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INTERNATIONAL | NEWS

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SPORTS | NEWS

INDIA-PAKISTAN PLAYERS SKIP HANDSHAKES BEFORE MATCH

CINEMA | NEWS

“Killer” release date announcement glimpse raises expectations for the film

SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

19-08-2026
Total pilgrims : 76,464
Tonsures : 36,913
Hundi kamahala : 4,94 CR
Ladies tulas : 4,27 Lac
Annaprasadam : 2.63 Lac
Ammi tulas : 3,494
Present Situation on 20-08-2026:
Waiting Compartments...Out side line adding at Sathuramam

Approx. Darsan Time for Saravadarshnam (with out SSD Tolerant) : 18-20 H.

Short Takes

5 dead, 20 hospitalised after suspected spurious liquor consumption

Bhavnagar, Aug 20: Five people have died and 20 others are undergoing treatment after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in Kharkhadi village of Ghogha taluka in Gujarat's Bhavnagar district, triggering a major police investigation. Following the incident, a team of the State Monitoring Cell (SMC) has reached Bhavnagar on the directions of Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister. A Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team has also begun collecting evidence from the suspected site where the liquor was allegedly adulterated.

ED searches nine Kozhikode premises over alleged CMRL money trail

Kozhikode: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Kochi Zone, conducted searches at nine premises in Kozhikode on August 18 in connection with an alleged corporate fraud and money laundering case involving Cochin Minerals and Rutile Limited (CMRL). The searches were carried out under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. According to the ED, the investigation stems from a probe by the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) into alleged corporate fraud and bribe payments linked to CMRL. The ED said its earlier investigation had indicated that proceeds of crime were allegedly generated under the management of CMRL, led by SN Sasidharan Kartha, and that payments were made to various individuals.

4 killed, 7 injured in truck collision inside Hanogi Tunnel

Mandi (TSIT): Four people were killed and seven others injured after two trucks collided head-on inside the Hanogi Tunnel on the Chandigarh-Manali National Highway in Himachal Pradesh on Thursday morning. The accident occurred at around 7:45 am, triggering panic in the area. The impact of the collision was severe, leaving four people dead, while seven others sustained injuries.

Digital coordination key to swift justice under new criminal laws Chief Justice



Hyderabad, TSIT BUREAU: Telangana High Court Chief Justice Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh on Thursday stressed that effective coordination among all stakeholders and the use of digital platforms are crucial for the successful implementation of the new criminal laws and for ensuring speedy justice to citizens.

Addressing a first-of-its-kind seminar jointly organised by the Telangana State Judicial Academy and Telangana Police Department, the Chief Justice said justice is a collective outcome achieved through coordinated efforts by the police, prosecution, forensic experts, prisons, medical departments and the judiciary. Nearly 1,200 judicial officers and officials from various departments participated in the programme in hybrid mode.

Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh

said every stage, from registration of a crime to investigation, forensic examination, prosecution and trial, plays a critical role in the justice delivery system. He called for continuous coordination among institutions and greater use of technology to make justice faster, transparent and accessible.

Telangana State Judicial Academy Chairperson Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya highlighted the need for better inter-departmental coordination and improved digital literacy among officials. She noted that incomplete data entry, coding errors and repeated information entry often lead to delays in case processing and prosecution review.

Director General of Police C.V. Anand said the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita

(BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) represent a comprehensive shift towards citizen-centric justice, scientific investigation and digital evidence-based policing. He emphasised accurate digital documentation, timely investigations and effective use of available technological platforms.

Technical sessions during the seminar focused on the Integrated Criminal Justice System (ICJS), e-Sakshya, online FIRs and charge sheets, e-summons, video-conference recording of evidence, investigation timelines, forensic and medical integration, prison management and coordination between investigation and prosecution agencies.

DGP Anand also proposed the creation of a coordination mechanism under the chairmanship of a High Court judge to review the implementation of the new criminal laws on a monthly basis.

The seminar was attended by High Court judges Justice Vijayens Reddy and Justice Madhavi Devi, NCRB representative Prasun Gupta, TGSFCL Director Shikha Goel, Prisons DG Soumya Mishra, Judicial Academy Principal Sridevi, CDTI Director Salman Taj, senior police officers and officials from various departments.

NATION MUST MAKE EVERY PERSON FEEL THAT THEY ARE LOVED: RAHUL GANDHI

New Delhi, Aug 20 : Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said on Thursday that the nation must make every person feel that they are loved, regardless of religion, caste, age or gender.

Addressing a congregation 'Hara Bhara Swaraj' organised to commemorate former Prime Minister late Rajiv Gandhi's 82nd birth anniversary here, the LoP lashed out at the BJP for targeting minorities, Dalits and tribals.

"The BJP tells Muslims, Christians and Sikhs that they don't exist. BJP tells Adivasis that their land will be taken, and if they protest, they will be shot. BJP tells Dalits that their oppression doesn't matter. This is what has been done to our country," he said. "That needs to be reversed," Rahul Gandhi asserted, stressing that every single person should feel a sense of belonging, love and respect in the country. The senior Congress leader maintained that the word 'Swaraj' is an Indian concept and is wrongly translated as "freedom" in English. He said Swaraj means "ruling over oneself", adding that while one could grant freedom to another, one could not bestow Swaraj upon another.



Naidu calls for stronger southern economic cooperation



VISAKHAPATNAM (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu called for greater cooperation among southern states to accelerate development and help them emerge as a major economic force in building Viksit Bharat. He made the remarks at the 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Mahabalipuram on Thursday.

Naidu said southern states contribute around 31 per cent of India's GDP and their combined economy could reach \$10 trillion by 2047. He stressed the need for greater Centre-state cooperation and mutual trust to address pending issues and promote balanced development.

He proposed a bullet train corridor connecting Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu through Kuppam, along

with an integrated transport network linking Amaravati, Bengaluru and Chennai. He also suggested a common logistics network, dry ports, power-grid integration, a southern universities and skills consortium and a Mutual Aid Force for disaster response.

Naidu highlighted Andhra Pradesh's key projects, including Polavaram, Amaravati and the South Coast Railway Zone, and sought faster resolution of bifurcation-related issues. He also urged early approvals for ports, metro rail projects and the Kadapa-JSW railway link.

On water resources, Naidu proposed diverting over 500 TMC of water through a Godavari-Cauvery link and called for a long-term Ganga-Cauvery river-linking plan. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar appreciated Naidu's broad development vision.

Shivakumar seeks freeze on Lok Sabha seats

MAHABALIPURAM: Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Thursday urged the Southern Zonal Council to adopt a resolution seeking to retain the Lok Sabha's existing 543 seats for the next 25 years and use the 1971 Census as the basis for delimitation.

Addressing the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council, Shivakumar said southern states should not be politically disadvantaged for successfully implementing population-control measures. He said the South's economic contribution and achievements in population stabilisation must be matched by adequate political representation. "We welcome the assurance that no southern state will lose seats. But representation is not only about numbers. It is about weight and voice," he said.

Shivakumar called for the 1971 population basis to be honoured during delimitation and urged the Union government to maintain the existing strength of 543 Lok Sabha seats. He also



proposed that women's reservation be accommodated within the existing number of seats rather than waiting for a fresh delimitation exercise.

"Women have waited long enough for their rightful representation," he said, stressing that their reservation should not be delayed.

The Chief Minister appealed to other southern Chief Ministers to support the proposal, saying protection of the region's political voice was essential to maintaining fairness in India's federal structure. He also linked political representation with equitable distribution of resources.

Omar Abdullah calls US-Pakistan row a bilateral matter



SRINAGAR (TSIT): Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the dispute between the United States and Pakistan over remarks by US Ambassador to India Sergio

Gor was a matter between the two countries. Abdullah was responding to Pakistan's decision to summon the US envoy in Islamabad and lodge a formal protest over Gor's remarks during his recent visit to Jammu and Kashmir. Gor had described Kashmir as an important part of India and indicated that the United States would reconsider its travel advisories concerning the region. "Whatever the US ambassador said, he said. Now it is between the two countries," Abdullah said.

CM Vijay urges Centre, neighbouring States to follow SC verdict on Cauvery

The Supreme Court on August 17 had directed the Karnataka government to comply with the Cauvery Water Management Authority's (CWMA) directions on releasing water to Tamil Nadu and sought a status report on the releases.

CHENNAI (TSIT):

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay on Thursday urged the Centre and neighbouring States to implement the Supreme Court's verdict on the Cauvery water dispute and ensure that decisions of the Cauvery Water Management Authority are followed.

Addressing the 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Kovalam near Mamallapuram, Vijay said Tamil Nadu's river-water rights must be protected



and the rights of downstream States should be safeguarded, according to the Daily Thanthi report. The Supreme Court on August 17 had directed the Karnataka government to

comply with the Cauvery Water Management Authority's (CWMA) directions on releasing water to Tamil Nadu and sought a status report on the releases. The Cauvery Water

Regulation Committee (CWRC) had directed Karnataka to release 12,000 cusecs of water daily to Tamil Nadu for 15 days from August 12. The CWMA subsequently upheld the decision.

Vijay seeks NEET exemption, fair share of funds. Vijay also reiterated Tamil Nadu's demand for exemption from the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), saying the examination affects poor and rural students seeking admission to medical courses.

Massive search operation by Navy, Coast Guard for seven missing Andhra fishermen

Amaravati (TSIT) : A massive search operation was underway in the Bay of Bengal for seven fishermen from Andhra Pradesh who had set out to sea earlier this month, officials said on Thursday. Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu said the search operation involves two Dornier aircraft, a helicopter, and seven boats of the Navy and the Coast Guard. He said Navy boats were deployed for extensive search from Visakhapatnam towards Paradip. A Navy vessel is also searching towards the port area. Dornier aircraft from Visakhapatnam, Kolkata, and Chennai were engaged in the search operation.

Special Intensive Revision
25th June, 2026 onwards

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POLART, BUDHART, NARAYAN, ALOK

Election Commission of India

Check your name in the Draft Electoral Rolls Published on 17.08.2026.

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Period of filing Claims & Objections: 17.08.2026 to 16.09.2026

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Use Form-7
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Publication of Final Electoral Rolls: 19-10-2026

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SAP chairman reviews Amaravati Championship arrangements

TIRUPATI, August 20, 2026: Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAP) Chairman Ravi Naidu inspected arrangements for the Amaravati Championship-2026 state-level competitions scheduled to be held in Tirupati from August 24 to 27.



Naidu reviewed the sports grounds, facilities for participating athletes and other arrangements along with the concerned officials. He assessed the preparedness of the venues and discussed measures required to ensure smooth conduct of the competitions. The SAP Chairman directed officials to complete all pending arrangements in a coordinated and meticulous manner before the start of the championship. He emphasised that adequate facilities and necessary support should be provided to athletes throughout the event. Ravi Naidu instructed the officials to ensure that participants face no inconvenience during their stay and while taking part in the competitions.

IIT, NEET EXCELLENCE CENTRE TO PROVIDE STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES FOR POOR STUDENTS

— MINISTER DR. DOLA BALA VEERANJANEYA SWAMY



Visakhapatnam (TSIT) State Social Welfare Minister Dr. Dola Bala Veeranjaneya Swamy directed officials to ensure quality education and provide state-of-the-art facilities for poor students at the IIT and NEET Excellence Centre. The Minister held a review meeting at the Amaravati Secretariat on Thursday on the construction of additional buildings and provision of facilities for students at the IIT and NEET Excellence Centre in Tadikonda, Guntur district. During the meeting, the Minister examined the proposed campus construction model and issued several directions to the officials. He instructed them to take up the construction of additional buildings along with internal roads, a walking track, badminton court, kho-kho court and a multipurpose court on the campus. He emphasized that all facilities should be developed in a manner that provides students with a peaceful, pleasant and conducive environment for learning. The Minister said that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu aspires to see poor students rise to higher levels in society. The coalition government is committed to providing better educational opportunities and a bright future for economically disadvantaged students through IIT and NEET Excellence Centres, he said. APSWREIS Secretary IAS V. Prasanna Venkatesh, AP EWIDC Executive Engineer Anil Kumar, Guntur District SC Corporation Executive Director Durga Bai, APSWREIS DCO and other officials participated in the review meeting.



District Collector Dr. S. Venkateshwar, Superintendent of Police Sri L. Subbarayudu and others held a meeting with the festival committee members and officials to discuss the arrangements for the Vinayaka Chavithi festival.



Sri K. Srinivasa Rao, who has assumed charge as the Regional Manager of APSRTC Tirupati District, paid a courtesy call on District Collector Dr. S. Venkateshwar.

CM Naidu Reviews Search for Missing Fishermen in Konaseema

Visakhapatnam (TSIT) Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu reviewed the search and rescue operations for seven fishermen from B.R. Ambedkar Konaseema district who went missing at sea. The Chief Minister held a review meeting with Fisheries Department officials at his camp office and sought details of the ongoing search operations. The fishermen, belonging to Odalarevu, Dummalapeta and Vasalattipu villages in Allavaram mandal, had ventured into the sea for fishing on August 3. They had informed their families that they



would return after about 10 days. When they failed to return, their families informed the authorities on August 16, following which search operations were launched with the assistance of the Coast Guard and Marine Police.

Officials informed the Chief Minister that extensive search operations were underway and that the Coast Guard headquarters in Chennai had been contacted. Information about the missing Andhra Pradesh fishing boat had also been shared with authorities in

Bangladesh and the Andaman region. Navy Dornier aircraft had conducted aerial searches up to 216 nautical miles in an effort to locate the fishermen. The Chief Minister questioned officials about whether the boat was equipped with a transponder, why it had ventured into the sea alone, when information about its disappearance was received and when search operations were initiated. He also reviewed the technical assistance being provided to fishermen and the daily coordination mechanism among the departments.

