RNI No.TELENG/2013/49469

INDIAN CHRONICLE

PUBLISHED FROM :RANAGAREDDY,AHMEDABAD, MUMBAI, LUCKNOW, BENGALURU, CHENNAI, VIJAYAWADA

30 October 2026|Friday | Volume No:14 | Issue No: 253 Pages: 12+8 www.indianchronicle.com Published from : Ranga Reddy (Telangana State) ₹1/-

Telangana High Court directs Housing Board to execute flat sale deeds within 10 days

Hyderabad: A Division Bench of the Telangana High Court comprising Justice B. Vijaysen Reddy and Justice Gadi Praveen Kumar has directed the Telangana State Housing Board (TSHB) to execute sale deeds in favour of flat purchasers within 10 days, without insisting on adjustments or demanding penal interest. The Bench passed the interim directions on October 28 while hearing a writ petition filed by the Telangana Housing Board challenging an order of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC), New Delhi, dated June 19, 2025.

Telangana faces fund crunch, Mahesh Kumar Goud admits after Anirudh Reddy's protest decision

Hyderabad: After Congress MLA J. Anirudh Reddy decided to stage a fast unto death over a shortage of funds and delays in clearing bills, TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud admitted that the State was facing a fund crunch.

"Not just in Jadcherla constituency, there is a shortage of funds in many constituencies," he said at a press conference here on Thursday.

ECI extends Telangana SIR claims deadline to November 26, final rolls on November 30

Hyderabad: The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Thursday revised the schedule of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Telangana.As per revised schedule, the notice phase, and disposal of claims and objections process will conclude on November 26. The final electoral rolls will be published on November 30.

The ECI revised the schedule as per the request raised by Telangana Chief Electoral Officer C Sudharsan Reddy. Earlier, the deadline for notice phase, and disposal of claims and objections process was November 5, with final electoral rolls publication scheduled for November 9.

Election Commission revises SIR schedule for six states

New Delhi, Oct 29 (IANS) The Election Commission of India (ECI) has revised the schedule for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Nagaland, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra and the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

The changes were notified on Thursday.

In most of the states, the final publication of the revised electoral rolls has been fixed for November 30.

The Commission has extended the notice phase and the period for disposal of claims and objections to give electors and political parties more time to participate in the process.

For Nagaland, the notice phase and disposal of claims and objections will run till November 25, with final publication on November 30.

In Telangana, the corresponding period has been fixed till November 26, followed by final publication on November 30.

Andhra Pradesh and Haryana have received identical revised schedules.

In both states, the notice phase and disposal of claims and objections will continue till November 20, with the final rolls to be published on November 30.

Maharashtra has been given a more detailed revision.

The period for filing claims and objections has been extended till November 13.

The notice phase and disposal of claims will continue till November 25, and the final publication is scheduled for November 30.

For Delhi, the schedule has been extended further.

The period for filing claims and objections will now run till November 25.

The notice phase and disposal of claims and objections have been extended till December 15, while the final publication has been fixed for December 22.

In all cases, the Commission has directed the Chief Electoral Officers to inform all concerned officials of the revised timelines and to give wide publicity to the modified schedule through all available media.

Political parties are also to be informed of the changes in writing.

Copies of the letters have been sent to the respective Chief Secretaries.

The Special Intensive Revision is being conducted to ensure that the electoral rolls are accurate and up to date.The extensions are expected to provide additional opportunity for eligible citizens to file claims for inclusion and for objections to be examined thoroughly before the final electoral rolls are published.

Coast Guard rescues 20 crew members from stranded ship off Andhra coast

Visakhapatnam, Oct 29 (IANS) In a high-risk operation, the Indian Coast Guard rescued 20 crew members from a Singapore-bound cargo ship stranded off the Andhra Pradesh coast on Thursday.

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) said that in a swift response off Antarvedi, post the very severe cyclone Aranab, it executed a high-risk operation, safely rescuing all 20 crew members from the aground vessel MV Sigma Pearl in rough seas.

ICG's pre-emptive measures, coastal monitoring, and Disaster Response Team (DRT) deployment along the Andhra coast ensured zero loss of life at sea.

ICG deployed its ship Sujay and helicopter ICG Helo to evacuate those trapped on the merchant ship.

The stranded crew members were airlifted in a heroic rescue operation.

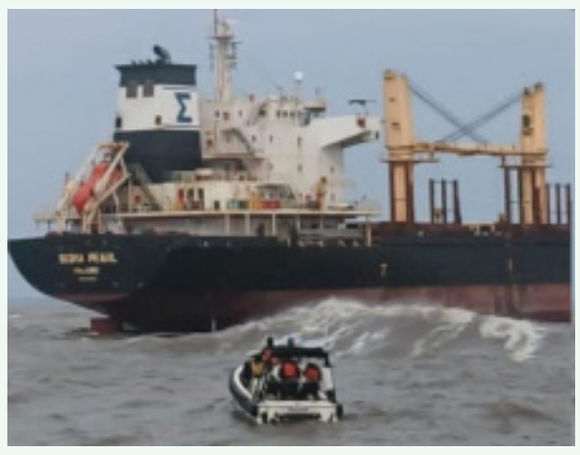
The bulk carrier, Sigma Pearl, sailing under the Marshall Islands flag, was stranded near Antarvedi while navigating through the Ravva oilfield due to engine failure.

The cargo ship was suspected to have suffered engine failure under the impact of severe cyclonic storm 'Arnab' in the Bay of Bengal.

The Coast Guard deployed a helicopter (ICG Helo) and Offshore Patrol Vessel Sujay as part of its operation to rescue members of the crew. The Coast Guard personnel used the helipad at Mogalthur village in West Godavari district for the rescue efforts.

The ship suffered an engine failure while returning to Singapore after unloading the cargo at Visakhapatnam port.

The vessel departed from Visakhapatnam port around 12.17 a.m. on October 27, around the time Cyclone Arnab was approaching Yanam before making



landfall in the early hours of October 28.

With the vessel stranded in rough seas, the crew members were worried and were desperately waiting for some help.

On receiving the communication, the ICG launched an operation and completed it within 24 hours, safely rescuing all the crew members.

Very severe cyclonic storm 'Arnab' crossed the Andhra Pradesh coast in the early hours of October 28 with maximum sustained wind speed of 125-135 kmph, gusting up to 150 kmph.

According to the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), the process continued for six hours till 8 a.m.

The cyclone claimed seven lives, leaving a trail of destruction in coastal districts, uprooting thousands of trees, electricity poles and causing extensive damage to crops.

Ex-minister Konda Surekha 'regrets' personal remarks against K.T. Rama Rao

Hyderabad, Oct 29 (IANS) Former minister and Congress MLA, Konda Surekha, has expressed regret for the personal remarks she had made against Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President, K.T. Rama Rao, two years ago.

Surekha, who was sacked from the Telangana Cabinet last month over certain remarks made by her daughter against Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, took to 'X' on Thursday to issue a clarification regarding personal remarks she had made about Rama Rao in 2024.

She stated that those comments were made in the context of the political situation at the time while criticising the Opposition. She said the comments were not intentional.

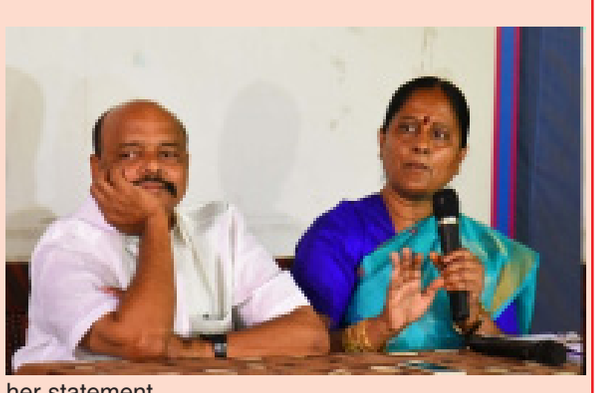
"I should not have made those baseless remarks. I had absolutely no malicious intent to cause pain to KTR or his family members, nor did I intend to damage their reputation," she said.

"If my comments caused any hurt to him or his family, I express my regret and hereby withdraw those remarks," added Surekha.

The minister had made the alleged defamatory statement on October 2, 2024 about K.T. Rama Rao also known as KTR, blaming him for the divorce between actors Naga Chaitanya and Samantha.

Naga Chaitanya's father and popular actor Nagarjuna had filed a defamation case against the then minister, saying her remarks harmed the dignity and reputation of his family.

In November 2025, Nagarjuna withdrew the defamation case after the minister expressed regret over



her statement.

The actor withdrew the case after Surekha took to 'X' to clarify that the statement she made was not intended to hurt Nagarjuna or his family members.

Though K.T. Rama Rao had issued a legal notice asking Surekha to retract her statement and apologise, she said she was standing by her comments about the BRS leader.

Following this, K.T. Rama Rao had initiated defamation proceedings against the then minister.

A city court in December last year had filed a Non-Bailable Warrant against Surekha.

After reviewing preliminary evidence submitted by the complainant, the court had observed that there is prima facie material to proceed under Section 356 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and corresponding procedural provisions under the BNS Sections 222, read with 223.

Cong must answer questions over ballot papers after alleging EVM tampering: Telangana BJP chief

Hyderabad, Oct 29 (IANS) Telangana BJP President N. Ramchander Rao on Thursday said the Congress, which had repeatedly raised questions over Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), must now answer questions about ballot papers after failing to win a single seat in the recent Legislative Council elections.

Speaking to IANS, Rao said, "The Congress party, which had been crying about EVMs, must now answer questions about ballot papers... It has lost in Karnataka, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The Congress claimed that EVMs were being tampered with, but what answer does it have regarding ballot papers?"

"Does it now want ballot papers to be removed as well? The Congress has been exposed, and its claims about EVM tampering and vote theft are completely false. These allegations are baseless. Therefore, Congress should now keep quiet and stop trying to create an atmosphere of anarchy in the country," he said.

Meanwhile, the BJP on Wednesday won 13 of the 28 Legislative Council seats that went to the polls across four states, while the Congress secured one seat. The Samajwadi Party (SP) made gains in poll-bound Uttar Pradesh, while the Jan Suraaj Party opened its account in Bihar's Upper House.

All the seats contested in this round of Legislative Council elections belonged to graduate or teacher constituencies. Polling was held on October 23 using ballot papers, but the counting process extended over nearly two days and was marked by confusion, allegations and protests.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also took a swipe at the Congress over the results. In a post on X on Wednesday, he said, "MLC elections in 28 seats across 4 big states - Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar and Karnataka. Elections held using ballot papers. Guess how many seats Congress won?"

In Uttar Pradesh, where 11 seats were contested across Varanasi, Lucknow, Jhansi, Agra, Gorakhpur, Meerut, Bareilly, Moradabad and Faizabad, the BJP retained its tally of six seats. The SP, its principal challenger, won five seats, increasing its tally by two.

In Karnataka, the Congress failed to win any seats, while the Janata Dal (Secular) wrested the Bengaluru teacher constituency from the ruling party. The BJP retained all three seats it contested, winning the North-East teacher, South-East graduate and West graduate constituencies by defeating Congress candidates.

Delhi Traffic Police announces vehicle entry restrictions under revised GRAP rules from Nov 1

New Delhi, Oct 30 (IANS) The Delhi Traffic Police has announced restrictions on vehicle entry into the national capital under the revised Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), which will come into effect from November 1, 2026, urging motorists to check their vehicles' eligibility before travelling.

In a post on X, the Delhi Traffic Police said vehicle entry would be regulated under the revised GRAP rules, with restrictions applicable to certain categories of vehicles to curb pollution and improve air quality in the national capital.

According to the advisory, BS-VI-compliant vehicles, CNG vehicles, electric vehicles and exempted vehicles will be allowed entry, subject to applicable rules.

The restrictions will apply to vehicles that do not meet BS-VI emission standards and those without a valid Pollution Under Control Certificate (PUCC). Non-compliant interstate buses will also face restrictions under the revised regulations.

Additionally, trucks not destined for Delhi will be required to use peripheral expressways instead of entering the city. Restrictions will also apply to tractors and jugad vehicles, wherever applicable, along with certain vehicles registered outside Delhi.

The traffic police have advised commuters to verify their vehicles' eligibility before planning their journeys and follow official traffic advisories to avoid inconvenience.

The Delhi Traffic Police also shared its traffic helpline numbers, 011-25844444 and 1095, for assistance and information regarding the restrictions.

The revised measures come amid concerns over deteriorating air quality in Delhi-NCR, with authorities stepping up enforcement of pollution-control measures and traffic regulations.Earlier, three FIRs were registered against commercial vehicle operators for allegedly using fake No Entry Permissions (NEPs) during a special enforcement drive conducted by the Northern Range Traffic Police at Delhi's border areas.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

The thirst behind the cloud— Karnataka's data centre policy must put water sustainability first

Karnataka is making efforts to attract the next generation of digital infrastructure. The State's newly approved Sustainable Data Centre Policy 2026-31 aims to meet a cumulative data centre IT load of 1 GW by 2031, accounting for 10-12 per cent of India's total data centre IT load. The policy has a budget of around Rs 1,300 crore and explicitly includes renewable energy, advanced cooling, water management and water-resource efficiency.This matters because the next wave of the digital economy will involve more than software and servers. It will be powered by electricity, land, connectivity and, increasingly, water. But the question is not whether Karnataka should attract data centres. It is how the State will ensure that its digital vision does not exacerbate its water vulnerability.

All searches, cloud services, streaming platforms and AI applications rely on physical computing infrastructure. Servers generate heat, making cooling essential. Depending on the technology and operating conditions, cooling can require significant quantities of water. The issue is becoming increasingly significant with the rise of AI and demand for high-performance computing.The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology says India's data centre capacity increased from 375 MW in 2020 to over 1,500 MW by 2025. Newer technologies, such as direct-to-chip liquid cooling, immersion cooling and adiabatic cooling, are also being emphasised by the government as a means to save water and energy.No single number can accurately reflect the water footprint of all data centres. Water consumption depends on factors such as climate, cooling technology, server density, and how they are used. A new metric gaining importance is Water Usage Effectiveness (WUE). Karnataka's new policy proposes monitoring WUE and Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE). That's a good start. However, for these metrics to be meaningful, they must also inform decisions about where and how the data centres are built.

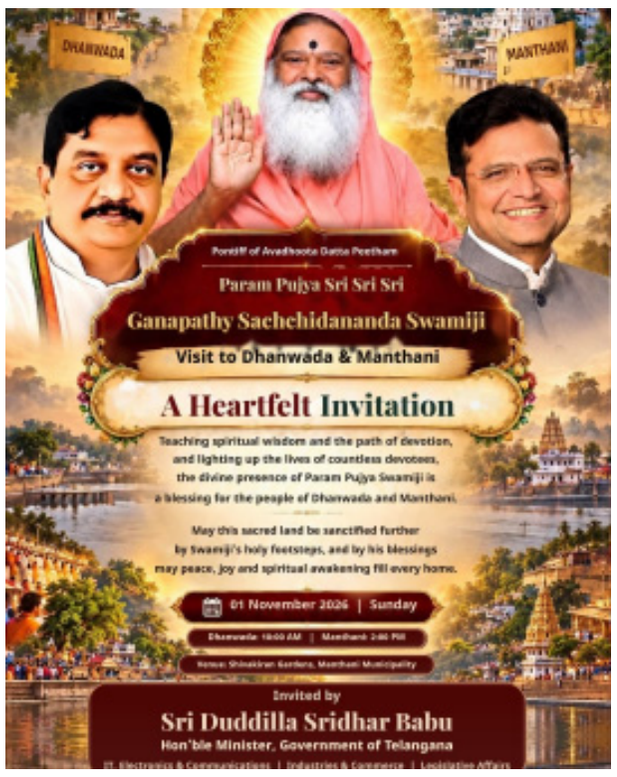
The timing matters. Karnataka is simultaneously striving for accelerated digitalisation and grappling with recurring water stress. Reports indicate that the State has issued its 17th drought declaration in 25 years, underscoring the persistent water concerns across several areas. This is a planning problem that cannot be solved by asking the data centres to use less water. A facility could be highly water-efficient yet still be located in a water-stressed area. By contrast, a site that has more available water resources, renewable energy resources and connectivity could present a more sustainable long-term option.

Water-aware site selection, efficiency benchmarks, treated wastewater use, resilience standards and updated water-resource maps can help Karnataka balance digital expansion with water security as it targets 1 GW of data centre IT load by 2031That is why location should be an integral part of sustainability policy. To enable site selection, the new policy proposes mapping resource availability, including land, electricity, water and connectivity. It also envisages the development of sustainable data-centre zones and parks. If implemented in an open and fair manner, this could prove to be one of the most critical components of the policy.Karnataka government's push to diversify data centres beyond Bengaluru provides a chance to reimagine the conventional patterns of data centre expansion. Changing location should not be a mere transfer of congestion from one city to another. Instead, it should encourage development in emerging locations such as Mysuru and Mangaluru. Location should be based on a broader resource matrix that considers water availability, groundwater conditions, renewable energy potential, grid capacity, connectivity, climate risk and the needs of surrounding communities. This is particularly relevant given that a recent study by WRI India found that more than half of India's data centres are located in areas facing water stress.Karnataka is one of the five States that account for 75 per cent of the country's total data centres. The lesson is not that data centres should be excluded from States facing water stress. Rather, infrastructure planning must be flexible and sensitive to local resource conditions.

TTD EO M. Ravichandra Presents Lord Venkateswara's Blessings and Prasadam to Gaddam Ravi Kumar

"— Blessings and Prasadam Received from TTD EO Following Special Darshan""""TIRUMALA, OCTOBER 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Gaddam Ravi Kumar, Director Trinadha Rao Nakkina and Y. V. Reddy had a special darshan of Lord Sri Venkateswara at the renowned Tirumala temple on Thursday. They participated in the worship of the deity and sought the blessings of Lord Venkateswara."Following the darshan, they met Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Executive Officer M. Ravichandra in a courteous interaction."On the occasion, TTD EO M. Ravichandra presented them with the sacred blessings of the Lord, along with prasadam, as a mark of divine grace.Gaddam Ravi Kumar expressed his happiness at receiving the blessings and prasadam from the TTD Executive Officer after the darshan of Lord Venkateswara.Director Trinadha Rao Nakkina, Y. V. Reddy and others were present during the occasion. They stated that the darshan of Lord Venkateswara and receiving His blessings bring spiritual joy, peace of mind and a sense of fulfilment to devotees.

Paramount Revered His Holiness Sri Sri Sri Ganapathi Sachchidananda Swamiji to Visit Dhanwada and Manthani



MANTHANI / DHANWADA — In a momentous spiritual occasion, the Avadhoota Datta Peethadhipati, Paramount Revered His Holiness Sri Sri Sri Ganapathi Sachchidananda Swamiji, is scheduled to undertake a sacred visit to the Dhanwada and Manthani regions."On behalf of the populace, Sri Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Honourable Minister for Information Technology, Electronics & Communications, Industries & Commerce, and Legislative Affairs, Government of Telangana, extends a warm and heartfelt invitation to all devotees and citizens to attend this divine gathering."Highlighting the profound spiritual import of the visit, Minister Sridhar Babu remarked that the divine presence of His Holiness—who continues to illuminate countless lives through the teachings of spiritual wisdom and devotion—is an unparalleled blessing for the residents of Dhanwada and Manthani. He expressed the collective sentiment that the sacred footsteps of Swamiji will further sanctify this pious land, invoking peace, happiness, and a resurgence of spiritual consciousness in every household."Event Schedule & Venue Details" * Date: Sunday, November 1, 2026" * Dhanwada Program: 10:00 AM" * Manthani Program: 02:00 PM" * Venue (Manthani): Shivakiran Gardens, Manthani Municipality"All devotees, seekers, and citizens are cordially invited to congregate in large numbers and partake in the divine blessings of Param Pujya Swamiji."Host / Invitee:"Sri Duddilla Sridhar Babu"Honourable Minister, Government of Telangana"(IT, Electronics & Communications | Industries & Commerce | Legislative Affairs)

Child Prodigy Himani Shines on International Stage across Africa and Indonesia

Hon'd Minister Sridhar Babu Extends Heartfelt Felicitations.

"Godavarikhani / Manthani, October 29, 2026:"Singarapu Himani, the gifted daughter of renowned international 3D artist Singarapu Sivaramakrishna (SSRK), has brought immense national pride by demonstrating exceptional artistic prowess on global platforms."In a recent prestigious African International Art Competition featuring participants from nearly 80 countries, Himani represented India with distinction and earned an esteemed International Certificate of Merit. Furthermore, her artwork was selected for the ongoing International Art Exhibition in Indonesia, where her creation will be proudly showcased for a fortnight."Recognizing her extraordinary accomplishments, Honorable Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu warmly commended Himani for her remarkable global accolades. Extending his blessings, the Minister expressed his hope that she would follow in her father's illustrious footsteps, achieve further international renown, and elevate the stature of Manthani on the world map.

Commitment to the Enhancement of the Educational Sector: Kondela Maruti.

"MANTHANI, October 29, 2026: Prominent social leader Kondela Maruti affirmed his unwavering dedication to the progression of the educational landscape in the Manthani region."Speaking on Thursday at the Smriti Patham commemorative event, marking 46 years since the historic movement for local education, Mr. Maruti addressed an intimate gathering of distinguished community members and intellectuals. The event commemorated the 46th anniversary of the landmark 1980 indefinite hunger strike (Aamarana Nirahara Deeksha), a monumental crusade that successfully led to the establishment of the Government Degree College in Manthani."During the session, various eminent speakers offered insightful recommendations aimed at elevating regional educational standards. Aligning with these suggestions, Mr. Maruti emphasized the imperative to submit formal proposals to the government to fortify regional educational institutions."The Chief Guest of the occasion, In-charge Principal Parsayya, lauded Mr. Maruti—who also serves as the Alumni Association President—for his pivotal role and commendable contributions during the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) peer team's inspection visit."Guest speakers revisited the historic milestones of the college's inception, invoking the spirit of the 1980 movement. They commended the inspiring leadership of Kondela Maruti under the banner of Manthani Vidyarthi Yuvatha for driving impactful social initiatives, encouraging the organization to sustain its momentum for community development.

"The event featured compelling addresses by several key dignitaries, including Dr. Adepu Laxmi Narayana (Lecturer, Government Degree College), Poreddy Venkata Reddy (Social Activist and Senior Citizen Representative), Ramadugu Maruti Rao (Associate President, Peddapalli District Pensioners' Association), Bhogoju Srinivas (BJP Leader), and Madhu (Social Analyst), alongside other prominent personalities.

Two Arrested for Illegally Storing Firecrackers in Residential Area Without Safety Measures

Around 100 kg of firecrackers seized from 58 boxes and other packets""""MEDIPALLY , OCTOBER 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Medipally police arrested two persons for allegedly storing a large quantity of firecrackers illegally in a residential area without following the required safety precautions. Police seized approximately 100 kilograms of firecrackers from their possession."According to police, they received credible information at around 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, October 29, about the unsafe storage of a large quantity of firecrackers in a residential area near the Jayashankar statue at Kachavani Singaram, within the limits of Medipally Police Station."Acting promptly on the information, the police informed their senior officials and reached the spot along with police personnel and two independent witnesses. During the inspection, they found various types of firecrackers stored without adhering to the prescribed safety standards."The police identified a total of 58 boxes and additional packets containing approximately 100 kilograms of firecrackers."The accused were identified as Elagandula Swamy (31), son of Venkatesh, a barber residing near the Jayashankar statue at Kachavani Singaram, and Jakkula Srinivas (36), son of Mallesh, a driver residing in Devender Nagar Colony, Uppal."During the inquiry, it reportedly came to light that the firecrackers had been stored without taking the necessary safety precautions."The police conducted a formal seizure procedure in the presence of the independent witnesses and confiscated the firecrackers. At around 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, both accused were taken into custody and shifted to Medipally Police Station along with the seized material."Police stated that further legal proceedings were being initiated in connection with the incident."Police Urge Public to Remain Vigilant"Medipally police warned that storing firecrackers in residential areas without the required permissions and safety measures could pose a serious threat to public safety."They cautioned that such negligence could lead to fire accidents, resulting in loss of life and property. The police urged everyone involved in the storage and handling of firecrackers to strictly comply with the prescribed regulations and safety standards.The public was also requested to immediately inform the police if they notice any illegal storage of firecrackers or other potentially hazardous activities in their neighbourhoods.

Argument over mobile usage leads to teenager's murder in Kothur

Hyderabad: Kothur police arrested a woman, identified as Vijayalakshmi, for allegedly murdering her 14-year-old daughter, Suvarna, following an argument over mobile phone usage.According to police, the mother allegedly strangled her daughter to death and attempted to pass off the incident as a suicide on October 26.A detailed investigation by Kothur police, based on the autopsy report, led to the alleged murder coming to light.

Women's Safety Needs Collective Responsibility: Charu Sinha

"Hyderabad Correspondent, October 29 (Indian Chronicle): The Telangana Police Women Safety Wing has launched a two-day training programme at Osmania University in Hyderabad to equip students and faculty members to promote women's safety, consent and gender equality, with the initiative targeting more than 2,000 people across the state over the next six months. The Training of Trainers programme under the StandWithHer campaign began on Thursday, bringing together students and faculty members from degree colleges across Telangana. More than 250 participants will be trained in four batches and will subsequently conduct awareness sessions in their respective institutions. Speaking at the inaugural session, Women Safety Wing Director General Charu Sinha, IPS, stressed that women's safety required a collective shift in social attitudes and everyday behaviour. She urged young people, particularly men, to challenge harmful stereotypes and act against harassment and discrimination. Osmania University Vice-Chancellor Kumar Molugaram highlighted plans for dedicated hostel facilities accommodating 1,500 women. Asiya Shervani, head of training and content development at the Women Safety Wing, also attended the programme.

