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**'PM MODI INSULTED SONAM WANGCHUK IN ARROGANCE': KEJRIWAL SLAMS CENTRE OVER PROTEST ACTION**

NATION PAGE

**SHIP AT CENTRE OF RECORD COCAINE SEIZURE FINALLY LEAVES CORK**

WORLD | NEWS



**THE RAJA SAAB SCORES BIG ON OTT**

CINEMA | PAGE



SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

14-07-2026

Total pilgrims - 75,485  
Tonsures - 30,939  
Hundi kankulu - 4.36 CR  
Laddu sale - 3.70 Lac  
Annasradams - 2.99 Lac  
Medical treatment - 3,928  
Waiting Compartments - Out side line  
V. Siltanaram

Approx. Darshan Time for Saradhamam (with out SSD Tower) - 15-18 H.

**US-Iran tensions escalate with renewed strikes**

Tehran (TSIT) :

Iran launched renewed attacks on US Gulf allies on Saturday after the US Central Command (CENTCOM) concluded a new round of strikes on Iran overnight. Iran's semi-official Mehr news agency said that



explosions were reported in Bushehr province as well as Hormozgan province's Sirik and Qeshm counties, and the official IRNA news agency said five blasts were heard in Iran's central Yazd province. Late on Friday, the US CENTCOM said in a post on social media platform X that US forces ended the seventh consecutive night of strikes against Iran.

**PM Modi Hails Vikram-1 Launch as Defining Moment for India**

New Delhi, (TSIT):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday congratulated the team of Skyroot Aerospace on the successful launch of



Vikram-1, calling it a defining moment in India's space journey that reflects the growing strength of the country's private space sector. In a post on social media platform X, the Prime Minister said he had spoken to the Skyroot team and praised the milestone, stating that the growing participation of the private sector is opening new frontiers and accelerating innovation. He added that the achievement would encourage countless youngsters to dream bigger and innovate fearlessly.

**US Welcomes Iraq-Syria Oil Pipeline Deal**

Washington (TSIT):

The United States has welcomed a landmark agreement between Iraq and Syria to revive a crude oil pipeline with a capacity of two million barrels per day, describing the move as a positive step toward regional energy cooperation and economic stability. The pipeline, which was once a critical artery for Iraqi crude exports to European markets via Syria's Mediterranean coast, has remained non-operational for years due to conflict and political tensions. The revived deal is expected to significantly boost Iraq's export capacity while providing much-needed revenue and energy infrastructure support to Syria.



Vikram-1 Test Flight-1 (Mission Aagamam), India's first private orbital rocket launch, lifts off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

## Skyroot's Vikram-1 becomes India's first successful private orbital launch vehicle

Visakhapatnam (TSIT)

Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1, a small satellite launch vehicle developed by an Indian space start-up, successfully lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota, on July 18,

2026, at 12:05:30 PM, marking a historic milestone in India's space programme. With this mission, Skyroot Aerospace became the first private Indian company to successfully launch a rocket into orbit from Indian soil, and that

too in its maiden orbital launch attempt. The achievement follows the Government of India's space sector reforms announced in 2020, which opened up space activities for private companies. Vikram-1 carried multi-

ple payloads, including two satellites — SCOPE and Grahah — which were successfully placed into Low Earth Orbit (LEO). The remaining payloads on the rocket's upper stage will be used for various in-orbit experiments. Earlier, Skyroot Aerospace had conducted the sub-orbital test launch of Vikram-S from Sriharikota on November 18, 2022.

## PM Modi dedicates 75 redeveloped Amrit Bharat stations to nation

New Delhi (TSIT)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday dedicated 75 redeveloped railway stations across the country to the nation under the flagship Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, marking a major milestone in the modernisation of India's railway infrastructure.

The newly transformed stations, spread across 20 States, have been developed as modern, passenger-friendly transit hubs with improved amenities, enhanced accessibility and future-ready facilities. The redevelopment works were completed at a combined cost of approximately 1,570 crore.

The revamped stations feature upgraded passenger facilities while incorporating architectural elements reflecting local and regional heritage. The initiative aims to provide a better travel experience for passengers and strengthen railway infra-



structure across the country. This marks the second major nationwide dedication of redeveloped stations under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme by the Prime Minister. Earlier, on May 22, 2025, Prime Minister Modi dedicated 103 redeveloped Amrit Bharat Stations across 18 States and Union Territories to the nation.

The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme is part of the government's broader infrastructure development vision aimed at transforming railway stations into world-class facilities that cater to the growing needs of passengers while preserving local cultural identity.

## Rahul attacks Centre over Sonam Wangchuk's hospitalisation



New Delhi (TSIT):

After Delhi Police hospitalised climate activist Sonam Wangchuk over his deteriorating health following 20 days of hunger strike, Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition (LoP) and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday launched a scathing attack on the BJP-led Central government, accusing it of "Asatya (lies) and Hinsa (violence)". Taking to X with the hashtag 'ChhatronKiGoonj', LoP Gandhi said: "The core tenets of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government are 'Asatya' and 'Hinsa'. The removal of Sonam Wangchuk ji from Jantar Mantar while he was on a non-violent hunger strike is wrong.

## CM Revanth lays foundation stone for Andesri Smriti Vanam

Hyderabad (TSIT):

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Saturday laid the foundation stone for Andesri Smriti Vanam and paid rich tributes to noted Telangana poet Andesri, describing him as a lifelong source of inspiration whose writings fuelled the Telangana movement and awakened public consciousness.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said Andesri was not merely a poet but an "elder brother" who inspired him during difficult phases of political life. He said the iconic "Jaya Jayahe Telangana" song, written by Andesri, was deliberately



sidelined during the previous government's tenure but has now found its rightful place in schools and public institutions across the State.

Launching a sharp attack on the previous BRS government,

Revanth Reddy alleged that despite issuing recruitment notifications, it failed to complete the process, while his government filled over 70,000 government jobs within a short period.

He accused the previous administration of failing to address unemployment and assured that his government would continue filling every vacant post through a transparent process. The Chief Minister also highlighted that Shankaramma and a granddaughter of Chakali Ilamma had been appointed to the State Women's Commission, while Prof. M. Kodandaram was nominated to the Legislative Council.

## AP to Become Pollution-Free State: CM Naidu

Visakhapatnam (TSIT):

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said that the goal of the Swachh Andhra-Swarna Andhra programme is to build a clean, prosperous, and pollution-free Andhra Pradesh. Participating in the 18th programme held in Gudivada, he urged people to adopt waste-free and eco-friendly lifestyles.

The Chief Minister laid foundation stones for municipal and public health works worth Rs.15,274 crore across 120 urban local bodies. He also inaugurated waste-to-energy plants and presented Operation Clean Sweep awards to several municipalities. Naidu said cleanliness is not just about sweeping roads but about improving public health and protecting the environment.

He called upon citizens to take responsibility for keeping their surround-



ings clean and support the government's sanitation initiatives. He announced that door-to-door waste collection would be strengthened with electric vehicles and said the state aims to become garbage-free by October 2 through effective waste management programmes.

The Chief Minister also announced that funds under

the Thalliki Vandanam scheme would be credited to mothers' accounts from July 22 to 24, benefiting over 67 lakh students.

He further stated that strict action would be taken against those involved in illegal activities and misuse of social media. Ministers, MPs, MLAs, and senior officials attended the programme.



## GITAM Student Selected for 1:1 Startup Pitch to Tim Cook

**Manas Malla**  
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Recognised in Apple's Swift Student Challenge 2026

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AP CM, Dy CM congratulate Skyroot Aerospace, ISRO



Vijayawada (TSIT) Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and deputy Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan on Saturday congratulated Skyroot Aerospace for Vikram 1 successfully reaching orbit. In a message, the Chief Minister said: "India has crossed another historic milestone. With Vikram-1 successfully reaching orbit on its maiden mission, India has demonstrated that our private space sector is ready to stand alongside the world's best. This achievement marks the dawn of a new era wherein the strength of our scientific institutions and the ingenuity of Indian entrepreneurs come together to push the boundaries of innovation."

Indian and an inspiration for generations of young innovators. May India's journey to the stars continue to soar," he said. Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan said: "Today, Bharat didn't just celebrate a successful launch. It celebrated the dawn of a new era of innovation, enterprise, and limitless possibilities. Heartiest congratulations to Skyroot Aerospace, ISRO, and IN-SPACe on the successful launch of Vikram-1, India's first privately developed orbital rocket. This landmark achievement reflects the transformative vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to open India's space sector to private participation, laying the foundation for a vibrant ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship."

"The success of Mission Aagaman is not only a milestone in space exploration but also a catalyst for new opportunities in science, technology, research, manufacturing, startups, and high-skilled employment. It strengthens India's position as a global innovation powerhouse and inspires millions of young minds to turn their aspirations into achievements."

TTD plans stronger safety measures on Alipiri path to tackle wildlife threats



Tirumala, July 18 : Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Additional Executive Officer Sri C.H. Venkayya Chowdary on Saturday directed officials to implement stronger safety measures for devotees using the Alipiri walking path and prepare a comprehensive action plan to control the movement of wild animals in the Tirumala forest region.

Chairing a review meeting with TTD and Forest Department officials at the Sudharma Meeting Hall in the Padmavathi Rest House, Tirumala, the Additional EO stressed the need for coordinated efforts among all departments to ensure the safety of devotees.

Venkayya Chowdary instructed officials to conduct a detailed analysis of wild animal incidents reported in recent years, study their patterns and prepare a permanent preventive strategy. He

directed officials to scientifically examine the movement routes and behaviour of wild animals, identify vulnerable zones and implement suitable safety measures.

He also asked officials to review the three major risk factors already identified regarding wildlife movement and prepare an action plan to minimise threats. Regular assessment of the number and condition of wild animals in the Tirumala forest area was also emphasised.

The Additional EO directed officials to study the impact of shops operating along the Alipiri walking path on wildlife movement and devotee safety. He stressed strengthening waste management systems in forest areas to prevent food waste from attracting wild animals towards the pedestrian route.

Skyroot's Vikram-I becomes first private Indian rocket to reach orbit

Sriharikota, July 18  
Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-I small satellite launch vehicle successfully lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, on Saturday, marking a historic milestone in India's space programme as the first orbital launch by a private Indian company from Indian soil. The rocket was launched at 12:05:30 PM and successfully placed multiple payloads into orbit, including two satellites — SCOPE and Grahaa — into Low Earth Orbit (LEO). Other payloads carried by the upper stage will be used for various in-orbit experiments.

