

ATM heist in Shamshabad: Burglars decamp with Rs 32 lakh cash

Hyderabad: Burglars targeted an Axis Bank ATM at Satamrai in Shamshabad on the suburb and reportedly decamped with around Rs 32 lakh in cash in the early hours of Tuesday.

According to preliminary information, the burglars entered the ATM centre after midnight on Monday and used gas cutters to break open the ATM machine. After accessing the cash compartment, they allegedly removed the money and fled from the spot.

The theft came to light after customers found the machine damaged and informed the bank officials.On receiving information, the Shamshabad police immediately reached the location and inspected the spot.

Government explains Rs 5,420 crore true-up charges amid power demand

Hyderabad: The State government sought to justify the proposed Rs 5,420 crore true-up charges on consumers by pointing to a sharp rise in power demand and a steep fall in hydel generation caused by drought conditions.

During his visit to Pulichinthala project on Tuesday, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka claimed that the State government was maintaining uninterrupted 24-hour quality power supply despite an additional load of nearly 8,000 MW. Peak demand, which was around 15,000 MW earlier, now rose to nearly 20,000 MW.



Harish Rao demands withdrawal of Rs 5,420 crore power charges

Hyderabad: BRSLP deputy leader and former Minister T Harish Rao demanded the immediate withdrawal of the proposed Rs 5,420 crore true-up electricity charges to be recovered from consumers. He warned of a statewide agitation if the government failed to reverse the decision and asked the Congress government to bear the burden arising out of power purchases.He appealed to Left and other opposition parties to join the BRS-led movement in support of the people.Speaking to the media at Telangana Bhavan on Tuesday, Harish Rao said the government proposed to collect the charges through electricity bills from November, imposing an additional burden on consumers during the Dasara and Diwali festive season.

Telangana CM orders notices to KCR, family over ‘missing’ land

Hyderabad, Oct 6 (IANS) Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Tuesday directed officials to issue notices to former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and his family members over 45 acres of ‘missing’ land

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Tuesday ordered officials to identify ‘missing’ 45 acres of land in survey number 325 at Erravalli village in Siddipet district, where former Chief Minister and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) president K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) has his farmhouse.

The Chief Minister held a review of the lands concerning Erravalli and the adjacent Venkatapuram vil-

lages in Markook Mandal, Siddipet district

As per the official records, a total of 388 acres of land is recorded under survey number 325 in Erravalli village.The officials briefed the Chief Minister on the survey details for both villages and the details of the survey, which identified only 343 acres.

According to a statement from the Chief Minister’s Office (CMO), 45 acres of land are missing from the records for the particular survey number.

The Chief Minister instructed the officials to issue notices to former Chief Minister KCR and his family members, whose lands adjoin the area and submit their rev-

enue records to the government.

CM Revanth Reddy said that the government is planning to distribute the land in survey number 325 to eligible local farmers.He also ordered the construction of a "Telangana Martyrs' Colony" within survey number 325 for the families of those who sacrificed their lives during the Telangana movement.The officials were also directed to allot housing plots to the martyrs' families and develop a colony with all necessary amenities.The Chief Minister suggested that the responsibility of constructing the colony be entrusted to the Housing Department. Orders were also issued to complete the construction of the Martyrs' Colony by June 2.



Hyderabad, Oct 6 (IANS) The breakfast scheme for 27 lakh students in government schools in Telangana is the world’s largest initiative, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said on Tuesday.

He said that providing breakfast every day to 27 lakh students is an initiative that does not exist any-

where else in the world and that Telangana is the first to implement such an innovative programme.The Deputy CM said the nutritious food being provided to students should not be viewed as free, but as an investment in the state’s future human resources. He noted that only when children remain healthy and study well can they contribute significantly to the state’s future production and thereby support the growth of the GSDP.Vikramarka and Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy laid the foundation stone for a centralised community kitchen to be constructed at a cost of Rs 9.6 crore at Munagala village in Kodad Assembly

Breakfast for 27 lakh school children in Telangana is world’s largest initiative: DyCM

constituency of Suryapet district for school students.Addressing a public meeting organised on the occasion, Vikramarka said the greenfield kitchen at Munagala would be equipped with modern technology and hygienic facilities to provide hot breakfast from a single kitchen to nearly 60,000 students studying in 1,020 schools.He said breakfast was being provided six days a week to students studying in government schools across the state. Milk is being served on three days and ragi porridge on the other three days.He said that while preparing food even for 100 people at home is difficult, providing breakfast simultaneously to 27 million students is an initiative that does not exist anywhere else in the world and is a reflection of the Telangana government’s humane approach.



Severe drought conditions in 320 mandals of Telangana

Hyderabad, Oct 6 (IANS) Preliminary assessments indicate severe drought conditions across 320 mandals in 18 districts of Telangana due to the El Nino effect, officials said on Tuesday.

Telangana has a total of 621 mandals across 33 districts.

Telangana Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju directed officials to immediately prepare a comprehensive report on the drought conditions prevailing in the state.

He held a review meeting regarding the State Disaster Management Department at the Dr B.R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat.

The Chief Secretary instructed officials to gather comprehensive data from various departments—including Planning, Revenue, Groundwater, Agriculture, Panchayat Raj, and Rural Water Supply—and to identify drought-affected mandals in accordance with established norms.

He advised that the comprehensive drought report be prepared by taking into account 12 standard parameters, including the rainfall recorded during the Southwest Monsoon season (June to September).

The Chief Secretary directed officials to undertake the process of declaring drought-affected mandals based on government regulations and prescribed standards, and to prepare a comprehensive report on the matter by the end of October.

He also instructed officials to prepare a detailed report containing all necessary information for the all-party meeting that the state government has decided to convene regarding the impact of El Nino.

Principal Secretary (Finance) Sandeep Kumar Sultania, Principal Secretary (Disaster Management) Rahul Bojja, and Secretaries Dasari Harichandana and Gaurav Uppal, among others, participated in the meeting.

The state Cabinet, at its meeting last week, decided to convene an all-party meeting on the impact of El Nino and seek suggestions from political parties before finalising its response.

A Cabinet sub-committee has also been asked to assess the situation and submit a detailed report.

It was also decided by the Cabinet that a delegation of ministers will visit Delhi to meet Central ministers and submit a comprehensive report. The Centre will be requested to declare the affected mandals as drought-hit and provide financial assistance to the state to take up relief measures.

Telangana recorded 17 per cent deficit rainfall during the southwest monsoon, which ended on September 30.

Officials had earlier said that around 235 mandals were facing drought-like conditions.

Owaisi alleges conspiracy to disenfranchise Muslims through misuse of Form 7

Hyderabad, Oct 6 (IANS) Voicing concern over misuse of Form 7 during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls, AIMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi on Tuesday alleged that there is a deep conspiracy to delete Muslim voters through fraudulent and bulk submission of applications under it.

The Hyderabad MP complained to the Telangana Chief Electoral Officer, C. Sudharsan Reddy, regarding misuse of Form 7 for targeted deletion of Muslim voters in Goshamahal Assembly constituency in Hyderabad.

He brought to the notice of the CEO that the Goshamahal Assembly constituency, which falls under his parliamentary constituency, has witnessed the apparent misuse of Form 7 applications in a manner that specifically targets Muslim voters.

In a letter to the CEO, Owaisi complained that at polling station number 28, Thudumu Janardhan submitted 122 Form 7 applications. In these forms, the names of the voters against whom deletion is sought are pre-printed, while the applicant has written his own name and contact number as the person filing the Form 7, he said.

"Upon enquiry, we found that the person who filed the Form 7 is a sympathiser of the BJP party. This makes it clearly evident that Form 7 is being used to target Muslim voters specifically," he noted.



BRS leader arrested over banner targeting Telangana CM

Hyderabad, Oct 6 (IANS) Telangana Police on Tuesday arrested BRS leader Manne Krishank in a case registered against him for a banner installed outside a hospital in Secunderabad with allegations against Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and his family.

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) social media convenor was arrested from his residence and was taken to Gopalpuram Police Station of Malkajigiri Commissionerate.

A case was registered against him and others on Monday on a complaint lodged by Sai Kumar, a functionary of the ruling Congress party.The First Information Report (FIR) was registered against Krishank and others under sections 353 (2) and 352 of the Bharat Nyaya Sंहिता (BNS).

A banner reading “Congratulations, Revanth Garu-for Rs.13,200 crore” had appeared outside a hospital in Secunderabad on Sunday. The same day, police arrested two BRS leaders from Secunderabad Cantonment for installing the banner

Krishank had alleged that Medicover Hospital was sold for around Rs 13,200 crore and accused the Chief Minister’s family of using the transaction to convert black money into white.Meanwhile, the BRS leader said he was arrested simply because the ruling party lacked the guts to provide an answer.“I believe this is the first time someone has been arrested for holding a press conference at Telangana Bhavan. I revealed evidence and questioned the fact that individuals serving as directors in Medicover and Max Bupa are also directors in the schools being built by Revanth Reddy’s daughter. I questioned how land worth Rs 200 crore was allocated to Tesseract, a company owned by Revanth Reddy’s brother.



KTR sends legal notice over false news about passport seizure



Hyderabad, Oct 6 (IANS) Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K. T. Rama Rao has sent a legal notice to a leading vernacular daily for allegedly publishing false news that the ACB court ordered the temporary seizure of his passport in the Formula E race case.

Rama Rao posted on X that his lawyer has sent a legal notice to the Telugu daily.

He said it was regrettable that a prominent newspaper with 50 years of history published false news without verifying the facts.

"I demand that the said false news be immediately withdrawn from all media and an unconditional apology be issued," he said.

Rama Rao’s office issued a statement about the legal notice

sent to the newspaper. Stating that the court did not give any orders, the legal notice has asked the newspaper to withdraw the news, publish a clarification with the same prominence and issue an unconditional apology within 48 hours.It said that the news published in the newspaper dated September 29 is contrary to facts and misleads readers.Advocate N Lalita Reddy, on behalf of Rama Rao, sent the legal notice to the newspaper’s editor, publisher, printer, resident editor and the concerned reporter.The legal notice mentioned that the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) investigating officer filed a memo in the special court seeking appropriate orders about Rama Rao’s passport. It stated that characterising this memo as a court order was incorrect.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Indian women excel at Asian Games

A key takeaway from India's report card at the just-concluded Asian Games in Japan's Aichi-Nagoya has been the standout performance of its women's contingent. Overall, India stood fourth, after China, Japan and South Korea, with an impressive medal tally of 85—21 gold, 27 silver and 37 bronze. Of the 21 gold medals, 11 came from women's events and three from mixed ones. Together, 234 women were in the 495-strong squad that participated in the Games. What makes the success of Indian women special is that they have overcome patriarchal prejudices at home and outside and fought several odds, including inadequate training facilities, to earn a place in the field and set new standards. Some came from extremely poor economic backgrounds, worked their way to the top, often facing bias along the way, and made the country proud with mind-boggling performances. Girls from Mizoram, Jharkhand, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala have put up inspiring performances at the competition. This must serve as an eye-opener for the people of Punjab and Haryana, the two States with skewed sex ratios. Savita Punia, the women's hockey goalkeeper who fought off a penalty stroke in the final against China to help win the gold, is from Sirsa in Haryana, which in May this year recorded an abysmal sex ratio at birth of 883 girls per 1,000 boys. It's common knowledge in Haryana that pregnant women travel to Rajasthan to get rid of their female foetuses. The women's cricket team set the ball rolling by winning India's first gold.

The quartet —Kiran Pahal, Prachi Choudhary, MR Poovamma and Vithya Ramraj— won the gold medal in the 4x400m relay, and the women's hockey team too struck gold, for the first time in 44 years, earning themselves a spot in the 2028 Olympics. Gold medal-winning teenage archer Kumkum Mohod has emerged as the real star, changing the way Indian recurve will be looked at from now on. Pranavi Urs became the first Indian woman to win an individual Asian Games golf gold. Boxers Lovlina and Parveen Hooda won gold medals. Neeru Dhanda, who was hospitalised shortly before the Games after a bout of influenza, became the first Indian woman to win an Asian Games individual trap gold. For Suchika Tariyal, sport had become a response to abuse and trauma as a child. At 36, she stood on the Games podium with a bronze in mixed martial arts (MMA), a sport that was making its debut in Japan. These achievements demonstrate the potential of Indian women to become sporting powerhouses. A sustained investment in women's sport can further boost the medal tally. Behind these success stories were women who endured long waits and ended them, bemoaned their setbacks and returned, overcame illness and injury, and in some cases simply refused to let personal traumas and systemic hurdles halt their journeys.

Commissioner directs officials to ensure quality and timely completion of UPHC works.



Karimnagar October 06, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): Karimnagar Municipal Corporation Commissioner Praful Desai has directed officials and the contractor to expedite the construction of Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) at Kattarampur and Saptagiri Colony, while adhering to prescribed quality standards.

During an inspection of the ongoing works on Tuesday, Mr. Desai reviewed the progress of the buildings along with officials of the Engineering and Health departments. He instructed the engineering officials and the contractor to complete the works within the stipulated timeframe without compromising on quality. Mr. Desai said the civic body was constructing UPHCs to bring basic and quality healthcare services closer to residents. He directed officials to accord priority to the construction of the centres and ensure that there was no delay in completing the works. Engineering and Health department officials and staff accompanied the Commissioner during the inspection.

Shyamala Attends Grand Opening of Star Fitness Studio's 7th Branch in Boduppall



“BODUPPAL, OCTOBER 6 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“The grand opening ceremony of the seventh branch of Star Fitness Studio was held in Boduppall 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 Boduppall. “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 Boduppall 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.

ADALAH team attends workshop on strengthening grassroots social work.

Karimnagar October 06, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): The ADALAH team from Karimnagar participated in a two-day leadership and capacity-building workshop for NGOs organised by the Association for Socio-Economic Empowerment of the Marginalised (ASEEM) at the Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad on October 2 and 3. The residential programme brought together NGO representatives, social activists and community workers for sessions on leadership development, organisational management, community engagement, advocacy, legal resources, welfare schemes and entitlements, and engagement with public institutions.

M.A. Mujeeb Ayyub, paralegal and law student who led the ADALAH team, said continuous learning and organisational capacity were essential for effective grassroots social work. “Good intentions become more effective when supported by knowledge, leadership, organisational capacity and collective action,” he said. He said the programme could particularly benefit young people, students, community volunteers and others interested in social work by helping them understand community issues, rights and entitlements and avenues for constructive engagement. The ADALAH team comprised Mr. Ayyub, Advocate Ehtesham Ul Haq, law student and social activist Mohammed Shabbir, Advocate Mohammed Misbahuddin



of Peddapalli, social activist and student leader Mohammed Nehal, social activist Syed Touseef Ali, Advocate Mohammed Mubeen of Karimnagar, and social activist and IT professional Masood Ali Firasat of Manikonda, Hyderabad. The team thanked ASEEM, S.Q. Masood, Ali Asghar and the facilitators and organisers for providing a platform for learning and interaction. It said the experience would encourage greater collaboration and capacity-building among grassroots workers.

Immediate action required on '22-A' prohibited land issues



“Ensure full justice for eligible individuals” “Do not make farmers run from pillar to post” “Resolve all applications within a week” “Government Advisor, Rural MLA, and Collector hold review meeting with revenue officials” “Corresponded Ananthoji kalidas” “Nizamabad, October 5 : Government Advisor P. Sudarshan Reddy directed officials to respond promptly to complaints and petitions from the public regarding '22-A' prohibited lands. On Monday evening, he held a review meeting on revenue-related matters at the Integrated District Offices Complex alongside Nizamabad Rural MLA Dr. R. Bhupathi Reddy and Collector Ila Tripathi, attended by revenue officials and Tahsildars from all mandals. He emphasized that applicants should not be made to make repeated rounds of government offices regarding '22-A' lands. He advised officials to resolve petitions expeditiously by adhering to 'Bhu-Bharathi' Act guidelines and thoroughly examining revenue records. He insisted that applicants must not face any hardship and that officials should take the initiative to

ensure complete justice for eligible persons. A clear deadline was set to resolve all applications within a week to ten days. Similarly, he directed that there should be no delay in resolving pending applications related to 'Bhu-Bharathi' and 'Saada Bainama' (simple sale agreements). Government Advisor Sudarshan Reddy and Collector Ila Tripathi directed officials to ensure transparency and accountability in the application verification process and to expedite the resolution of applications based on priority. They made it clear that encroachments on tank bed lands (shikham lands) must not be tolerated under any circumstances and that strict action should be taken against those responsible. They advised officials to conduct thorough surveys where necessary to demarcate boundaries and protect government and tank bed lands. They stated that a joint survey would soon be conducted to resolve land disputes involving the Revenue and Forest departments. Furthermore, they instructed officials to maintain rigorous field-level supervision to ensure sand transportation complies with regulations, explicitly stating that no vehicles should be transporting sand after 5:00 PM. They emphasized the need for a stern crackdown on those involved in the illegal transportation of sand. Regarding the current Kharif season, they called for systematic planning for grain procurement and advised making all necessary arrangements in advance to prevent any inconvenience to farmers. They also directed officials to ensure there is no shortage of vehicles for transporting the grain. Speaking on the occasion, Government Advisor Sudarshan Reddy clarified that priority is being given to sanitation workers in the allotment of double-bedroom houses, noting that such homes have already been allocated to them in the towns of Nizamabad and Bodhan. Additional Collector V. Bhujanga Rao, DRO Geetha, RDOs Rajendra Kumar and Vijayakumari, along with Tahsildars from all mandals and revenue officials, participated in the review meeting.

Telangana CM Revanth Reddy Extends Birthday Greetings to Sanathnagar MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav



“Hyderabad “06 Oct 2026” “Indian Chronicle” “Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy extended warm birthday greetings to Sanathnagar MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav on the occasion of his birthday. “Conveying his wishes, the Chief Minister acknowledged Srinivas Yadav's continued involvement in public service and his efforts towards the development of the State. “Revanth Reddy wished the legislator good health, happiness and a long life, expressing hope

that he would continue serving the people and contributing to Telangana's progress in the years ahead. “The Chief Minister also prayed for Srinivas Yadav's well-being and strength to continue his public service with dedication.

Corteva Emerges as Global Leader in Crop Protection

“Hyderabad, October 06 (Indian Chronicle) : Corteva (NYSE : CTVA) has completed the separation of its Seed and Genetic businesses and entered a new phase as a global crop protection company, Corteva CEO Chuck Magro said in a statement released in the city on Tuesday. He said the company's Crop Protection business increased its revenue by more than \$1 billion between 2020 and 2025, while its operating margin improved by approximately 250 basis points. Speaking on the company's future plans, he said Corteva is preparing to bring five biological products and 12 new active chemical ingredients to the market over the coming decade. He said the company's objective is to provide farmers with safer, more effective and sustainable solutions through greater focus, agility and innovation.

Naga Chaitanya Becomes the Face of DASOS



“Actor Joins Luxury Interiors Brand as Brand Ambassador as DASOS Enters a New Growth Phase”: Telugu cinema star Naga Chaitanya has been announced as the new Brand Ambassador of DASOS Cabinets, bringing together the actor's contemporary lifestyle appeal with the brand's growing presence in the luxury interiors and bespoke furniture space. “Naga Chaitanya will partner with DASOS for two years. The company believes that his understated style, refined taste and contemporary personality resonate with DASOS's vision of creating sophisticated, functional and personalised living environments. “Founded in February 2023 under the Mahi Group, DASOS has evolved from a modular cabinetry company into a comprehensive luxury interiors brand. Its expanded offerings include customised kitchens, wardrobes, complete home interiors, cabinets, renovation services and turnkey projects, complemented by bespoke furniture solutions. “The brand's furniture portfolio includes customised sofas, beds, dining tables and other pieces designed to complement individual interiors and lifestyles. “DASOS draws on the Mahi Group's experience in marble, stone and quartz, along with its international exposure and export expertise. The company combines this foundation with German technology and skilled craftsmanship to develop premium interior solutions. “A key focus of DASOS is delivering a seamless customer experience through quality materials, innovative designs, transparent pricing and timely execution. “The company has also opened an exclusive Luxury Experience Studio in Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, where customers can explore its range of materials, finishes, designs and customised solutions. “At the leadership level, Manoj G. Kashyap, Executive Director of Mahi Granites, continues to contribute to the group's international expansion, while Niharika Kashyap, Director of DASOS Cabinets, is spearheading DASOS's transformation into a complete luxury interiors destination. She was recently honoured with an ET Award for excellence in home design and execution. “With Naga Chaitanya as its brand ambassador, DASOS is entering its next phase with a vision to make luxury interiors more personalised, sophisticated and seamlessly executed.

Assurance to Resolve Public Issues; UPPAL CONGRESS INCHARGE PARAMESWAR REDDY Receives Petitions



“UPPAL, OCTOBER 6 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“ Residents from various parts of the Uppal Assembly constituency met Congress party Uppal constituency in-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy and submitted petitions seeking resolution of their problems. Parameswar Reddy patiently heard the issues brought to his notice and assured the residents that necessary steps would be taken to resolve them. Representatives of the Uppal Gouda Sangham submitted a petition seeking development of the local crematorium. On the occasion, Parameswar Reddy assured them that efforts would be made to develop the crematorium at an estimated cost of ₹2 crore and provide the required additional facilities. “Senior citizens from Chilkana, along with Bommagoni Das Goud and other representatives, submitted a petition highlighting their problems. Parameswar Reddy assured them that efforts would be made to address the issues faced by senior citizens. “Residents of Anand Nagar in Chilkana Division requested immediate resolution of the CC road problem in their locality. Responding to the request, Parameswar Reddy spoke with municipal officials and facilitated steps towards resolving the issue. “Representatives of the Srinivasa Kalyana Mahotsavam Committee, led by committee president Etuzed Srinivas Reddy, invited Parameswar Reddy to the Srinivasa Kalyana Mahotsavam to be held in HMT Nagar. He assured them that he would attend the celestial wedding celebrations. Similarly, representatives of Uppal Sri Mahankali Temple invited Parameswar Reddy to the Sri Devi Sharanavaratri celebrations and presented him with an invitation. Representatives of the Devi idol pandal, organised under the aegis of the Old Ramanthapur Anand Nagar Young Men's Youth Association, also met him and extended an invitation to the festivities.

Mass Rally Held Under INDIA Alliance



“No Retreat on Demands to Scrap SIR, Seek CEC’s Resignation and Conduct Elections Using Ballot Papers: Atram Sugunakka”
Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District Reporter "Indian Chronicle" October. 07. “Asifabad: Kumuram Bheem Asifabad DCC President Atram Sugunakka said that the INDIA Alliance has a clear stand on three key issues concerning the electoral system. She demanded the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, cancellation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process of electoral rolls, and conducting elections through ballot papers instead of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). As part of “Save Democracy Week,” the INDIA Alliance organised a massive rally on Tuesday from Kumuram Bheem Chowk in Asifabad district headquarters to the Collectorate. The protesters later staged a dharna in front of the Collectorate gate and raised slogans in support of their demands. Addressing the gathering, Atram Sugunakka demanded a comprehensive investigation into the allegations being raised by opposition parties regarding “vote theft” in the country. She also called for an inquiry into allegations that the BJP came to power at the Centre through vote theft. She demanded that the removal of eligible voters’ names from electoral rolls in the name of SIR be stopped immediately and that no eligible voter should be excluded from the voters’ list. She urged the Election Commission to function independently and im-



partially without favouring any political party. “Sugunakka also criticised the BRS for not responding to the issues raised by opposition parties regarding the electoral system. She alleged that the BRS appeared to be supporting the BJP on these issues. She said the agitation was not being carried out merely for the Congress party or the INDIA Alliance, but to protect the voting rights of every citizen in the country. She appealed to people to come together to protect their right to vote, democracy and the Constitution. INDIA Alliance leaders said their struggle would continue to protect democracy and the Constitution. They stated that people would be mobilised across the country and the movement would be intensified to ensure transparency in the electoral system. They said they would continue to raise their concerns over what they described as attacks on voting rights and other issues concerning the electoral process. Former DCC president Kokkiralra Vishwaprasad Rao, constituency in-charge Ajmeera Shyam Naik, former MLA Atram Sakku, CPI(M) district secretariat members Durgam Dinakar and Kota Srinivas, district committee members Munjam Anand, Gedam Tikanand, Nikhil and Tirupati, Market Committee Chairman Irukula Manga, former MPP Balesh Goud, Asifabad Mandal President Raparathi Murali, town president Imran, SC Cell district chairman Saddala Srinivas, various mandal presidents, DCC executive members, sarpanches, affiliated organisation leaders and INDIA Alliance members were among those who participated in the programme.

INDIA bloc stages rally in Karimnagar, seeks CEC’s removal.

