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NATION | NEWS

Deepak Mhaskey replaces Amit Malviya as BJP IT Cell chief

WORLD | NEWS

Trump says US to reduce military drills with South Korea after it stayed out of Iran war

CINEMA | NEWS

The globally popular cooking celebration is now in Tamil homes. Star heroine Samantha Ruth Prabhu to host Celebrity MasterChef Tamil

SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

11-06-2026
Total pilgrims : 97,014
Tonsures : 37,108
Hanul kamukha : 3,93 CR
Ladies sala : 4,61 Lac
Annaprasadam : 3,22 Lac
Aaridihospital : 3,757
Present Situation on 17-06-2026:
Waiting Compartments - Out
side line adding at Krishna Raja
guest house.
Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam
(with out SSD Tokens) : 18 H.

Short Takes

Bengal hotel fire: Death toll rises to 7, owner arrested

Kolkata.: The death toll in the hotel fire at Tarapith in West Bengal's Birbhum district on Monday rose to seven, confirmed the police, adding that the owner of the building has been arrested. Birbhum District Police Superintendent Vidit Raj Bundesh confirmed that the toll has risen and that Kalyan Paul, the owner of the hotel named 'Bideshini', has been arrested. The police are investigating whether the hotel's firefighting system was in proper condition and whether all the fire safety-related rules were followed.

Prashant Kishor takes oath as Bankipur MLA at Bihar Assembly



Patna (TSIT): Jan Suraj leader Prashant Kishor formally took the oath as the new MLA from the Bankipur Assembly constituency on Monday. Bihar Assembly Speaker Prem Kumar administered the oath to him in his chamber, allowing Kishor to officially participate in legislative proceedings and begin his responsibilities as an elected representative. Prashant Kishor reached the Assembly accompanied by senior leaders and supporters of the Jan Suraj Party.

7 killed in stampede at Ashok Dham temple in Bihar's Lakhisarai

Lakhisarai, Aug 17 : At least seven people were killed, and more than 12 were injured in a stampede outside the Ashok Dham Temple in Bihar's Lakhisarai district on Monday. The incident triggered chaos at the temple premises as a large number of devotees had gathered to offer prayers and perform rituals on the third Monday of the holy month of Sawan. An electric wire reportedly fell, triggering panic among the crowd. Rumours then spread among the devotees, causing panic. Many devotees rushed in different directions in an attempt to escape. A stampede ensued, leaving several devotees trapped and crushed under one another.

Rahul hits out at NTA over UGC-NET re-exam

New Delhi (TSIT) : As the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced the re-examination for the UGC-NET papers for three subjects after multiple errors were found in the question papers, Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi on Monday took aim at the Central government and claimed that the years of the students are being stolen because of these examination irregularities.

Earlier on Sunday, the NTA announced that it will re-conduct the University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test (UGC-NET) for English, Sociology and Commerce after several errors were found in the question papers. This added to the growing criticism over the testing agency's handling of competitive exams.

Rahul, in a post on X, said, "Modi ji, look at what your NTA has just done. UGC-NET exams for Sociology, English and Commerce were held between 22 and 30 June. Nearly two months later, NTA has cancelled all three because it set faulty papers and repeated old questions." "Thousands of candidates



who prepared for years, filled forms, paid the fees, travelled to distant centres, must now do it all again in September. NTA makes the mistake, but the student serves the sentence," he said.

The LoP recalled that during his Chhatron Ki Goonj programmes held in Kota, Dehradun and Prayagraj, he had stated that "this is no longer an education system", but an "extraction machine".

"It takes your money, your years, your mental health, and your confidence and returns nothing. Not even a job. NTA still won't answer the real question - were these papers leaked before the exam?" he said.

Jharkhand students win, govt cancels JSSC-CGL exam, probe by CID

Ranchi (TSIT): Amid a massive protest by job aspirants over alleged irregularities in recruitment exams in the state, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said on Monday, August 17, that the state government would cancel the JSSC-CGL examination.

He said that in a special meeting, the state Cabinet decided

called. TDPL is a Lucknow-based private recruitment agency at the centre of the scandal in the state.

Students rejoice

In Ranchi, students were jubilant at the government's decision to scrap the JSSC-CGL exams. However, maintaining a stoic stance, student leader and activist Devendra Nath Mahto,



that, since 2014, whatever mistakes have happened, big or small, will be investigated, and the CID would conduct the probe. Adding that several companies active in Jharkhand appear to be involved in a huge exam racket, Soren said that all the exams conducted by the TDPL (TSR Data Processing Private Limited) will be can-

who spearheaded the agitation, said, "I have seen many instances where CBI or CID investigations were ordered and then cancelled." Speaking to the media, he said, "We, the students, will continue to support this investigation... If our issues are resolved and our demands met, why would we need to hold further protests?"

No deviation in Mega DSC recruitment process: CM Naidu

■ Recruitment details placed online; YSRCP indulging in "hit-and-run" politics, says Chief Minister

Visakhapatnam (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Monday asserted that there was no deviation in the Mega DSC teacher recruitment process and that all stages of the selection were conducted transparently. He accused the YSRCP of spreading misinformation through what he described as "hit-and-run" politics and challenged the Opposition to debate the issue in the Legislative Assembly. Speaking in the Assembly, Naidu said education and skill development had always been priorities for the Telugu Desam Party. He recalled various initiatives undertaken during successive TDP governments, including residential schools, women's universities, expansion of educational institutions and measures to improve academic standards.

The Chief Minister said the previous government had not undertaken teacher recruitment for five years, while the present coalition government completed the recruitment of 15,941 teachers through the Mega DSC within 148 days of



assuming office. He said the recruitment process, including the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET), DSC notifications, reservation procedures and examinations, was conducted in a transparent manner. Examinations covering 13 subjects were conducted through the Computer-Based Test (CBT) system at 154 centres, with around 42,000 questions selected as part of the examination process.

Naidu said candidates were selected strictly according to merit-cum-roster principles. Zonal and State-level committees, along with an appellate authority, were constituted to address grievances and ensure fairness in the recruitment process. He also said the sports

quota was implemented in accordance with Central Government guidelines and maintained that no deviation had occurred from the procedures specified in the recruitment notification. The Chief Minister alleged that repeated accusations and legal cases were being used to create obstacles to the recruitment process. He criticised the Opposition for raising allegations outside the Assembly rather than participating in legislative debates.

"Come to the Assembly and debate the issue," Naidu said, challenging the YSRCP to present its concerns on the floor of the House. He maintained that the government was accountable to the people and would continue to strengthen transparency in recruitment examinations and introduce further reforms in the education sector. Naidu expressed confidence that attempts to create controversy would not affect teachers appointed through the Mega DSC and reiterated the government's commitment to transparent and accountable recruitment.

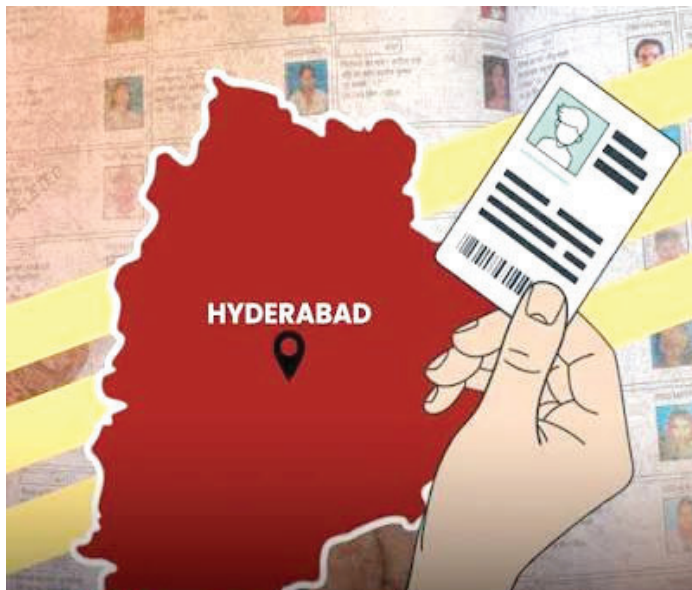
73 lac voters deleted from Telangana electoral rolls, Hyderabad records highest

FROM THE VOTER LIST OF HYDERABAD, 19,41,444 NAMES HAVE BEEN DELETED.

Hyderabad (TSIT): The ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has resulted in the deletion of 73,39,235 names across Telangana, with Hyderabad recording the highest number of deletions at 19,41,444.

The deleted names have been categorised under ASDD — Absent, Shifted, Duplication and Death. In Hyderabad, 1,56,392 voters were marked deceased, 2,99,850 were untraceable, 13,45,333 had permanently shifted, 99,264 were found to be already enrolled, while 40,605 were removed for other reasons.

Among Hyderabad constituencies, Jubilee Hills recorded the highest number of deletions at 1,79,510, followed by Yakutpura with 1,54,982 and Chandrayangutta with 1,48,869. Charminar recorded



the lowest number at 94,174. In percentage terms, Musheerabad had the highest deletion rate at 45.17%, followed by Malakpet at 44.76%.