The achievement follows the Government of India's space sector reforms announced in 2020, which opened the sector for greater private participation. The new Indian Space Policy has accelerated the growth of space startups involved in launch vehicles, satellite development and space applications.

With the successful mission, Skyroot Aerospace has become the first private Indian company to conduct an orbital launch from the country, achieving the feat in its maiden attempt. The Vikram-I is a

four-stage rocket featuring three solid propulsion stages and one liquid stage, designed to launch small satellites into LEO. Skyroot had earlier conducted the successful sub-orbital test flight of Vikram-S from Sriharikota on November 18, 2022.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and IN-SPACe provided extensive support to the mission by enabling access to testing facilities, technical assistance and launch-related infrastructure. ISRO facilities at Satish Dhawan Space Centre were used for solid motor casting and validation, while the liquid engine Raman-I underwent testing at the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC). IN-SPACe facilitated regulatory approvals, technical consultations, mission readiness reviews and access to ISRO facilities for the private space venture. ISRO and IN-SPACe congratulated Skyroot Aerospace on the successful maiden orbital launch, stating that the mission would encourage more private sector participation and open new global commercial opportunities in space.



Minister Nara Lokesh attended with his son the launch programme of\*\*Vikram-I (Mission Aagaman)\*\* — India's first private orbital rocket — conducted from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SHAR), Sriharikota.

SVIMS hosts CME on obesity management and mobility

Experts highlight importance of weight control, diabetic foot care and early diagnosis of endocrine disorders

The South India Times  
Tirupati, July 18 : The Department of Endocrinology at Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences (SVIMS) organised a Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme titled "Obesity to Mobility" on Saturday as part of the Andhra Pradesh Endocrine Society Annual Conference, focusing on obesity-related health challenges and advanced treatment approaches.

The programme was held at the Sri Padmavathi Auditorium, OPD Block, SVIMS, under the guidance of SVIMS Director and Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. V. Kumar.

SVIMS Medical Superintendent Dr. Ram informed that the session aimed to create awareness among medical professionals about the impact of obesity and related complications.

Prof. & Head, Unit-1, Dr. Nitin Kapoor from CMC Vellore delivered a presentation on "Musculoskeletal Health in Obesity", explaining that excessive weight places pressure on muscles, joints and bones, increasing the risk of knee pain,



back pain and mobility-related problems. He stressed the importance of balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, weight management and supervised weight reduction programmes to improve quality of life.

Prof. & Head Dr. Sriram Mahadevan from SRM Medical College, Chennai, spoke on "Lessons from Atypical Presentations, Complications and South Indian Experience on Primary Hyperparathyroidism". He high-

lighted the need for early diagnosis and timely treatment to prevent complications affecting bones and kidneys. Prof. & Head Dr. Sambit Das from Bhubaneswar presented on "Classification and Evaluation of Diabetic Foot", emphasising early detection, regular foot examinations and proper care among diabetic patients to prevent ulcers, infections and amputations.

A discussion session followed the presentations, with faculty members, doctors and postgraduate stu-

dents interacting with experts and clarifying their queries.

The programme concluded with Associate Professor Dr. Gayatri expressing gratitude to the speakers, organisers and participants. The event was attended by Dean Dr. Alok Sachan, Senior Grade Professor & Head of Medicine Dr. Alladi Mohan, Principal of Sri Padmavathi Women's Medical College Dr. Umamaheshwar Rao, Head of Community Medicine Dr. Anju and other faculty members.

Revenue Administration 2.0: The Next Decade

"The future of revenue administration will not be defined merely by digitising land records. It will be shaped by how effectively technology, transparency and public trust come together to protect one of society's most valuable assets—land."



By Ramesh Paka

Land is far more than a physical asset. It represents identity, livelihood, security, inheritance and economic opportunity. For decades, revenue administration has remained one of the most important pillars of governance, responsible for maintaining land records, protecting government property, resolving disputes and implementing welfare programmes.

Today, however, citizens expect far more than certified copies of records. They demand transparent, technology-driven, time-bound and citizen-friendly services.

The next decade presents a unique opportunity to transform revenue administration from a record-keeping institution into an intelligent governance ecosystem. Revenue Administration 2.0 is not simply about digitising files; it is about creating a system that delivers real-time, accurate and efficient public services.

While computerised land records, online registrations, digital mutation systems and GIS-based map-

ping have improved transparency, digitisation alone is not transformation. The real goal is to build an integrated digital land information system where every parcel of land has a unique digital identity backed by authenticated legal and spatial data. Such integration would reduce disputes, curb fraudulent transactions, simplify property verification and strengthen public confidence while enabling governments to make evidence-based policy decisions.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is expected to become a powerful partner in this transformation. Rather than replacing revenue officials, AI can assist them by

detecting discrepancies in land records, analysing mutation pendency, identifying encroachments and recognising suspicious transaction patterns within seconds. Predictive analytics can help identify areas vulnerable to disputes, prioritise surveys and monitor compliance with court orders. However, AI must remain an aid to human judgment, as legal interpretation, administrative discretion and natural justice can never be fully automated.

Similarly, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and drone technology are revolutionising land administration. GIS integrates ownership records, satellite

imagery, infrastructure and environmental data, enabling better planning for roads, irrigation, industries and urban development. Drone-based surveys equipped with high-resolution imaging and LiDAR technology provide faster, more accurate and transparent mapping while supporting disaster management, crop monitoring and encroachment detection.

Technology, however, has little value unless it improves citizens' lives. The revenue office of the future should not only be paperless but effortless. Citizens should be able to access records, track applications, verify property details and receive services

online without unnecessary visits to government offices. At the same time, assisted service centres must ensure that rural, elderly and digitally disadvantaged citizens are not excluded.

As governance becomes increasingly digital, cybersecurity will become equally important. Strong authentication systems, encrypted databases, blockchain-supported audit trails and regular security audits are essential to protect valuable land records from cyber threats and fraud.

Ultimately, technology alone cannot transform institutions. Success will depend on trained, ethical and citizen-focused officials

who combine technological competence with empathy and integrity. Revenue Administration 2.0 is more than a technological upgrade; it is a vision for smarter, transparent and trusted governance. As India moves towards data-driven development, the coming decade offers an opportunity not only to modernise land administration but also to strengthen the relationship between citizens and the State. The future of revenue administration will be measured not merely by advanced technology but by the trust it earns from the people it serves.

The Writer is General Secretary  
Telangana Tahsildars' Association

# GVMC Receives 'Operation Clean Sweep' Award

Vijayawada, Jul 18 : Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSRCP president, Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, today expressed shock over the horrific incident in Guntur city, where a woman was allegedly stripped and assaulted by a TDP leader, saying it is not just a stain on humanity but also a shocking reflection of the complete collapse of law and order in the state. "What is even more disturbing is that although the incident took place on Wednesday, it was allegedly kept under wraps for nearly three days. It was only after videos of the assault surfaced on 'social media' and triggered widespread public outrage that the government suddenly began projecting itself as taking swift action. This attempt to claim credit after trying to suppress the incident is deeply shameful," Jagan Mohan Reddy slammed.

## Defence official praises HSL's transformation, growth

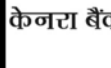


defence manufacturing sector. Calling upon employees to place the organisation's interests above individual interests, Anbarasu stressed that every employee has a vital role in nation-building. He urged Team HSL to work with unity, purpose and commitment to take the shipyard to new heights. Hindustan Shipyard Limited Chairman and Managing Director Rear Admiral Chandrasekhar Raghuram (Retd.), VSM, thanked the visiting dignitary for his guidance and encouragement.

## 9 NI Act Cases Worth Rs.49.10 Lakh Settled at Special Lok Adalat

Andhra Pradesh State Legal Services Authority, Justice Ravi Nath Tilhari, Executive Chairman of the Andhra Pradesh State Legal Services Authority, and Justice Battu Devanand, Chairman of the AP High Court Legal Services Committee. Two Special Benches were constituted for the Lok Adalat.

Commissioner Dr. D. Chandrasekhar also participated in the programme and highlighted the government's commitment to sustainable urban development and better civic amenities.



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- d. EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited in E-Wallet of **M/s. PSB Alliance Private Limited (BAANKNET)** portal directly or by generating the Challan therein to deposit the EMD through RTGS/NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan.
- e. After payment of the EMD amount, the intending bidders should submit a copy of the following documents/details on or before **05.08.2026**, to Canara Bank, **ARM Branch II Bangalore** by hand. i) EMD to be deposited in E-Wallet of M/s PSB Alliance Private Limited (BAANKNET) portal or by generating the Challan therein to deposit the EMD through RTGS/NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan. ii) Photocopies of PAN Card, ID Proof and Address proof. However, successful bidder would have to produce these documents in original to the Bank at the time of making payment of balance amount of 25% of bid amount. iii) Bid Form to be submitted.
- f. The intending bidders should register their names at portal <https://baanknet.com/> and get their User ID and password free of cost. Prospective bidder may avail online training on E- auction from the service provider. **M/s. PSB Alliance (BAANKNET) - e- mail: support.baanknet@psballiance.com**.
- g. EMD deposited by the unsuccessful bidder shall be refunded to them. The EMD/Sale proceeds shall not carry any interest.
- h. Auction would commence at Reserve Price, as mentioned above. Bidders shall improve their offers in multiples of **Rs. 1,00,000/-**. The bidder who submits the highest bid (above the Reserve price) on closure of 'Online 'auction shall be declared as successful bidder. Sale shall be confirmed in favour of the successful bidder, subject to confirmation of the same by the secured creditor.
- i. The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the sale price (inclusive of EMD already paid), immediately on declaring him/her as the successful bidder and the balance within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale by the secured creditor. If the successful bidder fails to pay the sale price, the deposit made by him shall be forfeited by the Authorized Officer without any notice and property shall forthwith be put up for sale again.
- j. For sale proceeds of **Rs. 50.00 Lacs** (Rupees Fifty Lacs only) and above, the successful bidder will have to deduct TDS at a rate 1% or as applicable rate on the sale proceeds and submit the original receipt of TDS certificate to the bank.
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|                                                      |                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Date : 17.07.2026</b><br><b>Place : Bengaluru</b> | <b>Sd/-Authorised Officer</b><br><b>Canara Bank</b> |
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INSIDE SONAM WANGCHUK'S EMERGENCY WARD

BARRICADES, SECURITY  
CORDON, QUESTIONS

EDITORIAL

US Attorney Backs  
DOJ's Explanation for  
Dropping Adani Case  
After Judge's Questions

The US attorney whose role in the decision to drop the criminal case against billionaire tycoon Gautam Adani was questioned by a federal judge has now told the court that he was not the decisionmaker and has no reason to doubt the Department of Justice's explanation for abandoning the prosecution.

