

Power supply concerns mount in Telangana amid rising demand, coal shortages

Hyderabad: Frequent complaints of power outages from domestic consumers, farmers and others this season have raised concerns over the possibility of ensuring uninterrupted power supply during the next season.During the current Vanakalam season, farmers have staged protests across the State, demanding adequate power supply. Domestic consumers have also complained of frequent power disruptions. Compounding the situation, questions are being raised over coal availability for thermal power projects. Depleting water levels in major reservoirs have also affected hydel power generation. Power demand in the State is already escalating. Peak-hour demand touched 19,982 MW on September 30, against the usual daily consumption of around 15,000 MW.

Birthday outing ends in tragedy; girl, relative killed in Tank Bund accident

Hyderabad: A family's birthday celebration ended in horror on Tank Bund on Sunday night when a speeding lorry ploughed into them as they crossed the road to cut a cake, killing a six-year-old girl and her 41-year-old relative.

The victims were identified as Sarakshi (6) and Viswanath alias Vishwanth (41), both residents of Jonnabanda in Old Alwal.

According to police, Sarakshi's family had come to the city on Sunday to celebrate her birthday. After watching a film at PVR in Kukatpally, they decided to cut a cake at Tank Bund.

Telangana terminates 35 government junior lecturers over fake certificates

Hyderabad: The Intermediate Education department has recently removed 35 government junior lecturers from service on charges of submitting fake certificates to secure jobs.

Of the total, six are from Rajanna-Sircilla, three each from Peddapalli, Siddipet and Suryapet, two each from Bhadradi Kothagudem, Karimnagar, Khammam, Nirmal, Rangareddy and Sangareddy, and one each from Jagtial, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Asifabad, Mahabubabad, Nagarkurnool, Nalgonda, Nizamabad and Vikarabad. These individuals had submitted certificates from universities located outside the State.



Telangana to formulate policy for foreign university campuses in 'Future City'

Hyderabad, Oct 5 (IANS) Telangana Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju on Monday directed officials to formulate a comprehensive policy designed to attract renowned international educational institutions to the state.

At a review meeting, he asked officials to take steps towards establishing campuses of prominent foreign universities in 'Future City' to transform Telangana into an international education hub.

Officials reported that, so far, the University of London, the University of Birmingham, and four other international universities have expressed interest in setting up branches in 'Future City'.

He stated that the policy should encompass aspects such as inviting foreign universities, providing necessary infrastructure and investments, facilitating approvals, and managing academic programs.

The Chief Secretary emphasised the need to make world-class educational opportunities available in Telangana and to implement measures that provide students with access to international standards of education, research, and skill development.

The Chief Secretary directed officials to hold consultations with prominent foreign universities regarding the establishment of proposed international educational institutions in 'Future City' and to prepare a clear action plan

in time for the upcoming global summit.

The review meeting focused on the construction of 'Young India Integrated Schools' across the state, the development of educational infrastructure, and the measures required to establish world-class higher education institutions in 'Future City'.

The government aims to establish 'Young India Integrated Schools' in a phased manner across the state's 119 Assembly constituencies. The Chief Secretary directed officials to accelerate the work to ensure the completion of 67 schools by December 2027 and to increase this number to 87 by June 2028.

Telangana CEO orders action over false Form 7 applications

Hyderabad, Oct 5 (IANS) Chief Electoral Officer of Telangana C. Sudharsan Reddy has directed officials to take action against those who submitted Form 7 applications to falsely delete eligible voters from the electoral rolls during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

The directive comes amid concerns over bulk and allegedly non-genuine Form 7 applications.

The CEO issued an order to the Commissioner of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, the District Education Officer, Hyderabad and all collectors and DEOs of districts across the state to "take appropriate action" against individuals found knowingly filing false claims or declarations in electoral-roll forms.

Election authorities across Telangana have received

28,753 Form-7 applications, including around 5,000 from Hyderabad.

The CEO asked DEOs to take action against the applicants, who have made knowingly false statements or declarations in writing in Form-6, 6A, 7 and 8.

"It has come to the notice of this office that there have been instances of filing of bulk applications in Form-7 before the EROs, and it is also alleged that such forms are not genuine. They are, therefore, requested to issue necessary instructions that the EROs shall take action against the applicants who have made knowingly false statements or declarations in writing in Form-6, 6A, 7 & 8, as per the provisions of Section 31 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, and such action shall be preceded by



an inquiry under Rule 20 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960," reads the order.

The CEO's direction comes against the backdrop of Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee's (TPCC) electoral office filing a complaint with the Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad, seeking FIRs over alleged misuse of Form 7s.

On October 1, bulk Form 7s had surfaced in Musheerabad constituency of Hyderabad. Pre-printed applications were allegedly filed by a booth-level agent (BLA) of the BJP, seeking the deletion of 31 electors, including a Congress BLA and his family members.



Telangana urges Centre to approve key infrastructure projects

Hyderabad, Oct 5 (IANS) Telangana's Minister for Roads, Buildings, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, on Monday urged Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, to approve key infrastructure for the state.

Telangana minister requested Nitin Gadkari's support for projects aimed at strengthening connectivity between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, alleviating traffic congestion in Hyderabad, improving transport facilities to the state's tourist destinations, and accelerating regional economic development.

Venkat Reddy held a meeting with Gadkari after the inauguration of the two-day 'Chintan Shivir-2026', a national conclave on highway infrastructure at Ekta Nagar in Narmada district of Gujarat.

According to a statement from the Telangana minister's office, the two leaders held extensive discussions on key infrastructure projects for Telangana, pending Central approvals, fund sanctions, and the development of national highways.

To provide a permanent solution to the growing traffic congestion in the eastern part of Hyderabad, the state minister proposed the construction of a double-decker elevated corridor spanning approximately 6 km from LB Nagar to Hayathnagar. It was noted that the Centre has already granted approval for Rs 545 crore to develop the LB Nagar-Malkapur section of NH-65 into a six-lane (6+2) highway, including service roads.

In light of the State government's decision to extend the Miyapur-LB Nagar Metro Rail corridor to Hayathnagar under Phase II, a request was made to include the double-decker elevated corridor in the 2026-27 annual plan and grant approval for it, ensuring coordination with the Metro project.

Minister Venkat Reddy requested approval for five ropeway projects at an estimated cost of Rs 1,230 crore under the Parvatmala scheme to enhance connectivity to tourism and spiritual sites in Telangana.He explained that these initiatives would not only provide convenience to devotees, tourists, and local commuters but also contribute to the development of an eco-friendly transport system.The minister requested sanctions for three key ROB/RUB projects under the 'Setu Bandhan' scheme for the 2026-27 financial year.Venkat Reddy requested Nitin Gadkari to expedite the project to expand the Hyderabad-Vijayawada-Machilipatnam NH-65—which connects the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh—into a six-lane (6+2) highway.

Cong turned Telangana into ATM to fund propaganda, says Ramchander Rao

Hyderabad, Oct 5 (IANS) Telangana BJP President N. Ramchander Rao on Monday accused the Congress party of turning the state into an ATM to fund its propaganda in Delhi.

Addressing the meeting of BJP office-bearers at the party office here, he stated that while the world takes pride in India's democracy and electoral process, the Congress is busy whining and making absurd, baseless allegations against the country and the Election Commission.

He remarked that the party is unable to digest the fact that an ordinary 'chaiwala' (tea seller) has become the country's Prime Minister.

Rao called it shameful that Congress National President Mallikarjun Kharge, driven by the narrow-minded notion that only someone from the Nehru family should hold the office, would claim that the elections held in the country are invalid.

Throwing a challenge at Congress, he said if they truly believe the elections are invalid, they should first have Chief Ministers of Telangana, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh, resign from their posts. He strongly criticised the Congress for what he called its regressive political conduct, noting that they praise EVMs and the Election Commission when they win, but blame them when they lose.

Ramchander Rao stated that during the Congress



party's past tenure, illegal infiltrators obtained ration cards through illicit means and registered their names in the voters' list. He clarified that while every citizen of the country has the right to vote under the Indian Constitution, foreign nationals who have entered illegally from countries like Bangladesh and Burma do not possess this right.

According to him, the names of millions of illegal infiltrators are coming to light during the ongoing voter list revision process. He claimed that there are approximately 30,000 Rohingyas and illegal voters in the Maheshwaram constituency of Hyderabad alone.

causing further harassment and extend cooperation in future.

The anti-graft agency said in a release that the tainted bribe amount of Rs 4 lakh was recovered from the possession of the accused officer.

In addition to the bribe amount, Rs 2.50 lakh in unaccounted cash was also found in the possession of the accused officer. The amount was recovered and seized.

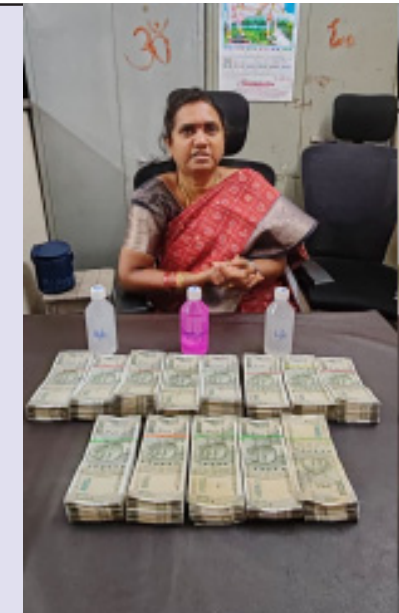
The ACB stated that the accused officer had performed her duties improperly and dishonestly to obtain an undue advantage.

The accused officer is being produced before the Special Judge for SPE and ACB Cases, Nampally, for judicial remand.



India, Switzerland double down on trade, infra, and innovation ties

New Delhi, Oct 5 (IANS) India and Switzerland on Monday signed several MoUs to deepen their co-operation across sectors, including sustainable infrastructure development, exchange of young professionals, innovation, technology transfer, and entrepreneurship.Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Swiss President Guy Parmelin held a meeting at Hyderabad House here to review the entire spectrum of bilateral ties.According to an MEA statement, the agreement on the Exchange of Young Professionals (YPS) aims to govern the exchange of young professionals taking up temporary employment in the other country to enhance their professional and language skills within their field.



ACB catches Town Planning Officer taking Rs 4 lakh bribe

Hyderabad, Oct 5 (IANS) Telangana's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Monday caught a Town Planning Officer red-handed while allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 4 lakh.

Tulasiram Sunitha, Town Planning Supervisor at the office of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), Golconda Zone, was caught by ACB officials after allegedly demanding a bribe of Rs 8 lakh and accepting part payment of Rs 4 lakh from the complainant for doing an official favour.

According to the ACB, the accused officer demanded and accepted the bribe from the complainant to ignore the speaking orders issued by the Deputy Commissioner, GHMC, to allow the complainant to proceed with building construction, refrain from

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

A hero in the skies

Indian pilot Smit Machchhar has done the country proud by showing extraordinary courage and presence of mind in preventing a major aviation disaster. Despite being seriously wounded in a stab attack by his Omani co-pilot, Machchhar managed to open the cockpit door, allowing passengers and crew of a Dubai-Tel Aviv flight to overpower the attacker and enabling other pilots on board to take control of the plane. His act of bravery helped save the lives of 174 passengers, mostly Israelis, and crew of the Flydubai FZ1073. The suspected terror attack highlights a dangerous new phase in aviation security: the insider threat in the cockpit.

The reinforced flight-deck doors introduced after the 9/11 attacks were designed to keep terrorists out. But they offer little protection when the threat is already inside the cockpit. While the motive and terror links of the co-pilot, now in the custody of Saudi Arabian authorities, are still being investigated, it has emerged that his grievous assault on the captain has nearly brought down the aircraft. During the violent struggle, the flight lost altitude rapidly, plummeting more than 17,000 feet.

The tragedy could have been prevented if proper background screening was done. It has now emerged that Oman had barred the co-pilot from flying over concerns that he was a radical Islamist, yet Flydubai hired him and drafted him for a flight bound for Israel. Questions are being raised about whether the existing cockpit security procedures were followed and how the co-pilot gained access to a weapon.

A transparent examination of aviation protocols must be done to get to the bottom of the truth. The attacker had used a "crash axe" — a 14- to 15-inch emergency tool with a sharp blade capable of cutting through an aircraft's interior aluminium skin and fibreglass — to attack the captain and seek to seize control of the plane. In the aftermath of 9/11 terror attacks, locked cockpit doors and strict rules governing access became a central defence against hijacking. But the question now is what if the person already inside becomes the threat, and the locked door becomes an obstruction to saving the plane and lives of passengers.

The answer lies in a combination of rigorous screening measures for cockpit and cabin crew, improved systems for identifying potential security risks, and protocols that encourage the crew to respond swiftly if a member of the flight team becomes a threat. The challenge is to institutionalise them. There is a need for a wider assessment of aviation. The episode has brought back memories of a similar courageous act by flight attendant Neerja Bhanot, who protected passengers during the 1986 hijacking of Pan Am Flight 73. The circumstances may be different, but both stories centre on aviation professionals making critical decisions when the safety of those on board is suddenly threatened.

20 Selected for Mahatma Gandhi Peace Awards



"Hyderabad, October 05 (Indian Chronicle) : The Telangana Intellectuals Forum, State Branch, will organize the concluding celebrations of International Non-Violence Day and the 157th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on October 8 at 10 a.m. at the Telangana Saraswata Parishath Auditorium in Bogulunta, Abids, according to Forum State President Dr.Raj Narayan Mudiraj.

On the occasion, the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Awards-2026 will be presented to Dr.T.Anjani Devi, Dr.Deepika, Madigala Vijayabhaskar Reddy, Gazula Anjaiah, Dr.M.Sangeetha Reddy, Dr.Raviteja, Dr.M.Raj Kumar, Dr.P.Ashwini Reddy, S.Madhu sudan, P.Sundar, Tarun Kumar Mehta, Edla Balaraj, Kumbharthi Ravinder, M.Kiran Mai, Mitra John Bunyan, Mohammed Saheb Rumi, K.Joji Reddy, K.Prapooma Reddy and Jameel Rabbani. Telangana State Council of Higher Education Chairman Prof.V.Balakrishna Reddy will be the chief guest. Veeranari Chakali Ailamma Women's University Vice-Chancellor Prof.Surya Dhanunjay, former judge Justice Vaman Rao, Lion Prem Chand Jain and Major K.A.Shiva prasad, among others, will attend the programme."

UPPAL MLA BANDARI LAKSHMA REDDY Distributes Insurance Bonds to UPPAL PRESS CLUB(P&E) MEMBERS



"UPPAL, OCTOBER 5 (INDIAN CRONICLE):" Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy stated that he would extend his full support and cooperation for the welfare of journalists at all times."Insurance bonds were distributed to members of the Uppal Press Club Print & Electronic Media under the leadership of Press Club President Vaddepalli Kishore and

General Secretary Ananda Narsimhareddy. MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the programme as the chief guest and personally handed over insurance bonds to several journalists."The insurance facility was provided to members of the Uppal Press Club with financial assistance from senior BRS leader Gudi Madhusudan Reddy."Speaking on the occasion, MLA Lakshma Reddy said journalists play an important role in bringing public issues to the attention of the authorities and contributing to the development of society. He said welfare and insurance initiatives such as these would greatly contribute to the safety and well-being of journalists."BRS senior leaders Gudi Madhusudan Reddy, former corporator Devender Reddy, Gandham Nageshwar Rao, Nerdam Bhaskar Goud, leaders Eerelli Ravinder Reddy, Tirumalesh, Kompally Ravinder, Palle Rajkumar Goud, Gaddam Papi Reddy and Pittala Naresh, Uppal Press Club President Vaddepalli Kishore, General Secretary Narsimhareddy, Electronic Media representative Seesa Nagaraju, Vice-President Boda Praveen, Edapaka Suresh, committee members, and leaders of various political parties were present."

200 Students, just 3 Teachers Ahead of SSC Exams

Teacher Shortage Puts Class 10 Students' Future at Risk""Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, October 5: No Teachers. How Will SSC Students Pass?"JAINOOR: With the Class 10 final examinations scheduled for March, parents of students at the ZPSS Urdu Medium School in Jainoor are worried over the severe shortage of teachers. Nearly 50 Class 10 students are preparing for their crucial examinations, but the school does not have adequate teaching staff to guide them."The school has around 200 students, but only three teachers are currently available. Parents are concerned about how the teachers can manage all classes while also completing the Class 10 syllabus, conducting revisions, clearing doubts and providing examination-oriented training."Parents Raise Concerns"Class 10 is a crucial stage in a student's academic career. Students need regular teaching, revision, model tests and special guidance before the final examinations. However, the shortage of teachers has raised doubts over whether students will be able to complete the syllabus and prepare adequately for the exams."Parents have urged the education authorities to immediately appoint additional teachers, stating that any further delay could affect the students' examination perfor-



mance and future. They questioned, "How can students be expected to pass without sufficient teachers, and who will be responsible for their future?"Representations Submitted to Officials"School Headmistress Ayesha said the teacher shortage had already been brought to the notice of the concerned authorities. She stated that representations were submitted separately to the Mandal Education Officer, District Education Officer and former District Additional Collector Deepak Tiwari, requesting the appointment of additional teachers."Despite the representations, the shortage continues. With the examinations approaching, parents are now demanding immediate action from the education authorities to ensure that the Class 10 students receive proper teaching and examination preparation.

Sri Adarsha School Champions Shine in District Karate & Thang-Ta...

"PEDDAPALLI, OCT 05(Indian Chronicle): Students of Sri Adarsha School, Brahmanapalli, delivered an outstanding performance at the District Level Karate and Thang-Ta Martial Arts competitions, securing top honors and qualifying for the upcoming state-level championship. At the School Games Federation (SGF) District Level Karate Championship held at Nandana Gardens, the school's Under-14 boys demonstrated exceptional skill and discipline. Dadi Raghu Charan won gold in the -20 kg category, while Nerella Shivam clinched first place in the -60 kg category after a series of commanding victories. Continuing the winning streak, Meka Karunya showcased brilliant technique in the Under-14 girls' division at the combined Karimnagar District Level Thang-Ta Martial Arts Championship, held at Indian Public School, Sultanabad, claiming top position in the -41 kg category. With their impressive victories, all three martial artists have booked their spots to represent Peddapalli District at the State Level Championship scheduled for the 10th of this month. "Extending hearty congratulations to the qualifiers, Sri Adarsha School Correspondent Chippa Bhaskar,



Principal Sujatha, Physical Education Teacher (PET) Ramyashree, and Martial Arts Coach Master Karra Venkatesh commended the students for their dedicated training and hard work. They expressed immense pride in their achievements and wished them continued success as they aim to bring accolades to both the institution and the district at the state level.

Ministers Ponguleti & Jupally Review Housing Schemes in erstwhile Adilabad Dist

Ministers Direct Collectors to Speed Up Indiramma Housing""Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar / Nirmal, October 5: Revenue and Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Minister Jupally Krishna Rao reviewed the implementation of Revenue and Housing Department programmes in the erstwhile Adilabad district at the Collectorate meeting hall in Nirmal on Monday."Kumram Bheem Asifabad Collector K. Haritha, Adilabad Collector Rajarashree Shah, Nirmal Collector Bhavesh Mishra and Mancheril Collector, along with Project Officer Manda Makarand, briefed the ministers on departmental programmes, ongoing works and services being provided to the public in their respective districts."Speaking at the meeting, Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy directed officials to ensure transparent and efficient governance and make sure that every eligible family receives the benefits of government welfare schemes. He stressed the need for continuous monitoring of Indiramma housing, land-related issues, revenue services, beneficiary selection and housing construction progress."The minister instructed collectors to give special attention to pending revenue applications, land disputes, Dharani and land records, pattadar passbooks, land rights and other revenue services. He directed officials to resolve applications within the stipulated time so that people do not have to repeatedly visit government offices."Officials were also directed to protect government and assigned lands and prevent encroachments through regular field-level monitoring. Revenue officials were asked to visit villages, understand people's problems and take immediate steps for their resolution."Focus on Indiramma Houses"The minister reviewed the progress of Indiramma housing district-wise, including sanctioned houses, constructions started, houses at different stages and completed houses. He directed officials to provide timely assistance to every eligible beneficiary as per government guidelines."Officials were asked to coordinate at the village level and ensure that financial assistance is provided to beneficiaries at every stage of construction without delay. Departments were also instructed to resolve issues related to construction materials, land, permissions and forest-related matters through proper coordination."Ponguleti said the housing programme would benefit poor and middle-class families and reiterated that the government's objective is to fulfil the dream of an own house for every eligible family. Collectors were directed to personally monitor housing works



at the field level."The four district collectors presented details of ongoing programmes, beneficiaries, housing progress, pending issues and problems requiring government intervention. The ministers issued necessary instructions based on the district-wise review."The meeting was attended by Chief Commissioner of Land Administration Lokesh Kumar, Special Secretaries Rajiv Gandhi Hanumantu and V.P. Gautam, MLC Dande Vithal, MLAs Vedma Boiju Patel, Pawar Ramarao Patel, Anil Jadhav and Kova Lakshmi, ITDA Project Officer Manda Makarand, additional collectors, sub-collectors and officials from Revenue, Housing and Forest departments, besides public representatives and other officials.

Two youngsters killed in road accident in Husnabad

Siddipet: Two youngsters died in a road accident after the two-wheeler they were travelling on hit a garbage collection tractor in Husnabad town in the early hours of Monday.

According to Husnabad police, three youngsters were travelling on a two-wheeler when they hit the garbage collection tractor at Ganesh Nagar along Hanamkonda Road in the town. Two of them died on the spot, while another sustained serious injuries.

VALLAPU JAGAN YADAY Elected President of Ramanthapur Dussehra Celebrations Committee



"RAMANTHAPUR, OCTOBER 5 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): The Ramanthapur Dussehra Celebrations Committee will organise the traditional Ravana Samhara Mela on the main road in Ramanthapur on October 21, the organisers announced. Former Uppal MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar will attend the event as the chief guest. The organisers said that the Ravana Samhara Mela has been conducted traditionally in Ramanthapur for the past 33 years. Against this backdrop, a new Dussehra Celebrations Committee was unanimously formed on October 4 under the leadership of former MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar. Burra Rajeshwar was unanimously elected as Chairman, K. Muttineni Jagadish as Vice-Chairman, Vallapu Jagan Yadav as President, Thalla Balakrishna as General Secretary, and Itikala Venkatesh as Treasurer."Kakkireni Harish, Srinivasa Chary, Tindera Hanumantha Rao, Boduppalli Nihan, Bandaru Venkata Rao, Kompalli Upender, Sanjay Patel, Ravinder Reddy, Revu Narasimha, Nandakishore Yadav, Boduppalli Muthyam, and Ramanthapur BJP Division President Santosh Gupta were among those present."

Hyderabad emerging as GCC capital: Anudeep Durishetty



"Hyderabad is rapidly emerging as India's Global Capability Centre (GCC) capital, with the Telangana government working to attract another 500 GCCs, said Anudeep Durishetty, IAS, Joint Secretary, IT, Electronics & Communications Department."Speaking at the inauguration of Planon India's expanded office at Aurobindo Galaxy, Raidurg, on Monday, Durishetty said Hyderabad had added around 515 GCCs over the past year. A new GCC policy is also in the pipeline and is expected to boost investments and employment, he said."The government is encouraging companies to develop innovative global products from Hyderabad and plans to strengthen data-centre infrastructure over the next five years. An Invest Telangana Summit will also be held soon, he added."The Planon facility will strengthen the company's Hyderabad operations in software engineering, cloud technologies, AI, digital transformation and product innovation. Planon CEO Henk Laracker said Hyderabad's talent and innovation ecosystem was playing a strategic role in the company's global growth."TGTS Chairman Manne Sateesh Kumar, Planon Statutory Director Kiran Madhunanapantula and Centre Head Radhika Reddy Gangarapu were among those present."Planon said women constitute over 40% of its India workforce, highlighting its focus on diversity and inclusive growth.

Graduates Urged to Enrol for Upcoming Council Polls.



