HYDERABAD HEADLINES

RNI NO.APENG/2010/33328 | VOL NO. 17 | ISSUE NO.: 153 | RANGAREDDY (HYDERABAD) | PAGES: 12 | RS. 1/-

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2026 | WWW.HYDERABADHEADLINES.COM



THE COMMISSION TURNS. SEVERAL FILES STAY SHUT

THE FILES THAT STAY OPEN —& SHUT

After 10 months of internal notes and 14 interventions by two Election Commissioners, the EC announces nine decisions on electoral rolls — while questions over Form 6, Bengal appeals and ECINet control remain unanswered.

After ten months of recorded notes inside Nirvachan Sadan, the full Election Commission met on 26 September 2026 and issued Press Note number 120. Nine decisions followed. Some doors opened for the voter. Key questions on Form 6, Bengal appeals and control of the roll software were left where they stood.

Fourteen times in ten months Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi put notes on the file. Four of those notes fell on a single day. The notes concerned voter registration, deletions, restorations, appeals and access to the systems that hold the rolls. That is the public record as reported after examination of internal papers.

The Commission described those notes as suggestions and inputs of ordinary deliberation. It said every Special Intensive Revision order carried unanimous approval, from the 24 June 2025 order onward. It said the Supreme Court on 27 May 2026 upheld the SIR exercise and the declaration attached to Form 6 for the SIR period. That is the Commission's stated position. It deserves to be set down in full.

Unanimity on the launch order is on the record. So are fourteen notes that asked who changed a form, who filed an appeal, and who holds the keys to the machine.

On Saturday the three sat together. Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Sandhu. Joshi. Then came the note, issued with the approval of the full Commission. Nine decisions. Process first. Relief next.

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Sircilla Land Row:
KTR Seeks White Paper

Hyderabad, Sept.27: Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president and Sircilla MLA K.T. Rama Rao on Sunday welcomed Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's upcoming visit to Sircilla, while demanding the state government address public grievances rather than indulge in political rhetoric. In a statement, Rama Rao challenged the Chief Minister to issue a white paper detailing his allegations regarding government land encroachments in Sircilla.

The BRS leader asked the administration to disclose complete details, including mandal, village, survey numbers, and individuals involved, for the claim that 8,000 acres were taken away and 2,400 acres recovered. "If the allegations are true, place the facts before the public. If not, the Chief Minister must apologise to the people of Sircilla," KT Rama Rao said,

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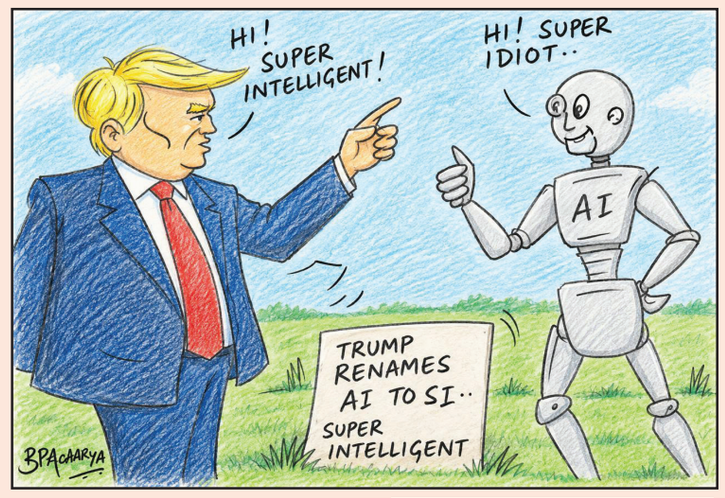
3-Day Bank Strike Deferred

NEW DELHI, SEP 27:

Bank unions on Sunday deferred their three-day nationwide strike following assurance from the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) on their demands, including a five-day work week. The strike call beginning Monday was given by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), which coincides with half-yearly closing. With the postponement of the strike, banks would function on Monday. "A high-level committee of the IBA and UFBU will be formed immediately to deliberate on the issue of declaring the remaining Saturdays as holidays. This committee will explore all possible alternatives, discuss with all the

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OBTUSE ANGLE



by BP ACHARYA

NLMC Concludes Three-City Investor Outreach Programme for RINL Land E-Auction

HYDERABAD, SEPT.27

The National Land Monetization Corporation (NLMC), under the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), Ministry of Finance, Government of India, has successfully concluded a three-city Investor Outreach Programme for the upcoming e-auction of 459 land parcels of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), the corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant.

As part of the programme, Investor Meets were organised in Visakhapatnam on September 23, Vijayawada on September 24 and Hyderabad on September 25. The programme was undertaken to provide prospective buyers, investors, developers and other stakeholders with detailed information about the land portfolio and the e-auction process ahead of the scheduled auction in October.

The Investor Meet in Visakhapatnam witnessed participation from more than 150 prospective buyers and other stakeholders in person, while more than 50 additional participants joined the programme through video conferencing. A number of participants joining virtually were NRIs and prospective buyers based outside India. Their queries regarding the properties, eligibility, auction process and other aspects of the transaction were also addressed by the officials during the interaction. The subsequent Investor Meets in Vijayawada and Hyderabad saw participation of approximately

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BJP to Hold Key Meeting on Sept 29

New Delhi, Sep 27: The BJP is set to hold a key meeting as it prepares for the upcoming Assembly elections. A meeting with the newly appointed state in-charges and co-in-charges will be held on September 29 under the chairmanship of the party's national president, Nitin Nabin. The meeting will discuss the party's organizational activities and election preparedness in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, and other states where elections are scheduled to be held. The BJP recently appointed new in-charges for several states. This will be the first major meeting between Nitin Nabin and the state in-charges following these appointments.

Country ready to welcome Rahul as PM



HYDERABAD, SEPT.27

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Sunday said the country was ready to welcome Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as Prime Minister. Addressing a public gathering at Neredcherla in Suryapet district, Uttam Kumar Reddy said growing concerns over the weakening of democratic institutions had

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Congress Moves to Finalise MLC Candidates

HYDERABAD, SEPT.27

The Congress high command has intensified the exercise to select candidates for the Nalgonda–Warangal–Khammam and Hyderabad–Rangareddy–Mahbubnagar Graduate MLC constituencies in Telangana, with the terms of the incumbent members set to end in March. Chintapandu Naveen, popularly known as Teenmar Mallanna, represents the Nalgonda–Warangal–Khammam constituency, while Vani Devi, daughter of former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, represents the Hyderabad–Rangareddy–Mahbubnagar constituency.

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka has been entrusted with selecting the candidate for the Nalgonda–Warangal–Khammam seat, while Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha has been assigned the task for the Hyderabad–Rangareddy–Mahbubnagar constituency. According to party sources, the two leaders considered social equations and local political

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Govt orders regularisation of eligible ULC applications

HYDERABAD, SEPT.27

The Telangana government has issued orders to clear decades-old Urban Land Ceiling (ULC) applications, initiating regularisation measures for all eligible cases in accordance with established rules. In a statement released on Sunday, Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy noted that while a Government

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Order (GO) regarding ULC lands was originally issued in 2016 by the previous administration, it was never implemented.

The Minister emphasised that the state is systematically resolving pending land prohibition issues under Section 22-A of the Registration Act. He highlighted that three major policy decisions have already been implemented to address 22-A grievances, with orders issued in line with GO

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2.5 Lakh to Join Bathukamma Guinness World Record

celebrations will be held this year across all 33 districts of Telangana and in several countries abroad.

Telangana Jagruthi will work on a wider scale for Telangana's cultural development and women's empowerment.

Kalvakuntla Kavitha, Founder and President of Telangana Jagruthi.

State committee, several district committees, and Telangana Jagruthi presidents appointed for various countries.



HYDERABAD, SEP 27

Kalvakuntla Kavitha, President of Telangana Rakshana Sena and Founder-President of Telangana Jagruthi, said that Bathukamma celebrations would be organized next year on a scale aimed at securing a Guinness World Record.

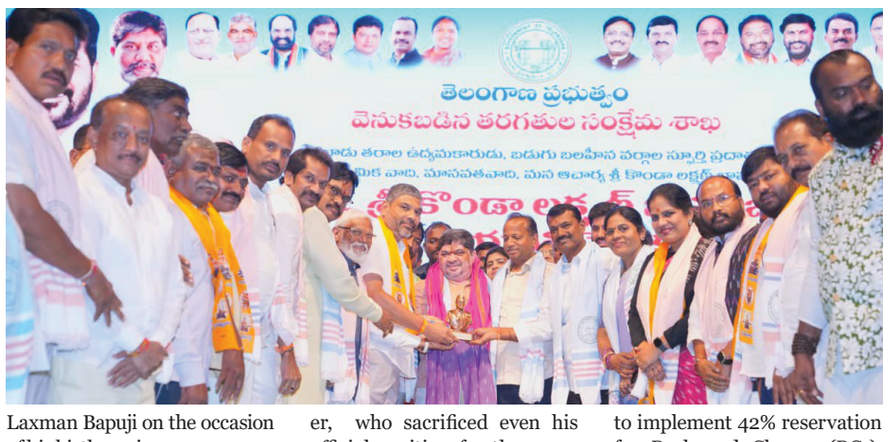
Speaking at the Telangana Rakshana Sena office in Banjara Hills on Sunday, she unveiled the poster for the Bathukamma celebrations and a CD containing Bathukamma songs produced by Telangana Jagruthi. She said that although successive governments had attempted to organize Bathukamma celebrations on a scale that could secure a Guinness World Record after the formation of Telangana state, those efforts had not succeeded. She announced that Bathukamma celebrations would be organized under the aegis of Telangana Jagruthi this year across all 33 districts of Telangana as well as in various countries abroad.

She said that next year, Bathukamma celebrations would be organized with 250,000 people to showcase the grandeur and

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Govt holds Konda Laxman Bapuji's 111th birth anniversary celebrations

HYDERABAD, SEPT.27



The 111th birth anniversary celebrations of Konda Laxman Bapuji were held at Ravindra Bharati under the aegis of the Telangana government and the leadership of Guduru Srinivas , the Chairman of the Konda Laxman Bapuji Birth Anniversary Celebrations Committee and the Chairman of the Telangana Padmashali Co-operative Corporation. State Ministers Ponnam Prabhakar and Vivek Venkataswamy attended the event as chief guests.

Other dignitaries present included Government Advisor V. Hanumantha Rao, Rajya Sabha Member Anil Kumar Yadav, Handloom Corporation Chairman Dudem Venkataramana, Handloom corporation Vice-Chairperson Jakkani Anita, Corporation representatives Eeravarthi Anil Kumar and Mettu Sai Kumar, BC Association leader Jajula Srinivas Goud, former MLC Cherupalli Sitaramulu, Vaddera Corporation Chairperson Gunja Renuka Narayana and other prominent leaders. Speaking at the event, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar paid rich tributes to Konda Laxman Bapuji on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

"Konda Laxman Bapuji was a great visionary, who dedicated his life to the cause of achieving the state of Telangana. Bapuji was a man of sacrifice, who prioritized the aspirations of the people of Telangana over political positions or his own political future. His struggle, sacrifices and public service hold a special place in the history of the Telangana movement. He also waged a struggle against social inequalities and exploitative practices like bonded labor.

Konda Laxman Bapuji has gone down in history as a leader, who sacrificed even his official position for the cause of the Telangana state. His ideals and fighting spirit served as an inspiration to us during the Telangana movement when we were serving as Members of Parliament. We all bear the responsibility of moving forward along the path he charted for the development and welfare of handloom workers and weavers," he said. He also said that Weaker sections must remain united and added that five Padmashali MLAs should win in the upcoming elections.

Stating that the Telangana government conducted a caste census and enacted legislation to implement 42% reservation for Backward Classes (BCs), he alleged that the Central government halted this move although the courts state that exceeding the 50% reservation limit requires standardized data from across the country.

Noting that the Central government announced that a caste census would be conducted as part of the general census starting April 1, 2025, he said that the census questionnaire included inquiries regarding SCs and STs but did not ask about the BCs. "We demand that a caste census be conducted nationwide," he said.



Pink Power Run 3.0 held in city

HYDERABAD, SEPT.27

The residents of Hyderabad stepped out to run in support of breast cancer awareness, the importance of early detection and women's health and empowerment. The, 'Pink Power Run 3.0' jointly organized by Megha Engineering & Infrastructures Limited (MEIL) and the Sudha Reddy Foundation, received an overwhelming response on Sunday. More than 35,000 people participated in this mega community run, which kicked off at the HMDA Grounds along the banks of Hussain Sagar Lake. Early in the morning, the Necklace Road area was packed with runners.

Organized with the aim of promoting health, fitness, early medical screenings and breast cancer awareness among the public, this event has emerged as one of Hyderabad's largest community fitness initiatives.

Competitions were held across four categories in the Pink Power Run: a 21-kilometer half-marathon and 10-kilometer, 5-kilometer, and 3-kilometer runs. People of all ages from young children to the elderly participated with great enthusiasm. The event's spirit was truly embodied by the large number of participants, ranging from five-year-old children to seniors over 80 and persons with disabilities.

The 21-kilometer half-marathon received an international response, with runners participating from countries such as the USA, England, the UAE, Ethiopia, Uganda, Sri Lanka, Iceland, Tanzania, Botswana, Kenya, and Canada. The presence of runners from both India and abroad created an international sporting atmosphere along Necklace Road.

The 'Pink Power Run' was flagged off by Telangana Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Danasari Anasuya (Seethakka), Telangana DGP CV Anand, MEIL Group Managing Director PV Krishna Reddy, Sudha Reddy Foundation Founder Sudha Reddy, US Consul General in Hyderabad Laura Williams, and Olectra Greentech (EV Trans) Vice President VV Lakshminarayana, among others. Film actor Sidhu Jonnalagadda, former Miss World Opal Sucheta, Indian professional boxer Vijender Singh, Narayana Group of Educational Institutions Director Puneeth and Avinash Group Chairman Avinash also participated, boosting the enthusiasm of the runners.

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NINE PLASTERS ON FOURTEEN WOUNDS

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Agendas will now be circulated before every Commission meeting. Minutes will be issued after. Officers will need Commission approval before foreign travel. New information technology modules and portals will first go through a Committee of Officers. ECINet will be reviewed by a committee headed by a senior Deputy Election Commissioner, with an independent expert from an IIT or IIIT. Field officers will get more flexibility if they need it. Directions issued by the Commissioners shall be meticulously complied with.

A constitutional body that records its agenda and its minutes strengthens itself. Compliance printed in a press note is a reminder that collective authority is the statute, not a courtesy.

For the citizen holding a notice, the change is concrete. Booth Level Officers will visit the homes of those marked unmapped or carrying logical discrepancies, collect documents and upload them on ECINet for the Electoral Registration Officer to decide. Hearings at the office will not be the default. Where a hearing is unavoidable, it should preferably be online. An adult family member may appear. District officers must set help desks for people in night shelters, labour, the poor and the homeless.



Delhi now has time till 30 October 2026 to file claims and objections. Disposal runs to 30 November. Maharashtra has till 12 October to file and 10 November to dispose. In Goa, where 97 voters cleared by local officers were still missing from the final roll, 81 have filled Form 6. The Chief Electoral Officer is directed to get them on the list.

The Opposition had already demanded that polls on SIR rolls be cancelled. The Commission answered with process, not a pause. Both positions are now on the public table.

Extra days and home visits ease the anxious voter. They do not, by themselves, close the questions that two Commissioners placed on the file.

A clean roll is a national duty. So is a Commission that records its minutes, circulates its agenda and treats every Commissioner as equal under the statute. The Saturday note repeats that SIR began with unanimous approval and that twenty States and Union Territories have completed the exercise. Anyone left out may apply under continuous updation. Letters to the Cabinet Secretary, the Commission says, concerned an officer on deputation, not policy. Work redistribution orders, it says, were not actually implemented after the orders of the two Commissioners.

Three questions raised on the file are still questions.

FIRST. The Commission says the declaration attached to Form 6 for the SIR period has been upheld by the Supreme Court. Outside the SIR period, forms under the Registration of Electors Rules 1960 will apply. The note does not say whether the parent question inserted on the online Form 6 on ECINet has been removed. Sandhu had recorded that insertion as unauthorised and illegal on 13 August and had asked that it be taken down. The public is entitled to a plain yes or no on the screen that the applicant sees.

SECOND. Who authorised appeals in West Bengal against voters already included by judicial officers remains unanswered in the Saturday note. Sandhu had asked on file who authorised those appeals on behalf of the Commission and who actually filed them. The question is institutional. It seeks a name of authority.

THIRD. Why Goa's requested software to restore names was not enabled remains unanswered. Officers who heard citizens and found them eligible could not write that finding into the system. A statutory officer's order and a software field must speak to each other. The country is entitled to know who can open that field.

The Court upheld SIR as an exercise in law. Upholding an exercise is not the same as naming who altered an online form or who signed an appeal.

MY SHOT

Write the minutes. Circulate the agenda. Let every Commissioner be heard under the statute before the machine is told to move.

Name the authority that changed the online form, if it still stands. Name the authority that filed the Bengal appeals. Name who holds operational control of ECINet and who can restore a name that a local officer has already cleared.

Home visits and extra days are a public good. They will be judged by whether the left out voter gets on the list. Trust in the list is trust in the Republic. Process has taken a step. The files that stay shut are still the test.

C. SUBRAHMANYAM

NLMC Concludes Three-City Investor..

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50–60 people each, including prospective buyers and stakeholders seeking information about the properties and the auction process. The interactions across the three cities covered the location and characteristics of the land parcels, plot sizes, applicable terms and conditions, eligibility requirements, registration procedure, Earnest Money Deposit (EMD),bidding process and other aspects relevant to participation in the e-auction.

During the Investor Meets, Executive Director, NLMC, Pradeep Kumar; General Manager, NLMC, Sunil Sahu; and General Manager (HR), RINL, Binay Prasad, addressed queries from prospective buyers and other interested stakeholders regarding the properties, auction process and related procedures. Questions raised by participants joining through video conferencing, including NRIs and prospective buyers based outside India, were also addressed during the Visakhapatnam interaction.

... welcome Rahul as PM

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strengthened the demand for leadership committed to defending the Constitution and restoring public confidence in democratic institutions. The Minister said Rahul Gandhi had spent more than a decade raising concerns over what he described as the BJP's "authoritarian and fascistic" methods of governance. Despite sustained political attacks, he said, Rahul Gandhi had continued to raise issues concerning citizens and speak for the independence of democratic institutions.

"Rahul Gandhi has stood firm through years of political attacks and attempts to silence him. He has continued to raise the issues that matter to the people and defend the values on which our Republic was built. The country is now looking to him to lead India as Prime Minister," Uttam Kumar Reddy said.

He said democracy could not be measured by elections alone, and stressed the importance of independent institutions, the right of elected representatives to question the government, freedom of expression and dissent, and ensuring that every vote was counted fairly.

..ELIGIBLE ULC APPLICATIONS

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Order (GO) regarding ULC lands was originally issued in 2016 by the previous administration, it was never implemented. The Minister emphasised that the state is systematically resolving pending land prohibition issues under Section 22-A of the Registration Act. He highlighted that three major policy decisions have already been implemented to address 22-A grievances, with orders issued in line with GO 118 and GO 76. Additionally, the government has cleared the registration of houses, plots, and flats that hold valid permissions despite falling under Section 22-A status. Minister Srinivasa Reddy assured that all remaining land-related encumbrances are being processed on a fast-track basis.

Congress Moves to Finalise MLC Candidates

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factors and finalised panels of three names each. The Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) is learnt to have forwarded the six names to AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal for consideration. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy is scheduled to travel to Delhi on September 29 to attend the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting. Party sources said the candidates for the two Graduate MLC seats are likely to be finalised during his visit.

Several Congress aspirants are seeking tickets for the two constituencies, with some reportedly lobbying through leaders at the State and national levels. However, with Bhatti Vikramarka and Damodar Rajanarsimha having forwarded three-member panels for their respective constituencies, the central leadership is expected to choose one candidate from each panel. For the Nalgonda–Warangal–Khammam constituency, the TPCC is learnt to have recommended Sarvotham Reddy, son of former minister and late Congress leader Ram Reddy Damodar Reddy of Suryapet district; RTI Commissioner P.V. Srinivas; and PCC general secretary Chanagani Dayakar.

For the Hyderabad–Rangareddy–Mahbubnagar constituency, the names recommended are reportedly prominent industrialist Manne Jeevan Reddy, former PCC Media Committee chairman Sama Rammohan Reddy, and PCC spokesperson and educational institutions chairman Gouri Satish.