In a sworn declaration filed on Friday (July 17), Joseph Nocella Jr., the US attorney for the eastern district of New York, said that principal associate deputy attorney general R. Trent McCotter alone decided to seek dismissal of the indictment after considering arguments presented by defence lawyers and Justice Department officials. Nocella said he attended several meetings in the case but that McCotter ultimately exercised his authority to conclude that further government resources should not be devoted to the prosecution.

"I was not the decisionmaker for the motion to dismiss," Nocella said. He added that both his May 11 email to defence lawyers and his signing of the Justice Department's May 18 motion to dismiss were done at McCotter's "direction, or authorisation".

He also told the court that he had "no basis to believe" that the reasons advanced by McCotter for dismissing the indictment were not "the real grounds upon which the application is based". Judge Nicholas Garaufis had directed Nocella to file the declaration after finding that a declaration submitted by Adani's lawyer, Robert Giuffra Jr., appeared to conflict with McCotter's earlier assertion that he had been the "final and sole decisionmaker" behind the government's move to dismiss the indictment. Giuffra's declaration disclosed a May 11 email from Nocella to defence lawyers rejecting one aspect of a settlement proposal while stating that "other grounds for resolution of the pending criminal charges with the Department of Justice are being explored". Specifically, Nocella wrote that the Justice Department "categorically rejected" the portion of the joint defence offer that proposed resolving the criminal charges "by, in part, a general proposal to invest \$10 billion in the United States. He also clarified that any settlements with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) or the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control would remain independent of the criminal case.

In his July 15 order, Judge Garaufis said the email appeared to suggest that Nocella was involved in determining the "grounds for resolution" of the criminal case as recently as May 11, about a week before the Justice Department moved to dismiss the indictment. That, the judge wrote, appeared to contradict McCotter's claim that he alone made the decision and called into question whether the reasons offered by the department were the complete explanation for seeking dismissal. The judge therefore ordered Nocella to state under oath whether he agreed with McCotter's stated reasons for dismissing the case and whether any additional grounds existed for the decision. The declaration comes after judge Garaufis repeatedly questioned the Justice Department's attempt to dismiss the criminal case against Adani.

The atmosphere inside Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital shifted from routine medical chaos to a high-security fortress the moment Sonam Wangchuk was wheeled in. The engineer, activist and environmentalist, who had been on a 21-day hunger strike at Jantar Mantar to demand the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over paper leaks, was moved from the protest site and brought to the emergency ward of the hospital by the Delhi Police due to his deteriorating health. Walking into the hospital felt like entering a restricted zone. The air was thick with tension. Every single entrance, corridor, and exit was heavily guarded by Delhi Police officers. Iron barricades lined the hallways and personnel were stopping almost everyone - questioning visitors, attendants, and even patients before letting them pass. By the time I managed to make my way into the emergency ward, the security presence had doubled. Security officials stood shoulder to shoulder, their eyes scanning the crowd. Hospital staff, nurses, and relatives of other patients stopped in their tracks, looking around with a mix of curiosity and anxiety. Whispers echoed through the halls as people tried to piece together what was happening. "Who is inside? Why is there so much security?" was the silent question on everyone's face. Sonam Wangchuk was moved into the emergency ward at exactly 7.30 am. A dedicated team of doctors was already at his bedside, conducting a series of medical tests. Also beside him, amidst the chaos of police presence and medical equipment, stood his wife. The hunger strike at Jantar Mantar may have been paused, but inside the walls of Safdarjung, a different, quieter battle had just begun. A medical bulletin released on Saturday afternoon by Safdarjung Hospital stated that Wangchuk has refused intravenous fluids and any other medication advised by doctors. "Although



intravenous fluids were advised, the patient has refused all intravenous fluids, oral rehydration solution and any other medication," the hospital said. He is being continuously monitored and counselled to accept treatment in the interest of his health, the statement added. I reached Jantar Mantar at around 7 am on Saturday, expecting another day of protest as supporters prepared for what was to be the 21st day of Sonam Wangchuk's indefinite hunger strike. Instead, it quickly became evident that something unusual was about to unfold. Security was unusually heavy. Delhi Police personnel were deployed in large numbers, along with the Rapid Action Force, CRPF and other paramilitary units. Several officers were in plain clothes, making it difficult to distinguish them from the crowd. There was a sense of uncertainty among the protesters, who appeared anxious but were unaware of what was about to happen. Wangchuk had joined the protest on June 28 and had been on an indefinite hunger strike since then. According to those associated with the protest, he had lost nearly 8.5 to 9 kg and his

health had severely deteriorated. His condition became the subject of a petition before the Delhi High Court, which observed that "every life is precious". The court directed the Central and Delhi Governments to ensure his daily medical examination and ordered that a team of doctors continuously monitor his health. Events on Saturday morning unfolded rapidly. A group of police personnel moved towards the main stage where Wangchuk was resting. They quickly covered the stage with white sheets, shielding the activity from public view. Behind those sheets, Wangchuk was carefully lifted and carried away. He was then swiftly transferred to an ambulance waiting just outside the barricaded protest site. NDTV was the first television channel on the ground to witness and report these developments as they happened. For several minutes, many protesters did not fully understand what had taken place. As word spread that Wangchuk had been removed, people rushed towards the stage and attempted to stop the police. There was brief resistance, but officers managed the situation while repeatedly urg-

ing people to remain calm. They maintained that they were acting in compliance with the Delhi High Court's directions regarding Wangchuk's health. One notable detail was that Abhijeet Dipke, founder of the Cockroach Janta Party, was not present when Wangchuk was taken away. Several protesters told NDTV that Dipke had stepped out to use the restroom at a friend's residence. Dipke later alleged that he had been assaulted and detained by the police. Nearly two hours after the incident, he returned to Jantar Mantar and announced from the stage that he would continue the movement by beginning his own hunger strike. After Wangchuk's removal, the protest site remained under tight security. The area was effectively sealed for nearly half an hour as additional police personnel entered the premises. Some protesters who attempted to create a disturbance were detained. The atmosphere remained tense for almost two hours. Throughout this period, police officials repeatedly made announcements over loudspeakers, informing protesters that Wangchuk had been shifted to hos-

pital under the High Court's directions and urging them to disperse peacefully. The protesters, however, remained visibly agitated. Many raised slogans against Delhi Police, accusing authorities of suppressing democratic dissent and calling Wangchuk's removal an attack on the right to protest. Despite the tense atmosphere and heavy deployment, the protest did not end. Later, Safdarjung Hospital confirmed that Sonam Wangchuk was admitted at around 7:40 am. According to the hospital, he was weak due to prolonged fasting and dehydration. Doctors said that while he was stable at the time of admission, he required continuous observation, monitoring and medical treatment to restore his health. Saturday morning's events marked one of the most dramatic moments in the ongoing protest - the removal of its most prominent face under heavy security, in compliance with judicial directions, while emotions ran high on the ground. Videos from the morning showed protesters trying to stop police access to Wangchuk, before being overpowered. The police used white sheets to form a cover around Wangchuk while they moved him. He has been taken to Safdarjung Hospital, where Wangchuk's wife Gitanjali Angmo has reached. "Nothing should be administered to him orally or intravenously without take consent from me, his family and his doctors who have been monitoring his health for the past 20 days," she said on X. Angmo has said she will lead Wangchuk's march to parliament scheduled for July 20 in his stead if he is unable to join it. Wangchuk and three student activists from the All India Students' Association (AISA) - Neha, Aamen and Manish - have been on an indefinite hunger strike demanding the resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan and changes to India's examination and education system.

TIME FOR SOCIAL REFORM:

DRUG-FREE YOUTH, DECENT CULTURE AND CRIME-FREE HARYANA

-Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

The greatest strength of any state is its youth. If youth are equipped with education, employment, values, and opportunities, they can elevate the state and nation to new heights. However, if these same youth are exposed to drug addiction, crime, and distraction, this very strength becomes a significant challenge for society. Today, the growing trend of drug abuse in many parts of the country, including Haryana, the influence of gangster culture, the glorification of crime on social media, and the increasing obscenity in stage programs are issues that require serious consideration. These problems cannot be resolved solely by relying on the law; instead, society, families, artists, educational institutions, and the administration must all shoulder their responsibilities together. The first and foremost fight should be against drug addiction. If addiction is eradicated, a major cause of crime will automatically disappear. Addiction ruins not only the individual but the entire family. When a youth falls prey to addiction, they drop out of school, their health deteriorates, their family faces financial crisis, and they gradually begin to drift towards the world of crime. Drug addiction often becomes the primary cause of crimes like theft, robbery, violence, and murder. Therefore, a drug-free society is not only a matter of health, but also of

law and order and social development. Every parent dreams of their son or daughter leading a respectable life through education. No mother wants her son to be ruined before her eyes by drug addiction. Therefore, the primary goal of the government, administration, and society should be to protect the young generation from drug addiction. If youth are safe, families will be safe, and if families are safe, society and the nation will also become stronger. A system should be developed that ensures no mother cries upon seeing her son's dead body, and no father has to despair for his son's future. Police action alone is not enough against drug abuse. Regular awareness campaigns must be conducted in schools, colleges, and universities. Students must be involved in sports, libraries, cultural activities, and skill development. Young people must be convinced that true success in life lies not in addiction, but in hard work, education, and discipline. De-addiction centers in villages and cities must be made more effective so that those who have fallen into the grip of addiction can be respectfully brought back into the mainstream. Additionally, gangster culture has become a serious social challenge. Some criminal organizations lure innocent and underage children into crime. Young children are lured into crime by the allure of easy money, expensive cars, weapons, and

