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Total pilgrims: 72,703
Venues: 3,758
Vandana: 1,402 CR
Laddu: 4,34 Lac
Annaprasadam: 2,42 Lac
Medical treatment: 3,402
Waiting: 10,000
Our side line at Station: 24 H

Approx. Darshan Time for Sarvadarshanam
(without SSD Tokens): 24 HSF recover arms,
dismantle bunkers in
multi-district opera-
tions in Manipur

IMPHAL (TSIT): Security forces conducted intensive search operations across multiple districts of Manipur on Wednesday recovering arms and ammunition, dismantling bunkers, and destroying unauthorised check posts, police said on Thursday. In the most significant operation of the day, forces searched four villages — Leilon Vaiphei, Leilon Khunou, L. Munlui, and Konsakhul — under the jurisdiction of Leimakhong Police Station in Kangpokpi district. The searches yielded 11 single-barrel breech-loading (SBL) guns, 294 live rounds of 12-bore ammunition, two packages of gunpowder, 34 empty cartridge cases, and six bullet-proof vests. Thirty bunkers, outposts, and strategic camp sites found in the vicinity of these villages were subsequently dismantled. Four individuals were detained for further verification. In a separate operation in the Churachandpur district, forces destroyed an unauthorised check post and a bunker at S. Nabil village and Loilamkoi village, both under Churachandpur Police Station. In the Kangpokpi district's Saikul Police Station area, four morcha/bunkers were demolished — two each at Thingphai Village and C. Kholen Village.

Italy's Meloni says Trump 'completely made up' story that she 'begged' him for photo at G7

New Delhi (TSIT) A diplomatic spat between Washington and Rome escalated on Friday after Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani cancelled a planned visit to the United States in protest against remarks by US President Donald Trump that appeared to mock Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. Tajani, who was scheduled to travel to Miami on June 21 and 22 to meet with senior American officials, announced that he was scrapping the visit, describing Trump's comments as "serious and offensive" and saying they had insulted not just Meloni but the whole of Italy. "The serious and offensive words of President Trump towards Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni offend all of Italy. For this reason, I have decided to cancel my visit to the United States scheduled for the next 21 and 22 June," Tajani wrote on X.

Telangana to Emerge as Education
and Sports Hub CM Revanth

HYDERABAD TSIT BUREAU:

Chief Minister A.Revanth Reddy reaffirmed the Telangana Government's commitment to transforming the state into a premier Education and Sports Hub by introducing far-reaching reforms in education, skill development and sports infrastructure.

Speaking at the launch of the Young India Student Kits distribution programme for 27.5 lakh students and the foundation stone-laying ceremony for sports complexes across various districts at LB Stadium on Friday, the Chief Minister said the establishment of Young India Integrated Residential Schools and the Young India Sports University reflects the government's vision of producing future Olympic medalists while ensuring quality education for every child.

Highlighting the challenges posed by rapid technological changes, Revanth Reddy warned that the growing impact of Artificial



Intelligence (AI) could reduce employment opportunities in several sectors. To address this challenge, the government is focusing on skill development initiatives aimed at creating a large pool of skilled blue-collar workers. He said Telangana has introduced German and Japanese language training programmes alongside English education and upgraded ITIs into Advanced Technology Centres (ATCs), besides establishing a Skill University to prepare youth for global employment opportunities.

Chief Minister urged students, particularly those

studying in social welfare institutions, to aspire to become doctors, IAS and IPS officers, and political leaders. Calling them active partners in the reconstruction of Telangana, he said the future of the state lies in its classrooms and that education alone has the power to transform lives and society.

Criticising the previous BRS government, Revanth Reddy alleged that it had weakened the education system over the past decade by neglecting schools and failing to enhance diet and cosmetic charges for students. He said the present government increased these alloca-

tions immediately after assuming office and reopened several schools that had been shut down earlier. Responding to criticism regarding the absence of a dedicated Education Minister, Chief Minister said he deliberately retained the Education portfolio to personally oversee reforms and ensure quality education for students from economically weaker sections.

He noted that the government has revived public education by introducing pre-primary classes in government schools and improving facilities, resulting in increased admissions. Many government schools are now displaying "No Admission" boards due to growing demand, he said.

Revanth Reddy further highlighted that the government has allocated 8.5 per cent of the total state budget to education, amounting to 26,600 crore in the 2026-27 financial year, reflecting its commitment to investing in future generations.

Disagreement among rebel MPs
for ministerial berth, those left out
will get Rs 25 crore more: Raut

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Friday claimed that there was disagreement among the party's dissident MPs over who would become a Union minister, and that a settlement has been reached to provide additional Rs 25 crore to those who do not get the opportunity.

Sena (UBT) MPs Sanjay Dina Patil, Sanjay Deshmukh, Sanjay Jadhav, Bhausaheb Wakchaure, Nagesh Patil-Ashtikar and Omprakash Raje Nimbalkar are likely to join the ruling Shiv Sena led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. These lawmakers did not attend the Sena (UBT) parliamentary party meeting convened on Thursday, confirming their breach with Uddhav Thackeray's leadership.

Talking to reporters, Raut said, "There are clashes in the rebel group over who will become minister at the Centre."

"Only one among the six can become minister, so a settlement has been made that the rest will be given an additional



Rs 25 crore (for the switch-over)," he alleged.

Slamming Mumbai Northeast MP Sanjay Dina Patil for rebelling, Thackeray said there was no reason for him to abandon the party. Even his daughter, Rajool Patil, was given a ticket for the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) ignoring a "loyalist". Rajool won the civic polls earlier this year.

"We were very confident that Sanjay Dina Patil will

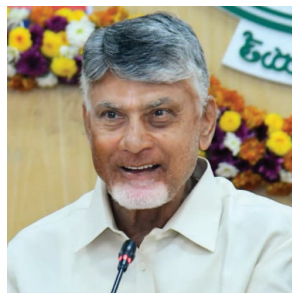
attend the meeting called by the party in New Delhi on Thursday," Raut said. He also attacked the Maharashtra government for granting 'Y-plus' security to rebel MPs, and dared them to roam without any protection. "The police department is only for the protection of traitors. This is a waste of public money," Raut said, adding that the dissident MPs should first resign and seek fresh mandate from the people.

CM Naidu urges bankers to facilitate economic
activity across Andhra Pradesh

AMARAVATI (TSIT):

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Friday urged bankers to extend their cooperation to facilitate economic activities across the state. The Chief Minister chaired the 235th State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) meeting held at the Secretariat. The meeting discussed the Annual Credit Plan for 2026-27 and reviewed the credit extended to the agriculture sector, MSMEs, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and tenant farmers.

Banks reported extending loans worth Rs 3,86,249 crore to the agriculture sector in 2025-26. They informed the Chief Minister that loans worth Rs 1,17,357 crore were given to the MSME sector and Rs 5,19,693 crore to the priority sector. Bankers noted that credit disbursement in Andhra Pradesh



stands at 137 per cent higher compared to other South Indian states. Chief Secretary Sai Prasad, Union Bank of India MD & CEO Ashish Pande, Union Finance Ministry Director Neelam Agarwal, RBI Regional Director AO Bashier, NABARD GM KVS Prasad, and others attended the meeting. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu will release Rs 3,125.47 crore under Annadata Sukhibhava-PM Kisan scheme from Linganguntla village in Chilakaluripet Mandal of Palnadu district on Saturday.

Akhilesh Yadav targets UP Minister over alleged
ticket, transfer and contract deals

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday launched a sharp attack on a minister in the Uttar Pradesh government, citing a news report that alleged widespread corruption linked to promises of election tickets, transfers, postings and government contracts, and claiming that those who allegedly paid money in advance are now searching for the minister after realizing they had been misled. In a post on his WhatsApp channel, Yadav used satire and political innuendo to target the unnamed minister, referring to reports that disgruntled aspirants, officials and contractors were now holding meetings to locate him and seek accountability for alleged



financial dealings.

"Until yesterday, only those aspiring candidates who had paid advances in the hope of getting election tickets were searching for the rumour-driven minister. But now people have realised that the claim of getting '30 seats' was merely a rumour. Not only is he unlikely to get even a single seat, but even if he somehow gets one, he is not expected to win,"

Yadav wrote.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister further alleged that the circle of dissatisfied people had widened beyond political aspirants. According to Yadav, Assistant Engineers (AEs), Junior Engineers (JEs), AMA officials and departmental contractors who had allegedly paid money in exchange for transfers, postings and contracts were now also looking for the minister.

"Now that the truth is coming out, it is being heard that AEs, JEs, AMA officials and departmental contractors are sitting together in 'panchayats' to search for him, after paying advances for transfers, postings and contracts," the Samajwadi Party chief said.

'Don't have level-playing field': Abhishek
Banerjee submits 20 petitions seeking
disqualification of rebel TMC MPs

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, along with TMC MPs Kalyan Banerjee and Mahua Moitra, on Friday met with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and submitted 20 petitions against its 20 rebel MPs, seeking their disqualification.

After the meeting, Banerjee told mediapersons that the rebel MPs, who have claimed to join the Nationalist Citizens Party of India (NCPI), should be disqualified from the membership of the House. "...20 MPs of TMC met Speaker 3-4 days ago and claimed to form their separate group. As per the media, they have claimed to be



treated as a separate group. Then 2-4 of them claimed a few hours later to have merged with NCPI which none of us heard of...I, as Leader of Lok Sabha of TMC, have submitted 20 different disqualification petitions...The 10th Schedule is against them, against these people who claim to have formed a separate group. If they have even a little integrity, they should resign from their post," Banerjee said.

Right to walk on demarcated footpath
is fundamental right: SC

THE DECLARATION BY THE TOP COURT CAME IN AN UNFORTUNATE MOTOR ACCIDENT COMPENSATION CASE WHERE A FATHER LOST HIS FIVE-YEAR-OLD SON WHILE TAKING HIM TO SCHOOL.

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

The right to walk on a demarcated footpath is a fundamental right, the Supreme Court on Thursday ruled. In a significant verdict, the top court held that this right shall have priority over motorised vehicles on demarcated paths and it forms part of the right to movement guaranteed under Article 19(1)(d) and other fundamental rights including Article 21 (right to life and liberty).

A bench of justices PS Narasimha and AS Chandurkar held that a citizen's fundamental right to walk on a demarcated footpath is primary and shall have priority over movement by motorised vehicles. The



declaration by the top court came in an unfortunate motor accident compensation case where a father lost his five-year-old son while taking him to school.

"The right to walk is a fundamental right under Part III of the Constitution. It is integral to the right to movement guaranteed under Article 19(1)(d), read with Article 19(1)(a), Article 19(1)(b), Article 19(1)(c) and Article 21 of the Constitution of India. The fundamental right to walk will take within its

sweep the right to demarcated footpaths. These rights are primary and shall have priority over movement by motorised vehicles," the bench ruled.

It held that the fundamental right to walk on demarcated footpaths has a correlative duty and "If the road exists, there is a duty to ensure that there are demarcated and well-maintained footpaths for walkers".

The bench said the duty bearers are the urban development authorities, municipal corporations, municipalities and even panchayats, who must endeavour to demarcate, construct, maintain, and safeguard footpaths and other necessary pedestrian infrastructure, as walking is integral to life.

Trump says PM Modi among
world's 'toughest leaders'

WASHINGTON (TSIT)

US President Donald Trump has singled out Prime Minister Narendra Modi as one of the world's toughest leaders, a view he expressed both in a newly published Axios interview and during his recent bilateral meeting with the Indian leader in France.

In an interview with Axios, excerpts of which were published on Thursday, Trump named Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Modi as the world leaders he most admires.

According to Axios, Trump praised Xi as "all business" and PM Modi as "a very tough cookie".

This closely mirrored Trump's remarks during his meeting with PM Modi in Evian, France, where the two leaders met on the



sidelines of the G7 outreach summit amid ongoing negotiations over a bilateral trade agreement and discussions on regional security.

Asked how close Washington and New Delhi were to finalising a trade deal, Trump responded with a lengthy tribute to PM Modi's negotiating skills. "Very close. We've been there for a little while. He's a very tough negotiator, one of the toughest,

actually," the US President said. Trump then described PM Modi as a leader whose mild public demeanour concealed formidable political instincts.

"So, you look at this man - I'll give you a lesson - he's the most beautiful looking man, he looks so nice, he's like an angel. But actually, he's as tough as - he's a killer." "He's as tough as they come, but he looks so good. So, he gets you by surprise," the US President

said. Trump's comments offered a rare glimpse into how he views one of Washington's most important international partners. Throughout the meeting, he repeatedly linked India's growing global influence to PM Modi's leadership.

When asked whether India could play a role in efforts to stabilise West Asia following the recent US-Iran understanding, Trump replied: "Yeah, I do. I think India plays a big role in everything." "As long as he's the leader, India is going to play a big role." Trump also highlighted the personal rapport he has developed with PM Modi over the years. "He's been my friend for a long time now and we've always had a great relationship," he said at the start of their meeting.