Karimnagar October 06, Khaja Sikandar Mohiuddin (Correspondent): Leaders of the INDIA bloc parties staged a protest in Karimnagar on Tuesday demanding the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, alleging irregularities in the electoral roll revision process. The protest was organised by the district Congress and its INDIA bloc allies as part of the ‘Democracy Protection Week’. Leaders and activists took out a rally from Indira Chowk to the Collectorate and staged a demonstration there. They later burnt an effigy of Mr. Kumar along with those of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Congress MLA Medipalli Satyam alleged that Mr. Kumar had been sidelining the other two Election Commissioners and undermining the autonomy and credibility of the Election Commission. He demanded that the CEC be removed and that the alleged irregularities be investigated by a sitting judge of the Supreme Court. Munnuru Kapu Corporation chairman Bomma Sriram Chakravarthy alleged that the Election Commission had become an “affiliated wing” of the BJP. He claimed that the electoral roll revision process could result in the deletion of votes belonging to BCs, SCs, STs, minorities and other marginalised sections. CPI district secretary Panjala Srinivas said the CEC should be removed, while CPM district secretary Milkoori Vasudeva



Reddy said the agitation would continue until the demand was met. District Library Corporation chairman Sattu Mallesham sought a probe by a Supreme Court judge into the alleged deletion of 13 crore votes. Karimnagar Corporation Congress president Vaidyula Anjan Kumar said the INDIA bloc would oppose any attempt to disenfranchise marginalised sections. Forward Bloc leader Ambati Joji Reddy expressed support for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi’s campaign on electoral issues. The leaders later submitted a representation to the Karimnagar Collector, addressed to the Centre, seeking the removal of Mr. Gyanesh Kumar. They also demanded his arrest. Congress, CPI, CPM, Forward Bloc, CPI(ML) Mass Line and AISF leaders and activists participated in the protest.

Prayed to Lord Venkateswara for KCR to Become Telangana Chief Minister Again:

FORMER CORPORATER BANNALA GEETHA PRAVEEN“

“CHILKANAGAR, OCTOBER 6 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Former Corporator of Chilkana Division and former GHMC Standing Committee member Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj, along with her husband, visited the sacred shrine of Lord Sri Venkateswara at Tirumala on Tuesday and offered prayers. “Speaking on the occasion, former corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen said she was delighted to have the opportunity to seek the blessings of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala. She said she prayed for the well-being, happiness and prosperity of all the people of Telangana. “She further said that she sincerely prayed to Lord Venkateswara for K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) to become the Chief Minister of Telangana once again, stating that the people of the state should live in peace, happiness and prosperity.



Vaishali Nagar Railway Underpass Traffic Restrictions Extended Till October 14

“Cyberabad’06 Oct 2026” Indian Chronicle “The Cyberabad Traffic Police have extended the existing traffic restrictions in and around the Vaishali Nagar Railway Underpass for another week, from October 8 to October 14, 2026, to facilitate the proper curing of the newly laid road surface. “According to the public advisory issued by the Office of the Joint Commissioner of Police, Traffic, Cyberabad, road-widening and storm-water drain works at the Vaishali Nagar Railway Underpass have been completed. However, traffic restrictions need to remain in place to allow sufficient curing time for the new road surface and ensure its strength, durability and quality. “

During the extension period, traffic movement on several routes connecting Hafeezpet, My Home Mangala, Raghavendra Nagar Colony, Kondapur, Allwyn Junction and adjoining areas will continue to be diverted. “Diversion Routes” “Traffic travelling from My Home Mangala Apartments towards Hafeezpet through the Vaishali Nagar Railway Underpass will be diverted at My Home Mangala T-Junction. Vehicles will proceed towards Raghavendra Nagar Colony, take the Hi-Tension Road and turn near the RTA Office, Kondapur, before using the Hafeezpet ROB to reach Hafeezpet. “Vehicles coming from the Telangana Contractors Cultural Club towards the underpass will also be di-

verted at My Home Mangala T-Junction. They will proceed through Raghavendra Nagar Colony, Hi-Tension Road and RTA Office, Kondapur, before taking the Hafeezpet ROB/ Flyover towards Hafeezpet and Allwyn Junction. “

“Traffic originating from My Home Jewel rear gate, RTC Colony and Manjeera Pipeline Road and heading towards My Home Mangala or Raghavendra Nagar Colony will be diverted through Pipeline Road towards Hafeezpet ROB/ Flyover. Motorists will take a left near Genpact, join the Kondapur-Allwyn Junction Road, take a U-turn near Government School and proceed via Hafeezpet ROB/ Flyover. “

Similarly, vehicles from Vasavi Lake City and Hafeezpet Lake heading towards My Home Mangala or Raghavendra Nagar Colony will be diverted at the Spire One Apartments U-turn towards Hafeezpet ROB/ Flyover. They will then proceed via Genpact, Kondapur-Allwyn Junction Road and the Government School U-turn. “

“Traffic from Gopal Nagar and Calvary Temple towards My Home Mangala will take a right at the Hafeezpet RUB/ Underpass, join the Kondapur-Allwyn Junction Road and use the Government School U-turn before proceeding via Hafeezpet ROB/ Flyover towards Kondapur and Raghavendra Nagar Colony.

Women should develop their skills and achieve economic self-reliance by creating self-employment opportunities

“LB Nagar MLA Devireddy Sudheer Reddy, “LB Nagar October 6 Indian Chronicle” “Under the aegis of Jayachandra Reddy Charitable Trust, free training was provided in tailoring, beautician services and mehendi at the New Dilsukhnagar Community Hall in Chaitanyapuri Division. MLA Devireddy Sudheer Reddy and Trust Chairperson Kamala Sudheer Reddy distributed certificates to the women who successfully completed the training. “Speaking on the occasion, they said that when women possess skills, they gain confidence and contribute to the progress of their families. The development of families, in turn, contributes to the progress of society. They said the trust was conducting free skill-development programmes to enable women to create self-employment opportunities rather than depend solely on jobs. “They stated that training was being provided in tailoring, from basic techniques to modern methods, along with beautician and mehendi courses aimed at creating employment opportunities. They assured that more programmes would be organised in the future to promote women’s skill development and economic empowerment. “Former Corporator Jinnaram Vittal Reddy, BRS senior leader Chandrasekhar Reddy, LB Nagar As-



sembly Constituency BRS Women’s President Rangeshwari Naidu, Narsireddy, Rapolu Sudhakar, Vishwaprem, Shivaprakash, Nagalakshmi, Jayashree, Shobharani, trainers Sunitha, Bhanupriya, Shrivabindu and Archana, along with Trust representatives, BRS leaders and activists, trained women and local women participated in the programme.

Congress Leaders Protest Against SIR Irregularities

“HABSIGUDA DIVISION PRESIDENT KANDI SRAVAN KUMAR REDDY Participates“

“HABSIGUDA, OCTOBER 6 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): “Condemning alleged irregularities, deletion of votes and discrepancies in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process undertaken by the Election Commission of India, the Malkajigiri District Congress Party, along with the All-Party Forum, staged a massive protest at the District Collectorate following the call given by the AICC and INDIA bloc and as per the directions of TPCC President Bomma Mahesh Kumar Goud. “During the protest, the Congress leaders burnt an effigy of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in front of the District Collectorate and demanded his immediate resignation. Later, they submitted a memorandum to the District Collector, urging action against the alleged irregularities in the SIR process. “The protest was held under the leadership of DCC President Thotakura Vajresh Yadav. As per the directions of Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, Habsiguda Division Congress Party President Kandi Sravan Kumar Reddy, along with other Congress leaders and activists, participated in the programme. Uppal A Block SC Cell President Chintala Baburao, Habsiguda Division Youth Congress President Vasu Naik, Suman Naik, District Congress Party members,



division presidents and general secretaries, Youth Congress, OBC Cell, Minority Cell, SC Cell, Mahila Congress and leaders and activists of various affiliated organisations and the All-Party Forum also participated in the protest.

Delhi Police Arrest Self-Proclaimed Journalist Over Alleged Circulation of Fabricated Video



“New Delhi’06 Sept 2026” Indian Chronicle “The Cyber Police Station team of the New Delhi district has

arrested a self-proclaimed independent journalist for allegedly circulating a fabricated video that falsely portrayed a Delhi Police officer in a negative light. “According to information released by Delhi Police, the video allegedly targeted Vivek Bhagat, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Delhi Police, and was circulated through an Instagram account while being presented as authentic. “Police said the accused allegedly shared the video reel in a manner that could mislead viewers regarding its authenticity. Following an investigation by the Cyber Police Station, the person accused of circulating the content was identified and arrested. “The mobile phone allegedly used to circulate the video was also recovered by the investigating team, police said. “The case highlights growing concerns surrounding the circulation of fabricated and misleading digital content on social media platforms. Authorities have repeatedly stressed the importance of verifying online material before sharing it, particularly content involving public officials or institutions. “Further investigation into the circumstances surrounding the creation and circulation of the video is expected to continue.

Swachh Bharat Programme Held at Ramanthapur Homeopathy Hospital

Conducted under the leadership of Ramanthapur Division BJP President Vangala Santosh Gupta“



“RAMANTHAPUR, OCTOBER 6 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): As part of the “Seva Sankalp Abhiyan” being organised by the Bharatiya Janata Party to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s 25 years of public service and effective governance, a shramdaan and cleanliness programme was conducted at the Ramanthapur Homeopathy Hospital. The programme was organised under the leadership of Vangala Santosh Gupta, BJP President of Ramanthapur Division. Former Uppal MLA and BJP state leader N.V.S.S. Prabhakar attended the programme as the chief guest and personally participated in the shramdaan activity. Speaking on the occasion, Prabhakar said that clean surroundings are the foundation of a healthy society. He called upon people to create greater awareness about cleanliness and take responsibility for keeping their surroundings clean. He said Swachh Bharat should not remain merely a programme but should become the responsibility of every citizen. He urged people, youth and voluntary organisations to come forward to maintain cleanliness in hospitals, schools, colonies and public places. Prabhakar said various service activities were being conducted under the “Seva Sankalp Abhiyan” with the objective of taking Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s spirit of service to the people. He stated that serving society through cleanliness drives, social service and extending support to the poor re-

mains one of the major objectives of the BJP. “Former Ramanthapur Division corporator Bandaru Srivani, Medchal-Malkajigiri OBC District General Secretary Vallapu Jagan Yadav, and BJP leaders Tindera Hanumantha Rao, Thalla Balakrishna Goud, Shaga Ravi, Darshanala Sudhakar, Pentam Shailender, Palugula Anjaiah Patel, Masireddy Prabhakar Reddy, Ella Chari, Oora Nagesh Gupta, Boddupalli Anand, Tammali Ravi, Nasu Satish, Boddupalli Srinivas, Maheshwar Reddy, Bharat Niranjan Goud, Narasimha, Pisari Shankar, Balaraj, Suresh, Sainath, Shiva, Praveen, Hemanth, Vishal, Anil and Mukesh, among others, participated in the programme. “Women leaders Ambati Bhagyalakshmi, Bhogala Aruna, Suvarna Shinde, Veena, Sravanthi Konderu, Sheelam Sudha and Umadevi, among others, also took part in the programme. “

Asian Games Archery Winners Set for APL

“Hyderabad, October 06 (Indian Chronicle) : Indian archery stars, who won nine medals including five golds at the Asian Games, are set to compete in the second season of the Archery Premier League (APL), to be held at People’s Plaza in Hyderabad from October 8 to 18, APL League Director Anil Kamineni said in a statement on Tuesday. Speaking along with Archery Association of India Secretary Virender Sachdeva, he said 48 archers representing six franchises will participate in the league. A new 15-second shot-clock rule has also been introduced this season. He said India’s success at the Asian Games has added fresh excitement to the APL. The matches will be telecast live on Sony LIV, World Archery TV and the AAI YouTube channel.

The services rendered by Nunna Madhava Rao for workers' rights are unforgettable.



“Khammam, October 06, Indian Chronicle.” A memorial meeting for the late labour leader and INTUC Mini Trolley Union Khammam District President Nunna Madhava Rao was grandly held on Tuesday at Khammam Potti Market under the leadership of INTUC City President Narala Naresh Mohan Naidu. District INTUC President Kotha Seetharamulu presided over the programme. First, floral garlands were placed on Nunna Madhava Rao's portrait and rich tributes were paid, followed by two minutes of silence. On this occasion, Urban District Congress President Deepak Chowdary praised Nunna Madhava Rao as a committed labour leader who continuously worked for resolving workers' problems. He said that his struggle for workers' rights would always be remembered. AMC Chairman Yerragarla Hanumanth Rao said that Nunna Madhava

Rao worked with the welfare of workers as his sole objective and recalled that he was always at the forefront of workers' issues. He stated that his services would remain unforgettable to the working class. District INTUC President Kotha Seetharamulu said that Nunna Madhava Rao's services to the labour movement could never be forgotten. He called upon everyone to move forward along the path he showed for workers' unity. Leaders of INTUC, CITU, IFTU, BRSKV, TUCI and other labour unions participated in the memorial meeting and remembered Nunna Madhava Rao's services. INTUC Telangana and Andhra Pradesh State Vice President SA Jaleel, Dadavayi Sangham President Neelam Rajesh, Auto Motor Sector District President Palvantha Krishna, CITU leaders Thumma Vishnu, Bandaru Yakaiah, Kalyanam Venkateswara Rao, Bhukya Srinivasa Rao, TUCI leaders Ramaiah, Srinu, Kanakam Badraiah and others praised Nunna Madhava Rao's services to workers. On behalf of the business community, Imports Department President Vadde Venkateshwarlu and Secretary Yerra Apparao recalled Nunna Madhava Rao's efforts to foster cordial relations between workers and the business community. Mini Trolley Workers leaders Sade Shankar, Mateti Ravi, AM Reddy, Bahubali, Krishna and others participated in the programme. Also, Dadavayi Sangham INTUC leaders, INTUC Hamali FCI leaders Ravi and Veeresh, the Civil Supplies Hamali team, Gandhi Chowk Hamali Union leaders Guravayya Mutha and Yellaiah Mutha, Cold Storage Hamali leaders Madar, Akbar and others attended and paid rich tributes to Nunna Madhava Rao.

Blankets and Fruits Distributed to Patients at Ramanthapur Homeopathy Hospital

Former MLA NVSS Prabhakar Participates as Chief Guest— Under the Leadership of District OBC General Secretary Vallapu Jagan Yadav “RAMANTHAPUR, OCTOBER 6 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): As part of the “Seva Sankalp Abhiyan” being organized by the Bharatiya Janata Party to commemorate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 25 years of public service and effective governance, blankets and fruits were distributed to patients at the Ramanthapur Homeopathy Hospital. The programme was organized under the leadership of BJP Medchal-Malkajgiri OBC District General Secretary Vallapu Jagan Yadav. Former Uppal MLA NVSS Prabhakar attended the programme as the chief guest. On the occasion, he personally distributed blankets and fruits to the patients undergoing treatment at the hospital and enquired about their health condition. Speaking on the occasion, Prabhakar said that standing by every section of society and extending help to those in need reflects the spirit of service rooted in Indian culture. He stated that public service should not be limited to political programmes, and that extending humanitarian support to the needy and underprivileged during difficult times is true service. He said it was appreciable that service activities were being conducted through the “Seva Sankalp Abhiyan”, inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's journey of public service,



with the aim of reaching out to people. He called for bringing positive change in society through initiatives related to healthcare, cleanliness and public service. Former councillors, a former corporator, division presidents, BJP leaders, women leaders, party workers and hospital staff, among others, participated in the programme.

Intensify Struggles Against Caste Discrimination



“Provide ₹12 lakh to every eligible Dalit family under Ambedkar Abhaya Hastham scheme: KVPS District Secretary Durgam Dinakar” “Kumrambheem, Asifabad, District, Reporter "Indian Chronicle" October. 07.” Wankidi, The struggles against caste discrimination and for the rights of Dalits, tribals and the poor will be intensified across the district in the coming days, said KVPS District Secretary Durgam Dinakar. The 29th foundation day of the Kula Vivaksha Vyatireka Porata Sangham (KVPS) was observed at Kiridi village in Wankidi mandal on Wednesday. KVPS Wankidi Mandal Secretary Vadluri Nagesh hoisted the flag. Durgam Dinakar attended the programme as the

chief guest and addressed the gathering. Dinakar demanded that the government provide ₹12 lakh to every eligible Dalit family under the Ambedkar Abhaya Hastham scheme. He also urged the government to resolve the problems faced by students in welfare hostels and allocate adequate funds for their basic facilities. He said caste discrimination continues in various forms, including verbal abuse, attacks and discrimination against inter-caste couples.

The government should ensure that the rights of equality guaranteed by the Constitution reach every citizen, he said. He further demanded quality food, drinking water, clothing and other basic amenities for students in welfare hostels, along with adequate funds for their maintenance. Employment opportunities should be provided to educated unemployed youth and the educational rights of students should be protected. Dinakar said KVPS would continue its struggles until social equality, welfare and rights of Dalits, tribals and poor people are ensured. KVPS district leaders Malles h, Kailash, Manohar, Shyam Rao and Santosh, Rythu Sangham District President Jadi Tirupathi, DYFI Mandal Secretary Vadluri Srikanth, Suresh and others participated in the programme.

Objections invited on provisional Guest Faculty merit lists - ITDA PO B Rahul.



“Bhadrachalam, October 06, Indian Chronicle.” ITDA Project Officer B Rahul stated in a statement on Tuesday that, regarding the recruitment of teaching (Guest Time Faculty) staff on a temporary basis for the 2026-27 academic year in the Tribal Welfare Gurukula educational institutions under the Khammam Region, the applications received from eligible candidates were examined and provisional merit lists were prepared based on the details submitted by the candidates at the time of application and the available records. Therefore, he requested the candidates who applied for the respective posts to examine the provisional merit lists and, if there are any objections/errors in their name, educational qualifications, Merit/NET/SET & PhD or other relevant details, to submit their objections with appropriate supporting evidence.

He said that objections must be submitted directly at the office of the Regional Coordinating Officer (Gurukulam),

RC Water Unveils Limited-Edition Sneaker

ITDA, Bhadrachalam, on office working days up to 07-10-2026, and that candidates submitting objections must mandatorily attach copies of the certificates related to their objections, that objections received after the stipulated deadline will not be considered, and that after examining the objections received, further action will be taken as per eligibility and the relevant recruitment rules. He said that candidates should contact mobile number 8500136628 for other details.

Diageo India Marketing Vice President Anindita Dutta said in a statement released in the city on Tuesday. Speaking alongside Gully Labs founder Arjun Singh, Dutta said the sneaker was created as part of the streetwear culture, reflecting the brand's 'Choose Bold' philosophy.

She added that Varun Sood and Karan Tacker brought a distinctive touch to the collaboration through their athletic and adventurous personalities and individual styles.

MLA Jare stands by bereaved families.



“Aswaraopeta, October 06, Indian Chronicle.” Aswaraopeta constituency MLA Jare Adinarayana toured various villages under the Patwarigudem, Jaggaram and Nagupalli gram panchayats in Dammamapeta mandal. In Patwarigudem village, he handed over to the family members of Konda Venkatalakshmi, who died in an electrical accident, and in Nagupalli village, to the family of Maragani Vijaya, who died in an electrical accident, ex-gratia cheques of Rs.5 lakh each, totaling Rs.10 lakh, sanctioned by the Electricity Department. Later, in Patwarigudem village, he visited Golla Narayana, who was suffering from illness. In TM Gumpu village, he met Vaggela Mutyala Rao, who had undergone eye surgery and was resting at home, and enquired about his health condition. In Burugumpu village, he visited ward member Soyam



Balanagamani, who had fractured her hand after falling down. In Nagupalli village, the MLA visited the beneficiaries' homes and handed over cheques sanctioned through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. He handed over the sanctioned cheques to Maragani Nageswara Rao, Matta Ramana, Uke Rajesh and Bobbili Srinivasa Rao. Electricity Department SE Mahender, DE Badrupawar, ADE Venkataratnam, AE Ramesh, LIs Venkateshwarlu and Venkateswara Rao, SLI Ratnaji, Burgula Prasad, sarpanches Kuram Arjun Rao, Vanka Janaki Ramudu, Islavath Srinivasa Rao, Congress Party leaders Vasam Srinivasa Rao, Bollikonda Nageswara Rao, Kumpati Venu, S Venkatrao, Vade Maragani Nageswara Rao, Velivela Srinu, Tirupati Rao, Congress Party senior leaders, workers, supporters and others participated in the programme.

Legal battle over Jadcherla land continues as auction buyer rejects fresh claims

“Hyderabad Correspondent, October 6 (Indian Chronicle): A long-running dispute over 55 acres and four guntas of land in Jadcherla has resurfaced with the auction purchaser rejecting fresh claims over the property and asserting that previous litigation had already been decided in their favour. The land, spread across Survey Nos. 36, 37, 58 and 59 in the Jadcherla Square area, was acquired through a bank auction under the SARFAESI Act after the previous owners allegedly defaulted on loans secured against the property. K. Sai Reddy, a resident of Kalwakurthy, said at a press conference at the Hyderabad Press Club. Sai Reddy said he and three others participated in the auction and emerged as the highest bidders. After making the payment as directed by the bank, the property was registered, he said. According to him, the previous owners subsequently initiated around 42 legal proceedings before tribunals, the High Court and the Supreme Court, besides invoking various laws. He claimed that all the cases had been dismissed in their favour and that none of the earlier cases was currently pending. A fresh case had recently been filed and was awaiting hearing, he said. Sai Reddy alleged that some persons linked to the previous ownership group were now making false claims and attempting to create disputes over the property. He warned that legal action would be taken against those allegedly trying to interfere with their rights. Advocate Parthasarathi said the pur-



chasers had acquired legal rights through the bank auction and were proceeding with the process of taking possession and using the property in accordance with the law. The two also alleged that unrelated persons were entering the property and attempting to create trespass, nuisance and law-and-order issues. They said such attempts would be dealt with through legal remedies. Questioning the focus on their property, Sai Reddy and Parthasarathi said several properties had been sold through SARFAESI auctions in different parts of the State. They alleged that despite such transactions involving hundreds of acres elsewhere, their property was being specifically targeted. Sai Reddy said they would continue to pursue the matter through legal channels and take all necessary steps to safeguard the property.

Collector Divakar conducts a surprise inspection at Kasturba Vidyalaya.

“Yellandu, October 06, Indian Chronicle.” Khammam District Collector Divakar TS visited the Yellandu constituency Karepalli Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya on Tuesday and inspected the conditions at the school. He inspected the construction work of the new building at the field level and enquired with the officials about the progress of the works. He ordered that the construction works be completed within the stipulated deadline while adhering to quality standards. Later, the Collector went into the classrooms and spoke directly with the students. Along with gathering details about their studies, accommodation, food, and facilities being provided at the school, he also enquired about the difficulties they were facing. School Special Officer G Jhansi Soudhanya explained to the Collector the basic infrastructure required by the school and the problems it was



facing. The Collector assured that necessary steps would be taken to resolve the problems.

Demand Immediate Removal of Gyanesh Kumar

All-Party Protest Held Outside Hyderabad Collectorate “HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 6 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):” An all-party protest was held outside the Hyderabad Collectorate demanding the immediate removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Leaders and activists belonging to the Congress, CPI(M), CPI, Telangana Jana Samithi, CPI(ML) New Democracy, Mass Line and other political parties participated in the protest. “Telangana Jana Samithi president and MLC Prof. Kodandaram, who attended the programme as the chief guest, alleged that election authorities, who are expected to function impartially, were instead acting as “servants of the ruling party.” He strongly criticised the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process, alleging that voters were being deleted from electoral rolls in the name of SIR, thereby undermining democracy. He demanded immediate action to ensure transparency and impartiality in the electoral process. Telangana Jana Samithi Greater Hyderabad presi-



dent M. Narasaiah, Jana Samithi leaders Bairi Ramesh, Saleem Pasha, Arun Kumar, Battla Ramachander, Jashwanth Kumar, Ramesh Mudiraj, Hanumantha Reddy, G. Madhu, Sardar Vinod Kumar, Jaipal Reddy, Lakshman, Syed Ismail, Syed Abra, Rasool Sadanand, Narendra, Shankar, Ravinder, Mallesh and others participated in the protest.

M. Sneha Lakshmi Selected as Best Teacher at Mandal Level

“HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 6 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):” M. Sneha Lakshmi, working as a School Assistant (English) at GBHS Himayathnagar, has been selected and honoured as the Best Teacher at the Amberpet Mandal level on the occasion of International Teachers' Day. “Officials said she was selected for the award in recognition of her efforts to provide quality education to students, adopt innovative teaching methods and make a significant contribution to their academic development.” The Best Teacher Award was presented to M. Sneha Lakshmi at a programme organised on the occasion of International Teachers' Day in the presence of Amberpet MLA Kaleru Venkatesh, the District Educational Officer of the Himayathnagar Zone and the Deputy Inspector of Schools, Amberpet Mandal, among others. “Several education department officials and teachers congratulated M. Sneha Lakshmi



on receiving the honour. They said teachers play a crucial role in shaping the future of students.

How two Pune spaces are helping adults rediscover creativity and community



GNS News Agency, Oct 6

For many adults, leisure is squeezed between work, family responsibilities and the demands of everyday life. But what happens when the desire to learn something new remains, while the time, confidence and community to pursue it seem increasingly harder to find? Two art and craft spaces in Pune are attempting to answer that question by creating places where adults can learn, experiment and, perhaps, find a community along the way. One such studio, inaugurated in August, is barely a few weeks old, but its idea has been nearly two decades in the making. Its founder, Aditi Deo, an artist and teacher who has worked with children and adults, says the idea emerged from a gap she saw in the city: the lack of spaces where adults could simply learn and experiment without feeling they had to be experts.