Nalla Radhakrishna, Teki Rajasekhar Invite Delhi Minister Ravinder Indraj Singh to National Conference

— Invitation letter presented by Bahujan Sahitya Akademi National President Nalla Radhakrishna and Telangana Joint Secretary Teki Rajasekhar""""NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Bahujan Sahitya Akademi National President Nalla Radhakrishna and Telangana Joint Secretary Teki Rajasekhar invited Delhi Minister for Social Welfare Ravinder Indraj Singh to attend the 20th National Conference of Bahujan Writers, scheduled to be held in New Delhi on November 15 under the aegis of the National Committee of the Bahujan Sahitya Akademi."On Thursday, the representatives met the minister at his official quarters on Raj Niwas Marg in New Delhi and presented him with the invitation letter. They briefed him on the objectives, arrangements and programme details of the upcoming national conference."Nalla Radhakrishna and Teki Rajasekhar informed the minister that the Bahujan Sahitya Akademi has an extensive presence across 28 states in India and 10 countries worldwide. Approximately 1,000 delegates from various regions are expected to participate in the conference.The conference will commence at 10 a.m. and continue until 6 p.m. A variety of cultural programmes featuring artists, dancers, poets and writers will be organised as part of the event.The representatives also extended invitations to Vishesh Ravi, MLA from Delhi's Karol Bagh constituency, and Sudharani Relangi, an Indian Legal Service (ILS) officer serving as a Central Information Commissioner in the Government of India, to attend the conference.

Blood Drive Across 38 Centres Pays Tribute to Hyderabad Police Martyrs

Hyderabad Correspondent, October 29 (Indian Chronicle): Hyderabad City Police organised a mega blood donation drive across 38 centres on Thursday, targeting the collection of 5,700 units in tribute to personnel who laid down their lives in the line of duty. Director General of Police C.V. Anand inaugurated a camp at the CAR Headquarters in Petlaburj. Around 30 blood banks are supporting the initiative to meet the needs of accident victims, children with thalassaemia and cancer patients. Anand said service programmes were being conducted across Telangana from October 21 to 31 to honour police martyrs. He commended the initiative to supply collected blood to government hospitals and urged private hospitals to act responsibly to strengthen public confidence in blood and organ donation. Hyderabad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar thanked participating hospitals, blood banks, voluntary organisations and donors for supporting the campaign. He said the drive was intended to pay tribute to fallen police personnel and reaffirmed the department's commitment to continuing public service initiatives. Senior police officers, medical representatives and volunteers attended the programme.

Ruth's Determination Is an Inspiration to Many - Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar.

""Khammam, October 29, Indian Chronicle.""Makes history as the first transgender woman in India to complete an MD in Emergency Medicine, overcoming discrimination. Ruth John Paul creates medical history, rising from poverty to achieve a remarkable milestone. Hyderabad Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar, IPS, has praised the inspiring journey of Dr Koyyala Ruth John Paul, a native of Ramanagutta in Khammam city, who overcame poverty and social discrimination to achieve a rare distinction in the medical field. Ruth John Paul, who belongs to the 58th Division, was born into an economically disadvantaged Dalit family. Despite facing numerous hardships, she pursued her education with determination and successfully completed her MD in Emergency Medicine, an achievement that deserves great appreciation, Sajjanar said. He noted that she had become the first transgender woman in the country to achieve this distinction. Having once worked as an agricultural labourer and faced discrimination, Ruth fought a legal battle and persevered to fulfil her ambitions. Her journey represents an extraordinary achievement, he said. Currently, she is serving as a doctor in the Emergency Department of the ESI Hospital in Sanathnagar, where she is helping save numerous lives. Sajjanar praised Ruth John Paul for proving that no matter how many obstacles one faces, it is possible to achieve even the seemingly impossible through self-confidence, determination and perseverance. He sincerely wished her a bright future and hoped that she would continue to scale greater heights in her professional career.

Paddy crops flattened across Mulakalapalli mandal due to the impact of Cyclone Arnab.

""Khammam, October 29, Indian Chronicle.""Mulakalapalli Sarpanch Korsa Adilakshmi visited cotton and paddy fields damaged by heavy rains and strong winds caused by Cyclone Arnab in Mogaralaguppa village, under Mookamamidi Gram Panchayat in Mulakalapalli mandal, on Thursday. Rains over the past two days across Mulakalapalli mandal have flattened paddy crops that were ready for harvesting, causing severe losses to farmers. With crops that were almost ready for harvest submerged in water, farmers are deeply worried about their livelihoods. She met the affected farmers, inspected the damaged crops and spoke with them to understand the difficulties they were facing. Speaking on the occasion, She said Farmers have suffered severe losses due to Cyclone Arnab. Cotton crops that were ready for picking and paddy crops that were ready for harvesting have been flattened, leaving farmers in a situation where they may not even recover their investments. The concerned officials must respond immediately and assess the extent of crop damage. The government must support every farmer who has suffered crop losses. I urge the government to provide appropriate compensation to the affected farmers and extend the necessary assistance to help them recover from these losses. Ward member Srikrishna, farmers Paparao, Venkatesh, Bhogam Sai and Naveen, women farmers Ramulamma and Bhanu, along with other villagers, participated in the programme.

Every Eligible Voter Must Register by November 6: MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY

"— MLC Voter Registration Awareness Programme Held at Chilkanagar Junction Under the Leadership of Gudi Madhusudan Reddy"""""CHILKA NAGAR , OCTOBER 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy has called upon all eligible voters to complete their registration within the stipulated deadline to ensure their participation in the upcoming MLC elections."An MLC voter registration awareness programme and enrolment drive were organised at Chilkanagar Junction under the leadership of senior BRS leader Gudi Madhusudan Reddy. MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the programme as the chief guest and provided important guidance to eligible voters regarding the registration process."Speaking on the occasion, the MLA emphasised that the right to vote is one of the most valuable rights in a democracy. He stated that eligible individuals must first ensure that their names are included in the electoral rolls to exercise their voting rights in the MLC elections."He urged all eligible voters not to neglect the registration process and advised them to submit the necessary documents and complete their applications within the prescribed time."November 6 is the last date for voter registration. The MLA appealed to all eligible individuals to submit their applications and complete the enrolment process before the deadline. He also advised people not to wait until the last minute, encouraging them to register early to avoid any difficulties."Highlighting the importance of public participation in the democratic process, Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that no eligible voter should lose the opportunity to exercise their voting rights simply because their name is missing from the electoral rolls."He called for greater public awareness about the importance of MLC voter registration and urged eligible individuals to make full use of the opportunity by completing their registration within the deadline.The awareness programme aimed to educate the public about the MLC voter registration process and encourage all eligible individuals to enrol themselves in the electoral rolls.

MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Lays Foundation Stones for Development Works Worth Rs. 49.75 Lakh in Combined Chilkanagar Division

"UPPAL, OCTOBER 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy laid foundation stones for various development works worth Rs. 49.75 lakh in the combined Chilkanagar division of Uppal constituency. Accompanied by former Chilkanagar corporator and GHMC Standing Committee member Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, along with BRS party leaders and workers, the MLA launched development works at several locations."The works include the construction of a cement concrete (CC) road in Indira Nagar Colony under the Beerappagadda division, completion of pending works at the community hall in Sairam Nagar Colony, construction of a new drainage pipeline in Adarsh Nagar Colony under the Chilkanagar division, and installation of another new drainage pipeline in the street behind Chilkanagar Bodrai."Development Works Being Implemented According to a Plan"Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said that large-scale development works were being undertaken in Chilkanagar and Beerappagadda divisions compared to other divisions in Uppal constituency. He stated that funds were being allocated continuously to improve basic infrastructure and ensure the planned development of residential colonies and local settlements."He explained that priority was being given to roads, drainage systems and other essential civic amenities to improve living conditions for local residents."The MLA appreciated former corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj for coordinating with BRS party leaders and colony association members to ensure the effective implementation of development works. He said her continued accessibility to the public and efforts to resolve problems faced by residents of colonies and local settlements were commendable."Remaining Works to Be Completed in Phases"Former corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj stated that approximately 85 per cent of the development works in Chilkanagar division had been completed so far. She assured that the remaining works would also be completed in phases with the support of MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy.

"She expressed her special gratitude to the MLA for allocating substantial funds for the development of Chilkanagar division. She praised his continuous efforts to improve infrastructure across Uppal constituency and said he remained accessible to the public to address their grievances.She further stated that the MLA's commitment to the overall development of the constituency was highly appreciable.BRS party leaders and workers from Chilkanagar and Beerappagadda divisions, colony association members and a large number of local residents participated in the programme.

Resolve Commuters Problems in Kusumanchi Mandal Without Delay.

"Khammam, October 29, Indian Chronocle.""A petition was submitted by the Khammam district, Kusumanchi Mandal Joint Action Committee to Khammam RTC Superintendent Officer Satyanarayana, urging the authorities to resolve commuters problems in Kusumanchi mandal headquarters as soon as possible. As the RTC Divisional Manager (DM) was attending a meeting, Superintendent Satyanarayana informed the committee that the issues would be brought to the attention of the Khammam RTC DM. The Joint Action Committee urged the authorities to address the following problems at the earliest Restore early-morning Khammam–Hyderabad express services. The cancellation of the Khammam–Hyderabad express bus services scheduled at 4:00am, In Kusumanchi it has caused serious difficulties for people who travel to Hyderabad hospitals for medical treatment and students pursuing their education in Hyderabad. The committee requested the authorities to restore these services immediately. Operate all express, deluxe and super luxury services through Kusumanchi around the clock. The committee requested the RTC authorities to ensure that all types of express, deluxe and super luxury bus services operate through Kusumanchi mandal headquarters 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Passengers are facing difficulties because certain buses, particularly those operating as special services, are taking the bypass road instead of passing through Kusumanchi. The committee demanded that all services operate through Kusumanchi around the clock. It also requested that Rajadhani buses be provided with a stopping facility near the flyover on the Kusumanchi bypass road. Provide a bus shelter at Kusumanchi, The absence of a bus stand in Kusumanchi mandal headquarters is causing severe hardship to the public, particularly students, pregnant women, children and elderly people, who have no proper place to wait for buses protected from the sun and rain. The committee urged the authorities to make immediate arrangements for a basic passenger shelter or, at the very least, install green netting to provide temporary protection. Withdraw additional 50% fares during festivals, During peak travel periods, particularly festivals, passengers travelling to spend time with their families are being charged an additional 50% fare under the name of special bus services. The committee stated that these extra charges place a heavy financial burden on poor and middle-class families, taking away the joy of festive occasions. It pointed out that the Andhra Pradesh government transports passengers to their destinations without imposing such additional fares and requested the Telangana government to adopt a similar approach by withdrawing the extra charges. Those who submitted the petition included Kusumanchi ward members, CPI(ML) party leader Cherukupalli Veeraiah, CPI(M) leader Kokkireni Venkanna, Agraharam ward members, TDP leader Karla Ramarao and others.

Make the 36th National Conference of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) in Nalgonda district (from November 15 to 18) a grand success:

Kondamadugu Narasimha, State Vice-President of the Telangana Agricultural Workers' Union."

"(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau – Indian Chronicle – October 29): Kondamadugu Narasimha, a senior leader of the Telangana Agricultural Workers' Union, along with leaders from the Telangana Rythu Sangham (Farmers' Union), conducted a door-to-door campaign on Thursday in Pilaipalli village, Pochampally mandal, urging farmers and the general public to support and ensure the success of the 36th National Conference of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS). The conference is set to take place from November 15 to 18 in Nalgonda district—a region historically significant as the epicenter of the Telangana Armed Peasant Struggle. Speaking on the occasion, the leaders noted that Nalgonda was chosen as the venue to mark two major milestones: the 90th anniversary of the founding of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) and the 80th anniversary of the historic Telangana Armed Peasant Struggle. They announced that on November 15, the opening day of the conference, a massive demonstration and public meeting involving hundreds of thousands of farmers will be held in Nalgonda town. Over a thousand delegates and prominent farmer leaders from 28 states across the country are expected to participate. Over the course of three days, they will engage in extensive discussions regarding the current challenges faced by farmers and formulate future strategies and forms of struggle for the movement. It was stated that these grand conventions aim to resist the forces seeking to control agriculture, foster unified movements for alternative pro-people policies, and devise a future course of action based on key demands—such as a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops, loan waivers, and the protection of the agricultural sector. Narsimha and Anji Reddy urged farmers and the general public to extend their full support and participate in large numbers to ensure the success of these conventions and the massive public meeting scheduled for the 15th. The event was organized with the participation of Kota Ramachandra Reddy (State Committee Member of the Telangana Rythu Sangham), Guduru Buchi Reddy (Mandal General Secretary), Manchala Madhu (Mandal Convener of CITU), and local leader Patthi Bikshapathi.

Make the 36th National Conference of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) in Nalgonda district (from November 15 to 18) a grand success:

Kondamadugu Narasimha, State Vice-President of the Telangana Agricultural Workers' Union.""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau – Indian Chronicle – October 29): Kondamadugu Narasimha, a senior leader of the Telangana Agricultural Workers' Union, along with leaders from the Telangana Rythu Sangham (Farmers' Union), conducted a door-to-door campaign on Thursday in Pilaipalli village, Pochampally mandal, urging farmers and the general public to support and ensure the success of the 36th National Conference of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS). The conference is set to take place from November 15 to 18 in Nalgonda district—a region historically significant as the epicenter of the Telangana Armed Peasant Struggle. Speaking on the occasion, the leaders noted that Nalgonda was chosen as the venue to mark two major milestones: the 90th anniversary of the founding of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) and the 80th anniversary of the historic Telangana Armed Peasant Struggle. They announced that on November 15, the opening day of the conference, a massive demonstration and public meeting involving hundreds of thousands of farmers will be held in Nalgonda town. Over a thousand delegates and prominent farmer leaders from 28 states across the country are expected to participate. Over the course of three days, they will engage in extensive discussions regarding the current challenges faced by farmers and formulate future strategies and forms of struggle for the movement. It was stated that these grand conventions aim to resist the forces seeking to control agriculture, foster unified movements for alternative pro-people policies, and devise a future course of action based on key demands—such as a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops, loan waivers, and the protection of the agricultural sector. Narsimha and Anji Reddy urged farmers and the general public to extend their full support and participate in large numbers to ensure the success of these conventions and the massive public meeting scheduled for the 15th. The event was organized with the participation of Kota Ramachandra Reddy (State Committee Member of the Telangana Rythu Sangham), Guduru Buchi Reddy (Mandal General Secretary), Manchala Madhu (Mandal Convener of CITU), and local leader Patthi Bikshapathi.

Case Registered in Sri Chaitanya College Hostel Student Assault Incident

— Comprehensive Investigation Underway from All Angles: Medipally Inspector D. Jalandhar Reddy"""BODUPPAL, OCTOBER 29 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):"Medipally Police have registered a case in connection with an assault on students at the hostel of Sri Chaitanya College in Boduppal. Medipally Police Station Inspector D. Jalandhar Reddy stated that the case was registered based on a complaint lodged by the mother of the injured student and that an investigation had been initiated."The Inspector said that police personnel had visited the scene of the incident and were collecting details related to the assault. He stated that a comprehensive investigation was being conducted from all possible angles and that legal action would be taken against those responsible for the incident."Police officials confirmed that a case had been registered at Medipally Police Station under Crime No. 1521/26, invoking Sections 126(2), 115(2), and 351(2), read with Section 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)."The investigation is currently underway.

Telangana government backtracks on farmers' declaration forms

GNS News Agency, Oct 29Hyderabad: The State government appears to have backtracked on its move to seek self-declaration forms from farmers regarding crop cultivation in the next season. The move drew sharp criticism from farmers' organisations even as farmers in a few areas continued to complain about the exercise.

Farmers' organisations had complained that seed dealers were insisting on self-declaration forms at the government's behest.

‘They razed my children’s home’: Who is Delhi animal rights activist Jagriti Mishra

In a 15-second video uploaded to the Instagram account of Street Worldz Trust on October 25, animal rights activist Jagriti Mishra is seen sitting beside the debris of a boundary wall of her under-construction shelter which was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) a day earlier. The video had crossed 11.5 million views within three days.Mishra runs the organisation that works for injured, disabled and paralysed stray animals in Nizampur village in the Kanjhawala area of Northwest Delhi. She shelters more than 100 stray dogs and other animals.

The boundary wall of an under-construction animal shelter was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on October 24. The boundary wall of an under-construction animal shelter was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on October 24.The videos prompted visits from Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and Tilak Nagar MLA Jarnail Singh, along with councillor Sonu Dabas. Gupta assured Mishra of Rs 5 lakh in financial assistance as compensation for her losses.On October 26, the MCD suspended a junior engineer in connection with the incident, while Delhi Police initiated a probe into the role of Sonu Chillar, a local resident whom Mishra had accused of being behind the demolition.Mishra, who is in her late 20s, hails from Bihar and lives in Delhi’s Uttam Nagar. She has been working for the welfare of stray animals for more than six years. Her work during the Covid-19 pandemic also earned her recognition from various platforms.With the number of animals under her care increasing, Mishra had appealed to people on social media to donate even Re 1 towards the construction of another shelter.

In a video uploaded to the account on June 1, 2025, she spoke about her dream of building a sanctuary where injured and paralysed animals of all kinds could receive treatment and care.With people contributing through the QR code she shared online, Mishra was able to begin construction of the new shelter. However, on October 24, she received a message informing her that the boundary wall of the under-construction shelter was being demolished.She rushed to the site and confronted MCD officials, who were accompanied by Delhi Police personnel. She also argued with a man, later identified as Chillar, alleging that the demolition was carried out at his behest.She recorded the confrontation and subsequently uploaded the video to Instagram, which garnered more than 50 million views. In the video, she also alleged that the demolition had been carried out at the behest of AAP councillor Sonu Dabas.After the videos went viral, AAP’s Jarnail Singh, accompanied by Sonu Dabas, met Mishra the following day. Singh told her that Dabas had no role in the demolition.Mishra later uploaded a video of their conversation to Instagram.In the video, Singh tells Mishra that she can file a police complaint against the person who allegedly misrepresented himself as Sonu Dabas. He also questioned how the civic agency could demolish the structure without prior notice.Mishra acknowledges in the video that she had mistaken Chillar for Dabas. She also says the incident demonstrated the power of social media, which helped her voice reach political leaders and the public.A few hours later, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta also met Mishra to discuss the incident.A video of their meeting, uploaded to Mishra’s Instagram account, shows Gupta speaking with and hugging the activist. The Chief Minister assured her that justice would be done and that action would be taken against those responsible for the demolition. She also directed a police officer to ensure Mishra’s safety.

‘Kill six’ to become chief? The story of the Chaimar gang

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

They move from one city to another with their families. They live on the fringes in makeshift jhuggis and pose as labourers or beggars to scout potential targets before carrying out robberies — and allegedly committing murder.This is the modus operandi of the Chaimar gang, said police, an offshoot of the Kachha Baniyan gang. According to police, the gang’s name comes from the Hindi words “chai (six)” and “maar (kill)”. Police claimed that to become its leader, a person has to commit at least six murders.On October 25, the alleged gang leader, Savan, 53, landed in the Delhi Police net following a shootout while he was scouting farmhouses in South Delhi, officers said. His arrest has brought renewed attention to a gang that police link to a series of robberies and killings in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

Robbery that led to the gang’s arrest

Around 1 am on August 28, 2016, a family was asleep inside its shuttered grocery shop-cum-home in Mathura’s Pathak Nagar area. Gopal Sharma and his father, Randev, were sleeping in a room just behind the shutters. Gopal’s mother and sister, Kusumlata, were in the verandah.Police said four men — Savan, Akbar, Salim and Harun — were allegedly moving through the neighbourhood with sticks, looking for a house to rob. They were dressed in boxers and vests, with oil smeared on their arms. The four reached Railway Road, where the Sharmas lived, and targeted their home. According to Uttar Pradesh Police records, they entered the premises from the back. Kusumlata, 17, woke up and saw them. When she and her mother screamed, the men allegedly began beating them up. Gopal and his father rushed in after hearing the screams, but were beaten too.“The robbers fled; Kusumlata died from the injuries. This was allegedly the seventh murder by the group,” said a senior police officer.“They had committed two similar robberies in 2014: One in Jaunpur, where they killed a man while robbing his house, and another in Punjab’s Mansa, where they entered with four other people and killed five members of the same family,” said the officer.After the Mathura incident, police prepared sketches of the four men and circulated them across several North Indian states. Savan’s sketch was recognised in Mansa and Jaunpur, where the group had allegedly carried out earlier robberies.The four were subsequently arrested in 2016. They were convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in 2023. They were granted bail in 2025.

After their release on bail, police said Savan and the other three allegedly moved their families from Uttar Pradesh to Ambedkar Nagar in Alwar. They subsequently began making frequent visits to Delhi.In July this year, police said the group allegedly identified a farmhouse in Mehrauli as a potential target. They entered the premises but could not reach the house and left, a police officer said.On October 25, the Delhi Police alleged, Savan was scouting South Delhi farmhouses in the Maidan Garhi area of Saket when police received a tip-off about his presence.“At 6.25 am, the suspect arrived on a motorcycle from Bass Gaon Road and was identified by a secret informer. When the police team attempted to intercept him, he allegedly opened fire using a country-made pistol. Sub-Inspector (SI) Narendra Kumar fired three warning rounds. The suspect subsequently took out another country-made pistol and allegedly fired again, with a bullet striking the bulletproof jacket of SI Kumar,” said DCP (South) Anant Mittal.Another police officer on the team then fired at Savan, hitting him in the right calf. He was taken to AIIMS and will soon be questioned in detail, said police.According to police, the Chaimar gang originated in Kannauj in Uttar Pradesh before spreading to other parts of the state and to Haryana. A police officer investigating Savan’s case told The Indian Express that his family was among the more notorious groups. “His brother, Fati, was arrested after an encounter last year in Mathura. He had 17 cases lodged against him,” the officer said.Police also alleged that Savan previously ran with another Kacha Baniyan sub-set called the Bawaria gang.

Race Course Masjid won’t face demolition action until Oct 29: Centre assures Delhi High Court

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

This came on a petition by a worshipper, Syed Ahmed Saud, who sought unrestricted access to the mosque as well as protection against demolition. The mosque, located on the Race Course ground premises and opposite the Prime Minister’s residence at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg, apprehended demolition after officials from the Land and Development Office (L&DO) reportedly orally instructed the Masjid’s imam to vacate the premises for impending demolition in the absence of any written order. Water and electricity connections to the masjid premises were also disconnected on October 7.

On Tuesday, the court posed a specific query: if it plans to demolish the mosque as well as a temple on the premises. The Centre, through the L&DO, represented by central government standing counsel Ashish Dixit sought time until Thursday to seek instructions.Dixit argued that the masjid is part of the same land where jhuggi dwellers too resided and had approached court challenging the eviction and demolition notice served to them. He added orally, “As of now, we are not demolishing (the mosque).”Justice Anish Dayal, however, asked if Dixit’s submission can be recorded in the order.Dixit answered in the negative, adding that he has only been instructed to the limited extent to inform the court that representations made by Saud as well as Delhi Waqf Board on disconnection of utilities will be decided.

Addressing Dixit, Justice Dayal remarked, “We will have to determine it (the reliefs and protection being sought in the petition), because under the cover of your submission that you will decide the representation, it cannot be that you demolish. Today the mosque is before us. Assuming that someone is raising the issue of the temple, then what? We assume you are not going to do anything in the next couple of days?”Dixit sought time until Thursday to return with instructions from the authority, adding, “As an officer of court, I will brief the officers on this (to not take any action towards demolition of the mosque until Thursday).”Earlier

this month, the imam moved the Delhi HC seeking restoration of the disconnected utilities in the absence of an eviction order. The plea was dismissed on October 15. The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) had refused to restore the utilities, saying “demolition work is still going on” in the area, which involves demolition of the jhuggi structures, and that “there is an element of public harm involved”.

Dixit too, on Tuesday, opposed providing unrestricted entry and exit to the mosque citing the same reason.The Centre has maintained that the masjid’s premises were “covered” by a HC judgment dated August 25. The order had paved the way for the eviction of around 700 slum dwellers and the Race Course Club, even though the masjid was not party to this litigationSaud also wrote to the Delhi Waqf Board on October 22, flagging the imminent threat of demolition. He urged the Delhi Waqf Board to discharge its statutory duties and protect the Waqf-notified grade II heritage structure and to ensure forthwith unhindered access to the masjid for worship.He also wrote to the L&DO the same day, seeking ingress and egress to the masjid be restored as well as requesting to “refrain from undertaking any demolition, dismantling, sealing, dispossession, forcible exclusion, structural alteration or other coercive action against the subject Masjid”.

Among the first to move High Court in Ankita Bhandari case, journalist called to Delhi for CBI questioning

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

Independent journalist and Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (Democratic) leader Ashutosh Negi, who was among the first to approach the High Court seeking a CBI investigation into the 2022 murder of 19-year-old Ankita Bhandari, has been summoned by the central agency in connection with the case. He is currently in Delhi for questioning.Negi was asked to appear before the CBI’s investigating team at its headquarters on Lodhi Road on Tuesday.