Vaishnaw reviews station masters' challenges to ensure safer, passenger-centric operation

NEW DELHI: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw held a review meeting with senior railway officials to discuss issues and challenges faced by over 6,000 station masters across the country, according to a statement issued on Friday.

The minister, along with officials, deliberated on a comprehensive framework aimed at empowering station masters to ensure safer, more efficient and passenger-centric railway operations at the meeting held on Thursday.

“During the review, detailed discussions were held to identify operational and administrative challenges faced by station masters in their day-to-day working and to develop solutions to strengthen their effectiveness,” the ministry stated.

It added, “The meeting also discussed strengthening the role of station masters. In addition, proposals relating to enhanced administrative and operational powers, improved career progression avenues and greater opportunities to rise to higher levels of management were reviewed.” To address grow-



ing operational requirements, discussions were focused on the provision of additional station masters in multi-track and high-density sections where traffic levels and operational complexity have increased significantly.

“The need for expeditious filling of vacancies in the station master cadre was also reviewed, with emphasis on treating these vacancies on priority,” the ministry said.

Officials said the ministry is also deliberating upon introducing mobile app-based paperless working for station masters and developing an integrated Station Management System that would enable better coordina-

tion among various railway departments and facilitate faster resolution of passenger-related issues at stations.

To enable quicker resolution of local issues and improve passenger convenience, proposals relating to enhancement of financial powers of station masters were reviewed, they added. Station masters' unions have been holding protests for the past several months to press their demands for zero vacancies and the rationalisation of duty hours. According to them, infrastructure expansion has significantly increased their responsibilities, while vacant positions have further added to their challenges.

HMDA Holds Pre-Bid Meeting for Hakeempet Land E-Auction, Draws Strong Investor Interest



Hyderabad, June 19, 2026: The Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) conducted a pre-bid meeting for the proposed e-auction of a prime land parcel at Hakeempet, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, at Hyatt Place, Banjara Hills, on Friday. The meeting witnessed an encouraging response, with over 50 prospective bidders participating.

During the session, Mr. Sandeep of JLL presented a detailed overview of the

State Government's vision, Hyderabad's rapid growth trajectory, the strategic location of the Hakeempet site, its key advantages, and the significant development opportunities in the area. The presentation highlighted the investment potential of the land parcel and its suitability for premium development projects.

Representatives of MSTC also made a detailed presentation on the e-auction process, explaining

bidding procedures and addressing queries raised by participants to ensure transparency and clarity.

The meeting was attended by senior HMDA officials, including Sri B. Ravinder, Chief Engineer; Smt. Rajitha, Superintending Engineer; Sri A. Ravinder Reddy and Sri B. Prasad Rao, Chief Planning Officers; Sri Y. Sudarshan, Deputy Collector, HMDA; and officials from the Estates, Public Relations, Engineering, and Enforcement Departments. The Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO), Shaikpet, was also present.

Participants appreciated the transparent auction mechanism and expressed confidence in the growth prospects associated with the project. The successful conduct of the pre-bid meeting is expected to boost investor interest and pave the way for a competitive e-auction of the strategically located land parcel.

MEDICOVER CANCER INSTITUTE SUCCESSFULLY PERFORMS COMPLEX ORAL CANCER SURGERY ON 65-YEAR-OLD WOMAN



Hyderabad, June 19, 2026: Doctors at Medicovert Cancer Institute successfully performed a highly complex cancer surgery on a 65-year-old Kamamma, who was suffering from oral cancer, giving her a new lease on life. Kamamma, a resident of a rural area, was diagnosed with oral cancer that had affected her jawbone, requiring surgical removal of the impacted portion. Due to her age and fear of undergoing surgery, she was initially hesitant to proceed with treatment. However, with proper counseling and reassurance from the medical team, she agreed to undergo the procedure.

The surgery was successfully performed under the leadership of Dr. Ajay Varun Reddy, Senior Robotic Surgical Oncologist, with the support of Dr. Prajyoth Reddy, Reconstructive Surgeon. During the procedure, the cancer-affected portion was removed, and the oral structure was reconstructed using tissue harvested from the patient's leg. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ajay Varun Reddy said that with advanced medical technology and the support of multidisciplinary medical teams, even highly complex cancer treatments can now be successfully performed in elderly patients.

GITAM Celebrates Unsung Heroes with MUDITA 4.0 Employee Recognition Programme

Visakhapatnam: GITAM Deemed to be University celebrated MUDITA 4.0, the fourth edition of its annual employee recognition and appreciation programme, honouring the institution's hospitality, campus life, and support services teams for their dedicated service in ensuring a safe, welcoming, and well-functioning campus environment.

Derived from the Sanskrit word Mudita, meaning joy in the happiness and success of others, the initiative reflects values of gratitude, teamwork, service, and collective achievement. Over the years, MUDITA has grown into a meaningful tradition at GITAM, recognising the vital contributions of staff who work behind the scenes to support the university ecosystem. The programme, organised by the Directorate of Hospitality and Campus Life, brought together employees from housekeeping, dining services, maintenance, engineering, gardening, landscaping, resi-



dences, utilities, transport, projects, IT, audio-visual services, human resources, finance, and administration.

The event featured

employee recognition awards, service excellence honours, appreciation ceremonies, and cultural performances, celebrating individuals and teams who have

demonstrated excellence, innovation, dedication, and long years of service.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambika Philip said the university's support teams create “a little bit of magic every day” through their commitment to serving students, parents, faculty, staff, and visitors, adding that their work ensures smooth and meaningful campus experiences.

University leadership highlighted that institutional success depends not only on academic excellence but also on the selfless efforts of support staff. They noted that MUDITA serves as a tribute to those whose contributions often remain unseen but are essential to the university's growth and functioning.

MUDITA 4.0 concluded with a message reaffirming GITAM's commitment to fostering a culture of appreciation, inclusivity, respect, and service excellence, recognising the collective strength that drives the university community.

NTPC Provides Advanced Medical Equipment to Gandhi Hospital Under CSR Initiative

Hyderabad, June 18, 2026: Reinforcing its commitment to community healthcare and social development, NTPC has provided advanced medical equipment to the Orthopedics Department and Mortuary of Gandhi Hospital, Hyderabad, under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Programme for 2025-26.

The equipment was formally inaugurated by Shri Surya Narayan Panigrahi, Executive Director (HR) and Regional Head of HR (North & South), NTPC Limited, in the presence of Dr. N. Vani, Superintendent and ADME of Gandhi Hospital, during a programme held at the hospital premises.

The initiative is aimed at strengthening healthcare infrastructure and enhancing the hospital's ability to deliver quality medical services to thousands of patients who depend on Gandhi Hospital, one of Telangana's largest government healthcare institu-



tions. The CSR support includes the provision of C-Arm Imaging Machines, C-Arm Compatible Orthopedic Fracture Operating Tables, Cordless Battery-Operated Drill Machines, and Modern Autopsy Dissection Tables equipped with attached shadowless lamps.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Surya Narayan Panigrahi reiterated NTPC's commitment to nation-building through impactful CSR initiatives in healthcare, education, skill development, and community welfare. He said strengthening public healthcare infrastructure remains a key priority for

the company and expressed confidence that the new equipment would improve patient care and operational efficiency.

The initiative also received appreciation from Telangana Health Minister Damodara Raja Narasimha, who commended NTPC's contribution towards strengthening healthcare facilities in the state.

Dr. N. Vani thanked NTPC for its continued support and noted that the equipment would significantly enhance patient services and hospital operations. Senior officials from Gandhi Hospital and NTPC Southern Region Headquarters attended the inauguration ceremony.

Super Six Guarantees Strengthen Public Trust, Says Minister M. Ramprasad Reddy at Chittoor Two-Year Governance Event

Chittoor, June 19: State Roads & Transport Minister and District In-Charge Minister M. Ramprasad Reddy has said that the successful implementation of the “Super Six Guarantees” over the past two years has significantly strengthened public confidence in the coalition government.

He was speaking at the district-level programme titled “Two Years of Trust – Development and Welfare,” organised at PVKN Degree College grounds in Chittoor to mark two years of governance. The event showcased development initiatives and welfare programmes implemented across the district.



Sankalp Yuva Pratishthan Distributes Free Umbrellas to Students and Teachers in Rural Pune During Monsoon



Khed, Junnar (Pune): As part of its annual monsoon initiative, the Mumbai-based charitable organisation Sankalp Yuva Pratishthan has distributed free umbrellas to students and teachers in rural, remote, tribal, and hilly regions of Pune district to ensure uninterrupted school attendance during the rainy season.

The distribution programme was held at Zilla Parishad Primary School, Vahagaon-Deshmukhwadi, a

remote school in the northern part of Khed taluka, and at Z.P. Primary School, Vadgaon Kandali in Junnar taluka.

The initiative was carried out in the presence of Sankalp Yuva Pratishthan President Manik Bhawar. Umbrellas were provided to all students and teachers of the participating schools as part of the organisation's yearly effort to support education during the monsoon months. Several members of

the organisation, including Sunil Navale, Sandeep Panmand, Jamal Khan, Sunil Shinde, Kiran Navale, Vishal Jadhav, and Pradeep Yadav, took part in the programme.

The event was compered by teachers Bandu Bhongale, Gorakh Navale, and Kedari. The initiative was widely appreciated by the school communities for helping students continue their education without disruption during heavy rains.

Dr. Rajashekhar Completes Historic Seven Summits Challenge After Scaling Mt. Denali

Hyderabad, June 19, 2026: Indian mountaineer and orthopedic surgeon Dr. Rajashekhar has successfully summited Mt. Denali, the highest peak in North America, completing the prestigious Seven Summits challenge—climbing the highest mountains on each continent. With this achievement, he has become the first doctor from South India to accomplish the feat.

Dr. Rajashekhar's journey is marked by resilience, determination, and recovery from personal adversity. A specialist in hip and knee surgery and a robotic surgeon, he had a distinguished medical career in Hyderabad, working alongside leading orthopedic surgeons and



training young professionals. His life took a turning point during the COVID-19 pandemic when he contracted the virus and was hospitalized. Following a prolonged recovery marked by fatigue and loss of motivation, he stepped away from his profession for nearly a year. Seeking to rebuild his physical and mental strength, he turned to mountaineering.

Sri Mahalakshmi Deepotsavam Held with Devotional Fervour in Tirupati

Tirupati: Sri Mahalakshmi Deepa Puja was conducted with great religious fervour at Sri Ramachandra Pushkarini on Friday, drawing a large number of devotees who participated in the spiritual event. The programme, marked by the lighting of thousands of lamps, resonated with Govinda Namasmarana as priests performed Vedic rituals, Deepalakshmi worship, and special prayers seeking pros-



perity, peace, and well-being. Speaking on the occasion, TTD Joint Executive Officer Dr. A. Sarat said that the Sri Mahalakshmi Deepa Puja initiative is aimed at promoting spiritual well-being.

Media's Role Crucial in Promoting Government Schemes :DPRO P. Srinivas at PIB Vartalap Workshop

Mahabubnagar, June 19: Journalists should play a vital role in creating public awareness about the welfare schemes and development programmes implemented by the government, District Public Relations Officer (DPRO) P. Srinivas said.

A special 'Vartalap' Media Workshop was organised in Mahabubnagar on Friday by the Hyderabad Regional Office of the Press Information Bureau (PIB) as part of the nationwide campaign on “12 Years of Trust, Development and Public Welfare.”

Inaugurating the workshop, DPRO P. Srinivas stressed the importance of fact-checking in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital information. He said it is the responsibility of journalists to verify information before publication and emphasized that ethical journalism contributes significantly to creating awareness in society.

Speaking on the occasion, PIB Hyderabad Media and Communication

Officer Varganti Gayathri explained the significance of the Vartalap programme. She said the initiative serves as an important platform for disseminating information about government welfare schemes and development programmes to the public. She added that PIB plays a crucial role in bridging the information gap between the government and citizens by providing reliable and transparent information.

During the workshop, senior journalist M u d d a m Narasimhaswamy delivered a comprehensive presentation on the achievements of the Central Government over the past 12 years. He highlighted major welfare schemes, development initiatives, and governance reforms, providing journalists with a detailed understanding of the government's programmes and accomplishments.

Fact-check trainer B.N. Satyapriya conducted a session on fact-checking in the digital era, focusing on identifying

misinformation and verifying information through credible sources. She underscored the importance of responsible reporting and urged journalists to prioritize accuracy and credibility while covering government policies and programmes.

Around 140 journalists participated in the workshop. The participants engaged in discussions with experts on journalism, communication, digital media practices, and professional ethics. Experts also addressed queries raised by journalists and offered insights into adapting to the evolving media landscape while maintaining accuracy and ethical standards in reporting.