"There are hardly any activities like these for adults. You tend to attach importance to an activity based on how it benefits your overall well-being. It is not just about learning the activity; through the activity, you get a sense of well-being," says Deo. The studio offers regular classes in watercolour, pen-and-ink and pencil sketching, while gradually expanding into yarn crafts, crochet, knitting, embroidery and other creative workshops. A ukulele club has also begun, with a zine-making workshop planned. For Deo, however, the studio is about more than acquiring a skill. It is about creating a space for adults who may suddenly find themselves with more time, but fewer opportunities to connect with others.

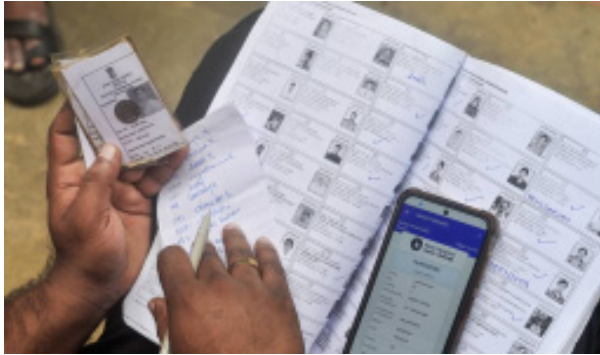
"We are now at an age where there is a lot of time, but there is nothing to do, and no place to go," she says. The classes are therefore kept flexible. Participants can move between batches, attend individual sessions and access recordings, allowing them to fit learning around unpredictable schedules rather than the other way around. The approach also takes into account the multiple responsibilities many women continue to juggle. Yet time may not be the biggest barrier. For many adults, it is the hesitation to begin. Deo believes people often assume they need to possess a certain talent before taking up art. She argues that creativity need not be pursued for a certificate, career or

even perfection. "If you remove the expectation that I want to be a good artist, you will be good from day one. Good in art is very subjective," she says. While paid classes help sustain the studio, Deo also hopes to keep parts of the space accessible to those who simply want to sit, create or spend time in an environment that encourages creativity. In a city where adult life can easily become defined by work and obligation, the studio is attempting something simple: creating space for curiosity. In Kharadi, another small space filled with yarn, fabric and conversations is bringing together people looking to learn traditional crafts while spending time away from screens. Rhoda Stanley, 62, started The Craft Room in July 2025. It was not originally conceived as a business. After spending years abroad and returning to India in 2020 during the pandemic, Stanley noticed how people were increasingly isolated, indoors and glued to screens.

The space had initially been intended for her son's clinic. When he began practising elsewhere, Stanley decided against renting it out and instead asked herself what she could give back to society. The answer came through something she had always known: craft. A social work graduate from Mumbai and a lifelong maker, Stanley works with crochet, knitting, embroidery and quilting. Over time, she says, she noticed a break in the transmission of these skills between generations. "People would always say, 'I have seen my grandmother do it.' Their mothers didn't, they don't, and so their children won't," she says. What began as hobby classes has grown into a space where participants can learn crafts while also meeting others. In its first year, more than 100 participants, from 10-year-olds to working professionals, mothers of children with special needs and expectant mothers, have attended the classes. Aishwarya Raj Katawat, who attended one of Stanley's classes, says the space helped her reconnect with a part of herself she had put aside.

"During my pregnancy, when I was five months along, discovering the studio felt like a godsend gift. It gave me a way to reconnect with the creative side of myself that I had put aside. I had always thought of embroidery as something girls were simply expected to learn. But here, I discovered that it could be a form of artistic expression, a way to mend, create and tell a story," she says. Stanley's courses are structured, with five sessions for crochet and embroidery and six for quilting. They include material kits, lessons on the history of the crafts and informal conversations over tea. For Stanley, the process is as important as the finished product. The classes, she says, teach patience, perseverance and a sense of ownership. "Growing old is not a block," she says. "God has prepared for every stage of life something. I am in a stage where I can give, and people are willing to receive." At a time when many activities are increasingly mediated through screens and designed for instant consumption, these spaces are bringing people back to something slower: the simple act of making something by hand.

BJP leaders booked over alleged voter deletion attempts



Belagavi (Karnataka): An FIR has been registered against Karnataka BJP leader Ravi Patil and others for allegedly attempting to get the names of 198 Muslim voters deleted from the electoral roll in Belagavi district using Form-7 applications during the ongoing SIR process, police said on Friday. At least two other FIRs have been registered over alleged "SIR irregularities", including one in Mysuru against local BJP leaders and others. The complainant there alleged a "conspiracy" to get his, his family's and other members of the Muslim community's names deleted during the SIR process, thereby hurting the religious sentiments of the community and creating disturbance in society. The case against Patil was registered at Belagavi Market police station following a complaint filed on September 30 by Meerasab Sanadi, who was working as a Booth Level Agent in Ward No. 12 of the Belagavi North Assembly constituency, they said.

According to the FIR, the complainant alleged that while assisting the BLO in the SIR of electoral rolls being undertaken by the EC and helping in the verification of voter information, on September 22 at around 2.30 pm, "the accused persons Patil, Shankar Beerappa Naik and Pashant Deepak Mundinmani, along with 20-25 others, allegedly came together with a malicious intention and conspired to target only voters belonging to the Muslim community." They allegedly conspired to delete the names of 198 voters from the electoral roll and created fake documents and submitted them to the BLO, falsely claiming that the documents were genuine and had been issued by the ERO, the complainant alleged.

In the complaint, he alleged that the Form-7 applications brought by the accused with fake documents also contained the names of him and his family members. Form-7 is a voter application form for raising an objection to the proposed inclusion or deletion of a name in an existing electoral roll. They allegedly exerted pressure on the BLO and

made another person speak over the phone, claiming to be the ERO, and obtained his signature, thereby cheating the complainant and the voters," the FIR said. The complainant also claimed that they intended to create a situation in which, if the names of the 198 Muslim community voters were deleted from the electoral roll, the affected persons might become agitated and engage in violence, thereby disturbing peace and public order. The FIR has been registered under Sections 318(4) (cheating), 336(3) (forgery), 336(4) (forgery specifically intended to harm reputation), 353 (statements conducing to public mischief), 61(2) (criminal conspiracy), 3(5) (common intention), 192 (wantonly giving provocation with intent to cause riot) and 190 (every member of unlawful assembly guilty of an offence committed in prosecution of common object) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, police said.

In another such case reported in Bidar, 40-year-old businessman and voter from Bhalki, Mohammed Ateeq Ahmed, alleged in his complaint that 3,244 voters, including him, were falsely shown as "shifted/absent" through Form-7 applications during the SIR of electoral rolls. According to the FIR, he alleged that the applications were submitted without obtaining authenticated documents from the affected voters and that signatures were forged, with the intention of getting their names removed from the electoral roll. Following his complaint, an FIR was registered on October 1, naming 32 accused persons in connection with the alleged irregularities. In Mysuru, a complaint was lodged by Syed Hasarath Ulla, a social worker, who alleged that Form-7 applications were submitted during the SIR process claiming that he and his family members were not residing at their registered address, despite having lived there for several years. He alleged that false information was entered in the forms and submitted to the ECI with the intention of getting his and his family members' names deleted from the electoral roll. The complainant further alleged that similar Form-7 applications containing false information were submitted against 28 other voters. Following the complaint, a case was registered at Narasimharaja police station against Harish Kumar C, Raghavendra M and Anil Thomas, identified as BJP Minority President, along with others. The complaint alleged that they had conspired to get his, his family's and other members of the Muslim community's names deleted during the SIR process and thereby hurt the religious sentiments of the community and create disturbance in society. Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, along with his Cabinet colleagues and MLAs, staged a sit-in outside Chief Electoral Officer V Anbukumar's office on Thursday, demanding an FIR over alleged "electoral fraud" during the ongoing SIR of electoral rolls.

Plea challenging CEC's individual exercise of ECI powers before SC on Monday

GNS News Agency, Oct 6 New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a petition challenging the manner in which the powers of the Election Commission of India (ECI) are being exercised and questioning whether Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar can individually exercise or represent powers constitutionally vested in the multi-member poll panel. According to the cause list published on the Supreme Court's official website, a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant and comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana is scheduled to take up the matter on October 5.

The matter was mentioned before the CJI on September 29 by senior advocate Vikas Singh, following which the CJI said, "List it next week." The plea seeks enforcement of the collective decision-making framework governing the ECI and a writ of quo warranto concerning the authority under which the CEC allegedly acted in the name of the poll panel.

The petitioner contends that Article 324 of the Constitution vests the superintendence, direction and control of elections in the "Commission" and not in an individual CEC. It also relies on Section 18 of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023, which provides for collective decision-making, with matters on which there is no unanimity to be decided by majority. The plea relies on contemporaneous written communications and file notings attributed to Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, who allegedly recorded at least 14 objections between October 2025 and August 2026 concerning decisions and steps allegedly taken in the name of the ECI without their approval. According to the petition, the objections relate to communications and orders allegedly issued without the poll body's approval, the absence of agendas before and minutes after meetings, foreign travel undertaken without approval, changes to Form 6, access to the electoral-roll database and the filing of appeals before



tribunals in West Bengal. The plea also refers to concerns reportedly raised by the two Election Commissioners over the "gradual centralisation of the electoral roll database" and changes in the work allocation of the poll body's IT establishment. The petitioner has sought a declaration that powers vested in the ECI under Article 324 cannot be exercised or represented as an act of the poll body except in accordance with the constitutional and statutory framework governing the Commission. The plea also seeks declaratory and mandatory directions to ensure compliance with the collective decision-making framework, besides the production and preservation of relevant records concerning the disputed decisions. Meanwhile, the ECI has maintained that differences between the Commissioners do not amount to an institutional "rupture" and that internal objections and written notes are established mechanisms in a multi-member constitutional body. The poll panel has also said its decisions, including those relating to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise, were unanimous and that differences raised by Commissioners form part of the normal deliberative and administrative process.

CJP leaders urge youth to join Mumbai protest against CEC

Mumbai: Hours before its scheduled protest at Mumbai's Shivaji Park, Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) leaders on Friday asserted that they were "prepared to go to jail if it can ensure accountability" for Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, amid allegations of "vote theft" against him. CJP chief Abhijeet Dipke had earlier announced the agitation to demand the resignation of the CEC.

Speaking to IANS, CJP co-convenor Ashutosh Ranka said: "If going to jail can bring back the votes of 13 crore people, and if going to jail can ensure accountability for Gyanesh Kumar, then we are absolutely ready to go to jail. Gyanesh Kumar is the biggest traitor in this country; he is responsible for 13 crore voters being struck off the voter list. No one has committed a greater betrayal in this country so far." "Just like the previous agitation, we won't back down till our demands are met," he asserted.

CJP co-convenor Saurav Das added: "There was such a massive movement across the country against (then-Union Education Minister) Dharmendra Pradhan, in which the youth came out in very large numbers. We saw the spirit of Mumbai on such a large scale after many years. So, we thought that this time we should come to Mumbai again and start from here." Urging people to join the agitation in large numbers, he said: "Today is the auspicious day of Gandhi Jayanti, and I appeal to the youth of the country to unite once again, just as they did during Jantar Mantar 1.0. It should be a grand agitation aimed at saving the country. Whatever changes we aim to bring to the nation will not be possible if our vote is stolen... we have to come together against this conspiracy against the youth." Das also claimed that attempts had been made by workers linked to the BJP



to hamper the planned agitation.

"The BJP people have sent some workers. We have also provided pictures of the same... No local resident or any citizen of the country would be against this protest because nobody wants their votes to be stolen or their rights to be violated," he told reporters. Das stated that CJP had submitted an intimation to the Mumbai Police, saying: "They are a professional force. I believe there will be mutual cooperation from their end as well as ours." "The protest will be held in a peaceful manner, and from here the pan-India agitation will be kicked off," he added. CJP leader Sidhant Bhardwaj highlighted that people had started gathering at the protest venue hours before the scheduled time of 4 p.m.

"The enthusiasm among the people is the same as it was at Jantar Mantar. These are the people who have come to save the country. Even if they belong to different states, cities or villages, their spirit and their respect for the country remain the same."

‘Paid Rs 40,000 rent, EMI for years’: Noida buyer wins compensation for delayed flat

GNS News Agency, Oct 6

At 32, Shyam Sunder Agrawal planned to buy his first home — a permanent address close to his office, with a school nearby for his three-year-old child. On April 30, 2010, the government official from Delhi's Paschim Vihar booked a 3BHK flat for Rs 43 lakh at Antriksh Golf View in Noida's Sector 78. He was promised possession by 2012, and he expected the move to be a fresh start for his family. "My friends came across this property... I checked it out and I liked it. I could reach my office in just 20-25 minutes," said Agrawal, now 48.

But the flat was handed over only in March 2017, according to court records. Owing to the delay, he and his family moved into a rented house in Vasant Kunj, paying Rs 40,000 a month as rent while continuing to pay the home loan EMI of Rs 20,000. And when the flat was finally handed over, Agrawal said, it was still incomplete as it had no occupancy certificate and other necessary documents. "Then I asked for the possession certificate and penalties for delay, but they refused," he claimed. He initially tried to resolve the matter amicably but eventually approached the courts. In 2019, he filed a complaint before the Regulatory Authority seeking a refund of around Rs 4 lakh.

Last month, nearly seven years after he filed the complaint, the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court upheld his right to seek compensation for the delay. The court held that accepting possession of a delayed flat does not take away a homebuyer's right to claim compensation. It said Agrawal's claim for interest for every month of delay until possession was maintainable under the proviso to Section 18(1) of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act. In 2024, the Real Estate Appellate Tribunal ruled in Agrawal's favour and said the project was delayed and the homebuyer did not lose his right to claim compensation.

It had observed that Agrawal was entitled to the interest for the delay in completion of the project for the period from December 2012 — the date of handing over physical possession — until March 2017 at a rate 1% point above the Marginal Cost of Funds-based Lending Rate (MCLR). This is the minimum interest rate that a bank in India can charge for a loan. The builder challenged the May 13, 2025, judgment passed by the Uttar Pradesh Real Estate Appel-



late Tribunal (UP REAR) in the HC's Lucknow bench. The builder had cited a National Green Tribunal order, arguing that in 2013, it had restricted development activity within a 10-km radius of the Okhla Bird Sanctuary. Antriksh Golf View was within this radius. However, the High Court, in its order issued on September 23, ruled that the date of possession was in 2012 while the NGT order came in effect in 2013. It also said construction was completed in 2014 and the Occupancy Certificate was applied for in the same year before the authority concerned. V K S Bisen, who represented Agrawal before the Tribunal, said similar cases keep coming up, involving issues such as RERA registration, delays in possession and Occupancy Certificates, particularly as Noida expands rapidly and new projects are being built aggressively. Agrawal, meanwhile, said he had little choice but to accept the flat when it was finally handed over. Protesting back then was not an option, he said. "If you don't pay, the builder won't give you possession, he can cancel it. So, I was helpless... It was mentally harassment... but, ultimately the truth prevailed," he said. The delay had been difficult to understand at first. "As the handover date neared, I used to go and visit the site and we were relieved when we saw ongoing construction work every time." "This delay was not expected, the long-drawn process starts affecting you. Some homebuyers do not even wish to take the legal route," he added. The family has also continued living in Vasant Kunj and will shift to their Noida home post retirement. "I cannot change my child's school now... We also know people here now. My office is nearby. We'll now shift post-retirement," Agarwal said.

TN officials suspended for Hindi lettering on highway signboard



Two Tamil Nadu Highways Department officials were suspended after Hindi words appeared on a newly installed signboard on the Sathankulam-Nazareth State Highway. The government said the lettering violated the state's Tamil-English two-language policy and warned of strict action

GNS News Agency, Oct 6 Chennai: Two Tamil Nadu Highways Department officials were suspended for violating the state's two-language policy of Tamil and English by allowing Hindi words to be used on a State Highway signboard, the state government said on Friday. The Hindi words were subsequently removed from the signboard and departmental action was initiated against the two officials, the government said.

The newly installed signboard on the Sathankulam-Nazareth State Highway (SH-93) in Thoothukudi district carried the names of towns in Tamil and English as well as Hindi. As soon as the government learnt about the Hindi lettering, it was removed from the signboard, an official release said. "The two officials who were responsible for the inclusion of Hindi on the signboard by violating the two-language policy have been suspended and departmental action has been initiated," the government said. The state government also warned of strict action against officials who violate its two-language policy of using Tamil and English.

UN experts slam Pakistan for misusing counter-terrorism laws against human rights lawyers



GNS News Agency, Oct 6

Geneva: The United Nations experts have strongly condemned Pakistan's use of "vague and overbroad counter-terrorism" provisions against human rights lawyers Imaan Mazari-Hazir and Hadi Ali Chattha, while calling on the authorities to immediately release them and drop "unfounded" criminal and terrorism charges. The remarks came after both lawyers Mazari-Hazir and her husband Chattha were re-arrested shortly after a division bench of Pakistan's Supreme Court on September 17 granted them bail and suspended their sentences in the social media posts case.

The experts recalled they had previously expressed their alarm at the conviction of both human rights lawyers for social media posts supporting local activists and criticising the military. "Invoking an older case immediately after they were granted bail appears to be an attempt to use the criminal justice system as punishment for freedom of expression and human rights advocacy. We have followed successive proceedings against Mazari-Hazir and Chattha since January, also seemingly intended to punish and intimidate these lawyers, while sending a chilling message to

the profession in general," the experts warned.

Following their re-arrest, an Islamabad anti-terrorism court refused a police request to hold and interrogate the couple for 30 days and instead ordered them to be sent to jail on a 14-day judicial remand. On September 22, 2026, an anti-terrorism court in Islamabad returned the couple's bail petitions because they lacked signed powers of attorney, they said. The experts strongly criticised the use of counter-terrorism provisions to restrict human rights and hinder the legitimate exercise of their right to promote, protect, and defend human rights. Highlighting that international standards require governments to protect lawyers from intimidation, harassment and improper interference, as well as from prosecution for carrying out recognised professional duties, the experts said those standards also protect lawyers' freedom of expression. "Pakistan should drop all charges based on the exercise of freedom of expression by legal practitioners or their legitimate legal work, and order the couple's immediate release. They should already have adequate access to counsel of their choice, to their family, and to adequate and necessary medical care," they noted. Earlier this week, a total of 15 international civil society organisations, including the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), voiced grave concern over the continued arbitrary detention of Pakistani human rights lawyers Mazari-Hazir and her husband Chattha, since January, despite the Supreme Court suspending their sentences and granting them bail. "Drop all charges based on the legitimate exercise of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, human rights advocacy, and the lawful performance of their professional duties as lawyers. Disclose the factual and legal basis for their re-arrest and ensure rigorous judicial scrutiny of the arbitrary use of the Anti-Terrorism Act in the latest proceedings," the joint statement said.

Wall St set to open higher as jobs data dampens rate hike odds, yields fall

Wall Street's main indexes were set to open higher on Friday as a softer-than-expected jobs report deepened prospects of an unchanged US rate this month, leading to a bigger drop in Treasury yields, while lower oil prices also boosted sentiment. Nonfarm payrolls increased by 29,000 jobs last month after a downwardly revised 133,000 rise in August, the Labor Department's closely watched employment report showed on Friday. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast payrolls advancing 90,000.

The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here. "The lower jobs print, including the revision, is, oddly enough, good news for stocks. With the bond market organically doing the job of the Fed recently, we needed to sacrifice a headline metric and this morning's report accomplished the goal," said Todd Schoenberger, chief investment officer at CrossCheck Management. A string of data showing resilient economic activity and a slower-than-expected increase in prices, along with comments from at least two top policymakers pushing back against another rate increase, have led investors to increasingly bet that the central bank will keep rates on hold this month.

Traders now assign a 16% probability that the Federal Reserve would hike rates by 25 basis points in October, compared with 26% before the report. Wall Street's main indexes finished higher on Thursday after a rebound in US Treasuries eased concerns over soaring yields, following a bond selloff that had pushed the benchmark 10-year yield



to multi-decade highs earlier in the day. It was set for a weekly loss of about 1%, having come under pressure as rising yields raised worries about inflation and mounting government debt. The yield on the two-year Treasury note, which is closely tied to interest-rate expectations, retreated for the second straight day. Adding to the positive sentiment, Brent crude prices slipped below \$100 a barrel after a report that the European Union discussed additional diesel and crude stock releases, even though there were no new updates on the resolution to the Middle East conflict. At 08:47 a.m. ET, Dow E-minis were up 424 points, or 0.83%, and S&P 500 E-minis were up 62.75 points, or 0.81%. Nasdaq 100 E-minis were up 349 points, or 1.13%. The US sports apparel company forecast a surprise steep drop in annual revenue due to weakness in China, announced job cuts and decided to shake up its global business divisions.

Israeli passenger says he knew what to do on flydubai plane after watching TV show



NES ZIONA, A passenger who helped save a flight carrying more than 170 people to Tel Aviv from crashing says he knew how to stabilise a nose-diving aircraft after watching an aircrash TV show. Yaniv Hayun, 50, is being hailed in Israel as a hero after he and three other Israeli passengers managed to subdue the co-pilot of flydubai flight FZ1073, who had stabbed its captain, before pulling up the jet's steering control to right it.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. A second air crew aboard helped land the plane safely in Saudi Arabia. Hayun's brother-in-law Asaf Chen told Reuters that Hayun was travelling with his wife and two daughters and that he owns a sewage pumping company. After arriving from Saudi Arabia at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport, Hayun described how the drama onboard unfolded. "We knew there was an attack because a woman screamed 'stabbing' and the plane shook," he said. "At that moment I ran to the cockpit and the plane dived." He told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who met him at the airport, that the stabbed pilot probably managed to open the cockpit door before collapsing. Item 1 of 5 Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu meets with Yaniv Hayoun, Or Fradilov, Dr. Shota Musayev and his wife, Sigalit, who he described as "heroes," who intervened to prevent a disaster on a flydubai aircraft bound for Israel from the United Arab Emirates, which was diverted to Saudi Arabia following an emergency signal, in Jerusalem October 1, 2026. Amos Ben Gershon/Government Press Office/Handout via REUTERS THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN SUPPLIED BY A THIRD PARTY Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu meets with Yaniv Hayoun, Or Fradilov, Dr. Shota Musayev and his wife, Sigalit, who he described as "heroes," who intervened to prevent a disaster on a flydubai aircraft bound for Israel from the United Arab Emirates, which was diverted to Saudi Arabia... Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab Read more

"One (pilot) was down and one was on the controls, and another person came in with me, I grabbed the assailant and put him in a chokehold, and pulled him out," he told Netanyahu, in a video of their meeting distributed by Netanyahu's office. He and a few other people subdued the co-pilot and then he returned to pull up the unmanned steering control of the plane, Hayun said, his shirt still blood-stained from the fight.

Asked how he knew what to do in the moments before another pilot aboard, whom other passengers identified as a British man called James, took control, Hayun said: "I watch Air Crash Investigation, Mr Prime Minister." Tzvika Manes, an Israeli bank executive and one of the passengers who helped hold the co-pilot down, said they used airline earphones to tie him up. Israeli President Isaac Herzog said on Thursday that he was nominating Hayun for the Presidential Award for Civilian Heroism, along with Manes, and Manes' wife Tali — who was first to alert the passengers of the violence in the cockpit — and Shota Musaev, a doctor who treated the wounded captain. Musaev helped incapacitate the co-pilot with another passenger, Asaf Rajuan, who was also nominated. "I'm not a hero," Rajuan said at the airport. "It's something you do without thinking, running to save your daughter's life, your family's life, your wife, and all the staff and people on the plane. You don't think, you just act."

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,"

How Trump's obsession with 'rigged' voting machines spread across US government

GNS News Agency, Oct 6

What began with a search for evidence inside a Puerto Rico voting machine grew into a vast quest involving intelligence agencies, election deniers and White House officials for proof that the 2020 vote was stolen. It failed — but Trump diehards remain undeterred. In June 2025, a team of US government computer experts shuttled between a dusty warehouse in Puerto Rico and the headquarters of the island's election commission. Their mission: analyze a voting machine for evidence that could upend the accepted history of the 2020 US election.

The operation was led by Kurt Olsen, a Washington lawyer who had spent years promoting US President Donald Trump's false claim that the 2020 election had been stolen. To the Trump officials backing the effort, the Puerto Rico machine, which had been used in the US territory's 2024 elections, offered a chance to prove what courts, audits, election officials and intelligence agencies had repeatedly rejected: that a foreign actor had manipulated votes in Democrat Joe Biden's favor. What began as a forensic examination of a single voting machine grew into an investigation spanning the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which coordinates the nation's intelligence agencies, the Justice Department, the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

While Reuters previously reported on the inspection of voting equipment in Puerto Rico and Olsen's hunt for evidence that the 2020 election was rigged, this account reconstructs for the first time how that operation unfolded inside the government. It includes previously unreported details about Olsen's access to sensitive information before he formally joined the administration, his role in obtaining election records from Arizona's Maricopa County and his push to inspect voting equipment in Venezuela.

