, even those that quantum computers may find hard to solve," R. Ramanujam of the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai, said. As computational techniques evolve, particularly with advancements in quantum computing, the interplay between complexity and cryptography will continue to be a crucial area of research and development, he added.

Modern cryptographic systems are built on problems that demand far too many resources to be solved. "As they say in the crypto community, if your cryptosystem is broken, either a spy is dead or a million dollars is missing," Ayan Mukherjee, an assistant professor at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune, said. "Such is the seriousness of the effect of a broken cryptosystem. Thus, oftentimes, people use the old and the trusted to secure their communications." This is also why, he added, "The field of cryptography is very slow-moving." "There is a close connection between complexity theory and cryptography, hence many [researchers] work on these connections, clarifying notions and building finer techniques," Ramanujam said. Areas where Indian researchers are working extensively include communication complexity (the amount of communication required to complete a computational task), proof complexity (the computational resources required to prove or disprove statements), and algebraic coding theory (using algebra to encode and decode data). Locks and keys

The goal is to make sure an adversary, especially one with enormous computational resources, can't crack the code. At the heart of any cryptosystem is the key: a secret value an algorithm uses to encrypt or decrypt data. The Caesar cipher is a simple example. It works by mapping the existing alphabet to one where the starting letter is offset by some number of letters. This number is the key. For example, if the key is 14, the encrypted alphabet begins with the letter O (the 14th letter) rather than A. Thus the words FIGHT FOR ROME become TWUVH TCF FCAS. When the sender encrypts data with a key, only someone who knows the key can decrypt the message and read it. More sophisticated systems use two keys — one each for the sender and the receiver — and map them in a separate secret way.

A famous example is public-key cryptography, which is used to secure information over the internet. The receiver uses a single algorithm to generate two keys called the public key and the private key, and shares the public key with the sender. Any message the sender encrypts with the public key can be decrypted by the private key. Researchers prefer the algorithms that generate keys to be one-way functions, a name in mathematics for functions that are simple

to use but hard to crack. In cryptography, this means they can be used to easily encrypt messages but can't be cracked without knowing the key. As Ramanujam put it, the challenge is like protecting a house with a strong alarm system that the house's residents can still use without training. Some one-way functions are very difficult to crack and thus very secure — but which also take a long time to decrypt messages. This is one of the principal reasons mining for bitcoins has become a very energy-intensive process. The bitcoin system uses a one-way function that has required more computational resources to decrypt messages as the size of its blockchain has increased. This is why some cryptography researchers in India and abroad are working on simplifying the decryption side in particular. Researchers are also considering whether shorter proofs (of the hard problems) can be used to verify the integrity of data in artificial intelligence and large language models. Cryptography isn't just a mathematical or academic curiosity but is of considerable practical interest, Yael Kalai, whose work on proofs won her the 2022 Turing Award, told the 11th Heidelberg Laureate Forum in September (the author was in the audience). "In today's world, the biggest problem we have to solve is trustworthiness," she said. Since researchers have solved the problem of authentication and security in communications, she added, the current problem is computation. "People are computing things for us. How do we know that they are computing correctly? How do we certify the huge and often crazy computations people are coming up with? That is a huge new research problem now."

Possibility of disruption Two research areas that could disrupt current cryptographic systems with significant economic and social consequences are homomorphic encryption and quantum information technologies, per a recent paper by the Organisation of Economically Developed Countries (OECD). Homomorphic encryption is a cryptographic method that allows certain calculations to be performed on encrypted data without the need to decrypt it first and without accessing the secret key. The result of such computations remains in encrypted form and can be revealed later, when necessary. According to the paper, this technique could surmount the problem of processing encrypted data without decrypting it first, which increases risk. Second, a mature quantum computer could easily break some encryption methods widely used today. Some researchers are thus working on algorithms that can resist attacks powered by a quantum computer, an enterprise called quantum resistant cryptography (QRC). In fact marrying cryptography with quantum physics paves the way for encryption technologies based on the laws of quantum physics, which can be more convoluted than mathematical concepts alone. Researchers worldwide have been working on QRC since 2006, including in publicly funded research projects in the European Union and Japan. In India, Mukherjee's group at IISER Pune, and those at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the Raman Research Institute (RRI), both in Bengaluru; the Centre for Development of Telematics, New Delhi; and at Pondicherry University are working on it as well.

'A huge deal' Cryptography research in India is taking off in other aspects, too, catching up with that in the European Union, the U.S., and China. The National Quantum Mission the Cabinet approved in 2023 includes a research hub for quantum communication. The mission is to enable satellite-based secure quantum communications between ground stations over 2,000 km, long-distance secure quantum communications with other countries, inter-city quantum key distribution over 2,000 km, and multi-node quantum networks, among other outcomes. The Indian Space Research Organisation is also planning to launch a satellite with ultra-secure quantum communication capabilities. In July, a team of Indian scientists from RRI, IISc, IISER Thiruvananthapuram, and the Bose Institute in Kolkata published a paper describing a way to generate true random numbers that are crucial to making secure private keys and nearly unhackable passwords. "This new method offers the enhanced protection we all need in our daily lives, by using truly random numbers to generate keys that will be used to encrypt the passwords," the Department of Science & Technology said in a statement. Apart from the Ministry of Science & Technology, major government funders for cryptography research in the country include the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the Department of Telecommunications. "The present status of quantum cryptography is to build quantum-secure cryptosystems," Mukherjee said. "It's based on the idea that, in the near future, we will have quantum computers. When that happens the current cryptosystems will fail. This is a huge deal." The consequences will also affect India's cryptography policy. According to a recent study commissioned by the Thales Group, the volume of sensitive data in the cloud could surge from 51% of all organisational data to 68% by 2027. As more data enters and lives in the cloud, "encryption techniques for data at rest, in motion, and in use are becoming more pervasive, evolving into a standard practice for protecting cloud-resident sensitive information against emerging cyber threats," the report said. There is widespread data loss as well: the report said almost three-fourths of all organisations have faced multiple data breaches in the past year, foremost due to inadequate encryption. Some 71% initiated formal cryptographic programmes and 81% have dedicated encryption teams.

to better tame US AI while supporting domestic and EU suppliers. Relying on Chinese tech, from cars to AI, is going to hollow out industry and undermine the security of our data," the report stated. The report points out that cheap AI takes the export threat from China to "a much higher level" than the communist country's low-priced products such as EVs, which hurt domestic car industries of other countries. "It's scary because Beijing is entering a new phase in the long march of economic development, taking the world's second largest economy closer to making China great again," the report states. It also underscores that China is building a fleet of warships to challenge the US in the Pacific, much as Japan did in the 1930s. Taiwan, the engine of semiconductor development, is also in its sights. The report further states that where Russia is using AI to enhance cyber-attacks on European government agencies and businesses to create chaos, China wants merely to widen the circle of friends that consume its goods without asking awkward questions. However, this has the potential to enable Beijing to turn states into clients who depend for the basics of life on Chinese technology.

Israel frees 90 Palestinian prisoners as ceasefire takes hold



The first three hostages were released from Gaza and the first Palestinian prisoners were freed from Israeli custody as the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hamas took hold following 15 months of war, with mixed emotions and more difficult steps ahead over the next six weeks. Palestinians across Gaza began making their way home, and the first trucks with a surge of humanitarian aid began to enter the devastated territory.

The ceasefire that began on Sunday morning raises hopes for ending the devastating conflict and returning the nearly 100 remaining hostages abducted in Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack. But major questions remain about whether fighting will resume after the six-week first phase. First came the release of Emily Damari, 28; Romi Gonen, 24, and Doron Steinbrecher, 31, in a tense handover to the Red Cross on a Gaza City street. Footage showed them surrounded by a crowd of thousands, accompanied by masked, armed men wearing green Hamas headbands. The women were taken to Israeli forces and then into Israel, where they hugged family members fiercely and wept. Damari was shown raising her bandaged hand in triumph. The military said she lost two fingers in the Oct. 7 attack. In Tel Aviv, thousands of people who gathered to watch the news on large screens erupted in applause. For months, many had gathered in the square weekly to demand a ceasefire deal. "An entire nation embraces you," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said. Over seven hours later, the first Palestinian prisoners were released. They had been detained for what Israel called offenses related to its security, from throwing stones to more serious accusations such as attempted murder.

Israel's military, which occupies the West Bank, warned Palestinians against public celebration — the release took place after 1 a.m. — but crowds thronged the buses after they left the prison, some people climbing on top or waving flags, including those of Hamas. There were fireworks and whistles, and shouts of "God is great." Those released were hoisted onto others' shoulders or embraced. The most prominent detainee freed was Khalida Jarrar, 62, a member of a secular leftist faction that was involved in attacks against Israel in the 1970s but later scaled back militant activities. Since her arrest in late 2023, she was held under indefinitely renewable administrative detention orders that were criticized by human rights groups.

The next release of hostages and prisoners is due on Saturday, with 33 hostages and nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners and detainees to be freed over the ceasefire's 42-day first phase. In just over two weeks, talks are to begin on the far more challenging second phase. Freed Palestinian prisoners react from inside a bus that arrived with them after their release from an Israeli jail as part of a hostages-prisoners swap and a ceasefire deal in Gaza between Hamas and Israel, in Ramallah, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on January 20, 2025.

Recasting insolvency resolution

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC) is one of India's most significant economic reforms, introduced to address the challenges of insolvency resolution in a structured and time-bound manner. At the time of its introduction, the IBC was seen as an important tool that would help India's standing in the business world and bring bad borrowers and big defaulters to book. Yet, as the law matured, certain issues have cropped up that demand attention, particularly regarding institutional capacity and procedural efficiency. The recent Supreme Court of India judgment in Jet Airways (State Bank of India & Ors. vs The Consortium of Mr. Murari Lal Jalan and Mr. Florian Fritsch & Anr.) has laid bare the many structural infirmities that are plaguing India's insolvency regime. A double burden The effective implementation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) hinges on the performance of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and its appellate body, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT). These tribunals face the dual burden of handling corporate insolvencies under the IBC and cases under the Companies Act. This institutional architecture, however, suffers from what might be termed "temporal disjunction". Conceived in 1999 based on the Eradi Committee's recommendations and operationalised in 2016, the NCLT's structure reflects the economic realities of a bygone era, leaving it ill-equipped to meet contemporary demands. With a sanctioned strength of 63 members — many of whom divide their time across multiple benches — the NCLT has become a bottleneck for



insolvency resolutions and corporate transactions such as mergers and amalgamations. Compounding the issue, several NCLT benches do not operate for the full working day, even when not tasked with handling cases from other benches. As a result, delays have worsened. According to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI), the average time for insolvency resolutions increased to 716 days in FY2023-24, up from 654 days in FY2022-23. This is despite the Supreme Court's repeated calls for adherence to the specific timelines provided in IBC, including in the Jet Airways case, where the Court has stated that the "NCLTs/NCLATs need to be sensitised of not exercising their judicial discretion in extending the timelines... in such a way that it may make the Code lose its effectiveness thereby rendering it obsolete". The need for domain expertise The current framework's deficiencies are manifest across other dimensions. What stands out the most is the qualitative dimension of institutional capacity. The current method of appointment ignores the need for domain experience. As the Court noted in the Jet

Freed Palestinian prisoners react from inside a bus that arrived with them after their release from an Israeli jail as part of a hostages-prisoners swap and a ceasefire deal in Gaza between Hamas and Israel, in Ramallah, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on January 20, 2025. | Photo Credit: Reuters This is just the second ceasefire in the war, longer and more consequential than a weeklong pause in November 2023, with the potential to end the fighting for good. But Netanyahu, who had been under pressure from both the Biden administration and President-elect Donald Trump to achieve a deal before Monday's U.S. inauguration, has said he has Trump's backing to continue fighting if necessary. Meanwhile, Israel's hard-line national security minister said his Jewish Power faction was quitting the government in protest over the ceasefire, reflecting the political friction that some Israelis said delayed a deal. Itamar Ben-Gvir's departure weakens Netanyahu's coalition but will not affect the truce.

