

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



16-02-2026
Total pilgrims: 73,776
Tonsures: 23,291
Hundi kanukalu: 4.42 CR
Waiting Compartments: 13

Approx. Darshan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens), 08 H

TO BOOK YOUR ADS CALL

99484 80279, 73307 78889

Rahul Gandhi to lead UDF's high-voltage campaign in Kerala



Thiruvananthapuram, Feb 16: Senior Congress leader and campaign committee chairman Ramesh Chennithala on Monday announced that Rahul Gandhi will take on a prominent and decisive role in the United Democratic Front's (UDF) campaign for the forthcoming Kerala Assembly elections.

CAMPAIGN

HILLARY CLINTON ACCUSES TRUMP ADMIN-ISTRATION OF EPSTEIN FILES 'COVER-UP'



WORLD NEWS

NEPAL SEAL HISTORIC WIN OVER SCOTLAND AT T20 WORLD CUP



T20 WORLD CUP

INBRIFS

Siddaramaiah to decide on leadership, says Shivakumar

Bengaluru (TSIT) Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday dismissed speculation about a possible leadership change in the state Congress, saying any decision or message on the matter will come directly from Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the appropriate time. Speaking to reporters, Shivakumar denied reports of secret deals or backroom arrangements between him and the Chief Minister. "There is no secret deal or backroom arrangement between me and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. If there is any message on leadership changes, it will come from him when the time is right," he said. He emphasized that decisions regarding cabinet reshuffles or leadership positions rest with the party and its high command. "Speculation in the media should not be taken as government policy. The high command will decide if and when any changes are needed," Shivakumar added. Addressing reports of legislators undertaking foreign trips or engaging in covert negotiations, he said, "These are just rumours. There is no basis to such claims." The remarks come amid ongoing speculation over internal power dynamics within the Karnataka Congress, especially regarding claims of a

India-France Partnership a Force for Global Stability: PM Modi

Mumbai (TSIT): Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his statement following the bilateral meeting with President Emmanuel Macron in Mumbai on Tuesday, described the India-France relationship as a "force for global stability" in an increasingly uncertain world. He emphasised that the partnership has evolved beyond traditional diplomacy into a "Partnership of the People," specifically highlighting the launch of the India-France Year of Innovation 2026.

PM Modi emphasised that the partnership is a "trusted anchor" for peace. He described France as an "indispensable partner" in the Indian Ocean region.

The Prime Minister stated that the India-France Year of Innovation is the centrepiece of their 2026 roadmap. He noted, "Innovation doesn't happen in isolation, but through collaboration. The goal is to link Indian and French startups, MSMEs, and research centres to solve global challenges in clean energy and digital health."

A major theme of the Prime Minister's address was Strategic Autonomy. He reaffirmed that the inauguration of the Airbus H125 helicopter assembly



HIGHLIGHT POINT:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed India-France ties as a "force for global stability," unveiling the 2026 Year of Innovation and deepening strategic, defence and AI collaboration with President Emmanuel Macron.

line in India was cited as a prime example of the "Make in India, Make for the World" vision.

Both leaders reviewed the Horizon 2047 roadmap, focusing on the joint production of military hardware, including the HAMMER precision-guided missiles and the landmark 114 Rafale fighter jet project.

India-France share vision for multipolar world: Prez Macron

French President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday underscored that the India-France relationship has reached a level of mutual trust that is "unique in the world today."

After a morning jog at Marine Drive and a tribute to the 2008 Mumbai terror attack victims, the President joined PM Modi to chart the next decade of the Horizon 2047 roadmap.

After the bilateral meeting, Macron, in his statement, said, "From the deep oceans to the highest mountains, the India-France partnership knows no boundaries. We are not just partners; we are two nations that share a vision for a sovereign, independent, and multipolar world."

President Macron reaffirmed France's commitment to India's "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-Reliant India) initiative. Macron welcomed the recent Indian approval for 114 Rafale fighter jets, noting that the majority of these will be "Made in India." He stated, "Our defence cooperation is not just about a buyer and a seller; it is about building a shared industrial base for the future of global security." He celebrated the inauguration of the Airbus H125 helicopter assembly line, the first of its kind in India. This facility will produce aircraft capable of operating in the world's most extreme environments, including the Himalayas.



TARIQUE RAHMAN SWORN IN AS NEW PM OF BANGLADESH



DHAKA (TSIT) : Tarique Rahman was sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Bangladesh on Tuesday, marking the end of the 18-month rule of the interim government which took charge after the collapse of the Sheikh Hasina regime in August 2024.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin administered the oath of office to 60-year-old Rahman at the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad instead of Bangabhaban, in a departure from a long-standing tradition. Rahman, the son of former premier Khaleda Zia and late President Ziaur Rahman, returned home two months ago after living in London in self-exile for 17 years.

He will serve as the prime minister for the next five years. Earlier in the day, Rahman was elected as leader of the parliamentary party by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party lawmakers.

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Rs 209 crore fake online investment scam busted in J&K, 9 arrested

Srinagar, Feb 16: Srinagar police have cracked a major transnational online investment fraud in Ganderbal district, involving over ₹209 crore, by arresting an MBBS doctor from Hissar, Haryana, along with eight others from different parts of Kashmir. The case came to light following a complaint by Firdous Ahmad Mir of Safapora, leading to FIR No. 08/2026 under multiple sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the IT Act. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed by SSP Ganderbal Khalil Ahmad Poswal discovered that the scamsters ran fake online trading platforms, promoted through social media and Google ads, including websites like paisavault.com.

Cleanliness Top Priority in 3 Corporations, Warns CM Revanth



Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed officials to prioritize cleanliness in the three municipal corporations—GHMC, Cyberabad, and Malkajgiri—warning of strict action against those found derelict in sanitation and garbage clearance duties. Chairing a high-level review meeting of the Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department at the State Secretariat, the CM instructed the commissioners to conduct daily field visits at 6 a.m. to assess ground-level sanitation and ensure regular waste removal.

The meeting also focused on boosting revenue through advertisement boards and urban display systems. Discussions included installing integrated smart poles at major junctions to support electric cables, telecom lines, CCTV cameras, and advertisements.

Expressing concern over unrealized revenue despite numerous advertisement boards, the CM

CENTRE PUSHES AI INTEGRATION IN EDUCATION AT INDIA AI IMPACT SUMMIT 2026

New Delhi (TSIT): The Ministry of Education organised a special session titled 'Ministry of Education - Pushing the Frontier of AI in India' on Tuesday at New Delhi's Bharat Mandapam as part of the India AI Impact Summit 2026, underscoring the government's push to integrate artificial intelligence across the country's education ecosystem. The session was attended by union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Minister of State for Education and Skill Development (Independent Charge) Jayant Chaudhary, along with senior officials and academic leaders. Addressing the gathering, Pradhan described the summit as a pathbreaking initiative envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to accelerate India's AI growth story.

Kharge alleges 'chaos & mismanagement' at AI Summit, targets Centre



New Delhi (TSIT) Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on the Centre over the conduct of a recent AI Summit, alleging "utter chaos and rank mismanagement" and accusing the government of turning a global showcase event into an embarrassment for the country. In a post on X, Kharge said what "could have been a showcase AI Summit for the entire world demonstrating the digital & AI capabilities of India" had instead been marred by disorder and distress for participants.

"Founders, exhibitors and visitors all face extreme distress due to the PM gatecrashing for a photo opportunity on the very first day," Kharge wrote, taking a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and describing the govern-

ment as "PR hungry." The Congress chief listed a series of alleged lapses at the event, claiming that exhibitors were left without basic amenities.

"Exhibitors are left without food and water, their products are stolen, Digi Yatra miserably fails, laptops, personal electronic devices and even bags are prohibited, only cash instead of digital/UPI payment is accepted, and founders are made to pay huge sums without basic facilities, among many other reasons of distress," Kharge said.

1,179 MoUs translate into Rs.12.37 lakh crore investment, says Tamil Nadu Interim budget

CHENNAI (TSIT): The Tamil Nadu government on Monday announced that 1,179 Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) signed since it assumed office have translated into a committed investment worth Rs.12.37 lakh crore, with the projects expected to generate about 36 lakh jobs.

According to the Interim budget 2026-27, the State aims to expand industrial activity across regions as part of its plan to move towards a 1 trillion dollar economy by 2030. Noting that before 2021, 24 SIPCOT industrial parks were functioning in 15 districts; the number has since increased to 54, covering 49,468 acres. To



support upcoming projects and future expansion, land acquisition is under way for an additional 28,392 acres.

According to the government, Tamil Nadu continues to lead the country in electronics exports, accounting for 41.23% of India's total exports in the sector. The State recorded an economic growth rate of 11.19% in 2024-25, the document noted.

New TIDEL Parks are being established at Tiruchirappalli,

Madurai and Hosur at an estimated cost of Rs.1,070 crore.

In addition, TIDEL Neo Mini IT Parks have been inaugurated in several cities, while Mini IT Parks are under development across multiple districts at a total estimated cost of Rs.388 crore. These initiatives are expected to generate about 25,500 jobs, according to the budget.

The government also referenced the Tamil Nadu Semiconductor Mission-2030, a 5 year roadmap with an estimated outlay of Rs. 500 crore, under which advanced semiconductor design and technology infrastructure is being developed in collaboration with academic and industry partners.

India intensifying engagement with global partners from position of strength: EAM Jaishankar

MUMBAI (TSIT) India is engaging with international partners more intensively and from a "position of strength", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Tuesday, citing a string of recent trade agreements as evidence of the country's growing economic clout. In an address at the Global Economic Cooperation conference, Jaishankar highlighted the successful negotiation of several high-profile deals, including a significant trade pact with the United States.

The Global Economic Cooperation is an event organised by the Future Economic Cooperation Council in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Government of Maharashtra. Describing the cur-



India is strengthening its global engagement from a position of economic strength, sealing major trade deals amid a rapidly shifting and turbulent world order, says External Affairs Minister

--S. Jaishankar.

rent international landscape as perhaps the most turbulent in living memory, the minister warned that the world is witnessing the "weaponisation" of production and finance, alongside tightening export controls and volatile market shifts.

"The established global order is clearly changing. Replacements are hard to create, and we appear

to be headed to a long twilight zone. This will be messy, risky, unpredictable, perhaps even dangerous," he said. Long-standing assumptions and expectations have now become questionable, the minister pointed out.

Key dimensions are transforming simultaneously, be it strategic, political, economic or technological. Solutions lie in derisking

and diversifying across multiple domains. This approach is increasingly visible in the policy of nations, the EAM said. Jaishankar stressed that the "reform express" will continue to roll on.

"From a position of strength, India is engaging international partners more intensively. This is demonstrated in the recently concluded trade deals," he said. Economic security is best served through stronger self-reliance and more trusted partners, the minister added. Following a phone conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump, both sides recently announced a reduction of US tariffs on Indian goods to 18 per cent from 50 per cent.

India, EU Conclude Free Trade Agreement Covering Nearly 25% of Global GDP

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen jointly announced the conclusion of the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA) at the 16th India-EU Summit, marking a historic milestone in bilateral economic relations. The agreement brings together the world's 4th and 2nd largest economies, which collectively account for nearly 25% of global GDP and one-third of global trade. It reflects both partners' commitment to open, rules-based, and inclusive trade.