"Kukatpally: Emphasising the imperative of democratic engagement, B-R-T-U State Labour Leader and Shram Shakti Awardee, Ravi, exhorted all eligible individuals to register themselves for the Mahabubnagar-Ranga Reddy-Hyderabad Graduates' MLC constituency elections."Addressing media representatives at the party headquarters on Monday, Ravi underscored that comprehensive registration is essential to ensure robust representation of graduates' grievances within the Legislative Council. He appealed to the educated populace to fulfil their civic duty by securing their voting rights ahead of the electoral process.

Rigorous Implementation of SIR for a Transparent Voter List



“Electoral Roll Observer T.K. Sridevi” “Inspection of Polling Stations” “Review with EROs and Political Party Representatives” “Indian chronicle Nizamabad.. October 3: T.K. Sridevi, Electoral Roll Observer and Director of Municipal Administration and Urban Planning, urged officials to work collectively to ensure the preparation of a final voter list that guarantees voting rights to every eligible voter. Emphasizing the crucial role of the vote in a democratic system, she directed that the comprehensive revision process be conducted meticulously to ensure no eligible person is left out while simultaneously preventing the inclusion of ineligible individuals. On Saturday, accompanied by Armoor Municipal Chairperson G. Lahari, Additional Collector V. Bhujanga Rao, and Armoor Sub-Collector Abhigyan Malviya, she inspected Polling Station No. 39 in Mamidipalli and Polling Station No. 88 in Armoor (within the Armoor constituency). She closely examined the implementation of the SIR (Special Intensive Revision) process and the manner in which details were recorded in the relevant registers. They inquired with BLOs Ramshankar and Pravalika about details such as the number of notices issued, hearings completed, the inquiry process, documents accepted, the count of ‘unmapped’ voters, and the number of voters on the ‘anomalies’ list. The Electoral Roll Observer expressed satisfaction with the proper recording of details regarding the SIR (Special Intensive Revision) process.” Subsequently, Electoral Roll Observer T.K. Sridevi held a meeting at the conference hall of the Integrated District Offices Complex with Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and representatives of recognized political parties from the Armoor, Nizamabad Urban, Nizamabad Rural, Bodhan, Balkonda, and Banswada assembly constituencies of Nizamabad district. During the meeting, she inquired about the implementation status of the SIR process for each constituency. Noting the high number of unmapped and anoma-



lous voters in segments like Nizamabad Urban, the Observer directed officials to submit a comprehensive list explaining the reasons, categorized by type. She instructed the EROs to conduct the hearing process transparently and rigorously, and to ensure strict supervision of the BLOs' performance at the field level. They directed that the digitization process be expedited and that precautions be taken to eliminate any scope for errors. They emphasized that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) must adhere to schedules and remain accessible to voters within their respective polling station areas. “Addressing representatives of political parties, the observers urged them to extend their support in ensuring the accurate preparation of the voter list while strictly complying with the Election Commission's rules and regulations. They requested the representatives to play an active role and offer full cooperation during the comprehensive revision of the voter list. They advised that any errors or discrepancies noticed should be brought to the attention of the concerned officials. They remarked that the preparation of the voter list should not be viewed solely as the responsibility of the administrative machinery and the Election Commission; rather, a truly transparent list can only be created when everyone participates in the process. They further advised Booth Level Agents (BLAs) representing political parties to work in coordination with BLOs at the grassroots level with dedication—ensuring that every eligible voter is included in the list while ineligible names are removed—and to discharge this responsibility effectively, treating it as a significant and noble task. Additional Collector V. Bhujanga Rao, Armoor Sub-Collector Abhigyan Malviya, Nizamabad Municipal Corporation Commissioner Dileep Kumar, Nizamabad and Banswada RDOs Rajendra Kumar and Ravinder, Collectorate Election Section Supervisor Balaraju, AEROs, officials from concerned departments, and representatives of recognized political parties participated in the meeting.”-

MLC Dande Vittal Participates in Ministers’ Review Meeting



“Development and Resolution of Public Issues Discussed in Detail” “Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter “Indian Chronicle” October. 06. “Nirmal: A review meeting was held at the Nirmal District Office under the leadership of Ministers Pongulati Srinivas Reddy and Jupally Krishna Rao to review development activities, implementation of welfare schemes and resolution of public issues in the erstwhile Adilabad district. MLC Dande Vittal, representing the erstwhile Adilabad district, attended the meeting and discussed various issues related to development and public welfare. During the meeting, officials and public representatives reviewed the progress of development works being undertaken by different departments. The meeting focused on the implementation of government welfare schemes and ensuring that eligible beneficiaries receive the benefits without difficulty. Discussions were also held on infrastructure development, roads, drinking water, education, healthcare, agriculture, rural development and other issues concerning the public. MLC Dande Vittal brought several issues related to



different areas of the erstwhile Adilabad district to the attention of the ministers. He discussed the needs of the people, pending development works and issues requiring government intervention. The ministers and officials discussed measures to speed up development activities and improve the delivery of government services. Officials were advised to coordinate with public representatives and take timely steps to address issues raised by people. The meeting also emphasized regular monitoring of development works and maintaining quality in the execution of various projects. Priority was given to resolving pending public grievances and ensuring that government schemes reach the intended beneficiaries at the grassroots level. “MLC Dande Vittal stated that better coordination between elected representatives and officials would help in addressing public issues more effectively and accelerating development activities across the region. The review meeting provided an opportunity for ministers, officials and public representatives to assess the progress of ongoing programmes and discuss further measures required for the overall development and welfare of the people.”

Severe Drinking Water Shortage in Chilkanagar as Lakes Dry Up— Borewells drilled up to 1,000 feet yield no water; residents submit petitions to officials and leaders

“CHILKANAGAR, OCTOBER 5 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): A severe drinking water shortage has hit several areas of Chilkanagar Division, including Chilkanagar, Mallikarjun Nagar Colony, New Ramnagar Colony,



Kummarigunta, Adarsh Nagar, Anand Nagar Colony, Ganesh Nagar and Beerappagadda. Residents are facing

serious difficulties as the drying up of lakes has resulted in a sharp decline in groundwater levels, leaving borewells without water. Residents said that even borewells drilled to depths of nearly 1,000 feet are failing to yield water. With municipal water being supplied only once every three or four days, the available water is not sufficient to meet the daily needs of the people. Residents expressed concern that if the situation has become so severe even before the onset of summer, the water crisis could worsen considerably during the summer months. “As part of efforts to bring the issue to the attention of the authorities, residents met Uppal Metro Water Works MD Santosh Kumar on Monday and submitted a petition seeking immediate measures. They also met the Uppal Zonal Commissioner and Uppal Commissioner Anand Kumar, explained the drinking water problem and submitted another petition.” They urged the authorities to ensure regular drinking water supply to the affected areas and make alternative water arrangements until the situation improves. Komapally Ravinder Mudiraj, Vittal Mudiraj, Masa Shekhar, Nimmaganti Yadagiri, Dudekula Siddayya, Gurrala Swamy Mudiraj, Satyanarayana Mudiraj, Shrivakumar Mudiraj, Pittala Nares, Neth, Lenin, Srinivas and residents of the respective colonies participated in the programme.

TUWJ Komaram Bheem Asifabad District Unit Election Notification Released

“Nominations on October 06; Polling and Counting on October 07” “Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter “Indian Chronicle” October. 06. “Asifabad, October 5: The Telangana Union of Working Journalists (TUWJ), Komaram Bheem Asifabad District Unit, has released the notification for the election of its new district executive committee. As per the directions of the state committee, the election process will be conducted in October 2026 in accordance with the prescribed schedule, nomination fees and election rules. “Nominations on October 06” As per the election schedule, nominations will be accepted on Tuesday, October 06, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Candidates must submit their nomination papers at the TUWJ District Office, located beside Apollo Medical and opposite the Asifabad Bus Stand. The scrutiny of nominations will be conducted on the same day from 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM. The withdrawal of nominations will be allowed from 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM. “Polling on October 07” If polling becomes necessary, it will be held on Wednesday, October 7, from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM at A Rose Garden Function Hall, Asifabad. Counting of votes will begin immediately after polling concludes, followed by the announcement of the results. “Nomination Fees” Candidates contesting for various posts must pay the prescribed nomination fee in cash along with their nomination papers and obtain an official receipt. “- District President: ₹5,000/- General Secretary: ₹3,000/- Vice-President: ₹2,000/- District Treasurer: ₹2,000/- Joint Secretary: ₹2,000/- Assistant Secretary: ₹2,000/- District Executive Member: ₹1,000/- Eligibility and Voting” Only members whose names appear on the final voter list approved by the union will be eligible to vote and contest in the elections. Members coming to cast their votes must carry a valid government-issued identity card, such as an Aadhaar card or Press ID. “Every candi-

date must submit a nomination paper supported by the signatures of one member as the proposer and another member as the seconder, both of whom must be included in the voter list. A member will be permitted to propose or second only one candidate for a particular post. Nominations submitted after the prescribed deadline will not be accepted under any circumstances. “Scrutiny and Withdrawal” During the scrutiny of nominations, only the concerned candidate or one authorized representative carrying a letter of authorization from the candidate will be permitted inside the hall. “Candidates wishing to withdraw their nominations must personally submit the withdrawal letter to the Election Officer before 5:30 PM on October 6. “If only one candidate remains for any post after the withdrawal deadline, that candidate will be declared elected unanimously. “Secret Ballot and Election Code” No campaign hoardings or distribution of pamphlets will be permitted within a 50-metre radius of the polling centre at A Rose Garden Function Hall. “Inducing or threatening voters, or disrupting the election process, will be treated as a serious violation of the election rules. “Voting will be conducted through a secret ballot system. Voters must not write their names or any identifying marks on the ballot paper. “Election Officers’ Decision Final” The notification states that in case of any dispute concerning the conduct of the elections, eligibility of candidates, rejection of nominations or counting of votes, the decision of the Election Officers will be final. The TUWJ Komaram Bheem Asifabad District Unit has appealed to all eligible members to follow the prescribed rules and cooperate in conducting the election process smoothly and transparently. “Date: October 5, 2026” “Place: Asifabad” Assistant Election Officer” Election Officer” Telangana Union of Working Journalists (TUWJ) “Komaram Bheem Asifabad District Unit

Vaishya and Brahmin Association Representatives Meet Parameshwar Reddy Seeking Funds for Crematorium Development

UPPAL, OCTOBER 5 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy assured that he would take steps for the comprehensive development of the crematorium for the Vaishya and Brahmin communities located in the Beerappagadda Division of Uppal Constituency. “On Monday, leaders of Vaishya and Brahmin associations from Uppal met Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy and submitted a memorandum requesting the sanction of necessary funds for the development of the crematorium in Beerappagadda Division. “Speaking on the occasion, Parameshwar Reddy assured the representatives that he would bring the issue to the attention of the municipal authorities and take special initiative to ensure that the required funds are sanctioned. He stated that he would extend his support towards providing the necessary basic infrastructure and facilities for the Vaishya and Brahmin communities. Bikkumalla Anjaiah Gupta, Bikkumalla Ashok Gupta, Bikkumalla Ramesh Gupta, Motkuri Aravind Sharma, Bikkumalla Sudhakar Gupta, Paladugu Santosh Gupta, Samudrala Naveen Gupta, Renigunta Kiran Gupta, Mashetty Raghavendra Gupta, Bikkumalla Santosh Gupta,



Sridhar Gupta, Dalcha Rakesh Gupta, Bikkumalla Rakesh Gupta, Bikkumalla Harish Gupta, Upa Shankar Gupta, Bikkumalla Jagadish Gupta, Bikkumalla Ravi Gupta, Gourishetti Srinivas Gupta, Raju Gupta, Srinivas Gupta and others participated in the meeting.

Praja Vani for Redressal of Public Grievances

District SP Nithika Pant, IPS, hears grievances directly from the public” “Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter “Indian Chronicle” October. 06. “Komuram Bheem Asifabad: With the objective of directly understanding public grievances and providing lawful solutions, the Praja Vani programme was conducted on Monday under the supervision of District Superintendent of Police Nithika Pant, IPS. People from various parts of the district attended the programme and personally explained their problems and grievances to the District SP. She patiently heard each complaint, gathered relevant details and discussed the issues with the concerned police officials. She directed the officials to conduct a thorough inquiry and take necessary action as per law. “The SP instructed the concerned police officers to give priority to every complaint received from the public and ensure that there was no unnecessary delay or negligence in addressing grievances. She directed the officials to examine each complaint carefully, verify the facts and take appropriate legal action in accordance with the rules. She emphasized that the police department is conducting the Praja Vani programme to remain accessible to the public and provide an opportunity for citizens to directly bring their grievances to the attention of senior police officials. People who are unable to resolve their issues at the police station level, or those who wish to bring their grievances to the notice of higher authorities, were advised to make use of the programme. District SP Nithika Pant urged people to ap-



proach the police without hesitation and make use of the services provided by the department for the redressal of their grievances. She assured that every complaint would be examined within the legal framework and that the police department would make efforts to ensure justice for the victims. The Praja Vani programme provided an opportunity for people from different parts of the district to meet the District SP directly and explain their concerns. The SP directed the concerned officials to work in coordination and take timely action to resolve the issues brought before them.

Polineni Sampath Rao Returns to His Political Home Joins BRS in Uppal under the leadership of MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy

“UPPAL, OCTOBER 5 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) received another boost in the Uppal constituency with the return of BRS state leader and Telangana movement activist Polineni Sampath Rao to the party. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy welcomed him into the party by draping him with a pink scarf. Speaking on the occasion, Sampath Rao said that BRS was the party that recognised the role of activists during the Telangana movement and stood by them. He said the party had undertaken several initiatives in the past for the welfare and dignity of Telangana activists. “He stated that his objective was to work in accordance with the aspirations of the activists who played their part in the Telangana statehood movement and to continuously fight for the resolution of public issues. “MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy said it was a matter of happiness that leaders and activists associated with the party were returning to the BRS family. He said every party worker and activist who worked hard for the party would be given due respect. The leaders called upon everyone to work together in the spirit of the Telangana movement, fight for



public issues and further strengthen the BRS in the constituency. “BRS state leader Gandham Nageshwar Rao, along with several other leaders and party workers, participated in the programme.

Unity in Diversity: BRS LP Whip and MLA KP Vivekanand Lauds Chintal Malayali Community at 13th Annual Cultural Gathering



“Date: October 5, 2026”IDPL, HYDERABAD: Emphasizing the rich tapestry of Indian multiculturalism and community harmony, BRS LP Whip and Quthbullapur MLA KP Vivekanand attended the 13th Annual “Malayali Family Get-Together” as the chief guest. The grand celebratory evening, organized by the Chintal Malayali Welfare Association, took place at the NR Function Hall in IDPL, drawing a large gathering of community members, local dignitaries, and prominent socio-business leaders. “Addressing the gathering, MLA KP Vivekanand commended the association’s long-standing dedication to preserving cultural roots while fostering deep ties within the local fabric. He highlighted that the

Chintal Malayali community serves as a glowing example of “Unity in Diversity,” actively contributing to the socio-economic and cultural landscape of the constituency. “Expressing his heartfelt appreciation, the MLA reflected on the strong bond he shares with the community.”> “The Chintal Malayali community truly reflects the spirit of unity in diversity. Transcending regional, linguistic, and cultural boundaries, you overwhelmingly supported me in the 2023 assembly elections to ensure a resounding victory. I extend my sincere gratitude to every family member of this vibrant association for your unwavering faith and support.”> “The 13th annual convention featured cultural performances, interactive sessions, and discussions on further empowering welfare initiatives within the region.” Key dignitaries and prominent figures present at the event included: “* Vijayan – President, Chintal Malayali Welfare Association” * Jayarajan – Secretary, Chintal Malayali Welfare Association” * Rajan – Program Convenor” * Surendran – Kannath Group of Companies” * Jijesh – Managing Director, Malabar Gold” * Vikram Pillai – Incredible India Realtor”The event concluded with active participation from executive committee leaders and welfare association members, reaffirming their shared commitment to community welfare, solidarity, and regional development.

Uppal Youth Congress Holds Extensive Executive Committee Meeting Under AKARAPU ARUN PATEL

“RAMANTHAPUR, OCTOBER 5 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):An extensive executive committee meeting of the Uppal Youth Congress was held under the leadership of Uppal Constituency Youth Congress President Akarapu Arun Patel. The meeting focused on strengthening the organisation at the grassroots level and chalking out strategies for the upcoming MLC elections. “Addressing the gathering, Akarapu Arun Patel called upon Youth Congress leaders and workers to work collectively for the victory of the Congress party candidate in the forthcoming MLC elections. He recalled that Congress workers had united and worked together to ensure the victory of Revanth Reddy from the Malkajigiri Parliamentary Constituency in the previous elections and urged party workers to demonstrate the same commitment in the upcoming MLC elections. “He stressed the need to strengthen the Youth Congress organisation in every division of the constituency and take the party’s programmes and welfare initiatives to the people on a larger scale. He also called for greater efforts to connect young people with the ideology of the Congress party and the welfare programmes being implemented by the government. “The meeting discussed various programmes to be undertaken in the coming days, measures to attract more youth towards the Congress party and plans to expand Youth Congress activities at the division level. The participants also deliberated on strengthening the party organisation and addressing public issues at the grassroots level. The meeting was attended by Telangana State Youth Congress In-charge and All India Youth Congress National



Secretary Bhavya, along with Bommaki Ajay, Nagarajuna, Muneer and others as chief guests. They provided guidance to the leaders and workers on strengthening the Youth Congress organisation, taking party programmes to the people, election strategies and future action plans.

They called upon Youth Congress leaders and workers to work in unity for the success of the Congress party and remain active in every division by continuously responding to public issues. District General Secretaries Nikhil, Sai, Sachin and Kishore, along with division presidents Jayanth, Prashanth, Bhanu, Uppal Prashanth and Vasu, besides a large number of Youth Congress leaders and workers, participated in the meeting.

Telangana Governor Calls for Green Transformation in Paper Industry



“Hyderabad”05 Oct 2026”Indian Chronicle”“Telangana Governor Shri Shiv Pratap Shukla has called upon the paper industry to accelerate its transition towards environmentally sustainable practices by giving greater priority to recycling, green technologies, energy efficiency and digital innovation.” “Addressing the 65th Federation of Paper Traders Associations (FPTA) AGM & Conference 2026, the Governor underlined the importance of balancing industrial and economic growth with environmental responsibility. He said sustainable development should remain at the centre of business strategies as industries respond to changing economic and ecological challenges.” “The Governor



emphasised that economic progress and environmental protection should move together. He encouraged stakeholders in the paper sector to strengthen recycling practices, adopt energy-efficient production and business processes, and make effective use of emerging technologies to reduce environmental impact.” “Highlighting the social responsibilities of industry, Shri Shukla urged businesses to contribute to inclusive development by generating greater opportunities for young people. He stressed the need to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship and skill development so that youth can play a stronger role in India’s evolving industrial economy.” “The Governor also underscored that responsible business practices are increasingly important for achieving long-term growth. Industries, he said, have a wider role beyond economic contribution and should work towards protecting natural resources while contributing positively to society.” “The paper sector can strengthen its future competitiveness by embracing technological transformation alongside environmentally responsible practices, he observed.

Shyamala Attends Grand Opening of Star Fitness Studio’s 7th Branch in Boduppal

“BODUPPAL, OCTOBET 5 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):” “The grand opening ceremony of the seventh branch of Star Fitness Studio was held in Boduppal with great enthusiasm. YSRCP spokesperson and South Indian actress Shyamala attended the event as the chief guest and formally inaugurated the new branch. “Speaking on the occasion, Shyamala said that today’s youth should give special importance to health and fitness. She advised youngsters to exercise regularly and adopt a healthy lifestyle. She congratulated the management for opening the seventh branch of Star Fitness Studio in Boduppal. “Shyamala extended her special congratulations and best wishes to the studio owners,

Mohammed Javeed and Rachamalla Balu. She expressed hope that Star Fitness Studio would continue to grow under their leadership and provide quality fitness services to the public. “Irshad Khan (Uppal Khan) also attended the grand opening and conveyed his best wishes to owners Mohammed Javeed and Rachamalla Balu. He said it was encouraging to see Star Fitness Studio coming forward to provide quality fitness services to people in the Boduppal area.” The event was attended by Star Fitness Studio owners Mohammed Javeed and Rachamalla Balu, staff members, local dignitaries, youngsters and fans in large numbers. The seventh branch received a positive response from the public.

Massive Midnight Burglary at Gold Shop “Gold and Diamonds Worth 7 Crore Stolen



Uppal DCP Suresh Kumar Reveals” “MEDIPALLY, OCTOBER 5 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“ A massive burglary at a gold jewellery store in the Medipally police station limits has caused a stir. The incident comes amid a series of

thefts being reported across Telangana, with organised gangs targeting houses and commercial establishments, including jewellery stores. “According to Uppal DCP Suresh Kumar, seven burglars entered the CaratLane TATA Gold Plus store located near the Canara Nagar bus stop in Medipally during the early hours of Monday. While six members of the gang reportedly remained outside, one of them removed the shop shutter and entered the premises. “The burglar allegedly escaped with gold and diamond jewellery worth approximately 77 crore from the store. The building watchman noticed the burglary and immediately alerted the police. A police team reached the scene and, with the assistance of the clues team, began collecting evidence from the premises. The police are also examining the CCTV footage from the jewellery store and surrounding areas. Special teams have been deployed to trace and apprehend the accused. A case has been registered, and an intensive investigation is underway.”

Kaka’s legacy of social justice continues to inspire: Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar

“Hyderabad Correspondent, October 5 (Indian Chronicle): Former Union minister Gaddam Venkataswamy, popularly known as Kaka, left an enduring mark on Telangana politics through his lifelong commitment to the poor and marginalised, Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar said. Speaking at programmes held to mark Venkataswamy’s 97th birth anniversary, Ponnamp paid tributes to his statue at Tank Bund along with Ministers Vivek Venkat Swamy and Mohammed Azharuddin, C.N. Reddy and other leaders. A commemorative programme was also organised at Ravindra Bharathi by the Telangana Department of Language and Culture. Ponnamp Prabhakar recalled Venkataswamy as a leader who consistently championed the rights of weaker sections in Parliament and maintained warm relations with people irrespective of their political affiliation or social background. He said Kaka had guided him during his early political career and offered suggestions during the Telangana movement on mobilising people and building political consensus for statehood. Ponnamp said education was central to Venkataswamy’s vision for bringing lasting change in the lives of poor and marginalised chil-



dren. He said carrying forward his commitment to social justice, education and public service would be the most fitting tribute to his memory. He also noted that Venkataswamy’s family members were continuing in public life, reflecting his enduring legacy. Former minister Jana Reddy, former Governor Bandaru Dattatreya, MLA Vinod Kumar, government adviser K Keshava Rao, MP Vamshi Krishna, C.N. Reddy and other leaders attended the programme.

PARAMESWAR REDDY Unveils Brochure for Sri Devi Sharannavaratri Celebrations

“--- Special Pujas to be Held from October 11 at Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameshwari Temple in Uppal” “UPPAL, OCTOBER 5 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“ Uppal Assembly constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameswar Reddy unveiled the brochure for the Sri Devi Sharannavaratri Mahotsavam celebrations at the Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameshwari Panchayat Temple in South Swaroop Nagar, Uppal. “The Sri Devi Sharannavaratri Mahotsavam will be celebrated at the temple from October 11 to 20 with a series of special pujas and religious programmes. Parameswar Reddy unveiled the brochure along with members of the temple committee and representatives of the Uppal Arya Vysya Sangham. “On the occasion, the committee representatives invited Parameswar Reddy to attend the special puja programmes to be conducted at the temple during the festivities. “Bikkumala Anjaiah Gupta, Bikkumala Ashok Gupta, Bikkumala Ramesh Gupta, Motkuri Aravind Sharma, Bikkumala Sudhakar Gupta, Paladugu Santosh Gupta, Samudrala Naveen Gupta, Renigunta Kiran Gupta,



Mashetty Raghavendra Gupta, Bikkumala Santosh Gupta, Sridhar Gupta, Dalcha Rakesh Gupta, Bikkumala Rakesh Gupta, Bikkumala Harish Gupta, Upa Shankar Gupta, Bikkumala Jagadish Gupta, Bikkumala Ravi Gupta, Gaurishetty Srinivas Gupta, Raju Gupta, Srinivas Gupta and others participated in the programme.