Concluding the programme, DPRO P. Srinivas appreciated the active participation of journalists and said that such workshops help strengthen the media's role in delivering accurate and reliable information to the public in a timely manner. This version follows standard English newspaper style and is ready for publication.

CM Shivakumar Calls for Strict Action Against Misuse of Guarantee Schemes, Protection for Eligible Beneficiaries

Bengaluru: Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar has directed officials to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is deprived of government welfare benefits while strictly curbing misuse and irregularities in the implementation of guarantee schemes.

Chairing a review meeting at Vidhana Soudha on the state's guarantee programmes, the Chief Minister said that genuine beneficiaries must not face any hardship, while ineligible claims and misuse of funds must be effectively stopped.

Referring to the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, the Chief Minister noted that some women beneficiaries have faced issues due to bank loan auto-debit deductions, leading them to change their bank accounts. He stressed that such beneficiaries should not be inconvenienced in any way. He also



highlighted cases where financial assistance was reaching deceased beneficiaries and accounts outside Karnataka, calling for strict corrective measures. He suggested that beneficiaries be informed through voice messages immediately after DBT credit.

He observed that lack of proper e-KYC, NPCI mapping, and timely verification has led to duplication and irregularities, including multiple registrations and misuse of accounts. According to the Accountant General's report, nearly Rs 60 crore has been disbursed irregularly through multiple transactions.

On the Shakti scheme, the Chief Minister informed that women have availed 763 crore free bus trips till May 2026, with the government spending Rs 20,047.69 crore. He also announced plans to distribute 10 lakh free bus passes to students in 2026-27 under the scheme.

Under Gruha Jyothi, 1.65 crore beneficiaries are currently receiving benefits. He directed officials to identify beneficiaries from outside the state and ensure only eligible voters enrolled in the electoral rolls receive scheme benefits.

Under the Anna Bhagya scheme, Rs 11,561 crore has been transferred through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), benefiting over 72 crore transactions. From February 2025 onwards, 5 kg of rice is being distributed monthly to 4.44 crore beneficiaries. The Chief Minister also called for strict action against the illegal sale of rice provided under the scheme in the black market.

He reiterated that all welfare schemes must be transparent, targeted, and free from misuse, ensuring that benefits reach only the intended citizens.

Vikas India Network (VIN), a non-governmental organization, in collaboration with CSI Hospital, organized a Free Medical Camp for transgender persons

Bangalore : Vikas India Network (VIN), a non-governmental organization, in collaboration with CSI Hospital, organized a Free Medical Camp for transgender persons at CSI hospital.

The Medical Camp was inaugurated by representatives from the CSI Hospital Rt. Rev. Vincent Vinod Kumar, Bishop of the Karnataka Central Diocese. The Camp witnessed active participation from the transgender community, and a total of 108 transgender persons benefited from the medical services provided. The beneficiaries of the camp were provided with Ration Kits and Lunch Packets as part of the programme.



The Medical Camp was meticulously planned and successfully executed under the leadership of Sr. Lavena, Sr. Jyothi, and the Vikas India Network team, with the support of Rt. Rev. Vincent Vinod Kumar, Bishop of the Karnataka Central Diocese; Rev. Hemalatha John, Chaplain of CSI Bangalore; Dr. C. R. Femine, Medical Superintendent; Mr. Louis Rao, Administrator; and the dedicated medical team from CSI Hospital.

Vikas India Network along with its partners expressed its gratitude to the special contributors of the Medical Camp, namely, the entire Medical Team from the CSI Hospital.

VK, which has taken a stand against the Mokedatu Project, should withdraw its support from the Congress party: Opposition Leader R. Ashok's challenge

Bengaluru : The TVK party's government in Tamil Nadu has taken a decision opposing the Mokedatu project. Opposition Leader R. Ashok has now challenged the Congress party to withdraw its support to TVK.

Speaking to reporters, he said: "The Congress, which stabbed the DMK in the back, has now joined hands with TVK. The same TVK party has now decided that it will not allow the Mokedatu project to be implemented. If the Congress has the courage, it should withdraw the support given to TVK. Otherwise, Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar should accept that he follows double standards and is two-faced. As long as the Congress government is in power, the

Mokedatu project cannot be implemented." He criticised that the Congress's padayatra was only for votes.

The Congress government is slashing ration cards and reducing the number of beneficiaries under the guarantee schemes. There is also large-scale bogus enrolment in the free electricity scheme, he alleged. A conspiracy has been hatched to remove around 20 lakh beneficiaries. The state has a debt of Rs.1.20 lakh crore and is unable to even pay the interest on it. Salaries to employees are also not being paid. Pensions have not been disbursed for the past four months. Not paying pensions means the government has become bankrupt, he said.

Due to deficient rainfall,

drought is about to begin. Soon there will be no fodder for cattle. At such a time, the government is proceeding with layouts in the very places meant for providing fodder. It is not clear what plan they have to tackle the shortage of food grains in the state. Siddaramaiah knew administration, but Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar only knows politics and knows nothing about administration, he remarked.

Cross-voting

A lot of information has emerged regarding cross-voting. A committee has been formed in this regard and the truth will come out. Action will be taken against those who have stabbed the party in the back. It will take some time to identify who

indulged in cross-voting. Some people have taken money and voted. Crores of rupees and the issue of grants will come to light. Information is being collected on who was where during voting and with whom they spoke. This matter has also been brought to the attention of central leaders. Central leaders have asked to meet them next week. We will submit a report at that time. We discussed this with Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy and he too is upset about it. We will give a proper answer to this. We are not saying it was done by the BJP or JD(S). We will find out who cheated. We will ensure that those who indulged in cross-voting do not become legislators again, he said.

If former minister is excluded from the electoral roll due to not studying SSLC due to SIR, what is the situation of the common people: Former Minister B.T. Lalitha Nayak

Bengaluru: Former minister B.T. Lalitha Nayak has questioned that, Even though I am a minister, I do not have a passport. I have not studied up to SSLC. That is, now I am excluded from the electoral roll due to SIR. If my situation as a former minister is like this, what is the situation of the common poor people, Dalits, Adivasis, minorities.

Speaking at a press conference organized at a private hotel regarding protest at Freedom Park against SIR, All progressive organizations and secular parties in Karnataka, has condemned the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process of the electoral roll which



will officially begin in Karnataka from June 20, and internal training and preparation will begin. This will create a situation where the rights of citizens are being taken away.

She said that we have invited the Election Commission and the government to answer the most important questions of

citizens in the protest meeting.

Noor Sridhar of Karnataka Janshakti said that in addition to the meeting, a statewide jatha has been organized on five routes from June 13 in collaboration with 'Eddelu Karnataka' and has been successfully completed. During the jatha, all the taluk centers

across the state have been visited. During this time, more than 170 different types of awareness activities have been carried out. He explained that people are understanding the danger of SIR and the conspiracy behind it.

Dr. Shivacharya Shivamurthy Swamy, Reverend Peter Machado, Rt. Reverend BP Susanathan, Maitreyi Mataji, Baljit Singh, Maulana Zulfikar Noori, Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, former CM Siddaramaiah, Home Minister Priyank Kharge and more than 230 dignitaries from the cultural, social and political sectors will participate, he informed.

KPTCL MD Dr. Ram Prasath Manohar Takes Concurrent Charge as Commissioner of Tourism

Bengaluru : Senior IAS officer Dr. Ram Prasath Manohar, currently serving as the Managing Director of Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL), assumed office today as the Commissioner of the Tourism Department.

As per the government order, he will function as the Commissioner of Tourism in a concurrent charge, taking effect immediately, alongside his present responsibilities as the Managing Director of KPTCL. After assuming charge, he held a meeting with the senior officials of the department.



Rotary District 3191 Partners with Mosaic Pte. Ltd. to Create Global Career Pathways for Indian Youth

Bengaluru : Rotary International District 3191 has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mosaic Pvt. Ltd. to create a structured pathway for skill development, Japanese language training, and overseas employment opportunities for deserving youth in Japan.

The collaboration seeks to identify and support young people from rural and underserved communities, equipping them with the language proficiency, cultural orientation, technical skills, and career readiness required to pursue opportunities in Japan's growing workforce sectors.

Under the partnership, Rotary District 3191 will identify and mobilise eligible youth, conduct outreach and counselling, and facilitate community engagement while Mosaic Pvt. Ltd. will provide Japanese language training, cultural orientation, qualification guidance, and interview preparation. Alp Consulting Limited will help connect qualified candidates with potential



employers in Japan and support placement and documentation processes. The programme will focus on sectors including engineering, skilled technical trades, healthcare, hospitality, information technology, and other areas driven by employer demand.

The initiative is designed to align training and skill development with actual workforce requirements in Japan, creating a practical and employment-oriented framework for youth aspir-

ing to build international careers.

Speaking on the partnership, Rtn Anil Gupta, District Governor Elect 2025-26, Rotary International District 3191 said, "At Rotary, we believe that the most meaningful way to transform lives is by creating opportunities. This partnership is about opening new horizons for deserving young people by equipping them with globally relevant skills, language proficiency, and the confidence to pursue

careers beyond borders. By connecting talent from our communities with international opportunities, we are not only empowering individuals but also creating lasting impact for families and society at large."

Mr. Hiroyuki Ishida, CEO & Director, Mosaic Pvt. Ltd. said, "Japan is witnessing an increasing demand for skilled and motivated talent across multiple sectors. Through this collaboration, we hope to bridge cultures and create opportunities for young Indians who aspire to work and grow internationally. Our focus will be on providing high-quality Japanese language education, cultural understanding, and career preparation that enable candidates to succeed in Japan both professionally and personally."

The MoU reflects a shared commitment to enhance employability, promote international workforce mobility, and create sustainable career opportunities for India's youth through skill development and global partnerships.

Aurya Diamonds Brings "Weightless Luxury" to Koramangala with Their New Experiential Store

Bengaluru : Aurya Diamonds, a lab grown diamond brand, launched its new experiential store in Koramangala, Bengaluru. The grand opening was graced by Former Indian cricketer and President of the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA), Venkatesh Prasad along with other dignitaries.

At 2,000 sq ft, the new store is a design-led destination built for a younger, craftsmanship-conscious generation of buyers. The Koramangala store is conceived as a clubhouse for collectors. It introduces various experiential zones such as a 3D diamond design studio where customers/buyers can co-create their pieces, AR try-on mirrors, and a private Studio Room for high-end jewellery previews.

To mark the new milestone, Aurya Diamonds debuted three capsule collections. Elements, that



reimagines fire, water, air and earth as daily-wear diamonds with a high-jewellery finish; K-Light, which offers lightweight 0.8g-2g pieces designed for office-wear as well as dinners; and Legacy Unveiled, that presents IGI/GIA-certified bridal investment pieces, previewed exclusively at launch. A limited Koramangala launch edition ring (only 26 pieces)

each carrying a hidden "K" engraving — will be available during the launch period.

Talking about her venture and scaling the brand, Shikha Dadha, Founder of Aurya Diamonds expresses, "Jayanagar taught us what trust looks like; Koramangala teaches us what the future holds. We're not just opening a

store — we're bridging the conventional and modern India with designs that speak volumes."

This is just the beginning for us. We at Aurya Diamonds are on a mission to make a landmark brand that resonates not just with people across regions and age-groups but also the kind of occasions they want to wear our exclusive pieces at," she added.

"With the launch of our Koramangala store, we're introducing a new era of fine jewelry to Bengaluru. Aurya is built on absolute transparency, genuine customer service without a sales script, and technology that values your time. We believe luxury should be felt instantly—if you don't experience that difference the moment you step inside our new experiential store, we've failed," said Saad Salman, Co-founder, Aurya Diamonds.

Steps to formulate appropriate policies for investment and job creation: Priyank Kharge

Bengaluru: The government is prioritizing job creation and investment needed by the state, and the policy will be formulated after discussing with the relevant stakeholders, said Home, Information and Biotechnology, e-Governance Minister Priyank Kharge.

Speaking after participating in the Bangalore Development and Employment Dialogue organized by the Integrated Workspaces Forum – CCIRE with the aim of holding a comprehensive discussion on various issues ranging from the concept of "Brand Bangalore" to climate change and infrastructure development, the minister said that the government is constantly interacting with the community, citizens, the corporate sector, and the industrial sector. The government considers everyone as its partner. Priority will be given

to the policy and presentation after listening to all the opinions. It is not possible to provide large-scale infrastructure

by nightfall. Everything needs to be changed as per the need in terms of design, scale and plans. To reduce traffic con-

gestion, it is necessary to obtain adequate information about the daily traffic system.

