

BENGALURU | CHENNAI | HYDERABAD | VIJAYAWADA | KOCHI

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For Website Visit epaper.thesouthindiatimes.comwww.thesouthindiatimes.com[/thesouthindiatimes.yahoo.in](https://thesouthindiatimes.yahoo.in)**Nitin Gadkari moves Bombay HC over social media posts linking him, family to alleged E20 business gains**

The Bombay High Court has allowed Gadkari to file a civil suit against Meta and other social media platforms, as well as unidentified entities allegedly being used to spread misinformation against Gadkari and his family...

Wildfire has 'life of its own', says French minister, with blaze nine miles from Bordeaux outskirts**"AADARSHA KUTUMBAM HOUSE NO: 47" PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN BEGINS WITH CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS: MEET VICTORY VENKATESH AS CHITTIBABU**

CINEMA | PAGE



SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

26-07-2026

Total pilgrims : 90,012
Tonsures : 28,345
Hundi kankal : 4,99 CR
Laddu sale : 4,50 Lac
Annaspradams : 2,71 Lac
Medical treatment : 3,254
Waiting Compartments : 23

Approva, Denda Time for Sarvajanikam (with out SSO Tonsure) 8 Hrs

BIHAR CONSTABLE SUSPENDED OVER PURPORTED AK-47 USE DURING STUDENT PROTEST

PATNA (TSIT) A police constable was suspended after a purported video showing him using an AK-47 rifle during a student protest in Bihar's Siwan district on July 25 went viral on social media, officials said on Monday. Siwan SP Purnan Kumar Jha told PTI, "The constable, posted with the District Intelligence Unit (DIU), has been



suspended with immediate effect after a video purportedly showing him using an AK-47 rifle during a student protest went viral on social media. Departmental proceedings have also been initiated against him. "No one was injured in the firing," he added. The SP said an inquiry has been initiated to ascertain the circumstances under which the constable used the AK-47 rifle during the protest. "There were clear instructions to the police force not to open fire during the demonstration," he said.

SENSEX JUMPS 776 POINTS, NIFTY RECLAIMS 23,900 AS MARKETS END 5-DAY LOSING STREAK

Mumbai (TSIT): Indian benchmark equity indices snapped their five-session losing streak on Monday, buoyed by a sharp decline in crude oil prices after the United States and Iran paused military strikes, easing concerns over a prolonged geopolitical conflict. The Sensex surged 776.29 points, or 1.02 per cent, to close at 76,835.78, while the Nifty climbed 229.40 points, or 0.96 per cent, to settle at 23,995.95, nearly reclaiming the 24,000 mark. Commenting on Nifty technical out-



look, experts said that the index has recovered as the fall in crude prices lifted equity market sentiment. "If the Nifty moves and sustains above 24,000, we may witness a continuation of the uptrend towards 24,250-24,300. However, failure to sustain above 24,000 might trigger a correction towards 23,800," a market expert mentioned. Investor sentiment improved as lower oil prices raised hopes of easing inflationary pressures and reduced concerns over higher import costs for India, one of the world's largest crude oil importers. Among the Nifty constituents, Eternal, InterGlobe Aviation and Infosys emerged as the top gainers, leading the market rebound. The rally was broad-based, with the wider market outperforming the benchmarks. The Nifty MidCap index advanced 1.11 per cent, while the Nifty SmallCap index gained 1.31 per cent.

Remove HYDRAA commissioner AV Ranganath T'gana HC directs govt**Hyderabad, TSIT BUREAU:**

In a significant development with far-reaching implications for Telangana's anti-encroachment drive, the Telangana High Court on Monday directed the state Chief Secretary to relieve IPS officer A.V. Ranganath from his position as Commissioner of the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) and appoint a suitable replacement. The court expressed serious concern over what it described as repeated violations of judicial orders and the Commissioner's conduct in multiple contempt proceedings.

The direction was issued by Justice Jukanti Anil Kumar while hearing a batch of contempt petitions arising out of a land dispute involving a 40-acre property at Lothkunta in Secunderabad. The petitioners alleged that HYDRAA officials entered the disputed land and carried out fencing despite subsisting High Court orders restraining any coercive



action. Rejecting an unconditional apology submitted by Ranganath, the court observed that an officer facing around 63 contempt cases during his tenure could not continue to head the agency. The judge noted that repeated disregard for judicial directions undermines the rule of law and directed the Chief Secretary to immediately identify and appoint another officer to lead HYDRAA.

The order follows a series of stern observations made by the High Court over the past week. During earlier hearings, the bench had sharply criticised HYDRAA for allegedly violating court orders and had even indicated that it could seek Army assistance to protect the disputed property after

expressing a loss of confidence in the state machinery. That direction was later deferred after the Advocate General assured the court that there would be no further interference with the land.

The controversy centres on allegations that HYDRAA officials entered private land despite explicit judicial restraint orders. The court repeatedly questioned why the agency continued to act in disregard of legal directions and stressed that even agencies created for public interest must function strictly within the framework of the law. Monday's order marks one of the strongest judicial interventions against HYDRAA since its formation and is expected to have significant administrative and legal implications for the agency's future functioning. The state government is now expected to act on the High Court's direction by appointing a new commissioner while the contempt proceedings and the underlying land dispute continue before the court.

Peaceful protest cannot justify police excess, uniform protocol needed: SC**New Delhi (TSIT):**

The Supreme Court on Monday said the Constitutional right to peaceful protest must be protected and stressed that allegations of police excesses as well as violence against security personnel during demonstra-

tions require an impartial examination, while indicating that a uniform nationwide protocol may be needed to govern the handling of public protests.

A Bench of Chief Justice of India (CJI), Surya Kant and Justices Joydalya Bagchi and V Mohana, hearing a batch of petitions arising out of the recent nationwide student protests over the alleged NEET-UG 2026 paper leak, said that merely because there is an agitation cannot justify the use of excessive force by police, while at the same time stressing that attacks on police personnel also cannot be overlooked.

AICC Reviews Telangana Congress Organisational Activities Praises Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan**Hyderabad TSIT:**

The All India Congress Committee (AICC) on Monday reviewed the organisational activities of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) at a high-level meeting held at Indira Bhavan, the party headquarters in New Delhi.

The meeting was chaired

by AICC General Secretary (Organisation) K.C. Venugopal and attended by Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, Telangana AICC In-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, AICC Secretary Sachin Sawant, and other senior party leaders.

During the nearly two-hour

meeting, the leadership reviewed the progress of organisational programmes across the state, including the implementation of the SIR initiative. K.C. Venugopal expressed satisfaction with the organisational work carried out from the booth level to the state level.

He commended the performance of the Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan, describing it as an effective organisational exercise. Stressing the importance of strengthening the party structure, he instructed leaders to ensure that the SIR programme is implemented with utmost seriousness and that there is no scope for even the slightest lapse.

CM Chandrababu Naidu orders El Niño awareness drive**Visakhapatnam (TSIT):**

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Monday directed officials to launch a statewide awareness campaign to educate farmers about the likely impact of El Niño and promote suitable alternative crops to minimise crop losses. Reviewing the performance of various departments through



the Real Time Governance Society (RTGS), the Chief

Minister said weather forecasts indicate a strong El Niño

effect this year. He instructed the Agriculture Department to conduct awareness programmes in campaign mode and effectively implement the Crop Insurance Action Plan to safeguard farmers.

Chandrababu also stressed the need to improve government service delivery in remote areas and asked officials to ensure that public services reach people efficiently. Referring to feed-

back received during his recent visit to Alur Assembly constituency, he said government employees should work in line with public expectations. Expressing concern over the death of a meritorious student from Rampachodavaram, the Chief Minister directed the Education Department to conduct psychometric assessments for students and involve mental health experts.

Global crude oil prices plunge up to 7 pc as US-Iran pause strikes**New Delhi (TSIT):**

Global crude oil prices witnessed heavy selling pressure on Monday, with key oil benchmarks plunging up to 7 per cent after the United States and Iran paused military strikes over the weekend. International benchmark Brent crude fell more than 7 per cent or about \$7 to hover around the

\$91-a-barrel mark. On the other hand, US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude also declined over 7 per cent, shedding around \$6.4 to trade below \$85 a barrel. The sharp decline came after Iran indicated it would refrain from further attacks as long as the US also halted military operations, fuelling expectations that the conflict could move towards a diplomatic resolution.

**₹4,200-crore expressway develops cracks days after inauguration in UP****NHAI denies road cave-in on Lucknow-Kanpur Expressway, says only surface slippage****Lucknow (TSIT)**

Cracks have appeared on a section of the Lucknow-Kanpur Greenfield National Elevated Expressway barely 14 days after its inauguration, raising questions over the quality of construction. The expressway, built at a cost of Rs 4,200 crore, was inaugurated on July 13 by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari.

As per a viral video, the

tion has sparked criticism and renewed debate over construction quality and project monitoring. Officials are yet to issue a detailed statement on the cause of the damage or whether repair work has begun. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), meanwhile, on Sunday clarified that a viral claim about a section of the recently-inaugurated Lucknow-Kanpur Greenfield Elevated Expressway caving in was incorrect, saying only the upper surface of the road was affected, which was repaired within hours.



cracks developed after recent rainfall, prompting concerns about the durability of the newly constructed expressway. Images and videos of the damaged stretch have circulated on social media, with users questioning how a project inaugurated less than two weeks ago could develop visible cracks. The Lucknow-Kanpur Greenfield National Elevated Expressway is a key infrastructure project aimed at improving connectivity between Lucknow and Kanpur, reducing travel time and easing traffic congestion on one of Uttar Pradesh's busiest corridors.

The appearance of cracks so soon after the inaugura-

WorldNews Section NHAI Project Director Nakul Prakash Verma told PTI that only the upper surface was affected over a stretch of about 40 metres, and "it cannot be termed as a road cave-in." He explained that a cave-in means the soil beneath settles and the entire road sinks. "Here, there was only slippage in the upper wearing coat," Verma said, adding that repair work was completed before 5 pm on Sunday and traffic was moving normally on the expressway. Responding to questions over construction quality, Verma said such technical issues could occasionally arise on long stretches of asphalt roads.

Wangchuk: Gandhian path still relevant**New Delhi (TSIT)**

Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk on Monday said the success of the recently concluded students' protests reaffirmed that Mahatma Gandhi's methods remain relevant, and clarified that Union ministers helping him break his hunger strike signified the Centre's acceptance of their demands rather than any



political endorsement.

After paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat, Wangchuk said

criticism over him ending his 26-day fast in presence Union ministers Jitendra Singh and JP Nadda stemmed from a misunderstanding of the Ladakhi traditions.

"I wanted to pay my tribute to Babu (Mahatma Gandhi). His path is as relevant today as it was 100 years ago. This experiment is successful today," he said. Explaining the controversy, Wangchuk

said in Ladakh, when a government representative or senior leader helps breaks a protester's fast, it is regarded as a sign that the government has yielded to their demands.