Suspend Deputy Sarpanch, Demands Contractor Mandokar Anil

“Allegation of Commission Demand, Delay in Cheque Signat ures and Pending Bills” “Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District. Reporter “Indian Chronicle” October. 06. “Wankidi: Contractor Mandokar Anil has alleged that the Deputy Sarpanch of Wankidi Gram Panchayat has been causing serious difficulties in the payment of bills related to development works undertaken by him. He alleged that although the works were completed and handed over to the concerned authorities, the bills were being kept pending by delaying the signing of cheques. “Anil said that he had completed the works as per the prescribed procedures and that all relevant documents, bills and measurement details were available with the Panchayat authorities. Despite approaching the concerned persons several times for the cheque signature, he alleged that the matter was being delayed on various grounds. “Allegation of Pressure for Commission” “Anil alleged that he was being pressured to pay a commission for the release of his pending bills. He claimed that after refusing to make any such payment, he was facing difficulties in getting the cheque signed. He demanded a comprehensive inquiry by the concerned authorities to establish the facts. “He said contractors have to invest their own money and, in some cases, borrow funds to complete development works. If bills remain pending for several months even after completion of the works, interest and other financial burdens increase, causing significant losses to contractors, he said. “Complaints to Authorities Yielded No Result, He Says” “Anil said that he had brought the issue to the attention of Panchayat officials, higher authorities and public representatives several times, but no permanent solution had been found so far. “He urged the authorities to independently verify whether the works were properly executed, whether the measurements were accurate and whether the bills complied with the prescribed rules before taking a decision. “Allegation of Political Support” “Anil alleged that the Deputy Sarpanch had close relations with some political leaders and was acting with the confidence that he had their support. He said political influence should not affect official affairs of the Gram Panchayat and that elected representatives should function strictly according to the rules. “Allegation of Pressure on Journalists” “Anil further alleged that pressure was being exerted on some journalists after he brought the issue to the attention of the media. He claimed that journalists who reported the matter were being subjected to pressure and intimidation. “He said that if any news report contained incorrect facts, the concerned persons could issue a clarification or refute the allegations with supporting documents. However, putting personal pressure on journalists for reporting a public issue was not appropriate, he said. “Probe



into Previous Allegations Sought” “Anil also urged the authorities to examine any previous complaints or allegations made against the Deputy Sarpanch. He called for verification of Panchayat development works, utilisation of funds, issuance of cheques, signatures and bill payments based on official records. “He stressed the need for transparency in all financial transactions and Panchayat development activities. “Ready for Inquiry into His Own Works” “Anil said he was ready to face an official inquiry into the works undertaken by him if anyone had doubts about their quality or compliance with rules. He said officials could inspect the quality of the works, measurements, expenditure and bills. “If any violation was established, action could be taken against him according to the rules, he said. However, withholding bills or delaying cheque signatures without conducting an inquiry was not justified, he added. “Demands Comprehensive Inquiry and Action” “Anil demanded a comprehensive inquiry into the allegations of commission demands, delay in cheque signatures, withholding of bill payments and pressure on journalists. If the allegations are found to be true after the inquiry, he demanded strict action against the Deputy Sarpanch as per the rules, including suspension from the post if warranted. “He appealed to senior district officials to immediately examine the matter and verify the relevant work files, measurement books, bills, cheques, signature records and complaints. “He also urged the authorities to ensure payment of his legitimate bills in accordance with the rules and to investigate the allegation that a commission was demanded. If the allegation of pressure on media representatives is established, appropriate action should also be taken, he said. “Anil maintained that Gram Panchayat development works should be carried out transparently without political or personal differences and that public funds must be utilised strictly for public welfare. “Meanwhile, the Wankidi Deputy Sarpanch and the concerned Panchayat officials are yet to issue their response to the allegations made by contractor Mandokar Anil.

Activists flag overloading, speeding by autos and maxi cabs in Telangana



GNS News Agency, Oct 5

Mancherial: Road safety activists allege that a significant number of auto-rickshaws and maxi cabs or seven-seater passenger vehicles are openly flouting road safety regulations due to lack of enforcement by officials concerned across the erstwhile Karimnagar, Nizamabad and Adilabad districts and several parts of Telangana, leading to frequent road mishaps and loss of innocent lives.

According to the activists, many drivers of these passenger vehicles overspeed and overload passengers in rural areas, tier-two cities and district centres. The tendency of the drivers can be attributed to the absence of inspections and enforcement of norms by officials of not only the Road Transport Department, but also the traffic police and other departments. The activists fault the officials concerned for failing to enforce road safety laws and prevent road accidents. They maintained that officials were negligent in inspecting vehicles to stop overloading, over-speeding and other safety violations due to staff crunch. The officials

should strive hard to bring down mishaps by strictly implementing the norms, they observed. "In the recent tragic Naspur road accident, the auto was being driven beyond permitted speed. The driver lost control, causing the vehicle to tilt before ramming into the lorry," Dr Neelam Sampath Kumar, founder of Safe Journey Road Foundation, a Karimnagar-based voluntary organisation, remarked.

Similarly, the drivers were also operating their vehicles far beyond the operational distance allowed under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. The vehicles are permitted to operate within the limits of the town or city. The officials are reportedly issuing permits to auto-rickshaws and seven-seaters without fixing the operational distance across several districts of Telangana. Road Transport officials admitted that they were unable to crack down on violators, citing pleas from drivers not to affect their livelihood. Some auto drivers allow passengers to sit with them while flouting norms, increasing accident risks. However, this practice and over-speeding were leading to a considerable number of road accidents, they concurred. The officials stressed that enforcement alone may not suffice. "Unless behavioural changes occur among the drivers, road accidents cannot be reduced. Not only the Road Transport Department, but NGOs, civil society organisations, police and Roads and Buildings Department should work together to create awareness among the drivers," they opined. Mancherial Road Transport Officer Gopi said that they would intensify checks to curb road safety violations. He informed that 179 cases were booked for overloading in Mancherial district alone from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026. The maximum permitted speed was 25 kmph in the district. The district accounted for 2,272 auto-rickshaws and 61 maxi cabs or seven-seaters.

‘Rs 70 lakh to be paid’: Seized note forces Karnataka PSC to scrap selection list



GNS News Agency, Oct 5 The Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) Monday withdrew its additional selection list for motor vehicle inspector (MVI) posts after investigating agencies uncovered documents pointing to alleged malpractices. The alleged irregularities surfaced during a Criminal Investigation Department (CID) probe into recruitment malpractices involving 400 veterinary officer posts conducted on January 8 and 9 this year. During the investigation, CID officials uncovered documents linking suspects to the MVI recruitment process.

While the September 28 order did not explicitly detail the ongoing probe, it noted that the commission had decided to revise the final selection list during a meeting on August 20. The KPSC conducted an examination in Decem-

ber 2016 to fill 150 MVI posts, which drew thousands of applicants. After preparing an initial shortlist of 141 candidates, the KPSC released an additional selection list on April 16, 2025. According to an officer from the CID's Special Investigation Team (SIT), investigators seized loose sheets of paper during a search at the residence of T Prakash, a retired in-charge assistant secretary at the KPSC.

One seized sheet contained the phrase "Barabekagiruvudu" (meaning "yet to be paid") under an MVI heading. The document listed eight names alongside a pending sum of Rs 70 lakh, accompanied by signatures or specific identification marks. The officer noted that several names appearing on the list matched candidates selected for MVI posts in April 2025. "We have been investigating people who have worked at KPSC for an extended period. Our focus has primarily been on those involved in preparing the question papers, uploading the answer sheets, and creating the selection lists," said the officer. Investigators also suspect a middleman, Basavaraj Kannale, who allegedly demanded money from candidates in exchange for appointments. Prakash, 61, retired from service on May 31 last year. He has since approached the court seeking relief from the ongoing investigation. On August 28, the public prosecutor informed the court that the state could not immediately provide a detailed status update on the investigation. As the Enforcement Directorate (ED) is concurrently investigating the matter, the court directed that a report be sought from the central agency.

Drought, failed crops, mounting loans: 2 farmer suicides in 2 days

GNS News Agency, Oct 5

Two farmers in Maharashtra died by suicide within 24 hours of each other last week, unable to repay loans after their crops failed for the second consecutive year. One was in Nashik's Niphad taluka and the other was in Beed's Ambajogai taluka. On September 25, as Ganesh immersion processions moved through towns and villages across the state, Satish Shivaji Kolgire, 38, was found dead on his farm in Radi village of Ambajogai taluka in Beed.

His elder brother Gajendra Kolgire found him around 7 am while visiting the farm. "He probably took the step during the night. Satish was under stress as his loans had mounted to Rs 7-8 lakh. His crops had failed due to drought and unseasonal weather, and he could not recover his investment or repay what he owed. No one ever thought he would take such an extreme step," Gajendra said. The family owns just one acre. Satish's wife, Vaishali Kolgire, said that as marginal landholders, the couple worked on other people's farms to make ends meet and pay for their children's education. Their son is in Class 6 and their daughter in Class 8. "We don't even have our own house, and the children are too young. The only hope is from the government now," she said. Vaishali said she had been with Satish until Thursday afternoon, helping him harvest the dried soybean crop. "Satish said that the same crop had been damaged last year by excess, unseasonal rain and this year by drought, and he was worried about the growing loans," she said. She returned home in the afternoon. Satish often stayed overnight on the farms where he worked to look after cattle, so Vaishali assumed he would do the same that night. He was found dead the next morning. Buddhiraj Sukale, Inspector at Ambajogai (Rural) police station, said, "He appears to have taken the step after his crop failed, and was unable to pay the loans. And no suicide note was found," he said. Nashik: a respected village figure A day later, on Saturday, Santu Rayate, 56, a farmer from Khadakmalegaon village in Niphad taluka of Nashik, allegedly consumed pesticide on his farm.

His son, Sham Rayate, 31, said the day began as usual with milking their buffalo. His father left home around 8:30 am, saying he would collect fuel from the petrol pump for the sprayer to be used on their cabbage crop. And then he went straight to the farm. When he did not respond to calls throughout the day, Sham went looking for him, while Santu was found unconscious after consuming pesticide in his farm. He was rushed to hospital but was declared dead. Sagar Kote, Assistant Police Inspector at Lasalgaon police station, said, "A note was found in Santu's pocket stating that he had consumed the toxic chemical because



he could not repay his loans. We have registered it as an accidental death and will submit the report to the Tehsildar-led committee for any government aid in cases of farmer suicides," he said.

The family owns 3.5 acres and grows soybean, grapes, tomato and cabbage, among other crops. "Most of our crops dried up this year due to the drought, while input costs, including labour, fertilisers and transport, have risen sharply," Sham said. Unseasonal rain and other weather events have also been damaging their crops. In February, the family planted watermelon at an investment of around Rs 1.5 lakh, but unseasonal rain and a pest attack destroyed most of it. "We realised just Rs 5,000," he said. Santu's borrowings, from friends, a cooperative society and fertiliser shops, had reached around Rs 12 lakh. His wife's wedding necklace has also been mortgaged. "Now I am completely blank. I don't know what to do or how to plan for the future," Sham said. Sham, who has a Commerce degree, said he looked for jobs in Pune without success. The only offer in Nashik paid Rs 10,000 a month, so he took up farming full-time. He also pointed out that Niphad taluka has been hit by the drought but is not on the government's list of drought-affected talukas. "Given the market volatility, the government must regulate the prices of fertilisers and other inputs, or announce a Minimum Support Price for every crop, so that farmers can expect at least some basic amount from the harvest," he said. Santu's cousin, Bhagirath Rayate, said Santu had earlier served as chairperson of the Khadakmalegaon Agriculture Cooperative Society and had helped several farmers. "With his calm and helpful nature, no one in the village would have thought he would take this extreme step. He ended his life because he could not pay the mounting loans. Our demand is that the government should take measures to help distressed farmers amid drought," he said. Santu is survived by his wife, son and daughter.

Hit by El Niño, Devbhoomi Dwarka ends up as driest district in Gujarat

GNS News Agency, Oct 5

As the official date for the end of the southwest monsoon season passed on Wednesday (September 30), official data showed that the coastal district of Devbhoomi Dwarka recorded its worst rainy season in 10 years, receiving only 16.45% of its decadal average rainfall. This made Dwarka, a traditionally rainfall-surplus district, the driest district in Gujarat this monsoon season. The district, which was the wettest in the state in 2024, received 97% of its 10-year average rainfall the following year, and crashed to a deficit of 73% in 2026. The Kalyanpur taluka of Devbhoomi Dwarka district had reported the least rainfall in the state with only 7.86% of the 10-year average until September 30. Large deficits in two coastal districts 2024 was a bumper rainfall year for the two coastal Saurashtra districts of Dwarka and Porbandar. This year has seen the opposite situation. Both districts have been put in the category of "large deficient" by the India Meteorological Department (IMD). According to data from the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) Gandhinagar, as on September 28, 2024, Devbhoomi Dwarka had recorded 258.2% of the 10-year average, the biggest departure among all districts, and almost double the state average of 134.4% of the 10-year average. This year, the onset of the monsoon was delayed by nine days after its usual date of arrival on June 15, and Devbhoomi Dwarka district did not receive any rain until June 30, the date by which the southwest monsoon usually covers the entire state. It was raining in Surat in South Gujarat, but the monsoon had not moved further. In the southwest monsoon season of 2024, the district of Porbandar received 193.04% of the decadal average until September 28 of that year, much more than the departure across the state. This year, Porbandar received just 30.86% of the 10-year average until September 28, and no rain has been reported since. In 2025 Porbandar had received 102.16% of the decadal average, as opposed to the average statewide figure of 111.7%. NO SYSTEM: A K Das, the IMD's regional director in Ahmedabad, said the dry monsoon this year could be the result of a "no system" moving towards these districts. In the IMD's monsoon terminology,

a 'no system' period refers to a time when there are no organised low-pressure weather systems such as a depression or a cyclonic circulation actively driving the monsoon. EL NINO: "Another reason could be the El Niño condition as a result of which there was a rainfall shift towards the eastern regions of the country," Das said. El Niño is a climate pattern characterized by the unusual warming of surface waters of the tropical central and eastern Pacific Ocean. An El Niño event became firmly established in the middle of this year, is currently rapidly intensifying, and is expected to persist through February 2027, according to the latest update from the Geneva-based World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The appearance of an El Niño is often correlated with a reduced rainfall year in the Indian subcontinent. The 2026-27 El Niño conditions are seen as having contributed significantly to the erratic and below-average rainfall during this year's southwest monsoon season. The all-India average rainfall deficit over the four-month rainy season that ended on September 30 was close to 13% compared with the long-period average (LPA). According to the IMD, Southern peninsular India recorded the biggest deficit (28%), followed by the Eastern and North-eastern Indian regions. Gujarat government officials have expressed concern over the rainfall departures seen in districts across the state. Overall, the state had received 810.32 mm of rain until September 30, or 89.16% of the normal. Eleven out of the 34 districts have fallen in the 20%-59% deficit range, while two districts have suffered deficits between 60% and 90%. Three talukas of Devbhoomi Dwarka district — Bhanvad, Dwarka, and Khambhalia — have received 24.3%, 20.4%, and 15.93% of their monsoon season average respectively. The districts of Patan, Mehsana, Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad, Surendranagar, Morbi, Botad, Anand, Mahisagar, Panchmahal, Narmada, Tapi, Dang, Amreli and Bhavnagar have received rainfall in the "normal" range. Only five districts — Kheda, Bharuch, Surat, Navsari and Valsad — received "excess" rainfall, which is defined as 20% to 59% above normal. Data from the Weather Bureau until September 30 show Valsad district recorded the highest surplus (39%), followed by Navsari (29%), Kheda (28%), and Surat (27%).

Koppal seer to open Mysuru Dasara 2026, first pontiff chosen under Congress regime

GNS News Agency, Oct 5

Sri Abhinava Gavisiddheshwara Swami, pontiff of the Gavisiddheshwara Mutt in Karnataka's Koppal, will inaugurate this year's Mysuru Dasara festival on October 11. He is the seventh seer to receive the honour in three-and-a-half decades and the first to do so under a Congress government. The seer will open the Dasara celebrations atop Chamundi Hills at 9.15 am.

In line with traditions, Koppal district in-charge minister Shivaraj Tangadagi has set up a delegation from Mysuru, including the deputy commissioner, superintendent of police, and other officers, to formally extend the invitation to the pontiff on October 3. Widely revered as 'Jala Rushi', the seer has spearheaded water conservation and lake rejuvenation campaigns across North Karnataka. Gavisiddheshwara Mutt, a Lingayat mutt, also provides food and education for free to over 5,000 underprivileged students in rural areas. The 49-year-old seer is the 18th pontiff of the mutt and is among the few who are also active on social media. The practice of inviting eminent personalities to inaugurate Dasara began in 1993 with actor Rajkumar. Over the years, the honour has gone to actors, farmers, rationalists, poets and freedom fighters.

Seers first inaugurated Dasara in 2007, when the H D Kumaraswamy-led coalition government invited Sri Balagangadharanatha Swami of Adichunchanagiri Mutt. The BJP carried forward the tradition and invited Shivakumara Swami of Siddaganga Mutt in 2008. In the subsequent years, the government invited Sri Ravishankar Gururji, D Veerendra Heggade, Sri Vishwesha Thirtha Swami and Sri Siddeshwara Swami.



When Siddaramaiah first became the chief minister in 2013, the Congress government shifted back to selecting writers and cultural figures, including Chandrashekhara Kambar, Girish Kamad and Puttaiah. Sudha Murty inaugurated Dasara in 2018 under the JD(S)-Congress coalition. After the BJP returned to power, S L Bhyrappa, C N Manjunath, S M Krishna and President Droupadi Murmu were chosen, followed by Hamsalekha, Hampa Nagarajaiah and Banu Mushtaq between 2023 and 2025. The seer was in the news recently after a viral video showed him exiting the venue of a spiritual discourse event in Ballari in August. According to reports, while he was delivering a spiritual discourse, Karnataka minister Eshwar Khander arrived late to the event, diverting the attention of the devotees, who gathered around Khander and started cheering aloud with political slogans. The seer, who seemed embarrassed due to the chaos, expressed his displeasure and left the venue. He reportedly returned the donations and gifts that were given to the mutt.

Bombay HC raps Maharashtra in Pune land case: ‘99% shareholder Parth Pawar didn’t benefit?’

GNS News Agency, Oct 5

The Bombay High Court has granted anticipatory bail to suspended Pune City tehsildar Suryakant Yewale in the Mundhwa land deal case, but questioned the Maharashtra government, noting "serious allegations" against M/s. Amadea Enterprises LLP, where Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar's son and Rajya Sabha MP Parth Pawar holds 99 percent of the shares, while another director, Digvijay Patil, made an accused in the case, holds only 1 percent.

"Your stand as Investigating Officer (IO) [in the affidavit] is that the person who is having 99 percent shareholding is not responsible, and the one who is accused is the person having 1 percent shareholding. Is the person who is having 99% share, Mr Parth Pawar, not a beneficiary of this transaction?" Justice Madhav J Jamdar orally questioned after the state lawyer said the company concerned was not a partnership firm. Meanwhile, State Director General of Police (DGP) Sadanand Date, after detailed scrutiny of investigation papers, informed the HC that "there is a need for a more professional and detailed investigation". Therefore, instructions have been issued to Pune Commissioner of Police (CP) Amitesh Kumar to carry out further probe. The Mundhwa land deal case The FIR alleged that the land in Mundhwa, which fell under the category of Mahar Watan land and was leased to the Botanical Survey of India, was sold to Amadea Enterprises — without the mandatory approval of the state government. Parth Pawar is a director in Amadea Enterprises.

The high court on September 7 directed the



Maharashtra Director General of Police (DGP) and the IO to respond to Yewale's anticipatory bail plea after noting a submission, without specifically attributing it to any of the parties, that Parth Pawar had not been named as an accused for being "very highly influential". Senior advocate Harshad Nimbalkar, appearing for Yewale, argued allegations related to his July 1, 2025 order declaring applicants owners of the land and a July 14, 2025 letter intimating the Pune Sub-Divisional Officer on the land purchase. Even if the order was illegal, he said, it could be challenged, and the FIR did not allege that it was passed for "illegal gratification." Additional Public Prosecutor (APP) SV Gavand, appearing for the state, opposed the plea, saying custodial interrogation was required since allegations were "very serious". The HC noted Yewale had not misused interim protection from arrest earlier granted to him, therefore, it granted him pre-arrest bail on an assurance of his cooperation with the probe.

AP SEC dismisses reports of two-month delay in local body poll schedule

Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh State Election Commission on Tuesday dismissed as false reports that another two months would be required for announcing the election schedule for the local body elections in the state. State Election Commissioner Anil Chandra Punetha stated that false and unauthenticated information was being circulated on social media and other communication platforms, stating that another two months would be required to announce the election schedule. "The said information further claims that the Commission would proceed with the election process only after obtaining clearance in the court cases relating to electoral rolls and reservations. It is also being stated that

even if the elections are delayed, internal arrangements for conducting elections have already been initiated, the State Election Commissioner said. He clarified that the information is false and is neither genuine nor issued by the Commission. The public, political parties and all other stakeholders are, therefore, advised not to believe, rely upon or circulate such unverified and unauthenticated information, he said. The Commission cautioned that the circulation of fabricated, misleading or unauthorised information in the name of the Commission may attract appropriate action under the applicable law. Any announcement regarding the election schedule will be made by the Commission through an official Press Conference / Press release.

Kuwait mandates digital salaries for private sector, including foreign workers



Dubai: Gulf countries have been moving fast to implement a transparent system in which wages are paid fully and without delay, and strengthen confidence between employees and employers. Kuwait is the latest country to adopt a mandatory digital wage payment system for the private sector. The stricter monitoring system is part of Kuwait's wider efforts to improve labour compliance, protect foreign workers, among whom Indians constitute the largest group,

and reinforce the country's international reputation in labour standards and human rights protection.

The Kuwait Wage Payment System (KWPS) will process and monitor salary transfers to private sector employees through local banks and ensure that wages are disbursed electronically in a secure and reliable manner.

Officials emphasised that delayed or irregular salary payments would not be tolerated, as First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef instructed authorities to implement a transparent system, stating that "workers' wages are a red line", according to reports. The move comes as part of broader efforts to protect workers' rights and strengthen compliance among private sector employers. Under Article 57 of Kuwait's Private Sector Labour Law, employers with five or more workers are required to transfer wages directly into employees' bank accounts. The Kuwait Wage Payment System (KWPS), under the supervision of the country's central bank, will process and monitor salary transfers to private sector employees through local banks and ensure that wages are disbursed electronically in a secure and reliable manner. The Public Authority of Manpower oversees and monitors the level of compliance.

Attacker's identity, motive remain unknown after flydubai flight to Israel escapes disaster

Jerusalem: The identity and motive of the Omani copilot who stabbed his captain on a flight to Israel, causing the plane to plummet dangerously and forcing it to land in Saudi Arabia, remained unknown on Thursday as investigators raced to learn more. Israeli passengers on the flydubai flight carrying 174 people from the United Arab Emirates to the Israeli city of Tel Aviv have described how the bloodied Indian captain managed to open the cockpit door to let them in before they grappled with the copilot and stabilised a descent so sharp that the plane's rudder was torn away.

