

KOCHI | VIJAYAWADA | CHENNAI | BENGALURU | HYDERABAD

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Chennai : Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, C. Joseph Vijay, has written to Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, urging the Union government not to grant any statutory or administrative approval to Karnataka's proposed Mekedatu Dam project, contending that it would violate the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) Award and the Supreme Court's 2018 judgment on the Cauvery water-sharing dispute.

PWD

**'IT'S A HELL OF A SITUATION': SPAIN GRAP- PLES WITH DEVASTATING WILDFIRES****RAASHII KHANNA PUSHES THE BOLDNESS QUOTIENT HIGHER**

CINEMA | PAGE



SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

26-07-2026

Total pilgrims : 90,012  
Tonsures : 28,345  
Hundi kankalya : 4.99 CR  
Laddu sale : 4.50 Lac  
Annaprashadams : 2.71 Lac  
Medical treatment : 3,254  
Waiting Compartments : 23

Approve, Decon Time for Sarvaadharanam (with out SSB Tonsure) 8 H

**YOUNGSTERS KNOW HOW TO MAKE GOVT YIELD, THANK NEW GENERATION FOR MORALE: AKHILESH**

New Delhi, July 28 : Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday asserted that the country's youth had demonstrated their ability to make the government respond to public demands, saying the recent student movement over examination irregularities compelled the Centre to concede several demands. Participating in the debate on the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, in the Lok Sabha, Akhilesh Yadav, referring to the recent protests against the alleged NEET paper leak, said the government's initial approach had reflected arrogance before it eventually gave in to public pressure. "We were watching the protest. The government was arrogant in the belief that it would not bow down. After the win, youngsters raised a slogan -- 'sarkaar jhukti hai, jhukane wala chahiye' (The government yields; it just takes someone to make it yield).



Delhi High Court orders winding up of Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL), months after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) revoked the bank's licence over persistent regulatory violations, marking the final step in the lender's closure process, the central bank said on Tuesday. In a statement, the RBI said the High Court, through orders dated July 8 and July 22, 2026, directed that PPBL be wound up under the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, read with the Companies Act, 2013. "By an Order dated July 08, 2026 read with the Order dated July 22, 2026, the High Court of Delhi has ordered that PPBL be wound-up under the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 read with the provisions of Companies Act, 2013," the central bank stated. The court has appointed Girikumar M. Nair, former Chief General Manager of State Bank of India, as the Official Liquidator of Paytm Payments Bank.

**DELHI HIGH COURT ORDERS****WINDING UP OF PAYTM PAYMENTS BANK: RBI**

Mumbai (TSIT) : The Delhi High Court has ordered the winding up of Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL), months after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) revoked the bank's licence over persistent regulatory violations, marking the final step in the lender's closure process, the central bank said on Tuesday. In a statement, the RBI said the High Court, through orders dated July 8 and July 22, 2026, directed that PPBL be wound up under the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, read with the Companies Act, 2013, the central bank stated. The court has appointed Girikumar M. Nair, former Chief General Manager of State Bank of India, as the Official Liquidator of Paytm Payments Bank.



India has emerged as the world's second-largest supplier of seafarers, contributing as many as 311,936 maritime professionals to the global shipping industry, according to the BIMCO-ICS Seafarer Workforce Report 2026. The report estimates that India now accounts for 12.16 per cent of the global seafaring workforce, ranking behind only the Philippines and ahead of China, the Russian Federation and Indonesia. In 2015, India contributed only 5.2 per cent of the world's seafarers and ranked fifth globally, behind China, the Philippines, Indonesia and

**India emerges as world's 2nd-largest supplier of seafarers**

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the Russian Federation. India's global share has more than doubled over the past decade. India's strength is particularly evident in the officer cadre. The country now supplies 140,718 officers, accounting for 13.41 per cent of the world's officer workforce, while 171,218 ratings represent 11.29 per cent of the global ratings serving aboard merchant vessels. Overall, Indian seafarers today constitute one of the largest and most skilled maritime workforces supporting global trade.

**CM Revanth Seeks 11.56 Lakh PMAY-G Houses for Telangana**

Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU:

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Tuesday urged the Union Government to sanction 11,56,915 houses to Telangana under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) and sought the inclusion of additional livelihood-oriented works under the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajivika Mission (VB-G-RAM-G) to meet local needs.

Chief Minister made the request during a meeting with Union Minister for Rural Development and Agriculture Shivraj Singh Chouhan at Krishi Bhavan in New Delhi. Revanth Reddy informed the Union Minister that the Telangana Government has accorded top priority to providing housing for the poor through the Indiramma Housing Scheme. He said the previous government had failed to effectively utilise the PMAY-G



scheme, leaving lakhs of eligible rural families without permanent homes over the past decade. Chief Minister said a survey conducted using the Union Rural Development Ministry's Awaas+ app had identified 11,56,915 eligible rural beneficiaries and requested the Centre to allocate houses to Telangana at the earliest.

Highlighting the impact of El Niño conditions and deficient rainfall, Revanth Reddy urged the Centre to expand the scope of the VB-G-RAM-G scheme by

including works suited to local requirements. He proposed activities such as construction of vegetable trellis structures, fodder plots, mulberry cultivation, silkworm rearing sheds, kitchen gardens, bamboo plantations, water-retention trenches, moisture conservation works for orchards and restoration of flood-damaged agricultural lands. The Chief Minister also pointed out that beneficiaries constructing Indiramma Houses are eligible for up to 90 days of employment under the

**CM Naidu Calls for faster execution of Amaravati capital works**

'Speed, Quality and Timely Delivery Must Be the Hallmarks of Every Project'



Visakhapatnam (TSIT):

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials and construction agencies to accelerate development works in Amaravati, stressing that all projects must be completed on schedule without compromising quality.

Reviewing the progress of capital city projects, the Chief Minister said the government is committed to ensuring speed, quality

and timely delivery. He urged contractors to treat the construction of Amaravati as a prestigious opportunity and assured them of adequate financial support for smooth execution. Naidu reviewed 95 projects worth Rs.50,999 crore and instructed officials to achieve at least 7.92 per cent of the planned work every month to keep projects on track. He also called for close coordination among departments on land acquisition, fund-

ing, statutory approvals and project design to avoid delays.

The Chief Minister said Amaravati should be developed as an integrated urban region along with Vijayawada and Guntur. He also emphasised increasing green cover and adopting sustainable development practices. Naidu said he would personally monitor the progress of the projects to ensure their timely completion.

**CM REVANTH'S DEFENCE OF HYDRAA SHAMEFUL: KTR**

Hyderabad, July 28 : Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday termed as "shameful" the defence of HYDRAA by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy even after the High Court's strong observations. He accused the Congress government of using the agency as an instrument of political intimidation, selective demolitions, and extortion rather than lawful governance. Calling upon the Chief Minister to respect the judiciary, KTR said it was shameful that



Revanth Reddy continued to defend the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA). "Respect the High Court. Respect democracy. A government that refuses to respect judicial institutions has no moral authority to speak about the rule of law," he said while speaking to reporters in New Delhi.

**Youngsters know how to make govt yield, thank new generation for morale: Akhilesh Yadav**

New Delhi, July 28 : Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday asserted that the country's youth had demonstrated their ability to make the government respond to public demands, saying the recent student movement over examination irregularities compelled the Centre to concede several demands. Participating in the debate on the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, in the Lok Sabha, Akhilesh Yadav, referring to the recent protests against the alleged NEET paper leak, said the government's initial approach had reflected arrogance before it eventually gave in to public pressure.

"We were watching the protest. The government was arrogant in the belief that it would not bow down. After the win, youngsters raised a slogan -- 'sarkaar jhukti hai, jhukane wala chahiye' (The government yields; it just takes someone to make it yield). The youngsters know how to make the government yield," he said. He claimed the Centre had eventually accepted several demands raised by the protesters, including the resignation of the then Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, but questioned why those commitments had not been formally placed before the Parliament. "The government had to bow down, and they agreed to make the Minister resign. The government has agreed to several points (presented by the protesters), but we don't know why it is not presenting it before the House," he said.

On the reception accorded to Pradhan in the Parliament after his resignation, the SP chief said his party had no objection to the welcome but



remarked that the resignation had shifted attention away from larger issues.

"However, how relieved he must be when he got to know what kind of a problem he diverted. They removed a Pradhan to save Pradhan Mantri," he quipped. Congratulating the younger generation, particularly Gen Z, Akhilesh Yadav said the students' unity and determination had succeeded where, according to him, the government's political campaigns had failed. "Who knows how many crores they (the government) spent on their negative politics. However, I would like to thank the new generation for their morale and unity; the way they campaigned, the government had to bow down," he said.

He further expressed hope that the government would implement all the demands raised by the protesting students. Referring to the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP), which spearheaded the protests, Akhilesh Yadav said the movement, despite beginning as a satirical campaign, evolved into a serious nationwide agitation that compelled the government to permit demonstrations. "The movement, which started as a 'joke', became so serious that the government became democratic and allowed them to sit on dharna."

Drawing parallels with earlier protests, the Kannauj MP recalled the farmers' agita-



New Delhi (TSIT):

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday said the entire nation and parents of injured students want answers on who approved the use of pellet guns and AK-47s on protesters during the agitation against exam irregularities. Participating in the debate on the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, in the Lok Sabha, Priyanka Gandhi called for accountability of those in government.

"The students are disillusioned. Money is overshadowing merit. They want the system that is endangering their future to be improved," she said.

The students only demanded accountability and removal of those who were responsible for irregularities, but they were

met with the use of force, she said, referring to the alleged NEET paper leak. "The examination system has itself failed. Over 750 crore students have been hit by 152 paper leaks in the last decade but not a single mafia was punished," said Priyanka Gandhi, alleging that the government has weakened the sectors that have potential to generate jobs.

To restore the faith of the youth in the decayed

system, drastic steps need to be taken, and efforts like PR and narrative change will fail, she said, expressing concern over the 'rousing welcome' given to the former Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Parliament premises with in days of his resignation.

She earlier narrated the anger and frustration of the mother of a girl who was injured in police action during the students' protests.

and clarify." The Samajwadi Party chief also referred to the alleged theft of donations at the Ram Temple and questioned the government's ability to prevent examination paper leaks.

"How can those who couldn't protect temple donations stop paper leaks?" he asked. He further pointed out that examination papers had allegedly been leaked even in Uttar Pradesh, the Prime Minister's home state in electoral terms. "A big state like UP, from where the Prime Minister gets elected, even there, the paper is leaking," he said. Akhilesh Yadav also questioned the government's decision to outsource functions of the National Testing Agency (NTA), expressing concern over accountability in the examination system.

"I hope you have not mistaken 'accountability' as the ability to fill accounts," he said. "The Opposition is afraid that the whole government will soon be outsourced. The organisation that must be most trustworthy are also being outsourced," he added. The SP President also criticised the BJP government over the closure of primary schools, claiming that more than one lakh schools had been shut across the country, including 26,300 in Uttar Pradesh. He also questioned why examination papers for Classes 10 and 12 continued to be leaked despite existing laws. In conclusion, Akhilesh Yadav compared the police action during the recent student protests in Delhi with the Emergency, alleging that the use of tear gas and force against demonstrators reflected a similar atmosphere of suppression. "I have not seen the Emergency, but Delhi witnessed similar injustice during the recent protests," he said.