The development comes amid renewed scrutiny of the alleged VIP angle in the murder, following the circulation of an audio clip by actress Urmila Sanawar that purportedly refers to a powerful individual in connection with the case. Sanawar was arrested on Monday in connection with a separate case.The CBI is investigating allegations concerning the possible involvement of the unidentified “VIP”, even as three men have already been convicted in the murder case.The investigation gathered pace following a protest by Ankita’s parents in Delhi a couple of weeks ago where they were joined by Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi seeking that the appointment of senior BJP leader Dushyant Kumar Gautam as the Governor of Sikkim be kept on hold.Earlier, Gautam had claimed that some social media posts falsely portrayed him as the “VIP” in the case. The former Uttarakhand BJP in-charge filed a defamation petition against the Congress, the Aam Aadmi Party, Sanawar, and others, for allegedly accusing him of being involved in the murder case.Who is Ashutosh Negi?Negi is an independent journalist and has also been associated with the Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (Democratic) – a registered, although unrecognised, political party in the hill state.

He emerged as one of the prominent voices questioning the investigation into Ankita’s murder and demanding accountability beyond the three accused arrested by the Uttarakhand Police.In October 2022, Negi approached the Uttarakhand HC seeking a CBI investigation into the case. His petition alleged that the police and the Special Investigation Team (SIT) had withheld crucial information. Among the concerns raised was the non-publication of Ankita’s autopsy report and the demolition of the room at the resort where she had worked.Ankita’s parents, Virendra Singh Bhandari and Soni Devi, subsequently joined the petition as petitioners.In December 2022, the High Court rejected the plea to transfer the investigation from the SIT to the CBI, expressing satisfaction with the state police’s investigation at that stage. The state government had argued that the SIT was functioning independently and that there was no reason to doubt its work.The demand for a CBI probe, however, continued among Ankita’s family members and sections of the public, particularly over allegations that a VIP had sought sexual favours from her and that the circumstances surrounding those allegations required further investigation.Negi was arrested by Uttarakhand Police on March 5, 2024, following a complaint lodged by a resident of Pauri Garhwal. The FIR included provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

His arrest drew criticism from the Opposition, which alleged that the action was intended to silence those seeking justice for Ankita. The BJP rejected the allegations, maintaining that the case against Negi was unrelated to the murder investigation.Then Uttarakhand Director General of Police Abhinav Kumar questioned Negi’s activities, alleging that they appeared to be part of a conspiracy to create unrest. The police maintained that they would take action if evidence emerged.Negi’s arrest also drew international attention. The Committee to Protect Journalists called for the charges against him to be dropped, saying authorities should ensure that journalists could report without fear or interference. He was later released on bail.The case and the unresolved VIP questionAnkita worked as a receptionist at the Vanantra resort near Rishikesh, managed by Pulkit Arya, son of former BJP leader Vinod Arya. She went missing in September 2022, and her body was recovered from the Chilla canal six days later.The state police’s SIT investigated the case and found that Ankita had been pressured

to provide sexual services to guests, which she resisted. In May 2025, a court in Pauri Garhwal convicted Arya and his two associates, Ankit Gupta and Saurabh Bhaskar, and sentenced all three to life imprisonment.The convictions established the criminal responsibility of the three men in Ankita’s murder. However, allegations concerning a possible VIP remained a separate issue.In December 2025, Sanawar released purported audio and video recordings involving former BJP MLA Suresh Rathore, whom she claimed was her husband. Rathore has denied that they were married and has disputed the authenticity of the audio.The controversy gathered fresh momentum this year, following protests by Ankita’s family and renewed demands for an investigation into the alleged VIP angle. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami subsequently recommended a CBI probe.

Delhi Police impose prohibitory orders outside Jamia

New Delhi: As the students’ agitation at Jamia Millia Islamia University entered its 16th day on Tuesday, the Delhi Police put up a poster outside Gate No. 7 of the university, warning that Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) was in force on the premises and that violations would invite legal action.The notice prohibits unlawful gatherings, meetings and processions, and warns of legal action and the use of force, if necessary, in case of violations.

Following the imposition of prohibitory orders, security was heightened outside Gate No. 7, with heavy deployment of police and paramilitary personnel.Students have been staging a hunger strike since October 12, demanding the restoration of the Jamia Millia Islamia Students’ Union (JMISU) and the removal of the university’s Chief Proctor over a “crackdown” on protesters.

Meanwhile, students have formally submitted their demands to the Vice-Chancellor, seeking a revision of the notification issued by the Registrar’s Office regarding the hunger strike and insisting that their demands be “fully addressed”.The Jamia Millia Islamia administration on Monday accepted the demands of the protesting students and announced that it would hold students’ union elections and constitute a committee to draft a students’ union constitution. It also said action against the protesters would be revoked. However, it did not provide a timeline for the process.In a letter to the university’s Vice-Chancellor, the students stated that the “hunger strike and peaceful” protest would continue until their demands were met.The demands include a clear timeline for the students’ union constitution and elections, revocation of disciplinary action against protesters, and the resignation of the Chief Security Advisor.No protesting students will apologise for implementing their constitutional right of peacefully protesting,” the students’ letter read.

‘They razed my children’s home’: Who is Delhi animal rights activist Jagriti Mishra

In a 15-second video uploaded to the Instagram account of Street Worldz Trust on October 25, animal rights activist Jagriti Mishra is seen sitting beside the debris of a boundary wall of her under-construction shelter which was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) a day earlier. The video had crossed 11.5 million views within three days.Mishra runs the organisation that works for injured, disabled and paralysed stray animals in Nizampur village in the Kanjhawala area of Northwest Delhi. She shelters more than 100 stray dogs and other animals.

The boundary wall of an under-construction animal shelter was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on October 24. The boundary wall of an under-construction animal shelter was demolished by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on October 24.The videos prompted visits from Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and Tilak Nagar MLA Jarnail Singh, along with councillor Sonu Dabas. Gupta assured Mishra of Rs 5 lakh in financial assistance as compensation for her losses.On October 26, the MCD suspended a junior engineer in connection with the incident, while Delhi Police initiated a probe into the role of Sonu Chillar, a local resident whom Mishra had accused of being behind the demolition.From rescuing animals to building a shelter

Mishra, who is in her late 20s, hails from Bihar and lives in Delhi’s Uttam Nagar. She has been working for the welfare of stray animals for more than six years. Her work during the Covid-19 pandemic also earned her recognition from various platforms.With the number of animals under her care increasing, Mishra had appealed to people on social media to donate even Re 1 towards the construction of another shelter.In a video uploaded to the account on June 1, 2025, she spoke about her dream of building a sanctuary where injured and paralysed animals of all kinds could receive treatment and care.With people contributing through the QR code she shared online, Mishra was able to begin construction of the new shelter. However, on October 24, she received a message informing her that the boundary wall of the under-construction shelter was being demolished.

She rushed to the site and confronted MCD officials, who were accompanied by Delhi Police personnel. She also argued with a man, later identified as Chillar, alleging that the demolition was carried out at his behest.She recorded the confrontation and subsequently uploaded the video to Instagram, which garnered more than 50 million views. In the video, she also alleged that the demolition had been carried out at the behest of AAP councillor Sonu Dabas.After the videos went viral, AAP’s Jarnail Singh, accompanied by Sonu Dabas, met Mishra the following day. Singh told her that Dabas had no role in the demolition.Mishra later uploaded a video of their conversation to Instagram.In the video, Singh tells Mishra that she can file a police complaint against the person who allegedly misrepresented himself as Sonu Dabas. He also questioned how the civic agency could demolish the structure without prior notice.Mishra acknowledges in the video that she had mistaken Chillar for Dabas. She also says the incident demonstrated the power of social media, which helped her voice reach political leaders and the public.A few hours later, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta also met Mishra to discuss the incident.A video of their meeting, uploaded to Mishra’s Instagram account, shows Gupta speaking with and hugging the activist. The Chief Minister assured her that justice would be done and that action would be taken against those responsible for the demolition. She also directed a police officer to ensure Mishra’s safety.

Bengal rape-murder accused killed in alleged police encounter

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

Kolkata: A man arrested in the rape and murder of a 17-year-old girl was allegedly killed in a gunfight with the police in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district on Tuesday, the second such incident in three months, a senior officer said.The incident took place around 2.50 am in Gaighata, where the accused, Prahlad Das, was taken for reconstruction of the crime scene, she said.Suddenly, he snatched the service revolver of a police officer and opened fire at the personnel, leading to retaliatory firing in which the 23-year-old man sustained gunshot wounds, she said.

The accused was taken to a nearby Chandpara Rural Hospital, where doctors declared him dead, the officer said, adding that the body had been sent for post-mortem examination."Our officers had taken the accused to his house to recover the clothes he wore at the time of the crime. While returning, he wanted to relieve himself. He then snatched a service revolver of a police officer and opened fire, prompting the police to retaliate," the officer said.The circumstances under which the accused managed to snatch the officer's revolver and the sequence of events leading to the firing are likely to be probed, she said.No policemen were injured in the firing by the accused, but the vehicle in which he was taken for reconstruction of the crime scene was slightly damaged, the officer said, adding that the vehicle would undergo forensic examination."One of the policemen got minor injuries when he jumped from the vehicle and was provided some basic treatment," she said.The accused's family members reached the hospital and expressed anger over the alleged police encounter.The deceased girl's parents, however, lauded the police personnel for their action."We are happy with the police action, but we will never get our daughter back," the teenager's mother said, adding that the accused was known to the family.

The girl's father echoed the same sentiment and said the "police action will not be able to fill up the void in our lives".A large police force has been deployed in the area to maintain law and order, and the spot where the alleged firing occurred has been cordoned off, the officer said.The man was arrested for allegedly raping and killing the Class 11 student, whose body was found outside a neighbour's house in Gaighata on Sunday morning.The girl had gone to attend a musical programme near her home on Saturday night.According to the police, the girl had left the venue after receiving a phone call and had not returned home.The encounter in Gaighata was the second such incident in three months, following the death of an accused in the rape and murder of an 11-year-old girl in an alleged gunfight in July.He had allegedly snatched an officer's revolver and opened fire on the personnel during crime scene reconstruction at Baruipur in South 24 Parganas district, prompting the police to retaliate.Reacting to the Gaighata incident, senior BJP leader and state Rural Development Minister Dilip Ghosh said the police must take stringent measures to regain public trust in Bengal, where, he alleged, law and order had deteriorated under the TMC regime."Nobody is above the law. If someone takes the law into his own hands, this would be the consequence. The police have to deliver justice to the people. Bengal's people had lost faith in the police force. To regain their trust, the police have to take stringent steps that may not be liked by many," Ghosh added.

Why is system helping pharma makers, asks Supreme Court

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday questioned the Centre over the massive difference between the maximum retail price (MRP) of medicines and the price charged to retailers, asking why the entire system was working to help pharmaceutical manufacturers.The Centre told the apex court that the government policy "is that the entire ecosystem is not to be controlled"."Why is the entire system working to help these people (manufacturers)," a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta asked during the hearing.It observed that the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) seemed to be a "totally defunct" body.

The bench was hearing two petitions that flagged the issue of medicine pricing in the country.Referring to the massive difference between the MRP and the price charged to retailers, the bench said, "The government is allowing this to happen. It is under the government's own eyes that it is happening." "Should it be allowed to run amok?" the bench asked.Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, told the bench that medicine prices in India were among the lowest in the world.The bench reserved its order in the matter.

While hearing the matter on October 12, the top court had said the Centre's response on capping the trade margin of anti-cancer drugs at 30 per cent of the MRP was "hardly anything to be happy about" and questioned why the government could not cap trade margins on other medicines.The Centre, which had earlier come under severe criticism from the top court over steep markups on cancer drugs by hospitals, said the government had taken an important decision to cap the trade margin on anti-cancer drugs at 30 per cent of the MRP. This was expected to result in annual savings of approximately Rs 2,500 crore for patients.

Andhra, Odisha step up cyclone preparations as Arnab nears coast

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

Amaravati/Bhubaneswar: Andhra Pradesh and Odisha have stepped up preparations, including moving people to safer locations, as "very severe" cyclonic storm Arnab heads towards the east coast and is expected to make landfall within the next 24 hours, officials said on Tuesday.In its latest bulletin, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the cyclone was over the Bay of Bengal, about 170 km south-southeast of Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, at 11.30 am. It is likely to move west-northwestward until evening before crossing the coast between Bapatla and Visakhapatnam, close to Yanam, by Wednesday forenoon.The system is expected to make landfall with maximum sustained wind speeds of 125-135 kmph, gusting to 150 kmph, the agency said.Andhra Pradesh has been placed on high alert, with evacuations planned and precautionary measures underway to prevent loss of life and property, officials said.

According to the Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA), the cyclone's impact is being felt, with heavy rainfall expected in the north coastal districts shortly. Srikakulam district is likely to experience heavy rain accompanied by strong winds, while strong winds have already begun in Visakhapatnam and Kakinada.Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu directed officials to shift people living in low-lying areas to safer locations, ensure essential supplies at relief camps and minimise cyclone-related damage.He spoke to collectors of districts likely to be affected and instructed officials to ensure the availability of food, drinking water and other essential supplies at relief camps.APSDMA Managing Director Prakhar Jain urged people to remain alert and follow safety precautions.Residents have been advised to stay indoors during the cyclone and avoid venturing outside amid strong winds. They should move to the nearest cyclone shelter if instructed by officials and stay away from the sea, rivers and ponds.Sea waves are likely to rise to heights of one to two metres, while extremely heavy rainfall is forecast in north Andhra Pradesh and coastal districts as the cyclone approaches.Jain said 2,131 cyclone shelters had been set up across the state's 20 districts, and continuous cyclone alerts were being sent to the mobile phones of 2.70 crore people across 18 districts.More than 30,000 fishing boats have been secured along the coast, while 1,087 medical teams have been deployed in cyclone-affected areas to provide emergency assistance, he said.Authorities have readied 8,281 emergency beds and 1,274 ambulances, while hospitals have stocked 21,536 doses of anti-snake venom to deal with possible snakebite incidents, officials said.A total of 1,351 pregnant women have already been shifted safely to hospitals. Drinking water tankers, generators and reverse osmosis (RO) plants have been kept ready, they said.Two months' worth of essential commodities have been stocked in advance at 14,686 ration shops, while advisories have been issued to 35.96 lakh farmers to protect their crops from damage, they added.

Indian Railways has placed around 600 km of tracks under close surveillance ahead of the cyclone's expected landfall, with safety protocols and rapid restoration measures in place across the Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam divisions.War rooms have been activated at zonal, divisional and Railway Board levels to facilitate round-the-clock monitoring, officials said.Traffic between Uppada and Kakinada has been disrupted due to rough sea conditions, affecting movement between surrounding coastal areas as waves continue to surge along the shoreline.Under the impact of the weather system, heavy rain accompanied by strong winds lashed parts of Odisha, where the government aims to move around 48,000 people to safer locations.Odisha Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Rajesh P Patil said around 11,000 people each would be shifted to safer locations in Gajapati and Nabarangpur districts.

Evacuation drives were also underway in Malkangiri, Ganjam, Koraput, Rayagada, Kalahandi and Nuapada, he said.Schools in eight districts have been ordered to remain closed on Tuesday and Wednesday.The IMD issued an orange warning, forecasting heavy to very heavy rainfall of 12-20 cm, for Puri, Gajapati, Ganjam, Rayagada, Koraput and Malkangiri districts.A yellow warning, indicating heavy rainfall of 7-11 cm, was issued for Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Khurda, Nayagarh, Jagatsinghpur, Nuapada, Balangir and Boudh.

Patil said 135 permanent cyclone shelters and around 1,600 temporary shelters had been prepared to accommodate people from vulnerable areas.The state government has deployed 294 rescue teams across potentially affected areas, including nine National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams, 60 State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) teams and 225 Fire Services teams, officials said.Maintaining that the government had set a "zero casualty" target, Patil said district collectors had been directed to take all necessary measures to protect lives and property.Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said heavy rain in the upper catchment areas of rivers in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand could trigger flash floods and waterlogging in western and northern Odisha.Odisha's major ports, including Paradip, Dhamra and Gopalpur, have stepped up preparations in view of the approaching storm.The very severe cyclonic storm also brought rain to parts of West Bengal in the afternoon.The coastal districts of South 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur experienced moderate rain, while parts of Jhargram, Paschim Medinipur, Howrah and Kolkata also received rainfall, the IMD said.The weather department forecast heavy rain in South 24 Parganas, Purba and Paschim Medinipur, Jhargram, Purulia, Bankura and Paschim Bardhaman on October 28 and 29, while Kolkata is likely to receive light to moderate rain.In the sub-Himalayan region, heavy rain is expected in Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri on October 29 and 30, it said.

The cyclone is also expected to bring heavy rainfall to parts of Jharkhand over three days, prompting the state government to ask district administrations to remain vigilant, officials said.A yellow alert, advising people to stay updated, has been issued for heavy rain in Ranchi, Khunti, Simdega, Gumla, Lohardaga, Saraikela-Kharsawan, East Singhbhum and West Singhbhum for 24 hours from 8.30 am on October 28, the IMD said.The Ranchi district administration has asked officials to remain vigilant."Waterlogging is likely in low-lying areas and on roads in Ranchi due to heavy rainfall. Kutcha houses, shanties and structurally weak buildings may sustain damage. Rivers, lakes and large drains could overflow. There is a possibility of flood-like conditions in low-lying areas," the administration said in a statement.

Supreme Court seeks Centre's reply on plea for equal status to Vande Mataram

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought a response from the Centre on a plea to transfer from the Delhi High Court a PIL seeking that the 'Vande Mataram' song be given status equal to the national anthem.A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana issued notice to the Centre on the plea filed by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay and tagged the matter with similar petitions.The plea, filed through advocate Ashwani Dubey, submitted that the PIL be transferred from the Delhi High Court to the top court as a similar writ petition is pending before it."Vande Mataram' is the symbol of our history, sovereignty, unity and pride. If any citizen by any overt or covert act shows disrespect to it, it would not only be an anti-social activity, but it would also spell doom to all our rights and very existence as a citizen of a sovereign nation," the plea submitted.

"Every citizen must, therefore, not only refrain from such activities but also do his best to prevent if any miscreant shows any disrespect to 'Vande Mataram'. We must be proud of our nation, our Constitution, national anthem and national flag and put national interest above our personal interests and only then will we be able to protect our hard-earned freedom and sovereignty. It is the duty of the executive to frame a national policy to promote and propagate 'Vande Mataram'," the plea said.The public interest litigation (PIL) seeks to ensure that the song is honoured and given status equal to the national anthem.

The petitioner, who has also sought a direction from the Centre and the Delhi government to ensure that 'Jana Gana Mana' and 'Vande Mataram' are played and sung in all schools and educational institutions on every working day, has contended that in the absence of guidelines or regulations to honour the song, 'Vande Mataram' is being sung

in an "uncivilised manner" and misused in films and parties.The petitioner has stated that the song played a historic part in the Indian freedom struggle and ought to be honoured as much as 'Jana Gana Mana' in view of the statement made by the Constituent Assembly Chairman Rajendra Prasad in 1950."To keep the country united, it is the government's duty to frame a national policy to promote-propagate 'Jana Gana Mana' and 'Vande Mataram'. There is no reason why it should evoke any other sentiment, as both are decided by the Constitution makers."The sentiments expressed in 'Jana Gana Mana' have been expressed keeping the State in view. However, sentiments expressed in 'Vande Mataram' denote the nation's character and style and deserve similar respect," the petition has said.The petition has asserted that there should not be any dramatisation of 'Vande Mataram' and "it must not be included in any variety show because whenever it is sung or played, it is imperative on the part of everyone present to show due respect and honour".

Search for 13 escaped Theni jail inmates expands to Kerala forests

Theni: The search for 13 remand prisoners who escaped from the Theni district jail has widened to forest stretches along the Western Ghats and neighbouring Kerala, with police in both states coordinating efforts to trace the fugitives.Seventeen inmates escaped late on Monday night after attacking prison personnel. Four were subsequently recaptured, while special teams continued searching for the remaining prisoners on Tuesday.

Kerala Police has been alerted, and combing operations are underway in forest areas, including parts of Idukki district bordering Tamil Nadu, a senior police officer said.Photographs of the escaped prisoners have been circulated among officers at different locations across both states to assist identification.The widening search has brought forest routes along the interstate border into focus. Teams are combing these stretches as part of the operation to locate the prisoners, while information gathered from those recaptured is being used to pursue further leads.Police identified one of the injured prison personnel as Thangapandi, a Grade II Constable. He was admitted to the Theni Government Medical College and Hospital following the attack.Two other personnel were also undergoing treatment, the senior officer said. Further details about their injuries and condition were not immediately available.Authorities have not disclosed the locations from where the four prisoners were apprehended. The officer said their questioning had provided information that special teams were following up in their efforts to track down the other escapees.Director General of Police, Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal, said a detailed investigation into the incident would follow once all the prisoners had been brought back into custody."Once the remaining 13 prisoners are also secured, we will conduct a thorough enquiry," he said.The Inspector General of Police for the South Zone said information about the escape had been shared with senior officers in Kerala and that combing operations were continuing in full swing.The immediate priority remains locating the fugitives through coordinated searches and the exchange of information between police teams in the two states.The circumstances surrounding the breakout and the attack on prison personnel are expected to come under scrutiny during the enquiry announced by the police chief.As of Tuesday, authorities had confirmed the recapture of four inmates. Searches for the remaining 13 continued across identified locations, including forest areas along the Tamil Nadu–Kerala border.

Man's response on free bus service leaves Bejjanki MLA flummoxed

Siddipet: A man's experience with the free bus service left Manakonduru MLA Kavvampally Satyanarayana flummoxed during a village-level meeting at Regulapally village on Tuesday.

During the "Prajala Vaddaku Palana" programme organised in the village, a man, Bandi Kanakaiah, told the MLA that his wife had left home following an argument with him recently. Since bus services were free for women, he said, it took him five days to trace her. His travel expenses for this purpose touched Rs 2,000.Everyone present at the meeting burst into laughter upon hearing the man's account of the free bus service. Kanakaiah said his wife had never travelled such distances when bus services were not free.

While trying to convince the man, the MLA suggested that Kanakaiah not search for her if she left home again. When Kanakaiah said there would be nobody to cook for him when he returned home from work, the MLA asked him to approach the local police so they could trace her easily.Even though everyone laughed at the conversation, it pointed to the underlying issues in the Maha Lakshmi scheme launched by the Congress government.

Apple unveils new iPad mini with 8.5-inch OLED display, A20 Pro chip

New Delhi: Apple on Monday introduced the next-generation iPad mini, featuring a redesigned thinner and lighter form factor, a larger OLED display, the new A20 Pro processor, and enhanced artificial intelligence capabilities powered by iPadOS 27.The new iPad mini comes with an 8.5-inch OLED display, larger than its predecessor while maintaining a similar overall footprint due to significantly slimmer bezels.

Apple said the Super Retina XDR display offers more than twice the peak brightness of the previous-generation model, deeper blacks, a 2,000,000:1 contrast ratio, and support for the P3 wide colour gamut.The tablet is also available with an optional nano-texture display designed to reduce glare in bright environments.

At just 5.4 mm thick, the latest iPad mini is Apple's thinnest mini tablet yet. It is available in midnight and starlight finishes and carries an IP67 rating for water and dust resistance, making it suitable for outdoor and on-the-go use.Powering the device is Apple's new A20 Pro chip, built using a 2-nanometre process. The company claims the processor delivers up to 60 per cent faster multithreaded CPU performance, up to 2.7 times faster graphics performance, and up to 4.5 times faster AI processing compared with the previous generation.The chip features a 7-core GPU with Neural Accelerators integrated into each GPU core, while the top-end 512GB variant includes a Dual 16-core Neural Engine for advanced on-device AI workloads.

Apple has also enhanced the device's multimedia capabilities with an Acoustic Display system that integrates specially designed woofers and tweeters into the display structure to deliver improved audio quality, higher volume levels, and stronger bass response.On the camera front, the iPad mini now features a 12MP Center Stage front camera positioned on the landscape edge for video calls and online meetings.The rear houses a 12MP Wide camera with Smart HDR 4, support for 4K video recording at up to 60 fps, and an Adaptive True Tone flash aimed at improving photography and document scanning.Connectivity has also received a major upgrade. The tablet is equipped with Apple's new N1 wireless networking chip, enabling support for Wi-Fi 7, Bluetooth 6, and Thread technology.

Environmentalists celebrate Lula's reelection in Brazil: 'The Amazon can breathe sigh of relief'

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

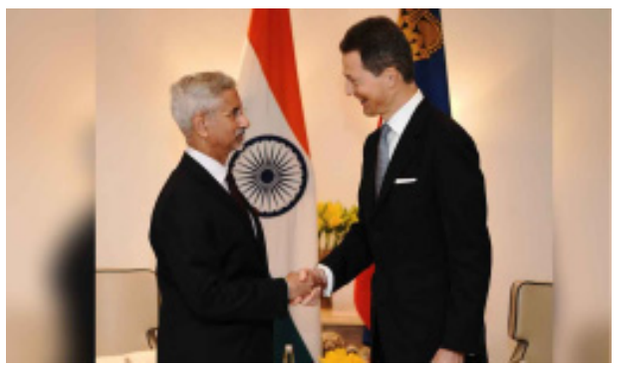
Manaus: Environmentalists, Indigenous groups and climate scientists are celebrating the reelection in Brazil of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, which brings the prospect of a continued focus on stopping the illegal cutting of the Amazon, the largest rainforest in the world.But supporters also warned that a Congress increasingly dominated by the far right and the agribusiness caucus could undermine those efforts to protect the forest and combat climate change.