"We felt helpless, suspended in midair, and I didn't know who to turn to. But it was all instinct to survive," one of the responders, Asaf Rajuan, said in a new statement shared by Israel's presidency. Saudi and UAE authorities have said little publicly beyond confirming that investigations were underway. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said the copilot was arrested. Capt. Smit Machchhar, widely praised as another hero of the flight, was reportedly in stable condition, the Indian Embassy in Saudi Arabia said overnight. The condition of the arrested copilot was not clear. In a CNN interview aired on Wednesday evening, Netanyahu said the attacker was an Omani national and was being interrogated in Saudi Arabia. US President Donald Trump told reporters at the White House that he and Netanyahu discussed the incident "at length" over the phone and that it seemed as though the copilot "was perhaps a terrorist or perhaps a whack job." Netanyahu said he spoke with the UAE's president, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who agreed that Israel would join the interrogation of the suspect. Israel's foreign ministry said the people on board were from Israel, India and the UAE. The US State Department said four passengers had American citizenship.

flydubai has said its flights to and from Israel would be



suspended while an investigation takes place. Netanyahu had warned in recent days of unspecified, heightened security threats. The country is a week away from the anniversary of the Hamas-led Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel, which has triggered the war in Gaza. In the chaos that unfolded about two and a half hours after leaving Dubai, the flight descended from 33,000 feet to 17,000 feet (around 10,000 metres to 5,100 metres) in about a minute, before making an erratic circle close to the Jordanian border and landing in the Saudi city of Tabuk about an hour later, according to Flightradar24, which identified the aircraft as a Boeing 737 Max 8. A person who heard the flight's communications with air traffic control described the plane being turned away by Saudi Arabia and Jordan before eventually landing in Tabuk, while passengers screamed in the background. The pilot's voice was trembling as he called "mayday" and said a hijacking was taking place. The air traffic control operators gave no reason for the refusals. The person who heard the communications spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to the media.

Amazing example of how we can fight terrorism together: Israel envoy hails Capt Smit Machchhar

New Delhi: Israel's Ambassador to India, Reuven Azar, on Thursday hailed Captain Smit Machchhar, the Indian pilot of flydubai flight FZ1073, who was injured after helping avert a major in-flight crisis, terming it an "amazing example" of how the people of the two nations can fight terrorism together and not surrender to terrorists.

In an interview with IANS, Reuven Azar said he is not aware whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Israeli counterpart, Benjamin Netanyahu, have spoken about the incident, but added that the counter-terrorism agencies of the two nations remain in close contact. On how he sees the role of the Indian pilot and passengers in this incident, he said, "...We know that in order to fight terrorism, it is not enough for governments to work together. It is essential that people work together as well, as we saw yesterday. I think this is an amazing example of how we can determine our destiny by being involved, by not surrendering to terrorists and by working together at a personal level. And this is exactly what happened yesterday."

On Wednesday, the co-pilot of a flydubai flight, which was carrying over 170 passengers, tried to sabotage the aircraft and later stabbed Machchhar, who was trying to prevent him from doing so. At the time, the Boeing 737, cruising at about 34,000 feet, began dropping at roughly 23,000 feet per minute before reaching about 15,600 feet. However, Machchhar fought back the co-pilot, resisted him, and opened the cockpit door so that passengers and crew members could overpower him.

When asked whether PM Modi and PM Netanyahu have spoken about the incident, he responded, "I am not aware



that the leaders have spoken to each other at this point in time. I think we continue to be in close contact. Our counter-terrorism agencies are in constant dialogue, and I'm sure that whether it is at the highest level, or at the medium and operational levels, we will share information and continue working together to create a situation in which we do everything needed to fight terrorism." Earlier, Azar said he was praying for Captain Machchhar's recovery and described him as an experienced and gifted pilot. "Together with Israel, India, UAE, I pray for the life of Captain Smit Machchhar, the experienced and gifted hero Indian pilot of flydubai flight FZ1073. His courage & the courage of other Israeli & Emirati passengers and crew members saved the lives of 180 souls," Azar posted on X. Azar also used the occasion to call for unity against terrorism, declaring: "United against terrorism".

Attackers open fire, kill 7 on small passenger bus in Syria

Damascus: At least seven people were killed late Wednesday when attackers opened fire on a small passenger bus in northwestern Syria, state media reported. Four people were wounded in the gun attack near the Masyaf Bridge in the western Syrian province of Homs late Wednesday, state-run SANA news agency reported.

The motive was not immediately clear and no group claimed responsibility. Syrian authorities did not name any individuals or groups as suspects. The victims were employees from a company returning home from work, authorities said. First-responders transported the victims to hospitals around the city of Homs as security forces began investigating the scene of attack, where blood stains and broken glass were visible inside the bus.

"We view this cowardly attack as an attempt to undermine the security of Homs and destabilise the security we have worked to consolidate through various measures across the governorate," Homs Internal Security Forces Commander Brigadier General Bassem Mohammad



Shaaban told SANA. Syrian authorities are struggling to maintain security after more than 13 years of war and the downfall of the Assad dynasty in late 2024. While authorities said they have foiled numerous planned attacks and activity by armed cells, there still have been deadly shootings and explosions in the capital Damascus and elsewhere.

US questions Most-Favoured-Nation cornerstone of global trade



Milwaukee: The United States has challenged one of the foundational principles of the global trading system, arguing that unconditional Most-Favoured-Nation treatment can prevent countries from responding effectively to unfair and distortive trade practices. US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer on Wednesday (local time) put reform of the Most-Favoured-Nation, or MFN, principle at the centre of discussions as he opened the G20 Trade Ministerial in Milwaukee.

"Many consider MFN to be the cornerstone of the global trading system. But even a cornerstone should be examined from time to time to ensure it is still supporting the structure we need," Greer told trade ministers and delegates. "The MFN principle, particularly when applied unconditionally, constrains economies' ability to effectively respond to distortive policies and adapt to changing market conditions," he said. The remarks represent a direct challenge by Washington to a principle that has long underpinned the multilateral trading system. Under MFN treatment, trade advantages extended to one trading partner are generally extended to other eligible trading partners.

Greer, however, argued that the existing architecture needed another look as governments confront non-market policies and other economic distortions. MFN is one of four workstreams selected by the United States for its G20 trade presidency. The other three are the weaponisation of food, structural excess capacity and production, and forced labour in global supply chains. Greer said the problems confronting international trade had persisted despite years of discus-

sion. "For more than a decade, the global economy has been beset by macroeconomic imbalances, structural excess capacity and production, forced labour, and economic coercion. And yet, the response by the world's economies has been mostly talk," he said. He pointed to the G20's 2016 commitment to address excess industrial capacity. "It has been ten years—excess industrial capacity is an even greater distortion in the global economy now than it was then," Greer said.

The US trade chief said Washington had consequently turned to tariffs and bilateral agreements. "This is why, starting last year, the United States took action, using a combination of tariffs and bilateral deals to reduce our trade deficit, make resilient our supply chains, and bring fairness, reciprocity, and balance to the global economy," he said. Greer also pushed back against the argument that questions involving the international trading system should primarily be addressed at the World Trade Organization. "Typically, and too often, when difficult questions and topics arise in the G20, many around the room suggest that such discussions belong elsewhere. That they should take place in Geneva at the WTO. But Geneva is just another city on a lake. And so is Milwaukee. So, let's talk candidly and constructively here," he said.

Greer placed the MFN debate within a broader US push to reconsider institutions and principles created during earlier periods of international economic cooperation. "We are trying to meet 21st-century challenges with an architecture designed for another era," he said. "So what should we do when the original blueprint—in this case the ideas of 1947 or 1995—no longer meet our needs?" he asked. Greer said reform did not necessarily mean discarding the existing system altogether. "Building for the future does not require us to discard everything we inherited from the past. But neither does it require us to leave old ideas unchanged," he said. The MFN debate has particular relevance for major trading economies, including India, as Washington presses G20 members to reconsider how equal tariff treatment operates alongside bilateral and preferential trade arrangements. India is participating in the Milwaukee ministerial through Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal as New Delhi and Washington separately pursue negotiations on a bilateral trade agreement.

Israel vows to get to root of flydubai attack, no motive yet determined

JERUSALEM, GNS News Agency, Oct 5 No motive has yet been determined for an apparent attempt to crash a passenger jet on its way to Israel, and an initial assessment suggested the co-pilot who stabbed the captain acted alone, Israeli officials said on Thursday. Disaster was averted on Wednesday's flydubai flight FZ1073 from Dubai to Tel Aviv after the wounded captain managed to unlock the cockpit door, allowing passengers to subdue the attacker and a reserve crew that had been aboard to land the plane in Saudi Arabia.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the attacker was being investigated in Saudi Arabia, where the plane, with more than 170 people on board, landed safely at Tabuk airport. Netanyahu said he believed the attacker would be taken to the United Arab Emirates.

Two Israeli security officials said Israel's initial assessment is that the co-pilot was likely acting alone, though the investigation was still ongoing. Israel's envoy to the UAE, Yossi Shelley, told Reuters it was too early to draw conclusions and no motive had been determined. Another Israeli official said Israel was not receiving "all the information it sought from the Saudis and that Israeli intelligence services, Mossad and Shin Bet, were investigating the incident as well. The Saudi government's media office didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The flight plunged nearly 14,000 feet in less than 30 seconds during the incident as it flew over Saudi Arabia on the journey from the United Arab Emirates to Israel. In an interview with Fox News host Sean Hannity, Netanyahu said Israel would be "following and possibly also participating in this investigation". Asked if there was any indication of Iranian involvement, Netanyahu said it was too early to say. "We'll get to the root of this attacker, whether he had accomplices, whether Iran was behind it. I think we'll find out very soon," Netanyahu said. There have been no official suggestions from Israel of Iranian involvement. The two Israeli security officials said Israel had not identified any Iranian involvement so far. Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said on Wednesday that Israel's preliminary information indicated that the co-pilot aimed to crash the plane, describing him as a terrorist, though Netanyahu only described it as "a serious security incident". Item 1 of 3 A plane, carrying passengers who were on the FlyDubai aircraft bound for Israel from the United Arab Emirates, which was diverted to Saudi Arabia following an emergency signal, arrives at the Ben Gurion International Airport, in Lod, near Tel Aviv, Israel

[1/3] A plane, carrying passengers who were on the FlyDubai aircraft bound for Israel from the United Arab Emirates, which was diverted to Saudi Arabia following an emergency signal, arrives at the Ben Gurion International Airport, in Lod, near Tel Aviv, Israel, September 30, 2026. REUTERS/Amr Awad Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab The UAE has started investigations that are seeking to establish the circumstances and motives and determine "whether the incident was linked to any terrorist activity or purpose, or involved prior planning or direction", the UAE state news agency reported on Thursday. UAE judicial authorities have jurisdiction over the incident because the aircraft is registered in the UAE and flies under its flag, the statement said, adding that UAE law applies to crimes committed on board even if they occur outside the country's territory. Omani authorities have not commented on the report. Saudi Arabia has issued no statements on its investigations. Saudi Arabia's Tabuk airport said on Wednesday that both pilots had been hospitalised after sustaining injuries. Flydubai said on Wednesday that the underlying reasons for the event remained unknown and warned against "premature speculation". The incident heightened security fears in Israel weeks before Israelis vote in the first election since the Hamas-led October 7, 2023, attacks, with Israel's security figuring prominently in the campaigning. The US and Israel launched strikes against Iran in February, in a conflict that quickly spread to the Gulf and Lebanon, where Israel has been fighting Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah.

Netanyahu and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi have hailed the flight FZ1073 captain and Indian national Smit Machchhar as a hero. India's ambassador to the UAE met Captain Machchhar's family and briefed him on his health and recovery, the Indian consulate in the UAE



said. Netanyahu, in his interview with Fox News, said Machchhar had apparently been stabbed or hit with an axe by the other pilot and had bled profusely. Israel has also lauded passengers who subdued the attacker. Yaniv Hayun, one of the men who incapacitated the attacker, described running to the cockpit as the plane nosedived. "We pulled the assailant out, I pulled him out. After I pulled him out we took control of the plane, I pulled up the yoke (steering control of the plane), I straightened the plane out a bit," he said, talking to reporters upon his return to Israel on Wednesday. Recasts with assessments from Israeli officials in paragraphs 1, 4-5, 9 Additional reporting by Eman Abouhassira and Jana Choukeir in Dubai, Kanishka Singh in Washington; Writing by Tom Perry; Editing by Aidan Lewis

Trump says Iran 'virtually destroyed', claims war will end 'very quickly'

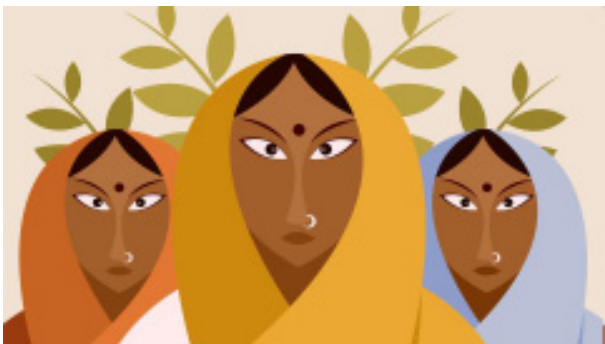
Washington: US President Donald Trump has said that the United States would win its war with Iran "very quickly", claiming Tehran's military capabilities had been severely degraded and Washington had established "virtually total control" of the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz.

Trump made the remarks on Wednesday (local time) during a White House event marking National Hispanic Heritage Month, where he ranged across foreign policy issues including Iraq, Iran and Venezuela before turning to the theme of the celebration. "Likewise in Iran, we have been there for six months with 18 killed. By the way, one is too many. But they lost 4,500. We lost 18," Trump said.

"And we have very soon—you'll see things happening very soon," he added. Trump claimed Iran had suffered extensive military and economic damage. "But we have a nation that's been virtually destroyed. Their economy is no good. They have 300 per cent-plus inflation," he said. "Their navy is gone. Their air force is gone. Their anti-aircraft equipment is gone."

Trump then turned to the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important energy shipping routes. "The last week in the Hormuz Strait, which we have almost total control—I would say total, but every once in a while they'll drop a mine in there and disrupt things a little bit, but we have virtually total control of the Hormuz Strait," he said. Trump also claimed that oil movements through the waterway had reached a record level over the past three days. "And in fact, in the last three days more oil has come out of the Hormuz Strait than at any time in the history of the Hormuz Strait," he said. "I'm not talking about since the war. I'm saying at any time in history. It's been—it's been pent up." Trump did not provide figures to support the claim during his remarks. The President suggested that the conflict with Iran could soon reach a decisive stage, but did not spell out what actions the United States planned next. "We have another one where we're six months in. And we have—you know, their military is totally wiped out. And we're going to have that war won very quickly, one way or the other," Trump said. "They'll either be one way or the other. Does anyone know what that means? I don't know." His remarks on Iran came immediately after he compared the conflict with US military operations in Venezuela and the long American military involvement in Iraq.

What true empowerment of women entails



The trial of former Janata Dal (Secular) MP Prajwal Revanna, tainted by every trick in the book that power can muster, from legal intimidation to procedural delays, could have been yet another grim entry in India's long and exhausting history of justice denied. However, this case was different because a 47-year-old domestic help, with no wealth, no political connections, and no media machinery at her disposal, refused to be worn down. She braved high-profile legal muscle, relentless attempts at discrediting her, and the quiet but crushing social pressures that compel victims to disappear into silence. She didn't disappear; instead, she stood her ground.

The language of empowermentIndia loves the language of empowerment. We put women entrepreneurs on magazine covers, we host conferences celebrating women CEOs, and we create awards to honour women leaders in politics, business, and culture. Yet, when a woman without privilege takes on the powerful in a court of law, we often treat her as a passing headline; not as a hero whose actions have fortified the very concept of justice. Our narrative of empowerment too often belongs to those who have the resources to recover from failure, the networks to cushion backlash, and the privilege to choose their battles. We rarely extend the same recognition and support to women whose fight is not for market share or boardroom representation, but for their very survival. Women like this domestic help are not just defending their rights; they are performing a form of public service. Their win strengthens the jurisprudence for every woman who will walk into a police station trembling, unsure if she will be heard. And yet, the moment the verdict is read, the applause dies down and the state, which was happy to bask in the optics of justice served, does little to ensure that these women can rebuild their lives. The women return to the same environment where abuse took place, facing retaliatory stigma, finding themselves jobless because it is "too much trouble" to employ someone who has been in court, or sinking under the weight of legal debts incurred during the fight. If governments, corporates, and civil society are serious about "women empowerment", they must provide these women structural support — legal, economic, and psychosocial — to ensure that victory

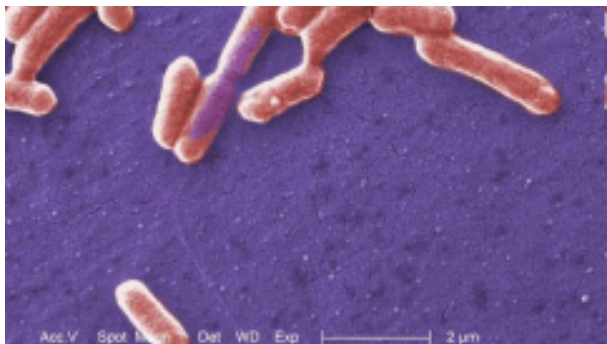
in court does not translate into defeat in life. The way forward

We need state-funded survivor compensation schemes. Frameworks exist to provide financial compensation to families of crime victims in categories such as terrorism or industrial accidents, so why should a woman who has stood up against entrenched power, faced character assassination, and endured court battles not receive similar recognition and financial security? The compensation should be calculated not only to cover legal expenses but to secure a minimum period of stability. We need dedicated legal aid cells with special funding. Most women in such cases are bankrupted by the legal process. While legal aid exists in theory, it is woefully under-resourced and often inaccessible. States must create specialised survivor litigation cells with professional advocates, forensic experts, and victim support officers, funded on par with public prosecutors in high-profile cases. We need guaranteed employment pathways. Governments, public sector undertakings, and corporates should create direct employment quotas for survivors of legal battles against abuse and harassment. We need psychological support and trauma recovery. Survivors require structured access to long-term counselling, peer support networks, and therapy sessions, funded by the state and supplemented by CSR initiatives. Trauma recovery must be treated as a right, not as a luxury. Most importantly, we must institutionalise survivor expertise. Women who have navigated intimidation, isolation, and legal complexity should be trained and appointed as counsellors for victims in police stations to guide them through the first and often most critical reporting stage; as mentors in community legal education programmes to demystify the justice process for other women; and as members of Internal Complaints Committees under POSH laws, where their lived experience can lend authenticity and empathy to workplace grievance redressal. This will not only provide survivors with income, but ensure that their courage is institutionalised, not forgotten. One might ask, why we should single out women like this? Why not simply improve the justice system for all? The answer is simple: they are fighting battles that, in the absence of systemic reform, remain exceptions. Supporting them visibly and meaningfully sends a signal to both potential victims and potential abusers that the state does not abandon those who resist, and that the cost of silencing them will only rise. Moreover, recognising these women's courage in concrete, life-changing ways reshapes our national idea of empowerment. Applause is easy; it costs nothing. But when a woman risks everything to hold a powerful man accountable, society owes her more than praise; it owes her a future. That future must be secured through a combination of immediate economic support, long-term professional integration, and the legitimisation of survivor voices in policymaking and institutional culture. Only then can we say that empowerment has been delivered, not just declared.

Scientists turn E. coli bacteria into a mercury sensor

In a step towards building cheap and programmable bioelectronic devices, Imperial College London and Zhejiang University researchers have shown in a new study that genetically engineered bacteria can be turned into self-powered chemical sensors that interface directly with electronics. According to the authors, these new platforms are possible today thanks to advances in synthetic biology and bioelectrochemistry.

Traditional biosensors, such as those based on enzymes, are often fragile, costly and/or have a slow response time in complex environments. Whole-cell biosensors, which use living microorganisms, can maintain and repair themselves and operate inside contaminated samples. However, in most conventional designs, these biosensors' output signals are in the optical range, which is harder to integrate into portable or field-deployable electronics. In their study, the researchers built a modular biosensor that could sense the presence of specific compounds and convert that into an electrical signal, which is compatible with low-cost electronics. The team used genetically engineered *Escherichia coli* bacteria as 'containers'. The microbes hosted three biosensor modules. The sensing module detected a target chemical through specific molecular regulators. The information processing module amplified or processed the signal. And the output module produced phenazines, nitrogen-containing organic molecules that can be measured using an electrochemical technique called voltammetry. This way, the researchers built two biosensors. The first one could detect arabinose, a simple plant sugar often used in lab media. When a sample containing the sugar came in contact with the bacteria, the cells started producing phenazine-1-carboxylic acid. When this molecule touched the electrode, the latter produced a current that rose with sugar level. The signal appeared in roughly two hours. The second sensor detected mercury ions in water. Because these ions are present only in trace quantities in real-world water, the researchers added a genetic amplifier to the *E. coli*. When the mercury bound with a protein called MerR, the meeting triggered the production of a polymerase that pushed the phenazine production pathway into overdrive. As a result, just 25 nanomoles of mercury — below the WHO safety limit — produced a readable current within three hours. The team also demonstrated an 'AND' logic gate inside *E. coli*, so that it produced a signal only when two specific molecules were present together. The team thus established a proof of concept of a living, electronically integrated biosensor capable of detecting compounds in its surroundings, processing the signals, and supplying data.



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Nutty delight

The almond harvest in Kashmir marks an important seasonal and cultural event, and this year's bumper crop has brought smiles to farmers' faces. Almond trees bloom in early spring, colouring the landscape in delicate shades of pink and white, which later turn green before the harvest in summer. Kashmir's moderate climate, fertile soil, and abundant water sources provide ideal conditions for almond cultivation. Kashmiri almonds, usually small in size but known for their sweet flavour and high oil content, are primarily grown in Anantnag and Pulwama in southern Kashmir, Budgam in central Kashmir, and Baramulla in the north. The varieties cultivated include both soft-shell and hard-shell almonds.

Harvesting almonds is a labour-intensive process. Farmers wait until the green outer hulls begin to split naturally, indicating ripeness. Then comes the "shakedown". The almonds are manually shaken from the trees using sticks and collected on cloth sheets spread beneath them. Once harvested, the nuts are sun-dried for several days before the shells are removed. Women and children also participate in this traditional activity, turning it into a family business that is often celebrated at the community level. Almonds are used extensively in traditional cuisine, especially in sweets and beverages such as kehwa. Locally grown almonds are preferred over imported varieties due to their superior taste and freshness. Despite their importance, almond farmers in Kashmir face challenges such as erratic weather patterns, limited access to modern farming techniques, competition from lower-cost imports, shrinking farmlands, and a lack of policy support from authorities. To address these issues, the government is now planning



to introduce high-density varieties of almonds across Kashmir. The almond harvest remains a celebratory event in Kashmir's rural life, blending natural beauty with traditional farming practices. Fresh from the tree: A farmer shows harvested almonds at a village in Pulwama district, south of Srinagar. Almonds are an intrinsic part of the Kashmiri cuisine and trade, with their harvest being celebrated as a cultural festival. Fit for harvest: A farmer scrutinises almonds on a tree for harvest in Pulwama. Once the almonds are ripe, they are shaken off the tree using sticks and collected on cloth sheets spread under.

Eyeing the Bodoland pie



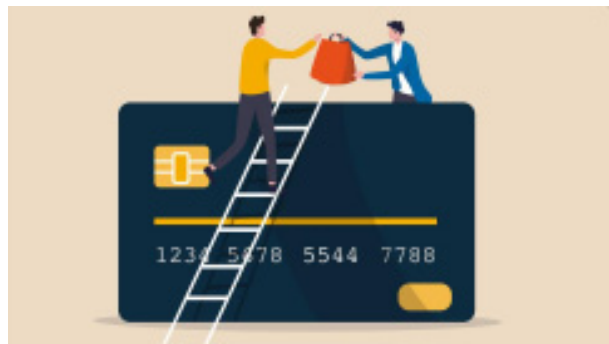
Peace sells in a region scarred by decades of extremism. In 2003, the Government of India, the Government of Assam, and the Bodo Liberation Tigers signed a peace accord, which led to the creation of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), an autonomous body to govern the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR). The BTC was established as a political alternative to the demand for a separate Bodoland state. The Bodoland People's Front (BPF), a political party formed largely by members of the disbanded Bodo Liberation Tigers, ruled the BTR until December 2020. The end of its 17-year rule was partly because of another peace accord in January 2020 and partly because of the BPF's divorce from its "big brother", the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The 2020 peace pact, catalysed by the influential All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU), was between the government and all the factions of another set of extremists — the National Democratic Front of Boroland. Pramod Boro, then the ABSU president and one of the key architects of the peace process, became the president of the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL), the BPF's long-term rival across the BTR. The BJP, claiming to have brought peace to the north-east and paved the way for development, found in Mr. Boro's image as a peace broker an opportunity to penetrate the areas under the tribal council where mainstream parties had little or no traction after 2003. The BPF, dumped by the BJP, became the single-largest party by winning 17 of the 40 seats in the 2020 BTC polls. The UPPL, which won 12 seats, and the BJP, with nine, formed the government in the BTC along with a regional party that won one seat. The Congress managed to win one seat and became the BPF's short-term ally in February 2021. Over the next few years, defec-

tions from the BPF and Congress saw the UPPL and BJP's tally increase to 15 and 14 seats, respectively.

