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NATIONAL | NEWS

Nepal President thanks India for 'generous support' after deadly flash floods

WORLD | NEWS

CLOSE RACE AS ICELAND VOTES ON WHETHER TO RESTART TALKS ON JOINING EU



RASHMIKA MANDANNA SERVES OLD-WORLD GLAMOUR

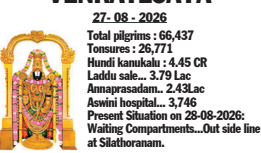
CINEMA | NEWS



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Short Takes

New Record for Land Prices in Hyderabad: Rs.269 Crore per Acre!

Hyderabad, August 29, 2026: Land prices in Hyderabad's IT corridor have set a new benchmark, with a government parcel at Raidurg fetching Rs269 crore per acre in an online auction conducted by the Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TIGIC). Hyderabad-based Vamsiram Builders emerged as the highest bidder for the 5.38-acre parcel, taking the total transaction value to approximately Rs1,447.22 crore. The government had put the 5.38-acre parcel in Survey No. 83/1 at Raidurg up for auction with a reserve price of Rs175 crore per acre.

GOVT KICKS OFF PREPARATIONS FOR UNION BUDGET 2027-28, PRE-BUDGET MEETINGS FROM OCT 12

New Delhi, Aug 29 : The government has kick-started preparations for the Union Budget 2027-28, with the Finance Ministry issuing the Budget Circular that sets out the framework, timelines and guidelines for the annual budget-making exercise. The circular lays down the process for preparing the Revised Estimates for 2026-27 and Budget Estimates for 2027-28. Ministries and departments have been asked to submit detailed expenditure projections ahead of the pre-Budget consultations. The pre-Budget meetings are scheduled to begin from October 12.

US controls Hormuz: White House

Washington, Aug 29 : The White House has declared that the United States controls the Strait of Hormuz, claiming American forces have cleared Iranian mines, protected nearly 1,500 commercial vessels and prevented Tehran from exporting oil through the strategic waterway. In a statement citing the US Central Command (CENTCOM), the White House said American forces were keeping global energy supplies moving while denying Iran revenue that Washington says could be used to threaten international commerce. The assertions were presented by the administration as evidence supporting President Donald Trump's repeated statements that the US Navy had gained control over the strait. The White House release did not include a response from Iran.

Eviction threat: Slum dwellers near PM's home meet Rahul

New Delhi (TSIT): People from three slum clusters near the Prime Minister's residence on Saturday, August 29, met Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi seeking his intervention against their proposed relocation to Savda Ghevra on the outskirts of Delhi, claiming the move would disrupt their livelihood, children's education and access to healthcare.

Residents of Bhai Ram Camp, Masjid Camp, and DID Colony, who gathered at the AICC office on 24 Akbar Road, claimed that around 717 families, comprising nearly 3,000 to 5,000 people, living in the three clusters will be affected.

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday granted these residents six weeks to vacate their homes and relocate to alternative accommodation at Savda Ghevra, rejecting the appellants' claim that the process of their eviction violated the Delhi Slum and JJ Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2015. A bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia also constituted a monitoring committee to supervise rehabilita-



tion of the dwellers and said authorities would "strictly" honour their undertakings and the court's June 4 directions to ensure amenities, such as schools, electricity, LPG connection, bus passes, dispensaries, etc., to them at Savda Ghevra. The Centre had sought their eviction on the grounds that the jhuggi-jhopdi clusters were in a protected zone, immediately next to an operational Air Force Station, and the decision to remove unauthorised construction in the area was taken to strengthen and secure defence infrastructure and for other important public and security purposes. "We have come here to Rahul Gandhi ji's office because our homes are being demolished.

NEPAL FLOODS: KHARGE WRITES TO PM MODI, HM SHAH, URGES GOVT TO PROVIDE EVERY POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE



New Delhi, Aug 29 : Congress National President, Mallikarjun Kharge, has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, expressing devastation caused by the flash floods in Nepal and urging the government to extend every possible assistance to those affected by the tragedy. Nepal's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority said that the bodies of 579 people swept away by the floods had so far been recovered. In comparison, 1,924 people remained out of contact as of Friday evening.

In his letter to the Prime Minister, Kharge said that he is "deeply concerned" about the devastating floods in Nepal. He also cited recent media reports and said that over 500 people have been confirmed dead and nearly 1,000 people are still unaccounted

for. He said that the disaster has left thousands of people in dire urgent need of food, medicines, shelter and other essential assistance.

"I request you to ensure that adequate humanitarian and relief assistance is provided to the affected people of Nepal in coordination with the Government of Nepal," Kharge said. The Congress chief also expressed concern over the Indian nationals and persons of Indian origin who are stranded in Nepal due to the floods and said, "It is requested that requisite directions are issued to the concerned authorities to intensify rescue and evacuation efforts and make all necessary arrangements for their safe and early return to India."

"I am also concerned about the Indian nationals and persons of Indian origin stranded or uncontactable in Nepal. As per the latest information from the Ministry of External Affairs, around 320 Indian nationals remain uncontactable," Kharge said, while expressing hope that the Centre will take immediate steps to provide all possible assistance during this difficult time.

PM Modi arrives in Uzbekistan on two-day official visit

TASHKENT: (Aug 29) Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Uzbekistan on Saturday, where he will hold delegation-level talks with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, aiming to fur-

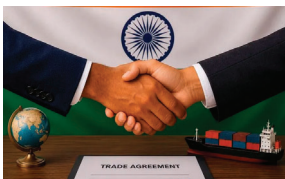


ther strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries. President Mirziyoyev welcomed PM Modi on his arrival at the airport in Tashkent. This is PM Modi's fourth visit to Uzbekistan. Landed in Tashkent to a warm welcome by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Grateful to him for the special gesture. This is my fourth visit to Uzbekistan, reflecting the depth and growing momentum of our bilateral relations," PM Modi posted on X after his arrival.

India, Argentina deepen trade ties, explore lithium, pharma access

New Delhi, Aug 29 : The Fourth Meeting of the India-Argentina Joint Trade Committee held in Buenos Aires reviewed progress on the roadmap agreed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2025 visit and reaffirmed commitments to deepen strategic and economic ties, an official statement said on Saturday.

The discussions covered investment opportunities across mining, energy and infrastructure, and noted significant progress by India's KABIL in Argentina's lithium sector. KABIL's mining activities in Catamarca, the first lithium mining initiative by an Indian company in Argentina, have progressed significantly with the completion of Phase II drilling.



Opportunities for further engagement in the provinces of Salta and Jujuy are also being explored to deepen the strategic partnership, the statement added.

Significant progress was also made in facilitating market access for Indian pharmaceutical products. Argentina has committed to work towards upgrading India from Annex II to Annex I under its pharmaceutical regulatory framework and reducing barriers to entry. The move will provide greater opportunities for

Indian pharmaceutical companies and contribute to improving access to quality and affordable healthcare in Argentina.

Building on the 2019 Memorandum of Understanding between Argentina's ANMAT (National Administration of Drugs, Food and Medical Technology) and India's CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organization), both sides committed to cooperation through joint initiatives in Ayurveda and Yoga. Bilateral trade crossed \$6.5 billion in 2025, registering consistent annual growth of over 17 per cent, and India is now Argentina's fifth-largest trading partner, the statement from the Ministry of Commerce & Industry said.

NTA releases final answer keys for Joint CSIR-UGC NET June 2026 exam

New Delhi, Aug 29 : The National Testing Agency has released the final answer keys for all five subjects of the Joint CSIR-UGC NET June 2026 examination on its official website, an official said on Saturday.

In a message on X, the NTA said, "Joint CSIR-UGC NET June 2026 Final Answer Keys are now available. Candidates can visit the official portal to check the answer key relevant to their examination." The NTA's Director (Exams) said in a public notice, "Candidates who appeared in the examination may log in using their credentials to access and view the Final Answer Keys pertaining to their subject."

"Candidates are advised to visit the official Joint CSIR-UGC NET June 2026



examination website regularly for the latest updates regarding the examination," said the notice. The NTA conducted the Joint CSIR-UGC NET June 2026 examination for determining the eligibility of Indian nationals for 'award of Junior Research Fellowship and appointment as Assistant Professor', 'appointment as Assistant Professor and admission to PhD' and

'admission to PhD only' in Indian universities and colleges.

The NTA conducted a series of national examinations between June and July this year. The examinations for which answer keys were processed together spanned three major examinations, UGC-NET, CSIR-NET and ICAR (AIEEA-PG and AICE-PhD), conducted across 184 subjects and papers in all, comprising

24,700 distinct questions. Over 10 lakh candidates registered for the examination, and of these, nearly 8 lakh appeared.