Lula defeated Sen. Flavio Bolsonaro, son of far-right former President Jair Bolsonaro, in Sunday's runoff with 51.78 per cent of the vote to 48.21 per cent. After trailing in the first round, Lula staged a comeback to win by 4.4 million votes."The Amazon can breathe a sigh of relief!" said David Lapola, a Brazilian scientist and lead author of a chapter on so-called tipping points in an upcoming United Nations climate report. Scientists debate the threshold beyond which the dense, humid Amazon rainforest could shift to a drier ecosystem, with irreversible consequences for biodiversity and the climate. The forest absorbs vast amounts of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that drives global warming. About 60 per cent of the Amazon lies in Brazil.Lula's victory reflected shifts in voter support and higher turnout nationwide. In the Amazon, Indigenous communities and advocacy groups mobilised voters and, aided by court rulings last week, helped secure government transportation for those living in remote areas.

The Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, known as APIB, was among the organisations that went to court to secure Indigenous voters' access to the polls. Lula's victory reflected the "strength of grassroots mobilisation in defence of democracy, life and Indigenous peoples' rights," it said in a statement.Flavio Bolsonaro refused to concede Monday and said he would ask the electoral court to nullify the results. He faces a high hurdle: presenting evidence of fraud sufficient to overturn Lula's winning margin and persuading the court before the results are certified Dec. 18. Early signals from Brazil's institutions and regional leaders, including conservative presidents who oppose Lula, suggest the outcome will be accepted at home and abroad.Flavio Bolsonaro had pledged to pursue policies aligned with those of his father, who governed from 2019 through 2022. Deforestation surged under Jair Bolsonaro as his administration weakened environmental enforcement agencies and loosened regulations. Lula's government last week announced the lowest Amazon deforestation rate on record.Lula is expected to continue efforts to curb deforestation and finance a sustainable economy through international donations as well as public and private funding. While he was the clear favourite for environmentalists, climate scientists and others who want to protect the Amazon, Lula has put forward policies that have drawn criticism. Most recently, he has supported efforts to drill for oil in offshore waters near the Amazon.

Still, Flavio Bolsonaro presented a stark choice that many environmentalists felt would put the Amazon and Brazil's overall environmental protections at risk. He had denied climate change while casting himself as an environmental defender. However, he offered few details on forest protection or financing, calling for "modernising" environmental laws and giving Amazon landowners more decision-making power — proposals environmentalists warned could weaken safeguards and accelerate deforestation.Brazil's Climate Observatory, a nonprofit coalition of 172 organisations, welcomed Lula's reelection but said seven in 10 incoming lawmakers oppose the climate and environmental agenda. It cited recent measures weakening pesticide rules, Indigenous land rights and environmental licensing, and urged Lula to broaden his alliances and strengthen ties with Congress.The goal of ending deforestation across Brazil's biomes must be pursued relentlessly," the group said.Amazon Watch, a nonprofit focused on environmental protection and Indigenous rights, also welcomed Lula's victory while warning of legislative obstacles."A Congress strengthened by forces seeking to open Indigenous lands to mining and weaken environmental protections remains a serious threat," said Ana Alfinito, an Amazon Watch legal adviser.WWF Brazil said the country's vast biodiversity and share of the Amazon give it a strategic role in addressing climate change. It credited Lula with strengthening Brazil's leadership through international cooperation."Maintaining this leadership is essential to mobilising other countries, raising the ambition of global commitments and turning agreements into concrete action," the organisation said.Election results bring money for forest protectionClaudio Angelo, the Climate Observatory's head of international policy, said Lula's re-election had already delivered a result: a USD 500 million pledge Monday from the Netherlands to the Tropical Forest Forever Facility, a Brazil-backed fund launched at last year's UN climate summit in Brazil.The initiative pays developing countries to keep forests standing but has struggled to secure an initial USD 10 billion by year's end. The Dutch pledge brings commitments to USD 7.8 billion.Angelo said prospective donors had put plans on hold pending the election results, calling the Dutch pledge a vote of confidence in Lula's victory."There was justified concern that a Flavio Bolsonaro victory could derail the TFFF, that Brazil would pull out and the fund would miss its USD 10 billion target," Angelo said.

EAM Jaishankar meets Liechtenstein Prince, discusses opportunities under TEPA



New Delhi: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar on Tuesday called on Liechtenstein Prince Alois and discussed bilateral ties and emerging opportunities under the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA).Taking to X, EAM Jaishankar said, "A pleasure to call on HSH Hereditary Prince Alois of Liechtenstein, on a State Visit to India. Our bilateral partnership is witnessing strong momentum across a wide range of domains, driven by the opportunities enabled by India – EFTA TEPA." "Look forward to his meeting with PM Narendra Modi later today to advance our cooperation," he added.

Earlier in the day, Prince Alois was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan. President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi warmly welcomed Prince Alois upon his arrival. He said that he is honoured to be in India for the State Visit, adding that the European country is determined to further strengthen ties with New Delhi.Speaking to the reporters, Prince Alois expressed gratitude to President Murmu and PM Modi for the invitation and warm welcome and said, "I am very honoured to be in India on the occasion of Liechtenstein's first state visit to this remarkable country."

"This historic visit bears testimony to the importance that Liechtenstein attaches to the relationship with India," he said.

Speaking about the conclusion of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with India, which entered into force a year ago, the Prince called it a "significant milestone" in strengthening bilateral ties. "We are determined to build on this momentum and strengthen our ties with India even further." "In particular, we see tremendous potential in expanding our economic cooperation in areas such as innovation, advanced manufacturing, financial services, education and technology. Across these and many other areas, our two countries possess complementary strengths that we can bring together for the lasting benefit of both our countries," Prince Alois added.Prince Alois arrived in the national capital from Gujarat's Vadodara on Monday. He was received by Union Minister of State (MoS) Jayant Singh at the airport. He was accompanied by his wife, Princess Sofia, a high-level official and a business delegation comprising top industry leaders.Prince Alois is scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Hyderabad House later on Tuesday, where they will discuss cooperation in various sectors, including trade and investment, science, technology and innovation, and people-to-people exchanges, as well as views on regional and global developments.Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Union Minister of State for Skills Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Chaudhary will call on Prince Alois on Tuesday. Prince Alois will then meet President Droupadi Murmu, who will also host an official banquet in his honour. "The visit is expected to provide further impetus to the growing engagement between India and Liechtenstein, particularly since the operationalisation of the India–EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement in 2025. The visit will provide an opportunity to further deepen the friendly ties between India and Liechtenstein and build partnerships in new areas of mutual interest," the MEA said in a statement.

White House completes review of proposal to modernise PERM programme

Washington: The White House has completed the review of a proposal to modernise the permanent labour certification process (PERM), considered as the first step for sponsoring foreign workers for a green card.The Department of Labour proposal seeks to revise the labour market test and other aspects of the PERM programme which were last modified in 2004.

It had submitted the proposal to the Office of Management and Budget of the White House for review in July.The agency is advancing the proposal amid a broader enforcement crackdown targeting the PERM programme by the US administration as part of the actions taken by the Anti-Fraud Taskforce led by Vice President J D Vance.

Earlier this month, the US suspended PERM programmes of Microsoft, Adobe and six other tech employers such as Infosys Technologies and Tata Group.The specific content of the proposal will not be known until publication, but according to the description of the proposed rule, it would revise the minimum standards for PERM recruitment, strengthen rules related to US worker layoffs and enhance employer non-discrimination rules.Once the proposal is published in the Federal Register, it is expected that the Department of Labour will accept public comments for 30 or 60 days.The regulation will not take effect until public comments are considered and the rule is finalised.The Department of Labour says that the rule would seek to revise the minimum standards for recruiting qualified US workers in the PERM labour market test.It also seeks to strengthen rules related to US worker layoffs and employer compliance with non-discrimination requirements in recruitment and hiring.

New UNSC permanent members without veto would be 'second-class': India

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

United Nations: India has asserted that any reform of the UN Security Council that creates a new category of permanent members without veto powers would effectively relegate them to "second-class" status, leaving the existing five permanent powers in control of the decision-making process.China, France, Russia, the UK and the US are the five permanent members of the 15-nation Security Council and enjoy veto powers. The Council also has 10 non-permanent members elected for two-year terms.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, on Monday said the veto must be held by all permanent members of a reformed Council as long as the provision exists, stressing that fairness and justice demand equal rights and responsibilities for all permanent members."India's position on the veto is principled and well known… We reiterate that as long as the veto exists, it must be held by all permanent members of a reformed Council," he said.Addressing the Inter-Governmental (IGN) plenary on 'Cluster Debate on the Question of the Veto' in the UN General Assembly, Parvathaneni said a reform that expands the Security Council by "creating another category of long-term members without the veto effectively makes them 'second-class' members and would not change the decision-making dynamic of the P5".

Creating a new category of permanent members, with or without veto powers, would further complicate an already difficult discussion and "entrench the very inequity we are seeking to correct", he said."Periodic elections and the concept of permanency are fundamentally contradictory," the diplomat said."History has a lesson for us," he said, recalling that the only expansion of the Security Council, in 1965, increased the number of non-permanent members from six to 10 while retaining five permanent members.The ratio of permanent to elected members shifted from 5:6 to 5:10, further strengthening the relative power of the P5, Parvathaneni said.India has consistently called for expanding both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, warning that reform efforts would border on "failure" if they focused solely on increasing the number of non-permanent members.New Delhi has been at the forefront of years-long efforts to achieve reform of the Security Council, saying the body, founded in 1945, is not fit for purpose in the 21st century and does not reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.India has consistently underscored that it rightly deserves a permanent seat at the horse-shoe table.New Delhi is also seeking a non-permanent seat for the 2028-29 term. Elections for the term are scheduled for June next year, when India and Tajikistan will contest the sole seat allocated to the Asia-Pacific Group.

India last served on the Council in 2021-22, its eighth term, having previously held seats in 1950-51, 1967-68, 1972-73, 1977-78, 1984-85, 1991-92 and 2011-12.Parvathaneni further stressed that the veto, currently a prerogative of the five permanent members, must be exercised with "great restraint", particularly on matters concerning international peace and security."It should not be an instrument of narrow political expediency," he said.Parvathaneni said the question of limiting the veto could not be considered in isolation from other aspects of Security Council reform, including membership categories, regional representation, the Council's size and its working methods."India reiterates its call for a comprehensive approach towards Security Council reforms. The starting point is early commencement of text-based negotiations, with clearly defined timelines and milestones," he said.Addressing the Council's working methods, the envoy said the veto was not limited to votes formally cast by permanent members.An "effective or de facto veto" could also be exercised by any Council member over presidential statements, press statements and decisions of sanctions committees, where the "unwritten rule" of consensus allows a single member to block a proposal, often without explanation, Parvathaneni said.He was referring to the working of the UNSC sanctions committees that designate and de-list terror outfits and individuals.The diplomat also criticised the use of consensus as a "disguised, de facto veto" in the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) process itself.Referring to the UN General Assembly resolution that established the framework for the negotiations, Parvathaneni said its guiding principle was the widest possible political acceptance, rather than consensus."Seventeen cycles later, we have no outcome to show for it," he said.India called for text-based negotiations to begin at the earliest, with clear timelines and milestones, arguing that the Council's credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness could not be restored by addressing the veto alone."The questions of credibility, legitimacy and efficacy that hang over the Security Council will not be answered by managing the veto alone. They will be answered by a Council fit for purpose, whose architecture reflects today's realities and not that of the outcome of a war eight decades ago," Parvathaneni said.

Russia-Ukraine ceasefire takes effect in Oleshky in deal brokered by Melania Trump

Mykolaiv: A localised ceasefire between Ukraine and Russia took effect early Tuesday ahead of a humanitarian mission led by US first lady Melania Trump.The pause in fighting started at 3 am in Ukraine to allow an aid mission into the Russian-occupied town of Oleshky in southern Ukraine later this week.According to her office, Melania Trump led talks with civilian negotiators from Russia and Ukraine after meeting with United Nations officials who briefed her on the situation in the town.

The aid mission is planned ahead of a new round of US-brokered talks between Russia and Ukraine expected next month and aimed at ending the war after more than 4Â½ years of fighting.Up to 2,000 people are stranded in Oleshky with dwindling supplies of food and medicine. They have been unable to leave because of explosive mines and drone attacks in the area, according to the UN.

Midterm polls paint grim picture for Trump, Senate race remains too close to call

New York: A week before midterm elections, polls project grim prospects for President Donald Trump, who is weighed down by the economic fallout of his tariff war and the Iran conflict on US voters.The consensus among major poll analysts is that his Republican Party will lose control of the House of Representatives while the Senate outcome is hovering in the realm of a toss-up.Trump's next two years in office will depend on which party controls either chamber of Congress or both.If Democrats control either, they can try to obstruct his policies and actions, or Trump can vehemently defy them, a standoff that could bring judicial intervention.

At the very least, the US could see a replay of his first term when the Democrat-controlled House impeached him — and he warned his supporters could happen again.Signs of his desperation are his offer of $5,000 to every American adult if the Republicans win the midterms, and not only lifting sanctions placed on Russia for its Ukraine invasion — after having imposed a 100 per cent tariff on India at one time — but also entering into a deal with Russia's President Vladimir Putin to buy diesel.Trump has declared the midterms a referendum on the first 20 months of his second administration, telling citizens to vote as if he was on the ballot, even though many Republicans are distancing themselves from him because of his low ratings.Republican New Hampshire Senate candidate John Sununu, for example, said in an ad, "When the president's policies are bad for New Hampshire, I'll oppose them, just like I opposed the war in Iran and the trade war with Canada".Trump seems to have admitted the popularity of his party — and him — is dimming even in their electoral fortresses, by concentrating his campaign in the reliably red states that he carried in the presidential election in order to shore up support for Republican candidates, rather than take the battle to blue states to topple Democrats."Every single place I go, people that are down are now winning", he asserted recently about his "Trumpapaloozas", the rallies he is holding from Alaska in the north to Texas in the South.And his Justice Department has taken the unusual step of filing a case to stop the Senate election in Alaska officially declared if the Republican candidate Dan S. Sullivan loses, because, the Trump administration says, there is another candidate with a similar name, Daniel J. Sullivan, on the ballot, and it confuses voters.The voting is already in progress, and as of Monday, nearly 30 million citizens had voted either through postal ballots or at in-person early voting stations.There are 217 million registered voters, and the turnout in midterm election is usually low, recording 46.2 per cent in 2022 and 50 per cent in 2018.Democrats flipping the House majority would be in line with the historical trend of the president's party losing the midterms, but the size of the majority would matter.RealClear Politics (RCP), which aggregates polls, reported that only 38.2 per cent of likely voters approve of Trump's job performance, while 60.2 per cent disapprove of Trump job.And, tellingly, 57 per cent say Trump policies are making them financially worse off.That would echo world-

wide sentiments about the impacts of the Iran conflict that Trump launched alongside Israel, and the tariff war, but hit closer to home for Trump.The inflation rate was 3.7 per cent last month (up from 3.4 per cent in August), but it bites consumers much harder than would be expected due to the soaring prices of petroleum, especially diesel, and its multiplier effect on food and other items of daily use, as well as the impact of tariffs on many items of everyday use.

This stings because during the 2024 election campaign, he had boasted he would bring down the price of petrol to $2 a gallon (53 cents per litre), but now the average price is $4.28 a gallon ($1.13 per litre), and diesel is $6.28 a gallon ($1.66 per litre).In this scenario, RCP gave Democrats a majority with 227 seats in the 435-member House, even with 25 seats it put in the "toss-up category" where neither party has a clear lead and can go either way.Cook Political Report, an authoritative source for non-partisan analysis, projects 220 seats for Democrats, with 17 tossups.Its editor for House elections, Erin Covey, was forthright about the outcome: "Republicans' path to keeping control of the House has all but evaporated".CBS News said Democrats could get 229 seats for Democrats and Republicans 206, with the caveat because of previous polls being off the mark: "Republicans do still have a very narrow path to hold the majority, too".That's because, according to CBS News, "There isn't a growing [Democratic] wave" and "the still undecided or uncertain voters tend to profile as more Republican".The Senate scenario doesn't have a clear winner.Only 35 seats are up for election this year under the system in which about a third of the 100 seats come up for election every two years because senators have six-year terms.CBS News, taking into account the seats not up for election, tallies 46 for Democrats and 44 for Republicans, with 10 categorised as tossups, but going by the trends in tossup states, it sees Democrats getting 52 seats to Republicans' 48.Cook Political Report projects 15 of them for Republicans with 13 for Democrats and seven stuck in the tossup category.Trump, who is an indefatigable campaigner and can outrun far younger politicians, has focused his campaign on the states where he had clear victories in the 2024 presidential elections but is now concerned with erosion of support.

Why U.S. President Donald Trump wants Intel's CEO to resign | Explained

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

The story so far: On Thursday (August 7, 2025), U.S. President Donald Trump singled out Intel's CEO Lip-Bu Tan on the right-wing social media platform Truth Social, posting, "The CEO of INTEL is highly CONFLICTED and must resign, immediately. There is no other solution to this problem. Thank you for your attention to this problem!"Mr. Tan, a Malaysian-born, Singapore-raised American citizen, took over the reins of the ailing chipmaker in March, three months after the abrupt departure of former CEO Pat Gelsinger. The company has been lagging behind Nvidia for several quarters now.

Why did Trump demand that the Intel CEO resign?

Mr. Trump did not cite specific details but suggested that Mr. Tan had serious conflicts of interest as Intel's CEO. The U.S. President's post on Truth Social likely referenced Mr. Tan's Chinese investments, which numbered in the hundreds, as well as his past leadership position in a company with Chinese military links.In a letter dated August 5, U.S. Senator Tom Cotton wrote to Intel's Chairman of the Board of Directors, Frank D. Yeary, expressing his concerns."Mr. Tan reportedly controls dozens of Chinese companies and has a stake in hundreds of Chinese advanced-manufacturing and chip firms. At least eight of these companies reportedly have ties to the Chinese People's Liberation Army," Mr. Cotton claimed in the letter.The U.S. senator wanted to know whether the Intel board made Mr. Tan formally take steps to divest from positions that could pose a conflict of interest for Intel's CEO, and whether Mr. Tan had officially disclosed any other ties to Chinese companies.

Is Intel's CEO involved with Chinese companies?

News agency Reuters reported that Mr. Tan had made many investments in Chinese companies.

Of particular note is Mr. Tan's investment in Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp (SMIC). Mr. Tan's venture capital firm Walden International's funds exited from SMIC in June 2013 and in January 2021, as reported in an investigation by the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. SMIC was flagged by the U.S. in 2020 over links to China's military.Additionally, the report stated that Mr. Tan served on SMIC's board from 2001 to 2018, and was compensated with "hundreds of thousands of dollars in salary and stock options for his tenure as a board member during those years."However, Walden International is still invested in funds and companies, including bodies with ties to the Chinse administration, per Reuters. Mr. Tan's alleged ownership of Sakarya Limited and his reported involvement with Seine Limited would have given him significant exposure to Chinese companies in the form of stakes, according to the outlet.Aside from his investments, there are security concerns about Mr. Tan's time as the CEO of Cadence Design Systems between 2008 and 2021 (overlapping with his time at SMIC). This became a pressing issue after Cadence, a multinational electronic design automation (EDA) technology company headquartered in California, pleaded guilty to resolve charges that it violated export controls by selling EDA hardware, software, and semiconductor design intellectual property technology to a Chinese military university called the National University of Defense Technology.The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) stated on July 28 that Cadence had agreed to pay criminal penalties of nearly $118 million to resolve the charges over the unlawful exports, and over $95 million in civil penalties.Mr. Cotton noted in his letter that the "illegal activities occurred under Mr. Tan's tenure.""Intel was awarded nearly $8 billion from the CHIPS and Science Act, the largest grant to a single company. Intel is required to be a responsible steward of American taxpayer dollars and to comply with applicable security regulations. Mr. Tan's associations raise questions about Intel's ability to fulfill these obligations," said the Republican senator.

What was Intel's response?

On Thursday (August 7, 2025), Intel published a statement defending the company, its board of directors, and Mr. Tan's commitment to U.S. national and economic security as well as Mr. Trump's "America First agenda.""Intel has been manufacturing in America for 56 years. We are continuing to invest billions of dollars in domestic semiconductor R&D and manufacturing, including our new fab in Arizona that will run the most advanced manufacturing process technology in the country, and are the only company investing in leading logic process node development in the U.S.," stated Intel, stressing that it would engage with the U.S. administration.However, Intel's troubles are mounting as the chipmaker faces pressure from investors over slow progress, and the general public's ire over mass layoffs even as Mr. Tan aims to streamline the company.Adding to this, Mr. Trump's public call for Mr. Tan's resignation, which led to a slip in Intel's shares, will make it even harder for the chipmaker to restore its reputation while facing a barrage of operational challenges.

With tariffs, India's growth rate needs a careful watch

The United States imposed 25% reciprocal tariffs on India's exports with effect from August 7. On August 6, the U.S. imposed a penal levy of an additional 25% on India's exports because India continued to import oil from Russia and this comes into effect on August 29, 2025. The two taken together can weaken India's exports to the U.S. We first examine the impact of the 25% tariff and, later, the impact of the penal rates.

India runs a merchandise trade surplus with the U.S. — for 2024-25, it stood at $41.18 billion — which is increasing over time. To narrow this trade surplus, the U.S. appears to focus both on India's exports and imports. While a 25% reciprocal tariff could hamper India's exports, the penalty could work on exports as well as serve as a non-tariff barrier on crude imports from Russia, thus, pushing India to import crude from the U.S. or elsewhere at a higher cost. While the U.S.'s measures could reduce the trade gap between the two countries, it is important to understand its implications on India's growth and external account. Such unilateral actions are contrary to the principles of free and fair trade.

Impact of reciprocal tariffsThe immediate impact of reciprocal tariffs would be on the trade balance. Assuming that there is no impact on imports from the U.S. (except for a limited diversification of oil imports from Russia to the U.S.), tariffs could adversely impact India's exports to the U.S. But to what extent? Assuming that the import elasticity with respect to tariffs as (-)1, which is on a higher side, India's exports to the U.S. can go down by 25% — this is a sharp decline. However, its impact on trade balance depends on how much the share of India's exports to the U.S. is in total exports. As the data for 2025-26 is not available, the implications of this expected drop in U.S. exports is worked out for 2024-25, ex post.

Even in the extreme case, where elasticity is assumed to be (-)1, the overall trade deficit widens by about 0.56 % of GDP to 7.84%. Consequently, real GDP growth drops by about 0.6% to 5.9% from 6.5%. What is of more concern is its impact on the Current Account Deficit (CAD). Due to the U.S.'s reciprocal tariffs, the CAD is estimated to increase from 0.6% to 1.15%. While these estimates are for 2024-25, the extent of the impact in 2025-26 would not be very different from these estimates for 2024-25, had the tariffs been effective from the beginning of the year. However, in the current year (2025-26) four months are behind us, the decline in GDP growth rate may be 0.4%, and correspondingly the CAD may also be reduced.These estimates are, however, subject to some caveats. India recently signed a comprehensive economic and trade agreement with the United Kingdom, while negotiations are underway with the European Union and other major countries and their impact on external account is not assessed. These may have a favourable effect on the CAD.We are also not considering the effects of tariff increases imposed on other countries that are competitors for Indian exports, and this can moderate the impact on India's exports. Further, we are not taking into consideration any likely changes in the exchange rate due to the recent U.S. trade measures and its impact on trade balance. Indeed, the rupee-U.S. dollar depreciated sharply and was hovering over ?87.5 since reciprocal tariffs were imposed. The new trade agreements as well as rupee depreciation could help narrow the CAD a bit and also limit the impact of the U.S. tariffs on India's GDP growth to some extent.Trump tariffs: Which sectors bear the brunt?But for 2025-26, and for the coming years, GDP growth, even after considering these two factors, could still be lower by about 0.5% than the base case growth forecast of 6.5%; the CAD could also widen by a similar extent. Further, following the penalty threat, any larger shift away from Russia on crude imports and towards the U.S. might have further implications on the CAD as well as the exchange rate and domestic inflation. Added to this, an increase in world oil prices and the uncertainty surrounding the world economy could exert more pressure on the CAD and its financing. It can also have an effect on inflation.