The UPPL-led government in the BTC, allegedly rendered bankrupt by the BPF, exuded inclusivity in the rebuilding process across the BTR, which had a history of conflicts between the dominant Bodos, the largest plains tribe in the north-east, and a majority of the 19 non-Bodo communities, including the Assamese and the Bengali-speaking Muslims. Mr. Boro's outreach was underlined by the Bhutan-inspired Bodoland Happiness Mission launched in 2024 and a community-based road map for development of the smallest of communities. According to him, the post-2020 BTR was vastly different from the pre-2020 BTR, ruled by instability and division along community lines. The UPPL has been banking on the "unprecedented" peace and associated development across the five-district BTR for a second term, either on its own or in an alliance. There is apparently no strain in the ties between the UPPL and the BJP, but the latter has often indicated it could befriend the BPF again. The BJP, reportedly miffed by a less pliant leadership in the BTC unlike its counterparts in the two other tribal councils — Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council and North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council — under the Sixth Schedule in Assam, has decided to go it alone in the BTC polls, likely to be held by September-end. If that is not enough, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma began campaigning in the BTR extensively, claiming that the region was reaping the benefits of peace because of the BJP. He also said that the non-tribal communities would have nothing to fear in Bodoland till he was alive. "Remember that you are safe and have equal rights because the BJP is here, and there will be no second-class citizens," he said. Bodo organisations did not react to the Chief Minister's alleged bid to polarise the BTR electorate on ethnic lines. However, the All-Assam Tribal Sangha condemned State BJP president Dilip Saikia's assurance to non-Bodos that the laws specific to the autonomous councils would be amended for them to purchase land in the tribal blocks and belts. The BJP's approach to the BTC polls indicates a design to weaken the hold of its smaller allies in specific areas. This is evident from its oblique advice to another regional ally, the Asom Gana Parishad, to stay away from the BTC polls. The Congress and other non-National Democratic Alliance parties have slammed the BJP's "divisive" campaign as a show of desperation to win the BTC polls.

Upgrading credit card



Upgrading means switching to another credit card, usually a higher variant, from existing card provider. This would earn higher rewards and better benefits and sometimes even higher credit limits, which would help maximise savings while maintaining current lifestyle. You can consider an upgrade in the following situations: While an entry-level card can be a good option for beginners, it comes with a low reward rate and usually lacks additional perks like lounge access, milestone benefits, movie benefits, etc. Hence, it is important to review spending patterns every few months and check for upgrade offers from the bank. If you have a strong credit history and excellent repayment record, your card issuer may extend a card upgrade, often with lifetime-free or first year free offers, additional joining bonus, or welcome vouchers, which can help you maximise savings. In such cases, upgrading would be a smarter choice. However, ensure the benefits of the existing card align with your current lifestyle. If your card spending has increased and the existing card only comes with a basic reward rate, you may not be able to maximise savings. Upgrading to a card with a better reward rate, especially in your preferred spending categories, could enhance savings. For instance, you have an SBI Simply Click Credit Card with accelerated rewards on select online brands, but with time, your income and expenses have increased, and you find yourself spending a considerable amount online, with a majority of it being beyond the select few brands. Here, upgrading to the Cashback SBI Card could help you get much higher savings on all online spends, as there are no merchant restrictions. Spending habits change with time as you grow financially. If monthly expenses have grown, especially in a particular category like travel, shopping or dining, upgrading to a card with more category-focused benefits could help you save more. For example, someone using an entry-level card like Axis My Zone can consider upgrading to Axis Horizon or Axis Atlas for travel-centric benefits. These give stronger value-back on travel spends with the option to transfer accumulated points to popular airlines and hotels. Enhanced perks around lounge access,

milestone benefits, forex markup fee, etc. can also be a good add-on for travellers.

Higher credit limitAs income grows over time, you need a higher credit limit to manage increasing expenses. If you continue with your existing credit limit and max out your credit card frequently, it can affect your credit score. Moreover, a consistently high credit utilisation ratio shows you are overly dependent on credit, which could make lenders apprehensive of extending more credit to you. Upgrading to a credit card that aligns better with your current needs and offers a higher credit limit can offer you a well-rounded solution. However, note that a card upgrade does not guarantee a limit increase, so it is essential to confirm this with the card provider before opting.

Cash flow managementAt the time of upgrading, you can also change the credit card billing cycle. This will help manage cash flow easily by aligning the billing cycle with monthly expenses. For instance, if you are a salaried person and your existing card's due date falls at the end of the month, you can change the cycle so that the bill is due at the beginning of the month, which would make it easier to manage monthly cash flow. Before an upgrade, review overall card benefits, fees, charges and other terms and conditions to ensure it matches current lifestyle and helps maximise savings. The right upgrade at the right time can help save significantly without affecting financial goals.

Minta Devi had no idea

The first few stories tracking down Minta Devi, the woman from Bihar's Siwan, who was recorded in the electoral rolls as 124 years, simply spoke about who she was, and how old she actually was (35). Reporters did not immediately ask her what she thought about her face being the symbol of alleged irregularities with the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) that Bihar has undergone. "I do not know what is going on in Parliament..." said Devi, adding that she didn't check the date on her voter ID card when it was delivered. On August 12, several Opposition members wore tees with her photograph, with the tag line '124 not out'. It is easy to use photographs of people — especially women with seemingly less agency — without their consent.

Women in Bihar already have it rough. Their life expectancy is lower than that of the men in the State (68.3 years to 69.6 years in 2015-19), they are highly vulnerable to violence and insecurity after natural disasters, and there are still 100 maternal deaths for every 100,000 births (2020-2022; the national average is 93). Now, with the SIR, more women than men have been deleted from the rolls. On the same day, at Delhi's Constitution Club, Jaya Bachchan pushed away a man who attempted to get too close to her and take a selfie. I doubt anyone would have put her face on a tee sans consent.

Class, in India, is sometimes more pronounced than caste. There is an 'us' and 'them': 'we' the educated English-speaking, 'they' the illiterate poor. Class unites women and men in the same social bracket. Until there is abuse. Then, the women are drawn into a circle of sisterhood that men, even as allies, might not be able to penetrate. Two days after Minta Devi's picture appeared everywhere and Jaya Bachchan pushed away a man who lifted his phone with entitlement, Kolkata came together again to Reclaim the Night. It was the first death anniversary of the medico who had been assaulted and killed, and women across the city seemed to say: we remember. We also remember when the Supreme Court passes a judgment that "sets a dangerous precedent for both criminal justice and gender equal-



ity". We know the issues that cut across class: gender-based violence, access to justice, and taking women for granted. Breakthrough, the non-profit that works in the gender-based violence space, is hosting its annual symposium called ReFrame, which will touch upon health, education, and work for women, along with brainstorming sessions on how to make men and boys allies. On September 3 and 4, 2025 in New Delhi. The ecosystem of the vaginal area (the tube between the external genitals and the lower end of the uterus) that has colonies of bacteria and other organisms, all contributing to the health of this part of the reproductive anatomy. Generally, a Lactobacillus-dominated vagina is considered healthy. Earlier this month, the Gates Foundation committed \$2.5 billion until 2030 to research and development around women's health. Among its "areas of breakthrough potential" was the vaginal microbiome, along with therapeutics for pre-eclampsia and non-hormonal contraception. Ouch! People consider [the code for Gaya airport, GAY] socially and culturally offensive and uncomfortable. Could it be replaced with something more respectful and culturally appropriate Vijaya Harish Jethwa, 55, has a shop in Dharavi's Kumbharwada area of potters, on Mumbai's 90 Feet Road. She runs it with her husband and two sons, and is so busy preparing for Janmashtami that she continues to paint pots as she speaks. "

How ‘honour’ killings in India are reinforced and legitimised



Caste in India is not an individual problem — it is a deeply rooted social phenomenon. Caste survives and thrives not just because individuals insist on it, but because families, communities, and entire social structures continue to enforce and legitimise it, knowingly or otherwise.At the heart of this caste endurance lie social customs passed down and protected within households. Children grow up internalising boundaries — who to talk to, who to marry, who to avoid — long before they can even articulate why. As a result, the caste system remains one of the most resilient social frameworks in India.

One of the biggest threats to the rigidity of caste has been social justice interventions. When marginalised communities, particularly Dalits, gain access to quality education and secure meaningful employment, it opens the gates for their integration into mainstream society. With that, a foundational shift begins. No longer confined to the margins, the oppressed now begin to interact with caste-Hindu society on an equal footing — in workplaces, colleges, cities, and most importantly, in relationships. This has created a new frontier of social tension: romantic unions that cross caste lines, especially those involving Dalit men and dominant caste women. These unions represent not just love or rebellion but a direct challenge to centuries-old caste hierarchies. And for many conservative families, that challenge is intolerable.

States like Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Maharashtra, and Kerala — where Dalit communities have seen relatively greater empowerment — also record higher rates of inter-caste marriages. According to the India Human Development Survey (IHDS-II), the national rate of inter-caste marriages stands at around 5%, but States with empowered Dalit populations show higher numbers. Ironically, these are also the States with increased incidents of honour killings.This paradox reveals a disturbing truth: honour killings occur not where casteism is strongest, but where it is most threatened. In States where the oppressed still maintain their “status quo,” violence is less — not because casteism is absent, but because it remains unchallenged. Thus, caste-based violence is not a sign of persistent hierarchy alone, but of hierarchy under siege.When caste killings happen, democratic voices among the public are strong in Tamil Nadu as the State boasts a strong and vibrant civil society. At the same time, caste is glorified on social media. Due to the anonymity such platforms offer, some accounts go so far as to defend caste killings.

How do we understand this paradox?? Perhaps in Tamil Nadu, while people possess a collective consciousness against casteism, shaped by decades of social justice politics, individual attitudes may not always align in the same way. The State’s anti-caste culture is collectively progressive but individually conflicted. In public, caste violence is rejected but in private conversations, WhatsApp groups, and through anonymous posts, caste continues to dictate social preferences, marriage alliances, and “honourable behaviour.”This paradox does not mean that Tamil Nadu’s anti-caste movement is a failure. It means that one is living in a liminal space — between tradition and transformation. What we see on social media is not just caste pride, it’s also the fear of losing inherited power and the anxiety of cultural change.

There’s a popular belief that the caste system survives mainly because of political parties or caste-based organisations. While these certainly reinforce caste divisions in the public sphere, they are not the roots of the system. Caste survives because it is protected and transmitted within the family. Through everyday customs, rituals, marriage arrangements, social expectations, and inherited prejudices, caste becomes part of a child’s consciousness long before they can question it. This is why caste has remained transgenerational, even in the face of rising education,??urbanisation and exposure to new ideas.However, the psychological and cultural importance of the ‘family’ itself is changing, especially among adolescents. Around the world, particularly in countries like South Korea and Japan, we are seeing dramatic shifts: marriage rates are falling, fertility rates are at historic lows, and the traditional family unit is losing its central place in people’s lives. Instead, new models of relationship — open partnerships, cohabitation, single living, and self-parenting — are emerging.India’s urban youth are slowly reflecting this trend too. Many adolescents today are increasingly prioritising individual growth, emotional well-being, and autonomy over traditional family obligations. As the value of the family unit weakens, so too does the primary mechanism through which caste is enforced and reproduced.

In other words, if the family becomes less central in shaping relationships and social norms, caste may lose its strongest and oldest vehicle of survival. This doesn’t mean that caste will disappear overnight. But it suggests that the cultural infrastructure that sustains it is slowly being dismantled — not by revolution, but by changing lifestyles, shifting emotional priorities, and evolution of the self.Caste in India is at crossroads. On one hand, we see violent reactions and online glorification. On the other, we witness strong democratic voices against honour killings and a new generation slowly withdrawing from social values. Tamil Nadu symbolises this contradiction in its most vivid form — a State where both the loudest resistance to casteism and the quietest internal caste pride coexist. But it also offers hope: if this contradiction is acknowledged, addressed, and challenged, especially through engagement and digital counter-narratives, we may finally move toward a society where caste loses its grip not only on our systems, but on our hearts and minds.

Biodiversity everywhere is ordered by a common ‘hidden’ pattern

For almost two centuries, biologists have divided the earth into large biogeographical regions. Each region hosts a unique mix of species shaped by its own history, climate, and barriers, such as oceans and mountains. Because those histories differ, many scientists assumed the inner layout of species inside every region would be idiosyncratic — that South America’s biodiversity, for example, would organise itself in a very different way from Africa’s.At the same time, global rules clearly exist. Tropical zones almost everywhere teem with life while polar zones host far fewer species. The authors of a new study wondered: could there also be a universal rule inside each biogeographical region, one that transcended continents, oceans, and even entire branches of the tree of life?Answering that question could reveal the basic forces that assemble nature’s living mosaics and show conservationists where protection could deliver the biggest payoff.

A new study, authored by scientists in Spain, Sweden, and the UK, reported just such a pattern in the July edition of Nature Ecology & Evolution.According to University of Kashmir Department of Botany assistant professor Irfan Rashid, the study provides a rare, large-scale, data-backed confirmation of a general rule in biogeography.In search of a hidden rule, the researchers cast an exceptionally wide net. They studied more than 30,000 species, including birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, rays, dragonflies, and trees. Information about the species’ ranges came from global databases such as the IUCN Red List, BirdLife International, and US Forest inventories. The team also tiled the earth’s surface into thousands of cells of equal area — each about 111 sq. 7km for most land animals, for example — and recorded all the species living there. Then the researchers used a network analysis tool called Infomap to group those cells together whose species frequently co-occurred. Each cluster thus became a biogeographical region, and the species most tied to that region were tagged as characteristic, i.e. as belonging to its core community. Species that spilled over from neighbouring regions were called non-characteristic.Finally, they took snapshots of four types of diversity in every cell: species richness (how many characteristic species live here), biota overlap (what fraction of species are non-characteristic); occupancy (how widely do characteristic species range); and endemicity (how much of each characteristic species’ range is confined to that region alone).With these four numbers in hand, the researchers ran a clustering algorithm on all the cells. If biodiversity organised itself differently among different kinds of organisms, cells from birds would cluster apart from cells from mammals, and so on. If a common rule existed, however, the algorithm would lump cells from many different taxa together. This is how the researchers were eventually able to split the world into seven repeating biogeographical sectors. More importantly, they found that the sectors appear again and again inside every major region and for every taxonomic group, lining up in a remarkably orderly pattern. The core hotspots were highly rich, highly endemic, and had almost no foreign species. The next inner layers were still species-rich but had slightly more endemic species and slightly more widespread species. The middle layers had no richness and also had some non-characteristic species. Finally, the transition zones were species-poor and packed with wide-ranging generalists from multiple regions.

That is, biodiversity everywhere was organised like an onion: with dense, unique biodiversity at the centre and grading outward towards porous, mixed margins.The researchers also found that in 98% of region-taxa combinations, temperature plus rainfall models could predict which



“We need to look at how changes in rainfall or temperature are affecting biodiversity along mountain slopes,” Chawla said. “Small experiments that simulate these changes can give us important insights.”

sector a cell belonged to. This implied that only species that could tolerate the local conditions could survive in a given layer.

Further, the species that inhabited the outer layers were also usually subsets, not replacements, of inner-layer species. That is, moving outward from the core, there were fewer specialist species rather than entirely different specialised species.“The study provides a strong basis for understanding broad ecological trends,” Amit Chawla, Principal Scientist at the CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT) in Palampur, Himachal Pradesh, said. “It shows how biodiversity tends to spread outward from regional hotspots, and how environmental filters like elevation or climate allow some species to move while blocking others.”Geographical gapsIn a time of climate uncertainty, understanding how species are spread can help make smarter decisions about what to protect and where. In the Indian Himalayas, for example, this could mean looking beyond traditional protected areas and focusing on key habitats, altitudinal zones, and natural corridors.

“We need to look at how changes in rainfall or temperature are affecting biodiversity along mountain slopes,” Chawla said. “Small experiments that simulate these changes can give us important insights.”“The Himalayas are already experiencing rising temperatures and shifting rainfall and are at the frontlines of this change. Studies like this one offer a useful lens to understand the big picture,” Asif Bashir Shikari, professor of genetics and plant breeding at the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, said.Finally, Chawla did point out that while the study was global in scope, it had some geographical gaps. “For instance, groups like dragonflies in Eurasia and trees in North America were studied only in limited regions. The conclusions for these taxa could have been stronger with more comprehensive global datasets,” he said.He added that some biodiversity-rich regions in the tropics and Global South, including parts of India, were underrepresented for certain taxa, underscoring the need for region-specific research to complement these global findings.In sum, the newly uncovered core-to-transition rule turns the earth’s messy quilt of species’ ranges into something organised in layers. By identifying how environmental filters shape these layers, the study could give conservationists a sharper lens through which to understand and protect the living planet.

Tier-2 cities emerge as India’s new investment hotspots



The 2025 Investment landscape has seen a significant tilt in balance, with more astute investors looking beyond demographic-heavy saturated metro markets to the more compelling growth stories and Alpha markets of Tier 2 cities that have a better potential for returns. This strategic about-face betokens a growing recognition of India’s shifting economic geography, where long-held tenets for investment are being reordered by demography, the emergence of new infrastructure, and rapidly changing business tastes that reward nimbleness over sheer bigness.Investor preference in Pune remains at the top as the city has transcended the tag of Mumbai’s satellite city and is now recognised as an individual, independent economic connector. The vibrancy of the city’s IT industry, top-notch academic institutions and geographical advantage, placed between Mumbai and the Deccan plateau, all add up in its favour.

Smart investors, especially, are targeting upcoming corridors such as Hinjewadi, Wakad and the Pune-Mumbai Expressway belt, where the residential market is giving rental yield returns in the region of 12%-15% year on year. Rental yields in the city are a healthy 3%-4%, much better than sub-2% returns in Mumbai, but with similar lifestyle features and quality of infrastructure on offer.Ahmedabad is now the gem of Gujarat’s real estate investment crown, favoured due to the state’s business friendly policies and strong growth in its industries. The city’s skyline and infrastructure transformation post the Sabarmati Riverfront development, and an impending bullet train connection to Mumbai are drawing large private equity players to Ahmedabad. Locations like Science City, Bopal and Shela have seen tremendous demand from end users as well as investors with property appreciation of 8%-10% annually. The city’s rich history of manufacturing, its thriving services market, and its superb access make it an excellent option for those seeking good returns in the long term in a supportive environment for enterprises.

Kochi emerges as the most inviting destination for South India as it holds strategic prominence as a commercial port city and thriving IT destination. A cosmopolitan city with a thriving start-up ecosystem, and an excellent educational infrastructure, the city has attracted investors with its strong investment narrative. Smart investors are moving into pockets such as Kakkanad and Edappally or the fast-evolving suburbs on the NH-47 corridor. While the planned expansion of the Kochi Metro and the planned Kochi-Mangalore Industrial Corridor construction further also will

push up boom property prices even further, investment opportunities ahead of the game are especially attractive for the smart developer or buyer.

Madhya Pradesh’s commercial capital Indore too has been emerging as a prime investment hub. The city’s position as a strategic region, with great local schools and an increasingly robust industry, has made for a consistent housing market both residential and commercial. Investors are especially optimistic about places like Vijay Nagar, Bhawar Kuan, and the under-development Smart City projects, where rise in infrastructure is leading to a significant rise in valuations. Affordable property prices in the city and the high demand for rentals from students and young professionals, make it a good place to dip your toe into the water if you are a first-time property investor.The city has become one of Tamil Nadu’s most favoured locations for investment in both textiles and engineering industry. Its proximity to Bangalore, pleasant climate, a growing hub for companies and booming industrial sectors have resulted in high demand for corporate and quality accommodation. Areas such as Peelamedu and Saravanampatti and the IT belt near Tidel Park continue to attract investors, as prices have been on an uptick and rental yields are still a robust 4-5%.

Its unique proposition of planned urbanisation and locational advantage has made it the best performing investment destination in the region of Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula, which is also known as Chandigarh Tricity. The tri-city has its own advantages owing to Chandigarh, a Union Territory with good governance and world-class infrastructure (thanks to Le Corbusier’s master plan), which will continue to attract premium residents and businesses. The IT City, Mohali, is a hot pick for smart investors, as it is home to leading IT companies, making it an ideal location for commercial or residential investments. Areas such as Phase 11, Sector 88 and New Chandigarh are seeing fantastic appreciation, properties are giving 10%-12% as annual returns. The hills nearby, coupled with new sectors such as 20, 21, and the upcoming residential zones, make Panchkula a town with good potential to grow at affordable entry points.In tricity, the location has loads of offerings which is a balanced mix of urban comforts, greens, revered educational institutions and easy accessibility from Delhi and hill stations thus rendering the tricity a most sought after choice for end-users and investors in the quest for quality life and high returns. The rental market continues to be healthy in the area thanks to a steady flow of IT professionals, government employees, and professionals associated with new business ventures in the CRC, and anticipated kudos from new infrastructure such as airport expansion and better highway connectivity will augment property capital values. A metropolitan lifestyle is possible at relatively less cost and with economic soundness. It’s just the right mix of growth opportunity, affordability and quality of life that today’s savvy investors are looking for.And as 2025 unfolds, the drive towards Tier-2 level investment is going to consolidate even further, with the pace of infrastructure growth continuing to accelerate, with the other untold story of the year being the push of corporate India no longer confined to metros.The realisation that the next wave of urban expansion of the country is going to be powered by these emerging, dynamic cities that offer lifestyle impetus along with return on investment is beyond obvious.

For women, unseen battles at workplace

In today’s world, women across all strata of society take up gainful employment and support their families financially. Even a few decades ago, only women who were privileged enough to receive an education entered salaried professions. However, those who remained at home engaged in unpaid labour, such as caregiving and other forms of domestic duties and agricultural work, but were often not acknowledged as making meaningful contributions to their family’s welfare. Their strength was exploited without compensation, and their efforts were left unrecognised.

Women have long been treated as the “second sex”, denied their basic human rights. Over time, many were conditioned to accept a subordinate status, believing that men were inherently superior and that women’s suffering was part of their fate. Traditional Indian families relegated women to tasks such as transferring culture and values to the next generation, denying them the opportunity to hone their skills, explore their interests, and gain knowledge. Generations of women were held back, made to feel inferior, and confined in dark traditions. Fortunately, things have begun to change. Today, women are forging paths of success across all fields. This transformation did not happen overnight. It was built on years of struggle, sacrifice, and silent determination. Many mothers gave up their own dreams so that their daughters could lead independent and empowered lives.But has the change truly taken root? Are women now treated equally as men at the workplace? Who truly cares about the real conditions that working women endure?

While women may now have the “freedom” to work, sadly, the workplace often becomes a second, silent confinement. Here, their wings are clipped, and their voices stifled. They may appear free, but many continue to toil under misogynistic superiors in environments where their dignity is undermined. Women need equality, dignity, and fair treatment. However, a patriarchal mindset persists in many sectors, where women are at the receiving end. If they raise their voices, they risk being fired or penalised. Out of fear, many suffer silently.One of the primary reasons women seek employment is financial independence. Yet, wage disparity remains a grim reality. In many workplaces, mainly in the informal sector, salary structures differ for men and women performing the same tasks. Even when a woman puts in equal efforts as her male co-workers or even more, she is rarely paid equally. The struggle of balancing work and family is another big challenge. Unfortunately, their ef-



forts often go unnoticed. In some establishments, bias exists even in hiring practices. This is an obvious violation of women’s rights. Promotions and performance evaluations are often tainted by gender-based discrimination.