The high command is expected to finalise two candidates from the six-member panel, though party sources said new names could also emerge at the last minute. The official announcement is likely to be made by the end of September.

Sircilla Land Row: KTR Seeks White Paper

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alleging that the Congress government has failed to fulfill its key poll promises nearly three years into its tenure. Highlighting the plight of Sircilla weavers, the former minister alleged that the current administration had halted major government procurement orders such as Bathukamma sarees, school uniforms, and festival gift packs that previously sustained the local textile industry. KTR demanded payment of the pending ₹60 crore dues, restoration of the 10 per cent yarn subsidy and revival of the ₹5 lakh Weaver Insurance scheme.

The BRS working president demanded that the Apparel Park and the 88-acre Weaving Park be fully operationalised and that new industries be brought to Sircilla to create employment. The government must announce clear timelines for allotting sheds and providing employment to workers, he said.

3-Day Bank Strike ..

➢FROM PAGE 1

stakeholders, and work out a solution acceptable to all the stakeholders, more importantly, the customers," the UFBU said in a statement. As regards the PLI scheme for Scale IV and above officers, the discussions can start with the IBA to propose modifications in the scheme to the government to address the observations of the unions/associations, it said. The residual issues as listed in the minutes dated March 8, 2024, will be discussed between the parties for expeditious resolution, it said. In view of the above, it was agreed by the UFBU that the proposed agitational programmes and strike actions will be deferred, it added.

2.5 Lakh to Join Bathukamma Guinness World Record

➢FROM PAGE 1

significance of Bathukamma. For this purpose, Bathukamma committees and Kolatam (traditional folk-dance) committees would be formed at the village level. She said Telangana Jagruthi would work toward achieving a Guinness World Record for Bathukamma as a voluntary organization that has showcased the festival's grandeur to the world, including at the Burj Khalifa. She appealed to women across Telangana to participate in the Bathukamma celebrations being organized by Jagruthi this year.

She said the CD featuring clap songs and traditional Bathukamma songs had been produced with the aim of preserving and passing these songs on to future generations.

"We will achieve a Guinness World Record" – Madhavi

Maripelli Madhavi, Telangana Jagruthi State President, said that Bathukamma would be organized next year with 250,000 people with the aim of achieving a Guinness World Record. She said that grand Bathukamma celebrations would be organized under the aegis of Jagruthi in all districts this year and appealed to women to participate in large numbers. She also said that the clap songs and traditional Bathukamma songs had already been uploaded on YouTube. Cultural Development and Women's Empowerment are Telangana Jagruthi's Goals

Telangana Jagruthi, a voluntary organization that has stood as a symbol of cultural awareness in Telangana since the days of the Telangana movement, is set to work with even greater enthusiasm in the future. After Telangana Jagruthi Founder-President Kalvakuntla Kavitha formed the Telangana Rakshana Sena political party, she appointed Maripelli Madhavi as the State President of Jagruthi. Kavitha has decided to further strengthen the organization so that Telangana Jagruthi can work more extensively and wholeheartedly for Telangana society.

She announced that Jagruthi would expand its activities with a focus on cultural development, women's empowerment, and eliminating inequalities in society. As part of this initiative, committees have been announced for several districts in Telangana and for various countries. Committees for the remaining districts will be announced soon, she said.

Telangana Jagruthi State Committee
President: Maripelli Madhavi
Vice Presidents:
Jadi Srinivas, Parsha Chandrasekhar
General Secretary: Gunti Sundar
Secretaries: Kannam Sharada,
Dondi Swarnalatha, Mastan
State President,
Women's Wing: Manukota Sunitha
Presidents of Various District Units
Jagtial: Patturi Tirupati
Rangareddy: MD Moinuddin
Warangal: Poludasari Ramesh
Hanamkonda: Netti Rajitha
Mahabubnagar: Yerupula Narsimlu
Suryapet: Lakkapaka Praveen
Bhupalpally: Gummadi Ravinder
Nizamabad: Avanti Kumar
Peddapalli: Medarapu Rajyalakshmi
Karimnagar: Gundu Manjula
Kamareddy: Reddipet Satish Kumar

Maharashtra Unit
Venugopal Yadav has been appointed President of the Maharashtra unit of Telangana Jagruthi.

Telangana Jagruthi Presidents in Various Countries
New Zealand – President: Muddam Aruna Jyothi
Qatar – President: Praveena Lakshmi
Qatar – General Secretary: Adarsh Reddy Pothula
USA – President: Raj Govilkar
Oman – President: Gundu Rajender Naik
Canada – President: Kunde Raghavendra Yadav
Ireland – President: Santosh Palle
Switzerland – President: Kishore Tatikonda
Italy – President: Soumya Pinnamreddy
Norway – President: Kiran Teja Sudhati
Norway – General Secretary: Nikhitha Billakanti
Zimbabwe – President: Shravan Kumar Goud
Kenya – President: Gantla Swapna Reddy

Vice Presidents:
Jadi Srinivas, Parsha Chandrasekhar
General Secretary: Gunti Sundar
Secretaries: Kannam Sharada,
Dondi Swarnalatha, Mastan
State President,
Women's Wing: Manukota Sunitha
Presidents of Various District Units
Jagtial: Patturi Tirupati
Rangareddy: MD Moinuddin
Warangal: Poludasari Ramesh
Hanamkonda: Netti Rajitha
Mahabubnagar: Yerupula Narsimlu
Suryapet: Lakkapaka Praveen
Bhupalpally: Gummadi Ravinder
Nizamabad: Avanti Kumar
Peddapalli: Medarapu Rajyalakshmi
Karimnagar: Gundu Manjula
Kamareddy: Reddipet Satish Kumar

GITAM Innovation Challenge 2026: National Student Pitching Competition Opens Applications

HYDERABAD



GITAM Innovation Challenge 2026, formerly known as SmartIDEAthon, has opened applications for its national student pitching competition, inviting students from across India to present innovative ideas and early-stage ventures. The competition is organised by GITAM's Venture Development Centre (VDC), Hyderabad, and GITAM Entrepreneurs Club (E-Club), in collaboration with GITAM i-TBI, GITAM TEC, Bower School of Entrepreneurship, Wadhwani Foundation and Balavikas, USA.

Now in its seventh year, the competition builds on six years of student participation and thousands of applications from across India. The 2026 edition offers more than ₹50 lakhin combined cash prizes and ecosystem/programme value, including ₹5.9 lakh+ in cash prizes and ₹44 lakh+ worth of venture coaching, mentorship, incubation and entrepreneurship programmes.

The competition is open across two tracks. The Junior Track is open to students of Classes 10–12, while the Main Track is open to undergraduate students and graduates from 2025 onwards. Participants can present ideas at the concept, prototype or Minimum Viable Product (MVP) stage across five themes: Planet & Sustainability; Bio Economy & Agriculture; DeepTech & Manufacturing; Sports & Fitness; and D2C & Consumer Brands.

Participants will undergo online screening and mentoring rounds, with the Junior Track also featuring new in-person regional rounds in Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam. The competition will culminate in the Grand Finale at GITAM Hyderabad on December 11, 2026, where shortlisted finalists will present their ventures before a jury comprising entrepreneurs, investors, industry experts and startupecosystem leaders.

Alongside the pitching rounds, participants will have opportunities to engage with entrepreneurs and startupfounders, participate in entrepreneurship sessions, receive personalised coaching through online bootcamps and build connections within the wider startup ecosystem.

Applications are open until October 4, 2026. The registration fee is ₹499 per team for the Junior Track and ₹699 per team for the Main Track.

The GITAM Innovation Challenge is part of VDC and E-Club's efforts to provide students with opportunities to develop, validate and advance innovative ideas through access to mentorship, incubation, industry engagement and the broader startup ecosystem. For details: gic.gitam.edu, and to apply:https://gevents.gitam.edu/registration/ODkyMg==

About GITAM Venture Development Centre (VDC)

The Venture Development Centre (VDC) at GITAM supports student innovators and aspiring entrepreneurs through mentorship, incubation, industry engagement and access to the startup ecosystem. VDC works with students to help develop and validate ideas and facilitate their progression from early concepts towards scalable ventures.

Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Mini Jatara from Feb 17 to 20, 2027

HYDERABAD

The dates for the famous Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Mini Jatara in Telangana have been finalised, with the four-day festival scheduled to be held from February 17 to 20, 2027.

The priests of Sammakka and Saralamma announced the dates and said arrangements would be made to conduct the festival in accordance with traditional customs.

The Mini Jatara will commence on February 17 with the ceremonial arrival of Saralamma at the Gadde, the sacred platform. On February 18, Sammakka will be brought to the Gadde.

February 19 will be observed as the day for devotees to fulfil their vows. Devotees from various parts of Telangana and neighbouring States are expected to visit Medaram and offer their vows to the deities. The four-day festival will conclude on February 20.

In view of the expected influx of devotees, officials are focusing on providing essential facilities, including drinking water, sanitation, medical services and transportation, to ensure smooth conduct of the Mini Jatara.

Heartbreaking Loss: Young Life Ends After a Night of Consuming Alcohol With Friends

- **Ramakrishna (29), Found Dead in KPHB—Police Probe the Mysterious Circumstances After He Vomited Following Alcohol.**



MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI

KPHB PS police are investigating a suspected death after a young man was found dead under mysterious circumstances following a night of consuming alcohol with friends. The incident took place in the KPHB area.

The deceased, Ramakrishna (29), a resident of Prakasam district, was living with friends in Sardar Patel Nagar. According to initial reports, he consumed alcohol with his friends on Friday, 25th of September 2026 night. After drinking, he reportedly vomited. On Saturday 26 th of September, 2026, morning, he was found lying motionless in the hall. He was immediately taken to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead, stating that he had already passed away before reaching medical care.

Police have registered the case and are probing the circumstances surrounding his death, including whether alcohol and health complications played a role.

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY, CHENNAI-38

The following e-tender is published in IREPS website. Firms are requested to login to www.ireps.gov.in and quote against the tender. Manual quotations will not be entertained for this tender.

Open Tender No.	Description of the Item	Tender Value (Rs.)	Date of Tender Closing Date & Time
202647 6212342	Servicing of Air End Unit of Screw Compressor Inv.No. 70338 available in Furnishing Division.	5,84,170/-	12.10.2026 15:00 Hrs.

Hindi Version of the above advertisement is available in ICF website: https://icf.indianrailways.gov.in/.

Dy.Chief Mechanical Engineer / Plant

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY, CHENNAI-38

Tender Notice No. 2026235212325, Dated: 24.09.2026

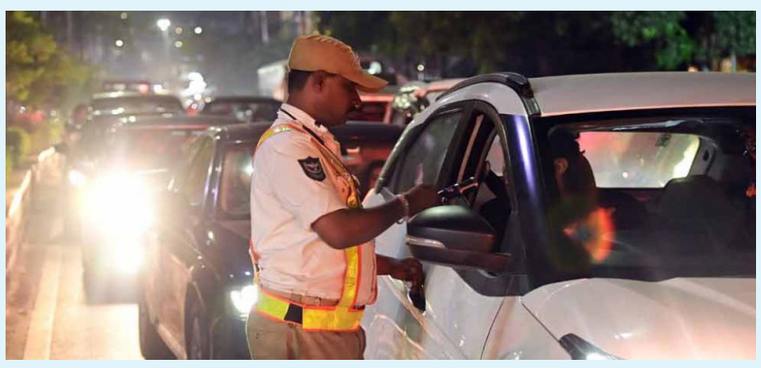
The following e-tender is published in IREPS website. Firms are requested to login to www.ireps.gov.in and quote against the tender. Manual quotations will not be entertained for this tender.

Open Tender No.	Short Description of the Item.	Tender Value (Rs.)	Last date of receipt / Date of opening of tender form
202623 5212325	Complete wiring work in LHB & Amrit Bharat LWLRRM, LSLRD, LVPH & LWCB Coaches including handling and installation of equipment and harness preparation activities at ICF Chennai.	4,86,56,922/-	16.10.2026 15:00 Hrs.

Hindi Version of the above advertisement is available in ICF website: https://icf.indianrailways.gov.in/.

Dy.Chief Electrical Engineer / Fur-II

Weekend-Special Drunk & Drive Checking's by Cyberabad Traffic Police



HYDERABAD

Cyberabad Traffic Police (CTP) has conducted a special drunk driving enforcement drive over the weekend, resulting in the apprehension of 97 offenders.

The total cases booked 76 Two wheelers , five three wheelers , 15 four wheelers and one heavy Vehicles based on their Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels 79 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 36 mg/100 ml to 200 mg/100 ml , 12 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 201 mg/100 ml to 300 mg/100 ml , 06 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 301 mg/100 ml to 550 mg/100 ml

All the offenders will be produced before the Court.

Cyberabad Police reiterate that driving under the influence of alcohol is a serious offence. If anyone is found to be driving in an inebriated condition and causes a fatal accident, such individuals will be booked under Section 105 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Culpable Homicide Not Amounting to Murder). The maximum punishment under this section is 10 years of imprisonment along with a fine.

In the last week (September 21 to 26) a total 89 drunk driving cases were disposed in the courts, in which three person got fine and jail, one person got fine and social service, 85 persons got fine only.

"From the Shadows to the Spotlight: Saluting Sewerage Workers on Their Birthday Moment"

- **A heartfelt appreciation for the unsung heroes who keep hygiene, sanitation, and public wellbeing on track**



HYDERABAD

In the heart of KPHB Colony Ward, a simple birthday celebration turned into an emotional tribute to the people who work quietly to keep the city clean and safe. HMWSSB DGM Degala Venkata Trinadha Rao felicitated the sewerage workers of KPHB Colony Ward in recognition of their dedicated service, hard work, and invaluable contribution in ensuring the smooth discharge of their duties—especially in moments when their presence matters most.

The program held in honor of the birthday of Sewerage Work Inspector P. Venkatesh Goud became a heartfelt reminder that progress is built by teamwork, discipline, and sacrifice. While many celebrate from the spotlight, sewerage workers often serve from the shadows—working with commitment, courage, and care to maintain hygiene, sanitation, and public wellbeing.

On this special occasion, Sewerage Work Inspector P. Venkatesh Goud and the sewerage staff were also felicitated by the HMWSSB KPHB Colony Unit. The program recognized the efforts of the team members, including D. Mallesh, M. Ilaiah, K. Basha, B. Kiran, I. Sudhakar, and G. Madhukar. Their sincerity and consistency were praised, with special emphasis on how their daily efforts protect the community and keep the ward moving forward.

Adding warmth to the celebrations, Managers B. Mamatha and Y. Sunitha participated in the program, supporting the message that every worker's contribution deserves respect and appreciation. The atmosphere was filled with gratitude, encouragement, and emotion—because those who serve society through sanitation deserve more than words alone; they deserve recognition from the very community they protect.

Speaking with appreciation, DGM Degala Venkata Trinadha Rao emphasized that the true strength of any city lies in its workers. He noted that the sewerage team's dedication reflects responsibility in its purest form—cleanliness achieved through relentless effort and teamwork.

The birthday celebration concluded as a meaningful tribute: not only to Inspector P. Venkatesh Goud, but also to the entire sewerage workforce of KPHB Colony Ward—whose work may not always be seen, yet is felt every single day.

6.32 lakh women take Ullas literacy exam across Telangana

HYDERABAD



After years away from the written word, thousands of women in Telangana are beginning a new chapter in their lives.

Having progressed from being unable to recognise the Telugu alphabet to reading, writing, and performing basic calculations, lakhs of adult learners appeared for the 'Ullas' examination held across the State on Sunday.

Under the 'Amma Ku Aksharam' programme, 6.32 lakh women took the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Test. Of these, 5.32 lakh were from rural areas, while approximately one lakh learners were from urban regions. The examination was conducted in 124 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) across Telangana, as well as in circles under the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), municipalities, and municipal corporations.

Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) officials reported that 98,324 Self-Help Group (SHG) members and 720 street vendors also appeared for the test, which was conducted in coordination with the Department of Adult Education.

Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, and Women and Child Welfare Minister D. Anasuya Seethakka congratulated the SHG members and other adult learners on their achievement.

"Learning the alphabet is not merely about acquiring the ability to read and write; it is about gaining self-confidence. It is a great transformation for women who have relied on thumb impressions for so long to now reach a stage where they can write their own names. There is no age limit for education; what matters is the determination to learn," Seethakka said.



SHORT TAKES

Water pumping continues from Yellampalli to Mid Manair

HYDERABAD: *The lifting of Godavari water from the Sripada Yellampalli Reservoir to the Mid Manair Reservoir (MMR) continued smoothly on Sunday. Four motors were put into operation at both the Nandi pump house in Nandi Medaram and the Gayatri pump house at Lakshmipur in Ramadugu mandal. Consequently, an inflow of 12,600 cusecs is reaching the Mid Manair Reservoir through the flood canal via Nandi Medaram. Concurrently, water is being discharged from Mid Manair into the downstream Lower Manair Reservoir (LMR).*

Srivari Navaratri Brahmotsavams from Oct 12-20

TIRUMALA: *Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is organising the grand Srivari Navaratri Brahmotsavam fete from October 12-20 in view of Adhikamasam, which occurs once in three years as per Chandrayaana during Ashwiyuja (Dasara) month. But the uniqueness about this Adhikamasa Brahmotsavams is that during Navaratri festivities there will be no Dwajarohanam, Pedda Radham, Dwajaavarohanam. All Vahana Sevas are held in the mornings (8-10 am) and evening (7-9 pm) excepting the prestigious Garuda Vahana Seva which is observed from 6.30 pm to 11.30 pm.*

We steal hearts but not votes, says Union Minister Kishan Reddy

HYDERABAD



Union Minister Kishan Reddy on Sunday said that they would not steal votes but they would win the hearts of the people. He alleged that It was the Congress party's nature to cast aspersions on EVMs and constitutional institutions when defeated in elections.

Addressing a media conference at the BJP state office in the city , he told Congress leader Rahul Gandhi that the the Bharatiya Janata Party never steals votes. He said that Claiming credit when winning elections but blaming EVMs and the Election Commission when losing was a testament to the Congress party's low-level politics and double standards. He strongly criticized the Congress party for failing to change its attitude despite facing public rejection.

Kishan Reddy vehemently condemned the baseless allegations made by Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party against the Election Commission and constitutional institutions. He noted that the Election Commission functioned excellently in states like Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh and Telangana where the Congress party came to power. He pointed out that when bogus votes were removed via the SIR process in Kerala as suggested by a senior Congress leader the party praised the Election Commission (EC) as a good institution. However, he noted that whenever the BJP wins in other states, the same party blames the EVMs and the Election Commission, which demonstrates their political immaturity. He clarified that it was not the Election Commission's responsibility to ensure the Congress party's victory, nor is it the EVMs' duty to make Rahul Gandhi the Prime Minister. He asserted that the Congress party had absolutely no moral right to speak about the Constitution.

He challenged them by recalling their history of imposing the Emergency in 1975, suppressing press freedom, trampling on civil rights and imprisoning opposition leaders during a dark era of governance. He reminded everyone of the 2009 incident where they recommended to the President the removal of constitutional Election Commissioners simply because they did not comply with the party's wishes. He remarked that it was laughable for such a party to speak about democracy when, in present-day Telangana, one must approach the courts just to secure permission for a democratic protest at Indira Park. He criticized Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, calling it shameful that after being elected by the people of Telangana he visits other states and declares he would "sacrifice his life for the Sonia Gandhi family," thereby neglecting the people's issues to focus entirely on serving the Gandhi family.

Kishan Reddy lashed out at the Congress, stating that its goal was to undermine the country's institutions. "Rahul Gandhi spares no institution and he spreads malicious propaganda by casting doubts on the Army Chief, the Air Force, surgical strikes, NSA Ajit Doval, the Lok Sabha Speaker, the CJI, the ED, the CBI, the Intelligence Bureau, media houses and even Parliament and the GST system. His remarks on foreign platforms, which tarnish the nation's reputation, demonstrate his lack of political understanding," Kishan Reddy asserted. He criticized Rahul Gandhi for displaying a monarchical mindset and arrogance believing that only his family should rule the country and that he alone should become Prime Minister simply because his grandfather, grandmother, and father held the office.

He stated that the NDA government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, remains closely connected to the people and delivers good governance. He highlighted that the government had transformed the lives of crores of people through various initiatives, including poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, free rations, the construction of roads and airports and support for women's groups.