Sources stated that each of these questions has to be set, moderated, translated, typeset, administered and evaluated to a common standard. They further stated that given the sheer breadth of subjects and the volume of unique questions, one can grasp the sense of the scale and complexity of the process. Earlier this month, 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.

Govt rejects concerns over CBG price hike, says impact on CNG, PNG consumers will be negligible

New Delhi, Aug 29 : The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on Saturday rejected concerns that the revised price of Compressed Biogas (CBG) under the GOBARdhan Scheme could place a significant additional burden on CNG and household PNG consumers, saying the assessment is based on inconsistent assumptions.

The ministry said the existing pricing mechanism links the price paid to CBG producers to 85 per cent of the retail selling price of CNG. Based on the latest revision, this translates into a CBG procurement price of around Rs 1,478 per MMBtu.

Under the revised GOBARdhan framework, the CBG procurement price has been fixed at Rs 2,110 per MMBtu, representing an increase of around 43 per cent over the prevailing price. However, the ministry clarified that this is the procurement price paid to CBG producers and is not the price directly paid by CNG or household PNG consumers.



The government will provide affordability support of Rs 10 per kg of CBG, equivalent to approximately Rs 215 per MMBtu for CBG containing 95 per cent methane. This support will be funded by the government and will reduce the amount that needs to be recovered through gas consumers.

After accounting for the govern-

ment support, the effective CBG cost to be recovered through the gas consumer base would be around Rs 1,895 per MMBtu, compared with the prevailing effective price of Rs 1,478 per MMBtu. This translates into an effective increase of approximately 28 per cent, significantly lower than the headline increase in the procurement price.

EDITORIAL

Ram Madhav Is Back But
BJP's 'Dimagi Naxal'
Playbook Has Expired

In a party reshuffle, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) ideologue Ram Madhav was recently appointed national vice president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) after being made to wait on the margins for some years in the Narendra Modi-Amit Shah dispensation. The timing of Madhav being formally rehabilitated is itself instructive. It coincided with the brutal take down of Modi’s strongman image by the youth of India protesting the broken education system across the nation. Madhav’s appointment came just two days after Prime Minister Modi’s August 15 address from Red Fort in which he placed the “Dimagi Naxal” proposition before the nation. The prime minister’s invocation of “Dimagi Naxal” was expectedly met with derision and another barrage of memes and reels on social media by the GenZ. Many opposition leaders happily embraced BJP’s new coinage which is merely a variation of the term “urban naxal” which has no formal existence as per a parliament reply some years ago. On March 11, 2020, the Minister of State for Home Affairs, G. Kishan Reddy, answered a written question in the Rajya Sabha stating that “the phrase ‘Urban Naxals’ is not used by the Ministry of Home Affairs.” In all likelihood the Modi government may offer a similar reply in parliament in the future saying “Dimagi Naxal” does not exist in official records. By now we very well know that the RSS operates most efficiently when things don’t exist in the official record books! RSS’s own hydra headed organisation structure with hundreds of smaller shadowy outfits defy official existence. Therefore one is not surprised that Madhav, after his rehabilitation, has added to the “Dimagi Naxal” discourse by writing an op-ed in The Indian Express (August 29) titled “Do we really need a definition for ‘Dimagi Naxal?’” After all, things must have a life of their own without being defined. He says, “PM Modi has an enviable knack of getting under the skin of his adversaries.” Modi’s Dimagi Naxal invocation has become a proverbial cat among the pigeons, Madhav writes. In this regard he cited the response of former home minister P. Chidambaram, “I am a proud Dimagi Naxal” and a statement by the Editors Guild of India protesting the portrayal of some senior journalists as “Dimagi Naxal”. Madhav then makes light of the matter saying such “polemics can be harmless and enjoyable”. In the past too, terms like “urban naxal” and “khan market gang” were invoked, he says. Incidentally, Madhav was known to have been a regular at Khan Market with his own gang. One can detect Madhav trying to play down or normalise Modi’s remarks by suggesting that even the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) had such apprehensions about urban intellectual support to Maoists. Madhav is trying to make a clever argument which does not hold water when one simply looks at the unprecedented criminalisation of dissent under the Modi regime. There is enough data to show the sheer scale on which the government has let loose police and enforcement agency dogs on opposition leaders, NGOs, media outfits, activists and businessmen who didn’t fall in line. The terms “Urban Naxal”, “Lutyens Gang” and now “Dimagi Naxal” are all part of the Hindutva right wing play book alluding to the left-of-centre/Nehruvian consensus which dominated the discourse for decades since independence.

China To Pak To America, The
Growing Dilemmas Of The 'General'

Pete Hegseth's removal of General Randy George as US Army Chief of Staff appears to have begun with an unauthorised helicopter flypast over the musician Kid Rock's home in Tennessee. George wanted the Army to investigate possible safety violations. Hegseth ordered the matter dropped and George was removed soon afterwards. The episode is part of a wider turmoil in the Army's senior leadership. Notably the number of serving four-star generals has fallen in the middle of a war. Civil military relations theoretician Samuel Huntington's Objective Civilian Control model, that the United States has adopted, proposes firm political dominance but with military leadership's autonomy in military expertise. Political leaders decide national objectives; the military advises and executes lawful policy. The arrangement works best when professional alignment refrains from seeking personal or political loyalty. Recent civil military turmoil in the United States, China and Pakistan can be understood through two lenses. First, political alignment, which requires the military to achieve the objectives set by legitimate authority. Second, operational effectiveness, which requires it to retain the leadership, experience and institutional confidence needed to fight. Trouble begins when tighter control erodes effectiveness, or when effectiveness is pursued through arrangements that upset the political balance itself. The War On 'Political Correctness' In America The second Trump administration is attempting a substantial transformation of American military culture. Hegseth has promoted a warrior ethos and greater emphasis on combat effectiveness. Simultaneously, he



has attacked what he regards as political correctness in the military. This transformation is important because cultural change has been imposed through repeated intervention with the senior leadership of the services. And more critically because of when it is happening. The United States has been at war with Iran since 28 February. The forty days of active fighting ended in a ceasefire in April, but the Strait of Hormuz remains closed. The blockade is still being enforced and strikes continue. Three carrier strike groups and three Army divisions are committed in the largest Middle Eastern deployment since 2003. Armies normally ensure stability of senior appointments once a war begins. This one is being trampled in the middle of one. The first cost is capabil-

ity. Cheap drones, long-range precision weapons and electronic warfare are forcing a rethink of established concepts. George had raised an Unmanned Assault Battalion within the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Italy to prototype a tactical unmanned systems unit drawing on Ukrainian experience. Its soldiers rotated through Kyiv and trained against Ukrainian operators playing the adversary force. General Christopher LaNeve, Hegseth's former senior military aide and now acting Chief of Staff, is closing this forward-thinking endeavour under a back-to-basics approach. General Chris Donahue, the European commander who backed it, was removed in July. The US Army is dismantling its main platform for learning the decade's most consequential tactical lesson. The second cost is civilian casualties. Last year, Hegseth offered com-

manders three options for the Pentagon's Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response programme: cut maximum staff while keeping it operational, retain a small central office, or abolish it. Nine commands chose the first and two rejected all three, asking that it be preserved intact. Hegseth gutted it anyway. American operations have since killed hundreds of noncombatants, according to a ProPublica investigation. Now senior Pentagon official Elbridge Colby has proposed restoring about a third of the capability. Both these penalties are intensified by a third: command continuity. Repeated removals affect those who remain: without any explicit loyalty test, officers may conclude that ideological alignment is essential for advancement. Firepower is useless if it cannot achieve political results. Politicians have the power to reshape how the military fights.

However, the bottom line is simple: do the changes actually help achieve victory? China's 'Party' Army China is a more developed version of the same relationship. The People's Liberation Army is explicitly a Party army, and the principle that the barrel of the gun must obey the Party's command is foundational rather than an external distortion. Xi Jinping insists at the same time that combat effectiveness remains the ultimate standard for modernisation. His campaign against corruption and disloyalty has produced an unprecedented purge. More than a hundred senior PLA officers have been removed or have disappeared from public view since 2022. Of forty-seven officers who held or were promoted to three-star rank over that period, forty-one had been purged or possibly purged by February. Of fifty-two key leadership posts examined by the CSIS China

Power Project, only eleven were filled. The consequences directly impact the China's Taiwan plans. A blockade or invasion would be the most complex campaign the PLA has ever attempted, demanding coordination across services, theatre commands and domains. The purges have pushed less experienced officers into greater responsibility at a force that has not fought a war since 1979. Zhang Youxia and Liu Zhenli, the two most senior operationally experienced officers on the Central Military Commission, were both placed under investigation, stripping the last battlefield experience from the top. China retains the military option and Xi may yet reconstruct the senior command, but an army preparing for its most complex conceivable operation is losing experienced commanders. Political control is meant to secure reliability.