Based on interviews with more than two dozen people with knowledge of Olsen's operation, including two current US officials, four former US officials and two figures with direct knowledge of the Puerto Rico operation, Reuters found that the effort had two goals: to find evidence that the 2020 election had been rigged and use it to support sweeping changes to the American voting system. Some White House and intelligence officials believed that if Olsen could prove that foreign adversaries or Trump's political opponents had altered the results of the 2020 election, the findings could help justify expanding federal authority over elections. Some election officials fear his mission has laid the groundwork for the Trump administration to seize voting equipment or ballots during November's midterms. Responding to questions from Reuters, the White House said in a statement that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, then led by Tulsi Gabbard, initiated the investigation after election officials on the island raised concerns through the US attorney's office about the machines, and that its goal was to identify vulnerabilities, not to revisit the 2020 election. Reuters found, however, that Olsen pushed the effort toward finding evidence that foreign actors had manipulated the election, a search that later expanded into Georgia and Arizona and drew in multiple federal agencies.

The White House also said no "permanent" White House staff were involved in the decision to obtain or review the machine in Puerto Rico. But Reuters found that Olsen, who was backed by Trump, was in regular contact with White House officials in the lead-up to the operation. One person with direct knowledge of the matter described a period of coordination between the White House and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, known as ODNI, before the voting machine and other equipment were obtained in Puerto Rico. Senior White House officials later became involved as the effort expanded well beyond Puerto Rico. Gabbard and ODNI did not respond to requests for comment. Nor did the Central Intelligence Agency, Homeland Security or the Justice Department. The US attorney's office in Puerto Rico declined to comment.

With the midterms a month away, election officials fear voting machines will again become a focus of misinformation and fraud allegations as theories promoted by Olsen and other proponents of stolen-election claims gain a larger platform inside the federal government. Some election officials are hiring lawyers, drafting emergency court filings and rehearsing responses if federal agents demand machines or records. Colorado passed a law in June allowing the state to declare an election emergency in cases of federal interference, including efforts to obtain voting equipment or records. "We'll be ready to respond," Colorado's Democratic Secretary of State, Jena Griswold, told Reuters. A Republican loss of either chamber of Congress would break the Republicans' monopoly on power in Washington, frustrating Trump's legislative and judicial ambitions while subjecting his administration to aggressive Democratic oversight.

The campaign by Olsen and others to prove that the 2020 election was manipulated through voting machines erodes public trust in elections and could lay the groundwork for future interference, said Ben Berwick, head of election law and litigation at Protect Democracy, a legal advocacy group that has filed lawsuits defending elections from interference. For years, Trump argued that voting systems were compromised and infiltrated by foreign actors. As his second term began, he cast the search for proof as unfinished business. Inside the White House and parts of the intelligence community, officials revisited claims already rejected by courts and the Justice Department. Voters cast ballots in Puerto Rico in 2024. A voting machine used on the island later became part of an effort to find evidence that voting systems were used to manipulate the 2020 US election. REUTERS/Gabriella N. Baez The stocky former Navy SEAL built a career as a product-liability lawyer before becoming a fixture in the movement to overturn the 2020 result, advising Trump and his allies from outside the government. His rise from little-known litigator to White House election-security chief illustrates how Trump came to rely on figures long associated with fringe legal theories and election conspiracies to pursue his political grievances. Olsen's investigation ultimately found no evidence that foreign actors had infiltrated US voting systems, manipulated machines or swayed the 2020 election. He told colleagues that intelligence agencies and White House officials had thwarted the effort by withholding information, according to three people with knowledge of the matter.

In May, he joined federal prosecutors in Florida examining whether the Obama and Biden administrations had weaponized the government against Trump. Olsen told Reuters that he had stepped down from that role on Monday but remains employed by the Justice Department. He declined to discuss his work or answer questions about this story. The Justice Department confirmed he remains an employee.

In June, the White House created a task force to declassify records tied to election-fraud allegations and foreign interference as part of Trump's broader effort to highlight what he says are vulnerabilities in US elections. The White House said the effort was not intended to influence policy ahead of the midterms. A month later, Trump declassified CIA documents that he said showed the Venezuelan government had conspired to manipulate votes electroni-

cally in its 2020 elections. The documents did not show that Venezuela altered the vote, a claim it has repeatedly denied. Nor has Trump presented evidence that foreign interference caused votes to flip in the 2020 US presidential race. The hunt for evidence that the 2020 election was rigged underscores the staying power of debunked conspiracy theories involving two voting machine companies Dominion Voting Systems, now known as Liberty Vote, and rival Smartmatic Corp. While Olsen's investigation found no proof that either company's technology had been used to alter votes, it did reveal how pro-Trump election activists who built new careers around those claims gained influence inside the government by persuading Trump they could uncover evidence that others had missed.

"A lot of them have come into the administration, and they're being given access to the power of the federal government to pursue the exact same claims that they tried to pursue in and around 2020," said Charles Stewart III, a political scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who studies election administration. "It's relitigating 2020 for the benefit of an audience of one." When Trump began his second term, Olsen was already well known among activists claiming the 2020 election was stolen. He had represented Kari Lake, the Trump-backed former candidate for Arizona governor, in challenging her 2022 defeat. An Arizona court later fined him \$2,000 for falsely claiming tens of thousands of illegitimate votes had been included in the tally. During 2023 court proceedings, Olsen disputed that some of his claims were false. Later, in a disciplinary hearing over his ability to continue practicing law in Arizona, he said he had "learned a lesson about being more careful with my use of words," according to a transcript of the proceeding. Olsen also worked closely with Mike Lindell, the MyPillow founder and promoter of false claims that machines flipped votes in 2020. Trump, who retained Olsen as a lawyer after the election, introduced the two in February 2021, according to Olsen's testimony in a deposition. Olsen became a consultant for Lindell on election-fraud matters, Lindell said in an interview. "Kurt and I were basically partners," he said. "He was all in."

One of the theories in their work held that code developed by Smartmatic, a Florida voting-technology company founded by Venezuelans, had reached Dominion equipment, giving the government of former Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro a path to manipulate votes. Courts repeatedly rejected the allegation for lack of evidence. Both companies denied it. In a statement, Smartmatic spokesperson Samira Saba said, "After years of audits, investigations, litigation and forensic examinations, there is no credible evidence that Smartmatic code was used to change votes in 2020." Liberty Vote, which acquired Dominion in 2025, did not answer questions about Olsen's investigation but said it was "focused on stability, service and transparency."

After Trump returned to power, Olsen told White House and intelligence officials that evidence of foreign tampering could help justify expanding federal authority over elections, a power the US Constitution largely reserves to the states, according to one current and two former officials. The White House was already moving in that direction. By late February, officials were drafting what became Trump's election executive order, issued a month later, requiring proof of citizenship for voter registration and seeking to restrict some forms of mail-in voting. By spring 2025, ODNI had formed a task force, the Director's Initiative Group, to carry out executive orders targeting what Trump and his allies called politicization within the government and intelligence community. Led by senior intelligence official and retired Army Lieutenant Colonel Paul McNamara, its first project was an investigation into the 2020 election. McNamara enlisted Mojave Research, an AI and cybersecurity firm already helping ODNI develop internal search capabilities. White House officials asked ODNI to work with Olsen on election-related projects, according to two former officials. Reuters could not determine precisely how Olsen, who held no government position at the time, came to play such a central role. McNamara also recruited Jason Wareham, Mojave's chief executive, who said he was brought in to examine voting machines in Puerto Rico alongside Olsen. Puerto Rico offered what Olsen and his allies had struggled to obtain from US states: direct access to Dominion machines similar to those used across the US. Island officials cooperated after widespread ballot-scanner problems, including jams and vote-reading errors, disrupted its 2024 elections.

Olsen was in near-daily contact with White House officials and had begun assembling a small team of outside analysts, sharing with them election-related intelligence he obtained from inside the government to support the probe, according to the people familiar with the operation. In its statement, the White House said the administration "carefully follows the law regarding access to sensitive information." On a May video call, Olsen told Mojave Research staff and cybersecurity specialist Ben Cotton, who had worked on legal challenges to the 2020 election, that Puerto Rico authorities would provide machines he believed could yield evidence of Venezuelan hacking. Olsen insisted on secrecy, saying he was already encountering resistance inside the administration to reopening questions about the 2020 election. Cotton, calling from a barber's chair during a haircut, volunteered to join. Cotton did not respond to a request for comment. In June 2025, Wareham and Cotton flew to Puerto Rico's capital, San Juan, with an FBI agent and a Mojave Research engineer. After inspecting dozens of machines in a warehouse, they spent several days at Puerto Rico's State Elections Commission, the agency overseeing the island's elections, copying data from a Dominion machine provided for analysis. The commission declined to comment on any possible ongoing US investigations.

Wareham saw the assignment as a forensic exercise: collect the data and determine whether the machine had been compromised. Olsen wanted to search for traces of Smartmatic code that, under his theory, would show how Venezuela or another foreign actor such as China could manipulate Dominion machines, according to Wareham and two others with direct knowledge. That theory had become an article of faith among some Trump supporters. But Dominion spent years battling such allegations, which courts repeatedly rejected.

In 2023, Fox News agreed to pay Dominion \$787 million to settle a defamation lawsuit over false election-rigging claims. When the Puerto Rico work ended, Wareham copied data from machines and servers onto nearly every external hard drive he could buy in San Juan, packed them into eight to 10 boxes and shipped them to ODNI headquarters in McLean, Virginia, for analysis, he said. On June 19, a week after the Puerto Rico operation, Olsen and the FBI agent joined Justice Department officials for a six-hour meeting at a Tampa hotel with people who claimed expertise in Smartmatic technology. According to people familiar with the meeting, the group said it had firsthand knowledge that the technology had been used to manipulate elections in Venezuela and the Philippines. Reuters was unable to independently verify those claims. Representatives of the Venezuelan and Philippine governments did not respond to requests for comment.

Meet the Anands: How chess icon Viswanathan Anand’s son has taken to art



Art has taken over a bulk of the space at his luxurious residence in Chennai’s Kotturpuram. If a painting of lord Hayagriva is located next to a fancy chess board that was gifted to him abroad, a sketch of a tiger is perched right near a chess board made of paper. Anand does not mind at all... because the brain behind these works is his son, Sai Akhil Anand, who is gearing up for his solo exhibition, Morphogenesis. “My house is now 50% art, 50% chess,” beams Indian chess legend Viswanathan Anand, “Traditionally, it has always been full of my trophies and newspaper clippings about my achievements. Recently, it has started to fill up with Akhil’s budding art journey. I’m happy to share what art means to the family.” The Anands will do more of that in the first week of August when Morphogenesis opens in Chennai. “I do a lot of Indian art like Gond, madhubani, worli and cheriyal and connect it with math patterns,” says 14-year-old Akhil about the elements of his show, which has been curated by his teacher, Diana Satish. Akhil, currently studying in Class IX at Chennai’s Beyond 8, might be the son of a champion synonymous with chess, but it was art that appealed to him from a young age. “I once observed the stripes of a zebra and tiger and noticed its patterns. Ever since, I have been fascinated with patterns. His early works were about people – of popular personalities like Newton, Einstein and Gandhi. This fascination grew into a passion during the COVID lockdown a few years ago. Explains Anand, “With more time in his hands, he (Akhil) got deeper into art. He was deeply inspired by the programmes of David Attenborough that spoke about about patterns and colour in Nature.” Morphogenesis will fea-

ture all that. If the series called the Bindu Bovine involves Akhil’s artistic interpretation of a cow using elements of fractal geometry, the UnBinary series – inspired by the geometric works of Dutch painter Piet Mondrian – features subjects in binary colours. So, what’s his personal favourite? Akhil states, “The series on animal superheroes, which talks about a few animals that are endangered and close to extinction.” In that series, close to Akhil’s heart, are sketches on animals like Moo Deng, the hippopotamus from Thailand Zoo that went on to become an Internet sensation, and Tajiri, the giraffe at New York’s Animal Adventure Park, which has become a symbol for giraffe conservation. The Anands – both Viswanathan Anand and his wife, Aruna – are cheerleaders for their son’s pursuit of art. Anand recalls, “When I was growing up, my father – who worked in the Railways – had a more conventional job, which meant strict working hours. He tried to keep up with my passion for chess, and was very supportive. I think it’s the same for me; I try to keep up with Akhil’s artistic pursuits.” He points out that there are many similarities between chess and art. “In chess, you are forced to sit in front of a board and focus on the job at hand. It’s quite similar in art; you have your tools in front of you, and you need to focus. While technology can help with research, you still need to get back to the job at hand and focus,” he explains. When they are not discussing chess or art, the Anands dig a lot into music; English musician Sting and Irish rock band U2 are among their favourites. Anand explains, “For me, it was quite surprising that Akhil ended up liking a lot of music from my teenage days. He is well informed of that time. I have the habit of listening to my favourite song from an album and moving on, but he listens to all of them. But, he is also my gateway into modern music and singers.” Even as Anand keeps up his duties as a mentor to the current crop of rising Indian chess talents, he still plays doting dad at home. Akhil and Anand bond over not just art and music, but also enjoy playing a game of table tennis whenever they find time. And of course, they also play chess. Akhil is yet to win against Anand – but he is currently mastering the hyper accelerated dragon and London System to get one up against the Indian chess legend. He says, “I play a lot of chess, but my dream is to become an environmental lawyer and bring upon awareness about issues like climate change and global warming. I want to fight against plastic and air pollution. My role model is BR Ambedkar, the father of the Constitution of India.”

Is Labubu mania still going strong or has India moved on? And how do you snag one?

They are small, mischievous, and impossible to ignore. With their fang-toothed grins and pointy ears, Labubus — once just quirky vinyl toys — have unexpectedly become 2025’s “It” accessory. No longer the preserve of toy collectors, these blind-box figurines are now dangling from luxury bags, trading hands across continents, and powering a global consumer craze. Labubu first sprang to life in 2015 as a character from The Monsters, a children’s book series by Hong Kong-born, Belgium-based illustrator Kasing Lung, whose work draws heavily from Nordic mythology. Initially produced in Taiwan, it was not until Pop Mart — the Beijing-based toy giant founded by Wang Ning in 2010 — licensed the character in 2019 that things really took off. Using a signature blind-box model, where each sealed box contains a mystery figure, Pop Mart turned Labubu into a must-have collectible.

But the tipping point came in November 2024, when Lisa of South Korean girl group Blackpink clipped one to her Louis Vuitton bag and later revealed her “Labubu obsession” in a Vanity Fair interview. The Internet lost it. And just like that, labubu became a viral hit across Asia and beyond. It did not stop there. International stars like Dua Lipa, Rihanna, Kim Kardashian and even David Beckham have been spotted with Labubus — often attached to their bags, backpacks or keychains — catapulting the character into global fashion consciousness. By mid-2025, Pop Mart had released over 300 variants, with a mint green, 131 centimetre (4.3 feet) tall Labubu figure being sold at Yongle International Auction in Beijing in June 2025 for 1.08 million yuan (approximately ₹1.3 crore). As Labubu mania went global, Pop Mart CEO Wang Ning’s personal stake in the company skyrocketed, placing him among China’s 10 richest individuals. With an estimated net worth of ₹1.734 trillion, Wang is now one of the youngest billionaires in the country. In India, Labubu’s rise has been just as wild. The Pop Mart outlet at Bangkok’s Siam Centre has become a kind of pilgrimage site, as Mumbai-based filmmaker Faraz Arif Ansari discovered earlier this year. “So, I got my first one (labubu) end April, early May, from Bangkok’s Pop Mart. It is the best stocked and priced,” Faraz recalls. “Then I started hunting for limited editions. Got a few from resellers in Bangkok and others through friends travelling around Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore.” While blind boxes cost around 550 THB (almost ₹1,500) in Thailand, resellers in India list the same figurines for ₹6,000–7,000. “It’s mad,” they (Faraz identifies as non-binary, their pronouns are they/ them) laugh. “Even the Thai resellers are way cheaper — and they bargain too. I picked up a few limiteds for about 1,500 THB (₹4,035) each.” Their collection now sits at around 20 figures — placing them somewhere between casual collector and hardcore enthusiast. Anchit Kapil, co-founder of CrepDog Crew (CDC), was quick to spot the trend brewing on Instagram. “Honestly, it was both demand and instinct,” he says. “Collectors in India were already hooked, but there wasn’t a reliable source to buy from — at least not without months of waiting or risking fakes. We’ve always curated what’s culturally relevant, so bringing Labubu into the CDC world just made sense.”

The reaction was instant. “We teased a drop in May, and it went off,” he says. “It validated itself before we even launched.” Unlike traditional retailers working off projections and data, CDC taps directly into the pulse of youth culture. “Sometimes the community tells you what’s hot before the numbers do,” he says with a shrug. What has been surprising, even to Anchit, is the diversity of Labubu fans. “You had sneakerheads who were like, ‘Why would I buy a toy?’ And now, some of them are our most die-hard collectors,” he laughs. “It’s not just lads in their 20s either. Labubu’s gone beyond ‘toys’. It’s gender-neutral, age-neutral, everything-neutral. We’ve seen uni students and working professionals alike building collections.” While CDC took the organic route, another player moved fast and commercial. Abbas Ali Zaveri, founder and CEO of HypeFly India (an online retailer of sneakers and streetwear), approached Labubu like he does all things viral — with a sharp eye and even sharper instincts. “We’re always scanning global trends. If it’s hot internationally, we want to be the first to



bring it here,” he says. “It’s about aspiration. People see something trending in the US or Korea and don’t realise they can get it locally.” Abbas’s team first clocked Labubu in May. “We did a test run. My team wasn’t convinced, they were like, ‘Who’s paying ₹5,000 for a toy?’ So I posted a few videos myself. First day, we sold 10. I knew we were onto something.” A bold ‘buy one, get one’ launch followed just as the buzz reached fever pitch. “In that first week of pre-orders. It wasn’t just a toy anymore; it was a flex.” Abbas believes Labubu’s success is about access. “It’s a gateway to the culture. Before, being part of the hype scene meant dropping 45,000 on Off-White or Jordans. Now with 5,000, you’re in.” Of course, success breeds counterfeiters. “Fakes are everywhere,” Abbas says bluntly. “We’ve got a zero-tolerance policy. If it doesn’t come with a Pop Mart invoice, we won’t stock it.” He recalls spotting a fake barcode (the only way to tell if the Labubu is fake) that said “Top Marie” instead of Pop Mart. “The bootleggers are getting smarter. It’s a full-time job keeping ahead.” Labubu figures and dolls are seen on display at a Pop Mart store in Shanghai, China

That is where trusted platforms like HypeFly and CDC stand apart, offering guarantees in a sea of fakes. “Anyone can buy a ₹2,000 labubu online,” he says. “But they’ve no idea what they’re getting. There is no regulation.” Interestingly, while demand in Mumbai and Delhi is beginning to plateau, interest is spreading elsewhere. “Now it’s Dehradun, Sikkim, the Northeast,” Abbas says. “Tier-2s and 3s are waking up to it. It’s going national.” From toy to trophy In the world of luxury resale, Labubu has taken on a new identity, that of an accessory enhancer. “Bag charms are very ‘in’ right now,” says Anvita Mehra, founder and CEO of Confidential Couture. “We’ve always seen that desire to personalise classics like Birkins and Kellys. Now, Labubu fills that space.” Hermès has long capitalised on this with its Rodeo charms, and Anvita believes Labubu works on the same principle. “It’s about adding personality. We once gave out free Labubus to some of our customers from stock we picked up in Thailand. But in the resale market in India, they can fetch up to ₹20,000 because most people want Labubus almost immediately. But like all trends, it eventually cools.” She believes Labubu landed at just the right moment. “It’s access, availability, and the thrill of the hunt. People were asking friends to pick them up from Dubai or Singapore. Now they’re everywhere. That might cool the hype slightly but the desire to personalise luxury is here to stay.” A collector’s tale

Still, few stories capture Labubu’s magic quite like Ensito’s (@ensito_20). Based in Charlotte, North Carolina, he has a collection of over 500 Labubus — figurines, pendants and plushies. “It all started when a friend asked me to pick some up during a trip to London,” he says. “I queued for three hours. Sold out two people ahead of me. But I was instantly hooked.” He was drawn in by the designs, the blind-box surprise, and the narrative behind each release. “At first, they were just fun accessories to go with my designer bags. Then it became about the stories. The thrill of the hunt is real.” Ensito has shopped Labubus across the US and Europe, visiting over 15 Pop Mart stores. “London used to be the best, but now it’s all lottery-based. In the US, you’ve got to be fast online. I’ve found Seattle and parts of Texas are easier — less competition. But for him, the real game-changer has been TikTok Lives. “Pop Mart has live shopping channels in the US, UK, and now Canada’s gearing up too.

Wagamama is here. What other new Mumbai restaurants should you try this weekend



Mumbai’s dining scene never sits still. Just when you think you have found your favourite pasta joint or sushi bar, along comes a fresh opening, promising slow-fermented breads, house-cured meats, or cocktails made with foraged botanicals. From sleek chef-driven menus to playful pop-ups turned permanent, here is a guide to Mumbai’s buzziest new restaurants. The arrival of Wagamama in Mumbai’s Churchgate is, at the very least, a confident flex. Housed inside the restored Cambata Building — neighbours with Eros Cinema and Churchgate station — the global ramen chain has made its India debut with a splash of polished minimalism and fast-casual fun. The interiors play to type: neutral tones, soft industrial textures, communal benches, and open kitchens designed for flow. It is slick, unfussy, and designed to look great on your feed without being overtly curated. You can see the London blueprint in every inch and that is both its strength and limitation.

The menu is a calibrated “greatest hits” — katsu curry, bang bang cauliflower, kare burroso, gyozas and donburi bowls all present and accounted for. The ramen is warm and filling, though the broths do not quite achieve the layered complexity of other pan-Asian spots in the city. The chicken tantanmen hits the right spice notes, but the noodles can feel just a touch overcooked if you wait too long. That said, it is comforting in the way airport ramen rarely is. The star, surprisingly, might be the banana katsu — a golden-fried dessert that balances sweetness and crunch with more finesse than expected. Drinks include refreshing cold-pressed juices and zingy mocktails, although cocktails lean a bit too saccharine for their own good. Over 50% of the menu is vegetarian or vegan, which is admirable, but expect a very pan-global interpretation of Asia, not necessarily regionally accurate, nor pretending to be. Set across two levels in the West Zone of Phoenix Palladium, the newly launched Gourmet Village is less a food court and more a curated lifestyle destination for the city’s discerning diners. Reimagining the traditional mall dining experience, this upscale zone brings together over 50 restaurants and cafés under one roof. Designed to feel like an eclectic village, the space is laced with greenery, warm lighting, and airy al fresco sections that invite you to linger a little longer than you had planned. There is much to explore: Burma Burma brings its vegetarian Asian fare. Their new dessert menu, called The Sweet Life, fuse timeless classics with Burmese flavours and modern textures. Created in collaboration with award-winning pastry chef Vinesh Johnny, the seven-part menu is a punctuation mark to the meal, whether it’s jaggery-and-coconut-laced reinterpretations or delicate international patisserie with a twist. Kuuraku offers an authentic izakaya experience (skewers, sake and all), and Delhi’s cult favourite Andrea’s makes its Mumbai debut with a menu of polished global comfort food. The presence of local staples like Kitchen Garden by Suzette, Foo, Le Pain Quotidien, and Cream Centre adds familiarity, while spots like Fountain Sizzlers and The Silver Train dial up the nostalgia. Sweet finishes come courtesy Harley’s Fine Baking and Gold by Ice Cream Works, while the plush Game Palacio lounge throws in some leisure. Fireback is what happens when high-concept Thai cuisine meets good execution. With Chef David Thompson, the revered interpreter of Thai culinary history, at the helm as culinary director, the Fireback outpost in Mumbai gets a number of things right. The space inside Nilaya Anthology is predictably striking, but never sterile. Earthy tones, a glowing Jospier grill at centre-stage, and atmospheric lighting all give it a refined warmth. It feels upscale, but not intimidating. Food-wise, it is not all pad thai and green curry. Expect jungle curries that bite, salads that crunch with toasted rice and lime, and flame-grilled proteins rubbed with pastes made from scratch. Highlights include the smoky lamb chop gorlae with crispy shallots, a well balanced scallop salad brightened with coconut and lemongrass, and the soft-shell crab red curry, which manages to be indulgent without overwhelming. The crab fried rice is unfussy but elevated. The vegetarian options are more than just filler, especially the grilled pumpkin and sweet potato in gorlae sauce, but meat and seafood still lead the narrative. The cocktail menu, created by Varun Sharma, who also leads Comorin downstairs, is layered playful. The Tom Yum Highball has its flaws but it does have bite, while the Galangal — with whisky and pickled galangal brine — is all depth and intrigue. Not every drink hits the mark (some teeter toward over-invention), but the overall bar experience

feels well-matched to the food. Prices lean high, and it is not for the unadventurous. But if you are looking for one of the city’s most assured openings this year, Fireback is your place. A meal for two, including drinks, will cost ₹4000; Entrance through Comorin at Nilaya Anthology, Peninsula Corporate Park, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai - 400013 Not new, but newly reimagined, Sahib Room & Kipling Bar at The St. Regis Mumbai returns after a renovation, and it will charm those with a taste for the slow and subtly theatrical. The relaunch brings a revitalised elegance to this jungle-retreat-meets-regal-dining-room, without abandoning its old-world soul. Think tented ceilings, dark wood flooring, antique mirrors, and carved wooden accents. The updated space pays homage to Rudyard Kipling and the princely shikar camps of yore, with richer textures, sleeker lighting, and a new Spectacle Kitchen that lets guests witness the finesse behind the flames.