Naidu directed officials to implement a proper Standard

Operating Procedure (SOP) to prevent such incidents instead of responding only after an accident occurs. He stressed that details of every fishing boat and every fisherman must be registered and updated so that immediate assistance can be provided during emergencies. The Chief Minister instructed all concerned departments to work in close coordination to ensure the safety of fishermen. He directed officials to utilise every available means to trace the missing fishermen and to provide all possible support to their families until they are safely located.

IIFSE Group Director Srinu Mahanti Receives Asia Pride Award-2026

Visakhapatnam (TSIT) IIFSE Group Director Srinu Mahanti, who has been rendering distinguished services in the fields of industrial fire safety, security, skill development and safety awareness, has been honoured with the prestigious Asia Pride Award-2026. Srinu Mahanti received the award from Rajasthan Governor Haribhavu Kisanrao Bagde at a function held at Hyatt Place Aurangabad Airport Hotel in Aurangabad, Maharashtra. The award recognises the significant contribution of IIFSE



Group towards developing requirements of industries, creating awareness among the skilled manpower to meet the requirements of industries.

public on fire and safety measures, and promoting a safer industrial environment. Speaking on the occasion, Srinu Mahanti described the award as an important milestone for IIFSE Group. He expressed his gratitude to the organisers of the Asia Pride Awards-2026 and dedicated the honour to the entire IIFSE Group team. He said the recognition would serve as further encouragement to expand efforts in the areas of industrial safety, skill development and public safety awareness.

AP: Rs 14,664 Cr. disbursed to farmers under Annadata-PM Kisan scheme: Minister

Vijayawada (TSIT) Andhra Pradesh Minister for Agriculture K Atchannaidu has informed the Legislative Assembly that Rs 14,664.33 crore has been credited into the bank accounts of eligible farmers under the 'Annadata Sukhibhava-PM Kisan' scheme. Participating in a debate on agriculture issues on Thursday, the Minister reiterated the government's commitment for the welfare of farmers and the development of the farming sector. He highlighted that the government is extending support to the farmers in distribution of fertilizers and market intervention. "Out of the Rs 14,666.33 crore disbursed to the eligible farmers, the state government share is Rs 8,903.10 crore while the Centre has extended Rs 5,761.23 crore.

AP Accelerates Urban Infrastructure Development with Rs. 7,469-Cr HAM Programme

- Rs.7,469.46 crore sanctioned for roads, drainage, parks and street lighting
- Rs.40,743 crore worth of urban infrastructure projects under implementation and planning

Visakhapatnam (TSIT) The Andhra Pradesh Government has accelerated its urban infrastructure development programme by sanctioning Rs.7,469.46 crore for roads, drainage, parks, central medians, street lighting and other works in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) under the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM). The Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department issued G.O.Rt.No.1067 on August 19, 2026, after Cabinet approval and Finance Department concurrence. The sanctioned amount includes Rs.5,500 crore for capital works and Rs.1,969.46 crore towards the estimated interest component over ten years. The HAM programme is part of a wider urban infrastructure initiative covering all 123 ULBs, with major projects worth around Rs.40,743.67 crore under implementation or planning through various schemes. The programme is being taken forward in line with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's Swarna Andhra 2047 vision of developing planned, liveable and investment-ready cities. Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister P. Narayana said the government was adopting an integrated approach to urban development, with roads, drainage, drinking water, sanitation, lighting and public spaces being planned together to improve the quality of life in towns and cities. The state has identified an urban road infrastructure gap of 4,388 km. Under the Rs.5,500-crore capital component of the HAM programme, Rs.4,655.82 crore will be



spent on roads with drains, Rs.509.12 crore on parks, Rs.247.28 crore on street lighting and Rs.87.78 crore on central medians. The state has an assessed urban road network of 25,626 km, of which 21,238 km has already been improved. Detailed project reports have been prepared covering roads, parks, street-lighting points and central medians. Infrastructure assessments across all 123 ULBs have also identified gaps in water-treatment capacity, water-distribution networks, sewage treatment and drainage systems. Projects are being mapped to various funding sources, including AMRUT, AIB, UIDF and other central and state programmes. The government is also focusing on urban parks and greenery. 58 new parks have been developed and 110 existing parks refurbished, while 45 more parks are under development. Around 4.43 lakh saplings have been planted along 2,165 km of urban roads under the Harithandhra programme. Solid-waste management is also being strengthened, with work orders issued for 108 Integrated Solid Waste

MASSIVE SEARCH OPERATION LAUNCHED FOR SEVEN MISSING FISHERMEN

- Seven Navy and Coast Guard vessels deployed for extensive search
- Dornier aircraft and Navy helicopter conducting aerial surveillance
- Haldia and Paradip Coast Guard stations also involved

Visakhapatnam (TSIT) A massive Search and Rescue (SAR) operation has been intensified to trace seven fishermen who went missing after venturing into the sea from the Vadarevu Fish Landing Centre, State Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu said on Thursday. The Minister said the fishermen had ventured out for fishing on August 3 and failed to return as scheduled. Immediately after receiving the information, the concerned departments were alerted and search operations were launched. Since August 17, five Indian Coast Guard vessels have been involved in the search, while the



Indian Navy has deployed two additional vessels, taking the total number of vessels engaged in the operation to seven.

The search is being conducted extensively both at sea and from the air. Dornier aircraft from Visakhapatnam, Kolkata and Chennai are carrying out search sorties, while a Navy helicopter from Kolkata has also been deployed. The Haldia and Paradip Coast Guard stations have been brought into the operation to expand

the search area. The Minister said the Navy, Coast Guard and Fisheries Department were maintaining continuous coordination and monitoring the operation. All available resources are being utilised to cover possible sea routes and areas where the fishing boat may have travelled.

Though no positive information regarding the whereabouts of the fishermen has been received so far, search efforts have not been stopped at any stage. Seven vessels, Dornier aircraft and a Navy helicopter are continuing the extensive search, he said. Appealing to the families of the missing fishermen to remain courageous, Atchannaidu assured them that the government understands their anxiety and that search operations would continue without interruption until the fishermen are traced and brought back safely.

PERMANENT BUILDINGS FOR RURAL HEALTH CENTRES BEING CONSTRUCTED AT FAST PACE

Visakhapatnam (TSIT) The state government is accelerating the construction of permanent buildings for Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) and Village Health Clinics to strengthen primary healthcare services across Andhra Pradesh, Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav said in the Legislative Assembly on Thursday. Responding to questions during the Question Hour, the Minister said the government was giving special priority to strengthening healthcare infrastructure in both rural and urban areas. Village Health Clinics and Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, which serve as the first point of healthcare access in rural areas, are being strengthened, while permanent buildings are also being provided for Urban PHCs. The Minister said there are 1,231 PHCs in the state, of which 1,143 are functioning from their own buildings. Of the 140 PHC buildings identified as dilapidated and being replaced with new structures, 118 have already been completed and 22 are under construction. Works to strengthen 948 PHC buildings have also been completed. He said more than 600 appointments had been made in PHCs during the past two years. At present, only 57 doctor posts are vacant and steps are being taken to fill these vacancies soon. There are 560 Urban Primary Health Centres in the state. Of these, 502 have their own buildings, while 55 are functioning from rented premises. Construction of several new UPHC buildings is also progressing, with the government focusing on providing permanent infrastructure in urban areas.



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Sl. No.	Name of Borrower (s)	Outstanding Dues	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession
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2	MR. VARIGATI SATYANARAYANA (Borrower) Mrs. VARIGATI GANGABHAVANI (Co-Borrower)	Rs. 1,05,01,829/- (Rupees One Crore Five Lakh One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty Nine Only) Dues as on 31-AUG-2025*	07-NOV-2025
3	Mr. VASAMSETTI JAYADATTA (Borrower)	Rs. 53,85,550/- (Rupees Fifty Three Lakhs Eighty Five Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Only) Dues as on 31-MAY-2025*	31-JUL-2025
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Oil Palm Cultivation Brings Good Income to Farmers

Narayanpet, August 20 (TSIT): As part of his tour of the combined Mahbubnagar district, Telangana State Agriculture Department Principal Secretary Sri Surendra Mohan, IAS, visited Kumarlingampalli village in Narva mandal of Narayanpet district on Thursday. He inspected the oil palm plantation being cultivated by farmer Gopal Reddy from the village and inquired about the cultivation methods, yields, income, and other details. Farmer Gopal Reddy set up an oil palm plantation on his 8 acres of land in 2022. He explained to the Principal Secretary that the plantation has been yielding produce since last year, and that he has so far achieved a yield of about 40 tonnes, earning an income of Rs. 6.80 lakh. Officials also discussed with the farmer aspects such as plantation maintenance, investment, crop yield, and



marketing. Principal Secretary Surendra Mohan expressed happiness over the income achieved by the farmer through oil palm cultivation and congratulated Gopal Reddy. He then spoke with other oil palm farmers in the village and learned about the difficulties they face in cultivation, the support being provided by the government, yields, and income details. Farmers Spoke on the Phone with Minister Tummala While

inspecting the oil palm plantation, Agriculture Department Principal Secretary Surendra Mohan spoke on the phone with State Agriculture Minister Sri Tummala Nageswara Rao. On this occasion, he had the farmers of Kumarlingampalli speak with the minister as well. The farmers shared with the minister the benefits they are gaining from oil palm cultivation, their experiences, and details of their income.

P.V. Prabhakar Rao celebrates 72nd birthday



HYDERABAD, August 20, 2026: Sri P.V. Prabhakar Rao, son of former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao, celebrated his 72nd birthday with family members, relatives, childhood friends, classmates, well-wishers and members of the Telangana Youth Journalists Federation (TYJF) at his residence in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. The celebrations began with Vedic rituals performed by Veda Pandits, who offered blessings for his good health, happiness, peace, prosperity and long life. The occasion brought together a large

gathering of people associated with Prabhakar Rao throughout his life. Childhood friends and classmates shared nostalgic memories of their school days and recalled his simplicity, humility, friendly nature and calm temperament. Family members, including his sisters, brothers-in-law, relatives and grandchildren, also spoke warmly about his personality and his affection and support for his wife and children. The gathering repeatedly highlighted Prabhakar Rao's dignified and down-to-earth nature. Despite belonging to a distinguished politi-

cal family, he has maintained a simple and peaceful approach to life. He appreciated his cousin brother Sri P.V. Sharath for organising the celebrations and thanked the staff for their coordination and efforts. His nephews and cousin brothers also participated. Jithender Rao Thanugula, Senior Journalist, President of TYJF and South India Times Bureau Chief, joined TYJF members in conveying birthday greetings. The celebrations became a memorable tribute to 72 years of family values, friendship, humility and meaningful relationships.

A.P. Mahesh Bank holds customers' meet in Khammam



HYDERABAD: A.P. Mahesh Bank organised a Customers' Meet at Hotel Budget, Khammam, on August 19 to strengthen customer relationships, understand local business needs and explore opportunities to expand its operations in the region. The meeting was chaired by CA Murali Manohar Palod, Chairman, A.P. Mahesh Bank. The meet saw participation from bank directors, general managers, business leaders, trade associations and a large number of existing and prospective customers, particularly from the granite, cold storage and chilli trading sectors. Participants shared their business requirements and suggestions for improving banking services in Khammam. Palod thanked customers for their continued confidence and support and highlighted the

Bank's focus on customer-centric services. He said the Bank was strengthening its technology and service capabilities through the proposed introduction of latest Core Banking Solutions, ASBA services and Forex operations. He also stated that the Bank's net worth stood at Rs.488 crore and that it had maintained a consistent record of profitability and dividend payments. Business representatives sought enhanced Cash Management Services for agricultural and allied businesses. Suggestions were also made to relocate the Khammam branch to the ground floor and offer shares to local residents. Palod said the Bank would continue supporting chilli traders, farmers, entrepreneurs and other businesses while expanding its presence in Khammam.

Perin Devi Natyalayam students shine at record event

HYDERABAD, August 20, 2026: Students of Perin Devi Natyalayam participated in the "Mera Bharat Mahan - 2026" Indian Honourable Awards-Jai India Book of Records event organised by Mayuri Arts at Ravindra Bharathi, Hyderabad, on August 20. The 80-minute programme, held as part of India's 80th Independence Day celebrations, featured 180 artists, 18 groups and 30 songs as part of a record attempt. Twenty-five students of Perin Devi Natyalayam showcased



their artistic talent through a performance celebrating patriotism, Indian culture and the country's rich artistic heritage. The students performed

under the guidance of Guru Dr. Perin Devi. Their presentation received appreciation from parents, art enthusiasts and the audience, who praised the young performers for showcasing their talent and cultural values on a prestigious platform. The participating students were D. Sahasra Reddy, Kyra Mohanty, N. Deeksha Rao, N. Keerthi Goud, D.V. Arunima, Mandala Poorvika, B. Shravya, Vamshika Guluri, Ananya Krishnan,

M.N.S. Hanshitha Chandra, A. Hanvitha, K. Sri Aaradhya Naidu, A. Charvi Loukya, C.V. Manaswini, T. Shruthika, J. Nagalakshmi Suchardha, Nukala Padmashree, K. Krithiksha, B. Andushree, M. Sumukhi, B. Varsha, C. Parnika Goud, Samruddhi Jaiswal, Sahasra Padmini and Jeedikanti Kyathi. The event gave the young artists an opportunity to celebrate India's cultural heritage and contribute to a national record attempt.

CARE HOSPITALS LAUNCHES PRANAAM IN VISAKHAPATNAM

VISAKHAPATNAM, August 20, 2026: CARE Hospitals launched 'Pranaam' in Visakhapatnam on Thursday, ahead of World Senior Citizen Day, to provide senior citizens with accessible, personalised and supportive healthcare. The initiative focuses on preventive wellness, continuity of care, caregiver support, emotional wellbeing and healthy ageing. The programme was inaugurated at CARE Hospitals, Visakhapatnam, by Dr. Shankhabrata Bagchi, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Visakhapatnam, in



the presence of Shalabh Dang, President-Sales & Marketing, Aster DM Quality Care Limited; G. Suresh Reddy, Hospital Chief Operating Officer, CARE Hospitals, Visakhapatnam; senior doctors, hospital officials, healthcare professionals and senior citizens.