Bajaj Finance Limited			
Registered Office : Bajaj Finance Limited, Off Pune-Ahmednagar Road, Viman Nagar, Pune - 411014. Branch Office : Bajaj Finance Ltd, 1st Floor, Aurum Panikath Complex, Patturalkal Junction, Trichur, Kerala-680022			
POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)			
(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)			
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bajaj Finance Limited (BFL), under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Sec.13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand by registered post ("Notice") calling upon the Borrowers/Co-borrowers mentioned hereunder to repay the amount mentioned in the notice U/s.13(2) of the said Act within a period of 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.			
The Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors named below having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors and public in general that the undersigned has taken Physical Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Sec.13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.			
The borrowers in particular and public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the said property and any dealing with this property will be subject to the charge of the Bajaj Finance Limited, for the amount mentioned herein below along with interest thereon at contracted rate.			
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.			
Loan Account No./Name of the Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) Guarantor(s)	Description of Secured Immovable Property	Date of Notice U/s.13(2) and U/s.13(2) Notice Amount	Date of Possession
436/LAP41431685 POWERMAX BATTERIES (BORROWER), ADD :- SARANYA COMPLEX, VII/62 THIROOR, VII MULAMKUNNATHUKAVU, TRICHUR-680581 SHIBESH S PUTHUKULANGARA (CO-BORROWER), ADD:- PUTHUKULANGARA HOUSE, KOZHIKUNNU, KILLANNUR, MULAMKUNNATHUKAVU, TRICHUR- 680581 SINOJ K L (CO-BORROWER), ADD:- KANNANAIKKAL HOUSE, VELUR BAZAR, VELUR P.O., TRICHUR - 680601. LAZAR K T (CO-BORROWER), ADD :- 528/A, KANNANAIKKAL, 4 VELLUR, TRICHUR-680601	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF THE PROPERTY ADMEASURING AREA 3.27 ARES (8.08 CENTS) IN SY. NO. 104A/P IN VELLUR VILLAGE, THALAPALLY TALUK, THIRISSUR DISTRICT, TRICHUR-680581, KERALA, BOUNDED AS- EAST - ROAD, NORTH - PROPERTY OF SUNDARAN, WEST - PROPERTY OF ANANDAN, SOUTH - ROAD.	23/10/2024 & Rs.30,43,859/- (Rupees Thirty Lakh Forty-Three Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty-Nine Only) as on 11/10/24	POSSESSION DATE 17/06/2026
Date - 17.06.2026, Place - TRICHUR			
Authorized Officer, For M/s BAJAJ FINANCE LIMITED			

EDITORIAL

Near 50% Seats in ITIs Stay Vacant: India’s Skill Crisis is Hidden in Plain Sight

India’s skilling ecosystem is undergoing a silent crisis. Across the country’s 15,000-odd Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), half of all seats go unoccupied every year – nearly 13 lakh vacant places across government and private institutions combined. The reason is not a shortage of young people looking for skills training. It is a crisis of relevance and trust.

A 2024 study by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship found that more than half of ITI graduates remain unemployed. When parents see that, they steer their children elsewhere. India’s much-anticipated demographic dividend begins to look like a demographic delay. Two major structural fault lines reveal the reason. The first is gender. Less than 15% of ITI students are female and the system is built to keep it that way, with training almost entirely segregated along gender lines. The second is relevance. The trades ITIs offer is overwhelmingly skewed towards traditional manufacturing sector leaving the service sector – the largest and fastest-growing source of skilled employment in the country – almost entirely unserved.

Misaligned trades

The trade dominating ITI enrolment today – electrician, fitter, diesel mechanic, welder, wireman – are essentially those catering to the manufacturing sector, which employs about 10% of India’s total workforce. Just two trades – electrician and fitter – account for 50% of all occupied seats in the country as per the latest National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) MIS data.

Meanwhile, India’s service sector, which accounts for 60% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and approximately 34% of employment is almost invisible inside ITI course catalogues. Information Technology, healthcare, financial services, logistics: these are the engines of job creation in 21st century India, and the ITI ecosystem, has mostly failed to address this need.

Occupational Segregation in ITI Training

Buried within this supply-demand mismatch is an equally troubling structural flaw: the trade wise near absolute gender segregation. The State of Working India 2026 report’s analysis reveals that the top 10 male-dominated trades account for roughly 80% of total enrolment in ITIs, with male students comprising over 90% in almost every one of them. The only exception is Computer Operator and Programming Assistant (COPA), with a 60% male share. Female students, less than 15% of total enrolment, are clustered almost exclusively in trades such as Sewing Technology, Dress Making, Fashion Design and Technology, Cosmetology, and Stenography – each seeing female enrolment approaching 90 percent. The pattern is not incidental but institutional.

Gaps in ITI Reforms

India has made consistent progress towards introducing innovative skills policies. The establishment of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in 2014, the National Skill Development Policy of 2015, and successive ITI upgradation schemes represent genuine institutional intent. But intent has consistently outpaced implementation.

The Harsh Transactional Reality Behind India-US 'Strategic Partnership'

The highly anticipated meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump is over, and the Ministry of External Affairs can heave a sigh of relief. No disruptive comments were noted, and Trump, in fact, was lavish in his praise of India's leader. Everything played out well. But this is no time to let our guard down. First, the meeting itself. Both sides noted 'satisfaction' at the progress in ties, and PM Modi raised the critical issue of the safety of commercial seafarers. Trump's response was swift, asserting that the US would never allow anyone to target India while PM Modi was at the helm. As a politician, Trump naturally respects a counterpart with massive democratic longevity. He is also unlikely to have forgotten the echoing legacy of the "Abki baar, Trump sarkar" campaign. Whatever the geopolitical ups and downs, he has never denigrated the Indian Prime Minister - a courtesy he has frequently withheld from core allies like French President Emmanuel Macron. Does this personal chemistry alter structural realities? Hardly. But it plays exceptionally well to domestic audiences in both New Delhi and Washington. Indian policymakers must adjust to a shifting Washington paradigm: democratic credentials no longer carry currency in America's transaction-first strategic partnerships. The current White House administration views geopolitics through a strictly bilateral, commercial lens. The 2020 perception of India as America's most "consequential partner" has given way to a more cautious global posture by Washington. The White



House has consistently chosen selective de-escalation with major adversaries, freezing massive arms sales to Taiwan while managing relations with Beijing. More telling is the reduced salience of regional frameworks, highlighted by the failure to convene the Quadrilateral Summit during India's chairmanships and the symbolic reverting of the Indo-Pacific Command back to its historic moniker, the Pacific Command. This stems from the reality of the expansionist 'Donroe Doctrine' - a blend of isolationist transactionism and aggressive hemispheric pressure. Look no further than the rhetoric coming out of the State Department, which openly questions the traditional

"rules-based international order" in favour of a world redivided by economic muscle. On paper, bilateral cooperation looks phenomenal. The COMPACT (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) initiative covers everything from critical minerals to space exploration. However, the operational progress remains sluggish. Defense cooperation has hit supply-chain bottlenecks; GE Aerospace's F404 and F414 engines for India's Light Combat Aircraft have faced persistent delivery delays, choking domestic timelines. While framework agreements like the Security of Supplies Arrangement (SOSA) have eased some

bureaucratic hurdles - and Indian private players like Kalyani Defence and Tata Aerospace are deeply integrated into global aerospace supply chains - the broader commercial climate remains volatile. Threat of sweeping tariffs, strict supply-chain compliance laws, and sanctions targeting third-party entities dealing with Russia or Iran mean that Indian enterprises face a minefield without ironclad political guarantees. This begs the fundamental question: Are India and the US true strategic partners? If strategy implies a alignment of core economic and military interests, the US agenda is clear: open up the Indian consumer market and accelerate American defense exports. Defense Secretary

Pete Hegseth's recent call at the Shangri-La Dialogue for partners to ramp up defense spending to 3.5% of GDP to buy American hardware underscores this worldview. The ambition is to expand American military and industrial dominance. The question for New Delhi is whether it seeks a balanced strategic partnership or an asymmetric alignment. In short, the geopolitical trajectory is set. For the current US administration, money speaks louder than shared values. Western capital remains deeply tethered to existing manufacturing hubs, and economic nationalism dominates Washington's thinking. While New Delhi is rightly moving to diversify its for-

eign direct investment sources and diplomatic capital, the Indian bureaucracy must recognise that the global discourse has fundamentally changed. Lavish praise from the White House makes for excellent headlines, but yields little structural value. Clout is measured entirely by economic velocity. To sit comfortably at the high table, India must aggressively slash red tape, streamline investor processes, enforce transparency, and modernise its industrial infrastructure. Muscle matters, but as global growth stumbles, economic resilience is what buys a seat at the table. Until then, the wisest course is to keep our heads down and focus on internal consolidation.

Romila Thapar’s Life, History and the Strange Death of Liberal India

Just Being? A publisher might have hesitated before accepting such a tepid title but this book is already flying off the shelves because of the person who is narrating her life-story. It could well have been called The Autobiography of the Most Well-Known Indian Historian. At no point does the narrative flag. If the incarceration of the lockdown gave Romila Thapar the time, it was matched by the granular memory of someone determined to live every moment fully. Her style has the confidence of K a m a l a d e v i Chattopadhyaya's in Inner Recesses, Outer Spaces, the nationalism-induced excitement of Jawaharlal Nehru's Autobiography, and the lively energy of Prakash Tandon's Punjabi Century. We read about a childhood with her parents in Indian cantonments, her college years in Pune, studying history and doing research in London, then her return in 1961 to India where she has been based since. Her teaching career in Delhi (1963-91) was interspersed by spells as visiting scholar in foreign universities, and in writing school textbooks. This last enterprise is what was to make her famous to a degree no other Indian historian has achieved. Just Being is memoir about New Delhi, complementing the writings of Sharada Prasad, the two Nayantaras (Sahgal and Pothan), Khushwant Singh, and Nirad Chaudhuri. Thirty-year old Romila Thapar, a newcomer to the



city, joined those whom Khushwant Singh invited for Sunday walks and picnics at the sites of older cities. For west Punjabis, Delhi could never be a substitute for Lahore (both cities were mourning those snatched from them). New Delhi was the first modern Indian city, a magnet that attracted people from all over India, a launching-pad connecting to other cultures and other young nations. Careers and networks were being built, as were habitats, fields being transformed into spacious enclaves, peripheral spaces becoming precarious homes for hundreds of construction workers. Thapar's own assessment was cryptic: "As a capital, Delhi attracted the best and the worst". (p.133). For newcomers, this patchwork-quilt landscape polarised into mental geographies, snobberies and senses of envy – not of 'Purani Dilli' and its Urdu culture that linked it to Lahore, but of 'Lutyens' Delhi', seen as a self-regarding remnant of imperialism. Romila Thapar was located

in "Lutyens' Delhi" but she was also part of another constituency, that of academia. In the aftermath of Partition, Delhi had little of the intellectual vibrancy of Calcutta, Bombay or Madras University. The year 1857 had seen the founding of the three Presidency universities, followed by that of Lahore's Punjab University in 1882. Delhi was known more by its undergraduate colleges (St. Stephens 1881, Hindu 1899, rather than by the University which was constituted in 1924. Delhi University did not have the equivalent of the Calcutta coffee-house or the Madras beach. Its sparse campus was a footnote to the new capital city, locationally a modification of what had been Delhi cantonment. After a brief spell at the new Kurukshetra University, Thapar joined the DU history faculty in 1963. The contrast with the other history teachers was marked – they were very senior, their lectures laid-back. She missed the atmosphere of London. The university

began to change shortly after, opening gates to new disciplines – economics, sociology, anthropology. These, as well as the department of history, attracted scholars who had just returned from European and American universities. And the arts faculty coffee house became the place to be seen in – until it had a competitor in the new one at the Delhi School of Economics. There were also winds of intellectual change blowing in from overseas. In a world just recovering from six years of war, it was as natural for historians to reassess the past as it was for rulers to plan the future. Indian scholars, excited by the newly-achieved independence, drew inspiration from both their own 'traditions', and from European scholars of the social sciences, and from the slogans of the 1968 students' agitation. Within a few years, in 1971, there would be another vast new campus that colonised the southern Ridge, like the new redbrick universities in England challenging Oxbridge in the '60s.