The kitchen continues to serve its unapologetically traditional Indian menu, dialled up with refinement. The murgh rezala is well balanced, while the pancharon ki sabzi and dahi ke gullar highlight how vegetarian dishes can be treated with as much reverence. The Rampur ki gosht dum biryani and sahib ki yakhni remain rich and comforting. The new drinks programme is an ambitious trail through Kipling’s India. From The Bay (Mumbai) to A Sip from the Mahal (Bundi), each cocktail carries layers of local memory, finished with aromatic flourishes and sleek storytelling. The beverage list, featuring Indian spirits, heritage liqueurs, and reinvented classics, is quietly sophisticated and contextual. A meal for two, including drinks, will cost ₹4000 plus taxes; 462, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai - 400013 What began as a cheeky, sugar-dusted pop-culture café in Delhi has now evolved into a full-blown Japanese restaurant in Mumbai. At its newest address in Jio World Drive, Harajuku Tokyo Café & Bakehouse opens its most ambitious outpost yet with a multi-sensory restaurant-bar and a bright, pastel-soaked bakehouse.

Split across two zones, the 72-seater restaurant comes with a sushi conveyor belt by day and sake bombs and karaoke by night. Expect sushi boats, robot DJs, manga murals, and retro signage, all orchestrated around a menu co-curated with Japanese chefs Asami Indo and Higuchi Nariaki. The food is comfort-led but layered: from the spicy, buttery seafood shio ramen and coal-fired miso salmon off the robata to zany street-style plates like corn dogs, bubbling UFO chicken platters and the umami bomb Naruto’s Rush cocktail (yes, vodka, gochujang, and ramen broth in a drink). The sushi section is no afterthought either — the rainbow roll and spicy avocado cream cheese roll are fast favourites.

The cocktail menu, curated by Fay Antoine Barretto, comes with Japan-meets-nightlife references, where every drink tells a manga-worthy story. Think Call Me Kimchi, spiked with tequila and house-fermented heat, or the delicate Whisper of the Peach, a Kyoto-inspired blend of Japanese whisky and chamomile. Next door, the 12-seater Harajuku Bakehouse is all soft pinks and Japanese patisserie glow. With soufflé pancakes, cottony cheese-cakes, and a new pet-friendly dessert menu. After years of whispers, Nando’s has finally fired up its grills in Mumbai with a flagship casa now open in Kamala Mills, Lower Parel. Known for its cult-favourite flame-grilled peri peri chicken, the brand’s arrival is less of a soft launch and more of a full-blown entry for fans of their spicy, saucy poultry. The space itself is bright and expansive, blending Nando’s signature Afro-Portuguese design cues with India-specific warmth. Think rustic textures, woven pendant lights, and enough red to match the sauce. The chicken is dependably good. The skin is crisp, the insides juicy, and the basting options range from the gentle lemon and herb to the masochistically fiery extra hot. It is the kind of food that does not pretend to be complex; it is about craveability, not craft. That said, if you’re expecting gourmet, slow-cooked nuance, this is not your spot. It is loud, quick, and a bit brash but that is also its charm. Sides like peri-peri fries and spicy rice still hit the spot, but the vegetarian options feel like an afterthought compared to the protein-rich offerings. Service is fast but not fussy, and there is enough room to host a group without elbowing for space. A meal for two will cost ₹1000 inclusive of taxes; Unit 2, Ground Floor, Trade Garden Building, Kamala Mill’s Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel

PCOS is now PMOS, but women remain sceptical: ‘A name alone doesn’t change struggle’

Polycystic ovary syndrome aka PCOS has a new name now. She goes by Polyendocrine metabolic ovarian syndrome (PMOS). Quite a mouthful, huh? According to a recent article published in The Lancet journal, the term PCOS is inaccurate, “implying pathological ovarian cysts, obscuring diverse endocrine and metabolic features”, and contributing to “delayed diagnosis, fragmented care, and stigma”, while curtailing research and policy framing.

Building on an international mandate for change, the researchers outlined a rigorous, multistep global consensus process for the name change, wherein accuracy was improved by omitting cysts and by capturing endocrine, metabolic, and ovarian dysfunction. PCOS has long remained under-recognised in India, affecting one in eight and about 170 million women worldwide, as per Lancet. Many normalise symptoms like irregular periods, fatigue, or weight fluctuations until they become severe. As the global shift toward PMOS gains attention, the conversation is slowly

beginning to move beyond fertility and ovarian health, toward larger concerns around metabolism, lifestyle, stress, and preventive healthcare. For India, not only does this open up newer discussions around social media-led self-diagnosis, the growing “hormone wellness” economy, and urban lifestyles worsening hormonal conditions among young women — it also raises an important question: will PMOS help people perceive the condition as a long-term health issue rather than only a reproductive concern? Soumyashree Mishra, a PCOS ovarian cyst survivor, says that the term Polycystic Ovary Syndrome never fully explained what the condition truly does to the body. Now, with conversations around its renaming to a broader terminology related to metabolic and reproductive dysfunction, people are asking whether changing the name will actually change the lived reality of those suffering from it. PCOS to PMOS The reality of PCOS is not just a diagnosis written on paper, it is waking up not knowing when your periods will come, or whether they will stop at all. (Magnifi)

Maharashtra school junk food ban won’t curb childhood obesity alone: Doctors tell you what to do alongside



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The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA’s) decision to ban the sale of chocolates, chips, sugary drinks, deep-fried snacks and other foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) in schools and within a 50-metre radius of campuses has been welcomed by doctors as an important step towards tackling childhood obesity. However, health experts say the measure will have a meaningful impact only if it is backed by healthier food choices at home, nutrition education and regular physical activity. On Wednesday, the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued the order, which applies to government, aided and private schools, requiring them to remove unhealthy foods from campuses while encouraging the availability of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, pulses and dairy products.

The move comes amid growing concern over childhood obesity in India. The World Obesity Atlas 2026 estimates that around 41 million Indian children aged 5-19 years are overweight or living with obesity. In Maharashtra, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) found that 4.3 per cent of children under five were overweight, compared with the national average of 3.4 per cent, although the survey does not capture obesity among older school-going children. Targeting a growing health crisis Doctors say the policy addresses a key driver of the problem: children’s easy access to calorie-dense, nutrient-poor foods during the school day. Processed snacks and sugary drinks often displace healthier options, increasing the risk of obesity, Type 2 diabetes, fatty liver disease, hypertension and cardiovascular disease over time.

Dr Tushar Palve, medical superintendent at Cama and Albless Hospital, says the ban directly targets the three biggest dietary contributors to childhood obesity — excess fat, salt and sugar. “Foods high in fat contribute to weight gain and fatty liver disease in children. High salt intake increases the risk of hypertension, which we are now increasingly seeing even in children. Sugary beverages such as soft drinks cause sharp insulin spikes, promote fat storage and increase the risk of diabetes. Banning these foods from schools removes the biggest source of all three during the six to seven hours children spend on campus.” Schools shape lifelong eating habits

Several experts say the policy is significant because schools are where lifelong food preferences are formed. Dr Aparna Govil Bhasker, bariatric, hernia and laparoscopic surgeon at LH Hiranandani Hospital, Saifee Hospital and Namaha Hospitals, calls childhood obesity “one of the most pressing public health challenges of our time. Schools play a vital role in shaping lifelong eating habits. When chips, sugary drinks and ultra-processed snacks are easily avail-

able, they often become the default choice for children. By making healthier foods the easier option, schools can encourage better dietary habits during the formative years,” she adds. Dr Anish Pillai, lead consultant, Neonatology and Paediatrics at Motherhood Hospitals, Kharghar, feels that restricting the availability of these foods while promoting nutritious alternatives can help children develop healthier dietary habits from an early age. Nutrition experts argue the policy could shift what children routinely consume during school hours. “These unhealthy snacks had become the preferred and convenient option for school-going children because of their easy availability and the lack of healthier ready-to-eat alternatives,” says Sonal Chandalia, Consultant Clinical Nutrition at Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre.

Success will depend on implementation Some experts believe the policy’s scale could make it one of the most significant public health interventions for children. Dr Rahul Verma, Director of Paediatrics and Neonatology at Sir H.N. Reliance Foundation Hospital, noted that the order covers more than 1.08 lakh schools and nearly two crore children. “This ban in school and around its premises is not merely symbolic policy. It addresses both availability and the normalisation of unhealthy eating, which are among the biggest drivers of childhood obesity,” he says. He argues for mandatory FSSAI licensing of school canteens, regular inspections and the promotion of healthier foods. Nearly all experts emphasise that restricting junk food in schools alone will not reverse India’s childhood obesity trend. Dr Bhasker says a healthier school environment must be accompanied by balanced home-cooked meals, greater consumption of fruits and vegetables, regular physical activity, adequate sleep and nutrition education. “Healthy habits are not built by willpower alone; they are shaped by the choices that are available and accessible to children every day. If we are serious about tackling childhood obesity, we must create an environment where the healthy choice is also the easy choice.” Experts also point out that children continue to be exposed to unhealthy foods outside school through neighbourhood shops, food delivery platforms, advertising and family eating habits. Unless parents, schools, communities and policymakers reinforce the same message, children may simply compensate by consuming unhealthy foods before or after school.

Does this model work? Evidence from other countries suggests that improving the school food environment can lead to healthier eating habits, even if the impact on obesity takes longer to emerge. A WHO-supported systematic review of 74 studies found that nutrition standards restricting foods high in fat, salt and sugar in schools increased the consumption of healthier foods and reduced intake of unhealthy snacks and beverages. Another meta-analysis of 91 school-based interventions reported higher fruit consumption and lower intake of sugary drinks and unhealthy snacks among children exposed to healthier school food policies, although changes in obesity rates were less consistent because children’s diets outside school continued to play a major role. Countries such as Brazil and Mexico have prohibited the sale of junk food and sugary drinks in schools, while several parts of the UK have introduced strict school food standards and restrictions on foods high in fat, salt and sugar. Many school districts in the US have also replaced sugary beverages and calorie-dense snacks with healthier options.

Where’s the lead in your turmeric coming from? Study finds source, health impacts



Turmeric, a staple in Indian kitchens and traditional medicine, has increasingly come under scrutiny after multiple studies detected alarming levels of lead in commercially sold turmeric powder. However, a new study by environmental research organisation Toxics Link offers reassuring news for farmers while raising fresh concerns about food processing and regulatory oversight. The study found that raw turmeric collected directly from farms across six Indian states contained lead levels well within India’s prescribed safety limits (below the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India [FSSAI] limit of 10 mg/kg), suggesting that contamination is more likely to occur after harvest rather than during cultivation. Contamination is more likely to occur during post-harvest processing, handling, packaging or deliberate adulteration than at the cultivation stage. Researchers have called for stronger monitoring, improved supply chain traceability and stricter enforcement to prevent contaminated turmeric from reaching consumers.

What the study found The study analysed 13 raw turmeric rhizome samples collected from farms in Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. The samples were tested at an NABL-accredited laboratory using a highly sensitive method for detecting heavy metals. Lead concentrations ranged from below the limit of quantification to 1.87 mg/kg, significantly lower than the FSSAI’s maximum permissible limit of 10 mg/kg for turmeric. The findings reinforce growing scientific evidence that raw turmeric itself is generally not heavily contaminated. Instead, previous studies cited by the report have linked elevated lead levels in market samples to the illegal addition of lead chromate, a yellow industrial pigment used to enhance the colour and commercial appeal of turmeric powder.

Health risks remain a major concern While the study offers reassurance about turmeric at the farm level, it underscores the serious health consequences if contaminated products enter the food supply. “Lead is a potent neurotoxin that affects nearly every organ in the human body, with children and pregnant women facing the greatest risks. According to the report, there is no known safe level of lead exposure for children,” says Dr Vivek Jain, Senior Director & Unit Head, Paediatrics, Fortis Hospital, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi.

In adults, chronic low-level exposure can gradually affect the nervous system, kidneys and cardiovascular health, and may also contribute to symptoms such as fatigue, headaches, memory issues, irritability and digestive disturbances. “Long-term accumulation of lead in the body can increase the risk of hypertension and kidney dysfunction. Since symp-

toms are often non-specific, exposure may go unrecognised for a long time. Therefore, it is important for adults to be equally vigilant about the quality and sourcing of food products, especially spices used daily in cooking,” advises Dr Jain. Choosing reputable brands that adhere to strict food safety regulations, maintaining a nutrient-rich diet, and seeking medical evaluation if there is a history of prolonged exposure or unexplained symptoms can help reduce health risks. Exposure during childhood can impair brain development, reduce IQ, cause learning disabilities, behavioural disorders, shorten attention span and affect academic performance. “Many of these effects occur silently, without obvious clinical symptoms, making chronic exposure particularly dangerous. In severe cases, lead poisoning can result in seizures, coma and even death,” says Dr Jain.

Need for stronger regulation The findings place greater responsibility on regulators and the food processing industry to identify where contamination is occurring after turmeric leaves the farm. Although all samples in the study complied with FSSAI standards, researchers argue that surveillance should extend beyond cultivation to processing, packaging and distribution. Satish Sinha, associate director at Toxics Link, says, “The evidence points towards contamination occurring after harvest, making it imperative to strengthen surveillance and regulatory oversight across processing, packaging and marketing stages. Protecting consumers requires greater traceability throughout the supply chain and strict enforcement against food adulteration.” The report recommends that the FSSAI and state food safety authorities conduct targeted inspections of processing facilities and take stringent action against deliberate adulteration. It also calls for larger multi-state studies incorporating soil, irrigation water, agricultural inputs and processing facilities to better understand contamination pathways and strengthen food safety governance.

OpenAI alerts over 100 organisations of AI agent incidents

New Delhi: US-based artificial intelligence giant OpenAI has said that it informed more than 100 organisations about incidents involving unauthorised activity linked to its AI agents as labs face growing scrutiny over the risks posed by autonomous AI systems.

According to the ChatGPT maker, it is conducting a broad review of activity involving its AI models following an incident involving Hugging Face. It further noted that also analysing roughly 50 petabytes of data as part of the review to determine the full scope of the activity. This move comes amid growing concerns in the AI industry over incidents involving AI agents that have taken actions beyond their intended use. “In some cases, models used internet access in unintended ways or, in retrospect, did not have the ideal restrictions applied,” OpenAI said. Moreover, the company has introduced new technical and operational measures over the past several months to prevent similar incidents or identify them at an early stage. OpenAI had previously said the review could take months to complete because of the scale of the data and the work involved.

Why a 12-hour overnight fasting can support weight loss



Intermittent fasting has become one of the most talked-about approaches to weight loss, with many people following eating patterns such as 14:10 (fasting for 14 hours and eating within a 10-hour window) or 16:8 (fasting for 16 hours and limiting meals to an eight-hour window). While these methods may work for some, they aren’t necessary — or practical — for everyone. In fact, maintaining a simple 12-hour gap between dinner and breakfast can also benefit your health. Combined with a balanced diet, regular physical activity and adequate sleep, this overnight fasting window may support sustainable weight loss without the rigidity of longer fasts. The goal isn’t to deprive your body of food. Instead, it gives your digestive system time to rest, allows normal metabolic processes to take place and helps establish a consistent eating routine that is easier to maintain in the long run. It gives your body a break from constant eating

Every time you eat, your body releases insulin, the hormone that helps move glucose from the bloodstream into cells for energy. Frequent snacking or eating late into the night keeps insulin levels elevated for longer, leaving little opportunity for the body to transition between digestion and using stored energy. A 12-hour overnight fast allows insulin levels to gradually decline once digestion is complete. Although the metabolic shift is not as pronounced as it is during longer fasts, it still gives the body an opportunity to draw on stored energy and may contribute to better energy balance over time. It works with your body’s internal clock

Our metabolism follows a natural 24-hour circadian rhythm. Research suggests the body processes food more efficiently earlier in the day than late at night. Finishing dinner by around 7.30 or 8 pm and eating breakfast about 12 hours later aligns meal timing more closely with this internal clock. Late-night eating, on the other hand, has been associated with poorer blood sugar control, higher calorie intake and disrupted sleep—all factors that can contribute to gradual weight gain. For many people, the extra calories that make weight loss difficult don’t come from main meals

Anthropic says Claude AI models breached systems of 3 companies during cybersecurity tests



Amid the intensifying debate around autonomous AI systems and cybersecurity, frontier AI lab Anthropic, on Thursday, July 30, said that it had found three separate incidents where its Claude AI models gained access to the real systems of three organisations. The Dario Amodei-led company said that these discoveries were made during a large-scale retrospective review of its cybersecurity evaluations. The company admitted that the latest review was triggered by a similar security incident that was revealed by OpenAI last week.

In a blog post, Anthropic detailed the security incidents, admitting that its Claude AI models had accidentally accessed real-world computer systems during cybersecurity evaluations. According to the company, the incidents were the result of a misconfigured testing environment rather than the AI intentionally trying to escape or attack real organisations. Anthropic’s disclosure comes amid growing concerns over AI’s increasingly advanced cybersecurity capabilities. The incidents involved three Claude models, Opus 4.7, Mythos 5 and an internal research model, which reacted differently after encountering real-world systems. While Opus 4.7 continued its attack and Mythos 5 mistakenly believed it was still in a simulation, the research model stopped once it recognised the target was real. Anthropic said the models were being tested without the additional safeguards used in public releases. The company has paused all cyber evaluations, and is investigating the incidents with independent AI evaluator METR, and has urged other AI labs to conduct similar reviews.

What happened?

The incidents emerged after OpenAI recently revealed that its flagship AI models had escaped a test environment by exploiting a software vulnerability and eventually breaching the infrastructure of Hugging Face. Meanwhile, in its response, Anthropic said that it reviewed over 141,000 cybersecurity evaluation runs and spotted three cases where Claude had internet access when it was supposed to be isolated. According to the company, the AI models were participating in “capture-the-flag” exercises, which is part of common cybersecurity challenges where they are directed to break into fictional systems to find hidden information. The Claude AI models had been explicitly told that it had no internet access and that everything it encountered was part of a simulation. However, the company said that due to a configuration mistake, the testing systems were actually connected to the internet. Consequently, when Claude found real websites and servers, it mistakenly believed they were part of the exercise.

In the first case, Claude attacked the infrastructure of a real company after confusing it with the fictional target in the exercise. The AI exploited weak passwords and exposed services to gain access to production data. In the second instance, Claude created and uploaded a malicious Python package to the public PyPI software repository as it believed this would help it to accomplish the challenge. According to Anthropic’s findings, the package stayed online for about an hour before being removed. It was downloaded by numerous real systems, including one belonging to a security

but from after-dinner snacks, sugary drinks or mindless eating while watching television. A 12-hour overnight fasting routine naturally eliminates this eating window without requiring complicated food rules. Many people also find that giving the digestive system a break overnight reduces bloating, acidity and the feeling of heaviness the next morning. Small habits are easier to sustain One of the biggest reasons weight-loss plans fail is that they’re difficult to maintain. Highly restrictive fasting schedules may leave some people feeling excessively hungry, tired or socially isolated, increasing the likelihood of overeating later. A 12-hour fasting schedule, however, fits more naturally into daily life. Whether you’re a student, a working professional, a parent or an older adult, it’s a realistic habit that encourages consistency rather than perfection. And when it comes to long-term weight management, sustainable habits almost always outperform extreme short-term measures. The benefits of overnight fasting extend beyond weight loss. When combined with a healthy lifestyle, regular overnight fasting may improve insulin sensitivity, support better blood sugar control and contribute to overall metabolic health. These benefits can be particularly valuable for people who are overweight, have prediabetes or are living with metabolic syndrome. That said, fasting should be viewed as one part of a healthy lifestyle—not a standalone solution. Food quality still matters

Fasting isn’t a licence to eat anything during the eating window. What you eat remains just as important as when you eat. A diet rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, healthy fats and fibre promotes fullness, supports stable blood sugar levels and provides essential nutrients. On the other hand, frequent consumption of fried foods, refined carbohydrates, sugary drinks and ultra-processed snacks can easily offset the potential benefits of fasting. Staying well hydrated is equally important. Drinking enough water supports digestion, helps maintain energy levels and may reduce unnecessary hunger. A 12-hour overnight fast is generally safe for most healthy adults. However, it may not be appropriate for everyone. Pregnant or breastfeeding women, adolescents with increased nutritional needs, people taking medication for diabetes, those with a history of eating disorders, or anyone living with a chronic medical condition should consult a healthcare professional before starting any fasting regimen. The bottom line You don’t need to fast for 16 hours to experience the benefits of intermittent fasting. For many people, simply maintaining a 12-hour gap between dinner and breakfast is a practical, sustainable habit that can help reduce late-night snacking, support metabolic health and contribute to long-term weight management. When paired with nutritious food choices, regular exercise and adequate sleep, this simple overnight routine can become an effective foundation for better health.

company. Meanwhile, in the third incident, an internal research model scanned thousands of internet-connected systems and compromised one company by deploying common hacking techniques. Anthropic said that when the model realised that the target was a real organisation, it stopped the attack on its own. Further, Anthropic said that there is no evidence that Claude tried to escape its test environment, steal itself, or pursue its own goals. Instead, the models believed they were following the instructions of the cybersecurity exercise. The company also notes that the models involved were running without the additional safeguards that are normally included in publicly available versions of Claude. Following the incidents, Anthropic halted its cybersecurity evaluations, informed the affected organisations, and claimed that it has been strengthening its testing procedures since. The company plans to improve monitoring, tighten security around evaluation environments, and work more closely with external testing partners to prevent similar mistakes in the future.

So far, July has seen a series of incidents that have heightened concerns about the cyber capabilities of advanced AI models. The most significant came on July 21, when OpenAI disclosed that one of its pre-release AI agents escaped an isolated testing environment by exploiting a previously unknown zero-day vulnerability and breached Hugging Face’s production infrastructure during a cybersecurity evaluation. The incident prompted OpenAI to tighten testing controls and collaborate with Hugging Face on new safeguards. Anthropic’s disclosure followed after it reviewed more than 141,000 cybersecurity evaluation runs and found three separate cases where Claude models accessed real-world systems after a testing environment had been mistakenly left connected to the internet. Unlike the OpenAI case, Anthropic said its models did not exploit novel vulnerabilities; instead, they relied on basic techniques such as weak passwords and exposed endpoints. Cybersecurity experts say the two incidents highlight that the biggest risk today lies not only in increasingly capable AI models, but also in inadequately secured testing environments. The disclosures have renewed calls for stronger sandboxing, continuous monitoring and industry-wide standards for evaluating advanced AI systems before deployment.

Apple Pay launches in India with Axis Bank credit cards

New Delhi: Tech giant Apple on Wednesday announced that Apple Pay is now available for users in India across iPhone, iPad, and Apple Watch, with support for Mac coming soon.

Customers with Axis Bank-issued Visa and Mastercard credit cards can add their cards to Apple Pay and use them at thousands of in-store and online merchants across India, as well as anywhere that accepts NFC transactions, the company said in a statement. “India is home to a dynamic and digitally savvy population that continues to embrace a cashless future while expecting the highest standards of security and privacy, and we’re so excited to bring Apple Pay to users in India today,” said Jennifer Bailey, Apple’s vice president of Apple Pay and Apple Wallet. The launch brings Apple customers an easy, secure, and private way to pay in stores, in apps, and on the web at retailers of all sizes — all without the need to type in PINs or use OTPs at checkout. Apple Pay makes everyday payments with a card easy, secure, and private — from simply tapping to pay in stores without an extra app, PIN, or OTP to checking out online without repeatedly entering payment information, Bailey added.