Pranaam aims to simplify the healthcare journey for elderly patients through dedicated support assistance, priority care pathways, caregiver-inclusive consultations, simplified communication, post-visit follow-up and a dedicated helpline. The initiative also promotes active

ageing through chair yoga, walking groups, hobby clubs, reading circles, health awareness programmes and community activities. Speaking at the launch, Dr. Bagchi appreciated the initiative and said senior citizens deserved care, dignity and respect. Shalabh Dang said Pranaam seeks to make healthcare interactions simpler and more reassuring for elderly patients and their families. G. Suresh Reddy said the programme would strengthen preventive healthcare and help seniors lead healthier and more independent lives.



EDITORIAL

India's UPI Miracle Has Created A Difficult, Rs 20,000-Crore Question

Parliament has reopened a question that the country thought was settled: should UPI ever charge? On August 6, the Lok Sabha passed the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, by a voice vote, and on August 10, the Rajya Sabha, since this is a Money Bill, returned it after discussion, completing the process. It now goes to the President for assent. The change reads small on paper and large in effect. It amends Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, which until now shielded UPI and RuPay debit from any charge because they were prescribed under the Income-Tax Act. That automatic shield is gone. From here, whether a payment mode stays free depends on what the government chooses to notify. The case for charging begins, reasonably enough, with a bill nobody disputes. Running the world's largest real-time payment network is not free. Every tap that looks instant sets off authorisation, settlement, reconciliation, fraud screening, dispute handling, cloud capacity, and round-the-clock monitoring, and all of it costs money. One estimate puts the yearly cost of running UPI and RuPay debit infrastructure as high as ₹20,000 crore. As volumes keep climbing - July 2026 alone saw 2,366 crore transactions worth ₹29.9 lakh crore - that bill only grows. So the question the new law opens is fair: if security and a coming wave of AI need real investment, must UPI finally charge? Right Problems, Wrong Solutions The costs behind all this are not imaginary. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) chief has said AI will define UPI's next chapter, taking it from about 750 million daily transactions towards a billion, onboarding half a billion more users, and hunting the mule accounts that already run into lakhs of cases a year. Voice onboarding in many languages, models trained on financial data, and real-time fraud engines are not cheap, and all of it needs steady funding. The RBI Governor has put the question plainly: who, in the end, pays for the plumbing? It helps to recall how that plumbing was paid for, because "free" never meant "unfunded". UPI was built and run by NPCI as public infrastructure, not a profit centre, and its scaling and security were financed the way a public good is: from the exchequer. The government reimbursed banks through an incentive scheme, ₹1,389 crore in 2021-22 and a peak of ₹3,631 crore in 2023-24, paying 0.15% on low-value merchant payments. That model carried UPI from a standing start in 2016 to accounting for nearly half of all real-time payments on the planet. The strain is that this public funding has thinned even as the network has swelled. The Standing Committee on Finance found that incentive payouts of ₹8,730 crore over four years to 2024-25 covered barely 11% of the industry's cost. The 2026-27 budget set aside ₹2,000 crore, less than before, even as daily volumes touch record highs. So banks and processors now carry a rising share of a growing bill, and want durable revenue, not a subsidy that shrinks each year. Where It Hurts The Most And yet, the leap from "the costs are real" to "therefore charge each transaction" skips the harder question of design. Most of what UPI spends on is fixed, infrastructural cost, not something that rises neatly with each ₹40 payment to a vegetable seller. A per-transaction fee is a blunt tool for a largely fixed bill. Worse, it lands where it does the most damage: at the point of acceptance, on the smallest sellers, whose whole reason to accept digital money was that it cost nothing.

Manmohan Singh, Bachchans, And Other Secrets Of 10 Janpath: The Sonia Gandhi Story

Political memoirs are often written twice: first by memory, then by self-preservation. The best ones resist the temptation of the second. In this context, Sonia Gandhi's forthcoming memoir, titled *Belonging: A Journey of Love* and to be published by Alfred A. Knopf on November 10, comes with an unusual burden of expectation. At 544 pages, the memoir promises to travel from her childhood in post-war Italy and her meeting with Rajiv Gandhi in Cambridge to life inside India's first political family, the assassinations of Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, her reluctant entry into politics, and her years at the helm of the Congress. Sonia herself says she wants to reach the motivations, actions, and "very human failings" of a family about which much has been written. Few Indian politicians have wielded so much influence while revealing so little of themselves. Sonia has been the Congress president, Leader of the Opposition, UPA chairperson, National Advisory Council chairperson, and, for ten years, the political pole around which a coalition government revolved. Yet, we know surprisingly little about how she understood her own power. In the mouths and pens of others, Sonia Gandhi's story is usually compressed into one convenient word: dynasty. But dynasty alone does not explain it. She did not grow up inside the Congress, inherit its political vocabulary, or possess unquestioned legitimacy within it. She entered that world through Rajiv Gandhi and, after losing him, had to negotiate it herself. Over the years, she had to fight, win, cajole, reconcile, absorb rebellion, and repeatedly act as matriarch to a party whose veterans were often older, more experienced, and more rooted in politics than she was. *Belonging* has an opportunity to tell us how she did it. Before *Politics Came Family* The early chapters may prove among the



most revealing precisely because Sonia Gandhi was not born into politics. Politics came looking for her. The geographical arc itself is remarkable: from Orbassano, the comune near Turin where she grew up, to Cambridge; from marriage into the Nehru-Gandhi household to 1 Safdarjung Road, 10 Janpath, and eventually the very centre of Indian power. But the more interesting journey is psychological. At what point did a woman who fiercely guarded her private life begin to regard stewardship of the Congress almost as a familial obligation? She arrived in India as Sonia Maino, married Rajiv in 1968, and entered a household where the private and the political were almost impossible to separate. The publisher's account makes clear that Sanjay Gandhi's death in the 1980 plane crash - and Rajiv's subsequent movement towards politics - will be central to the story. Sonia had herself written of resisting Rajiv's entry with extraordinary intensity, saying she had "fought like a tigress" for their family and their freedom. But *Belonging* can take us further. What exactly were Sonia's relations with Sanjay? How

did she view his enormous influence over Indira Gandhi? Did she merely fear politics for Rajiv, or did she have reservations about the political culture he was inheriting? The Bachchan Saga And then there are the Bachchans. Amitabh Bachchan was not simply another celebrity friend of Rajiv Gandhi. The two families were once extremely close, and Amitabh entered electoral politics in 1984 as Rajiv's friend, winning Allahabad spectacularly. Yet, over time, the friendship disintegrated. What happened? Was the rupture political, financial, personal - or an accumulation of all three? A memoir called *Belonging* cannot entirely avoid the story of people who once belonged almost to the family and then abruptly did not. Nor can an account of Sonia's political evolution easily bypass 1998-99. Her arrival at the top of the Congress was hardly a coronation without resistance. What did she really make of Sitaram Kesri and the circumstances in which she replaced him? Then came a much more personal challenge. In 1999, Sharad Pawar, PA Sangma, and Tariq Anwar questioned her suitability for the highest

office on grounds of her foreign origin - from within the Congress itself. Sonia resigned as party president; the organisation rallied behind her; the rebels were expelled and went on to establish the NCP. It was a defining test of authority. How did she experience it: as humiliation, betrayal, political challenge, or proof that she had finally acquired a constituency of her own? Political memoirs by powerful women - from Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher to Benazir Bhutto and, more recently, Jacinda Ardern - become historically valuable when they reveal the human calculations beneath public decisions. Sonia's life contains more than enough for a compelling personal narrative. The question is whether she will stop at that fascinating human story - or open the political files as well. Rao, Natwar, And Trust The most intriguing political relationship to revisit may well be Sonia Gandhi's with PV Narasimha Rao. Rao was no outsider to the Gandhi establishment. He had served Indira and Rajiv, and, after Rajiv's assassination, emerged as Congress President and Prime

Minister. Yet Sonia and Rao went from a relationship of trust to an estrangement that became one of the defining internal conflicts of the Congress in the 1990s. Why? One answer has long centred on Sonia's dissatisfaction with the investigation into Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. Accounts from Congress figures say she felt the probe was moving too slowly and suspected that the full conspiracy had not been uncovered; she publicly expressed unhappiness in 1995. Her memoir should tell us what she actually believed. The Rajiv assassination itself deserves a fuller reckoning. The LTTE's responsibility for the killing was established through investigation and trial, but Sonia's reported dissatisfaction went beyond the immediate perpetrators. What did she believe remained unresolved? Then comes Natwar Singh, another relationship where affection hardened into hostility. Natwar was more than a foreign-policy adviser. A diplomat, writer, Nehru-Gandhi loyalist, and bibliophile, he belonged to Sonia's intellectual and political circle and often functioned as an informal literary counsellor

as well. The rupture followed his exit from government amid the UN Oil-for-Food controversy, after which his memoir *One Life Is Not Enough* offered an unflattering account of Sonia and disputed her version of why she declined the Prime Ministership in 2004. = What turned intimacy into permanent estrangement? Sonia has so far largely allowed Natwar's version to stand unanswered. Now she has her turn. The Mannohan Mystery When it comes to Sonia's powerplays, nothing will be scrutinised more closely than 2004, and why she chose Manmohan Singh. Once Sonia decided not to become Prime Minister, the choice of the leader was hers. Pranab Mukherjee was senior, vastly more experienced politically and, by Manmohan's own admission, had reason to feel aggrieved. Arjun Singh, too, represented an older Congress order with considerable organisational weight. Was Manmohan chosen because Sonia trusted him? Because he had no faction? Because his integrity and economic credentials reassured India and the world? Or because he was the rare leader who could exercise governmental authority without creating an alternative political centre inside the Congress? There is an intriguing counterfactual. Madhavrao Scindia, who died in a plane crash in 2001 at only 56, had been widely regarded as prime-ministerial material and was effectively Sonia's deputy in the Parliamentary party. Had Madhavrao lived, would Manmohan Singh still have been Sonia's choice in 2004? Her answer would tell us much about how she understood leadership. So would also her account of the UPA arrangement. Critics described her as a "super PM"; admirers argued that the division was perfectly legitimate - Manmohan ran the government while Sonia managed the coalition, party, and political mandate.

HARASSMENT OF GIRL STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS

-Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

(Crisis of trust in the temple of education)

Schools are not just places for learning. They lay the foundation for children's personality development, values, discipline, and a secure future. When parents send their children to school, they trust that teachers will not only impart knowledge but also ensure their child's safety and dignity. But when, under the guise of this trust, a teacher molests, behaves inappropriately, or sexually harasses a student, it's not just the child who suffers the consequences; the entire educational system is put on trial. Reports of inappropriate behavior by teachers toward female students in schools have surfaced from time to time. The nature and facts of each incident may be different, so it's unfair to blame someone based solely on an allegation. However, suppressing a complaint once it's made, attempting to silence the girl, or delaying the matter to protect the institution's reputation is an even more serious problem. The reputation of any school cannot be more important than the safety of its children. The relationship between a teacher and a student is fundamentally based on trust. A teacher possesses both knowledge and authority. Students naturally value their teacher's words and often consider them the most trustworthy adult after their parents. This is why, if a teacher abuses this trust and

authority, it is difficult for a child to protest. During adolescence, children often cannot discern whether an adult's behavior is normal or inappropriate. Fear, shame, social pressure, worries about exams and the future, and the fear of whether their voice will be believed can prevent them from complaining. Therefore, simply asking, "Why didn't the child complain earlier?" is not enough. The real question should be: Has the school created a safe environment where the child can speak out without fear? The most dangerous element in such cases is often silence. Many families, fearing social stigma, are reluctant to complain. Some suppress the matter, fearing that the child's education will be affected. School administrations, too, may sometimes try to resolve the complaint internally, fearing a tarnished image of the institution. However, such silence can encourage abuse. If a child's complaint is not taken seriously, it can send the message that the institution's reputation is more important than her safety. This message is deeply concerning for any civilized society. Therefore, parents, teachers, and school management must understand that filing a complaint is not a disgrace, but a step toward safety. Allegations should be investigated impartially, and if proven guilty, action should be taken in accordance with the law and institutional rules. The role of school administration should not be limited to taking action after an incident occurs. Security arrangements

should be robust in advance. Proper verification of teachers and staff, a clear code of conduct, rules for dealing with students, and a secure complaint system are essential. Schools should educate children about appropriate and inappropriate touch, how to recognize uncomfortable behavior, and how to report it to a trusted adult. This education should be provided not only to female students, but to all children. They should also be made aware that they are not responsible for any inappropriate behavior. Schools should have a complaint system where children can express their concerns without fear. The availability of female teachers, trained counselors, or other trusted adults can be crucial in this regard. The POCSO Act, 2012, exists in India to protect children from sexual offenses. This law provides important protections in cases of sexual offenses against children under the age of 18. Schools and their staff must have a basic understanding of this law. It is not appropriate to suppress a serious complaint simply by considering it an "internal school matter." Depending on the nature of the case, it may be necessary to inform and cooperate with the appropriate authorities. The purpose of the legal process is not only to punish the accused, but also to protect the safety, dignity, and rights of the victimized child. Even today, after such incidents, questions are often raised in society about a girl's behavior, clothing, time, friendships, or social media activities. This thinking is

wrong and harmful. A girl's clothing, her conversation, or her trust in a teacher does not give an adult the right to behave inappropriately. The responsibility lies with the person who abuses their position, age, and authority. Instead of scaring girls in the name of safety, they must be given confidence. They must be assured that if someone makes them uncomfortable, they can speak up without shame or fear. Most teachers shape children's futures with complete honesty and dedication. Therefore, it is unfair to tarnish the entire teaching community with the alleged or proven misconduct of a few individuals. However, this very reason increases teachers' professional conduct responsibilities even more. Teachers have constant contact with children, so they must be especially mindful of boundaries and professional decorum. Schools should have clear rules regarding situations such as personal messages, inappropriate comments, unnecessary physical contact, or private conversations. Teachers' behavior should reflect respect, equality, and security. School administrations should send a clear message that any form of sexual or inappropriate behavior toward children is unacceptable. However, "zero tolerance" should not mean taking action against anyone without investigation. It truly means taking every complaint seriously, following a fair process, ensuring the safety of the child, and taking appropriate action based on the investigation's findings.