For Minors in Observation Homes, There is Little Hope for Rehabilitation

Jaipur: Two towering iron gates stand between the observation home and the outside world. The first has to be locked before the second can be opened. Curtains hang across the doors just beyond the second gate, ensuring that those inside can neither see outside, nor be seen from outside. The overall security arrangement gives the impression that society is being protected from those inside. Except, those inside are children. On my first day inside an observation home in Jaipur, a desk is placed for me in the middle of the premises so I can interview some of the resident children inside. A security guard sits beside me, but quickly drifts off to sleep. I am given the impression that the premises are unsafe with such vigour and by so many, that I briefly consider waking him up. A few minutes later, I am interviewing a child who landed in conflict with the law because he had an abiding love for scooters and could not resist taking one for a ride when he saw that the keys had been left inside. Another had snatched smartphones because, he says, he loved to take selfies. A third says he stole money given as offerings to certain temples ever since he was turned away hungry from one during a community function years ago. These were not hardened offenders, but children with stories far more complex than their case files suggested. I interviewed 108 children in conflict with law to study the effectiveness of mental and psychological



rehabilitation under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, as part of my LL.M. dissertation at National Law University, Delhi. The study was conducted across three districts of Rajasthan – Jaipur, Sikar and Jhunjhunu – after obtaining permission from the Rajasthan high court and the Rajasthan Department of Child Rights. Separate observation homes are maintained for boys and girls. However, the number of girls in these homes is significantly lower, and girls are typically detained only in cases involving heinous offences, such as murder. Most of the children were booked for petty offences such as theft (22), assault (six), and chain snatching (two). A majority – 59 – were booked under The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, while only a few (18) had been accused of heinous

offences like murder. One was there for cyber fraud. Why they do the things they do A lot of the debate around juvenile justice revolves around the question – should children who commit offences be rehabilitated or punished? What I expected to study was rehabilitation, but troublingly, there was not much of it in the observation homes in Rajasthan. The real question is whether there is any rehabilitation taking place even in the case of children who have landed on the 'rehabilitation' side of the debate. Behind the legal labels are stories of poverty, school dropouts, neglectful parents, step-parents, and bad company. Many children are from families where survival itself was a daily struggle. One of the boys mentioned earlier proudly says that he has been booked three times for stealing scooters. "Why?" I ask. "I like driving Activa," he says. His

plan would be simple. If he found a scooter with keys left inside, he would take it for a ride until the petrol ran out. He laughs, "I am unlucky. The petrol usually runs out near a traffic policeman." Another boy admits that he has snatched smartphones twice – not to sell them or to make money. His immediate purpose was to take selfies. Yet many of them, with stories that make it apparent to any adult as to how their tellers should be tended to, have spent weeks and sometimes months and years inside observation homes. As the interviews continue at the Jaipur observation home, I notice one older boy helping me coordinate the interviews. He calls names, maintains order and appears unusually mature. When his turn comes, he sits calmly and says he has committed murder. Unlike many others, he does not deny his agency in the crime.

Reliance succession plan near completion: Ambani

New Delhi: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani on Friday, June 19, said the transfer of day-to-day management responsibilities at his oil-to-telecom-and-retail conglomerate Reliance Industries to his children is “almost complete”, marking the final stages of a closely watched succession process at India’s most valuable company. Speaking at the annual shareholders meeting, Ambani said Akash, Isha and Anant are now leading key businesses across the group and will drive the conglomerate’s next phase of growth, including major initiatives in telecommunications, retail, digital services and new energy. Ambani, 69, lavished praise on his three children as he said the “generational transfer of day-to-day management at Reliance is almost complete”, signalling that the succession process at India’s largest conglomerate has entered its final phase. “The future of your company is not only in safe hands, but in hands that will take Reliance to far greater heights,” he told shareholders. Just like the previous year, he gave the floor to twins Akash and



Isha, 34, to present a business plan for the telecom and retail segments, respectively. Youngest, Anant, 31, who in May last year was appointed as executive director on the board of Reliance — the first among the siblings — for a second year in a row, delivered a business update for the energy segment. Succession has long been one of the most closely watched issues at Reliance. Ambani, who joined the company’s board in 1977 at the age of 20, assumed control of the conglomerate following the death of founder Dhirubhai

Ambani in 2002. He, however, had a protracted dispute over control of the conglomerate with his younger brother, as their father did not leave a will. For investors, the leadership transition carries added significance as Reliance evolves from a traditional oil-and-petrochemicals group into a consumer, technology and clean-energy powerhouse, with billions of dollars earmarked for digital services, retail and renewable energy. “Isha, Akash, and Anant have now completed three transformative years on the Board of

Reliance Industries. Isha leads consumer businesses. Akash leads technology businesses. Anant leads the energy businesses,” he said. “While leading individual business verticals, they are simultaneously working towards the holistic growth of everything under the Reliance ecosystem. They are three bodies, one soul. Their soul is Reliance. One single indivisible Reliance, now and forever.” Asia’s second-richest man said that while he continues to provide hands-on leadership, as many as 500 young leaders in

their 30s and 40s have been groomed in various businesses to assist his three children, “They bring top-notch domain expertise, technological fluency, and the first generation’s passion to surpass expectations. They are being mentored by seniors to ensure that the institutional culture of Reliance is upheld, and the bar is continually raised.” After Akash, who has been working at Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd since 2014, presented a digital business plan, Ambani said, “Splendid Akash.” “I can see the passion, dedication and hard work you and your team are putting into this mission. When work is done with such devotion, hard work becomes heart work. I am confident that this heart work will make Jio’s second decade even more scintillating, more purposeful and more transformational,” he said. On his daughter’s retail plan, he said, “That was truly impressive, Isha.” “Let us applaud Isha and the entire retail and consumer product teams for what they have built and for the clarity and courage with which they intend to build the next phase of Reliance Retail.

Bandhan Bank opened Corporate Banking Branch in BKC, Mumbai



Hyderabad, June 2026: Bandhan Bank today announced that it has inaugurated a dedicated Corporate Banking Branch in Mumbai, marking a significant step in strengthening its presence in the financial capital of India. The new branch located at INS Tower, BKC Mumbai, was inaugurated by Mr. Partha Pratim Sengupta, MD & CEO, Bandhan Bank, in the presence of Mr. Rajinder Kumar Babbar, ED & CBO, Mr. Ratan Kumar Kesh, ED & COO and Mr. Satish Kumar, Head-Wholesale Banking, along with other senior officials of the Bank. This specialized Corporate Banking Branch has been designed to exclusively cater to the needs of corporate and institutional clients, offering a comprehensive suite of tailored financial solutions. The branch will focus on delivering end-to-

end banking services to large corporates, mid-sized enterprises and institutional clients. By setting up a dedicated corporate banking hub in BKC, Bandhan Bank aims to deepen client relationships, enhance service delivery, and provide faster, more specialized support to its growing corporate customer base. The branch will also serve as a key centre for relationship management, structured finance solutions, and sector-specific advisory services, ensuring a high-touch, consultative approach for corporate clients. Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Partha Pratim Sengupta, MD & CEO, Bandhan Bank, said “We are delighted to announce the launch of our dedicated Corporate Banking Branch at BKC. This initiative reflects our strategic focus on expand-

ing our corporate banking franchise and providing specialized, relationship-led services to our corporate customers. As we continue to strengthen our network, we remain committed to sustainable growth and to delivering innovative, flexible banking solutions across customer segments. Our corporate banking vertical will play a key role in driving this next phase of growth.” Bandhan Bank is currently present in 35 out of the 36 states and Union Territories in India and serves more than 3.2 crore customers through a robust network of over 6,380 banking outlets. The launch of the Corporate Banking Branch in Mumbai highlights the Bank’s commitment to diversifying its offerings and strengthening its position as a full-service bank catering to both retail and corporate clients.

20 years of leadership amid evolving global dynamics: ArcelorMittal Executive Chairman Lakshmi Mittal marks 20th anniversary highlighting India as a key driver of global growth

NEW DELHI, JUNE 19: India set to power the next phase of global steel demand, driven by infrastructure, urbanisation and the energy transition. Scale and diversification strengthened resilience, helping ArcelorMittal navigate major global shocks over the past two decades. The steel industry has become faster, more global and technology-driven than it was in 2006. Long-term outlook remains positive, supported by emerging market growth, infrastructure investment and industrial policy. ArcelorMittal Executive Chairman Lakshmi Mittal has stated that the last 20 years has been characterized by China’s remarkable growth. Now it is India’s turn, with massive infrastructure expansion, rapid urban housing growth, and energy transition infrastructure all on the cards. “If I look back over the 20 years, I genuinely believe that the merger did indeed create a stronger company, benefiting from greater scale, diversification, resilience and strategic reach. Clearly – as is always the way - there have been events we did not anticipate. The aftershocks of the Global Financial Crisis are still with us, and the fall-out from COVID has been similarly dramatic. I am adamant though that we navigated these shocks better



together than we could have done separately,” Mr. Mittal said in a video message delivered to attendees at the World Steel Dynamics annual Global Steel Dynamics Forum 2026, held in New York. “Operating in 2026 is obviously very different to 2006. Today markets move faster, competition is more global, technology changes constantly, and companies are expected to adapt in real time. Even traditional industries like ours operate in a faster, more global, more data-driven, and more environmentally constrained world than they did in 2006. There are plenty of reasons to remain optimistic and excited about

the future. I have no doubt that we will continue to face plenty of challenges and unexpected events. But honestly, I can say that after 50 years in the steel industry, there is no place I would rather be.” Ahead of its 20th anniversary on July 31 this year, ArcelorMittal Executive Chairman Lakshmi Mittal, recalled the speech he gave at the event, shortly before the merger of Mittal Steel and Arcelor was reached. Reflecting on the past two decades, Mr. Mittal highlighted how the combination created a stronger, more resilient business with the scale, diversification and reach to navigate major global shifts - from the financial crisis to the COVID-19 pandemic to the rise of China’s steel industry. He also set out how industry has evolved, with faster-moving markets, greater technological change and a more complex operating environment than in 2006. Looking ahead, Mr. Mittal expressed confidence in the long-term outlook for steel, underpinned by demand from emerging markets such as India, infrastructure renewal in developed economies and the energy transition. He also underlined the growing role of domestic industrial policy and the importance of maintaining a strong, competitive steel industry.

TIRUPATI EMERGES AMONG INDIA’S FAST-GROWING PET CARE MARKETS

Tirupati, June 2026: The future of India’s pet care market is increasingly being shaped by cities like Tirupati. As one of the country’s fastest-growing pet care markets, Tirupati is part of a broader wave of growth beyond metros, where pet parenting is moving firmly into the mainstream. Nationwide, Instamart recorded a 41% growth in pet care orders over the past year, while Tier II+ cities outpaced metros with 96% year-on-year growth. From grain-free meals and specialised nutrition to grooming products and treats, pet parents are spending more on their pets’ health, comfort, and happiness than ever before. While Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Delhi remain the biggest pet care markets overall, the real headline is happening elsewhere: Tier II+ cities posted 96% year-on-year growth in pet care orders. India is Having a Cat Moment Settling the dog vs cat-lover debate, data shows that cat food now makes up nearly 60% of all pet food demand on Instamart. Cat



food is the single most-searched pet term on the platform. On the feline front, Mumbai is crowned India’s cat capital, followed by Bengaluru, Chennai, and Kolkata. Kolkata stands out

as India’s most cat-dominated city, with more than 8 in 10 cat-and-dog food orders going to cats. Bengaluru is India’s most dog-loving city, followed by Hyderabad, Mumbai, Chennai and

Delhi. The real dark horse is bird food, up 178% YoY, with rabbit food close behind at 130% growth. Beyond Food: Grooming Goes Mainstream The pet food bowl is getting a glow-up, too, and so is the rest of the pet care basket. “Dog shampoo” is now Instamart’s fastest-growing pet search term. Grain-free pet food grew 152% YoY, making it the fastest-growing nutrition segment on the platform. Wet food now accounts for nearly 45% of all pet food orders. Pet supplements and wellness products are up 42%, with premium nutrition showing no signs of slowing down. Bengaluru Has India’s Most Pampered Pets Nearly 66% of all pet-care spending in the city goes toward treats, toys, and premium products, making it India’s undisputed pet-pampering capital, with Gurgaon, Noida, and Hyderabad close on its heels. Gurgaon tops India’s Pet Treat Index, clocking 37 treat orders for every 100 food orders. Pet indulgence is going mainstream.

IDBI Bank Launches Hackathon “IDBI Innovate 2026” to Drive Banking Innovation



India: IDBI Bank announced the launch of its hackathon, “IDBI Innovate 2026,” a forward-looking initiative aimed at fostering innovation and accelerating digital transformation across the banking ecosystem. The event was formally inaugurated by Shri Rakesh Sharma, MD & CEO, IDBI Bank, marking a significant step in the Bank’s commitment to embracing next-generation technologies. Built around the theme “Build. Integrate. Transform.”, the hackathon invites participation from start-ups, fin-

techs, developers, and innovators from across India. The initiative is designed to harness creative and technological talent to address real-world challenges faced by the banking industry. Speaking on the occasion, Shri Rakesh Sharma, MD & CEO of IDBI Bank, said: “With ‘IDBI Innovate 2026,’ we aim to create dynamic solutions that brings together bright minds and innovative ideas to reimagine banking solutions. This hackathon reflects our commitment to digital excellence and customer-centric innovation.”