### Skyroot Aerospace Founders Meet CM Revanth Discuss Space Innovation and Industry Collaboration



Hyderabad TSIT: The founders of Skyroot Aerospace, Mr.Pavan Kumar Chandana, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and Mr. Naga Bharath Daka, Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer (COO), called on Telangana Chief Minister A.Revanth Reddy at the Delhi Camp Office on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Skyroot Aerospace leadership briefed the Chief Minister on the company's historic achievement of successfully launching Vikram-1, India's first privately developed orbital-class launch vehicle, on July 18, 2026. The milestone places India among only three countries—alongside the United States and China—to achieve private-sector orbital launch capability.

The discussions focused on Telangana's rapidly expanding aerospace and space tech-

nology ecosystem, advanced manufacturing, research and development, innovation, and opportunities for deeper collaboration between the State Government and the private space industry.

Congratulating the founders on their landmark accomplishment, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy praised their contribution to strengthening India's position in the global space sector. He reaffirmed the Telangana Government's commitment to promoting innovation, supporting startups, and building a world-class ecosystem for aerospace and high-technology industries in the State.

The meeting underscored Telangana's continued emphasis on emerging technologies and its vision of becoming a leading destination for space, aerospace, and advanced manufacturing investments in India.

### Telangana to Strengthen Advanced Eye Care Services in Government Hospitals Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha

Hyderabad, July 28 (TSIT): Telangana Health, Medical and Family Welfare Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha on Tuesday said the State Government is committed to providing high-quality and advanced eye care services to every citizen through government hospitals.

Minister said all 35 Government Medical Colleges in the State have Ophthalmology Departments offering specialised eye care services. Routine eye examinations, optometry services and cataract surgeries are being conducted regularly across government hospitals to improve access to quality treatment. He noted that Sarojini Devi Eye Hospital in Hyderabad continues to serve as the State's premier centre for ophthalmic care, providing advanced treatments including retinal surgeries, laser procedures, squint correction surgeries, corneal transplantation, ocular cancer treatment, plastic and reconstructive eye surgeries, and glaucoma management.

To further strengthen the referral system for eye care across



Telangana, the Health Department has completed a gap assessment and prepared plans to establish dedicated ophthalmic operation theatres and provide essential medical equipment in district-level government teaching hospitals. The programme will be implemented in a phased manner.

Minister also reviewed the partnership between the Health Department and LV Prasad Eye Institute to strengthen ophthalmic services in government hospitals. Discussions were held on expanding the pilot programme for newborn eye screening, currently

being implemented in Bhadradri Kothagudem district with the support of LV Prasad Eye Institute, to other districts in phases. He appreciated the institute for its valuable contribution to public eye care.

Damodar Rajanarasimha further said the government is examining the establishment of regional cornea collection centres (eye banks) in collaboration with LV Prasad Eye Institute to promote corneal donations. He also emphasised training RBSK (Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram) personnel to enhance eye screening and optometry services for

### Assembly Committees Hold Inaugural Meetings Speaker Stresses Accountability and Ethics



Hyderabad, TSIT: Inaugural Meeting of Telangana Legislative Assembly's Government Assurances Committee, Rules Committee and Ethics Committee were held at the Speaker's Chamber in the Assembly building on Tuesday.

The meeting were attended by Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar and Minister for Legislative Affairs D.Sridhar Babu. The Government Assurances Committee meeting was attended by Chairman Patlolla Sanjeeva Reddy and members J. Anirudh Reddy and Jare Adinarayana. The Rules Committee, chaired by the Speaker, was attended by members Danam Nagender, Thudi Megha Reddy and Bhukya Murali Naik. The Ethics Committee, chaired by Revuri Prakash Reddy, was attended by member G. Madhusudan Reddy. Also present were Legislative Council Secretary Dr. V. Narasimha Charyulu and Assembly Secretary Rendla Tirupathi.

Addressing the meetings, Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar said parliamentary committees are the backbone of a vibrant democracy and play a crucial role in ensuring accountability and effective governance. He said the Government Assurances Committee must closely monitor the implementation of

assurances given by the Government on the floor of the House, while the Rules Committee should ensure the smooth, efficient and democratic functioning of the Legislature.

Speaker emphasised that credibility of a Legislature depends not only on the laws it enacts but also on the conduct, integrity and commitment of its members. He urged the Ethics Committee to function impartially and uphold the highest standards of parliamentary ethics, thereby strengthening public confidence in democratic institutions.

Legislative Affairs Minister D. Sridhar Babu congratulated the newly appointed committee chairpersons and highlighted the importance of the Assembly Rules Book in conducting legislative business. He suggested that the Rules Committee prepare a revised and modernised rulebook to enhance the efficiency of the Assembly. Minister also proposed that committee members undertake study visits to other State Legislatures to examine best practices and adopt suitable reforms in Telangana. He said the Ethics Committee should play a key role in safeguarding the dignity and decorum of the House and make recommendations that would help establish the Telangana Legislative Assembly as a model legislature.

### Mahabubabad Speeds Up Government Land Resurvey Across 70 Villages

11 Villages Completed; Boundaries of Public Lands Being Demarcated

Mahabubabad District Correspondent July 28 : The Mahabubabad district administration has accelerated the government land resurvey programme, with 11 of the 70 identified villages already completed, Additional Collector (Revenue) K. Anil Kumar said on Tuesday. Inspecting the ongoing resurvey at Kalvapalli village in Danthalapalli mandal, Anil Kumar said the exercise focuses on the identification and demarcation of government lands, habitation areas, canals, roads, tanks and other public properties to ensure



accurate land records and prevent encroachments. He said the resurvey is being carried out under the directions of District Collector Sneha Shabarish, IAS, in accordance with State

Government guidelines. Government surveyors and licensed surveyors have been deployed to conduct the exercise systematically and complete it within the stipulated timeframe.

### Thummala urges farmers to shift from paddy cultivation



Sircilla (TSIT): State Agriculture and Marketing Minister Thummala Nageswara Rao has advised farmers to cultivate dryland and horticultural crops instead of paddy considering the prevailing weather conditions and declining water availability. Participating in the 100th episode of "Rythu Nestham" through video conference from Hyderabad, the Minister interacted with farmers and agriculture officials. He said technol-

gy is being used to make farming easier and more profitable, and advised farmers to select crops based on soil conditions, water availability and market demand. District Collector Garima Agrawal, who attended the programme from Marupaka Rythu Vedika, said the district received 36 per cent less rainfall compared to last year. She suggested farmers cultivate crops like ragi, pearl millet, foxtail millet, sorghum, sesame and maize instead of paddy.

### Comprehensive plan for the development of village panchayats

Bhadradri Kothagudem (TSIT): Collector Ankit attended the meeting held at the Julurupadu Mandal Parishad office as the chief guest. A comprehensive review was conducted on the development programs undertaken by various departments in the 23 village panchayats under Julurupadu mandal, the implementation of government welfare schemes, the formulation of comprehensive development plans of village panchayats, and future activities. The steps to be taken for the development of villages and the goals to be achieved were discussed extensively with the mandal level officials and sarpanches. Collector Ankit said that compared to last year, there has been

a rainfall deficit of about 40 millimeters in the district. He said that although there has been more than normal rainfall in the last four years, the conditions are different this year. He said that after almost 25 years, conditions such as high temperatures and increased heat content in the air are being seen due to the El Nino effect.

Keeping these conditions in mind, he said that the departments of agriculture, irrigation, animal husbandry, education and other departments are preparing action plans in coordination. He revealed that after extensive discussions in the two-day mandal level meetings, an action plan will be prepared to effectively deal with the impact of El Nino in the

coming year. He said that in the last season, along with paddy, maize cultivation was also done in large quantities, and about 42 thousand metric tons of paddy and 70 thousand metric tons of maize were purchased. He suggested that farmers should focus on cultivating oil palm, maize, pulses and other wet crops as an alternative to paddy. He said that farmers have the opportunity to get a stable income for about 25 years through oil palm cultivation. He also directed that the cultivation of crops that have high demand in the market such as cotton and vegetables should be encouraged, and that the agriculture department officials should organize awareness programs for farmers at the field level.

### Union Bank conducts customer outreach in Saifabad



Hyderabad (TSIT): Union Bank of India, Regional Office, Saifabad, conducted a "Shop to Shop" customer outreach programme on Tuesday under the leadership of Regional Head D. Aparna Reddy to strengthen customer engagement and create awareness about the bank's products and services.

Employees from all cadres, including branch managers, officers, clerical staff and sub-staff, participated in the initiative by visiting shops, business establish-

ments, commercial centres and government offices. They interacted with customers and provided personalised financial guidance based on their banking needs. The outreach programme highlighted the bank's latest high-yield deposit schemes, competitive MSME and retail loan products, insurance policies and enhanced secure mobile banking applications. The initiative aimed to improve customer awareness and expand access to Union Bank's financial services.

### TRP to hold first Palamuru flag hoisting event

Jogulamba gadwal TSIT.: The Telangana Rajyadhikara Party (TRP) is set to organise its first-ever party flag hoisting celebration in the erstwhile Palamuru district at Enugonda in Mahabubnagar town on July 29. The event will be led by TRP founder and State President Teenmaar Mallanna, who is expected to receive a grand welcome from party cadres and supporters.

As part of the celebrations, the party has planned a massive roadshow from Kal Pista House to the Palamuru University campus, covering a distance of nearly five kilometres. The procession will feature around 100 cars, accompanied by traditional band troupes,



drum performances, and cultural processions. Teenmaar Mallanna will travel in the party's campaign vehicle, greeting the public along the route.

According to party leaders, the programme marks a significant milestone in the expansion of the Telangana Rajyadhikara Party in the erstwhile Palamuru region and is expected to witness the participation of a large

number of party workers, supporters, youth, and BC community members from across the district.

Preparations for the event are being carried out under the leadership of Palamuru District TRP President Munnuru Jaipal Reddy. A review meeting on the arrangements was held under the supervision of TRP State General Secretary and In-charge of the erstwhile Palamuru

district, Vemulawada Madan Mohan, who inspected the preparations and reviewed the rally route, public participation, logistics, and organisational arrangements.

Among those present during the preparatory programme were district leaders Anjaneyulu, Dandu Vijayudu, State Secretary Medinti Shivaveer, and several party functionaries from the erstwhile Palamuru district.

Party leaders appealed to the public, particularly youth, farmers, women, and BC community members, to participate in large numbers and make the flag hoisting ceremony and the reception to Teenmaar Mallanna a grand success.