How can India mitigate the downside risks of Donald Trump's tariffs? One option is that India still has the space to negotiate with the U.S. as the trade deal has not yet been finalised while not yielding on contentious issues such as agriculture and allied sectors and micro, small and medium enterprises.The other way is, as many have suggested, to diversify the export market. But this would be difficult in the short term. One possible way is to look at our own tariffs that we impose on our imports. Our empirical results do suggest that India's exports are negatively affected by import tariffs. The estimated elasticity with respect to import tariffs is more than (negative) one. With the increasing import content of our exports over time, the negative impact of tariffs on exports growth has only increased. The government may look at the existing tariff rates and may reduce those that have an adverse effect on exports.Impact of penal levyThe impact of the penal levy, which is another 25%, will have the same effect as reciprocal tariffs. However, there are some commodities that are exempt from this levy. Here the impact will be somewhat lower. Taken together, the total impact on India's growth rate can be quite severe, a reduction of over 0.6 percentage points from the base growth rate of 6.5% in the current year. To avoid the penal levy, India has to bring to the attention of the world at large the inequity of the decision. It is highly discriminatory. There are many other countries which import from Russia far more than what India does. The interval of three weeks that is available now for negotiation must be effectively utilised.Reciprocal tariffs with penal levy are a clear case of using tariffs to compel nations to follow a specific policy. India needs to work with other nations to get back to a different system of world trade. While the immediate impact of the tariffs on the growth rate of India may be managed, the continuation of this kind of trade regime will not be in the interests of all countries including the U.S. and India.

Russia is not Iran, India can't cancel oil imports on U.S. demand: experts

India cannot cancel oil imports from Russia as it did six years ago with Iran and Venezuela, given the difference in the scale and importance of the relationship, said experts, warning that the U.S.'s actions against India were damaging the relationship built over decades. In 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump had in his first term, demanded that India "zero out" its oil imports from Iran and Venezuela. India had eventually complied with the demand before the deadline in May 2019.On Wednesday, Mr. Trump signed an executive order levying a 25% penalty on top of 25% tariffs on Indian goods, unless India cut energy purchases from Russia, which currently make up more than 35% of its oil imports. The penalty would kick in by August 27 unless Russia stops the war in Ukraine. The threat is expected to add pressure on both India and Russia ahead of a meeting between Mr. Trump and President Vladimir Putin next week, and the upcoming visit by Mr. Putin to India for the annual summit with Mr. Modi.

"At the global level, Russia is not Iran," former Indian Ambassador to the U.S. Arun Singh told The Hindu in an interview. "We want Russia, as one of the major powers in the international context, to be an important partner of India, and there's a memory in India of Russia in the past having provided political support [and] ...defence technology that nobody else was willing to provide," he added, also warning that if India were to cave in to Mr. Trump's demands, this would only increase the U.S.'s appetite to demand more concessions from India.According to scholar Brahma Chellaney, the U.S. move on Russian oil is a cover to strong-arm India into accepting trading terms the U.S. wants, including market access for agricultural products. "[Mr.] Trump is weaponising Russian oil purchases to force a largely one-sided trade deal on India," said Mr. Chellaney, who is a Professor of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin. He pointed out that technically, the U.S. has not sanctioned Russian oil, nor has it subscribed to the European Union's latest price cap on it. Mr. Trump had also not penalised China, which is the world's largest importer of

Russian oil. "Cutting Indian purchases of Russian oil is unlikely to make him back off. He wants a trade deal on his terms," Mr. Chellaney added. Until recently, India imported about 2 million barrels a day, and is the second largest importer of Russian oil.Mr. Singh pointed to the past 25 years as a period of building trust between the two countries, and a steady improvement in relations after the previous era, where India had seen the U.S. as a "coercive and an unreliable partner" for its backing of Pakistan, the 1971 Bangladesh War intervention, and the 1998 sanctions on India for its nuclear tests. Since 2008, after the U.S. helped India win exemptions at the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Nuclear Suppliers Group for doing nuclear trade, he said this perception seriously changed. He also said that the U.S. had supplied drones and winter clothing to support Indian forces during the India-China stand-off at the Line of Actual Control at "short notice"."But because of what President Trump has done in India, there's a resurrection of the old and bitter memories of the U.S.," Mr. Singh who is a Senior Fellow at Delhi-based Carnegie India and a Professor at Ashoka University. "So President Trump and the U.S. may feel that they are putting some penalties on India, high tariffs, I would say that they are putting high tariffs and penalties, less on India, and more on the U.S.-India relationship. It will take some time for the relationship to come out from this shock that has been generated", he added.

Industrial accidents, the human cost of indifference

After spending 37 years in India's oil and energy sector, this writer has walked through the innards of factories, refineries, and chemical plants across the country. This writer has seen, up close, the tragic aftermath of industrial accidents — not as distant events, but as raw human tragedies. These are not acts of fate. They are the result of choices — bad ones made by individuals, institutions, and systems that fail to care.We have seen it again, recently — as explosions at Sigachi Industries in Telangana, and as a firecracker unit disaster in Tamil Nadu. They are not aberrations. They are the symptoms of a deeper, ongoing national crisis.

A universe is shattered every timIn the last five years, at least 6,500 workers have lost their lives in India's factories, construction sites, and mines, according to government data compiled by the Labour Ministry and several Right to Information-based reports. This means nearly three fatalities every day in peacetime, in a growing economy, in the 21st century.In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu alone, over 200 fatalities have occurred in major industrial mishaps over the past decade. But the true toll — especially from the unregistered or informal sector units may be much higher and rarely makes news. Each of these cases is not just a data point. It is about a breadwinner gone, a child orphaned, and a household thrust into trauma and penury. This writer has witnessed this — an empty seat in a refinery canteen after a fatality, families pacing outside the plant gates, waiting for news they know will break them.

A study in 2022 by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) found that India had had over 130 major chemical accidents in just a 30-month window post-2020, with 218 fatalities and 300-plus injuries. Most of these occurred in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which often operate under regulatory radar.What makes these deaths even more inexcusable is how elementary and avoidable their causes are: no fire No-Objection Certificate (NOC) — factories running without even the basic No-Objection Certificate from the Fire Department; no firefighting systems — alarms, sensors, extinguishers missing or dysfunctional; no permit-to-work system — high-risk jobs undertaken casually, with no formal hazard identification or job safety analysis; no training — especially for migrant and contract workers who often speak different languages and oblivious to the signage or safety protocols; no fire exits — or exits locked, blocked, or hidden under storage materials; no accountability — audits, when conducted, are often tick the box exercises. Convictions for safety lapses are rare, and penalties are negligible.Even in large corporates, the focus on operational excellence often overshadows basic safety culture. Globally, countries such as Germany and Japan have embedded safety deeply into industrial design and workplace culture. In contrast, India still treats safety as a compliance hurdle rather than a core value.While the spotlight is on Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, let us not pretend that other States fare better. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh have their own grim records. In fact, Gujarat witnessed over 60 major industrial fires and gas leaks in just a single year (2021), according to media and State records.According to the Directorate General Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes (DGFASLI), India records one serious industrial accident every two days in registered factories. What are unregistered units? Nobody truly knows.The pattern is now familiar

India must assure every worker, who risks life and limb to keep its industries running, that industrial safety is a right

to the point of fatigue: tragedy, outrage, compensation, committee and then silence. The root cause remains untouched. The next accident is just waiting to happen.What keeps this cycle alive is national indifference — the silence of the public, the inertia of regulators, and the cost-cutting impulse of companies that treat safety as overhead, and not obligation. Workers, especially those on contract, are seen as disposable.There is also a deeply troubling class bias. Would a similar safety lapse at a high-rise corporate headquarters or in a software park go similarly unnoticed? The harsh truth is that these lives are undervalued because of who they are — migrant workers, contract labourers, and the economically voicelessThe phrase 'act of god'There is a phrase that we often hear, which is "act of God." It sounds biblical, a way to distance ourselves from culpability. But these disasters are not divine punishment. They are man-made. A National Geographic documentary once explored this very idea showing how industrial accidents across the world stem not from chance, but from negligence and failed systems.Countries such as South Korea and Singapore now have corporate manslaughter laws, holding senior executives criminally accountable for gross safety failures. India needs to begin that conversation.This is not just a call for regulatory reform or better audits. It is a call for collective conscience. As citizens, as industry leaders, as media, as policymakers we need to say, "We care".We must not only hold companies to account but also strengthen our labour safety boards, digitise risk reporting, and ensure whistleblower protection. And for every worker who risks life and limb to keep our industries running, we must affirm this truth: industrial safety is not a favour, it is a right.The question is not whether we have the means to prevent these tragedies. We do. The only question is this: do we care enough to act? Or will we, through silence and resignation, keep proving that unspoken indictment true? Who cares?

Trump says court halt of tariffs would cause 'Great Depression'

U.S. President Donald Trump warned on Friday (August 8, 2025) of cataclysmic consequences on the U.S. economy if a court rules that his imposition of sweeping tariffs constitutes an illegal power grab.If a "Radical Left Court" strikes down the tariffs, "it would be impossible to ever recover, or pay back, these massive sums of money and honor," he wrote on his Truth Social platform."It would be 1929 all over again, a GREAT DEPRESSION!" he said.Mr. Trump's hyperbolic statements come as a U.S. appeals court weighs the legality of his broad use of emergency powers to enact sweeping tariffs on trading partners.A lower court ruled against Mr. Trump in May, but the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit put the ruling on hold as it considers the case.Claims, counterclaimsTrump on Friday touted billions of dollars in tariff revenue "pouring" into the Treasury — paid by U.S. importers — and recent stock market records, as proof his levies had created "the largest amount of money, wealth creation and influence the U.S.A. has ever seen."Many economists meanwhile worry the tariffs are stoking inflation and see trade policy uncertainty as slowing investment.Since returning to the White House in January, Mr. Trump has announced a slew of new tariffs, seeking to force a reordering of global trade that he has long claimed is biased against the United States.In addition to sweeping tariffs invoked under declarations of economic emergencies, he has also instituted sectoral tariffs of be-

tween 25% and 50% on steel and other items.Those levies have generally followed government investigations and are not at issue in the pending litigation.At a July 31 hearing, members of the appeals court appeared skeptical of the Trump administration's arguments that it had broad discretion to declare national economic emergencies and invoke tariffs as a remedy.To invoke his so-called "reciprocal" tariffs on many U.S. trade partners, Mr. Trump declared a national emergency over "large and persistent annual U.S. goods trade deficits."Opponents to the White House policy have argued that such a reason does not qualify under the law Mr. Trump has cited for the tariffs, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

States and the challenge before the Finance Commission

The Government of Tamil Nadu recently hosted the Sixteenth Finance Commission, which was chaired by Arvind Panagariya. With its distinguished experts from various fields, the Commission is uniquely positioned to address the critical fiscal challenges facing India and rectifying the skewness in the relationship between the States and the Union.The decisions taken by this Finance Commission will not only shape the fiscal fate of the nation for the next five years but will also influence India's economic trajectory in the decades to come. The Sixteenth Finance Commission's work coincides with significant shifts in global economic trends. Concepts such as "friendshoring" and "reshoring" are reshaping international trade and investment patterns. These trends present a unique opportunity for India and Tamil Nadu. To seize these opportunities, the critical challenge for the Finance Commission lies in striking a balance between equitable redistribution and incentivising growth in high-performing States such as Tamil Nadu.

Since 1951, when the first Finance Commission was formed, each Finance Commission has adapted its own approach towards the fiscal challenges of its time. Every Commission has sought to achieve an equitable redistribution of resources by increasing the share of States under vertical devolution and channelling funds to less-developed States through horizontal devolution.But there have been clear gaps between their declared objectives and outcomes; therein lies our case for a new and fair system of distribution of resources. For instance, while the Fifteenth Finance Commission awarded the vertical share of the divisible pool to the States as 41%, the effective devolution to States in the first four years of the award period amounted to only 33.16% of the Union's gross tax revenue. The unprecedented levying of cess and surcharges by the Union is the fundamental reason for this effective decline in devolution.Hike States' share, incentivise performersThe States, which are near to people, bear substantial developmental expenditures, and, hence, their share should be further increased substantially. The financial strain on the States has been particularly severe due to increases in counterpart funding for centrally sponsored schemes on the one side and inadequate devolution on the other side. Hence, a fair and equitable share for States would be 50% devolution of the gross central taxes, allowing States greater fiscal autonomy in funding and implementing locally relevant schemes.

On horizontal devolution, it is evident that the redistribution policy followed for the first four and a half decades in our country has yielded limited results in driving real growth. Hence, the fundamental question would be this: should the focus be on a smaller national pie with a larger share for less-developed States or a larger national pie with equitable distribution that provides greater absolute resources for all? The answer is difficult, yet a more balanced approach would ensure a larger national economic pie, allowing for reasonable shares for less-developed States and adequate resources for progressive States to continue their upward trajectory. This would clearly necessitate a progressive resource allocation methodology for the performing States so as to allow them to fulfil their potential to be India's growth engines.Unique challenges in progressive StatesAmidst this, it is also important to note that progressive States such as Tamil Nadu also face unique challenges in demography and urbanisation. With a median age higher than the national average, the State's capacity to generate consumption-based tax revenue is declining, even as the costs of supporting an aging population are rising. It is imperative to ensure that such States do not fall into the "middle-income trap", where growth stagnates and they "grow old before becoming rich". Next, the challenges due to urbanisation in fast-growing States merit adequate addressal. A State like Tamil Nadu is witnessing the fastest rate of urbanisation in the country, due to which it will have a 57.30% urban population in 2031, against the expected national average of 37.90%. The resources for fulfilling the infrastructure needs of urbanisation should be earmarked to ensure the long-term sustainability of our growth.We should keep in mind that the mandate of the Commission goes beyond fiscal arithmetic. It is about envisioning a future where every State contributes to and benefits from the nation's progress. Whether it is fostering manufacturing, addressing urbanisation challenges, or ensuring climate resilience, the Commission's decisions will impact millions of lives and determine the trajectory of the country's destiny, to take its place among the world's leading economies.

Amid key victories in fight against TB, states face one battle: Shortage of drugs

Last month, the World Health Organisation highlighted two significant milestones in India's fight against TB: an 18% dip in cases over the past 10 years, more than double the global rate; and a 24% reduction in deaths in the same period, higher than the global average of 23%.

This frames the Government's 100-day intensive campaign beginning December 7 to enhance detection in select high-burden districts but these bright spots in the mission to eliminate TB by 2025 have a shadow: shortage in supply of key TB drugs since 2023, according to records investigated by The Indian Express.India's TB treatment schedule has two stages: a two-three month Intensive Phase (IP) marked by a combination tablet of four antibiotics, and Continuation Phase (CP), where a patient gets another combination medicine with three antibiotics for four to seven months.These are called fixed-dose combination (FDC) drugs. Data for 2022, 2023 and 2024 shows a progressive dip in the supply of FDC drugs from the Centre. For 2023, data shows a 56.5 per cent decline in the supply of drugs for the first phase (IP) compared to 2022; and a 23 per cent drop for the second (CP) across the same period.

Supplies have improved in fits and starts but this year, data available until June shows, there was a 23.04 per cent dip in supply for the first phase, compared to the first six months of 2023, and a 28.8 per cent dip in supply for the second phase across the same period.Records show this prompted the Centre to send several letters to states on these delays urging local procurement. The key factors behind the shortfall: the nodal procurement agency cancelled nine of its 26 tenders to purchase these drugs due to "administrative reasons"; and, three suppliers were blacklisted for violations ranging from forged bank guarantees to faulty pricing.Amid key victories in fight against TB, states face one battle: Shortage of drugs

The Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare did not respond to a detailed questionnaire from The Indian Express on the state of the shortage. But a letter sent by the Ministry to states this March said that TB drugs would "get delayed due to unforeseen and extraneous circumstances."It directed states to procure them locally for a period of three months, with no restrictions on size or formulation. "On case by case basis, reimbursement of costs towards drugs to the patient, if the district/ health facilities are unable to provide free drugs," it said.

Mission 2025It was during the "End TB Summit" in New Delhi in March 2018 that the Government announced a deadline of 2025 for elimination of the disease. According to the latest WHO data, India was estimated to have had 27 lakh TB cases in 2023, of which 25.1 lakh patients (85 per cent) were receiving medication — a significant achievement since more than 50 per cent of those in this category succumb to the infection without treatment.The treatment of Drug-Susceptible TB (DSTB) — mainly for newly diagnosed patients — involves six-nine months of antibiotics.The drugs involved are Rifampicin, Isoniazid, Pyrazinamide and Ethambutol in a single daily tablet for Intensive Phase; and Rifampicin, Isoniazid and Ethambutol in a single daily tablet for Continuation Phase. The duration and dosage of these tablets can vary, depending on age, infection level and treatment history.While treatment is free in government facilities, patients opting for the private sector may end up shelling out around Rs 10,000 for six months of IP and CP and Rs 20,000-30,000 per month for drug-resistant cases.Under the National TB Elimination Programme, the Centre is responsible for the procurement and supply of TB drugs, while states receive limited funds to make emergency purchases as a temporary measure.

Ideally, stocks for three months are maintained at the district, state and national levels and for two months at the block level. Experts say buffer stocks are crucial because those who miss scheduled doses risk contributing to the growing threat of drug-resistant TB, which primarily results from an incomplete course of treatment.Among the states topping the charts in reported TB cases are: UP (6.3 lakh), Maharashtra (2.27 lakh), Bihar (1.86 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (1.84 lakh), and Rajasthan (1.65 lakh). Overall, India accounts for 26 per cent of global TB cases and 29 per cent of TB deaths.Letter after letter

The shortage was reflected in a series of letters sent to states, urging local procurement of medicines, mainly Isoniazid, Pyrazinamide, and Rifampicin, by the Central TB Division, which is the Union Health Ministry department responsible for implementing the elimination programme.In eight letters, the Centre eased permission norms to give a three-month extension for local procurement.Records show that another key hurdle for the availability of drugs was the cancellation of at least nine tenders issued by the Central Medical Services Society (CMSS) — the agency that procured drugs for Government health programmes — between January 2023 and August 2024 due to "administrative reasons."To compound the crisis, records show, at least three of the government's TB drug suppliers were blacklisted by CMSS this year for various alleged violations.

UP-based Unicure India Ltd was barred from CMSS tenders for Ethambutol for two years this February for failing to deliver the medicine after allegedly quoting incorrect prices; Maharashtra-based J Duncan Healthcare was barred for two years after allegedly submitting forged bank guarantees, including for two TB drugs tenders worth Rs 215.5 crore; and, Gujarat-based Centurion Laboratories was blacklisted for two years for alleged delays in supply.For instance, the order blacklisting Centurion Laboratories warned: "Please note the significant delays in supply resulted into crisis in Anti TB Drugs among patients and hence, severely affected the National Programme." The three companies did not respond to requests from The Indian Express seeking comment.

States scramble for stocksTo bridge the shortage, the government issued at least two tenders in July and August against the ones that previously failed. States are also preparing themselves better. Said a state official: "The crisis we faced earlier this year has abated…but we do not have the kind of buffer stocks that we used to maintain before."However, records show that states also faced challenges in local procurement. For example, on March 26 this year, responding to a Central letter on shortage, Health Minister of Congress-ruled Karnataka Dinesh Gundu Rao wrote to the then Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya that the Centre's "delayed communication to procure a critical drug" had come at a time when the Model Code of Conduct for the general elections was in place."It has been learnt that neither these medications are available in the quantities required by the state nor the procurement process can be hastened,"

Rao wrote, adding that this has "adversely affected" procurement efforts.A senior official from another state said they tapped into the buffer stock of loose medicines rather than procure afresh. "We were constantly moving medicines between facilities and monitoring stock levels. We also allocated funds to districts to purchase medicines from local stores," an official said.Another state official said, "We had to provide patients with supplies for four or five days, asking them to return thereafter, when normally we would give them a month's supply."According to a senior official from a fourth state, local procurement was difficult without a state-specific rate contract — an agreement setting fixed prices for commonly used items for a certain period. "Without a robust procurement system, securing short-term supplies is challenging," the official said.

Long Covid lasted beyond 2 years, left 70% survivors breathless, says AIIMS study

EMS News Agency, August 11

Long-term breathlessness was associated with those who were infected during the second wave of the pandemic, when the Delta variant was predominant.Long-term breathlessness was associated with those who were infected during the second wave of the pandemic, when the Delta variant was predominant.Ankan Jaiswal, 47, still gets dizzy and breathless when she climbs a flight of stairs or walks more than a kilometre. Sometimes her mind is in a haze. Three years after a Covid infection landed her in ICU, its after-effects still seem to get the better of her. She and other survivors were tracked at the long Covid clinic at AIIMS, Delhi, for three years as part of a study that found that 70.7 per cent of them weren't breathing properly or getting sufficient oxygen from the air to their blood,The study is significant because it shows that after-effects can be quite severe and last beyond two years after initial Covid diagnosis. This was common especially in women, the elderly, those who had severe infection and smokers. "It is one of the first studies from a low- and middle-income country (LMIC) to report long-term pulmonary sequelae (after effects) of COVID-19. Some of them still need oxygen support occasionally," says Dr Anant Mohan, head of the pulmonology department at AIIMS Delhi.He and his team conducted an observational study on patients who have been visiting the long Covid clinic regularly for three-and-a-half years. "We are still running it because we have a couple of ongoing projects. We had around 1,426 Covid survivors. Of them, 231 patients had been following up with us for over two years. We mapped their symptoms and found that they reported persistent dyspnoea (breathlessness and feeling suffocated) and impaired lung functions," he says.

WHAT DOES THE STUDY SAY?

A total of 1,426 patients were registered in the post-Covid clinic from 2020 as a part of the long Covid multisystem observational study. Altogether 231 of them are still coming to the hospital for follow-ups. Most of them had not one but overlapping symptoms. So 36.4 per cent had persistent self-reported dyspnoea, 48.1 per cent had impaired spirometry (how much air you can breathe in and out, and how quickly you can exhale) and 70.7 per cent patients had impaired lung diffusion (lungs are unable to efficiently exchange gases or move oxygen from the air into the blood).

WHO ARE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO LONG COVID? WHAT ARE SYMPTOMS?

Dr Mohan included all kinds of patients above 18 — those with severe, mild and moderate Covid infection and those with no symptoms at all. Apart from hospital records of physical visits, the two-year follow-up was done in-person or telephonically. "During physical visits, the patients were invited to perform spirometry, lung diffusion test and a

six-minute walk test," says Dr Mohan.Long-term breathlessness was associated with those who were infected during the second wave of the pandemic, when the Delta variant was predominant. The elderly had prolonged pulmonary function impairment, given their reduced capacity to repair lungs with ageing.There was a consistent association of women with long-term lung function abnormalities. Like Ankan, who has now moved to the US with her family as the pollution in Delhi worsens her symptoms. Seventy-year-old Savitri Devi was hospitalised at AIIMS for four days recently. "Her breathing difficulties worsen when pollution levels go up in Delhi. Post-Covid, she has not been able to walk long enough as she goes breathless and has coughing bouts," says her husband Mahavir, a resident of Delhi's Karawal Nagar.Meanwhile, 48-year-old Mithilesh Kumar, says he misses running and walking fast, something which he did pre-Covid. He can't walk and talk to someone at the same time, cannot climb the stairs and gets breathless when his son holds or hugs him tightly.Long Covid patients have also reported dietary changes, psychiatric changes and sleep disturbances, which are being looked at separately in other studies. "Other than respiratory symptoms, we found patients complaining of fatigue and sleep disturbances. We can now say we have a reasonable idea on what long Covid is all about," says Dr Mohan.

WHAT SHOULD PATIENTS DO THEN?

The study, according to Dr Mohan, is trying to compile all the symptoms of long Covid so that patients can seek early medical attention to address them and prevent complications. "Breathing exercises should be taken up on a regular basis by long Covid patients," says Dr Mohan.The patients' demographics and co-morbidities were compiled along with their details on the initial Covid infection, including the date of positivity of laboratory test, the severity of the illness, the need for hospitalisation, their hospital records, out-patient prescription slips and patient recall.

Where Viksit Bharat meets green growth

India's much-vaunted GDP growth rate — making it the world's fastest-growing large economy — slipped in the last year. Apart from the near-term consequences, this also means the longer-term goal of Viksit Bharat, to transform India into a developed nation by 2047, slips further away. Understandably, policy priorities are focused on getting back on the fast-growth track: Consistently over 8 per cent growth annually is needed to make it to the viksit threshold. But a different objective — green growth — might need equal attention.India's other long-term goal is to reach net-zero emissions by 2070. A lot needs to be accomplished in the near-term to get there, such as 50 per cent reduction of emissions intensity, 500 GW of fuel capacity from renewable sources, and around US $290 billion in investments in new wind and solar energy sources — all by 2030.

The Fletcher School at Tufts University in the US and Worley, a leading global professional services company of energy, chemicals and resources experts, collaborated on a research initiative to better understand where the Viksit Bharat and net-zero journeys intersect. We found that to head towards one destination, you need to aim for the other as well. The topic has returned front and centre in policy conversations in New Delhi, including at the 2025 Raisina Dialogue in the context of the shifting ground beneath the "global green deal".Green growth will help keep India on the fast track: At first glance, the two directions of travel appear to be at odds. India's fast growth is heavily reliant on carbon-intensive activities. A major contributor to the recent slowdown in GDP growth was a slowdown in emissions-intensive manufacturing. Coal accounts for 55-60 per cent of the country's power generation with demand not expected to peak until 2030-2035.However, if India strays too far from its green growth journey, it could be knocked off the fast-growth path as well. High carbon-intensity activities escalate climate risks that, if unattended, will shave off the growth rate.There are numerous ways in which this could happen: The impact of climate risks on agriculture could amount to a 2.8 per cent of GDP loss by 2030; lost labour productivity due to extreme heat could cost the economy $220 billion by 2030. Overall, extreme heat could cut 2.5-4.5 per cent from GDP by 2030, climbing to a 10 per cent plunge by 2050; carbon cost penalties imposed by importers of Indian goods could cost $150 billion annually in export revenues by 2040 if industries are not decarbonised; a reliance on imported fossil fuels — 85 per cent of crude oil and 50 per cent of natural gas are imported — could leave the economy exposed to price volatility, and geopolitical and supply chain shocks.