India slipped to the 31st position in the Global Gender Gap Index, 2025, according to the World Economic Forum. If such conditions persist, the situation may worsen. Women remain under-represented in key areas such as politics, business, and leadership. While women are often praised as natural multitaskers, the reality is that their labour is undervalued. Some men still cannot accept women as superiors or colleagues on an equal footing.Despite performing the same duties or more, women are rarely acknowledged or appreciated for their efforts. In addition to office work, many bear caregiving responsibilities at home. But do they receive respect, support, or encouragement from male colleagues or partners?Several workplaces lack basic facilities such as clean and accessible toilets. During menstruation, women need proper hygiene infrastructure. Are there enough government provisions ensuring access to sanitary facilities or safe spaces? Do workplaces provide adequate breaks for breastfeeding mothers? Women above the age of 50, especially those working in retail or as support staff, are often forced to stand for long hours. Though laws exist mandating seating arrangements for them, such regulations are often ignored. Speaking up can cost them their jobs, so many continue to suffer in silence. Even more tragically, in some cases, women particularly those in vulnerable financial conditions are forced to compromise their dignity by their superiors. While difficult to acknowledge, this form of exploitation still occurs.

Use ChatGPT as second opinion, not primary source: OpenAI executive

New Delhi: OpenAI’s latest language model, GPT-5, may be more powerful and accurate than its predecessors, but the company has warned users not to treat ChatGPT as their main source of information.Nick Turley, Head of ChatGPT, said the AI chatbot should be used as a “second opinion” because it is still prone to mistakes, despite major improvements.In an interview with The Verge, Turley admitted that GPT-5 continues to face the problem of hallucinations, where the system produces information that sounds believable but is factually wrong.

OpenAI says it has reduced such errors significantly, but the model still gives incorrect responses about 10 per cent of the time.Turley stressed that achieving 100 per cent reliability is extremely difficult.“Until we are provably more reliable than a human expert across all domains, we’ll con-

tinue to advise users to double-check the answers,” he said.“I think people are going to continue to leverage ChatGPT as a second opinion, versus necessarily their primary source of fact,” he added.Large language models like GPT-5 are trained to predict words based on patterns in huge datasets.While this makes them excellent at generating natural responses, it also means they can provide false information on unfamiliar topics.To address this, OpenAI has connected ChatGPT to search, allowing users to verify results with external sources.Turley expressed confidence that hallucinations will eventually be solved but cautioned that it will not happen in the near future.“I’m confident we’ll eventually solve hallucinations, and I’m confident we’re not going to do it in the next quarter,” he said.Meanwhile, OpenAI continues to expand its ambitions.

Is social media telling you what to eat? Here's how to access accurate nutritional information



Do you start your mornings with detox water, flax-seeds, chia seeds, eat collagen for skin during the day and add a dose of magnesium for good sleep? If your answer is yes, you are not alone. The global health and wellness market stood at \$1.4 trillion in 2024 according to a report by McKinsey, a multinational consulting firm. The report highlighted that people are prioritising wellness more than ever, and are looking for science-backed products. How is wellness and nutrition a central narrative of our conversations these days? Clinical nutritionist Amrita Gadre explained: "Today, the ultimate status symbol is health and vitality. Glowing skin, a high-energy lifestyle, and a fit physique are the new aspirations. And social media is the perfect stage for this display." However, in an information-filled world, people are struggling to understand nutrition science, an area of study that is already a complex subject. A recent peer-reviewed study conducted on Indian students highlighted how "social media impacts an individual's eating patterns by acting as a stimulus for immediate consumption of food, cravings and trying trends." Another study from South Africa also found that social media is used to "access and implement nutrition information while showing the inability of participants to assess whether nutrition information on social media is evidence-based and correct." A simple Google search tells us what to eat or drink and how much, for our weight concerns, skin concerns or even conditions such as diabetes. However, this information is not always accurate, as it is sometimes not backed by strong scientific evidence, may promote conflicting views and could even distort scientific findings to promote one particular food item or product. "While social media has raised awareness, it has simultaneously created a "Wild West" of information that has deeply complicated the public's understanding of nutrition," said Ms. Gadre.

So what is the science behind nutrition and food?

Eating five oranges will not give you glowing skin overnight. Multiple videos and posts tell how we carrots can help improve increase eyesight, certain seeds can help reduce weight, drinking eight glasses of water helps flush toxins and eating oranges can give one a glow from within. Let us first understand how our body absorbs food. Food is broken into our digestive system when we eat. It starts in the mouth with enzymes in saliva, then moves to the stomach where acids and more enzymes break things down further. The real action happens in the small intestine: this is where nutrients are absorbed through the intestinal lining and enter the bloodstream.

Vikrant Ghanekar, scientific officer, Biology Cell at Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education explained that the small intestine has an extensive supply of blood vessels to facilitate the uptake of nutrients. He added that "excess vitamins, minerals may not give immediate benefits because water-soluble vitamins (Vitamin B and Vitamin C) are lost through body fluids [urine] and excessive oil-soluble vitamins can be harmful for metabolism. Regular supply through fruits and leafy vegetables is enough to maintain a balance," he said. Ms. Gadre explained how eating one food may not immediately impact our health. "Take Vitamin C as an example (from oranges). It is water-soluble, so it is absorbed in the small intestine and carried in the blood. Your body takes only what it needs. The rest is excreted in urine. No amount of oranges can force your skin to glow instantly. Glow comes from a combination of hydration, healthy fats, protein and antioxidants, not just one vitamin. Also, absorption depends on gut health, the presence of other nutrients, and overall balance. So yes, eat your oranges. But also eat your dal, rice, ghee, sabzi, nuts - glow comes from nourishment, not gimmicks." Similarly, the much-talked about link between carrots and eyesight has some basis, but "there's nothing magical about the carrots alone". According to the University of Utah, "Carrots are a super source of beta-carotene—and that's a start. But it takes a whole lot more to

How a simple two-minute walk can help both prevent hypertension and detect it early

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 1 in 3 adults globally -- about 1.28 billion people are living with hypertension, with nearly half unaware of it. In India, the burden is steep: over 220 million people live with hypertension, with detection and follow-up rates particularly low among younger adults and in rural populations. "Even people in their twenties and thirties are now showing signs of early hypertension," says T.S. Srinath, senior consultant, cardiology, SIMS Hospital, Chennai. "But they don't get tested until symptoms appear, often too late." Therefore, doctors are pointing to an underused yet effective pair of tools -- two minutes of regular movement, and the two-minute walk test (2MWT). Movement as preventive care and diagnostic tool

First, there's movement as medicine. Multiple studies -- including recent ones by the American Heart Association show that two-minute activity breaks taken every 30-60 minutes can significantly reduce average blood pressure and improve vascular health, particularly for desk-bound adults. "Physiology is cumulative," explains Surya Prakash S., consultant, Institute of Cardiac Sciences, SRM Global Hospitals. "Even just two minutes of walking every hour helps maintain blood flow, prevents arterial stiffness and reduces stress hormones, all of which matter in long-term BP control." Simple interventions, like walking during phone calls, stair use, or pacing while watching TV -- can yield benefits over time. For a country with growing rates of sedentary behaviour, this offers a low-cost and scalable solution. Then comes the two-minute walk test -- a short submaximal exercise assessment initially used to gauge endurance in elderly or cardiac patients. Today, clinicians are repurposing it to spot early signs of cardiovascular dysfunction, especially in asymptomatic or newly-diagnosed hypertensive individuals. "We check how much the blood pressure rises, how fast heart rate recovers, and whether the person reports symptoms like fatigue, dizziness, or breathlessness," explains Madan Mohan B., Interventional Cardiologist at MGM Malar Hospital, Chennai. "A systolic jump over 20 mm Hg or a delayed drop in heart rate after exercise signals poor autonomic control and vascular stress, both early signs of future risk." According to guidelines, a heart rate recovery

protect your irreplaceable vision." Carrots benefit the eyes but they won't reverse or improve vision conditions. What many struggle to understand or often misunderstand, is whether food can cure diseases or medical conditions. Krish Ashok, author of the book Masala Lab explained: "good food provides ingredients for the body's immune system to function at its best (genetically determined) capacity. But beyond that, food cannot act like medicine." It is the same with seeds, spices and water. According to Ms. Gadre, kitchen ingredients such as carom seeds or fennel seeds (ajwain, dalcchini, jeera, saunf) are great in culinary doses and have traditional digestive benefits. When asked if they could help lose weight, she said, "To expect them to cure obesity or diabetes is taking it too far. Superfoods don't undo overeating or inactivity. Weight loss and metabolic health require exercise, stress and sleep management and calorie balance." Commenting on daily water requirements, she said, "Hydration is vital, but that 8-glass rule is generic. Overhydration can lead to electrolyte imbalance. A good rule of thumb: drink when you're thirsty, sip more in hot weather or after workouts, and observe your urine color - pale yellow is ideal. Water doesn't flush toxins." The internet's latest obsession

A simple keyword search - 'how to lose weight' unravels a whole lot. Search results lead to multiple videos explaining how to lose weight with the help of 'natural ozempic'. These videos say that a concoction of vegetables such as cucumber, celery, and bitter melon constitute 'Nature's Ozempic' and claim that this can lower blood sugar and melt fat. Ozempic is an antidiabetic and anti-obesity medicine which is prescribed under medical supervision for weight management. There are multiple videos promoting juices of certain vegetables and drinking these on empty stomach for weight loss. Ms. Gadre, commenting on this trend, explained: "There is no clinical evidence supporting these drinks for sustainable weight loss. Moreover, Ozempic is a prescription GLP-1 drug used for type 2 diabetes under strict medical supervision. You can't DIY that with karela [bitter melon]." She further warned that "Overconsumption of raw vegetable juices can cause bloating, nutrient imbalances, risk of kidney stones and even blood sugar dips if not combined with meals."

Hazards of social media-related nutritional information While social media promotes certain foods, it also creates fear around a few food products. This makes understanding what to eat and what not to, more complex. Both sugar and carbohydrates have earned a bad reputation on social media. And while too much of either can be detrimental, many take extreme measures to curb it from their diets. The Mayo Clinic prescribes: "people need at least 130 grams of carbohydrates every day to meet the body's energy needs." A Johns Hopkins blog post on sugar explains, "Our bodies run on sugar. Removing natural sources of sugar and other carbohydrates from your diet -- fruits, dairy products and grains -- is not a healthy choice". Diets that cut out all carbohydrates and sugars, such as the ketogenic diet, can be harmful to your health, it says. Ms. Gadre added: "Social media thrives on black-and-white thinking. Nutrition science is all about context, dose, and individuality. Is sugar "bad"?

It depends. A spoonful in your chai is vastly different from drinking a litre of soda. The diet that worked for a 22-year-old actor in Bollywood is unlikely to be the right fit for a 45-year-old working mother in Delhi. Genetics, the gut microbiome, lifestyle, stress levels, and cultural background all determine what works for you. "A peer-reviewed study conducted in Australia highlighted how social media can be an unreliable source of nutrition information. It concluded: "Nutrition-related information published by influential Australian Instagram accounts is often inaccurate and of sub-optimal quality."

The nuances of nutrition science When it comes to a nuanced understanding of nutrition science, randomised controlled trials are the gold standard to understand how and why certain foods get easily absorbed by the body. But a lot of claims are based on observations and observational studies, and therefore cannot be applied to everyone. A study by the American Diabetes Association explores what makes nutrition research so difficult to conduct and interpret. It states: "observational studies have been used to track dietary intake in large numbers of participants and can be used to track such data over many years. Observational studies are not carefully controlled like clinical trials, so their results may be less reliable." The study also highlights that reporting of nutrition research findings can be confusing.



of less than 12 bpm in one minute is associated with higher mortality and cardiovascular events. Prakash Ayyadurai, consultant, orthopaedics & sports medicine, explains his clinical experiences in using the 2MWT to uncover exercise intolerance in patients who otherwise present normal resting vitals. "A lot of people pass routine tests but struggle when asked to walk even two minutes," he says. "They show palpitations, fatigue, or sweat profusely. That exertion response can reveal hidden prehypertension or vascular rigidity." Similarly, Dr. Srinath notes that in patients with mild or labile hypertension, the 2MWT is useful not only for screening but also for monitoring treatment outcomes. "If BP response improves and heart rate normalises faster over time, it tells us the patient is improving." Doctors emphasise that India must integrate simple physical activity-based screenings into routine health checks -- especially in primary care and semi-urban areas where access to advanced diagnostics is limited. "Two minutes of walking can be far more revealing than sitting in a chair for a BP reading," says Dr. Surya Prakash. "The test costs nothing, requires no machines, and adds meaningful insight into cardiovascular fitness." Even if not diagnostic, the test helps triage patients into low, moderate, and high-risk groups for further testing like ambulatory BP monitoring, echocardiography, or stress ECG. While WHO data and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) surveys show India's hypertension burden is high, doctors say the face of the condition is changing. "

The paradox of market restriction for anti-TB drugs



Tuberculosis (TB) could be drug sensitive (DS TB), which can be treated by a few first-line oral drugs, or drug resistant (DR TB), wherein there is resistance to one or more drugs, making it difficult to treat, potentially leading to more complications and even death. Drugs for any form of TB are provided free of cost through the Indian government's National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP). Newer anti-tubercular (anti-TB) drugs like Bedaquiline, Delamanid and Pretomanid are key drugs that have revolutionised the treatment of DR TB, since they are orally administered and require shorter treatment durations compared to the older regimen of daily injections, which were to be taken for many months. Another key drug is Rifapentine, which is mainly used to prevent TB in people who have come in contact with TB-infected individuals or in people with HIV disease. The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), following a letter from the Central TB Division of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, mooted an important proposition regarding the regulation of newer anti-TB drugs in the private market, in the 66th Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC) meeting held on June 17, 2025. The DCGI is planning to restrict access to the newer anti-TB drugs Bedaquiline, Delamanid, and Pretomanid and Rifapentine by making them conditionally accessible only through NTEP, in adherence to the Standards of TB Care in India. The reasons and implications of this move need to be closely examined.

NTEP has its own exclusive procurement and supply chain management system for anti-TB drugs, laboratory consumables and TB preventive drugs. India, like many countries in the world, procures most of its anti-TB drugs from the Global Drug Facility (GDF), a not-for-profit establishment funded by the Global Fund, along with procurement via domestic funding through the Central Medical Services Society. GDF does not aim to make a profit and therefore provides drugs and consumables at very low prices to countries through bulk procurement. The Central TB Division places an order to GDF at least one year prior by forecasting the need, based on the disease burden in the country. The drugs are then routed through Government Medical Store Depots to State Drug Stores of NTEP, from where they go to District Drug Stores and then down to DOTS centres at Tuberculosis Units and Peripheral Health Institutions. This entire process is managed real-time through a portal called Ni-Kshay Aushadhi, which is accessible only to NTEP personnel. The Central procurement of drugs is based on drug requests received from peripheral health institutions at the grassroots level. Timely online drug requests through the Ni-Kshay Aushadhi portal are imperative for uninterrupted procurement and supply of drugs in NTEP. However, studies have shown the sub-optimal use of the portal in the field owing to various reasons like lack of digital literacy and training of peripheral level staff, portal interface not being user-friendly and stock planning and forecasting not being perceived as a 'felt need' by staff.

A new drug that is developed can be patented by the company that developed it (originators) for a minimum of

Some cities in the northwestern, northern Indo-Gangetic Plain shielded from long-range aerosol pollution

A study of 141 cities in India from 2003 to 2020 using satellite-retrieved aerosol data reveals a surprise -- aerosol levels were significantly high in 57% of cities compared with the surrounding areas outside the city in south and southeast India, while the converse was true in the case of 43% of cities in northwest and northern Indo-Gangetic Plain (IGP) region where the aerosol levels were relatively lower in the cities compared with the surrounding areas. Researchers at the School of Earth, Ocean and Climate Sciences, IIT Bhubaneswar, refer to the cities in south and southeast India that show higher aerosol levels than the surrounding areas as Urban Aerosol Pollution Islands. And cities that show relatively lower aerosol levels compared with the surrounding areas are referred to as Urban Aerosol Clean Islands.

In the case of cities referred to as urban aerosol clean islands, the aerosol levels were not uniformly higher in the surrounding areas compared with the city. Instead, the levels were higher in the areas southwest of the city, which are located upstream of the dust flow, while the northeast side of the city located downstream of the dust flow showed less aerosol levels which almost matched the levels seen in the city. "Aerosol coming from outside wasn't adding to the pollution already seen in the cities that we refer to as urban aerosol clean islands. Instead, the cities in northwest and in the northern Indo-Gangetic Plain region were stopping or diverting the incoming aerosol and moving it around the city. We observed areas upstream of the aerosol flow had more aerosol load than the city, while the areas northeast of the city that were located downstream of the flow had less aerosol load. It is a trail going actually downwind for some distance," says Dr. V. Vinoy from IIT Bhubaneswar, and the corresponding author of a paper published on July 16, 2025 in the journal Communications Earth & Environment. "We didn't expect this."

"North Indian cities, despite being blamed for poor air quality, are found to have no consistent 'pollution domes'. Instead, we observed urban clean islands -- zones with relatively lower aerosol levels than surrounding areas. We hypothesise this unexpected pattern to be linked to a phenomenon known as urban wind stilling effect," he said.

Wind stilling effect Wind stilling effect refers to a weakening of surface winds across highly urbanised cities where the buildings and infrastructure reshape local climates, creating zones of atmospheric stagnation. These zones collectively lead to invisible barriers around the city (in the upwind regions), partially blocking the entry of long-range aerosol pollution, especially mineral dust from the nearby arid regions. Also, cities located in regions with high background pollution tend to slow down the transport of pollutants from outside the city, like the dust from Thar desert or aerosol

20 years. No other company can undertake commercial production of the drug during this period. However, when a drug goes off-patent (expiry of patent period), it can be manufactured by any other pharmaceutical company and can be marketed for use. Patenting was done in the case of Bedaquiline (Johnson & Johnson), Delamanid (Otsuka), Pretomanid (TB Alliance) and Rifapentine (Sanofi) by their originators. These drugs are procured by the government and available only through NTEP to registered beneficiaries. Over the past 5 or 6 years, patents for all these drugs have expired, except for Pretomanid, and several generic pharmaceutical companies like Lupin, Macleods, Natco, etc. have taken up the production of these drugs, leading to lower costs and more availability in the market. Since they are off-patent, these companies could produce them for the open market as well. The easy availability and low prices of antibiotics in the open market drive private prescriptions, often leading to their judicious use. This, in turn, promotes the emergence of drug-resistant bacterial strains, ultimately rendering these antibiotics ineffective. With the advent of drug-resistant and extensively drug-resistant strains of bacteria, TB treatment is already facing a crisis which warrants the discovery of newer drugs. Hence, the move of DCGI assumes importance in the journey to combat antimicrobial resistance. Making them conditionally accessible through NTEP would ensure rational use of these drugs.

However, there are certain risks to this decision if implemented in the current context. In the event of a break in the supply chain of NTEP, these drugs would become unavailable for the persons with TB (PwTB) who are supposed to take them regularly, most often daily, without missing the doses. A terrible drug stock-out of anti-TB drugs during 2023-24 is an example of this threat. The stock-out affected almost every State in India and occurred both for DS-TB and DR-TB drugs. PwTB and their families had to run from pillar to post to obtain drugs needed daily for even the most common DS-TB regimen. Since the NTEP centres ran out of stock, a few PwTB who could afford it, sourced drugs from the open market. For persons affected by DR-TB, since drugs were available only through NTEP, they had to take incomplete regimens or miss their doses altogether. Lack of an alternative source to obtain drugs can be detrimental for PwTB if similar situations arise in future. Missed or incomplete doses can lead to delays in cure or no cure, increased risk of development of drug resistance and increased out of pocket expenditure for patients. This also leads to loss of trust in government systems built over several years, and in the larger picture, is a deterrent to our goal of TB elimination.

The proposition to make newer anti-TB drugs accessible only through NTEP is a welcome move, provided the government ensures a reliable and uninterrupted supply of drugs through the programme. Similar to how the Ni-Kshay dashboard on real-time disease burden in the country is visible to the public, the Ni-Kshay Aushadhi dashboard depicting available stock of drugs should also be made accessible. This would ensure accountability and help public health advocates to forecast and flag any potential drug stock-outs. A high level of vigilance from civil society is required to ensure that stock-outs at the regional level are predicted, prevented or mitigated.

The existing TB Mukh Panchayat initiative could be leveraged for the involvement of local self-governments (gram panchayats) in doing the same. Accountability of the programme to provide drugs to all beneficiaries can be attained if people in power are also devoted to the cause. The idea to restrict the availability of newer anti-TB drugs therefore, must be implemented after careful planning and adequate groundwork, in order to prevent any interruption of access to eligible individuals.

from biomass burning that are transported from elsewhere. This results in cities having relatively less aerosol loading than the surrounding areas. "While external sources still contribute to pollution, this barrier alters how pollutants accumulate and disperse, leading to a deceptive pocket of cleaner air within the city and its downwind regions. In contrast, southern Indian cities, with less influence from transported dust and different meteorology, show traditional pollution domes," Dr. Vinoy explains. Less aerosol load

According to Soumya Sethi, a Ph.D. scholar and the first author of the paper, the study makes it clear that the proposed barrier effect seen in cities does not eliminate pollutant transport into the city but only slows down the transport. In the process, the cities in the northwest and northern Indo-Gangetic Plain have relatively less aerosol load while the surrounding areas witness an increase in pollutant build up. The reason why cities in southern India do not have urban aerosol clean islands is because southern cities don't have any large source of pollutants coming from elsewhere to create a large aerosol background, which will allow us to see this rather invisible dome effect. Instead, we see the urban pollution island because cities are still the dominant source of pollutants, says Dr. Vinoy. The urban clean island effect was not studied during monsoon due to non-availability of data due to clouds and rain. The study looked at data for other seasons but found the urban clean islands effect was pronounced and clearly observable only during the pre-monsoon period. During other seasons, a large amount of dust or other sources of aerosols being transported long distances is not seen, making it difficult to see the urban aerosol clean islands effect clearly. "The pre-monsoon time is when the signature is clear, and the urban clean islands effect becomes clearly visible," he said. The urban clean island effect normally disappears during the post-monsoon but is again seen during winter because of dry conditions but not to the extent that is seen during the pre-monsoon period. The study looked at the high dust case and no dust scenario and found the urban clean island effect became pronounced in many cities in northwest and northern Indo-Gangetic Plain in high dust case but not in the no dust scenario. "Our hypothesis is that, irrespective of the season, whenever less transport of aerosol or pollution is happening, you will see urban pollution islands. But whenever the pollution transport from outside is enhanced, you will see a clean island effect," Dr. Vinoy said. "There is an invisible barrier that was not noticed earlier. This barrier is seen only when aerosols from biomass burning or dust are transported from elsewhere." In fact, a few studies carried out over global megacities such as Shanghai, Atlanta and a few European cities have observed clean islands, but attributed it to emissions in suburban regions. "

Indian stock markets log worst weekly losing streak in 25 years, fall another 1%



The Nifty IT bucked the trend and gained 2%, with the likes of Mphasis, Coforge, and Infosys adding around 4%. The Nifty IT bucked the trend and gained 2%, with the likes of Mphasis, Coforge, and Infosys adding around 4%. The Indian stock market fell around 1% on Thursday under heavy selling pressure as foreign investors continued to pull funds and elevated crude oil prices and bond yields kept any optimism in check. With these, both benchmark indices have now ended in red for eight straight weeks — the longest such losing streak in 25 years. The Indian markets remain shut on Friday on account of Gandhi Jayanti.

On Thursday, BSE's Sensex had opened the session relatively muted but started inching downwards from noon to fall over 1.5% at its lowest. However, it recovered some of its losses after that to eventually end 570.59 points or 0.8% lower at 71,909.70. Nifty 50 shed 0.9% to close at 22,421.95. The sharp fall midway had wiped out around Rs 9 lakh crore in investor wealth in about an hour. The India VIX index, which indicates market volatility, climbed 7% to an over three-month high. Automobile stocks were among the worst performers during the day and were a key factor for the sharp fall of the benchmark indices midway as auto sales for September failed to meet market expectations. Bajaj Auto tanked around 8%. Mahindra & Mahindra fell 3% to a 52-week low. Maruti Suzuki India also shed around 5% to fall to a 52-week low. Barring IT, all other sectoral and broader market indices ended deep in red. The Nifty IT bucked the trend and gained 2%, with the likes of Mphasis, Coforge, and Infosys adding around 4%. "The key takeaway for October is that domestic fundamentals alone may not

be sufficient to drive a sustained recovery while global liquidity remains tight," said Vikram Kasat, Chief Business Officer for advisory and dealing at PL Capital. Foreign investors kept selling Indian shares as rising bond yields, elevated crude prices, and a weak currency squeezed any value to be derived out of the Indian market. Oil prices were at \$100 per barrel, while US Treasury yields remained at their highest levels since 2002 amid inflation fears.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) had dumped shares worth around \$1.1 billion on Wednesday, taking cumulative sales during the month to around \$3.8 billion. This came after FPIs had bought Indian shares for two straight months prior. In the first half of September, the financial services sector had seen the sharpest outflows at \$647 million, according to data from the National Securities Depository Ltd. The automobiles sector had seen outflows of \$278 million. Oil and gas and fast moving consumer stocks had also seen significant foreign funds pulled during the period. Data for the latter half of the month has not been released yet.