### Suryapet Additional Collector Reviews SIR Digitisation, Urges Climate-Resilient Farming

Suryapet (TSIT): Additional Collector B. Hari Singh on Tuesday inspected the Penpahad Tahsildar's Office and reviewed the progress of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) electoral roll digitisation. He directed officials to complete the process accurately and within the deadline as per Election Commission guidelines. The Additional Collector examined digitised SIR forms and instructed staff to ensure error-free data entry. He later reviewed the progress with Tahsildar, Booth Level Officers and supervisors. Participating in an El Niño awareness programme, Hari Singh advised farmers to adopt climate-resilient farming



practices due to the expected rainfall deficit. He urged farmers to reduce water-intensive crops like paddy and cultivate millets, sorghum, pulses and vegetables.

He also suggested adopting drip and sprinkler irrigation methods for efficient water use and following Agriculture Department advisories. Tahsildar Rajashekhar, MPDO A. Janayya, officials, sarpanches and farmers participated in the programme.



EDITORIAL

Your CTC Is Dead.  
Your Company Is  
Calculating You In  
Tokens Now

Gen Z Can Topple A Minister. Why  
Can't They Enter Parliament?

AI has found a way to do something capitalism could never quite manage before: separate skill from the skilled, break it into tokens and sell it by the meter. There is a line doing the rounds on Reddit: “The underlying purpose of AI is to allow wealth to access skill while removing from the skilled the ability to access wealth.” AI has found a way to do something capitalism could never quite manage before: separate skill from the skilled, break it into tokens and sell it by the meter. There is a line doing the rounds on Reddit: “The underlying purpose of AI is to allow wealth to access skill while removing from the skilled the ability to access wealth.” Advertisement - Scroll to continue It sounds like dystopian exaggeration. Then you realise that every sentence an AI writes, every line of code it generates and every document it analyses is already counted and billed in tokens. A writer's instinct, a coder's logic, a lawyer's drafting and an artist's imagination are being converted into cheap, reproducible units of machine work. The human spent years acquiring the skill. The model absorbed its patterns, while the platform acquired the ability to reproduce parts of the work whenever a customer was willing to pay. Capital no longer always needs to hire the person. Increasingly, it can simply pay for the tokens. That is the real AI revolution hiding behind the friendly chatbot. Human expertise is not merely being automated. It is being tokenised, priced and rented back to the economy by companies that control the infrastructure on which this new form of work runs. So perhaps “Will AI replace humans?” was never the right question. The more disturbing one is: Who owns the meter on human skill? Skills, Now Priced Per Token Behind the reassuring language of copilots and assistants, AI has a brutally simple economic grammar. Every action a model performs, including reading, writing, coding, analysing, reasoning or generating an image, consumes tokens. These are small pieces of data processed by the system, and each of them can be counted and priced. Deloitte calls the token “the fundamental unit of AI work”. Its 2026 analysis argues that the economics of AI increasingly revolve around tokens rather than software licences, processors or server capacity. For companies, the critical calculation is fast becoming how efficiently tokens can be converted into revenue, productivity or lower costs. That may sound like a technical change, but it is also a redefinition of labour. A company once hired a content team, a software unit or a group of junior analysts. It paid salaries in exchange for time and expertise. Now, parts of the same work can be summoned through an application programming interface and charged according to consumption. The company no longer needs to employ every person whose skill contributed to the output. It can rent a machine-generated approximation whenever required. A copywriter's instincts become text generation, a programmer's experience becomes code completion, a lawyer's drafting becomes document automation and an illustrator's eye becomes image generation. The work does not vanish, but the relationship between the work and the worker begins to fray. AI Does Not Need To Replace You The debate around AI and employment is usually framed in absolute terms.

Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation carries an irony that Delhi's political durbars should not miss. A politician whose ascent began in student politics has been forced out of the Education Ministry by students who had no party office, no famous surname, or invitation to the national high table. The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) converted an insult into an identity and an examination scandal into a larger argument about fairness. The ruling NDA government first treated the agitation as a policing problem. It then negotiated, conceded the protesters' principal demands, and accepted Pradhan's resignation. Pralhad Joshi, another senior Cabinet hand, has been given additional charge of Education. The resignation matters. But India must understand the larger message: young people should not have to besiege Parliament to be heard inside it. Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy put the argument in memorable political shorthand: India's youth should not merely march from Jantar Mantar towards Parliament; they should be enabled to move from sadak se Sansad, that is, from the street into the legislature itself. Not Yet A Generational Transfer The immediate official response has been administrative continuity: one veteran replaces another, at least temporarily. Yet the crisis was not merely about who occupied Shastri Bhawan. It was about the distance between those designing India's education system and those living through its examinations, coaching factories, paper leaks, delayed recruitment, and precarious passage from degree to employment. The next full-time Education Minister should, therefore, be chosen with more imagination. So should the next minister responsible for information technology. These min-



istries govern the terrain on which Gen Z lives: education, artificial intelligence, data, online speech, platform work, skills, and employment. In fact, many in the Congress and the INDIA alliance are now suggesting that a future Opposition-led government should entrust the education portfolio to a Gen Z leader. Young Country, Old House India possesses the world's largest Gen Z cohort. More than 500 million Indians, roughly 35% of the population, are between 10 and 29. Yet, only four members elected to the present Lok Sabha were identified as Gen Z. That is less than one per cent of a House whose average age is 56 and which is among the oldest Lok Sabhas India has elected. The mismatch is not cosmetic. Representation influences what receives urgency. India permits a citizen to vote at 18 but requires that person to wait until 25 to contest for the Lok Sabha or an Assembly, and until 30 for the Rajya Sabha or a Legislative Council. The

argument is older than the Republic. In the Constituent Assembly, Shibban Lal Saxena had warned against excluding exceptional young Indians, while BR Ambedkar defended higher age requirements, particularly for the Upper House. The founders made their judgment in the conditions of 1949. But does respect for their wisdom does not require every threshold to remain frozen for eternity? The world, after all, has evolved. Singapore permits citizens aged 21 to contest parliamentary elections. Since its Prime Minister must command a parliamentary majority, a 21-year-old is theoretically eligible for the office. Singapore has not had a 21-year-old prime minister, but the relevant point is simple: its law does not declare political adulthood to end at the voting booth. The Indian contradiction is difficult to defend indefinitely. A citizen can vote at 18, graduate soon afterwards, sit for the civil services at 21 and, in exceptional cases, acquire substan-

tial administrative responsibility before becoming legally eligible to contest an Assembly or Lok Sabha election. The Republic is willing to trust a 21-year-old with the machinery of the state, but not yet with the possibility of securing a popular mandate. Can Parliament Act? Reddy has repeatedly proposed lowering the minimum age for contesting assembly elections from 25 to 21 and has spoken of an Assembly resolution urging a constitutional amendment. Telangana cannot make this change alone: Articles 84 and 173 prescribe the qualifications, so Parliament must act. But a state government can create the political pressure that makes Parliament act. Reddy has announced that a special session of the Telangana Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council will be convened in the first week of August to adopt a resolution seeking 21 as the minimum age for contesting the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies,

and 25 for the Rajya Sabha and Legislative Councils. The resolution is to be forwarded to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union government. The proposal retains a distinction between the directly elected Houses and the Upper Houses, while lowering both thresholds. It is more considered than a blanket demand to abolish every age qualification. The argument draws deliberately on Rajiv Gandhi's decision to lower the voting age from 21 to 18 through the 61st Constitutional Amendment. The amendment's statement of objects argued that politically conscious young people should be allowed to become part of the political process. Another Congress-era precedent comes to mind. Under PV Narasimha Rao, the eligibility age for offices in urban and rural local bodies, including mayoral and Zilla Parishad leadership positions, was lowered from 25 to 21. This helped create space for very young representatives in local government,

including the election of a 21-year-old mayor in Thiruvananthapuram. younger candidates later. The unfinished step lies in Parliament and the assemblies. But parties need not wait for a constitutional amendment. They can commit a meaningful share of tickets in every state to candidates below 35. They can open district and state organisations to credible internal elections, and place young legislators in portfolios with real authority rather than confining them to youth affairs, sports, and ceremonial responsibilities. Open The Gates, Not Merely The Gallery Lowering the candidacy age to 21 would be a start, not a cure. Indian politics is expensive, dynastic, and organisationally closed. Without changes in campaign finance, internal party democracy, and candidate selection, lowering the threshold may simply allow younger members of established political families to enter four years earlier. A youthful surname is not a youth revolution. Nor should the CJP be romanticised. A successful protest is not automatically a programme for governance. Virality is not organisation, and irreverence is not ideology. Young politics can be intolerant, impulsive, and vulnerable to manipulation, just as old politics can be cynical and complacent. The answer is not to hand the Republic to one generation. It is to stop excluding that generation from meaningful power. Political parties should publish the age profile of their candidates, set measurable youth targets for tickets, and finance first-generation entrants who do not possess family wealth or an inherited constituency. Legislative fellowships should lead somewhere more consequential than research assistance.

When will non-BJP governments be held accountable for paper leaks?



Competitive exams in India are not just a means of employment, but also the dreams of millions of youth, the hopes of families, and the foundation of social justice. Any exam is considered meaningful only when it respects talent, hard work, and fairness. But when a question paper is leaked, not just one exam is affected, but the credibility of the entire system is questioned. Unfortunately, the first response to such incidents in the country is not a solution, but rather a political one. A cycle of blame and counter-allegations ensues, and the future of students becomes a subject of political debate. In the past few years, incidents of paper leaks have surfaced in many states across the country. Some affected teacher recruitment exams, others police recruitment exams, some Public Service Commission exams, and other competitive exams. These incidents have made it clear that paper leaks are not a problem limited to a single state, a single party, or a single examination body. It challenges the entire examination system. Yet, political parties present this issue according to their own interests. When irregularities occur in a national-level examination, the opposition holds the central government and the concerned minister accountable, demanding their resignation. This is a natural part of democracy. It is the opposition's duty to demand answers from the government. But this question becomes even more important when repeated incidents of paper leaks occur in non-BJP-ruled states. The same political parties that advocate for morality and accountability at the center often dismiss these as

mere administrative lapses. This is where the debate about double standards begins. Morality in a democracy doesn't mean it applies only to the opposition. If demanding the resignation of a government is justified, then the same criteria should apply equally to every government. Accountability cannot be determined by party. If a paper leak in a BJP-ruled state is a government failure, how does the same incident become solely the fault of officials in non-BJP governments? If a minister's resignation is demanded in one place, why is the same demand considered inappropriate in another? In fact, the bar for morality in Indian politics often shifts between power and opposition. While in opposition, every party espouses the highest standards of accountability, but upon coming to power, the same party begins citing investigations, procedures, and administrative reasons. This trend is not limited to any one political party. Almost all parties have fallen victim to this political expediency from time to time. Therefore, the problem lies not with any particular party, but with political culture. However, it is equally true that the opposition's responsibility is not only to raise questions but also to set a better example during its rule. If a party demands the resignation of BJP governments, it should adopt the same ethical standards in its own states. Democracy builds credibility only when principles do not change with the change of power. The biggest loss from a paper leak is to the student who has worked hard for years. Thousands and even lakhs of rupees are spent on coaching, books, application fees, and accommodation. Families cut back on their own needs to invest in their children's education. Cancellation of an exam not only means a new date, but also mental stress, financial loss, and deep uncertainty about the future. Sometimes, students face the risk of overstaying their age limit. In such a situation, statements from political parties cannot heal the wounds of students. Paper leak incidents also demonstrate that simply enacting laws is not enough. If deficiencies persist in question paper storage, printing, transportation, digital security, and monitoring of