Gen Z Women Lead with 48% Share of Andhra Pradesh & Telangana Bus Bookings Amid Growth in Pilgrimage Travel: redBus

Hyderabad, 19 June, 2026: redBus, the world’s largest online bus ticketing platform is witnessing a strong surge in intercity travel from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The surge is led by pilgrimage journeys to Tirupati ahead of the weekend travel window and temple festivities such as Jyesthabhishekam. Bus bookings from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are projected to grow by 22% between 14 June - 20 June 2026, compared to the same period last year. This surge reflects strong demand for spiritual travel to Tirupati, home to the Sri Venkateswara Temple and one of India’s most visited pilgrimage destinations. The temple continues to attract devotees from across India, with over 44 million servings of meals and beverages distributed between January and May 2026 alone, highlighting the scale of pilgrimage activity at the shrine. Beyond pilgrimage travel, weekend getaways and seasonal travel patterns con-

tinue to drive intercity mobility across the region, with families, students, young travellers, and devotees undertaking short-window journeys. Some key travel trends, as per bookings on the redBus platform, are:

Top Routes and Key Destinations (by traffic):

Intra-region

Hyderabad-Vijayawada
Vijayawada-Tirupati
Tirupati-Hyderabad
Hyderabad-Nellore

Inter-region

Hyderabad-Bangalore
Tirupati-Bangalore
Hyderabad-Chennai
Hyderabad-Pune
Nellore-Bangalore

Top Boarding Points by Traffic in Hyderabad:

MGBS Bus Stand
Kukatpally
Gachibowli
Miyapur

Lakdikapul
Ameerpet
Traveller Preferences

65% of bookings are for AC buses, indicating a strong preference for comfortable travel during the pilgrimage and summer travel period. Sleeper buses account for 58% of bookings, while seater services account for 42%, reflecting traveller preference for overnight and long-distance journeys to the region and for Tirupati. Traveller Demographics Travellers in the 18-30 age group account for 47% of the seat share, underscoring strong participation from younger devotees and leisure travellers. Male travellers account for 64% of the total bookings, of whom 46% are young travellers (18-30). Women travellers make up 36% of total bookings, of whom 48% are young travellers (aged 18-30). 42% of travellers begin their journeys from Tier 1 cities, while 21% depart

from Tier 2 towns and 37% from Tier 3 towns and villages, reflecting strong metro demand alongside steady momentum in the non-metro market. Together, these trends indicate a strong rise in pilgrimage-led travel across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, supported by advance travel planning and the growing preference for comfortable intercity bus services. As devotees undertake spiritual journeys to key destinations, redBus continues to strengthen access across these pilgrimage corridors, enabling travellers from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to plan and complete their journeys with greater ease and reliability. To support this, redBus offers travellers up to 2500 off on using the code PILGRIM on bookings made between 01 May 2026 to 30 June 2026 to travel from Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore to Tirupati via redbus.com or the redBus mobile app.

NCW RECOMMENDS ANNUAL POSH AUDITS, STRONGER SAFEGUARDS

New Delhi: The National Commission for Women (NCW) on Friday, June 19, issued an advisory to all states and Union Territories, recommending mandatory annual POSH audits, and a host of measures to strengthen workplace safety and effective implementation of guidelines under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The advisory has been sent to chief secretaries and directors general of police of all states and UTs and has also been disseminated to district magistrates, senior superintendents of police and commissioners of police across the country for grassroots-level enforcement and accountability. “A woman should never have to choose between her dignity and her livelihood. Every workplace must be a space of safety, respect and equal opportunity,” NCW chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar said. “Effective implemen-

tation of the POSH Act is not merely a legal obligation but a collective responsibility towards ensuring women’s empowerment and participation in nation-building,” she said. In a statement, the commission said that the advisory seeks to ensure that every workplace, whether in the government, private, organised or unorganised sector, strictly complies with provisions of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (of Women at Workplace) (POSH) Act and fosters a safe, inclusive and gender-sensitive working environment for women. Mandatory POSH audits for all establishments with 10 or more workers in a major step towards institutional accountability, the commission has advised all states and UTs to establish dedicated POSH monitoring cells or digital compliance dashboards to track implementation of the POSH Act, the statement said.

ISRAEL AND HEZBOLLAH AGREE TO CEASEFIRE, US OFFICIAL CONFIRMS

Lebanon was drawn into the war between Israel, the US and Iran at the beginning of March, with Hezbollah launching rockets into Israel in retaliation for an Israeli strike that killed Iran's supreme leader. Israel responded by launching a bombing campaign across Lebanon and invading a significant part of the country's south, with the aim of driving back Hezbollah fighters from its northern border. At least 3,912 people have been killed, among them women and children, and a further 11,699 others wounded since the latest conflict began, according to Lebanon's health ministry. About a million people remain displaced, while dozens of communities in the south have been completely destroyed. Hezbollah has vowed to continue with its attacks as long as the invasion persists. The IDF has confirmed that there is a ceasefire in place between Lebanon's Hezbollah and Israel. IDF Spokesperson,



Brigadier General Effie Defrin, says in a statement: "We are in a ceasefire. The IDF is prepared to continue fighting if called upon to do so." The first point in the US-Iran deal declares an "immediate and permanent" termination of military operations on "all fronts", including Lebanon. It also commits all sides to ensuring Lebanon's "territorial integrity and sov-

ereignty". Centred around 14 points, the memorandum of understanding also includes reopening the Strait of Hormuz, a requirement that Iran will never have a nuclear weapon, a \$300bn (£224bn) plan for Iran's "reconstruction", and the US terminating "all types of sanctions" on Iran. US officials have previously said that while Lebanon was covered

by the ceasefire framework, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory was not a condition of the deal and that Israel would retain the right to self-defence. The announcement comes after at least 18 people were killed in southern Lebanon following a series of Israeli air strikes overnight, according to the country's health ministry. Israel's mili-

tary says four of its soldiers were also killed. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) also earlier said it has struck 80 targets linked to the Iran-backed armed group Hezbollah and killed "dozens" of its members. The developments come a day after the US and Iran signed a deal aimed at ending the conflict in the Middle East, including a permanent cessation of hostilities in Lebanon. "We'll bring you the latest updates right here on this page. At least 18 people have been killed in southern Lebanon following a series of Israeli air strikes overnight, the country's health ministry has said - while the Israeli military says four of its soldiers were also killed. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said it had struck 80 targets linked to the Iran-backed armed group Hezbollah and killed "dozens" of its members. It comes a day after the US and Iran signed a deal aimed at ending the conflict in the Middle East, including

a permanent cessation of hostilities in Lebanon. Both Israel and Hezbollah have carried out strikes against each other since the agreement was announced, raising questions about the future of the truce between the US and Iran. The US-Iran deal calls for an end to hostilities on all fronts, and for Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty to be respected. However, Israel has said it has no intention of withdrawing its forces from Lebanon and has insisted that its conflict with Hezbollah is separate from the war on Iran. Lebanon's state news agency described the overnight bombardment across the Nabatieh district of southern Lebanon on Thursday as one of the most intense of the war, with at least 18 killed, 33 injured and several buildings hit. Hezbollah said it had ambushed an Israeli group in southern Lebanon, destroying three tanks with guided missiles, and targeting troops with rocket and artillery fire.

UK actress charged with importing meth worth almost A\$300m into Australia

A British actress, who appeared in an Eastenders spin-off and a Jason Statham movie, has been charged with trying to smuggle 320kg of meth into Australia from West Africa. Emma Hussen, 34, appeared in a Sydney court on Thursday after she was charged with attempting to import a commercial quantity of methamphetamine into Australia. The maximum penalty is life in prison. Police allege Hussen, along with a couple from South Australia, tried to import meth hidden in bags of charcoal in shipping containers from Ghana. The drugs had an estimated street value of A\$296m (US\$208m; £157m). Hussen was refused bail in an earlier court decision and is due back in court in August. Hussen played the character Naz in an Eastenders spin-off E20 which first aired in 2010. She was also in Jason Statham's 2013 action thriller Hummingbird, which was released in the US as Redemption. Australian police launched



an investigation in April after border authorities detected anomalies in two shipping containers that had arrived at Sydney's Port Botany from Ghana. Authorities found a "white crystallised substance" after they X-rayed the contents of the containers, which were listed as bags of charcoal. Further testing confirmed it was meth. Police removed the drugs from the ship before it was delivered to a storage facility in GIRRRAWEE in Sydney's western suburbs. Police allege that Hussen went to the facility and supervised as several men unpacked the container.

IN TRUMP'S SHADOW, VANCE BECOMES FACE OF IRAN DEAL



As he defended the US-Iran deal at the White House press briefing on Thursday, Vice-President JD Vance brushed aside a question about whether President Donald Trump had positioned him as the "fall guy" for an agreement that is broadly unpopular with Republicans in Washington. "I think the president was joking," Vance said, referring to Trump's comment the previous day that he might blame the vice-president if the deal collapses. Vance has spent the week defending the memorandum of understanding with Iran. Yet he was often contradicted or overshadowed by Trump - and his uncertainty about the logistics of a signing ceremony he was planning to attend in Switzerland with Iranian leaders only further underscored his challenges in handling a defining issue of his vice-presidency. Late Thursday, the White House announced that Vance would ultimately not be travelling for the ceremony, at least for now. Despite all the challenges, Vance has still delivered a forceful defence of the deal. He also delivered a blunt rebuke of Israel's response to the agreement, going further in

his criticisms than anything Trump has said in recent days. The timing is awkward for Vance, who just days ago published a memoir that intensified speculation about a possible presidential run in 2028. It will be hard for him to sell this interim deal to a party that is divided between anti-interventionist Maga supporters who opposed the war from the start, and conservative Iran hawks who believe the White House has ultimately capitulated to Tehran. Other senior administration officials, meanwhile, are not facing quite the same pressures as Vance when it comes to Iran. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, a potential rival for the 2028 Republican nomination, has manoeuvred himself out of the spotlight on this war. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth has been a vocal defender of the military campaign, but has not been deeply involved in the diplomatic talks to end it and is not the face of this agreement in the same way Vance is. Some Republicans said Vance's Iran war portfolio has turned into a thankless assignment from a president long known for blaming his subordinates for unpopular policies.

MANGIONE'S LAWYERS REVERSE COURSE ON PSYCHIATRIC DEFENCE IN STATE MURDER TRIAL



Lawyers for the defendant accused of gunning down UnitedHealthcare Chief Executive Brian Thompson will no longer argue a psychiatric defence at his state murder trial. Luigi Mangione's attorneys reversed course a day after telling Judge Gregory Carro that they would try to show he was suffering from "extreme emotional disturbance at the time of the occur-

rence". Mangione, 28, has pleaded not guilty in both the federal and state cases against him for the fatal shooting of Thompson in midtown Manhattan at the end of 2024. The BBC has contacted Mangione's attorneys. The Manhattan district attorney's office declined to comment. The reversal came ahead of a Thursday deadline Mangione's legal team was facing to provide prosecutors at the Manhattan district attorney's office with information in support of the psychiatric defence claim. If Mangione had pursued the psychiatric defence, and the jury accepted it, then he could have faced a shorter prison sentence as he might have faced a conviction for manslaughter, instead of murder.

Italy's Meloni says Trump 'made up' story that she 'begged' him for photo at G7

Italy's foreign minister, Antonio Tajani, has cancelled a trip to the US after President Donald Trump told Italian TV that Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni had "begged" him for a picture with her. Meloni has said his comments were entirely "made-up". The highly public exchange between the two leaders was an indication that their earlier close ties have frayed in the months since Trump's decision to go to war with Iran. Trump and Meloni were seen in close conversation at the G7 summit at Evian-les-Bains in eastern France this week, and the Italian leader later told reporters their relationship was unchanged and there had been "no recriminations". However, Trump has since given a phone



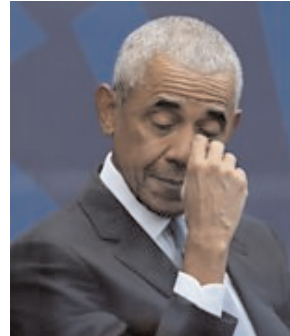
interview with Italy's La7 TV channel in which he alleged: "She begged me to take a photo with her; I felt sorry for her." The two leaders were filmed several times at Evian, including while they appeared engrossed in conversation on a small sofa, with Meloni smiling as they talked. "She's probably happy I spoke to her," he said. La7 did not produce

Trump's original words in English, but voiced them over in Italian. Meloni reacted in total disbelief, saying she was "frankly stunned", in a brief address to her seven million followers on Instagram. "I don't know why the US president behaves this way towards allies," she said, adding it was not the first time it had happened. "I can only say it

is regrettable he does not show the same determination towards the enemies of the West and towards the enemies of the US - [enemies] whose leaders he instead appears to be far more accommodating with." "But there is one thing he needs to remember: neither I nor Italy ever beg." The BBC has approached the White House for comment. Meloni's evident shock at Trump's outburst comes after a series of incidents that have weakened what had begun as a close political relationship. Elected in 2022, Meloni was the sole European leader to attend Trump's inauguration in January 2025 and was widely seen by her EU colleagues as a potential bridge-builder with the US president.