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) Monetary Policy Committee will meet next week, with the market expecting the committee to hike the repo rate by 25 basis points as inflationary concerns grow. This may be a negative for the market and foreign investors in the near term as it further reduces the interest rate differential between the US and Indian markets in the wake of higher bond yields, according to experts. Interest rates, festive demand key; West Asia weighs A higher interest rate differential attracts FIIs due to higher returns, while a lower interest rate differential accelerates foreign outflows from emerging economies like India, especially when US bond yields provide a much better and risk-free proposition. The festive season this month, meanwhile, will be a big indicator for the demand environment. The situation in West Asia, which has dragged on since late February, has continued to weigh on the Indian markets. Negotiations between the US and Iran have moved back and forth for months without any significant conclusion. US President Donald Trump on Thursday said the US will either "make a deal" or resolve the situation by "maybe by blowing them up", doing little for hopes of a ceasefire held by market participants so that focus could turn to more fundamental factors like earnings and economic growth.

Insurance brokers flag commission caps; policyholders, jobs at risk

The Insurance Brokers Association of India (IBAI) said the measures could undermine insurance brokers, who are legally required to act in the customer's interest, unlike tied agents. Insurance brokers have opposed the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India's (IRDAI's) proposed reforms on insurance distribution, warning that the broad commission caps and a one-third cut in insurers' expense limits could weaken customer service, reduce jobs and slow insurance expansion.

The Insurance Brokers Association of India (IBAI) said the measures could undermine insurance brokers, who are legally required to act in the customer's interest, unlike tied agents. Brokers compare policies, negotiate coverage and help policyholders with claims. The association questioned why an independently appointed broker should receive less remuneration than an insurer's tied agent. It cited regulator data showing 69% of complaints against general insurers relate to claims, while 63% of complaints are decided in customers' favour. "Weakening the one participant whose duty runs to the customer cannot serve the customer," an IBAI spokesperson said.

In its response to IRDAI's consultation paper, "Reforms for Recalibrating Economics of Insurance Distribution", IBAI said it supported measures to protect policyholders, improve transparency and curb mis-selling. These include a ban on compulsory insurance bundling with loans, enforceable suitability requirements, commission clawbacks in proven mis-selling cases, disclosure of related-party payments and identity tagging of salespersons. However, the main objection of brokers is to the proposed framework's more than 30 commission caps across products and distribution channels, along with the proposed reduction in insurers' overall expense limit. Impact on costs, jobs and insurance access IBAI also challenged the basis for the proposed caps. It said IRDAI's figures show that general insurers' total expenses of management fell from 28.2% of premium in 2022-23 to 26.5% in 2024-25, even as premiums grew by about 13% annually. The association said the reported rise in commissions was mainly driven by the reclassification of payments from other expense heads — an issue it said was acknowledged in the consultation paper. Instead of blanket caps,



IBAI recommended conduct and fair-value rules for segments where customers have limited choice. The association warned that the proposals could also affect employment and insurance access in smaller towns. As of March 31, 2025, brokers sponsored 14.81 lakh of India's 27.18 lakh point-of-sale persons and 16,230 of 26,316 motor insurance service providers. Many are self-employed operating in Tier-2 and Tier-3 towns. IBAI said commissions below the cost of servicing customers could force distributors to leave smaller markets. It also warned that cutting insurers' expense limits by more than 30% over five years could lead to reductions in sales, servicing and claims staff.

IBAI urges retention of 2023 expense framework According to IBAI, reduced distribution reach could undermine the government's "Insurance for All by 2047" target. It questioned replacing the 2023 framework before its scheduled 2028 review and without a regulatory impact assessment, particularly after the sector was opened to 100% foreign investment. IBAI has urged IRDAI to retain the 2023 expense-management framework, limit commission caps to credit-linked and other coerced-choice sales, exempt commercial and large risks, and publish a regulatory impact assessment before drafting regulations. The association said it would submit its detailed response by October 25, adding that its opposition was not to reform but to measures that, in its view, may not deliver tangible benefits to policyholders.

(MoSPI), is one of the most important surveys in the country and covers the formal manufacturing sector. Its results provide insights into how the country's — and each state's — manufacturing industries are changing and are key in calculating the GDP and formulating government policy.

The results of the 2024-25 ASI are based on inputs from 86,547 units, with MoSPI estimating that the number of factories in India rose 2.6% in 2024-25 to 2.7 lakh. In 2023-24, the number of factories had risen by 2.7%. As such, this is the first time in over a decade that the number of factories has increased by more than 2% in successive years. With 12.8%, Uttar Pradesh saw the largest increase in the number of factories in 2024-25 to 24,964. However, Tamil Nadu (41,221), Gujarat (33,084), and Maharashtra (27,379) were ahead in the number of factories. While Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra saw a 3% rise in factories in 2024-25, Gujarat saw a 1% reduction. These changes led to Uttar Pradesh raising its share of factories in the country by almost a full percentage point to 9.4%, the highest increase of any state in 2024-25. Meanwhile, Gujarat's share fell the most — by 0.4 percentage points — to 12.4%. Tamil Nadu continues to have the highest share of factories in the country, with the figure unchanged at 15.4%. The story was similar in terms of the number of workers, with Uttar Pradesh seeing a 14% rise, second only to Haryana (15%) among major states. Tamil Nadu continues to have the highest number of factory workers in India, having seen a rise of 5% in 2024-25 to 26.1 lakh. At an all-India level, the number of workers increased 7.3% to 1.67 crore in 2024-25. Uttar Pradesh also saw above-average wage growth of 6.7% in 2024-25, as did Maharashtra (6.1%) and Tamil Nadu (5.6%). In Gujarat, wages only rose 2%, less than half the all-India average of 5.3%.

Tata Sons revamp stokes fresh fury: Trustees question unilateral move



The strategic overhaul of Tata Sons proposed by Tata Trusts has triggered a fresh rift within the Trusts, with two senior trustees questioning why the decision on the company's reorganisation was taken without consulting all members of the Trusts. Srinivasan and Singh said the proposed reorganisation may have serious financial consequences for Tata Sons, SDTT and other stakeholders. "These include the group companies, employees and regulators affected by an amalgamation and a change in Tata Sons' regulatory status," they wrote. Earlier this week, both Srinivasan and Vijay Singh had written to the Charity Commissioner for regulatory action against SDTT over "violation" of various norms. The internal rift points to alleged governance lapses in the Tata Group, where a key decision made without consulting all trustees might impact Tata Sons' regulatory compliance, charitable status of Tata Trusts, and broader financial stability. The two trustees said they were surprised to learn about the proposal and the accompanying public announcement from "public sources", alleging that SDTT held no meeting, and they were not consulted before the issuance of the communication in the trust's name.

The duo has also questioned the manner in which the proposal seeks to direct the Tata Sons board to "consider and approve" the restructuring, arguing that a decision of such legal, regulatory, financial, and commercial significance should be independently evaluated by its board. "Going by the tone of the September 17 meeting and the latest letter from two trustees, Tata Sons directors are likely to oppose it. Even if the board agrees, the RBI (Reserve Bank of India) will have to be convinced," said an observer tracking the Tata Group. Srinivasan is also a member of the Tata Sons board.

"To our knowledge, no meeting of the Trustees of SDTT was held to discuss or deliberate on this issue before the Letter was sent to Tata Sons. We were not consulted, and are not aware that the other Trustees were consulted either. It is accordingly unclear whether the Letter and the proposal it sets out have the support of all the Trustees of SDTT," Srinivasan and Singh said in the letter. "We are equally concerned that press releases are being issued in the name of the 'Tata Trusts' without the Trustees of SDTT having been consulted on their content or authorisation," they wrote. "As no meeting of the Trustees of SDTT authorised the Letter or the Press Release, neither can be said to reflect the collec-

tive, institutional position of SDTT?." They said the proposed reorganisation is a significant decision: involving the merger of two operating companies, RBI approvals, and surrender of Tata Sons' certificate of registration, with substantial impact on the Tata Trusts interests and the business affairs of Tata Sons. "It therefore warrants consideration of its legal, financial, commercial, governance and institutional consequences, and the underlying material and analysis ought to have been made available to the Trustees before any position is expressed in the Trust's name on a matter of this magnitude," the letter said. The stated objective of the reorganisation is to ensure that the resultant entity — Tata Sons — is neither a non-banking financial company (NBFC) nor a core investment company (CIC). They said it is questionable whether it is appropriate for a shareholder to instruct a company's Board to "approve" a matter that the law reserves to the Board's own independent judgment, rather than to propose the course of action for the Board's consideration. Warning that this specific mode of communication could jeopardize the charitable status of the Trusts, they noted: "Trustees should also be conscious of the impact that such a mode of communication could have on the charitable status of the Trusts, if it were construed as an attempt by a public charitable trust to direct the commercial decision-making of a company rather than to exercise the rights available to it as a shareholder," they said. These matters require appropriate analysis and deliberation, including consideration of the interests of Tata Sons, the letter said. The institutional position of SDTT must be distinguished from the views of any individual Trustee, and all Trustees must have the opportunity to consider the relevant material and participate in the decision-making process — particularly where the communication is made in the name of the Trust and carries its authority and reputation, they wrote.

On September 28, the Tata Trusts sent a proposal to the Tata Sons board for the merger of TESS and TCE with Tata Sons. The move, if approved and implemented, would alter the structure and nature of the company and could take it outside the regulatory framework that triggered the RBI's listing directive. The strategy is to make Tata Sons more of an operating company and less of an investment company. The merger would achieve this in two ways. First, Tata Electronics would bring a large manufacturing and semiconductor business directly into Tata Sons. Second, TCE would add an established engineering and consultancy operation with substantial revenues of its own.

Given the power struggle in the group, the million-dollar question is: will the board of Tata Sons agree to the proposal of Tata Trusts. The board, in a majority 4:1 decision, agreed to take steps to go for listing as mandated by the central bank in its meeting on September 17. Four directors — Harish Manwani, Anita M George, Venu Srinivasan and Saurabh Agrawal — okayed the listing process. Noel Tata was the sole director to oppose the plan. SRTT, which belongs to Tata Trusts, is unable to conduct meetings and take decisions in view of the restraining order by the Charity Commissioner. SRTT and SDTT control over 50% stake in Tata Sons.

Finance Ministry sees 7.3% GDP growth in July-September, far higher than RBI



The Ministry of Finance is projecting a GDP growth rate of 7.3% in the July-September quarter, far higher than the 6.4% forecast by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). "Growth momentum has extended into Q2 FY27, though at a more measured pace," the finance ministry said in its Monthly Economic Review report for September, released on Thursday. "Our nowcasting measure, unveiled in the Economic Survey earlier this year, anticipates a real GDP growth rate of 7.3% in the fiscal second quarter," it added. GDP data for July-September will be released by the statistics ministry on November 30. Nowcasting is a type of forecasting method that uses very recent data to constantly update predictions for the immediate future. In this regard, the RBI's forecast of 6.4% was made on August 5, well before statistics ministry data showed on August 31 that GDP growth in the April-June quarter came in at an unexpectedly high 7.8%. This was well above the central bank's forecast of 7%.

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee is set to meet next week and announce its interest rate decision on October 7 — it is increasingly seen raising interest rates by 25 basis points to 5.5% — when the central bank will also update its economic projections, including those for growth and inflation. Currently, it expects GDP growth to average 6.7% in 2026-27. With India's growth exceeding expectations for some time now, numerous economists and organisations have raised their forecasts in light of the rapid April-June figure of 7.8%. On September 23, four international agencies — S&P Global Ratings, Fitch Ratings, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) — hiked their growth forecast for the current fiscal by 40–80 bps to 6.9–7.1%. However, the finance ministry warned on Thursday that India "cannot afford to rest on its post-Covid growth laurels" due to the geopolitical and geoeconomic uncertainty that plagues the world. "It has to be earned every quarter. That is the challenge for policymakers," the report said. Noting that global conditions have "turned unfavourable again", the finance ministry report said that surging oil prices, rising global bond yields, "unsettled" trade relations with the US, and the AI bubble having "not begun its inevitable meaningful deflation" mean that India, and other developing nations, "faces a stiff challenge to attract capital flows". "Indications are, however, that foreign direct investment inflows, on a net basis, should do better this financial year than last. Thus, short-term pressure on Indian assets, including the currency, remains," it further said.

"Over time, as some of these clouds inevitably dissipate, India's intrinsic growth potential will earn the attention it deserves from investors," it said, adding that the country must keep working to become more competition-friendly, rather than business-friendly, as only a competitive economy will become a successful, innovative, and manufacturing economy. "Improved governance and enhanced state ca-

capacity at all levels of the government hold the key to a competitive Indian economy."

Despite its rapid growth, the Indian economy has been facing pressures on the external front, with the exit of foreign capital from domestic financial markets and subdued Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows over the last couple of years exerting tremendous pressure on the rupee. Having almost breached the 97-per-dollar mark in May, the rupee is current trading at 95.98, lifted slightly by the RBI's concessional swap windows drawing \$133 billion as Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) deposits in just three months. So far in 2026–27, foreign investors have sold Indian stocks and bonds to the tune of \$9.36 billion on top of the \$16.59 billion of sales in 2025–26. Meanwhile, the situation has improved slightly on the direct investment front, with net FDI in July rising to an over five-year high of \$7.35 billion, leading to net inflows in the first four months of 2026–27 being \$13.43 billion. This is a vast improvement from 2024–25 and 2025–26 together seeing net inflows of just \$7.7 billion.

PIB debunks fake order claiming all Saturdays are public holidays for public sector banks

New Delhi: The Press Information Bureau's (PIB) Fact Check unit on Thursday dismissed as fake a purported government gazette notification circulating on social media that claims the Centre has declared every Saturday a public holiday for all public sector banks, including the State Bank of India (SBI).

In a post on social media platform X, PIB Fact Check clarified that no such notification has been issued by the Ministry of Finance's Department of Financial Services. The agency said the document being shared online is fake and does not represent any official government order.

"A Gazette circulating on social media, purportedly issued by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Financial Services), claims that the Central Government has declared every Saturday a public holiday for all Public Sector Banks, including SBI. The document being circulated is fake," it said. The fact-checking unit urged the public not to rely on unverified documents circulating on social media and advised citizens to verify government-related information through official channels before sharing it further. "No such notification has been issued by Finance Ministry declaring every Saturday as public holiday for public sector banks," it said. "Flag suspicious content related to the Central Government to PIB Fact Check," it added. The clarification came after the widely circulated document claimed that all public sector banks would remain closed every Saturday following a purported decision by the Central Government. However, PIB Fact Check firmly denied the claim, stating that no notification declaring every Saturday as a public holiday for public sector banks has been issued by the Finance Ministry. PIB also encouraged people to report suspicious content related to the Central Government to its Fact Check team to help curb the spread of misinformation online. This comes after the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) last week deferred its three-day nationwide strike early next week, following an eleventh-hour meeting with the Indian Banks' Association (IBA).

Ishan sets up, bowlers whip it up: India fix gold medal bout with Pakistan



GNS News Agency, Oct 5

India and Pakistan will cross the path once again as they will face-off for the gold medal at the Asian Games on Saturday. Having received a bye till quarterfinals, which was washed out because of rain, defending champions India faced Sri Lanka in the semifinals on Thursday, whom they brushed aside with ease. To put things in context, India are fielding their first-choice T20 squad led by Shreyas Iyer whereas Sri Lanka took the field at Nisshin with three debutants with none of their regulars featuring in the tournament. Having taken a strong team to Asian Games, the gold is definitely India's to lose. But still the unfamiliarity with the conditions and the pitch did have the potential to make it challenging. That they took the field with only Jasprit Bumrah as the lone seamer said much about how well they read the conditions. But going into the final, it is worth keeping an eye on the cracks that are all over the pitch. Having largely remained indoors because of the torrential rains, India were in control the moment they posted 169/7 after being asked to bat first. On a pitch that had plenty of cracks that caused uneven bounce and spinners' extracted square turn, Indian batsmen's high-risk, attacking approach reaped their downfall. But Vaibhav Sooryavanshi ensured his team got a head start with a quickfire 38 off 21 before Ishan Kishan's unbeaten 80 off 46 deliveries took the game away from Sri Lanka. The chase happened to be a non-starter with Sri Lanka folding up for a paltry 45 to give India a massive 125-win and thereby ensuring a medal.

It was a day where India had to thank Ishan. India's top three of Sooryavanshi, Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson came up with their usual intent. But on a pitch that was on the slower side, the Sri Lankan spinners ensured Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson's stay was minimal. While

Sooryavanshi immediately found the range, it was only when Ishan arrived did India take complete control of the game. Captain Shreyas Iyer too struggled for timing, falling early that put India in a spot of bother. But Ishan, walking in at No 5, calmed any nerves with a typically attacking knock. Ishan Kishan in action in the semi-final against Sri Lanka. Ishan Kishan in action in the semi-final against Sri Lanka.

What served Ishan the best on the afternoon was how well he used his reverse-sweeps and explored the off-side field when Sri Lanka spinners tried to take the ball away from him. Whenever they landed in his arc, he happily freed his arms and swung straight, ensuring the pressure never got to India even as wickets kept falling. Like the top-order, Axar Patel, Shivam Dube and Tilak Varma didn't contribute much, leaving the responsibility completely to Ishan. Purely given the conditions, this would be a knock that would give the left-hander plenty too cherish as more than the runs he made, it was his application that matted the most. Chasing 170, which was already a tall-order, premier pacer Jasprit Bumrah straightaway got down to inflicting damage. In the first over, he trapped Sineth Jayawardena with one that appeared to go with the angle before it nipped back in like it happened with Keaton Jennings in 2018. Two deliveries later, he found Sohan de Livera edge with Samson grabbing a diving catch. Those two blows in the first over meant Sri Lanka didn't recover from the calamitous start, as their top three failed to score a run. Of late, India's fielding has been under severe scrutiny, but on the day they ticked boxes on the front. The three run-outs including two direct hits were a testimony to that. Once Bumrah provide the breakthroughs the spinners took over, with Shreyas using the pacer only for one more over as Sri Lanka crumbled without putting up a fight. In all, five of their batsmen were dismissed for zero with Nuwanidu Fernando being the lone one to touch double figures. Axar Patel got two wickets in his three overs, Washington Sundar got one before Ravi Bishnoi finished off the tail with two wickets in the five deliveries he sent down. Sri Lanka will now face Bangladesh for a bronze-medal match. That fixture will be followed by India versus Pakistan gold medal contest. Like Sri Lanka, even Pakistan have a young side but in captain Sahibzada Farhan and Saim Ayub have batsmen who can play an innings that can make the difference. If the pitch continues to remain like this, it could potentially make the contest tight, but India undoubtedly enter the final as firm favourites. Brief Scores: India 169/7 in 20 overs (Ishan Kishan 80 not out, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi 38) beat Sri Lanka 45 in 9.5 overs (Abhishek Sharma 2/2; Jasprit Bumrah 2/7, Axar Patel 2/8) by 124 runs.

India grind out semi-final win to set up Asian Games hockey final with China



The India captain had the acceleration to turn a loose ball into a counterattack, the speed to leave defenders chasing shadows and the engine to keep going long after others had slowed down. But somewhere along the way, the Ferrari became a fleet. "Now, there are 10 Ferraris on the field," Salima had said before the tournament, crediting her teammates for the speed and fitness that have become defining features of this Indian team. On Wednesday night, South Korea got a glimpse of what she meant.

India did not just beat South Korea 2-0 to reach the Asian Games final. They spent 60 minutes squeezing the life out of the semi-final. India dominated possession, repeatedly entered the circle, won penalty corners and, when the goals finally came, refused to take their foot off the accelerator as they set up a gold-medal clash with holders China. For half an hour, though, it was a test of patience. South Korea had managed to do what few had at these Games: keep India scoreless. The Indian attack, which had been feasting on opposition defences through the pool stage, kept coming up against bodies, sticks and a goalkeeper in its way. Nine penalty corners came in the first half without producing a goal. Marijane's team, however, did not panic, or get restless. They kept probing, kept circulating the ball and recycling possession, and kept making Korea defend. Eventually, the pressure told, as Ishika and Salima scored a goal each in the third and fourth quarters, respectively, to hand India a 2-0 win.

By the end, India had 61 per cent possession and had won 12 penalty corners to Korea's three. They had also kept Korea from turning their rare moments of possession into sustained pressure. It was the kind of territorial control that has been the defining feature of India's campaign in Kakamigahara. They entered the semi-final having scored 66 goals in five pool matches, the most by any team in the

tournament, while conceding just three. Deepika had 21 goals, Navneet Kaur 10 and Rutuja Pisal seven. The goals had come through different routes, too: 34 from field play and 30 from penalty corners. But those goals came against opponents who aren't exactly hockey nations. Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Thailand. In a way, the semi-final was a step-up after the lightweight battles in the early rounds, and even though South Korea did not prove to be an attacking threat, their watertight defence tested India's patience. The breakthrough, when it came in the 44th minute, was almost cheeky. Ishika was the injector at a penalty corner, but instead of the expected Deepika drag-flick, Deepika received the ball at the edge of the D and immediately played it back to Ishika. The variation caught Korea off guard. Ishika swiped at the ball and finally broke the resistance. After nine unsuccessful penalty corners in the first half, India had found another way in. And once they did, they did not wait long for the second. In the 48th minute, Salima did what Ferraris do best: accelerate. She drove into the D and tried to squeeze through from the baseline before cutting the ball across the dangerous space between the penalty spot and the goal line. The ball created panic in front of the Korean goal, sticks and bodies converging as the defence scrambled. It ricocheted off a defender and went in, doubling India's advantage.

The numbers tell the story, but they do not quite capture the relentlessness. With less than five minutes left and India already two goals ahead, Rujuta chased down a misplaced pass to make sure India retained possession. There was no immediate danger, no need to sprint. But the ball was there, so Rujuta went after it. It was a small moment, almost insignificant against the two goals and the 12 penalty corners. Yet it was perhaps the clearest illustration of what this team has become. A side that had scored 66 times in the pool phase was not satisfied merely with attacking. A side that had conceded three goals was not content merely with defending a lead. The reward is a final that, before the semi-finals, everybody wanted to see. China, the defending champions and Paris 2024 Olympic silver medallists, had to go through a shootout against hosts Japan, winning 4-2 after the match ended level, to book their place in Friday's gold-medal match. Now, there is no room for what-ifs. Just India, China, the Asian Games gold, and an Olympic ticket waiting at the end of it.

altry-corner opportunity with a powerful strike after India had continued to dominate possession and territory. Pakistan struggled to cope with India's movement in the opening quarter, but the game changed after the break. Sukhjeet Singh made it 3-0 in the 23rd minute, finishing a move that began with Manpreet Singh winning possession before Shilanand Lakra drove down the left and sent the ball across goal. Pakistan finally found their way back into the contest shortly before halftime when Abu Mahmood converted a penalty corner in the 30th minute, cutting the deficit to 3-1. The momentum continued to shift after the interval. Hannan Shahid pulled another goal back in the 45th minute, capitalising on a dangerous ball from the right after India failed to clear their lines. Three minutes into the final quarter, Pakistan completed the comeback. Rana Waheed turned in another delivery from the right to make it 3-3, leaving India facing the prospect of a shootout after having led by three goals. Instead, Abhishek settled the contest with barely seconds remaining. Finding space on the right side of the circle, he got a deflection on his effort that carried the ball beyond Raza and into the net. Pakistan were unable to respond before the final hooter, giving India a 21st consecutive match unbeaten against their neighbours. The result also leaves India one victory away from retaining their Asian Games crown.