Across Gaza, there was relief and grief. The fighting has killed tens of thousands, destroyed large areas and displaced most of the population. "This ceasefire was a joy mixed with pain, because my son was martyred in this war," said Rami Nofal, a displaced man from Gaza City. Masked militants appeared at some celebrations, where crowds chanted slogans in support of them, according to Associated Press reporters in Gaza. The Hamas-run police began deploying in public after mostly lying low due to Israeli airstrikes. Some families set off for home on foot, their belongings loaded on donkey carts. In the southern city of Rafah, residents returned to find massive destruction. Some found human remains in the rubble, including skulls. "It's like you see in a Hollywood horror movie," resident Mohamed Abu Taha said as he inspected the ruins of his family's home. Already, Israeli forces were pulling back from areas. Residents of Beit Lahiya and Jabaliya in northern Gaza told the AP they didn't see Israeli troops there. One resident said they saw bodies in the streets that appeared to have been there for weeks. In Israel, people remained divided over the agreement. Asher Pizem, 35, from the city of Sderot, said the deal had merely postponed the next confrontation with Hamas. He also criticized Israel for allowing aid into Gaza, saying it would contribute to the militant group's revival. "They will take the time and attack again," he said while viewing Gaza's smoldering ruins from a small hill in southern Israel with other Israelis gathered there. When President Joe Biden was asked Sunday whether he has any concerns about Hamas regrouping, he said no. The toll of the war has been immense, and new details will now emerge. The head of the Rafah municipality in Gaza, Ahmed al-Sufi, said a large part of the infrastructure, including water, electricity and road networks, was destroyed, in addition to thousands of homes. There should be a surge of humanitarian aid, with hundreds of trucks entering Gaza daily, far more than Israel allowed before. The U.N. humanitarian agency said more than 630 trucks with aid entered on Sunday, with at least 300 going to hard-hit northern Gaza. "This is a moment of tremendous hope," humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher said. Over 46,000 Palestinians have been killed, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which says women and children make up more than half the fatalities but does not distinguish between civilians and fighters. The Hamas-led attack on southern Israel that sparked the war killed over 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and militants abducted around 250 others. More than 100 hostages were freed during the weeklong ceasefire in November 2023. Some 90% of Gaza's population has been displaced. Rebuilding — if the ceasefire reaches its final phase — will take several years at least. Major questions about Gaza's future, political and otherwise, remain unresolved.

Report warns of data security risks from cheap Chinese AI models

New Delhi: There is much to fear from artificial intelligence (AI) developed by Chinese companies such as DeepSeek and Xiaomi China and handed to businesses and governments in the West almost free of charge, according to a report. The report in the UK's The Guardian highlights that Chinese developers are launching AI models by the dozen each month at a fraction of the cost of US equivalents. In practice, an AI user has the choice between a cheap Chinese open system they can tweak for their own ends or expensive US software that comes with various attachments that they probably don't need.

The policy governing DeepSeek's online chatbot says it collects prompts and uploaded material, processes and stores personal data in China, and permits disclosure to Chinese authorities, the report by Phillip Inman pointed out. It cited Michael Wooldridge, a Professor of AI at the University of Oxford, as saying it is not unreasonable to assume data inputted into the chatbot could be shared with the Chinese state.

"The consequences for policymaking are profound. The UK should reject the lure of cheap Chinese AI and seek

Building a community of nature educators in Bengaluru



A game of spring bingo is underway at Cubbon Park on a pleasant Sunday morning. The players fan across the park's lush lawns and thickets of trees, dodging other Sunday regulars (walkers, joggers, readers, skaters, dogs, lovers ambling hand-in-hand) as they attempt to identify specific things in the park: new leaves, flowering trees, spiderlings, edible leaves and birdsong. Once they cross out most of the items on their respective bingo cards, they sit in a circle under a large tree, ready to share insights and meet other like-minded people.

Now in its 10th edition, this monthly event is a nature educators' meet-up, an informal convening of people in or interested in the nature learning space. These meets, an initiative of the Nature Conservation Foundation's Nature Classrooms, is a space "where people can feel free to come, share their work, collaborate, network and give nature education a voice," says Priyanka Prakash, a project manager at Nature Classrooms. According to nature educator and ecologist Vena Kapoor who founded and heads Nature Classrooms, an initiative to link everyday learning and education to the natural world, this idea of an informal meet-up was seeded from a casual conversation during a team meeting. "My colleagues and I were discussing how many people reach out to us, saying that they are also interested in nature education and asking if they could meet us," she says. This casual conversation led to them thinking that it would be "nice for people from the nature education space to catch up occasionally, just to discuss each other's work, see if we want to share resources, figure out what is happening in this space and help each other."

In April last year, a call was put out on the Nature Classrooms Instagram page announcing an in-person meeting for nature educators in Bengaluru. The turnout at the first meetup, which was held on April 21, at Cubbon Park, was impressive, which surprised them, recalls Vena. "Some people who came were just curious and wanted to know what other people were doing. Or there were people who were planning to get into nature education and wanted to meet people who were already doing nature education," she says. What also became evident was that people were just happy to see the number of other people working in this space, she believes. "It made them feel less alone." During this meetup, many participants also told the organisers that they wanted a more consistent engagement, so this first informal meeting became the first of a series of regular events at Cubbon Park. "We decided that we will all meet on the last Sunday of every month and stick to that so automatically people will be able to add it to their diaries," says Vena. Since then, this informal meetup has occurred every month, except for one month, during the Deepavali break. Participants bring in their own perspectives, ideas and experiences, with the focus of the conversation hopping from the use of effective nature-based education tools to the problems of parachuting in and out of communities.

A spirit of camaraderie is visible among the group under the large tree at Cubbon Park, with green grapes and cookies being passed around and plenty of side talk. Manini Bansal, a visual communication designer and animal-lover, who is facilitating this session, then takes over, beginning by talking about her own journey. "I am someone who grew up just enjoying nature and loving being outdoors...constantly looking for creatures...bringing random animals into the house," she confesses, with a laugh,

recalling how her grandmother used to call her Mowgli.

Manini goes on to trace her career path, starting with her training at design school, her first job at a design studio ("I absolutely hated it") and her experience of working as the managing editor of Current Conservation, a not-for-profit quarterly print and online magazine focusing on conservation. Back then, only people from the conservation space knew about this magazine, so her goal was to engage the larger public "to make sure that the magazine was out there through different ways of design and communication," she says. In keeping with this goal, the magazine often conducted events for the public, including nature education workshops for children, she says, describing some of them. She then raises a very germane question: How do you talk about nature to children from different socioeconomic backgrounds? The rest of the group starts chiming in with their own perspectives, ideas and experiences, with the focus of the conversation hopping from the use of effective nature-based education tools to the problems of parachuting in and out of communities, the scope of nature journals, whether taking a utilitarian human-centric perspective is the best approach to conservation, among other things. Other specific issues, like the impact of the proposed Sharavathi project in Karnataka on the endangered lion-tailed macaques and how development often severely impacts insect diversity, were also discussed at the session. "We were very conscious, right from the beginning, that we didn't want it to be a unidirectional lecture-based session. We wanted it to be a community space for what we thought we wanted out of these meetings," says Vena. While the Nature Classrooms team facilitated the first few meetings, other participants from the larger community have also been volunteering to facilitate these meet-ups. "So, every session has been very different in terms of topics we have chosen to discuss," she says, while Priyanka adds, "It is just us trying to see the diverse conversations we can have around nature education and how we can bring people to share their work and lead some of these sessions."

Priyanka feels that nature education is gaining some momentum now, with many educators developing their own resources and content. But it is still somewhat happening in pockets, which can be isolating, according to her, and so, "we feel it would be so nice if we can come together and exchange our work with one another," she says. "I think this space needs a lot of partnerships and collaborations with people bringing in diverse expertise because education requires different approaches."

Murtuza Khetty, a freelance trainer, educator and theatre professional who has been regularly attending these meetups right from the beginning, agrees. "Not many institutions look at working with nature as part of their whole curriculum," says Murtuza, who has also moderated one of these sessions. In his opinion, there are a lot of people in the nature education space who are doing good work, but they're all working in silos. "Being part of this community is helping people get new ideas and collaborate," he says, an opinion also echoed by artist and educator Antara Mukherji. "I get to meet this tribe of people that I connect with immensely and can relate to," says Antara, who especially likes the group's diversity. "The connection-building and opening of another perspective helps; sometimes I feel very secure in my opinion, but then getting another perspective opens up the mind," she says. There is also strength in numbers, says Vena, who believes that creating a collective will lead to more voices speaking together on nature education in a manner that is "much more powerful and effective than working with silos," she says. She hopes that, at some point, the group can come together to create a resource or intervention collaboratively "that all of us can use...something designed in such a way that it can be tweaked for different geographies and cultural contexts." Vena also believes that, over time, nature educators will be able to open different chapters of this meetup in other parts of the country. "We've got people from outside the city who've heard about these meetups and planned their trips to Bengaluru to ensure they attend them. The hope is that this model can be taken to other cities and towns."

death of the insurance policy holder or his/her spouse. Mohammad Monish, senior associate, home insurance, PolicyBazaar, (PW24995), says, "Most insurers offer coverage in the standard policy for cost of repairs, architect or surveyor's fees, costs of clearing debris, loss of rent, rent for alternative accommodation or cost of construction. However, some insurers may charge additional premium by offering few additional benefits via add-ons, making the policy costly. Therefore, buyers must carefully study the inclusions of standard policy, inclusions through the add-ons, premium amount payable, etc." A home-loan insurance prevents you from losing the ownership title of your house if you failed to pay EMIs to loan-providers (banks) on time. That is, when a borrower of a home loan defaulted on EMIs owing to death or other adversity, home-loan insurance comes in handy. For instance, let's assume Mr. X had availed a loan from ABYZ bank and he must pay EMIs for 30 years. During the tenure of the loan, if Mr. X met with an accident and died, the balance loan amount due to ABYZ bank would be paid by the insurer. This way, Mr. X's family members would be relieved from the burden of continuing to pay the EMIs. Of course, home-loan insurance coverage varies from one insurance company to the other. Some provide coverage only on the demise of the insured person, while some offer protection even when the person has critical illness, met with accident or lost job, thereby losing the earning potential. However, terms and conditions are not same across insurers. Who can buy? Any individual can purchase a home insurance policy provided he owns a property in his name; that is, only if he is a landlord of any property. A tenant cannot buy a home insurance covering the structure of a building, for, he has no insurable interest, as per insurance parlance. However, he could avail a policy covering contents/valuables stored in the house. Home-loan insurance cannot be purchased if you do not have any existing home loan. For, the very policy is designed to offer protection only for the outstanding loan amount at the time of adversity. Often, the premium payable for home-loan insurance would be much higher than that payable for the standard home insurance. Home-loan insurance could help you in reducing the down payment needed at the time of availing the home loan, as the insurer 'guarantees' repayment of the loan at the time of any untoward/adverse event. However, the standard home insurance has zero impact on down payment. Mr. Monish says, "Both Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India and Reserve Bank of India have not made it mandatory to buy home insurance or home-loan insurance. Customers can choose to buy or not to buy but both are beneficial to them if claims are made as per the policy coverage."

Why retirees prefer FDs Venkatesh Bangaruswamy



Most adult children have an issue with parents' investing in bank fixed deposits (FDs). The argument is bank deposits earn low post-tax returns and do not beat inflation. This is true. Yet, it may be optimal for retirees to invest in bank deposits. Now, we look at the behavioural reasons why deposits are staple investments for retirees.