KTR blames govt for Palamuru crop losses, seeks compensation

NAGARKURNOOL



Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao on Sunday expressed concern over crops drying up across the erstwhile Palamuru district despite the availability of water in the Krishna and Godavari rivers.

During a visit to Deshitikyal village in Nagarkurnool mandal, Rama Rao met farmers and inspected cotton and maize fields. Farmers told him that their crops had suffered severe damage and that they were unable to recover even their cultivation costs.

Rama Rao said more than 40 per cent of crops in the erstwhile Palamuru district had been damaged. He said farmers had stopped his vehicle while he was returning to Hyderabad after attending a programme in Kollapur and urged him to inspect their fields.

The condition of the cotton and maize crops indicated the extent of the damage, he said. Farmers also complained of inadequate irrigation and power supply. Rama Rao alleged that despite sufficient water being available in the Krishna and Godavari rivers, irrigation water was not reaching farmers.

He further alleged that the government was not operating the Kaleshwaram and Palamuru-Rangareddy projects to their full potential.

The BRS working president demanded that the government immediately undertake a comprehensive crop-loss survey across the erstwhile Palamuru district and provide compensation to affected farmers.

He also sought a special package for farmers who had suffered heavy losses after investing borrowed money and pledging their gold. Rama Rao assured farmers that the BRS would continue to raise their concerns and pressurise the government until adequate compensation was provided.



Medigadda rehabilitation may involve end-to-end diaphragm wall: Uttam

HYDERABAD

The rehabilitation of the Medigadda barrage of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme is likely to include the construction of an end-to-end diaphragm wall, Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy said on Sunday.

He said the strengthening and extension of downstream stilling basins would also be required at all three barrages Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla.

Speaking to media persons at Huzurnagar, Uttam Kumar Reddy said a diaphragm wall may have to be constructed across the entire width of the Medigadda barrage to provide comprehensive protection to its foundation.

The stilling basins downstream of the barrages are also expected to be strengthened and extended to reduce the velocity of floodwaters and improve energy dissipation, he said.

"These interventions are being considered based on the preliminary examination of extensive technical tests conducted at the three barrages," the Minister said.

"The proposal under consideration is to construct a diaphragm wall from one end to the other at Medigadda barrage. The existing stilling basins may also have to be strengthened and extended to control the velocity of floodwaters," he said. However, Uttam Kumar Reddy clarified that the final rehabilitation designs were yet to be submitted. IIT Bombay and internationally reputed engineering consultancy AFRY India have been engaged to examine the test reports and prepare repair and rehabilitation designs.

The Minister said soil, concrete and foundation tests recommended by the National Dam Safety Authority were nearing completion. The design agencies were examining the findings to determine the precise structural interventions required at each of the three barrages, he added.

Congress Steps Up Exercise to Select Candidates for Two MLC Seats in Telangana

HYDERABAD

The Congress party has intensified its efforts to select candidates for two MLC seats in Telangana. According to reports, the PCC has prepared a list of six names, with three candidates each for the Khammam–Warangal–Nalgonda and Hyderabad–Rangareddy–Mahbubnagar seats.

The list containing the candidates' names is reportedly being sent to K.C. Venugopal, the party's Telangana affairs in-charge.

According to reports, the responsibility of selecting the candidate for the Khammam–Warangal–Nalgonda seat has been assigned to Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, while Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha has been entrusted with selecting the candidate for the Hyderabad–Rangareddy–Mahbubnagar seat.

The candidates are expected to be selected after taking into account social equations and the party's organizational strengths and weaknesses. Party sources say senior leaders are likely to meet in Delhi on September 29 to take a final decision on the candidates for these two seats. The candidates' names are expected to be officially announced after the meeting.

BJP leaders remember Konda Laxman Bapuji



HYDERABAD

Grand celebrations marking the birth anniversary of freedom fighter and first-generation Telangana movement leader Konda Laxman Bapuji were held at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Telangana state office.

The event was organized under the leadership of the BJP OBC Morcha State President Anand Goud. Key leaders including State General Secretary Virender Goud, State Vice President and former MP Dr. Boora Narsaiah Goud and State Spokesperson Dr. Samatha participated by garlanding Bapuji's portrait and paying their heartfelt tributes.

Speaking on the occasion, OBC Morcha State President Anand Goud hailed Konda Laxman Bapuji as the only great leader, after Mahatma Gandhi, to be addressed as 'Bapuji' by the masses. He highlighted Bapuji's immense contributions to the freedom struggle, the movement against the Razakars and the agitation for the realization of Telangana statehood. He recalled that during the initial phase of the movement in 1969, Bapuji not only sacrificed his ministerial post for the cause of Telangana but also vowed never to accept a ministerial position until the separate state was formed—a pledge he steadfastly honored until the end. He called upon everyone to rededicate themselves to realizing Bapuji's ideals.

Subsequently, BJP State General Secretary Virender Goud spoke, stating that Bapuji's life serves as an exemplary model for future generations. He described him as a warrior, who, alongside participating in the national freedom struggle, risked his life to fight against the atrocities committed by the Razakars in Telangana. It was recalled that he stood as a pillar of support for the downtrodden, weaker sections and handloom weavers by establishing cooperative societies for their economic upliftment.

He was noted as the leader, who first resigned from his ministerial post in 1969 for the sake of the Telangana movement. Virender Goud reminisced about the time Bapuji personally attended a meeting organized by the Nava Telangana Party led by former Minister Devender Goud at Indira Park on November 2, 2008, under the slogan "We will form our own Telangana" and provided direction to the movement. He stated that building an egalitarian society free from poverty a vision Bapuji cherished—would be the true tribute paid to him.

Speaking on the occasion, BJP State Vice-President and former MP Dr. Boora Narsaiah Goud described Konda Laxman Bapuji as the 'Iron Man of Telangana.' He highlighted that the credit for arranging armed training—at his own expense in Solapur for revolutionaries like Narayana Rao Pawar and Gandayya (who had hurled bombs at the Nizam at Koti to put an end to the atrocities of the Razakars) goes to Bapuji. He also mentioned that Bapuji, a lawyer by profession, dedicated his entire wealth to the Telangana movement. He noted that 'Jaladrushyam' his residence served as the birthplace of the second phase of the movement and added that the Telangana agitation drew its life force from that very location. He praised him as a perpetual revolutionary who, even at the age of 96, undertook a protest fast in the bone-chilling cold of Delhi to achieve the goal of a separate Telangana state. (NSS)

Konda Laxman Bapuji fought against Nizam : Talasani

HYDERABAD

Former Minister and BRS party Deputy Floor Leader Talasani Srinivas Yadav on Sunday described former minister Konda Laxman Bapuji as a freedom fighter, who battled against the Nizam's autocratic rule. On the occasion of Konda Laxman Bapuji's birth anniversary, he paid tribute by garlanding his statue at Tank Bund.

Speaking on the occasion, Talasani noted that Konda Laxman was a pioneering activist in the first phase of the Telangana movement in 1969. He recalled that during the second phase of the Telangana movement under former CM KCR's leadership, Bapuji stood in support of the struggle for statehood by making his own home as the movement's headquarters. He highlighted that Bapuji worked tirelessly to raise awareness not only among the Padmashali community but also among the downtrodden and weaker sections of society. Talasani explained that KCR had implemented numerous programs aimed at the economic and social advancement of the Padmashali community, but criticized the Congress government for halting these initiatives, calling the move unjust. He urged everyone to strive towards realizing the ideals championed by Konda Laxman Bapuji.



A Matter of Pride for India: Dr. Supriya Ratna Kumar Gowda (Telangana) Receives International Recognition

HYDERABAD



Telangana's women's leadership has received recognition at the international level. According to a press note released by the organization, Dr. Supriya Ratna Kumar Gowda has been recognized as the South Asia Commander of the International Police Commission–Global Command Inter-Governmental Organization (IPC GC IGO).

The organization stated that she was awarded a paramilitary rank equivalent to IPC Lieutenant General. During her official visit to the Philippines from September 19 to 25, she met with several senior officials and commanders of the IPC GC IGO Global Command and the Philippines Command. She also reportedly met Supreme Commanding General Robert S. Bayazon.

She held discussions with representatives of the South Korea, Bangladesh, and United States commands as well. According to the press note, the meetings focused on international cooperation, humanitarian services, peace initiatives, social development, and community service.

The organization stated that she will play a key role in coordinating these initiatives across South Asia.

Mahesh Yadav Aspires for BRS Ticket in Khairatabad By-election

HYDERABAD

With the Khairatabad assembly constituency by-election now certain, former Khairatabad Corporator Mahesh Yadav has expressed his aspiration to secure the BRS party ticket to contest as the main candidate. He shared these views during a press conference held for this purpose.

Speaking on this occasion, Mahesh Yadav stated that he was a local resident of the Khairatabad constituency and had been constantly accessible to the public striving to resolve their issues. He urged the BRS party leadership to recognize his services to the party and provide him with this opportunity.

He noted that he possesses a thorough understanding of local issues in the Khairatabad area and works with a close awareness of the people's needs and problems. He highlighted his continuous rapport with both the party workers and the general public. Mahesh Yadav expressed optimism that the BRS leadership would allocate the ticket to him by taking into account his services to the party, his local connections and his bond with the people.

CEC Controversy: Wangchuk Extends Support to Opposition

NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing political controversy surrounding Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, social activist Sonam Wangchuk has expressed moral support for the opposition. He said he would support opposition leaders and organizations fighting for transparency and accountability in the electoral process. However, he stated that it would not be possible for him to participate directly in every protest. Wangchuk said it is important for people to have confidence in the electoral process in a democracy. Meanwhile, opposition parties are demanding the resignation of the CEC and an explanation regarding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process. Several opposition parties, including the Congress, are preparing to hold protests over the issue. On the other hand, the Election Commission clarified that decisions related to the SIR were taken with the unanimous approval of all three Election Commissioners. As a result, the political debate surrounding the CEC issue continues.



Secretariat Employees Clash with Police During Vijayawada Protest

VIJAYAWADA

A scuffle broke out on Sunday between the employees of village and ward secretariats and the police during the protest by the employees over their long-pending demands. Tense situation prevailed as a large number of employees, including women, gathered at Dharna Chowk in response to 'Chalo Vijayawada' protest called to press for their demands. They raised slogans, demanding the Andhra Pradesh government to give them promotion and address other pending demands.

Police tried to detain the protesters and physically lifted some of them to the police vehicles. As protesters resisted the arrest, this led to a scuffle between the two sides. Police resorted to cane charge to control the situation. Several protesters and police personnel received injuries in the clash. Employees were furious over what they called the Telugu Desam Party (TDP)-led coalition government's repressive actions against those who raised their voices for their legitimate demands.

In a tragic incident during the protest, a police officer died of cardiac arrest. Circle Inspector Ahmed Ali suffered cardiac arrest while performing his duties at Dhanra Chowk. He collapsed on the ground. Other police personnel rushed him to a nearby hospital but he succumbed on the way. Meanwhile, YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) condemned the cane charge on the village and ward secretariat employees who were protesting for their just demands. YSRCP MLC Lella Appi Reddy alleged that the TDP-led coalition government has gone back on its poll promises and has been using police against the protesting employees. "They were fighting for their just demands and the police had shown high-handedness in preventing the leaders and active participants of the village and ward secretariat and behaved in a harsh manner at the Dharna Chowk where they were protesting," he said.

EESL to showcase India's energy-efficiency success story in Germany

EESL to Showcase Energy-Efficiency Success Across Key States, Including Telangana

EESL Committed to PM's Vision of Energy-Efficient, Climate-Resilient India

EESL CEO Credits Ministry of Power Support for Programme Success

HYDERABAD, SEPTEMBER 27

Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), under the Ministry of Power, Government of India, is set to showcase India's experience and success in implementing energy-efficiency and clean-energy programmes across States at an international knowledge-exchange programme in Ravensburg, Germany, from September 28 to October 2, 2026.

EESL has been invited by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to participate in the international study tour and share India's experience in energy efficiency, clean-energy solutions and sustainable development. The invitation provides an opportunity to highlight how large-scale energy-efficiency programmes have been translated into practical solutions across diverse geographies and sectors.

The programme will bring together policymakers, technology providers, industry experts and development partners from different countries to exchange experiences on innovative energy-efficiency interventions, clean-energy technologies and climate-resilient solutions.

EESL will highlight a range of initiatives implemented across Indian States, demonstrating the potential of scalable and locally adapted solutions to deliver energy savings, improve public services and support sustainable development.

These include energy-efficient cooking solutions in all Anganwadi centres in Andhra Pradesh; street-lighting initiatives in Telangana; decentralised solar systems in Maharashtra; energy-efficient buildings in Gujarat; smart metering initiatives in Bihar; street-lighting programmes in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan; electric mobility initiatives in Odisha; micro cold-storage systems in Himachal Pradesh; and energy-efficient water-pumping systems in Kerala.

In Telangana, EESL's experience with energy-efficient street lighting is among the State-level initiatives that demonstrate how technology-led interventions can help improve public lighting services while promoting more efficient use of electricity.EESL has successfully implemented the energy-efficient LED street lighting project in the GHMC area by replacing approx. 5.5 lakh conventional street lights with energy-efficient LED street lights. As per EESL records, this has resulted in substantial energy savings of more than 61%, leading to an annual energy saving of 230 Million Units (MU), reduction of 0.19 million tonnes of CO_2 emissions per annum, and avoided peak demand of 60 MW.

The study tour will also provide an international platform to highlight initiatives aimed at transforming cooking practices in public institutions. EESL's work under the National Efficient Cooking Programme seeks to promote modern, energy-efficient cooking solutions and reduce dependence on conventional cooking methods. The Ravensburg programme will facilitate knowledge exchange on global technologies, research, policy frameworks and implementation models. Participants will discuss challenges in scaling energy-efficiency interventions and explore approaches to strengthening climate resilience and sustainable energy access. Through its participation, EESL will share India's implementation experience while also gaining insights into international best practices and emerging technologies. The programme is expected to strengthen collaboration among governments, industry, technology providers and development partners in advancing energy efficiency and clean-energy solutions.

EESL to Showcase AP Anganwadi Success Story in Germany

- GIZ, Germany Invites EESL for Study Tour (September 28–October 2 to showcase clean-energy initiatives and strategies for strengthening climate resilience)

- EESL to Highlight Energy-Efficiency Programmes of Key States (Initiatives from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh to be showcased)

AP Anganwadi Clean-Cooking Initiative to Get Special Focus (EESL to showcase Andhra Pradesh's clean-cooking programme as a national benchmark for integrating social welfare, energy efficiency and sustainable development)

EESL Committed to PM's Vision of Energy-Efficient, Climate-Resilient India

EESL CEO Thanks Ministry of Power for Continued Support (Guidance and support instrumental in achieving programme targets)



Vijayawada, Sep 27: The Andhra Pradesh Government's pioneering clean-cooking initiative covering 55,746 Anganwadi Centres is set to receive international recognition, with the Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) showcasing the State's programme at a global knowledge-exchange platform in Ravensburg, Germany, from September 28 to October 2, 2026.EESL, under the Ministry of Power, Government of India, has been invited by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to participate in the international study tour and share India's experience in energy efficiency, clean energy solutions and sustainable development.

The programme will bring together policymakers, technology providers, industry experts and development partners from across the world to exchange experiences on innovative energy-efficiency interventions and climate-resilient solutions.

While several successful Indian initiatives will be presented, Andhra Pradesh's Anganwadi clean-cooking programme will receive special focus as an example of how energy efficiency can be integrated with social welfare and nutrition services on a large scale.

AP's Anganwadi initiative takes centre stage

EESL CEO Akhilesh Kumar Dixit is scheduled to make a special presentation on the clean-cooking intervention implemented across 55,746 Anganwadi Centres under the Women and Child Welfare Department of Andhra Pradesh, with EESL's support. The initiative replaces conventional cooking practices with energy-efficient induction stoves and modern utensils, aimed at providing safer and cleaner cooking environments for Anganwadi workers and children while reducing energy consumption and cooking costs. According to EESL, the programme is expected to deliver around 30 per cent savings in cooking costs, create smoke-free kitchens, improve indoor air quality and avoid an estimated 28,327 tonnes of CO_2 emissions annually. The scale and speed of implementation have positioned the Andhra Pradesh initiative as a significant example of integrating social welfare, energy efficiency, clean technology and environmental sustainability.

EESL has attributed the successful implementation to the support and guidance of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, continuous monitoring by the Chief Minister's Office and the commitment of the State's administrative machinery. The initiative also reflects the Government of India's broader efforts to modernise cooking infrastructure in public institutions and reduce dependence on conventional cooking methods under the National Efficient Cooking Programme.

Indian success stories on global platform

Apart from Andhra Pradesh, EESL will showcase energy-efficiency initiatives from several States, demonstrating the diversity of India's clean-energy transition. These include decentralised solar systems in Maharashtra; energy-efficient buildings in Gujarat; smart metering in Bihar; national street-lighting programmes in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan; electric mobility initiatives in Odisha; micro cold-storage systems in Himachal Pradesh; and energy-efficient water-pumping systems in Kerala. The Ravensburg programme will provide an opportunity for participants to exchange international experiences, discuss implementation challenges and examine emerging best practices in accelerating energy efficiency, improving energy access and strengthening climate resilience.

From local intervention to global learning

The special focus on Andhra Pradesh's Anganwadis is expected to demonstrate how a relatively simple clean-energy intervention can generate benefits across multiple areas — women and child welfare, nutrition delivery, household-style institutional cooking, energy conservation, indoor air quality and climate action. The GIZ study tour will further facilitate knowledge-sharing on global technologies, research, implementation models and policy developments, while providing a platform for Indian stakeholders to share forward-looking approaches involving governments, industry and implementation partners. The Andhra Pradesh Anganwadi programme thus offers an example of how energy efficiency can move beyond conventional infrastructure projects and directly improve the everyday functioning of essential social-welfare institutions.

Governor, CM Grace World Tourism Day 2026 at Sangai Ethnic Park



Imphal, Sept 27: Manipur observed World Tourism Day 2026 today at Sangai Ethnic Park, Moirang Khunou, Bishnupur District, on the theme "Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to Redesign Tourism". The celebration was jointly attended by Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla and Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Bhalla said the true strength of Manipur tourism is not just its scenic landscapes and monuments, but its people and communities. He added that the government is actively promoting homestays to empower local families and ensure tourism revenue reaches the grassroots. Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh said that before the 2023 crisis, around 1.75 lakh tourists visited Manipur, higher than Mizoram at that time. Today, Mizoram has crossed 8 lakh tourists while Manipur has seen a drastic decline.

Citing Sikkim, which receives over 17 lakh tourists annually due to stable law and order, the Chief Minister said tourists will not visit without peace. He stressed that beautification alone is not enough and overall facilities must be upgraded to international standards. Tourism Minister Khuraijam Loken Singh said tourism significantly contributes to State revenue and unity among the 36 communities is essential for peace and development. MLA of Thanga AC Tongbram Robindro Singh called for community-centred tourism and encouraged young entrepreneurs. During the programme, the Governor launched the Manipur Tech Innovation Foundation (MTIF) Portal, while the Chief Minister relaunched the revamped 'Explore Manipur – Re-Imagining Tourism' Portal. In a major announcement, the State Government declared that NorthEast United FC will bring the Indian Super League (ISL) to Manipur for the first time, with a match scheduled on November 24. The programme was organised by the Department of Tourism and was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Losii Dikho, Home Minister Govindas Konthoujam, Chief Secretary, DGP and other dignitaries.

Suvendu Blames Mamata for 27 Lakh SIR Deletions

KOLKATA, SEP27

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Sunday blamed former CM Mamata Banerjee for the deletion of 27 lakh names from the State's electoral rolls during the Special Intensive Revision, asserting that neither the BJP nor the Election Commission could be held responsible for the exclusions. Mr. Adhikari said the deletions were carried out by judicial officers pursuant to directions of the Supreme Court in a case filed by Ms. Banerjee herself, and accused her of attempting to shift the blame after losing the Assembly elections.