Haldwani ‘Purification’ a Crime Says Rahul Gandhi, Demands FIR and Justice for Kharge

New Delhi: Leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday (August 29) condemned the “purification” ritual that was performed on stage in Haldwani after Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge addressed a public meeting earlier this month. Gandhi called the incident a crime and demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi must register an FIR. “The more successful a Dalit person becomes, the more forcefully they are attacked. This happens every day with crores of people,” said Gandhi. “When our Rajasthan CLP [Congress Legislature Party] leader Tikaram Julie visits a temple, BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leaders perform purification rituals. When Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, who has dedicated his whole life to the country, has been a minister, when he goes to deliver a speech at Haldwani’s Ramlila Maidan, purification is performed there. When former Bihar chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi visits a temple, purification is performed there too. This is done by BJP-RSS [B J P - R a s h t r i y a Swayamsevak Sangh] people, and this is a crime according to the constitution of India.” Gandhi said that while this is called “purification,” it is “untouchability” which is being practiced by the BJP. “When they are doing purification they are saying Dalit is untouchable and they are



dirty. And this is a crime under the constitution,” said Gandhi. Gandhi said that the issue does not concern Kharge alone but is the tip of the iceberg. “If the Congress president can face this openly, then imagine what happens in school with a four-year-old child,” he said. Earlier this month, Uttarakhand BJP president Mahendra Bhatt defended the “purification” ritual and said that the place was “polluted”. “Those who have no real issues are the ones who raise matters that only damage and divide the society. Kharge ji’s rally held in Haldwani. The Ramlila Ground there was defiled. At a place where there is a Ram temple, slogans were raised that should not have been raised. The place was polluted, and then it was purified,” he had said. On August 13, Kharge had raised the matter in the Rajya Sabha

and said that he was made to feel the “sting of untouchability” when Union minister and leader of the House J.P. Nadda had said action would be taken. “I have the strength to fight. I do fight. Lakhs of people were there at Ramlila Maidan in Haldwani. At that time, I did not mention the name of any community or religion; I only reiterated the issues of the government. But after my speech, you [people associated with Bharatiya Janata Party] tried to insult me by doing a purification ritual [on the stage in Haldwani], you made me feel the sting of untouchability. Is this the way in a democracy? How are you protecting the constitution? I am the LoP,” Kharge had said in the Rajya Sabha. Nadda had then responded to say: “I assure you that whatever happened there will certainly be investigated. The

[BJP] national president will look into this. It is a matter of great regret for all of us that your sentiments were hurt.” Gandhi said on Saturday that Modi should order an FIR and the incident revealed that the BJP-RSS mindset does not want Dalits to progress. “Prime Minister Modi should order that action be taken under the SC/ST Act against those who carried out the purification,” said Gandhi. “Today’s fight is between the constitution and the BJP-RSS ideology, and the purification incident reveals their mindset. They don’t want Dalits to progress or live with respect and become successful.” “We are demanding justice for the Congress president. Give the Congress president justice in Uttarakhand. It is the duty of the Union and state governments to ensure that Kharge gets justice,” he added.

INDO-US JAVELIN DEAL:

Solution For India's Needs or
Lollipop for Washington?

Chandigarh: In what can only be described as a client-patron arrangement in the stark calculus of defence procurement, India has finally agreed to import the US-origin FGM-148 Javelin anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) for the Indian Army – over 16 years after it first sought the weapon system, not as a mere buyer, but to manufacture it locally through technology transfer. The deal has been widely hailed across Indian media as another milestone in the deepening US-India defence relationship, but beneath that celebratory narrative lies a rather less flattering reality. According to a cross-section of senior Army officers, the symbolism of the deal, announced by the US embassy in New Delhi on Friday (August 28), is unmistakable: the US retains ownership of the technology and control of the ATGM supply chain, while India, after years of fruitless negotiations to become its producer, has ‘meekly’ accepted the ‘subordinate’ role of buyer. Consequently, the Indian Army has signed a Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) with the US for the Javelin missiles and associated equipment through Washington’s government-to-government Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme, administered by the Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA). Almost as an afterthought, however, the US embassy declared that the LOA opens discussions on



‘mutually beneficial co-production’ of the Javelin and other opportunities to expand defence manufacturing and technology cooperation between the two sides, but declined to elaborate. But that tentative promise raises an obvious question: after some 16 years of negotiations over the Javelin, what is actually different this time? Why should India believe that this latest promise of Javelin co-production will deliver where earlier efforts to manufacture the missile in India did not? And what, precisely, does ‘co-production’ mean if the US retains control of the Javelin’s technology and India remains merely its procurer? The circumstances surrounding the ATGM purchase offer little reassurance either, with the narrative behind it remaining opaque and ill-defined. The exact value and details of the concluded Javelin deal, for instance, have not been publicly disclosed. Some media reports, quoting

unnamed officials, indicate that after 16 years of wrangling, the Javelin is finally being acquired under the Army’s ‘fast-track’ emergency acquisition powers. This authorisation permits all three armed forces to directly acquire ‘critical operational capabilities’ worth up to Rs 300 crore at a time, sidestepping Ministry of Defence (MoD) oversight and its notoriously laborious and time-consuming acquisition procedures. The incongruity is hard to miss: how can 16 years of negotiations over the Javelin ultimately end in a ‘fast-track’ off-the-shelf purchase? Or is the Javelin buy less a solution to an old ATGM operational requirement than a carefully calibrated ‘lollipop’ for Washington, designed to keep the US defence establishment and arms industry invested in their profitable relationship with India – and its prospect of further materiel sales? The Javelin deal, in other words, raises more ques-

tions than it answers and the clues, rather like an Agatha Christie whodunit, lie buried in the details of a deal that has remained remarkably opaque. In November 2025, the US State Department had approved a possible \$45.7 million FMS package, and the DSCA had notified Congress of the proposed sale. The package comprised 100 Javelin missiles, 25 Lightweight Command Launch Units and one additional missile designated ‘fly-to-buy’, along with associated training, support and logistics, broadly matching the package announced on Friday. That one additional missile, however, almost buried in the fine print, adds yet another twist to the whodunit. Designated ‘fly-to-buy’, it is intended for live firing as part of the customer’s acceptance or evaluation process before committing to the weapon system. In simple terms, the customer gets to fire one before deciding to buy the rest.



Raidurg land auction breaks record, fetches Rs 269 cr per acre



Hyderabad: In just one week, Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC) achieved another landmark in its Raidurg auction, with the 5.38-acre plot auction generating Rs 1,447.22 crore at Rs 269 crore per acre. On August 21, the previous such auction fetched Rs 264 crore per acre, generating Rs 1,386 crore in revenue. Twenty-five per cent of the auction value from this has already been received as the first-stage payment, a

release from the state government said on Friday, August 28. Together, the two auctions have generated Rs 2,833.22 crore from 10.63 acre, at an average realisation of Rs 266.53 crore per acre. Achieving realisations of over Rs 260 crore per acre across two auctions within a span of just one week underscores the strength, depth and consistency of investor appetite for the Raidurg corridor, the release said. Commenting on the occa-

sion, the Vice Chairman and Managing Director of TGIIC, K Shashanka, said, "Today's auction is a strong endorsement of investor confidence in Hyderabad and Telangana and the continued attractiveness of Raidurg as a premier business and investment destination. This achievement reflects the government's proactive and investor-friendly policies, supported by sustained infrastructure development."

Trump hails 'historic' deal for US to control 65bn barrels of Venezuela's oil

The US has struck a deal with Venezuela to control more than 65 billion barrels of its proven oil reserves, Donald Trump announced. The US president wrote that the agreement would more than double American oil reserves and "substantially lower Gas Prices for all Americans". Venezuela's interim President Delcy Rodríguez hailed the deal as one that would help her nation's economic revival. But some analysts have reacted with scepticism, including questioning whether the deal would address long-running obstacles that have deterred investment in Venezuela's oil industry. Trump has recently been under domestic pressure to tame petrol prices, which have spiked due to the Iran war. He vowed to tap into Venezuela's reserves, the world's largest, after the US captured its then-President Nicolás Maduro in January,



ostensibly to stand trial on drug charges in New York. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio called the oil deal "a huge win for both the American and Venezuelan people". Few details were released. "For the Venezuelan people, this deal will bring nearly \$100bn (£74bn) in private investment, support thousands of

high-paying jobs and drive the reconstruction of Venezuela's economy," he said. Trump said Rubio and Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth had reached the agreement with Venezuela's leadership "through a partnership with private business". He did not elaborate on the partnership or describe possible commit-

ments and terms for the US in the deal, but he claimed the agreement was reached "at no cost to the American Taxpayer". Under the deal the US government will retain 55% control of a joint venture with an "experienced private operator in Venezuela", a US official told the BBC's US partner CBS News. The Wall

Street Journal reported on Friday that US energy firms Chevron and Halliburton were nearing deals to invest billions in overhauling the infrastructure in Venezuela's oil fields, many of which have not been developed. David Goldwyn, president of energy consultancy Goldwyn Global Strategies, said there was "no precedent" for the US government entering into a lease to operate Venezuelan oil fields. It's not clear if such a move would violate Venezuela's constitution or its hydrocarbons law, he told the Reuters news agency. "It is hard to see how this kind of arrangement would accelerate investment at any material scale," he added, citing Venezuela's political uncertainty, weak power grid, and limited export capacity. Venezuela's interim president said in a statement that the agreement would have "a significant impact on our nation's revival".