examination centers, criminals will find new ways to commit them. Therefore, robust technical systems, transparent processes, and timely investigations are essential. The perpetrators must face swift and severe punishment so that no one dares to commit such crimes in the future. Along with this, accountability must be established at the highest level. This does not mean that immediate resignation is the only solution for every incident. However, if papers are continuously leaked in a department, if security systems repeatedly fail, and if serious oversight negligence is revealed, the moral responsibility of the minister and top officials cannot be denied. High office confers not only authority but also greater responsibility. This question arises in the context of non-BJP governments because political discourse often highlights incidents in BJP-ruled states, while similar incidents in other states receive relatively little discussion. If the principle of equality is accepted in democracy, then there should be equal discussion and accountability. The public does not care about the party in power; it cares about whether the future of its children is secure. The role of the media is also crucial in this context. If the media presents events solely from a political perspective, the real problem will be overlooked. Journalism's responsibility is to uncover the facts, monitor the direction of investigations, and give prominence to student voices. The media must question both the ruling party and the opposition with equal rigor. This is the very essence of democracy. Social media has also added a new dimension to this debate. Political propaganda often overshadows facts. Supporters defend their respective parties and blame their opponents. As a result, even discussions on serious issues like paper leaks devolve into political polarization rather than solutions. This further undermines student confidence. The need of the hour is to completely modernize the examination system. Systems such as digital encryption of question papers, secure distribution, artificial intelligence-based monitoring, scientific selection of examination centers, and independent audits should be strengthened.

One Crisis, 4 Wins: How China Might Just Have Hit A Geopolitical Jackpot

There is now a near-unanimous consensus that the Iran war has benefited China immensely. Against the sniggering commentaries of the initial days of the war, when it was believed that China would be hit hard, the more recent reports on how it has impacted China are far more sobering, if not outright envious. But China can hardly be blamed for accruing benefits from the shortsighted, ill-thought-out war. There are four broad areas in which China is reportedly benefiting. A Distracted America The first is military. The ongoing Iran war is being perceived as a gamechanger in the Indo-Pacific security architecture as the US continues to pivot to the Middle East, pulling out missile systems, long-range missiles, and interceptors from places like South Korea and Pacific Islands and transferring them to the Middle East to replenish depleting stockpiles there. This leaves China with greater military clout in the region and also helps it mount a narrative - especially around Taiwan - about the unreliability of the US as an ally. The war also helps China study American war manoeuvres, strike patterns, weapons systems, operational capabilities, etc., which are useful for any potential future conflict over Taiwan or in the Indo-Pacific. It's The Oil, Silly Secondly, the closure of the Strait of Hormuz early into the war and the destruction of energy facilities have caused disruptions in energy supply chains on a scale hitherto un witnessed. About 25% of crude oil and a fifth of



LNG have disappeared from global energy markets. This has benefited China in two ways. One, the energy shortfall has accelerated the push for renewables. Countries such as Pakistan and Vietnam have increased the deployment of renewable energy and the use of electric vehicles. China is the largest manufacturer of electric vehicles, solar panels, and wind turbines, and is leading global clean energy chains, with exports soaring to \$21.9 billion just by March 2026. On the other hand, China has judiciously engaged in building massive strategic energy reserves. Over the years, it has sourced sanctioned Iranian oil at massively discounted prices, especially after the 2021 agreement with Iran for an estimated \$400 billion, which has been a lifeline for Iran, more so after the war began and a blockade was imposed on the country's ports. According to data from the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), China holds an estimated 1.2 to 1.4 billion barrels of total crude oil in combined commercial and strategic stockpiles. With decreasing demand

and sustained pipeline LNG supplies, Chinese firms have been reselling LNG to countries facing severe shortfalls because of the war, like Vietnam, South Korea and the Philippines. Both these things increase China's strategic leverage regionally and globally. The Age Of The Yuan A third reason, and one tied to the above, is the process of de-dollarisation and the promotion of the Chinese yuan. This process has been underway for a while now and is projected to only accelerate. Just like the sanctions on Russia accelerated the use of the yuan in Sino-Russian trade, so did the sanctions on Iran facilitate the use of the Chinese currency in settling cross-border trade. Sanctions aside, other countries, too, have tried to hedge their exposure. For instance, in 2023, China and Saudi Arabia signed a local currency swap agreement worth \$7 billion as part of efforts to boost trade using their currencies and reduce reliance on the dollar. In 2024, Saudi Arabia signed on to the mBridge project, launched in 2021 between the central banks of China, Hong Kong,

Thailand, and the UAE, to develop a new system for cross-border payments using central bank digital currencies. India, too, paid in yuan for Russian oil shipments earlier and for Iranian crude this year under a US sanctions waiver. Given how tied the Iranian economy is to China's, and in order to deliberately undermine the US dollar, Iran also announced that it would collect shipping "tolls" for passage through the Strait of Hormuz in yuan. China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS) has reportedly seen daily transactions increase by over 50%, from \$85 billion to \$130 billion during the war. Pulling Its Diplomatic Weight Fourthly, the Iran war has seen China's diplomatic clout increase. In any case, much of the Global South, at least Africa and the Middle East, sees China as a natural leader and the only alternative to the US. The Iran war has helped project and promote that image. The war began on February 28, 2026. Soon after, China's Special Envoy to the Middle East, Zhai Jun, began engaging in shuttle diplomacy in the region to facilitate mediation and advance de-escalation efforts. This was just what Li Hui, the Chinese government's special representative for Eurasian affairs, had done during the Russia-Ukraine war. While nothing changed on the ground in the latter case, it did project and promote China's image as a peace-loving and peace-seeking country. China has also opposed a UNSC resolution to open the Strait of Hormuz.

## Chipmakers In Freefall: SanDisk, AMD, ASML, Micron Slip Up To 12% On China DUV Challenge

The semiconductor and chipmaker rout has deepened on Tuesday, with major American players like Micron Technology Inc., Nvidia Corp., Advanced Micro Devices Inc., Sandisk Corp., and ASML Holding N.V. falling up to 10% at open. Traders have been dumping chip stocks ever since China announced that it has begun manufacturing its own immersion deep ultra-violet (DUV) lithography machines. The breakthrough directly impacts Dutch firm ASML's near-monopoly over critical chipmaking technology. ASML's stock traded 5% lower at \$1,566.35. Memory giant Sandisk was hit the hardest, and dived 11.5% to a low of \$1,128.36 within minutes of the Wall Street opening bell. Micron plunged over 8.6% to a low of \$817.02, AMD traded 8.2% lower at \$452.54. Intel Corp slid over 6% to a low



of \$85.75, Qualcomm Inc. was down 4% to \$164.10. Nvidia Corp. was somewhat insulated compared to other semi peers, but still fell 2% to \$193.57. American Depository Receipts (ADRs) of newly-listed Korean giant SK Hynix fell 9% to \$130.54. The ADRs have fallen nearly 24% in just the last 5 days. China's jolt came at an already volatile time for AI-linked semiconductor companies and chipmakers, with investors engag-

ing in frequent selloffs over concerns regarding sky-high valuations, AI revenue. China Threat: Explained Chipmaking relies on lithography machines that use precisely focused light to etch microscopic circuits onto silicon wafers. Therefore, China's announcement triggered a sharp selloff of semis across global chip equipment stocks with ASML shares sinking more than 7% on Monday — its worst day since June 8.

## RUPEE RISES 35 PAISE TO 95.64 AGAINST US DOLLAR IN EARLY TRADE

Mumbai: The rupee extended its upward momentum, rising 35 paise to 95.64 against the US dollar in early trade on Tuesday, July 28, driven by lower crude oil prices amid easing geopolitical tensions. Forex traders said a weak US dollar index and positive equity market sentiment further boosted the Indian currency. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 95.75 and gained further to trade at 95.64 against the greenback, up 35 paise from its previous closing level. The rupee appreciated sharply by 54 paise to close at 95.99 against the US dollar on Monday, after rising 20 paise in the preceding session on Friday. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading down 0.06 per cent at 101.31.



Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 1.43 per cent lower at USD 87.10 per barrel in futures trade. Analysts said oil prices eased as the US and Iran refrained from attacking each other's targets for the third consecutive day and mediators achieved progress in getting both sides back to negotiations. US President Donald Trump said Iran had asked for more discussions, reaching out directly "because we've been hit-

ting them very hard." Iran has said there are no direct talks underway. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex rose 14.66 points, or 0.02 per cent, to 76,850.44, while the Nifty was up 27.10 points, or 0.11 per cent, to 24,023.45. Foreign Institutional Investors offloaded equities worth Rs 1,688.23 crore on a net basis on Monday, according to exchange data. Analysts said oil prices eased as tensions in West Asia appeared to

moderate, with the United States and Iran refraining from attacking each other's targets for a third consecutive day. Market sentiment was also supported by reports that diplomatic efforts had made progress towards bringing both sides back to negotiations. US President Donald Trump said Iran had sought further discussions, claiming it had reached out directly after sustained US strikes. Tehran, however, denied that any direct talks were currently taking place. Domestic equity markets also traded in positive territory during early deals. The BSE Sensex gained 14.66 points, or 0.02 per cent, to 76,850.44, while the NSE Nifty rose 27.10 points, or 0.11 per cent, to 24,023.45. Despite the rupee's strength, foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers, offloading equities

worth Rs 1,688.23 crore on Monday, according to exchange data. The Indian currency opened at 95.75 in the interbank foreign exchange market before strengthening further to 95.64 against the greenback. The rally follows Monday's sharp 54-paise gain, after the rupee had also advanced 20 paise in the previous trading session. Foreign exchange traders attributed the rupee's continued recovery to declining global oil prices, a weaker dollar index and improved investor sentiment in Indian equities.

The US dollar index, which measures the greenback against a basket of six major currencies, was trading 0.06 per cent lower at 101.31. Global crude prices also remained under pressure, with Brent crude futures falling 1.43 per cent to USD 87.10 a barrel.

## Dreame Technology Redefines Hands-free Cleaning with the Launch of the Dreame D30 Ultra Robot Vacuum

**New Delhi, India, 28 July 2026:** Dreame Technology, a global leader in smart home innovation, today announced the launch of the Dreame D30 Ultra Robot Vacuum in India. Combining advanced 25,000Pa suction, intelligent MopExtend™ technology, and a fully automated maintenance station with AceClean DryBoard™ washboard auto-cleaning, the Dreame D30 Ultra sets a new benchmark for truly hands-free home cleaning. The newly launched product will be available on Amazon at INR 52,999. It will also be available on Dreame India's official website, Cromia, and select retail stores starting 1 August. Manu Sharma, Managing Director, Dreame India, said, "As Indian households increasingly embrace smart living, there is a growing expectation for home appliances that can proactively adapt to users' needs and make cleaning hands-free. The Dreame D30 Ultra has been designed to address this shift by combining powerful cleaning performance with intelligent automation, enabling users to spend less time on routine chores and more time on what matters most. With features tailored for modern homes, the Dreame D30 Ultra reflects Dreame's commitment to



making advanced home care technology more accessible and practical for consumers across India."