"The responsibility for the deletion of 27 lakh names lies with Mamata Banerjee, not the BJP or the Election Commission. Judicial officers took the decision following the Supreme Court's directions in a case filed by her," Mr. Adhikari said at a press conference here. The Chief Minister's remarks came amid a renewed political confrontation over the SIR exercise, with Ms. Banerjee's party alleging that genuine voters had been removed from the electoral rolls and demanding their restoration. Mr. Adhikari also sought to turn the political argument over the SIR into a wider question of electoral accountability, accusing Banerjee of refusing to accept the verdict of the electorate. "If SIR is good in Kerala, why is it bad in West Bengal? We have won 208 seats, while the two sides (TMC and its allies) have 80. Mamata Banerjee is unable to accept the people's verdict," he said. The chief minister's jibe came a day after Ms. Banerjee addressed a rally at Serampore and launched a fresh attack on the Election Commission and the BJP over the voter-roll revision. Mr. Adhikari also referred to Saturday's meeting of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and two Election Commissioners — Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi — claiming that the meeting and the poll panel's subsequent statement showed that decisions relating to the Bengal SIR had not been taken by the CEC alone.

SCR bagged Prestigious SKOCH Award for Rail Parcel App

HYDERABAD

Rail Parcel APP was started by Commercial department of Hyderabad Division of SCR transforming Parcel services through digitalization, convenience and transparency



South Central Railway has been adjudged with prestigious SKOCH award, 2026 for developing integrated "Rail Parcel App" under e-governance category. This award was presented in recognition of the efforts of Commercial department of Hyderabad Division of South Central Railway for transforming logistics of Railway Parcel services through digitalisation, convenience and transparency. This award was received by Smt Ity Pandey, Principal Chief Commercial Manager, SCR and Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Hyderabad Division at Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi today i.e., on 26th September, 2026. SKOCH award which was instituted by the SKOCH group in the year 2003, is one of the prestigious awards in the country conferred by an independent organisation. This award acknowledges exceptional efforts by any individual, corporate entity or government entity that go the extra mile for betterment in digital, financial, social inclusion, governance, technology, and economic transformation. The methodology and evaluation spans for months and the experts and juries devote hours and days of their time evaluating each project in great detail.

The Rail Parcel Application transforms the traditional station-centric parcel process into an end-to-end digital logistics marketplace. It integrates First Mile doorstep pickup, the Mid Mile strength of the Indian Railways network and Last Mile doorstep delivery through empanelled Logistics Service Providers. The platform enables customers to access and choose logistics services based on parameters such as pricing, performance and ratings, bringing greater convenience, transparency and choice to railway parcel customers. The initiative of Rail Parcel APP reflects Railway's commitment to continuously improve the customer experience by leveraging technology. The core objective is to make railway parcel services simpler, more accessible and convenient, while also creating an ecosystem that can support the growth of parcel traffic on Indian Railways. The consistent efforts of commercial department of South Central Railway has resulted in bagging the prestigious SKOCH award 2026 for Rail Parcel APP.

Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, SCR congratulated the Commercial Wing of SCR and Hyderabad Division and appreciated the efforts of Smt. Ity Pandey, Principal Chief Commercial Manager, SCR, Shri Santosh Kumar Verma, Divisional Railway Manager, Hyderabad Division and Dr Anirudh Pamar, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Hyderabad Division for their outstanding achievement. He stated that SCR is committed to serve the rail users in more transparent manner by leveraging the technology and digitalization.

Naidu, Pawan Kalyan to Launch Rs 11,085-Cr Palle Panduga Works

Amaravati: Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan will launch development works worth Rs 11,085 under Palle Panduga 3.0 at Udayagiri in Nellore district on September 29.

As part of the programme CC roads will be laid in villages covering 6,000 km at a cost of Rs 2,700 crore. BT road works covering 9,500 km will be taken up at a cost of Rs 7,550 crore. Around 22,000 mini Gokulams (cattle sheds) will be constructed to benefit dairy farmers at a cost of Rs 300 crore.The Horticulture Department will take up plantation activities across 50,000 acres at a cost of Rs 225 crore and 1,000 km magic drains will be constructed at a cost of Rs 110 crore.Bus shelters, gram panchayat buildings, Rachabandas and other works will be taken up at a cost of Rs 200 crore. Of the total Rs 11,085 crore, the Central share will be Rs 5,391 crore and the State share Rs 5,694 crore. The government will take up works with Rs 1,750 crore under VB-G RAM G, Rs 3,800 crore under the Global Horticulture Hub, and another Rs 2,000 crore through NABARD, SASKI and other funds. Under Palle Panduga 1.0, the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Department laid 4,000 km of CC roads, 22,514 cattle sheds, 21,000 farm ponds and horticulture plantations across 64,000 acres.Under Palle Panduga 2.0, works included 2,500 km of CC roads, 8,300 km of BT roads, 15,750 cattle sheds, 15,500 cattle water troughs, 86,000 farm ponds, 82,000 individual soak pits and 32 km of magic drains. The coalition government is undertaking massive development works in rural areas under Palle Panduga 3.0, with a focus on strengthening rural infrastructure, supporting farmers and dairy producers and improving basic amenities in villages.

EDITORIAL

When Politics Changes Sides, Voters Pay the Price

In a democracy, political parties may change their positions, alliances may shift and elected representatives may move between political formations. Politics is, after all, a changing field. But when such changes occur after an election, they raise an important question: what happens to the mandate given by voters?

The voter does not cast a ballot merely for an individual. A vote is usually a choice involving a candidate, a political party, its policies and the programme it presents before the electorate. When an elected representative changes political affiliation after winning on one party's ticket, that connection between the voter's choice and the representative's subsequent political course can become less clear.

This does not mean that every change of political affiliation is necessarily wrong. Political circumstances evolve, and representatives may have genuine differences with their parties. Democracies must also allow room for political expression and individual judgment. The larger concern is whether such changes respect the spirit of the mandate received at the election.

India's anti-defection law was introduced precisely to address instability and unprincipled defections, while attempting to balance party discipline with the constitutional role of elected representatives. Over the years, however, questions have continued over how effectively the existing framework deals with changing political loyalties and how quickly such disputes are resolved. The real issue is therefore not simply who crosses the political aisle. It is whether voters are given clarity when the political identity under which their representative was elected changes. If an elected representative moves to another party, the electorate should not be left wondering whether its original mandate still has meaning. This is also why timely decisions by the competent constitutional authorities matter. Prolonged uncertainty can turn what should be a constitutional process into an extended political controversy. Clear procedures and predictable timelines can help ensure that questions relating to elected representatives are settled institutionally rather than through prolonged political argument.

Political parties, too, have a responsibility. They should recognise that winning an election creates an obligation that extends beyond the next political opportunity. Representatives are accountable not only to party leadership but, above all, to the people who elected them. Ultimately, democracy is sustained by trust. Governments may change, alliances may change and political careers may take unexpected turns. The voter, however, remains the constant participant in the democratic process.

The challenge is to ensure that political mobility does not weaken electoral accountability. Whatever the political circumstances, the sanctity of the voter's mandate must remain at the centre of representative democracy

THE CLAY IS NOT IN VAIN

Not worthless is the potter's clay,
That spins and sings in earthen sway
From humble dust, a form takes flight,
Through fire and wheel, it finds its might.

In golden hue the vessel gleams,
It cradles hopes, it carries dreams.
A thousand forms it dares to wear,
Through pain and joy, through breath and prayer.

A mother's touch, a sacred limb,
A starlit branch on heaven's rim.
It seeks no crown, it courts no fame,
Yet warms the soul like kindled flame.

It holds the cool, sweet water's grace,
And shelters incense in its place.
A chalice where the nectar flows,
Where palm and flower garden grows.

It honors gods in humble shrines,
It blesses fields and harvest signs.
It sings of Sita's sacred toil,
It rests where cows caress the soil.

It bears the curd, the milk, the feast,
It soothes the hunger, calms the beast.
The mother's hand, the jasmine breeze
The earthborn pot, it lives to please.

But man today, with heart of stone,
Builds walls of pride and stands alone.
He knows but steel, and glass, and grime
He's lost the clay, he's lost the time.

Would you trade scent of rain-washed ground
For sterile walls and soulless sound?
Would you choose songs of gears and wires,
And count your days in fading fires?

Return, Oh soul, to gentler lands,
To pots once shaped by loving hands.
And hear the clay, though still and bare,
Sing life, and earth, and silent prayer.

..: Dr. Peruka Raju :..
National Poet
7810032847

US, CHINA REACH TRUCE
INDIA, GLOBAL SOUTH FACE FALLOUT

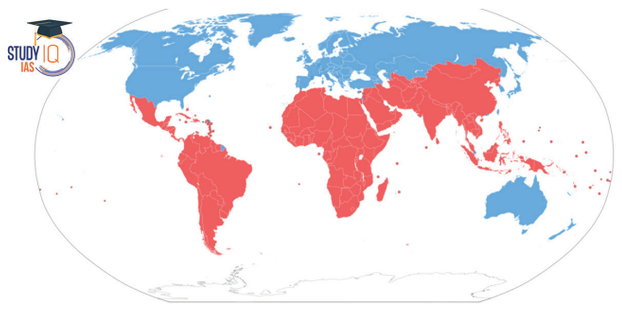
Two giants meet. Since 1962, in a first, a US President welcomes a country head at air base in person – a rare moment indeed for a short truce till January 2027 – about three months. Perhaps, the world should rejoice. But is it good news for the world's poor, including India, with the largest number of people below the poverty line in absolute terms?

When the leaders passed the press corps at one point at the Oval Office, Trump said, "We had a great meeting," reports NBC News. Trump said Xi was "an expert on stone, aside from many other things, and he loves good granite." A great comment. Would Trump's real estate firms make a beeline to China and would Beijing allow it?In diplomacy, impossibility itself is impossible.The closer are ties between them, it doesn't bode well for poorer countries. The US can extract a lot from China in concession and so can it as well. The poorer need to be careful. They may have to foot the bill.

It also means further compromise on multilateralism and the UN, almost the last days of League of Nations moment. More bilateralism is a threat to the weaker nations and welfarism. It may hurt the people of the US itself with sharper corporatisation, detested by Americans.

By holding a White House summit during the UN General Assembly (UNGA), both leaders created a symbolic "split-screen" that effectively sidelined the UN as the centre of global governance.A Trump-Xi rapprochement is viewed by analysts at the Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore, not as a definitive disaster, but as a complex strategic test that has repeatedly fallen short of fears over a formal 'G2' alliance.

Indian strategists are long worried that a direct US-China deal would marginalise New Delhi. However, actual engagements, such as the May 2026 summit, proved relatively banal and limited in major economic resets.For New Delhi, the key concerns are the possible sidelining of the Quad, with stalled summits raising fears of a leadership vacuum; growing manufacturing competition, as any easing of US-China trade friction could affect investments seeking alternatives in India; and mounting bilateral US pressures, particularly steep US tariffs on Indian exports that add to economic friction.



INDIA AS A LEADER OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Yet, this need not be viewed as a total setback, as Trump-Xi meetings have often produced limited deliverables focused mainly on containing risks, while structural distrust and competition between Washington and Beijing remain intact. India also retains strategic autonomy and independent leverage through its multiple global partnerships.

A diplomatic reset or broad trade deal between US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping could have significant implications for India's strategic and economic interests. Though India is not on the official agenda, any easing of US-China tensions could affect New Delhi in four ways.

The US-China trade friction has encouraged global companies to diversify manufacturing and supply chains away from China, benefiting India. A tariff truce or trade deal could reduce that incentive, slowing the flow of investment and manufacturing capacity to alternative hubs.

The US tariff focus could shift to India. If Washington eases pressure on Beijing, India could face greater scrutiny over tariffs and market access. Agriculture, retail and technology could become particular areas of US pressure, especially as Washington seeks wider access to the Indian market.

The Quad could lose strategic weight. A major US-China rapprochement, particularly on maritime security or wider geopolitical issues, could reduce Washington's strategic focus on the Indo-Pacific. For India, any dilution of US engagement would have implications for its regional balancing vis-à-vis China.

A worsening US-China conflict could create a different dilemma. If the summit fails and economic confrontation intensifies, Washington could press India to align more closely with its China strategy. That could complicate India's strategic autonomy and its balancing act with Washington and Beijing, even as it deepens engagement with China through BRICS and other forums.

Opportunities & Risk

The outcome presents both opportunities and risks for India. If the US and China de-escalate their economic and trade tensions, global trade could become more stable, with steadier commodity prices and stronger demand, but the easing could also slow the relocation of global supply chains to India and leave New Delhi more exposed to targeted US trade pressure.Weaker global growth and disruptions in China-linked supplies of critical minerals and semiconductors could create fresh vulnerabilities.

Tarif Relief Unlikely

A Trump-Xi trade reset is unlikely to bring immediate tariff relief for India and could leave New Delhi facing continued or even greater pressure. The two sides have only extended their trade truce for two months, leaving broader differences unresolved.

A major pressure point is Russian oil. A new US sanctions law gives Washington the power to impose tariffs of up to 100 percent on countries buying significant quantities of Russian crude. India's continued energy trade with Moscow, therefore, remains a potential source of friction. US and Indian officials have already discussed the implications of the new measures.

If Washington reaches a broader accommodation with Beijing, attention could also shift more heavily towards India's trade barriers and market access. At the same time, the unresolved US-India trade negotiations leave key Indian export sectors exposed to tariff action.

Major Export Loss

Around 55percent of India's merchandise exports to the US face a baseline 10 percent Section 301 duty, with labour-intensive and machinery sectors particularly exposed.The US absorbs over 32 percent of India's textile exports. Dominated by MSMEs with thin margins, the sector could lose competitiveness against Bangladesh and Vietnam if tariffs rise. The US accounts for 55percent of India's global carpet exports.

Electrical machinery has risen from 5.5percent of India's US export basket in 2020 to 28percent, now the largest category. About 48.1percent of India's electrical machinery-exports go to the US. A parallel US excess-capacity investigation could push combined tariffs on engineering goods to 18percent.

The Gems and Jewellery sector remains heavily dependent on US consumer demand and could face lower orders and greater competition from alternative processing hubs if tariffs increase. This apart, the US takes nearly 48percent of India's shrimp exports, making seafood highly vulnerable to higher tariffs because of its price-sensitive market.

Re-strategisation would be required if India pines to be a global player as well as stabilise its economy for a too stretched a target of 2047



SHIVAJI SARKAR

SHADOWS OVER THE JUDICIARY, REFORMS ARE THE ANSWER

Kolanu Venkateshwara Reddy, Retd. SP Jails, Telangana

The judiciary is the last door people knock on when they seek justice. If that very door comes under a shadow of suspicion, where are people supposed to go? That is why the remarks made by senior advocate Dushyant Dave, alleging that there are many corrupt judges in the Supreme Court and that he could not even recall their number, have caused a stir. Referring to his 48 years of experience as a lawyer, he made these comments. They cannot be accepted as established facts. However, the fact that such allegations have been made publicly by a senior lawyer should certainly prompt the judiciary to engage in introspection.

Allegations against the judiciary are not new. In 1993, impeachment proceedings were initiated in Parliament against Justice V. Ramaswami following allegations of financial irregularities. The motion did not pass because it failed to secure the required majority. In 2011, the Rajya Sabha passed an impeachment motion against Justice Soumitra Sen of the Calcutta High Court over allegations relating to misappropriation of funds. He subsequently resigned. These incidents are not grounds for casting suspicion on the entire judiciary. But they are reminders of how important accountability is.

The Cash-at-Door controversy that came to light in 2008 also shook the judiciary. In the case involving Justice Nirmal Yadav, an incident concerning ₹15 lakh in cash came to light. However, after a prolonged investigation and trial, a special CBI court acquitted her in 2025. We must remember the legal principle that an allegation and the establishment of guilt are not the same thing.

At the same time, there is a need for discussion about the system of appointing judges. Under the present collegium system, the judiciary has the principal role in the appointment of judges. The Supreme Court has considered this necessary to safeguard judicial independence. This same principle of independence was a major reason why the Supreme Court struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) as unconstitutional in 2015. However, questions continue to be raised about transparency in collegium decisions, selection criteria, and social, regional and gender diversity.

Dave's allegation that cases involving the wealthy and powerful are being heard more quickly should also be viewed from this perspective. It cannot be said that every expedited hearing is the result of influence. But if the perception grows that cases involving ordinary people remain pending for years while cases involving prominent individuals are listed quickly, it can undermine public confidence in the judiciary.

That is why clear reforms are now necessary. The reasons behind collegium meetings, selection criteria, and, where possible, details concerning rejections should be made more transparent. Along with merit, appointments should incorporate measurable criteria for regional, social and gender diversity. There should be a mechanism, independent of the judiciary but designed in a manner that does not undermine its independence, to examine credible complaints relating to corruption or conflicts of interest involving judges. There should be clear criteria and a digital audit trail for case listing and for assigning priority to urgent hearings. A more effective system for declaring the assets and financial interests of judges and their family members is also needed. In addition, time-bound targets for reducing the backlog of cases, greater use of technology, and faster filling of vacant judicial posts are essential.

What weakens the judiciary is not criticism, but the suspicion that grows around a system that lacks transparency. We need an independent judiciary free from government interference. At the same time, we also need a judiciary that is accountable to the people. Protecting both the belief that justice cannot be bought and the faith that justice is equal for everyone is the essence of genuine reform. The best way to preserve the dignity of the courts is not to silence criticism. It is to make the system more transparent, impartial and trustworthy.

> "What weakens the judiciary is not criticism, but the suspicion that grows around a system that lacks transparency."

Investing Within, Giving Outward: Aho Gurudev celebrates Six Decades of Pujya GurudevshriRakeshji'sLife and Work

60th Birth Anniversary of Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshji, celebrates not one Life, but the Lives Transformed by it.. A Galaxy of Saints, Stalwarts and Seekers from Six Continents Gathers; 60 Landmark Initiatives Announced

MUMBAI

The Jio World Convention Centre became a meeting point for the world on 25–26 September 2026, as Shrimad Rajchandra Mission Dharampur hosted Aho Gurudev – 60 Years of an Enlightened Existence. The celebration honoured the 60th birth anniversary of Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshji, globally revered spiritual master, humanitarian and ardent devotee of Shrimad Rajchandraji.

It was, ostensibly, a celebration of a 60th birth anniversary. But inside the expansive convention centre, the occasion seemed to resist the usual grammar of 'milestone birthdays'.Spiritual heads, corporate leaders. philanthropists, young volunteers and thousands of spiritual seekers from 214 cities and 24 countries across the world, moved through the same space.

The two-day gathering brought together revered spiritual figures including Pujya Morari Bapu, Pujya Anandmurti Gurumaa, Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Swami Swaroopanandji, BK Sister Shivani, Sadhvi Bhagwati Saraswati and BhikuSanghasenaji. Other distinguished guestsincluded Mangal Prabhat Lodha, Cabinet Minister, Government of Maharashtra; Padma Vibhushan N. R. Narayana Murthy, Founder & Chairman Emeritus, Infosys; Padma Bhushan N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons; Lt. Gen. D. S. Kushwah, PVSM, AVSM, SM, GOC, Maharashtra, Gujarat & Goa Area; Padma Shri Hema Malini, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha, Mathura); Padma Bhushan Deepak Parekh, Former Chairman, HDFC; Padma Shri Dilip Shanghvi, Founder & Managing Director, Sun Pharmaceutical Industries; Padma Shri Sanjeev Kapoor, Culinary Icon & Co-Founder, Wonderchef; Manoj Modi, Director, Reliance Retail & Reliance Jio; Vinod Adani, Promoter, Adani Group; Ashok Hinduja, Chairman, Hinduja Group; Ranbir Kapoor, Actor & Producer; Sudhir Mehta, Chairman Emeritus, Torrent Group; Sonam Kapoor Ahuja, Actor & Fashion Entrepreneur; Nilesh Shah, MD, Kotak Mahindra AMC; Motilal Oswal, Co-Founder, Motilal Oswal Financial Services; and Madhukar Parekh, Chairman, Pidilite Industries.

A striking highlight was the announcement of 60 new initiatives, split equally between Spiritual and Seva projects. The list of Seva projects ranged from Shrimad RajchandraSarvamangal Cancer Hospital;Shrimad RajchandraSarvamangalHospital and Medical college in Surendranagar; Shrimad Rajchandra Mental Health Initiative;60 new Shrimad Rajchandra Love and Care Centres; Multi-Speciality Mega Medical Camps as well as anaemia and vision care camps across India reaching 60 Million lives; a mega campus for animal care including 4 institutions including, Shrimad Rajchandra Animal Hospital, animal shelter, institute of veterinary science and Ahimsa Awareness centre inDharampur as well an Animal hospital in Malad; Shrimad Rajchandra DISHA- a free, AI-powered career guidance platform; Shrimad Rajchandra School for Special Needs Children, Mumbai; Shrimad RajchandraSarvamangal University for the rural India;Shrimad Rajchandra Afforestation initiave and many other initiatives for women empowerment, community and environment.