"In Ladakh, when protests happen, it is believed that if a government representative or some big leader breaks your fast, it is considered a victory. They are bowing to you while feeding you.

AP Plans to Introduce Steam Rice Through PDS, Seeks Centre’s Support

Visakhapatnam: The Andhra Pradesh Government is preparing to introduce steam rice through the Public Distribution System (PDS) to provide beneficiaries with better-quality rice and curb the illegal diversion of ration rice. State Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Nadendla Manohar discussed the proposal with Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution *Pralhad Joshi* and senior officials during his two-day visit to New Delhi.

The Minister said that supplying steam rice through the PDS would improve the quality of rice distributed to beneficiaries while helping prevent



its misuse and illegal transportation. He sought the Centre's approval to launch a pilot project in one district before expanding the initiative across the state. He noted that steam rice is already being served successfully under the **Dokka Seethamma Mid-Day Meal Scheme** in nearly **41,000 schools** and **4,000 hostels**,

receiving a positive response. During the visit, Manohar also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India (NCCF) for setting up *1,000 "Mee Mart" outlets* across Andhra Pradesh to strengthen the public distribution network.

Collector pushes MSME growth, jobs



Tirupati (TSIT) : District Collector Dr. S. Venkateshwar on Monday directed Industries Department officials to intensify efforts for establishing new MSME units and creating better employment opportunities for youth while ensuring strict implementation of industrial safety standards. Reviewing the District Industries Export Promotion Committee (DIEPC) meeting at the Collectorate, the Collector said the State Government is giving high priority to industrial development. He said that under the Single Desk system, approvals had been

granted to 124 of the 178 industrial proposals received between May and July 2026, while 54 applications were under scrutiny. The committee also approved Rs.2.92 crore in incentives for 11 industries, including investment subsidy for nine units, power subsidy for one unit and interest subsidy for one unit. Dr. Venkateshwar reviewed the progress of the Printing Cluster at Tirupati, Kalamkari Cluster at Sri Kalahasti, Narayanavanam Power Loom Cluster and Photo Frames Cluster at Tirupati, and directed officials to expedite their implementation.

Sarpanches seek withdrawal of cheque powers



Mahabubabad TSIT: Demanding the withdrawal of cheque-signing powers vested in Deputy Sarpanches and the immediate release of funds to elected Gram Panchayats, Sarpanches from across the erstwhile Warangal district on Monday alleged that the existing system was leading to misuse of authority and hampering rural development. The demands were raised at the District Sarpanches' Awareness Conference organised by the Telangana Panchayat Raj Chamber at Aarthi Gardens in Mahabubabad under the chairmanship of United Warangal District Sarpanches' Forum Convener Guniganti Kamalakara

Goud. Addressing the gathering, Telangana Panchayat Raj Chamber President Chimpula Satyanarayana Reddy said the organisation would take the issues faced by Sarpanches across the State to the government's notice and work towards securing their resolution. He stressed that strengthening the role of elected village

heads and safeguarding the constitutional rights of local bodies were essential for effective grassroots governance. Participants demanded that adequate funds be released directly to Gram Panchayats, pending development bills be cleared without delay and financial powers be restored to Sarpanches to accelerate stalled development works.

COLLECTOR ORDERS SPEEDY DISPOSAL OF PRAJAVANI PETITIONS



Suryapet, July 27 (TSIT): District Collector Tejas Nand Lal Pawar on Monday directed officials to ensure the prompt disposal of grievances received through the Prajavani programme and ordered mandatory online registration of all petitions. Reviewing the grievance redressal mechanism after the weekly Prajavani at the Integrated Collectorate, the Collector instructed officials to upload all petitions received at the district and Revenue Division levels to the online Prajavani portal without delay. He also direct-

ed departments to clear pending petitions in the old portal on a priority basis and expedite the disposal of State-level Prajavani grievances. Emphasising timely public service, Pawar said grievances should be resolved within the stipulated timeframe. He also reviewed the implementation of the Revenue Division-level Prajavani programme and instructed all divisional-level officers to participate regularly so that issues could be resolved locally, reducing inconvenience to citizens. A total of 98 petitions were received during Monday's Prajavani, including 60 related to land and revenue issues, 11 concerning Women Development and Child Welfare, six from the Panchayat Department, five related to the Health Department and 16 pertaining to other departments.

Misuse of Social Media, Child Marriages Can Destroy Young Lives: DLSA

Mahabubabad TSIT : The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) has cautioned students that irresponsible use of social media, cybercrime, child marriage, ragging and drug abuse could have serious legal and lifelong consequences.

Addressing a legal awareness programme organised by the DLSA at the Zilla Parishad High School in Kambalapalli on Monday, Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel Dasari Nageshwar Rao said technology was a powerful tool but could become dangerous if used without responsibility and awareness.

Assistant Government Pleader Sunitha advised students to avoid interacting with strangers online, clicking suspicious links



and falling victim to cyber fraud or harassment. Advocate Yasadi Chennamalla Reddy stressed the need for legal awareness at the school level and educated students on the responsible use of social media, anti-ragging laws and cyber safety.

He also highlighted the legal implications of child marriage, stating that marriage of girls below 18 years and boys below 21 years is a punishable offence. Child marriages adversely affect the physi-

cal and mental health of children, disrupt education and invite strict legal action against parents and others who facilitate such marriages, he said.

The speakers also created awareness on the POCSO Act, urging children to understand the difference between "good touch" and "bad touch" and report any form of abuse immediately to parents, teachers or the Child Helpline 1098, assuring that victims' identities would remain confidential.

TRP urges MRO office at New Rajoli

Jogulamba Gadwal, July 27 (TSIT): Telangana Rajyadhikara Party (TRP) Jogulamba Gadwal District President Morugu Veeresh has urged the State Government to construct the proposed Rs.2.25-crore Mandal Revenue Office (MRO) and all future government offices at New Rajoli instead of the flood-prone Old Rajoli village. In a statement, Veeresh recalled the devastating 2009 Krishna-Tungabhadra floods, which submerged Old Rajoli, displaced thousands of families and caused extensive damage to public infrastructure and government records. He said the tragedy highlighted the need to locate government institutions in safer areas. He noted that after the floods, nearly 3,700 affected families were rehabilitated at New Rajoli, where over 10 acres of



government land were earmarked for public infrastructure. He said the newly sanctioned MRO office should be built on the available two-acre government site at New Rajoli, as requested by the village's All-Party Committee. Veeresh said establishing government offices at New Rajoli would ensure protection from future floods, safeguard official records, improve access to services for residents of 11 surrounding villages and provide sufficient space for future expan-

150 veena artistes perform at Kanipakam



Kanipakam, July 27: Around 150 veena artistes from the Sankirtana Seva group, Vijayawada, presented a devotional Veenanadam recital at the Kalyana Vedika of the Swayambhu Sri Varasiddhi Vinayaka Swamy Devasthanam in Kanipakam on Monday as part of the temple's Kala Nivedana programme. The programme was attended by Devasthanam Chairman Mani Naidu and Executive Officer Panchala Kishore, who honoured the artistes by presenting Swamyvari Tirtha Prasadam.

Sarpanches Demand Withdrawal of Deputy Sarpanches' Cheque Powers, Seek Direct Funds for Village Development



Mahabubabad TSIT District Correspondent Balne Suman July 27: Demanding the withdrawal of cheque-signing powers vested in Deputy Sarpanches and the immediate release of funds to elected Gram Panchayats, Sarpanches from across the erstwhile Warangal district on Monday alleged that the existing system was leading to misuse of authority and hampering rural development. The

demands were raised at the District Sarpanches' Awareness Conference organised by the Telangana Panchayat Raj Chamber at Aarthi Gardens in Mahabubabad under the chairmanship of United Warangal District Sarpanches' Forum Convener Guniganti Kamalakara Goud. Addressing the gathering, Telangana Panchayat Raj Chamber President Chimpula Satyanarayana

Reddy said the organisation would take the issues faced by Sarpanches across the State to the government's notice and work towards securing their resolution. He stressed that strengthening the role of elected village heads and safeguarding the constitutional rights of local bodies were essential for effective grassroots governance. Participants demanded that adequate funds be released directly to Gram Panchayats, pending development bills be cleared without delay and financial powers be restored to Sarpanches to accelerate stalled development works. They also sought the cancellation of cheque powers granted to Deputy Sarpanches, alleging misuse of authority in several villages.

Granthi Pavitra ritual held at Kapileswara temple



Tirupati, July 27: The annual Pavitrotsavams at Sri Kapileswara Swamy Temple in Tirupati continued with religious fervour on Monday, with the Granthi Pavitra Samarpana ritual being performed amid Vedic chanting and traditional temple music. The day's rituals began with Suprabhata Seva, followed by Pavitra Abhishekam to the presiding deity. Later, Nitya Homam,

Granthi Pavitra Samarpana and other special rituals were conducted in accordance with Agama traditions.

A large number of devotees participated in the sacred ceremonies and offered prayers to Lord Kapileswara Swamy. Special pujas, homam and Laghu Purnahuti are scheduled to be performed at the Yagasala in the evening.

Temple invites deities for Varuna Yagam

Srisailem, July 27: Invitation cards for the Varuna Yagam and Sahasra Ghatabishekam, scheduled to be held from August 7 to 11, were ceremonially presented to Sri Bhramaramba Mallikarjuna Swamy and Goddess Bhramarambika at the Srisailem temple on Monday.

The rituals are being organised with prayers for timely rainfall, an end to drought conditions and prosperity for the State through abundant crops and livestock. As part of the programme, Varuna Yagam, Sahasra Ghatabishekam, special archana, homams, japams and parayanams will be conducted, with a grand



abhishekam using 1,000 sacred pots on August 10 and Purnahuti on August 11. Following temple tradition, the invitation cards were first offered special prayers at the Mahadwaram before being taken in a ceremonial procession with traditional music. The invitations, along with fruits and flowers, were presented to Ratnagarbha Ganapati Swamy, Sri Mallikarjuna

Swamy, Goddess Bhramarambika, Kumaraswamy and Nandishwara Swamy.

The programme was attended by local MLA Buddha Rajasekhar Reddy, Devasthanam Trust Board Chairman Pothugunta Ramesh Naidu, Executive Officer M. Srinivasa Rao, Trust Board members, temple priests, Vedic scholars, officials and devotees.

SRM AP explores quantum research partnership

Amaravati, July 27: SRM University-AP hosted a high-level delegation from Quantinuum, a global quantum computing company, to explore academic and research collaboration in quantum technologies.

The Quantinuum delegation, led by Dr. Rajeeb Hazra, President and CEO, and Dr. Seetha Rama Krishna Nookala, Vice President, was welcomed by Prof. Ch. Satish Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of SRM University-AP, who presented the university's academic vision, research ecosystem and institutional priorities. During the meeting, both



sides discussed opportunities for collaborative research, faculty and scholar exchange, and residential research programmes at Quantinuum's research centre. They also

explored collaboration in the development of fault-tolerant quantum computing technologies.