An India-Pakistan War Test: How Far Would Saudi Arabia And Turkey Go?

The trilateral Mecca security pact between Saudi Arabia (KSA), Turkey, and Pakistan wasn't really a bolt from the blue. For months, there had been confabulations between these three countries and Egypt, and the air was abuzz with a new regional security arrangement that was being worked out. This new arrangement is in addition to the bilateral Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) between the Saudis and Pakistan. The reaction in India to this new strategic realignment in West Asia has swung between two extremes. While some analysts see it as a very negative development with serious strategic implications for India's security, others have expressed deep scepticism about this arrangement working effectively, if at all. Both sides of the argument have made valid observations in support of their assessment of the Mecca Pact. But regardless of which assessment proves accurate, India cannot afford to ignore, much less dismiss, this realignment of two enemy countries (Pakistan and Turkey) with a third friendly country (Saudi Arabia); But nor does India need to get flustered over it. What India needs is a strategy that will not only counter the negative aspects of the Mecca alliance if it works on the ground but also improve its strategic space if the sceptics of the Mecca Pact prove correct. Unsteady Ground While the pact is an outcome of a breakdown of the security architecture that has prevailed in the region over the last 100 years, it is rather premature to imagine whether this alliance is laying the foundation on which a new regional security framework



will be built. To call the Mecca Pact an "Islamic NATO" or equate it with the Baghdad Pact (CENTO) is quite a stretch. Both those alliances were led by a dominant power, the US. There is no such power that provides the necessary ballast to the Mecca Pact. If anything, traditional rivalries between Turkey and Saudi Arabia haven't entirely been resolved. Just a few years ago, Erdogan was viciously twisting the knife into the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman (Mbs) over the Khashoggi killing. That they subsequently papered over their differences means very little, because in this region, all alliances are temporary and can change virtually overnight. The third leg of the stool, Pakistan, is in it for the money, naturally. Hardly a new NATO - which, by the way, is in total disarray itself. A lot is being made about "collective deterrence against any act of aggression, and...any armed attack against any one of the three States shall be regarded as an attack against them all". But there is no clari-

ty about what this really means. While Article 5 of the NATO agreement defines how the collective defense will kick in, the Mecca Pact has kept the agreement secret. Is this to keep some wiggle room for the signatory countries to opt out of this collective defense clause? Or is the secrecy being kept because the obligations enjoined on each country in the event collective defense is invoked are different and could thus evoke sharp opposition and criticism? In other words, the Saudis, who were unable to defend themselves against Iranian or Houthi attacks, cannot realistically be expected to send in their forces for the defence of Pakistan. Speaking of Houthis, within a few hours of the Mecca Pact, the Houthis fired missiles on Saudi Arabia, and there wasn't even a squeak from the new and much-vaunted security partners of the Saudis. Perhaps Saudi obligation under the pact will be limited to giving money, diplomatic and political support to Pakistan to fight its own war. But what is expected of the

Pakistanis? So far, at least, they haven't really delivered on their commitments to Saudi Arabia. Also, why would Turkey, which is a member of NATO, need Pakistan and the Saudis to come to its aid in the event of an attack? A Reality Check While it can be argued that these three countries have militaries with different offensive and defensive capabilities, none of them has the capacity and capability required for out-of-area operations of the kind that the US possesses. Even a significant power like China would be hamstrung in conducting and sustaining operations outside its immediate neighbourhood. Given their current capabilities, for any of these countries to marshal troops to go to another country's aid and fight its wars is a bit far-fetched. It is also not clear if the Mecca Pact is a return to the kind of alliances that existed in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when a bunch of countries, mostly in Europe, would enter into wars on behalf of their alliance partners.

Anirikshitha
Athithigalu cinema with
unexpected songs!

Bangalore: The name of the movie is Anirikshitha Athithigalu. While the name of the movie has nothing to do with crime fiction, the songs have come out in a way that creates even more curiosity.

At the press conference for the release of the songs, it was also shared that the movie will be released next month, on September 18. This movie, which has six main characters, is directed by new director Manoj Annaiah. There are 4 main songs in this movie, produced by B Vinod Kumar.

A lyrical song has been released with music by Swaminathan R.K and is already making a splash. Its video was shown on the



screen. Another pop song has been sung wonderfully by singer Sirikatte. The song is entirely in English. But it is a song that suits the occasion, said director Manoj Annaiah.

Birth anniversaries of Rajiv Gandhi, and former
Chief Minister D. Devaraj Urs, celebrated with
visually impaired children

Bengaluru: KPCC General Secretary S. Manohar recalled the visionary leadership of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his immense contribution to building modern India.

Celebrating The birth anniversaries of Bharat Ratna, former Prime Minister Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, and former Karnataka Chief Minister and champion of the poor, Late Shri D. Devaraj Urs, with visually impaired children.

Speaking on the occasion, Rajiv Gandhi made significant contributions towards the modernisation of the technology and telecommunications sectors in the country and provided a new direction for the devel-



opment of India's youth and its future. His visionary initiatives were truly transformative and played an important role in shaping a modern India, he said. He also highlighted that Rajiv Gandhi reduced the voting age from 21 to 18 years, thereby enabling millions of young Indians to participate in the demo-

cratic process through the electoral system. S. Manohar also remembered former Karnataka Chief Minister Late Shri D. Devaraj Urs as a great progressive and socially committed leader who worked tirelessly for the social and economic empowerment of Backward Classes, Dalits and the poor.

Don't cross upper limit of 9 SIMs
per customer, govt tells telcos

New Delhi, Aug 20 : The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed the telecom companies to strictly enforce the rule of not issuing a new mobile phone connection to any subscriber already having nine SIMs, an official statement said on Thursday.

"From August 24, 2026, onward, TSPs (telecom service providers) shall take appropriate technical and organisational measures to identify each subscriber who seeks to obtain mobile connections beyond the prescribed limit and communicate to him that he already has a maximum number of mobile connections permitted to an individual and accordingly, a new mobile connection cannot



be provided to him," the circular states.

The directions also require customers to provide a declaration in the Customer Application Form (CAF) regarding the mobile connections already held in their name across telecom operators and licensed service areas. DoT said the respective Licensed Service Areas (LSAs) will be the competent authorities to decide issues arising from the implementation of the instructions.

The DoT circular points

out that the details of subscribers who have already obtained mobile connections beyond the prescribed limit are available on its Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP).

DoT has also put in place a mechanism to help telecom operators identify such subscribers. From August 23, a representative image of the photo of each subscriber who has already reached the prescribed limit for mobile connections in their name will be made available on the DIP. The DIP uses subscriber information submitted by various telecom companies. This information is available for the telcos to identify subscribers who have already reached the upper limit of 9 SIM cards.



Former BBMP Councillor Dr. S. Raju congratulated Rajya Sabha member Prof. M. Nagaraj, who was elected as the National Vice President of BJP, at the state BJP office.

8-year-old Yuti B. who brought glory
to the country by winning the World
Junior Tourism Ambassador award

VIETNAM: 8-year-old Yuti B has brought glory to the whole of India by becoming the runner-up in the World Junior Tourism Ambassador-2026 competition held in Vietnam.

Yuti B, the daughter of Basavaprasad and Mrs. Lakshmidevi Basavaprasad, Bangalore, is a 3rd class student at Purnaprajna Education Institute and has been awarded the World Junior Ambassador Award runner-up award held in Vietnam.

An avid gymnast, dancer and model, Atul Suresh of Atul Academy and Joseph Sonia have been very supportive, says Yuti.B.

Yuti B said that India's tourism should be promoted in the world, foreigners should know our country, history, literature,

culture, art and Indian way of



life. It is the wish of the student. About 40 talented delegates from 15 countries participated in which I am proud of my country India that I competed from India and became the runner-up winner, she said.

Karnataka Biofuel Development Board Chairman
S.E. Sudhindra meets Minister Eshwar Khandre and
discusses approval of new biofuel policy

Bengaluru: Karnataka Biofuel Development Board Chairman S.E. Sudhindra met Minister Eshwar Khandre and discussed the approval of the proposed new biofuel policy submitted to the government and the provision of necessary funds.

He said that the demand for approval of the new biofuel policy by the Board Chairman would be brought to the government's attention and the next agenda would be released.

Congratulating the Minister for the positive response, Sudhindra expressed his gratitude for suggesting that the Board formulate more work plans under his guidance and request the Department for



more funds to be ready for action.

On the occasion of "International Biofuel Day", an important day for the bio-fuel sector, he submitted a report on his 10-day tour to the United States from August 01 to the Minister.

During the tour, he briefed

the Minister about the visit of the High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom at the London airport, meetings with Maryland Governor Wes Moore and Lieutenant Governor Arun Miller, a visit to the Consulate General of India office, and discussions with NRIs on skill develop-

Struggle against Minister Nagendra will continue; rights of
224 MLAs are being denied: Opposition Leader R. Ashoka

Bengaluru : We will continue the struggle until Minister B. Nagendra, who swallowed the funds of the Valmiki Development Corporation, resigns. For the sake of one minister, the rights of 224 MLAs are being denied, said Opposition Leader R. Ashoka.

Speaking in the House, he said: "We have continued the dharna even on the fourth day. Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara, speaking on this matter in the House, claimed there is no case. But there are 24 charge sheets against him. Parameshwara is giving false information to the House. I have the complete records of the cases against Minister Nagendra, and I will even provide the numbers." The wife of the officer P. Chandrasekharan, who committed suicide, has neither been given a pension nor a job. But



Nagendra has been given a ministerial post. If the government has any self-respect, it should declare a drought. There is no need for discussion before that. The government itself has not accepted that there is a drought. The government should say how much money it is giving for drought and how much it has given for drinking water. There is no point in discussing drought without releasing even a single paisa of relief, he said.

Protection in the name

of Dalits

Speaking to reporters outside the House, he said: "The Rs.187 crore of the Valmiki Development Corporation belongs to Dalits. Minister Nagendra is trying to seek protection in the name of Dalits. But the corporation's entire funds belong to Dalits. The Congress government has to decide whether it wants crores of Dalits or one Nagendra. Crores of poor Dalits are waiting to build houses and take loans. The minister's resignation

must be obtained for the sake of such poor people."

Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara has lied by saying that Minister Nagendra's name is not in the CBI charge sheet. If that is the case, why was the Governor's permission sought for the investigation? We need to discuss issues such as drought, the KPSC scam, and pending pensions. For the sake of one minister, the rights of 224 MLAs are being snatched. Immediately obtain the minister's resignation and give an opportunity to begin the discussion, he demanded.

The BJP did not write the Vande Mataram song. Freedom fighters used to fully sing the Vande Mataram song written by the freedom fighter Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. It was a great inspiration for the youth of that time.

Bhavishya Belaku Charitable
Trust Chairman discusses
'Vidyanjali' scheme with MLA
Allama Prabhu Patil



Kalaburagi: Girish Nalkudri, Chairman of Bhavishya Belaku Charitable Trust, met Allama Prabhu Patil, MLA of Kalaburagi South constituency, and had a long and meaningful discussion on the 'Vidyanjali' scheme, which is complementary to the development of the education sector.

During this meeting, discussions were held on the effective implementation of the 'Vidyanjali' scheme to strengthen government schools, improve infrastructure, and provide quality education and support to students.

Speaking on the occasion, Trust Chairman Girish Nalkudri said, "The main objective of our trust is to provide appropriate encouragement to the education sector and create a good learning environment for every child in the society."

Massive protest by Union of Karnataka quarry
and stone crusher owners association at
Freedom Park: Over 5,000 people participate

Bengaluru : A massive protest was held at Freedom Park in the city on Thursday under the leadership of the Union, of Karnataka quarry and stone crusher owners association, demanding the government to fulfill various demands, including immediately stopping the collection of capital from quarry and crusher owners on both sides, and to abandon its dual policy.

More than 5,000 quarry and crusher owners, workers and industry representatives participated in the protest across the state and expressed their anger against the government. Former Deputy Chief Minister Dr. C.N. Ashwath Narayan, former minister Gopalaiiah, Congress MLA Ivan D'Souza and more than ten MLAs met the protesters.

Speaking after accepting the appeal from the protesters, Mines and Earth Sciences Minister S.S. Mallikarjun said, "We will discuss the issue of collecting capital from both sides and take an appropriate decision. A give-and-take policy is necessary between



the government and the union. The government is not at fault here. Workers should not be inconvenienced due to loopholes. Let us all come together and thoroughly examine the matter and take an appropriate decision so that there is no injustice to the government and the union." He said that he will discuss the second notice given to the owners with the departmental secretaries and chief secretaries.

The previous government had imposed five times the tax on the quarry sector. But our government has formed a committee and reduced the tax. We have their full cooperation to resolve the problems.

Lifelong learning may cut dementia risk by nearly 40%, study finds

New York, Reading, writing and learning new languages throughout life could reduce the risk of dementia by nearly 40%, according to a new study that suggests millions of people may be able to delay or even prevent the condition through sustained mental activity. Dementia is among the world's fastest-growing health challenges, with the number of people living with the condition projected to triple to more than 150 million globally by 2050. Experts warn that it poses a major and escalating burden on health and social care systems worldwide.