For spiritual upliftment, projects unveiled includedspiritual centres in Mumbai; New spaces at Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram like Shrimad Rajchandra Wellness Centre; Solitude Groves (Ekant Kutirs); Shrimad Rajchandra Museum; six new satsang centres in South America; Pujya Gurudevshri's discourses, books and meditations in 8 of the world's most spoken languages, 60 books (six titles in 10 languages) and Shri Pujya Gurudevshri's commentary of Shrimad Rajchandraji's magnum opusAtmasiddhi Shastra, in 60 languages; Shri Atmasiddhi Shastra in 60 languages; and BEYOND, a visual biography of Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshji. The event also brought the Sacred Atmarpit Diksha (renunciation) ceremony wherein eleven young seekers took the vows of celibacy, committing their lives to a higher purpose. On the 26thevening, 'Aho Gurudev', a spectacular cultural tribute, brought together youth performances paying an ode to Pujya GurudevshriRakeshji's life and works. Across the programme, GurudevshriRakeshji delivered three elevating discourses on 'Choosing Consciously', 'Renouncing Courageously' and 'Serving Compassionately'.



Since the age of four, Pujya GurudevshriRakeshji has drawn multitudes of seekers, moved by a clarity that seemed to transcend His years. Six decades on, that early luminosity has grown into a global presence spanning six continents and touching millions of lives, from youths discovering purpose early and corporate leaders stepping away from boardrooms to attend His discourses, from village classrooms in Africa to rescued animals given a second chance, and seekers across languages and cultures finding solace and perspective. This force for spiritual awakening and sustained humanitarian action, made the celebration about the lives transformed through His vision.

The event carried the grandeur of a large spectacle, but its centre of gravity was elsewhere—in the idea that spirituality should translate into action. With the first event held in Mumbai, the celebration is slated to move across India and then overseas, from Dubai and London to Toronto and cities across the US.

Key Quotes:

- Padma Vibhushan Shri Narayana Murthy, Founder and Chairman Emeritus of Infosys
- Respected Gurudev dear Rakeshji, my deepest salutations to this extraordinary individual, who represents for us all the godly attributes.
- The true measure of any spiritual tradition lies not just in its teachings, but in the compassion, it inspires through action. And that is what we saw today—the demonstration of these wonderful 60 initiatives. These are the acts that reaffirm our belief in God and in saints.
- India's future cannot be determined by technology and infrastructure alone. Its destiny will ultimately be shaped by the quality of its people.
- When I had the privilege of meeting Gurudev, my humble request to him was charter a revolution where our culture is transformed. If we transform our culture into a desirable one, then Viksit Bharat will happen very quickly.
- Padma Bhushan N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons
- Gurudev Rakeshji, pranams. Good evening to all of you. It is my great privilege and honor to be here on this historic occasion to celebrate the 60th year of Gurudev. For me, it was absolutely revealing to learn about Gurudev and this wonderful organization that he has built in such a short time, and the impact Gurudev is having on everyone who hears about him and has an opportunity to have a glimpse of him.

I have now spent 40 years in the Tata Group. Our group, as many of you know, is more than 150 years old. We are built on strong values. These values—trust, character, discipline, perseverance, and hard work—are what build great individuals and great institutions. And that is why the work of Gurudev is so meaningful. Through his teachings and his work with young people, these values and this sense of purpose are being shared with tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, and millions of people. That is the impact Gurudev is having on this world.

I am grateful to Gurudev for giving me this opportunity. I seek his blessings for myself and for everyone here. Thank you.

Actor Ranbir Kapoor-

I'm speechless. Walking into this hall and experiencing this collective energy of joy and happiness, Gurudev, it is truly something special. This is what you have created.

It is an absolute honor to be here for your 60th birthday celebrations.

For all the selfless work you have done over the years, for the countless lives you have touched and healed, and for the way you continue to uplift humanity, I wish you a blessed life filled with love, laughter, and happiness.

I know you are often called the 'Youth Magnet.' And it is truly incredible to see young minds coming together and walking the path of spirituality under your guidance.

Seeing specialised doctors and healthcare professionals travel to the remotest parts of our country to heal people and serve communities, that, I believe, is what true spirituality is. Gurudev, I had the good fortune of becoming a father for the first time three years ago. Around the same time, I received what felt like a gift from above: I had the opportunity to play Bhagwan Ram in Ramayan. That experience brought me closer to my own spirituality and helped me understand the spiritual heritage of our country more deeply. And now, after knowing you, I feel that I will come even closer to that goal. I cannot wait to visit your ashram in Dharampur. Happy birthday, Gurudev. Thank you so much. It is truly an honor to be in your presence."

Gave me triple talaq, threatened halala: Haridwar woman takes husband, in-laws to police

A Haridwar woman has accused her husband and in-laws of triple talaq, halala threats, assault and abuse. Police have filed a case under the triple talaq law and Uttarakhand UCC provisions and begun an inquiry. woman in Uttarakhand's Haridwar has filed a case against her husband and other members of her in-laws' family, accusing them of giving her triple talaq, threatening her with halala, assaulting and threatening to kill her.



The case was registered in Haridwar's Badshahpur area under provisions of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, as well as relevant provisions of Uttarakhand's Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

CASE FILED UNDER TRIPLE TALAQ, UCC PROVISIONS

Haridwar Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Navneet Singh Bhullar said the woman had accused her husband and other members of her in-laws' family of giving her triple talaq and threatening her with halala. "She has also made allegations of assault, abuse and threats to kill her," Bhullar said. Police have invoked provisions of the triple talaq law and the UCC provisions relating to halala, besides sections dealing with abuse, assault and criminal intimidation. The SSP said the woman's husband is the main accused in the case.

WOMAN SI PROBING CASE

A woman sub-inspector has been assigned to the investigation, and police are examining the allegations. Bhullar said further action would be taken based on the facts that emerge during the probe. The woman has accused several members of her husband's family who lived with her at her matrimonial home, police said.

Supreme Court to hear plea against 0.4% MDR on UPI payments above Rs 2,000

The Supreme Court will on Monday hear a plea challenging the Centre's decision to impose a Merchant Discount Rate, or MDR, on specified UPI person-to-merchant transactions above Rs 2,000. The petition questions both the legal basis of the move and the way it was brought in. The government has ended nearly six years of fully free UPI payments by introducing a 0.4 per cent fee on merchant payments above Rs 2,000 through the UPI platform from October 15. Everyday person-to-person transfers and small payments have been kept outside the charge. According to the apex court's cause list of September 28, the matter is listed before a bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana.



Under the new framework, the MDR will be capped at Rs 300 for payments of Rs 75,000 and above. Essential and thin-margin sectors such as railways, telecom, insurance, fuel and agricultural inputs will pay a flat MDR of Rs 5 per transaction for payments above Rs 2,000. Payments into mutual funds, securities, and through stockbrokers and dealers will attract 0.02 per cent MDR, again subject to a cap of Rs 300. Person-to-person transfers, which account for 37 per cent of UPI's transaction volume and 70 per cent of its transaction value, will continue to attract zero charges regardless of size. The public interest litigation, filed by advocate Anjan Datta, challenges the Centre's September 14 notification and the MDR framework announced on September 15, which is to take effect from October 15. The plea alleges that the levy was introduced without adequate statutory safeguards, transparency or public consultation. It also challenges the constitutional validity of the amended Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, saying it gives unguided powers to the executive to decide which electronic payment modes will get no-charge protection. The plea said, "Declare that no MDR or analogous compulsory charge may be imposed or recovered merely on the strength of a press release or FAQs absent a duly authorised, authenticated and published statutory instrument." The petitioner has also questioned the distinction between UPI transactions and RuPay debit card payments, pointing out that the notification continues no-charge protection for RuPay debit cards without any monetary ceiling. The plea says the framework is arbitrary and discriminatory, and may hurt merchants, especially those with low margins, while also creating a possible indirect burden on consumers and increasing the risk of digital exclusion. It has sought the quashing or suspension of the framework to the extent that it imposes MDR on UPI transactions above Rs 2,000. In the alternative, it has asked for a fresh look at the framework after transparent consultation, publication of empirical data and an impact assessment, along with safeguards for micro and small enterprises. The plea also said, "Direct that any future MDR classification be based on relevant considerations including merchant turnover, statutory MSME status, actual margins, geography and ability to bear the cost, and avoid cliff-edge treatment unsupported by evidence." The Centre and other authorities, including the Reserve Bank of India, have been made party respondents in the case. The case will therefore test the government's new MDR framework for higher-value UPI merchant payments, while the petition asks the court to examine the statutory basis, the classification of transactions and the possible impact on merchants and users.

Cabinet Minister Ranbir Gangwa Listens to 138th Episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' in Barwala

CHANDIGARH

Haryana Public Works and Public Health Engineering Minister Sh. Ranbir Gangwa on Sunday listened to the 138th episode of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi's monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat' along with party workers and residents at Bal Sanskar Vatika, Booth No. 31, in the Barwala Assembly constituency of Hisar district. A large number of residents and party workers attended the programme and listened to the Prime Minister's address. Addressing the gathering after the programme, Sh. Ranbir Gangwa said that Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi connects with the people of the country every month through 'Mann Ki Baat'. The programme highlights positive changes taking place across the country, India's progress on the path of development and the achievements of people making notable contributions in various fields. He



said that through 'Mann Ki Baat', the Prime Minister also highlights the inspiring work of ordinary citizens and eminent personalities who are contributing to strengthening society and the nation in their respective fields. Their stories inspire others to move forward and contribute to the national interest. The Cabinet Minister said that the programme has become an important medium for connecting citizens with nation-building, encouraging positive change in society and strengthening the spirit of public participation. He called upon the workers and citizens present to imbibe the Prime Minister's messages and play an active role in serving society.

Northeast Railway Ensures Smooth Operations Amid Heavy Rains

GORAKHPUR

The Northeast Railway administration is making continuous efforts to ensure safe, secure and smooth train operations amid challenging conditions caused by heavy rainfall and strong cyclonic winds. In this regard, Northeast Railway General Manager Shri Uday Borwankar is continuously monitoring train operations and the situation across various railway sections from the War Room (Control Room) at the headquarters in Gorakhpur. He is also taking regular updates from the Divisional Railway Managers and issuing necessary instructions to them.

General Manager Shri Uday Borwankar appreciated the dedication, sense of duty and spirit of service of railway personnel who have been continuously deployed on duty round the clock under adverse weather conditions. He has instructed all railway officers and employees to accord the highest priority to railway safety and work with complete alertness, caution and mutual coordination.

Continuous monitoring is being carried out across all major railway sections of Northeast Railway, including railway tracks and bridges, Overhead Equipment (OHE), signalling and telecommunication systems, stations and other critical railway assets. Railway officers and employees from various departments are working continuously in close coordination to deal with this challenging situation. Monitoring has been intensified at vulnerable locations, and teams from the concerned departments have been constituted for prompt action whenever required.

Special monsoon patrolling teams have been deployed in waterlogged areas, and additional pumps have been arranged for water drainage. Railway officers and employees from Engineering, Signal and Telecommunication, Electrical, Operations and other concerned departments are carrying out round-the-clock monitoring of railway tracks. Measures such as boulder packing to prevent soil erosion and cleaning of drainage systems are being undertaken on a war footing.

The railway administration appeals to passengers and the general public not to venture unnecessarily onto railway bridges, railway tracks, areas around the tracks or other vulnerable railway premises in view of the adverse weather conditions and heavy rainfall.

Northeast Railway remains committed to ensuring uninterrupted train operations even during adverse weather conditions, while giving the highest priority to the safety of passengers.

NFR to Continue and Operate Additional Special Trains for the Upcoming Festive Season

MALIGAON

In view of the forthcoming Puja, Diwali and Chhath festival season, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has decided to continue existing special train services as well as operate additional special trains. These services will provide convenient travel options, facilitate increased passenger movement and strengthen connectivity during the festive period. The special services include trains connecting Secunderabad – Naharlagun, Santragachi - Naharlagun, Howrah - Lumding and Kolkata - New Jalpaiguri. These services will connect important destinations across the Northeast, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and Telangana regions, offering enhanced travel options and improved connectivity to passengers during the festival season.



Train No. 07046 (Secunderabad - Naharlagun) Special will depart from Secunderabad from 02 nd October to 30 th October 2026, every Friday at 08:30 hours to reach Naharlagun at 16:00 hours on Sunday. In the return direction, Train No. 07047 (Naharlagun - Secunderabad) Special will depart from Naharlagun from 05 th October to 02 nd November 2026, every Monday at 13:00 hours to reach Secunderabad at 21:50 hours on Wednesday. The service will operate for 5 additional trips in each direction, as per the existing days of run, timings, stoppages and composition.

Train No. 08047 (Santragachi - Naharlagun) Special will depart from Santragachi 02 nd October to 27 th November 2026, every Friday at 18:00 hours to reach Naharlagun at 20:50 hours on Saturday. In the return direction, Train No. 08048 (Naharlagun – Santragachi) Special will depart from Naharlagun from 03 rd October to 28 th November 2026, every Saturday at 23:55 hours to reach Santragachi at 04:15 hours on Monday. The service will operate for 9 additional trips in each direction, as per the existing days of run, timings, stoppages and composition. Train No. 03005 (Howrah - Lumding) Special will depart from Howrah from 16 th October to 27 th November 2026, every Friday at 07:15 hours to reach Lumding at 08:00 hours on Saturday. In the return direction, Train No. 03006 (Lumding – Howrah) Special will depart from Lumding from 17 th October to 28 th November 2026, every Saturday at 11:00 hours to reach Howrah at 12:30 hours on Sunday. The service will operate for 7 additional trips in each direction. The train will have stoppages at important stations including Bandel, Katwa, Jangipur Road, Malda Town, New Jalpaiguri, Kamakhya, Hojai and other stations enroute. Train No. 03129 (Kolkata–New Jalpaiguri) Special will depart from Kolkata from 17 th October to 29 th November 2026, every Saturday and Sunday at 23:10 hours, to reach New Jalpaiguri at 10:45 hours on Sunday and Monday, respectively. In the return direction, Train No. 03130 (New Jalpaiguri - Kolkata) Special will depart from New Jalpaiguri from 18 th October to 30 th November 2026, every Sunday and Monday at 12:45 hours, to reach Kolkata at 00:40 hours on Monday and Tuesday, respectively. The service will operate for 14 additional trips in each direction. The train will have stoppages at important stations including Naihati, Nabadwip Dham, Azimganj, New Farakka, Barsoi and Kishanganj, among others. The details of stoppages and timings of these trains are available in IRCTC website and are also being notified in various newspapers and social media platforms of N. F. Railway. Passengers are requested to verify the details before undertaking their journey.

ASEAN countries show growing interest in BRICS amid push for strategic autonomy: Report

NEW DELHI

The growing interest of Southeast Asian countries in BRICS reflects a broader push for strategic autonomy and diversification of economic and diplomatic partnerships amid shifts in the global order, according to a report.

According to the report by India Narrative, the recently concluded 18th BRICS Summit, held in New Delhi on September 12-13, 2026, under India's chairship, brought renewed attention to the grouping's growing relevance among ASEAN countries.

The summit was held under the theme, "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability", with a focus on strengthening cooperation across political and security, economic and financial, and cultural and people-to-people pillars.

The report said ASEAN's interest in BRICS merits attention as the Southeast Asian grouping has traditionally positioned itself as a regional platform for small and middle powers, emphasising consultation and cooperation rather than coercion. It noted that BRICS is increasingly being viewed in Southeast Asia as a platform through which countries can diversify their economic and diplomatic engagements without subscribing to a 'West vs. the rest' binary.

Filipino President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who attended the New Delhi summit as ASEAN Chair and an Outreach Country, said ASEAN nations would engage with BRICS on advancing peace, inclusive growth, sustainable development and a rules-based international order, according to the report.

The report noted that the



Philippines' interest in expanding its diplomatic and strategic options comes amid its sovereignty dispute with China in the South China Sea. It said BRICS could provide Manila with an additional platform to broaden its engagement while avoiding direct confrontation with Beijing.

On the sidelines of the summit, India and the Philippines also held discussions on expanding their strategic partnership across defence, trade, space and infrastructure. The Philippines had purchased the shore-based version of India's BrahMos anti-ship cruise missile in 2022, with deliveries of launch systems beginning in April 2024.

The report also highlighted Vietnam's growing engagement with BRICS. According to the Vietnamese ambassador to India, through engagement, Vietnam aims to contribute to the overall success of BRICS, helping strengthen the voice of developing countries, while it will provide Vietnam with additional space to diversify markets and partners.

Vietnam became a BRICS partner country in 2025, while Vietnamese Prime Minister Le Minh Hung attended the New Delhi summit at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's invitation. The report said Hanoi sees BRICS as another platform beyond ASEAN through which it can expand partnerships while maintaining ties with China, the United States, Japan and Europe.

India and Vietnam also agreed to strengthen defence and maritime cooperation on the sidelines of the summit.

Malaysia, another BRICS partner state, is also looking at the grouping as an avenue to expand economic and diplomatic engagement with major emerging markets amid global economic uncertainty and regional conflicts. The report noted that India is Malaysia's largest trading partner in Asia and said "Indian companies had 293 approved manufacturing projects in Malaysia worth US$2.95 billion as of June 2026, which is expected to create 28,455 jobs." Indonesia, the sole ASEAN member of BRICS, meanwhile, views the grouping as a platform to strengthen the voice of the Global South and promote more resilient global trade and supply chains.

The report said the growing ASEAN interest in BRICS could create opportunities for India to deepen economic and strategic engagement with Southeast Asian economies. It also argued that India's presence could help ensure that BRICS remains a platform for broader Global South cooperation rather than becoming dominated by any single power.



At least 27 people killed in two shootings in South Africa

PRETORIA

At least 27 people were killed, and more than 20 others were injured in two shooting incidents in South Africa over the weekend, local media reported on Sunday.

At least 10 people were killed, and 11 others were injured after a shooting incident at an entertainment venue in Lwandle, The Citizen reported.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) said that armed men had opened fire on party-goers in Lwandle, shortly before 2 a.m. (local time) on Sunday. Five people died on the spot while five others died after they were taken to the hospital.

As many as 11 injured people were taken to hospital for treatment. Lwandle police have opened cases of murder and attempted murder against the suspects.

In a separate incident, a total of 17 people, including 13 men and four women, were killed and 15 others were seriously injured after suspects opened fire at a tavern in Wedela near Carletonville in Gauteng province at around 9.30 p.m. (local time) on Saturday night. The suspects reportedly possessed AK-47s and handguns, The Citizen reported.

The South African police have been carrying out a search for at least eight suspects wanted in connection with the shooting that took place near Carletonville.

"It is alleged that patrons were drinking inside and outside the tavern when the suspects arrived and opened fire on those outside. The suspects then entered the tavern and continued shooting at patrons inside," The Citizen quoted Gauteng police spokesperson Captain Tintswalo Sibeko as saying.

After the shooting, the suspects allegedly searched the patrons to take their mobile phones and other valuable items. The suspects then fled from the spot in two vehicles and torched two other vehicles that were parked near the tavern.

Emergency responders have said that 17 people died on the spot. The injured people have been taken to the hospital for treatment.

Sibeko said that the motive behind the shooting is not known at this stage. She stated that Gauteng police have deployed a team of detectives and other specialised units to find and arrest the suspects.

Iranian army chief says war not over yet, enemy must be ready for Iran's 'severe blows'

TEHRAN

Chief Commander of Iran's Army Amir Hatami said Sunday the war imposed by the United States and Israel against the country has not ended yet, and the "enemy" must still be ready to receive "severe blows" from the Iranian armed forces.

"The war is not over ... Although the aggressive enemy has suffered heavy blows, it must remain prepared to receive further crushing blows from Iran's armed forces," Hatami said at a national festival in Tehran, according to the semi-official Tasnim news agency.

He urged regional countries to recognise that cooperation with the United States fails to



guarantee their security, emphasising that regional security must be safeguarded from within by the nations of the region, Xinhua News Agency reported.

Meanwhile, Iran's Persian Gulf Strait Authority (PGSA), the body responsible for maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, has warned ship-owners against being forced by "some charterers" to use "illegal" routes for passage through the waterway.