Key Benefits for India:
Over 99% of Indian exports by value will receive preferential access to the EU market. Nearly USD 75 billion worth of Indian exports stand to benefit, including USD 33 billion from labour-intensive sectors like textiles, leather, marine products, and gems and jewelry. Expanded services access across 144 EU subsectors for Indian IT, professional services, education, and financial services providers. Safeguards and Cooperation: Enhanced market access for tea, coffee, spices, fruits, and processed foods, while pro-



tecting sensitive sectors like dairy. A structured mobility framework for professionals and contractual service suppliers. Calibrated, quota-based auto liberalisation supporting

Make in India. Forward-looking cooperation on carbon measures, clean technologies, AI, and digital trade. The FTA is expected to generate employment and strengthen opportunities for women, youth, artisans, and professionals. Designed as a balanced and future-ready agreement, it includes review and consultation mechanisms to address evolving trade challenges. The India-EU FTA reinforces India's commitment to trusted global partnerships and aligns with the vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047" for inclusive, resilient, and sustainable growth.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Interacts with 3,000 Students at YuvAI Hackathon, Announces \$217 Billion AI Investment Commitments

New Delhi: Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting, and Electronics & IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw, on Tuesday interacted with over 3,000 students participating in the YuvAI hackathon at the AI Impact Summit 2026, held at Bharat Mandapam. Students from across India presented domain-based, vernacular AI solutions, demonstrating strong grassroots innovation and youth engagement in emerging technologies. The Minister emphasized that Artificial Intelligence is a powerful tool accessible to all for solving day-to-day challenges and creating solutions tailored to individual and community needs. During the interaction, Vaishnaw revealed that the Summit has attracted significant global interest, with commitments of approximately \$17 billion in venture capital funding and up to \$200 billion in infrastructure investments. "This reflects the high level of interest the world has in India's AI ecosystem," he stated.



The Minister attributed this momentum to the visionary framework laid down by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, positioning India as a global leader in emerging technologies. He noted that

hosting the world's largest AI summit in India demonstrates the country's growing stature at the forefront of the global AI movement. The YuvAI hackathon provided a platform for young

innovators to showcase their AI solutions, reinforcing the government's commitment to fostering technological talent and innovation at the grassroots level.

Nine-judge SC bench to hear pleas on religious discrimination against women

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday said a nine-judge bench will on April 7 commence the final hearing on petitions relating to discrimination against women at religious places, including Sabarimala Temple, and on the ambit and scope of religious freedom practised by multiple faiths. In September 2018, a five-judge Constitution bench, by a 4:1 majority verdict, had lifted the ban that prevented females between the ages of 10 and 50 from entering the Ayyappa shrine at Sabarimala in Kerala and held that the centuries-old Hindu religious practice was illegal and unconstitutional. Later on November 14, 2019, another five-judge bench headed by then CJI Ranjan Gogoi, by a majority of 3:2, referred the issue of discrimination against women at various places of worship to a larger bench. The bench had then framed broad issues on freedoms across religions, saying they cannot be decided without any facts of the particular case. Besides the Sabarimala case, the verdict also referred issues of entry of Muslim women into mosques and dargahs and of Par-

si women, married to non-Parsi men, to the holy fire place of an Agiary, to the larger bench. On May 11, 2020, another bench held that its 5-judge bench had the power to refer the questions of law to a larger bench for adjudication while exercising its limited power under review jurisdiction in the Sabarimala temple entry case. After that, the matters could not be taken up for almost five years because of the COVID pandemic, and later, they were not taken up by other chief justices. On Monday, a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said a nine-judge bench will begin hearing the petitions on April 7 and will conclude them on April 22. The CJI asked the parties to file their written submissions on or before March 14. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta for the Centre said he supported the pleas for review of the Sabarimala verdict that allowed entry of women of all age groups to the hill-top shrine in Kerala. The bench-appointed lawyer Krishna Kumar Singh is the nodal counsel for parties supporting the review of the Sabarimala verdict.

It also appointed Shashwati Pari as the nodal counsel for those opposing the review of the verdict. "We also deem it appropriate that senior advocate K Parameswar, along with Shivam Singh, are appointed as the amicus. Singh shall submit the stand taken by all parties before this court," the CJI said. "The nine-judge bench will begin hearing the Sabarimala review case on April 7, 2026, at 10:30 am. The review petitioners or the party supporting them shall be heard from April 7 to April 9. The ones opposing the review shall be heard on April 14 to April 16. The rejoinder submissions, if any, will be heard on April 21, 2026, followed by the final and concluding submissions by the learned amicus... which is expected to be over by April 22," the order said. The bench asked the lawyers to adhere to the schedule. Earlier, the bench read out seven questions it had framed on the scope of religious freedom. Asserting that it was open to addition and deletion of issues framed, the bench said it would consider: "What is the scope and ambit of right to freedom of religion under Article 25 of the Constitution of India?"

Mandatory to appear in first board exam for class 10 students: CBSE on two board exams policy

NEW DELHI: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has said that it is mandatory for class 10 students to appear in the first board exam, and those who do not attempt at least three subjects in the first edition will be placed in the "essential repeat" category, officials said. CBSE is starting with two board exams for class 10 from 2026. The clarification by the board comes after it received a few requests stating that class 10 students who are not able to appear in the first board exam should be allowed to appear in the second board exam. "It is mandatory for all the students to appear in the first board examination. All passed and eligible students will be allowed to improve their performance in any of the three subjects out of Science, Mathematics, Social Science and languages," CBSE Examination

Controller Sanyam Bhardwaj said. "If a student has not appeared in three or more subjects in the first examination, then he or she will not be allowed to appear in the second examination. Such students will be placed in the 'Essential Repeat' category and can take the examination only next year in the main examinations in the month of February next year," he added. Students with compartment in the first exam will be allowed to appear in the second exam under the compartment category, he said. "Additional Subject will not be permitted after passing class 10, students will not be allowed in stand-alone subjects. Because of any reason if a student is not able to appear in 3 or more subjects in main examination, he or she cannot be permitted to appear in second board exams

as per policy. Any request received by CBSE about this not be responded to," Bhardwaj said. Board exams for class 10 and class 12 will begin on Tuesday, with over 46 lakh students set to appear from India and abroad. Under the new National Education Policy (NEP), several recommendations have been made with regard to Board exams, including conducting them twice a year. NEP 2020 said that the existing system of Board and entrance exams shall be reformed to eliminate the need for undertaking coaching classes. "To reverse these harmful effects of the current assessment system, Board exams will be redesigned to encourage holistic development; students will be able to choose many of the subjects in which they take Board exams, depending on their individualised interests," the policy stated.

PM Modi 'surrendered' before Trump; farmers' interests, energy security sacrificed: Cong

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Monday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has "surrendered" before US President Donald Trump in agreeing to the India-US interim trade deal, which, it claimed, will "devastate" the livelihoods of crores of farmers across states and sacrifice India's energy security, digital sovereignty and economic self-reliance. Slamming the Centre, Congress general secretary Randeep Surjewala said trade agreements should not become a path to slavery by "sacrificing a country's sovereignty", and asserted that national interest cannot be mortgaged under the guise of a trade pact. He also demanded answers from the prime minister on this. Terming the Indo-US interim trade deal a "one-sided and unequal agreement", Surjewala said such deals must be based on parity and mutual public interest, and

not become instruments that compromise the sovereignty or livelihoods of millions. He also claimed that 1.44 billion Indians would not accept any arrangement that weakens the country's self-reliance. "Trade agreements are the path to economic progress. The very foundation of trade agreements is mutual public interest on equal terms. Trade agreements should not be a path to slavery by sacrificing a country's sovereignty. National and public interests cannot be sacrificed under the guise of trade deals," Surjewala said at a press conference. Tagging Surjewala's statement, Congress general secretary in-charge communications, Jairam Ramesh, said the former explained how this trade deal will "devastate" the livelihoods of millions of farmers across states. "The prime minister has complete-

ly surrendered before President Trump - just as he did on May 10, 2025, when he abruptly and unexpectedly halted Operation Sindoor," Ramesh said on X. Surjewala alleged at the presser that through the US-India trade agreement, the Modi government has sacrificed the interests of India's farmers and farms. "India's energy security was openly compromised. Serious questions have been raised about India's digital autonomy and data privacy. Instead of standing firmly in defence of India's interests, a helpless government compromised India's sovereignty and self-reliance," he claimed. People are asking whether it is a "mazboot sarkaar" (strong government) or "majboor sarkaar" (compelled government), an "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" or "America-nirbhar Bharat", he claimed. Surjewala also said that importing

American agricultural and food products into India's agricultural market is a "direct attack" on farmers' livelihoods. "In the very first point of the February 6 Framework Agreement of the US-India trade deal, India agreed that it would open its market to US agricultural and food products without any import duty," he said. The proposed import of products such as Dried Distillers' Grain (DDG) or processed maize, sorghum, soybean oil and cotton would adversely impact the domestic producers and have a direct effect on the country's biodiversity and seed purity, the Congress leader said. Noting that India produces about 43 million metric tonnes of maize annually, compared to the United States' 425 million metric tonnes, he asked how Indian farmers would compete if duty-free imports were allowed.

EC suspends 7 WB electoral officials over SIR-linked 'misconduct'

NEW DELHI: Using its powers under the electoral law, the Election Commission has suspended seven officials, deployed as assistant electoral registration officers (AEROs) in West Bengal, with immediate effect for serious misconduct, dereliction of duty and misuse of statutory powers in connection with the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) process in the state. These suspended officers were state government employees who were working on deputation for the EC to update the voters' list and help hold elections. Quoting orders, EC officials said the poll authority has directed state Chief Secretary Nandini Chakravarty that disciplinary proceedings be initiated against these officials by their respective cadre con-

trolling authorities immediately, without any delay and the Commission be apprised in this regard. The EC and the Trinamool Congress government in West Bengal have been at loggerheads over the ongoing special intensive revision of the voters' list. The poll authority used powers under section 13CC of the Representation of the People Act 1950 to take action against the seven. As per the Terms of Settlement arrived at between the Commission and the Union government following a Supreme Court Order of September 2000, the disciplinary functions of the Election Commission over officers, staff and police deputed to perform election duties will extend to "Suspending any officer/official/police personnel for insubordination or dereliction of duty."

Don't vote for BJP, SAD, Cong else Punjab will drown in drugs again: Kejriwal

MOGA: AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Monday lashed out at previous governments of the Congress, SAD and BJP, accusing them of "pushing Punjab into drugs" and urged the public not to vote for these parties, warning that Punjab could drown in drugs once again. Kejriwal commended the Bhagwant Mann government for its strict actions against drug smugglers and highlighted the ongoing anti-drug initiative called 'Yudh Nashian Virudh'. The AAP government hosted a state-level event in Killi Chahlan village here to promote this campaign. Present at the rally, besides Kejriwal, were Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, party leader Manish Sisodia, Punjab Cabinet ministers, MLAs, and other party officials. Mann arrived at the venue after being discharged from Fortis Hospital in Mohali, where he had been admitted due to exhaustion on Sunday. During his address, Kejriwal acknowledged the contribution of village defence committees in the government's fight against drugs.



He emphasised the importance of informing each family in villages about the parties that contributed to the drug problem in Punjab. "You must go to every family in every village and tell them who pushed Punjab into drugs -- Akali Dal, BJP and Congress. When these parties were in power, every family in Punjab was affected by drugs. They destroyed the youth, the families, and the future of Punjab," Kejriwal alleged. He urged people to avoid voting for these parties, warning that doing so could lead to Punjab "drowning"

in drugs once again. You must go to every household and tell them not to vote for these parties even by mistake, otherwise Punjab will again sink into drugs, he said. Kejriwal highlighted that for the first time, a government is taking serious steps against drug smugglers, including imprisoning them, demolishing their homes, and seizing their properties. "By God's grace, such a government has come. Under no circumstances should you vote for the other parties. This is the responsibility of the Village Defence

Committees. We must go door-to-door and tell people. Very soon, our Punjab will become 'Rangla' Punjab and 'Nasha Mukti' Punjab," he said. The Punjab assembly elections are scheduled for 2027. Kejriwal noted that the anti-drug campaign 'Yudh Nashian Virudh' began on March 1, 2025. He recalled that initially, people were hesitant to share information about drug smugglers out of fear for their families' safety. "Last year, the Punjab police seized 2,000 kg of drugs, destroyed the properties of drug dealers, and arrested significant smugglers, which led to the people starting to believe that the AAP government is not scared of anything," Kejriwal said. Kejriwal said village defence committees (VDCs) composed of retired teachers, ex-servicemen, youth, and sarpachis (village heads) are being formed. The VDCs will gather information on local drug activity while keeping the identities of informants confidential. The Punjab government has created a mobile app for this purpose. A VDC member can sub-

mit information through this app, and his identity will be kept confidential, he said. "One of the tasks is to provide information about those selling drugs so that the police can arrest them and send them to jail. The second is to ensure that those in the village, who are victims of drug addiction, are taken to the nearest centre for treatment," Kejriwal said regarding the VDCs. He encouraged the VDCs to take charge of making their villages drug-free, assuring them of the government's full support. Additionally, Kejriwal mentioned that the Mann government is constructing sports stadiums in every village for the youth. Addressing the gathering, Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav shared details about the anti-drug efforts initiated in March of last year, noting that over 34,000 FIRs had been filed and more than 45,000 individuals arrested. He said that over 2,000 kg of heroin was confiscated in 2025, accounting for 66 per cent of the total heroin seizures across the country that year.