social media fame. Often, these children are unaware of the quagmire they are entering. By the time they realize the reality, their future, their families, and their lives are already in jeopardy. The most worrying thing is that the adults who commit crimes remain silent while inciting innocent children. Ultimately, these children and their families bear the brunt of the crime. A minor's involvement in crime exposes his or her entire family to social humiliation, financial hardship, and mental anguish. Therefore, strict action against such criminal gangs is the need of the hour. The police administration constantly strives to control crime, but the cooperation of society is equally essential. If suspicious activities are observed in any area, if someone is luring children into crime or dealing in illegal weapons and drugs, it is the duty of every responsible citizen to inform the relevant authorities. Only collective awareness of society can be the most effective weapon against criminals. Social media has also exacerbated this problem. Today, some people portray gangsters as heroes. Their songs, videos, and posts portray crime as a symbol of power and honor. This trend has a negative impact on the minds of young people. Society needs to break these myths and introduce young people to real heroes—those who have brought glory to the nation through education,

science, sports, the military, agriculture, industry, and social service. Similarly, serious consideration is needed regarding the direction of cultural programs and stage events. Haryana has a rich cultural heritage. Its raginis, folk songs, folk dances, and traditional arts are hallmarks of Indian culture. These folk traditions, along with entertainment, also imparted moral education, social messages, and cultural dignity. However, over time, complaints have emerged regarding the increasing vulgarity, obscenity, and unnecessary display in some stage programs. It is inappropriate for family viewing programs to feature scenes that adversely affect children and adolescents. Artists are a source of inspiration for society. Their words, their clothing, their performances, and their behavior reach millions. Therefore, artists' social responsibility is as great as their popularity. Haryana's artists should be expected to maintain decorum on stage. Entertainment does not necessarily mean obscenity. Art becomes great when it unites, inspires, and positively guides society. The soul of folk culture lies in its simplicity, sensitivity, and social consciousness. If the stage becomes merely a medium for provocation, it loses its original identity. Wherever public events are held, the organizers should be held accountable. They should adhere to the rules set by the administration.

Road accidents: not individual negligence, but a challenge to public health and good governance

- Dr. Satyavan Saurabh

India is among the world's most affected countries by road accidents. According to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, approximately 177,000 people died in road accidents in 2024. This number is no less than that of any natural disaster or epidemic. Every day, hundreds of families lose a loved one, thousands are permanently disabled, and the country suffers a loss of productive human resources and billions of rupees in economic losses. Therefore, limiting road accidents solely to driver negligence, speeding, or traffic violations is tantamount to a complete failure of public health, road infrastructure, law enforcement, emergency medical services, and administrative coordination. The issue of road safety is directly linked to citizens' right to life, guaranteed by Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. If a citizen cannot even walk safely on the road, it not only reflects their individual negligence but also questions the state's responsibility and the effectiveness of governance. The Supreme Court has also directed governments in numerous cases to ensure safe road infrastructure, scientific road construction, and effective monitoring. Poor road engineering is a major cause of most accidents in India. Black spots, inadequate signage, broken roads, unscientific curves, lack of lighting, and a lack of safe pedestrian access on many national and state highways contribute to accidents. Encroachment

on sidewalks, illegal parking, and unplanned traffic management in cities also increase the risk of accidents. Neglecting quality and safety standards during road construction ultimately costs citizens their lives. Another important reason is the lack of effective enforcement of laws. Despite the Motor Vehicles Act's stringent penalties, problems such as speeding, drunk driving, not using helmets and seat belts, and overloading persist. In many places, enforcement of traffic rules is limited only by the presence of police. If monitoring systems are technology-based and transparent, compliance with rules may increase automatically. Road accidents are also considered a public health crisis because the lack of timely medical care after an accident results in a large number of deaths. Many lives can be saved if victims receive proper medical attention during the Golden Hour, but in rural and remote areas, the situation becomes critical due to a lack of ambulance services, a lack of trauma centers, and delays in reaching hospitals. Lack of coordination between the police and health departments often impacts relief efforts. Even at the administrative level, road safety is a subject of fragmented responsibility among multiple departments. Road construction is handled by one department, traffic control by the police, health services are under another department, and local bodies have their own roles. This fragmented system prevents the develop-

ment of a coordinated strategy for accident prevention. Consequently, accountability remains unclear. To ensure road safety, it is essential to ensure scientific and safe road engineering. Safety audits should be mandatory for every road project, and accident-prone areas should be identified and remediated promptly. The needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and the disabled should also be integral to road design. Technology-based monitoring systems should be expanded to ensure traffic law enforcement. Automated speed cameras, CCTV networks, artificial intelligence-based traffic management, and e-challan systems will reduce corruption and promote compliance. Repeat offenders need to be suspended for licenses and strict penalties imposed. Strengthening emergency medical services is also crucial. Modern trauma centers should be established at regular intervals along national and state highways, ambulance services should be expanded, and all hospitals should be mandated to provide immediate treatment to accident victims. Effective implementation of "Good Samaritan" guidelines is also essential, so that citizens who assist an injured person are not deterred by fear of legal consequences. Road safety is not just a matter of law, but also a question of social behavior. Road safety education should be included in the curriculum, from schools to universities. A culture of responsible driving should be developed among citi-

zens through public awareness campaigns. Active participation of parents, teachers, the media, and civil society can play a vital role in this direction. Institutional reforms are also essential for long-term solutions. A coordinated road safety framework should be developed between the central and state governments, with clear policymaking, funding, monitoring, and accountability. District-level road safety committees should be given greater authority and resources. Accident data from the police, transport, and health departments should be integrated to create a reliable national database, enabling evidence-based policymaking. If India is to progress towards becoming a developed nation, safe roads are a primary prerequisite. Road accidents are not a matter of fate or coincidence, but in most cases, are preventable. The need is to view them not as mere individual errors, but as a challenge to public health and good governance. Only through safe road infrastructure, strict and transparent law enforcement, modern emergency health services, public awareness, and effective administrative coordination can accidents be significantly reduced. Until the government makes road safety a core development agenda, millions of families will continue to suffer and the country will suffer irreparable losses every year. Safe roads are not just a convenience, but a constitutional and human right of every citizen.



## Diamonds and 'cab to orbit': Rocket aiming to transform India's space ambitions takes off

What if launching a satellite was as easy as calling a cab? That's the vision behind an Indian private rocket company that achieved its first orbital launch on Saturday. Skyroot Aerospace, which recently became India's first space tech unicorn after reaching \$1.1bn valuation, launched Vikram-1 from the Indian Space Research Organisation's (Isro) launch facility in Sriharikota in southern India. The seven-storey rocket lifted off at 12:05 India time [06:35 GMT] and travelled 280 miles (450km) to reach the Low Earth Orbit in a 16-minute flight. Skyroot is the first Indian private company to launch a rocket into orbit, making India only the third country, after the US and China, with a private company capable of orbital launches. "Vikram-1 Test Flight-1 has reached orbit... History is made," the company posted on X. The successful Vikram-1 launch will take



Skyroot closer to its goal of offering what it calls a "cab service to space", where companies can hire a rocket "to ride to a unique location in the orbit to place a satellite or visit a space station". The rocket - named after

Vikram Sarabhai, who is called the father of India's space programme - is small and has the capacity to carry payloads of up to 350kg, Skyroot co-founder and CEO Pawan Kumar Chandana told the BBC

before the launch. Chandana says today, access to space remains "a major bottleneck, with satellite operators often waiting for months or even years for a launch opportunity" and that their venture expects to change that. He says Skyroot aims to cut long waits for satellite launches by offering dedicated missions for small payloads. Instead of sharing space on large rockets that fly on fixed schedules, customers can book a launch tailored to their satellite and its required orbit - much like taking a taxi instead of waiting for a train. "If you want to just go to a friend's house, you don't need a train, you book a cab, an Uber. What we are offering is a cab service to space, which can be used to ride to a unique location in the orbit to place a satellite or visit a station." Skyroot's model would appear similar to that of Rocket Lab in the US, which provides small-lift launch vehicles.

## Samsung Introduces New 990 SSD with Powerful Performance and Improved Power Efficiency

**July 18, 2026** –Samsung India today announced the launch of its new 990 SSD, available in 1-terabyte (TB) and 2TB capacities. Delivering exceptional sequential performance and enhanced power efficiency, the Samsung 990 SSD is designed as a balanced storage solution optimized for gaming, creative workloads, and daily PC use. "Samsung's new 990 SSD is an excellent solution for a wide range of users looking to expand their storage for heavy workloads, immersive gaming, high-resolution content creation, and DIY PC builds," said Tommy (Hyoungsuk) Kwon, Vice President of Memory Brand Product Biz Team at Samsung Electronics. Thanks to PCIe 4.0 support and the latest NAND technologies, the Samsung 990 SSD 2TB model delivers a sequential read speed of up to 7,250 megabytes per



second (MB/s), while the 1TB model reaches up to 7,150 MB/s. Both models provide sequential write speeds of up to 6,450 MB/s, enabling fast file transfers and reduced loading times. For random performance, the 2TB model delivers up to 850K read and 1,200K write IOPS, while the 1TB model reaches read and write speeds of up to 700K and 1,100K IOPS, respec-

tively. These capabilities help users experience faster application launches, responsive gameplay, and efficient handling of large-scale workloads. The expanded storage capacity also allows users to store large amounts of high-quality content and the latest AAA games. The 2TB model can store up to 30 large-scale games based on an average size of 64GB[1], making it an

ideal solution for gamers and creators managing increasingly sizable files and applications. The Samsung 990 SSD has also achieved significant improvements in power efficiency. Compared to its previous 990 PRO model, the power efficiency has improved by up to 38%[2], allowing users achieve high performance with lower power consumption. The Samsung Magician Software helps ensure SSDs—including the Samsung 990—maintain optimal performance. It supports seamless data migration and drive health monitoring, enabling users to benefit from customized performance optimization and robust data protection. The Samsung 990 SSD will be available in 1TB and 2TB models from the last week of July 2026, with an MSRP of INR 25,649 and INR 50,349, respectively.