Dr. Hazra appreciated SRM University-AP's research environment and

advanced quantum computing facilities, expressing interest in expanding cooperation from fundamental research to entrepreneurship and commercialisation. Dr. Nookala highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary research and proposed training programmes for the university's faculty on Quantinuum's quantum systems. The meeting underscored SRM University-AP's commitment to building partnerships with global technology leaders and strengthening its position as a centre for quantum research and innovation in India.



His Holiness Sri Sri Sri Viswapriya Theertha Swamiji of Admar Mutt, Udipi visited Sri Vari Temple, Tirumala on Monday morning.

Veena recital held at Kanipakam temple

Kanipakam, July 27: Around 150 veena artistes from the Sankirtana Seva group, Vijayawada, presented a Veenanadam recital at the Kalyana Vedika of the Swayambhu Sri Varasiddhi Vinayaka Swamy Devasthanam in Kanipakam on Monday as part of the temple's Kala Nivedana programme.

Devasthanam Chairman Mani Naidu and Executive Officer Panchala Kishore attended the programme and presented Swamyvari Tirtha Prasadam to the artistes in appreciation of their performance.

EDITORIAL

*In An AI-Anchored
World Order, Tech
Capital Alone Can't
Price Our Future*

Last year, multinational company Nvidia's market value became \$5 trillion, which is bigger than the annual production size of most major global economies at this point. At about the same time, the world's biggest tech companies announced investment plans that may total more than a trillion dollars over the next few years, much of which will be focused on building infrastructure for AI, data centres, and advanced computing systems. AI-led investments are guiding a new trend in the world stock market trends and across major economies - while sucking out capital from emerging market economies and other sectors. This is proof of a new revolution in technology-led capital investment that has caused the emergence of what is an AI-anchored world order. There are issues with this trend, of course. Commitment to AI-led investment is growing, but there is limited evidence of widespread productivity gains in/across these firms - which we explained earlier in terms of the formation of a tech-fueled mania or bubble. Goldman Sachs estimates that cumulative capital expenditure by the world's largest hyperscalers could exceed \$1.1 trillion over the coming years, while Morgan Stanley projects nearly \$2.9 trillion in global data-centre spending through 2028. Broader AI-related investment is expected to surpass \$1.6 trillion over the same period, extending far beyond software into semiconductors, cloud infrastructure, electricity networks, and specialised computing systems. While all major companies are blindly betting on big investments in AI, (stock) markets have been signaling other companies to follow trend and governments - some of which hardly understand AI at all, are rethinking their industrial policies and growth-strategies around it. This is troubling-and a trend too well seen in economic history before where the history of economic change through investment pledges made are rarely as apparent as the financial optimism often seen around it. There is of course a few countries benefitting from this pivot to an AI-led world order. Nations with their stack of industries promoting AI benefit while others lose out. US and China with their foundational AI models; South Korea, Taiwan with their chip-manufacturing industrial strength, and, Israel and Japan with their skilled capital beneficial for AI-investments are obvious gainers. For others, like Europe, India, Brazil, Philippines, South Africa etc. see muted benefits. The potential for commercial returns from AI is not yet clear in these countries or in other EMEs which are seeing a greater amount of foreign capital move out as well. In AI-companies too, the productivity gain verdict isn't fully out. OpenAI's own forecasts reportedly predict that it will suffer cumulative losses of more than \$140 billion from 2024 to 2029. The price of advancing the technological frontier is continuing to increase rapidly throughout the industry. According to industry estimates, the incremental improvements in language models will be increasingly expensive in terms of computing power, energy usage and capital expenditure. The economics of AI is starting to look more like massive infrastructure initiatives than software. Meanwhile, there is less dramatic evidence from the workplace than the market valuations may indicate.

Trump's Nuclear 'Gift' To Saudi Arabia
Could Haunt Middle East For Years

As usual, US President Donald Trump has pulled another cracker from his hat. In a surprise move, the US Department of Energy announced that the US and Saudi Arabia had reached an agreement on a thirty-year civil nuclear deal, also called the '123 Agreement', which, as is typical of this administration, lauds the "great access" given to US companies to the Saudi nuclear energy programme, the benefits for American industry and workers, President Trump's vision, and so on. All standard issues on most US government announcements now. Almost as a footnote, it also says the agreement will meet Saudi energy needs. What would puzzle most people is the timing. After all, the proposal has been in the pipeline for years - it was there even during Trump's first term. For the Saudis, this is a big win. But it is going to lead to a lot more anxiety in the region with possible developments. Not Just A 1-2-3 First, the '123 agreement' itself. It gets its name from a US Energy Act section that allows peaceful nuclear cooperation with other countries. The US has some 26 such agreements in force with various nations to allow the transfer of nuclear material or equipment and facilitate technical exchanges, scientific research, and safeguards discussions. These agreements are tied to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and require strong non-proliferation agreements on the ground, with safeguards agreements and oversight by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Though, however strong the oversight, there is already strong opposition from both Republicans and Democrats towards encouraging the development of a technology that everyone agrees is dual-use. Early reports had indi-



cated that there might be a two-year study to assess the viability of local enrichment. But for now, it appears that there are no such plans, with some talk of a 'black-box' facility that would allow the US to enrich uranium in Saudi Arabia under its control. Though it is impossible that the deal would not have been discussed with Israel first, Tel Aviv will certainly do all it can to prevent enrichment inside Saudi Arabia. The Directive From The President The argument for the deal is that it is rooted in the Presidents Executive Order 14299, which declares that the US "faces a critical national security imperative to ensure a resilient, secure, and reliable energy supply for critical defense facilities", including for computing infrastructure for artificial intelligence (AI) needs and national laboratories, all of which demands "reliable, high-density power sources that cannot be disrupted by external threats or grid failures". AI facilities like data centres are to be created in 48

states, which require advanced nuclear facilities, this time with the involvement of the private sector. All this also requires a lot of money. The last bit of the agreement then says, "The Secretary of Energy shall aggressively pursue at least 20 new 123 Agreements by the close of the 120th Congress to enable the United States nuclear industry to access new markets in partner countries." That's where the Saudis come in. The reactor business is big money. Estimates note that the nuclear construction industry is likely to be more than \$70 billion by 2030, on the back of not just AI requirements but also a marked shift towards renewables. A Political Twist Then again, nothing in the Trump administration is ever that simple. A day later, Trump posted on Truth Social that the deal was 'totally tied' to Saudis joining the Abraham Accords, which essentially means recognising Israel. The accords are meant to encourage "efforts to promote interfaith and inter-

cultural dialogue to advance a culture of peace among the three Abrahamic religions and all humanity" and allow for peace in a long-troubled region. Essentially, the whole thing revolves around not just giving Tel Aviv the legal recognition it craves but also learning to live with its nuclear capabilities. So far, only the UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco have signed on to the accords. Sudan has joined in, too, though its position is still at an uncertain stage. There is, of course, Kazakhstan, which has recognised Israel since the 1990s. The assumption is that the Middle East's stability depends on what the Saudis do. But that argument is a bit overrated. True, its position as being the guardian of the holy sites accords the Kingdom great significance. But with countries such as Iraq - which recently criminalised contact with Israel - and Syria and the Palestinians, whose key demand for a homeland is to be set aside under the US plan, expecting Saudi Arabia

to be the node for stability might be unrealistic. Washington, however, recognises something that has long been brushed under the carpet. For Saudi Arabia, the main danger comes from Iran, not Israel. In fact, Saudi Arabia and Israel have long cooperated in clandestine intelligence-sharing activities. The Saudis have also actively encouraged allies such as Bahrain in recognising Israel and have allowed overflights as well. But the main point here is the timing. Right when Palestinians are being bombed and strafed, a Saudi recognition for Israel is politically risky. In other words, this will probably remain a 'can-do' aspect of the deal rather than a critical stumbling block - for the moment, at least. The Real Saudi Motives There's another aspect to timing. The nuclear deal itself provides a valuable boost to the Saudis at a time when their position vis-a-vis Iran has been shaky. True, typical of Trump, it falls well short of the Mutual Defense Treaty that the Joe

Biden administration had proposed for the US and Saudi Arabia. Washington, after all, is no longer in the protection business. Meanwhile, it is not that the Saudis haven't been looking for alternative energy options. An important aspect of 'Vision 2030' envisaged by Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman is ending what he called over-reliance on oil and shifting to alternative sources of energy, including wind and nuclear power. He has also solidly backed the need to find alternative sources of income as he leads the country into a modern age. Massive data centres are being planned, which, in turn, need huge energy supplies. Technically, that should not be a problem for an oil-rich country. But, as experts note, the Kingdom has recorded a deficit in all but one year in the last decade. Apparently, oil, accounting for 40% of Saudi Arabia's GDP, is simply not enough. Besides, oil saved is more oil sold. Nuclear energy for domestic use thus makes sound sense. Even so, there are problems ahead, all of which are pertinent to India. First, even tinkering with the Pandora's box of nuclear proliferation is dangerous. It is not just that the Saudis have nuclear ambitions - after all, they were the ones who had virtually financed Pakistan's nuclear programme. The fact is that Saudi Arabia also has large reserves of uranium. On paper, at least, the Saudis, with some Pakistani help, could start their own nuclear programme. That, in turn, will set off a chain reaction across the region, with countries like Turkey, with a solid industrial base and a strong missile capability, getting emboldened to act on their long-decided wish to obtain nukes. Notably, Turkey was an important node in the infamous Abdul Qadir Khan proliferation network in the 1990s.