More money is certainly better than some, whether it buys more happiness or not. But the source of money is important, especially for retirees. Most may be uncomfortable if generating more returns requires taking higher investment risk. The argument is based on a behavioural bias called loss aversion. Typically, losses hurt us more than gains can give us happiness of the same magnitude. That

is, a ₹10,000 loss is likely to be more painful than the happiness a ₹10,000 gain can give. Empirical research shows working executives are likely to invest only when risking ₹10,000 can offer a potential gain of at least ₹20,000. That is, they want a reward to risk ratio of at least 2:1. Retirees require an even higher ratio, nearly 4:1. Why? Retirees typically depend on their passive income to meet post retirement living expenses. Therefore, an investment portfolio that not only has a high return potential but also high downside risk is not preferred. What if a significant part of portfolio value is lost due to market crash? What if they sell equity investments every year, and then run out of money in old age? Most retirees, therefore, prefer stable income portfolios. The satisfaction of receiving stable income is more dominating than having to worry about fluctuations on equity investments — earning higher returns but with high downside risk. Investing is about risk and return.

But behavioural biases can dominate the structure of an investment portfolio. It is true post-tax returns on bank FDs are unlikely to beat inflation. But more important is the retirees' fear of running out of money in old age. This can happen for two reasons. One, investments decline in value on negative returns. And two, the retirees outlive life expectancy, referred to as the longevity risk. Retirees, therefore, adopt a simple rule to moderate (if not overcome) their fear: conserve capital and consume income. Any investment that fit this rule is naturally embraced. Bank fixed deposits do.

Where a book is worshipped

Prapoyil is a verdant village near Cherupuzha, a small town 64 km from Kannur, Kerala. In Prapoyil is an exceptional temple, perhaps the only one of its kind in the world, the Navapuram Mathaatheetha Devaalayam (Secular House of God). The deity in the temple is the sculpted image of a book. The temple opened on March 4, 2021, and the installation of the idol, sculpted by Santhosh Manasam from nearby Kamballor village in Kasaragod district, was completed in October 2021. Devotees can pray in the sanctum sanctorum and offer books to the deity, and the prasadam in return is a book. There are no priests nor a hundi and anyone, irrespective of caste or religion, can pray in the temple. The idol-book is perched on a giant natural stone. The vision of the temple is rooted in the belief that knowledge is divine. The temple promotes and nurtures the philosophy of knowledge, fostering universal love and humility.

Its entrance hall is an impressive library of a few thousand books. Through the hall, adorned with sculptures on the walls, one ascends the steps to reach the idol — a concrete book installed atop a 30-foot-high stone. Three sentences are etched in its pages: "God is knowledge. Religion is broad thinking. Humble wisdom is the path." The sculptures in the entrance hall are of Cherusseri, the north Malabar poet who wrote the Malayalam epic Krishnagadha, Sri Buddha and a stone lamp, the symbol of knowledge. The two-acre complex in sylvan surroundings houses a few cottages, called Ezhuthupura (a cottage for writing) where writers can stay and write. Three of the cottages are complete and the target is 10.

This distinctive temple is a dream come true for Prapoyil Narayanan, who has been aspiring to create it for 35 years. His arduous life story is awe-inspiring. He is the only son of his mother. His father, Kokkodan Raman, a landlord, died when he was nine. All that Narayanan inherited was two acres. At the age of 15, he started shouldering the responsibility of his family. In his early twenties, he started thinking about the idea of the book temple and began setting aside a nominal amount for his dream project. He published many articles in different periodicals and became a reputable writer. Narayanan has authored 26 books. His initial education was in medical lab technology and after that, he started tutoring students. Sheer grit enabled him to own a flourishing parallel college in Cherupuzha town. The institution teaches degree and postgraduate courses in politics, sociology, history, commerce, Hindi, and philosophy. Narayanan himself is a postgraduate in five subjects and is currently studying for an MA degree in English literature. Income from his parallel college helped him save lakhs for the temple. The land



development, sculptures, cottages and the festivals the temple organises are expensive and so far, he has spent a whopping amount of more than ₹60 lakh. Of late, he has received donations, but that does not even suffice for one-tenth of the expenses. The temple conducts two annual cultural festivals, during April and the Puja holidays. Literary debates, classical and folk-dance performances, book releases, seminars and debates, and dramatic performances mark the festivals with large audiences. Awards are presented to writers in four Dravidian languages. Narayanan is supported in his noble endeavour by his friend Sabu Maliyekkal and the villagers. Narayanan's ambition is to develop the temple into a self-sustaining institution. He has already initiated conversations with favourably inclined persons to make this a reality. To Narayanan, a truly rare individual who has dedicated his life to literature and books, the unwavering support of his wife, Shyla, is immeasurable.

MeitY asks Meta to review Facebook, Instagram algorithms amid concerns over content amplification



New Delhi: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has asked technology giant firm Meta to review the content recommendation and ranking systems that power Facebook and Instagram, stepping up regulatory scrutiny of how social media algorithms amplify information in India, according to multiple reports. In an advisory issued to the company, the ministry had asked Meta to ensure that its recommendation systems do not lead to the disproportionate exposure of users to a single or limited set of narratives and instead provide greater access to diverse, relevant and credible information, according to them.

The ministry also directed Meta to strengthen mechanisms for rapidly identifying, reviewing and escalating content that gains significant reach through recommendation systems when such material has the potential to contribute to public confusion, violence or disruption of public order. Apart from that, the US-based company has been asked to implement the measures immediately and inform the government of the action taken.

The advisory specifically highlights photographs, videos and graphics related to ongoing public events where the authenticity, timing, location or surrounding circumstances may be unclear. It calls for additional context where old or unrelated visuals are presented as current, where footage has been selectively edited or where unverifiable claims

are made regarding emergencies, police action or other official measures. Additionally, this marks the latest escalation in the government's scrutiny of Meta's moderation and recommendation systems.

Earlier in August, government officials questioned Meta executives over content recommendation algorithms, deepfakes, synthetic media and safeguards against unlawful content. Meta has separately tightened content and advertising safeguards following concerns related to child sexual exploitation material. The company said earlier this month it deployed new AI-driven advertising review systems and removed 5.3 million pieces of child sexual exploitation content in India during January-June 2026, with more than 98% detected proactively.

Rupee loses 84 paise in three sessions, closes at 95.22 against dollar

Mumbai: The rupee depreciated for the third consecutive session, settling 29 paise lower at 95.22 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, weighed down by elevated crude oil prices and geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. Forex traders said the rupee weakened amid a stronger dollar and a slight rise in US Treasury yields, while a recovery in domestic equity markets cushioned the decline.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 94.92 against the dollar before losing ground to touch an intra-day low of 95.26. It finally settled at 95.22 (provisional), down 29 paise from its previous close. On Friday, the rupee had depreciated 12 paise to close at 94.93 against the US dollar. Over the last three trading sessions, the rupee has lost 84 paise against the US dollar.

Should you buy home insurance or home-loan insurance is a million-dollar question. People often use the terms interchangeably, though they are not supposed to be used that way

Should you buy home insurance or home-loan insurance is a million-dollar question. People often use the terms interchangeably, though they are not supposed to be used that way. Fundamentally they are apples and oranges. Home insurance protects you from losses arising out of damages caused to the structure of your house and its contents. In contrast, a home-loan insurance protects a person (or his family) from the liabilities of the home loan or the equated monthly instalment (EMI) payments. Let's dive into the details.

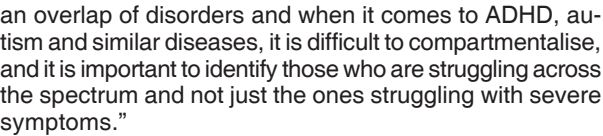
On April 1, 2021, IRDAI made it mandatory for all general insurers to offer standard home insurance policy called 'Bharat Griha Raksha'. For instance, if someone's house and the contents thereof are damaged owing to fire accident, flood, earthquake, volcano or other accidents or natural calamities, home insurance acts as a lifesaver. Under the policy, three types of coverage — for building structure, things at home and optional cover — are offered. One can include the optional cover in his/her policy by paying an additional premium. The optional cover is available for valuables such as jewellery, silverware, paintings, etc. based on agreed value. Further, this also includes personal accident cover if the damage to the building also resulted in the

Bandipur authorities intensify awareness drives in villages surrounding the tiger reserve to prevent forest fires



So far, 65 awareness camps and drives have been conducted in a bid to curb the outbreak of fires, which are a major concern in Bandipur during the dry season. The tiger reserve has a history of devastating fires that have previously ravaged vast stretches of forest. S. Prabhakaran, director of Bandipur Tiger Reserve, told The Hindu that the awareness drive will continue until nearly all the hamlets and villages bordering the forests are covered. "This is a proactive measure to build goodwill and gain the trust of the local community in protecting the fragile ecosystem, which is highly vulnerable to fire," he said. The importance of this initiative stems from the need to enlist local cooperation in the early detection of fires. Also, fire prevention is most effective when the community is involved and feels a sense

Both psychologists and psychiatrists in Bengaluru say they have noticed an increase in the number of patients who walk into their clinics with such diagnoses. Anxiety, depression and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are some commonly self-diagnoses in such patients. "We see many young adults, specifically in their 20s or early 30s, coming in with information they have derived from social media. For instance, they say things like, 'I procrastinate, so I have ADHD. Medical terms are very loosely used on the internet and people see these broad, vague, non-specific criteria and diagnose themselves,'" said Arohin Vardhan Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist at Cadabams Hospitals. In a country like India, where speaking about, or seeking help for mental health issues has been taboo and stigmatised for a long time, doctors believe that celebrities coming out and speaking about their mental health issues has led to greater awareness and openness, and may have led to more people trying to identify their own issues. "People, in general, are more aware now in terms of both physical and mental health due to the widespread dissemination of information on the internet. One in five persons usually suffers from either anxiety or depression and while these problems existed in society for a long time, there was a lot of stigma around it. It is evident in literature that when there is more awareness in the community, people reach out for help more and that leads to better outcomes," says Senthil Reddi, professor of psychiatry at NIMHANS. He added, "A lot of famous people have spoken about their disorders, including learning disabilities and this has been helpful in starting a conversation around mental health. The fact that people are coming in and seeking help is a good thing, as there have been some changes even in the classification of diseases recently. It has been recognised that there is



While being largely appreciative of the fact that people are seeking help, doctors have also noticed that a chunk of such patients tend to convince themselves that they have a specific disorder or that medicines have side effects. This sometimes leads to the development of the infamous 'Internet Derived Information Obstructing Treatment (IDIOT) syndrome, doctors have observed. "While patients may have some features of a disorder, it should be decided by a professional as to whether they actually have that disorder. But some patients decide that they have a specific disorder and seek specific treatment. It is very difficult to convince them that their symptoms indicate a different disorder. We usually evaluate them in the first few sessions and then tell them what the core disorder is. Then, most people are very understanding," Dr. Vardhan said. Similar issues were also flagged by Shashidhar Bilagi, a practising psychiatrist in Bengaluru. "Most people seek information on the internet and just go to a therapist. However, for severe disorders, it is very important to consult psychiatrists. When it comes to medicines especially, there is a lot of misconception and wrong information on the internet about side effects. Patients refuse to take these medicines and suffer from severe disorders. To reduce the stigma, they go on the internet, but fail to seek the right kind of treatment. It is important that patients do not rely on the internet for help," he said.