Rangareddy district record-

ed the second-highest number of deletions at 12,87,091, followed by Medchal-Malkajgiri with 10,71,566. Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri recorded the lowest number at 26,121.

BJP reshuffle: Bandi Sanjay dropped, Smriti back as general secy

New Delhi (TSIT): As part of an organisational reshuffle ahead of elections in many states, BJP president Nitin Nabin on Monday, August 17, appointed the party's national office-bearers. In a major upset for Telangana, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, who was a national general secretary, has been dropped. He serves as the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs. He had earlier served as the party's Telangana chief as well. Representing the Karimnagar Lok Sabha constituency, he is a party heavyweight who takes keen interest in state politics as well.

In Telangana, Bandi Sanjay has been in the news over the



POCSO case involving his son, Bandi Sai Bhageerath.

A minor's mother filed an FIR this May, alleging that Bhageerath had sexually assaulted her daughter. Bhageerath denied all allegations, filing a counter-complaint claiming that the girl's family threatened him and attempted to extort Rs 5 crore from him. The BJP shared the lists on X.

Indian Army contingent departs for India-Thailand joint military exercise MAITREE-XV

New Delhi (TSIT) : An Indian Army contingent left for Thailand on Monday, where it will participate in 15th edition of India-Thailand Joint Military Exercise MAITREE-XV, slated to be held from August 18 to 31 at Vibhavadi Rangsit Camp in Surat Thani.

The bilateral military exercise is aimed at strengthening defence cooperation between India and Thailand and enhancing the ability of the two armies to conduct joint operations in challenging environments.

The Indian Army and Royal Thai Army contingents participating in the exercise will comprise 85 personnel each. The



Indian contingent will be represented primarily by troops from the 9 Gorkha Rifles, while the Royal Thai Army contingent will comprise personnel from

the 3rd Battalion, 25th Infantry Brigade, 5th Division.

The exercise will focus on company-level joint training for operations in jungle and

semi-urban terrain. The training is designed to enhance the combined capabilities of the two forces in conducting joint counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist operations in jungle and semi-urban environments under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

The exercise will include a range of training activities, including field exercises, combat discussions, lectures and demonstrations. The two contingents will also participate in a culminating validation exercise to assess the operational capabilities developed during the training.

Janasamruddhi 2.0 launches e-commerce and direct marketing platform

Bengaluru, August 17, 2026: Janasamruddhi Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd. has entered a new phase of business growth with the launch of Janasamruddhi 2.0, a technology-driven e-commerce and direct marketing platform aimed at creating wider opportunities for its agents, customers and business partners across India.

The initiative was formally inaugurated in Bengaluru on August 16 in the presence of around 200 JSM agents representing 25 branches from different parts of Karnataka. The launch marked a significant step in the organisation's nearly 12-year journey and highlighted its plans to build a broader, technology-enabled business ecosystem.



Janasamruddhi 2.0 brings together products and services across 25 categories, including insurance, real estate, fashion, apparel and several consumer and business segments. The integrated platform is designed to allow agents to connect customers with products and services based on their individual requirements. According to the

organisation, a key objective of the new initiative is to strengthen its agent network by providing multiple avenues for business development. Instead of restricting agents to a single line of business, the new model seeks to enable them to explore different categories through one platform and build stronger relationships with customers.

NCPA and National Theatre Creating a National Platform for Young Theatre Makers

Bengaluru : The National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), in partnership with the National Theatre UK, announced the fourth edition of Connections India—a unique youth theatre and playmaking initiative that brings professional-level theatre experiences to young people across India. Expanding beyond Mumbai for the first time, the 2026-27 edition will bring together students from schools, colleges and NGOs across Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru and Pune, continuing its commitment to nurturing the next generation of theatre-makers while making high-quality theatre education more accessible to young people across the country. Following the success of the programme's first three editions in Mumbai, which collectively brought together 34



schools, colleges, NGOs, and over 550 participating students, Connections is expanding to four cities in 2026. This year alone, 33 schools, colleges and NGOs will stage ten contemporary plays by acclaimed playwrights from India and the UK, taking the initiative to a significantly larger and more diverse audience. The repertoire spans a wide range of themes, from friendship, identity and mental health to climate change, belonging and resilience.

Kumaraswamy questions alleged takeover of NICE road project

Hassan, August 17, 2026: Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy has asked Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar to clarify who is allegedly attempting to take over the NICE road project from the existing company, raising concerns over the handling of the project and the interests of farmers. Speaking to the media at Holenarasipura in Hassan district, Kumaraswamy said he had received information that efforts were underway to take over the project and questioned whether the proposed move involved private interests. "I have information that someone is now trying to take over this project from the company. Who has a stake in this? Who is trying to take over the project?" he asked, urging the Chief Minister to

provide clear answers. Kumaraswamy alleged that there was a difference between the Chief Minister's public statements and developments taking place behind the scenes. He warned that the Opposition would not remain silent if official power was misused in connection with the NICE project. He also referred to recent observations of the Karnataka High Court concerning the project and said the government should first ensure that all actions were taken strictly in accordance with the law and court directions. Kumaraswamy said he had written to Shivakumar urging him to keep aside discussions about taking over the project until the legal issues were addressed. Questioning the proposed ownership or control structure, he

asked whether the government itself was planning to take over the project or whether it was intended to benefit private interests associated with those in power. Kumaraswamy further alleged that farmers' land and public assets could be affected by any improper decision and urged the government to protect their interests. He also criticised successive governments for what he described as failures in handling the Bengaluru-Mysuru Infrastructure Corridor (BMIC) project. According to Kumaraswamy, the project has faced prolonged litigation and controversies over several years. He said the project originally envisaged about 111 km of road but remained incomplete even after three decades. Kumaraswamy alleged that the company's primary

Madrasa Students Create Ruckus, Allegedly Steal Valuables Under the Pretext of Hoisting National Flag on Independence Day

Bengaluru: Officials and students of Jamia Mohammadia Mansoor Madrasa have allegedly created another ruckus.

On August 15, Independence Day, a group of people allegedly entered a property belonging to Masiha Ahmed in Thanisandra, confined two security personnel, abused them and allegedly stole valuables worth Rs.2.5 lakh. An FIR has been registered at the Kothanur Police Station in connection with the incident.

Repeated incidents of alleged attacks by madrasa students have created an atmosphere of fear in the area. On July 13, around 60 people had allegedly attacked 15 staff members with deadly weapons in a similar incident. The attackers had also allegedly assaulted police personnel. However, the police have reportedly not arrested



ed the accused so far. Landowner Masiha Ahmed has alleged that despite the attacks on them, the police are delaying action against those responsible for the incidents.

According to a complaint filed by P.N. Guardian Security Services Director Hanumantharayappa G.K. (46), the accused allegedly trespassed onto the property under the pretext of

hoisting the national flag on Independence Day, damaged CCTV cameras and committed the alleged theft.

The complaint states that security personnel Nanda Kumar and Ningappa were deployed to guard Masiha Ahmed's land bearing Survey Nos. 104/2, 104/3, 105/2 and 105/3 in Thanisandra. Khalid Musharaf, along with teachers and students of Jamia Mohammadia Mansoor Madrasa, allegedly confined the security guards and stole a security box, a security mobile phone and valuable documents belonging to the security agency.

A security cabin has been installed at the site, with two security guards deployed in each

of two shifts round the clock. At around 11.45 a.m. on August 15, Khalid Musharaf, CEO of Jamia Mohammadia Mansoor Madrasa, and others allegedly trespassed onto the property, claiming that it belonged to them. They allegedly snatched the guards' mobile phone, verbally abused them and threatened them, warning that they would not spare them.

At around 3 p.m., the security personnel were allegedly forced out of the room. When the site was subsequently inspected, the security cabin and valuable documents were found to be missing, the complaint stated.

The complainant has urged the police to take appropriate legal action against the accused and provide adequate security to the property and its personnel.

HD Kumaraswamy targets Congress over Vande Mataram row

Hassan, August 17, 2026: Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy on Monday criticised Congress leaders over the reported objection to the singing of Vande Mataram, asserting that the national song deserves respect from every Indian. Speaking to the media at Holenarasipura in Hassan district, Kumaraswamy said Vande Mataram, written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, has a deep historical association with India's freedom movement. He recalled that the song was sung at a Congress session attended by Mahatma Gandhi and also referred to Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's association with the song. "Everyone should respect this song. There is no need for Congress leaders to display such narrow-mindedness on an issue that has deep historical significance,"



he said. Reacting to reports that Congress leader Sonia Gandhi had objected to the singing of Vande Mataram, Kumaraswamy made sharp remarks and questioned the Congress' position. He said people were closely watching developments and would respond to what he described as such politics. On the recent shooting incident in Hanur, Kumaraswamy questioned the manner in which Forest

Department personnel allegedly opened fire, resulting in the deaths of three members of a family. He said the government's explanation that the victims had entered the forest for deer hunting did not answer questions about the use of force. Kumaraswamy also criticised the Congress government over the proposed project and land acquisition-related issues in Bidadi. He said farmers and women farmers had been protesting

for nearly 500 days and alleged that attempts were being made to pressure them into surrendering their land. Questioning why the government was insisting on the particular land, Kumaraswamy challenged Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar to make public the findings of the government's fact-finding committee. He also referred to the Kagodu Thimappa Committee and said its recommendations should be published so that people could examine the government's earlier position on the development of townships in the area. "Publish your party's fact-finding committee report before the people of Karnataka," Kumaraswamy said, taking a dig at the Chief Minister and the Congress government's publicity campaign.