EDITORIAL

The Great AI Race: India Must Decide Whether It Writes The Code, Or Lives By It

As India hosts the AI Impact Summit this week, artificial intelligence has ceased to be a mere technological frontier; it is now a theatre of geopolitical contestation. Much like nuclear technology during the Cold War, AI has moved to the heart of strategic competition. States are not merely investing in algorithms - they are investing in power. Economic primacy, military superiority, and societal control increasingly hinge on who shapes, trains, and governs intelligent systems. The transition from narrow AI applications to generative and autonomous systems has only intensified this urgency. Unlike oil or territory, AI's strategic value lies in intangibles: data, computing power, talent, and algorithmic innovation. These are the new currencies of influence. Control over AI ecosystems - cloud infrastructure, semiconductor supply chains, regulatory standards - has become synonymous with digital sovereignty. The geopolitical map, therefore, is being redrawn not through shifting borders but through control of code and compute. In this emerging order, resilience is defined less by geography and more by technological depth.

Building On The Paris Summit

Building on the momentum of the 2025 AI Action Summit in Paris, the AI Impact Summit 2026 represents an expanded partnership between Paris and Delhi to shape the future of AI through inclusive, responsible, and impact-oriented collaboration. French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to India this week will be an important milestone in this partnership as the two nations inaugurate the India-France Year of Innovation 2026. The summit aims to transition from high-level principles to practical outcomes and partnerships, reinforcing India and France as co-leaders in global AI governance and innovation. The India-France AI partnership reflects a shared vision of leveraging technology for sustainable development, democratic values, and global digital governance, positioning both nations as influential actors in shaping the future of artificial intelligence. By aligning their approaches to responsible and inclusive AI, India and France are seeking to craft a middle path - one that safeguards democratic values while remaining globally competitive. In that sense, their collaboration is as much about shaping global governance debates as it is about fostering domestic innovation.

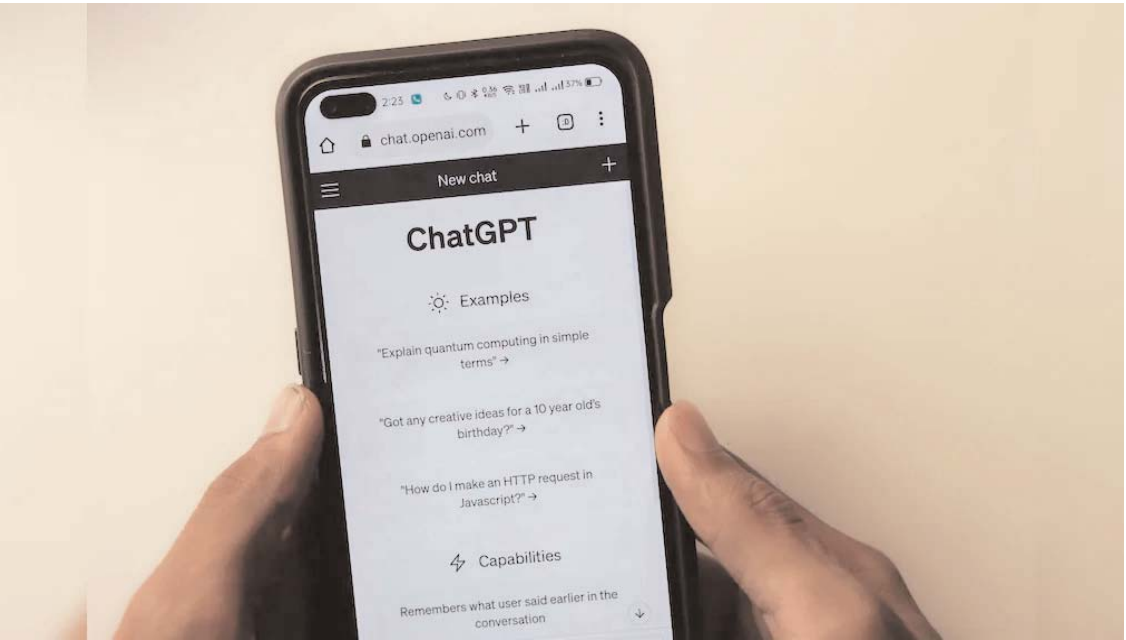
At the core of AI geopolitics lies great-power rivalry, most visibly between the United States and China. For Washington, technological leadership underpins its global pre-eminence; for Beijing, AI mastery is central to national rejuvenation. This is not merely an economic competition, even if the economic stakes are enormous. Estimates suggest AI could add trillions to global GDP, but the distribution of gains will be uneven, privileging those with advanced digital ecosystems. Technological leadership is, thus, inseparable from strategic leadership.

AI Is Everywhere

Security anxieties further sharpen this contest. AI enhances intelligence gathering, cyber capabilities, and autonomous weapons systems. The militarisation of machine learning is no longer speculative - it is underway. Export controls on advanced chips, restrictions on semiconductor supply chains, and tightening investment regimes are symptomatic of a broader technological decoupling. What is emerging resembles a digital Cold War, with competing blocs seeking self-sufficiency in critical technologies. Resources add another combustible layer. The hardware that powers AI depends on critical minerals - lithium, cobalt, rare earths - linking AI competition to the geopolitics of supply chains and energy transitions. At the same time, data itself is fragmenting along national lines, creating politically siloed digital ecosystems. The promise of a globally integrated internet is giving way to sovereign data regimes. Ideology cannot be divorced from this technological contest. Democratic systems emphasise transparency, privacy, and human rights in AI governance, while authoritarian regimes view AI as an instrument of state control and social management. Competing regulatory models are thus exporting competing political values.

Edit

What ChatGPT Is Now Doing With Your Darkest 'Secrets'



A friend in Delhi is involved in a fiery relationship with her self-declared "maverick" partner. She resorted to what modern urban Indians do when love turns, well, let's say, complicated, though it was more than complicated. She consulted relationship counsellors, life coaches, even a "mind game strategist". Never heard of that, but she explained they are available online and charge enormous sums by the hour. But nothing worked for her. Defeated, she decided to divert her attention and jumped onto the ChatGPT bandwagon. She signed up for it casually. At first, it was curiosity. Then it became routine. Slowly, she began sharing her relationship angst almost every day. She spilt everything. Her fears, her doubts, her insecurities, her jealousy, her hope that maybe she was overthinking it all. She did it, secure in the knowledge that she was safe, she won't be judged, and the conversations will remain confidential. A friend in Delhi is involved in a fiery relationship with her self-declared "maverick" partner. She resorted to what modern urban Indians do when love turns, well, let's say, complicated, though it was more than complicated. She consulted relationship counsellors, life coaches, even a "mind game strategist". Never heard of that, but she explained they are available online and charge enormous sums by the hour. But nothing

worked for her. Defeated, she decided to divert her attention and jumped onto the ChatGPT bandwagon. She signed up for it casually. At first, it was curiosity. Then it became routine. Slowly, she began sharing her relationship angst almost every day. She spilt everything. Her fears, her doubts, her insecurities, her jealousy, her hope that maybe she was overthinking it all. She did it, secure in the knowledge that she was safe, she won't be judged, and the conversations will remain confidential.

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A few days ago, she called me to say that she is really, really worried about ChatGPT introducing ads. What if one day, the same system that heard her cry about her failing relationship starts showing her ads for divorce lawyers? Or for couples therapy packages? Or medication for anxiety? She has now limited the use of ChatGPT only to research. As for her partner? That's another topic. The issue at hand right now is that her intimate relationship with ChatGPT is not unusual. For over three years now, millions across the world have been speaking to it, pouring their hearts out, almost as if they are speaking to their own subconscious. They have treated ChatGPT like a confidante. And one company - OpenAI - holds the keys to this vast digital locker. Inside it are not just data points, but patterns of fear, long-

ing, ambition and despair. Mountains of human candour. That intimacy is now at the centre of a growing global debate.

AI Is Getting A Bit Too Personal

Before we move any further, let me say why I will mostly talk about ChatGPT in this column. In India's fast-expanding AI chatbot market, ChatGPT has become the default, everyday AI for students, job-seekers, creators and general users. It accounts for roughly 70-75% of total usage, with Google's Gemini a distant second and tools like Perplexity and Microsoft Copilot occupying much smaller places. Claude is niche, and its consumer share is estimated at just around 1%. My friend's worry is actually everyone's concern, as OpenAI has emailed millions of its users a privacy-policy update to say that it will start placing adverts in ChatGPT free and Go versions. OpenAI has informed users that personalisation will rely on signals, such as user interactions and chat context that remain within the system, and that new features, including contact syncing and age-prediction safeguards for younger users, are being introduced alongside clearer disclosures on how long data is stored and how it is processed. OpenAI claims conversations are not shared with advertisers, that ads will be clearly separated from responses and that marketers will see only

aggregated performance data. Users, it adds, will retain control through settings. It appears to be an attempt to build a revenue model without repeating the mistakes of social media. However, user anxiety is not misplaced. We have already seen in recent times how personal data collected for one purpose can later be used for political influence. Investigations, including by the UK Parliament, and multiple academic studies have shown that data harvested from Facebook was used to build detailed voter profiles and deliver highly personalised political messages during the 2016 US presidential election and the Brexit referendum. It indeed triggered worldwide concern about the influence of digital platforms on democracy. The worry now is similar. If AI platforms hold the most intimate conversations of millions of people, what stops a future deal between a government, a political party or a large corporation and a technology company to use that behavioural insight to send customised political messaging or influence voters one individual at a time? This is not about what is happening today. It is about what could become possible once the data exists at that scale. In the end, trust will depend not on company assurances but on clear laws that make such use illegal and technically impossible.

High-Profile Resignations

In the past few days, two high-profile resignations from major artificial intelligence companies have highlighted concerns about where this technology is headed. Mrinank Sharma, who led the Safeguards Research Team at Anthropic - an American AI company based in San Francisco - resigned publicly, warning that the "world is in peril". Anthropic is best known for its chatbot called Claude, which competes directly with ChatGPT. The Wall Street Journal reported over the weekend that the US military used Claude during the operation in which Nicolás Maduro was captured in Venezuela. This is a high-profile example of how artificial intelligence is now being built into real military missions. Sharma's job was to ensure that these systems behaved safely and ethically.

Pak 'Impostors' To Jamaat Trolls: What's Going On With Bangladesh Social Media?