Equipping more and more local communities to collect and share real-time data to report fires as soon as they are sighted through mobile applications, toll-free helplines, and SMS-based systems can strengthen early warning systems and ensure rapid, localised response in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, self-help groups, primarily women, collect pine needles to blunt future fires. India can also draw from Nepal's Community Forest User Groups and Indonesia's Fire-Free Village Program to strengthen community forest fire management. Empowering communities with awareness, training, and resources and engaging youth as 'forest fire scouts' can foster stewardship, combining local knowledge with modern tools like fire risk mapping and controlled burns. Forest fires are not just an environmental issue — they are societal and economic, affecting livelihoods, health, and the foundation of our ecosystems. Addressing this challenge requires the collaboration of policymakers, scientists, civil society groups, and communities. From creating supporting infrastructure through policy intervention, improved budgeting, technology adoption, and building a cadre of trained personnel to empowering communities — all measures must go hand-in-hand to turn the tide.

A more robust response. However, given the growing intensity of forest fires in India, much more remains to be done. First, Budget constraints have proven to be an obstacle. For example, the FFPMS's funding allotment has

As we navigate the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in IT, mainframe technology remains critical. Once viewed as legacy systems, mainframes now play a vital role in Hybrid IT environments, supporting essential applications across sectors such as banking, healthcare, and government. However, for mainframes to remain competitive, we must bridge a notable skills gap, one that is compounded by rapid digital transformation and evolving industry needs. To meet the demands of Hybrid IT, an enhanced focus on mainframe education is essential. Here is why fostering specialised skills and encouraging advanced educational initiatives is critical to thrive in this field. As AI enhances mainframe capabilities, traditional mainframe expertise and advanced AI-driven skills are required. This new skill set encompasses machine learning, data analysis, cybersecurity, and generative AI integration and requires an interdisciplinary approach where mainframe experts not only handle legacy systems but also manage and optimise AI-powered processes, using tools to modernise applications for the cloud. To address this, mainframe education must expand beyond foundational knowledge to include training in AI integrations, Hybrid IT architecture, and secure coding practices. Universities and technical institutes play a crucial role in preparing students for a career in mainframe technology. While traditional programming and IT management remain important, there is a growing need for partnerships with tech organisations to introduce advanced mainframe courses. Collaborative programmes such as IBM's Academic Initiative offer hands-on experience and tailored certifications for students to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Moreover, institutions could enhance curricula by including industry-led workshops, simula-

ons, and real-world case studies. In doing so, they equip students with applied skills in areas such as mainframe application modernisation and Hybrid IT integration, bridging the gap between academia and industry expectations. Technology has redefined educational delivery methods. Virtual labs, interactive simulations, and AI-driven tutoring platforms are reshaping how students engage with mainframe technologies. Online certification programmes such as those offered by IBM, Coursera, Interskills and BMC make it easier to gain credentials in specialised areas such as mainframe administration and AI-powered system management. Additionally, advanced learning platforms incorporate gamification to make learning more engaging, especially for complex topics such as mainframe security and hybrid cloud management. Digital tools also facilitate remote internships and mentoring programmes. For example,

BMC Software's DevOps initiatives integrate mainframe training into development processes, enabling students to practice real-world mainframe applications and collaborate on virtual projects with industry experts. By harnessing these technologies, students and professionals can acquire skills that are practical and directly applicable in today's IT environments. Certifications are increasingly recognised as a valuable means to stay competitive in the mainframe space. Popular certifications such as IBM's z/OS Mainframe Practitioner Professional Certificate focus on foundational skills, while advanced certifications in AI integration, cloud computing, and cybersecurity are now also available. BMC's SAMI for Security certification, for instance, is gaining popularity as companies prioritise secure, AI-enhanced mainframe operations to safeguard sensitive data.

Rupee much more flexible now, FX rate should be first line of defence: IMF's Srinivasan



There has been "much more flexibility" in the rupee's exchange rate after its 'de facto' arrangement was reclassified last year as 'crawl-like' from 'stabilised', Krishna Srinivasan, Director of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Asia and Pacific Department, said. While deferring to the Fund's Article IV consultation team and its 'mechanical' exercise on the exchange rate, Srinivasan told The Indian Express in an interview that allowing the exchange rate to move is "better", with interventions by many Asian countries not providing "much by way of relief". He also discussed the importance of labour reskilling and Asia's demographics. Edited excerpts:

The APAC regional economic outlook warns that creating jobs through the export-led, manufacturing model is becoming harder. With youth unemployment in the region rather high, what should authorities do amid AI advancements? Some of the work we have done says countries in Asia trade a lot with each other when it comes to intermediate goods, because they're part of global and regional supply chains. But when it comes to final goods, there's very little intra-regional trade — it's only 30% compared to 60% in the EU and North America. So, there's potential there to have greater integration, which provides support for manufacturing-led exports and manufacturing activity, which will create jobs. Our work on AI shows that since ChatGPT was launched, in sectors that are relatively more exposed to AI, labour demand has come down by 10% and stabilised — so it's a reshaping of jobs rather than disappearance.

A lot of manufacturing now also involves services. And whether you focus on manufacturing or services, what's important is bridging the skills gap. So, a lot of emphasis needs to be placed on what is required for the jobs of tomorrow and what is being produced in terms of people coming out of college. The skills mismatch needs to be addressed to make sure that the people joining the labour force get jobs. And for India, that number could be 150 million to 300 million between now and 2050. So, it can't be just about creating a lot of jobs right now but also making them AI proof.

I don't know what you mean by AI proof because our study shows that if employees embrace AI, then there are employers willing to employ you. That's what I mean by saying you have to reskill. By AI proof I mean jobs that are not at risk. For instance, the Chief Economic Adviser mentioned recently that youngsters should be willing to pursue trade skills. I think I agree with him. As per another study of ours, those skilled and benefitting from AI will get an income and generate demand for services, be it carpenters or drivers. So, that will be an important source of demand for these skills which Anantha (CEA V Anantha Nageswaran) talked about. But even those jobs, at some point, will be affected by AI. It's important that we emphasise reskilling and retooling. I often tell people about Singapore, which has a model whereby the government asks employers what kind of skills they want and provides an incentive to hire employees who are retooling themselves for the skills that are wanted. Sure, Singapore has the fiscal space to do it, not everybody does. But sometimes it happens organically: in the dot-com boom, India produced so many people who could code as ITIs (information technology institutes) mushroomed

everywhere. The world has gone from benefiting from China's low prices to feeling threatened by its overcapacity. With exports driving its growth, what risk could a weaker China pose?

China has relied on investment and export-led growth for a long period of time and it needs to rebalance towards greater consumption demand. Our estimate for long-term growth in China is 3.5%. If China rebalances towards greater consumption, growth could be stronger and more durable. For every 1 percentage point change in China's growth, the impact on the rest of the emerging market is about 0.3 percentage points over the medium-term. We have documented the fact that a lot of the overcapacity also reflects some resource misallocation. Is Asia's demographic dividend window closing faster than perhaps median ages would suggest?

When it comes to demographics, there's not one Asia, but three. The first is the early dividend countries, like Nepal and Philippines, where the labour force is young and growing. Then you have the late dividend countries, like India and Indonesia, and then the post-dividend countries like China and Japan. In an ideal world, labour could go from surplus to deficit countries. That's not happening. But it's not just about how many people are there in the workforce; it's more about are they skilled enough for the new world. What we find is that for the young and educated population, unemployment is even higher. That tells you there is a skill mismatch. The point which we would like to underscore is that we have to think more holistically about what we are producing in our universities. If you address that well, then you can have the dividends. If you don't, it could be a drag. Even if the government and universities proactively approach reskilling, wouldn't it take anywhere between 5-10 years?

I won't put a number on it. People can be quite adaptive; if they know what kind of skills are needed, they will adapt. We saw this during the dot-com boom — there were institutes which came up to cater to what IT companies were looking for. Similarly, if there's a good understanding of what is needed, then you can do it quite quickly. I would not focus on whether the college curriculums should change. There could be other substitutes, such as vocational training. The IMF and India haven't always seen eye to eye on the exchange rate policy. Last year, it was changed to crawl-like. What do you make of the RBI's recent regulatory measures to make hedging more expensive? One has to study some of these measures deeper and see whether they're having the right impact or not. Generally speaking, given the shock and the fact that India is an energy importer, we would like to see the exchange rate be the first line of defence. Our general advice is to not protect prices because they are the signalling mechanism. You can also think of how to liberalise tariffs and non-tariff barriers so that there's an offsetting force. Of course, there are conditions where if the movement is very disorderly, then you can think of some kind of an intervention. But the way we see it as right now, the currency mismatches are not large, the market is reasonably deep. Many countries in Asia have intervened and it has not provided much by way of relief. So, allowing it to move is better and to keep your reserves as a buffer against future shocks. So, the exchange rate does not fit the crawl-like arrangement definition. They have allowed the exchange rate to move... There is definitely much more flexibility in the exchange rate, no question about that. The IMF's Article IV team will look at that (exchange rate classification). It's a very mechanical exercise. But the point I want to make is that the exchange rate has been a lot flexible since the time when that assessment was made. You have called India's GDP revisions as being consistent with the IMF's advice and good practices. Can the national accounts data expect a better grade than C? My sense is the revisions broadly reflect the recommendations we've been making. In terms of the grade, that is a question for the Article IV team. They'll do a holistic assessment of the whole framework.

Reduced tax on stock gains? Centre may cut capital gains levy from current 12.5%

As investors grapple with a flat stock market trajectory for more than two years now, discussions within the government in the run-up to Budget 2027-28 include lowering the long-term capital gains tax from 12.5% now for both domestic and foreign investors, and letting foreign investors pay this tax on capital gains made in dollar terms as opposed to in rupee terms, to boost market sentiments. Officials say the urgency to act fast is due to two key concerns. One, zero returns or losses in stock markets over the last two years come on top of poor wage growth, and this is a big sentiment dampener. It is felt across a larger spectrum of middle class with surging retail participation in markets now.

1A lower long-term capital gains tax Long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax is charged on the profit made when investors sell shares they have held for the long term. On every ₹100 of long-term profit goes in tax today, at 12.5%, before any exemptions. Being discussed Cutting the 12.5% rate, for both domestic and foreign investors. SBI's suggestion Abolish the tax on equity, and extend the holding period to two to three years. 2Tax on dollar gains, for foreign investors Today they pay tax on gains in rupees, even if a weaker rupee wipes out their gain in dollars. Say a foreign investor puts \$1,000 into Indian shares. The shares rise 10% in rupees, but the rupee weakens by the same amount. The rupee-dollar example uses illustrative round numbers. Both changes are being discussed ahead of Budget 2027-28; no decision has been announced. Source: Long-term capital gains tax rate: 12.5%. Created by Chandrashekar Srinivasan Post-Covid, stock market investments witnessed a sharp rise in participation by retail investors (those holding up to ₹2 lakh in shares) looking to diversify and supplement their regular income streams. According to data sourced from Prime Infobase in March 2020, retail shareholding in NSE-listed companies was 6.58% valued at ₹7.23 lakh crore; it jumped to 7.66% in June 2024 valued at ₹33.16 lakh crore and dropped to 7.12% in March 2026 valued at ₹28.97 lakh crore. In terms of demat investor accounts with CDSL, they jumped to 19.34 crore in September 2026 from just 2.12 crore in March 2020. Two, the confidence that domestic mutual fund inflows would, by and large, counter the impact of any large-scale Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) outflows, has taken a beating. For almost a decade till 2024, domestic funds had always seen every large FPI exit as a buying opportunity.