Can quitting sugar sharpen your jawline? Here's what doctors say

Margao: Nearly half of Goa's adult population is overweight or obese, while diabetes and hypertension have emerged as major health concerns, according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6) 2023-24. The findings point to a growing burden of lifestyle-related diseases in the coastal State, even as Goa continues to perform strongly on several maternal and child health indicators.

The survey, released by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, found that 43.6 per cent of men and 45.1 per cent of women in Goa have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 kg/m² or above, placing them in the overweight or obese category. The figures are considerably higher than the national averages of 27.3 per cent among men and 30.7 per cent among women.

The latest data also show a significant increase compared with the previous NFHS-5 survey conducted in 2019-21. At that time, 32.6 per cent of men and 36.1 per cent of women in Goa were classified as overweight or obese. The increase highlights the growing prevalence of obesity and the associated risks of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and other non-communicable illnesses.

Diabetes-related indicators have also emerged as a serious concern. The survey found that 32.1 per cent of men and 27.5 per cent of women in Goa either had elevated blood sugar levels or were taking medication to control diabetes. These proportions are substantially higher than the national averages of 20.9 per cent among men and 17.8 per cent among women.

Goa recorded the highest prevalence of elevated blood sugar among men in the country, narrowly ahead of Kerala. Compared with the previous survey, the proportion of men with high blood sugar increased by around eight percentage points, while



the corresponding figure for women rose by nearly seven percentage points. The trend underlines the need for greater focus on prevention, early diagnosis, regular screening and lifestyle modification. Hypertension was another major health concern highlighted by the survey. Around 27.5 per cent of men and 26.2 per cent of women in Goa either had elevated blood pressure or were taking medication for the condition. Both figures were higher than the respective national averages, indicating a substantial burden of high blood pressure among the State's adult population.

The survey also recorded a high prevalence of caesarean deliveries in Goa. As many as 46.2 per cent of births in the State took place through C-section procedures, compared with the national average of 27.2 per cent. The proportion was particularly high in private healthcare facilities, where 69.7 per cent of deliveries were reported to be through caesarean section.

Despite the concerns over lifestyle diseases and rising C-section rates, Goa continued to perform well on several maternal and child health indi-

cators. Institutional deliveries remained exceptionally high at 99.6 per cent. The survey also found that 92.1 per cent of mothers underwent antenatal check-ups during the first trimester of pregnancy, indicating strong access to maternal healthcare services. Child immunisation coverage also showed improvement. Full vaccination coverage among children aged between 12 and 23 months increased to 93.8 per cent. At the same time, child nutrition indicators recorded encouraging progress. The proportion of children under five years who were stunted declined substantially, from 25.8 per cent in NFHS-5 to 19.4 per cent in NFHS-6.

The findings also point to significant demographic changes in Goa. People aged 60 years and above now account for 17.2 per cent of the State's population, compared with 14.2 per cent in the previous survey. The growing share of senior citizens reflects Goa's ageing population and is likely to increase demand for geriatric care, chronic disease management and other age-related health services.

On social indicators, the survey reported an increase in the proportion of ever-married

women who reported experiencing spousal violence. The figure rose to 11.3 per cent from 8.3 per cent recorded in the previous survey, highlighting the need for continued efforts to strengthen awareness, support services and protection mechanisms for women.

At the same time, alcohol consumption among men declined considerably. The proportion of men reporting alcohol use fell from 36.8 per cent in the previous survey to 22.4 per cent, indicating a notable change in consumption patterns.

Goa's total fertility rate was recorded at 1.6 children per woman, remaining below the replacement level of 2.1. The figure reflects the State's changing demographic profile, marked by lower fertility and a steadily ageing population.

Overall, the NFHS-6 findings present a mixed picture of Goa's health and social development. While the State has achieved high levels of institutional deliveries, antenatal care and child immunisation, the rapid rise in overweight and obesity, diabetes and hypertension poses a growing public health challenge.

Think twice before taking antibiotics for monsoon fever

The rainy season often brings a familiar medical routine—someone develops a fever, someone recommends an antibiotic and within hours a strip of tablets appears on the kitchen counter. Doctors, however, warn that this seemingly harmless practice can backfire. Monsoon fevers can be caused by several infections, including dengue, chikungunya, malaria, typhoid, influenza and leptospirosis. Antibiotics, however, do not work against all of these infections. Taking them when they are not required can also contribute to antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Dr Prerna Goyal, Senior Consultant - Physician at RG Hospitals, Ludhiana, said monsoon brings a predictable rise in different types of fever, but many people automatically turn to antibiotics.

"Most monsoon fevers are viral. Dengue and chikungunya, for example, are mosquito-borne viral infections. Antibiotics act against bacteria, not viruses. So taking an antibiotic for dengue or chikungunya does nothing to treat the virus causing the illness," she said.

Self-medication with antibiotics is common during the monsoon, Dr Goyal said. Some patients reach doctors after taking antibiotics on their own for a week. In such cases, doctors have to deal not only with the original illness but also with the effects of medicines that may not have been necessary.

Dengue and chikungunya are mosquito-borne viral infections and do not have a bacterial component that antibiotics can target. Therefore, a person who develops fever along with symptoms such as a rash or joint pain should not automatically take an antibiotic.

Such symptoms may require appropriate testing for dengue or chikungunya. Doctors say identifying the cause of the fever should come before deciding on treatment.

Not every monsoon fever is viral. Some infections, including typhoid, are bacterial and may require antibiotics. However, this does not mean that patients should select an antibiotic from their medicine cabinet.

Dr Goyal pointed out that prescribing the wrong antibiotic, or starting the right antibiotic too early before a proper diagnosis, can mask symptoms, make accurate testing more difficult and contribute to antimicrobial resistance. Even when an antibiotic is eventually required, guessing which medicine to take is not the same as treating the infection correctly. Dr Niraj Kumar, Senior Consultant, Internal Medicine, ShardaCare - HealthCity,



said many people believe antibiotics will make a monsoon fever disappear faster.

"When the fever is caused by a virus, an antibiotic does not help. Unnecessary medicines can also cause side effects and contribute to antimicrobial resistance (AMR). This happens when bacteria gradually become resistant to medicines designed to kill them or stop their growth," he said. Antimicrobial resistance can make infections that were once relatively easy to treat much harder to manage in the future. Doctors advise that the first response to a fever should not necessarily be reaching for an antibiotic. Patients should observe their symptoms, rest, stay properly hydrated and monitor their condition, particularly when a viral illness is suspected. Dr Goyal recommends medical evaluation if fever persists for more than two to three days, with blood tests considered before medication is started when appropriate. Fever accompanied by a rash or significant joint pain may require testing for dengue or chikungunya. Other symptoms and the patient's medical history can help doctors identify other possible causes.

Dr Kumar also advises people to seek medical attention promptly if fever persists or warning symptoms develop. Any fever lasting more than 48 to 72 hours, particularly if it is not improving or is accompanied by other concerning symptoms, warrants medical evaluation. Doctors emphasise that the biggest mistake is assuming every fever is the same. Fever is a symptom, not a diagnosis, and it can be caused by viruses, bacteria or other conditions. The appropriate treatment therefore depends on the cause. Before taking an antibiotic because someone says it worked for them during the previous monsoon, doctors advise patients to get the illness properly assessed and take antibiotics only when prescribed or recommended by a qualified medical professional.

Stock markets decline in early trade amid rising crude oil prices

Mumbai: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty drifted lower in early trade on Monday, August 17, amid rising crude oil prices and persistent geopolitical tensions in West Asia. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 284.85 points to 77,717.05 during initial trading. The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 69.25 points to 24,297.05. From the Sensex pack, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra, Hindustan Unilever and State Bank of India were the biggest laggards. Bharat Electronics and Titan were the only winners. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 0.43 per cent higher at USD 88.86 per barrel. “Crude oil remains the principal concern, with Brent holding near USD 88 a barrel after renewed US warnings against Iran pushed prices higher on Friday, keeping the geopolitical risk premium firmly embedded in energy



markets,” Hariselman Radhakrishnan, Founder & CEO of HST Wealth, a research analyst firm, said. In Asian markets, Japan’s Nikkei 225, Shanghai’s SSE Composite index and Hong Kong’s Hang Seng index traded higher. US markets ended lower on Friday. “Indian equity markets are expected to remain range-bound with a cautious bias as persistent geopolitical tensions in the Middle East continue to restrain risk

appetite,” Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth-tech firm, said. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 508.12 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. On Friday, the Sensex was down 70.71 points, or 0.09 per cent, to settle at 78,009.25. The Nifty dipped 29.85 points, or 0.12 per cent, to end at 24,366. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 284.85 points to 77,717.05 during initial trading.