Researchers in the United States found that individuals who consistently engaged in intellectually stimulating activities — such as reading books, writing, visiting libraries or learning a foreign

language — were less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia, and experienced slower cognitive decline. The study, led by Andrea Zammit of Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, suggests that cognitive health in later life is "strongly influenced" by lifelong exposure to mentally enriching environments.

"Our findings are encouraging, suggesting that consistently engaging in a variety of mentally stimulating activities throughout life may make a difference in cognition," Zammit said. She added that public investments in early education programmes and access to libraries could play a significant role in reducing dementia incidence. The study tracked 1,939 participants with an average age



of 80 who did not have dementia at the outset. They were followed for an average of eight years and completed surveys about cognitive activities during

midlife and later years. Early-life enrichment — before age 18 — included being read to, reading books, access to newspapers and atlases at home and learning a foreign

and 719 developed mild cognitive impairment (MCI), an early stage of memory loss. Among those in the highest 10% for lifetime cognitive enrichment, 21% developed

Alzheimer's disease, compared with 34% in the lowest 10%. After adjusting for factors such as age, sex and education, researchers found that higher lifetime enrichment was associated with a 38% lower risk of Alzheimer's disease and a 36% lower risk of MCI.

Participants with the highest enrichment levels developed Alzheimer's at an average age of 94, compared with 88 among those with the lowest levels — a delay of more than five years. Similarly, mild cognitive impairment developed at an average age of 85 in the high-enrichment group, compared with 78 in the low-enrichment group. Autopsy data from participants who died during the study also indicated that those with higher lifetime enrichment maintained bet-

ter memory and thinking skills and experienced slower cognitive decline before death.

However, researchers noted limitations, including reliance on participants' recollection of early-life experiences and the fact that the study shows an association rather than direct causation.

Dr Isolde Radford of Alzheimer's Research UK, who was not involved in the study, said the findings reinforce the idea that dementia is not an inevitable part of ageing. "This new research shows that staying mentally active throughout life can cut the risk of Alzheimer's disease by nearly 40%," she said, adding that it supports existing evidence about the preventive steps individuals can take to reduce dementia risk.

Karnataka submits revised Mekedatu dam DPR; 8.90 lakh trees to be felled for project

Karnataka has proposed constructing a 67-TMC dam across the River Cauvery at Mekedatu, a move that has been strongly opposed by the Tamil Nadu government.

CHENNAI: The Karnataka government has submitted a revised Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the proposed Mekedatu dam to the Central Government, with the report stating that around 8.90 lakh trees would be felled for the project, according to a Daily Thanthi report.

Karnataka has proposed constructing a 67-TMC dam across the River Cauvery at Mekedatu, a move that has been strongly opposed by the Tamil Nadu government.

The revised DPR reportedly contains details of the forest land that would be submerged, the number of trees that would be affected and the compensatory measures proposed by the Karnataka government.

The Karnataka government had first submitted the DPR for the Mekedatu project to the Central government around five years ago. The project was then estimated to cost Rs 9,000 crore and was proposed to meet Bengaluru's drinking water requirements and generate 400 MW of electricity.



However, the Central government returned the earlier DPR citing technical issues and asked Karnataka to submit a revised report. Against this backdrop, the Karnataka government has now resubmitted the revised DPR.

The proposed project involves constructing a dam with a storage capacity of 67 TMC. The report states that around 4.75 TMC of water from the project would be utilised to meet Bengaluru's drinking water requirements. 8.90 lakh trees to be felled, 12,500 acres of forest land to be

submerged under Mekedatu project. According to the revised DPR, around 12,500 acres of forest land would be submerged once the Mekedatu project is implemented. As a compensatory measure, around 20,000 acres of land in areas including Dakshina Kannada and Shivamogga have reportedly been identified for allocation to the Forest Department.

The project is also expected to have a significant impact on the forest cover in the Mekedatu region. Around 8.90 lakh trees are proposed to be

felled as part of the project. Of these, around seven lakh are classified as small trees, while around one lakh are categorised as large trees. The remaining trees are also expected to be affected by the project and associated construction activities.

The complete details contained in the revised DPR have not yet been made public. Rs 9,000 crore Mekedatu project proposed to meet Bengaluru's drinking water needs and generate 400 MW. The Mekedatu project was originally proposed with an estimated cost of Rs 9,000 crore. Karnataka has maintained that the project would primarily help meet the drinking water requirements of Bengaluru while also generating 400 MW of electricity.

The proposed dam across the River Cauvery has, however, remained a contentious issue between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The Tamil Nadu government has consistently opposed the project, citing concerns over its impact on the State's share of Cauvery water.

Sameera Group announces Rs 300 cr realty projects in Tamil Nadu



CHENNAI: The Chennai-based realty player Sameera Group has announced its "10 Projects in 10 Days across 10 Districts" programme, a Rs 300 crore initiative in TN. The company will launch the 10 residential projects across the State between August 23 and September 1, 2026, comprising a mix of plotted developments and villas.

CM Vijay urges Centre, neighbouring States to follow SC verdict on Cauvery. The latest initiative will mark a significant expansion of Sameera Group's footprint across key growth markets in TN.

The new projects will come up across Tiruchy, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Vellore, Ranipet, Kanchipuram, Chennai, Krishnagiri, Tiruvannamalai and Chengalpattu.

Each project is planned across approximately 10 acres, with around 200 units and plot sizes beginning from approximately 800 sqft. Jayakumar Murugesan, MD, Sameera Groups, said, "We are simultaneously expanding into several important growth markets across TN. This initiative reflects both the scale of our ambition and the execution

capability we have built over more than four decades in the real estate sector."

M Sandeep Kumar, MD, Sameera Groups, said, "These launches have been planned to address the growing demand for organised residential developments across emerging markets in TN. The projects will offer a mix of plotted developments and villas, supported by gated environments, parks and other community infrastructure. Our focus is to create well-planned developments that can offer customers both a quality living environment and long-term value."

There are bigger problems than MLAs not having car, says DMK

CHENNAI: The principal opposition party, the DMK, on Wednesday questioned the urgency of Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay's announcement of official vehicles for the MLAs. Wondering what prompted the chief minister to make such a decision, DMK organising secretary RS Bharathi said there were so many issues affecting the people that merited immediate attention. "The people are suffering, and there are many burning issues afflicting the state. What is the urgency for this? The government could have waited," Bharathi told PTI, reacting to Vijay's announcement in the Assembly today. When pointed out that some of the first-time MLAs from the ruling TVK don't own a car, he asked, "Then why not the party fund them or ensure a loan to buy the vehicle?" Another DMK leader, Dr Ezhilan, criticised the decision, pointing out that many legislators are wealthy as per their election affidavits. Spending hugely on providing them vehicles and allowances contradicted the state government's claim of a financial crisis or empty coffers, he told reporters here.

Raise Cauvery issue at Shah meet, urges Premallatha

CHENNAI: DMDC chief Premallatha Vijayakant on Wednesday urged Chief Minister Vijay to firmly take up the Cauvery water dispute at the Southern Chief Ministers' Conference in Chennai today. She said CM Vijay must secure the state's rightful share for tail-end farmers facing crop distress. We have only been receiving surplus water from the Cauvery until now. Only when that rightful share of water arrives and flows to the tail-end areas will farmers benefit today. Considering all this, our chief minister must urge this with (Karnataka CM) DK Shivakumar and our Home Minister Amit



Shah to secure our rightful water share in the Cauvery," Premallatha added. She further demanded that the state leadership take up the matter regarding the recent killing of three Tamil youths in Karnataka forests.

AIADMK members stage walk-out as Speaker postpones discussion

CHENNAI: The opposition AIADMK members staged a walkout from the Tamil Nadu Assembly on Wednesday after Speaker JCD Prabhakar ruled that an issue the party wanted to raise would be taken up on Thursday.

As Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay was making a slew of announcements, the House was suddenly disrupted when AIADMK leader Edappadi K Palaniswami asked the Speaker to take up an issue for which his party had given a notice.

The Speaker repeatedly appealed for order, urging the members to adhere to established democratic procedures. He reassured that the urgent issues submitted by members had already been forwarded to the govern-



ment for necessary action and would be formally addressed the following morning. Emphasising the Assembly's heavy legislative schedule for the day, which included discussions on crucial grants for three government departments, the Speaker insisted on maintaining decorum and requested members to resume their seats. However, unsatisfied with Prabhakar's decision, the AIADMK members staged a

walkout. Later, speaking to reporters outside the Assembly complex, Palaniswami launched a sharp attack on the ruling TVK government over its response to a recent tragedy involving a fisherman from Palaniswami noted that his party has been insisting on discussions about the TN fisherman shot dead by Iranian pirates but has not received a concrete response Mayiladuthurai.

Massive fire at paper mill in Tirunelveli district guts lakhs worth goods

CHENNAI: Goods worth several lakhs of rupees were destroyed in a massive fire that broke out at a private paper mill in Vadukampatti near Kallur in Tirunelveli district on Wednesday (August 19).

According to the Daily Thanthi report, firefighting operations continued for the second day on Thursday (August 20) as the blaze could not be brought under control.

On Wednesday afternoon, old paper bundles stacked in one part of the mill suddenly caught fire amid scorching heat. Strong winds at the time caused the fire to spread



rapidly across the premises. More than 50 firefighters in six fire engines led by District Fire Officer Bhanupriya, rushed to the spot after being alerted. Firefighting operations

continued through the night, but the blaze remained uncontrolled. Around 25,000 tonnes of old paper bales worth several lakhs of rupees were destroyed in the fire.

Study finds many continue Ozempic for weight loss despite side effects

New Delhi: GLP-1 receptor agonists, originally developed for type 2 diabetes, are now witnessing soaring demand for weight management, with drugs like Ozempic gaining widespread popularity, particularly on social media.

Ozempic is the brand name for semaglutide, a GLP-1 receptor agonist that mimics the hormone glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1), which regulates blood sugar, insulin secretion and appetite. While the drug continues to be prescribed for diabetes, its off-label use for weight loss has surged globally.

A recent study published in the Journal of Medical Internet Research found that many users are willing to continue using Ozempic despite experiencing unpleasant side effects, primarily because of the weight loss benefits.

Instead of conducting a traditional clinical trial, researchers used "inoveillance," analysing 10 anonymous public reviews from the website Drugs.com to understand real-world patient experiences with Ozempic for weight loss. The study found that perceived effectiveness was the main factor driving satisfaction and continuation of treatment. Patients who reported significant weight loss or improvements in appetite and food cravings were



more inclined to tolerate side effects.

Around 67 per cent of users reported a significant drop in appetite or food cravings. Many described a reduced desire for sugary and greasy foods, allowing them to eat less without feeling deprived. Gastrointestinal issues such as nausea and vomiting were the most commonly reported side effects, though their severity varied. Importantly, these side effects did not significantly impact overall satisfaction or decisions to continue treatment in most cases. However, individuals who experienced minimal weight loss or non-gastrointestinal side effects were more likely to discontinue the medication. Common side effects associated with Ozempic include nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, constipation and fatigue. Less common but more serious side effects may include pan-

creatitis, kidney problems, allergic reactions and gall-bladder issues.

Ozempic works in three primary ways. It stimulates the pancreas to release insulin when blood sugar levels are high, helping to control post-meal glucose spikes. It slows gastric emptying, which prolongs the feeling of fullness and reduces blood sugar fluctuations. It also acts on appetite-regulating centres in the brain to reduce hunger and cravings. Health experts emphasise that individuals prescribed GLP-1 medications for diabetes should strictly follow medical advice. For those considering such medications solely for weight loss, they should be used as part of a broader strategy that includes balanced nutrition, regular physical activity and sustainable lifestyle changes.

While medications like Ozempic can aid weight reduction, experts caution

Silent infections during pregnancy can harm unborn babies, warn experts

New Delhi: Pregnancy is a phase when women become especially conscious about their health — eating nutritious food, taking adequate rest and attending regular antenatal check-ups. However, medical experts caution that certain infections may remain completely silent in the mother while posing serious risks to the unborn baby.

Doctors explain that these are known as asymptomatic infections, where the expectant mother may not experience fever, pain or any visible signs, yet the infection may quietly affect the foetus.

Dr Alka Chaudhary, Senior Consultant — Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Rainbow Hospital, says many such infections go unnoticed without routine screening. "These infections often do not cause symptoms in the mother, which is why regular testing during pregnancy is extremely important," she notes.

Echoing similar concerns, Dr Tripti Raheja, Director — Obstetrics & Gynaecology at CK Birla Hospital, explains, "Sometimes a pregnant woman can have an infection without feeling sick at all. She may feel completely normal. But without proper screening, the baby could still be affected." Health experts emphasise that antenatal check-ups are not merely routine visits but crucial opportunities for early detection and prevention.

One of the most widespread silent infections is Cytomegalovirus (CMV). Most adults may have been exposed to the virus at some point in their lives. In pregnant women, CMV rarely produces noticeable symptoms. However, if transmitted to the foetus, it can lead to congenital



CMV, which may result in hearing loss, developmental delays, vision impairment or neurological complications in the child. Since mothers often remain asymptomatic, awareness and screening play a vital role.

Toxoplasmosis is another infection that may not cause symptoms in expectant mothers. It is commonly contracted through consumption of undercooked meat, contact with contaminated soil or handling cat litter. While the mother may feel unaffected, the infection can cause miscarriage, brain damage or eye disorders in the baby, depending on the stage of pregnancy. Rubella, particularly

dangerous in early pregnancy, may present as a mild illness or go completely unnoticed in the mother. If contracted during the first trimester, it can lead to severe birth defects such as heart abnormalities, hearing loss and vision problems. Doctors stress that vaccination prior to pregnancy remains one of the most effective preventive measures against rubella-related complications.

Certain infections may remain silent in mothers but can be transmitted to the baby during pregnancy or delivery.