THERE SHOULD BE A MOVEMENT
AGAINST OBSCENITY TOO

-Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

Entertainment is both a mirror and a guide for society. The language, behavior, thinking, and social culture of a society are gradually influenced by the kind of entertainment it consumes. Therefore, the question of whether we are willing to accept everything in the name of entertainment has become more relevant today than ever before. The outcry against the obscene dances, songs, and videos performed by female dancers at the platform of Meham Chaubisi in Rohtak district, Haryana, is not merely a local incident. It reflects a broader concern felt by a large section of the country. But if this movement remains confined to forums and public events, it will likely be an incomplete movement. What is needed today is to discuss every form of obscenity equally—whether it occurs on stage, social media, or OTT platforms. The digital revolution has democratized entertainment. Now everyone is not just a spectator, but also a creator. Mobile cameras and the internet have given millions the opportunity to showcase their talent. This has brought about many positive changes. But it has also led to a competition in which provocative content is prioritized for the sake of more views, more likes, and more revenue. The result is that vulgarity, sensationalism, and obscenity often go viral more than talent.

many social media platforms. Furthermore, these videos often reach millions of people automatically due to algorithms. If content is viewed more, platforms distribute it to even more people. In this system, popularity becomes more important than quality. OTT platforms have given a new direction to the Indian entertainment industry. Many excellent films, web series, and documentaries have emerged through these platforms. Therefore, it would be unfair to single-handedly blame OTT. The problem arises when some producers use excessive nudity, profanity, and violence beyond the story's requirements simply to attract audiences. It often seems that if a web series lacks sufficient profanity, provocative scenes, or excessive violence, it will not be considered successful. This trend demands serious consideration. It's often argued that such content is age-limited and not intended for family viewing. However, the reality is different. Most children and adolescents in India use mobile phones. Age verification systems are limited and often merely formal. Parents cannot constantly monitor what their children are viewing. Therefore, simply posting warnings is not a sufficient solution. Psychologists have been pointing out for years that a person's personality develops rapidly during childhood and adolescence. Language, behavior, understanding of relationships, and social sensitivity are influenced by the environment around them. Digital content has also become a part of that

environment. This doesn't mean that every child will become like a child after watching a video, but it's also not fair to assume that content has no impact. Family, school, friends, society, and digital media—all play a role in personality development. It should also be noted that the definition of obscenity is not the same in every society or at every time. Art, literature, and cinema should be allowed the freedom to discuss difficult topics and reflect social reality. Freedom of expression is a vital right in a democracy. Therefore, the tendency to ban any idea merely on the basis of disagreement is also inappropriate. However, there is a clear distinction between freedom of expression and deliberately serving provocative content for commercial gain. This balance is of paramount importance. The problem isn't just with content creators. Viewers are also part of this entire system. If obscene or sensational content receives millions of views, the market will move in that direction. Therefore, society must also introspect about the type of content it is promoting. Protests alone won't bring about change; viewing habits also need to change. The government's role is also crucial. Censorship should be a last resort in any democratic system, but measures such as child safety, clear age classification, effective parental controls, grievance redressal mechanisms, and transparent regulation can be seriously addressed. Digital platforms also have a social responsibility to operate not solely based on profit, but

also considering their impact on society. Digital literacy in schools has become the need of the hour. Children must be taught that not all content available on the internet is suitable for them. They need to be educated about critical thinking, responsible digital behavior, and online safety. Parents must also increase communication with their children. Simply taking away their mobile phone is not the solution; proper guidance and an environment of trust may be more effective. If society opposes vulgar dance on public platforms, it should also show equal sensitivity to similar content available on social media and OTT platforms. Protests should not be selective. Protecting culture cannot be limited to community gatherings, fairs, or events; today, its biggest test is taking place in the digital world. We also need to understand that healthy entertainment doesn't have to mean boring entertainment. India's art, music, theater, cinema, and folk traditions are rich. Excellent entertainment and social responsibility can go hand in hand. Numerous films, web series, and programs prove that audiences can be won over without vulgarity. Keeping the new generation away from modern technology is neither possible nor necessary. What's needed is to teach them how to use technology judiciously. If we want our young generation to become sensitive, creative, and responsible citizens in the years to come, we must engage in serious social dialogue about the changing nature of entertainment.

Movements, Leadership, and Democracy:
Searching for Truth Among Questions

-Dr. Satyavan Saurabh

Democracy is not driven solely by elections, but also by the active participation, dialogue, dissent, and accountability of citizens. In any democratic system, movements are a vehicle for social consciousness. They hold power to account, give voice to public suffering, and pave the way for policy reforms. But history also shows that not every movement is inherently sacred, nor is it beyond suspicion. If serious questions arise about a movement's objectives, leadership, funding sources, organizational structure, and functioning, they must be answered with democratic transparency. Similarly, allegations made against a movement must be evaluated based on evidence, not merely political assumptions. In recent years, numerous movements in India have influenced national discourse. Examples include the farmers' movement, protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, movements against alleged irregularities in various recruitment examinations, and numerous youth-related campaigns. These movements have made it clear that the country's youth are vocal about their rights and future. Furthermore, they have raised the question that the legitimacy of a mass movement is determined not only by its objectives, but also by the transparency and accountability of its conduct. When a new face suddenly emerges on the national stage, gains immense popularity on social media in a

short time, or appears to be leading a major movement, curiosity naturally arises. People want to know about their life, background, ideological journey, financial sources, and organizational capabilities. This curiosity is not unreasonable in a democracy. It is also natural to expect public accountability from those active in public life. But there is a clear line between curiosity and accusation. Asking questions is a democratic right, while jumping to conclusions without evidence is contrary to democratic prudence. Today, social media has transformed the nature of politics. Popularity used to be achieved through years of struggle; now, reaching millions and even billions of people can sometimes happen in a matter of days. Algorithms, viral content, media coverage, supporter campaigns, advertising, and digital networks can rapidly expand a person's reach. Therefore, it's inappropriate to conclude a conspiracy based solely on the number of followers. On the other hand, if a digital campaign shows signs of artificial propaganda, bot networks, or opaque resources, independent investigations should be part of a democratic system. In a democracy, the success of a movement isn't measured solely by the size of the crowd. Sometimes small movements can lead to significant change, and sometimes even large crowds fail to leave a lasting impact. However, if a movement results in violence, damage to public property, clashes between police and protesters, or incidents of

provocation, an impartial investigation becomes necessary. It's equally important to identify the culprits based on individual responsibility, rather than painting the entire movement or society as one. The Indian Constitution grants citizens the right to peaceful protest. It also places an obligation on the state to maintain law and order. Therefore, in a democracy, both movements and administration are tested. If a movement turns violent, its moral foundation is weakened. If the administration uses excessive force, its legitimacy is questioned. Balance is the hallmark of democracy. The involvement of political parties in protests is a long-standing tradition in Indian politics. The opposition's role is not only to debate in Parliament, but also to go among the public and oppose the government's policies. Similarly, the ruling party's responsibility is not merely to dismiss protests as political conspiracies, but also to offer solutions to the public's genuine concerns. In a democracy, both a healthy opposition and a responsive government are equally essential. The question of transparency regarding the financial sources of movements is also crucial. Long-term protests, platforms, publicity, transportation, food, and other arrangements require resources. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to expect organizers of large movements to be transparent about their financial sources. Similarly, if an organization is accused of foreign funding or other ille-

gal financial assistance, its resolution should be based solely on legal investigation and judicial process. In a democracy, accusations and evidence are not synonymous. India's youth today face numerous challenges. Allegations of irregularities in competitive exams, delays in recruitment processes, unemployment, and uncertainty about the future fuel discontent among youth. If these real problems are not addressed in a timely manner, any movement can garner widespread support. Therefore, the best response for governments is not to suppress movements, but to address the underlying causes that underlie them. Meanwhile, the responsibility of the protesters is no less. If the movement is about a specific issue, its focus should remain on that issue. If various unrelated political or ideological agendas become involved, it is natural for confusion to arise among ordinary citizens. This is why the credibility of any mass movement is built on its discipline, clear purpose, and peaceful nature. India's democracy has gone through many ups and downs. This country has witnessed both the Emergency and peaceful mass movements. Therefore, the path to strengthening democracy lies neither in blind support nor blind opposition. The power of democracy lies in critical thinking. Citizens should question both the government and the protesters. The media should also investigate both sides with equal seriousness.



THINK Gas Swiftly Restores City Gas Supply After Pipeline Damage

Company Urges ‘Dial Before You Dig’ Awareness for Safety

Anantapur, 27 June 2026: A city gas pipeline laid by THINK Gas (formerly AG&P Pratham) was damaged during un-intimated excavation work carried out for Electrical Pole installation work Near Bite and Sip Cafe, Sri Nagar colony, Anantapur. The THINK Gas emergency response team acted promptly by isolating the affected section and restoring the gas supply within a short time, ensuring public safety and minimizing inconvenience to residents. THINK Gas has established a robust pipeline infrastructure in Anantapur district to supply Piped Natural Gas (PNG) for households and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) for transport users. Despite the presence of visible route markers, cautionary signage, and emergency contact boards along the pipeline route,

Highlights

■ A city gas pipeline laid by THINK Gas (formerly AG&P Pratham) was damaged during un-intimated excavation work carried out for Electrical Pole installation work Near Bite and Sip Cafe, Sri Nagar colony, Anantapur.

the contractor involved in the excavation failed to notify THINK Gas before starting work and did not submit any post-incident report. As per government regulations, any third-party planning to carry out excavation work must inform the City Municipal authorities or the City Gas Distribution company through the ‘Dial Before You Dig’ contact number. The incident occurred without prior intimation to the company, prompting THINK

Gas to file an official complaint against the party responsible. As per the current legal provisions under IPC Sections 285 and 336, such unauthorized damage constitutes an offense punishable by imprisonment of up to 3 years and a fine of up to ₹25 crores. THINK Gas urges all contractors, agencies, and individuals to comply with this safety requirement. The toll-free number to contact THINK Gas before any digging activity is 1800 2022 999.

Business

OIL PRICE DIVES AS US AND IRAN PAUSE ATTACKS

The price of oil has fallen sharply on hopes that a pause in attacks between the US and Iran could help to de-escalate the conflict. Brent crude, the global benchmark for oil, sank more than 9% to \$87.59 a barrel at one point, marking a sharp turnaround from last week when it had risen above \$100. The fall came after the US ambassador to the UN said attacks on Iran had been halted for a second night in a row to give “talks some space”. An Iranian army spokesperson said on Sunday that Tehran had halted “retaliatory” attacks in the region in response. The outbreak of the Iran war triggered a sharp rise in oil prices as the conflict led to the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping route which usually carries about 20% of the world’s oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG). When



Iran and the US signed a memorandum of understanding in June to halt military operations and reopen the strait, the price of oil fell back to pre-war levels of around \$70 a barrel. However, the collapse of the ceasefire earlier this month reignited fears over global energy supplies and pushed the oil price back up. Last week it hit \$100 a barrel for the first time since May, with added concerns coming after Houthis

militia in Yemen attacked oil tankers in the Red Sea, threatening a key export route that Saudi Arabia had used to bypass the Strait of Hormuz. By Monday afternoon, the price of Brent stood at \$90.60 a barrel, down more than 6% for the day. Susannah Streeter, chief investment strategist at Wealth Club, said markets were remaining “cautious given the twists and turns during this conflict”.

Highlights

■ THE PRICE OF OIL HAS FALLEN SHARPLY ON HOPES THAT A PAUSE IN ATTACKS BETWEEN THE US AND IRAN COULD HELP TO DE-ESCALATE THE CONFLICT.

Despite the sharp fall in crude, “there is still significant uncertainty baked into these prices and a reticence about whether negotiations will lead to a lasting breakthrough,” she added. The conflict between the US and Iran - and its impact on oil - has pushed up the cost of fuel such as petrol and diesel in many countries. This often has knock-on effects on other prices, such as food, as businesses pass on the

higher costs they are facing to customers, and this can push up the rate of inflation. Higher inflation raises the possibility that central banks will increase interest rates in an attempt to keep price rises under control. In June, the European Central Bank opted to lift its key interest rate for the eurozone for the first time in almost three years, noting that the conflict was “generating inflation pressures”. Before the Iran war began, there had been expectations that the Bank of England would cut rates this year. However, no cuts are now expected and financial markets are currently predicting a rate rise towards the end of the year. The Bank of England holds its latest interest rate-setting meeting this week, when it is expected to keep its key rate unchanged at 3.75%.

Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles and Indian Army come together for Shaurya Vijay Yatra, Culminating at Dras on Kargil Vijay Diwas

Dras, 27 July 2026: Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles' Shaurya Vijay Yatra, organised in partnership with the Indian Army, culminated at the Kargil War Memorial in Dras on Kargil Vijay Diwas, completing a 1,900-km journey that began at the National War Memorial in New Delhi. Bringing together serving and retired defence personnel, Veer Naris, families of martyrs and civilian riders, the expedition paid homage to the valour, dedication and supreme sacrifice of the heroes of the 1999 Kargil War. A defining moment of the expedition was the ceremonial carriage of sacred soil from the National War Memorial to the Kargil War Memorial, symbolically connecting generations of Indian soldiers whose unwavering commitment continues to safeguard the nation's freedom. Travelling through the rugged terrains of Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh, participants paid respects at key military landmarks including Chandimandir, Rezang La and the Leh War Memorial before arriving in Dras. The journey served not only as a memorial ride but also as a reminder of the enduring legacy of India's armed forces and



the values they embody. Since its inception in 2021, the ride conceptualised by Jawa Yezdi motorcycles has sought to carry the stories of India's soldiers beyond military circles and into public consciousness. By bringing together members of the riding community, serving personnel, veterans, Veer Naris and families of martyrs, the initiative has evolved into a unique civil-military movement dedicated to preserving the spirit of courage, duty and selfless service for future generations. This year's expedition was flagged off

by Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh and attended by senior military officials, veterans and invited guests, underscoring the significance of the initiative and its growing role in fostering public remembrance. The expedition was completed aboard a fleet of Jawa and Yezdi motorcycles, including the Jawa 350, Jawa 42, Jawa 42 FJ, Yezdi Adventure and Yezdi Scrambler. Traversing high-altitude passes, challenging mountain routes and some of India's most significant military landmarks, the motorcycles enabled rid-

ers to undertake a demanding journey befitting the spirit of the occasion. Anupam Thareja, Co-founder, Classic Legends, said: “The Shaurya Vijay Yatra is our way of ensuring that the stories of India's bravehearts continue to inspire future generations. From the National War Memorial to Dras, every kilometre of this journey was dedicated to honouring those who gave everything for the nation. We are proud to undertake this tribute alongside the Indian Army and the wider riding community.

By bringing together serving and retired defence personnel, Veer Naris and civilian riders, we hope to ensure that the values of courage, service and national pride continue to resonate across generations.” As riders gathered at the Kargil War Memorial on Kargil Vijay Diwas, the Shaurya Vijay Yatra reaffirmed its enduring purpose—to ensure that the legacy of India's fallen heroes continues to inspire citizens across generations and that the spirit of Kargil remains etched in the nation's collective memory.

BOB DATA LEAK: BANK CONFIRMS EMPLOYEE EMAIL HACK; SAYS CORE SYSTEM UNCOMPROMISED

State-run Bank of Baroda has acknowledged a cybersecurity incident after reports emerged that customer data and internal documents were leaked on the dark web. The lender, however, maintained that its core banking systems remain secure and uncompromised. In a statement, the bank said the incident involved the compromise of an employee's email account and not its core banking infrastructure. “Bank of Baroda has robust information security protocols in place. The incident involved the compromise of an employee's email. The matter was identified promptly, necessary action has been initiated, the core banking system remains uncompromised, and a forensic review has been launched,” the bank said. The clarification comes after multiple media reports said that customer data and internal records linked to the bank had appeared on the dark web, citing a source familiar with the matter and cybersecurity researcher Srikanth L, founder of Cashless Consumer. According to Reuters, the leaked cache allegedly



contains customer information, identity documents, loan-related papers and internal audit records. Preliminary indications suggest the breach originated from a compromised email system rather than the bank's core infrastructure, a source familiar with the matter told Reuters. The data reportedly surfaced on a dark web marketplace on Saturday night and was advertised as a package exceeding 700 GB, based on metadata analysis conducted by Srikanth L. Bank of Baroda has initiated a forensic audit to determine the scope and impact of the incident. However, it remains unclear how many cus-

tomers, if any, may have been affected. The bank has not disclosed details of the investigation or notified stock exchanges of the incident. The incident adds to a growing list of cybersecurity breaches affecting major Indian companies and critical institutions. According to Reuters, in June, a cyber-attack on Apple supplier Tata Electronics resulted in confidential component design and specification documents linked to Apple and Tesla being leaked on the dark web, Reuters reported. Earlier this month, ransomware group World Leaks also published files allegedly related to India's largest nuclear power plant.

mPokket announces Naveen Polishetty as brand ambassador with the brand film 'mPokket Ante Non-Stop Growth'

India, 27 July 2026: mPokket, one of India's leading digital lending platforms, has officially unveiled its latest brand campaign titled 'mPokket Ante Non-Stop Growth'. The campaign features Telugu actor and self-made star Naveen Polishetty as the brand ambassador. Developed by the creative agency Social Panga, the campaign comprises a 35-second master film and two 20-second cohort films, all centred around a single, sharp idea: life shouldn't be one long audition. Unlike conventional celebrity endorsements, this campaign flips the script by drawing directly from Naveen's own journey. A Hyderabad-born engineering graduate, Naveen attended more than a thousand auditions and faced repeated rejections before his breakthrough. Today he is one of the biggest names in Telugu cinema, with a run of hit films behind him and a fan following that keeps growing. His rise was never one big moment. It was many small steps forward, each one earned, which is the same



non-stop growth mPokket wants to back for young India. The campaign uses his story of resilience and self-belief to send a powerful message to India's youth: while Naveen had to constantly prove himself to get a chance, mPokket users shouldn't have to. Through this campaign, mPokket positions itself as the credit partner that backs India's young dreamers without demanding endless validation, bridging the gap between talent and opportunity. The films bring this idea alive through a high-energy, character-led treatment. In the first cohort film, a young professional

realises that the real barrier holding him back is lack of credit access, not lack of ambition. In the second, a single mPokket interaction turns a young woman's dream of owning a beauty parlour from wishful thinking into real possibility. At the centre is the master film, which turns Naveen's personal journey into a larger cultural statement. Drawing on his years of rejection before the industry finally backed him, the film builds to a clear message: talent, ambition and hard work should not have to wait for endless validation. Just as Naveen eventually found people who

believed in him, mPokket positions itself as the partner that backs potential when the world is still asking for proof. Gaurav Jalan, Founder and CEO of mPokket, said, “Young India is full of people who are working hard, delivering results, and growing every day but still finding themselves blocked when they need credit the most. mPokket was built to change that. To date, 6.5 million Indians have taken their first-ever formal loan through our platform. Remarkably, nearly 79% of all these New-To-Credit (NTC) borrowers were under the age of 25 when they took their first loan. For millions of young Indians, mPokket is where their financial identity truly began.” “Naveen spent years delivering, and the industry kept making him prove it again. That gap between what someone is capable of and what the world is willing to back is exactly what mPokket exists to close. This campaign isn't a metaphor. It's the most honest thing we've said about why we built this,” he added.

MONEY WON'T MATTER IN 2036, ELON MUSK MAKES BOLD CLAIM

Elon Musk believes money could lose much of its importance by 2036 if artificial intelligence and robots make goods and services so abundant that human needs are easily met. Speaking during an interview with The Economist Editor-in-Chief Zanny Minton Beddoes, the Tesla and SpaceX chief argued that the purpose of money would diminish in a world where AI can produce far more than people can consume. “What do you want money for?” Musk asked. “You want money for goods and services... housing, transport, entertainment. If robots and AI are providing more goods and services than any human could possibly consume, what do you need money for in that case?” Beddoes pushed back, noting that investors who own Musk's companies may not share his view and questioned how societies would navigate widespread job losses caused by AI. She asked whether such a future would require wealth



Highlights

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redistribution through higher taxes on capital or universal basic income to support displaced workers. Musk suggested governments could simply issue payments to citizens. “I think that the Treasury should just simply issue

people checks,” he said. When Beddoes argued that such a move would fuel inflation, Musk countered that traditional economic assumptions may not apply in an AI-driven economy. “Inflation is simply the ratio of money to goods and

services,” Musk said. He argued that if AI boosts the production of goods and services at a much faster pace than the money supply grows, economies could instead face deflation. “I'll make a prediction, which is that deflation will be the issue, not inflation,” Musk said. “If the output of goods and services increases faster than the money supply, you will have deflation.” Despite his optimism about AI's long-term potential, Musk acknowledged the transition could be politically and socially turbulent. Beddoes questioned how democracies, already grappling with political polarisation and public anxiety, would cope with rapid technological disruption before reaching the future Musk envisions. Responding to the concerns, Musk described AI as both exciting and unsettling. “It's exhilarating and terrifying,” he said. “Honestly, if you ask me on any given day, in fact, even intraday, I've gone from exhilaration to terror regarding AI.”

THREE DEAD AND SEVERAL INJURED IN SHOOTING AT FOOD FESTIVAL NEAR SEATTLE'S SPACE NEEDLE



Three people have been killed and several others injured following a shooting at a food festival near the Space Needle in Seattle on Sunday. Police said there were two suspects who were shooting at each other. One of the suspects is in custody and the other still at large, although officials have said there is no threat to public. Shots rang out at around 18:00 local time (01:00 GMT) at one of the city's most popular tourist spots and as the annual Bite of Seattle food festival drew even more people to the downtown area. Two deaths were confirmed at the scene, and one person died later in hospital. Those injured include a two-year-old boy, officials said. Videos shared online showed people taking shelter inside the city's iconic Space Needle. People could be seen crouched on the ground, taking cover behind pillars and shelves of merchandise in the Space Needle's lobby during the shooting. Faith Adia Hunter told Associated Press that

one of the shooters was near her and her friends when they heard the shots, sending them fleeing for shelter in the Seattle Children's Museum. "We were right next to him when it started so we took off running," she said. "So we took off running too into the building with the crowd." The Seattle Police Department said an investigation remains ongoing and urged the public to avoid the area. Mayor Katie Wilson said in a statement that she wanted to "thank the Seattle police officers who responded to the scene and took a suspect into custody". She had originally announced two suspects had been taken into custody before updating her statement later on Sunday evening. Four of the injured were taken to hospital in a stable condition, while a fifth chose not to, the fire department said. Representatives for Seattle and Washington state have condemned the shooting as an act of "senseless violence".