## AndPurpose Forum Hyderabad 2026: Bringing Together Leaders to Shape India's Sustainable and Inclusive Future

**T-Hub, Hyderabad** : The AndPurpose Forums, one of India's leading convening platforms for sustainability, climate innovation, CSR, impact investing, and social entrepreneurship, successfully hosted its fourth edition on 17 July 2026 at T-Hub, Hyderabad. Bringing together influential voices from government, industry, startups, philanthropy, academia, and the social impact ecosystem, the Forum served as a collaborative platform to exchange ideas, showcase innovations, and build partnerships that can accelerate sustainable development across India. This year's Forum featured an eminent lineup of speakers, including Masood Mallick (Managing Director & Group CEO, RE Sustainability); Gopalakrishnan VC (Director - Automotive & EV, Government of Telangana); Radhika Choudary (Co-Founder, Freyr Energy); Vamsi Udayagiri (Founder & CEO, Hesa); V. Laxmikanth (Managing Partner, Pavestone); Krishna Mohan Deevi (Senior Director, Cyient); Namita Banka (Founder & MD, Banka BioLoo); Alokparna Sengupta (Managing Director, Humane World for Animals India Foundation); Dr. Sujeet Ranjan (CEO, United Way of Delhi); Rashi Aggarwal (Chief Growth Officer), T-Hub; Rashmi Pimpale (CEO, Rich); Yashodhara Bakliwal (AVP - Portfolio Investments, Transition VC); Ashish Khetan (Founding Partner, Benzai 10 Investment Ventures); Vivek Jain (Co-Founder & CEO, Stride Green), along with several other distinguished leaders from the sustainability, innovation, CSR, investment,



and policy ecosystem. As aptly said by Masood Mallick, Managing Director & Group CEO, Re Sustainability, India's circular economy is no longer a matter of environmental responsibility alone. It is, at once, an environmental imperative, an economic opportunity, and a strategic necessity – a US \$300-400 billion opportunity by 2030 that will shape how we secure our materials, power our industry, and meet our climate commitments. An opportunity

of this scale cannot be unlocked by any single actor, sector, or approach. It calls for transformation of many kinds and at many levels. The 'soft' – knowledge, advisory, strategy, research and capital – must integrate seamlessly with the 'hard' - infrastructure, engineering, technology and implementation at scale. Academia, startups, MSMEs and large corporates must move from working in parallel to building together. And the instinct to 'build'

must be complemented by the flexibility to buy, partner, catalyse and incubate. Just as critically, we can no longer treat materials, resources, energy, water, climate and carbon as separate problems. They are one interconnected system, and they must be seen – and solved – together. The real unlock lies in integration: connecting the first mile to the last, the upstream to the downstream, so that scale and viability emerge where, today, they simply do not exist. At Re, we see our role not merely as an operator, but as an integrator and catalyst for this entire ecosystem. Through our initiatives, partnerships and platforms, we stand for one idea above all – scale, for good. More than 200+ leaders, innovators, investors, corporates, policymakers, startups, foundations, CSR professionals, and ecosystem enablers participated in the one-day forum, reinforcing AndPurpose's commitment to fostering meaningful dialogue and cross-sector collaboration that drives measurable social and environmental impact. A Forum Designed to Build Meaningful Partnerships The AndPurpose Forum was established with a clear vision - to create trusted spaces where leaders across sectors can move beyond conversations and work together to address India's most pressing sustainability and development challenges. Each edition brings together stakeholders from government, business, philanthropy, academia, civil society, startups, and the investment ecosystem to exchange perspectives, identify opportunities for collaboration, and collectively advance solutions with long-term impact.

## TG RERA ASKS BUILDER TO REFUND RS 1.04 CRORE OVER GST ISSUES

Telangana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (TG RERA) has directed Hyderabad-based Sukhii LLP to refund Rs 1.04 crore to a buyer, stating that the firm cannot impose Goods and Services Tax (GST) on a customer who has opted out. The authority asked the firm to refund the loan with an interest rate of 10.7 per cent in 45 days. The case was filed by Vemulapalli Sai Vasanthi and Ghattamaneni Venkat Sai Maithreya against Sukhii LLP, which had booked apartment number 510 in the Sree Sumeru residential project at Uppal Bhagayath. The apartment, measuring 1,695 square feet with two car parking spaces, was booked in December 2022 and the agreement for sale was executed in February 2023. According to the agreement, the developer had undertaken to complete construction, obtain the occupancy certificate (OC) and hand over possession with registration by March 31, 2025, with a grace period up to June 30, 2025. The buyer paid Rs 1,04,87,870, nearly 95 per cent of the total sale consideration. Project remains incomplete Despite the expiry of the deadline for completing the project, it remained incomplete. The complainant informed the TG RERA that



several promised amenities, including the clubhouse, gymnasium, landscaped areas, children's play area and internal roads, were yet to be completed. The project had also not obtained the OC, preventing registration and possession. The customer alleged that repeated requests for a completion deadline was unanswered, while the developer failed to provide any assurance regarding the project's completion. Buyers seek refund due to delay Following the delay in handing over the flats, buyer wrote an email in July 2025 and sought a refund, along with the interest from the builder. In September 2025, the customer conveyed his wish to opt out of the project and sought a refund of the entire amount. According to the complaint, the construction firm informed the customer that they could opt out of the project after paying the GST amount. GST can't be

imposed if project is incomplete After hearing the complaint, the TGRERA said that representatives from the construction firm appeared only once during the proceedings. Since no written counter or explanation was filed, the authority proceeded ex parte and decided the matter based on the evidence placed by the complainants. Invoking Section 18(1) of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, TG RERA held that once a promoter fails to hand over possession within the agreed timeline, and the allottee chooses to withdraw, the buyer becomes entitled to a full refund along with interest. The TG RERA ordered that a promoter who has defaulted can't impose unilateral deductions such as booking charges, GST or any other arbitrary amounts, adding that it would defeat the consumer-protection objective of the RERA Act.

## Telangana HC shields Doolapally homeowners in FTL dispute

**Hyderabad**: The Telangana High Court on Friday, July 17, directed the state government not to take any forcible action against a group of homeowners in Doolapally in Hyderabad, days after authorities accused them of having built their houses within the Full Tank Level (FTL) area of the Fox Sagar Lake. The FTL of a lake marks the maximum water spread level it can reach, and construction within this zone or its buffer area is barred under law to protect the water body. Justice B Vijayans Reddy passed the interim order while hearing an urgent petition filed by the homeowners challenging two government orders issued on July 7, which had revoked earlier clearances for their properties. The matter will next be heard on July 27. What the case is about The petitioners had built their houses on the disputed survey numbers after obtaining the required government permissions and occupancy certificates. Their land use had been formally changed from "recreational" to "residential" through government orders issued in 2019 and 2023.



The two fresh orders passed on July 7 this year revoked those very approvals, holding that the survey numbers actually fell within the FTL of Fox Sagar lake and that all permissions linked to them needed to be cancelled pending a fresh inquiry into how the lake's FTL was fixed. Appearing for the petitioners, senior counsel A Venkatesh and advocate K Pratik Reddy argued that the government's own record, the official land survey map and a preliminary notification uploaded on the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority's (HMDA) website, showed that the properties actually

lay outside the lake's buffer zone and FTL. They also pointed out that the government itself had admitted that its examination of records and the inquiry into the lake's FTL were still under way. This, they argued, made the cancellation of the homeowners' permissions premature and arbitrary, since it had been carried out even before the inquiry was complete. High Court's order After going through the case records, the High Court granted interim protection to the homeowners, restraining the state authorities from taking any coercive steps, such as demolition or sealing.

## 'Uber For Space': What Skyroot CEO Pawan Chandana Said On Competing With SpaceX



As Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram-1 became the first Indian private rocket to reach orbit, Chief Executive Officer Pawan Kumar Chandana's old statement resurfaced where he laid out his vision for the company, describing it as the "Uber for space". Comparing Skyroot To SpaceX In an appearance on NDTV Profit's The Disruptors show, Chandana was asked about an earlier comparison he had drawn between Skyroot and SpaceX, describing SpaceX as "the bus, or the train that carries satellites" and Skyroot as "the cab". He said the analogy captures exactly what the

company is trying to build. "So that's what we aim to be, you know, we want to become the Uber for space," Chandana said. "What we do is that satellite companies book the rocket, just like you book a cab, and then go to wherever they want." "Typically if you want to go to your home, you don't book a train, you have to book a cab to go specifically to your place. So there are satellites who want to go specifically to certain locations in space. And we're Uber for them, where they book the rocket, put their satellite onto the rocket, launch to space and get them dropped wherever they want."

## Shri Vivek Nishant Nath takes charge as Director (Commercial), NMDC

**Hyderabad, 18th July**: Shri Vivek Nishant Nath assumed charge as Director (Commercial) of NMDC Limited, India largest iron ore producer. With over three decades of experience in the metal and mining sector, Shri Vivek Nishant Nath brings extensive experience in sales and marketing, international commercial operations, procurement, logistics and supply chain management. Shri Nath began his professional career with NMDC in 1992 and served the Company for nearly fifteen years in various commercial roles, gaining extensive experience in domestic iron ore sales and marketing. He subsequently held key positions in Essar Steel Limited and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India before joining Odisha Mining Corporation Limited (OMC) as General Manager (Sales Marketing) in 2021. He was subsequently promoted as Chief General Manager (Sales Marketing) in 2024 at OMC, where he headed the sales and marketing functions of iron ore, chrome ore, manganese ore, bauxite, lime-



stone and ferrochrome. During his tenure at OMC, the company recorded significant growth in iron ore sales and revenue. He played a key role in introducing customer-centric initiatives, transparent pricing mechanisms, digital systems and logistics reforms to improve commercial operations. Under his leadership, OMC iron ore sales increased from 12.33 million tonnes in FY21 to 38.26 million tonnes in FY26. His unwavering dedication to the sector is evident through his scholarly

contributions, having authored over 11 research papers on pertinent industry topics. Mr. Nath expertise is sought after in national and international forums, where he has been invited as keynote speaker and guest lectures at esteemed platforms such as SGX, Fastmarkets, Mysteel, SMM, IMARC, Metal Junction, Metalogic and Steelmint. He holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree in International Business from Symbiosis Centre for Management Studies, Pune. He has also completed the Management Development Programme in Business Administration and Management from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Indore. His experience across NMDC, leading private steel companies and Odisha Mining Corporation will be instrumental in strengthening NMDC commercial operations, enhancing customer engagement and supporting the Company vision of becoming a 100 million tonne iron ore mining company.