Subhash Chandra Case: After HDFC Bank, Union Bank, Canara Bank To Challenge NCLT's Approval of Insolvency Resolution Plan



Union Bank of India and Canara Bank will challenge the National Company Law Tribunal's approval of a resolution plan in the personal insolvency proceedings against Essel Group Chairman Dr Subhash Chandra, according to a media statement released on Saturday. Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd had initiated the personal insolvency proceedings against Chandra. The statement said Union Bank of India (UK), along with creditors including Canara Bank and LIC Housing Finance Ltd, had rejected the resolution plan and urged the NCLT not to approve it. The tribunal, however, approved the plan after it received the requisite majority vote from certain private-sector creditors, the statement said. Union

Bank of India will now challenge the NCLT order before the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal, it added. Canara Bank also posted their statement via X. HDFC Bank on Thursday said that it is mulling an appeal against the bankruptcy court NCLT's order in the case involving Subhash Chandra. The bank said only 3.2% of the total claim amount has been admitted under the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) order in the matter. HDFC Bank's total claim was Rs 680 crore. "HDFC Bank had opposed and voted against this resolution, which was approved by the majority. The Bank is exploring filing an appeal at the NCLAT (National Company Law Appellate Tribunal)," HDFC Bank said in a statement.

CUSTOMS IS NOW A PROACTIVE TRADE FACILITATOR, ASSERTS ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER P. SATISH AT FICCI WARANGAL EXPORT WORKSHOP

WARANGAL, August 2026 – Underscoring a significant paradigm shift in India's cross-border trade administration, Shri P. Satish, IRS, Additional Commissioner of Customs, Hyderabad, stated that the Customs Department has successfully transitioned from a traditional duty collection agency into a dedicated facilitator of global trade. Addressing regional entrepreneurs at an exclusive Export Awareness Workshop organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in association with the Warangal Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the M.K. Naidu Hotel & Convention Centre today, Shri Satish urged local exporters to leverage modernised, transparent customs procedures to maximise their international footprint. Taking center stage at the workshop, Shri Satish highlighted the sweeping changes in customs operations implemented since 1998. He noted that today, nearly 90 percent of import consignments are facilitated seamlessly with zero interference, reflecting the department's commitment to building a frictionless business environment. By implementing advanced



digital measures such as the E-sealing process and the E-way bill system for container movement, the department now ensures absolute transparency, allowing real-time data monitoring that prevents tampering while accelerating clearances. Dispelling the myth that government applications are cumbersome, he extended an open invitation to Warangal's exporters to directly collaborate with the Hyderabad Customs office, which operates round-the-clock to resolve logistical hurdles and develop the region's untapped export potential. The workshop primarily focused on demystifying the

ATA Carnet and UN TIR systems, which act as powerful catalysts for seamless international trade. Mr. P.S. Pruthi, Senior Consultant at FICCI and Former Member of CESTAT, explained that the ATA Carnet serves as a "passport for goods," allowing duty-free temporary imports for exhibitions and professional equipment across multiple countries without the need for separate customs declarations. Complementing this, the UN TIR system facilitates the secure, regular transit of commercial cargo across international borders without containers being subjected to repeated customs

inspections at intermediate transit points. Detailing the operational mechanics, Ms. S. Vijayalakshmi, Director at FICCI, emphasised FICCI's critical role as the national issuing and guaranteeing association for both systems in India. She guided the attendees through the streamlined documentation process, noting that the expansion of authorized customs ports and the upcoming transition to an e-Carnet system will further eliminate financial guarantees at foreign borders, thereby drastically reducing time and administrative burdens for Indian businesses.

TIM COOK GETS APPLE FAREWELL AHEAD OF CEO HANDOVER TO JOHN TERNUS

Apple CEO Tim Cook has been formally bid farewell by senior executives and employees at a gathering held at Apple Park in Cupertino, ahead of his transition from the company's top executive role. The event, held last Sunday at Apple's headquarters, was attended by around 200 senior Apple employees and other key figures, according to Silicon Valley-based technology publication The Information. The gathering took place at Cafe Macs, Apple's large employee cafeteria overlooking the company's sprawling campus. Cook is set to hand over the CEO position to John Ternus at the end of August, with Ternus taking charge as Apple's chief executive from Sept. 1. Cook, however, will remain with Apple as executive chairman of the board. In his new role, Cook is expected to continue advising Ternus while taking on a broader diplomatic role for Apple, including representing the company in key external engagements. The farewell event also featured a performance by OneRepublic, one of Cook's favourite bands. Among those who addressed the gathering were Laurene Powell Jobs, widow of Apple co-founder Steve Jobs; former Apple Chief Operating Officer Jeff



Williams; and Eddy Cue, who heads the company's services business. Cook also spoke at the event, although details of his remarks have not been made public. Cook publicly came out as gay in 2014 but has generally kept his personal and family life away from the public spotlight. Cook has described the transition to Ternus as a seamless one. Following Apple's latest quarterly results, he said he was "more than pleased" to see Ternus take on the leadership role and guide the company into its next phase. Ternus, 51, is expected to make his first major public appearance as Apple CEO on Sept. 9, when the company is scheduled to unveil its latest iPhone lineup. Apple has already made an unusual move ahead of the leadership transition by introducing new Mac models in August, breaking from its recent launch pattern.

Dhaksha Unmanned Systems inaugurates new manufacturing facility in Kancheepuram, strengthens indigenous drone capabilities

National, August 2026: Dhaksha Unmanned Systems Private Limited, a subsidiary of Coromandel International Limited, today inaugurated its new manufacturing facility at Aymicheri region in Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu. The facility was inaugurated by Mr. Arun Alagappan, Executive Chairman, Coromandel International Limited, marking an important step in strengthening India's indigenous drone manufacturing capabilities in agriculture, defence and enterprise. The facility will support the development and execution of larger and complex programmes across its key UAV verticals, while enabling greater indigenisation of critical technologies and strengthening its ability to serve evolving customer requirements. During the event, Dhaksha announced the launch of two new agricultural drone models, the DH Agrigator E10 Prime and DH Agrigator E10 Eco.



Developed with indigenous components, the E10 Prime aligns with the Namo Drone Didi programme and supports India's growing domestic drone ecosystem, while the E10 Eco offers an affordable solution designed to expand access to drone-based farming services for small and marginal farmers and rural entrepreneurs. Beyond agriculture, the facility will also support Dhaksha's growing defence portfolio, including surveillance and logistics applications. A dedicated produc-

tion line for defence applications will strengthen the company's execution capabilities, along with supporting its indigenisation efforts at building greater control over critical technologies. Dhaksha is also expanding its sourcing and service ecosystem, including its network of service centres, to support its growing operations. The facility will act as a platform for collaboration across the drone value chain, enabling technology partners to combine complementary capabilities and

accelerate the development of an integrated drone manufacturing ecosystem under one roof. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. S. Sankarasubramanian, Director, Dhaksha Unmanned Systems Private Limited, and Managing Director & CEO, Coromandel International Limited, said, "India's journey towards a more productive, resilient and technology-enabled economy will be shaped by our ability to harness advanced technologies across sectors.