Hepatitis B and HIV may not show obvious early symptoms, yet without timely intervention, they

can lead to long-term health complications in newborns. Syphilis, often unnoticed in its initial stages, can result in stillbirth, prematurity or congenital infection if left untreated.

Group B Streptococcus (GBS), commonly present in the birth canal without symptoms, can infect the baby during delivery and cause severe conditions such as sepsis, pneumonia or meningitis.

blood tests and screening during pregnancy help detect these infections early, allowing doctors to initiate appropriate treatment and reduce potential risks.

Regular testing crucial for a healthy pregnancy

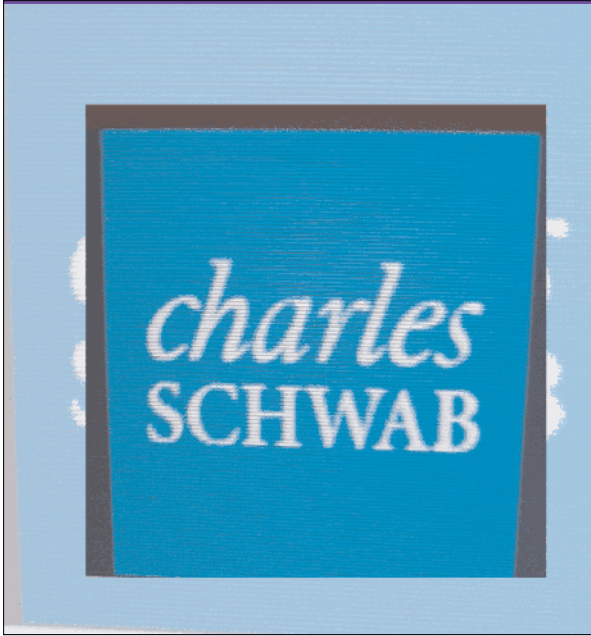
Many women question the need for multiple blood tests during antenatal visits, particularly when they feel healthy. However, doctors clarify that silent infections cannot be identified based on symptoms alone.

Dr Tripti Raheja states that simple blood investigations during pregnancy can detect infections at an early stage. "Early diagnosis allows timely treatment, which can significantly reduce risks to the baby," she says.

Dr Alka Chaudhary further highlights the importance of preventive measures such as vaccination where applicable, safe food practices, maintaining proper hygiene and adhering to scheduled check-ups. The message from medical experts is unequivocal: feeling well does not always guarantee the absence of infection. Regular prenatal care is essential to safeguard both mother and child, as early detection can make the difference between complications and a healthy beginning to life.

Charles Schwab opens tech capability centre in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: Charles Schwab, the US-based financial services major, made its India debut on Wednesday, August 19, with Schwab India in Hyderabad. The 345,000 sq ft technology capability centre will support Charles Schwab's US business, said the Times of India. The company plans to have a 2,000-strong workforce by the end of 2027 and would handle in-house the technology work it has been outsourcing. Telangana IT and Industries minister D Sridhar Babu inaugurated the facility along with Charles Schwab leaders, including Christopher Wyse, managing director and chief corporate affairs officer. Sridhar Babu said Hyderabad was moving beyond shared services to build technology that powers global trading and brokerage. He said the city hosts nine of the world's top 10 brokerage and trading institutions, representing about USD 40 trillion in



assets under management, and more than 475 global capability centres. "Mumbai is India's trading and brokerage capital, but Hyderabad is increasingly building the technology that powers trading and brokerage for the world," he said. Wyse said the investment

would help Schwab serve 48 million account holders and 30,000 employees who depend on its technology platforms. The company plans to have a 2,000-strong workforce by the end of 2027 and would handle in-house the technology work it has been outsourcing.

INDIA'S L&T WINS DUBAI AL MAKTOUM AIRPORT PEOPLE MOVER ORDER

India's Larsen & Toubro (L&T), in consortium with Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI), on Thursday, August 20, secured a large order to design and build an Automated People Mover (APM) system for Phase 1 of Al Maktoum International Airport in Dubai. The project is part of the airport's multi-phase expansion and is being developed by Dubai Aviation City Corporation through Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects. Once fully developed, Al Maktoum International Airport is planned to handle up to 260 million passengers and 12 million tonnes of freight annually. L&T to deliver automated transport system Under the Design-and-Build contract, the MHI-L&T consortium will undertake the turnkey delivery of the APM system, covering its design, construction, supply, testing, commissioning and operational readiness. L&T will handle the design, procurement and integration



of key infrastructure and systems, including guideways, DC traction substations, power distribution, signalling and telecommunications. Its scope will also include onboard communication systems for vehicles, platform screen doors and depot equipment. Ramkumar S, Executive Vice President and Head of Transportation Infrastructure at L&T, said the project involves advanced technologies and multiple sys-

tem interfaces, highlighting the company's capability to execute complex integrated APM rail systems. He said the project would be delivered with a strong focus on safety and quality. Al Maktoum airport to replace DXB operations The first phase of Dubai's new Al Maktoum International Airport is scheduled for completion by 2032. Once operational, the mega-hub will gradually take over all flight operations from

Dubai International Airport (DXB), currently one of the world's busiest aviation hubs. In April 2024, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, approved the designs for the new passenger terminals at Al Maktoum International Airport. The expanded airport is planned to have five parallel runways and 400 aircraft gates, forming the cen-

terpiece of Dubai's long-term aviation strategy. L&T strengthens Gulf transport presence L&T has experience in turnkey Design-Build and engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) projects across the railway and metro sectors. Its integrated rail systems portfolio includes projects associated with the Mumbai Metro, Dhaka Metro and Jakarta MRT networks. The company said rising investment in next-generation mobility, urban transit and sustainable transport infrastructure across the Gulf Cooperation Council is expected to create further opportunities in the regional railway and transit sector. The Al Maktoum International Airport contract adds to L&T's transport infrastructure portfolio in the Gulf and strengthens its position in the region's growing mobility sector. The first phase of the mega-hub is scheduled for completion by 2032 and will eventually replace DXB operations.

HCLTech report reveals telecom leaders identify AI as top revenue driver, but only 25% ready to scale

NOIDA, India, Aug 2026— HCLTech, a leading global technology company, in partnership with Mobile World Live, a global telecom industry destination, today unveiled findings from its Telecom Pulse Survey Report, highlighting an execution gap between telecom leaders' AI ambitions and their readiness to deploy AI-native, autonomous and cloud native services at scale. Based on insights from nearly 200 senior executives across network operators, MVNOs, communication service providers (CSPs) and OEMs worldwide, the survey reveals that while 60% of telecom leaders see AI as a key driver of future revenue, only 25% believe their organizations are ready to operationalize AI at scale, preventing the essential shift from a telco to an AI-native TechCo. Persistent challenges around legacy infrastructure, cloud native modernization and skills continue to slow progress for the industry to be prepared for an AI-driven future. The findings also underscore mounting pressure on traditional telecom business models. Nearly 70% of respondents agree that connectivity services are

increasingly commoditized, reinforcing the need for differentiated digital services and platform-led growth. However, innovation velocity remains constrained, with nearly 80% launching fewer than five new digital products or services in the past year, pointing to ongoing challenges in product engineering and time-to-market acceleration. Ecosystem collaboration emerged as a critical enabler, with nearly half of telecom leaders citing partnerships with hyperscalers, AI platform providers and software vendors as essential to accelerating innovation and monetization. Despite this shift, success metrics remain heavily skewed toward cost optimization, with operational efficiency continuing to dominate how AI and digital transformation outcomes are measured. "The telecom industry is at a defining moment as AI transforms networks into intelligent, platform-driven ecosystems and this research recognizes that connectivity alone is no longer sufficient to sustain growth," said Anil Ganjoo, Chief Growth Officer and Global Head of Telecom, Media and Technology at HCLTech.

VAYU Launches in India, Bringing Made-in-India Compressed Air Solutions to Growing Manufacturers

Hyderabad, August 20, 2026: VAYU, a new air compressor brand created for ambitious manufacturers and growing businesses, today announced its launch in India with a portfolio of compressed air solutions designed to deliver dependable performance, operational simplicity and efficient ownership across diverse manufacturing requirements. The launch comes at a time when India's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are playing an increasingly important role in the country's industrial growth story. According to the Economic Survey 2025-26, MSMEs contribute approximately 35.4% of India's manufacturing output, 48.58% of the country's exports and 31.1% of GDP, underscoring the scale and significance of the sector to India's economy. Built in India and designed around the operating realities of Indian manufacturing businesses, VAYU reflects a strong belief in the ambition and potential of this entrepreneurial ecosystem. The brand has been created to support manufacturers as they grow and evolve, with compressed air solutions engineered for real-world operating conditions, simple operation and responsive service support. Anvar Jay Varadaraj, Chief Operating Officer, Elgi Equipments,



said, "India's manufacturing story is ultimately a story of its entrepreneurs - the businesses that continue to invest, build capabilities, create employment and contribute to the country's growth. We have served this community for decades and have seen their needs evolve as their businesses grow. VAYU represents the next step in that journey, bringing dependable screw compressor technology, built in India around the realities of Indian manufacturing, to a broader base of businesses. Our ambition is to grow with these manufacturers in India and, over time, take VAYU to customers around the world." At launch, VAYU offers a 5-45 kW range of air compressors, available in fixed- and variable-speed configurations and designed for operating pressures ranging from 7 to 12.5 bar. The

portfolio is supported by a range of accessories, genuine spare parts, comprehensive warranty coverage and nationwide service support. Growing with India's Manufacturing Entrepreneurs: For decades, ELGI has served manufacturing businesses across India through its reciprocating compressor portfolio, building long-standing relationships with customers as their businesses and compressed air requirements have evolved. VAYU represents the next step in this engagement, bringing screw compressor technology to a broader base of manufacturing businesses seeking to upgrade their compressed air capabilities. As manufacturers expand production and adopt new technologies, their expectations from critical utilities such as compressed air are also chang-

ing. VAYU has been developed around this transition, providing solutions aligned with evolving production and operational requirements. Built Around the Realities of Manufacturing: Compressed air is a critical utility across manufacturing environments, where equipment reliability and continuity can directly influence productivity, customer commitments and business performance. The VAYU proposition is built around a simple understanding: manufacturers need more than compressed air. They need the confidence that production can continue smoothly, shift after shift. Rather than relying on a single differentiating feature, VAYU brings together dependable equipment, simple operation and maintenance, and accessible support throughout the ownership journey.

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance registers a 60.7% YoY growth in term plan business in Telangana in Q1-FY2027

Hyderabad, August 2026: The Company has registered a strong 60.7% year-on-year growth in Q1-FY2027 for the term plan (retail protection) business in Telangana. The Company covered 6,56,032 lives in the State as on March 31, 2026. The Company is also receiving strong demand in its savings business that includes linked, non-linked and annuity business in the State of Telangana. The Company's Assets under Management (AUM) stood at Rs. 11,708 crore as on March 31, 2026 in the State. Importantly, the Company reported a sum assured of Rs. 1,52,016 crore as on March 31, 2026 in the State and in the last 7 years the Company has paid total benefits worth Rs. 4,060 crore to its customers in the State of Telangana. The Board of Directors recently approved a proposal to rename the Company as 'ICICI Life Insurance Limited', subject to relevant approvals. As on March 31, 2026, the Company has 11 branches and 6,172 advisors along with 3,934 partner branches and 3,372 specified person in Telangana. Mr. Amish Banker, Chief Distribution Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company Limited, said, "Telangana continues to be a strategically important mar-

ket for our Company and we are witnessing strong momentum across both urban and emerging centres in the State. Over the past few quarters, we have seen a clear shift in customer behaviour, with individuals increasingly prioritising financial protection, long-term savings and retirement planning as part of their overall financial goals. Our continued investments in distribution, digital capabilities, diversified products and customer engagement are helping us deepen our presence in the region. Our Company's strategy is to make it effortless for customers to plan and take control of their future. All our efforts are focused in this direction. Overall, our Company leverages artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics and digitalisation across the customers' entire life cycle. Notably, during Q1-FY2027, at the overall Company level, approximately 54% of our savings policies were issued on the same day, and about 58% of our insurance policies were issued using digital KYC. Importantly, 97% of our services are made via self-help or digital modes, enabling our customers to easily manage their policies in a few clicks.

ITC HOTELS SIGNS STORII ASSAGAO, EXPANDS PRESENCE IN GOA

New Delhi, 20 August 2026: ITC Hotels Limited today announced the signing of a management agreement for a 51 key hotel in Assagao, North Goa, under its fast-growing Storii by ITC Hotels brand. The hotel is envisioned as a distinctive hospitality offering inspired by the region's vibrant character attracting travellers to its dynamic culinary treasure, natural beauty, boutique retail experiences, and proximity to the state's celebrated beaches and attractions. Storii Assagao will feature well-appointed rooms and suites, an all-day dining restaurant and a range of dining, social and recreational experiences. The signing further strengthens ITC Hotels' presence in Goa across various brand and reinforces its strategy of expanding across high-potential leisure markets. Anil Chadha, Managing Director, ITC Hotels Limited, said "Goa continues to be one of India's leading tourism markets and remains a key focus area for our leisure growth strategy. Assagao has emerged as an



attractive micro-market, driven by its distinctive character, strong visitor appeal, and evolving travel preferences. Storii Assagao will seamlessly blend the essence of the locale with the brand's focus on personalized service and memorable guest experiences. We are delighted to partner with Ananda Hospitality Services Private Limited on this exciting project." Purshottam Sharma and Dilip Sharma, Partners at M/s Ananda Hospitality Services Private Limited, said "Assagao has steadily evolved into one of Goa's most sought-after hospitality destinations, attracting trav-

ellers looking for enjoyable and well-curated stays. We are pleased to collaborate with ITC Hotels and look forward to creating a hospitality offering that reflects the unique appeal of the region while delivering exceptional guest experiences." The signing also marks a significant addition to ITC Hotels' growing presence in North Goa, a market that continues to benefit from strong tourism demand, improving connectivity, and increasing preference for experiential leisure travel. With its strategic location and proximity to key tourism hubs, its tree-lined avenues, charming neigh-

bourhoods, and evolving hospitality landscape, Storii Assagao is well-positioned to become a preferred choice for travellers exploring the region. With the enduring Namaste as the symbol of its brand experience and a distinguished legacy spanning over five decades, the business of ITC Hotels has been a pioneering force in shaping India's luxury and responsible hospitality landscape. Since its inception in 1975, the chain has consistently set new benchmarks in service excellence, culinary innovation, sustainable practices and the celebration of Indian culture. What began as a single hotel has grown into one of India's largest and most respected hospitality chains, with a presence that now extends across India, Sri Lanka and Nepal through a portfolio of 150+ properties and over 14,200 keys. The Company has seamlessly blended world-class hospitality with environmental stewardship, showcasing India's heritage while embracing the future through innovation, inclusivity and purpose-led growth.