### Dreame D30 Ultra Product Highlights

Designed to tackle the realities of everyday home cleaning, the Dreame D30 Ultra intelligently transitions across different floor types, reaches difficult edges and corners, keeps carpets dry during mopping, and automates routine maintenance, from dust collection and mop washing to drying and washboard self-cleaning, delivering a next-generation home cleaning experience with minimal manual effort. It also combines intelligent automation with powerful cleaning performance, making it an ideal solution for consumers seeking a truly hands-free home cleaning

experience.

### Key features include:

**75 Days of Hands-Free Dust Collection:** The Dreame D30 Ultra features a fully automatic base station with a 3.2L dust bag, enabling up to 75 days of hands-free dust collection while automating mop washing and drying, water refilling, accessory usage monitoring, and consumable reminders, significantly reducing everyday maintenance. **Powerful 25,000Pa Vortexmax™ Suction:** Powered by Dreame's advanced Vortexmax™ suction technology, the Dreame D30 Ultra delivers 25,000Pa suction power for effective removal of dust, debris, pet hair, and fine particles across hard floors and carpets. Users can further customise cleaning performance through

five adjustable suction levels. **Mopping Reimagined with MopExtend™ Technology:** Featuring intelligent edge recognition, MopExtend™ automatically extends and retracts the mop to reach edges, corners, up to 4cm (1.57 inches), and skirting boards with greater precision, ensuring more comprehensive floor coverage while minimising manual touch-ups. **10.5mm Intelligent Mop Lift with Smart Carpet Cleaning:** The Dreame D30 Ultra automatically raises its mop pads by up to 10.5mm to keep carpets dry while seamlessly transitioning between hard floors and carpeted surfaces. Users can further personalise carpet care through multiple intelligent carpet cleaning modes.

**Smart Pathfinder™ Navigation with Precise Obstacle Avoidance:** Equipped with Smart Pathfinder™ Navigation and Single-Line Laser obstacle avoidance, the Dreame D30 Ultra accurately maps homes, creates efficient cleaning routes, supports multi-floor mapping, and intelligently navigates around furniture and everyday household obstacles. **AceClean DryBoard™ Washboard Auto-Cleaning:** Featuring Dreame's AceClean DryBoard™ technology, the Dreame D30 Ultra ensures efficient mop washing by evenly distributing water across the washboard, improving cleaning performance while reducing residue build-up and simplifying maintenance.

## Ujjivan Small Finance Bank and Tata AIG join hands to expand insurance access across India

**Vishakhapatnam, July 2026:** Ujjivan Small Finance Bank announced a partnership with Tata AIG General Insurance Company Limited to offer a wide range of general insurance solutions to its customers across India. Tata AIG's comprehensive portfolio of insurance solutions will be made available through Ujjivan Small Finance Bank's network of over 700 branches and banking touchpoints across 26 States and Union Territories, covering 300+ districts and serving a wider customer base across the country. The partnership will enable customers across retail, MSMEs, vehicle finance and housing segments to access insurance solutions tailored to their evolving financial and protection needs. Tata AIG will deploy teams at key branch locations to support customer engagement, policy servicing and hands-on assistance. Commenting on the partnership, Hitendra Jha, Head of Retail Liabilities,



TASC & TPP, Ujjivan Small Finance Bank, said, "Our strength lies in the deep trust we have built with the diverse customer segments we serve. This collaboration brings together Ujjivan's strong customer relationships and extensive distribution network with Tata AIG's expertise in insurance, enabling us to make quality protection more accessible and convenient. We are committed to delivering seamless, customer-centric solutions that are integrated into everyday banking, while expanding the reach of

insurance to the aspirational communities. Together, we look forward to building a long and successful partnership that creates lasting value for our customers." Commenting on the partnership, Ezhilarsan Ramalingam, Head – Bancassurance at Tata AIG, said, "At TATA AIG, we are committed to making insurance simpler and more accessible to customers as part of their daily financial journeys. Our partnership with Ujjivan Small Finance bank is another step in this direction. By combin-

ing Ujjivan Small Finance Bank's strong customer franchise with TATA AIG's insurance expertise, we are well placed to offer relevant and innovative insurance solutions that address customers' protection needs across health, motor, housing, and MSME. Together, we will leverage the bank's extensive distribution network along with our strong protection capabilities to make insurance more accessible and strengthen financial resilience across diverse customer segments in India."

## UBER BIKE LAUNCHED IN WARANGAL; FIRST RIDE FREE FOR NEW USERS

**Hyderabad:** Uber has launched its Uber Bike service in Warangal, Telangana. The service is aimed at helping people with daily commuting, short-distance travel, and first- and last-mile connectivity. For a limited period, Uber is offering the first Uber Bike ride free for all new users in the district. Affordable travel, flexible earning With the launch of Uber Bike, riders can book bike taxis through the Uber app for trips such as commuting to work or college, running errands, or visiting friends and family. The company said the new service will also create flexible earning opportunities for local drivers. MLA welcomes Uber Bike service Wardhannapet Assembly Constituency MLA K. R. Nagaraju welcomed the launch. He said the service would make travel easier for residents while also generating income opportunities for local drivers. The MLA also highlighted the importance of road safety and appreciated Uber for distributing free helmets as part of the launch. Uber said



it aims to become a trusted travel option for the residents of Warangal. Uber has launched its motorcycle ride-hailing service, Uber Bike, in Warangal, bringing a fast, affordable, and convenient travel option to residents across the city. The launch marks the company's debut in Warangal, aimed at serving commuters traveling to work, college, daily errands, or social visits while offering flexible earning opportunities for local drivers. To celebrate the rollout, Uber announced that all new riders in Warangal will get their first Uber Bike ride for

free for a limited period. The promotional offer is intended to allow local residents to experience the bike taxi service firsthand when booking trips through the Uber mobile app. K. R. Nagaraju, Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Wardhannapet Assembly Constituency in Telangana, attended the launch and welcomed the platform to the city. Nagaraju noted that Warangal is expanding rapidly, creating a growing demand for accessible, affordable, and reliable mobility options for its citizens. Emphasizing the cru-

cial role of road safety, Nagaraju stated that wearing a helmet during the golden hour after a crash can make a critical difference in saving lives. He appreciated Uber for making safety a core part of its Warangal debut by distributing free helmets to drivers alongside the platform's standard safety measures. Speaking on the expansion, Rishant Ghosh, Director of Consumer and Growth at Uber India and South Asia, highlighted the importance of bike taxis for everyday urban travel. Ghosh explained that two-wheeler rides have proven to be an affordable option for short trips and first- and last-mile connectivity across Indian cities, adding that the platform aims to become a trusted mobility choice for Warangal residents. Uber confirmed that all trips booked through Uber Bike in Warangal will include a suite of built-in safety features. These safety tools feature a Driver Realtime ID Check, an in-app emergency SOS button, a dedicated 24X7 Safety Line.

HONG KONG ACTIVIST  
ALLOWED TO STAY IN  
UK AFTER  
DEPORTATION THREAT



Former Hong Kong opposition leader Wu Chi-wai has been allowed to stay in the UK with his family for six months, after initially being detained at the border. Wu had arrived at London's Heathrow Airport last Wednesday, where he was detained for nearly 10 hours and initially refused entry, he told BBC Chinese. He said he was later told he could stay for only one week, after which he would have to report to the airport to be deported. But on Monday, the UK Border Force approved his entry and granted him a standard stay of six months, he said. The 63-year-old was the leader of the now-defunct Democratic Party and one of the most recognisable faces of the city's quashed pro-democracy movement. Wu is one of the so-called Hong Kong 47, a group of high-profile pro-democracy leaders who were sentenced to jail after a controversial national security trial. He was released in June after spending more than five years in prison for subversion and other convictions. Wu told

BBC Chinese that his son and wife moved to the UK in 2022 and 2023, and the only communication he had with them since then was through monthly phone calls and letters. He had hoped to reunite with his family in the UK during his recent visit, he added. Ahead of his departure, Wu said he had consulted staff at the British Consulate General in Hong Kong, asking if there would be any problems with his entry. "The information I received was that there would be none," he said, adding that consular staff said they would explain his criminal record and itinerary to the UK Border Force. The Border Force said he was not considered a "genuine visitor" who was solely visiting family, he said. Wu denies that he had intended to apply for political asylum in the UK - a claim that was previously reported in the media. Rights group Hong Kong Watch, which had called on UK authorities to allow Wu to stay in the country, said in a statement that it welcomed the recent news.



■ People trapped in Japanese mall hit by earthquake, with others missing after factory chimney collapse

'IT'S A HELL OF A SITUATION': SPAIN GRAP-  
PLES WITH DEVASTATING WILDFIRES

For the past week, firefighters have been tackling a series of wildfires ravaging the Spanish countryside, threatening dozens of communities and forcing more than 70,000 people to evacuate their homes. Three fires in the Madrid region have caused special concerns, with a new heatwave expected to hit Spain from Wednesday, fuelling fears that firefighting efforts could be hindered. "It's a hell of a situation," said Madrid regional leader Isabel Díaz Ayuso, as she visited affected areas on Monday alongside Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez. Sánchez spoke on Tuesday of highly challenging hours and days ahead but of light beginning to appear "at the end of the tunnel". Temperatures are expected to approach 40C in



some regions in the coming days, with the heatwave forecast to last at least until Sunday. Spain's state meteorological agency Aemet has warned the "fire danger level will continue to rise to extreme levels, hindering firefighting efforts". Ayuso confirmed that four municipalities remained under lockdown orders while another 12 were evacuated. She had earlier described the

wildfires as "the biggest natural catastrophe in the history of Spain" and of flames turning the area into a "war zone". In the Madrid region alone, more than 56,500 people have been evacuated since the fires broke out last week. A further 27,797 people have been ordered to stay at home. Further evacuations have taken place in Ávila, Toledo and Valencia. Ayuso wrote on X that the situation

was now "improving little by little" and some residents may soon be allowed to return home. Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska told Spain's La 1 TV channel that firefighting efforts on Monday night had resulted in "relatively positive progress". "This morning, we are very satisfied with the work done. We are going to consolidate the work that has been done," he said. He maintained that "we must be positive; we have the emergency under control" but conceded that "weather conditions are not helping us at all". "The climate emergency is worsening year after year, and we are required to be united to fight against fire, as well as in prevention and reconstruction," he told reporters during a briefing in Madrid.