Bitcoin To Hit \$1 Million Sooner Than Expected: Binance Founder CZ

Binance founder Changpeng "CZ" Zhao has predicted that Bitcoin will eventually reach \$1 million per coin, saying the milestone could come much sooner than the 25-year timeframe some have suggested. Speaking at the Bitcoin Asia 2026 conference in Hong Kong, Zhao said Bitcoin's future should not be judged by its price alone, with its utility and adoption expected to expand significantly over the next decade. "I think for Bitcoin hitting a million dollars would be a good thing - it will happen," Zhao said, according to Bitcoin Magazine. "I think it's going to happen much quicker" than 25 years. Zhao also said Bitcoin would eventually become more important than gold, arguing that major countries would increasingly recognise the cryptocurrency as a strategic asset. Bitcoin currently remains significantly smaller than gold in terms of market value. Bitcoin Magazine reported that Bitcoin's market capitalisa-



tion stood at around \$1.6 trillion, compared with approximately \$32.2 trillion for gold. Zhao said the gap would narrow as governments and institutions increasingly embrace digital assets. He also argued that countries should not view Bitcoin as a threat. Instead, failing to adopt or invest in the cryptocurrency could leave nations at a disadvantage. "Bitcoin is much more dangerous if

you don't use it: you're missing out," Zhao said. According to Zhao, Bitcoin could increasingly be held alongside traditional foreign exchange reserves and eventually play a role similar to gold. He said the transition by major economies would take time, but he expects the trend toward Bitcoin adoption by governments to continue. Zhao also highlighted the rapid development of stable-

coins, tokenisation, artificial intelligence and AI agents, saying these areas could become major drivers of growth for the crypto industry over the next decade. He expects Bitcoin to primarily serve as a long-term savings and reserve asset, while stablecoins and other cryptocurrencies could play a larger role in machine-to-machine payments, trading and transactions involving AI agents.



Nepal calls for 'global effort' to address climate change after devastating flash floods

EX-WHITE HOUSE TELEPROMPTER OPERATOR ORDERED TO PAY \$172,000 FOR TRUMP SPEECH BETS

A former White House teleprompter operator has been ordered to pay more than \$172,000 (£127,000) for using inside information to bet on Donald Trump's speeches. Gabriel Perez was found to have made trades concerning what the US president would say during addresses between December 2025 and February 2026 on Kalshi - a prediction markets platform where users can bet on real-world events. Its regulator, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), said Perez would have to surrender profits of \$107,539.02 and pay a civil penalty of \$65,000. The White House has not yet commented. In July, then-press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Perez was on unpaid leave and would not return to his post. Announcing the settlement on Friday, the CFTC said Perez had "misappropriated" his prior



knowledge of Trump's speeches to place bets "in breach of his duty of trust and confidence". It said his civil penalty had been reduced due to his "exemplary co-operation" with the investigation. Perez has also been

banned from trading for three years. Kalshi's lead lawyer Bobby DeNault welcomed the decision, writing on X: "It doesn't matter who you are: violate our rules or federal law and you will face the consequences." The company

previously told the BBC that its analysts had noticed unusual betting on "mention markets" - contracts through which users predict whether a speaker will use common terms, such as specific countries, campaign slogans or words - in March. It said it had used account data to find that the user had been a federal employee operating White House teleprompters, and reported the activity to the regulator. "The words of political leaders like presidents and Fed chairs cause billions of dollars of movement in FX markets, oil futures [and] the stock market," it said in a statement in July. The same month, the White House Management Office had sent a letter to aides telling them not to place bets on prediction markets, administration officials told the BBC's US media partner CBS News.

CLOSE RACE AS ICELAND VOTES ON WHETHER TO RESTART TALKS ON JOINING EU



Icelanders are voting in a referendum to decide whether to resume talks on joining the European Union, 13 years after they were broken off. In an indication of how tight the result is expected to be, the latest opinion poll put the No campaign in the lead with 51.6%. An earlier poll had put the Yes campaign ahead. Prime Minister Kristrún Frostadóttir's centre-left government had already intended to hold a referendum, but turbulent international affairs prompted her to bring it forward. But the debate was fought less over Nato member Iceland's security concerns than over its vital fishing industry and sovereignty. Voting is due to go on from 09:00 to 22:00 GMT on Saturday and the result is expected in the early hours of Sunday. Iceland has a population of under 400,000. More than one in five voters had already cast their ballots in early voting before

Saturday, according to Iceland's public broadcaster RUV. What is the vote about? The question on the ballot is: "Should Iceland resume accession negotiations with the European Union?" Although Iceland is already part of the EU's single market and Schengen border-free zone as part of the European Economic Area, EU membership would bring it into the customs union and eventually the euro. Iceland's application to join the EU was already well advanced when it put talks on hold in 2013, and European Commission officials have indicated that talks could be finalised in one or two years. Of the 35 so-called chapters of talks ranging from fisheries and economic policy to freedom of speech and free movement of goods, 27 had begun and 11 of them were provisionally complete. A Yes vote would not be a final decision on joining the EU. It would mean backing a move

towards an accession agreement. Any deal would then have to be approved by a second referendum, as well by parliament, and the constitution would have to be amended. The EU's 27 member states would also have to sign it off. One Yes-campaign group, "Yes to See", says Icelanders should at least see what deal they can get, so they have all the information before a final decision. Equally, a No vote would not rule out the chance of Iceland resuming talks in the future. Sovereignty has been a crucial issue in the pre-referendum debate. Iceland fought hard to become fully independent from Denmark in 1944, and its fishing and marine industries make up almost 40% of exports. The No campaign fears losing control over Iceland's prized fishing grounds under the EU's Common Fisheries Policy and has vowed never to share the country's waters with anyone.

Oslo mayor calls off wedding ceremony after death of Norway's king



Oslo's Mayor Anne Lindboe has called off her wedding ceremony because of the death of King Harald V of Norway. The wedding with her fiancé Pål Sandvid was planned to take place on Friday but was postponed after the king died earlier the same day, her political adviser confirmed to the BBC. "It's hard to imagine an Oslo and a Norway without you. You didn't need a crown to be king," Lindboe wrote in a tribute to the late monarch on Instagram. Harald reigned for 35 years and died at the national hospital in Norway's capital, where he was being treated for a rare blood condition. His son,

King Haakon VIII, ascended the throne on Friday. "Even the majority of Norwegians who never met you in person still felt like they knew you," Lindboe added in her tribute. No new date has been set for the wedding yet, Lindboe's political adviser said. After five years together, Lindboe announced the couple's engagement in June this year. The late king was a popular and reforming leader in Norway who modernised the monarchy. He broke with tradition by marrying a commoner, Queen Sonja, and served as a unifying figure during Norway's most difficult moments. Harald died a day before their 58th wedding anniversary. Members of the public have been gathering to lay flowers at a memorial outside the Royal Palace in Oslo. Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre said in a televised memorial address that his country was "united in grief and gratitude" for Harald's service and that his "legacy lives on".

NORWAY MOURNS KING HARALD AS HAAKON VIII ASCENDS THRONE

Norwegians are grieving the death of the beloved King Harald V, as a period of national mourning begins and his son Haakon VIII assumes the throne. After Harald's death was announced early on Friday, crowds amassed at the royal palace in Oslo, laying flowers and flags, some mourners visibly in tears. The 53-year-old new king held an extraordinary council of state meeting with government ministers, saying he was taking on the royal family's motto "All for Norway". Harald - who was on the throne for 35 years - died in hospital at 06:35 local time (04:35 GMT) aged 89, after being treated there for a rare blood condition. His coffin was later taken to the palace in a public procession. An estimated 10,000 people lined the streets in the capital to see the late king go past, Norway's public broadcaster reported. The late monarch has been described as an inclusive, transparent and empathetic "people's king" who mod-



ernised the Norwegian monarchy. European royals, including King Charles III - whose mother Queen Elizabeth II was Harald's second cousin - as well as political leaders and ordinary citizens, paid tribute to his service and the stability he brought to the country. Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, who laid flowers outside the palace and signed a book of condolences after greeting the new king, said the country was "united in grief and grati-

ty". In a televised memorial address - one of multiple eulogies by ministers - he said the late king's "legacy lives on" and offered condolences to the royal family and Queen Sonja, who would have celebrated her 58th wedding anniversary with Harald on Saturday. Norway's superstar footballer Erling Haaland thanked Harald for "everything you meant to Norway" in a post on Instagram, adding that it had been an honour to meet him earlier

in the summer at the palace following the Fifa World Cup. In the country's capital, Norwegians shared their grief and affection for the late king. "I personally will say he was everything for us, especially being an immigrant," Biteya Terfassa, an Oslo resident who was born in Ethiopia, told news agency Reuters outside the palace. "He made us feel at home and he made us feel loved. So he was like a grandfather that I never had."

Right-wing commentator Milo Yiannopoulos detained by ICE



British right-wing political commentator Milo Yiannopoulos has been detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and is awaiting deportation. Yiannopoulos, 41, a former editor of Breitbart News and onetime political aide to rapper Kanye West, appears to be held in Louisiana, according to ICE's inmate registry. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said he "was issued a final order of removal by an Immigration Judge on July 22, after failing to show up for his immigration hear-

ing", and will remain in custody pending deportation. The self-styled provocateur has called himself the "most fabulous supervillain on the internet". His critics call him a purveyor of hate speech. Yiannopoulos, who grew up in Kent in the south of England, was arrested on 27 August after arriving at the airport in New Orleans. He flew into the US in May 2019 and "chose to overstay his welcome in violation of our nation's laws", said DHS. The DHS statement referred to him as "an illegal alien from the United Kingdom".