For the government, it has been a challenge to explain the robust 7.8 per cent growth rate in April-June this year, especially when stock market indices actually dropped over the last two years, and poor wages growth in the private sector. The Budget may hence explore moves to boost the market. We are discussing every option," a senior government official told when asked if measures for stock markets



include a reduction or removal of capital gains tax. On FM table: Slashing capital gains tax rate, dollar-based taxation for foreign investors Global investors see the 12.5 per cent LTCG tax as very high compared with similar levies in other markets. For example, China, Indonesia and Brazil, among others have either nil or very minimal capital gains tax. What also hurts them and compounds their problem is that this tax has to be paid on rupee gains and not on dollar gains (or losses). Section 72 of the Income-tax Act, 2025 that deals with the 'mode of computation' of tax says that the income chargeable under the head "capital gains" shall be computed from the full consideration of a capital asset after deducting transfer expenses, acquisition costs, and improvement costs. Foreign currency conversion benefits are provided to non-residents under 72 (6) of the Act for transferring unlisted Indian company shares or debentures to prevent notional gains caused by rupee depreciation. However, this relief explicitly applies only to non-residents and excludes domestic investors and FPIs.

On FM table: Slashing capital gains tax rate, dollar-based taxation for foreign investors The lack of an AI play, the feeling of overvalued stocks despite significant correction, and rising interest rates across developed markets are being seen as holding back large scale FPI inflows. In this backdrop, an ostensibly adverse taxation structure is not seen to be helping. Earlier this year on June 5, the government scrapped the withholding tax as well as long and short-term capital gains tax on foreign investors' investments in government bonds to attract overseas funds. Before that, foreign investors paid 12.5 per cent tax on long-term capital gains, 30 per cent on short-term capital gains, and around 20 per cent withholding tax on interest income from their government bond holdings. In its latest research report Ecowrap dated October 12, State Bank of India said the government must seriously look into anchoring hot money flows into equity segment by extending the holding period to say 2-3 years and abolishing the long-term capital gains tax for equity. Earlier this month, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said the debate on LTCG tax is "healthy" and she is "keen" to hear about it.

Lancet releases 17 threats to health: India faces all of them



A new Lancet Commission has identified 17 catastrophic threats to global health and human survival, warning that decisions taken today across health, finance, climate, defence and technology will determine how many years of healthy life future generations gain — or lose — by 2100. For India, the findings underscore the need to strengthen long-term health planning and play a more prominent role in global negotiations on pandemic preparedness, artificial intelligence (AI) safety and other emerging risks. Launched at the World Health Summit in Berlin, which opened on October 11, the Lancet Commission on 21st Century Global Threats to Health examines risks across 204 countries and territories. It assesses how investments in prevention, preparedness, health systems and innovation could avert enormous losses of healthy life over the next 75 years. Obesity emerges as one of the largest projected health burdens, accounting for an estimated 23.1 billion disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) that could potentially be avoided by 2100 through effective interventions. DALYs measure years of healthy life lost because of illness, disability or premature death.

Other threats include antimicrobial resistance (AMR), poor mental health, high blood pressure, childhood malnutrition, smoking, unhealthy ageing, income inequality and low educational attainment. Climate change, pandemics, conventional conflict, nuclear conflict and the malicious use of AI also feature in the Commission's assessment. A threat was classified as catastrophic if it could account for at least one billion DALYs by 2100, sufficient data existed to model its potential impact, and there was scope for policy action. For each threat, the Commission modelled plausible best-case and worst-case scenarios, highlighting the health losses that targeted interventions could prevent. Professor Christopher J.L. Murray, director of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington and co-chair of the Commission, said the estimates demonstrated the scale of avoidable health losses. While some threats already impose substantial burdens, others carry significant risks if they materialise. "Crucially, all 17 threats are interconnected, which is why they must be addressed together, not in isolation," he said.

Why doctors waited 2 days to remove the bullet from Tiger Shroff firing victim

Umesh Chauhan, a Mankhurd based vlogger who was shot on October 18 while filming outside Pushpa Park in Juhu, near actor Tiger Shroff's residence, underwent surgery at KEM Hospital on Tuesday to remove a 1.5 cm bullet lodged in his body. Doctors waited two days before extracting it, monitoring him for internal bleeding and damage to vital organs. The bullet had travelled through the chest region, injuring the area around the liver, before lodging inside his body. As Umesh remained stable and had no ongoing bleeding requiring emergency intervention, doctors proceeded with the removal after observation. The surgery lasted around two hours.

Dr Uday Jadhav, head of KEM Hospital's cardiac surgery department, said the priority after a gunshot injury is to stabilise the patient and establish the extent of internal damage before deciding whether emergency surgery is necessary. Tiger Shroff car firing case, Lawrence Bishnoi gang weapon supply, Delhi Police Special Cell NDR, Anil Pandit Bishnoi gang, Radha and Babita Sonipat guards, Mumbai Juhu firing incident, weapon couriers Rs 12000, Dadar hotel gun delivery, Dadar Haridwar Express escape, crime news Sonipat Mumbai Delhi Doctors weigh these risks against the benefits of removal. Depending on the circumstances, they may recommend immediate surgery, delayed extraction or monitoring. (Express photo)

Q. Why isn't a bullet always removed immediately?

The immediate threat after a gunshot injury is often the damage caused by the bullet, rather than the bullet itself. Doctors first assess whether it has injured major blood vessels or vital organs, including the heart, lungs, liver and intestines. Uncontrolled bleeding, damage to vital structures or a deteriorating condition may require emergency surgery. In such cases, controlling bleeding and repairing the injury take precedence over extracting the bullet. If the patient is stable and the bullet is not causing an immediate threat, doctors may monitor the injury before deciding on removal. The decision also depends on the bullet's location and whether extracting it could cause further damage.

Q. How can a small bullet cause extensive damage?

A bullet's size alone does not determine the severity of a gunshot wound. Its velocity, trajectory, construction and the tissue it strikes — all influence the extent of the injury. Apart from damaging the tissues along its path, a bul-

Why India needs to take the lead Dr Soumya Swaminathan, the World Health Organization's inaugural chief scientist and a member of the Commission, told The Indian Express that policymakers must move beyond short-term priorities and national-level considerations to address long-term risks proactively. She said many major threats — including childhood malnutrition, air pollution, AMR, high blood pressure, obesity, poor mental health, income inequality, pandemics and unhealthy ageing — are exacerbated by climate change. Conversely, well-designed climate mitigation measures can also help tackle several of these challenges. "We have to find a way to manage them all in parallel and in an integrated manner — we do not have the luxury of choosing one over the other," she said. For India, this means incorporating foresight into health planning, drawing on local data across sectors, using AI to integrate and analyse information, modelling future scenarios and directing investments towards vulnerable populations. "India should play a leading role in global health discussions and negotiations on important topics like AI safety, pandemic threats, commercial determinants of health and global health architecture," Dr Swaminathan stressed.

She also called for people's lived experiences and ethical considerations to inform policymaking, alongside greater interdisciplinary research to develop solutions suited to local contexts.

Climate change, inequality and emerging risks The Commission highlights the far-reaching consequences of climate change. Limiting global warming to around 1.8°C, rather than allowing it to reach 4.4°C, could prevent an estimated 1.89 billion years of healthy life from being lost to causes including extreme heat and air pollution. Unchecked warming could also intensify other threats, including migration. Income inequality could account for an estimated 13.8 billion DALYs by 2100, a burden the Commission equates to 25 COVID-19 pandemics. Although nuclear conflict and the malicious use of AI are considered less likely than many other threats, their potential consequences are exceptionally severe. Preventing nuclear conflict could avert an estimated 133 million deaths and 9.35 billion DALYs by 2100, while measures to reduce the risk of malicious AI could avert an estimated 10.4 billion DALYs. The report also notes that, although moderate pandemics have become less frequent, naturally occurring pandemics remain a major long-term threat. Build readiness, back breakthroughs, track threats The Commission recommends a three-pronged approach: build readiness through health systems equipped for prevention and preparedness; back breakthroughs by investing in vaccines, antibiotics, obesity treatments and climate technologies; and track threats through regular, independent assessments. Dr Richard Horton, editor-in-chief of The Lancet, said the report calls for a broader framework for coordinated action, reflecting the increasingly interconnected dangers facing humanity.



let transfers energy to surrounding tissues, causing them to stretch and potentially tear. This process, known as temporary cavitation, can result in damage extending beyond the bullet's track. Damage to a major blood vessel can cause life threatening bleeding, while injuries to the lungs can impair breathing and those to abdominal organs can lead to internal bleeding. In Umesh's case, position of the bullet allowed doctors to remove it through a small incision, avoiding a larger operation. Kota Police apprehend three accused, including a minor, in connection with the firing on Bollywood actor Tiger Shroff Mumbai Police with accused in Tiger Shroff attack case. (Source: ANI)

Q. Is it safe to leave a bullet inside the body?

Not always. A retained bullet can cause complications, including infection or damage to surrounding structures, depending on its location. However, extracting it can also carry risks, particularly if it is lodged near vital organs, nerves or major blood vessels. Doctors weigh these risks against the benefits of removal. Depending on the circumstances, they may recommend immediate surgery, delayed extraction or monitoring.

The belief that bullets are sterile because of the heat generated when fired is also misleading. Heat does not guarantee that a bullet is free of microorganisms. Contaminants from ammunition, the firearm, skin or clothing can enter the wound. Gunshot injuries therefore require appropriate wound care and monitoring for infection. In Umesh's case, after establishing that he was stable and did not require emergency intervention for ongoing bleeding, doctors proceeded with the extraction.

India's GCCs offer AI professionals salaries of up to Rs 1.08 crore: Report

New Delhi: Nearly 44 per cent of India's Global Capability Centres (GCCs) now own platforms, products, artificial intelligence adoption and business-critical outcomes, a report said on Monday. The report from TeamLease Digital said AI Architect roles command a median fixed pay of up to Rs 108.6 lakh per annum at 15 years and above of experience, while Principal Data Scientists earn up to Rs 92.8 lakh per annum.

The pay premiums are following ownership, with AI-Core roles offering starting salaries 2.5 to 3 times higher than AI-Support positions from the earliest stages of a career. The report showed that GCCs are steadily moving from delivery centres to AI capability hubs, and the pay for digital talent is moving along with them. GenAI, ML and data science remain the highest-return skilling pathways for salary acceleration in GCCs. The country has over 2.5 lakh AI and machine learning professionals and over 1,200 AI-enabled GCCs and is ranked first in global AI hiring. Nearly 83 per cent of GCCs are scaling generative AI initiatives, 70



per cent are adopting hybrid AI models and 58 per cent are investing in agentic AI technologies. The 2026 salary increment in GCCs stands at 10.4 per cent, ahead of the 9.1 per cent India Inc. average, and AI, ML, cyber and cloud skills carry a 30-40 per cent pay premium because demand outpaces supply.

Pakistan break West Indies' 50-year-old record in stunning one-wicket win over England



Pakistan stunned England by one wicket in the fourth ODI of the tri-series, which also includes Sri Lanka, in Lahore, with all-rounder Shadab Khan finishing unbeaten on 113 off 96 balls. Chasing a target of 242, Pakistan had been reduced to 154/9 in the 34th over. Extraordinarily, the last wicket stand between Shadab and Haris Rauf ended up taking the hosts all the way over the line. The partnership between Shadab and Rauf remained unbeaten on 89 off 80 balls, which is the highest for the last wicket in a successful chase in an ODI match. The previous record was 64 between Deryck Murray and Andy Roberts for the West Indies in the 1975 World Cup.

According to ESPNcricinfo, Shadab and Rauf's stand is also the second highest overall in any successful chase in any men's 50-over match. The highest is an unbeaten 102-

run stand by Thando Bula and Friedel de Wet for the North West against Free State in South Africa's provincial cup in 2006. England themselves had made a strong comeback with the bat after being reduced to 52/4 in the 10th over, with Ben Duckett (105) scoring a century and reviving their innings along with Sam Curran (42). Gus Atkinson remained unbeaten on 36 off 28 balls. Shaheen Shah Afridi did a major part of the damage early on and finished with figures of 4/46.