ON THE FRONT LINE OF  
ECUADOR'S DRUGS WAR,  
POLICE FIGHT GANGS,  
GUNS AND CORRUPTION



=In the Ecuadoran city of Durán, riddled with drugs and rival gangs, Police Captain Jean Carlos Bustamante knows exactly what he is up against – not just the criminals who kill and sometimes dismember their rivals, but also the enemy within. "We have many, many bad people inside our unit, inside the state, inside politics," he says. "We have many, many guys that are corrupt. They are in the pay of the gangs." The only police officers he can trust, he says, are the ones right beside him - members of his hand-picked team. At 34, Captain Bustamante is the oldest among them and moves like the special forces officer he used to be. With the sun setting, he leads his team into a hardscrabble neighbourhood where windows are sealed off behind metal grills, and lips are sealed by fear. This is the heart of gangland, controlled by a group called Los Aguilas (Spanish for The Eagles). I ask what happens if local people speak out against the gangs. "They kill them," the captain replies. "So that's why they never say nothing." He's heading for an abandoned house where he believes weapons have been hidden (gunmen don't keep

their guns at home). He and his team line up, hugging the wall, heavily armed, and tightly packed. A battering ram gets them through the door. They find two handguns – one rusty but the other ready to be fired - and ammunition for an assault rifle. The captain says he's happy with the result. "The first reason is because we are safe," he says. "The second is that there are two guns less for the gangs." But this is a small victory, in a war of attrition. He admits the gangs have "many weapons and much more money than the state". He knows the risks only too well – having lost three close friends fighting the gangs. He has also lost his fear he says, "years ago", but his parents have not. "My mum says be careful, maybe you can die there," he tells me. "My dad calls all the time and asks 'my son, are you good? Tell me that you are good.'" A line can be traced - in dollars and in broken lives - from the back streets of Durán to the hotspots of London, and other capital cities. Around 70% of the cocaine reaching Europe and the US is funnelled out of Ecuador, according to the country's President, Daniel Noboa.

Gironde wildfires pick up as French region  
braces for new 40C heatwave

Firefighters in France are working around the clock to contain wildfires that have been raging in the Gironde region, while bracing for another sharp rise in temperatures. "The fire is like David against Goliath," said Eric Brocardi, spokesman of the national firefighters' federation. Four of his colleagues had died in recent weeks across France, he said, and 2,000 had been deployed in the Gironde to contain the flames, which for days have ravaged the countryside between the coastline and Bordeaux. "Weather conditions were unfavourable," a local official warned, as this summer's fourth heatwave was expected to start by Wednesday, bringing temperatures in the area to 40C. Bordeaux, which has a population of 260,000, is not currently under threat, according to officials. But Commander Rémi Lassourelle, who is leading the firefighting response in the Gironde region, is worried about the western edge of the wildfire. "We are frightened about the impact on Bordeaux and the metropolitan area," he



said. One of the wildfires burning on Monday was 15km (9 miles) from the periphery of Bordeaux, where the air quality has deteriorated dramatically in recent days. "By Sunday evening everything had really begun to empty out," a holidaymaker from Essex told the BBC, adding that the air was "really smoky" with bits of ash. "People were staying indoors, so it was eerie, and very sad." The majority of residents and tourists were wearing masks and the smell of smoke clung on to clothes for days, she said. A firefighter "got a round of applause" as he walked through the Marché Chartrons square in

Bordeaux where restaurants were having to close their doors because of the ash in the air, she added. "The city has been very quiet," said Graham White, president of the Bordeaux British Community. "The shops, restaurants and cafes are fairly empty... Interestingly on Sunday when there was still smoke, there were people brave enough to sit outside on terraces." White, who has been living in the area for several years, said this sort of event had not occurred before and was "something significant". But some news reports had suggested the situation in Bordeaux was "akin to being the next Great Fire of

London", which was not the case, White added. President Emmanuel Macron, who visited the fire-ravaged area in the Gironde region on Monday, said the country was facing a "completely unprecedented wildfire... the 'toughest since World War Two'. Health Minister Stéphanie Rist said the government was being "very vigilant" in terms of air pollution and urged people in the affected areas to stay indoors. On Tuesday morning the Gironde prefect ordered a new evacuation of all camping sites near the coast at Lacanau, while those in the nearby town were allowed to stay put but told to prepare for sudden evacuation. About 4,000 tourists told to leave the area are in addition to the 220,000 people evacuated around France in recent days. An estimated 240 homes and houses have been destroyed, officials have said. By midday on Tuesday firefighters were already intervening in various parts of the region to tackle the fires that were picking up again. A 23-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of starting a fire in the Var region.

'A narcissist': Victim's family  
hits out at Kohberger for chal-  
lenging murder conviction



The family of one of the victims of Bryan Kohberger has hit out after it emerged that he was challenging his conviction for four murders of students in the US state of Idaho. Kohberger was sentenced last year to four consecutive terms of life in prison after pleading guilty to charges of murder in the November 2022 killings. In recent days, Kohberger told the New York Times he was taking back his plea, which was made to avoid the death penalty. He said it had rested on "false promises and blatant disinformation". The family of Kaylee Goncalves, one of the stu-

dents who was killed, said that Kohberger was a "narcissist" who appeared to have changed his position. "He chose not to leave his fate - or the facts of the case - to a jury," their statement from the Goncalves family said. "He never cried foul, never claimed he was uninformed or pressured, and never suggested there were problems with the discovery materials he and his counsel had reviewed for two years that should have been challenged." The Goncalves family went on to say "the real tragedy" was the amount of attention that Kohberger was now receiving at the expense of the victims.

ZELENSKY TO PRESS TRUMP ON AIR  
DEFENCES WHILE IN WASHINGTON

Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky is due to hold important talks with US President Donald Trump at the White House, where he is hoping to firm up commitments to bolstering Kyiv's anti-ballistic missile defences. Zelensky has arrived in the US at a significant stage in Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine, with Moscow's mayor saying the capital was targeted by 390 drones in a matter of hours overnight. The Ukrainian leader is expected to press Trump over support he gave earlier this month for Kyiv to be given a licence to produce Patriot interceptor missiles. Russia has escalated deadly ballistic missile attacks on Ukraine's capital recently, and Zelensky has said interceptors are urgently needed. Patriot



missiles have been at the top of Zelensky's wish-list for some time, but after the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, these US air defence interceptors are in very short supply. Promising a licence is one thing, but co-producing the highly sophisticated PAC-2 and PAC-3 interceptors on Ukrainian soil is another, because it involves a lengthy political, legal and

technical process. A delegation from US manufacturer Raytheon visited Kyiv last week and Zelensky said the defence firm had expressed "readiness to take our partnership to an even higher level". After he speaks with Zelensky, Trump will have another important meeting with Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu. It is the first time the two have met in person since the war on

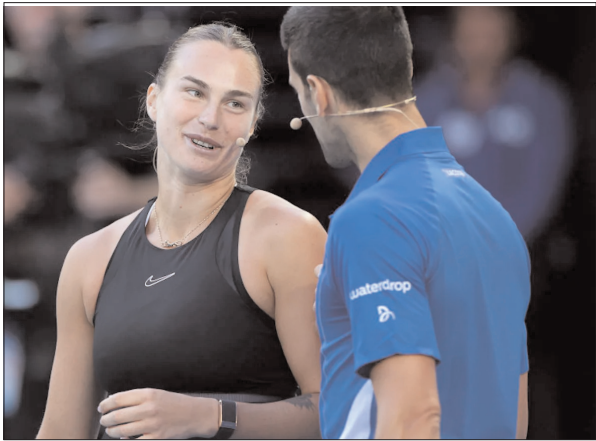
Iran started in late February. Zelensky and Netanyahu are in Washington to attend the funeral of Senator Lindsey Graham, who died this month aged 71. The Ukraine war appeared to coincide with the US-Israel war with Iran at the weekend, when Ukrainian forces targeted an Iranian cargo ship in the Caspian Sea. Kyiv has described Iran as a "direct accomplice to Russian aggression against Ukraine" and Zelensky has said Ukrainian intelligence has evidence that Russia has shared satellite imagery with Tehran, enabling Iran to attack US military facilities and Gulf states. Trump has said he will "find out if that's true. I'll ask Putin about it", while saying if true, it had no impact at all.



US walks out of UN Security Council meeting during France's remarks

## NOVAK DJOKOVIC, ARYNA SABALENKA TEAM UP FOR ALL-STAR US OPEN MIXED DOUBLES PAIRING

Serbian tennis legend Novak Djokovic and women's number one Aryna Sabalenka top the list of pairings entered for the US Open mixed doubles. However, both men's world number one Jannik Sinner and second-ranked Carlos Alcaraz have not entered the competition which was heavily revamped last year. Reforms featured a shorter scoring format in the earlier rounds and a new scheduling slot -- played over two days -- before the singles draws in an attempt to encourage the top players to enter. Italian doubles specialists Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori, who criticised the changes, will defend the title they won last year, which came with a \$1 million winners' cheque. Djokovic, 39, and 28-year-old Sabalenka are certain to feature among the initial six pairings selected according to world rankings when the deadline



for entries closes on August 17. "Anytime you can bring women and men together on the same team, you showcase tennis at its best," said US Tennis Association CEO Craig Tiley. "This is exactly what the mixed doubles championship does. "We are proud to again bring the world's top players together in a format that will provide exciting entertainment for our fans." Wimbledon champi-

on Sinner -- who did not enter last year's mixed doubles -- is "prioritising" his health ahead of the final Grand Slam of the year and is also bypassing the Canadian Open, which runs from August 2-13. Alcaraz, who did play last year with Emma Raducanu, is recovering from a wrist injury that ruled him out of both the French Open and Wimbledon.

## Geneva To Host D Gukesh vs Javokhir Sindarov World Chess Championship Match



The FIDE World Championship Match 2026 between reigning champion Gukesh D and challenger Javokhir Sindarov will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from November 25 to December 15. Both Gukesh of India and Uzbekistan's Sindarov will be just 20 years old when the match begins, making it the youngest World Championship contest in history. The clash also signals a generational shift in world chess, with two of the game's brightest young stars battling for its biggest prize after emerging

from an era dominated by seasoned champions.. FIDE Interim President Viswanathan Anand welcomed the announcement. "Several countries expressed a strong interest in hosting the FIDE World Championship Match, including India, the United States and Cyprus," said Anand. The World Championship match will be contested over 14 classical games, with the first player to reach 7.5 points crowned world champion. If either player reaches the winning mark before all 14 games are completed.