At least 37 dead and hundreds evacuated after strike on Kyiv weapons depot

Landlady to 9/11 hijackers reveals their links to alleged Saudi spy



Holly Ratchford still cannot believe that the man who moved into the residential complex she once managed would go on to be accused of involvement in the darkest day in recent US history. "It's almost impossible for me to wrap my head around who he said he was, and who he really is. I still struggle with that," she tells the BBC. The man, Omar al-Bayoumi - a Saudi in his early 40s - moved to the complex in San Diego, California, with his family in September 1999. The new resident at number 152 Parkwood Apartments quickly became a regular at Ratchford's pool parties. "He was always so bubbly and smiling," she recalls, "and just very, very friendly." A few months later, Bayoumi

would introduce Ratchford to two apparently unassuming, "polite" men, who would also become her neighbours. The pair would become infamous for hijacking American Airlines flight 77, and crashing it into the Pentagon, in the 9/11 attacks. Ratchford has been haunted by her connection to these three men for the past 25 years. She

feels she was taken in by Bayoumi from the start. "Whenever I had parties he would come and be a part of the activities," she recalls, adding that his family would invite her in for food. "I enjoyed going over." But Bayoumi, the one-time resident of 152 Parkwood, is now at the centre of the \$1 trillion (£733bn) lawsuit brought against the

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by several thousand families of victims and as well as survivors of 9/11. On 11 September 2001, four passenger aircraft were hijacked by 19 members of the Islamist extremist network, al-Qaeda. In addition to the crash at the Pentagon - the US military's headquarters near Washington DC - two planes were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York, causing both buildings to collapse. A fourth crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, following resistance from passengers on board. In all, almost 3,000 people were killed, including about 300 firefighters and other emergency workers at the World Trade Center.

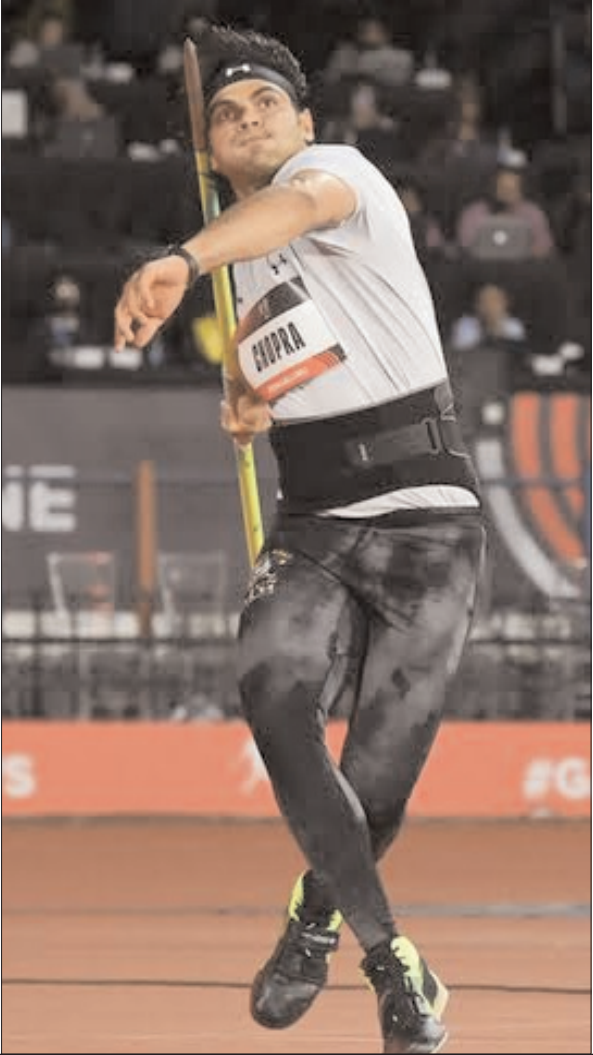
Not Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Or Shubman Gill, England Great Says This Star Has 'Ability Of Sachin Tendulkar, Brian Lara'

Former England captain Sir Geoffrey Boycott has revealed that star right-handed batter Harry Brook failed to get in touch with him after he offered to help him refine his concentration in Test match cricket, despite possessing the potential to rival legendary batters like Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara. "His uncle came to me last year and he said, 'Would you have a word with him?' Well, he asked me what I thought of him. I told him exactly this. He said, 'Really?' I said, 'Yeah.' I said that much ability is rare, special. "He said, 'Would you have a word with him?' I said, 'It's not for me to go to him. He might tell me to, you know, off,' I said. But if he asked me, of course I'd help. Why would I not? I gave him my number and never heard a word," Boycott said in a recent episode of 'Geoffrey Boycott: An Extraordinary



Innings' podcast. Brook is ranked the world's number one Test batter, but has not managed a century in the format for over a year. "He's not getting the best out of his talent. I've said before and I'll say again, I've seen a lot of players. "I haven't seen anybody with the talent he's got for a long time. Enormous talent. The timing, the shot playing, he's tall, big reach, but his thinking is just unbelievable," added Boycott, who played 108 Tests and 36 ODIs for England. In the first Test against Pakistan

at Headingley, Brook made 91, before making 15 in the ongoing game at Lord's. "If he wants to carry on playing that way, he'll have a decent career, but he has the ability, if he could think better, to be in the realms of Lara and Tendulkar. And, whoa, that's a bit special. To be up in that stratosphere is huge. "There ain't many above them, except Bradman, and that's special. But he plays one-day cricket to every ball. He doesn't have a look at the ball, he has to bash the first ball.



NEERAJ CHOPRA TO MISS ASIAN GAMES, ANNOUNCES HEARTBREAKING NEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In a bitter blow to the Indian contingent ahead of the Asian Games 2026, two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra has been ruled out of the continental event due to an injury. In a post on social media, Neeraj said that he suffered a ligament tear to his ankle after the Lausanne Diamond League. Following careful assessment, it was decided that he would miss the remainder of the 2026 season, as well as the Asian Games. The setback is also set to keep Chopra out of the Diamond League Finals in Brussels on September 5 and the inaugural World Athletics Ultimate Championships in Budapest from September 11 to 13. The injury brings an unexpected

end to Neeraj's campaign, considering he had recently started to hit his peak after a couple of injury-riddled years. "After a period of hard work, I finally felt I was gaining the momentum I had been looking for with a Season's Best throw in Lausanne," Chopra said. "Unfortunately, shortly after, I sustained a ligament tear in my ankle during training. After discussions with my doctor and team, we've decided that I will sit out the rest of this season. It's disappointing, especially because I felt close to finding my rhythm. But as they say, setbacks are a part of the journey." "My focus now is on recovering well and coming back even stronger," he

added. Chopra's withdrawal from the season also means he will miss the Diamond League Final, for which he had qualified. Neeraj was in and out this season, primarily because of a lower back injury that had troubled him since September last year. Despite not being fully fit, the Tokyo Olympics golden boy won a silver medal for India at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games with a throw of 85.83 meters before registering his season's best effort of 88.05 meters at the Lausanne Diamond League. His effort in Lausanne gave Indians the hope of seeing a fully fit and firing Neeraj again, but a fresh injury concern struck right before the Asian Games 2026.