Jio Reintroduces Rs 299 Prime Membership Plan After Airtel Rejig



Reliance Jio has reintroduced its Rs 299 Prime membership plan, days after Bharti Airtel discontinued its popular Rs 299 prepaid offering and raised the entry price of its unlimited plans to Rs 349. Jio said the Rs 299 Prime membership will remain available to existing prepaid and postpaid customers, with the price guaranteed until Sept. 5, 2027. The membership will also provide subscribers with dedicated priority customer support. The move comes as telecom operators continue to rationalise their prepaid portfolios and seek to improve average revenue per user (ARPU). Airtel’s decision to withdraw its Rs 299 base plan, which offered 1GB of daily data for 28 days, effectively lifted the entry-level unlimited plan price by 16.7% to Rs 349. The new plan also offers 1.5GB of

data per day. Analysts at Centrum Broking described Airtel’s latest changes as one of its biggest single-day prepaid portfolio cleanups in recent years, calling it part of a broader tariff rationalisation exercise. Several less-popular plans across 56-day and 90-day validity periods were also discontinued. Jio’s decision to retain the Rs 299 price point could help it position the membership as a value proposition as the industry moves toward higher tariffs. The company’s move also comes against the backdrop of stronger subscriber monetisation across the sector. Notably, Airtel had reported an 11.5% sequential rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 8,167 crore for the June quarter, while revenue from operations increased 5.7% to Rs 58,539 crore.

Vedanta Power Reaffirms Commitment to India’s Energy Security on Independence Day

Andhra Pradesh, August 17th: As India celebrated its 80th Independence Day, Vedanta Power Limited, India’s fifth-largest private thermal power producer, reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening the nation’s energy security by delivering reliable power, securing domestic fuel supplies and investing in long-term capacity expansion. With a total power generation capacity of 4.78 GW, including 4.18 GW operational capacity and 0.6 GW under commissioning, Vedanta Power has established a significant presence across Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Chhattisgarh. Around 74% of the company’s capacity is backed by long- and medium-term Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), while approximately 85% of its operational capacity has domestic coal linkages, providing greater fuel security and stability of operations. Fuel security remains a key pillar of Vedanta Power’s approach to reliable generation. Approximately 85% of its operational portfolio is backed by long-term domestic coal linkages through Coal India subsidiaries, including Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) and Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL). This includes



100% linkage coal from SECL and NCL for the Vedanta Power Talwandi Sabo Thermal Plant in Punjab and 100% linkage coal from MCL for the Vedanta Power Jharsuguda Thermal Plant in Odisha. Vedanta Power is also strengthening fuel flexibility across its portfolio. At Meenakshi Energy Limited in Andhra Pradesh, the company is transitioning the plant from its original imported-coal-based fuel mix towards domestic coal. This transition is aimed at enhancing fuel security and reducing exposure to global fuel market volatility.

Commenting on the occasion, Rajinder Singh Ahuja, Whole-Time Director and CEO, Vedanta Power Limited, said, “Energy security is fundamental to the country’s economic independence and its aspirations for a developed India. At Vedanta Power, we are committed to playing our part by ensuring reliable and secure power, strengthening domestic fuel linkages and expanding our generation capacity. As India’s power requirements continue to grow, we believe dependable thermal power will remain an important part of the energy mix,

alongside emerging clean energy technologies. Our focus is to build a resilient and diversified power portfolio that can support India’s growth ambitions for decades to come and contribute towards Viksit Bharat by 2047.” K Binu Raphael, Acting CEO, Meenakshi Energy Limited, said “Independence is also about building greater resilience and reducing dependence on external resources. At Meenakshi Energy Limited, our transition towards greater use of domestic coal reflects this larger national objective.

Airtel Payments Bank Announces Board Transition; Shabnam Sinha To Succeed Sunil Mittal



Airtel Payments Bank on Monday announced a leadership transition, with Shabnam Sinha, who brings more than three decades of experience across development finance and financial services, including a stint with the World Bank, set to succeed Sunil Bharti Mittal as chairperson from Oct. 1, 2026, subject to Reserve Bank of India approval. Mittal will step down as non-executive chairman and leave the bank’s board effective Sept. 30, bringing an end to his tenure that began in April 2016. Sinha, currently an independent director on the bank’s board, will serve as chairperson for a three-year term. During Mittal’s tenure, Airtel Payments Bank expanded its presence across consumer and enterprise banking and emerged

as India’s largest payments bank by revenue, according to the company. The bank now has more than 121 million monthly active users and nearly 30 million bank account customers. Its banking network spans more than 500,000 banking points across the country, reaching three out of four villages, the company said. Airtel Payments Bank has also positioned itself as India’s second-largest mobile bank and UPI Autopay player. Sinha currently chairs the board’s Special Committee for Monitoring Frauds and is a member of its Risk Management and IT Committees. She brings more than three decades of experience across development finance, financial services, public policy and institutional transformation.

PAYTM BLOCK DEAL:

Resilient Asset Management To Sell Up To Rs 4,900-Crore Stake; Floor Price Fixed

Paytm shares will be in focus on Tuesday as Resilient Asset Management is set to sell a stake of up to 5% in One97 Communications, the parent company of Paytm, through block deals, according to sources. The proposed stake sale is expected to be worth up to Rs 4,900 crore, with the transaction set to take place on Tuesday. The floor price for the block deal has been fixed at Rs 1,535 per share, representing a 3% discount to Paytm’s current market price. The base deal size comprises around 19.2 million shares, while an additional 12.4 million shares could be sold through a greenshoe option. The overall transaction could therefore cover up to 5% of Paytm’s equity. Goldman Sachs is acting as the banker for the transaction. The proposed sale comes after a strong run in Paytm shares, with investors



closely watching the company’s shareholder structure and potential changes in promoter-linked holdings. Resilient Asset Management held a 10.2% stake in Paytm as of the quarter ended June, according to the shareholding data. Resilient had acquired a 10.2% stake in Paytm from Antfin in 2023 against optionally convertible debentures, or OCDs. The proposed transaction could significantly reduce Resilient’s holding if the

full 5% stake is sold. Paytm Q1 Results The parent company of Paytm reported a 8.1% jump in its consolidated revenue for the first quarter of fiscal 2026-27 to Rs 2,448 crore sequentially, compared to Rs 2,264 crore, according to an exchange filing. The firm’s net profit saw a 20% increase to Rs 220 quarter-on-quarter from Rs 184 crore. Its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) increased by 54% to Rs

Highlights

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203, compared to the previous quarter’s Rs 132 crore. The Ebitda margin expanded to 8.3% from 5.8% in the quarter prior. The company has clocked a profit for the fifth straight quarter. Paytm Share Price Today Paytm shares closed 1.42% lower at Rs 1,580.20 per share on Monday. The shares have fallen 0.25% in one week but rose 17.23% in one month. The shares were up 22.33% year-to-date and 37.25% in the last one year.

FERRARI'S FIRST EVER ELECTRIC CAR SOLD FOR RECORD \$40M



Ferrari’s first ever electric car has fetched \$40m (£29.5m) in a charity sale, setting a record for a new vehicle sold at auction. The sale of the Ferrari Luce - brainchild of the British iPhone designer Sir Jony Ive - raised more than 35 times the usual price of the car at the event at RM Sotheby’s in California. The Luce faced a backlash when it was launched in May. Some commentators said it strayed from the marque’s traditional designs and lost part of the brand’s identity by being battery-powered and having five seats. Sotheby’s said all proceeds of the sale will be donated to the Ferrari Foundation’s educational programmes.

Sotheby’s did not name the buyer of the custom Luce which features a unique finish and bespoke parts. The BBC has contacted the auction house and Ferrari for comment. The unveiling of the Luce was seen as one of the biggest launches of a new car in recent years. It marked the prancing horse’s first entry into the electric vehicle (EV) market - a sector dominated by Elon Musk’s Tesla and China’s carmakers. Italian President Sergio Mattarella and Pope Leo were invited to view the luxury brand’s new vehicle. But Ferrari’s share price dropped the day after the Luce’s launch, following backlash over the car. Among those criticising

the car were Italy’s deputy prime minister Matteo Salvini and former Ferrari chairman Luca Cordero di Montezemolo, who said the car was “risking the destruction of a legend”. Ferrari’s chief design officer Flavio Manzoni said in an interview in May that critics are part of the innovation process and that he believed people would come to appreciate the Luce. The company has not disclosed its target for Luce sales but, according to a Financial Times report, it has hit this year’s goal thanks to strong demand from China. Sotheby’s said in a statement that the auctioned vehicle marked an “unbeatable opportunity” to own the first production car



of the Luce. The car has special wheels, customised brakes and a white finish. The charity sale marks a “tangible expression of innovation, responsibility, and long-term vision for future generations,” Sotheby’s said. Ferraris often attract some of the highest prices at car auctions. A bespoke Ferrari Daytona SP3 supercar raised \$26m for the carmaker’s education initiatives at an auction in 2025. At the time it set an auction record for the highest-price paid for a new car. The current record for the highest price paid at auction was an ultra-rare 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR Uhlenhaut Coupé, which was sold for \$142m in 2022.