## BCCI DECIDES TO NOT RENEW 2TWO INDIA COACHES' CONTRACTS AFTER ENGLAND SERIES

Winds of change are sweeping through Indian cricket. After the tours of Ireland and England, where India lost two T20I series and an ODI series, the BCCI was expected to conduct a review. It has now been confirmed that the BCCI will not renew the contracts of assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate and fielding coach T Dilip. The development was shared by BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia. "Assistant coach Ryan Ten Doeschate's two-year contract with Indian men's team ended on June 10. Fielding coach T Dilip, who was given a one-year extension after his original term ended, also had his contract ending on June 8," BCCI secretary Saikia told PTI in an exclusive interaction. "The BCCI continued with the duo till the end of India's tour of United Kingdom. However, the BCCI is not giving them any extension. There is no question of accepting resignation as the contract has ended," the secretary cleared the air. A few reports have claimed that Subhdeep Ghosh will be the new



Indian fielding coach. However, Saikia said: "BCCI is in talks with two or three candidates to finalise the new fielding coach for the Indian men's team." Assam's Ghosh, who has been in the system for last six to seven years since the time of Rahul Dravid at the NCA, is the favourite right now. It must be mentioned that Ten Doeschate intended to leave as when he was brought on board on Gautam Gambhir's insistence, he

was promised fielding coach's job but was given no specific role in last two years. In case of Dilip, his extension for one year before the 2025 Test series in England was on insistence of a senior superstar but no one was happy with his performance. It would have been a miracle had he been given any further extension after poor show during the recent white ball tour of UK. India will measure success at the upcoming

Glasgow Commonwealth Games not just by medals but by the "knowledge it acquires" ahead of hosting the centenary 2030 edition in Ahmedabad. India's Chef de Mission Rohit Rajpal has said. The 23rd edition of the quadrennial extravaganza beginning on July 23, have been significantly scaled down, featuring only 10 sports -- nine fewer than Birmingham 2022, where India finished fourth with 61 medals (22 gold, 16 silver and 23 bronze). The non-playing captain of India's Davis Cup team, Rajpal in an interview to PTI said the off-field agenda assumes unprecedented significance so that they leave no stone unturned for 2030. "This time, both the Games side and the non-Games side are equally important," Rajpal said from Glasgow after reviewing preparations ahead of the opening ceremony. "There will be knowledge-transfer programmes on the sidelines so we can match or better things when we host the next Games in India. We will also be taking back the flag and the baton."

## HARVARD PLANS ON HOLD, WORLD JUNIOR SQUASH CHAMPION ANAHAT SINGH AIMS FOR OLYMPIC GLORY

Newly-crowned junior squash world champion Anahat Singh has revealed that she placed her academic goals at the prestigious Harvard University on hold this year to give herself the best chance of winning a medal at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. Anahat's original plan was to follow in her elder sister Amira's footsteps and pursue higher education at the Harvard. But bolstered by the title triumph in her fifth and final attempt, the 18-year-old now wants to put all her energies into preparing for the upcoming Asian Games and the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics in a couple of years' time. Anahat has been living out of the suitcase for as far as she can remember, juggling top level squash and school. Having graduated from school only a couple of months ago, Anahat has now chosen to focus on the sport to take her game to the next level. "I was supposed to go to college this year, but I decided to take a gap year because of the Asian Games coming up. And now I under-



stand that this year is really important for me regarding squash and, the build up to the LA 2028 (Games)," Anahat told PTI in an interview referring to her plans for squash's Olympic debut. "So, yeah, I mean, just focusing on this year, outside of school, because I've been doing that for the last 12 years (smiles). I'm just focusing on squash for a year and just making sure that I'm at my peak going in to LA 28," she said. World title confidence-boosted ahead of Asia Having got the monkey off her back with a world junior title in her fifth and final appearance, Anahat's next big assignment is the

Asian Games in Japan in September-October. If Anahat is to win gold, she will have to find ways to upstage higher-ranked players like world number five Sivasangari Subramaniam from Malaysia and sixth-ranked Satomi Watanabe from Japan. Considering the challenge ahead, the triumph in Canada that included wins over three Egyptians, will give Anahat more confidence against the world's best players. A gold in Japan would secure her automatic qualification to the Olympics. "It (the win at world juniors) definitely adds a lot to my confidence to get into this event.

## Roberto Mancini Named Italy Football Team Head Coach For Second Time

Roberto Mancini has once again been tasked with revitalizing an Italy team in crisis, almost exactly three years after he bolted on the national team. Italian soccer federation Giovanni Malago announced Mancini as the new Italy coach on Tuesday, adding that Claudio Ranieri will become the new technical director after Paolo Maldini stepped down the previous day -- just 16 days after being appointed. The 61-year-old Mancini led the Azzurri to the European Championship title in 2021 but shockingly resigned as Italy coach in August 2023, taking over Saudi Arabia's national team two weeks later. "Time was running out ... I believed the person who should become the new coach of Italy is Roberto Mancini, for a whole list of reasons," Malago said. "There will be a press conference tomorrow with both Claudio Ranieri and Roberto Mancini." The Italian national team is in crisis after failing for a third straight time to qualify for the World Cup, prompting the resignations of FIGC president Gabriele Gravina and coach Gennaro Gattuso in April.



## Why Sanju Samson Quit Following Virat Kohli's Lifestyle Advice After 1 Year

Virat Kohli remains the ultimate benchmark for cricketers worldwide. Since making his India debut, Kohli has transformed not only how batters approach the game, but also how elite athletes manage their lifestyle. From eliminating gluten to spending countless hours in the gym, he raised cricketing fitness standards to an unprecedented level. Although it has been over a decade since the Indian icon underwent this transformation, even younger players struggle to match his discipline. Sanju Samson recently shared an intriguing anecdote, revealing that he once asked Kohli for lifestyle advice, only to give up on it after about a year. Speaking on JioStar's show Believe, Samson praised the intensity Kohli brings to the gym and recalled receiving advice on maintaining the



diet and routine required for international cricket. He admitted to implementing Kohli's suggestions, but confessed he soon lost track. "We all know how Virat bhai is. He is very clear and very straightforward with everyone. If you need to do something, 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!,' he said. "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 would not.

## Zinedine Zidane Appointed As New Coach Of France After Didier Deschamps' Departure



Zinedine Zidane was appointed France coach on Tuesday, as widely expected, following the departure of Didier Deschamps, the French Football Federation's president. "For me, it's an immense joy... about being able to become the coach of this French team. I don't have any other words," said Zidane. "I'm holding myself back because I have so many emotions inside me. I'm ready for the challenge,

that's what drives me today." Former Real Madrid star Zidane, who was Deschamps' teammate in the 1998 World Cup triumph, has been readying himself for the role since leaving Real Madrid in 2021. "The France job was the

only one I wanted," Zidane said after his unveiling at the FFF headquarters in Paris.

"I've had offers over these four or five years to take charge of a club and I turned them all down for the French national team."

## Sarvesh Kushare: Onion Farmer's Son From Nashik Who Earned Historic Commonwealth Games Silver



National record holder Sarvesh Kushare scripted history as he became the first Indian to win a silver medal in the men's high jump event of the Commonwealth Games, losing the gold by the narrowest of margins in an enthralling showdown with Jamaica's Romaine Beckford. After sailing over 2.25m, both the 31-year-old Kushare and Beckford failed to clear the 2.28m mark. But the Jamaican took the gold as he had one less failed attempt than the Indian on count-back. The bronze went to Jack Kimani (2.20m) of England.

The other Indian in the fray, Adarsh Ram, finished fifth with 2.15m. Before Monday, Tejaswin Shankar was the lone Indian to have won a high jump medal -- a bronze in the 2022 Birmingham Games. But Kushare bettered it with his silver. It was Kushare's first medal in the CWG and that too on debut. Tejaswin also competed on Monday and retired after failing to clear 2.05m in his first attempt. The move was a precautionary measure for Tejaswin as he is competing in the men's decathlon starting on Thursday. The 27-year-old, who has a personal best of 2.29m, has not competed in too many individual high jump events in the last two years as he has been focussing on decathlon. Son of an onion farmer at Devargaoon village in Maharashtra's Nashik district, Kushare used to practice high jump by using makeshift landing pits made of corn husks, cotton, and agricultural waste, prepared by his father and childhood coach.

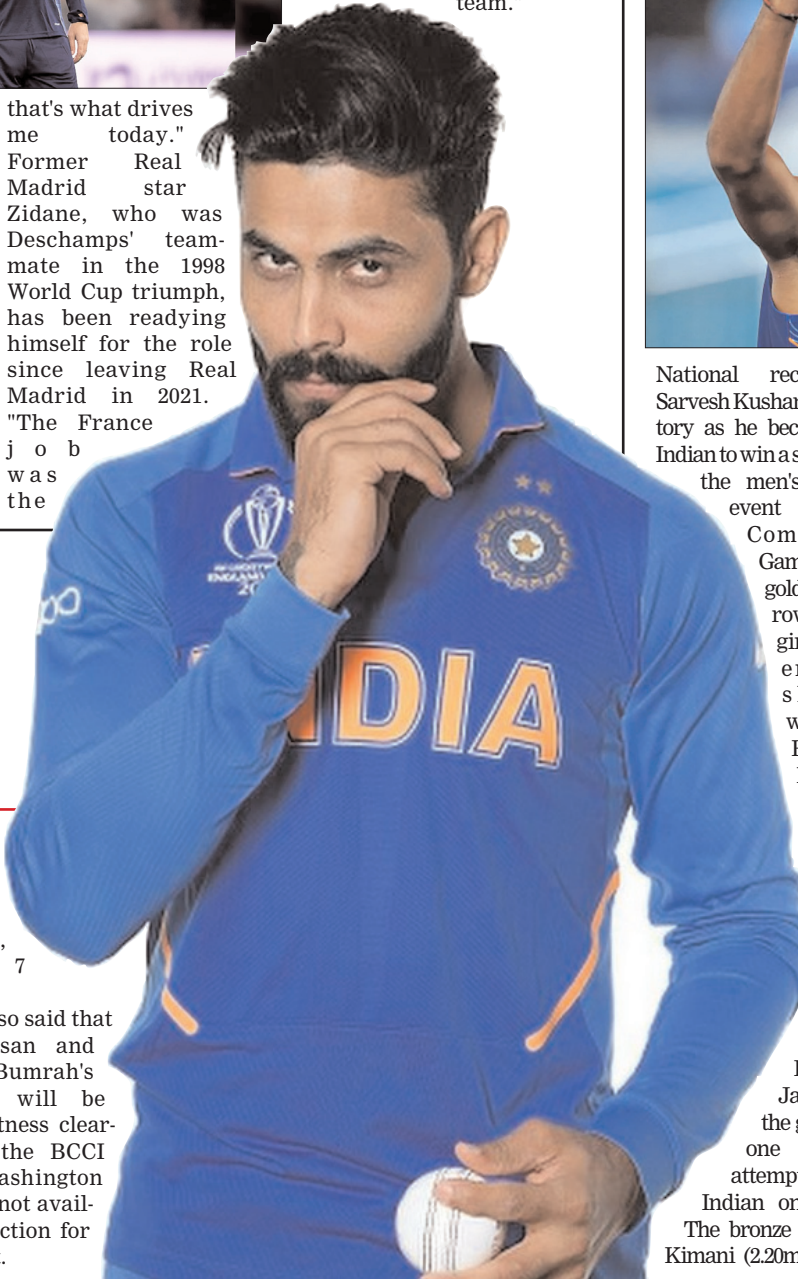
## Ravindra Jadeja Returns To India Squad, Uncapped Star Earns Surprise Call-Up For Sri Lanka Tests

Veteran India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja marked his return as the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced the squad for the upcoming two-match Test series against Sri Lanka. Having fully recovered from a tennis elbow injury sustained during the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL) in May, Jadeja makes his comeback to bolster India's spin attack in Subcontinental conditions. The announcement also marks the maiden India call-up for spin-bowling all-rounder Saransh Jain, who comes into the 15-man squad as a replacement for Washington

Sundar, who was unavailable for selection due to a hamstring injury sustained during the ODI series in England. A seasoned campaigner for Madhya Pradesh with 181 First-Class wickets to his name, Jain secured his spot following impressive performances for India A against Sri Lanka A recently. Saransh has established himself as a reliable bowling all-rounder over 54 First-Class matches, proving to be a mainstay for Madhya Pradesh and earning recognition at the India A level. Operating primarily as a right-arm off-spinner, he has claimed 181 wickets at an average of

27.30 and a controlled economy rate of nearly 3.01 runs per over, with best innings figures of 6/75. With the bat, the left-handed lower-middle-order hitter offers vital depth, having amassed 2,223 runs across 85 innings at an average of 31.75. He has registered 14 half-centuries and two First-Class century (top score of 103), making him a well-rounded utility player who can fill in the void left by Washington Sundar. In a press release, the BCCI said: "The Men's Selection Committee has selected India's squad for the two-match Test series against Sri Lanka. Ahead of the series, the

team will play a four-day practice match in Colombo, starting on 7 August." The BCCI also said that Sai Sudharsan and Jasprit Bumrah's availability will be subject to fitness clearance from the BCCI COE. Washington Sundar was not available for selection for the first Test.