## Donald Trump threatens new Canada tariffs over fires sending 'filthy' air into US cities



US President Donald Trump has threatened to impose new tariffs on Canada after hundreds of wildfires have left much of the northern US covered by a blanket of smoke. The threat follows complaints by US lawmakers over the wildfires and Ontario's premier Doug Ford asking the US to send support to fight the fires, rather than complain. "The United States is being unnecessarily invaded by filthy, polluted, and unhealthy air," Trump said, threatening to impose new levies over Canada's "willful negligence". As of Saturday, there were about 955 fires actively burning in Canada, according to the Canadian Wildland Fire Information System - with the majority burning out of control. More than 190 of those blazes are burning in Ontario, some out of control. Trump said in his post to Truth Social that he would call Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney to demand an explanation over his country's "willful negligence," accusing the country of "not properly maintaining" their forests

and brush. Fellow Republicans have used the issue to renew Trump's call to make Canada the 51st US state, a musing that has offended Canadians and prompted many to stop travelling to their southern neighbour in protest. Others online suggested a delay in opening the Gordie Howe International Bridge, a Canada-funded project that will connect Ontario to Michigan. Carney earlier noted that it was the responsibility of both countries to fight climate change. After Trump's remarks, Carney's emergency management cabinet minister said the two countries remain in constant contact and share a long history of working together on such disasters, citing a reciprocal fire-fighting agreement from 1982 and another assistance agreement from emerged from the 2025 G7 summit. Canada has worked to prevent wildfires and invested about C\$12bn (\$8.5bn; £6.4bn) in forests sustainability and fire prevention, MP Eleanor Olaszewski said in the statement.



■ US strikes hit Iran for seventh consecutive night

## SHIP AT CENTRE OF RECORD COCAINE SEIZURE FINALLY LEAVES CORK

A ship detained at Cork port since 2.2 tonnes of cocaine worth an estimated 157m (£133.5m) was seized on it in September 2023 has finally left the harbour. Managing and maintaining the MV Matthew since then has cost the Irish state around 17m. The 28,000-tonne Panama-registered freighter could not be disposed of until December 2024 as it was needed for evidential purposes. An international shipping company later acquired the vessel for a nominal price of \$1 with an agreement to tow the vessel to Varna in Bulgaria. The Republic of Ireland's Revenue service confirmed its departure on Saturday. While berthed at Cork the costs included maintaining engine, electrical and ventilation systems. Eight men



were jailed for a total of 129 years last summer in connection with the record drugs seizure. Dr Atanas Rusev, from the Centre for the Study of Democracy, said managing "such big,

complex, high-value assets is a big drainage for public finance". "You usually need to coordinate between various authorities and deal with various legal proceedings,"

he said. Rusev added that this happening to a vessel this large is "rare" and that Irish authorities had dealt with the ship "relatively quickly". "Sometimes it takes five, 10, 15 years."

## MAGNITUDE 7.3 EARTHQUAKE QUAKE STRIKES OFF MEXICO COAST



A powerful magnitude 7.3 earthquake struck off the coast of southern Mexico on Friday, triggering a tsunami warning for parts of the Pacific. No fatalities or significant damage have been reported in Mexico or Guatemala from the quake, which was also felt in El Salvador. Mexico's navy secretary Admiral Raymundo Morales told a press conference that there was "no serious impact", but that people were being advised to stay away from beaches. The US Tsunami Warning System had warned of possible "hazardous tsunami waves" along the nearby coasts of Mexico and Guatemala. It later recorded waves of 0.3m (1.1 feet) above tide level in Puerto Madero and Chiapas in Mexico. Several hours after the initial warning was issued, the centre said the threat had passed but advised people in affected areas to "remain observant and exercise normal caution near the sea". The quake, which struck near the fishing town of Puerto Madero in Mexico at 08:49 local time (14:49 GMT) on Friday, had a depth of 15.2 km (9 miles), according to the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Governor Salomón Jara Cruz, of the southern Mexican state Oaxaca, said the quake was felt with "moderate intensity" but no significant damage had been reported. Eduardo Ramírez, governor of the state of Chiapas closest to

the epicentre, also said there had been no serious impact, but added he had instructed his cabinet to suspend administrative activities and urged the private sector to do the same. In Guatemala and El Salvador, the tremor shook buildings, triggering evacuations and causing some people to run from their homes, Reuters news agency reported. A series of aftershocks, with magnitudes between 4.7 and 6, have been recorded. Guatemala's President Bernardo Arévalo said the country's emergency management agency had been deployed in response to a magnitude 5.6 earthquake with its epicenter in Quetzaltenango. No fatalities have been recorded so far, he added. "I call on the population to remain calm and to follow the recommendations," he said on X. The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which operates the tsunami warning center, forecast waves of less than 0.3m above tide level along the coasts of El Salvador, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Honduras. A tsunami is a series of waves, with times between crests ranging from five minutes to an hour, that can persist for many hours, according to the agency. In this case, the waves lasted for 12 minutes in Puerto Madero and 28 minutes in Chiapas.

## EU PROPOSES SLOWING DOWN CUTS TO CARBON EMISSIONS FOR BUSINESSES

The European Union has unveiled proposals that would slow cuts to businesses' greenhouse gas emissions limits, as part of a major climate policy overhaul. The reforms would relax the rules of the bloc's emissions trading system (ETS) to give businesses more time to reduce their carbon output than previously planned. The changes would mean some industries could obtain emission allowances until 2038 instead of 2034, if they commit to investing in decarbonisation efforts. The proposals still need to be approved by EU countries and lawmakers - a process that could take a year. "We are adopting a more business-friendly and, may I say so, savvy approach," said EU climate commissioner Wopke Hoekstra. The European Commission, which develops legislation for the EU's 27 member states, said the changes would ensure the ETS was aligned with the EU's goal to reduce carbon emissions by 90% by 2040, compared with 1990 levels. The ETS, which



was introduced in 2005, is the EU's main tool for curbing greenhouse gases. But it has come under criticism from a number of member states, with Italy in particular condemning the trading scheme as a de facto tax that has helped keep energy prices artificially high. Under the ETS, Europe's industries and power plants are required to buy a permit, or allowance, for every tonne of carbon dioxide they emit, creating a financial incentive to invest in cleaner technologies. Companies can buy extra permits or trade them. Some businesses are given permits for free to help them compete with foreign firms that do not

pay carbon costs. The ETS also caps the number of permits released each year to make sure missions decrease. The Commission has proposed slowing the rate at which this cap is lowered each year to around 3.7% from 2031 and then to 1.7% from 2036 - down from 4.3% currently. As part of the changes, the EU also proposes continuing free permits until 2038, rather than ending them in 2034, when they were to be replaced by a carbon border charge on imports for some sectors. The Commission would also offer 80% of free permits up front to companies with

plans to invest in decarbonisation in Europe. Businesses would get the remaining 20% once those investments are made. Responding to the proposals, Polish climate minister Paulina Hennig-Kloska said Poland would push to weaken the policy further. "For the first time, we are seeing a softening of the stance rather than a toughening of it - this is a huge success for Poland. Although we will fight for more," she said. But Green politicians were less impressed. A German member of the European Parliament, Michael Bloss, said the plans would result in "gigantic climate pollution" and the next generation would have a worse quality of life as a result. Global temperatures have been rising over the past century due to human activities that release greenhouse gases emissions, but local or regional geography shapes the speed at which different places are warming. As Europe is warming particularly quickly, it is being more exposed to frequent and stronger spells of extreme heat.

## LAOS SAYS IT CAN'T DETERMINE CAUSE OF TOURIST DEATHS LINKED TO METHANOL



Laos says it cannot determine blame or cause for six deaths linked to methanol-tainted alcohol. A Briton, two Australians, two Danish citizens and an American died in November 2024 following a night out in Vang Vieng. Laos Ministry of Public Security said they did not have evidence to establish if the deaths "were caused by the actions of any individual or by any particular cause, because no autopsies were conducted on the bodies". It emerged earlier this week that the distillery owner is facing charges for the sale of food products harmful to health and operating an illegal business, but not the deaths. The

charges collectively carry penalties of up to one year in jail and a fine of £829 (US\$1,100; A\$1,600) against those allegedly responsible. In response, the Australian government said it was "deeply frustrated and bitterly disappointed" more serious charges had not been pursued following the deaths of the six backpackers. Australia's foreign ministry summoned Laos' ambassador in Canberra. In its statement on Saturday, the Laos Ministry of Public Security said authorities had not been allowed to conduct autopsies in 2024, and therefore "lacked the forensic evidence necessary to determine the cause of death".

## GERMAN POLITICIAN RESIGNS OVER SURROGACY CHILD CONTROVERSY

German centre-right politician Jens Spahn has resigned as parliamentary group leader of the country's governing coalition after being accused of hypocrisy over his use of a surrogate mother in the US to have a child. Surrogacy is prohibited in Germany - a policy backed by his Christian Democrat party (CDU) and, several years ago, by Spahn himself - although raising a child born to a surrogate mother abroad is not. He wrote in a statement on Saturday: "I have realised that my personal happiness - founding a family together with my husband and becoming a father - is not compatible with my political office." Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who leads the CDU, called his decision "right" and "inevitable". "Credibility is the highest asset in politics,"



he wrote on social media, and said he would begin the process of appointing Spahn's replacement. Spahn, 46, revealed earlier this week that he and his husband Daniel Funke had become parents, with their use of a surrogate abroad prompting criticism from politicians from several parties, including his own. Announcing his resignation on Saturday, Spahn wrote: "The balancing

act between my private decision to have a child through surrogacy and the understandable expectations placed on me as Chairman of our parliamentary group has become greater than I anticipated," he added. He also said the "increasing relentlessness in public discourse" had given him "deep pause for thought". "Despite all clarity and decisiveness regarding the issues, let us always

remain human in our tone," he wrote. German media reported Alexander Hoffmann, head of the Christian Social Union parliamentary group, would take over Spahn's duties until a successor was chosen. Hoffmann said: "Jens Spahn's decision deserves the utmost respect." Under the 1990 Embryo Protection Act, surrogacy in Germany is punishable with three years imprisonment or a fine. For many German couples, single-sex or heterosexual, surrogacy abroad has become an important option. As recently as February, Spahn's party signed a resolution reaffirming its support for a ban on the practice within Germany itself, to stop the emergence of "commercial or neutral models that turn surrogacy into a business model".