There's a lot of talk nowadays on 'cognitive warfare' in future wars and how hostile countries are likely to use it. In Bangladesh, it is happening in real time. Its elections witnessed unprecedented social media influence operations across platforms, dangerous in a country with 99% mobile penetration and an educated youth. The good part is that a watchful Bangladesh media called out those involved, naming and shaming many. The bad part is that the manipulation has already led to trouble after elections, with more to come. Who's Spending The Most It's not that social media use is unusual in political campaigning. It's just that this time, it was used across the board, with major parties spending an estimated Taka 2.5 crore on social media, primarily Facebook campaigns. A reputed tracking site, Who Targets Me, analysed Facebook and Instagram, among other platforms, and noted that the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) had 234 pages, accounting for 54% of spending. It was closely followed by the Jamaat, which used 199 linked pages accounting for 38% of the total. Others were pretty much flat-lined. But examination of data shows that the largest single spends were from DailyNews24, which masquerades as a news organisation but is, in reality, a Jamaat organ. The second and fourth spenders are also Jamaat sites. Again, all this is generally acceptable, except that it points to a lot of money in Jamaat's hands. What is concerning, however, is data computed by The Daily Star on deepfakes, text, videos, photocards and a variety of tools used to spread 'news' bypassing traditional media. The BBC also noted highly sophisticated AI content showing 'news anchors' and uniformed 'officers' delivering highly slanted messages. One such clip was viewed 8 million times. Disinformation was rampant the whole day of the voting. Unsurprisingly, 65% was by entities that appear aligned with the Jamaat, according to The Daily Star's findings. As for the Awami League, it trailed at 21.2%, pro-BNP groups at 7%, and the National Citizen Party (NCP) at just



3%. That's surprising for a youthful segment, which would presumably have been the most competent to use social media. But then, the NCP seems to have been manipulated extensively. Its cadres won just five seats even as the Jamaat's student wing took university after university in elections. So, at least one factor that explains Jamaat's rise from some 11-odd seats to its record high of 68 is its huge social media 'outreach'. Even so, all this is in the past. What is worrying is the spate of disinformation that has continued post-elections. The Mayhem Continues Even as media on the ground warn of dangerous levels of street anger, a reputed fact-checking site has reported a surge in public opinion that the Jamaat was cheated out of elections. The basis for this were the alleged narrow margins between the BNP and Jamaat candidates; some said that at one place it was as low as 53 votes and that some 57 seats were 'stolen' from the party. Reliable fact-checks show no such narrow margins; even those seats where the vote gap was just around 5,000 were fewer than 22 in number. Ironically, even then, it was the BNP that suffered, not the Jamaat. The result of all this is that the Jamaat chief is being castigated for accepting an election purportedly manipulated by the 'deep state'. Unsurprisingly, Shafiqur Rehman noted hurt among his cadres and declared that the elec-

tion was riddled with "inconsistencies" and that there was a lack of transparency from the Election Commission. In short, such 'cognitive' wars may end up throwing a political head into a dangerous situation, especially since the recipients of such content are mainly in the age group of 25-34 years, urban, and, in many cases, seething with anger. The Add-on: Hate Against India Add to all this a layer of anti-India networks. An analysis observes how outlets like Bangla Vision (506K subscribers) spread false rumours about India, even downgrading Op Sindoor in their content. The recently reopened Amar Des, run by publisher and editor Mahmudur Rehman - eulogised, oddly, in a Ghana news source - is also backing the 'Indian domination' narrative. Rehman, who returned recently from exile in Turkey after the Awami League had allegedly framed cases against him, was closely aligned with the July 24 uprising. His Facebook page, now seemingly rebranded as Political Lens (658K followers), recently put out reports about how Jamaat leaders' houses were torched by BNP workers. Overall, the anti-India sentiment in Bangladesh has, unsurprisingly, skyrocketed after the recent, entirely unnecessary, hysteria against Shah Rukh Khan and Mustafizur Rehman, wherein Jamaat handles effectively milked the incident to whip up anti-India anger.

'Team Rahul' And 'Team Priyanka': Inside Congress' Plans For Kerala And Assam

Disclaimer First: There is no such thing as Team Rahul or Team Priyanka within the Indian National Congress. What exists in reality is a blurred, imaginary line-up of Team Rahul and Team Priyanka Gandhi. They don't function at cross-purposes or differ on key ideological issues. However, in practice, they are often seen following slightly different 'chaal, chalan, chehra', as they say, from each other. The upcoming assembly polls this year in West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry are set to have a crucial bearing not only on the country's politics but also on the grand old party and its internal dynamics. To a discerning observer, the Congress line-up for Assam and Kerala is most interesting. The party's prospects of winning in Kerala are high, while in Assam, it is merely fancying its chances. Team Priyanka In Assam It may be a pure coincidence, but the Congress team for Assam is, in effect, Team Priyanka. She is the chairperson of the screening committee that will select 126 party candidates. The list of observers consists of DK Shivakumar and Bhupesh Baghel, both seen to be favourably inclined towards her. There were efforts to draft poll strategist Naresh Arora, too, in the Congress campaign, but the DesignBoxed head is said to be staying away from it for now. The All India Congress Committee (AICC) General Secretary in charge is Bhunwar Jitendra Singh, whose loyalty towards the Gandhi sib-



lings is absolute. As a former Alwar maharaja, he is a wildlife enthusiast, which also brings him closer to Priyanka. Rahul Takes Kerala In Kerala, all key players, except for perhaps Sachin Pilot and Shashi Tharoor, can be classified as Team Rahul. To be sure, Sachin's stature within the Congress is tall, which prevents him from being projected into any team or camp. Tharoor had been focusing on his own brand of politics all this while, but of late, he has again aligned with the rest of the Kerala Congress to shore up the party's prospects. Karnataka Minister KJ George, Rajya Sabha MP Imran Pratapgarhi and party leader Kanhaiya Kumar are other observers for the Kerala assembly polls. Team Rahul is fully and solely represented by KC Venugopal, who himself loves being Rahul's eyes and ears. While Ramesh Chennithala is a strong contender for the Chief Minister's post, Venugopal is hoping to upstage him

with the help of Rahul. Regardless of whether Venugopal becomes Chief Minister of Kerala or not, old-timers within the grand old party wonder why the Assam and Kerala polls are being seen through the lens of Priyanka and Rahul camps. Is there a design that the Gandhi siblings failed to see? The Assam Muddle As many survey agencies indicate, Congress is expected to come back to power in Kerala, while there is a big, big question mark over it being able to dislodge the Himanta Biswa Sarma-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Assam. In any case, the party has been caught in an awkward muddle in Assam in the wake of an avalanche of 'resignations' and 'revolts' in the state unit. The former state party chief, Bhupen Borah, has threatened to join the BJP in spite of Priyanka Gandhi's efforts to retain him. Borah had been in touch with Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma even when he was

heading the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC). The buzz is that he has been offered a ministerial berth by Sarma in the next government. On the other hand, a number of Muslim MLAs and leaders who are being denied assembly tickets are queuing up outside the Rajiv Dol office. Party insiders attribute this to AICC General Secretary Bhunwar Jitendra Singh's over-reliance on party MP Rakibul Hasan, who is increasingly turning unpopular among Muslim leaders. The failure to set up a subcommittee to look into alliances is also proving costly. It seems Jitendra Singh is more focused on bagging a Rajya Sabha berth from his home state, Rajasthan, rather than committing his body and spirit to the Assam contest. Who Gains, Who Loses If the Congress wins in Kerala, Rahul's close lieutenants - everyone from Venugopal and KJ George to Kanhaiya Kumar - stand to gain from it.

World’s largest AI summit opens to packed halls in Delhi

New Delhi: The world’s largest artificial intelligence (AI) summit opened to packed halls and long queues on Monday, February 16, as tech moguls, industry leaders, policymakers, founders, and technologists thronged the venue for the conference, where India is set to push for widening access to AI and seek international agreement on global AI commons. With huge billboards around the city welcoming delegates, speakers and guests at the AI Impact Summit, Bharat Mandapam saw long queues much before the conference opened at 9:30 am, signalling the interest in the subject and the conference. The enthusiasm was high despite the fact that the high-profile speakers – from Sundar Pichai of Alphabet to Sam Altman of OpenAI and Dario Amodei of Anthropic – haven’t even arrived in the country. Their sessions start not before Wednesday, February 18. Final two days of the Summit – February 19 and 20 – will see more than 20 heads of state and government, including France’s Emmanuel Macron and Brazil’s Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, along with Indian Prime Minister Narendra



Modi, talking about the future of AI alongside business leaders and investors. A team of PTI reporters on the ground saw long queues outside the halls that are hosting different sessions. There were some logistics issues, but the conference was orderly and well organised. Registrations exceeded expectations Multiple parallel sessions are happening at the same time, and all of them are packed to capacity. From February 16 to 20, the summit will feature over 3,250 speakers and more than 500 sessions. “Sessions are packed. There are long

queues, and once the halls fill up, doors are closed, which creates some hassle for those still waiting outside,” an enthusiastic participant said. “You have to be there for a session well in advance. One cannot float around from session to session like in other conferences.” Another person said an interesting line-up of speakers is drawing huge crowds. “There is a lot of buzz around AI.” Organisers said registrations exceeded expectations, reflecting accelerating interest in AI infrastructure, enterprise adoption and sovereign compute capabilities.

Panel discussions on the future of employability in the age of AI, skilling, safe and trusted AI at scale, AI governance and infrastructure, generative AI deployment, and public sector use cases drew standing-room-only audiences, with participants crowding corridors between sessions to network and exchange ideas. Google, OpenAI, Amazon, among others at the expo An expo where the who’s who of the tech industry – from Google to Nvidia, Amazon, Meta, OpenAI and Microsoft, besides homegrown giants – put on display innovations

on AI is held alongside. Focused on AI’s transformative impact, it includes 300+ exhibitions, 13 country pavilions, and addresses themes of People, Planet, and Progress. The summit offers India not just a chance to showcase its vast tech-savvy population and engineering talent but also to push for democratizing AI access to the global south. Besides wider access to AI, New Delhi may also seek international agreement on ‘global AI commons’ or a repository of use cases for AI in key sectors that can be shared. Summit focused on expanding AI technologies, digital infrastructure, and more The United Kingdom hosted the first AI Summit in 2023 that focused on AI safety and extreme risks. The next edition in France in 2025 saw trumpeting big investments in the tech sector. For Prime Minister Modi, it offers an opportunity to showcase the impressive digital infrastructure and tech prowess that has attracted the likes of OpenAI and Anthropic to set up operations in the country, as well as an array of data centre commitments by giants such as Amazon, Google and Microsoft.

Hyatt Hotels chairman steps down over Jeffrey Epstein ties

Billionaire Thomas Pritzker says he has retired as the Hyatt Hotels chairman, after his ties with Jeffrey Epstein surfaced in the latest files released by the US Department of Justice. He said in a statement on Monday that he had exercised “terrible judgement” in maintaining contact with the convicted sex offender. Recently released files showed that Pritzker was in regular contact with Epstein in the years after the financier’s 2008 plea deal on sex crime charges. Pritzker is the latest business figure to face scrutiny after the release of files showing the extent of Epstein’s network of high-profile elites. Pritzker, who has held the role of executive chairman at the global hotel chain since 2004, said he decided to step down after discussions with fellow board members and would not stand for re-election. “My job and responsibility is to provide good stewardship... Good stewardship includes ensuring a proper transition at Hyatt”, said Pritzker, the billionaire heir to the hotel chain’s fortune. He said: “Good stewardship also means protecting Hyatt, particularly in the context of my association with Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell which I deeply regret.” Maxwell was convicted in 2021 for her role in lur-



ing underage girls for Epstein. He was convicted in 2008 for soliciting prostitution from a child and died while in custody facing sex trafficking charges in 2019. Pritzker said he condemned the actions of the pair, adding: “There is no excuse for failing to distance myself sooner.” His statement was paired with a letter to the board, in which Pritzker points out that he will be 76 this year and that the company is in a “strong and sustainable position” with the strength to thrive. He does not mention his links to Epstein or Maxwell in his letter to the board. The board named Mark Hoplamazian, Hyatt’s president and chief executive, to take over from

Pritzker as chairman. Hoplamazian said Pritzker’s decision “reflects his stewardship and strong commitment” to Hyatt over decades of service. The release of the Epstein files has revealed the financier’s ties to numerous prominent figures in politics, business and academia, many of whom are facing scrutiny. There is no suggestion that appearing in the documents suggests any wrongdoing. Earlier this month, Goldman Sachs’ top lawyer, Kathy Ruemmler, announced she would leave the company after emails in the latest tranche of Epstein documents showed she had a close relationship with the financier.