Maruti Suzuki FRONX becomes the fastest SUV to clock 2 lakh exports from India in record time



New Delhi August 2026: Maruti Suzuki India Limited ("Maruti Suzuki") today announced that its popular SUV, FRONX, has crossed the milestone of 2 lakh exports in under 38 months, becoming the fastest SUV from India to achieve this feat**. Since the commencement of exports in June 2023, FRONX has witnessed a remarkable acceleration in global demand. While the Made-in-India SUV achieved its first lakh exports in under 25

months, it added the second lakh in around 13 months. Manufactured at Maruti Suzuki's Hansalpur facility in Gujarat, FRONX is being exported to nearly 90 countries, including Japan. Speaking on the milestone, Mr. Hisashi Takeuchi, Managing Director & CEO, Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Every vehicle exported by Maruti Suzuki carries the hard work and pride of our people. Together, these vehicles take a piece of Indian manufacturing to nearly 120

countries. FRONX has been a key contributor to Maruti Suzuki's success in exports. Since FY 24-25, it has been India's No. 1 exported passenger vehicle* and is now shipped to nearly 90 countries. After crossing the milestone of 1 lakh exports in record time, FRONX reached its second lakh significantly faster, underlining its growing demand in the international markets." He added, "Aligned with 'Make in India, Make for the World', Maruti Suzuki con-

tinues to showcase the prowess of India's manufacturing ecosystem. Sustained focus on exports has earned the Company the number one position in passenger vehicle exports from India*. Illustrating this leadership, all three of India's top exported passenger vehicles in Q1 FY 26-27* were from Maruti Suzuki. The growing export volumes year-on-year are a strong endorsement of the reliability and appeal of the Company's products across global markets."

EX-ZAMBIAN MINISTER KILLED IN SECURITY RAID ON OPPOSITION



A former Zambian minister was killed in last week's raid by security forces on a house linked to opposition leader Brian Mundubile a day after the presidential election, the authorities have said. A police spokesman said Mutotwe Kafwaya was fatally wounded by law enforcement officers during what officials have described as an exchange of fire in a security operation in the capital, Lusaka, on Friday. Eleven people were arrested in the raid, with the authorities accusing Mundubile's party, the NRPU, of being "involved in insurgency" and "militia activity" and storing "high-grade" weapons. Mundubile, who has since gone into hiding, rejected the allegations as "total fabrications". According to official results, incumbent President Hakainde Hichilema won a second five-year term with a 60% share of the vote. Mundubile, who trailed behind with 38%, plans to challenge the outcome in court after alleging the tallying process had been tampered with. Speaking about Kafwaya on Tuesday, the

opposition leader said he had had no information of his whereabouts after he had been shot during the raid, which he said took place at his house. The police confirmed Kafwaya's death late on Wednesday amid growing demands for information about him. They said the 49-year-old was killed in a shootout during the raid by a joint security task force, adding that they encountered "gunfire and resistance from unknown individuals, resulting in [them] returning fire". "In the process one unidentified male person was fatally wounded, and the firearm was recovered," the police said, adding that family members had subsequently identified him. Kafwaya first became a lawmaker in 2016 and was appointed by then-President Edgar Lungu as the for minister for works in 2018 and moved to the transport ministry the following year. He served there until 2021, when Lungu lost to Hichilema in the presidential election of that year. He continued serving as an opposition member of parliament.



■ At least 15 killed in Kyiv as Ukraine grapples with air defence shortages

Donald Trump vows tougher economic measures on Iran and supporting countries

Donald Trump has said he will launch tougher economic measures against Iran, as well as any country that helps or does business with it. The US president wrote in all capital letters on Truth Social that he was launching "the most crushing economic operation ever taken against any country", without providing further details or the names of any nation other than Iran. It comes after a 60-day ceasefire formally expired on Monday without any sign of a diplomatic settlement to the war the US and Israel began at the end of February. Tehran said Trump's threat would only bring further animosity. If realised, it would extend a campaign of economic pressure on Iran aimed at forcing it into submission. The US launched a wave of sanctions



on foreign banks and firms that do business with Iran in April when it became apparent that military action had not led to the overthrow of the regime in Tehran nor its surrender, as Trump had initially hoped. Conversely, since the start of the war, Iran has been able to stem the flow of marine traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, raising energy prices globally. Ahead of the US midterm elections

in November, Trump is facing pressure over how much the war is costing American consumers. The US president wrote on Wednesday evening that he was launching "economic D-Day" on Iran because it had failed to make a deal with the US. "ANY country that allows its financial institutions, businesses, airports, or government entities to provide any type of lifeline to Iran will itself face

TREMENDOUS Economic Consequences," Trump said. He did not specify what punishment countries might face. Trump continued: "Oil smuggling, swap lines, cash transfers, exchange houses, ship registries, front companies - it all needs to stop NOW. You know who you are." It comes a day after the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a US ally, announced it would be severing all financial and economic ties with Iran, following a new missile threat from the country. The UAE's defence ministry said it had detected two ballistic missiles launched from Iran targeting maritime traffic, both of which landed in the sea. Iranian entities have long used Dubai's financial system to transfer money through exchange houses and shell companies.

Australia 'outraged' after Israel decides not to open criminal investigation into killing of aid worker in Gaza



Australia's foreign minister has said she is "outraged" over an Israeli military decision not to launch a criminal investigation into the death of aid worker Zomi Frankcom, who was killed in an air strike in Gaza. Frankcom was an Australian aid worker with World Central Kitchen (WCK) who was killed with six other colleagues in an Israeli attack in April 2024. Foreign Minister Penny Wong said in a statement the decision "falls far short of the accountability we expect" and summoned the Israeli ambassador. After meeting Wong, Ambassador Hillel Newman defended the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and its investigation, saying "there was no criminal intention" and therefore "no criminal responsibility". Frankcom's family said in a statement on Thursday that they were "deeply disappointed" by the IDF's decision. "As a family, we do not believe this to be accurate, and we continue to call for an independent investigation," the statement said. Three British nationals, a Palestinian, a Polish national and a dual US-Canadian citizen were also killed in the attack. The UK has yet to comment on the Israeli decision. Speaking to reporters after meeting Newman, Wong said there were still many "unanswered questions", including why if the first strike on the convoy was "a catastrophic error", two further strikes followed,

just minutes apart. She also said the removal of two officers from their positions and the reprimanding of three after an initial probe was "insufficient accountability" for the death of seven people. Drone audio from the attack had still not been handed over despite requests from the Australian government, she said. In its statement on Wednesday, the IDF said the presence of an armed guard with the convoy had not been flagged with it before the convoy set off, and that he was falsely identified as a Hamas fighter. It also claimed the convoy had deviated from the route that had been coordinated with the military. Notwithstanding "serious failures" in the process that led to the killings, "the decisions of the commanders did not raise reasonable suspicion of criminal misconduct," the IDF said. In the same statement, the IDF also said it had also failed to find grounds for criminal investigation into the killing of four employees of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), who were killed in two separate attacks in November 2023 and February 2024. In her earlier statement, Wong said the Australian government had learned of Israel's decision late on Wednesday night, adding that the outcome was "especially insulting" as it occurred on World Humanitarian Day.

Founder of collapsed Chinese property giant Evergrande sentenced to life in prison

The founder of Evergrande, the property giant at the centre of China's housing market slump, has been sentenced to life in prison and had all of his personal property confiscated. Hui Ka Yan pleaded guilty in April to several charges, including embezzlement of assets and corporate bribery. Shenzhen Intermediate People's Court also fined his former companies a total of 15.82bn yuan (£1.73bn; \$2.35bn) over multiple crimes, including falsifying records and concealing debt. Hui's sentencing marks a key moment in the fallout from Evergrande's collapse, which shook China's property sector and hit investors and domestic banks hard. Hui and his businesses "seriously disrupted" the Chinese property market, resulting in significant economic losses, the court said. Other Evergrande executives, including Hui's two sons Xu Zhijian and Xu Tenghe, were also sentenced to jail terms ranging from 22 months to 18 years, according to state media. Once ranked Asia's



richest man, Hui has seen his wealth and influence dwindle as his company unravelled. Hui, also known as Xu Jiayin, rose from humble beginnings in rural China, where he was raised by his grandmother before venturing into property development and setting up Evergrande in 1996. He oversaw the company's rapid rise through an aggressive expansion programme funded with large amounts of borrowed money. Evergrande became China's biggest real estate developer, with a stock market valuation of more than \$50bn (£36.7bn). Hui

was once estimated to be Asia's richest person. The firm was dealt a huge blow when Beijing introduced measures in 2020 to control debt in the country's property sector. As the company struggled to meet interest payments on its debts it sold properties at huge discounts to stay afloat before collapsing in 2021. In April, the court heard that the company had taken millions of dollars in pre-sale funding from potential house buyers that were not used for construction. The money had instead been channelled to new property developments, resulting

in hundreds of unfinished projects. In March 2024, Hui was fined \$6.5m and banned from China's capital market for life for his company overstating its revenue by \$78bn. Evergrande's stock market valuation shrank by 99% before its shares were removed from the Hong Kong exchange in August 2025 after more than a decade and a half of trading. Evergrande's implosion has often been blamed for triggering a broader slump in China's property market that continues to weigh heavily on the economy. At its height, Evergrande was the biggest firm in the country's real estate industry, which made up about a third of China's gross domestic product at the time. The property market was a significant driver of growth and an important revenue source for local governments. The industry's ongoing problems have weighed heavily on the world's second largest economy as several other major developers faced financial woes.

Missing teen hiker found dead in Australian bush after eight-day search



The body of a woman has been found in Australian bushland, following an eight-day search for a Sydney teenager reported missing last Wednesday. Police said that while the body was yet to be formally identified, it was believed to be that of 18-year-old Lily Hooper. The confirmation came after the state premier told the New South Wales parliament that she had been found alive before later retracting the statement. The teenager left her home in Sydney to go walking in a nearby national park on 12 August. Her family reported her missing later that night, after she

failed to return home by 22:00. Her car was found in a car park at the bottom of a challenging trail in the Nattai National Park. Police said that the body was found in the Southern Highlands at approximately 11:30 local time on Thursday. Hooper's body had been found in dense vegetation and would likely have to be carried out on foot. There was initial confusion as to Hooper's condition, after New South Wales Premier Chris Minns told a parliamentary hearing that she had been found alive. Local media suggested that her family had also been informed that she was alive.



Giant whales move into Greenland waters as ice disappears

Belgian car salesman becomes prince after royal parentage confirmed

Belgium's Prince Laurent has legally recognised 26-year-old former car salesman Clément Vandenkerckhove as his son and heir. Vandenkerckhove, the result of a relationship between the royal and Belgian singer Wendy Van Wanten, was quietly brought into Prince Laurent's family at a town hall ceremony six months ago, although details have only just emerged. While he formally becomes a prince, he will not receive a royal allowance. The new prince has had several years to get used to the idea of having a royal father, and he said recently he was not yet sure he would begin using his father's name Saxe-Coburg. "I might want to do that, but I am proud of the name Vandenkerckhove," he told Het Nieuwsblad. "If I were to



sacrifice that family name, it would be a betrayal of everything my mother has done for me." He will not be part of Belgium's royal line of succession, unlike his half-sister Princess Louise and half-brothers Prince Aymeric and Prince Nicolas. Nor will he take part in public royal activities. Vandenkerckhove is already well known to Belgians, having been the

focus of a Flemish TV documentary last September, in which he described how he got to know his father. His father had been in a relationship with Wendy Van Wanten, whose real name is Iris Vandenkerckhove, before he went on to marry Princess Claire in 2003. During the VTM documentary, Clément described meeting the prince unexpectedly in a shopping

centre in 2013, without realising who he was. It was only when he was 16 that his mother revealed his father's identity. Four years later he plucked up the courage to ring him up, and after several more calls they met in person and eventually Prince Laurent suggested they take a DNA test. "We went to the hospital together and I remember him saying 'I'll go first so you're feeling at ease'," he told VTM. Then he received an email from the laboratory which told him of a 99.5% DNA match. Prince Laurent's DNA test is reminiscent of his father, former King Albert II, who had a test after a lengthy paternity battle. Albert admitted in 2020 that he had fathered a daughter during an affair and eventually recognised her as his own.