■ Macron calls crisis meeting as wildfires threaten Bordeaux and heatwave looms

Wildfire has 'life of its own', says French minister, with blaze nine miles from Bordeaux outskirts

The Spanish Met Office, AEMET, has issued amber alerts for a widespread heatwave until at least Sunday. The warning covers south-western and central regions, as well as the Canaries. A large area of high pressure will strengthen, with temperatures to rise day on day underneath cloudless skies. They will range from 39C to 41C by Wednesday and are expected to rise later in the week. Temperatures will exceed 40C across the Guadalquivir, Guadiana and Ebro valleys for several consecutive days. Friday could be the hottest day of the week, with Cordoba expected to reach 44C, while Toledo, Zaragoza and Ciudad Real could all see temperatures of about 42C. Wildfires continue to cause



uncertainty for Spanish and French residents as more than 300,000 people have had to leave their homes. There is no single reason why these fires are so intense, but scientists are very confident that climate change is playing a role. Most wildfires are started by humans, whether deliberately or accidentally. But climate change means we're seeing

more of the weather conditions conducive to the spread of fires. Intense heatwaves – like we have seen repeatedly this summer – draw extra moisture out of soils and vegetation. These tinder-dry conditions help fires to spread at speed, especially if winds are strong. This can lead to larger, more intense fires than might have happened otherwise. The UN's climate panel expects these "fire weather" conditions to become even more common in the Mediterranean as the planet continues to warm. But there are lots of other factors in addition to climate change. In recent months rainfall has been lower than average across much of south-western Europe – which is thought to be down to natural variability. And some researchers have long warned that the Mediterranean's forests and scrublands are not being properly managed – leaving plenty of vegetation as fuel for fires. France's Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez says firefighters are facing an "unprecedented" situation in Gironde, battling a fire that "has a life of its own".

Netanyahu accuses NYC Mayor Mamdani of 'fomenting hate' after arrest threat



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said he plans to attend the UN General Assembly in New York City this autumn, despite the city's mayor, Zohran Mamdani, making threats to arrest him. Mamdani walked back that threat last week, acknowledging he lacked the legal power to arrest Netanyahu on a warrant issued by the International Criminal Court, the world's top war-crimes court. The Israeli leader, who flies to the US on Monday on a different visit, told Fox News on Sunday that he was "not concerned" about Mamdani's previous pledge and accused the mayor of "fomenting hate". He will meet US President Donald Trump at the White House on Tuesday and attend a funeral service for the late senator Lindsey Graham. New York is not on his itinerary on this trip. "He's [Mamdani] fomenting hate. He's supposed to be the mayor of all New Yorkers – Jews, Christians, Muslims, everyone," the prime minister said on Sunday. "But he's trying to turn one group against the other. I speak to Jewish Americans, and they're afraid right now." He referenced a pair of stabbings in New York on Thursday, in which a suspect stabbed a Jewish man and an Asian man just blocks apart. The suspect allegedly shouted the phrase "Allahu akbar" while committing the stabbings, according to police. He has been charged with hate crimes relating to each victim. Both men survived the attacks, which drew con-

demnations from the city's Jewish and Asian American leaders. In the aftermath, Netanyahu said Jewish New Yorkers were "afraid right now." The mayor's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Mamdani, a staunch supporter of Palestinian rights, made his opposition to the Israeli military operation in Gaza a central plank of his campaign last year. In an address last week, he called Netanyahu a "war criminal." As part of that platform while campaigning, Mamdani promised to enforce a 2024 arrest warrant for Netanyahu from the International Criminal Court (ICC), which accused the prime minister of committing war crimes in Gaza. Israel has denied charges that it has committed war crimes in Gaza, and Netanyahu called the charges "bogus". The Israeli military entered Gaza after the Hamas-led attack in Israel on 7 October 2023. About 1,200 people were killed and 251 were taken hostage. Over 73,000 people have been killed in Israeli attacks in Gaza since then, including more than 21,000 children, according to the territory's Hamas-run health ministry, whose figures are considered reliable by the UN. Last week, after the New York Times pressed Mamdani on his pledge to arrest Netanyahu, Mamdani said his administration had reviewed the law and found: "We do not have the independent legal authority to enforce this warrant".

Anger, shock and grief - questions remain in the wake of the Berlin Pride attack

In Germany there is grief, shock and, increasingly, anger about the attack at Berlin Pride on Saturday night which left one Polish woman dead and injured at least 29 others. The main suspect, Abdul Ballout, a 21-year-old German citizen with Lebanese heritage, was shot and killed by police on Sunday. Germany's Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt said Ballout "had previously drawn attention to himself through a high volume of criminal offences, radicalisation and affiliation with the Islamist scene." As details emerge about his criminal convictions, many are asking why Ballout was not in prison. Prosecutors say that in 2025, Ballout decided to try to join Islamic State group's armed struggle in Syria, travelling via Turkey to Lebanon. In Lebanon, they say, he met several people he believed were members of IS. He was arrested in Lebanon in July 2025 and sentenced to three months in prison for incitement to religious and sectarian conflict. Then in November 2025 he returned to



Germany, where he was arrested at Berlin Brandenburg Airport and held in pre-trial detention. In May this year, a Berlin court sentenced Ballout to a juvenile sentence of one year and ten months, for "preparing a serious act of violence endangering the state". The sentence was suspended while prosecutors appealed against the verdict, calling for a longer sentence. Ballout was released and placed under the supervision of a probation officer. Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt told RTL that the decision to impose a suspended sentence was "certainly incomprehensible... given the level of danger involved in

this case". He said the authorities were investigating how that happened. Berlin's Governing Mayor, Kai Wegner from the centre-right Christian Democrat party (CDU), said he was dumbstruck at the way the Berlin judiciary had handled Ballout's case. "He was sentenced... under juvenile criminal law," he told RBB TV. "And then, unfortunately, the court handed down a suspended sentence. I don't want to pass judgement on that – that's the independence of the judiciary – but I'm really at a loss for words." The opposition far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party described the attack as a total

failure of security policy. "If an Islamist threat known to the police was able to carry out such an act, a thorough investigation must be carried out to establish why he was still able to move about freely in the first place," said Martin Hess, the AfD's home affairs spokesperson. According to Der Spiegel, Ballout told the Berlin court this spring that he had distanced himself from extremist ideology and violence. Thomas Mücke, an extremism expert at the Violence Prevention Network VPN, told ARD television that he had met the suspect. He said Ballout had given social workers "a very composed, very cautious, very controlled and very friendly impression". "And those are precisely the criteria where we realise we can't really get to know the person," he continued. Some have called for Germany's laws against terrorism to be made stricter. Peter Neumann at King's College London told ZDF that Germany's criminal law on terrorism is "too lenient," and sentences too short by European standards.

CARLY SIMON REVEALS PARKINSON'S DIAGNOSIS

The singer-songwriter Carly Simon says she has been diagnosed with Parkinson's and is "learning how to live" with the "sometimes frightening" condition. In a statement provided to the BBC, the 83-year-old described the "unpredictable" progress of the disease, saying: "Some days I'm so tired I can't get the day moving at all. On others, it gives me a little more room to move, think, work, and feel like myself. "But I have not stopped living, and I have not stopped working," said the singer, best known for songs like You're So Vain, Why, and Coming Around Again. Simon added that she had recently received surgery to remove a cancerous growth on her face that had "affected my appearance". The surgery "made me more self-conscious about being seen in public," she added. "I have always been more critical of my appearance than anyone else could possibly imagine (check out the irony of having written You're So Vain), and this gave my inner critic quite a lot of new material." Parkinson's is a progressive disorder that affects the



brain, nervous system, and muscle control. It is the fastest growing neurological condition in the world, with about 153,000 people in the UK living with the condition. Simon said her problems began with arthritis in both knees and one of her hips. However, her mobility failed to improve after three replacement surgeries. "I had trouble standing up from low chairs and deep couches without someone offering me an arm," she said. "Overstuffed furniture became my enemy. Once seated, I could feel as though I had been swallowed by the chair and might remain there permanently, like a guest who had badly overstayed her welcome."



More than 600 US military service members injured since Iran War began in February

BALI BANS DUTCH EXPATS WHOSE RUN CLUB ALLEGEDLY EXCLUDED INDONESIANS

Indonesia's immigration authorities have banned two Dutch nationals for organising an illegal running event that had also allegedly discriminated against locals. The run organised by the expatriate-focused group Entourage Bali drew heated backlash after testimonies circulated online that the club had appeared to reject Indonesian applicants while accepting foreigners. The two Dutchmen aged 35 and 37, left Bali for Singapore before the ban was announced. They will not be allowed back to Indonesia, authorities said. Bali, Indonesia's famed tropical paradise, has become a hotspot for digital nomads in recent years, resulting in growing tensions between expats and



locals. The allegations of discrimination against Entourage Bali's run club has reignited anger at foreigners who are perceived to be acting with entitlement and building exclusive communities on the island. On Sunday, Bali Governor I Wayan Koster vowed to take "strict action" to ensure such incidents do not happen again. Immigration authorities

said the two Dutch men had violated immigration laws by organising the running event without obtaining permits. In a statement posted on Friday, Entourage Bali said that its run clubs were "open for everyone, including non-digital nomads". Indonesians made up the largest group of participants, holding nearly 25% of the tickets, it said. It pointed to "errors in the

automated approval process" for its chat groups, which "incorrectly rejected" some numbers registered in Indonesia. "Entourage was created as a community for digital nomads in Bali to help people who are new to the island connect with others and do fun activities together during their stay," the statement said. "Being a digital nomad is not defined by nationality. Our community includes members from many countries, including Indonesia." Entourage Bali said it was pausing all its events for now and "promise we will make real changes going forward". The group had successfully held a run in May, with social media posts showing a crowd, comprising many foreigners, jogging on the streets with headphones.

Indian Boxer Ankush Panghal Cruises Into CWG 2026 Quarterfinals

Indian boxer Ankush Panghal produced a commanding performance in his Commonwealth Games debut, defeating Antigua and Barbuda's Zalaan Jan by a unanimous 5-0 decision to advance to the quarterfinals of the men's 80kg category of the 2026 edition. The 22-year-old looked composed from the opening bell, landing accurate punches and controlling the pace of the bout with sharp counter-attacking. Ankush swept the first round with all five judges scoring in his favour after he connected with clean hooks and maintained a strong defensive approach, according to ESPN. Building on his early advantage, Ankush continued to dictate the contest in the second round. He moved in and out of range effortlessly, frustrating Jan's attempts to mount an attack and once again secured a clean sweep from the judges. With a commanding lead heading into the final round, Ankush



stayed disciplined and focused on maintaining control. He landed a series of powerful combinations before following his coaches' instructions to keep his distance and avoid unnecessary exchanges. Jan managed to find brief moments of success, including pinning Ankush against the ropes, but the Indian boxer remained in control and

comfortably ran down the clock to complete a one-sided victory. The win marked an impressive start to Ankush's Commonwealth Games campaign and highlighted his composure, accuracy and tactical maturity on his debut stage. He will now enter the quarterfinals with confidence as he continues his pursuit of a medal for India.

M Sreeshankar Qualifies For Long Jump Finals At CWG 2026; Sajjan Prakash Enters 200m Butterfly Final



Indian long jumper M Sreeshankar made the finals of the Commonwealth Games 2026 after breaching the qualifying standard in his very first attempt on Monday. Sreeshankar, whose season's best is 8.38m, jumped 8.01m here to earn direct qualification from Group A. The qualification standard has been set at 8m or at least the 12 best performers. The 27-year-old is hoping to improve on the silver medal that he won in the

2022 edition of the Games. He is on a comeback trail after recovering a career-threatening knee injury – a ruptured patellar tendon – in April 2024, for which he underwent a surgery. The breakdown had robbed him of a highly anticipated maiden appearance at the Paris Olympics. He recorded his season's best performance only last month in the National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar.