US Open 2026: Novak Djokovic's Record Chase, Carlos Alcaraz's Title Defence Among Key Attractions

US Open 2026 is set to begin with a mix of record prize money, historic

high-profile comebacks, as the final Grand Slam of the tennis season gets underway in New York from August 30. With Novak Djokovic chasing a record 25th major, Carlos Alcaraz returning to defend his

title, Aryna Sabalenka eyeing a hat-trick and Serena and Venus Williams reuniting for doubles, Flushing Meadows promises two weeks of compelling action, according to a release. The stakes at Flushing Meadows have never been higher. The US Open 2026 will offer a record USD 108 million prize pool, the largest in Grand Slam history, with the men's and women's singles champions each set to earn USD 5.5 million. Even first-round participants are guaranteed USD 140,000, underlining the scale of the tournament's record financial stakes from the very out-

set. With more money on the line across the draw, players will be fighting for every point, setting the stage for intense, high-octane clashes from the opening serve. Djokovic chases record 25th Grand Slam title: Novak Djokovic arrives in New York with history within reach. The Serbian is chasing a record 25th Grand Slam singles title, which would move him clear of Margaret Court's tally of 24 major singles titles and give him the outright record for most Grand Slam singles titles. A four-time US Open champion, Djokovic last lifted the trophy in 2023 and has reached the final in New York a remarkable 10 times. At 39, the physical demands of another two-week campaign will be significant, but few players have a greater

history of delivering on the biggest stages. If Djokovic can navigate the draw, his pursuit of a 25th major will be one of the biggest talking points of the tournament. Alcaraz returns to defend his US Open crown: Carlos Alcaraz returns to Flushing Meadows to defend his US Open title after missing four months of action due to injury. The Spaniard's preparations have been disrupted, adding an element of uncertainty to his title defence. With Jannik Sinner also missing the tournament, the men's draw has opened up, giving Alcaraz an opportunity to make another deep run in New York. The 23-year-old has already won two US Open titles and will be aiming to add another chapter to his impressive record at Flushing Meadows.

est' he has seen in a long time. "I'll be brutally honest. The England bowlers aren't being challenged at all. And this Pakistan batting line-up is possibly the easiest batting line-up I've seen in a long time to bowl to. And not only that, I think as a bowler, I think they're all queuing up to bowl because they know there are wickets out there," Vaughan said on the BBC Test Match Special. "You're

PAKISTAN TEAM COMPARED TO 2ND DIVISION COUNTY SIDE, ENGLAND GREAT TEARS INTO BABAR AZAM'S MEN

Bowled out for just 110 against England in the first innings of the second Test at Lord's, Pakistan have become a subject of mockery on social media. Babar Azam's men arrived in the match, hoping to shrug off the first Test horror, after being handed an innings defeat by England. However, the tourists seem to be on course for humiliation in the second Test too, as England enter Day 3 with a gigantic 261-run lead. Seeing Pakistan struggle against England, Michael Vaughan compared the visiting team with a second division county side. While Pakistan are yet to put up an all-round show worthy of challenging England, it's the team's batting unit that has disappointed Vaughan the most. He even called Pakistan's batting line 'easi-



est' he has seen in a long time. "I'll be brutally honest. The England bowlers aren't being challenged at all. And this Pakistan batting line-up is possibly the easiest batting line-up I've seen in a long time to bowl to. And not only that, I think as a bowler, I think they're all queuing up to bowl because they know there are wickets out there," Vaughan said on the BBC Test Match Special. "You're

not going to get hurt. There's no batter that's going to hurt them. No one's going to damage their figures, and it's really, 'roll up, roll up, who wants to get the wickets?'," he added. "I think they all know that Pakistan aren't going to get big scores. So you're only going to be out there for 40 to 50 overs, so you give everything in every spell, you keep going to Joe Root saying, Err, I'll bowl another one."

Lando Norris Signs Contract Extension With McLaren Until At Least 2030

Defending Formula 1 champion Lando Norris has signed a contract extension with McLaren, under which he will race for the British team until at least the end of the 2030 season. The deal also includes a multi-year option to commit beyond 2030. The extension will see Norris remain with the Papayas for more than a decade, having joined them as a test and development driver in 2017 and earned a promotion to the grid in 2019. "I'm very, very excited. McLaren's been my home since the very, very beginning of my career in Formula 1 and I want it to stay that way for as long as possible. We've had a great few years.



Anaya Bangar On "Unfair Advantage" Claim As Marizanne Kapp's Post Triggers Row

South Africa all-rounder Marizanne Kapp slammed Cricket Australia's decision to offer Anaya Bangar, the child of former India cricketer and coach Sanjay Bangar, a pathway to return to professional cricket. Anaya underwent hormone replacement therapy for the first time in 2024 and has now been given the nod as per CA's 'Inclusion of Transgender and Gender Diverse Players in Elite Cricket Policy'. Without taking offence at Kapp's comment, slamming CA's decision, Anaya countered the Proteas star's remarks, saying the path has been cleared only after undergoing extensive testing. Taking to social media, Kapp reacted to the news of Anaya's return to professional cricket. She said: "Absolutely ridiculous. This should not be allowed." In an interview with Times Now,



Anaya said that a 12-week test was done on her body, measuring her athletic capabilities. The results confirmed that her physical parameters fall in the female athlete range. "I think I understand the place where she's coming from. To counter the point about the unfair advantage aspect: there has been testing done by the Manchester University Institute of Sport. They did a 12-week-long test-



ing program with me regarding my body's athletic capabilities after being on hormone replacement therapy for a year. That test concluded that my physical parameters fall within the cisgender female athlete range," she said. Anaya, hence, stressed that there's scientific evidence that she wouldn't have any unfair advantage when she returns to professional women's cricket.

LIVERPOOL AGREE DEAL WITH PSG FOR BRADLEY BARCOLA, FEE MORE THAN 100 MILLION POUNDS: REPORT



Liverpool have agreed a deal worth up to GBP 123m for Paris Saint-Germain striker Bradley Barcola. The Reds have been pursuing the French international to add firepower to the forward line since the departures of Luis Diaz and Mohamed Salah over the past two summers. Barcola has been with PSG since 2023 and is a two-time Champions League winner, a three-time Ligue 1 champion and a two-time French Cup winner. He also featured in the recent FIFA World Cup, where he scored three goals for the French side that reached the semi-finals. According to a BBC report, Liverpool have agreed an initial GBP 106m deal with GBP 17m in potential add-ons, bringing

the total to GBP 123m, which would be a record fee for a player leaving the French top flight. PSG had initially valued Barcola's transfer at GBP 145m, but a GBP 123m deal would not hurt them. Barcola had his minutes limited at PSG, with the club preferring Desire Doue and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia. Moreover, he is entering the final two years of his contract with the Reds and does not seem willing to extend his stay. For Liverpool, though, this will be a shot in the arm. They have seen the departures of Diaz to German club Bayern Munich and of Salah, whose nine-year career with the Reds has ended, as he moved to Turkish Super Lig side Trabzonspor.

INSPIRED BY 'FIT INDIA', PROCAM INTERNATIONAL LAUNCHES '100 DAYS OF RUNNING' INITIATIVE

Procam International on Friday announced a new avatar for HDOR - 100 Days of Running, a movement that has been building a culture of consistent fitness for the past 11 years. Now part of the Procam portfolio, HDOR is launched in its new avatar with a stronger platform, wider reach and renewed ambition to make fitness easy to start, fun to sustain and accessible to everyone, as per a press release. Inspired by the vision of Fit India, HDOR - 100 Days of Running invites people of all ages and fitness levels to run, walk, cycle or take on a duathlon, wherever

they are and in a way that works for them. At the heart is a simple belief: taking the first step towards a more active life is always possible. Mumkin Hai. Registrations open on India's National Sports Day, August 29, 2026, at https://hdor.com/ with the 100-day journey beginning on the October 10, 2026 and concluding on the January 17, 2027. India's digital adoption has moved rapidly from connectivity to everyday usage, creating new opportunities to make healthy and active lifestyles more accessible. With more than a billion Indians now connected to the

internet, technology is increasingly enabling people to discover, track, and sustain healthier habits. At the same time, the growing prevalence of lifestyle-related risks, reinforces the need to make regular physical activity part of everyday life. In this evolving landscape, HDOR finds its place-bringing technology and movement together to make fitness more flexible, inclusive, and easier to sustain. Vivek Singh, Joint Managing Director, Procam International, said, "HDOR is not really about 100 days of running.



NAGARJUNA’S 100TH FILM TITLED ‘KING 100’

Witness Royal Swagger- King Nagarjuna’s Landmark 100th Film Is Titled Powerfully King 100, The Title Glimpse Is Majestic & Mind-Blowing. Theatrical Release For Christmas On December 24, 2026 King Nagarjuna’s landmark 100th film #King100, produced by Annapurna Studios and helmed by Ra Karthik on his Telugu debut, is presently in production, with the shoot progressing at a brisk pace. On the occasion of Nagarjuna’s birthday, the makers of the film have unveiled a powerful title glimpse, unveiling the title as King 100. The glimpse opens with Nagarjuna’s commanding voiceover, where he talks about how society divides people based on their wealth. He recalls being called a loser when he had nothing, only to be hailed as The King once he amassed wealth. A news report of a staggering 50,000 crore scam, accompanying Nagarjuna’s picture adds another layer of mystery to the proceedings. King 100 certainly feels like an apt and powerful title for Nagarjuna’s landmark 100th film. Going by the title glimpse, the superstar seems to have chosen a script that is tailor-made for his stardom. Nagarjuna is presented in an exceptionally stylish and dynamic avatar, with his screen presence making an immediate impact. He looks suave and sophisticated, carrying the royal swagger of a true superstar with remarkable ease. The glimpse effectively showcases his attitude and personality, instantly making his character intriguing. Director Ra Karthik gives Nagarjuna a striking presentation, while his narrative approach appears fresh, intriguing and packed with promise. The grand production values and rich visuals add considerable scale to the glimpse, creating a sense of a larger-than-life cinematic experience. Rockstar Devi Sri Prasad’s pulsating background score further elevates the impact, perfectly comple-



menting the visuals and narrative with infectious energy. The Nagarjuna-DSP combination once again proves to be a sensational one, with the powerful BGM adding the right dose of hype, elevation and mass appeal to the glimpse. Overall, King 100 title glimpse looks majestic and mind-blowing. With Nagarjuna in a powerful new avatar, an intriguing

premise, impressive visuals and a high-energy score, the glimpse has certainly raised the bar and significantly heightened expectations for this much-awaited landmark 100th film. The glimpse is a feast not just for Akkineni fans, but for normal cine goers as well. Tabu plays a pivotal role in the movie, while the team will disclose the rest of the cast and crew later.