INFOSYS STOCK RISES OVER 3 PC AFTER STRATEGIC TIE-UP WITH ANTHROPIC

New Delhi: Shares of IT major Infosys rose more than 3 per cent on Tuesday, February 17, after the company said it has entered into a strategic collaboration with Anthropic to develop and deliver advanced enterprise artificial intelligence (AI) solutions. On the BSE, the scrip of company increased 3.27 per cent to Rs 1,410.95 per piece. Markets are trading in the positive territory, with the 30-share BSE Sensex rising 126.19 points, or 0.15 per cent, to 83,403.34. BSE-focussed IT index gained 1.45 per cent, with Infosys emerging as the top performer. Markets are trading in the positive territory, with the 30-share BSE Sensex rising 126.19 points, or 0.15 per cent, to 83,403.34. Infosys on Tuesday announced a strategic collaboration with Anthropic, an AI safety and research company, to develop and deliver advanced enterprise AI solutions to companies across telecommunications, financial services, manufacturing, and software development. The



Bengaluru-based Infosys said the collaboration with Anthropic will focus initially on the telecommunications sector through a dedicated Anthropic Center of Excellence to build and deploy AI agents tailored to industry-specific operations. The partnership will further expanded across industries, including financial services, manufacturing, and software development, the company said in a regulatory filing. At its core, the strategic alliance integrates Anthropic’s Claude models, including Claude Code, with Infosys Topaz AI offerings to help

enterprises automate workflows, accelerate software delivery, and adopt AI with governance and transparency for regulated industries. The collaboration will also help organisations modernise legacy systems, combining Infosys Topaz and Claude to accelerate migration and reduce the cost of updating aging infrastructure, it added. “Our collaboration with Anthropic marks a strategic leap toward advancing enterprise AI, enabling organisations to unlock value and become more intelligent, resilient, and responsible,”

Salil Parekh, Chief Executive Officer, Infosys said. Anthropic Co-Founder and CEO Dario Amodei said, “Infosys has exactly that kind of expertise across important industries: telecom, financial services, and manufacturing. Their developers are already using Claude Code to accelerate their work and to create AI agents for industries that demand precision, compliance, and deep domain knowledge.” Markets are trading in the positive territory, with the 30-share BSE Sensex rising 126.19 points, or 0.15 per cent, to 83,403.34.

Aakash Institute Telangana Excels in JEE Main 2026: Jayanth Shekhar Emerges as Topper with 99.99 Percentile; 24 Students Score Above 99.5 Percentile and 43 Above 99 Percentile

Hyderabad, Telangana, 17 Feb, 2026: Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL) four students from Telangana have again demonstrated exemplary performance during the JEE Main 2026 (Session 1) and given testimony to the continued success of their academic program throughout their region. According to the results released by the National Testing Agency (NTA) on February 16, students from Aakash Institute, Telangana Branches, delivered an excellent performance in JEE Main 2026. According to the results released by the National Testing Agency (NTA) on February 16, students from Aakash centres in Telangana delivered outstanding results with 2 students scored above 99.99 percentile, 6 students scored above 99.9 percentile, 24 students scored above 99.5 percentile, and a total of 43 students secured above 99 percentile, reflecting an exceptional overall performance across the state. Jayanth



Shekhar emerged as the topper with an impressive 99.996 percentile other high achievers include Hanzalah Abedeen (99.992 percentile), Alamuri Chaitanya (99.97 percentile), Harish Adithya M G (99.92 percentile), B Abhijeet Reddy (99.91 percentile) and Lokesh Vudumula (99.91 percentile). Altogether, six students scored above 99.9 percentile, reflecting the strong academic foundation and rigorous preparation provided at Aakash. Commenting on the

students’ accomplishments, Mr. Dheeraj Kumar Misra, Chief Academic and Business Head, Aakash Educational Services Limited said: “The exceptional results of our students Telangana from is a testament to their commitment to academics, as well as the strength of the Aakash educational ecosystem. We are so proud of their hard work and congratulate them on their accomplishments. We wish them continued success in their future endeavours.”

Many of the students also commented that by self-discipline, consistent practice, rigorous training, timely mentoring and regular assessment helped many of these students achieve success. Through their structured curriculum, the guidance from a qualified instructor and the regular opportunity to take a simulated test, they maintained focus on their studies, identified weaknesses sooner, and increased their performance steadily.

The Dutch love four-day working weeks, but are they sustainable?

The Dutch have quietly adopted working just a four-day week. But what has been its impact, and can it last? “Your kids are only young once,” says Gavin Arm, co-founder of Amsterdam-based small business Positivity Branding. “Most people, if they’re running a company, they throw themselves into it and work, work, work to try and make it. And they’re probably doing it for their kids. “But then they look back when they’re older and go ‘I missed that part of their lives’, and that’s awful. We don’t want to be like that.” Arm is speaking to me at the firm’s cosy office in the Dutch capital’s lively De Pijp neighbourhood. South of the city centre, it is known for its bustling markets, bohemian history and heavy gentrification. His business, which he co-founded with colleague Bert de Wit, advises companies on their brand identity and packaging. Arm and de Wit switched themselves and their staff to a four-day week seven years ago. Employees did not have to take a cut in



salary, and nor did they have to work longer hours on the four days. Instead, their hours remain at 32-per-week, or eight-per-day. “The work-life balance was at the heart of it,” adds de Wit, who disagrees with the suggestion that their staff are now doing less work for the same amount of money. Instead he puts it down to “working smarter not harder”. “In other countries they might spend a lot of time at work, but that doesn’t mean they work a lot. Changing the culture and the mindset is the biggest challenge.” Working a four-day week has now

been common across the Netherlands for a number of years, with even the largest companies getting on board. Meanwhile, the country’s biggest union, FNV, is continuing to lobby the Dutch government to make it the official recommendation. And, anyway, Dutch employees already have a legal right to request reduced hours. “We like time to free up our mind. I get the best ideas when I walk my dog,” says Marieke Peppers, chief people officer at the Dutch software firm Nmbms. She takes Friday off every week. “No one is expecting me, I get my inspiration, I’m in a better place, and the company is too.” Peppers adds that since the company switched to a four-day week “staff sickness is down, and retention is up”. But she says that the idea was initially a hard sell. “We had to convince investors. Our own people were sceptical at first, I’m already not capable of finishing my work in five days’ [was one reaction].” Some people were feeling pressure.

New Holland Unveils Workmaster 105 with HVAC Cabin for Power-Packed, All-Weather Farming in Telangana

Hyderabad, February 2026 New Holland, a brand of CNH, today launched the Workmaster 105 with HVAC Cabin in Telangana, marking the latest addition to its high horsepower tractor portfolio. This new variant brings all-weather operator comfort along with advanced performance features to New Holland’s 106 HP tractor range, setting new benchmarks for convenience, durability, and productivity in demanding field conditions. The Workmaster 105, powered by a 106 HP, 3.4-litre FPT (Fiat Powertrain Technologies) TREM-IV engine, delivers exceptional performance and fuel efficiency with lower revolutions per minute (RPM). The new variant with the HVAC cabin offers all season comfort with heating and air conditioning system featuring six roof vents. It also provides a noise-free environment and an air-suspended seat for fatigue-free operation, while the pneumatic reversible fan allows uninterrupted work even in dusty post-harvest conditions, particularly useful after paddy harvesting during baling operations. Commenting on the launch, Narinder Mittal, President & Managing Director –



India, CNH, said, “Telangana has rapidly emerged as one of the most dynamic and fast-evolving agricultural markets in India, with increasing adoption of advanced mechanization across diverse crops and applications. It is also a focus market for our India growth strategy. The Workmaster 105 with HVAC Cabin is designed to combine high power output with an enclosed, climate-controlled workspace that enables longer and more productive operating hours. For farmers across Telangana’s

varied and heat-intensive farming conditions, this launch underlines our commitment to delivering technology that supports productivity while making operations more comfortable and reliable.” The Workmaster 105, introduced to the Indian market last year after proving its success as a Made-in-India model for global markets, is now available with an HVAC Cabin. The new variant builds on the strong performance and wide acceptance of the Workmaster series, which has

already surpassed 15,000 units of sales in India and worldwide. It comes equipped with a 20 forward + 20 reverse Power Shuttle transmission and a robust 3,500 kg lift capacity, enabling smooth handling of heavy implements. The all-weather cabin offers protection from extreme temperatures, while the complete wet clutch for the main drive and Power Take-Off (PTO) ensures durability and reliability under continuous load, particularly in demanding applications such as baling, potato planting, and trenching. Workmaster 105 is also suitable for advanced applications like baling, forage harvesting and rig applications etc. Having established a strong presence in the United States and other international markets, the Workmaster 105 is now poised to see rising demand in India with the introduction of the HVAC Cabin. With this launch, New Holland continues to strengthen its leadership in the premium tractor segment, delivering power, performance, and all-season comfort that redefines the high-HP tractor experience for Indian farmers.

Jesse Jackson dies aged 84 as Trump pays tribute to 'force of nature' civil rights leader

Jesse Jackson was a key voice of the US civil rights movement of the 1960s, and went on to be a prominent US political figure. In the clip below, we've pulled together some of the key moments in his life and work. In Jesse Jackson's 1988 speech at the Democratic National Convention, he used his platform to shed light on his early years and his relatability. "I wasn't always on television, writers weren't always outside my door," he told delegates. "When I was born late one afternoon October 8 in Greenville, South Carolina, no writers asked my mother her name - nobody chose to write down our address." He said he was born to a teenage mother who herself was born to a teenage mother - Helen Burns was 16 at the time she had Jesse and, unmarried, was expelled from her local Baptist church after she became pregnant. "I understand - I know abandonment and people being mean to

you," he continued. "I'm a working person's person [...] I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth." His speech ended with the refrain "keep hope alive" and would be echoed decades later in the "hope and change" slogan of Obama's successful 2008 presidential campaign. Former vice-president Kamala Harris has paid tribute to Jackson, calling him "one of America's greatest patriots". Harris, who ran on the Democrat ticket for the White House in 2024 says in a post on X that Jackson's own campaigns for the nomination "electrified millions of Americans and showed them what could be possible". She says that he "gave a voice to people who were removed from power and politics." "He let us know our voices mattered. He instilled in us that we were somebody. And he widened the path for generations to follow in his footsteps and lead," she adds. Harris recalls driving with a



bumper sticker which read "Jesse Jackson for President" as a student, and says "you would not believe how people from every walk of life would give me a thumbs up or honk of support." "Reverend Jackson was a selfless leader, mentor, and friend to me and so many others," Harris adds. Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy has recalled how Jesse Jackson was "one of the

first people to call" him following the 2011 riots that started in Lammy's constituency of Tottenham. He says Jackson was a "pillar of the civil rights movement" and a "dear friend" of his predecessor, the former Tottenham MP Bernie Grant. "It was a privilege to share such precious time with him in Chicago and London over the years," Lammy writes on X. "May his legacy live on."

US President Donald Trump has described Jesse Jackson as a "force of nature like few others before him" in a tribute following the civil rights leader's death. In a statement posted on Truth Social, Trump described Jackson as a good man with "lots of personality, grit and street smarts". He says it was his pleasure to "help Jesse along the way", and says this is despite - he claims - that he is consistently called a racist by the "scoundrels and lunatics" on the "radical left". "He loved his family greatly, and to them I send my deepest sympathies and condolences. Jesse will be missed!" he adds. Leader of the House Democrats Hakeem Jeffries says Jackson "was a legendary voice for the voiceless," in a tribute to the late civil rights leader posted on X. "For decades, while laboring in the vineyards of the community, he inspired us to keep hope alive in the struggle for liberty and justice for

all," Jeffries writes. "We are thankful for the incredible service of Rev. Jesse Jackson to the nation and his profound sacrifice as the people's champion." Jackson bore witness to several decisive moments in US history - including Barack Obama's election as the country's first black president. He was seen in tears on the night Obama won the contest in Grant Park, Chicago, in November 2008. "I thought about the moment. The movement," he told Vanity Fair, external in 2020. "I wish they could have been there. Dr. King and Medgar Evers and Fannie Lou Hamer. "People who'd paid the supreme price. If God had let them live just 15 seconds more to see the fruits of their labor. "I was blessed to be there to represent them as best I tried to." If you're just joining us, US civil rights leader Jesse Jackson died "peacefully" on Tuesday morning aged 84, his family has confirmed.