In a post on its account on social media platform X early Sunday, the authority said, "Reports to PGSA indicate that some charterers are forcing vessels to use illegal routes. This risks financial and life losses for the vessel, owner, master, and crew, and seriously restricts its future Strait of Hormuz passage."

"Ship-owners must be vigilant against such illegal actions by some charterers," it said. "If proven, the charterers will be added to the Non-Compliance List, and all their vessels' passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be restricted."

On February 28, Israel and the United States launched joint attacks on Tehran and other Iranian cities. Iran responded with waves of missile and drone attacks targeting Israel and US bases and assets in the region, and tightened its grip on the Strait of Hormuz.

South Korean military, UN Command conduct joint probe on DMZ blast site

SEOUL

South Korea's military has conducted a joint on-site investigation with the UN Command (UNC) to look into the cause of a suspected mine blast inside the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) last week, officials said Sunday.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said a survey team comprising some 40 personnel reached the vicinity of the suspected explosion site inside the DMZ and surveyed the area using mine detectors, Yonhap News Agency reported.

The joint probe comes just six days after the explosion occurred south of the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) separating the two Koreas, leaving two officers seriously injured. On Thursday, a South Korean presidential official pledged a prompt and thorough investigation into who was responsible for the recent explosions in the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) that injured three South Korean soldiers.

"An objective, prompt and thorough investigation is under way," the presidential official told reporters in Mexico City on Thursday while accompanying South Korean President Lee Jae Myung during his state visit to Mexico. The official's remark came in response to suspected mine explosions in the DMZ on Monday that injured three South Korean soldiers, prompting forensic analysis of collected mine fragments to determine whether they were of South or North Korean origin.

"A thorough fact-finding (probe) is needed to determine whether they were mines, and if they were mines.

11 people killed, eight others injured in minibus-truck collision in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG

As many as 11 people were killed and eight others critically injured in a head-on collision between a minibus taxi and a truck in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal Province, local media reported on Sunday.

The accident occurred at around 4 am local time (0200 GMT) on the N2 highway in the Inkosi Mtubatuba Municipality, Independent Online reported, citing the provincial Department of Transport and Human Settlements. The northbound minibus taxi collided with the southbound truck and caught fire. Eight people sustained critical injuries, including burns, and were transported to hospital, Xinhua News Agency reported.

The Road Traffic Management Corporation would work with police to establish the exact cause of the accident, the report said. Minibus taxis are one of South Africa's main modes of public transport, but they are frequently involved in deadly crashes.

On September 13, at least 21 people were killed in a road accident in South Africa's Western Cape province, authorities said.

The accident occurred at around 11:30 pm local time (2130 GMT) on September 13 on the N1 highway between Prince Albert and Leeu-Gamka in the province, involving two minibus taxis and a station wagon.

Local police confirmed the crash to Xinhua, saying emergency personnel were summoned to the scene after three vehicles collided.

"Upon arrival, police found two Toyota minibus taxis that collided head-on and a Suzuki station wagon which collided with one of the taxis," police spokesperson Christopher Spies told Xinhua.

"A total of 18 occupants were declared deceased. Several other occupants were transported to nearby medical facilities for treatment," he said, adding that local police have opened a culpable homicide case and are investigating the cause of the crash. The Western Cape Mobility Department later confirmed in a statement that the death toll had risen to 21.

Chinese Nationals Among 212 Held in Pakistan Over Alleged Fraud Schemes



ISLAMABAD

As many as 212 people, including Chinese nationals, were arrested by Pakistani authorities in raids carried out on three illegal call centres in Islamabad involved in an alleged international online fraud network, according to a media report.

Pakistan's National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) targeted call centres involved in international online fraud in raids conducted in Islamabad's E-11 and G-10 sectors. Officials said the call centres used various schemes, including tasking fraud, romance or "love-dating", and impersonating Google representatives to carry out scams, The Jerusalem Post reported.

Tasking fraud usually starts with fake online opportunities, where scammers offer money to victims for completing tasks like liking videos, rating products or promoting content. Initially, scammers may pay a small amount of money to victims before convincing them to deposit larger amounts to complete higher-value tasks or withdraw supposed earnings.

According to an NCCIA spokesperson, Pakistani authorities seized computers and other gadgets, including 383 computers and CPUs, 306 mobile phones and 299 monitors and laptops, The Jerusalem Post reported, citing the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan (APP).

The arrested individuals include Pakistani and Chinese men and women, it said. However, the Pakistani authorities did not reveal the number of Chinese nationals that have been detained during the raids.

In July last year, the NCCIA claimed that it had arrested 149 people, including 48 Chinese nationals and people from some other countries, for their alleged involvement in an online fraud. As many as 149 people were arrested during a raid carried out on a factory in Faisalabad, Pakistani daily Dawn reported.

Sources revealed that the arrested individuals, including 48 Chinese citizens, were allegedly involved in hacking internet systems of banks and other cybercrimes and had been operating from the factory, Dawn reported. The authorities recovered a large number of laptops and gadgets from the factory.

Iran's IRGC claims it captured second US unmanned submersible in Strait of Hormuz

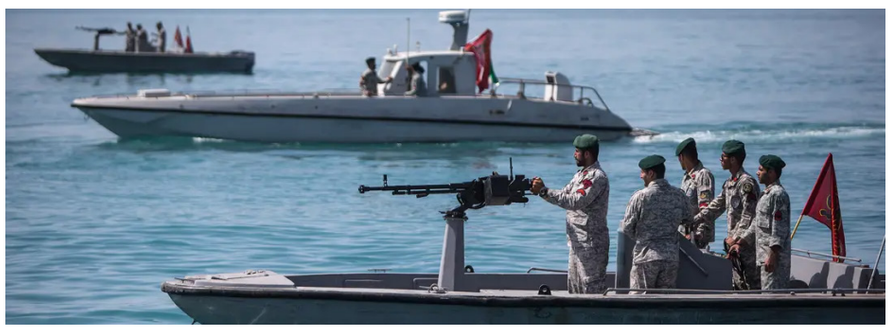
TEHRAN

The navy of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) announced on Sunday that its forces have captured another "advanced smart" unmanned submarine belonging to the US Army in the Strait of Hormuz.

Making the announcement in a statement on the IRGC's official news outlet, Sepah News, the navy said the autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV), which was carrying out "espionage" activities in the Strait of Hormuz, was captured in a "coordinated and complex operation with intelligence dominance and electronic warfare."

It identified the AUV as the "REMUS 600," adding that it has been handed over to its specialists for data recovery.

The navy emphasised that the Strait of Hormuz is closed, "and we are taking decisive



and incessant actions against dangerous movements and passage through unauthorised routes in the waterway", Xinhua News Agency reported.

Earlier this month, the IRGC announced having captured one of the US Army's "most modern, smart" unmanned submarines at the entrance of the Strait of Hormuz, identifying it as a "Dive-LD," according to Sepah News.

Iran tightened its grip on the Strait of Hormuz on February 28, barring safe passage of vessels belonging to or affiliated with Israel and the United States following their joint strikes on Iranian territory.

Meanwhile, Chief Commander of Iran's Army Amir Hatami said on Sunday the war imposed by the United States and Israel against the country has not ended yet, and the "enemy" must still be ready to receive "severe blows" from the Iranian armed forces. "The war is not over ... Although the aggressive enemy has suffered heavy blows, it must remain prepared to receive further crushing blows from Iran's armed forces," Hatami said at a national festival in Tehran, according to the semi-official Tasnim news agency. He urged regional countries to recognise that cooperation with the United States fails to guarantee their security, emphasising that regional security must be safeguarded from within by the nations of the region.

Rabies: Fatal Disease but Completely Preventable

(On the occasion of "World Rabies Day" on 28 September)

To create awareness about the completely preventable disease of rabies, explain the precautions to be taken, and dispel misconceptions about dog bites, it has become a tradition to observe "World Rabies Day" on September 28 every year since 2007. This platform is being used on the occasion of the death anniversary of the famous chemist and microbiologist "Louis Pasteur" who developed the rabies vaccine. The theme of World Rabies Day-2026 is "Stronger Together". Rabies is being controlled easily as vaccines are available to protect animals and humans from rabies. Rabies affects the brain as well as the central nervous system when infected. We are witnessing people losing their lives due to misconceptions, misinformation, unrealistic illusions, misconceptions, and lack of understanding about rabies, a disease caused by the rabies virus. Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating animals, especially dogs, that carry the disease.

Rabies : Fatal but Completely Preventable:

Rabies is 99 percent fatal, but 100 percent preventable. Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating dogs, controlling the stray dog population, and educating people about the facts. The UN is working to achieve a "zero rabies death" or "rabies free" world by 2030. Up to 95 percent of deaths due to rabies virus occur in Asia and Africa. Immediately after a dog bite (within 15 minutes), the area must be washed with water and the full dose of rabies vaccine must be administered immediately. It is important to know that if left untreated, the condition can be fatal.



India is the Global Epicenter of Rabies

Rabies is reported in about 150 countries. India alone accounts for 40 percent of rabies cases. Every year, 59,000 people die from rabies worldwide, and 20,000 in India. Sadly, about 40 percent of rabies deaths occur in children under the age of 15. Many people die from dog bites due to ignorance. It should be noted that rabies can also be contracted from dog bites, children, bats, and monkeys, as well as from scratching or biting. Symptoms of rabies include fever, weakness, vomiting, itching, difficulty swallowing, excessive salivation, muscle aches, tremors, headaches, agitation, confusion, cerebral palsy, fear of water (hydrophobia), and death due to coma.

Complete Understanding of Rabies Prevention

Everyone should take the initiative to ensure that stray dogs or animals are not touched, that pets are vaccinated, that pets are carefully monitored when they go out, that they are washed with water immediately after being bitten or scratched, that they are vaccinated with full doses immediately, and that they provide information about dogs with strange behaviors to the authorities. Taking precautions such as not believing the myth that rabies can only be contracted through dog bites, ignoring the fact that minor bites or scratches are nothing, knowing that symptoms of the disease appear a few days after the bite, that dogs with the rabies virus foam at the mouth, noting that the rabies vaccine once given does not work for life, and discontinuing rabies treatments with traditional methods can prevent life-threatening risks.

It is estimated that there are about 40 million stray dogs on the streets of India today. Vaccinating the large number of stray dogs roaming the streets is a challenge, but it is necessary to vaccinate them and control their breeding. The Indian government should make rabies vaccination available in hospitals across the country and make it a minimum requirement to provide it free of charge.

- Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy
9949700037.

Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals Turns World Heart Day Into a Movement

Launches "Heart Attack Free Society for the Neighbourhood" in Kondapur

Nearly 200 riders joined a 10-km Cyclothon with cycling partner Bike-O-Holics as the hospital used World Heart Day to put prevention, not just treatment, at the heart of the conversation

HYDERABAD





Before the sun was fully up over Kondapur, the courtyard outside Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals, Masjidbanda, was already busy: T-shirts being handed out, a Zumba warm-up loosening legs, nearly 200 riders checking their bikes for a 10-km ride organised in partnership with cycling community Bike-O-Holics. It was World Heart Day, and the hospital chose to mark it not with a seminar behind closed doors but with a Cyclothon that rolled out at 6:30 AM and pulled the whole neighbourhood in. The morning carried more than a ride. Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals used it to launch its "*Heart Attack Free Society for the Neighbourhood"* initiative, and to introduce Kondapur to CT Coronary Artery Calcium (CTCAC) Score Screening, a scan that can flag silent, calcified plaque building up inside the coronary arteries years before a person ever feels a symptom. As part of the launch, 1,000 eligible residents aged 40 and above were offered this screening free of cost, along with a cardiology consultation, subject to eligibility. That number matters because heart disease so rarely announces itself in advance. Most people discover a blocked artery only after chest pain sends them to an emergency room, by which point prevention is no longer an option. The initiative's premise was simple and urgent: catch the risk while it can still be managed, not after it becomes an emergency.

The turnout reflected exactly the mix the initiative was built for. Around fifty to seventy-five neighbourhood residents rode alongside close to a hundred members of local cycling clubs, with roughly fifty doctors and hospital staff pedalling in the same stretch of road as their patients. The 10-km route carried them past Aparna Serene, HCU, Gachibowli Junction and AMB Mall, looped through Botanical Garden, and brought everyone back to the hospital gates within the hour.

- Sri G. Hanmantha Rao, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, attended as Chief Guest, addressing participants on the importance of heart health and an active lifestyle before flagging off the ride at 6:30 AM. He returned as riders crossed back in to take part in the medal distribution that followed, handing finisher medals to cyclists of every age. *Prof. Dr. V. S. Ramchandra*, Chief Cardiologist & Electrophysiologist and Chairman of Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals, *Dr. Tushara Aluri,* Managing Director, *Dr. Subbarao*, Medical Director, and *Mr. Giri Babu*, Chief Operating Officer, were present throughout the ride, the launch and the medal ceremony. "The purpose of this initiative was to encourage people to understand their cardiovascular health before symptoms became a concern," said *Prof. Dr. V. S. Ramchandra*, Chief Cardiologist & Electrophysiologist and Chairman, Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals. "By bringing preventive screening and cardiology consultation closer to the community, we wanted to create greater awareness around cardiovascular risk and the importance of timely evaluation."
- Dr. Tushara Aluri, Managing Director, Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals, framed it as a shift in mindset.

"Heart health was not something that needed attention only after a problem appeared," she said. "This initiative brought people together to focus on awareness, prevention and informed health decisions, while encouraging eligible members of the community to take a closer look at their cardiovascular health."

- Dr. Subbarao, Medical Director, Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals, highlighted the importance of making preventive healthcare accessible within the community.

"Preventive cardiology is about identifying risk early and giving people the opportunity to take informed action before a serious cardiac event occurs. Through this initiative, we are taking cardiovascular awareness and screening closer to the community and encouraging eligible individuals to understand their heart health proactively rather than waiting for symptoms to appear."

- Mr. Giri Babu, Chief Operating Officer, Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals, spoke about the community-driven nature of the initiative.

"The response from the Kondapur community has been extremely encouraging. Bringing together residents, cycling groups, doctors and hospital teams on a single platform shows how community participation can make health awareness more meaningful. Our objective is to build a sustained culture of prevention where people regularly pay attention to their health, fitness and cardiovascular risk." Between the flag-off and the finish line, the hospital also walked residents through what the CT Calcium Score does: a non-invasive scan that helps doctors detect calcified plaque in the coronary arteries, feeding into a fuller clinical evaluation of cardiovascular risk. Residents unsure whether the test applied to them were encouraged to raise it directly with a qualified healthcare professional. By the time medals had been handed out, the morning closed over breakfast, with cyclists, doctors and residents still talking, the ride behind them and, for several, a screening appointment newly booked ahead. In pairing fitness, screening and professional consultation into a single Sunday morning, Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals turned a global health observance into something local and immediate: a neighbourhood in Kondapur choosing, together, to know its own heart health before it had to.



Centre launches Dekho Apna Desh 2.0 campaign in fresh push to tourism

NEW DELHI

Union Minister of Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Sunday launched the National Digital Tourism Stack and National Mission for Alternative Destinations—Dekho Apna Desh 2.0 campaign on World Tourism Day 2026. The Ministry also exchanged five Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with industry partners for joint tourism promotion and marketing.

Addressing the event at Bharat Mandapam here, the minister said, "The next phase of India's tourism journey must ensure that growth reaches beyond popular destinations, creating opportunities for local communities, entrepreneurs, women and youth while making tourism more balanced, inclusive and sustainable." "Tourism is no longer just about visiting places; today's travellers seek authentic experiences—local cuisine, local art, local traditions and meaningful connections that create memories, not merely photographs," he observed.

Dekho Apna Desh Campaign 2.0 seeks to distribute tourism demand more widely by promoting tourism-ready, lesser-known destinations as alternatives or complements to destinations experiencing heavy tourist footfall. In collaboration with States and Union Territories, the initiative will identify destinations with a distinct appeal, adequate infrastructure and accommodation, and the capacity to receive additional visitors sustainably. The initial focus will be on hill and mountain destinations, coastal and waterfront destinations, heritage and cultural towns, and regional pilgrimage destinations. On the occasion, the Ministry of Tourism exchanged five Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with Airbnb India Private Limited, FlixBus India Private Limited, Glance Digital Experience Private Limited (InMobi Group), Eicher Group Foundation and MakeMyTrip (India) Limited to strengthen destination promotion, community participation and responsible tourism.

The National Digital Tourism Stack, being developed in collaboration with ONDC and with the support of the International Centre for DPI Innovation and Advancement (ICDIA), aims to make India's tourism offerings more discoverable, accessible and trustworthy. This shared digital infrastructure will enable tourism providers to make their offerings available across participating platforms, supported by capabilities such as verified identities and supplier credentials, search and discovery, payments, ratings and grievance redressal. Envisaged as a collaborative effort involving the Ministry, States, Union Territories and industry, the programme will be implemented in phases with a pilot planned for January 2027. Delivering the welcome address, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Bhuvnesh Kumar said, "Artificial Intelligence, digital platforms and data-driven destination management can make tourism more accessible, responsive and personalised. India has considerable experience in Digital Public Infrastructure, and we are now looking at how these capabilities can be brought together for tourism." Vivek Raghavan, co-Founder, Sarvam AI, delivered the keynote address on this year's World Tourism Day theme, "Digital Agenda and Artificial Intelligence to Redesign Tourism." He stated that AI has the potential to transform every stage of the tourism journey — from discovering destinations and planning a trip to booking, experiencing and sharing it. The opportunity before us is to use technology to make travel more seamless, personalised and accessible, while creating a customised experience for every traveller."

Sitharaman in Qatar from Sep 27-29, to attend AIIB annual meet

NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will visit Qatar from September 27-29, the finance ministry said on Sunday. During the visit, Sitharaman will attend the 11th Annual Meeting of Board of Governors of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) scheduled in Doha on September 28, 2026, besides other important bilateral meetings with the AIIB President and her counterparts from Jordan, Switzerland, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, and Nepal, the Ministry said on X.

NMDC Commissions ₹5,427-Crore Iron Ore Plant

HYDERABAD



NMDC Ltd has commissioned its 2 million tonne per annum (MTPA) pellet plant at Nagarnar in Chhattisgarh, as part of a Rs 5,427-crore integrated project of iron ore processing, pipeline and pellet making connecting its iron ore operations at Bacheli with the company's steel plant at Nagarnar. The project includes a new iron ore processing plant at Bacheli, a 15 MTPA slurry pipeline and the 2 MTPA pellet plant at Nagarnar. The 135 km slurry pipeline carries processed iron ore concentrate from Bacheli to Nagarnar, providing an alternative to transporting the material by road. The maiden production from the pellet plant was monitored live from NMDC's headquarters by Chairman and Managing Director Amitava Mukherjee and the company's senior leadership, as adverse weather conditions prevented them from travelling to the project site. The facilities will enable NMDC to process iron ore fines and slimes from its Bailadila mines into concentrate and subsequently convert the concentrate into pellets. The pellet plant uses Straight Grate Induration technology to produce pellets for use in steelmaking. "Today is a day of immense pride for everyone at NMDC. This has not been an easy project to execute. It involved the processing facilities, the actual slurry pipeline and the pellet plant. But today is a red-letter day—a day we have been waiting for a long time. This is the day when our collective dream is coming true," Amitava Mukherjee, Chairman and Managing Director, NMDC Ltd., said.The commissioning strengthens NMDC's presence across the iron ore value chain, from mining and beneficiation to slurry transportation and pellet production. It also adds a new value-added product to the company's portfolio and allows it to make greater use of iron ore fines and slimes generated from its Bailadila operations. The project is part of NMDC's broader expansion and diversification strategy as the company works towards increasing its iron ore production capacity to 100 million tonnes in the long term.

The slurry pipeline passes through 61 villages in Bastar and Dantewada districts and is designed to reduce the movement of processed ore by road, provide alternate mode of evacuation and lower dependency on Railways and ensures a dedicated link between NMDC's Bacheli operations and Nagarnar.

From Conflict to Classrooms: How Aastha Gurukul Is Rebuilding Lives in Dantewada

DANTEWADA





In a region that has lived through decades of violence and disruption, a residential school in Jawanga's Education City is offering children a different route into adulthood — through education, stability and the possibility of a life far removed from the circumstances that shaped their childhood. Aastha Vidya Mandir, also known as Aastha Gurukul, is currently home to around 1,300 students from Class I to XII. Located in Education City at Jawanga in Dantewada district, the state-run residential school has become an important educational institution for children from communities that have borne the brunt of prolonged conflict. More than half of its students are estimated to have been directly or indirectly affected by violence associated with Left-wing extremism (LWE). The school gives priority to children orphaned due to such violence, children whose parents were involved in the insurgency and students from affected areas, particularly in Dantewada and the wider Bastar region.