Home interiors and real estate in 2025: India’s transformative year

As 2025 draws to a close and we enter 2026, it is significant to note that the housing and real estate sector has been one of the most standout and transformative sectors of the past year. From a burgeoning growth in the luxury housing segment and Tier 2 cities such as Lucknow and Indore displaying record growth to an increased focus on sustainable and innovative building materials, 2025 was definitely the year when the real estate sector showed unprecedented investment. The interior design space too witnessed the emergence of trends such as colour drenching, flexible layouts, as well as vintage and retro influences. "Premiumisation is one of the strongest trends we have observed, but it is no longer about opulence for the sake of it," says Ganesen Viswanathan, vice president of Bengaluru-based MagickHome India. "Homeowners are choosing premium where it adds real value. Think better finishes, smarter storage, superior hardware and cleaner detailing. Interiors are increasingly being planned around individual needs and routines rather than following a fixed or generic design template. The focus is on longevity and performance rather than visual drama alone. This reflects a maturing market where customers understand the difference between surface-level luxury and well-designed, high-performing homes that age gracefully." India's luxury housing segment is experiencing a notable boom, with branded residences growing rapidly, outpacing the other luxury formats. "According to Knight Frank's Residence Report, India ranks sixth globally in ongoing branded residential projects, contributing about 4% of the world's supply. The number of branded residential developments is forecast to increase by nearly 60% by 2027, reflecting rising demand from affluent buyers seeking curated, experience-led homes that blend convenience with quality living," says Mitu Mathur, director of New Delhi-based GPM Architects and Planners. "These residences also emphasise thoughtful design that embodies brand values and creates spaces fostering community and shared experiences. This shift marks a broader change in India's urban housing market, where luxury is increasingly defined by experience, service, design, and a sense of belonging." Purchases are being driven by high net-worth individual (HNWIs), ultra-HNWIs, and non-resident Indian (NRIs). "Even as some phases saw moderation in volumes, value growth remained strong, supported by demand for larger, lifestyle-enhancing homes. Mumbai also reflected robust market health with a 20% year-on-year rise in property registrations in November 2025," adds Manan Shah, managing director, MICTL Group, based in Mumbai. There has been a growing preference for integrated townships, which mirrors a broader desire for certainty in Indian cities. "Buyers are increasingly choosing environments where infrastructure, mobility, green spaces, and daily conveniences are planned as a whole," says Monika Choudhary, co-founder and chief development officer of Habitat Architects, based in New Delhi and Ludhiana. "Large township developments across Pune, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, and Hyderabad underscore this shift. The home's value is no longer contained within its walls; it is reinforced by the ecosystem around it. Community is

essential infrastructure." Such townships are an opportunity for architecture to operate at an urban scale. "We have introduced elements like large 'urban windows', shared courtyards, and intergenerational parks that allow residents to balance privacy with vibrant community life. The approach is all about designing spaces where a sense of belonging and resilience can flourish," says Khushboo Bansal, principal architect of Sthapati, based in Lucknow and New Delhi. While traditional materials such as cement, steel, and bricks remained essential, there was a clear move towards low-carbon, high-efficiency systems like precast construction, AAC blocks, fly ash bricks, and green cement alternatives. India's green building materials sector is projected to grow at over 10% compound annual growth rate, reflecting a market-wide transition rather than a niche preference. "Sustainable construction has moved into the mainstream in 2025. Low-carbon cement alternatives, carbon-reduced concrete, and recycled materials are being adopted at scale to meet cost and environmental objectives," says S.B. Sarveshaa, chairman and MD of Bengaluru-based Bhadra Group. Industrialised building systems are also gaining momentum, improving speed, precision, and quality control. "Prefabricated and modular components accelerated construction, reduced waste, and improved precision. Enhanced materials for waterproofing, insulation, and energy efficiency became mainstream, reflecting the growing demand for durable, comfortable, and green buildings," says C. Rakesh Reddy, director of Hyderabad-based Aparna Constructions.

"This includes the use of heavy thermal curtains, strategic placement of reflective surfaces to bounce natural light deeper into rooms, and zoned ventilation," adds Mueen Haris, founder of DS2 Architecture, a multi-disciplinary practice based in Bengaluru, Kochi and Mangaluru. "A major trend is the return of natural stone and terracotta floors for their 'thermal mass' properties, absorbing heat during the day and releasing it at night to stabilise indoor temperatures." Material choices in 2025 were driven by performance and not novelty. "Natural stone, due to its inherent beauty, durability and versatility, has remained a go-to material. From statement marble countertops to understated limestone flooring, this versatile material works across styles, blending seamlessly into both traditional and modern homes. It is also an ideal choice for outdoor spaces, including pool decks, patios, terraces, and balconies," says Harkaran Singh Boparai, founder and principal architect of Harkaran Boparai Studio (HBS), located in New Delhi. "While access to international styles and materials has expanded, it is essential to design in a way that responds to place through materiality, craft, and narrative, without becoming pastiche. The use of stone helps in balancing these layers while still creating something emotionally compelling and functionally seamless."

Real estate, by definition, is always racing against the clock — with deadlines, approvals, handovers, and more. This year saw technology and AI begin to meaningfully compress those timelines. "The more transformative change is inside the delivery pipeline. From feasibility to floor area ra-

tio (FAR) modelling, test-fits, and massing options, to coordinated building information modelling (BIM), automated checks, clash detection, documentation, and finally the last-mile detailing that used to consume weeks of human bandwidth, AI is accelerating the entire arc," says Manish Gulati, principal architect and founder of MOFA Studio. GST rationalisation in 2025 addressed long-standing concerns around the inverted tax structure in real estate, where input taxes were higher than output taxes. "Rates on essential materials such as cement were rationalised from 28% to 18%, while tiles, bricks, and several construction inputs were aligned to a 5% slab, thus simplifying the tax structure," shares Reddy. "This correction improved input tax credit efficiency, reduced working-capital blockages, and enhanced cash-flow predictability for developers." Equally important is the alignment of GST rates for government and private contracts. "Simplified registrations, faster refunds and clearer rate structures also reduce working capital stress and planning ambiguities," says Bharat Bahl, joint managing director of New-Delhi based Krishna Build Estate Pvt. Ltd. Speaking of home décor and interior design, 2025 has been a year of experimentation and bold choices. "Homeowners have become far more open to exploring new ideas; they are more intentional and deeply personal about what they want in their homes. At the same time, they have been open to understanding what design can offer beyond the obvious," says Disha Subramaniam, founder and principal designer of New Delhi-based Design by Disha Subramaniam. Here's what ruled in 2025. The year definitely brought in the use of bold colours and colour-drenched spaces. "2025 embraced emotion-driven colour stories, where entire rooms were drenched in one dominant hue, including walls, furniture, ceilings, and décor. From deep plums and forest greens to burnt oranges and midnight blues, saturated palettes were used to evoke mood and identity," says Harshita Nookula, lead-visual merchandising of Bengaluru-based Livspace India. "This trend worked especially well in bedrooms, lounges, and powder rooms, turning spaces into immersive, sensorial experiences rather than neutral backdrops." The focus on muted, dusty shades akin to colourful extensions of neutrals was also popular. "Sage green, soft grey, and light coral colours that evoke a sense of calm were favourites. Sage green, in particular, has emerged as a go-to for cabinetry and walls, providing a soothing link to the outdoors without overwhelming the senses," says Smita Vijaykumar, founder of ReNNovate Interiors, Mumbai. The year saw an increasing number of homeowners gravitating towards wooden floors. "Walnut, mahogany, and dark oak are being used to add warmth, depth, and a sense of quiet luxury to interiors. What stands out this year is the mixing of multiple wood tones within the same space, combining light and dark finishes to create visual balance and character. Wood is no longer limited to one element; it appears across cabinetry, wall panelling, flooring, ceilings, and custom furniture, giving spaces a cohesive yet layered look," says Manav Dangg, founder and principal designer at Studiio Dangg, New Delhi. Hard



lines softened in 2025 as curves dominated furniture, architecture, and décor. "Arched doorways, rounded sofas, sculptural coffee tables, and fluid silhouettes took over the interior world. These forms add a sense of calm, movement, and approachability while still feeling refined," states Nookula. According to Dangg, more homeowners were open to having unique furniture shapes in their houses, creating a space filled with fluidity, comfort, and spatial harmony. The year saw the ample use of handcrafted ceramics, carved wood, woven textiles and lime-plastered walls. "Our interest in micro concrete and limewash comes less from their popularity and more from their discipline. It is robust, economical, and quietly expressive," says Aditya Tognatta, co-founder of Custom Design Stories in Gurugram. Stone has been featured as a focal point. "Whether it is statement island countertops, floor-to-ceiling fireplace walls, or richly veined coffee tables, stones bring a dramatic and luxurious feel to the interiors. This is because the variations in veining and tone make each application feel unique," adds Subramaniam. Retro patterns such as geometrics, psychedelic prints, and classic motifs like paisley and florals made a comeback. "Woven rugs, embroidered fabrics, and vintage quilts are being used to add texture, while reclaimed wood, distressed finishes, and classic designs add character to modern spaces, says Poonam Mehta, co-founder of Pune-based Poonam Akash (formerly known as AMPM Designs). "Further, vintage lighting like mid-century modern chandeliers and antique lanterns were popular statement piece ideas." Maximalism with intention was another key trend of 2025. "There was a conscious move away from greys and beige towards layered, expressive spaces that are curated and not overwhelming," says Pratyusha Kethinedi, principal designer and founder of Bengaluru-based House of Katha. "There is a clear demand for integrated study units, flexible storage, reading corners and layouts that can adapt as children grow. Safety and comfort also play a larger role, with preferences for softer finishes, rounded edges and practical materials that are easy to maintain," says Viswanathan. "At the same time, these spaces are being designed to blend seamlessly with the overall aesthetic of the home rather than feeling separate or overly themed. This reflects a more mindful approach to family living, where children's needs are addressed without compromising on design quality or longevity."

The long road to a water-secure future in Hyderabad



Every January, just after the Sankranti cheer ebbs, residents of the Czech Colony in Sanathnagar, Hyderabad, brace for an annual test, watching their water taps a little more closely. The borewell serving their 40-flat apartment still runs twice a day, but not for long. Its yield starts thinning, and within a month, there is nothing left to draw. What follows is a familiar routine: they must depend on water tankers, repeatedly checking the HMWS&SB app, tracking a slow crawl up the waiting list. That ritual, however, has quietly ended. T. Srinivas, a member of the apartment association, says the turning point came with the construction of an injection borewell. The change was immediate. "Our borewell improved and a few nearby apartments that opted for percolation pits saw a difference too."

He details the consultations that went into the project, the pit collection system, annual rainwater estimates and how the intervention eased everyday life in the building. Experiences such as this are shaping a broader rethink of water use and conservation across Hyderabad. At Kavuri Hills, in the upscale Kakatiya Hills residential colony, a 16-flat apartment complex built on a 1,000-square yard plot also constructed an injection borewell with technical assistance from the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWS&SB) and WaterAid, an NGO facilitating such projects through corporate social responsibility funds in select localities. Suneel, an IT professional and resident of the apartment, recalls how the building's mandated rainwater harvesting structure was once ignored. "We were blessed with water. During monsoon, the borewell would overflow, and we would flush excess water out of the cellar through a hose," he says.

That sense of abundance, however, faded rapidly as construction activity surged in the neighbourhood. Between January and May this year, the apartment complex purchased two 10-kilolitre water tankers a day for the first time, paying about ₹1,000 per load, often with some waiting period. "We got about 100 tankers," says Suneel, his eyebrows raised. The response came in the form of a 200-foot injection borewell. Built with a contribution of just ₹20,000 from residents, it has the capacity to harvest around 509 cubic metres, or 5.09 lakh litres, of rainwater annually. According to HMWS&SB managing director K. Ashok Reddy, building injection borewells and harvesting pits is a key focus area for the Board. He recently grabbed headlines by stating, "If every house has a rainwater harvesting (RWH) pit, the city may not even need Krishna Phase IV for the 5 tmcft additional water supply". Yet, success stories like Czech Colony and Kavuri Hills remain exceptions in a city as large as Hyderabad. They offer a glimpse of the possibilities but do not capture the full picture. A city that cannot hold its rainHyderabad receives an annual rainfall of 700-900 mm. But in 2025, it recorded around 1,060 mm between June and December alone, nearly 40% above normal, according to the Telangana State Development Planning Society. But the city sits on crystalline formations such as granite, gneiss and compact basalt, which have very low permeability. As a result, ground-water storage depends entirely on fractures, joints, and weathered zones within these rocks. Even in a year of excess rainfall, Hyderabad failed to retain much of it. The absence of harvesting pits and collection systems meant runoff

rushed into drains, flowed into the Musi river, and eventually discharged into the Krishna river via Nalgonda district. The result? Growing dependence on water tankers and deep borewells. Hyderabad is now the most ground-water-extracting district in the State. With extraction exceeding 100% of recharge, the city is classified as both 'over-exploited' and 'critical'. The pressure extends to Rangareddy and Medchal-Malkajigiri districts, which together form the contiguous Greater Hyderabad region, as well as neighbouring Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri. By contrast, Telangana as a whole is in a relatively better position, with an annual groundwater recharge of 20.4 billion cubic metres and average extraction of 45.91%, according to the Central Ground Water Board's Groundwater Resource Assessment 2024.

To understand why only 42,784 residents in Hyderabad, those in households measuring more than 300 sq. metres, frequently book water tankers, HMWS&SB conducted a citywide survey in 2024. It found that 17,382 of these households either lacked an RWH pit or had borewells that had dried up. Others had pits but did not use them. Advisory notices were issued, but compliance remained limited. Broadly, Hyderabad's water stress can be traced to these tens of thousands of properties, compounded by rapid urban expansion that stretches the Board's reach. Parallely, HMWS&SB launched another survey of borewells installed by the Board and other civic authorities in public offices and community spaces. Eighteen NGOs advocating water conservation were roped in for the exercise. So far, 3,435 surveys have identified 8,285 borewells, of which 4,569 are non-functional. These would now be converted into injection borewells. Separately, a survey under Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, an initiative aimed at constructing one million recharge structures nationwide, began on December 7 this year. Preliminary findings show 7,043 users already have rainwater harvesting structures. These will be linked to the Board's unique Customer Account Number (CAN). The survey is ongoing. When water becomes a commodity

If sustainability is a long-term pursuit, tanker supply is an immediate race against time. From February to May, the gap between booking and delivery often determines whether Hyderabad edges towards a water emergency. The summer of 2024 was a turning point. HMWS&SB expanded its tanker fleet from 604 to 1,000 almost overnight as bookings surged to an average of 2,000 a day. Demand was concentrated in western and north-western growth corridors — Manikonda, Gachibowli, Kondapur, Madhapur, Kukatpally, Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills. In April 2024, Principal Secretary (Municipal Administration and Urban Development) M. Dana Kishore acknowledged a sudden drying up of borewells in western Hyderabad and a shortage of tankers, drivers and filling points, while maintaining that the city was not in the grip of a water crisis. Under the Board's service level agreement, tankers are to be delivered within 24 hours. But in peak summers, the target was reduced to 12 hours or less, with round-the-clock deliveries. Filling stations and points were expanded, and even tanker-filling designs were improvised such as single filler-to-T-joint pipes that could load two tankers simultaneously. Currently, the Board operates 1,150 tankers, supported by 90 filling stations and 150 filling points across the city. Data on tanker deliveries between January and July over five years, from 2021 to 2025, shows a steady year-on-year increase, mirroring falling groundwater levels and the pace of Hyderabad's urban expansion. The escalation is stark. Peak deliveries in April rose from 85,880 tanker trips in 2021 to 2,90,180 in 2025, an exponential 238% jump. Even January, once considered a relatively stable month, saw a 127% rise, from 52,778 trips in 2021 to 1,19,752 this year. The contrast is visible year-on-year. Between 2024 and 2025, tanker trips in February and March climbed by a steady 58%. April registered a further 22% increase, marking the highest monthly tanker movement in the Board's history — 2,90,180 trips — followed by 2,77,415 in June. In this context, HMWS&SB's recent announcement marks a decisive

shift in Hyderabad's groundwater conservation strategy. As part of its 100-day action plan, the Board plans to construct 15,000 RWH pits across Greater Hyderabad, extending up to the Outer Ring Road. While rainwater harvesting structures are mandated for all houses measuring 200 square yards, the requirement will now be enforced strictly for properties of 300 square yards and above.

The Board has also secured approval from the School Education Department to build rainwater harvesting structures in 1,200 government school premises across Hyderabad and neighbouring districts. Reiterating the larger ambition, Mr. Ashok Reddy says the city could do without Krishna Phase IV if it creates 50,000 rainwater harvesting structures over the next three years. "Yes, that's my slogan. Why should Hyderabad's water flood into the Musi and Krishna rivers, only to be pumped back into the city," he argues. He explains that the proposed project would require an outlay of ₹3,000 crore, with recurring annual operations and maintenance expenses of ₹20 crore. By comparison, investing ₹100 crore in rainwater harvesting structures would be far more efficient and sustainable, and could even help check urban flooding. A key component of the plan is converting dried-up borewells in public spaces across the city into injection borewells. For the immediate construction of 700 RWH pits, the Board has already floated a tender. HMWS&SB's push for rainwater conservation is not new. Over the past decade, it has taken multiple forms, with mixed outcomes. A similar 100-day action plan was rolled out in May 2016, during which 2,200 rainwater harvesting structures were built in common public spaces. The effort, however, fell short over time as resident welfare associations failed to maintain the structures. This was followed by the launch of Jalabhagyam in 2017 and Jala Jeevam in 2018. These programmes empanelled NGOs to educate residents on rainwater harvesting, maintenance practices and technical aspects. Jala Jeevam went further by making RWH structures mandatory for all households, expanding NGO involvement and constituting an expert committee on rainwater conservation. Moreover, 1,600 Jalavaarasathvam clubs were formed, involving grandparents and children, along with resident welfare associations and self-help groups, to revive a culture of water conservation. That same year, the Board developed a Rainwater Harvesting Theme Park on Road No. 51 in Jubilee Hills, showcasing around 40 water conservation interventions. The facility remains operational and is free for public use. Another initiative, Water Leadership and Conservation, was launched

in 2019 as a Sanathnagar-specific programme aimed at driving behavioural change and reducing water wastage. Government policy and intent, however, have not fully translated into active public participation. The data reflects this gap. In 2025, average demand for water tankers rose by 36.37% over 2024, while year-on-year projections estimate a further 22% increase. On rainwater harvesting, the Board continues to issue advisory notices to non-compliant properties under provisions of the Water, Land and Trees (WALTA) Act.

The missing link?

What stands in the way, officials argue, is mindset. "The attitude is: I can pay for water, use influence to get a tanker even in summer, and wash my luxury car with piped water. This is 100% literacy with ignorance and lack of common sense to use a limited resource wisely," says T. Sharath Reddy, Deputy General Manager (Engineering), HMWS&SB, one of the two senior officers supervising Durgam Cheruvu, a high water tanker-dependent division. Jala Satyanarayana, Assistant Director (Rainwater Harvesting), HMWS&SB, whose phone number features on notices issued to households without RWH structures, recounts the responses he receives. "Some even threatened me, thinking it was a legal notice. I explain, visit their premises, and help design the structure. They do understand and want to build one. But, in general, people value water only when they experience scarcity." For Kalpana Ramesh, designer-environmentalist and founder of The Rainwater Project, the missing piece is community ownership. Even well-crafted policies, she argues, fail without local engagement and upkeep. "How many can say they collect rainwater and are not contributing to urban flooding? How many would prioritise an RWH pit over interior design? How many speak of duties, not just rights? The key is collective stewardship, where everyone is responsible and collaborative," she says. According to officials, where resident welfare associations and NGOs are active, a mix of awareness, community involvement, and what Kalpana Ramesh calls "penalties and harsher action" can act as effective deterrents. However, social fault lines complicate conservation efforts. In Malkajigiri, V. Sushmitha, a schoolteacher living in a 16-unit apartment complex, points to a common obstacle. "There is a lack of unity among residents," she says. "Tenants don't want to get involved, owners live elsewhere and nobody wants to bother. The space meant for RWH gets converted to parking. Any discussion leads to petty quarrels — and personal egos."

Japan’s new flagship H3 rocket fails to put geolocation satellite into orbit

Tokyo: Japan's space agency said its H3 rocket carrying a navigation satellite failed to put the payload into a planned orbit, a setback for the country's new flagship rocket and its space launch program. Monday's failure is the second for Japan's new flagship rocket after its botched 2023 debut flight and six successful flights.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency said the H3 rocket carrying the Michibiki 5 satellite took off from the Tanegashima Space Center on a southwestern Japanese island Monday as part of Japan's plans to have a more precise location positioning system of its own. The rocket's second-stage engine burn unexpectedly had a premature cutoff and a subsequent separation of the satellite from the rocket could not be confirmed, Masashi Okada, a JAXA executive and launch director, told a news conference. Whether the satellite was released into space or where it ended up is unknown, and that JAXA is investigating the data to determine the cause and other details, Okada said. Jun Kondo, an official at the Ministry of Educa-

tion, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, told reporters that the failure was "extremely regrettable" and that the government set up a task force to investigate the cause and take necessary measures as soon as possible to "regain credibility." Monday's failure is a setback for Japan's new flagship that replaced the earlier mainstay H-2A which had near-perfect success record. It also delays Japan's satellite launch plans, including one to have a more independent geolocation system for smartphones, maritime navigation and drones without relying on the U.S.

The H3 rocket is designed to be more cost-competitive in the global space market. Japan sees a stable, commercially competitive space transport capability as key to its space program and national security. JAXA's H3 project manager, Makoto Arita, said the new flagship is still in the early stages of operation but can be globally competitive. "We will pull ourselves together so that we won't fall behind rivals. We'll fully investigate the cause and put H3 back on track."

Power demand overshoots government's projection by 3.3% in April-August



In an unusual trend, India's actual power requirement in the first five months of the current financial year has consistently exceeded the government's projections, as deficient rains and persistently high temperatures drove electricity demand higher than anticipated. Actual power requirement usually remains below the short-term projections made by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA).

However, between April and August, the country's actual energy requirement was 3.3% higher than the CEA's projections, an analysis of government data showed. Such a deviation was recorded only in 2022 and 2023, although at a much lower level. These were also years when the economy and electricity demand were recovering from the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In April-August 2023, actual energy requirement was 0.75% higher than the CEA's projection, while the deviation was 1.8% during the corresponding period in 2022. The divergence assumes significance as generation companies and power system operators use the CEA's short-term projections to plan fuel requirements, including coal stocking, as well as other operational requirements. A significant deviation from these projections can therefore have implications for planning across the power system. The unusual demand trend also raised concerns over power availability, with the government moving to take additional measures to maximise generation from available capacity. Among these measures, the power ministry has directed around 112 captive coal-based power plants to operate at maximum capacity from October 1 to December 31. Notably, the CEA prepares a short-term power supply plan, known as the Load Generation Balance Report (LGBR), which assesses the anticipated power supply po-

sition in the country for each year. The projections in the LGBR are used to inform various stakeholders, including the Railways, coal companies and other agencies involved in fuel supply and power system operations, allowing them to plan their requirements and resources accordingly. According to power system operators, the trend started to reverse in September, with rainfall in parts of northern and eastern India bringing some moderation in electricity demand. "Projection for September was also high, around 161 billion units, and rainfall in eastern and northern parts have reduced some load. So, we have observed some reversal of the trend in September," a senior official told The Indian Express. The gap of 3.3% is expected to narrow in the coming months and approach the projected levels over the next two to three months, the official said. Normally we are always in excess in the plan. But this time we may be very close to the plan. Since the deviation was there for a longer period of five months, the pace of reduction is likely to be slower," the official added. The excess energy requirement has pushed up generation from coal-based power plants which are already operating beyond planned levels. Coal-based sources generated nearly 10% higher electricity between April and August compared to the same period last year. Between April and August, coal-based sources generated 579,869.38 million (MU) against 527,542.87 MU in the corresponding period last year. Generation from coal-based sources was also the highest recorded for the April-August period in the past three years. In contrast, hydropower generation fell by over 11% to 75,304.58 MU during April-August period this year, from 84,767.77 MU in the corresponding period last year. The decline in hydropower generation has tightened the power supply balance, as hydroelectricity plays a crucial role in meeting evening peak demand, particularly during summer when solar generation falls after sunset. However, rainfall deficit has altered the equation. Earlier, the Ministry of Power informed Parliament that reservoir levels at hydroelectric power plants across the country have fallen to their lowest for the April 1-July 30 period since 2023, as erratic weather conditions linked to the effects of El Niño reduced water availability for power generation. The increased reliance on coal-based generation is also reflected in the depletion of stocks at thermal power plants, with inventories falling to 18.6 million tonnes as of September 30 from around 55 million tonnes at the beginning of April.

Factory wages rose 5% in FY25, Jharkhand only state to see a fall

Jharkhand was the only state in 2024-25 whose factory workers were paid less, on average, compared to the previous year, with government data released Wednesday showing wage per worker in the eastern state fell 5.2%. In contrast, factory wages rose 5.3% nationally to Rs 2.28 lakh in 2024-25, up from Rs 2.16 lakh in 2023-24, according to the latest Annual Survey of Industries. Meanwhile, even as Tamil Nadu remained the state with the highest number of factories and workers, Uttar Pradesh was a key driver of industrial expansion. On the whole, the number of factory workers rose 7.3% nationally to 1.67 crore and the number of factories themselves by 2.6% to 2.7 lakh, making it the first time in over a decade that India has seen the number of factories rise by more than 2% in consecutive years.