Trump envoy Kushner meets Netanyahu after Hamas talks on peace plan



A meeting between Donald Trump's Middle East envoy Jared Kushner and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has ended, the premier's spokesperson has told the BBC. Kushner arrived in Israel on Sunday night after holding rare talks with Hamas to discuss the implementation of the US-backed Gaza peace plan. Last week, Israel rejected Trump's 15-point plan for peace, which also calls for Israeli troops to withdraw and for Gaza to be rebuilt under a new civilian Palestinian administration. The rejection came after the president's Board of Peace said it had reached an agreement for the "complete disarmament" of Hamas and other armed groups in Gaza last month. Trump leads the Board of Peace, which was created as an international organisation originally intended to bring peace to Gaza, but later expanded to include conflicts worldwide. According to Israeli media reports, Board of Peace envoys Nickolay Mladenov and Tony Blair are also meeting Netanyahu on Monday, with the aim of

advancing Trump's plan. In a phone interview with Fox News on Monday, Trump is reported to have said that Hamas "are giving up their guns" and that Israel should not be carrying out strikes in Gaza. The US outlet did not elaborate further on his comments. Many Israelis remain sceptical that Hamas is ready to disarm. The US-led Board of Peace wants to show that the peace plan for Gaza can still move forward - despite Netanyahu's firm rejection of a new roadmap. Hamas has agreed to give up its weapons in exchange for a phased Israeli troop withdrawal. But Israel has insisted that Hamas must fully disarm before any Israeli pullout. It also wants any weapons that Hamas gives up to be destroyed, rather than stored by a Palestinian technocratic committee, so that Hamas cannot reclaim them. In addition, there is opposition to Turkey and Qatar being involved in checks on whether Hamas is meeting its requirements under the deal. Pushing Netanyahu to change his position will be an uphill struggle.



■ Aid shortages and fears of starvation as Indonesia reels from deadly earthquake

Trump says US to reduce military drills with South Korea after it stayed out of Iran war

President Donald Trump has said the US will "substantially reduce" joint military exercises with South Korea, citing his "very good relationship" with North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un. He also noted on Truth Social that South Korea had recently declined to join the US in the "denuclearisation" of Iran. "These exercises are not only costly, with much of these costs paid for by the United States of America (as usual), but send a signal that is totally inappropriate and hostile," Trump posted. Seoul said it was reviewing Trump's comments, adding it hoped a favourable relationship between Washington and Pyongyang could lead to meaningful talks. Pyongyang has not yet commented. Earlier, South Korea said the drills with



the US would proceed "as scheduled". It comes after North Korea this month conducted ballistic missile tests banned by the United Nations. Trump said in his social media post on Sunday that it was "too late to cancel", as the US and South Korea were due to start their annual military exercises on Monday. He added: "While somewhat unrelated (?), I recently asked the

presidential Blue House said it would continue diplomatic consultations on US-Korea military cooperation related to the Strait of Hormuz, while discussing details on joint military drills with the United States. Experts suggest the walking back of joint military exercises could carry a high cost with relatively little benefit. "US-South Korea combined defence exercises are essential for military forces to be ready and capable of doing their jobs," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. "Scaling them back can damage alliance coordination, slow the process of South Korea taking on greater responsibility for its own defence, and weaken deterrence against possible conflicts in Asia.

Two dead and hundreds evacuated after twin fires break out on Greek island



Two people died and hundreds were evacuated after two fires broke out "almost simultaneously" on a Greek island near Athens on Sunday afternoon, officials said. About 200 firefighters were deployed to keep the twin fires from converging on the island of Salamina, which was under a high wildfire risk on Sunday. The first blaze was reported at 14:40 local time (11:40 GMT) near the island's south coast and spread rapidly due to high winds, followed by a separate fire some 20 minutes later in the east. Their cause is not yet known. One of the fires had been brought under control and evacuations completed by Sunday evening, Greek media report, with 500 people having left the island by sea. The first blaze broke out in a forested residential area in Peristeria, a southern city on the island, fire official Vasilios Vathrakoyannis said in a statement. Firefighters attending the blaze found two bodies at the scene, he said. The city's mayor told Greek media they were believed to have been a couple. Officials continued to battle scattered blazes there late on Sunday, while the second fire which began in the eastern town of Selinia was said to have "no active front". Two coast guard vessels and a fire department vessel will remain in the area for surveillance and assistance. At least 10 other people suffered burns or showed "symptoms of smoke

inhalation", five of whom had been taken for treatment locally, Greek Health Minister Adonis Georgiades said on X. A number of aircraft and 50 fire engines, assisted by water tankers and construction machinery, were deployed to try and tackle the two fires. Salamina Deputy Mayor Thodoris Zannis earlier said this was to keep the fires from burning over a mountain on the island and meeting to form a single blaze. Five patrol boats and several other private vessels were sent to the area for assistance. Salamina sits just west of Athens and has some 37,000 residents, many of them elderly. Firefighters across Europe have been facing a series of wildfires this weekend, including officers in Belgium spending a third day beating back flames in the country's largest nature reserve, Hautes Fagnes. The wildfire - described as the largest in the country's recent history - has more than doubled in size in 24 hours. Meanwhile, at least one person died and dozens were injured in a wildfire that tore through Croatia's coastline overnight on Friday. It was described by Croatia's fire chief Slavko Tucakovic as "one of the worst" blazes in the country's history and saw around 1,200 residents and tourists evacuated. The EU's climate monitoring service, Copernicus, has confirmed that western Europe experienced its hottest June-to-July period on record.

Top Zambian opposition figures arrested days after presidential vote

Security forces in Zambia have seized weapons and arrested 11 people, including senior opposition figures, allegedly involved in an insurrection plot, the government has said. The leading opposition candidate in last Thursday's presidential election, Brian Mundubile, was also found at the scene of the raid in the capital, Lusaka, according to the country's top civil servant Patrick Kangwa. In an interview with the BBC, Mundubile dismissed the accusations as "total fabrications", alleging security forces staged an assassination attempt on his life during a raid at his home on Friday. With results from more than half of the constituencies announced, he is trailing incumbent Hakainde Hichilema. Hichilema, who is running for a second five-year term, has 62% of the votes. Mundubile, one of 13 challengers, has 36%. But the 55-year-old opposition leader had earlier claimed victory and alleged, without sharing the evidence, that there had been voting irregularities.



Giving details about the raid, Kangwa said the individuals arrested were connected to "military plans involving foreign nationals and illegal military training camps". He added that they posed "a serious threat to state security" and held "high-grade military weapons", ammunition and other materials intended for use in an armed insurrection. He alleged that shots were fired at law enforcement officers leading to an exchange of fire. Mundubile however told the BBC that there was no militia at his home. "It's unfortunate that senior government officials would present themselves before the entire nation to make such

falsehoods," he told BBC Focus on Africa. According to Kangwa, among those arrested were Patrick Mwansa, the husband of Tasila Lungu, the daughter of former Zambian President Edgar Lungu, and other politicians. The suspects are being held in custody at various police stations in Lusaka. Mundubile described the raid to the BBC saying armed personnel knocked down the gate with an armoured vehicle, broke doors and windows and opened fire. "They were basically shooting indiscriminately. They directed two shots towards me. Like I've always said, it was just by God's grace that I survived.

"So they came in to kill us," he said. Mundubile said former minister Mutotwe Kafwaya was shot while he and his wife were present. He said Kafwaya, whose whereabouts remain unknown, was bleeding and he urged the officers to take him to hospital. Mundubile said his family remains traumatised. "My children saw their uncle... bleeding profusely and being dragged like an animal... 80 soldiers coming into the house, shooting indiscriminately and breaking doors and windows down is not an experience anybody would want to go through." He said he and his family had not returned home since Friday and felt unsafe. On the day following the election, he maintained that his campaign's parallel vote tabulation showed him in the lead and repeated allegations of irregularities, without providing detailed evidence. The authorities denied the claims of vote rigging and in preliminary statements observers described election day as largely peaceful and orderly.