Conversely, green growth contributes to fast growth. It creates jobs — 50 million new jobs in India by 2070 — according to the World Economic Forum's Mission 2070 report. This translates to $1 trillion in additional economic value by 2030 and up to $15 trillion by 2070. It promotes opportunities for manufacturing and technology innovations, which have significant spillover effects in productivity and faster growth. It enhances health, which has multiplier effects. Energy security puts India in a stronger position to weather global shocks and to stand more firmly on the geopolitical stage.A holistic strategy could hasten progress: The recently announced 2025 Union Budget prioritised fast growth while advancing several green initiatives, the most notable being a plan to develop 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047. It also included support for manufacturing of solar equipment and grid-scale batteries as well as incentives to boost scrap materials and critical mineral recycling.There is potential to go even further with a holistic growth strategy and commitment of resources for green growth across three important dimensions: First, India must combine a comprehensive renewables capacity-building plan with investments in climate adaptation while ensuring the wider ecosystems — transmission, storage, public-private collaborations, carbon capture and storage, etc. — are in place. Second, a holistic strategy should pay close attention to the demand side. Farmers, comprising 45 per cent of the workforce, need access to affordable climate-resilient infrastructure, drought-resistant crops and farming practices. In parallel, micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), which contribute 30 per cent of GDP, generally lack access to sustainable technologies and finances. In addition to education, subsidies and incentives, there are other tools, from carbon pricing to green finance schemes, that could be advanced. Third, where green growth is at odds with fast growth, these disruptions could be anticipated and actively managed. Some sectors may experience slowdowns as capital is reallocated towards less carbon-intensive activities and sectors. States tied up with coal would need help reskilling their workers and re-building their economies, potentially subsidised by states that are economic beneficiaries of the greening of India.A greener, faster-growing India is within reach: Creating the energy infrastructure that keeps pace with the demands of "viksit" proportions while ensuring an effective green transition is not only a tall order, it is a monumental undertaking — even if the 2047 goal is achieved in later years. The most effective way to execute a complex strategy at the scale and pace that India demands would be to pair India's growing expertise with best-in-class international players. These collaborations could span technical areas, skill development, the management of complex projects along with innovative financing.

Sake, Japan's traditional alcoholic brew, finds spot on UNESCO's cultural heritage list

Luque: Sake, a smooth rice wine, is perhaps more Japanese than the world-famous sushi. It is brewed in centuries-old mountaintop warehouses, savoured in the country's pub-like izakayas, poured during weddings and served slightly chilled for special toasts.The traditional alcoholic brew that plays a crucial role in Japan's culinary traditions was enshrined on Wednesday by UNESCO on its list of the "intangible cultural heritage of humanity".

At a meeting in Luque, Paraguay, members of UNESCO's committee for safeguarding humanity's cultural heritage voted to recognise 45 cultural practices and products around the world, including Brazilian white cheese, Caribbean cassava bread and Palestinian olive oil soap.Unlike UNESCO's World Heritage List, which includes sites considered important to humanity such as the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, the Intangible Cultural Heritage designation names products and practices of different cultures that are deserving of recognition.A Japanese delegation welcomed the announcement in Luque. "Sake is considered a divine gift and is essential for social and cultural events in Japan," Takehiro Kano, the Japanese ambassador to UNESCO, said.The basic ingredients of sake are few: rice, water, yeast and koji, a rice mold, which breaks down the starches into fermentable sugars like malting does in beer production. The whole two-monthlong process of steaming, stirring, fermenting and pressing can be gruelling.The rice — which wields tremendous marketing power as part of Japan's broader cultural identity — is key to the alcoholic brew. For a product to be categorised Japanese sake, the rice must be Japanese.The UNESCO recognition, the delegation said, captured more than the craft knowledge of making high-quality sake.It also honoured a tradition dating back some 1,000 years — sake makes a cameo in Japan's famous 11th century novel, The Tale of Genji, as the drink of choice in the refined Heian court.

The lives of inland fisherfolk in Tamil Nadu

Six decades ago, little boys would scoop out sand from the dry riverbed of the Vaigai in Madurai during summer, to see water rising from below. They would wait until the water was clear, and then drink to their heart's content.The river originates in the Periyar Plateau of the Western Ghats in Tamil Nadu, flowing southeast near Madurai on its way to empty itself into the Palk Bay. Along its course, the river enriches not just the landscape, but the lives of the people dwelling nearby.The districts of Madurai, Tiruchi, Viluppuram, and Krishnagiri account for the highest number of inland fisherfolk in Tamil Nadu. "Among these, Madurai leads with 6,000 families, followed by 4,000 in Dindigul, and 2,000 each in Theni and Palani," says R. Rajaguru, an overseer with the Tamil Nadu Government's Department of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare posted in Kodaikanal. The Vaigai fills up around 1,500 manmade ponds and irrigation tanks in Madurai, he explains. Many of these, along with the Vaigai dam in Theni district, are chief fishing resources.While fishing techniques may differ depending on the depth of these waterbodies, Rajaguru says most fisherfolk use simple tools and a work ethic that does not exploit nature's bounty. "They take what nature gives, and nothing more," he says.

In Dindigul district, several families in Anaipatti and Mettupatti villages are inland fishers. Anaipatti is home to the Peranai regulator that was constructed across the Vaigai in 1918 by the British. It is here that fisherman C. Vijayalingam spreads out his veechu valai — a fishing net variety — in a graceful throw that lands in the water in a perfect circle. It is almost noon and the sun beats down on his head that he has turbaned with a checkered towel. He is not having much luck today, and after a few throws, decides to come out of the water.The 28-year-old is among the 50 people in Anaipatti, home to around 800 families, that depend on fishing for a living. "My father is a fisherman, and so was my grandfather," says Vijayalingam. He goes fishing through the year, staying away only on days the river is flooded during the monsoon.

Back-breaking workA typical river fisherman's workday starts at midnight. "I leave for the Vaigai dam in Theni around that time," explains Vijayalingam. He travels by bike, joined by his team of five, reaching the river in two hours. Once there, he trudges through shallow waters with his net slung across his shoulder. Another man — they mostly work in teams of two — with a net-like basket called the aappa valai secured at his hip, follows. Vijayalingam casts his net, that can weigh up to 5 kg owing to the iron pellets tied to its ends, gathers it, and empties the catch into his assistant's aappa valai.

"We repeat the process until we've caught enough, and start back at dawn," he says. The catch is displayed in a basket on their bikes, and the men sell it at the many towns and villages along the way. "We get sold out by the time we are home in the afternoon," says Vijayalingam. After a quick meal and a short nap, he prepares to set out all over again at midnight.It's backbreaking work that leaves him sleep-deprived, but Vijayalingam is happy doing it. "This is my parambarai thozhil [family occupation] and it gives me freedom. I am able to earn up to ?500 a day and if I plan well, I can also save some," he says. Some men choose to go fishing at the irrigation tanks, for which they employ coracles. "They use a net variety called the ari valai," says Vijayalingam. The tanks and ponds, though, are not full through the year. "When there is no water, these men work as drivers, farmhands, and cooks," he adds. Despite these challenges, the river keeps the fisherfolk rooted to the village, and they do not move to the bigger cities for better opportunities. "We prefer this life," says Vijayalingam.Another fisherman, S. Surya, explains that when the river is in full flow, they also use the kattu valai across certain stretches. "This is a net that is tied across the water like a curtain, weighed down by iron pellets at the bottom," he says. They leave the arrangement for about an hour or so after which the men retrieve the catch.The fish varieties caught include salli kendai (carnatic carp), viraal (murrel), pallu kendai (grass carp), and jalebi (tilapia). "The smaller kinds sell for ?100 to ?150 a kg, while the viraal goes for ?300," says Vijayalingam.The Noyyal river runs through Coimbatore, originating from the Vellingiri hills in the Western Ghats. Although the city gets a steady supply of marine fish from nearby Kerala, apart from Rameswaram, it does have a demand for freshwater fish. Here, fish are reared by fishermen who buy juveniles from the Fisheries Department's fish farms in places such as Bhavanisagar, Mettur, Thanjavur, and Manimutharu."We produce 2,000 lakh three-day-old juveniles a year that fisherfolk buy from us to rear in ponds and lakes across Tamil Nadu," says S. Thillairajan, Deputy Director of Fisheries, Bhavanisagar. Varieties include catla, rohu, and mrigal.

One Sunday morning, we see fisherman N. Rajkumar coming out of the Valankulam, a lake fed by the Noyyal in the heart of the city. He has a good haul of tilapia that he offers for just ?100. "I'm going home, may as well give this away," says the 40-year-old. Most river fisherfolk families live in the Five Corner neighbourhood in the city, and according to Rajkumar, are from the Siviyar community."We chiefly use the nattu valai," Rajkumar points out, adding that they hold on to sacks filled with polystyrene cubes to stay afloat in the water while fishing. Here, too, some fishermen use coracles.Thillairajan explains that inland fishermen are members of district-level fisheries cooperative societies that take waterbodies on lease for fishing rights. He adds that in Western Tamil Nadu, Erode has the highest number of inland fishers due to the presence of the Bhavanisagar dam.Anaipatti has several restaurants selling 'fish meals': there is rice, fish curry, and a slice or two of fried fish. We sit down for a meal at one of them.

The curry is delicious: although river fish have plenty of bones, what sets them apart is the defining earthy smell of freshwater, and a sweetish flavour profile as opposed to the bold flavours of sea fish. Locals say that once you develop a liking for freshwater catch, there is no going back to sea fish.River fisherfolk lead a relatively risk-free life when compared to their counterparts in the seas. "But we do encounter risks," says Vijayalingam. "Broken glass on the riverbed has cut into my feet, and once, there was a sudden surge in the dam when we were inside," he adds. Luckily for his team, they made it out safe.There are some rituals these fisherfolk have been following for generations. In Coimbatore, when the fish have matured and it is time for harvest, the men do not enter the water without visiting the Ayyasamy temple by the hills at Theethipalayam. "We sprinkle theertham [holy water] from the temple into the lake before fishing," says Rajkumar.At Anaipatti, fisherfolk worship the Vaigai on Ayudha Puja day every year, standing in knee-high water, offering puffed rice, bananas, betel leaves, and coconut on a platter. "Vaigai is like our mother," says Vijayalingam. "We live by her banks, and she offers us a livelihood. She is our everything."

How not to identify an illegal immigrant

In the winter of 2024, when Delhi was receiving 'cold wave' alerts, my phone would beep multiple times a day to alert me about the detainment of "illegal" Bangladeshi immigrants. The crackdown on the community began in Delhi after Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena's office issued an order to the police, in the aftermath of the regime change in Bangladesh, to identify foreign nationals "illegally" staying in the capital.The police first began their searches in the jhuggis of Bengali-speaking migrant workers. When I asked them why certain people fell under their radar of suspicion, they said that their "suspects" spoke Bangla. Some of them also claimed that they had received "tips" from local folks who interpreted on their own the dialects spoken by the "suspects".I realised then that due largely to the monolithic representation of Bengalis in the Hindi film industry, and the global reach of Bengalis in Kolkata, people are convinced that the Bengali spoken in Kolkata is the only "authentic" Bengali of Indians. If anyone speaks a different dialect of Bangla, which is the case across rural Bengal and even other urban parts of the State, they are at risk of being identified as Bangladeshi.It is not just the police which holds such a belief. Some users on X posted that while paani (water) is a word used by Bangladeshis, jol is used by Indian Bengalis. This, they claimed, would help the police identify who is an "illegal" Bangladeshi and who isn't. What about the fact that Charyapada, an 8th century text, considered to be one of earliest examples of Bengali literature, also uses the word paani for water? No one has an answer.The police, which is actively detaining migrant workers on the basis of the language they speak, have little space in their investigation for nuance. In one case, an officer told me that since he had found a worker sending money from India to Bangladesh, he had detained him. The detainee, however, told me that during the land parcel exchange between Bangladesh and India that was spearheaded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he and his siblings chose to become Indian citizens while his parents remained in Bangladesh. He claimed that he was simply sending back money to support his ageing parents.Other testimonies of detainees also show that legal complications and cross-border relationships do not find place in police interrogations. People have got into trouble simply for wearing a particular garment. A song composed by a few youths from rural Bengal highlights this racial profiling. It goes, "Just because I wear a lungi in a foreign land, I am being called a Bangladeshi. My choice of attire is based on the comfort I feel while working in this heat. That does not mean that I was born in Bangladesh and not in Bharat."While documenting the stories of the detainees from West Bengal, and the police procedures, I have had people on social media hurl racial slurs at me and ask me to 'go back to Bangladesh'. But what has shocked me most is the continuing silence of Bengali public intellectuals. Having heard so often that Bengalis have a substantial influence in the media, in academia, and in the culture and arts space, I expected to see small protests or even a social movement against this ethnicity-based targeting. This has sadly not been the case. Does that mean that the intellectuals hold no power? Or are they just so far removed from all the other Bengalis and wish to be differentiated from the Bengali working class?The crackdown that first impacted the Bengali Muslims has now started to impact the lower caste Hindu Bengalis as well. Will the intellectuals continue to mark their distance from the working class until those in power get impacted?

Runway launches Aleph, a breakthrough AI model for advanced video editing

Hyderabad: Runway has unveiled Aleph, its latest in-context video generation model that pushes the boundaries of multi-task visual editing and manipulation. The new AI-powered tool allows users to transform, extend, or edit video content with simple text prompts — from adding or removing objects to generating new camera angles, styles, and lighting conditions.Aleph enables creators to seamlessly modify existing videos by applying new aesthetics, generating next shots in sequences, altering characters' appearances, or changing time of day, location, or weather in footage. The model also introduces capabilities like motion transfer from one video to a static image, green screen isolation, and even changing environments or props within scenes — all with precise detail and natural integration.

'Anything that moves, NASA-ISRO satellite will see with unprecedented fidelity'

the India-US space collaboration crossed a historic milestone with the successful launch of NISAR, or the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar satellite, a flagship earth observation mission jointly developed by the two nations' space programmes. It is the first satellite to use radars of two frequencies — the L-band radar by NASA and the S-band radar by ISRO — to continuously monitor the earth's surface. NISAR is expected to provide unprecedented data on land deformation, ice-sheet dynamics, forest biomass, and natural disasters like earthquakes and floods. With its high-resolution, all-weather, day-night imaging capabilities, NISAR aims to enhance climate resilience, agricultural monitoring, and disaster response. Beyond science, NISAR also holds commercial promise to enable new data services, geospatial analytics, and early-warning systems across sectors such as insurance, infrastructure, and agriculture.

To discuss this scientific milestone and what this means for space cooperation, Vasudevan Mukunth and Kunal Shankar spoke to Karen??St.?Germain. Dr. St. Germain is the director of the Earth Science Division at the Science Mission Directorate at NASA, where she oversees NASA's full earth science portfolio, including satellite missions, technology, applied research, and data-to-action programs.Vasudevan Mukunth: Karen, thank you so much for joining us today. Can you give us a few examples of scientific studies that are possible with NISAR, but haven't been possible so far with the existing crop of Earth observation satellites?Karen St. Germain: Absolutely, and it's great to be with you. The way to think about NISAR is that it will see anything that has structure to it that moves, that changes its position at a scale of less than a centimeter over an area about half of a tennis court. When I say anything that has structure: it could be forest, it could be buildings, it could be glaciers, mountains, land. Anything that moves, we'll see at an unprecedented level of fidelity.

What that means is we will be able to see the slight bulging that happens before a volcano erupts. We'll be able to see the land becoming unstable before a landslide. We'll be able to see building shifts after an earthquake or any other sort of event. When a forest gets cut down, we'll be able to see that. Anything that changes, we'll be able to see, and that's an extraordinary new capability for us.Kunal Shankar: After the launch, NISAR will start its 90-day commissioning phase. And this is the world's first dual band SAR satellite. In this phase, do you foresee any challenges with calibration, especially with cross-band calibration? Could you break down that process for us?Karen St. Germain: There are a number of different aspects to the calibration. Largely the ISRO team will focus on calibrating the S-band radar and the NASA team will focus on calibrating the L-band radar. They don't really get cross-calibrated, but each one will look at its own special targets.Now, what do I mean by a target? It's something we call a corner reflector and it is exactly what it sounds like. It's a corner, just like the corner of a room. And it has a special feature, which is that when a pulse of energy hits it from any direction, it reflects back in exactly the same direction. So we use these targets to calibrate independently each of the instruments. And then the only other thing we really have to pay special attention to is the alignment, the pointing. Are they pointing in the same place on the ground? And for that, we'll use the data itself. So the data itself will identify features and we'll align those features from each radar.The GSLV-F16 mission lifts off carrying the NASA-ISRO NISAR satellite ISRO's Sriharikota spaceport on July 30, 2025.

Karen St. Germain: The way NASA builds missions, we establish a life cycle cost. So that life cycle starts when we start designing and it runs through the design phase, the build, the integration, the launch, and all the way through — what we call the prime mission, which for NISAR is the first three years. For NISAR, that included the deployable antenna, which is the most distinguishing feature of NISAR, and the L-band radar. And of course, the L-band and the S-band are operating through the same reflector. Then of course, there are various electronics and data handling elements as well.And then there are the people, right? The people that put it all together and worked so closely with the team from India. So even after we were finished building our part, our team came to India to work with ISRO to integrate it onto the spacecraft and prepare for launch and even sat on the console for the launch. So it's a total cost.

Kunal Shankar: Speaking of costs, there's a lot of interest about the commercial aspect and the applications aspect of NISAR. Could you just tell us a bit about the kind of interest that it has generated?

Karen St. Germain: Actually, let me take a step back and talk about earth observation data in general because understanding the earth — the surface, the atmosphere, and the changes large and small that can have impacts on communities and businesses, that's become an enormous area of interest. In fact, NASA's been collecting data on the earth system for more than 60 years now. And we find that about three quarters of our Fortune 100 companies are drawing something out of that earth observation archive. We also find that about 75% of our users, and we have more than 5 million users, are coming from .com addresses. So we are talking about agriculture producers, the insurance industry, the finance industry, the transportation industry. And that's before you even get to things like disaster response. So we have a tremendous interest in general.For NISAR specifically, we know that NISAR will produce data that can directly benefit agriculture, also risk assessment — everything from natural hazards like earthquakes and volcanoes, which are both issues in the US but also things like wildfire risk because NISAR will be able to characterise how much fuel is in our wildlands. So that's dry fuel that is burnable. There are all these application areas. One of the things that we do that we're really excited about is any time we launch a new mission, we have an Early Adopters program. These are people out there who anticipate what NISAR might do for them in their business. We don't require that they tell us a lot about what they intend to do. But right now for NISAR, we have at least 200 of these Early Adopters. Once the data start to roll out and the excitement builds, we expect it to take off from there.Karen St. Germain: The Early Adopters, yeah. It's a high number for a mission that is as sophisticated as NISAR. What I mean by that is: pictures are generally easy for people to use. Synthetic aperture radar data requires some pretty complex processing to turn it into usable information. But all the data is free and openly available from us. We will distribute the L-band data out of the Alaska SAR facility and our colleagues at ISRO will have their own distribution mechanism for the S-band data, and it will also be open and freely available.

Vasudevan Mukunth: Two-hundred is a big number. Also, can you explain why NISAR took 11 years to build? Were there any particularly difficult engineering challenges that you had to overcome first?

Karen St. Germain: Yeah, absolutely. First, it's an enormously complex system, with many dozens of subassemblies that had to be designed. Of course, to make these two radars work together and operate through a single reflector, there's a lot of design work that had to happen up front. So it was challenging to begin with. And then we had a couple of other particular challenges. This one happened right as I was starting my job: COVID hit. So think about an integrated engineering team already separated by time zones and distance and now having to work through a global pandemic. A lot of this work also had to happen in person. We had people who had to travel at the height of COVID, and had to leave their families. Remember that the waves of COVID hit differently in the US and India. We had people on both teams sometimes come down with COVID when they were in the opposite country, so we had to take care of one another's teams. Then we had to develop entirely new protocols for how people could work together in a space and remain healthy. That was a big one.More recently, this reflector is enormous, it's about a 40-foot deployable reflector. And when we were in India integrating and we were testing in the thermal vacuum, we saw some data that worried us. We were really afraid that there may be too much of a thermal load on that reflector before it gets deployed, and it might overheat. If it did that, it could challenge the structural integrity. Of course, when you've got a deployable antenna, if it doesn't stay taut, it doesn't reflect the way you want it to. So we ended up de-mating that reflector, bringing it back home, applying a reflective coating so the sun couldn't cause it to overheat, on the struts (not on the reflector surface itself). Then we had to ship it back and reintegrate. So we had a couple of technical challenges, which we expect when you're doing something as difficult as this.

Kunal Shankar: Speaking of challenges, what do you think are the limitations in terms of penetration depth of the L-band versus the S-band?

Karen St. Germain: I would not frame it so much in terms of limitations as I would frame it that they are both specialists and they just have different specialties. So the L-band has a longer wavelength and that means it can penetrate deeper. It can penetrate through foliage. Of course they'll both be able to create imagery in day and night through clouds and weather. It's just that when there is some material there like foliage, the L-band will penetrate further: it will interact with larger structures. The S-band will give you more information about that foliage because it's more sensitive to it. That's just one example. They will really just see different things. And their power then will be when we combine the information from them and get a more holistic holistic view, right?

Vasudevan Mukunth: This is kind of a follow up to that. Both the L-band and the S-band radars use the same reflector. Since S-band has a shorter wavelength than the L-band, does this create any trade-offs in either L-band or S-band performance?

Karen St. Germain: It doesn't. And the reason for that is because this is a synthetic aperture radar. It creates its spatial resolution as it moves along. Each radar is taking snapshots as it moves along. You know, to get this kind of centimetre level fidelity and the kind of spatial resolution we're achieving, if you were to use a solid antenna, it would have to be five miles long. Just like when you're talking about a camera, if you want to be able to get high fidelity, you need a big lens. Same idea. But we can't deploy an antenna that big. So what we do is we build up image after image after image to get that resolution. And because of this technique, it's actually independent of wavelength. It works the same for S- and for L-bands. The only thing that's a little different is because the antenna feeds for the L-band and the S-band can't physically occupy the same space, they have to be next to each other and that means there's a slight difference in the way their pulses reflect off the antenna. There's that positioning difference, and that we can correct for.

Vasudevan Mukunth: Could you tell us a little bit more about that slight difference?

Karen St. Germain: It's the way a reflector works. You would ideally want to put the feed at the focal point of the reflector. But when you have two feeds, you can't do that. So they're slightly offset. That means they illuminate the reflector just slightly differently. The alignment is just a little bit different. The team optimised the design to minimise that difference and to make it so that they could correct it in post-processing.

Kunal Shankar: How do NASA and JPL's radar systems for planetary exploration feed into and evolve from their Earth observation systems? And even at the moon, NASA and ISRO have been collaborating specifically using radar systems on the DFSAR on Chandrayaan-2 orbiter and the Mini-RF on LRO. Can we imagine a NISAR built for missions to the moon, Mars or beyond?

Karen St. Germain: Of course, once you have expertise in a technology, you can use it in many, many ways. And this is often the case in NASA between earth science and planetary science. One of us will develop a new technology or advance a new technology and then it can be used very broadly. So absolutely! And we love that kind of interplay. I love seeing earth science technologies make it into planetary missions.That's one aspect. The other thing is what we learn from NISAR on earth can inform what we understand about other planets. There are lots of ways that we interact across disciplines.

Vasudevan Mukunth: Could you give us an example of a lesson that you would learn from NISAR that would help with the planetary mission?

Karen St. Germain: Let's see. One of the things that NISAR is going to tell us about is what's going on underneath the crust of the surface because we'll be able to see these very small motions that you and I don't experience daily, right? We can't sense these. But NISAR will, and it will allow us to advance our models about how the interior of planets work. And those kinds of models are the same models we use when we try to understand how a planet like Mars works.Vasudevan Mukunth: NISAR is a first of its kind equal partnership between NASA and ISRO. Can you tell us what kind of precedent this collaboration sets for future major collaborations or technology sharing between the two organisations?Karen St. Germain: First, I will say I have been singularly focused on getting NISAR off the ground and not really looking beyond.

Noel Tata counters process to reappoint Chandrasekaran, seeks board meeting records

In a direct challenge to the process through which N Chandrasekaran was reappointed as Executive Chairman of Tata Sons for another five years, Tata Trusts Chairman Noel Tata has demanded audio and video recordings of a crucial board meeting, questioned the filing of the reappointment resolution with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, the role of Director Venu Srinivasan, and sought disclosures about reported commercial dealings between TVS Motor Company and a company associated with Chandrasekaran's immediate family.

In a letter dated October 26 to Suprakash Mukhopadhyay, Company Secretary of Tata Sons, and copied to all directors, Noel Tata alleged that a contested resolution had been treated as a concluded decision even as the minutes remained unsettled, his objections unresolved, and the company had failed to provide recordings of the September 17 board meeting. The board approved a five-year extension for Chandrasekaran and decided to pursue the company's listing.The letter sets a seven-day deadline for the company to furnish records and disclosures, warning that failure to do so would invite adverse inferences.