REGINA CASSANDRA PROVES SHARP LOOKS GOOD OFF-SCREEN



Structured shoulders. A cinched waist. Flared trousers that catch the light with every step. Regina Cassandra’s latest look is less about being pretty and more about commanding a room, and it works. The actress picked a blush-pink suede jumpsuit scattered with delicate crystal florals trailing down

one side, skipping jewelry almost entirely and letting soft waves and smoky eyes do the talking instead. It’s a fitting choice for where her career is headed. Regina has been steadily carving a space for herself in Bollywood, taking on layered villain roles that trade glamour for grit.

RASHMIKA MANDANNA SERVES OLD-WORLD GLAMOUR



Rashmika Mandanna has reportedly been finalized to play legendary Carnatic vocalist MS Subbulakshmi, with an official announcement expected on September 16, her birth anniversary. The biopic is helmed by Gowtam Tinnanuri of Jersey fame, produced by Allu Aravind, Bunny Vas, and Rockline Venkatesh. Sai Pallavi, the earlier choice, reportedly exited due to date issues, paving the way for Rashmika to take on this career-defining role. On the style front,

Rashmika recently stunned in a regal velvet anarkali blending emerald green with wine maroon panels, finished with heavy zardozi embroidery and a jeweled choker, a look dripping in old-world royal charm that had fans swooning. Career-wise, things are looking busy for the National Crush. Up next are Mysaa, an action thriller, and Ranabaali, a period drama set against a freedom struggle backdrop, both signaling her shift toward meatier, content-driven roles.

STAR PRODUCER DIL RAJU LAUNCHES SECOND LYRICAL SONG FROM MISSING MEGHANA



Star producer Dil Raju launched the second lyrical song from the upcoming movie Missing Meghana, produced by Panchumarthi Naresh Babu under First Copy Movies and KD & Co banners, and directed by Vachaspathi. Speaking at the launch, Dil Raju praised the lyrics and music, wishing the film team a massive box office success. The film stars Ram Karthik, Ammu Abhirami, Vaidika Senjaliya, and Ankit Koya in lead roles, along with

Goparaju Ramana, Vempa Kashi, Kaushik, Mahipal, Ruchitha, Nalini, Srinivas, Azeem, and Pandu in prominent supporting roles. Earlier, the film’s first look and title unveiling poster were released by sensational director V. V. Vinayak, while the first single (“Pilla Pilla Pilla”) was launched by legendary producer D. Suresh Babu. Dil Raju has now launched the second song. The movie features cinematography by Sam K. Naidu and music composed by R. R. Dhruvan.

‘MUGGURU KOTHULU’ TITLE SONG RELEASED FROM SHOBHARANI GARIMELLA’S PRODUCTION, DIRECTED BY KARTIK GARIMELLA

Presented by GSR Creations and co-presented by Sky Flare Networks, ‘Mugguru Kothulu’ is a film produced by Shobharani Garimella and directed by Kartik Garimella. Teja Kondapally, Ganesh Bodda and Devansh play the lead roles in the movie, while Varshika Pasam is the female lead. The film’s first-look poster has already impressed everyone. Now, the team has come up with another update by releasing the title song from the movie. The video song, which goes by the title ‘Mugguru Kothulu’, features the three heroes having a blast and enjoying themselves to the fullest. The song showcases the fun and carefree lives of bachelors and singles. Going by the song, it is evident that the film is set to be a youthful, fun-filled entertainer. The audience is likely to enjoy the catchy tune and the crazy antics of the three heroes. Jagadeesh Busayavalasa’s lyrics and Chaitanya Gannavarapu’s



vocals are expected to be major highlights of the song. The shooting of the film is progressing at a brisk pace. S. Suhas is composing the music for the movie. Raj

Nomula is the cinematographer, while Jameer Shaik is handling the editing. The team is gearing up to entertain the audience with many more updates in the coming days.

Roja Selvamani’s much-awaited comeback film ‘Anbe Diana’ is now streaming on Sony LIV



The much-awaited movie Anbe Diana is now streaming in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, and Hindi on Sony LIV, following its theatrical release. Blending romance, humour, cultural and family dynamics, the film will now reach a wider audience, allowing viewers to experience this story from the comfort of their homes. Set against the backdrop of Perambur, Chennai, Anbe Diana follows a conservative young man whose world takes an unexpected turn when he falls in love with a free-spirited Anglo-Indian girl. As two contrasting worlds come together, what follows is a journey shaped by family expectations and the complexities of finding your own voice. Produced by Million-Dollar Studios, Neo Castle Creations and Era Entertainments, ‘Anbe Diana’ marks Roja Selvamani’s comeback to the screen, playing the character of Sarala, the mother of Pari.

GRAND TRAILER LAUNCH EVENT FOR UNIQUE POLITICAL ENTERTAINER ‘DHARMASTHALA CONSTITUENCY’

Dharmasthala Constituency’ Set for a Worldwide Grand Theatrical Release on September 4 Produced under the banner of Moving Dreams India Private Limited, ‘Dharmasthala Constituency’ stars Suman, Saikumar, Nataraj, Rayamcha Kokkur Varun Sandesh, and Vithika Sheru in key roles. Directed by Jai Gnan Prabha Thota and produced by Merum Bhaskar.

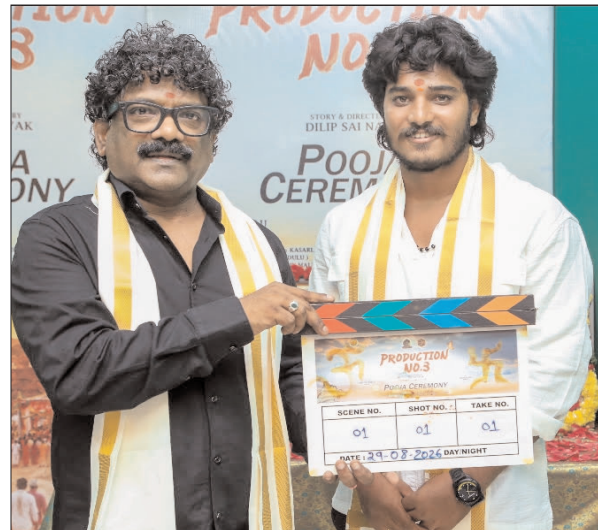
Highlights
■ **Dharmasthala Constituency’ Set for a Worldwide Grand Theatrical Release on September 4**

the political entertainer is gearing up for a worldwide grand theatrical release on September 4. The film’s trailer launch event was held grandly in Hyderabad today.



Famous folk star Kittu Pawan is in the film produced by M.S .Varahi and Shimam Media banners

The movie started on Saturday with the sensational folk songs with the smell of Telangana soil and achieved hundreds of millions of views with Kittu as the hero who became close to the audience. Muni Siva and Sivamallalu are jointly producing this film as production number 3 under the banner of YMS Varahi Creations and Shivam Media. The director of this movie is Dilip Sai Naik. The film started as Vanga at Madhapur Shivam Media Office. Famous writer Oscar Award Winner Chandra Bose, Director RP Patnaik, National Award Winner



Satish Vegesna and Big TV Chairman Vijay Vennam were the chief guests for the

launch of this movie. Satish Vegesna and Bullet bandi Laxman gave the script to

the director Dileep and Chandra Bose clapped on the hero Kittu. RP Patnaik was the honorary director of the first shot and Big TV Vijay switched the camera and congratulated the team. Chandra Bose said – “I know this team very well. The whole team is very talented. Producers Muni Siva, Sivamallalala, Bullet bandi Laxman and music director Madin are very dear to me. I wish all of them would achieve great success,” he said. Satish Vegesna said – Both our Shivs are very supportive of the director Dileep who came up with a good story. I wish all of them were a big success,” he said.