India beat Pakistan, move one win away from LA Olympics

Kakamigahara: India held their nerve through a dramatic late Pakistan fightback to beat their arch-rivals 4-3 and reach the men's hockey final at the Asian Games 2026 here at the Gifu Prefectural Green Stadium on Thursday. The defending champions have now confirmed a medal and are one win away from qualifying for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics. The victory not only kept India's title defence alive but also created a piece of Asian Games history, with both the Indian men's and women's hockey teams reaching the final at the same edition of the Games for the first time since 1998.

India appeared to be cruising towards a comfortable victory after racing into a 3-0 lead, only for Pakistan to claw their way back and level the contest early in the final quarter. Abhishek then produced the decisive moment in the final minute, restoring India's lead and sending the team into the title clash.

The Indians made an assertive start and were rewarded with their first goal in the fifth minute. After a succession of penalty corners, Harmanpreet Singh finally found a way through Pakistan goalkeeper Muneeb-ur-Rehman Raza, firing between his legs to put India ahead. Harmanpreet doubled the advantage in the 13th minute, converting another pen-

How Sahil Jadhav won Asian Games gold



Now, South Korea needed another 10 to stay alive. Yonghee Choi's final arrow landed in the nine-ring, handing India a 20-19 shoot-off victory, a second compound archery gold of the day. Jadhav later combined with Kushal Dalal and Ganesh Mani Ratnam Thirumuru for a team gold. Tucked inside the celebration is India's first Olympic quota in archery for Los Angeles 2028, where the mixed team event will make its Olympic debut. Family sacrifice

The story of these two medals stretches well beyond the shooting line in Okazaki. It runs through a family in Satara that kept finding money for an expensive dream, and through a coach who once worked hospital night shifts to fund his archery career. Pravin Sawant never made it to an international stage as an archer. His student now has an Olympic berth. "It's like a dream come true — two dreams, in fact," Jadhav, 25, said. "It's awesome." Jadhav was 19 when he first picked up a bow at a summer camp in Wai. His parents wanted him to try an individual sport and he initially trained in the wooden Indian round before moving to recurve. Sawant, who was coaching in Satara, saw that the youngster's physique and temperament were better suited to compound.

Jadhav had started late by archery standards and spent years waiting for the breakthrough, missing selections and major teams while continuing to train. Then came Covid, his father lost his job, and the family's stretched finances became a question of whether he could continue playing the sport. "The family wanted Sahil to stop competing," Sawant said. "I convinced them to let him continue so that he had a chance to justify his talent." His mother, a teacher, sold her jewellery to help buy Sahil a compound bow. Sawant could relate to the family's situation. His own archery journey took off when he simultaneously worked as a ward boy in an orthopaedic hospital. "I would finish night duty and spend

the day travelling 45 kilometres to Wai to practise, using whatever money I earned from the job to pay for training and equipment," Sawant says. He too had dreamed of representing India. "Who doesn't have that? To play for India," Sawant, who is now a police constable, says. But the dream ran into the realities of his circumstances. "I couldn't do that as a player. Because I didn't get all those things. I didn't get proper coaching. I didn't get the equipment. I didn't get an upgrade in my knowledge from time to time." What he could not find for himself, he began trying to build for others. When travelling to Wai became difficult, he began training at Shahu Stadium in Satara. Other youngsters began joining him, and whenever Sawant finished his police duty, he would train them. The coach who had once squeezed archery into the margins of his working life was slowly building a second career as coach. Aditi Swami and Ojas Deotale emerged from Sawant's Drushti Archery Academy to become world champions in 2023 before playing leading roles in India's compound gold rush at the Hangzhou Asian Games. Aditi won the women's individual and team golds; Ojas returned with three gold medals. Jadhav was the next one to leave Satara, moving to the National Centre of Excellence in Kolkata, but distance did little to alter the relationship with his first coach. If anything, their meetings became rituals of their own. Jadhav, who has a fondness for tea, and Sawant would sit over endless cups whenever they met, talking through training, competitions and what had to change. For Nagoya, they had settled on a number. "52 seconds," Sawant said. "It's the length of our national anthem. We never target the gold, we always play for the anthem."

Yet, on Wednesday, the metaphor acquired an uncanny precision. The mixed team final had been slipping towards a shoot-off after India, which had led through the earlier ends, saw South Korea shoot a perfect 40 in the fourth while India managed 39. The scoreboard read 157-157, leaving four arrows — two each — to decide the gold. When Jadhav stepped onto the shooting line after Chikitha played her part, he seemed to have hesitated for a moment before finding the bulls-eye. It was not the arrow that mathematically won India the gold; South Korea still had one shot left. But it was the arrow that made the final Korean shot unforgiving. When Choi hit a nine, Jadhav lowered his bow as the Indian celebration began. "This is awesome," he said.

Rohit Sharma backs Shubman Gill, keeps 2027 World Cup in sight



Hyderabad: India's experienced opener Rohit Sharma has his eyes firmly set on the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027, with the marquee tournament now on the horizon. Speaking to JioStar, Rohit opened up about Shubman Gill's captaincy, his desire to win another ICC Men's Cricket World Cup for India and the importance of making the most of every opportunity in the lead-up to next year's tournament.

"Shubman Gill has a great cricketing brain, no doubt about that. He has been captaining for about a year now, so it is unfair to judge him as a captain so early. But from what I have seen, he has been impressive. He is very clear about what he wants. That is the most important thing a captain should have. If the captain is clear, the players around him will also be clear. That is what I see with Shubman. He knows what he wants and is moving in the right direction. Of course, any captain needs the support of the players and the staff around him. I am sure that in whatever way I can help him, I will do that," he said. On supporting Gill, Rohit said: "Shubman is the captain, but that does not mean I stay away from him or talk less with him. Ever since he made his debut, we have been moving in the same direction. That is how it should be, and it should not change for any reason. He needs the confidence of the team, knowing that every-

one is moving together. Our job is to support him and take the team forward." On what winning the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027 would mean to him, Rohit said: "It'll be great to win the upcoming ODI World Cup, that's all I'll say. I wouldn't think about full circle and all that now. Winning a World Cup for India is a special feeling. I have experienced that twice in the T20 format. In 2007 I was just a young kid of 20 years. Of course, it's a big tournament, you've won a World Cup in your first year, it's great. Then we won the Champions Trophy in 2013, and after that there was a long period, almost for 11 years, where we couldn't win an ICC title.

"So that's why, when we won the T20 World Cup in 2024, there was a realisation of how important it was. So that feeling is still inside to a great extent. So, I know what winning a World Cup feels like. So that's why I want that feeling back. The fun we had, you can't describe what that feeling is, because you can't match that. That's why winning that World Cup is very important to me, because I want to feel that feeling again, which we felt recently," the opener said. On the road to the 2027 ODI World Cup and why staying in the present matters more than looking too far ahead, Rohit said: "What I want to manifest is that I keep myself capable enough until 2027, so keep myself fit, keep working hard, and keep performing well in every tournament that comes up. This is what I need to think about and this is what I need to do. So, I think my immediate goal is that whatever is in front of me right now, I do that properly. Because thinking about next October right now is not going to help me play my game. 'What will help me is stay in the present, keep ticking every box that comes my way, and then keep moving forward. In life, I've progressed step by step like this, so right now I have to do the same. So basically, what I mean is that I don't need to change anything. The way my journey has been so far, I want to keep driving it the same way. Keep working hard on my batting, keep working hard on my fitness, help the boys in the team, give input wherever it's needed, that's all," Rohit explained.

How Hyderabad coach Vivek Teja helped Chikitha script Asian Games golden double



Hyderabad: He is not a designated support staff member of the Indian archery contingent at the ongoing Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. Yet Hyderabad-based human performance and transformation coach Vivek Teja has quietly played his part in Indian archer Chikitha Taniparthi's golden double in the women's team and mixed events. "It all

started about 10 months ago when Chikitha, who comes from a poor farming family in Peddapalli district of Telangana, felt that she needed the right kind of guidance and mentoring ahead of the 2026 Asian Games," Vivek told Telangana Today.

"My work with Chikitha focused on her overall preparation, including strength and conditioning, nutrition, supplementation and mental resilience. I worked on her strength, stability, balance and core strength, which are very important for an archer to hold the bow steadily, maintain her position and stay strong throughout competition," he said. "I also worked with her on proper nutrition, making sure she was eating balanced meals, getting the right nutrients and following appropriate supplementation to support her training and recovery," Vivek said. "I have also helped her develop mental resilience — staying calm, focused and confident during competitions and not getting distracted by pressure or outside factors," he said. "When I first started training Chikitha, she did not have the same level of muscular strength and physical conditioning that she has today. So, we started with a proper strength and conditioning programme and gradually built her strength, stability, balance and endurance," said Vivek, who is also an internationally recognised martial arts exponent. "There was an effort to ensure her competitive mindset, how to stay mentally strong, stay calm and focused, and not get distracted by pressure or things happening around her," he said. "Chikitha is extremely disciplined and hardworking. We worked very hard with the Asian Games as an important goal, and winning two gold medals is a tremendous achievement. I am extremely happy and proud that I could play a small part in her preparation," said the 33-year-old mentor. "I am also very happy that she has secured her place for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. That is a very big milestone, and I am excited to see what she can achieve in the future," Vivek said.

Hero Flydubai passenger credits this TV show for helping him save jetliner from crash



Flydubai news: A plummeting plane, an altercation in the cockpit and a hero passenger who drew on his learnings from years of watching a TV show that recreates major air disasters to save the plane that plunged 17,000 feet.The Flydubai flight incident has made headlines worldwide. While Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar is being praised for his quick thinking despite being severely injured, social media users are equally intrigued by the story of a 'hero' passenger who reportedly saved the plane from crashing after drawing on something he had learned from watching a TV show, Air Crash Investigation, also known as Mayday: Air Disaster. It's a Canadian documentary series about aviation accidents.

A Canadian docuseries Mayday helped passenger avert air crashThe passenger named Yaniv Hayoun claimed that he rushed into the cockpit after Machchhar opened the cockpit access door despite being injured and confronted the alleged attacker.In a viral video, Yaniv can be seen meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and recounting the incident. He said, "In my opinion, the stabbed pilot managed to open the cockpit before he collapsed." He added, "When I went inside, I saw the attacker on the instrument panel between the two seats. There were no pilots in the seats. One was on the floor, one was on the instruments, and someone else had come in with me."Explaining how he helped regain control of the aircraft, Yaniv said, "I grabbed

the attacker, put him in a chokehold, and dragged him out first."A curious Netanyahu asked, "What was he doing on those machines?"Yaniv replied, "He was trying to destroy the instruments to disable the plane." He continued, "We got him out. It all happened in seconds and the plane's nose was pitched like this," he said, gesturing downwards to indicate the aircraft diving towards the ground.

He added, "I called out to a bunch of Israelis on board, and two other guys came over. We pinned him down. I jumped back, grabbed the controls and started pulling back the handles."Netanyahu then asked, "You are easing the handles back? Did you know how?"It was at this point that Yaniv revealed that watching the Canadian docuseries had helped him understand what to do. "Yes. I watch Air Crash Investigation, Mr Prime Minister," he said.Yaniv continued, "The plane started to level out a bit, and then the pilot told me he was taking over the controls from there."

What is Air Crash Investigation?

First aired in 2003, Air Crash Investigation has so far aired hundreds of episodes. The documentary series, produced by Cineflix, examines air crashes, near-crashes, fires, hijackings, bombings and other aviation disasters.The series delves into the events that led to each crisis or disaster, examining their causes as determined by official investigating bodies. It also explores measures that could help prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.The programme uses reenactments, interviews, eyewitness testimony, computer-generated imagery, cockpit voice recordings and official reports to reconstruct the sequence of events behind each incident.

What happened on the Flydubai flight?

Flydubai fight from Dubai to Tel Aviv faced a mid-air emergency when one pilot allegedly attacked the other and apparently tried to crash the plane carrying 174 people. The co-pilot reportedly stabbed Captain Smit Machchhar, who managed to open the cockpit door, allowing crew and passengers to enter the cockpit and bring the situation under control.The plane made an emergency landing in Saudi Arabia.While the identity of the co-pilot who allegedly attacked the captain has not been disclosed, Israeli officials have identified him as an Omani national.

Nivin Pauly, Soori's film is a messy, AI-overloaded affair



Yezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai movie review: Ok, first things first — I think Yezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai (Seven Seas Seven Hills) can be used by those advocating against the uncontrolled, mindless use of artificial intelligence (AI) to show how blindly dependent people can be on it, diminishing their natural abilities.It would be an understatement to say that director Ram has employed AI-generated visuals in his latest fantasy drama. More precisely, Ram has thoughtlessly interspersed AI-generated visuals in Yezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai — seemingly without a proper quality check — giving the impression that the director thought he only needed to make so much of the film, and could simply leave the rest for AI to take care of.

On a fateful Diwali night, a man (Soori), returning from Dubai, meets a stranger (Nivin Pauly) in an empty train compartment on his way to his native place. His initial excitement about meeting his son in person for the first time — since he left for Dubai when his wife was pregnant and couldn't get leave for eight years — quickly turns to fear as the "weird" Nivin starts following him.As they talk inside the hurtling train, Nivin reveals that he is 8,822 years old and has been searching for Anjali, his lover from her past "four lives." Meanwhile, Soori realises that his destiny has become intertwined with Nivin's — not because of good luck, but because of bad luck. With nowhere to run and no one to turn to, Soori begins making futile attempts to save himself.A chaotic mix of realism and fantasyYezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai feels like no one involved in the movie, especially Ram, had a clue what they were doing. It isn't that the fantasy drama is bad in the conventional sense, but it's all over the place, and not in a good way.One of the biggest issues with the film is the director's lack of clarity on whether to give it the tone of a fantasy or a realistic drama. If one were to assume that he was aiming for a blend of both, it makes Yezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai appear even sloppier, like a mediocre mish-mash of both styles.

In the scenes set inside the train, Ram mostly gives it the texture of a gritty action drama, whereas when it cuts to the flashback, it becomes slightly fantastical. However, even in moments where he should have gone fully fantastical, Ram maintains restraint, making one feel as if he is haunted by his signature style of highly dramatic realism.Don't Miss | Dorothy movie review: Karthik Subbaraj's film will make everyone uncomfortableAt times, Yezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai even resorts to Mickey Mousing, almost as if compensating for the lack of humour in its supposedly comedic moments and lines, further diminishing the movie's already limited quality.

Deep ideas lost in executionAlthough the film's basic themes of temporal disorientation, slight memory erosion from having lived thousands of years, guilt over the collective sins of one's species, and universal egalitarianism are fascinating and hold immense potential, writer-director Ram is as clueless as one can be and struggles throughout to weave everything into an already fragile story.None of the characters in the film has names. Each of them can be seen as the embodiment of various human emotions and natures. Soori is the one who survives everything, while Nivin Pauly works to bring order, where even a rat gets justice if wronged. Anjali, meanwhile, is the amalgamation of everything nice, beautiful, and sweet, like music.ICYMI | When actor MR Radha shot MGR: How a 1967 assassination attempt reshaped Tamil NaduAt one point, we see the immortal Nivin sleeping through a monstrous thunderstorm, suddenly waking up upon hearing the sound of Anjali's cycle and sensing

its light from afar. Yezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai features several such moments, highlighting the power of love transcending centuries and lives.Even though Ram tries to make it appear similar to the essence of F Scott Fitzgerald's line, "There are all kinds of love in the world, but never the same love twice" from his short story The Sensible Thing, the eternal love in Yezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai never manages to pull at our heartstrings or even create a slight impact, failing to make us want to root for them.Must Read | Digger movie review: After 30 years of defying gravity, Tom Cruise takes his biggest leapFrom disastrous slow-motion to soulless dialogues, pointless plot devices, and uneven narrations, the movie is marred by poor creative choices. Aside from the metaphors and philosophies, Ram even stuffs in references to Hulk and She-Hulk that add nothing worthwhile.Nivin Pauly and Soori try hard, but no useNivin Pauly's dialogue delivery is as bad as Ram's writing and direction. Although Anjali doesn't have much to do in the film, she at least brightens up the frame every time she appears.Both Soori and Nivin, nevertheless, deserve commendation for the physical effort they put into the movie, as they are almost constantly engaged in some form of action within the confines of an unclean train compartment. However, all those efforts are ultimately wasted on a movie that clearly doesn't know what to do with them.Do you remember that iconic moment from Pranchiyettan and the Saint (2010), where Pranchiyettan (Mammootty) is walking through a painting exhibition and tells his friend, "Did you understand anything? All these (paintings) have big meanings." Even though he is just as clueless as his friends about what any of the works imply, he believes that they carry significant meaning because... well, that's how we have been taught.That's pretty much how I felt watching Yezhu Kadal Yezhu Malai. Ram, or anyone who's going to rave about the fantasy drama for any reason, can make tall claims about the movie, saying it carries deep allegories, metaphors, and philosophies. But if a film can't communicate those properly to viewers of all walks of life and ends up simply boring them, it's done.If people like a work, they will find the inner meanings, ethos, underlying themes, and more themselves. They will formulate theories and build on them by reading or listening to more. But if a movie can't keep them hooked and instead becomes a cinematic endurance test, any expectation that people will explore its subtexts is simply unrealistic.It will definitely sting more when such a work comes from a director like Ram who gave us many memorable movies in the past.

Bhagyashrii Borse pens heartfelt note for Mohanlal during 'Operation Ganga' shoot

Chennai: Actress Bhagyashrii Borse, who plays the female lead in actor Mohanlal's upcoming film, 'Operation Ganga', has now told the Malayalam superstar that it felt like a blessing to be his co-actor.Taking to her Instagram page to post a picture of herself with her 'Operation Ganga' co-star Mohanlal, she wrote, "Dearest @mohanlal sir, To be your co-actor feels like a blessing. Every day of shoot, I get to see cinema through your eyes and learn from you.. you are truly gifted sir. #OperationGanga #AgentOnDuty."

Sources close to the unit of 'Operation Ganga' said that the crew was in Georgia filming some important sequences for the film.For the unaware, the film, which is being directed by National Award-winning filmmaker Vishnu Mohan, was tentatively being referred to as L367 before being titled 'Operation Ganga'.

'Operation Ganga' refers to India's evacuation mission launched to bring back Indian citizens, including thousands of students, who were stranded in Ukraine following the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war.'Operation Ganga', which has the tagline 'A Nation's Promise' will be a film on one of the most daring and intriguing operations on international borders by India.Apart from Malayalam superstar Mohanlal and Bhagyashrii Borse, the film will also feature Bollywood star Arjun Rampal and actors Parthiban & Aadil Hussain



Drishyam 3 Movie Review, Rating and Release Live Updates: Ajay Devgn is returning as Vijay Salgaonkar with Drishyam: The Conclusion, the third and final chapter of the Hindi Drishyam franchise, which is set to arrive in cinemas on October 2. Directed by Abhishek Pathak, the film brings back Tabu, Shriya Saran, Ishita Dutta, Rajat Kapoor and

Kamlesh Sawant, while Jaideep Ahlawat and Prakash Raj join the cast.The new film picks up the story of Vijay and his family after the events of Drishyam 2. The franchise has revolved around Vijay's efforts to protect his family after an accidental killing and his elaborate attempts to stay ahead of the investigation. The third film introduces another threat to the secret the Salgaonkars have managed to protect, putting Vijay's carefully constructed plans under renewed pressure.

What makes Drishyam: The Conclusion particularly significant is that the Hindi franchise is now moving on a different narrative path from the Malayalam series starring Mohanlal. While the first two Hindi films were remakes of the Malayalam Drishyam films, the new Hindi instalment has its own story.At the trailer launch, Ajay Devgn said the Hindi film has a "completely different script" and is not a version with minor changes. He explained that while the first two Hindi films were inspired by the Malayalam originals, the third instalment takes an entirely different route.He also revealed that he wanted Mohanlal and filmmaker Jeethu Joseph to watch the film and give their approval.According to Sacnilk, Drishyam: The Conclusion has generated nearly Rs 38 crore in advance bookings for the extended opening weekend, including blocked seats, while the figure excluding blocked seats stands at Rs 28.49 crore. For Day 1, advance bookings have crossed Rs 19 crore, with Delhi-NCR among the strongest markets. The film has also recorded more than 11 lakh tickets sold across around 36,000 shows.The film benefits from a national holiday and a solo release, with no major Bollywood film releasing alongside it on October 2. Trade expectations have placed its opening-day potential in the Rs 40 crore-plus range, although the final collection will depend on actual footfalls after release.

Single mother who runs tiffin service gets Rs 12.5 lakh US president question wrong

KBC 18: Amitabh Bachchan-hosted Kaun Banega Crorepati 18 saw Almas Khan from Jaipur take the hot seat during the show's India Challenger Week in the September 30 episode. A single mother of two, Almas has worked as a teacher and later as an assistant sales manager while continuing her education to support her two sons. She also runs a tiffin service to make ends meet.Unlike the traditional Fastest Finger First format, India Challenger Week features a rapid buzzer round, followed by the Jaldi 5 mini-game. The two fastest contestants compete against each other, with the first contestant to answer five questions correctly earning a spot on the hot seat.Almas Khan emerged victorious in the Jaldi 5 round after answering five questions correctly, securing her place on the KBC 18 hot seat. Since she had already answered five questions in the mini-game, her main game began directly with the sixth question, worth Rs 25,000.Almas had three lifelines available to her — Audience Poll, Sanket Soochak and MahaFlip.Check this space tomorrow to learn more about the toughest question on the latest episode of Kaun Banega Crorepati 18. We will be bringing you the question and the story behind it.

Almas Khan opens up about her strugglesDuring her conversation with Amitabh Bachchan, Almas spoke about the difficulties she had faced while raising her two sons as a single parent. She said she continued her education while bringing up her children and took up different jobs to support the family.She also spoke about running a tiffin service alongside her work.Recalling the difficult phase of her life, Almas said she had travelled extensively by bus for work and would return home at night to prepare food for her tiffin service.She said, "I have travelled in crowded buses and would come home at night to prepare food for my tiffin service. It was very difficult. There was a time when I didn't even have money to buy food."Almas said her children, who are in college and also work as freelancers, contributed money towards her trip to KBC. She said their gesture left her emotional. She told Bachchan that one of her dreams was to buy a house for her family.Almas steadily progressed through the game after starting with the Rs 25,000 question. She used the Audience Poll for Rs 2 lakh question, and went with the answer supported by the audience.For the next question, worth Rs 3 lakh, Almas used her MahaFlip lifeline. She replaced the original question with another one and answered it correctly, taking her winnings forward.She then reached the Rs 5 lakh question, for which she used the Sanket Soochak lifeline. Almas successfully answered the question and secured Rs 5 lakh. She then entered the Super Sandook round.Almas Khan answers Rs 12.5 lakh question incorrectlyDuring the Super Sandook, Almas answered five questions correctly and earned the opportunity to choose a lifeline. Instead of taking the money, she opted for the 50:50 lifeline, giving herself another lifeline for the questions ahead.She later used the 50:50 lifeline for the question worth



Rs 7.5 lakh. After two options were eliminated, she answered the question correctly and continued playing.Almas then reached the 12th question, which was worth Rs 12.5 lakh. The question for Rs 12.5 lakh asked:

What is the first common first name of American President?

The options were:

- A. John
- B. George
- C. William
- D. James

Almas chose B. George. However, her answer was incorrect. The correct answer was D. James.As a result, Almas lost the opportunity to take her winnings to Rs 12.5 lakh and ended her KBC journey with Rs 5 lakh.The first name James has been shared by six US presidents, making it the most common first name among American presidents. They are James Madison, the fourth president of the United States; James Monroe, the fifth; James K. Polk, the 11th; James Buchanan, the 15th; James A. Garfield, the 20th; and James Earl Carter Jr., better known as Jimmy Carter, the 39th president. While Carter was popularly known as Jimmy, his given name was James Earl Carter Jr. This makes James the first name of six US presidents, more than any of the other options given in the question.