Nuclear talks between US and Iran end in Geneva



A second round of talks between Iran and the United States, aimed at resolving their dispute over Tehran's nuclear programme, have ended in the Swiss city of Geneva. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said the two countries had reached an understanding on the main "guiding principles", but work still needs to be done. The US has not yet commented. The indirect discussions followed repeated military threats by Washington against Iran over the country's deadly crackdown on anti-government protests, as well as its nuclear activities. Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One ahead of the latest talks, US President Donald Trump

said he believed Iran wanted to make a deal. The foreign ministry in Tehran, meanwhile, said it believed that the US position on the nuclear issue had moved towards "a more realistic one". Before Tuesday's meeting, mediated by Oman, Iran said it would focus on its nuclear programme and the potential lifting of economic sanctions imposed by the US. Washington has previously indicated it wanted to discuss other issues as well, such as Iran's missile development. Framing the talks as "very important", Trump said he would be "indirectly" involved and suggested Tehran was motivated this time to negotiate.

US surveillance jets tracked from Alaska to UK air base as Iran tensions continue



Yesterday we identified the US aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln in satellite imagery off the coast of Oman. Now we are working to track another carrier, USS Gerald R Ford, which has been reportedly ordered to sail from the Caribbean to the Gulf as part of a broader military build-up in the region. On 13 February, we identified a vessel approximately 340km (210 miles) off the island of Guadeloupe heading east. The vessel appears consistent with an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, a common accompanying ship for US aircraft carriers such as USS Gerald R Ford. While this sighting does not confirm the Ford's location it is the closest indicator so far of its possible movements. As we continue to monitor the buildup of US military forces which could be used to carry out strikes on Iran, two key airborne warning and command aircraft used for battlefield management have arrived in the UK. The E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System (Awacs) aircraft landed this morning at RAF Mildenhall in Suffolk and were photographed by

an aviation enthusiast. The pictures allowed us to visually match the E-3s' serial numbers with flight tracking data, which indicates the two aircraft took off from Anchorage, Alaska. The next movement of these key assets will be keenly watched, given many analysts regarded their arrival as being one of the final "puzzle pieces" needed for any US attack on Iran. Steffan Watkins, a researcher who tracks ships and aircraft using open source information, previously told BBC Verify: "If things play out the same way as Midnight Hammer [the codename for US attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities in June 2025] it will show the strike is imminent". As various models have become readily available to people around the world, we've tracked all kinds of ways that creators try to mislead audiences into believing that their fake videos are real. Here's a quick guide on how to spot disguised AI watermarks. Commenting on Labour's U-turn over postponing some local elections in England, the leader of the Liberal Democrats Ed Davey.

US Senator Mark Kelly tells he will 'seriously consider' White House run

US Democratic Senator Mark Kelly has said he will "seriously consider" running for president in 2028 as he battles the Trump administration over a video in which he urged military personnel to refuse illegal orders. The Arizona senator, who was accused of "seditious behaviour" by Donald Trump over the November clip, said he and his wife, Gabrielle Giffords, received "many" death threats after the president's comments. "We get them on a weekly basis now," he told BBC Newsnight. "We had to get security to protect us 24 hours a day." Asked if he was considering a White House run, the retired Navy captain said he was considering it "because we're in some seriously challenging

times". senators. "I'm one of the very few engineers, I'm the only person with a graduate degree in engineering the United States Senate. I've got combat experience, that's kind of rare. I spent 25 years in the military," he said. He added: "It's a serious decision. I just haven't made it yet." Kelly, 61, and five other lawmakers, who had all either served in the military or had roles in intelligence, have been targeted by the government after they published a 90-second video encouraging troops to disobey orders they deemed illegal. It was released at the time of rising questions of the legality regarding American strikes on alleged narco-trafficking boats off the coast of South America.

HILLARY CLINTON ACCUSES TRUMP ADMINISTRATION OF EPSTEIN FILES 'COVER-UP'

Hillary Clinton has accused US President Donald Trump's administration of a "cover-up" over its handling of files related to the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. "Get the files out. They are slow-walking it," the former US secretary of state told the BBC in Berlin, where she attended the annual World Forum. The White House insisted that by releasing the files they had done "more for the victims than Democrats ever have". Millions of new files relating to the late sex offender Epstein were released by the US Department of Justice (DoJ) earlier this month. At the time, the deputy attorney general said three million pages were not released - due to the existence of personal medical files, graphic depictions of child abuse or



other material that would jeopardise investigations. When asked whether Andrew Mountbatten Windsor should go before a congressional committee, Hillary Clinton said: "I think everybody should testify who is asked to testify." Appearing in the files is not an indication of wrongdoing. Andrew has always denied any wrongdoing. The committee does not have the power to compel him to appear in front of

them, but put pressure on the Clintons to do so, which they agreed to last month. Bill Clinton will make his appearance on 27 February and Hillary Clinton will appear the day before. A planned vote to hold the Clintons in contempt of Congress for initially refusing to appear was shelved after the pair agreed to testify. It will be the first time a former US president has testified to a congressional panel since Gerald Ford did

so in 1983. Hillary Clinton reiterated the couple's call for their congressional committee hearing to be in public rather than a closed-door deposition. "We will show up but we think it would be better to have it in public," Hillary Clinton told the BBC. Republican committee chair James Comer had accused the Clintons of "delay", saying the pair "caved" as a contempt vote loomed. "I just want it to be fair," said Hillary Clinton. "I want everybody treated the same way." "We have nothing to hide. We have called for the full release of these files repeatedly. We think sunlight is the best disinfectant." The former presidential candidate argued that she and her husband were being used to divert attention away from Trump.

FRANCE RELEASES SUSPECTED RUSSIAN 'SHADOW FLEET' TANKER AFTER FINE PAID

France says it has released an oil tanker suspected of being part of Russia's sanctions-busting "shadow fleet" after its owner paid a fine. French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot said the vessel, named Grinch, was "leaving French waters" on Tuesday having paid a penalty of "several million euros". The tanker was seized by French forces in the Mediterranean in January and then diverted to the port city of Marseille. It had set sail from Murmansk in northern Russia and was flying under a Comoros flag, officials said. Moscow's so-called shadow fleet is a clandestine network of tankers used to evade Western sanc-



tions on Russian oil exports by using aged tankers with obscure ownership or insurance. Many Western countries imposed sanctions on Russian oil after it launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. "Circumventing European

sanctions comes at a price. Russia will no longer be able to finance its war with impunity through a ghost fleet off our coasts," Barrot said in a post on X. He added: "The tanker Grinch will leave French waters after shelling out several million

euros and three weeks of costly immobilisation at Fos-sur-Mer. Let's keep it up." "As part of a guilty plea procedure the company that owns the vessel was sentenced by the Marseille judicial court to a financial penalty of confiscation," the public prosecutor's office and regional maritime authorities said in a statement. The exact amount the vessel's owner was fined was unclear. Shadow fleets are becoming increasingly common. A growing number of tankers transporting Russian, Iranian and Venezuelan oil are using a variety of methods to conceal their identities and contravene Western sanctions.

Nancy Guthrie's family cleared as possible suspects, with search in its third week



Police in Arizona say family members of Nancy Guthrie have been cleared as possible suspects, as speculation grows on social media about the whereabouts of the missing 84-year-old mother of NBC anchor Savannah Guthrie. "The family has been nothing but co-operative and gracious and are victims in this case," said the Pima County Sheriff's Office, which has been leading the investigation. "To suggest otherwise is not only wrong, it is cruel," the office said in a statement. The Pima County Sheriff Chris Nanos told NBC News that his office sent out the statement because people had been "attacking the innocent". Nanos told NBC in a text message that "kindness matters" and that it was "every cops duty to stand up and be that voice for our victims". The search for Guthrie, who police say went missing on the early hours of 1 February, is now in its third week - and no suspects have been named. Police have said Guthrie was taken from her home, and that blood was found on the floor of her porch. A video taken from a doorbell camera at Guthrie's residence has shown the man

believed to have seized her. He wore a mask, gloves and backpack. After conducting a forensic analysis of the video, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announced last week that it believed the man was between 5ft 9in and 5ft 10in (175-177cm) tall, with an average build. They have also said they believe the suspect bought the mask and backpack at a Walmart and are contacting stores to find a list of people who made the purchases. Officials have been reviewing surveillance footage from nearby Walmart locations, Nanos has said. Investigators have also been testing a glove they found that seems to match the ones worn by the suspect. They have created a DNA profile of an unknown male to put into a national FBI database, according to the BBC's US partner CBS News. That database could show a match if the suspect had a previous arrest and gave law enforcement a DNA sample in the past. On Sunday, Savannah Guthrie, the Today show co-host, issued another video appeal to "whoever has her, or knows where she is". She added that Nancy Guthrie's loved ones "still have hope".

THIRD ROUND OF RUSSIA-UKRAINE TALKS STARTS IN GENEVA AS STRIKES CONTINUE

Russian and Ukrainian delegations are meeting in Geneva for the latest round of US-brokered talks, a week before the fourth anniversary of Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Expectations for a breakthrough remain low, as Moscow has not wavered from its maximalist demands for Ukrainian territory. Russia's strikes on Ukraine are continuing on a nightly basis, further damaging the country's already battered power grid as subzero temperatures continue. Hours before the delegations met in Switzerland, Moscow carried out a large combined aerial attack on Ukraine, hitting 12 regions with 400 drones and almost 30 missiles. At least three people

were killed. The latest attacks showed the "extent to which Russia disregards peace efforts", Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said. Russia said its air defences had repelled more than 150 drones, while an oil refinery caught on fire after a Ukrainian drone strike. Tuesday's talks are mediated by Steve Witkoff, Donald Trump's special envoy, and Jared Kushner, the US president's son-in-law. Ukraine is represented by National Security Council Secretary Rustem Umerov and President Volodymyr Zelensky's chief of staff, Kyrylo Budanov. The Russian delegation includes President Vladimir Putin's aide Vladimir Medinsky and



members of the military intelligence figures. "I don't think we should expect any news today," said Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, adding the talks would continue on Wednesday. Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One, Trump on Tuesday said Ukraine had

"better come to the table fast." Trump has previously signalled his impatience with the lack of swift progress in solving the four-year conflict. Russia occupies roughly 20% of Ukraine, including large parts of the eastern Donbas region. The Kremlin wants Ukraine to hand over the rest

of the region, which Ukraine has ruled out. For Kyiv, robust security guarantees from the West - including the US - must come before any settlement with Russia can be agreed. At least three energy workers were killed near the frontline city of Sloviansk in Monday's overnight attacks, Ukraine's deputy Energy Minister Artem Nekrasov said. A further nine people - including children - were injured across the country, President Zelensky said. More than 10 residential buildings and railway infrastructure damaged. "Russia must be held to account for its aggression," he wrote on X, adding: "For peace to be real and just, action must target the sole source of this aggres-

sion". Kyiv said 12 regions were hit, damaging infrastructure and leaving thousands without power in the southern port city of Odesa. DTEK, the country's largest private energy firm, said power infrastructure in the city had suffered "incredibly serious" damage, adding it would take a long time to return to a working condition. Ukraine is facing an acute energy crisis after months of relentless Russian attacks on its infrastructure and as it struggles through a freezing winter. It launched its own volley of attacks on Russia overnight. Officials said a fire broke out at the Ilsky oil refinery in the southern Krasnodar region after a drone strike.