MOVIE THAT WENT VIRAL FOR TERRIBLE ANIMATION BECOMES CHINA BOX OFFICE HIT



It's so bad, it's become a box office hit. Niu Lai, a low-budget animation film about a cow in a dream sequence has seen a huge jump in ticket sales after going viral for its confusing plot and terrible graphics. It grossed just 7,705 yuan (\$1,140, £843) in the first 10 days after its release, but has now made more than 11.4 million yuan, according to movie tracking site Mao Yan. That means it is holding ground against Hollywood blockbusters like The Odyssey and Spider Man: Brand New Day. "You may regret for 80 minutes if you watch it, but if you don't, you'll regret it for life," one popular social media post about the film said. Other

social media users have hailed the movie as the antidote to the AI slop that is taking over social media algorithms. They are sharing clips praising Niu Lai's "hand-crafted" method - a reference to the poor animation quality - as "proof" that its creators did not use AI. "That's some serious craftsmanship," a Weibo user wrote. Another social media user called it "pure handmade" and the biggest "dark horse" of the summer movie season. Others say they are rooting for the movie because they desperately hope for a "bullish" stock market - a reference to the fact that the words "bull" and "cow" share the same character in Chinese.



Russia and Ukraine trade more deadly strikes

Ebola outbreak in DR Congo becomes deadliest in its history

The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo is now the deadliest in its history, according to public health officials. A total of 2,325 people have been killed by the virus since it was declared on 15 May, surpassing the death toll of the country's 2018-2020 outbreak. The outbreak was already the fastest growing on record, UN humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher said last week, warning that "the epidemic is killing someone every 30 minutes". There is currently no approved vaccine available for the Bundibugyo species that has caused the current epidemic but several are in development, including one based on technology used to develop the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine. DR Congo's Institute of Public Health on



Sunday said it had recorded 4,945 confirmed cases, including 101 in the previous 24 hours. Comparatively few cases have been identified outside the country: as of 12 August, 20 cases were confirmed in neighbouring Uganda, while two people were treated in Germany and one case was declared in France. However, the pace of the virus's transmission in

DR Congo, where it has spread to six of 26 provinces, has been described as "exceptional" by the World Health Organization. According to Reuters, it took close to five months for the world's deadliest outbreak of 2014-2016 in West Africa to reach 1,000 fatalities. The current outbreak reached 2,000 deaths in three months, though researchers say it may have

been spreading undetected since February. The outbreak is the 17th to have emerged in DR Congo since Ebola was discovered 50 years ago. Years of conflict and a highly mobile population have added to the country's challenges in controlling the spread of the disease. The WHO has said it hopes to reverse the spread of the disease within three months but warned that this meant bringing transmission under control and not ending the outbreak entirely. Ebola is a rare but deadly viral disease and the Bundibugyo species is even rarer, with only two known prior outbreaks. Symptoms of Ebola, which are similar to the flu or malaria, include fever, headache and tiredness, and can begin suddenly within two to 21 days of infection.

AYUSH SHETTY: INDIA'S BADMINTON STAR WHO STUNNED WORLD NO. 1 SHI YUQI AT BWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

India's 21-year-old badminton star Ayush Shetty stunned defending champion and World No. 1 Shi Yuqi of China 21-14, 13-21, 21-19 in the BWF World Championships 2026 Round of 64 clash. The youngster, who hails from Karkala in Karnataka, looked in sensational form as he came up with brilliant smashes and terrific defence to pull off a stunning win in front of the home crowd in New Delhi. This was his first-ever win over Shi Yuqi after three successive losses, including a straight-game loss in the final of the Asia Badminton Championships earlier this year. Ayush was off to a flying start with a 21-14 win in the first game and although he dropped the second game, the youngster did not give up. He fought back brilliantly and was able to finish the match in style. Who is Ayush Shetty? Shetty found himself in the headlines earlier this year after he became the first Indian men's singles player to



reach the Badminton Asia Championships final in 61 years. While he was defeated by Shi Yuqi in the final, he pulled off a brilliant win over Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the semi-final. It was a result that truly announced his arrival on the global stage. He comes from the small town of Sanoor near Karkala in Karnataka and was introduced to badminton at the age of 8 by his father, who coached him in their backyard. The family later relocated to Bengaluru in order to provide proper training to Shetty and under the guid-

ance of coaches at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy, he honed his skills. Shetty's breakthrough came in 2025 when he won the US Open title after beating Brian Yang in straight games. It was his maiden BWF World Tour title. He followed it up with wins over top-10 players like Li Shi Feng and Chi Yu Jen at the Asia Championships. Earlier, he won the bronze medal at the 2023 World Junior Championships in Spokane, USA, won the Denmark Junior International in 2021.

Formula E To Match Formula 1 In Speed? Co-Founder Says Gen4 "Will Be Very Close"

Formula E is entering its Gen4 era with a clear ambition to close the performance gap with Formula One, with championship co-founder Alberto Longo believing the all-electric series could be running at near-F1 pace on several circuits by the end of the next four-season cycle. Formula E bid farewell to its Gen3 cars at the London E-Prix on Sunday, and CEO Jeff Dodds believes its rapid evolution could eventually see electric racing outpace Formula One. "What is fascinating in Formula E is to see the steps. Because every two-three years, we have a step in technology which is so big that it's even difficult to compare to the previous generation," Longo said. "It was difficult to compare Gen3 to Gen2. It will be very difficult to compare Gen3 to Gen4. Because we speak to another level in terms of racing level, technology." The Gen4 cars are expected to reach around 335 kmph, with lap times improving by six to 10 seconds at circuits through increased downforce, powertrain development and new tyres. Longo expects the performance gap with Formula One to



narrow substantially during Gen4's four-season cycle. "By the time we end Gen4, in the fourth season of Gen4, we will be very close to times of Formula 1 in many tracks," he said. CEO Dodds, who has worked in the Formula One ecosystem and describes himself as an F1 fan, believes Formula E's progress should not be measured simply by its proximity to the established championship. Formula E is only 12 years old, compared to F1's 76-year history, Dodds pointed out, and said the

younger championship had experienced "hyper-growth" while developing a fundamentally different proposition. "We don't need Formula 1 to fail for us to be successful or vice versa. We absolutely think there is room for both organisations to continue being incredibly successful," he said. Dodds believes Formula E's technological trajectory could eventually give it a performance advantage over combustion-powered racing. "We already accelerate much faster than a Formula 1 car. We are at

the infancy of the technology here at Formula E. The combustion engine's been around for 130 years, so that's been iterated to within an inch of its life," he said. "So over the next four, five, six, seven years, we are going to get to a point where the technology in Formula E can outpace a Formula 1 car. No question about that." At the heart of Formula E's argument is efficiency. Dodds said the most efficient F1 combustion engine operates at roughly 55 per cent efficiency, while Gen4 technology is expected to be in the region of 97-98 per cent. That, he argued, explains the absence of the traditional engine roar associated with motorsport. "When people say to me, it would be great if these cars sounded noisier, like a Formula 1 car. What you're asking me is to make a car sound like the past. To make it sound less efficient, less performant, less technologically innovative," Dodds said. "We're going to make our cars sound like this car. Our children... are likely to only exist driving a hybrid or an electric car. This needs to be a sound that they associate, not what my father associates with."

High On Confidence, Indian Women's Hockey Team Eyes World Cup Win Over South Africa

High on confidence after holding Olympic silver medallists and world No. 4 China to a draw, India will look to strengthen their bid for a top-two finish in Pool D when they face South Africa in their second Women's Hockey World Cup match on Tuesday. India, ranked ninth in the world, produced a disciplined display to secure a 2-2 draw against a fancied Chinese side in their tournament opener. The result has given them a valuable point and put them in a good position to qualify for the second round. England currently lead Pool D following their 4-0 win over South Africa, with China and India next in the standings, while South Africa are fourth. For the semifinal race the top two teams from each pool will be divided into two groups (E and F) of four teams each. Each team will play matches against the opponents they did not face in the first round. A team's result in the first round against the progressing team from its pool will



be carried forward in second round. It means that India and China will not play each other if they reach the second round and their one point each from the draw will be carried forward. For India, Tuesday's game is, therefore, an opportunity to put themselves firmly in control of their qualification hopes. A win over 18th-ranked South Africa would not only boost their chances of finishing

in the top two but also provide momentum ahead of their final pool game. "We don't have to worry about the other teams' positions, but we need to maintain this momentum in the upcoming matches while avoiding complacency," coach Sjoerd Marijne said after the China game. India showed plenty of promise in their opening match. Dragflicker Deepika converted a penalty

corner and also earned another, while World Cup debutants Sunelita Toppo, Ishika and Shilpi Dabas displayed composure well beyond their experience. Navneet Kaur, who was named Player of the Tournament at the World Cup Qualifiers, has also carried her impressive form into the tournament and will be one of India's key attacking threats. However, Marijne knows there is room for improvement, particularly in possession and ball retention. India controlled the opening quarter and went into half-time with a 2-1 lead, but their intensity dropped after the break. They sat deeper in the third quarter, allowing China to take control and eventually find the equaliser. "We scored a penalty corner and a field goal, but I'm not happy with the third quarter. We need to work on ball possession and ball retention. The team must have felt relieved after the draw in the first match," Marijne said.