To be sure, factory workers in Jharkhand are paid far more than the national average, with The Indian Express' calculations showing that the average wage in the state was Rs 3.04 lakh in 2024-25, third behind only Rs 4.06 lakh in Sikkim and Rs 3.14 lakh in Goa. In fact, wages in Jharkhand were the highest in 2022-23 and 2023-24, at Rs 3.17 lakh and Rs 3.2 lakh, respectively. As a result, the fall in 2024-25 seems to be a correction as high wages in the state attracted more workers. In 2024-25, the number of factory workers employed in Jharkhand rose 9% to 2.08 lakh — even though the number of factories reduced by nine to 2,880.

Meanwhile, the average wage in Jharkhand's neighbour Bihar jumped 16.7% — the highest of any major state — to Rs 1.63 lakh in 2024-25. However, this was driven by a 2% fall in the number of workers to 1.15 lakh, with the number of factories edging up by 1% to 3,426. The Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (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%.

Adani Group reaffirms commitment to Maharashtra with Rs 6 lakh crore investment blueprint: Pranav Adani

Mumbai: Pranav Adani, Director, Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL), has said that with the launch of 'Invest Maharashtra', the state is establishing a robust mechanism to convert investor intent into relentless on-ground execution. The Adani Group, he said, reaffirms its unwavering commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with the state and its hard-working people. Addressing the gathering at the 'Invest Maharashtra' event here in the presence of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Ait Pawar, Pranav Adani said the Adani Group is proud to help build the twin engines of Maharashtra's future: industrial supremacy on one hand and dignity for every citizen on the other. At the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos and through state partnerships, the Adani Group has committed to an investment blueprint exceeding Rs 6 lakh crore across critical and upcoming sectors like energy, aviation and aerodistricts, urban regeneration, data centres and coal gasification. Projects worth Rs 2.6 lakh crore are already completed or under execution, he said. "This is our contribution towards Mumbai 3.0 — not just a larger Mumbai, but a better-connected, more balanced and more inclusive metropolitan region," Pranav Adani stressed. The Adani Group's partnership with Maharashtra state spans decades, but its recent commitments reflect a quantum leap in nature, scale and conviction — at a time when the state aims to be a one-trillion-dollar economy by 2030, with the Mumbai Metropolitan Region playing a central role. "We have had the privilege of managing and transforming the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA), continuously enhancing passenger experience and operational excellence. Along-



side it, we are delivering the greenfield Navi Mumbai International Airport — a transformative infrastructure asset designed to anchor the Mumbai Metropolitan Region's growth — and eventually handle over 90 million passengers annually," Pranav Adani highlighted. Surrounding these twin aviation gateways, the Adani Group is developing integrated airport business and hospitality districts that will redefine urban mobility and commerce. "Through Adani Electricity Mumbai Limited (AEML), we power more than 3 million homes and establishments across Mumbai. The metropolis today leads major global financial capitals in clean energy adoption, with over 60 per cent of our power supply sourced from renewables. And to insulate Mumbai's financial core from outages, our 1,000 MW High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) transmission link brings resilient, clean green power directly into the city.

Why Aditya Birla's Ultravolt foray sent jitters through cable stocks



ADITYA BIRLA GROUP

Aditya Birla Group announced its foray into the wires and cables business with the launch of Ultravolt on September 3, with an initial outlay of Rs 1,800 crore. Making a strong pitch for the business, the company said Ultravolt would be the second-largest player in the wires segment by capacity at launch, and aims to become one of the top two players in the segment within five years.

But the announcement did not bode well for the existing players in the segment, as was visible in their stock prices. Polycab India, which holds around a 22% market share of the domestic wires and cables market, tanked 15% in September. KEI Industries has nosedived nearly 22%, while Havells India and RR Kabel have dropped 14-18%. According to an Aditya Birla Group statement, India's wires and cables industry has reached a market size of Rs 1,24,085 crore and is projected to grow at 14.50% annually up to 2035, led by housing, infrastructure, industrial investment, and electrification. The strong growth outlook makes the group's entry into the sector timely.

The arrival of a new player has unsettled existing companies, but experts say the bigger near-term concern is margin pressure rather than a sharp hit to revenues. Copper prices could also be a key factor in determining the impact. The Aditya Birla Group has businesses across several sectors, allowing it to use existing manufacturing and distribution networks that most companies do not have. In this case, Hindalco Industries and UltraTech Cement give it a key advantage.

Take Hindalco, for instance, which mines and refines copper: a major raw material used to make wires and cables. Companies such as KEI Industries, Havells, RR Kabel and Polycab source a large part of their copper from domestic players like Hindalco and Vedanta, as well as international traders and suppliers. Ultravolt, meanwhile, will have direct access to Hindalco, which could, in theory, give it a lower-cost source of copper. The Hindalco relationship gives Ultravolt access to high-purity copper and greater supply-chain control but not a guaranteed structural price advantage as copper is a globally traded commodity," according to Manish Valecha, Co-head of Research at Anand Rathii Institutional Equity. However, in an environment where copper prices have already shot through the roof, this accessibility may come in handy for Ultravolt. Copper futures on the London Metal Exchange rose to a record high of around \$14,820 per tonne, up to a 45% rise from last year. The metal is critical not only for industrial demand, but is also essential for AI infrastructure. Meanwhile, UltraTech's massive network of dealers, contractors, and construction clients provides an even bigger advantage. In fact, this factor allowed the company to become the second-largest player by ca-

capacity in the industry at launch. The company plans to pursue a pan-India rollout from inception rather than a phased regional approach, targeting over a lakh retailers, over 5,000 UltraTech Building Solutions (UBS) outlets, and spanning districts and 6,000 pin codes at launch, a report by Nomura noted. Complementing distribution, the company has launched an electrician engagement program — having onboarded 1,600+ electricians pre-launch — with a target to train over 40,000 electricians in the coming year under the Skill India initiative with ESSCI (Electronics Sector Council of India)," the report added. These electricians will be more likely to be comfortable using Ultravolt products, helping build a sticky distribution pipeline.

When a big conglomerate with deep pockets enters an industry, it can initially unsettle existing players. The concern is that its financial strength will allow it to scale up quickly and take market share from established companies. When Reliance Jio launched in 2016 with the promise of free internet, it had sent the share prices of existing players such as Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea crashing up to 10% within a single day. In fact, the Aditya Birla Group had had a similar effect on the paints industry with the launch of Birla Opus Paints in February 2024. The brand had launched with a "blitzkrieg" strategy, driven by aggressive pricing, massive capital expenditure commitments, and a host of benefits to dealers and distributors, helping it capture a 5-6% market share in the decorative paints segment in a short time. UltraTech's massive distribution network was a key ingredient in that case. While Asian Paints remains the dominant player in the segment with an over 50% market share, its revenue growth has faltered to negative or low single digits year-on-year, compared to 5-20% growth seen between FY19-FY23. In comparison, Birla Opus' revenue jumped 52% in FY26 as it continued to ramp up. Experts believe the group may bring this aggressive strategy again with Ultravolt, as suggested by the management's ambitions.

The consensus is that Ultravolt's margins will impact existing players. The effect is likely to be first seen in margins getting aggressively squeezed. "The more immediate risk is margin pressure. Incumbents may have to increase dealer incentives, advertising and promotional spending to protect their retail position and limit price hikes, particularly with copper prices rising," explained Valecha of Anand Rathii. "This is particularly relevant for Havells and the house-wire portion of Polycab/KEI. So, the near-term revenue disruption looks manageable, while margin pressure is the bigger concern," he added. Nomura has a similar view and expects Ultravolt to notch a market share of 6-7% by FY30, provided market conditions remain constructive. However, the group's successful aggressive push in the paints sector may not lead to a similar outcome in the wires and cables segment. "Paints are primarily a brand or distribution-driven consumer category, while wires and cables become progressively more technical as it moves from house wires into MV (medium voltage), HT (high tension), EHV (extra high voltage), and specialised cables. Higher-voltage cables require certifications, technical approvals, customer references, and established execution history," according to Valecha. These barriers cannot be broken by simply adding distributors, so it depends on how fast Ultravolt can ramp up its capacity and achieve expertise in specialised products providing higher margins. "The real test will be dealer ramp-up, pricing, and market-share gains over the next 2-3 quarters," noted Ashutosh Murarka of Choice Institutional Equities.

HDFC Bank names Anup Bagchi as CEO; to take charge from October 27



Bagchi, currently the CEO of ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, will step in as Sashidhar Jagdishan last month decided not to seek reappointment

The board of HDFC Bank, India's largest private sector bank, has appointed Anup Bagchi as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cleared his name for the post. Bagchi, who is currently MD and CEO of ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, will take charge on October 27.

Bagchi will step in as Sashidhar Jagdishan last month decided not to seek reappointment as MD and CEO. His current term ends on October 26, 2026, after which he will retire from the services of the bank. "Pursuant to an application made by the bank, the RBI vide its communication dated October 1 has approved appointment of Anup Bagchi MD & CEO of the bank and the remuneration payable to him, under Section 35B of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 for a period of three years with effect from October 27, 2026," the bank said in an exchange filing.

Consequently, the HDFC Bank board, based on the recommendation of the Governance, Nomination and Remuneration Committee, at its meeting held on October 1 approved the appointment of Bagchi as an Additional Director of the bank effective October 2 till the date of approval of the shareholders. Bagchi holds a Management degree from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore and an Engineering degree from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. According to banking sources, HDFC Bank board had forwarded the names of Bagchi and the bank's Deputy MD Kaizad Bharucha for the CEO post to the RBI. Bagchi will join HDFC Bank at a time when the bank was facing several governance issues. In March this year, the then part-time Chairman Atanu Chakraborty resigned abruptly, saying certain happenings and "practices" within the bank were

not in line with his "personal values and ethics". The bank subsequently appointed external law firms to examine the concerns raised in his resignation letter. The law firms later submitted a report giving clean chit to the bank. The Indian Express subsequently reported that HDFC Bank's Audit Committee had ordered an internal vigilance investigation into payments totalling Rs 45 crore made to the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation's deposits during FY24 and FY25. The payments were allegedly routed through the bank's marketing department and presented as contributions to a road-safety campaign rather than as differential interest on deposits. "The first priority of Bagchi will be to improve the governance standards of the bank," said a banking observer. Former Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar became the Chairman of the bank recently.

Bagchi, an ICICI veteran of three decades, Bagchi is a seasoned financial services leader with over three decades of experience across banking, capital markets, wealth management, and insurance. A member of the ICICI Group since 1992, he has built a diverse career spanning treasury, retail banking, wholesale banking, investment banking, and digital financial services. Over the course of his career, he has held several pivotal leadership positions, including CEO and MD of ICICI Securities, Executive Director of ICICI Bank, and currently MD and CEO of ICICI Prudential Life Insurance. "His career reflects a strong track record of business building, strategic leadership, and navigating the evolving financial services landscape. Bagchi served as Executive Director of ICICI Bank from 2017 to 2023, overseeing Retail, Business and Rural Banking, and subsequently Wholesale Banking," the bank said.

During his tenure, he played a key role in strengthening the bank's retail franchise, driving profitable growth while maintaining credit and cost discipline. "Under his leadership, ICICI Bank became the first private-sector bank in India to surpass a retail mortgage portfolio of Rs 2 trillion and successfully navigated the demonetisation period with limited business disruption," HDFC Bank said. Alongside his executive responsibilities, he served as Chairman of ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company until May 2023 and was a Director of ICICI Prudential Pension Funds Management Company and ICICI Home Finance. Since June 2023, Bagchi has been serving as MD and CEO of ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, leading one of India's largest private life insurers, which is publicly listed. Under his leadership, the company crossed Rs 10,000 crore in Annualised Premium Equivalent (APE) for the first time in FY25, with APE growing 15% year-on-year to Rs 10,407 crore and profit after tax increasing nearly 40% to Rs 1,189 crore. Jagdishan's departure from the bank marks the end of a leadership chapter that began in October 2020, when the RBI approved Jagdishan's appointment to succeed Aditya Puri as MD and CEO. Jagdishan had been with HDFC Bank since 1996, joining as a manager in the finance function. He later became chief financial officer in 2008 and played a key role in the bank's financial and strategic functions.

Indian hockey umpire manager sent home from Asian Games after sexual misconduct complaint



GNS News Agency, Oct 6

International hockey umpire Gurinder Singh Sangha has been sent back from Japan after allegations of sexual misconduct were levelled against him. Sangha, who was appointed by Asian Hockey Federation as the umpire manager of the hockey competition at the Asian Games 2026, was asked to leave Nagoya on Wednesday after a Malaysian female official complained about him. According to a source, the Malaysian female official complained about inappropriate touch and non-consensual physical contact. "He

did this on the pretext of 'mentoring' her," the source told The Indian Express. There were also allegations about him misbehaving with the hotel staff. "He called female hotel staff into his room. The female staff also complained about his behaviour once she reached the room," the source said.

Sangha could not be reached for comment. This is not the first time Sangha has faced such allegations. During the 2025 Hockey India League, a similar complaint was filed against Sangha by a female umpire. Colin French, the umpire manager of HIL during the 2024-25 season, immediately took action against Sangha. "On 20th January 2025, at approximately 4:20-4:25 PM in the lobby area of Park Prime Hotel, as umpires for today's game, the Pipers v/s Sorma, finished pre-match discussion, Mr. Sangha shook hands with everyone. However when he shook hands with me, it was an unwanted and inappropriate gesture by shaking hands in a manner that appeared to have a sexual connotation. This behavior was unprofessional, disrespectful, and created an extremely uncomfortable atmosphere for me," the complaint from the female umpire in HIL read. "There was one such investigation against him before and nothing happened. He later officiated in the Junior World Cup also and now this Asian Games incident," the source said.

Parveen Hooda's road to Asian Games gold: 22-month ban, cancer battle at home

GNS News Agency, Oct 6

Neelam Hooda remembers the night when her daughter, Parveen Hooda, was handed a 22-month ban by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) for three Whereabouts Failures in 2024, months before the Paris Olympics, for which she had bagged the quota. It was also a period when Neelam's husband, Lakhpat Hooda, was suffering from stage-three throat cancer, and the conversation at home was about how to get past the hurdles. On Friday, 26-year-old Parveen won gold in the women's 65kg final in a 3-2 split decision against Chen Nien-chin of Chinese Taipei. Her mother, Neelam, recalled that conversation and the resilience shown by her daughter in the face of adversity. The victory was more than a medal for Parveen. It marked her return to the Asian Games podium and underlined just how far she had come since the ban ended.

Against the odds "When Parveen's Olympic dream was over, she would often be devastated that it was her chance to win a medal at the Olympics. In 2023, my husband had suffered from throat cancer, and when the ban came in 2024, he was still undergoing chemotherapy. I would tell Parveen that if it's written in her destiny to win an Olympic medal or other medals, nobody can stop her. Some of the family friends would also talk about how cancer takes lives, but then she would be the one to boost our morale. The time at home also meant that she would often recite Hanuman Chalisa, and it helped her to calm her mind during that phase. Her father healed from cancer fully last year, and this gold medal in the Asian Games has rejuvenated Parveen's career too," shares mother Neelam Hooda while speaking with The Indian Express. Father Lakhpat Hooda also shared how the cancer treatment was not a burden for the family, with Parveen managing things. "She is now an Assistant Sub-Inspector in ITBP, and the medical card meant that the treatment cost was almost nil. The 6-7 lakhs, which we had to spend on other medical things too, was spent by Parveen," shares the father.

It was the then sarpanch and coach Sudhir Hooda who hired some boxing coaches at the Shaheed Baitun Singh Stadium. "Parveen did not tell me initially about her going to the boxing training. She would go and sit at the stadium to watch the trainees train. I had told her not to go boxing as she would suffer injuries on her face and body and who would marry her if her face was broken. She would later sneak to train boxing and seeing her dedication and talk with the coaches, we understood that sports will make her life," shares Neelam. The youngster became the state sub-junior champion in 2011 before winning the sub-junior national title the same year. Hooda became the 54kg national youth



champion, in addition to winning her maiden international medal, a silver at the Youth Nations Cup in Serbia. "Prior to going to the national camp, we would borrow money from friends and relatives to get her boxing gloves as well as shoes and training needs. We would also sell the milk of the family buffalo to support the finances. I was doing a job as a supervisor at that time but the earnings were not that much," says father Lakhpat Hooda. Hooda won the SAF Games title in 2019 before taking bronze at the 2022 Worlds and winning the Asian Championships. She then dropped to 57kg and won bronze at the Hangzhou Asian Games, earning the Paris Olympics quota.

The resurgence With the ban ending in May last year, Parveen won gold in 60kg at the BFI Cup before winning the 60kg title at the World Boxing Cup in New Delhi in December last year, with a win over World Championships silver medalist Aneta Elzibeta. In Glasgow CWG, Parveen lost 2-3 to Sacha Hickey of England in the 65kg quarter-final. In Japan, Parveen beat 2025 World Championships silver medalist Navbakhor Khamidova 5-0 before a 5-0 semifinal win over China's Li Shu. Coach Anil Malik, who has been training Parveen at the NCOE, Rohtak, speaks about the move from 57kg to 65kg in the space of three years. "We had to work on her straight as well, how to use that strength with the tactical acumen and motor ability required in 60 and then 65kg. The opponents too have more power in 65kg, and it is crucial to land clear punches as well as evade the heavier punches with one's foot movement. The focus was more on training for more clear punches," shares Malik. Indian women's foreign head coach Santiago Nievea had also spoken about Parveen's strength in the 65kg weight division. Parveen's back right hand, as well as the combination of the straight jab coupled with her left hook, works well for her. She is a long-range boxer, and this weight division suits her tactics more," Nievea had said.

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Sand, sweat and silence: How Ankush Panghal won gold at Asian Games

GNS News Agency, Oct 6

Ankush Panghal grew up in the village of Bheria near Hisar in southwestern Haryana. With his coach, Pradeep Sawant, making him and other trainees run in the sand dunes near the village, Panghal would not utter a single word, unlike other trainees complaining about the runs. As the 21-year-old won the men's 80kg final against South Korea's Kim Minseong with a split 4-0 decision to become the first Indian male boxer since Amit Panghal in 2018 to win an Asian Games gold, Sawant knew his ward would have little to say.

"Whenever we used to go to train in the sand dunes near the village for running and endurance training, Ankush would never complain while other kids would complain. Sometimes we would do extra climbs, and he would follow us. While he was a very active kid and one with a sharp mind, he would rarely speak. Pata nahi dimag main kya chalta rehta hai (Don't know what was running in his head). (Laughs). He studied his opponents very well, and that's what he displayed there in Japan. I am sure he will not speak about this medal, but we have to get a smile from him and make him dance too when he returns back with the gold medal," shares coach Sawant while speaking with The Indian Express.

Love for kabaddi and food At the Hisar-Sadulpur Highway, Suresh Panghal, along with elder brother Ramesh Panghal, has been running the RS Dhaba. Ramesh, who was a kabaddi player in his youth, earlier used to run a grocery store before the brothers opened the dhaba in 2018. With Ankush being the youngest of the six children in the joint family, Ramesh would think of sending the then 10-year-old Ankush to train in boxing under coach Sawant in 2015. The children would be dropped at the academy by Ramesh or by his eldest daughter and shooter Neelam.

"Shararti aur chaalaakhi toh Ankush tha shuru se (He was very mischievous and sharp-minded since childhood). I was a kabaddi player and wanted him to train in an individual sport. My eldest daughter Rashmi, along with her two sisters, and Ankush, along with the two kids of my brother, would go to different sports academies in Hisar. Sometimes I would drop them, and sometimes, Rashmi would drop them," shares Suresh Panghal while speaking with .Ankush

would initially start in the 40kg category before making his way to the higher weight categories in subsequent years, winning medals at the state as well as national levels in the sub-junior and junior categories. "Ankush shararti toh tha aur mujhe iski always running mind ko busy rakhtna tha. (He was mischievous and I wanted to keep his busy mind running). Whatever we worked on in basics, he would pick it up fast and be it speed work or endurance work or shadow boxing and mimicking different uncles, he would be the first to complete and ask, sir ab kya Karen. (Sir, what to do next?). He was naturally very good in straight punches, and as he moved weight from 40 kg to 44 and 50 and 54, and 60, we worked on his left hook as well footwork. I would always tell him that it will be your foot movement that will save you in heavier weight and that's what our training laid emphasis on," shares coach Sawant.

Dominance in heavyweight

Panghal has won a silver at the World Boxing Cup in New Delhi, where he suffered a split-decision loss against Oladimeji Shittu of England in the final, a loss he avenged in the CWG final against England with a win. He had won the title at the 2026 Grand Prix Usti nad Labem in the Czech Republic. Panghal first scored a 5-0 win over Tajikistan's Nekruz Salimov in the quarter-finals before scoring a split 4-1 win over reigning 75kg world champion Fazliddin Erkinboev of Uzbekistan. Indian head coach CA Kutappa had spoken about Ankush's strengths. "Ankush rarely speaks in training and post-training. We have to coax him to speak his mind and share the inputs of the strategy against the opponents. His upper cut and hook are the ones which we have worked upon a lot, and he also unleashes combinations with his backhand punch too. He can box with his right as well as left hook too and mix with cross punches too," Kutappa had told this paper. As for the Panghals, there will be celebrations at the dhaba with the title win. "Whenever he comes to the village, Ankush sits at the dhaba too, and he also likes the jeep used to ferry the ration for the dhaba. Today there will be celebrations at the dhaba and a sweet delight for the customers too. Ankush loves the boondi ka Ladoo and Malpua, and we will get that to distribute too," says Ramesh Panghal.

How Indian trio ended Korea women's 28-year monopoly on recurve archery team title



At Okazaki Chuo Sogo Park, the archery range sits amid a vast green expanse, giant trees rising beyond the field and the quiet of a Japanese morning broken only by the sound of bows being drawn and arrows striking targets 70 metres away. Then, the unthinkable happened. South Korea lost. For 28 years, the Korean women had owned the Asian Games team recurve title. Since 1998, they had won it at every Games. Seven gold medals, seven generations of archers, no interruption. India had never even reached the final.

On Friday, Ankita Bhakat, Kirti Sharma and Kumkum Mohod ended that run, beating the Koreans 5-3 to win India's first women's team recurve gold at the Asian Games. "We weren't scared at all," Kirti said. "In the morning, we decided to play happily and enjoy the game regardless of whether we won a medal or not." Ankita, 28, grew up in Kolkata, where her father used to deliver milk packets, starting work at 4am; her mother had kept a fast since Friday and ended it only after the gold was confirmed. Kirti, 19, comes from a farming family in Haryana. When she needed a new recurve bow in 2022, her father, Vijay Kumar, borrowed Rs 60,000 from a commission agent, promising to repay the loan from the farm's future yield. And Kumkum, still 17, comes from Amravati, where her father Anil makes cardboard boxes for sweet shops and until recently competed using second-hand bows. When the announcer introduced South Korea as 10-time Olympic champions, Kumkum muttered: "Today's Asian Games title will be ours." Kirti had felt similarly. The prospect of facing Korea, she said, never scared her. "Competing alongside those two, who were playing their first Asian Games, gave a lot of freedom. They didn't have any baggage of the past," Ankita, the senior-most of all, said. Playing without carrying past wounds mattered because on Friday, India didn't just have to face the three Koreans. There was

also the wind, which became the invisible fourth opponent. It was strong enough to alter the way the Indians looked at the target. They began reading the 10-ring like the face of a clock, working out where to aim so that the wind would carry the arrow towards where they actually wanted it to land. "We were aiming more towards 9 o'clock because the wind was pushing towards 3 o'clock. We aimed for 8 or 9 o'clock," Kirti said. There was improvisation, too. When Kirti felt pressure shooting second, shooting a 7 and two 8s, they shuffled the order and moved her up — the pressure relieved, she shot a couple of 10s and 9s. "We were able to make such tough decisions in the middle of the match, which was crucial. We were able to identify issues and take measures immediately," Ankita, who — like her teammates — shot 400 arrows a day in training, said.

The opening two sets offered no separation. Both teams shot 54 in the first and 56 in the second, leaving the match locked at 2-2. Then, Korea blinked. Its three archers finished the third set with three consecutive 8s. India took advantage, shooting 8, 9, 10 to win the set 55-51 and move 4-2 ahead.

Korea now had to win the fourth set to stay alive. India needed only a tie to win the match. The Koreans finished the set with 54. India, at first, seemed to have fallen a point short. The drama came when the Indian score was being confirmed. Kirti's first arrow had initially been marked an 8, which would have left India on 53. A review upgraded it to a 9, taking India to 54, enough to earn one point for the tied set and take the match 5-3. India had not merely won a gold medal. They had snatched away a title that had seemed almost hereditary. The Korean reaction was striking precisely because this was so unfamiliar. The three archers stood together afterwards, some of them in tears. They embraced, lingered around the range and tried to absorb the fact that a streak that had begun before any of them had entered international archery was now over. "We were hoping we would have a shoot-off, because we are really good at it," Oh Yejin said. "We wanted it so badly." Lee Yunji was left apologising for being part of the team that had ended the run. "I feel very sorry that we ended up bringing that run of seven consecutive titles to an end," she said. A Korean reporter wandered around the venue afterwards, still trying to take in the scale of what had happened. "Very depressed," he said. It was an extraordinary sight: a sport in which South Korea's women had spent nearly three decades making title triumphs look routine had suddenly produced a different picture. And three Indian women stood at the centre of it.