AJIT AGARKAR TOLD TO PICK VAIBHAV SOORYAVANSHI FOR ODIS, MAKE HIM OPEN WITH ROHIT SHARMA

Teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi should be drafted into the ODI side as an opener alongside Rohit Sharma ahead of the 2027 World Cup, reckoned former India cricketer Farokh Engineer. The wicketkeeper batter of yesteryears opined that Shubman Gill, the other half of the current opening pair with Rohit, can bat at No. 4, giving more meat to the middle-order. "The ideal situation is Shubman Gill and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. Gill is a class player. Gill, I think, is the best batsman in the team now. So, Gill should come at four," Engineer told PTL. "Gill is not a guy who lifts the ball. So, a left-right combination would be ideal in ODIs. So, if Rohit is playing, and I think he should be playing, let him open with Sooryavanshi. "A batsman like him (Sooryavanshi) is much better at opening because he finds bigger gaps in the field. Virat Kohli can come third. Gill can come fourth and then we've got a solid batting line-up," he said. Sooryavanshi bagged the



Player of the Series award in the just-concluded three-match rubber against Zimbabwe, scoring 151 runs with two fifties. Engineer felt that the 15-year-old had done enough to merit a place in the 50-over version. "This is probably the right time to draft Sooryavanshi into India's ODI side. I don't know why people distinguish so much between ODI and T20 because for me, a half-volley is a half-volley. He's been getting runs and he's got the confidence to open the innings. "He'll win more matches for you than lose you. When he gives a start like that, the other players can have time to

consolidate the innings and put on a big score," Engineer noted. The 88-year-old said the Indian team must persevere with Sooryavanshi because he is a high quality match winner. "Anything which is slightly short of length, in Suryavanshi's curve, is going to go for a six. He learned from his mistakes, he has learned to curb himself. But don't try to over-coach him. He's not from the MCC book of manual, which is completely out of date. "He's a genius. Nor was Viv Richards. Viv was the best batsman I've ever seen play. But persevere with Sooryavanshi.

"WON'T BE A PART OF CONSTANT RAT RACE": SANJU SAMSON VOWS TO PLAY ON OWN TERMS

Senior India wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson has revealed that he took a vow to continue to play cricket entirely on his own terms without paying attention to outside noise even before the T20 World Cup happened and added that he has stepped away from the rat race and will continue to back his own instincts. Samson etched his name into Indian cricket folklore when he smashed three consecutive fifties to help the side retain the Men's T20 World Cup title on home soil earlier this year. But a brief drop in form during the games against Ireland and England meant that Samson was left out of the recently concluded trip to Zimbabwe. "I realised that there is a constant rat race in our country, and I decided before the 2026 T20 World Cup that I would

not be part of it. I just want to enjoy the game. By God's grace, I have achieved a lot. I am 31 now, and I have a few years left. So, I have decided to play on my own terms. No one will tell me how to bat or what to do. Sanju will decide for Sanju. "With all due respect, I will play, enjoy the game, be a good teammate, and support the group, but I will do it my way. After the 2024 World Cup, I didn't even expect to play in the 2026 World Cup. I wasn't in the 14 or 15-man squad at one point. So how can I plan for 2028? If I'm there, if the team needs me, and if I'm playing well, things will fall into place. If not, I am deeply grateful. No one can take this achievement away from me," Samson said on JioStar's show 'Believe'. Recalling an earlier gym interaction during a national team camp



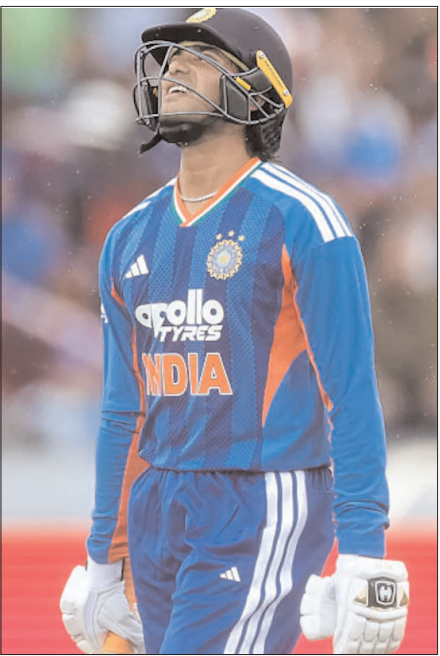
with former captain Virat Kohli regarding lifestyle and physical conditioning, Samson shared how the conversation influenced him. "We all know how Virat bhai is. He is very clear and very straightforward with everyone. If you need to do some-

thing, he will tell you exactly what is required. The way he carries himself in the gym, there is a different fire in that guy and I really love that about him. "We both were working out together in the gym during an Indian team camp and I asked him, 'Paaji,

what should I do? Tell me something too!' and he told me that lifestyle plays a huge role. If you want to become an international cricketer, you must maintain a different kind of lifestyle. "He shared what works for him on his journey and told me, 'This food will help your body recover, this won't. If you maintain this discipline for the next 10 years, you will have a great career ahead.' I started following it for a year, a year, and a half, but after that, I couldn't stay on track with that anymore!" he explained. Speaking on the tactical preparation ahead of the marquee T20 World Cup semi-final against England at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, Samson recalled how he shrugged off past record discussions regarding the face-off against speedster Jofra Archer.

Form Is Temporary For Abhishek Sharma, But Is A Place In Indian Team Permanent?

Google Abhishek Sharma today and the headlines are about his bowling. His figures of 3 for 17 in the second T20I against Zimbabwe that helped India seal the series before completing a 3-0 sweep. It was exactly the kind of tour India needed after the battering in the British Isles. A weaker opponent, three comfortable wins and a chance for struggling players to rebuild confidence. Most did. Abhishek didn't. His numbers since the start of the year paint an uncomfortable picture. ICC's No. 2-ranked T20 batter, who began the year at No. 1, returned from Zimbabwe with 11 runs in three innings at an average of 3.66. That is not an isolated failure. It is the latest chapter in a slump that has stretched for months. Against England, he scored 131 runs in five T20Is at an average of 26.2. Against Ireland, he managed 49 runs in two matches at 24.5. Across his last 10 T20 innings, there has been just one fifty. More worrying than the runs is the manner of the dismissals.



'Batted Around 1000 Balls': Suryakumar Yadav's Social Media Post Leaves Internet Buzzing

Former India T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav may have lost his spot in the squad but his practice remains just as intense. Hours after India completed a 3-0 series win over Zimbabwe, Suryakumar posted a video on social media where he was running and batting at the Vasoo Paranjape Cricket Academy. "Sunday was fun. Quick run. Batted around 1000 balls for 3 hours. Felt good," Suryakumar Yadav wrote in the caption. The veteran batter guided India to the T20 World Cup 2026 title in March but was dropped from the



squad just months after the victory amid a poor run of form in IPL and international cricket. Meanwhile, as per a BCCI source, the apex cricket body has not ruled out a comeback for Suryakumar, and he remains in contention for selection if he consistently performs in domestic cricket, despite not being in the current

plans. "Doors for Suryakumar Yadav are still open. He is not currently in the scheme of things, but he remains eligible to come back if he scores runs in domestic cricket consistently," said a BCCI source. Led by newly appointed captain Iyer, India suffered a 56-run defeat in the fifth T20I at Southampton, conceding the five-match series to England 4-0 after the opening game was washed out and ended in a no-result.

WHY GURINDERVIR SINGH DIDN'T QUALIFY FOR COMMONWEALTH GAMES 100M SEMIFINALS DESPITE FINISHING 2ND IN HEAT 4



Gurindervir Singh, who holds the national record, finished second in his men's 100m heat at the Commonwealth Games 2026 on Monday but it was not enough for him to find a place in the semifinal. While he was second behind Jamaica's Rohan Watson in Heat 4, he finished outside the automatic qualification spots with a timing of 10.39 seconds. Across 11 heats, the Indian sprinter finished 28th

among 73 athletes. A timing of 10.24 seconds was needed for qualification but he fell short by 0.15 seconds. While 24 positions were there in the semifinals, only 17 were up for grabs with 7 athletes already receiving byes. As a result, while Gurindervir did finish second in Heat 4, his timing was not among the 17 fastest athletes and as a result, he was eliminated. Meanwhile, winner of Heat 4 - Rohan Watson

- qualified with a timing of 10.13 seconds. The result came as a surprise given the momentum Gurindervir had built heading into Glasgow. In May, the Punjab sprinter had rewritten Indian sprinting history at the Federation Cup in Ranchi, becoming the first Indian man to break the 10.10-second barrier with a sensational national record of 10.09 seconds. His record-breaking run first saw him breach the national record to 10.17 seconds in the semifinal, surpassing Animesh Kujur's previous mark of 10.18 seconds, before improving it further to 10.09 seconds in the final. Those performances had established him as one of India's strongest medal prospects at the Commonwealth Games and fuelled hopes of a historic run in Glasgow.

"It Hurts, It Will Continue To Hurt": Kylian Mbappe Writes To Fans After France's Failure To Win FIFA World Cup 2026



Days after France ended their FIFA World Cup 2026 campaign in the semifinals, superstar striker Kylian Mbappe penned a heartfelt letter to fans, saying that not being able to bring the trophy home "will continue to hurt for a while" and thanked the fans for their relentless support. France, despite dominating a large part of the group and knockout stages, fell to Spain 2-0 and to England 4-6 in the third-place match. Despite Mbappe being the leading goal-scorer of the tournament with 10 goals and surpassing Lionel Messi's tally to become the all-time highest FIFA World Cup scorer with 22 goals, Mbappe could not get the ending he wanted. Nonetheless, Mbappe's run from the 2018 FIFA World Cup title win to the 2026 semifinals, which also included a runners-up finish in 2022, where he gave Messi-led Argentina a scare in the final with a hat-trick,

is one of the finest runs in FIFA World Cup history. The letter published in the regional press on Monday had some personal photos, including a childhood picture of Mbappe standing in front of his idol Thierry Henry. "We did not bring home a team trophy. It hurts, and it will continue to hurt for a while, I am not going to lie to you about that," he told fans in the letter, as quoted by Goal.com. He also dedicated a large part of his letter to the fans who followed the tournament despite a lot of time zone differences, noting how they stayed up late, gathered wherever they could to cheer for France, "You stayed up late, sometimes until the dead of night depending on the time zone, to watch us play on the other side of the world. You gathered at home, in bars, with family or friends, all over France and beyond," he emphasised.