"The recording is the only neutral record of what transpired," Noel Tata wrote, arguing that there could be "no legitimate reason to withhold it from a director who was present at the meeting and who has placed his objections on record."Noel Tata said neither the original nor the revised agenda circulated for the September 17 meeting identified Chandrasekaran's reappointment as a proposed resolution. Agenda item 7 was described as a "Debriefing from Nomination and Remuneration Committee". Although the revised agenda added discussion of a September 11 letter from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and related caveat applications, it still did not mention the reappointment. Nevertheless, the resolution was moved under that item, he wrote.He also questioned the reported filing of the resolution with the Registrar of Companies, Maharashtra, Mumbai, before the minutes had been finalised and while his objections remained unresolved. "It is unacceptable that, despite being a Director of the Company, I have not been furnished with a certified true copy of the resolution and have instead been constrained to rely on a version circulating in the public domain," he wrote.The letter asserts that no Selection Committee was constituted under Article 118, despite a request dating to August 13, and that the affirmative vote required from directors appointed under Article 104B was not obtained.He warned that filing it with the Registrar of Companies presented a disputed decision as a completed act of the board, conveying "a false impression to the public, to the company's stakeholders and to its regulators".

Seven days to produce recordings and filing recordsNoel Tata has sought the complete, unedited audio and video recordings of the September 17 meeting, any transcript and confirmation that the original recordings and their metadata have been preserved. He has also demanded the final signed minutes or, if unsigned, the revised draft, showing which of his proposed corrections were accepted and recording his dissent where they were not.The demands include the formal meeting notice, successive versions of the agenda, circulation dates and times, details of who instructed changes, and the audit trail of documents uploaded to the board's web application.He has sought the voting outcome on each part of agenda item 6, including individual directors' votes wherever a resolution was proposed, and confirmation of whether the required affirmative votes were obtained. The company has also been asked to disclose when the certified resolution was issued, who authorised it, whether it preceded the signing of the minutes, and all documents filed with the Corporate Affairs Ministry.Noel Tata has further requested confirmation that Tata Sons will inform the Registrar of Companies, in writing, that the resolution's validity is disputed by him and that no further steps will be taken until the record of the meeting is settled.

TVS Motor dealingsThe second major strand of the letter concerns Hanno One Warehousing Pvt Ltd, whose directors include Lalitha Chandrasekaran and Pranav Chandrasekaran, and its reported commercial relationship with TVS Motor.Citing media reports, Noel Tata outlined transactions involving land, construction and proposed industrial infrastructure. According to the letter, TVS Motor leased approximately 17.41 acres near its Hosur plant to Hanno One in June 2025 for 29 years, renewable at Hanno One's option. Hanno One is reportedly constructing a facility of approximately 3.30 lakh square feet for TVS Motor, with rental payments expected to begin in November 2026.It also refers to land allotted to Hanno One near TVS Motor's Mysuru factory for an industrial park estimated to cost Rs 330 crore and intended to serve TVS Motor and its suppliers. Noel Tata cites a report referring to Karnataka Land Audit Committee minutes dated November 6, 2025, in which a Hanno One representative reportedly said the company had "entered into agreement with TVS Motor company".The central question raised in the letter by Tata is whether the board received sufficient information about a commercial relationship involving the Executive Chairman's immediate family while considering his reappointment.

Srinivasan's role questionedNoel Tata has specifically questioned the participation of Venu Srinivasan, Chairman emeritus of TVS Motor, in the Nomination and Remuneration Committee meeting on September 3 and the Tata Sons board meeting on September 17. Srinivasan is a member of the committee that reviews the Executive Chairman's performance and remuneration.According to Noel Tata, he participated in the committee's deliberations and cast the Article 104B-nominated director's vote on which the company relies in treating the reappointment resolution as passed.Noel Tata argued that the reported dealings between TVS Motor and Hanno One placed Srinivasan in a position of conflict when evaluating Chandrasekaran's reappointment. "As a director nominated by a charitable trust, he owes a fiduciary duty not only to the trust but to the nameless, faceless beneficiaries of those trusts," Noel Tata wrote, adding that the required standard was "pure, unadulterated public interest".Noel Tata said he did not recall any disclosure of the reported dealings being placed before the Tata Sons board. The disclosures recorded under Section 184 of the Companies Act at the September 17 meeting referred to Srinivasan having ceased to be a director of TVS group companies on June 10, 2026, rather than to the Hanno One relationship, he wrote.According to his letter, Tata Sons' spokesperson had stated that Hanno One's incorporation was disclosed in April 2025 to companies chaired by Chandrasekaran and that the TVS Motor transaction did not require disclosure to Tata Sons.Noel Tata has demanded the original April 2025 disclosure, relevant declarations of interest, Chandrasekaran's annual affirmations under the Tata Code of Conduct, records of any conflict-of-interest review and the basis for the company's position that the transaction did not require disclosure.Legal opinions by Tata SonsThe letter also challenged the circumstances in which legal opinions were obtained on the reappointment. Noel Tata said the opinions of retired judges Uday U. Lalit and B. N. Srikrishna was sought after the resolution's result had been publicly declared.

He points out that Srinivasan was among those who sought Justice Lalit's opinion, raising questions about advice on the validity of a vote in which Srinivasan himself participated. Noel Tata has sought the instructions and documents supplied to the lawyers, details of who authorised the opinions and confirmation of whether the reported TVS Motor dealings were disclosed to them.Invoking Article 121B, he has asked the board to consider the alleged nondisclosures, Srinivasan's participation, the constitution of a Selection Committee under Article 118, and the RBI's September 11 letter concerning Tata Sons' status and proposed reorganisation.The letter concluded with instructions to preserve relevant records, including board papers, agenda audit trails, internal communications, disclosures, and communications with the press concerning Hanno One.

Mumbai engineering student suicide: How to help a young person during an emotional crisis

The death of a second-year engineering student at Mumbai's Institute of Chemical Technology (ICT) has once again drawn attention to the mental health challenges faced by young people and the importance of timely intervention. According to reports, the student, Siddhesh Patil, was found dead in his hostel room. He had reportedly been receiving treatment for depression and had messaged his doctor about his distress, including suicidal thoughts, before his death. His doctor alerted his family, who contacted his hostel friends in an attempt to reach him. Police investigation is on.The tragedy underscores the need to take signs of emotional distress seriously, particularly when a young person appears overwhelmed or unable to cope. While every individual's circumstances are different, the incident raises important questions about how families, friends, educational institutions and healthcare professionals can recognise distress and help young people access support.

Academic and professional expectations, personal difficulties and the challenges of navigating early adulthood can sometimes compound emotional strain. Yet distress is not always easy to recognise, and those experiencing it may struggle to articulate what they are going through. "In such moments, the response of people around them can matter. Listening without judgement, taking expressions of hopelessness seriously and helping someone seek professional assistance can be important steps towards support," says Dr Monica Chib, Senior Consultant, Psychiatry, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi. "When emotional distress becomes overwhelming, a person may begin to feel trapped, hopeless or unable to see a way forward. In such moments, the way people around them respond can make a difference. The priority is not to find an immediate solution to every problem, but to help the person feel heard, supported and safe enough to seek help," she adds. Excerpts:

Listen without judgementPeople experiencing severe emotional distress may find it difficult to explain what they are going through. Some may withdraw, while others may express frustration, hopelessness or a sense of being a burden. These changes should not be dismissed as temporary mood swings or attention-seeking behaviour.Often, people in distress do not need someone to solve their problems immediately; they need someone who will listen. Being able to talk openly, express pent-up emotions and put difficult feelings into words can ease some of the emotional burden and help a person feel better. A calm conversation can create that space.Rather than offering quick solutions or saying things like, "You have so much to be grateful for," it is better to acknowledge their feelings. Statements such as "I can see that things feel difficult right now" or "I am here to listen" can help them feel less alone.Listening without interrupting, judging or comparing their experiences with those of others is particularly important. If someone expresses a desire to give up, says that life is not worth living or appears deeply hopeless, it is important to ask whether they are thinking about self-harm. A direct, compassionate question does not encourage suicidal thoughts; it can help a person speak about them rather than conceal them.

If they disclose suicidal thoughts, the response should be calm and supportive. Avoid challenging their feelings, making them feel guilty or asking them to think about the impact on their family. If there is an immediate risk, they should not be left alone, provided it is safe to stay with them. Contacting a mental health professional, involving a trusted person and seeking emergency assistance may be necessary.Help them focus on the next stepDuring a crisis, asking someone to solve their academic, professional or personal difficulties may add to the pressure they already feel. Instead, focus on what can help them remain safe in the immediate moment. This could mean sitting with them, helping them contact a mental health professional or accompanying them to receive urgent care. Professional support is essential, but reaching out early can make it easier to access that care.Sometimes, the most important response is not having all the answers, but listening without judgement, staying present and helping the person take the next step towards support.

Make it easier to accept helpEven when someone acknowledges that they are struggling, taking the first step towards professional care can feel daunting. They may worry about stigma, being judged or burdening their family. Instead of simply telling them to seek help, offer practical assistance: help them arrange an appointment, accompany them to a consultation or connect them with a trusted person who can support them. Small, concrete steps can make seeking care feel more manageable.A person appearing calmer after a difficult conversation does not necessarily mean their distress has passed. Continued contact, checking in without pressure and helping them stay connected with professional care can provide an important layer of support. Where appropriate, encourage them to work with a mental health professional on a safety plan that identifies personal warning signs, coping strategies, supportive contacts and steps to take if suicidal thoughts return.

Russian crude purchases may fall in November as West Asian oil's viability improves: BPCL

The country's second-largest public sector refiner Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) expects crude oil purchases from Russia to fall in November due to Russian crude's poor commercial viability — specifically elevated freight costs and high supplier premiums — compared to West Asian oil, whose availability and commercial viability have been improving in recent months, according to the company's director (finance) Vetsa Ramakrishna Gupta."Our spot crude share remained at around 67% in Q2 (July-September) while Russian grades accounted for approximately 37% of our total crude procurement, both broadly in line with the previous quarter. As flows from the Middle East improved, we progressively restored sourcing from the region while retaining the flexibility and diversification we had built during Q1," Gupta said in an investor call that followed BPCL's September quarter earnings.

Gupta added that Russian oil volumes came down slightly in October from July-September levels, but will be down significantly in November due to commercial viability issues as the refiner is not getting "good offers" for Russian crude. "November Russian volumes have come down compared to PG (Persian Gulf) grades. PG grades are actually more commercially viable compared to Russian grades and that is the reason November Russian (oil purchases) will be lesser," he said, but didn't elaborate on volumes.Premiums for Russian ?crude were at $12-13 per barrel in October, but have now narrowed to about $1-$2 a barrel for December cargoes, Gupta said, which means that economics for Russian oil could improve for December deliveries from the perspective of Indian refiners. For the better part of over four years, Russian oil has been available at a discount to Indian refiners, but amid global supply tightness and surging freight costs due to geopolitical crises, Russian oil has commanded a premium in recent months.

In July-September, Saudi Arabia accounted for a 19% share in BPCL's crude oil imports, while the UAE's share was about 17%, Gupta said, underscoring the recovery in Persian Gulf oil volumes. He, however, noted that cargoes from Iraq and Kuwait were not yet arriving in large quantities. BPCL expects West Asian oil volumes to improve further in the coming months.India's oil imports from West Asia saw a notable jump in September with Gulf suppliers effectively using ship-to-ship (STS) cargo transfers to move their crude through the fraught waters of the Strait of Hormuz, in addition to using available pipeline systems that bypass the waterway, as per provisional tanker data. Oil imports from India's largest supplier Russia, however, declined for the second straight month due to stronger competition from Chinese refiners and freight cost pressures, according to industry insiders and analysts.In February, before the West Asia war started, India's oil imports from five West Asian suppliers that used the Strait of Hormuz for oil exports stood at around 3 million barrels per day (bpd), according to data from commodity market analytics firm Kpler. These countries are Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, and Qatar. Their combined September volumes were 33% lower at 2 million bpd. Their cumulative share in India's oil imports was 36.7% in September, up from 26% in August, but still substantially lower than February's 56.3%.Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar are the most dependent on the Strait of Hormuz for exporting their oil. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have pipeline systems that bypass the chokepoint, although a bulk of their oil also traditionally transited the strait. The jump in export volumes from inside the Strait of Hormuz is largely due to STS activity, according to trade sources.

Unlike regular operations, in which oil is loaded onto tankers that sail directly to the destination port, STS transfers involve a shuttle tanker that carries the oil for some distance, after which the cargo is transferred to another ship. In STS operations in the Strait of Hormuz, the supplier usually takes on the responsibility — and the risk — of sending the oil through the strait, after which a tanker waiting in safer waters outside the strait takes the oil and sails to the destination port.This has effectively transferred the risk largely to the suppliers from the buyers, who were earlier required to charter ships and send them into the Persian Gulf for lifting oil. So far, Iran hasn't been able to effectively disrupt this STS arrangement, which is evidently getting protection from the American navy.As for Russian crude, Ukrainian attacks on Russia's oil and gas infrastructure is a key reason for the pressure on Moscow's oil exports. Attacks on export infrastructure in the Black Sea have become a tangible threat to navigation of energy tankers in the region. Freight economics are also incentivising avoiding the Black Sea routes, which account for a notable share of India's Russian oil imports, analysts said.Competition for Russian oil from China has picked up due to a various factors, which include lower Russian oil exports as Moscow has been trying to maximise domestic refinery production to meet its own fuel demand amid Ukrainian attacks on its energy infrastructure, and the fall in Iranian oil volumes available to Chinese refiners amid the Strait of Hormuz crisis. This increased competition has pushed up prices for Russian crude.India's crude import strategy has shifted sharply since March 2026 as Strait of Hormuz disruptions tightened West Asian oil flows and increased freight risks. Russian crude remains the backbone of India's import slate, while refiners have diversified aggressively towards African, North American, and South American barrels to offset the drop in supplies from the Gulf. About 40% of India's crude imports usually came through the Strait of Hormuz, and a large part of that supply was effectively offline for the better part of the past eight months.

Income Tax Department nudges UAE property owners for assets disclosure scheme

Nudging taxpayers under its ongoing assets disclosure scheme, Foreign Assets of Small Taxpayers-Disclosure Scheme (FAST-DS), the Income Tax Department has recently reached out to select taxpayers who have invested in residential and commercial properties in the UAE, sources in the Ministry of Finance said.Information received by tax authorities through the Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) with other countries has been displayed on the e-filing portal of the tax department for assets reported on their PANs by the foreign jurisdictions to nudge them to disclose the undeclared overseas assets, the sources said.

Around 1,100 taxpayers have filed applications so far under the scheme which was launched on August 16. The disclosures can be made till December 31. Taxpayers can log in to the e-filing portal and download their information for three years from 2022 to 2024, sources said."The information received under AEOI from the signatories of CRS/FATCA frameworks only has been displayed in the e-filing portal. The Department receives information under other multilateral frameworks which have not been displayed in the portal due to various risk factors or non-disclosure commitments," a source said, adding that the Department collects information and intelligence from other sources as well.In a high-level meeting held on October 23, the Income Tax Department decided that such information may also be shared with relevant taxpayers, wherever possible, to nudge them to participate in the scheme, the source said.The Indian Express had reported on September 28 that the Department had sent out a series of e-mails and messages to them, sharing specific information about the ownership of overseas stocks, bank accounts or assets. The e-mails had been sent to the taxpayers with the subject line — 'Important advisory: opportunity for voluntary compliance regarding FAST-DS, 2026', adding that it was a system-generated communication.The details about foreign assets and income are shared between the countries in line with international reporting frameworks such as the Common Reporting Standard (CRS) and the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), aimed to tackle tax evasion by increasing transparency and cooperation among tax authorities globally.Under CRS and FATCA, India receives detailed information about financial accounts held by its residents in foreign jurisdictions, which includes account holder's name, address, and tax identification number (TIN), account number and balance, and income details such as interest, dividends, and other financial proceeds.While the tax disclosure window, FAST-DS, has been launched to facilitate disclosure of undisclosed overseas assets, it has also resulted in doubts and questions as individuals face high fees and penalties to participate in the scheme. The problem is more acute for salaried individuals who have received restricted stock units (RSUs) or ESOPs and have not reported them before.Even for cases where there has not been any actual gain, the employees will now be required to pay Rs 1 lakh for disclosing under the new scheme, which is being seen as too steep an amount as a penalty by many. ESOPs are an important salary component for salaried employees in many sectors, especially those working in the tech sector, startups, and foreign companies.The scheme applies to two broad categories: i) undisclosed and never-before-taxed foreign income or asset located outside India up to Rs 1 crore; ii) asset up to Rs 5 crore located outside India, which was already offered to tax or was acquired when the assessee was a non-resident, but not declared in the relevant schedule of the income tax return. Under the first category, an assessee needs to pay 30% of fair market value (FMV) of assets or 30% of undisclosed income as tax and 30% as additional income tax in lieu of penalty, while for the second category, the disclosure fee is Rs 1 lakh.As per the Department, a valid declaration brings immunity from further assessment, penalty and prosecution under the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015 (Black Money Act). If taxpayers report accounted assets and income on payment of Rs 1 lakh, they will not have to pay Rs 10 lakh each year prescribed in the Black Money Act.

Man found dead in suspected suicide in Balanagar

Hyderabad: A 44-year-old man allegedly died by suicide in his room in Gouthamnagar, Balanagar, on Tuesday, reportedly due to health issues and financial problems.The man, Syed Ahamed, was working as a corporate personal assistant and had been living with his wife, Shaheen Begum, a private teacher, and three children in Gouthamnagar for the past four years.The family members told the police that Ahamed had reportedly been suffering from thyroid-related health issues and had been taking medication for the past four months.On Tuesday morning, Ahamad was found hanging from a ceiling fan with a towel. The police suspect that the man might have ended his life due to health issues and financial difficulties. A case has been registered.

Harry Kane wins Ballon d'Or: Football's perpetual nearly man claims the big one

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

Bayern's Harry Kane celebrates after scoring a penalty, the opening goal of his team during the Champions League semifinal first leg soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich in Paris, Tuesday, April 28, 2026. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena, File)Bayern's Harry Kane celebrates after scoring a penalty, the opening goal of his team during the Champions League semifinal first leg soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich in Paris,

There was once a time when it was thought that England skipper Harry Kane would end his career as a nearly man. On Tuesday night, the Englishman stood on top of the world, clinching the coveted Ballon d'Or, becoming the first England player since Michael Owen in 2001 to win the award and taking his place as one of the greats of the game. Kane finished as Europe's top goalscorer last season, scoring 73 goals for club and country. He also led Bayern to a domestic double, winning the Bundesliga and the DFB-Pokal, and skippered England to the semifinals of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.But there was once a time when the so-called big trophies eluded him, and it took a record move to Germany for that jinx to break when he finally won a league title in the 2024/25 season when Bayern won the Bundesliga.

When at Tottenham, however, Kane was not only their best player by a mile but also one of the best forwards in the Premier League. While he finished as the Premier League top goal scorer in the 2015/16, 2016/17 and the 2020/21 seasons, the big titles regularly slipped out of his grasp.In the 2016/17 season, Kane single-handedly dragged Spurs to a 2nd-placed finish in the Premier League, falling just short of eventual winners Chelsea. In the 2018–19 season, Kane again played a pivotal part in Tottenham's run to the UEFA Champions League final but fell short after losing the summit clash to Liverpool. His Tottenham run ended in 2023 as he departed for pastures anew, having scored 317 goals in 213 matches.After leaving Tottenham and going to Bayern, becoming the most expensive Bundesliga signing in history, the jinx of not winning a major league title still followed him like a bad habit as his debut season ended with the Bavarians finishing third. Xabi Alonso's Invincible Bayer Leverkusen side clinched the title, with Kane having to be satisfied with a European Golden Shoe and the joint Champions League top-scorer.Ultimately, in the 2024-25 season, Kane finally got a taste of winning a league title for the first time and was announced as the Bundesliga player of the season. As mentioned above, last season, he guided Bayern to a domestic double and won the 2026 Ballon d'Or.Kane, however, is yet to win a big title in national colours, having come up short in the last 2 Euros (20120, 2024), falling in the finals to Spain and England respectively. In World Cups, he hasn't had much luck either, having finished 4th in 2018, then getting eliminated in the quarterfinals in 2022 and then finishing 3rd in 2026, their highest since their title-winning campaign in 1966. Kane is also a World Cup Golden Boot winner (2018) and the joint top scorer of Euro 2024. He is also England's leading goal scorer in World Cups with 14 strikes.

Harry Kane wins Ballon d'Or, ends 25-year wait for English football

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

London: Harry Kane became the first Englishman in 25 years to win the Ballon d'Or on Monday thanks to his prolific scoring last season.Kane scored 73 goals for club and country last season — he was Europe's top scorer — and smashed scoring records in Germany and at the World Cup, where he captained England to a third-place finish.The Bayern Munich star says the achievement was built on so much more.

"Anything is possible with hard work, when no one else is watching, to go through the ups and downs, to learn through resilience, determination and self-belief," an emotional Kane said in a message to young boys and girls, after reflecting on his early career struggles."My journey wasn't straightforward. I wasn't the kid who went straight to the top. I had to experience the downs," he added. "I had to fight my way to be the very best right now. I hope that can give you inspiration as well."The 33-year-old Kane was followed in the voting by Kylian Mbappé, Lamine Yamal — voted best young talent for a third straight year — 2024 winner Rodri and record eight-time winner Lionel Messi.Kane thanked his teammates, coaches, parents, children — "It's past your bedtime" — and wife Kate, "my best friend. We've been through ups and downs for sure. You're my biggest supporter. You always want the best for me."He led Bayern to the Bundesliga and German Cup double, scoring a hat trick against Stuttgart in the cup final.At the World Cup, he scored six times to pass Gary Lineker as England's all-time leading World Cup scorer and place himself among the all-time top five in tournament history. They lost to Argentina in the semifinals but beat Mbappé's France for third place, England's best World Cup placing in 60 years.An Englishman hadn't won the Ballon d'Or since Michael Owen in 2001.England coach Thomas Tuchel said the Three Lions were "lucky to have you as our leader.""I ran out of superlatives to describe your performances a long time ago, but I'm delighted to see that you have now been formally recognized by the football world," Tuchel said.Monday's ceremony was held in London for the first time in recognition of the inaugural winner 70 years ago, England's Stanley Matthews in 1956.Putellas hat trick of awardsEarlier, Spain star Alexia Putellas won her third women's Ballon d'Or after leading her former club Barcelona to multiple trophies last season including the Women's Champions League.Putellas, who joined London City Lionesses in the offseason, also helped Spain win the Women's Nations League last December.The 32-year-old midfielder ended Spain teammate Aitana Bonmati's three-year reign.Putellas won the prestigious award in back-to-back seasons — 2021 and 22 — before tearing her ACL and seeing Bonmati rise to stardom. Bonmati, who completed her women's Ballon d'Or three-peat in 2025, was not on this year's shortlist after breaking her leg in December.Putellas urged young boys and girls to approach the sport with "love and passion.""Believe in yourself, that's the most important thing," she said. "If you have a dream, go for it, even if at some point you have to start from zero."

Boos for ad-breaks, premature declaration of 'winners': 3-hour long Ballon D'Or ceremony draws flak

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

Hours before Harry Kane was revealed as the winner of the 2026 Ballon d'Or, the website for the award ended up putting up a tribute for his victory. Moreover, they also got articles up celebrating Kylian Mbappe and Lamine Yamal winning the Ballon d'Or this year as well. That and a few other incidents have given the 2026 Ballon d'Or ceremony some unsavoury buzz on social media.The premature announcementsAround the time that the ceremony was scheduled to start, its official website ended displaying three articles for each of the top three contenders, each declaring them as winners. One announcement read, in part, "Harry Kane wins 2026 Ballon d'Or" – and similar articles described Lamine Yamal and Kylian Mbappe also winning.It turned out the organizer France Football had prepared many announcements – to be ready for when the winner is announced – but they were accidentally posted well ahead of the gala at The London Palladium. "Some profiles of nominees prepared by BallonDor.com were inadvertently published online," the organizer said in a statement to the BBC. "These articles had been prepared for all nominees and should in no way be considered as an indication of the final results or rankings."The award ceremony was held at the London Palladium, a 110-year-old West End theatre in London, England. The focus of the evening, for those watching in the hall and everywhere else, would've been the Ballon d'Or award itself but that moment came at the end of a whopping three-hour long ceremony. Moreover, the presenters would often announce commercial breaks right in the middle of announcing an award, after having introduced the presenter and the nominees. Once the award has been presented and the winner has given a speech, the broadcast was thrown

to another commercial break and this remained the pattern throughout the evening.The MCs for the evening were television presenter Kate Scott and France great Thierry Henry and the loudest boos and jeers were reserved for when they announced ad breaks before the announcement of the women's and later the men's Ballon d'Or winner.

Henry roasting Lamine Yamal fails to land wellThierry Henry is mostly admired for his insights when speaking as a pundit but his performance as a presenter split opinion on social media at least. Fans were particularly taken aback by his exchange with Yamal after the Spanish forward won the Kopa Trophy."It's your third one, right? That is your third one? But is it the one that you really wanted?" Henry asked Yamal, with the latter smiling sheepishly. When the Barcelona foward didn't answer, Henry asked,"In Spanish maybe?" Another moment for which the former Arsenal captain is being slammed his him correcting his co-presenter Scott's pronounciation of the name of Brazil legend Socrates.