For some students, the impact of the conflict is established even before they enter a classroom.

Principal Ravindra Panigrahi said the school relies on official documentation while admitting children under the special priority criteria. Police certification confirming that a student's area has been affected by LWE activity and FIR records relating to the death of a family member are among the documents considered.

The objective, however, goes beyond providing accommodation and access to schooling. The school has attempted to create an environment where children who have grown up amid violence can recover, learn and imagine a future beyond the circumstances they inherited.

"Those who have been affected by violence are given counselling sessions from experts. Accomplished persons like IAS officers also provide special lectures and interact with the students to inspire them," Panigrahi said.

The school follows the CBSE curriculum, while classrooms are equipped with smart-screen systems to incorporate technology into teaching. For students coming from remote villages, some of which have experienced prolonged conflict and limited access to educational infrastructure, the facilities represent a significant change in their learning environment.

"The operations are funded by NMDC CSR and administration is with the state government in the Education City. The classrooms are equipped with smart-screen systems to teach students using state-of-the-art technology," Panigrahi said. Aastha Gurukul was launched in 2013, with NMDC providing CSR support for the development of its infrastructure. The campus includes separate residential buildings for boys and girls and an auditorium with a capacity of more than 1,000 students.

The financial commitment has continued well beyond construction. NMDC's CSR funding supports the school's operations, with annual operational expenditure alone reaching around Rs 3.5 crore.

The arrangement has created a public-corporate model in which the school remains a state-run institution, with its administration under the state government, while NMDC's CSR funding supports its infrastructure and continuing operations.

For a child who has lost a parent to violence, grown up in a village caught in conflict or been born into a family touched by the insurgency, the significance of a residential school can extend well beyond education. The campus provides a structured environment, formal schooling, counselling and exposure to people and opportunities that may otherwise remain distant for children from remote parts of Bastar. More than a decade after its launch, Aastha Gurukul has become part of a broader effort to address the consequences of conflict through education. Its classrooms are now filled with children studying under the CBSE curriculum, its residential buildings house students from across the region, and its campus offers a daily routine far removed from the violence that affected many of their families.

In Dantewada, where the legacy of conflict has often been measured in lives lost and communities disrupted, the school's longer-term impact is ultimately being seen in what its students are able to do after they leave Jawanga — and that education gives them the freedom to choose a future defined not by where they came from, but by where they want to go.

SEBI settlement overhaul may speed up recovery of siphoned funds, strengthen shareholder protection

NEW DELHI

The Securities and Exchange Board of India's (SEBI) proposed overhaul of settlement norms could help speed up the recovery of diverted funds and strengthen shareholder protection in cases involving financial misrepresentation and siphoning of money, according to SEBI officials and legal experts. The market regulator approved the SEBI (Settlement of Administrative and Civil Proceedings) Regulations, 2026, at its board meeting last week, introducing changes aimed at resolving such matters without prolonged litigation. The revised framework provides for a defined formula for calculating settlement amounts, separate treatment of wrongful gains, fast-track settlements in certain cases and wider access to the settlement mechanism. The regulations are yet to be notified and will come into effect 30 days after their notification. SEBI Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said investor protection in cases involving diversion or siphoning of funds would not be limited to the settlement amount. He said disgorgement and Remedial and Regulatory Terms (RRT), wherever applicable, would also form an important part of the process. "Shareholders' interest can be protected in a variety of ways. One of the sure ways is that if there is a siphoning of money, it should come back first. That is non-negotiable," Pandey said.

He added that settlement should be viewed as involving not only the settlement amount but also disgorgement and RRT, where applicable. Under the approved framework, the settlement amount will be determined using a defined formula, while RRT will be imposed wherever required. Pandey said the settlement amount would be "certain times of the penalty". A settlement does not amount to an admission or denial of guilt. However, it would involve a financial impact on the company or individual concerned and could allow the regulator to resolve proceedings more quickly.

As part of the new process, SEBI will issue a settlement notice before issuing a show-cause notice. Entities receiving such a notice will have 60 days to submit a settlement application.



From Classroom to Career

Education and career planning are no longer separate stages of life. Students today enter a world where technology is changing jobs, industries are creating new roles, and traditional career paths are being reshaped by artificial intelligence, automation, entrepreneurship and globalisation. A degree continues to be important, but it is increasingly only one part of a successful career. Knowledge, practical skills, communication, adaptability and continuous learning are becoming equally important. For students and young professionals, the biggest challenge is not simply deciding what to study. It is understanding how education can be converted into useful skills and how those skills can lead to meaningful employment, professional growth or entrepreneurship. A well-planned approach to study and career can help young people make better decisions while avoiding the pressure of choosing a career only because it is popular.

Education Is Becoming More Career-Oriented

For many years, education was viewed primarily as a way to obtain a degree. Students completed school, entered college, earned a qualification and then searched for employment. That model is changing. Employers increasingly look for candidates who can apply what they have learned rather than simply demonstrate that they have passed examinations. This does not mean that academic education has become less valuable. A strong educational foundation remains essential because it develops analytical thinking, subject knowledge and the ability to understand complex problems. However, students also need opportunities to connect classroom learning with real-world situations. A student studying commerce, for example, can benefit from understanding accounting and economics while also learning spreadsheet analysis, financial software and business communication. An engineering student can strengthen a degree through internships, industrial projects, programming or design skills. A student of literature can explore publishing, digital content, communications, editing and media alongside academic study. The modern approach is therefore not about choosing between education and skills. It is about combining the two.

Choosing a Course With a Long-Term View

One of the most important decisions students make is choosing a course. This decision is often influenced by parents, friends, examination scores, social expectations and the popularity of particular professions. While these factors may matter, they should not completely determine a student's future.

Students need to understand their own interests, abilities and preferred working environment. Someone who enjoys solving technical problems may find satisfaction in engineering, technology or data-related fields. Another student who enjoys interacting with people may prefer healthcare, hospitality, sales, teaching or management. Career decisions should also consider how an industry is developing. Technology has created opportunities in areas that were relatively small or nonexistent a decade ago. Artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, renewable energy, electric mobility, robotics, semiconductor manufacturing, digital finance and advanced healthcare are examples of sectors generating new forms of employment.

At the same time, traditional industries continue to provide opportunities. Agriculture, construction, logistics, manufacturing, banking, tourism, retail and public services are all adopting new technologies and requiring workers with updated skills. The objective should therefore be to understand where personal interests and abilities meet emerging opportunities.

Skills Matter Alongside Degrees

A degree can help a candidate enter a profession, but skills often determine how far that candidate progresses. Employers increasingly value people who can solve problems, communicate clearly, work with technology and adapt to new situations. Communication is one of the most transferable skills. A technically capable employee who cannot explain an idea clearly may struggle in meetings, interviews or client interactions. Written communication is equally important because emails, reports, presentations and digital communication form a major part of modern workplaces. Digital literacy has also become essential across professions. Students do not necessarily need to become software developers, but they should understand the digital tools used in their field. Knowledge of data analysis, productivity software, artificial intelligence tools, online collaboration platforms and basic cybersecurity can improve employability in many occupations. Problem-solving is another important ability. Companies increasingly want employees who can identify a problem, examine available information and develop practical solutions. This is why projects, internships, competitions and real-world assignments can be valuable additions to classroom education.

The Growing Importance of Practical Experience

One of the biggest gaps between education and employment is the lack of practical exposure. A student may understand theoretical concepts but still be unfamiliar with how an organisation actually operates. Internships can help bridge this gap. Even a short internship can introduce students to workplace communication, deadlines, teamwork, professional behaviour and industry practices. Students can also gain practical experience through apprenticeships, volunteering, freelance work, college projects and part-time opportunities. For example, a student interested in digital marketing can create campaigns for a small business and learn how audiences respond. A student interested in finance can work on a simulated investment analysis or assist a small organisation with financial records. Someone interested in journalism can write articles, conduct interviews and learn digital publishing. These experiences create evidence of ability. Instead of simply telling an employer that they possess a particular skill, candidates can demonstrate what they have actually done.

Technology Is Reshaping Career Choices

Artificial intelligence is one of the biggest forces influencing the current employment landscape. AI is changing how companies write, analyse information, design products, develop software, provide customer service and manage operations. For students, the important question is not whether AI will affect their profession. It is how they can learn to work alongside it. Many repetitive tasks are becoming increasingly automated, while demand is growing for people who can use technology to improve productivity and make decisions. This creates opportunities for professionals who combine domain knowledge with digital skills. A healthcare professional who understands AI-assisted diagnostics may work differently from someone trained only in traditional methods. A financial professional who can analyse large datasets can potentially perform tasks more efficiently. A designer familiar with modern digital and AI-assisted tools may expand the range of work they can undertake. Rather than treating technology as a replacement for education, students can view it as an additional tool that strengthens their existing knowledge.

Entrepreneurship as a Career Option

Employment is not the only destination after education. Entrepreneurship has become another career pathway for young people with ideas, technical capabilities or knowledge of a particular market. Starting a business does not necessarily mean immediately creating a large company. It can begin with a small service, online business, consultancy, local enterprise or specialised product. Students can use education to identify problems that need solutions. A person with knowledge of food technology might explore food processing. Someone with agricultural knowledge could develop a farm-based enterprise. A technology student could build a software service. A person interested in design could establish a creative business. However, entrepreneurship requires more than an idea. Financial planning, customer understanding, marketing, operations and risk management are essential. Education can provide the foundation for developing these capabilities.

Emerging Careers Beyond Traditional Professions

Career opportunities are also expanding beyond the professions traditionally associated with degrees. Renewable energy, electric vehicles, smart agriculture, logistics technology, healthcare services, hospitality, construction technology and digital commerce are creating jobs for people with different combinations of education and technical training. The growth of electric mobility, for instance, is creating demand for technicians who understand battery systems, vehicle electronics, charging infrastructure and diagnostics. Modern agriculture is generating opportunities in precision farming, protected cultivation, food processing, supply chains and agricultural technology.

Logistics has also become a technology-driven industry. Warehousing, transportation, inventory management and last-mile delivery increasingly rely on digital systems and data. Healthcare provides another broad employment ecosystem. Apart from doctors and nurses, there is demand for medical laboratory technicians, radiology professionals, hospital administrators, healthcare technology specialists, physiotherapists and other specialised workers. These examples show that career planning should not be restricted to a small list of familiar professions.

The Role of Internships and Networking

Career development begins well before graduation. Students who build professional connections early can gain exposure to industries and understand what employers expect. Networking does not simply mean collecting contacts. It means learning from professionals, attending seminars, participating in industry events and maintaining meaningful professional relationships. Internships can be particularly valuable because they provide direct exposure to organisations. A student may discover that a particular career is not suitable after experiencing the work environment. That can be useful information because identifying an unsuitable path early can prevent larger career changes later. Professional platforms, alumni networks, workshops and conferences can also help students understand employment trends and discover opportunities that may not be visible through conventional job searches.

Learning Does Not End With Graduation

One of the most important changes in modern careers is the need for continuous learning. Technology, regulations, consumer behaviour and business models change rapidly. A qualification earned at the age of 21 or 22 may remain valuable, but it cannot be expected to provide all the knowledge a person will need throughout a 30- or 40-year career. Professionals increasingly need to update their skills through certifications, short courses, workshops, professional training and independent study. Continuous learning does not necessarily mean collecting qualifications. The objective is to remain capable and relevant. Sometimes learning a new software tool or understanding a new industry process can be more useful than completing another formal degree.

Building a Career With Flexibility

Young people should also recognise that careers rarely follow a perfectly straight line. Someone may begin in one profession and later move into another industry. A marketing professional may enter entrepreneurship. An engineer may move into management. A teacher may develop educational technology products. A journalist may move into corporate communications.

Such transitions are becoming more common because skills can often be transferred between professions.

This makes adaptability an important career asset. Instead of viewing the first job as a permanent destination, students can see it as the beginning of professional development.

Making Better Career Decisions

A practical career decision should consider several dimensions at the same time. Students need to understand what they enjoy, what they are capable of doing, what opportunities exist and what kind of lifestyle they want.

Income is naturally an important consideration, but it should not be the only factor. Work environment, location, growth opportunities, job stability, personal interests and long-term learning potential can also influence career satisfaction.

Students should also verify information before making major decisions. Career choices based entirely on social media trends or hearsay can create unrealistic expectations. Talking to professionals already working in the field can provide a more realistic understanding of daily responsibilities, qualifications and career progression.

Parents and Teachers Have an Important Role

Parents and teachers can support students by helping them explore possibilities rather than imposing a single definition of success. Every student has different interests, abilities and circumstances.

Career counselling can also become more important in schools and colleges. Students need access to reliable information about courses, vocational education, emerging industries, entrance requirements and employment opportunities.

Teachers can contribute by connecting academic concepts with practical applications. Parents can encourage young people to explore careers while providing guidance about financial and practical considerations.

The objective is to create an environment in which students can make informed choices rather than choices driven entirely by fear or social pressure.

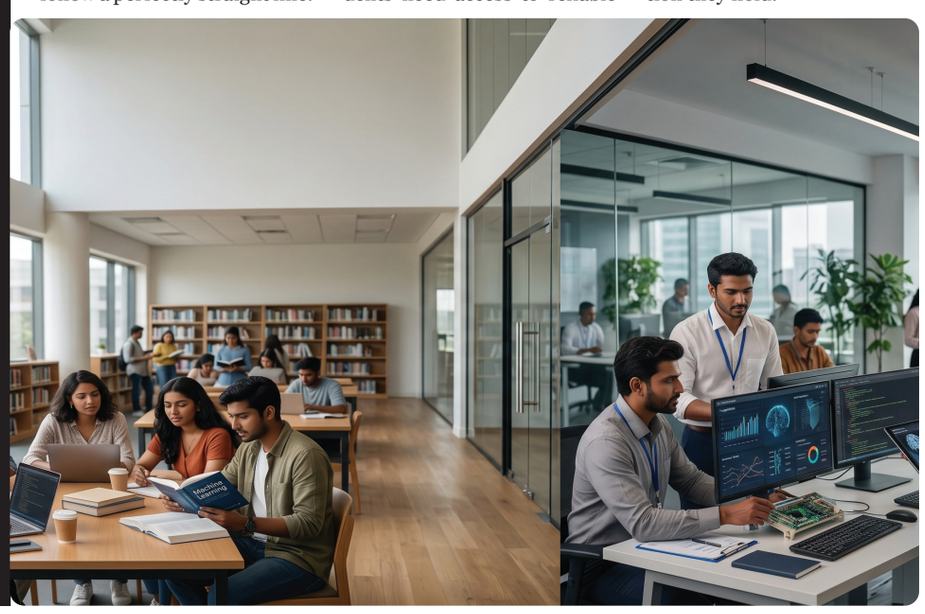
The Future Belongs to Adaptable Learners

The relationship between study and career is becoming more dynamic. Education provides knowledge, but career success increasingly depends on how that knowledge is applied. Skills, experience, technology awareness, communication and adaptability are becoming important components of professional development.

For today's students, the most useful approach may be to think beyond the question, "Which degree should I take?" A broader question is, "What capabilities do I want to build, and where can those capabilities create value?"

That shift in thinking can open the door to a much wider range of possibilities. Traditional professions will continue to exist, but new roles will emerge alongside them. Some careers will combine disciplines that were previously separate, while technology will change how many existing jobs are performed.

Ultimately, study and career should be viewed as an ongoing journey rather than two separate stages. The strongest career foundation comes from developing knowledge, gaining practical experience, remaining curious and being prepared to learn again when circumstances change. For young people entering today's rapidly evolving world of work, the ability to adapt may prove just as important as the qualification they hold.



SHORT NEWS

CRICKET

Breaks can disrupt rhythm, continuous cricket keeps me going, says Prasidh Krishna

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: India fast bowler Prasidh Krishna on Sunday said he prefers playing continuous cricket over frequent breaks, noting that staying on the field helps him maintain his bowling mechanics and running rhythm. Prasidh is returning to action after a short breather via the first India-West Indies ODI in Thiruvananthapuram following the Test tour of Sri Lanka, where India won 1-0. "It is exciting, actually. Three weeks of rest after Sri Lanka... coming back hot and sunny today, looking forward to this.

SQUASH

This could be my last Asian games, says Abhay after winning

NAGOYA: India's Abhay Singh admitted that the ongoing Asian Games could potentially be his last appearance at the continental showpiece after settling for a silver medal in the men's singles squash event on Sunday. "You never know; it could be my last, maybe not. I think I played pretty well in the first. I think we were quite toe-to-toe," Abhay told IANS. The 44-minute contest at the Nagoya Kinjo Futo Arena saw Abhay stay close to Eain in the opening game before the Malaysian gradually took control to beat the Indian 11-9, 11-5, 11-5 and bag the title.

1st ODI: Kuldeep's four-for, Gill and Kohli tons help India thrash WI by eight wickets

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM



Virat Kohli smashed an unbeaten 139 while skipper Shubman Gill struck 110 as India crushed the West Indies by eight wickets in the first ODI at the Greenfield International Stadium here on Sunday to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

After the West Indies made 295/7, with Kuldeep Yadav picking a four-wicket haul and controlling run-flow in the middle overs, Rohit Sharma and Gill gave India a quick start with a 74-run opening stand before the latter and Kohli batted the visitors out of the game with a 151-run partnership. Gill walked off to a standing ovation after his 108-ball 110, his tenth ODI hundred featuring 13 fours and a six.

Kohli, who became only the second batter after Sachin Tendulkar to reach 15,000 ODI runs during the innings, struck 139 not out off 88 balls with ten fours and nine sixes, the most sixes he has hit in an ODI innings. It was his 55th ODI ton and 10th against the West Indies, as India got home with 50 balls to spare.

Rohit drove the first ball of the chase from Jayden Seales for four and that set the tone for India's successful chase. Gill was dropped on 11 at cover-point, and West Indies then wasted a review on an lbw appeal against Rohit, who slashed the next ball over sweeper cover for six.

Gill hit Alzarri Joseph for three fours in the eighth over and lifted Gudakesh Motie over cover for six, while Rohit pulled him for his third six as India reached 70/0 at the end of the powerplay. Joseph struck in the 12th over after moving deep square leg a little straighter, and Rohit miscued a whip straight to the fielder to fall for 32. It was the fourth time Joseph had dismissed him in ODIs.

Kohli got going with a top-edged pull over the keeper for six. Gill reached his fifty off 49 balls as dew set in, and with Justin Greaves off the field with a shin problem, Shai Hope had only five frontline bowlers to call on. Kohli reached his fifty off 40 balls and then hit Joseph for three successive fours in the 29th over, the second of them making him the fastest men's batter to 15,000 ODI runs and cross that landmark after Tendulkar. Gill completed his hundred with a drive off Seales at the start of the 31st over.

Kohli's pulled six off Roston Chase in the 34th over brought up the 150-run stand, but Gill fell three balls later by slog-sweeping to deep mid-wicket. With Ruturaj Gaikwad (13 not out) giving support, Kohli danced down to loft Motie over long-on for six to reach his hundred off 74 balls, his third-fastest in ODIs and his 60th in List A cricket.

Dropped on 125 by Keemo Paul, Kohli finished the match in style, whipping Keacy Carty over deep backward square leg for six before sealing the win with another six over fine leg. Previously, Justin Greaves struck a fluent 101 off 108 balls, while John Campbell and Amir Jangoo chipped with fifties.

Put into batting in stifling heat and humidity, West Indies raced to 85/0 in the powerplay as India's seamers struggled for control. Greaves was particularly severe on the pacers, making 56 off 55 balls against them with 10 fours, while the spinners held him to 44 off 53.

Nitish Kumar Reddy's first over cost 18, with Greaves hitting four boundaries, one off a no-ball and another off the free hit. Gurnoor Brar nearly had him in the fourth over, but Rohit Sharma could only get fingertips to the edge at wide slip.

Campbell took on Ravindra Jadeja as soon as spin came on, hitting two sixes over long-on. Greaves cut debutant Naman Dhir for four in the 14th over to reach his fifty and bring up West Indies' first century opening stand against India since 2019.