ONE DECISION, JUST TWO RUNS: SHUBMAN GILL, GAUTAM GAMBHIR'S GALLE STRATEGY UNDER FIRE

India finished the second day of the first Test against Sri Lanka at Galle on 460/9. It was expected that India would declare at the overnight score to gain the maximum advantage of bowling in the first hour of the morning session. However, the Indian team management took a surprising call as they sent overnight unbeaten batters Kuldeep Yadav and Prasidh Krishna to start the proceedings. The move was a defensive one, and former India player Dodda Ganesh raised an important question. "Why would you bat on the third day morning with two tailenders? #SLvIND," Ganesh wrote on X. India were bowled out for 462 in their first innings on the third day of the opening Test

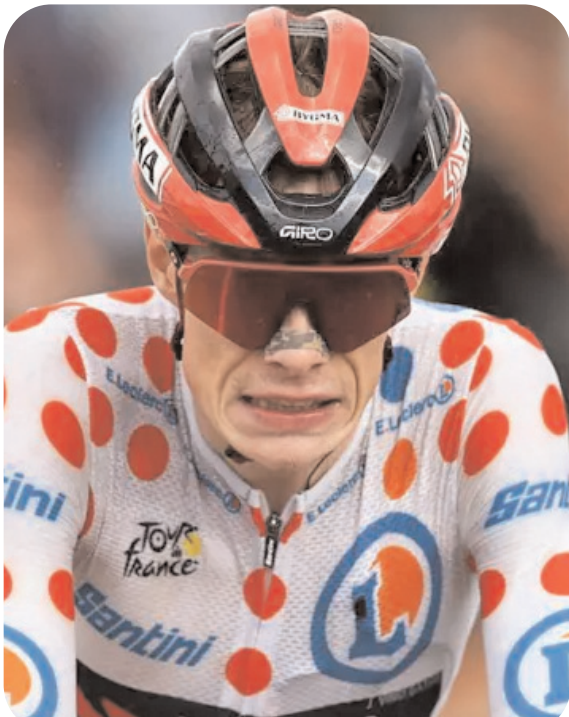


against Sri Lanka on Monday. Devdutt Padikkal top-scored for India with a mammoth knock of 167 that ended on Sunday. Resuming their innings at 460/9, India managed to add just two runs before the final wicket fell, with Asitha Fernando dismissing Prasidh Krishna. For Sri Lanka, Prabath Jayasuriya was the pick of

the bowlers, finishing with figures of 4/109. Keshara Nuwantha claimed 3/175, while Fernando took 2/63. India's total was built around Padikkal's outstanding knock of 167, which anchored their first-innings effort. On the second day of the Test, the first two sessions were washed out due to incessant rain.

Vingegaard out for rest of season with Tour injury

Two-time Tour de France winner Jonas Vingegaard will miss the rest of season as he continues his recovery from a broken collarbone sustained in this year's race. On stage 15, the 29-year-old Visma-lease a Bike rider was tackling a tight right-hand bend off a roundabout when his front wheel slid out, causing him to land on his shoulder. The injury required surgery and ruled the Dane out of challenging for a third Tour victory, with Tadej Pogacar going on to win a record equalling fifth yellow jersey. Vingegaard will be absent from September's UCI Road World Championships in Montreal, Canada, when Pogacar will go for a third straight world title.



Ricky Ponting Shows The Mirror To Australia After 'Embarrassing' Bangladesh Defeat

Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting has called for a change in the Test team after their recent loss to Bangladesh in Darwin on Sunday. Australia's batting has been facing growing scrutiny recently, and it all compounded when the Aussies were catapulted in their own backyard despite being at full strength as Bangladesh scripted a nine-wicket victory. Ponting advocated for injecting youngsters into the batting order and believed that there was enough evidence for a change. "This ends up being a very embarrassing defeat. I think it's inevitable they have to make a change. I was on the record at the end of last summer thinking that this was the ideal time to start to regenerate this team because of the performances from some of the



players," Ponting told Channel 7. Ponting stated that he would be the last one to call for a change, but looking at the performance, he thinks it is inevitable. "Look, I'm the last one I want to make change. As a captain or as a player, I wanted to keep the group together. It has to get to a bad point before I start saying you ought to leave somebody out. But there had been enough evidence for me

coming here to suggest that they weren't going to lose anything or much at all by starting that regeneration, by maybe bringing in another opener, by maybe bringing in someone at No.3. I think that that has to happen," he added. Meanwhile, former Australia bowler Trent Copeland emphasised that losing a Test to Bangladesh in Australia is 'unacceptable. "The players themselves will be, I'm sure, distraught with how this has gone," he told SEN. "I also think there is an element of them not sitting in this like the world is over either, but this is a completely unacceptable Test match result for Australia. When you are in your own conditions, I don't care about the preparation, I don't care who's playing for Australia even.

Aryna Sabalenka Squeezes Out A Win On Sixth Match Point In Cincinnati



Top seed Aryna Sabalenka fought through 62, 76 (7/2) against Talia Gibson on Sunday to join two other elites in the third round of the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters. The world number one needed six match points, Australia's Gibson saving five in the 12th game of the second set before Sabalenka managed a final winner to get the job done in just under two hours on a windswept Grandstand Court. "I'm super tired, this is crazy weather," the Belarusian said. "Talia played great tennis and was more aggressive in the second set. She put more pressure on my service games. I'm glad I stayed calm and pulled it out in straight sets." Sabalenka, who won the Cincinnati trophy in 2024, is looking for a solid build-up to the US Open, where she'll be seeking her first Grand Slam title of the year. She's won three titles in 2026, but none since Miami in March. She joined a pair of reigning Grand Slam champions in advancing, with Australian Open winner

Elena Rybakina and Roland Garros titleholder Mirra Andreeva also reaching the third round. Second seed Rybakina, coming off a runner-up finish to Iga Swiatek in Toronto, defeated Taylor Townsend 6-3, 6-4. Andreeva crushed Oleksandra Oliynykova with the loss of just one game, breaking five times and saving all seven break points against her own serve in a 65-minute 6-1, 6-0 rout. Rybakina said that she is concentrating on recovery after a tough Toronto run and was glad to get off to a low-stress start. "Today I'm happy with the serve," she said. "Definitely it helped me a lot. Last week in Toronto was very difficult. A lot of three set matches." Seventh seed Swiatek, the defending champion who bagged her first title of a rocky season in Toronto, hammered Emiliana Arango of Colombia 6-3, 6-0. Swiatek went down an early break but recovered quickly to prevail in 71 minutes over the player who ousted Venus Williams in the first round.

MAKHACHEV SECURES RECORD-SETTING WIN AGAINST MACHADO GARRY

Islam Makhachev (29-1 MMA) has successfully defended his UFC welterweight championship, defeating Ireland's Ian Machado Garry (17-2 MMA) via unanimous decision (49-46, 49-46, 48-47) while also setting an impressive record in the main event of UFC 330 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. With the victory on Saturday night, Russia's Makhachev etched his name in the UFC record books, extending his winning streak to 17 consecutive fights and surpassing UFC Hall of Famer Anderson Silva's historic 16-fight mark set from 2006 to

2013. Makhachev dictated the tempo throughout the 25-minute championship tilt, neutralising the challenger with suffocating top control and chain wrestling while mixing in dynamic striking, including a damaging second-round head kick. Machado Garry, bidding to become only the second undisputed UFC champion hailing from Ireland, stayed diligent in defensive scrambles on the mat to survive danger but could not mount enough offence to sway the judges' scorecards. "I have nothing but respect for Islam. ... He

won. I have no complaints, no excuses," Machado Garry said inside the Octagon after the decision. "It's always hard," Makhachev said of grinding out the victory against the challenger in the championship rounds. In the co-main event, UFC women's strawweight champion Mackenzie Dern (17-5 MMA) successfully defended her title for the first time, using dominant grappling and relentless submission threats to defeat Canada's Gillian Robertson (17-9 MMA) via unanimous decision (49-46, 49-46, 48-47). Dern, a Phoenix native who

fights out of Southern California, controlled the pace on the mat across 25 minutes, constantly threatening transitions and clinching attacks against her fellow Brazilian jiu-jitsu standout. Dern's most dangerous moment came in the opening frame, nearly securing a buzzer-beating rear-naked choke just before the horn sounded. While Dern had voiced confidence throughout fight week that she would finish Robertson inside the distance, the champion was pleased with her complete five-round performance.