India's T20 World Cup Super 8 Opponents, Dates And Venues Confirmed

India's Super 8 opponents are now confirmed. With Zimbabwe becoming the latest team to advance to the Super 8 stage of the ongoing T20 World Cup 2026 after their match against Ireland in Pallekele was washed out on Tuesday, the dates for India's Super 8 clashes are now finalised. The defending champions have been placed alongside Zimbabwe, the West Indies, and last season's runners-up, South Africa. India will take on South Africa on February 22 in Ahmedabad, then move to Chennai, where they will play Zimbabwe on February 26, before concluding their Super 8 campaign in Kolkata on March 1, where they will face the West Indies. India advanced to the Super 8 stage after beating arch-rivals Pakistan by 61 runs in Colombo on Sunday. They currently top Group A with three wins from three matches. India will play their final group-stage match against the



Netherlands at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Wednesday. The two countries have met only once before in T20 Internationals, with India winning their 2022 T20 World Cup clash in Sydney. The Suryakumar Yadav-led Indian team will be eyeing a fourth consecutive win after victories over the USA, Namibia, and Pakistan.

The Netherlands' losses to Pakistan and a heavy defeat to the USA have effectively ended their hopes of qualifying for the Super 8. Scott Edwards' side have only a win over Namibia to show for their efforts. India Squad: Suryakumar Yadav (c), Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, Sanju Samson, Shivam Dube, Ishan Kishan,

Hardik Pandya, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Varun Chakaravorthy, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Rinku Singh. Netherlands Squad: Scott Edwards (c), Michael Levitt, Max O'Dowd, Bas de Leede, Colin Ackermann, Zach Lion-Cachet, Logan van Beek, Aryan Dutt, Roelof van

der Merwe, Kyle Klein, Fred Klaassen, Noah Croes, Saqib Zulfiqar, Paul van Meekeren, Timm van der Gugten. The toss for the Group B match between Zimbabwe and Ireland at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium was delayed due to rain on Tuesday. It was drizzling for quite some time in Pallekele and the ground was completely under covers. If the match is washed out, both teams will receive one point each and it will be enough for Zimbabwe to book their spot in the Super 8 stage. However, it will be bad news for Australia who will be eliminated from the competition in that case. Australia suffered their second loss of T20 World Cup 2026 as they were completely outplayed by Sri Lanka on Monday. Australia have just one win from their three matches and even if they win their remaining game against Oman, they need Zimbabwe to lose both of their matches.

Zimbabwe Enter T20 World Cup Super 8 After Washout Against Ireland



Zimbabwe on Tuesday entered the Super 8 stage of the T20 World Cup after their crucial Group B match against Ireland was washed out due to rain, a result that also eliminated former champions Australia and Ireland from the tournament. Both teams were awarded one point each. The shared points took Zimbabwe to five, enough to secure a Super 8 berth. They will face India in their opening Super 8 match on February 26 in Chennai. Zimbabwe became the sev-

enth team to get a ticket to the Super 8s, completing Group G1, which also comprises India, South Africa and West Indies. Zimbabwe will play their final group match against co-hosts Sri Lanka on February 19. With table-toppers Sri Lanka (6) having already qualified for the Super 8s, the contest held significant importance for Zimbabwe and Ireland, who had come into the game with four and two points respectively. Australia were also on two points following their defeats to Zimbabwe

and Sri Lanka. The former champions needed Zimbabwe to lose both their remaining matches to stay in contention, but persistent rain ended their hopes. The toss at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium was initially delayed due to drizzle, with the ground remaining under covers for a considerable period. However, continuous rain and a wet outfield prevented any play, confirming Zimbabwe's progression to the Super 8 stage.

"Terrible What They Are Doing To Him": Sunil Gavaskar Slams Pakistan Government For Mistreating Imran Khan

Imran Khan, Pakistan's World Cup-winning captain and the country's former Prime Minister, found support from the cricket fraternity after a report claimed he has suffered a devastating loss of eyesight, severe health deterioration, and prolonged solitary confinement inside Adiala Jail. A detailed report prepared by the Supreme Court-appointed amicus curiae (friend of the court), Salman Safdar, accessed by NDTV, reveals that Imran Khan has lost nearly 85 per cent of the vision in his right eye after jail authorities allegedly ignored repeated medical complaints for months.



Following the revelation of the report, former cricketers from around the world who played with Imran came together and appealed to the Pakistan government for better prison treatment for the former captain, amid serious health concerns. Former India captain

Sunil Gavaskar, who was among those who appealed to the Pakistan government, said he was pained by Imran Khan's condition. "It's terrible what they are doing to him. We have been friends since he was trying to qualify as an overseas player for Worcestershire

and not just rivals on the field," Gavaskar was quoted as saying by the Sydney Morning Herald. The petition, initiated by former India coach Greg Chappell and delivered to Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday, has also been endorsed by former Indian captain Kapil Dev, along with Allan Border, Steve Waugh, Ian Chappell, Belinda Clark, and Kim Hughes. England's Mike Atherton, Nasser Hussain, Mike Brearley, and David Gower have also signed, along with Clive Lloyd from the West Indies and John Wright from New Zealand.

BCCI's Plans For Gautam Gambhir As India Head Coach Revealed? Report Makes 'Olympics' Claim

Indian cricket team head coach Gautam Gambhir's tenure could be extended to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics depending on results, according to a report by Dainik Jagran. Gambhir's current contract runs until the 2027 ODI World Cup, and under his coaching, India are currently looking to defend their T20 World Cup title. While his focus remains firmly on winning these tournaments, the report claimed that positive results could lead to his contract being extended through the 2028 Olympics. Cricket will return to the Olympics after a 128-year gap in 2028, and the decision regarding the role will reportedly rest with



Gambhir. Meanwhile, former Indian Premier League (IPL) champions Rajasthan Royals (RR) are set to approach Gambhir to join them as CEO, mentor, and partner. According to a report in Dainik Jagran, RR is set to undergo a change in ownership, with one of the three potential

owners offering Gambhir a minority equity stake - believed to be in the region of 2-3 per cent - in the franchise. Gambhir had a highly successful association with the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the IPL, helping the franchise lift three titles, two as a player and one as a mentor. He

also had a fruitful stint during his two seasons as mentor of the Lucknow Super Giants (LSG), who qualified for the playoffs in both campaigns. However, Gambhir is unlikely to join RR due to his current commitments with the Indian national team. As per the Supreme Court's ruling based on the Lodha Committee recommendations, an individual cannot simultaneously hold a position with the national side and be associated with an IPL franchise. This "one man, one post" rule is strictly enforced to prevent any potential conflict of interest. If Gambhir wishes to accept the offer, he must step down from his role as head coach.

WHY BENFICA TIE IS PIVOTAL FOR ARBELOA AND REAL MADRID



Alvaro Arbeloa's Real Madrid tenure is only five weeks old - but Tuesday's Champions League trip to Benfica already feels like it could be a defining night for the fledgling boss. The 43-year-old replaced Xabi Alonso last month and, despite no official confirmation, sources close to both the club and Arbeloa told BBC Sport he has a contract until the end of next season. Real knew the appointment of a head coach with no top-level managerial experience was risky. And after a slow start for Arbeloa and a less than positive reception from supporters, they quickly started planning for potential replacements - including former Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca - in case another change was needed. But after six wins from their past seven matches, there is a new feeling of calm among the Real hierarchy with the club top of La Liga. However, Arbeloa will know failure in Europe would pile the pressure back on once again. Real's only loss in those seven games came against Benfica, when a sen-

sational 4-2 victory by Jose Mourinho's side left Los Blancos needing a play-off against the same opponents to stay in the competition they have won six times in 12 years. Of course there is a second leg at home to come on Wednesday, 25 February, but failing to reach at least the last 16 - for the first time in more than three decades - is unthinkable for the Real faithful. Since the defeat in Lisbon in January, Arbeloa has made some changes, including tweaking Real's formation. That match was the last time he played with a 4-3-3 formation, where Franco Mastantuono, Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Jr started as the front three. In Real's subsequent three games, Arbeloa has changed to a 4-4-2 set-up, where Mastantuono drops back into midfield to leave Gonzalo Garcia, Vinicius and Mbappe as rotating striker options. "Defensively, it's a structure that closes down the midfield corridor, where there are more players, and allows us to be more compact," Arbeloa said.



WWE Raw February 16 Results: Elimination Chamber Qualifiers And CM Punk's Unexpected Appearance

Ex-Pakistan Cricketer Imad Wasim Called "Homewrecker" By Ex-Wife After His Second Marriage With Nyla Raja

Sannia Ashfaq, the ex-wife of former Pakistan all-rounder Imad Wasim, has accused the cricketer of cheating on her. This comes after Imad, 37, confirmed his second marriage, tying the knot with Nyla Raja just months after confirming his separation from Sannia. Imad and Sannia married in 2019 and divorced last December. The Wales-born cricketer and Nyla first caught public attention in July 2025 when they were spotted together in London, sparking allegations of cheating at a time when Sannia was reportedly pregnant with their third child. On Monday, Sannia shared a series of posts on Instagram, calling Imad a "cheater, homewrecker, and a murderer," demanding accountability for the suffering she and her children have faced due to the veteran cricketer's actions.



"Now everyone has seen the proof. This homewrecker never once thought about my kids. The cheater has finally been exposed and I want justice for my children and for everything we've been put through," Sannia wrote in a post. She also called Imad a "murderer," accusing him of a forced abortion in 2023. Additionally, she blasted Islamabad United for signing the player for the upcoming PSL season. "In

December 2023, he forced an abortion on me in Lahore. He's a murderer, and I have a video that proves it. He cheated on me. @islamabadunitedpsl has given a chance to a murderer and a cheater. # boycottislamabadunited-no cheater or murderer should get an escape," she wrote in another post. Imad, who represented Pakistan in 55 ODIs and 75 T20Is, termed his life after his first marriage with Sannia "one of

the hardest chapters." "I went through one of the hardest chapters of my life after a marriage that did not work. Even so, that chapter gave me the greatest blessings of my life, my children. I love them beyond words, and that love will never change," Imad wrote in a detailed statement. "I stayed longer than I should have, holding on to hope and trying to protect what mattered most to me. In doing so, I made decisions I regret." "My delay and silence contributed to a situation where an innocent person was unfairly judged and subjected to criticism she did not deserve. I take full responsibility for that, and I carry that weight with sincerity and remorse." "With the grace of Allah and guidance of my parents, I have now married Nyla."

"Aditi Is His Girlfriend": Ishan Kishan's Grandfather Makes It Official



Star wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan's comeback story has been nothing short of exceptional. After nearly two years away from the national side, and having lost his central contract, the 27-year-old is making headlines once again for all the right cricketing reasons. On Sunday, the elegant south-paw starred in India's record 61-run win over arch-rivals Pakistan in the T20 World Cup, smashing 77 off just 41 balls on a tricky Colombo track. However, Kishan is also dominating headlines off the field as well, with his grandfather confirming his relationship status, putting years of speculation to rest. Speaking to news agency ANI in Bihar's Aurangabad, Kishan's grandfather, Anurag Pandey, confirmed that his grandson is currently dating model Aditi Hundia. "Whoever Ishan chooses to marry, I fully accept his decision," he told ANI. "We are ready to accept whoever Ishan Kishan wants to marry. Aditi is his

girlfriend. She is a model. One should accept what makes children happy." Meanwhile, Kishan spoke on his match-winning knock against Pakistan, saying he kept it simple and treated the match as just another game, watching the ball and playing his shots after assessing the wicket and target. In a video posted by the BCCI, Ishan Kishan said, "Not only for me, I feel this is for all the supporters who were supporting us throughout the game, throughout the tournament, when we were preparing very hard. So, credit goes not just to me, but to the whole of India." Regarding his mindset, he added, "I think I was just keeping it simple. Like I said in the press conference earlier that day, it's just another game. You have to watch the ball and play your shots, which you believe in, which are on. You have to assess the wicket, how is it playing, what's a good total for all of our teammates."