In reply, Pakistan never got going in their chase and it looked like a lost cause for the hosts by the time Rauf, who had earlier taken two wickets, in the 34th over. Shadab was at the time on 32 off 35 balls. While they had only one more wicket in hand, Pakistan only needed 88 to win off 96 balls at the end of that over. Rauf hung on while Shadab rattled away the runs at the other end. He got to his century in 92 balls but that came only after it had looked like he was gone for all money the previous over. Atkinson appealed for LBW off the second ball of the 45th over and the umpire raised his finger. Shadab looked pretty convinced that he had fallen, throwing the bat away in frustration and even beginning to shake hands with the England players but he took a review anyhow in the middle of all that. As it turned out, the ball had taken an inside edge off his bat before it struck his pads. Sadab then smashed 15 runs off Atkinson's next over in the 47th. Rauf then took Pakistan over the line with a four off the first ball of the 48th, sparking wild celebrations at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

'Where is he at his best?': Murali Kartik on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi



GNS News Agency, Oct 28

During the 2nd T20I between India and New Zealand, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi batted at number three for the first time. Before the game in Christchurch, he had never played in that position for the Indian blue, and many former players and pundits believed that if he started, he should be opening, or else it wouldn't be the best use of his skill set.

Sooryavanshi came into the side in place of Ishan Kishan, who bats at number three, and he was slotted into that position as well. He scored four runs from eight balls

and looked anything but comfortable. Former Indian spinner Murali Kartik was unhappy about the decision. "I was repeatedly saying this, even before the match started, especially before our batting, when you are playing Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, where is he at his best? He is good as an opener," Kartik said while speaking on Sony Sports.

"You have put him in the middle order. He hasn't played there; he is a young kid and he has only batted in one way. This is exactly why you have experienced players, so they can play different roles," Kartik said. However, despite Sooryavanshi's shortcomings, India managed to pull off a thrilling win. "In my opinion today, although they won the match, which is a different matter, if you are playing Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, he should have opened today," Kartik said. "He should have opened. As a youngster, as soon as the management told him that he would bat at No.3, he would have panicked. He played only because Ishan Kishan was injured. Though it wasn't wrong of the management not to break the opening combination, Suryavanshi doesn't have the experience at No.3. His strength is batting at 0/0 with the anticipation of whether he's going to hit a six or four off his first delivery." Another former Indian cricketer, Sadagoppan Ramesh, said on his Instagram channel.

Hockey returns to its cradle with Asian Champions Trophy

GNS News Agency, Oct 28 Balbir Singh Kular, a 1968 Mexico Olympics bronze medalist, recalls the time he played against the Netherlands at Police Lines in Jalandhar in 1967. Col (ret'd) Kular, who hails from nearby Sansarpur village, one of the main nurseries of hockey, will be a guest at Tuesday's opening ceremony of the Asian Champions Trophy at the city's Olympian Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium. Mentioning that it will be the first time many of the members of the current Indian team will be playing in their home state, he believes better late than never.

Kular remembers youngsters from his village coming on bicycles to watch the Indian team play almost 60 years ago, and anticipates the same excitement for witnessing the likes of skipper Harmanpreet Singh in action. More than half of the Indian squad for the tournament is made up of players from Punjab. "Players from Sansarpur and across Punjab came to see the match. At that time too, more than half of the Indian team was from Punjab. We were motivated by the fact that we were playing in front of a home crowd. I have watched this batch for a long time and the fact that even players with two Olympic bronze medals have not played for India in Punjab was a bit unfortunate. These boys show why Punjab is the cradle of Indian hockey," Kular tells The Indian Express.

The Asian Champions Trophy has been on a nine-day tour across Punjab with Olympic medalists and former India captains in attendance. Posters of the tournament — which features India, China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and Bangladesh — with the tagline in Punjabi, Jee Aayan Nu Hockey (Welcome hockey) — are seen across Jalandhar and Mohali, the two host cities. Pakistan has pulled out of the event in the wake of tense bilateral ties between the two countries. Former India captain Gagan Ajit Singh, who is serving as the Senior Superintendent of Police in Fazilka, was the chief guest there while his former teammate Jugraj Singh attended the ceremony in Amritsar. "During my time, I did not get many chances to play in Punjab as an India player. But this week, me and my former teammates like Jugraj and Prabhjot Singh have been sharing Asian Champions Trophy pictures with young kids in our WhatsApp groups," says Gagan Ajit.

In Gurdaspur, 1975 Hockey World Cup winner Brigadier (ret'd) Harcharan Singh, who scored the winner in the final against Pakistan, was present during the trophy tour. Harcharan was also part of the organising committee during Pakistan's 2006 tour to India, when drag-flicker Sohail Abbas broke Dutch legend Paul Litjens' world record of



267 goals in Amritsar. "Legendary Pakistani left-winger Samiullah had come as the team's manager. He wanted an Urdu copy of Japji Sahib (Sikh prayer) and we arranged it. Watching Abbas in action, many youngsters in the crowd would have started to dream about becoming a drag-flicker like him," shares Harcharan. He also recalls the Indian team playing against an Asian All-Star XI in exhibition matches in Amritsar and Jalandhar, and the Punjab crowd applauding the likes of Samiullah, Manzoor Hussain, Munawar Zaman and Islahuddin.

"People watched matches from the stands as well as standing in the trees around the grounds. In Amritsar, we were given two kg of ghee as well as almonds. While we were intense rivals on the field, most of us spoke Punjabi and made sure that our rivals also enjoyed Punjabi hospitality," adds Harjinder. Former India goalkeeper Baljit Singh Dadhwal was one of the stand-out performers in the 2009 Punjab Gold Cup in Chandigarh, where they lost in the final to the Dutch. He describes that tournament as a significant marker in the team's development. "The Punjab Gold Cup had Olympic champions Germany as well as Holland and we were extra motivated to play on our home ground. We lost a close final. If I remember correctly, Rupinder Pal Singh was watching the matches as a young trainee," says Dadhwal. He remembers travelling to Jalandhar to watch an India-Pakistan Test match in 1998. "I took a bus and watched Sohail Abbas play at his peak. I didn't know much about his tactics but later in my career, I made some saves against him. That memory remains special." At the stadium which will see intense action from Tuesday, a few youngsters are talking about the chance to see Indian captain Harmanpreet. "We have not seen Surjit sir take penalty corners but we will see Harmanpreet paji taking drag-flicks for India for the first time," says one of the trainees.

Sheetal Devi rates individual gold her most special medal at Asian Para Games

New Delhi: India's star para archer Sheetal Devi is keeping her focus firmly on her game and tuning out the social media buzz as her consistent medal-winning performances continue to raise expectations. Her latest success came at the Asian Para Games in Japan. Sheetal returned to New Delhi on Sunday to a rousing welcome along with her fellow Indian archers after winning two gold medals and a silver in the compound individual, mixed team and women's team events. "I focus on my game. I do not look at social media much. But I feel very happy when I win a medal and people come to see me. Many children, even young children, watch, so it feels wonderful," she told PTI. The para archery sensation defended her individual title with a hard-fought win over Singapore's Nur Syahidah Alim, renewing their rivalry from the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para Games final. The 19-year-old from Jammu rated the individual gold as the most special of her three medals. "The individual event. The others are special too, but my focus was more on the individual event to return as a champion. With the grace of God and everyone's wonderful and lovely support, I won," she said.

Paris Paralympics gold medalist Harvinder Singh said India's recurve team handled the pressure of heightened expectations well to clinch gold at the continental event. "Indeed, higher expectations bring pressure, but I am glad we handled that pressure. Our practice was excellent, the federation's support was wonderful, and we received a week of training there, all of which benefited us in archery," said Harvinder, who partnered Vijay Sindi in the men's recurve team event. India recorded its best-ever campaign in archery at the Asian Para Games, returning with three gold and an equal number of silver medals. "It feels wonderful when the entire team wins medals. In 2018, only I had won an individual medal, but this time I am happy that many more medals have come. For those few players who did not win, we hope that next time our entire team will bring home medals," he said. Mona Agarwal's dream run in Japan

Para shooter Mona Agarwal described her campaign at the Asian Para Games as a dream come true after clinching two gold medals and setting five records, including a world record. Mona, who was named India's flag bearer for the closing ceremony in Nagoya, emerged as the country's most successful athlete in its campaign that yielded 114 medals. "I would like to say that in a very short time, I have



The para archery sensation defended her individual title with a hard-fought win over Singapore's Nur Syahidah Alim, renewing their rivalry from the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para Games final. The 19-year-old from Jammu rated the individual gold as the most special of her three medals.

brought back a lot of happiness from Japan. I was expecting a medal, but when five records were created together and I became the flag bearer, it is a very big achievement for me," she said upon her return. "Winning a medal, setting records, and becoming a flag bearer are all connected; they cannot be separated. It feels like a dream. When I left for Japan, I went thinking I would bring back two medals, but I did not think I would return with two gold, five records, and become the flag bearer," she added.

Nitesh eyes another Paralympics gold Indian shuttler Nitesh Kumar clinched gold in the men's singles SL3 category after defeating compatriot and veteran Pramod Bhagat in an all-Indian final. "Winning against Pramod in two sets is, of course, very special. Winning the final against him is a very rare thing, and the final match was quite good and interesting," the Paris Paralympics gold medalist said. Nitesh said his ultimate goal was to defend his Paralympic title at the Los Angeles Games in 2028. "We are hoping for the same (Paralympics gold), but two years is a long journey. First, we have to get through qualifications, and the target will remain the same — to defend my title in LA," he said.

Jose Mourinho has mellowed, but he can still beat Barcelona

The knee slide on the touchline on Sunday night was not as theatrical as the sprint across the Nou Camp 16 seasons ago. Jose Mourinho's Inter Milan had lost that night, 1-0, fighting stubbornly with 10 men to preserve their 3-2 aggregate over Pep Guardiola's all-conquering Barcelona, but the Portuguese called it "the sweetest defeat of my life." Later, Real Madrid's president Florentino Perez dropped him to the hotel in his limousine. A few weeks later, Perez unveiled Mourinho as the "galactico", setting off another chapter in a love-hate triangle story.

Mourinho, one of Bobby Robson's coaching staff in the mid-90s and then a prime managerial candidate before Guardiola's ascent, had once sworn that he would land in Bernabeu "only to destroy them". But there he was, gliding out to plot against his former employers. His vow is working inversely. Barcelona have not beaten him in six Clasicos. Age has mellowed Mourinho, extinguished some of his fire and vanity. The one-liners don't bite the listener, although he still retains his wit and way with words. Like when he said before the Clasico: "The clásico is just another game in the championship but to say it's a game like any other would be to lie, totally unreal." There were no dramatic pauses between words, or antagonism. He delivered the line with matter-of-fact calmness. His brigade did the same on the pitch, a no-frills exhibition of composed football, free of incidents and drama, or bitterness. There was just an odd line of sarcasm in his post-match talk. "The VAR room fell asleep," he said with a smirk, reflecting on Joao Cancelo's heavy challenge on teenaged winger Yan Dimande.