Tears Were For Everything I Went Through", Says Mirabai Chanu After CWG 2026 Gold



Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu won her 3rd gold and 4th Commonwealth medal on Sunday night. The gigantic effort came after three days of starving and remaining dehydrated to maintain her weight. On the podium, one saw a Mira who was overcome by emotion- a rare picture of the athlete. She went for the mandatory dope test right after. Once done with the formalities,

she caught up with NDTV's Rica Roy for a chat, calling this gold the toughest of her career Q: First of all, congratulations. I thought I'd catch you in the dining hall celebrating. Have you finally had a meal? Mirabai Chanu: (Laughs) No, I'm not in the dining hall. I'm still at the competition venue. I haven't really eaten properly for the last three days. Right now, I only feel like drinking water. I'll have dinner a little later. Q: We have always seen you smiling. But today, you broke down on the podium during the national anthem. What was going through your mind? Mirabai

Chanu: A lot of emotions came back at once. This medal wasn't easy. I had to deal with injuries, change weight categories and constantly control my body weight. Every day was about deciding what I could eat and what I couldn't. Age is not on my side either. When I stood on the podium and the national anthem started playing, I remembered everything I had gone through in these last few years. Those were tears of happiness. I couldn't stop them. I had worked so hard for this medal. Q: The last time we spoke was after the Paris Olympics. You were in

pain then, physically and emotionally. You mentioned a better lift wasn't possible because of hip injury and periods at that time. Does this gold feel like redemption? Mirabai Chanu: Yes, in many ways. After Paris, I went through a lot. I missed out on a medal there, came fourth. I was struggling with a hip injury and, on the day of competition, I was also dealing with menstrual pain. Every woman understands how difficult that can be. But as athletes, we still have to step on the platform and compete for India. Winning and losing are both part of sport.

“AADARSHA KUTUMBAM HOUSE NO: 47” PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN BEGINS WITH CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS; MEET VICTORY VENKATESH AS CHITTIBABU

The makers of Victory Venkatesh and Trivikram Srinivas’ much-awaited family entertainer “Aadarsha Kutumbam House No: 47 – AK47” have officially begun unveiling the vibrant world of the film with a series of character introductions. Kicking off the campaign is Victory Venkatesh as Chitti Babu, followed by Srinidhi Shetty, Yuvina Parthavi and Raja Prajwal, who together form the heart of this wholesome family entertainer. Introducing

the first character, Venkatesh steps into the role of Chittibabu, the lovable pillar of the family who binds everyone together with his warmth, wit and unwavering sense of responsibility. The character glimpse offers a charming sneak peek into his world, featuring Venkatesh alongside Srinidhi Shetty and Nara Rohith, teasing the film’s blend of laughter, emotions and strong family bonds. With his effortless screen presence, impeccable comic timing

and natural flair for family entertainers, Venkatesh once again promises a character that audiences of all ages will instantly connect with. Chitti Babu is poised to be one of those memorable roles that perfectly reflects the spirit of a joyful, close-knit family. As the first introduction sets the tone, excitement is now building for the remaining character reveals, each expected to bring a unique flavour to the lively world of AK47. Produced by S. Radha

Krishna (Chinababu) under the prestigious Haarika & Hassine Creations banner. “Aadarsha Kutumbam House No: 47 – AK47” is slated for a grand worldwide theatrical release on October 2, 2026. With music by S. Thaman, cinematography by Ravi K. Chandran, editing by Sreekar Prasad, action choreography by Kevin Kumar, the film promises to deliver a complete festive entertainer for audiences across all sections.



Mahira Khan endorses Israel-linked brands, then attends Gaza event



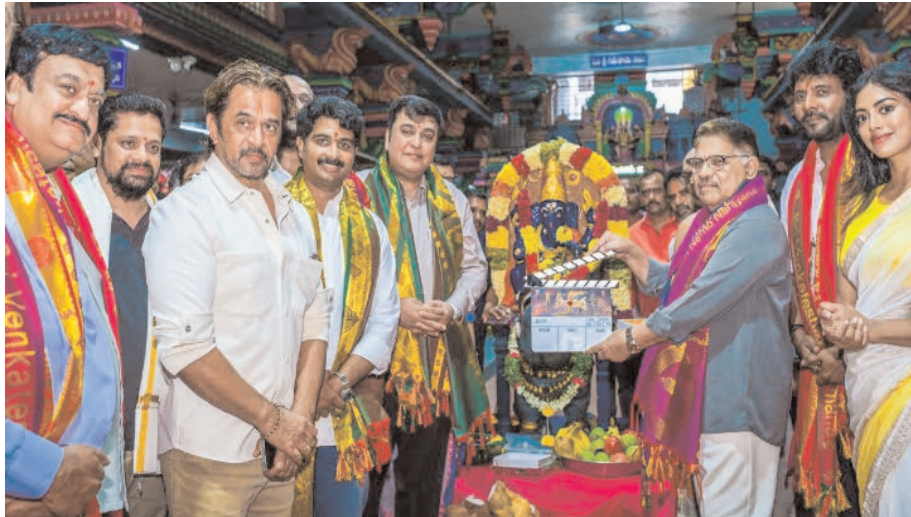
Pakistani actress Mahira Khan has come under criticism on social media after attending a charity fundraising event in London for humanitarian relief efforts in Gaza. The event, organised by Luxe Events UK along with its charity partners, aimed to raise funds for people affected by the ongoing crisis in Gaza. Mahira attended as the chief celebrity guest, interacting with members of the British-Pakistani community and taking part in a Q & A session. However, videos from the event soon went viral, triggering mixed reactions

online. While many fans praised Mahira for supporting the humanitarian cause and appreciated her warm interaction with attendees, others accused her of being hypocritical. Several social media users pointed out that Mahira Khan has endorsed global brands such as L’Oréal Paris and Pepsi, which are frequently mentioned in boycott campaigns related to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Another video of Mahira dancing at the same event also drew criticism, with some users claiming the programme looked more like a promotional event than a fundraiser.

ACTION KING ARJUN JOINS THE ‘POLIMERA’ FRANCHISE AFTER BLOCKBUSTER ‘BLAST’

Polimera 3’ Launched Grandly

After creating a sensation on OTT with Maa Oori Polimera and achieving massive success in theatres with Polimera 2, director Dr. Anil Vishwanath is set to take the successful horror-thriller franchise to the next level with Polimera 3. Directed by Dr. Anil Vishwanath, Polimera 3 is being produced on a grand scale by Vamsi Nandipati and Janhvi Narang under the banners of Vamsi Nandipati Entertainments and Sri Venkateswara Cinemas LLP, with the blessings of renowned producer and distributor late Narayan Das Narang. The film was officially launched today with traditional pooja ceremonies at a Ganesh temple in Secunderabad. The launch,



held on the birth anniversary of late Narayan Das Narang, made the occasion even more special. Several prominent personalities from the Telugu film industry attended the

launch event. Veteran producer Allu Aravind gave the ceremonial first clap, while senior producer D. Suresh Babu switched on the camera. Young producer Bunny Vas and exhibitor Sadanand

Goud handed over the bound script to the team and wished them success. Producers Suniel Narang and Puskur Ram Mohan Rao, among others, were also present at the event.

Hero Thiruveer’s Bhagavanthudu Second Single, “Sittharala Navvu” out now

Young and talented actor Thiruveer is gearing up to entertain audiences with his upcoming film Bhagavanthudu, featuring Faria Abdullah as the female lead. Kannada actor Rishi plays a pivotal role in the film. Presented by Asian Films’ Narayan Das Narang and Panasa Shankarayya Goud, the movie is being produced by successful producer Ravi Panasa under the Ravi Panasa Film Corporation banner as Production No. 1. The film also marks the directorial debut of G.G. Vihari. Touted as a romantic period political action drama, Bhagavanthudu is currently in the final stages of production and is getting ready for its theatrical release. The makers today



released the film’s second single, “Sittharala Navvu.” Music director Krishna Prasad has composed the song beautifully, while director G.G.

Vihari has penned its captivating lyrics. Renowned singer Javed Ali lends his soulful voice to the track, making it an instantly memorable listen.

FILM SET FOR GRAND RELEASE ON AUGUST 7



Starring Vikram Sahidev, Sandhya Vasishta, and Tarak Ponnappa in the lead roles, Anakapalli is a raw and rustic entertainer produced by Kandregula Naidu and Thrinadha Rao Nakkina under the Bhavya Sri Movie Makers and Nakkina Narratives banners. The film is directed by Khagesh Tammineni. Kandregula Kumar Raja serves as the co-producer. Along with writing the story and screenplay, Thrinadha Rao Nakkina also plays a key role in the movie. Anakapalli is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on August 7. The film’s songs and teaser have already received a great response on social media. The makers have now unveiled the film’s trailer. It was launched during the Elite Cricket League Season 2 event held in Visakhapatnam, where the Tollywood Thunders team released it in the presence of thousands of spectators. Actors Srikanth, Thaman, Sudheer Babu, Tarun, Ashwin Babu, and several others attended the event, unveiled the trailer, and congratulated the team.

‘Teeram’ Title Song Launched Grandly

he title song of the upcoming emotional drama ‘Teeram’, produced under the Sri Bhavani Creations banner, was launched in a grand event at Prasad Labs, Hyderabad. The launch ceremony was attended by the film’s cast and crew along with several noted personalities from the Telugu film industry, who extended their best wishes to the team. The title song was officially unveiled by chief guests including ‘Pushpa’ fame actor Jagadeesh, Jabardasth Saddam, actor Kumaran, and several other film personalities.

‘I First Watched Spider-Man When...’: Rishab Shetty Reveals He’s a Massive Spider-Man Fan Ahead of Brand New Day

Spider-Man: Brand New Day is set to release on 30th July in India. Ahead of the film’s release, Rishab Shetty opened up about his love for the superhero. National Award-winning actor-director Rishab Shetty has revealed that he is a long time Spider-Man fan. Ahead of the release of Spider-Man: Brand New Day, the Kantara star featured in a special video celebrating the iconic Marvel superhero. In the clip, Rishab unexpectedly crosses paths with Spider-Man before sharing his admiration for the superhero, a character he says has been a favourite for years. Rishab, who earned widespread acclaim for Kantara

and has since become one of Indian cinema’s most celebrated actors, brings his own enthusiasm as a fan to the collaboration. The video arrives just days before Spider-Man: Brand New Day opens in cinemas, offering audiences a crossover moment between one of Indian cinema’s biggest stars and one of the world’s most enduring superheroes. Speaking about his love for Spider-Man, Rishab said, “I still remember watching Spider-Man for the first time in a single-screen theatre many years ago and instantly connecting with Peter Parker. He has always reminded me that it’s okay to stumble, make mistakes, and even experience heart-

break, as long as we never lose the goodness within us.” The Kantara actor added, “Spider-Man also teaches us that with great power comes great responsibility, and that lesson stays relevant no matter how old you are. Over the years, my love for Spider-Man has only grown stronger, and today, he’s just as special to my children. In fact, they’ve already made me book tickets for Spider-Man: Brand New Day so we can all experience it together on the big screen.” Spider-Man: Brand New Day is set to release on 30th July in India. The Tom Holland starrer will release in English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