“I was waiting for a film like ‘Hey Balwanth’”: Hero Suhas

The successful duo Bunny Vaas and Vamsi Nandipati, who recently delivered blockbuster films like Little Hearts, Raju Weds Rambhai, and Eesha, are now bringing a full-length out-and-out entertainer titled “Hey Balwanth” (title changed from Hey Bhagwan) under the banners of Nandipati Entertainments and Bunny Vaas Works. The film stars Suhas, Shivani Nagaram, senior actor Naresh, and anchor Sravanti in key roles. Directed by Gopi Achhar, the movie is produced by B. Narendra Reddy under the Trishul Visionary Studios banner. The movie is set to release on February 20. On this occasion, hero Suhas interacted with the media on Tuesday. Here are the highlights.

Why was the title changed from “Hey Bhagwan” to “Hey Balwanth”?
Since Bhagwan means God, the censor board suggested changing the title. So we changed it to Hey Balwanth. We also changed Naresh's character name. Along with the title, the censor board also considered the movie's concept.

How is your role in this movie?
I play a youngster who wants to start a business from childhood and wants to take over his father's business. The story revolves around what challenges he faces and what his father's business

actually is. The movie is a full entertainer, and my role is also very entertaining.

It is said this movie was completed in very few working days?
Yes. In my career, this is one of the fastest films completed and released after getting finalized. Despite the speed, the movie has very good quality. I wondered if I would ever do a film this fast again.

What made you accept this movie?
I liked the story as soon as I heard it. Especially, I connected emotionally along with the entertainment factor. The movie turned out 100 times better than what we expected.

Can we call this Suhas 2.0?
Don't use such big words. But I strongly believe this movie will bring me success.

You put effort into every film. How do you feel if success doesn't come?
I keep waiting for success. It feels bad, but I immediately prepare for the next film.

What are your expectations for “Hey Balwanth”?
Everyone has strong belief in this movie. Vamsi Nandipati garu has given us great confidence. After consecutive failures, everyone advised me to think carefully before choosing films. Even my wife said the same. So I took a short break and chose Hey Balwanth. I have a lot of confidence in this film.

How will your role be in the Tamil movie “Mandadi”?
It's a Tamil film where I play the main villain. Depending on the result, I may get busy in Tamil cinema. It's a look and character I waited for. They approached me after watching Ambajipeta.

Many people want you to succeed. Have you noticed that?
Yes, people feel I am a good actor and want me to get a good film. I consider that my luck.

How is it doing Tamil films?
I'm doing villain roles. It's a very different look, and I'm slightly tense about how the audience will receive it.

Earlier you

mostly did serious roles. For the first

time, you are doing comedy in “Hey Balwanth”?
In the beginning of my career, I mostly did comedy roles in short films. After watching my role in this film, my wife also told me to do such films.



NILAVE’ STANDS AS A SILENT HIT WITH DECENT COLLECTIONS: DIRECTOR V. SAMUDRA AT SUCCESS CELEBRATIONS

N ‘Nilave’ is the ‘Geethanjali’ of This Generation: Actor Gemini Suresh

Our Film ‘Nilave’ is Like ‘Baahubali’ to Us: Hero Sowmith Poladi
‘Nilave’, starring Sowmith Poladi in the lead role and co-directed by him along with Sai K. Vennam, features Shreyansi Sen as the heroine. Harsha Chemudu and Supriya Aysola played another pair in the film. The movie is produced by Raj Allada, Giridhar Rao Poladi, and Sai K. Vennam under the POV Arts Productions banner. Released on February 13 as a Valentine's Day special, the film received an excellent response from audiences. It has gained appreciation as a biggest musical love drama. Today, the team held success celebrations at Ramanaidu Studios.

Oscar award-winning lyricist Chandrabose responded through a video byte, congratulating the team and stating that the film has emerged as a biggest musical hit.

Director V. Samudra, who attended the success meet as the chief guest, said: "Among the six or seven films released this Valentine's Day, ‘Nilave’ has gained a successful talk. With decent collections, it has become a silent hit. The hero and heroine of this film will definitely become superstars in the future. My congratulations to director Sai K. Vennam and the entire team."

Actor Gemini Suresh, who



attended as another guest, said: "After a long time, I felt like I watched a truly good film. ‘Nilave’ stands like a painting drawn by Babu garu, like a poem by Viswanatha Satyanarayana, and like the ‘Geethanjali’ of this generation. Thanks to producer Raj Allada for making such a wonderful film. Director Sai's vision, Dileep's visuals, and Kalyan's music have come together beautifully. Our Karimnagar boy Sowmith has scored a hit with this film." Hero Sowmith said: "Thank you to everyone who supported us even though we are newcomers. This film is the result of three years of hard work. Even Rajamouli garu took three years to bring ‘Baahubali’ to the audience. Our ‘Nilave’ is like ‘Baahubali’ to us. No matter how many difficulties we

faced in this journey, we never compromised. The response we are receiving from the audience now makes us very happy. Our film has become a genuine hit. Seeing the audience response and housefull boards for the past four days, we are celebrating our success." Heroine Shreyansi Sen said: "Thanks to Sowmith and director Sai Vennam for trusting me with the role of Aditi. Thank you to the Telugu audience for giving me success with my very first film." Director Sai K. Vennam said: "Thank you to everyone who blessed us. This journey that began three years ago has reached this stage today. I learned many things during the making of this movie. Through this film, I realized that if our intention is pure, everything will fall into place. I would

like to tell upcoming filmmakers that if you understand the reason why you want to make a film, everything will work out well. We have come this far because our reason was strong. This success came only because of the support of the entire team." Producer Raj Allada's wife Madhuri said: "We are very happy that our film is receiving such good appreciation from the audience. Everyone who watched the movie says it doesn't feel like it was made by newcomers. Especially the music has become a major plus for our film. Our movie connects emotionally and touches everyone's heart." Music director Kalyan Nayak said: "We are very happy with the success given by the audience. It feels like we have received the right reward for our hard work."

Once earned Rs 500, she is now among South cinema’s highest-paid stars

H **Hyderabad:** Keerthy Suresh, one of South India's top actresses, started her acting career as a child. Born to film producer G. Suresh Kumar and actress Menaka, Keerthy always had a connection to the film industry. She appeared in several Malayalam movies as a child artist, like Pilots and Achaneyanenikkishtam, produced by her father.

Her First Paycheck
Although Keerthy's family was famous in the industry, her first earnings were surprisingly small. In an interview, Keerthy shared that her first salary was just Rs 500. She earned this amount while working as a backstage assistant at a fashion show during her college days. What makes it even more special is that Keerthy

didn't keep the money for herself. Instead, she gave it all to her father, considering it her first real paycheck.

Film Career and Breakthrough
Keerthy's first big break in Telugu came in 2016 with Nenu Sailaja, where she impressed the audience with her natural acting. But it was in 2018 that her career truly skyrocketed. She starred in Mahanati, a film based on the life of legendary actress Savitri. Keerthy's performance as Savitri was praised by critics and fans alike, and she even won the prestigious National Award for Best Actress.

Rise to Stardom
Keerthy's hard work and talent paid off.



NATURAL STAR NANI'S BIRTHDAY WILL BE MARKED WITH MAYHEM, THE PARADISE FIRST SINGLE AAYA SHER ON FEBRUARY 24TH

Natural Star Nani is presently busy with the shoot of his much-awaited Pan World spectacle The Paradise, being helmed ambitiously by director Srikanth Odela of Dara fame, with Sudhakar Cherukuri joining the madness as producer, bankrolling the project on a monumental scale and canvas on SLV Cinemas banner. The title glimpse, followed by first look posters have already garnered massive response, and heightened buzz for the movie. Now, the makers came up with a big update. The team is gearing up for a special birthday celebration of Nani on February 24. The makers of The Paradise have locked that date to unveil the film's first single, the goosebumps-inducing and



mayhem creating introduction track Aaya Sher, setting the stage for the movie's promotional campaign. The song has

already been filmed on a gigantic set filled with hundreds of dancers, designed to present Nani in a fierce, massy avatar.

SATHYA REDDY MADE THE MOVIE 'PRATYUSHA' 24 YEARS AGO ON THE INCIDENT OF 'PRATYUSHA'

It is not a common thing to make a film named Pratyusha directly on the death of budding actress Pratyusha, after 24 years, as a result of the unrelenting struggles of Pratyusha's mother. It needs guts. It needs a lot of courage and determination. Knowing that behind Pratyusha's death are the sons of ministers, sons of police officers, big big babus, children of real estate traders, a young producer named Sathya Reddy, who is nine years old, came forward with Kalamatalli's faith and came forward. The film opened on a grand scale with a huge cast including Shastri, Kallu Chidambaram and Tirupati Prakash. Since Pratyusha's death became a sensational event in the entire Telugu state as well as in India, the print

media, electronic media, and Doordarshan of that time were spreading the hype about this movie. Because of this, the budding hero who is playing the hero in this film is afraid that there are many adults behind her death. Along with the hero, writers, lyricists and singers also got scared and returned the advances. Satya Reddy, who entered the film industry under the wrong circumstances, became a hero, became a writer, a lyricist and a singer, completed the film and faced many difficulties with the censors, but the length of 1100 feet was removed by the censor. Besides, Some scenes like the sit-in in front of the Governor's bungalow were re-shot and re-censored and the film was successfully released. The great thing



about this is that Ashwini Dutt Krishna, the head of today's Vyjayanthi movies, who saw the film, released it

through Guntur Districts Vyjayanthi and it can be said that the film was a success. As the story took place in the united Andhra Pradesh, the film was bravely produced and a 50 feet cut-out of the hero Satya Reddy was placed in Vijayawada's Annapurna Theater and his fans gave huge honor to Satya Reddy and gave him the title of "Janamstar". The honor program held in Vijayawada that day was a sensation with the participation of many people's associations and writers in large numbers, mainly under the title of Janam Star. Thus Sathya Reddy, who started making movies with social themes for the people on public issues, who was a star of the people, satya reddy, a revolutionary poet against the privatization of Visakha steel plant, produced a centenary day revolutionary movie called "Ukku Satyagraham" with Praja Uddha Nauka

Gaddaranna and now went to the level of directing the international movie "King Buddha" which started in America in Hollywood. Based on this, it can be said that history proves that people appreciate films that reflect social issues. Moreover, his fans say that there is no doubt that King Buddha Hollywood film, which is being shot in 25 countries and produced in more than 100 languages ??under the direction of Sathya Reddy, will create a sensation in world history. Moreover, after 24 years, the accused in the Pratyusha case were punished. Along with the producer Janam Star Sathya Reddy, the members of the film unit of Pawan Money Creations of yesterday are also expressing their joy.



A yesha Khan is known for maintaining a perfect balance between glamour and traditional style in her looks and social media posts. She often shares pictures that highlight both her modern fashion sense and her graceful ethnic charm. Her latest photos once again show how effortlessly she blends elegance with beauty. In her new clicks, she is seen wearing a pink sleeveless blouse paired with a blue saree and matching bangles. With her hair left open, she enjoyed an outdoor photo-shoot while sipping coconut water, perfect for the summer season. In some pictures, she is seen riding in an auto and wandering around

the city, while in others she is sitting under a tree in a park reading a book. Flaunting her bright smile, cute bindi, pink lipstick, and silver jhumkas, she looks fresh, simple, and charming. Recently, Ayesha also spoke strongly against the misuse of artificial intelligence after morphed images and AI-generated videos of her started circulating online. She called the trend “very scary” and disturbing, saying it feels unsettling to see fake but realistic images of herself being shared. She criticised how such content is spread without consent and explained the emotional impact it can have when personal images are manipulated and misused.