But self-admittedly, he is not the stormy petrel he once was. "I've matured, I'm more at peace. A win no longer represents the moon to me, and a defeat no longer means hell," he had said a few years ago. "I can go home and not watch a football match, not think about football. I can do that. At the start of my career, I couldn't. I was switched on 24 hours a day. I had to find a kind of maturity. Today I feel comfortable with my personality as a man," he explained. He also knew that his stocks had plummeted, that the super clubs no longer court him. However, he can still deliver a tactical coup. The plan against Hansi Flick's Barcelona was simple. Suffocate, steal and strike. They let the hosts' ball-happy midfield dominate possession, but cut out the passing avenues, decelerating the quick offensive transition. Jude Bellingham (dropping from his advanced area), Bernardo Silva and Tchouameni fiercely man-marked Rodri, Pedri and Fermin Lopez. Passes often found the wrong men, and the sympathy juddered. All three were exceptional, especially Silva. He is eight years older than Pedri, less mobile and agile



than him, but with supreme positional sense and an intuition about his adversary's next move, he outwitted Barca's conductor. Barcelona somehow clung onto the ball, but when they lost it, Madrid counterattacked swiftly, without losing shape, the forwards pouncing in the twitch of an eyelid. When Madrid attacked, they went full-throttle. The centre-backs, the much-maligned Ibrahim Konate and Dean Huijsen, bombed forth. Marc Cucurella's stifling of Lamine Yamal was admirable. He clung onto him like a shadow, and although the Spaniard spun and sped past him a few times, he recovered and impeded his vision. He is a defender born to be a Mourinho lieutenant. His bark and bite are qualities the manager appreciates. "The kid is very good and difficult because, besides being good, he's clever. He tried everything to get Cucu a yellow card, but Cucu held his own very well," Mourinho said.

The first goal originated from the left-back sweeping the ball cross-field to Yan Dimande. Defender Gerard Martin cleared the ball, but it rebounded off Mbappe's body into the goal. A fortuitous goal, but one that Madrid fully deserved. Although Barcelona equalised, Mourinho stuck to his plans. He did not make any change in haste. His troops knew Barcelona would commit more men upfront. Shots piled on, but Madrid thwarted them. Even as pressure mounted, they didn't pull the shutters down, but waited for one decisive opportunity wherein they would deliver the knockout blow. Three minutes away from stoppage time, the knockout blow came. Jude Bellingham jinked past Gabriel Jesus, swiping the thin air, to set Eduardo Camavinga away. He passed to Guler, made the run upfront, received the ball back, sliced past Pau Cubarsi with a svelte touch and squared it to Mbappe. The Frenchman wouldn't miss from such a close range. Silence descended on Nou Camp, and Mourinho slid on his knees, his tongue out. It wouldn't be among his most iconic celebrations, even though it was Madrid's first win at Barcelona in three years, but he has etched another chapter in his complex love-hate triangle with the El Clasico rivals.

'Manchester United dressing room will be toxic', claims club legend Gary Neville

Manchester United legend Gary Neville has said that the current environment inside the Manchester United dressing room "must be toxic" and that players like captain Bruno Fernandes and Lisandro Martinez criticising the club management is only one or two per cent of the discontent that the players are feeling at the moment. Neville's comments came just before Manchester United lost 0-3 to Bournemouth at Old Trafford which forced the Red Devils to slide to 16th spot in the Premier League standings with seven points from eight league games. The club is now 14 points adrift of the top of the standings with just eight games done in the season. Bruno Fernandes was benched for the Bournemouth game for questioning manager Michael Carrick's tactics after their Champions League defeat to Como. Meanwhile, Martinez had criticised Jason Wilcox, Manchester United's director of football, for failing to strengthen the club's ranks sufficiently in the summer window. "For a player — the captain and the star player — to come out and speak like he did, we're only getting probably one or two per cent of what the team thinks. You imagine what they're like in the dressing room. Imagine what they're saying and thinking inside. It will be toxic. Probably the two most prominent players in the team, a World Cup winner (Martinez) and a PFA player of the year (Fernandes) coming out hammering the owners, hammering the sporting director and criticising the manager all in the space of a week means that the players have completely gone. There are a number of these players who have been a wrecking ball through managers for the last three to five years. And it looks like unfortunately it's happening again," Neville said on Sky Sports from Old Trafford before the game began. On his part, Carrick gave an emotional press conference after Fernandes' comments before benching him for the entirety of the Premier League game on Sunday. "When you're starting to have to justify the values of this football club to an audience. Saying people have to be humble... Carrick was talking about humility and resilience. That message can only be to the players because it felt like because there's 75,000 people in this stadium and there's millions



around the world who don't need reminding of what Manchester United is. So, the only people who he's sending that message out to are the football players in the dressing room. And if you're having to remind them of the club's history, of its values, character traits and personality traits to play for this football club, you're at a pretty low point," Neville added. While Martinez was not penalised for his outburst because he came out and apologised, Fernandes was forced to watch the entire 90 minutes from the bench. Neville said that he understood why Martinez was let off, before launching an attack on the current crop of United players. "If you go back 25 years — which we're not in that position anymore — these players would never be anywhere near the club, let alone the pitch. They'd be gone. Finished. But Manchester United aren't in that position right now. Neither is Michael Carrick. I was actually supportive and thought that the Martinez situation was handled well because there's no defenders. The ones that are there aren't good enough. I've not got any inside knowledge. I haven't spoken to anybody at the football club. To be fair, Fernandez has been world-class at times for United and his assists and goals are outstanding. But let's be really really blunt about it: he's played awfully this season. His standards have been really poor. So you could leave him out actually on performance alone, let alone on the words that he said."

Bhansali, who? Malayalam cinema made an Avengers-like movie on War and Love 23 years ago

What are you trying to pull off, Sanjay Leela Bhansali? You are making a movie about Love and War in 2026, even though Malayalam cinema made an “epic” on these two themes almost 23 years ago? Bhansali really thinks he can do as great a job as Vinayan? Seriously?! War and Love (2003) isn’t just Malayalam cinema’s “answer” to Saving Private Ryan (1998); it’s the industry’s Avengers, in a way. I highly doubt Bhansali, Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, and Vicky Kaushal can create a movie that’s even a fraction of what Vinayan Sir made. War and Love opens by dedicating itself to those brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives for India. However, by the time the movie ends, any family of soldiers killed in action who watch it may feel second-hand embarrassment and even be offended, wondering if this is what people, especially filmmakers, think the lives and missions of Army personnel look like. Don’t Miss | Kamal Haasan, Shankar’s Indian 2 reveals why Boomer uncles easily fall for internet scams

Malayalam cinema’s BorderWar and Love arrived at a time when India was still reeling from the tremors left by the 1999 Kargil War. Besides, even as the country’s cinematic landscape evolved slowly, the impact of JP Dutta’s Border (1997) had yet to wane, and “Sandeshe Aate Hai” had yet to disappear from the lips of the masses. During this period, Dutta was busy making LOC: Kargil (2003), his next epic historical war film, another multi-starrer like Border. Director Vinayan must have thought, “Why can’t we also do the same in Malayalam?” And he is not just a dreamer, guys; he is an achiever. But there’s a catch: not only is he not JP Dutta, but since his last few movies were abominations like Oomappenninu Uriyadappayyan (2002), Kattuchembakam (2002), and Meerayude Dukhavum Muthuvinte Swapnavum (2003), it probably must have been impossible for him to get Malayalam cinema’s equivalent of Sunny Deol, Jackie Shroff, and Suniel Shetty for his Border. But since he couldn’t compromise on star power either, Vinayan did something no one would ever expect. He put Dileep, a big star at the time, at the centre and surrounded him with familiar actors who mostly played character and comedy roles. They aren’t bad actors; in fact, Kalabhavan Mani, Vijayaraghavan, Prabhu, Siddique, Sai Kumar, and Jagadish are phenomenal performers. However, War and Love underscores that an actor is only as good as the director.

Here, they all look clueless, almost like wind-up toys doing exactly and solely what they are told. Forget actors preparing for their roles; I have strong reasons to doubt that Vinayan and J Pallassery wrote the script on the go, based on whatever was available on set, without giving two hoots about authenticity or accurate portrayal. The unintentional comedy of War and LoveEarly on, we see Major Rajendran (Suresh Krishna) being killed by a group of terrorists near the border. Here’s the thing: it’s okay to take creative liberties for cinematic effect, but completely throwing logic out the window and expecting people to play along is too much. Despite standing right next to a time bomb when it goes off, Rajendran is shown getting back on his feet and shooting at the terrorists seconds later. And those terrorists, who were standing just a few feet away when the bomb exploded, appear completely unscathed — there’s not even a bit of dust on their clothes, let alone any injuries. Did they make a bomb or a firecracker?

War and Love is helmed by Vinayan. War and Love is essentially marred by abysmal drama, ridiculous dialogues, and amateur plot devices. (Credit: IMDb)Then, when the opening credits appear, we see shoddily animated tanks, jets, and combat helicopters. This could be considered directorial brilliance, as, in hindsight, they foreshadow the pathetic production design, where oddly painted large pipes are passed off as bazookas. In one scene, we see a group of Pakistan Army personnel arriving in India and taking a bunch of villagers hostage. We hear that they entered the country by deceiving the BSF. But we see them wearing their Army uniforms right beneath their civilian clothing. Why would they do that for a high-stakes mission? And did Vinayan think that the Indian Army is incapable of noticing something so simple? Don’t Miss | Oriignal movie review: A time-travel drama that trades sci-fi jargon for moral conflict

Lost films, non-negotiable rules: Inside Himesh Reshammiya’s strict music rights strategy



Himesh Reshammiya revealed that he doesn't compose music for films unless the makers agree to sell the music rights to his label.

Himesh Reshammiya, who has a busy November ahead with the release of two films for which he has served as the sole music composer, Sooraj Barjatya’s romantic film Yeh Prem Mol Liya and Aditya Datt’s action romance Gunmaaster G9, recently revealed the non-negotiable conditions he sets before agreeing to compose music for a movie. Talking about his ‘music label model’, Himesh said, “I have a music label model now. If I’m doing a film, I need the rights of the film. Keeping my fees as a composer aside, I’ll pay the market price you’re getting for music rights. So, it’s a straight model.” The music label Himesh Reshammiya Melodies, founded in 2021, is co-owned by Himesh and his wife Sonia Kapoor.



Malayalam supremacy! Conveniently, the Indian Army troop sent for a counter-operation consists mostly of Malayalees, which justifies most of the dialogue being in Malayalam. But the convenience doesn’t end there. For the romance subplot, Captain Gopinath (Dileep) falls in love with Serina (Laila), the daughter of Pakistan Army General Jaffer Khan (Mukesh Rishi). To make their interactions in Malayalam, Vinayan again uses his “brilliance” and gives Jaffer Khan Kerala roots. Tapping into Islamophobic narratives, it is shown that Jaffer’s father originally hailed from Malappuram, a Muslim-majority district in the state. Had the movie been released today, the right-wing would have hailed it as yet another Dhurandhar (2025) that “exposed” Pakistan’s connections to Kerala, with even the Army General and his daughter speaking in Malayalam. And we Malayali millennials would have lived to see the internet swarming with “peak detailing by Vinayan Sir” theories.

War and Love is essentially marred by abysmal drama, ridiculous dialogues, and amateur plot devices. Since the movie features far too many comedy actors, Vinayan also throws in “jokes” once in a while. Even though the written jokes in the script aren’t even a tad funny, War and Love unknowingly compensates for this: the serious moments are so poorly made they make us ROFL. If Saving Private Ryan’s opening sequence is “peak cinema,” War and Love’s climax is “weak cinema,” where every time a bomb blasts, people standing nearby jump and fall back to create the effect of being thrown away.

Not only do the AK-47s look like they were made from cheap plastic, but the way most actors hold the guns is so hilarious that one can’t help but laugh while watching War and Love.

This movie is almost like the Avengers — if the superheroes had zero superpowers or any swagger. Prabhu is Captain America, but no one really listens to his orders properly. If he tells one of his jawans not to do something, the latter does exactly that and dies, as Sai Kumar did. Dileep is Iron Man, but his stunts are comical. Jagadish is Thor, who doesn’t even know how to hold Mjolnir properly. Kalabhavan Mani is Hulk, who is all talk and no smash. Indraj is Black Widow, but just there for some female power in the cast. I think Vinayan considers himself the “S Shankar of Malayalam cinema” — a trailblazer who introduced several never-before-seen elements to the industry. But the only issue is that nobody actually wanted to see any of these things. But sadly, life doesn’t always go according to our wishes, right? By the way, I feel like we have been completely ignoring Telugu cinema? That’s unfair, given the industry’s immense “contribution.” Next week, let’s look at the “power” of Telugu cinema through NT Rama Rao Jr. Memories of Blunder is a column in which we dissect some of the worst South Indian movies and performances of all time. No offence to anyone whose name surfaces here. They may all have potential, but they blew it that one time. However, don’t play the song if you can’t face the music, right?