## Making Video Titled The Origin of Agadha Released

Under the banner of Sri Adi Varaha Productions, presented by Ajay KR and produced by Kashi Visalakshi Balusu, acclaimed filmmaker M.S. Raju has directed the upcoming film Agadha. The film stars Kamakshi Bhaskarla, Shravan Reddy, Ulka Gupta, Jovika Vijaykumar, Bhanu Chander, Sijju, Vanitha Vijaykumar, Roshan Basheer, Shreya Rani Reddy, Viva Raghava, Robert Master, Arna Muller, and Kanakavva in pivotal roles. Agadha is all set for a grand theatrical release on August 14. The film's teaser has already been trending on YouTube. The makers have now unveiled a special mak-



ing video titled "The Origin of Agadha," offering fascinating insights into the making of this ambitious project.

Speaking on the occasion, M.S. Raju said: "No matter how many films I have produced or directed, I never

feel completely settled. Every film is a new experience and a fresh challenge. Throughout my career,

films like Devi, Manasantha Nuvve, Okkadu, Varsham, and Nuvvostanante Nenoddantana challenged me immensely in terms of story and screenplay. Agadha has been another such challenge. From the moment I conceived this story, I knew it would demand an extraordinary journey. I wanted to create episodes that audiences had never experienced before. I travelled across several states, visited remote villages steeped in superstition, and met people living amidst such beliefs. During one such visit, I witnessed a woman performing rituals believed to expel evil spirits. That encounter inspired the character of Mahadevi. To balance her powerful pres-

ence, I created the equally compelling character of Simha. After considering many actors, I found Simha in Shravan Reddy. A film of this scale requires strong production support. Sri Adi Varaha Productions and producer Kashi Visalakshi Balusu stood firmly behind me, allowing me to focus entirely on filmmaking. The role of Ulka is portrayed by an actress from Mumbai. Jovika and Sijju have delivered outstanding performances. Nani's cinematography is exceptional. We conducted extensive research for both the story and screenplay. I wanted actors who would truly own their characters, and I was fortunate to find such an incredible cast.

## Srinidhi Shetty Unveiled as Swarna in Aadarsha Kutumbam House No: 47 - #AK47



With Venkatesh as Chittibabu receiving a terrific response, the makers of director Trivikram Srinivas' Aadarsha Kutumbam House No: 47 - #AK47 now present the next member of this family. Srinidhi Shetty steps into the role of Swarna, Chittibabu's wife, a cheerful middle-class homemaker whose lively bond with him adds to the film's warmth and fun. Nivetha Pethuraj and comedian Satya also make brief appearances, adding to the entertaining vibe of the teaser.

With the character introductions creating good excitement, the makers will next unveil Yuvina Parthavi as Sampoorna and Raja Prajwal as Sarwa. Written & Directed by Trivikram, Produced by S. Radha Krishna (Chinababu) under Haarika & Hassine Creations, written and directed by Trivikram Srinivas, featuring music by Thaman S, cinematography by Ravi K. Chandran, editing by Sreekar Prasad, the film is all set for a grand worldwide theatrical release on October 2, 2026.

## Aakasamlo oka tara unveils first single 'chitti chitti cheema' on dulquer salmaan's birthday



The makers of Aakasamlo Oka Tara unveiled the film's first single, "Chitti Chitti Cheema", today on the special occasion of leading man Dulquer Salmaan's birthday. Composed by GV Prakash Kumar, Chitti Chitti Cheema is a heartwarming melody that captures the emotional soul of the film. Sung from the heroine's perspective, the song reflects a woman's dream of reaching the stars and the quiet, unwavering support

of the man who stands beside her. It beautifully celebrates an extraordinary bond that goes beyond conventional love. Penned by Sreemani and soulfully rendered by Ramya Behara, the song uses striking metaphors such as a tiny ant carrying sugar, a Kondapalli doll crossing mountains, and a kite soaring only against the wind to symbolize resilience, hope, and the silent strength behind every dream.

## Rebel with a Cause: Happy Birthday People's Doctor and Actor Madala Ravi

Madala Ravi started his inspiring journey as a child actor in Erra Mallelu made by his father Madala Ranga Rao, and his song "Nampally Station Kadi" was a blockbuster hit that topped the charts for many decades and won many awards as well. He studied MD in Internal Medicine and DM in Gastroenterology in Russia, and also worked as the managing director for a leading pharmaceutical company. He also served as a cultural secretary for Indian organizations and for cultural affairs in Russia. Coming back to India, he started his production house and produced and acted as a hero in many films like Nenu Saitham, Maa Ilavelu, Broker 2,



Panchamukhi, Veeragadha, Aaj Ka Inquilaab, Naag Laxmi, and many more. He continues to work as an actor and filmmaker. On his birthday, we celebrate a man whose life work demonstrates that true impact isn't measured by personal accolades, but by the lives uplifted and the voices amplified.

## RANBIR GIVES YRF AN UNEXPECTED DHOOM 4 TWIST?



Ranbir Kapoor has reportedly decided to opt out of Dhoom 4 after being dissatisfied with the film's revised script. The project was initially expected to be directed by Ayan Mukerji. However, following the underperformance of War 2, the makers are said to have reworked the screenplay. Despite the changes, reports claim that Ranbir Kapoor was not convinced by the new version of the script and chose to step away from the project. His decision has come as a surprise to Yash Raj Films, as he was consid-

ered a key part of the film's plans and was supposed to play the main villain. With Kapoor no longer attached, the production house is now reportedly exploring other casting options to move the project forward. No official announcement has been made by either Ranbir Kapoor or Yash Raj Films regarding these reports, and details about the film's future remain unconfirmed. Fans are now waiting to see who will be approached to lead the project and whether the film will proceed with a new cast.

## 'Objection My Lord' Different. "There is meaning, there is emotion



Telugu ZEE5 is all set to premiere its latest original courtroom thriller, Objection My Lord - Notary Parasuram Chapter 1, on July 31. Ahead of its streaming debut, the platform hosted a grand preview and

media interaction in Hyderabad, where the cast and crew came together to

share their experiences of bringing the gripping legal drama to life. Produced by Rajkumar Akella under the banner of Dream House Productions and directed by Santhosh Ayyappan, the series stars Srikanth Meka in the titular role alongside Mukesh Rishi, Ananya Sharma, Snehal and Sameer in pivotal roles, with cinematography by Suryaa and music by Arunn Chiluveru. With the first two episodes screened for the gathering, anticipation for the premiere was palpable as the team took the stage.

## Vishal's Makutam Unveils the Soulful New Song "Kalatheylaa"

Makutam, the 99th production of Super Good Films, stars Vishal in the lead while also marking his directorial venture. Produced under the banner of the late R.B. Choudary, the film features Anjali and Dushara Vijayan as the female leads. The teaser, first single "The Rise of Linga," and the folk number "Nachake Vachera" have already raised expectations for the film. Continuing the momentum, the makers have now released another beautiful track titled "Kalatheylaa." "Kalatheylaa" is an emotional family-oriented motivational song that highlights heartwarming moments featuring Vishal, Dushara Vijayan, and children. Penned by Rajashree Sudhakar and sung by Krishna Tejasvi, the song is elevated by G.V. Prakash Kumar's catchy and soulful composition. With its appealing melody and emotional visuals, the song is expected to strike a chord with audiences and trend widely on YouTube. The film's cinematography is handled by Richard M. Nathan and Abhinandan Ramanujam, while N.B. Srikanth serves



as the editor. The makers are expected to announce the film's release date soon.

## Chennai Love Story" Team Delivers a Cult Love Story to Audiences



Starring Kiran Abbavaram and Sri Gouri Priya in the lead roles, Chennai Love Story has emerged as a grand success with overwhelming appreciation from audiences across all sections. Viewers have been praising the film as a beautiful love story, while the movie has also been performing exceptionally well at the box office. Within just three days of its release, the film grossed ₹40.1 crore. To celebrate this success, the makers organised a grand success meet in Hyderabad with Yuva Samrat Naga Chaitanya as the chief guest.

## RAASHII KHANNA PUSHES THE BOLDNESS QUOTIENT HIGHER



Raashii Khanna has had a packed year, juggling multiple projects, Tamil films Dharman and Rowdy And Co, Hindi releases Bridge and Talaakhon Mein Ek, alongside the Amazon series Farzi 2. Amid this busy schedule, she took a break to share some stunning pictures on social media on Tuesday morning. The photos show her in sleek black outfits,

exuding bold confidence with sultry expressions, soft glam makeup, and effortlessly tousled hair, proving her style game is as strong as her work ethic. On the Telugu front, Raashii appeared this year in Ustaad Bhagat Singh, while her last Telugu release, Telusu Kada, didn't perform well at the box office. With her plate full across languages, fans are now eager to see when she'll return to Telugu screens with a solid hit. Raashii Khanna turns heads with her effortless charm in her latest photo shoot, striking the perfect balance between elegance and glamour. Dressed in stylish ensembles with minimal accessories, the actress lets her confidence and radi-

ant smile do the talking. Every frame reflects her graceful screen presence and fashion-forward appeal, making the pictures an instant hit among fans. The actress has steadily built a strong presence across Telugu, Tamil and Hindi cinema. Known for blending commercial entertainers with performance-oriented roles, she continues to remain one of the most sought-after faces in the industry. On the work front, Raashii has a busy slate ahead. She was seen in Ustaad Bhagat Singh, and now working in Rowdy & Co., Bridge, and an untitled Hindi film directed by Anees Bazmee, further strengthening her presence across both big-screen and OTT platforms.