'Still can't get 50 of 12': Yuvraj's playful dig at Abhishek after 38-ball 113

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

Abhishek Sharma of India react after century (100 run) during the 3rd T20I match between New Zealand and India at the Hnry Stadium, Wellington, New Zealand on October 27, 2026.Abhishek Sharma of India react after century (100 run) during the 3rd T20I match between New Zealand and India at the Hnry Stadium, Wellington, New Zealand on October 27, 2026.Former India batter Yuvraj Singh pulled the leg of his mentee Abhishek Sharma after the latter blitzed a 38-ball 113 runs in the 3rd T20I vs New Zealand on Tuesday, guiding the Men in Blue to an unassailable 3-0 lead in the 5-match series.

Yuvraj joked that even with all the belligerent hitting, Abhishek still could not break his record of 50 runs in just 12 balls, something that the former had done in Durban during a T20 World Cup match in 2007 vs England. This was the same innings where Yuvraj had hit Stuart Broad for 6 sixes in an over."You still can't get 50 off 12, can you @OfficialAbhi04! Looks like two left-handers batting in their backyard!" Yuvraj posted on X.

"And I can't make 100 of 30 or 34 balls. Well played, sir @OfficialAbhi04! Great innings aur apne single bhi le liye ? Good stuff on the other end by #VaibhavSooryavanshi! Devastating combination! Hats off to @IamSanjuSamson, playing at no. 3 as a complete team man! Well-bowled by our bowlers to keep the score under 200! Great series win. congratulations Team India," the former India player added. And I can't make 100 of 30 or 34 balls ?? Well played sir @OfficialAbhi04 ! Great innings aur apne single bhi le liye ??????? Good stuff on the other end by #VaibhavSooryavanshi! Devastating combination! Hats off to @IamSanjuSamson, playing at no. 3 as a complete team

man! Well-bowled by our bowlers to keep the score under 200! Great series win ?? congratulations Team India ????Abhishek continued his record-breaking spree, smashing a 35-ball hundred on Tuesday. The hundred was Abhishek's 11th in all T20s, surpassing Virat Kohli (10) for the most centuries among Indians in the format. Only Chris Gayle (22) and Babar Azam (13) have registered more centuries in all T20 cricket.Reacting to Yuvraj's banter, player of the match Abhishek responded during the post-game interview. "I don't know what cricket he was playing back at that time, but it's not that easy at all," Abhishek said.I would say if any batter wants to go there and bat like that, it's not easy at all. You can't just go and score 50 off 12 balls. It just happens once in a while," he added.Abhishek said the focus, particularly for him and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, was to get the team off to a flying start and sustain the momentum.As a batter, we don't go for that milestone. We always want to win the game for the team. So that was the plan, and that's what we want to take throughout the series as well, and it went well," he said.

Badoni hits 2nd consecutive Ranji Trophy double century, equals world record

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

Delhi captain Ayush Badoni continued his scintillating scoring form in the Ranji Trophy, cracking a second consecutive double century during the third-round match against Jharkhand in Ranchi Batting first at the JSCA International Stadium, Badoni once again spearheaded the Delhi batting as he reached his double century in only 216 balls on the back of 28 fours and three sixes during the second day's play.

The 26-year-old Badoni joined a handful of Indians to have cracked double centuries in consecutive First Class innings. Last week in Delhi's first home game at the Air Force Ground in Palam, Badoni piled on a career-best score of 217 against Gujarat.Badoni joined the likes of Delhi greats Gautam Gambhir and Virat Kohli in the elite list of batters to have scored two double centuries in as many innings. No batter has achieved the feat more than twice in First Class cricket history. Overall, Badoni is the 21st Indian to achieve the feat in the format, the first incidentally being KS Ranjitsinhji after whom the prestigious Ranji Trophy was named. Ranjitsinhji remains the only Indian to record the feat twice, having score back-to-back double hundreds in 1900 and 1901.

Two years ago, when a massive mid-series shake-up handed him the reins of the Delhi side, Badoni responded with his maiden Ranji double hundred on captaincy debut at the Kotla. Batting on 198 in the final hours of the fourth day, he then cracked a six to seal the decisive first-innings lead against Jharkhand and shook hands with the opposition.Badoni has also cracked a double century in the Duleep Trophy for North Zone, making the latest knock the fourth of his First Class career and second of the season.In the opening match of the season where Delhi faltered in a nine-wicket loss against Bengal, Badoni was the lone saving light with a second-innings 85 and a five-wicket haul to his name.Indian batters to hit two First Class double centuries in consecutive innings

HCA league matches feature centuries and dominant batting displays

Hyderabad: Smyan Bharadwaj of Team F was the top-scorer in the HCA Under-16 Super League Cricket Championship, scoring 191 off 248 balls, with 27 fours and five sixes, here on Monday.Aneesh Karthik of Team A also batted well, scoring an unbeaten 106.

At Pune: Uttar Pradesh 188/4 in 20 overs (Varnika Singh 95, Muskan Malik 63) bt Hyderabad 176/5 in 20 overs (Pranavi Chandra 66, G Trisha 51).

Team B 327 in 76.5 overs and 160/8 declared in 47 overs lost to Team F 449 in 96.4 overs (Smyan Bharadwaj 191, G Parthiv Varma 67, Huzaifa Imran Khan 91; Utkarsh 3/91) and 106 in 32.1 overs.

Team D 230 in 57.1 overs and 123 in 46.5 overs (Harsh Gandra 55; G Advaith Reddy 3/15) lost to Team A 221 in 71.2 overs and 167 in 41.2 overs (Aneesh Karthik 106 not out; Naren Koka 4/33).Team C 251 in 51.4 overs and 202 in 54 overs lost to Team E 196 in 47 overs (Rudra Rao 34, G Chaitra Sandeep 38; N Rithvik Rudra 4/29, Ruhaan Verma 3/30) and 288/5 in 67.2 overs (M Dakshdeep 92, A Omkareshwar 51, Sai Tanishq C 51, Ruhaan Verma 56).A-Division one-day league-cum-knock-outDeccan Wanderers 166/9 in 36.2 overs (P Nitish Reddy 42, Anudeep Javvaji 30; Shubham Sharma 4/30) lost to Balaaji 167/4 in 23.1 overs (Hrishikesh Simha 41, Sheshi Kumar Yadav 55, Shubham Sharma 45 not out).

Abhishek hits 35-ball hundred, breaks Kohli's record for most T20 tons among Indians

GNS News Agency, Oct 29

Opening the batting in a 199-run chase, the dashing southpaw went on a tear from the outset, storming his way through to his second T20I century this calendar year. Pairing up top with Vaibhav Sooryavanshi this time, the left-handed duo pulverised the Kiwis through the Powerplay, racking up multiple records along the way.India amassed 118 in the first six overs, the opening over alone yielding 26 runs – both records among Full-Member nations in the format. After a lowly start to the series with two sub-30 scores, Abhishek regained his hitting zones in remarkable fashion as he built towards his fourth T20I century. He walloped nine fours and 11 sixes in all before falling on 113 off 38 balls in the 10th over. The contest had lost all meaning by then, with India storming to 178 for two at the half-way mark, left with a 21-run deficit from sealing the series.Abhishek goes past Kohli

The hundred was Abhishek's 11th in all T20s, surpassing Virat Kohli (10) for the most centuries among Indians in the format. Only Chris Gayle (22) and Babar Azam (13) have registered more centuries in all T20 cricket.The hundred was also his fourth in only 70 T20Is, the joint second-most in the format, only behind Rohit Sharma and Glenn Maxwell, who have had five such scores.Abhishek recorded his maiden T20I hundred for India in July 2024 in Harare. He followed it up with a 37-ball century against England in January 2025. In September this year, Abhishek annihilated the record books with a 30-ball century against Afghanistan in Delhi, making it the fastest-ever century in the format by a batter from a Full-Member nation.

Hyderabad's 14-year-old martial artist reportedly lands 330 punches in a minute

GNS News Agency, Oct 29Hyderabad: Fourteen-year-old martial artist Balabhadrapatruni Yashwwanth has reportedly secured his 10th world record after delivering 330 single-hand punches in one minute, surpassing the previous teenage record of 292 punches.Born on December 7, 2011, Yashwwanth achieved a rate of 5.5 punches per second using one hand, according to information provided about his feat.Beyond his speed records, Yashwwanth has also demonstrated endurance by completing 59 consecutive full-contact karate kumite rounds. He is also reported to be the first teenager globally to complete the Senkoukai 50-Fight Challenge.Yashwwanth trains in Senkoukai Karate under the supervision of his coach, Grandmaster Hanshi Shaswat Kumar, who is described as the "Grandmaster of the Century".Yashwwanth said, "Reaching my 10th world record is a dream come true. This milestone is a testament to rigorous training, perseverance, and the effectiveness of my coach's advanced training systems.

Singer Maninder Buttar slams Subodh Uniyal for alleging he performed drunk

Days after Mika Singh refuted Uttarakhand minister Subodh Uniyal's allegations that his elder brother Daler Mehndi was drunk during a recent stage performance, another Punjabi singer has come out to refute the minister's similar claims against him. Punjabi singer Maninder Buttar shared a selfie video on his social media on Monday to demand proof from the minister for alleging that he was also drunk while performing at an Uttarakhand event back in 2019."I am a very simple person. I have never intentionally hurt anyone's feelings, never indulged in any kind of misconduct, and have always tried to maintain my dignity and respect for others. I was genuinely shocked when I came to know that such things had been said about my father and me," said Buttar.

Earlier this month, when Daler Mehndi was performing at a state event in Uttarakhand, Uniyal interrupted him and lashed out at him, claiming that Daler seems drunk, which is why he wasn't even able to sing properly. During that exchange, the minister quoted the example of Buttar, alleging that the singer was also drunk during an earlier event, after which he was beaten black and blue."Itna pita tha ki ab uska baap bhi nahi aa sakta yahan se (He was thrashed so much that even his father would not dare to come here)," claimed Buttar. However, now, the Punjabi singer has refuted Uniyal's claims. "It was back in 2019, almost seven years ago, when I travelled to Uttarakhand for a show and performed for more than an hour. The Hon'ble Minister even came on stage and honoured me by placing a traditional Pahadi cap on my head. I performed the entire show wearing that cap," recounted Buttar.I respectfully request the Hon'ble Minister to upload the complete recording of that show so that everyone can see what actually happened," he added, claiming that Uniyal is like a father figure to him. "I have always tried to keep my family away from controversies. I have never performed under the influence of alcohol or any intoxicating substance, and I have always taken my work seriously. All I ask is for the complete, unedited recording of that show to be made public," he reiterated.When Daler was performing during Siddhpeeth Maa Kunjapuri Tourism and Development Fair, a cultural evening organised by the Uttarakhand government in Narendra Nagar, Uniyal interrupted him mid-performance, alleging he was drunk. However, the next day, Daler's younger brother and fellow singer Mika Singh claimed that the former doesn't drink, and if he's found drunk, Mika would quit singing.He also claimed that Daler chose to perform at the event in order to fill in for another artist at the last minute, and did so despite undergoing a surgery and being unwell for the past two years. However, Uniyal claimed that Daler shouldn't have accepted the offer of Rs 26 lakh to perform at the event, if he was not up for it.Mika's team on Monday told NDTV that Uniyal called up Daler and apologized to him personally. However, later in the day, the minister refuted the claim, and hinted that it's Daler who should be apologizing to the audience for disappointing him despite accepting a fat cheque. He called that a "crime" and refused to issue an apology to the veteran singer for his behaviour, which was captured in a video that went viral.

CID's BP Singh dies at 77; Dayanand Shetty says, 'Today morning he just didn't wake up'

Brijendra Pal Singh, popularly known as BP Singh, has died at the age of 77. The filmmaker was best known for creating and producing CID, one of the longest-running crime shows in Indian television history.Speaking to HT City, Dayanand Shetty, who played the popular character of Daya in the crime show, said, "BP Singh ji had no other life, other than making content. He was dedicated to his work, was very passionate about it. He was also one of the best cameramen we had. He had not been well for quite some time, and today morning he just did not wake up. It was age-related, he was not well."BP Singh's journey from Doordarshan to CID

An FTII alumna, BP Singh first worked on Ek Shunya Shunya, a detective series for Doordarshan. Later, he created CID, which premiered in 1998, and became a television staple. The show featured Shivaji Satam as ACP Pradyuman, Aditya Srivastava as Inspector Abhijeet and Dayanand Shetty as Inspector Daya.CID ran for over two decades, and completed 20 years in 2018. In 2014, BP Singh filmed an episode in a single continuous shot lasting 111 minutes to mark the show's sixth anniversary. The feat earned him a place in the Limca Book of Records and became one of the show's most talked-about achievements.Apart from CID, BP Singh was known for creating Aahat, one of Indian television's best-known horror shows. First aired in 1995, the series brought supernatural stories, suspense and mystery to the small screen. It ran for several years and became a familiar name among viewers who grew up watching television in the 1990s and 2000s.Through CID and Aahat, BP Singh left a lasting mark on Indian television, creating stories and characters that remained popular with audiences across generations.

Dhurandhar's music earned Rs 350 cr: Kapil Sharma asks Shashwat Sachdev if he regrets less fee

Shashwat Sachdev, the music composer of Aditya Dhar's Dhurandhar, featuring Ranveer Singh, appeared on The Great Indian Kapil Show, and took the audience through the music creation of the film. He also talked about his collaboration with director Aditya Dhar and the process of creating its songs, and its music earning Rs 350 crore.During the show, the host, Kapil Sharma asked Shashwat if he regretted charging less for the music after learning that the music alone of Dhurandhar earned Rs 350 crore. The musician responded, "No No, this thought never crossed my mind."

Archana Puran Singh then took a dig at Kapil and said, "Not everybody thinks like you, Kapil." The host hit back at Archana with his signature 'Baba ji ka thullu' pose and remarked, "Look who's talking!"Shashwat Sachdev then explained that the music rights for Dhurandhar were with Sa Re Ga Ma. He continued by talking about Aditya Dhar's brilliance and how the director plans the music while writing the film. "Aditya writes the songs in the script itself, its placement and how it would be done. For a composer, this is such a big blessing."Kapil observed that Shashwat was giving lengthier answers during the conversation, and prompted him to joke that he now understood why Dhurandhar was such a long film.Kapil then asked Shashwat whether it was true that the music had not been completed until the day of the music launch. Explaining the process, the composer said that he sees music as an extension of the film he is making with the director. "I am not just making music, I am making a film with my director. As and when the film inches towards its completion, we realise that we can do something more to enhance the music. This is a world where you don't know where to stop; we are not making music, we are chasing something else. We are still mixing and mastering the music and replacing it for Netflix; we are still trying to improve the songs because the process doesn't end after the film's release."Talking about Dhurandhar's box office collection, overall, the sequel minted Rs 1,813.39 crore, and the first installment earned Rs 1,307.35 crore. The film is currently streaming on Netflix.

Masseur, trapped': Scout OP's girlfriend confronts him over closeness with Love Gill

The growing closeness between gamer Scout OP and Punjabi actress Love Gill on the Salman Khan-hosted show Bigg Boss 20 has been drawing attention. When Salman brought up the subject a few weeks ago, the contestants avoided addressing it directly. However, their equation became a topic of discussion once again when Rohit Shetty raised it during the latest Weekend Ka Vaar episode. What blew up the issue further was Scout's girlfriend Kaashvi Hiranandani's reaction to the equation.Kaashvi alleged that Love Gill had trapped and manipulated her boyfriend Scout OP to grow closer to him. Following Kaashvi's reaction, several viewers came out in support of Love, calling Kaashvi's remarks biased. Kamya Panjabi, Manu Punjabi, Gauahar Khan and Nassir Khan, among others, have also backed Love.

Everything wrong with Scout OP and Love Gill's 'sibling bond'Scout OP and Love Gill started as good friends on Bigg Boss 20. Their friendship soon evolved into a sibling-like bond with fellow contestant Yung DSA. Until three weeks ago, the trio was inseparable, but things began to get complicated as Scout and Love grew increasingly close. Scout appeared to develop romantic feelings for Love, although he never expressed them directly to her. During a conversation with Yung, Scout wrote on the grass that he was confused about his feelings for Love.

Although Yung advised Scout to maintain boundaries, and Scout did the same, he continued to give Love massages and engage in playful physical interactions with her. Their growing physical closeness became so noticeable that host Salman Khan addressed the issue two weeks ago. At the time, both Scout and Love dismissed the speculation, maintaining that there was nothing inappropriate about their interactions. Love even told Salman that she shared a similar level of physical closeness with her brothers in real life.Last week, Scout was seen massaging Love's shoulders and thighs while covering them with a blanket. Shortly afterwards, Love was heard making sounds suggesting she was in pain. The interaction drew criticism over how it appeared on screen. During the latest Weekend Ka Vaar episode, host Rohit Shetty addressed the incident, telling both contestants that their actions were being misinterpreted by viewers and appeared vulgar. He said, "One thing that is coming across very wrong, even Salman Bhai tried to hint at it, is when you guys come close, and he is massaging your legs or neck. It's not looking good at all. A wrong image is being portrayed. This is affecting you in a very different way. Scout, you have to be very careful since you have a personal life outside. It is looking wrong. Love, you are a girl. It's a double-edged sword, but I am only saying what's coming across."While Love Gill and Scout OP defended their actions, Scout's girlfriend Kaashvi Hiranandani entered the show to confront them over their behaviour. However, her intervention further complicated matters, as she placed the blame solely on Love, accusing her of manipulating Scout into developing feelings for her.

Scout OP's girlfriend Kaashvi blames Love GillAddressing the issue, Kaashi told Scout, "How is your massage parlour going, Tanmay?" She then asked Love, "Do you really do all this with your brothers? Even those who are not your real brothers?" Love replied, "It's not like that. I don't know what's being shown outside. I was in pain, so he just helped me. It was very clear." Kaashvi added, "When Aamrapaliji told you that it was wrong, didn't you think about how I would feel outside?" Love replied, "I always made it clear that I never found his intentions wrong. This never felt wrong."

Kaashvi then told Scout, "You are on national television. Everything is zoomed in, whether you touch or write on grass. What soft corner and feelings or confusions were you talking about? How did you think you could compare me with her? Do you not know your boundaries? Do I need to be physically present in a room for you to remember your boundaries? People are singing love songs to visuals of you pressing her legs or carrying her. It makes me feel disgusted; my family is embarrassed. Everyone is uncomfortable." Scout replied, "I am genuinely saying there were no bad intentions. The soft corner comment was as a sister. I only compared her to you for the way she took care of me. There was nothing more than that."Kaashvi further told Scout, "Are you there to be taken care of? If you wanted to feel at home, you shouldn't have come on the show. No one feels wrong when you speak to Kanika, but this angle looks vulgar. No amount of money could have gotten me here on this stage, but this is not the real you. You are chasing a girl like a background character now. It's time for you to change everything, draw the line, and cut her out. We cannot see you become a masseur. Your audience despises her. You have been so emotionally manipulated that she trapped you, and now you are stuck."After this, Love Gill broke down and blamed OP Scout for ruining her career and image. She said after the show, she will only have to defend this tag rather than focus on work.

Love Gill breaks down, receives support from the audienceWhile Kaashvi's confrontation became an eye-opener for Scout, it also backfired, as Kaashvi only blamed Love. The audience rallied behind Love and called out Kaashvi for her reaction. Kamya Panjabi wrote on X, "If the bond was real, he would set boundaries, not cut ties. Blaming the other girl for 'manipulation' just to protect your own committed partner is disgusting and small-minded. Stop pulling another woman down to save your man. Hold him accountable!" Gauahar Khan commented, "Feeling very bad for Love Gill, the perception is very unfair." If the bond was real, he would set boundaries, not cut ties. Blaming the other girl for "manipulation" just to protect your own committed partner is disgusting and small-minded. Stop pulling another woman down to save your man. Hold him accountable!Nasirr Khan shared a video on social media where he said, "I feel Bigg Boss should call Love Gill and show her Kaashvi's statement, so that her heart and mind are at peace. As a girl and a single person, the impact of such allegations is severe. She needs assurance."After Kaashvi's feedback, Love Gill's team also issued a statement which read, "The human heart can only take so much before silence becomes a scream. Watching Love Gill stand utterly alone tonight – defenseless while her entire character was torn to shreds on national television – was nothing short of agonizing. Her family is destroyed. Shattered into pieces. Imagine being a mother, sitting at home, helpless as you watch the world ruthlessly vilify the daughter you raised. Imagine watching her take the blame for a man's uncurbed emotions, while opportunistic influencers and clout-chasers turn her pain into content for likes, views, and headlines. Have we completely stripped away our humanity? Do we even care what happens to a soul when it's thrown under the bus?"

The statement further read, "From day one, Love's boundaries were clear: Scout was a brother to her. Period. Yet, the moment a grown man blurred those boundaries and confessed his feelings, society executed its oldest, most toxic double standard: blame the woman. Why is a grown man treated like a victim of hypnosis, while a girl is painted as a calculated temptress? Why is she expected to carry the burden, the shame, and the humiliation for feelings she never asked for and never reciprocated? Love shouldn't have to bleed to protect another woman's fragile reality. She shouldn't have to surrender her dignity just because someone else lacks the courage to hold their own partner accountable. Love Gill didn't just stand there in silence tonight-she endured a public execution of her character. She deserved to be heard, respected, and protected. Instead, she was humiliated and sacrificed at the altar of public judgment. No woman should ever have to pay for a man's choices. No family should ever have to watch their child be broken like this. Love Gill deserved empathy, not cruelty. She deserved justice, not a character assassination."With the backlash, Kaashvi also issued a clarification on social media. She wrote, "I intended to address Scout, call out the mistakes I felt he had made, and hold him accountable for his actions. However, in doing so, I realise that some of the words I used were insensitive towards other people involved. Regardless of what I was feeling at the time, it is not my place to pass judgements on someone else's intentions or character, and I could have expressed myself better. I never intended to direct hate towards another woman or encourage anyone to target her. Like, I understand that my words carry weight, and I take responsibility for how they may have come across. Watching all the "She knows what she's doing", "it's her strategy" content clouded my emotions, but I should have known better. It's not my place to tell her anything. I recognise that and truly apologise to everyone I've hurt."Post the controversy, Love Gill and Scout OP have gone their separate ways. While Love has been struggling emotionally with the fallout, Scout has distanced himself from her.

Mammootty avoids risks, invests in land, turned startup into success: CA on star's wealth mantra

Despite being one of the biggest stars Malayalam cinema has ever seen, Mammootty seems reluctant to expand his entrepreneurial portfolio, particularly by undertaking risky ventures. Instead, he appears more inclined towards tangible investments that carry lower risks.According to Chartered Accountant (CA) Sanil Kumar, who has managed the wealth, finances, and private business ventures of both Mammootty and Mohanlal for over 30 years, the megastar also possesses the clarity and knowledge to manage his own affairs, ensuring he doesn't face significant losses.Memories of Blunder | Bhansali, who? Malayalam cinema made an Avengers-like movie on War and Love 23 years ago

Why Mammootty prefers low-risk investments over big businesses"He doesn't get involved in businesses like that. His investments are mostly in things like land. Beyond that, he hasn't shown much interest in taking risks and running a business," Sanil shared during a conversation with 42 PodCatcher.However, Mammootty was a stakeholder at Motherhood, a maternal care services brand run by his daughter Surumy and her husband, Dr Mohammed Rehan Sayeed. "Mammootty was a major shareholder in Motherhood. It was sold at a very good premium. You could call it a startup back then. I am talking about some 15 years ago. It's only now that we hear about startups every day. Motherhood began as a startup. Then a foreign company came in and took over. Beyond such endeavours, Mammootty doesn't get into big businesses. But he has the good sense and clarity to keep everything (his assets) safe," Sanil Kumar added.Reportedly, Motherhood was run by Rhea Healthcare Pvt Ltd, where Dr Mohammed Rehan Sayeed served as the chairman, and Surumy served as the director. For the unversed, Surumy is the elder sister of renowned actor Dulquer Salmaan.One of the most accomplished and revered actors in Indian cinema, Mammootty is a recipient of the National Film Award for Best Actor four times, a record he shares with Amitabh Bachchan. In a career spanning over five decades, he has appeared in more than 400 films. He was most recently seen in director Mahesh Narayanan's Patriot, which marked his on-screen reunion with Mohanlal. The movie, however, bombed at the box office.He is currently gearing up for the release of Rajkumar Periasamy's Om, where he shares the screen with Dhanush. Om will hit theatres on November 20.

UAE Property Grand Expo to be held in Hyderabad on October 31

Hyderabad: Hyderabad is set to host the UAE Property Grand Expo 2026 at JRC Conventions and Trade Fairs on October 31 and November 1. The event is being organised by UAE-based Global Edge Advertisements LLC, with support from the Dubai Land Department and the Ajman Land Department.The exhibition will bring together established UAE property developers, government representatives and real estate specialists.

Printed and Published by V. Srinivas Reddy on behalf of M/s SAI KRISHNA PUBLICATIONS, Owned by M/s SAI KRISHNA PUBLICATIONS, Printed at – Sree Seshasai Enterprises, Plot No.98/1, Co-operative Industrial Estate Phase II, Gandhinagar, Medchal-Malkajgiri District, Telangana-500037. Published at Plot No.3, Flat No.13, Surya Saroj Apartment, HUDA complex, Saroornagar, Rangareddy District, Telangana-500035. Editor: VADDI SRINIVAS REDDY, RNI No. APENG/2013/49469. Ph.No. 9440231967