Kuldeep broke the 135-run stand in the 20th over when Campbell top-edged a sweep to short fine leg. Keacy Carty struggled through a tortured stay before lobbing Prasidh Krishna to mid-on in the 31st over, and Kuldeep had captain Shai Hope caught at backward point.

Greaves reached his maiden ODI hundred with a single through point but soon missed a sweep at a Kuldeep googly, and India's review showed the ball crashing into off stump. Next ball, Jewel Andrew pressed forward to another googly from Kuldeep and edged to Rohit at slip for a golden duck. Roston Chase and Amir Jangoo rebuilt with a 50-run stand before Prasidh bowled Chase for 24 in the 45th over. Jangoo, who took three fours off Prasidh in the 43rd over, then hit Gurnoor for successive fours and a six to reach his second ODI fifty off 38 balls.

Nitish removed Matthew Forde in the final over, and Jangoo hit unbeaten 58 off 43 balls. But the West Indies fell five runs short of reaching 300, which was utterly inadequate to challenge a rampaging duo of Gill and Kohli.



Let Kohli be himself and he will win matches for you: Shubman Gill

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

India captain Shubman Gill on Sunday said the best way to get the most out of Virat Kohli is to let him be himself, after the talismanic batter's unbeaten 139 off 88 balls powered India to an eight-wicket win over West Indies in the first ODI here at the Greenfield International Stadium. Gill made 110 and shared a 151-run stand with Kohli, who hit an unbeaten 139 off 88 balls, including crossing the 15,000 runs mark in the format, as India chased down 296 with 50 balls to spare and go 1-0 up in the three-match series.

"Honestly when I got out, I thought I should have finished the game. But it was a satisfying innings for me. He's batting superbly and I think he's enjoying the game a lot more, playing with freedom, those are the facts of his batting and he always had the game, the ability to clear the boundary at will, he's doing that right now.

"Someone like him, who's won so many games for India, you let him be and on the day he will win the matches for you," said Gill in the post-match presentation ceremony on Sunday.

He also lauded wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav, whose 4-40 pulled India back into the game after West Indies openers Justin Greaves and John Campbell had put on 135 runs for the opening stand.

"Someone like Kuldeep, especially in the middle overs if he is bowling well, he is a wicket-taker. We were on the backfoot with their opening partnership, he got us back in the game, at one point it looked like keeping them to 300 was great."

Gill also said India were still looking for more depth in the batting. "Ideally, yes, we would like an eighth batting option: someone who can contribute at least 20-30 runs. We weren't able to get the scores we wanted, but we are open to trying different combinations to see what works for us."

West Indies captain Shai Hope admitted that the visitors failed to make the most of a strong start. "For sure, we could definitely put more runs on the board. When you come in on surfaces such as good surfaces here in India, you have to make sure you put a good score on the board.

"Maybe 60 to 80 runs short, to be fair. But then in the way you're bowling, when you're trying to defend a target, close to 290, I think you gotta make sure everything goes right for you." West Indies were going at more than seven an over at one stage before Kuldeep's spell derailed them, and Hope agreed the middle overs cost them.

Dr. Peruka Raju Participates in 'Run with Soldiers – Run for Soldiers'

*** Enthusiastic Marathon in Hyderabad – Youth Run Shoulder to Shoulder with Soldiers**

HYDERABAD



The 'Run with Soldiers – Run for Soldiers' marathon was held in Hyderabad on Sunday morning in a vibrant and patriotic atmosphere. Defence personnel, ex-servicemen, students, young men and women, and people of different age groups participated in large numbers, making the event a memorable celebration of fitness, unity and respect for the Armed Forces.

The marathon was organised in 5 km, 10 km and 21 km categories. Women participated enthusiastically alongside men and added to the spirit of the event. Participants from neighbouring states also joined the marathon, giving it wider representation.

Prominent poet, multilingual scholar and Indian Army Junior Commissioned Officer Dr. Peruka Raju participated in the marathon along with soldiers from his unit, including Ramana, Umesh, Laxman and Sreekumar, among others. Displaying physical endurance and true sporting spirit, they successfully completed the marathon and received medals. Adding a special touch to the occasion, young Snehit also enthusiastically participated in the marathon alongside Dr. Peruka Raju. His participation at a young age reflected physical fitness, sporting spirit and respect for soldiers, earning appreciation from those present.



The programme commenced at 5:00 a.m. with the singing of the National Anthem. The venue thereafter reverberated with spirited chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai." The event continued throughout with a strong sense of patriotism, enthusiasm and sportsmanship. Breakfast and necessary medical facilities were also arranged for the participants.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Peruka Raju said, "Such programmes not only strengthen self-confidence and physical fitness but also deepen respect for our soldiers and reinforce the spirit of patriotism. Running alongside soldiers is a symbol of national unity and love for the nation."

People questioned sending me to the coach early morning, recalls Ancy Sojan; credits father

NAGOYA



India's Ancy Sojan opened up about her humble beginnings and the sacrifices made by her father, an auto driver, after winning the women's long jump silver medal at the Asian Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026 here on Sunday.

Ancy produced a 6.53m effort to stay in contention for gold before China's Huang Yingying came up with a 6.55m final jump to pip the Indian by two centimetres. The silver marked Ancy's first international medal after a long wait.

Recalling her journey, Ancy said she started training barefoot, and her father faced questions from people about early morning training and whether she would be able to make a career in athletics.

"In the beginning we had nothing. I started barefoot, and the people will ask why you are sending your daughter to that guy in the early morning. Is it safe or something, and she is not going to reach anywhere," Ancy told IANS after her silver-medal-winning performance.

"Today the people, they can't imagine where I am standing, but that is my hard work and my father's dedication too. He supported me like a back pillar when I was injured and all. In the beginning I never thought I would reach this level, like making India proud."

Ancy said the silver was the result of the faith placed in her by her family and those who supported her throughout her journey.

"We waited long, and after 10 years I got the first international medal. That is like a great trust I can give them back, like I am winning. They also trusted me," she said.

The 26-year-old also admitted that she had hoped to win gold but was satisfied with the silver medal, particularly given the challenging conditions in Nagoya. "They expected the same like me, like a gold medal, but it's not bad in this weather because the people who are sitting outside and seeing it are not easy like that. While we come to the ground, it is very difficult. I put in my 100% effort, but I will settle with silver," she said.

Ancy said she had dedicated the medal to herself after a season of hard work and sacrifice, while also acknowledging the contribution of her coach and father. "Yes, I worked very hard, and I dedicated all the good performances to my coach and my father. I told my soul to reach the 7 metres, but a lot more competition has come," she said.



Chess Olympiad: India men win open silver, women bag bronze

SAMARKAND

India signed off from the 46th Chess Olympiad 2026 with two medals, as the men's Open team won silver and the women's team secured bronze after both sides drew their final-round matches here on Sunday.

The Indian Open team played out a 2-2 draw against Hungary to finish second in the standings. World champion D Gukesh suffered a defeat against Hungary's Gleb Dudin, while Arjun Erigaisi defeated Peter Leko to help India secure a share of the points.

Host Uzbekistan claimed the gold medal in the Open section after beating Ukraine 2.5-1.5 in the final round. Mukhiddin Madaminov provided the decisive result for Uzbekistan by defeating Roman Dehtiarov.

Uzbekistan finished two points ahead of India and Germany to secure their second Chess Olympiad title. India took the silver medal on tie-breaks, while Germany settled for bronze after defeating the Netherlands 2.5-1.5. Matthias Bluebaum beat Jorden van Foreest in Germany's win.

The Indian women's team also finished on the podium after being held to a 2-2 draw by Georgia in their final-round encounter.

Savitha Shri produced an important result for India as she held Georgia's Meri Arabidze to a draw after finding herself in a difficult position. The result was enough to ensure India finished third and took home the bronze medal. China won the women's gold after defeating Vietnam 3-1 in the final round.

'I didn't want to give up until the last point,' says Anahat after historic silver

NAGOYA

Anahat Singh said she did not want to give up until the final point despite being pushed back by Malaysia's defending champion Sivasangari Subramaniam as the Indian teenager signed off with a historic silver medal at the Asian Games 2026 here on Sunday.

"I honestly just didn't want to let it go easily. It was 3-0 for her, but I didn't want to let any point go without a fight. I definitely didn't play my best squash today, but I didn't want to give up until the last point because you never know what can happen," Anahat told IANS.

The 18-year-old became the first Indian woman to win a silver medal in the Asian Games women's singles squash event. She had earlier scripted history by becoming the first Indian to reach the women's singles final at the continental showpiece.

Sivasangari, ranked No. 5 in the world, controlled the contest with her attacking game and defence to successfully defend the gold medal she won at Hangzhou 2022.

Anahat, however, looked back at her campaign with satisfaction, having beaten World No. 6 Satomi Watanabe in a dramatic semifinal after coming back from two games down and saving two match points.

"Yeah, like you said, the competition's been, I mean, Siva's number five in the world, Satomi's number six, so just getting to play against the top players is something that's



really special, and, of course, I'm quite happy with the silver medal," she said. "This is my first time playing individuals, actually, and my second time playing in the Asian Games, and just getting to learn from this and be at this stage is something that is very exciting for every athlete, and also getting a medal on top of that is something I'm quite happy about."

The silver also meant Anahat missed out on the first direct qualification opportunity for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics, where squash will make its debut, with the singles gold medallist earning the quota. Anahat, however, said the experience would be an important part of her development over the next two years. "I tried my 100 per cent, but there are always things that work out and some things that don't, and hopefully the journey for the next two years is going to be good," she said.

The reigning Junior World Champion also had a message for young girls in India who aspire to pursue sport.

"I'd just say to give it your all, and if it's something that you really love doing and are passionate about, you should not let it go very easily, and you should just push and just enjoy every moment of it," she said. Anahat credited her family, coaches, government and sponsors for helping her reach the highest level of the sport.

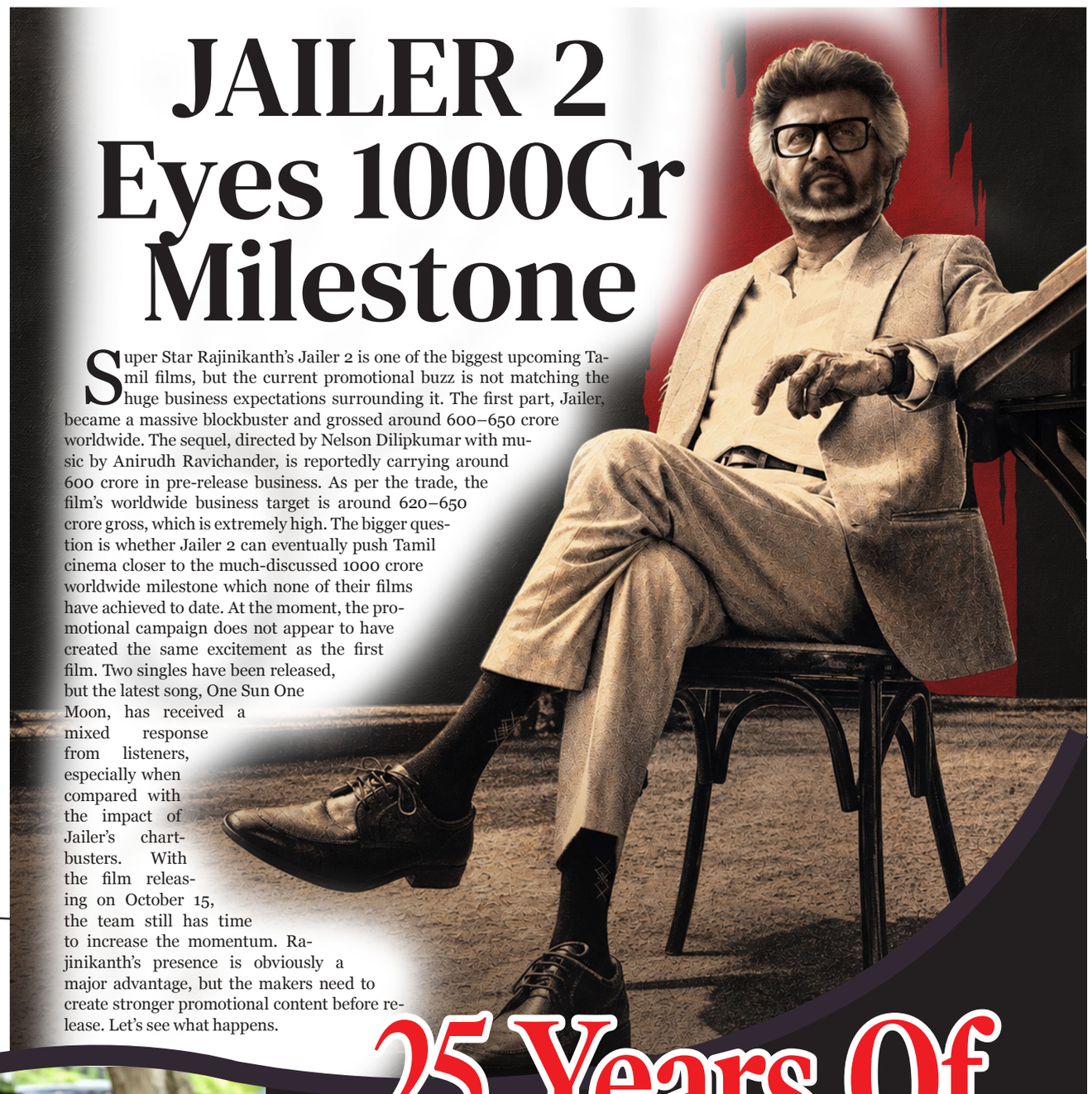
"There are a lot of people I can dedicate it to. First of all, my family, my parents and my sister and just everyone; they've supported me through every single thing, and they're always there in whatever I need, and of course my coaches as well," she said.



Malavika Looks Simply Stunning

Malavika Mohanan had a rough patch at the box office with back-to-back disappointments in The Raja Saab and Sardaar 2, both failing to click with audiences despite the buzz around them. The setbacks have put a temporary dent in her recent theatrical run. But there's good news on the horizon. Malavika has been roped in for Pocket Novel, the upcoming project helmed by acclaimed director Thiagarajan Kumararaja, known for cult favourites Aaranya Kaandam and Super Deluxe. The film marks his third directorial outing and has already got cinephiles curious. Meanwhile, Malavika continues to keep her fashion game strong. Dressed in a soft pink embroidered saree with statement jhumkas, she strikes an elegant pose in a sunlit corridor, proving that even amid box office lows, her style quotient remains a consistent high.

JAILER 2 Eyes 1000Cr Milestone



Super Star Rajinikanth's Jailer 2 is one of the biggest upcoming Tamil films, but the current promotional buzz is not matching the huge business expectations surrounding it. The first part, Jailer, became a massive blockbuster and grossed around 600–650 crore worldwide. The sequel, directed by Nelson Dilipkumar with music by Anirudh Ravichander, is reportedly carrying around 600 crore in pre-release business. As per the trade, the film's worldwide business target is around 620–650 crore gross, which is extremely high. The bigger question is whether Jailer 2 can eventually push Tamil cinema closer to the much-discussed 1000 crore worldwide milestone which none of their films have achieved to date. At the moment, the promotional campaign does not appear to have created the same excitement as the first film. Two singles have been released, but the latest song, One Sun One Moon, has received a mixed response from listeners, especially when compared with the impact of Jailer's chartbusters. With the film releasing on October 15, the team still has time to increase the momentum. Rajinikanth's presence is obviously a major advantage, but the makers need to create stronger promotional content before release. Let's see what happens.

Chakkora Trailer PACKS It All

With Aakash Jagannadh launching the trailer in Hyderabad, Chakkora – Lunar Love Bird has introduced audiences to a completely different romantic world. Produced by Dr. Chintada Hemarao under High Joy Commercials in association with VIP – Vintage Iconic Pictures, the film is directed by debutant Manga Srinivas and heads for a worldwide theatrical release on October 9 through Sri Lakshmi Pictures. The trailer begins with the fun-filled life of Ravana Brahma, played by Sravan, whose chilled-out personality brings entertaining moments throughout. Everything changes when Julie, portrayed by Malaika T. Vasupal, enters his world. He falls madly in love, follows her, proposes to her, and is willing to fight for her, creating a youthful romantic journey. Halfway through, the trailer shifts into an emotional mystery. Julie disappears unexpectedly, and Ravana Brahma's search takes him into unknown territory filled with hidden truths and unanswered questions. The mystery surrounding Julie's past becomes the film's biggest emotional conflict. The trailer promises Manga Srinivas' signature Mass Poetry storytelling with visually appealing frames and an impressive background score from Prince Henry. Packed with romance, friendship, family emotions, and mystery, Chakkora aims to deliver a refreshing love story that Telugu audiences haven't experienced before.





Kaaka Speeds Ahead

While several young heroes are taking considerable time to complete their films, Megastar Chiranjeevi is setting a remarkable pace. The actor has been wrapping up his films at impressive speed in recent times.Chiranjeevi, who graced the pre-release event of Sundeep Kishan's Sigma, shared an interesting update about his much-awaited film Kaaka, directed by Bobby Kolli. According to Chiranjeevi, the shoot of Kaaka is progressing at jet speed. The team has already completed the entire first half and has also finished nearly 30% of the second half.More importantly, music director S Thaman has already begun work on the background score for the first half and is said to be in full josh. Chiranjeevi once again confirmed that Kaaka will hit the screens as planned during Sankranti 2027. A major share of the credit also goes to director Bobby Kolli for maintaining such a brisk pace while handling a big-star project mounted on a large canvas.

25 Years Of SS Rajamouli



SS Rajamouli is one of the greatest filmmakers in Indian cinema. He debuted with the film Student No. 1 and it completes 25 years today. It also marks Rajamouli's 25 years in Tollywood as a successful director. Rajamouli will remain special for showcasing the might of Telugu cinema on premier global stages like the Oscars. As he completes 25 years in films today, we look forward to his next film, Varanasi. Rajamouli hailed from humble roots and set a gold standard in filmmaking, sustaining an uninterrupted winning streak. With no flops to his credit, Rajamouli has emerged as the torchbearer of the film fraternity. He began his career directing television serials and made his silver screen debut with NTR's Student No. 1. After Student No. 1, Rajamouli delivered a string of commercial hits. Simhadri, Sye, Chatrapathi, and Vikramarkudu are some of his biggest blockbusters. Rajamouli's signature style is blending high-octane emotions with towering character arcs. In later years, Rajamouli introduced cutting-edge technology to Telugu films and relentlessly experimented with visual effects. Magadheera and Eega are prime examples.

With Magadheera, he redefined the fantasy genre in Tollywood. By conceiving and helming a cult classic like Eega, Rajamouli turned the attention of audiences worldwide. And then came the mighty Baahubali! With Baahubali, Rajamouli defined Indian cinema into two distinct eras. Before Baahubali and after Baahubali. Rajamouli proved that cinema transcends regional boundaries and laid the foundation for the Pan-Indian culture. Baahubali's collections projected Indian cinema onto the international map. In the post-Baahubali era, Rajamouli's popularity reached new heights with RRR. The song Naatu Naatu from the film won an Academy Award and a Golden Globe. The movie also earned the praise of Hollywood filmmakers. Up next is Varanasi for Rajamouli. Mahesh Babu, Priyanka Chopra and Prithviraj Sukumaran are the leads in the film. Billed as an Globe trotting action-adventure, the film is already one of the most awaited films in the coming days. The film carries high expectations and is gearing up for a grand release in April next year.

Amala Paul Stuns In Golden Hour



Amala Paul, who welcomed her baby boy Ilai with husband Jagat Desai two years back, is proving that motherhood has only added to her glow. The actress's latest shoot has fans talking about how effortlessly she's bounced back to her sultry, confident self. Dressed in a peach ribbed tank and white shorts, styled with quirky striped socks, Amala strikes a moody, sunlit pose that radiates both comfort and confidence. The play of shadow and light against the wooden backdrop gives the shoot an artistic, editorial edge. It's been nearly two years since Amala's last film, but with her glam game clearly intact, speculation is building around a possible on-screen comeback soon.

Printed, Published, Edited and Owned by Pisati Janga Reddy, Printed at : Jayadurga Printers, Plot No.48, H.No.24114/ 3/1, Survey.No.551, Laxmi Narayana Nagar, Uppal, Medchal District, Telangana State.
Published at : Flat No.303A, Prajay Alakapuri Apartments, Road No.2, Green Hills Colony, Kothapet, Hyderabad 500035,Ranga Reddy District, Telangana State.
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