Russian online retail warehouses hit by deadly Ukrainian strikes

# BELGIAN GRAND PRIX: ANTONELLI BEATS VERSTAPPEN TO POLE

Mercedes' Kimi Antonelli takes pole position for Sunday's Belgian Grand Prix! The championship leader will share the front row with four-time title winner Max Verstappen at Spa-Francorchamps, with George Russell now third after Lando Norris' grid penalty is applied. Norris is still going to take part in the post-qualifying interviews, though. Arvid Lindblad grabbed seventh but his pushed down by the McLaren of Oscar Piastri. Lando Norris can only manage third on his final run, but the world champion won't stay there because of his grid penalty. Norris had a trip onto the gravel at the same spot as Lewis Hamilton and Pierre Gasly. Max Verstappen is right behind Isack Hadjar and the tow is about to be executed. It's not as clean as maybe Red Bull would've liked, but the Dutchman still goes onto provisional pole. But he's beaten by Kimi Antonelli!



The championship leader beats the Red Bull driver by 0.317 seconds! The drivers have got to get the tyres in absolutely the right window and we are not just talking of the surface of the tyre. That heat and temperature has got to be perfect both for the core and the surface. The Audi of Gabriel Bortoletto is piggy-in-the-middle of the two Mercedes of Kimi Antonelli and George

Russell. Isack Hadjar is the first of the 10 cars to start his final lap, but he'll be heading right to the back of the grid on Sunday. The session has resumed but the fans will have to wait a little bit longer to see any cars on track. Every team wants the best position for these final runs, and it looks like Isack Hadjar has gone out ahead of Red Bull team-mate Max Verstappen again. Lando

Norris is the last man to join the track, behind McLaren buddy Oscar Piastri. I thought that George Russell radio message was very interesting because he was told where his time loss was and he said "so it is all on the straight then?". So the inference you can take is that he has some kind of issue on the straight. The pattern of the weekend has been that Russell has been lacking

energy in the final sector because he is not able to as smooth with the car at the same speed through the corners as Antonelli. That has meant Antonelli can conserve battery. The top three are close together at this stage of the final part of qualifying. Lando Norris is fastest at the moment - but he has a 10-place grid drop, so won't be on pole anyway - with Kimi Antonelli only 0.039 seconds behind, and Charles Leclerc 0.092secs back. World championship leader Kimi Antonelli topped the times for Mercedes ahead of defending champion Lando Norris of McLaren in Friday's second free practice ahead of this weekend's Belgian Grand Prix. The 19-year-old Italian clocked a best lap time of one minute and 45.944 seconds to outpace Norris, who has a 10-place grid penalty for Sunday's race after taking a new battery, by 0.190 seconds with Max Verstappen third for Red Bull.

# Mirabai Chanu, Lovlina Borgohain Named India's Flag, Baton Bearers For Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony



Olympic medalists Mirabai Chanu and Lovlina Borgohain will serve as India's flag and baton bearers at the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, the Indian Olympic Association announced on Saturday. The opening ceremony of the scaled-down multi-sport event will be held on July 23. "It is a matter of pride Mirabai and Lovlina will be doing the honours at the OVO Hydro. I wish both the girls and the entire contingent good luck," IOA President PT Usha said in a media release. "It is a matter of pride two

women have been chosen to do the honours for Team India at the opening ceremony, which will set the tone and tenor for the Games. "Both Mirabai and Lovlina have time and again proved themselves in the international arena for India. They are at present training in right earnest for the Games in the United Kingdom," Usha added. Mirabai, who turns 32 on August 8, has been India's leading weightlifter for close to a decade. She won the silver medal in the women's 49kg category at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021 and followed it up with gold at the 2022

Birmingham Commonwealth Games. Although she was unable to replicate that success at the 2024 Paris Olympics, she remains one of India's strongest medal hopes in Glasgow. She is also a multiple medalist at the World Championships. Lovlina, meanwhile, claimed the bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics before winning gold at the 2023 World Championships. She also secured a silver medal at the 2023 Asian Games in Hangzhou and is expected to be among India's leading medal contenders in Glasgow.

# BCCI 'Not Pleased', Sends Big Message To Selectors Amid Rohit Sharma Buzz: Report

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has reportedly urged the men's national team selectors to avoid interactions with the media, amid talks surrounding veteran batter Rohit Sharma's future. India's defeat to England in the second ODI at Cardiff was overshadowed by multiple reports suggesting that the third and final game at Lord's could be Rohit's last for the team in the format. However, BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia has rubbished the reports, claiming that Rohit will continue to play as long as he is in the scheme of things. According to a report by Cricbuzz, the BCCI has expressed its displeasure over the leaked information surrounding Rohit, urging the selectors to avoid dia-



logue with media personnel in any form. The report also added that with too much speculation going on, the current scenario is fluid, and nothing can be officially confirmed regarding what is happening behind the scenes. Indian cricket revolves around narratives, and the current focus is whether Rohit Sharma will

be able to fulfill his dream of playing in the 2027 ODI World Cup, which will be co-hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. Rohit's current form, which has yielded just 241 runs in eight innings at an average of 30.12 and a strike rate of 88.60, has failed to convince some selectors, who no longer want to persist with

the former captain. Sources had told NDTV that some members of the selection committee had informed Rohit that they no longer saw him in the scheme of things before the start of the Afghanistan series last month. India head coach Gautam Gambhir was also kept in the loop during the discussions between the selectors and Rohit. However, Rohit was selected for the Afghanistan series, as well as the England series, after the former India captain had approached the top brass of the BCCI. But, with Rohit managing scores of just 11 and 26 in the first two ODIs against England, the group of selectors had to reiterate their stance to the veteran opener, who is desperate to prolong his career.

# Spain Defender Aymeric Laporte Reignites "Referee Debate" Ahead Of Final vs Argentina

Spain defender Aymeric Laporte believes aggressive play should not go unpunished in football, saying he was surprised by refereeing decisions involving Argentina in recent matches ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026 final. Speaking to Marca in an interview quoted by French news outlet L'Equipe, Laporte, when asked about the physical style adopted by Argentina against their opponents, said he was surprised by some refereeing decisions that he felt favoured the Albiceleste, adding that several incidents had gone unpunished. "I'm not at all worried about aggression in football. If it's tolerated and the referee does his job, it doesn't bother me," Laporte said. The Spain international,



however, said some incidents involving Argentina in recent matches had surprised him. "It's true that in recent matches, we've seen things that have greatly surprised us, actions that have gone unpunished. Especially against Argentina, a team

that makes a strong impression. This shouldn't be allowed in football, especially in such important competitions, because it can destabilise and frustrate the team," he told Marca in an interview quoted by French news outlet L'Equipe. Laporte also

praised Spain's discipline throughout the tournament, saying the team had avoided dangerous challenges and maintained a fair approach. "Since the start of the tournament, we've been a pretty good team from this point of view. We don't try to hit our opponents or commit dangerous fouls. And I think that's what we need to do in this match. But it's true that it will depend a lot on the refereeing," the Spain defender told Marca in an interview quoted by French news outlet L'Equipe. Defending champions Argentina and European champions Spain are set to face off in the FIFA World Cup 2026 final, setting the stage for a highly anticipated clash between great Messi and teenage sensation Yamal.

# ENZO FERNANDEZ MOCKS ENGLAND WITH 'WONDERWALL' POST AFTER ARGENTINA'S EPIC COMEBACK, DELETES LATER

Argentina midfielder Enzo Fernandez has grabbed headlines for his recent trolling of England after his side's 2-1 win in the second semi-final of the FIFA World Cup 2026. With around five minutes left in regulation time, La Albiceleste were 0-1 down. Inspired by Lionel Messi's two assists, the defending champions produced a terrific comeback to set up a final against Spain. Lautaro Martinez scored the equaliser for Argentina in the 85th minute before Enzo sealed the game for the team with a stoppage-time goal. After the victory, Enzo Fernandez took to Instagram Stories to share a photo of himself with Lionel Messi and Leandro Paredes, trolling England. In the picture, the trio could be seen laughing, with Oasis' Wonderwall playing in the background. It is worth noting that the England football team used the song as its unofficial anthem at the World Cup. Their players, as well as their fans, used to sing the song together after victories. Things did not go down well with the post, and Fernandez eventually had to delete it before posting it again without the background song. Argentina face Spain in the FIFA World Cup final on Sunday. Former England striker Robbie Fowler believes Spain have the edge but warned that Lionel



Messi is one player capable of changing the game on his own. Fowler said Spain's control of midfield, led by Rodri, gives them a slight advantage, although stopping Messi over 90 minutes remains among the toughest challenges in the sport. "(Lamine) Yamal will be a different player. He will be a different animal in the final. I have seen enough of that in the semi-final to know that his game will change," Fowler told reporters in Mumbai.

# French Grandmaster Alireza Firouzja Stuns World Champion D Gukesh At Chennai Grand Masters 2026



French Grandmaster Alireza Firouzja inflicted a shock defeat on reigning world champion D Gukesh to emerge as the sole leader after the second round of the Chennai Grand Masters 2026 in Chennai on Friday. Firouzja, who had beaten Indian GM M Praneesh with the black pieces in the opening round, outlasted Gukesh in a gruelling 69-move battle to move to two points from as many rounds in India's most

prestigious classical chess tournament. The other three Indian players in the field - M Praneesh, Arjun Erigaisi and Nihal Sarin - all settled for draws against their higher-rated opponents. Organised by MGD1, the eight-player double round-robin tour-

nament carries a prize purse of Rs 75 lakh besides offering valuable FIDE Circuit points. After Deepraj Mukherjee, General Manager of The Westin Chennai Velachery, made the ceremonial first move between Firouzja and Gukesh, the Frenchman opened with the Ruy Lopez. Gukesh looked on course to salvage a draw in a knight-and-pawn ending, but Firouzja's timely pawn sacrifice created the decisive breakthrough, allowing the French GM to convert the advantage with precise technique.

# Forged At IIS, Bound For Glasgow: Inspire Institute Of Sport's Commonwealth Games 2026 Contingent



Every major multi-sport Games is shaped by athletes at different stages of their careers. Some arrive as experienced campaigners looking to build on years of success, while others prepare to make their debut on one of sport's biggest stages. This year, 21 athletes from the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS) will represent India at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow across boxing, judo, athletics and swimming. Among them are Olympian Sajjan Prakash, national

record holder Gulveer Singh and Asian Games medalist Parul Chaudhary, alongside a new generation of athletes making their mark across boxing, judo and athletics. Together, they reflect the depth of talent that has emerged through the institute's high-performance programme and years of consistent preparation. The contingent brings together established international performers and some of India's most promising young athletes. From Olympic and World Championship competitors to rising stars earning their first major Games selection, each athlete has reached this stage through sustained performances on the national and international circuit.