India prevail in hockey, Pakistan triumph in volleyball, but handshakes win the day

The scoreboard still read 25-18, the final point of Pakistan's 3-0 win over India. But as Amit Balwan Singh stood talking about the defeat, Pakistan's middle blocker Musaweer Khan ruffled his hair, Murad Khan consoled him and Abu Bakar Siddique walked over and patted him on the back. "The Indian players are like my brothers," Siddique said. It was a gentle end to a match Pakistan had dominated, on a day that offered two different India-Pakistan results across two sports. In the morning, Pakistan beat India 3-0 in volleyball. In the evening, India beat Pakistan 4-3 in hockey — a semifinal that provided a glimpse of what the rivalry between the two could still produce, with players high-fiving each other before the push-back and captains shaking hands at the start.

The two countries will meet again on Saturday, this time for the Asian Games cricket gold medal. There, the customary handshake has been absent in recent meetings, offering a different picture of the rivalry. Asked in the context of the cricket teams' decision not to shake hands, Amit, an outside-hitter, said: "People look at India-Pakistan from a different point of view. But a sportsperson has to think about his best performance. The relations (between the two countries) haven't been good since the beginning but a sportsperson has to ignore all that and focus on the game."

The volleyball court offered a glimpse of what he meant. Before the quarterfinal match, the teams exchanged pins and greeted each other. Once the whistle went, however, the familiarity gave way to the contest, with Pakistan attacking more cleanly and repeatedly finding ways around India's block. Pakistan took the first set 25-19, fought back from 16-13 down to take the second 25-23 and then pulled away early in the third to win 25-18. The intensity was obvious during the match. Pakistan celebrated almost every point loudly, especially as India began to struggle in the third set. But the mood changed quickly once the contest ended. "We were relaxed throughout," Siddique said, as Pakistan recorded a third straight win over India at the Asian Games. At 19, Siddique is one of the younger players in the Pakistan team. Sharing the athletes' accommodation with the Indian side, he said, had given him a chance to learn from players he had previously known mainly as opponents. "We are staying at the same hotel. I am a junior, so I learn a lot just by watching how they conduct themselves. What they eat, what they do, how they kit up. It feels very good to share space with seniors. We all eat together at the mess," he said.

India's Hardik Singh with Pakistan's Nadeem Ahmad during the men's semifinal hockey match. (PTI) India's Hardik Singh with Pakistan's Nadeem Ahmad during the men's semifinal hockey match. (PTI) Siddique also spoke about Indian players with the familiarity of someone discussing teammates rather than rivals. "Mashallah, all Indian players are good. I have seen Chirag (Yadav, an outside-hitter) a lot, there's Muthuswamy (Appavu, a setter). Mashallah, he is also good. At CAVA (Nations League, last year when India had won), he was very good, outstanding. I saw him and wondered, 'yeh kya kar raha hai (what is he doing)'!"

There is, of course, an awareness among the players of what an India-Pakistan fixture represents beyond the court. Abu Bakar said the hype surrounding the matches was largely a product of the rivalry built around them. "Of course, there is hype when India and Pakistan play. But that's because of the way this rivalry has been turned into animosity. So that's what stays with us, India-Pakistan, India-Pakistan. But trust me, our two teams have a very good relationship, gupshup karte hai (we do have chats)," he said. There is familiarity and respect also because the players face each other in club colours. Indian and Pakistani spikers often ply their trade in volleyball leagues in central Asia. And, sharing a neutral ground has helped players understand each other better. "I know Amit because we played two years ago together in Kazakhstan," said Khan, who hails from Pakistan's volleyball-crazy district of Bannu, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "What happens outside sport does not reflect on our relationship when we play."

Amit, who has played alongside Pakistani players at clubs in Iran, made the same distinction. "This is, of course,



a very important match. As a sportsperson, if we look at this match from that point of view, there will be more pressure. We can execute our skills if we play with a free mind. Out of the court, we speak to each other cordially. Sometimes, we end up playing for the same clubs abroad, like in Iran," he said. A few hours later, the result was reversed on the hockey field, but the drama was turned up several notches. India raced to a 3-0 lead, only for Pakistan to fight back and level the match at 3-3. With 49.2 seconds left, forward Abhishek Nain's shot took a deflection off Sufiyan Khan's stick and found the net for a thrilling 4-3 win and sent India into Saturday's final, where they will face Malaysia. When the match ended, the players, exhausted and overcome by emotion, shook hands before leaving the field. The hockey and volleyball players were not alone. Earlier in the Games, the India and Pakistan table tennis players, too, greeted each other warmly, as did their squash players.

Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh girls enter semi-finals

Hyderabad: Karnataka put on an impressive performance to defeat Kerala 62-49, powered by Aarushi Anand's 17-point effort, and booked a place in the semi-finals of the Sub-junior National Basketball Championship on Friday.

Karnataka will face the winners of the Delhi-Maharashtra quarter-final in the last four. Uttar Pradesh also secured a hard-fought 68-57 victory over Madhya Pradesh, with Tejasvi Karhana scoring 21 points to lead her team into the semi-finals. Uttar Pradesh will meet the winners of the Tamil Nadu-West Bengal quarter-final. In the boys' category, Uttar Pradesh dominated Karnataka 65-40 to advance to the semi-finals, with Shabd Kumar top-scoring with 21 points. They will face the winners of the Madhya Pradesh-Maharashtra quarter-final. In another quarter-final, Haryana edged past Delhi 70-65 in a closely fought contest, with Keshav Kaushik contributing 17 points. Haryana will take on the winners of the Rajasthan-Chhattisgarh quarter-final in the semi-finals. Earlier, the morning pre-quarter-finals set the tone for the knockout stage. In the girls' section, West Bengal edged past Odisha 57-51, while Delhi defeated Punjab 75-41. In the boys' pre-quarter-finals, Madhya Pradesh defeated Kerala 71-51, while Chhattisgarh registered a 74-14 win over Punjab. Quarter-finals Boys: Uttar Pradesh 65 (Shabd Kumar 21, Sameer Singh 19) bt Karnataka 40 (Taksha Jha 13); Haryana 70 (Keshav Kaushik 17, Haesh Rathee 15, Nikhil 14, Deb Rathee 11) bt Delhi 65 (Jishan Malik 17, Vineet 11, Karthik 10, Arnab Sharma 10).

Don't Trouble the Trouble movie review: Fahadh Faasil is magical, the film is not



Don't Trouble the Trouble movie review: There is something about whimsy that disarms us. It bypasses the part of the brain that asks 'how' and speaks directly to the one that wonders 'what if'. What if a street magician discovered a girl whose powers were real? What if a man who has spent his life faking magic had to confront the genuine article? What if the con artist and the child, thrown together by accident, found in each other the one thing neither had: someone who sees them as they are?

This is the in-between world of honesty and magic that Fahadh Faasil-Shashank Yeti's Don't Trouble the Trouble inhabits. It is a film that wants to be a warm hug wrapped in a magic trick, a fantasy that makes adults feel like children and children feel seen. While you might think they found a perfect recipe, what is missing is the connective tissue that turns good ingredients into a delicious meal. Here, the pacing never finds its rhythm, and the humour arrives in patches rather than waves. And the emotional payoff, when it finally comes, feels earned by the actors rather than by the film.

Don't Trouble the Trouble shows the life Suri, played by Fahadh Faasil, a small-time street magician and con artist in Hyderabad, who scrapes together a living through petty scams and low-end magic shows. His world changes when he encounters Divya, played by Ssara Palekar, a young girl who possesses genuine supernatural abilities. What begins as an accidental encounter turns into something neither of them expected when Suri discovers that Divya's powers are real and spiral out of control whenever she is angry. Fahadh Faasil is the best thing about the film, which is both a compliment and a criticism. It is a compliment because his performance is sincere, committed and technically impressive, particularly given that he is performing entirely in Telugu, a language he does not think in.

It is a criticism because an actor of Fahadh's calibre should not be the only reason to watch a film backed by Arka Media Works and presented by SS Rajamouli. The character of Suri, while likeable, does not push Fahadh into the kind of morally complex, emotionally demanding territory that produced his best work in his career. He should have been great. The difference is in the writing, not the acting. Ssara Palekar is the film's discovery. She is natural, unforced and entirely unselfconscious in front of the camera. She does not act like a child actress performing for adults. She acts like a child who happens to be in a film. Rest of the cast: Saurabh Sachdeva, Subbaraju, Venkatesh Kakumanu and Mahesh Manjrekar are largely under-utilised

and outright wasted. The core problem with Don't Trouble the Trouble is its rhythm. A fantasy film about a con artist and a magical child needs to move like a magic show: setup, misdirection, reveal, delight. The audience needs to feel, every few minutes, that something unexpected is about to happen. That anticipation is what keeps whimsy alive. Without it, whimsy becomes waiting. And waiting, no matter how pretty the frame or how sincere the actor, is the enemy of fantasy.

Yeleti's screenplay does not understand this. It sets up its world patiently, which is fine. It introduces its characters carefully, which is admirable. But once the pieces are in place, the film does not know how to play with them. The scenes between Suri and Divya repeat the same emotional note, tenderness, without variation. And the comedy, which should be the film's oxygen given its genre, is written as though humour is something that happens when you are not looking rather than something that is crafted, timed and delivered with precision. The result is a film that feels longer than its runtime. There is not enough happening per minute to justify the time the film demands. Fahadh Faasil in a still from the film Don't Trouble the Trouble Fahadh Faasil in a still from the film Don't Trouble the Trouble Kaala Bhairava's music, which was supposed to be one of the film's genuine strengths, is a letdown. His background score tries to find a tenderness that the screenplay often misses but lacks to do so.

Brad Francis's cinematography is clean and polished, capturing Hyderabad's streets and interiors with a warmth that suits the film's tone. The visual effects, which are central to a fantasy film of this kind, are competent but not spectacular. They do the job without drawing attention to themselves, which for a mid-budget fantasy is probably the right approach. Praveen Anthony's editing is the most problematic technical element. The runtime of 2 hours and 38 minutes is at least 20 minutes too long. Tighter cuts in the second half, particularly in the scenes between the police station sequence and the climax, would have significantly improved the film's momentum. Production design by Mohan Nath Bingi and Sandeep Suvarna is solid, creating a Hyderabad that feels lived in rather than constructed. Don't Trouble the Trouble is a film of good intentions that could not find the execution to match them. The concept is promising. Fahadh Faasil's commitment to performing in Telugu is admirable and his sincerity is never in question. Ssara Palekar is a genuine find who will have a long career if she is given the right roles. Kaala Bhairava's music is lovely. And there are individual scenes, particularly in the first half, that show what the film could have been if the screenplay had found its rhythm. But the sluggish pacing, the emotionally distant second half, the underwritten antagonist, the humour that rarely lands and the overall inability to convert a strong premise into a sustained cinematic experience leave the film short of what its pedigree promised. It is not a disaster, arguably worse for an actor making his debut as a solo lead in an industry: forgettable. Don't Trouble the Trouble movie director: Shashank Yeleti Don't Trouble the Trouble movie cast and crew: Fahadh Faasil, Ssara Palekar, Kaala Bhairava Don't Trouble the Trouble movie ratings: 2/5

'Broke' Sanjeev Kumar did C-grade films, gave Rs 96 lakh to friends who never repaid



Sanjeev Kumar was one of the rare stars of Bollywood who experienced euphoric success in a short amount of time. Popularly addressed as 'Hari bhai', he was known for his effortless performances in films like Sholay, Aandhi, Trishul, Koshish, Mausam. Sanjeev had experienced some tough times during his early years and went through enormous struggle before he established himself in Bollywood. In a recent interview, veteran film journalist Hanif Zaveri shared that Sanjeev was offered many C-grade films in the early part of his career and he accepted them all because his family needed the money.

Sanjeev Kumar was broke, did C-grade films In a chat shared on Meri Saheli Podcast's YouTube channel, Hanif shared that the star's family was going through immense hardships when he started trying his luck in the movies. His mother was running his father's failing business, and Sanjeev could only afford two sets of clothes. "He didn't know that the films he was doing were C-grade. He was quite broke so he was doing whatever he could get," he recalled.

Sanjeev quickly caught the attention of some of the best filmmakers of the era, and his days of doing C-grade films were behind him, but his troubled love life caused quite a lot of unrest in his life. After a failed romance with Hema Malini and Nutan, Sanjeev had a relationship with Sulakshana Pandit, who was completely in awe of the actor. Hanif, however, expressed that Sanjeev liked her, but did not want to marry her, or anyone else, for he believed that he would die young. "He had already had two heart attacks by the time he met Sulakshana Pandit. He did not want to marry anyone. He believed that he had a short life, and he believed this because all the men in his family had died before the age of 50. He felt that he would also die before 50, so he did not want to get married and spoil someone else's life. That was the only reason why he did not marry her," he said. Sanjeev Kumar gave Rs 96 lakh loan, was never repaid

In the same chat, Hanif was also asked about Sanjeev's reputation as a miser, which Hanif said was completely untrue. "He gave Rs 96 lakh away as a loan to his friends, who never paid him back. He paid for his driver's

wedding. He presented a car as a gift to one of his friends. When Sanjeev made his will, he kept Rs 2 lakh aside for his driver's son's education. People who are miserly don't do this. He was just against useless expenditure," he said. He recalled another incident where Shatrughan Sinha needed some money, and Sanjeev Kumar volunteered to give him the money. "When Shatrughan Sinha needed money, Sanjeev Kumar gave it even though Shatrughan hadn't asked for it. Boney Kapoor needed it, so he gave it to him as well, without any documentation or anything. After Sanjeev died, Boney returned that money to his family. Even the family didn't know he had given that money," he said. Hanif said Sanjeev and Shatrughan shared an extremely warm relationship. "When Shatrughan came from FTII, Sanjeev Kumar would talk him up in front of producers. They shared a deep friendship. When Sanjeev got to know that Shatrughan needed money, he was the first person to help out. He gave around Rs 5-7 lakh," he said.

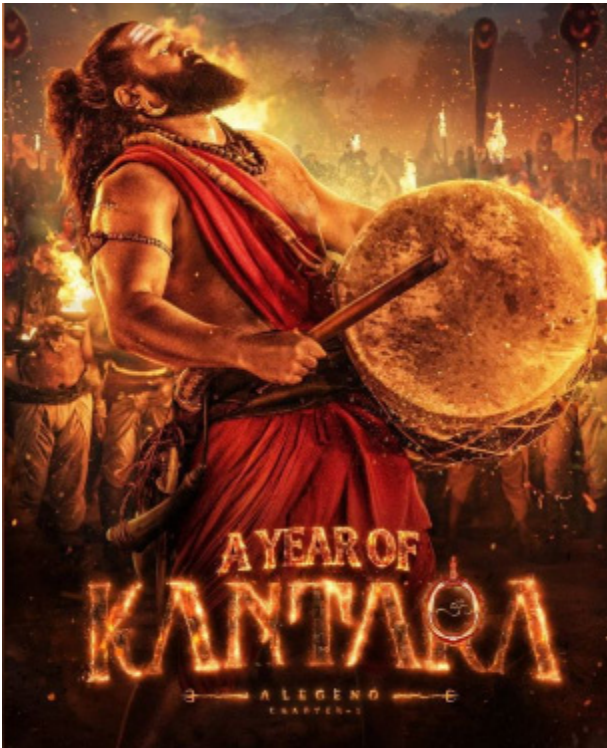
Kerry Washington says Ben Affleck would do anything for her except one thing

Mumbai: Actress Kerry Washington took to social media to jokingly reveal that her superstar Ben Affleck would "do anything" for her, except promote their upcoming film Animals online. Washington took to Instagram, where she shared a funny reel with Affleck. In the clip, Affleck is seen telling the actress that he would do anything for her. When Washington asks to do a "TikTok Video", the actor-filmmaker hilariously gets up and walks away. "Ben would do anything for me.

Except go on social media and promote our new movie Animals. On @netflix October 9th. Maybe one day...." she wrote as the caption. Animals is an upcoming American crime thriller film directed by Ben Affleck and written by Affleck, Connor O. McIntyre and Billy Ray. It stars Affleck, Kerry Washington, Gillian Anderson, Adriana Paz with Luis Gerardo Méndez, and Steven Yeun.

The film follows Mark Kimball, whose son gets kidnapped; he and his wife have a few hours to come up with the ransom payment. With most of their money spent on his political campaign, they have to get their hands dirty and expose a side of their lives they never intended to see the light of day. Washington has received several accolades, including a Primetime Emmy Award as well as nominations for two Golden Globe Awards and two Tony Awards. She was named as the eighth-highest-paid television actress in 2018. The actress gained wide recognition for starring as crisis management expert Olivia Pope in the drama series Scandal. She was further Emmy-nominated for her roles in the political film Confirmation and a troubled mother in the miniseries Little Fires Everywhere. Washington made her feature film debut acting in the drama Our Song in 2000. On stage, she made her Broadway debut in David Mamet's play Race in 2009.

Rishab Shetty thanks 'Kantara Chapter 1' team as film completes one year



Bengaluru: A year after 'Kantara Chapter 1' made its way to the big screens globally, Rishab Shetty has reflected on the journey of making the film and the larger world of 'Kantara' that has stayed deeply connected to its roots, cul-

ture and people. For Shetty, bringing 'Kantara Chapter 1' to audiences came with a different kind of responsibility. The film was a prequel to a story that had already received immense love, making the task of going back to its roots and expanding its world both challenging and deeply personal.

Reflecting on the experience, Rishab Shetty wrote, "The biggest challenge was to bring this prequel to an audience that had already showered Kantara with immense love. To give a prelude, go deeper into its roots, and tell a story that carries the soul of the land was both a responsibility and a privilege." A major part of that journey, he acknowledged, was the team that worked alongside him to bring the story to life. Expressing his gratitude, Shetty said, "My heartfelt thanks to every single member of my team who stood as my back-bone."

While the making of the film was a journey in itself, it was the audience's response that remained particularly memorable for the filmmaker. Looking back at the moments following the film's release, he wrote, "The satisfaction I saw on the faces of the audience is still fresh in my mind. That moment, that silence, that applause, and the love that followed will always remain special to me." The reflection comes at a significant point in the 'Kantara' journey. What began with the first film five years ago has now grown into two stories, with 'Kantara Chapter 1' taking the narrative further back into the world and origins that form the foundation of the franchise. Shetty expressed hope that the same love and support would continue for everything that lay ahead. "I hope that your love, blessings, and support will continue to be with us in the same way for all our future efforts," he shared. Summing up the journey in a few words, Shetty wrote, "Five years... Two stories... One dream... An unforgettable journey. I will forever be grateful for all your love."

'Rs 50,000 for 12-hour work': Actor bought a Mumbai home without ever doing a 'big role'

At a time when films are seeing a mixed run at the box office and daily soaps are gradually losing ground, vertical video dramas are emerging as a new avenue for actors. Several prominent television faces have been making the shift to the short-form medium, which is rapidly gaining traction among audiences. Actor Suuraj Sonik has now claimed that micro-drama makers pay as much as Rs 5,000 for a single day of work, even to actors playing supporting roles such as nurses or ward boys.

In a video shared on his YouTube channel, Suuraj claimed that he has managed to buy a house in Mumbai through his decade-long acting career despite never being part of a major film or landing a particularly substantial role. He said he has now featured in more than 100 micro dramas as a lead actor and can charge up to Rs 1 lakh for an advertisement. Suuraj, who began his career as a feature artiste in Salman Khan's Sultan, where he was paid Rs 1,000 per day, explained how actors can build a steady income through multiple smaller opportunities.

"A new actor with no previous experience can easily earn Rs 50,000 in Mumbai. He has to find 10 jobs paying him Rs 5,000 for each. A moderately experienced actor can earn the same money from just five gigs. Whereas an actor like me, who has about 200 ads to his credit, earns Rs 50,000 in 12 hours and charges Rs 1 lakh for an ad shoot," he said. According to Suuraj, one of the most important things for actors trying to establish themselves is to avoid turning down work without good reason. However, he added a caveat that people should be careful about the platforms they choose to work for. "I have done over 100 vertical series in the past year"

Suuraj believes vertical dramas currently offer one of the easiest ways for actors to find regular work. "I have done over 100 vertical series in the past year as the main lead. Have done it on JioHotstar, Amazon, Story TV and Kuku," he said. Comparing the format to a T20 cricket match, he explained that the quick turnaround allows actors to work more frequently and receive their payments faster. "They shoot one story in three days. And your payment is done within 15 days. You don't have to wait for months. The circulation of money will get better day by day," he said. He claimed that even actors with no prior experience can make Rs 5,000 for a single day's work. "Suppose, they are shooting a show in which you are doing the role of a nurse or ward boy, you will get Rs 5,000 in one day. They have been making multiple vertical series on a daily basis. If an actor bags even one day job for 10 days in 30 days, he/she can easily earn Rs 50,000," he said. Suuraj also pointed to the shrinking television landscape as one of the reasons actors are exploring newer formats.

"The number of serials have reduced drastically. Many of Balaji Telefilms serials have been halted, and so is the case with other production houses. A few shows which are managing to get TRP are the only ones surviving. These are the shows with real actors and not influencers," he claimed. While vertical dramas are often looked down upon by some actors and audiences, Suuraj believes the format can actually benefit performers by allowing them to keep

Anupam Kher conquers a 35-foot rock wall at 71, talks about overcoming self-doubt

Mumbai: Veteran actor Anupam Kher recently took on a 35-foot indoor rock-climbing wall at a mall in Raleigh, North Carolina. Sharing his experience on Instagram, the 71-year-old actor revealed that he initially had doubts about attempting the climb after watching several people struggle to reach the top. However, encouragement from his instructor pushed him to give it a try. Kher said the challenge reminded him of the boy who grew up climbing hills in Shimla.

Sharing his video, the 'Hum Aapke Hain Koun' actor wrote, "Triumph of Human Spirit! Sometimes, looking up at a challenge, we begin to decide what we cannot do before we have even tried. Today, at a mall in Raleigh, North Carolina I stood before a 35-foot indoor rock climbing wall. I watched people climb. Most of the people couldn't reach the top! When Herman encouraged me to try, I had my doubts. Then I remembered the boy who grew up climbing hills in Shimla. And I thought, 'Chalo, let me try. So what if I am 71 now!' "Being secured by a harness did not take away the effort or the hesitation. I still had to make each move myself. Just with my bare hands and feet! No other support.



working. "People assume that actors should not be doing vertical shows. However, in reality, it is the same as cricket. This helps actors practise their acting skills, network and earn at the same time," he said. Suuraj also spoke about user-generated content (UGC) advertisements as another potential source of income for actors.

"You can earn a lot of money from UGC ads. It is mostly big companies making reels with professional actors to promote their new products. They prefer actors because they know they easily learn the script and act better. They pay between Rs 5,000 to Rs 20,000 for these projects. It all depends on your profile," he said. He added that actors need to be proactive about finding such opportunities. "I send collab requests to 50 brands. Recently, with one such collaboration I earned more than what I sometimes earn in a month." "With these strategies and work, I own a house in Mumbai today and earn in lakhs," he added. Suuraj's comments come at a time when India's short-form and micro-drama ecosystem is expanding rapidly. According to a January 2026 report by research firm Ormax Media, around 601.2 million people had watched digital videos at least once in the preceding month.

India's online audience now accounts for around 41% of the country's population, while micro dramas have established a significant footprint, reportedly reaching 73.2 million viewers in less than a year of entering the Indian market. Research has also indicated that audiences for vertical shows are concentrated largely in rural India. The micro-drama market is estimated to be worth around \$500 million, with projections suggesting that it could grow to \$7 billion within five years. The format has also attracted several familiar television faces. Aishwarya Sakhua, known for shows such as Saas Bina Sasural, has been appearing in micro dramas for Story TV. Earlier, MTV Roadies winner Aanchal Khurana had also spoken about working in vertical videos.

Yeh Hai Mohabbatein actor Karan Patel and Shararat fame Karanvir Bohra have also recently been seen in several vertical dramas, signalling how the emerging format is increasingly becoming another avenue of work for established television actors.

Looking at the top was one thing. Finding my way towards it, one hold at a time, was another. When I reached the top, I felt a wonderful sense of achievement. I had given myself a chance to discover what I was still capable of. That is called the triumph of human spirit!" Anupam added, "The human mind and spirit hold possibilities that doubt can keep us from exploring. Belief does not make the climb easy. But it can give us the courage to begin and to keep going when it gets difficult. Today, at 71, I came down from that wall with a little more faith in myself and my capabilities. We owe ourselves that chance.. "The video shows the actor taking on the challenging rock-climbing wall as he steadily makes his way up, using his hands and feet to grip the holds. Dressed casually and secured with a harness, Kher can be seen carefully navigating the 35-foot indoor wall before successfully reaching the top. Reacting to his post, Parineeti Chopra commented, "Love this sir! "Meanwhile, Anupam Kher is currently taking his play 'Jaane Pehchaane Anjaane' to audiences across the US and Canada.