Obama moved to tears by wife Michelle's speech

Former US President Barack Obama was visibly moved as his wife Michelle Obama saluted his work during the opening of the new Obama Presidential Center in Chicago. He appeared to wipe away a tear as the former first lady hailed his achievements in office, including his efforts to expand healthcare and his attainment of a Nobel Peace Prize. The latter remark was widely interpreted as a jibe at his successor, Donald Trump, who has coveted the same accolade during his own time in office. Living former presidents Bill Clinton, George W Bush and Joe Biden attended the event but Trump, who has long feuded with the Obamas, was not invited. The BBC has contacted the White House for comment. The Chicago attrac-



tion, a monument to the eight years the couple spent in the White House, has been in the works since Obama, the 44th president, left the Oval Office a decade ago. The Obamas chose the Jackson Park neighbourhood on the South Side for the 20-acre campus, near the home where they lived before moving to the White House. Obama said he hoped the cen-

tre would "remind us what we can achieve when we embrace our shared responsibilities as citizens". Michelle Obama used her speech to address her husband directly and salute his resilience. "Barack, you gotta look at me," she said, drawing laughter from her audience. "Eight years in the crucible and not once did you melt from the heat." Her hus-

band had done "the people's work", she went on to say, touting his record on the economy and the raid that killed Osama Bin Laden, alongside his achievements on healthcare and the Nobel prize. Barack Obama had been held to a "higher standard" as America's first black president, she added. She told her husband he had battled "lies about your birthright, your faith, your patriotism". When he took the microphone, Barack Obama addressed the emotions of the day, saying of his wife: "She knew she was going to mess me up, and she did it anyway." Obama, who was president from 2009-17, told visitors that the centre had been planned as a "vibrant, living celebration of community".

Zimbabwe MPs pass bill to extend president's time in power



Zimbabwe's lower house of parliament has passed a bill to extend presidential terms from five to seven years, which would allow President Emmerson Mnangagwa to remain in power until 2030. More than 200 lawmakers voted in favour of the draft legislation on Thursday, surpassing the vote threshold required for a two-thirds majority to amend the constitution. The bill also scraps direct presidential elections, with future presidents chosen by parliament. Mnangagwa, 83, took power in 2017 after ousting long-time ruler Robert Mugabe with the backing of the military - and went on to win disputed elections in 2018 and 2023. The bill now heads to the senate, where it is also expected to secure approval, before being enacted by the president. This is the culmination of a campaign by the ruling Zanu-PF party - in power since independence in 1980 - to amend the constitution and extend

presidential terms, a plan that received cabinet backing in February. The president had previously described himself as a constitutionalist and pledged to respect term limits. During Thursday's vote, Speaker of Parliament Jacob Mudenda announced that 216 lawmakers had backed the legislation, surpassing the 187 votes required to amend the constitution. Forty-two lawmakers voted against it. Opposition parties, civil society groups and constitutional lawyers have argued that such fundamental changes should be put to a national referendum rather than being approved solely through parliament. Initially hailed by supporters as a reformer who would restore economic growth and democratic governance, Mnangagwa's presidency has instead been marked by economic challenges, disputed elections and growing concerns over democratic backsliding.



Lebanon says Israeli strikes kill 18 as Israel says four soldiers killed by Hezbollah

BOY, 12, WINS HEARTS AFTER TRYING TO CHECK SICK CHICKEN INTO ETHIOPIAN HOSPITAL

Growing up in rural Ethiopia, 12-year-old Markos Abaye developed a deep affection for animals. So when his beloved chicken fell sick earlier this month and did not respond to any at-home treatments, Markos popped his shoes on and did what made the most sense to him - he rushed the bird to the local hospital. A video of the unlikely couple, recorded by a nurse at Denbecha Primary Hospital in the Amhara region, racked up 770,000 views on TikTok, with many Ethiopians struck by Markos' compassion. "She is wheezing," Markos tells the nurse in the video, cradling the poorly chicken with a worried expression on his face. The nurse, Umer Chane, responds: "Listen, there



are doctors who treat animals. You have to take her there. This is a hospital for humans. Okay, dear?" He then took her to a vet, where the chicken was treated. The youngster wound up at the hospital after his uncle, also his guardian, suggested getting professional help for the hen. There are vets in Denbecha, but Markos was not aware they existed. In

BCCI Breaks Silence On 'Discussion' Over Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli's 2027 World Cup Future

The deliberations on India's roadmap for the 2027 World Cup are "not meant for public consumption", BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said in an interview to PTI, refusing to be drawn into any discussion on individual players and their much-speculated future in the team. Veterans Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli dominate the chatter whenever there is any talk around the Indian team's 2027 global campaign but Saikia is categorical that "strategic discussions in the board room" are best left inside. While both former skippers are determined to play the mega-event, chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar and head coach Gautam Gambhir have been non-committal on whether the squad will have space for the white-ball legends. Rohit, 39, and Kohli, 37, are only active in the ODI format for India, having retired from the other two. However, despite being in relatively good form, Saikia's response over their



future leaves more questions than answers. Much like Gambhir and Agarkar, Saikia has maintained a non-committal stance on Rohit and Kohli's 2027 World Cup chances, which does not provide definitive clarity over the spots of the two Indian batting greats. Asked if the BCCI has had any internal conversations on the matter, Saikia said all stakeholders are aligned in

their views in what is essentially an ongoing process. "We have a very well-knit team and a lot of experts. All stakeholders are taken on board," Saikia told PTI during an exclusive interaction. "Whatever decisions that are made involve the cricket committee, the selectors and all other stakeholders, including the support staff, the head coach and the players concerned. "There are

regular conversations taking place. For that reason, we do not need any special session of interaction. This is an ongoing process," the secretary said, keeping all his cards close to his chest. He maintained that he would not divulge any board room information. "I do not think I should disclose anything before the media or the public because these are strategic discussions. I am

not authorised to speak about them before the media. Secondly, these are matters that should remain within the boardroom." Along with a dominance-extending series clean sweep, India will eye substantial runs from KL Rahul and Yashasvi Jaiswal in the third and final ODI against Afghanistan here on Saturday. While Rahul's spot in the one-day squad has never really been in doubt, Jaiswal would welcome a heavy knock to stake his claim for a space in the already-crowded top-order. Jaiswal was brought back to the 50-over format for the first time since December 2025, and he was dismissed for 4 in the second match against the Afghans at Lucknow. The left-hander had made an unbeaten 116 against South Africa at Visakhapatnam in his previous appearance but since then the return of Ishan Kishan has added one more contender to the top-order positions.

MEXICO FIRST TO BOOK FIFA WORLD CUP KNOCKOUT SPOT AFTER BEATING SOUTH KOREA 1-0

Mexico took advantage of a defensive blunder by South Korea to win 1-0 and become the first team to advance to the knockout stage of the World Cup on Thursday. It marks a major triumph for a team that failed to get out of the group stage in 2022 and now has won twice on home soil in front of jubilant crowds. Luis Romo scored in the 50th minute after South Korea goalkeeper Kim Seung-gyu collided with defender Lee Gi-hyuk and dropped the ball inside the area. Romo easily found the open net after picking up the loose ball. The South Koreans nearly equalized in the 87th minute when Mexico goalkeeper Raul Rangel stopped a header from close range by Cho Gue-sung, then made an even better save on the rebound, extending his right arm to keep the ball from crossing the line. Mexico has six points from



two Group A matches, three more than South Korea and five more than the Czech Republic and South Africa, who drew 1-1 earlier Thursday in Atlanta. The top two teams from

each group move on to the knockout stage, along with the best eight third-place teams. A round of 32 is being played for the first time at the World Cup after the tournament was expanded to 48 teams.

Yuvraj Singh To Start Coaching Career In IPL 2027, Set To Join This Team: Report

An Indian cricket legend could be gearing up for his first coaching stint in the Indian Premier League (IPL) come 2027. According to reports, former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh is set to join the Delhi Capitals (DC) coaching staff ahead of IPL 2027. Former India captain Sourav Ganguly's return to the DC support staff is imminent, and he wants Yuvraj in the dugout too, as per a Times of India report. The wholesale changes are set to take place as JSW Group takes control of the franchise's operations IPL 2027 onwards. According to the report, a senior DC official confirmed that Yuvraj is all set to join the franchise. For the uninitiated, Delhi Capitals is run in alternate two-year cycles by co-owners GMR Group and JSW Group. With GMR having run the team in 2025 and 2026, JSW is set to take over for the next two years. Sourav Ganguly was a key figure in the franchise's support staff during the previous JSW cycle, and is likely to return for 2027. Ganguly served as JSW's

Director of Cricket for Delhi Capitals for the last two seasons, during which Hemang Badani was appointed as the head coach. However, Delhi Capitals could be set for a reshuffle after two underwhelming seasons in IPL 2025 and IPL 2026. Captained by Axar Patel, DC failed to reach the playoffs in both years, despite boasting star players like KL Rahul, Mitchell Starc and Kuldeep Yadav. In IPL 2025, DC got off to an excellent start but their campaign faltered in the second half of the season, and they finished fifth. In IPL 2026, DC's season was much more inconsistent, and they finished sixth in the standings. These results have put Badani's position as head coach at risk, with Ganguly expected to return to the support staff helm in 2027. And it seems like Ganguly wants Yuvraj in the support staff as well. According to PTI, Yuvraj is likely to join Delhi Capitals as the team's batting coach for IPL 2027.



Usyk ref had seen enough to end fight before bell

The referee at the centre of the controversial fight between Oleksandr Usyk and Rico Verhoeven last month told a boxing commission he had seen enough to stop the bout in the 11th round before the bell sounded. Verhoeven, 37, who lost the fight in May, appealed to the Middle East Professional Boxing Commission (MEPB) against the result. He claimed referee Mark Lyson ended the contest in Egypt after the official bell had sounded, and appealed on that basis. In its ruling, seen by BBC Sport, the commission agreed that the fight had been concluded after the bell sounded - but said it had no bearing on the outcome. Dutchman Verhoeven had revealed on Wednesday that his formal protest had been dismissed. He looked to be on the verge of a major upset against box-



ing great Usyk, but the Ukrainian produced a late surge that sent him to the canvas. Verhoeven beat the count, but a follow-up flurry in the closing seconds of the round prompted referee Mark Lyson to step in and wave it off - a decision that looked harsh on the challenger. Usyk was named the

winner and retained his world heavyweight titles. MEPB said Lyson acted in good faith "and with the paramount objective of boxer safety", and said it could have only overturned the result had the referee not acted that way. The ruling added Lyson stated unequivocally: "I decided I wanted to stop the

contest... I had already seen enough." The commission also stressed how the referee had the authority to end a contest whenever they saw fit. "Under its rules the referee is the sole arbiter of the contest and retains the full and unfettered right to stop the contest at any time," it said. "There is no distinction in authority or effect between a stoppage effected during the round and a stoppage effected between rounds or during the rest period." A timing discrepancy identified by official timekeeper Brad William also did not meet the commission's threshold to overturn the referee's discretionary decision. The panel acknowledged William's evidence, but said "even if the physical wave-off occurred fractionally after the bell, this is, at its highest, a procedural timing discrepancy."

JAY SHAH MEETS SRI LANKA PRESIDENT ANURA KUMARA DISSANAYAKE, REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO CRICKET IN THE COUNTRY

ICC chairman Jay Shah met Sri Lanka's President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Friday and discussed the current state of cricket in the island nation, with a focus on expanding opportunities for emerging players, strengthening grassroots and youth development programmes, and using the sport as a catalyst for social impact and economic growth. In a post on social media, Shah described the meeting as a privilege and highlighted Sri Lanka's enduring contribution to world cricket. "It was a privilege to meet His Excellency President @anuradissanayake today and discuss the current status of cricket in Sri Lanka. Our discussions focused on increasing opportunities for emerging players, supporting grassroots and youth development programmes, and leveraging cricket as a vehicle for social impact and economic growth. "We also exchanged views on the role Sri Lanka continues to play in hosting major international events and contributing to the global development of our sport. Sri



Lanka holds a special place in the history of cricket, and I look forward to working closely with all stakeholders to further strengthen the game and create new opportunities for future generations. My sincere thanks to His Excellency for his time and unwavering support for cricket," Jay Shah posted on X. The meeting between ICC chairman Jay Shah and Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake comes at a delicate time for the country's cricket environ-

Ugly Scenes At FIFA World Cup 2026 As Qatar, Canada Players Clash On Field

The FIFA World Cup 2026 Group B match between Canada and Qatar witnessed a massive brawl at the final whistle on Friday. Canada dominated the game throughout and were able to clinch the match 6-0 in Vancouver. However, the victory was slightly marred by a serious injury suffered by Ismael Kone and players from both teams got into a heated spat as soon as the match ended. The midfielder had to be carried out on a stretcher after suffering a dangerous challenge from Qatar's Assim Madibo. It was Qatar's second red card in the match after Homam Ahmed was also sent off. Canada was extremely unhappy with the tough tackles from Qatar and tempers flared after the final whistle as the players from both teams were seen shoving each other. Even the



Canada head coach Jesse Marsch got involved in a tense exchange with Qatar's Julien Lopetegui as both coaches were not happy with the on-field scuffles. Coming to the game, Jonathan David scored three goals and Canada won its first World Cup match while all but securing a spot in the knockout round with a 6-0 victory over Qatar on Thursday. Qatar was reduced to nine players because of red cards in the

chaotic match. Assim Madibo was handed a red early in the second half after a tackle on Ismael Kone, who was stretched off with a serious injury to his lower left leg. Homan Ahmed was sent off in the first half for a challenge on Tajon Buchanan. Canada Prime Minister Mark Carney attended the match after missing the team's opener in Toronto last week because of the G7 summit in France.