HERO SRIRAM (SRIKANTH) STARRER OUTSTANDING PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER "THE MAZE" RELEASES REVERSE TEASE

Hero Sriram (Srikanth), who has earned a strong following among Tamil and Telugu audiences, is coming up with a new film titled "The Maze". Priyanka, Hrithika Srinivas, and Kamal Kamaraju will be seen in other key roles. The film is presented by Dr. Naimisha Reddy Kasireddy and produced by Dr. Uday K. Reddy Palvayi, Dr. KSR (Kareddy Sridhar Reddy), Dr. Bharat Reddy Gopu, and Dr. Anirudh Reddy Soma under the Shrousha Kamala Arts and UR Creations banners. "The Maze" is being made as a fresh psychological thriller, directed by Dr. Ravikiran Gadalay. The film is currently in regular production. The reverse teaser of "The Maze" was released today. The makers have impressed with a novel promotional idea by presenting the teaser almost entirely in

reverse, marking a unique attempt. The "The Maze" reverse teaser opens with an intriguing dialogues that question reality. The protagonist suddenly wakes up from sleep, with numerous incidents flashing through his mind. He sets out in search of proof for certain truths that nobody else believes but him. He also follows several people in his quest for answers. Are the things others believe are merely hallucinations actually illusions? Or are they real, just as strongly as the protagonist believes? Who is responsible for this confusing situation? Who stood by him and supported him throughout this journey? How did he get injured? And who is the Homicide Intervention Team investigating in an attempt to prevent murders? These are among the many questions that create

curiosity in the teaser. The teaser becomes even more intriguing when the protagonist is shown being arrested and taken away by the police in the final sequence. Except for the final scene, the entire teaser has been presented in reverse, making it a genuinely fresh and innovative attempt. Overall, the reverse teaser successfully raises expectations and curiosity around "The Maze", promising an intriguing psychological thriller filled with mystery, uncertainty, and unexpected twists. The Maze is an engaging thriller that revolves around a man whose life takes an unexpected turn over the course of a single night. As reality begins to blur and every moment takes him deeper into the unknown, he must navigate through a maze of fear, mystery, and unforeseen twists.

Shravan Reddy surprises us with his range as both Hero & Anti Hero in AGADHA

Agadha is a film that is so different from the regular breed of movies that come and go, especially within the horror genre. In fact, to simply call it horror would almost be a disservice. It is an atmospheric thriller steeped in mysticism and the supernatural, elevated by some towering performances from its cast. Shravan Reddy plays a character that is remarkably layered. He begins at a place that feels seemingly normal and familiar, but as the film progresses, the character slowly reveals shades that allow Shravan to showcase both his range and his understanding of the role.



There is something increasingly unsettling about his performance — not because he overtly

plays for menace, but because he never quite lets you comfortably read where the character stands. He moves effortlessly between the positive and negative shades, inhabiting that difficult grey zone with aplomb. Even in his quieter moments, there is an undercurrent that keeps you watching him, wondering what lies beneath. By the time the film ends, Shravan has taken the character somewhere far removed from where we first encountered him. It is a controlled, assured performance — and one that stays with you long after the end credits roll.

Sunil and Akhil Uddemari's Psychological Thriller 'Fight Maha' Trailer Released

The Film is Set for a Worldwide Theatrical Release on August 21

Sunil and Akhil Uddemari play the lead roles in the upcoming psychological thriller "Fight Maha," featuring Dr. Srivani Gopichand, Vaishnavi, Siddharth, and Srikanth Ayyangar in key roles. "If dreams come true, whose truth is it?" is the intriguing tagline of the film. Directed by Anand Chandra, the film is being presented as a fresh and innovative psychological thriller. It is produced by AVS Raju, R. Kumar Raju, and Anand Chandra under the banner of New I Movies LLP. The teaser, which was released last month by renowned filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma, received an excellent response and has crossed more than a million views. Today the makers have now unveiled the 2-minute-20-second theatrical trailer, further raising curiosity around the film. "Fight Maha" is scheduled to release worldwide in theatres on August 21.



The globally popular cooking celebration is now in Tamil homes.. Star heroine Samantha Ruth Prabhu to host Celebrity MasterChef Tamil



A new take on the popular cooking format with a Tamil nativity.. Samantha Ruth Prabhu is bringing together several celebrities from the Tamil entertainment industry to celebrate food, flavors, emotions and connections on Sony Vela and Sony Liv - Sony Pictures Networks India has recently announced 'Celebrity MasterChef Tamil'. This globally recognized cooking format will be hosted by star heroine Samantha Ruth Prabhu on Sony Viza and Sony Liv for the Tamil

audience. Celebrities, food, competition... 'Celebrity MasterChef Tamil' is being made by bringing these three worlds together. Many celebrities from the Tamil entertainment industry are going to step into the kitchen from the sets for the first time... and face the challenges, unexpected twists and pressure of tough cooking. In addition to pleasing the audience... they are going to prove their talent by preparing delicious dishes to win every challenge.



HUMA QURESHI OWNS THE COVER, EFFORTLESSLY

Huma Qureshi is proving she is a true fashion powerhouse with her latest magazine cover, and it's impossible to look away. The actress, all set to impress fans with her upcoming film Toxic, brought serious glam to the shoot with multiple striking looks. She switched between four bold outfits, a black and white feathered dress, a rich maroon pantsuit, a flowing white gown with dramatic sleeves, and an elegant black gown covered in crystal embellishments. Each look showed off a different side of her style, from edgy to classic

elegance. Huma completed her looks with statement earrings and soft, glowing makeup, letting her confidence shine through every frame. With Toxic creating buzz, this cover comes at the perfect time, proving Huma is ready to own the spotlight both on screen and in fashion. Our cover girl for this high on fashion issue is none other than the warm and bubbly Huma Qureshi. The star, who lives by her own rules and gives power-packed performances, believes in empowering others. She's also a lot of fun to shoot with and oozes confidence.

Ameer Log Will Be a Complete Family Entertainer: Director Ramana Reddy Soma

Ameer Log is the first production venture of Madhavi Reddy Soma under the banner of Awwal Number Productions. Directed by Ramana Reddy Soma, the film has Manohar Reddy Manchuri as its co-producer. MC Hari, Manoj and Sasidhar play the lead roles, while Vedha Jalandhar, Ravan Nittoor, Vishwender Reddy and Saiyogi appear in key roles. Rana Daggubati's Spirit Media is releasing the film grandly in Telugu on August 21. As part of the promotions, director Ramana Reddy Soma interacted with the media and shared several interesting details about the film.

■ TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND: I am from Raghavapuram in Nalgonda district. I came to Hyderabad in 1997 for higher studies and pursued Architecture at JNTU. I was an avid movie watcher even during those days. I started my own office in 2007 and have around two decades



of experience in the architecture industry. During the COVID period, I went back to my hometown. Since I had plenty of free time then, I started watching many more films on OTT platforms.

■ HOW DID YOU DEVELOP AN INTEREST IN FILMMAKING? I have always loved reading and writ-

ing stories. I started writing stories around six or seven years ago, drawing from my own experiences and things I had observed around me. Later, with the help of a friend, I learnt how stories should be written for cinema. I also picked up a few things through YouTube. Eventually, with the support of some friends, I got an opportunity to visit a shooting set. That is how my journey into cinema gradually began.

■ TELL US ABOUT YOUR FIRST FILMMAKING ATTEMPT: I made a short film around three years ago. I wrote the story at night and shot it the following morning. We ended up with around 33 minutes of footage shot across a village and the city. After watching the output, I felt that I could do much better and decided that I should make a film only after preparing a proper bound script. During a podcast, I once heard Manoj Bajpayee mention the phrase 'Ameer Log'. That stayed with me, and that is where this journey began.

Rhea Chakraborty says father lost job over her surname

Rhea Chakraborty has opened up about the price her family paid following the controversy that engulfed her after actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death in 2020. While her own career came to a standstill, Rhea revealed that even her father lost a major job simply because of his surname. During her appearance on Farah Khan's vlog, Rhea spoke about rebuilding her life and the struggles her family faced amid intense public scrutiny. She revealed that her father, Indrajit Chakraborty, had secured a senior position at a reputed hospital, but the opportunity was taken away after his connection to her became known. "Papa got a very big job as a medical superintendent at a very big hospital in town. And then they found out his surname and said, 'Sorry, aap Rhea Chakraborty ke papa ho toh...'" she shared. Who is Rhea Chakraborty's father? Indrajit Chakraborty is a retired Army officer who served as a doctor in the Armed Forces Medical Corps. Despite his experience, Rhea claimed that the controversy surrounding her became the reason he was removed from the hospital job. Her revelation shows how the fallout of the case extended beyond her personal and professional life, affecting members of her family who had no connection with the film industry.



UNIQUE SURVIVAL DRAMA THRILLER "CHIRANJEEVI" TRAILER RELEASED



Chiranjeevi" stars Kiku Yanamala and Kashish Khan in the lead roles. Eeswari Rao, Tanikella Bharani, Sreekanth Bharat, Viva Raghava, and others play key roles in the film. Produced by Deepti Nadiminti under the

Kiku Entertainments banner, the film is directed by Shubha Sai Venkat. "Chiranjeevi" is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on the 28th of this month. The makers released the film's trailer today.

Rakul Preet Singh Drips In Sequins, Sass

Rakul Preet Singh is proving age is just a number with her latest stunning photoshoot. The actress, gearing up for her much-awaited role in Ramayana, dropped a set of pictures that instantly caught fans' attention. She wore a shimmering black sequinned gown with a sheer crystal-studded neckline and a bold cutout back with lace-up detailing. She kept it simple with a sleek bun, ear cuffs, and dewy makeup, letting the gown steal the show. Nearing her 40s, Rakul continues to impress with her fitness and style. With almost two decades in the industry, she has built a strong name in Tollywood and is now steadily making her mark in Bollywood too.