Himesh Reshammiya recalled that production house Rajshri Films, which has bankrolled Yeh Prem Mol Liya, asked him if he could only compose the music for their film, instead of also buying the music rights. “I said, ‘I’ll do a great job, but that’s my model. So, once I’ve fit my model into my framework, I’ll pay you the market price,’” Himesh said on the Game Changers podcast.

Even though Himesh worked with Rajshri Films for their 2015 hit action romance Prem Ratan Dhan Payo, starring Salman Khan and Sonam Kapoor, he refused to make an exception. “I’ll not do it for anyone. I don’t have any desperation,” he asserted, adding, “It was difficult to convince everyone. But they’re such nice people.” The singer-composer admitted that he had lost out on several films because of this non-negotiable condition. “Because they may think they can get an extra price, or I’ll think I can get a better price, or someone else may offer a better price. But I’m not insecure because I’m very happy with what I have.”

Himesh Reshammiya also explained how he approaches every film collaboration these days. “My main process is, listen to my music first. If you don’t think they’re blockbuster songs, they’re anyway going to stay with me. But at least let’s jam and do great work together; then we’ll get to negotiations. We should be clear creatively first, then modality should be clear, then whatever you’ve committed to, you should fulfil it. Your intention should be clear, and you should work very sincerely,” he said. The composer added, “Whoever comes to me, I should first see if I fit into their world and whether I have the songs they need for the film. I want to do romantic songs. I don’t want to do films where there are no romantic songs. I have immense clarity. Unless you don’t have romantic songs, the album wouldn’t track. They do 10 times better. I’m good at doing romantic songs. Because of my brand, it’ll be expected of me to deliver good numbers.” The album of Yeh Prem Mol Liya, starring Ayushmann Khurrana and Sharvari, features six songs, of which only three, the title track, “Jai Ambe Bol” and “Jhumka Patola”, have been released so far. Two songs from the Gunmaaster G9 album have been released so far — the romantic track “Afsaana Banaaya Aapne” and “Do Din Ki Zindagi”. The film reunites director Aditya Datt and actor Emraan Hashmi with Himesh, 21 years after their hit romantic film Aashiq Banaya Aapne. It also stars Genelia D’Souza and Aparshakti Khurana, among others.

Nobody Wants This Season 3 review: Adam Brody, Kristen Bell show gets back on track

Nobody Wants This season 3 review: Erin Foster’s romantic show Nobody Wants This went astray in Season 2, just like its lead characters — Noah (Adam Brody) and Joanne (Kristen Bell) — who “merge their lives and blend their friends”. But the second instalment served more as a placeholder than a season with a distinct identity of its own. It paid the price to showcase that rites-of-passage phase in any relationship when it lets more people in, instead of the two who kicked it off. The real resolution of that season, like life, comes much later in the third season, when the couple realises that at some point, they need to stop making their relationship palatable to others, and focus on consolidating and building on their bond. In the process, Foster also tightens his grip on the show and reinforces its identity as a green flag, if it were a profile on a dating app.

International setting, desi issues Nobody Wants This is a fairly relatable show for Indians as it explores familiar desi themes such as family approval, religious conversion, and most crucially, the wave of feminism reshaping households today — for the better. Noah is a rabbi, as steeped in faith and tradition as it gets, but he’s also the too-good-to-be-true idealistic modern man who insists on his partner retaining her identity and choices as she navigates a new family, a new life, and even a new faith. It’s a struggle Indian families are encountering every day today, as women continue to hold their own instead of bowing down to their in-laws and a patriarchal society’s diktats like in the old days. But for them to be able to do that sans guilt yet with authority, they need a man like Noah who steps in to intervene gently as well as firmly, without severing ties with either party. But they don’t make men like Noah. They never have. In season 3, as he and Joanne begin living together, he even takes in stride sharing space with a woman who asks, “Should I put this bread in with the plastic cover into the toaster?” Every step of the way, more than Joanne, it’s Noah’s unending patience that tests the audience’s patience — when will this man push back? What will it take for him to assert his dominance? Is the fact that she’s converting for him good enough for him to take everything else lying down? To make matters worse, like any daily soap, his mother also keeps tightening her grip on their relationship. Spoiler alert As soon as he pops the question after organising a dream proposal, both Noah and Joanne begin to lose control of their relationship. Their parents start dictating not only the duration of their courtship, but also the scale, location, and vibe of their wedding. “I want a Julia Roberts wedding,” Joanne keeps manifesting, till she gives in to his family’s wish to keep the nuptials in their ancestral backyard. But Noah wins her over not by letting his family corner her, but by standing firmly by her side, till she realises on her own that he wants it as much as his family does. In that case, instead of being a pushover, he establishes his brand of romance on the lines of Shah Rukh Khan’s Raj from Aditya Chopra’s 1995 seminal romantic comedy Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge — he wants to win his girl over, but not at the cost of disrupting patriarchy like a violent man. He wants to bowl over patriarchy with his charm, even though it comes at the price of standing up to his own family.

It’s not just their parents Noah and Joanne have to con-



tend with while planning their wedding, it’s also their siblings. For starters, Joanne starts to feel she’s losing traction as a podcaster to her sister Morgan, whose new philosophy of “make them” fetches her not only thousands of new followers, but also a book offer (a smashing cameo by Poorna Jagannathan as her potential editor Eleanor) and a spot on What Happens Live with Andy Cohen. Professional envy aside, personal territories are breached too, as Morgan ends up sleeping with Noah’s newly separated brother Sasha. The show spends a good amount of time steering their romance in a predictable and clichéd direction. But by the end, it vehemently refuses to tie that loose end. Because, like its lead couple, Nobody Wants This also realises — whether by design or otherwise — how it started and where it should be going. Their decision to hard-launch their relationship in Season 2 was not to seek approval of their family and friends, but to test whether they’re secure enough about their relationship, whether they can fight both individually and as a team to protect their equation, and whether their own inherent conflicts about their dynamic can avoid getting reinforced by external opinions. But that doesn’t mean they set out on a path of ensuring their siblings, parents, and even distant cousins are on board with the idea of how, why, when, and with whom they tie the knot. In a standard rom-com, the climactic scene of skeletons tumbling out of everyone’s closets and them confronting each other over built-up tension would’ve resulted in the couple working overtime to sustain peace at their pre-wedding ceremony. But like the show, Noah and Joanne also end up dismissing what’s not important — seeking validation from those too tied up by their own issues — to focus on what’s most important — making their wedding a memorable milestone. From where she started, Joanne comes a long way when she attributes her conversion to a desire to understand what makes Noah see the world the way he does. That’s all it takes for him to do something he would normally hesitate to do — disrupt tradition, not even seek her consent, and announce that he’d like to get married on the spot. “It’d be a controversial decision,” he admits, but doesn’t mind risking it because, at the end of the day, it just feels right. At the risk of sounding filmy, that’s the moment when Noah lets go of his own hand and tells himself, “Jaa Noah Jaa, jee le apni zindagi.”

Rashmika Mandanna, Vijay Deverakonda address Koffee backlash: ‘Bullying dressed up as feminism’

Days after intense backlash about their relationship, actors Rashmika Mandanna and Vijay Deverakonda have addressed the trolling with social media posts on their respective handles. The comments began after their appearance on Karan Johar-hosted Koffee With Karan where Vijay said he told Rashmika to ask him a 100 times before he will consider marriage. Rashmika and Vijay tied the knot earlier this year. In a video shared on X, Rashmika can be seen playfully climbing onto Vijay’s back, raising her hands and saying something to him. The video has been muted, but it captures the couple in a light-hearted moment at home. She wrote a lengthy note, calling it her “little 2 cents on this whole issue concerning me and Vijju”, where she addressed those supporting the couple and the ones criticising them.

“I will ask him a 1000 times” “My lovely people of the internet, to all those who deeply love and to those who are permanently bitter. My little 2 cents on this whole issue concerning me and Vijju,” she wrote. Rashmika explained that she generally refrains from addressing such controversies because she believes everyone is entitled to their opinion. However, she said the current situation felt less like a difference of opinion and more like “an angry mob looking for someone to vent at”. She added that she was writing the note to stand up for people who believe in love. She also singled out Vijay Deverakonda’s comment to Karan Johar that he had told Rashmika to ask him 100 times and then he would consider marriage. “First, it was never about the number of times or an entire year. That’s where some of you got stuck. Yes, that conversation happened. But neither of us was looking for a grand proposal. The conversation was about him wanting both of us to take the time and space to understand each other, to be sure that despite all the highs and lows, joys and stresses of life, this was what we wanted and the right time for it,” she wrote. The actor said it was perfectly fine for her to know what she wanted while Vijay took time to think through the practical aspects of their lives before making a decision. “That didn’t change our love in any way. I am all heart and he is the thinker — and we need that in each other’s lives,” she added.

Rashmika also questioned why expressing affection for her husband had become a subject of ridicule. “If I am not in love with the man I am marrying, then why in the world would I marry him?” she asked. Taking a swipe at her critics, she urged people to find partners who made them feel loved even after marriage. “Find a man who loves you so beautifully that even after you are married, you would still want to tell him, ‘Let’s get married.’ I would do it a thousand times — 100 is nothing. It’s really that simple,” she wrote. She also addressed those who, she felt, had become too invested in their own interpretations of her relationship. “If your love doesn’t fit your imagination of what love should look like, that’s okay no? You go live that beautiful imagination in your life. I will be cheering for every happy person out there,” she wrote. Rashmika reserved a special message for content creators who had advised her to walk away from the relationship. She said their opinions failed to account for the difficult moments she and Vijay had experienced together. “I wish some of you had been there a couple of years ago, when things were really, really hard. You weren’t there. He was and he is even right now,” she wrote. The actor also expressed disappointment that people appeared more will-



ing to believe online speculation, misleading edits and unverified claims than her own account of her personal life. “The fact that some people would rather believe random narratives, misleading edits and absolute lies created on the internet than believe what I say about my own life is honestly a little creepy,” she added. Emphasising Vijay’s presence in her life, Rashmika wrote, “When my stomach hurts every month, you aren’t there. He is.” She concluded by asking people not to worry about either of them and criticised those who discussed her family without knowing them, describing such behaviour as “bullying dressed up as feminism”. It’s me and her against the world: Vijay Deverakonda Sharing a personal note, Vijay wrote, “My best friend, my wife, my woman. One of the most beautiful parts of my life that I got absolutely right ?? For all those concerned, We are both gloriously happy. I am blessed. If its me and her against the world – so be it ?? Big love to all those who celebrate love and the simplicity of living happily. ?? Now, with absolutely no intended kindness or respect, everyone else can go f**k themselves. :)) Deverakonda Vijay Sai.” Here is Rashmika Mandanna’s complete post... My lovely people of the internet, ?? To all those who deeply love, and to those who are permanently bitter. ?? My lil’ 2 cents on this whole issue concerning me and Vijju. I generally don’t address these things because everyone has a right to their opinions. Sometimes, I even enjoy reading them and gaining a different perspective. But the current frenzy over our interview feels less like people having opinions and more like an angry mob looking for someone to vent at. Somewhere along the way, the whole point got lost. Maybe it didn’t fit your lens. Maybe some of you simply don’t want to see it. I’m writing this because I want to protect the people who believe in love, and I hope everyone gets to find their own version of it. ?? We’ve been bombarded with opinions, comments and unsolicited advice on all our profiles, mine and yours, unnecessarily.