TWO-TIME OLYMPIC MEDALLIST PHILIP RETIRES



British two-time Olympic medallist Asha Philip has announced her retirement from athletics. The 35-year-old was part of the 4x100m relay teams that won bronze at the 2016 Rio Olympics and 2020 Tokyo Games. After a 19-year career which involved Philip overcoming a serious knee injury in 2007, she leaves the sport having won multiple world, European and Commonwealth medals alongside her Olympic success. "Sport has been a way of life and I am so grateful for everything it has given me," said Philip. "My true resilience showed after a serious knee injury in 2007 threatened my sport-

ing career. "To be able to come back from that challenging period and become a two-time Olympic medallist, a three-time world medallist, alongside multiple European, Commonwealth and British gold medals, has been the greatest achievement of my life." At the age of 16, Philip became the first British woman to win a global 100m title in any age group when she triumphed at the World Youth Championships in 2007. Alongside two silver and one bronze 4x100m relay World Championship medals, Philip is also a four-time European champion and two-time Commonwealth champion.



Virat Kohli To Return In England ODI Series? Report Makes Huge 'Injury' Claim

Indian cricket team star batter Virat Kohli has been making significant progress in his recovery from a hamstring injury and he can return to the team for the upcoming ODI series

against England, according to a report by Times Of India. Kohli has started his rehabilitation, and his injury is healing quickly. He is expected to report to the BCCI's Centre of Excellence for his fitness assessment and clearance soon. If his recovery goes as planned, Kohli is expected to make his comeback to the team in the upcoming England series," a source told the publication. Kohli was ruled out of the ODI series against Afghanistan due

to the hamstring injury and it was reported that he could end up missing the ODI series. However, the report said that the BCCI selectors are expected to pick the squad later in the week and it is a possibility that Kohli can make his way back in time for the series. "The selection committee meeting to pick India's ODI team for the England tour will be held in the next three to four days," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia told TOI on Thursday. The ODI series

between India and England will be played from July 14 to 19. Earlier, Harshit Rana has joined the India squad for the third and final ODI against Afghanistan after completing his rehabilitation from a knee injury, the BCCI announced on Friday. Rana, who suffered a ligament strain in his right knee during India's T20 World Cup warm-up match against South Africa and subsequently underwent surgery in February, has linked up

with the squad ahead of Saturday's series finale here. India have already sealed the three-match series, taking an unassailable 2-0 lead. "Mr Harshit Rana, who has completed his rehabilitation at the BCCI Centre of Excellence (COE), has linked up with the ODI squad in Chennai," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said in a media release. The injury had forced the 24-year-old fast bowler to miss both the T20 World Cup and the Indian Premier League.

Spider-Man: Brand New Day Telugu Trailer Out Now:

Tom Holland's Superhero To Arrive in Cinemas on 30th July

The second trailer for Spider-Man: Brand New Day has finally arrived, bringing Tom Holland's beloved superhero back into action after a four-year wait. Unveiled amid much fanfare at a special event in Amsterdam, the trailer offers fans their most exciting look yet at the next chapter in Peter Parker's journey. The film is also releasing in Telugu and the trailer has been released. The trailer showcases Holland donning the iconic Spider-Man suit again as he faces new threats while navigating life in the aftermath of Spider-Man: No Way Home. With the world having forgotten Peter Parker's identity, the trailer hints at the superhero who is learning to embrace a new reality while continuing to protect his neighbourhood. The trailer also offers a glimpse at his complicated relationship with MJ, played by Zendaya. Spider-Man: Brand New Day promises bigger action, menacing new villains, and challenges unlike anything Peter has faced before. Among the most highly anticipated films of the year, Spider-Man: Brand New Day enjoys a massive global following, India being one of the franchise's strongest markets. The excitement reached a new height when Sony Pictures Entertainment announced that the Spider-Man: Brand New Day's release date had been moved



up by a day, sparking a frenzy among fans. It's a BRAND NEW DAY for Peter Parker. Fighting crime full-time as Spider-Man in a world that doesn't remember him—and the pressure of seeing his old friends move on without him—sparks a

change in Peter he may not have the power to control. But that transformation might also be the only thing that can stop a shocking new threat to the city and those he loves - a powerful villain no one can even see. The world may have forgotten

Peter Parker, but he hasn't forgotten them. Directed by Destin Daniel Cretton, Spider-Man: Brand New Day stars Tom Holland as Peter Parker/Spider-Man, alongside Zendaya, Jacob Batalon, Jon Bernthal, and Sadie Sink.

VISHWANATH AND SONS FIRST SINGLE "NENO BUTTERFLY" EMERGES AS THE NEXT BIG MUSICAL SENSATION

One of the most anticipated and exciting combinations today, Vishwanath And Sons starring Suriya and directed by Venky Atluri has officially locked August 14, 2026 for its grand worldwide theatrical release. The makers recently unveiled the film's first single Neno Butterfly and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. From the very first listen, the song strikes a chord with its infectious melody and refreshing vibe making it one of the most promising musical releases of the season. Going by the early response, the song is expected to create a strong impact and grow into a major favorite among music lovers in the coming days. When it comes to melodies, GV Prakash Kumar never misses the mark and once again he has delivered a magical composition. His successful collaboration with director Venky Atluri continues to impress audiences further raising expectations for the film's musical album. Sung by Subhalashini whose impressive run with recent blockbuster tracks has made her one of the most sought after voices today. Adding further depth to the composition are the lyrics penned by Saraswathi Putra Ramajogayya Sastry perfectly capturing the innocence, excitement and emotions of love. Ever since its announcement, Vishwanath And Sons has generated tremen-

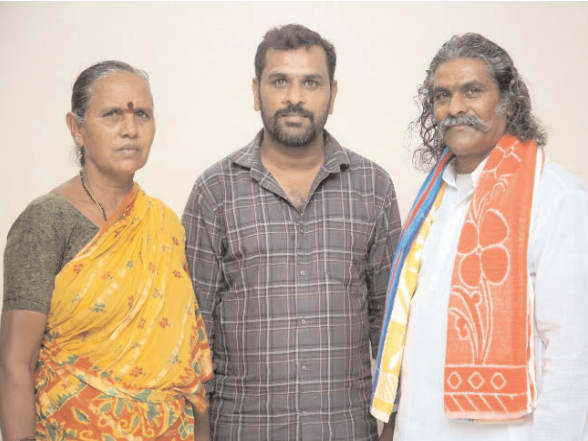


dous positivity and excitement across audiences and trade circles alike. Every promotional asset released so far has managed to create a strong impact emerging as a talking point among movie lovers. The anticipation surrounding the film continues to grow as audiences eagerly await what promises to be a wholesome,

emotional and heartwarming experience mounted on a grand scale.The film is produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi along with Sai Soujanya under the banners of Sithara Entertainments in association with Fortune Four Cinemas and Presented Srikara Studios. Naga Vamsi who has earned widespread acclaim

for backing successful films such as Vaathi and Lucky Baskhar once again brings together a powerful combination with all the ingredients of a grand theatrical celebration. Vishwanath And Sons is shaping up to be one of the biggest and most celebrated family entertainers to watch out for in 2026.

Lost Everything for 'Spirit is Not One'; Prabhas Garu, You Are Our Only Hope" — Women Farmer cum Producer Narsamma



In a heartbreaking turn of events, a woman farmer and independent film producer, Narsamma, has made an emotional public appeal to Pan-India superstar Prabhas and director Sandeep Reddy Vanga. Under her banner 8th Wonder Cinemas, Narsamma produced a small-budget film titled "Spirit is Not One". However, due to a sudden legal dispute raised by the

makers of Prabhas' upcoming big-budget venture "Spirit", her movie's release has been stalled, pushing her family to the brink of financial ruin.

A Dream Shattered by Legal Notices
Speaking about her plight, Narsamma stated that producing this film was her childhood dream. To fund the project, her family of farmers sold off their lands

and assets, exhausting all their life savings. The movie had completed all formalities, including securing a Censor Certificate a year before Prabhas' "Spirit" even began its shoot. 8th Wonder Cinemas had actively promoted the film across various news portals, YouTube channels, and newspapers. However, just last month, as they printed posters and finalised the theatrical release, they were slapped with two consecutive legal notices from Bollywood giant T-Series, headed by Bhushan Kumar (the producers of Prabhas' Spirit). "Like a hammer crushing a sparrow, they used legal notices to stop our small movie. Sandeep Reddy Vanga's manager collected our address and details under the guise of an enquiry, only to pass them on to T-Series to serve us these notices," a tearful Narsamma alleged.

'Nagabandham' visually provides a grand theatrical experience to the audience: Director Abhishek Nama at the trailer launch event



The trailer of the film 'Nagabandham' – The Secret Treasure' has raised expectations even higher with the release of its latest trailer. Director Abhishek Nama has directed this epic adventure thriller with Virat Karna playing the lead role. The trailer, which is a blend of myths, secrets, supernatural powers and adventure elements, takes the audience into a wonder-

ful world. The trailer presents the story as revolving around a centuries-old mystery. The sacred Brahma Lotus, preserved in the Anantha Padmanabha Swamy temple, seems to be a key element in the story. The story takes interesting turns as evil forces try to take possession of the Brahma Lotus, which has been protected for generations. As the story progresses, ancient, spiritual secrets

and mysterious powers come to light one by one. The emergence of Lord Shiva and the entry of Naga Sadhus make the story more thrilling. The 'Nagabandham' seen at the end of the trailer will be the focal point of the main conflict in the story of the divine protection power. The main attraction of this trailer is the magical world created by director Abhishek Nama.

ANANYA PANDAY TURNS EVERY STREET INTO A RUNWAY



Ananya Panday may not have found success in Telugu cinema with Liger, but the actress has remained busy with a string of Bollywood and OTT projects. While her recent film Chand Mera Dil failed to make an impact at the box office, Ananya continues to enjoy strong popularity among young audiences and on social media. The actress recently shared stunning pictures from her glamorous foreign getaway and fashion events. From a breathtaking beige gown with a dra-

matic trail to a stylish white backless outfit overlooking the sea, Ananya effortlessly showcased her fashion-forward personality. The photos quickly grabbed attention online. Though box-office results have been mixed, Ananya has managed to stay relevant through her screen presence, brand endorsements, and glamorous appearances. As she continues to explore new opportunities in films and OTT, fans are hoping the actress will soon deliver a major hit to match her growing popularity.

Director Vaibhav Koundinya’s “Gossip” Unveils First Single “Sippu Sippu”

The makers of Gossip, directed by Vaibhav Koundinya, have officially launched the film's first single, "Sippu Sippu." Starring the talented and energetic Rashi Singh in the lead role, the film is being produced by Yethi remella under the banner of YBHAV CINESCULPT STUDIOS. Blending contemporary emotions, a beautiful love story, and a sharp social satire, Gossip is being crafted as an engaging entertainer that resonates with today's generation while appealing to family audiences as well.

The recently released promo of Sippu Sippu received an overwhelming response from music lovers.

Continuing the film's musical journey, the makers have now released the full lyrical version of the song through Aditya Music. Composed by

Shakthikanth Karthick, Sippu Sippu is an energetic pub dance number featuring vibrant beats and catchy rhythms. The song is penned by Kasarla Shyam, while singer Malavika brings it to life with her captivating vocals, making it an instant chartbuster contender. As the first song from

Gossip, Sippu Sippu perfectly reflects the youthful and vibrant tone of the film. The movie revolves around the life of a middle-class young woman and explores relatable emotions through an entertaining narrative filled with humor, romance, and social commentary. With its fresh sound and energetic presentation, the song is expected to strike a chord with audiences. The choreography by suneeal sunnapu Master and Phalguni Bangera adds further appeal, elevating the visual and entertainment quotient of the track.