# Request To Gautam Gambhir, Then A Fallout: Big Rohit Sharma Claims Revealed

The third and final ODI against England won't be Rohit Sharma's last for India, confirmed BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia on Friday. This statement from the official came after multiple reports claimed that the series-decider against the Three Lions could be Rohit's last game in India colours and that he might opt to retire with the conclusion of the contest. As these reports came during his poor batting form, the update only fuelled the speculation about his future. It spread like wildfire, and eventually Saikia had to come forward to clarify that all of it was false. While Saikia cleared the air on the issue, there are reports that Gautam Gambhir, Ajit Agarkar,

and Rohit Sharma have been sharing a strained relationship in the recent past. A PTI report on Friday claimed that it was Rohit who requested Gautam Gambhir during the Indian Premier League 2024 to coach India. Kolkata Knight Riders were playing against Mumbai Indians in an away game at the Wankhede Stadium when Rohit made the request. Rahul Dravid was set to leave the post of India's head coach, and Rohit wanted Gambhir to take up that role. As per the shared details, Rohit went up to Gambhir during an evening training session at Wankhede and said, "Gauti bhai Indian team mein aa jaao (Gauti bhai, join the Indian team)." To this, Gambhir had

apparently replied: "If you remain captain, I will definitely join." The report further stated that the relationship between Rohit and Gambhir deteriorated during India's 0-3 drubbing by New Zealand at home. It added that the bond worsened during India's tour of Australia in 2024-25. On the eve of the Sydney Test, Rohit was engrossed in a prolonged discussion with Gambhir and chief selector Ajit Agarkar at the SCG during the team's training. The batter reportedly wanted to sit out for the match owing to his poor form, but Agarkar didn't approve his request, claimed the agency in its report. It stated that Agarkar advised Rohit not to "sit out" as his

selection for the next series in England, six months later, would be an issue. Rohit apparently wanted to quit Tests and announce his retirement the very next day. But when he gave an interview to the broadcasters, he was famously quoted as saying: "I am a father of two.



## VETERAN PRODUCER CHADALAVADA SRINIVASA RAO AT THE PRE-RELEASE EVENT



As the 2024 National Film Awards are expected to be announced this evening, Telugu cinema fans are eagerly backing Kalki 2898 AD for major honours. Many believe the Prabhas-starrer deserves either Best Film or Best Visual Effects recognition, calling it one of the most technically accomplished films ever produced in TFI history.

Amravathi Movie Makers and Sundarakanda Motion Pictures have jointly produced Hey Chikkiitha, with N. Ashok RNS and 'Garudavega' Anji serving as producers. Starring Abhinav Manikanta, Divija Prabhakkar, Tanmay Khushi, Devi Prasad, and ETV Prabhakar in key roles, the film is directed by Dhanraj Lekkala and is slated for a theatrical release on July 24. The film has already generated positive buzz with its posters, teaser, and songs, all of which have significantly raised audience expectations. The makers recently unveiled the theatrical trailer at a grand pre-release event attended by eminent guests including producer Chadalavada Srinivasa Rao, Thummalapalli Rama Satyanarayana, Ram-Lakshman Masters, comedian Ali, V.N. Aditya, and Prasanna Kumar. Veteran Producer Chadalavada Srinivasa Rao said, "When I was young, I produced Laila, and the film earned tremendous profits through its audio rights alone. Looking at the Hey Chikkiitha team reminded me of those wonderful days. It takes the blessings of many lifetimes to become a producer, artist, or technician in this industry. Every actor has performed exceptionally well in Hey Chikkiitha. Anji's cinematography is excellent. I sincerely hope the director, producers, and everyone associated with this film earn great recognition through it. The satisfaction of scoring a hit with a small film is incomparable.

## Mythri Movie Distributors LLP to Release Mandaadi in Telugu on a Grand Scale on September 10



Presented by Elred Kumar under the RS Infotainment banner, Mandaadi is directed by Mathimaran Pugazhendhi and produced by Elred Kumar. The film stars Soori and Suhas in pivotal roles. The content released so far has generated a strong response from audiences. The striking character transformations of Soori and Suhas have grabbed attention, while the makers are confident that the film's high-octane action sequences and stunning visuals will be among its biggest highlights. The much-talked-about boat action sequence, which the team has already teased, is expected to be one of the major attractions of the film. Mandaadi is all set for a grand worldwide release on September 10 in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi. The Telugu version will be distributed across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana by Mythri Movie Distributors LLP, ensuring a massive release in the Telugu states. The film also stars Mahima Nambiar as the female lead, alongside Sathyaraj, Ravindra Vijay, Mithun, Bala Saravanan, and others in key roles.

## THE RAJA SAAB SCORES BIG ON OTT

The Pan-Indian horror fantasy starring Prabhas is receiving a sensational response on the small screen despite its box-office shortcomings. According to Ormax's Stream View Half-Yearly Report 2026, The Raja Saab topped the charts with a massive 17.5 million views on JioHotstar. Standing at number 1 position in Indian films on OTT, proving once again that the tag of "India's Biggest Superstar" for Prabhas is far from an exaggeration. It has to be noted that much like Raja Saab this year, in 2025 as well, films like Mirai and Jaat featured in the Top 5 of the same report. After HanuMan, Teja Sajja's growth in popularity across the nation reflected in Mirai's numbers theatrically and digitally as well. Adding to that, Mirai went on to register a Massive TVR on satellite television both in telugu and hindi and on JioHotstar took platform's #1 trending film position. On the other hand, Sunny Deol's Jaat even surpassed Pushpa 2 on Netflix in terms of OTT views. Interestingly all the above films are produced by People Media Factory. Irrespective of the films' box-office performances, their reach on digital and satellite platforms is massive. Also let's see how Mirai and Jaat will perform in their upcoming sequels in both theatrical and non-theatrical arenas. Working with superstar is like work-



ing with a double edged sword for directors. If they deliver a good film that clicks at the box office, they accumulate fame and money, along with love from fans. But if they fail to deliver, the repercussions are stiff as they face endless trolls on social media.

## FROM '#90S' TO 'LENIN' – SIVAJI'S WINNING STREAK CONTINUES

Actor Sivaji has established himself as one of Telugu cinema's finest performers, known for choosing content-driven films and portraying diverse, impactful characters. From comedy and family entertainers to emotional dramas and action-packed roles, he has consistently impressed audiences with his versatility. After making a successful comeback through Bigg Boss Telugu, Sivaji carefully selected meaningful scripts, earning the trust of audiences who now believe that every film featuring him promises quality storytelling and memorable performances. His second innings has been nothing short of remarkable. Critically acclaimed films like Court and Dandora brought him widespread appreciation and prestigious awards, further strengthening his reputation as an actor who values substance over commercial formulas. Most recently,

Actor Sivaji has established himself as one of Telugu cinema's finest performers, known for choosing content-driven films and portraying diverse, impactful characters.

Sivaji delivered a powerful performance as Yathiraju in the blockbuster Lenin, winning praise from critics and movie lovers alike. His journey, which began with the hit ETV Win web series 90's, continues to showcase his commitment to challenging and meaningful roles. Looking ahead, Sivaji has an exciting slate of projects that promise to further elevate his career. He will next be seen in Epic, where he plays a middle-class father in an emotionally compelling role. Alongside this, he is part of Allari Naresh's upcoming film, the Telugu-Tamil bilingual starring Pradeep Ranganathan, a project directed by Kalyan Chakravarthy, and several other prestigious ventures. With strong scripts, versatile characters, and growing recognition across industries, Sivaji continues to redefine himself as one of the most dependable and content-oriented actors in Telugu cinema.



## NEWTON'S THIRD LAW' IS A THRILLER THAT GIVES A VERY NEW EXPERIENCE



Sumanth is the hero in the unique thriller 'Newton's Third Law' produced by Ewin. Directed by Rajesh Karna, the film is produced by K. Harish. The film will hit the theaters on the 31st of this month. On this occasion, the makers launched the song Dham Dham.

At the song launch event, hero Sumanth said... Hello everyone. I got the story of 'Newton's Third Law' right in one sitting. I am very happy to do this project after 'Anaganaga'. As soon as I heard the story, I told Vinay's character and Karthik's character to be very strong. I thought that

the film would only work if those two characters were amazing. Both of them really acted amazingly. This song is also based on their characters. Every character has a lot of importance in the film. Everyone did full justice to their roles. It is very happy to receive the Best

Actor Award for Anaganaga. On this occasion, I thank the management of ETV. This film is coming before the audience on July 31. We are coming with a very good film. We are all very confident about the film. This film will definitely entertain all of you.



## Shruti Haasan's Regal Look Steals The Show

Multi-talented actress Shruti Haasan continues to prove her stamina in both acting and music. Her recent song "Pavazha Malli," sung alongside composer Sai Abhyankkar, has taken the internet by storm. In just about four months, the track has crossed close to 300 million views, becoming one of the biggest musical hits of the year and showing fans yet another

Multi-talented actress Shruti Haasan continues to prove her stamina in both acting and music.

side of her versatile talent. This time, Shruti turned heads in a rich purple and wine-toned saree, paired with a heavily embroidered halter-neck blouse featuring a gold thread work. The pallu carried the same intricate detailing, giving the outfit a regal, festive touch. She kept her hair loose in soft

waves, added a classic bindi and jhumkas, and finished the look with bold lips, striking a perfect balance between traditional elegance and modern styling. On the acting front, Shruti is currently filming for "Aakasamlo Oka Tara," a much-awaited Telugu film directed by Pavan Sadineni. The movie stars Dulquer Salmaan and Satvika Veeravalli in lead roles, with Shruti playing a pivotal character. Backed by Geetha Arts and Swapna Cinema, the film will release in Telugu, Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, and Hindi.

## KRITHI RADIATES ELEGANCE IN SLEEVELESS BLUE GOWN

Krithi Shetty is a vision of elegance in her latest photo-shoot! The actress, known for her stunning looks and impeccable style, is seen wearing a sleeveless blue gown that flatters her figure perfectly. She pairs the gown with a pair of stylish leggings and a golden dupatta, adding a touch of traditional charm to the modern outfit. To complete her look, Krithi accessorizes with golden earrings and a bindi, enhancing her natural beauty.