"TEST OF MIND, NOT CHESS":

Vidit Gujrathi On D Gukesh's World Championship Battle

Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi believes reigning world champion D Gukesh's title defence against Uzbek challenger Javokhir Sindarov will be a test of mental strength more than chess ability, with the Indian needing to put behind him a difficult run and rediscover the form that made 2024 an exceptional year. Gukesh has endured an inconsistent phase since his World Championship triumph, while Sindarov heads into the marquee clash in excellent form. Vidit, however, said a dip in results does not necessarily indicate a decline in a player's ability. "In chess, performances, if you are not Magnus Carlsen, come in stages. For example, 2024 was an exceptional year for Gukesh. Every tournament, he had the Midas touch. Whatever he played, he was winning," Vidit told PTI. He said form among



elite players is influenced by several factors beyond their chess strength. "Their strength is very high. A lot of things affect form - mindset, physical condition and pressure. Sport is about whether you can bring your best on that day." According to Vidit, Gukesh continues to work hard and has brought fresh ideas to his games but has struggled to produce the efficiency that characterised his rise to the world title. "Usually he would convert very well, but now he is

missing those wins. He is coming under time pressure a lot. He is working very hard. That's very clear from the games. But something is missing." Vidit, however, felt Gukesh could still return to his best, provided he can overcome the mental baggage of his recent results. "That doesn't mean that in the World Championship, he cannot go back to his 2024 version. It will require a lot of inner strength because when you don't do well, you struggle mentally."

INDIA-PAKISTAN PLAYERS SKIP HANDSHAKES BEFORE MATCH

The Indian men's hockey team swept past their arch-rivals Pakistan in emphatic fashion, beating them 5-3 in their final Pool D match of the FIH Hockey World Cup in Amstelveen, Netherlands, on Wednesday. However, the intense battle on the field did not stop the teams from exchanging pleasantries, as the players shared high-fives before the start of the match. While politics often threatens to overshadow India-Pakistan encounters, the clash in Amstelveen showcased a modern display of sportsmanship. After their respective national anthems were played, the two sets of players lined up and exchanged quick high-fives to show mutual respect, skipping the traditional pre-match handshakes. In the aftermath of



Operation Sindoor, the India and Pakistan cricket teams have refrained from shaking hands with each other. However, hockey does not appear to be following cricket's path, at

least for now. Even during the Sultan of Johor Cup last year, the two teams shook hands after their match. After full-time in Amstelveen, the India and Pakistan players did

shake hands, having skipped the customary gesture before the start of the match. As far as the action on the field is concerned, skipper Harmanpreet Singh and

striker Abhishek scored a brace each as India extended their decade-long unbeaten run over arch-rivals Pakistan with a 5-3 win. The defeat ended Pakistan's campaign in the tournament. Playing their first World Cup in eight years, Pakistan fought back after conceding three goals but India held their nerve to seal a memorable win in front of a packed 10,000-capacity Wagener Stadium. Captain Harmanpreet (5th, 21st) scored twice from penalty corners, while Abhishek (11th, 24th) struck two fine field goals and Hardik Singh (34th) converted a penalty stroke for India. Hannan Shahid (22nd, 46th) scored twice for Pakistan, with Sufyan Khan (24th) adding the other from a penalty corner.

INDIA STAR TOLD 'NOT TO PLAY IN IPL' IN BIG VERDICT: "DON'T CHANGE YOUR STRENGTH"

Manav Suthar left everyone impressed with a sensational bowling performance as India registered a commanding 165-run victory over Sri Lanka in the first Test of the two-match series in Galle on Wednesday. The 24-year-old spinner, playing only his second Test for India, picked up six wickets in the second innings to finish with a remarkable 10-wicket match haul. Having made his Test debut against Afghanistan in June, Suthar had already announced his arrival on the international stage with a five-wicket haul. He followed it up with another outstanding display in Galle, playing a key role in India's victory. With India taking a 1-0 lead in the two-match series, former India batter Cheteshwar Pujara urged Suthar to



remain focused on red-ball cricket rather than chasing an IPL contract. Pujara also appealed to the Indian team management to "preserve" the young spinner for the longest format of the game. "Try to preserve him. We have had this discussion in

the past that, yes, all the young players might want to play the shorter format, but India should be looking to preserve him for the Test format. Yes, he might want to play the IPL, but don't go there. I mean, yes, if he gets the opportunity to play the

IPL, that's fine, but don't change your strength," Pujara said on the Sony Sports Network. "I think he doesn't need to change his bowling much. Just when it comes to white-ball cricket, you need to have that flatter trajectory, and I don't mind

him playing in the IPL. If he plays in the IPL, if he's successful in the IPL, that is fine, but don't change your strength," he added. Pujara further stated that Suthar does not need to alter his bowling action, as his natural ability and skill set are already helping him thrive in red-ball cricket. "For someone like Manav Suthar, who is fighting the ball, who is willing to go a little slower, when it comes to red-ball cricket, you don't need to change that. Don't change yourself just for the IPL. I can understand, but don't change your natural ability, which is to flight the ball," said Pujara. Speaking about Suthar's T20 credentials, the Rajasthan-born spinner has featured in five IPL matches and picked up two wickets.

FC Goa Drawn In Tough Group For AFC Challenge League

FC Goa were clubbed with Qadsia SC of Kuwait, Fortis FC of Bangladesh and FC Regar-TadAZ of Tajikistan in a tricky group in the AFC Challenge League 2026-27 after the draw was held in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday. After losing to FK Arkadag of Turkmenistan in the AFC Champions League 2 preliminary stage last Wednesday, FC Goa dropped to the group stage of the AFC Challenge League, Asia's third-tier men's club competition. Qadsia SC and Fortis FC finished third in the Kuwaiti Premier League 2025-26 and the Bangladesh Football League 2025-26 respectively, while FC Regar-TadAZ were the Tajikistan Cup 2025 win-



ners. The draw saw 20 teams divided into five groups of four - three in the West and two in the East. They will compete in a single round-robin centralised league format in the group stage from October 17 to 24, 2026. The Gaurs will travel to Kuwait, where Qadsia SC will host all Group C matches. In the West, the

three group winners and the best ranked runners-up among all groups will qualify for the quarter-finals. In the East, the group winners and runners-up will make it to the last eight. The quarter-finals and semi-finals - both double-legged affairs - are set for March 3-18 and April 7-15, 2027, respectively, with the final slated for May 8.

Treesa Jolly-Gayatri Gopichand Enter World Championships Quarters

Indian women's doubles pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand stood one step away from a medal after reaching quarterfinals with a straight game win over Japan's seventh seeds Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi at the World Championships in New Delhi on Thursday. The Indian unseeded pair, which is on a comeback trail after Treesa recovered from an injury, dished out a dominating performance to outwit world No 7 Japanese Rin and Kie 21-16 21-12 in a lop-sided contest. Treesa and Gayatri, who were awarded the Arjuna Award for 2025, had made it to the All England Open semi-finals in back-to-back years in 2022 and 2023.



Manav Suthar Shares Details Of His Practice After Demolishing Sri Lanka In 1st Test

India's young left-arm spinner Manav Suthar revealed that he practised with the Kookaburra ball at home before the Sri Lanka series to adapt quickly to the conditions, and his preparation paid off in the first Test at the Galle International Stadium. Suthar produced a match-winning performance in only his second Test, claiming 10 wickets as India defeated Sri Lanka by 165 runs in the opening Test on Wednesday. The spinner returned figures of 6-55 in Sri Lanka's second innings to finish with match figures of 10-101 and help India take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series. Speaking in a video released by the BCCI, Suthar said he had focused on adapting to the Kookaburra ball following India's game against Afghanistan and had spent considerable time



practising with it both at home and in the nets. "I take cricket very seriously. My focus is to improve day to day when I go to practice. I practice as much as I can. My focus after the Afghanistan game was to adapt as soon as possible. I practised a lot with the Kookaburra ball. I practised in nets and at home. I was focusing on in-house games. It was very important," Suthar said. Suthar also credited

India's arrival in Sri Lanka 10 days before the Test for giving him valuable time to understand the conditions and get comfortable with the Kookaburra ball. "We came to Sri Lanka ten days ago, and it helped a lot in adapting to the environment and how to play with the Kookaburra ball. I get time to adapt. It has helped me a lot," he said. The 22-year-old said patience was another important factor on a Galle pitch that offered assistance to the bowlers. He revealed that he, Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav discussed the need to remain patient, knowing that new batters could find it difficult to settle.

Top Seeds Aryna Sabalenka, Alexander Zverev Stunned In Cincinnati Fourth Round



Top seeds Aryna Sabalenka and Alexander Zverev crashed out of the Cincinnati Masters in a matter of hours on a rainy Wednesday of fourth-round action. American Tommy Paul saved a match point on the way to a 4-6, 7-6 (8/6), 6-4 upset of Germany's Zverev. But the biggest shock came on the women's side where Czech Sara Bejlek, ranked 35th, stunned world number one Sabalenka 7-6 (9/7), 6-4 in a gritty match that finished up shortly after the clock ticked past midnight into Thursday morning. Former champion Sabalenka led by a break in the opening set and was up 5-1 in the tiebreaker before Bejlek roared back to pocket the set in 65 minutes. Bejlek broke the Belarusian three times in the second set, ral-

lying from 4-1 down and securing the win with a love game capped by an ace. "I lost my words - it feels incredible," Bejlek said after her first win over a top-10 player. "I was playing what I was feeling and not really thinking. I was trying not to be nervous and just play. I believed in myself no matter what," Bejlek, who won the Abu Dhabi hard court title in February as a qualifier, booked a quarter-final clash with American Madison Keys. It was yet another setback for Sabalenka as the start of the US Open looms on August 30. The four-time Grand Slam champion was ousted in the fourth round of the Toronto Masters last week, having lost in the same round at Wimbledon and in the quarter-finals at Roland Garros.

Mumbai Indians' New Post Sparks 'Hardik Pandya' Rumour Ahead Of IPL 2027

Ahead of the next season of the Indian Premier League, there has been a huge buzz regarding Hardik Pandya. Multiple reports have claimed that Mumbai Indians are looking to trade the player before IPL 2027. The all-rounder, who made his IPL debut for MI in 2015, left the franchise ahead of the 2022 season and joined Gujarat Titans. Hardik led GT to the title in their debut season and continued as captain for another year before MI reacquired his services through the transfer window. This time, Hardik was handed the responsibility of leading Mumbai Indians. However, the results did not go as expected, with Mumbai finishing at the bot-

tom of the IPL 2024 points table. The following season, MI reached Qualifier 2 before ending IPL 2026 in ninth place. Amid the ongoing rumours regarding Hardik's potential trade, Mumbai Indians took to social media to post some pictures of the player. Commenting on IPL transfers and trades, former India captain Sunil Gavaskar made a direct appeal. "...there's some speculation in the media about the possible switching of players from one franchise to another. There's, of course, still some time before that window closes. However, while the transfer of a player from one franchise to another is in the public domain, when a trade takes place,

the numbers are known only to the two franchises, the player and the BCCI," Sunil Gavaskar wrote in Mid-Day. "In such a situation, the other franchises don't know whether the salary cap that every franchise has for its squad was maintained or breached. That's why it's important for full transparency that the numbers are also made public." He added that full transparency would help maintain the high profile of the IPL. "The IPL is the greatest T20 league in the world and it's therefore crucial that full transparency is maintained so that there's no finger-pointing at it from those jealous of it," he wrote further. Ahead of the next season of the

Indian Premier League, there has been a huge buzz regarding Hardik Pandya. A single Mumbai Indians social media post has sent the IPL rumour mill into overdrive, reigniting speculation over whether Hardik Pandya will still be wearing the franchise's colours come the 2027 season. The Mumbai franchise shared a post captioned "Memo: Make it HP coded," accompanied by two images.



Viswanath & sons’ is a film that lived up to suriya sir’s faith: director Venky Atluri

Tamil star Suriya's latest film 'VISWANATH & SONS', directed by acclaimed filmmaker Venky Atluri, features Mamitha Baiju as the female lead. Presented by Srikara Studios and produced jointly by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas, the film hit theatres on August 14, 2026. With its natural humour, heartfelt emotions and relatable family drama, 'VISWANATH & SONS' is receiving an overwhelming response from audiences. The film has crossed the ₹150 crore gross mark worldwide within just four days and is continuing its successful run. In a recent interaction with the media, director Venky Atluri shared his happiness over the film's success and spoke about Suriya's faith in the story, the writing process, the film's art work, Trivikram Srinivas's reaction, Mamitha Baiju's casting and several other interesting aspects of the film.



What was Suriya sir's reaction when he first heard the story?

Suriya sir immediately liked the story. In fact, he was looking for a family-oriented film, and he had mentioned that to me. I already had this story ready, so I narrated it to him. He really connected with it. He felt that we should tell the story honestly without unnecessarily adding comedy or commercial elements. That is why

we were particularly careful with the climax. We also made sure that no character was compromised in the process. Suriya sir watched the film a few days before its release. He was very happy because what he had believed in was exactly what he saw on screen. I feel very happy that we could live up to the faith he placed in the story. You are being praised for having the strength of writing seen in Trivikram Srinivas's films. How do you feel about that comparison? Mani Ratnam sir and Trivikram sir are two of the biggest inspirations behind my decision to enter the film industry. So, being compared with Trivikram sir is a great honour for me. I also understand the responsibility that comes with such a compliment, and I will work even harder to live up to it. I particularly love Trivikram sir's 'Nuvvu Naaku Nachav'. The dialogues are entertaining and humorous, yet they convey profound truths about life. That film inspired me tremendously, and I enjoy writing in a similar space.

How did the story of 'VISWANATH & SONS' originate?

Initially, I wanted to write a story around a relationship involving a significant age difference. If a person reaches the age of 40 without getting married, there has to be a strong reason behind that decision. The story evolved around that idea.

'Village Stars' Movie Launched with Traditional Pooja Ceremony

A new beautiful entertainer is set to make its way onto the Telugu screen. The upcoming film 'Village Stars', being produced under the NSV Productions banner, was officially launched with a grand pooja ceremony at the Venkateswara Veeranjaneya Swamy Temple in

Venkatagiri. Actor Sameer attended the event as the chief guest and blessed the entire film team. Narendra and Lilly Ballu are playing the lead roles, while Srinivas, Syed Abzal, Vijay and others will be seen in key roles. The film is directed by A. Narendra, with the story penned by Nagoor NGR.



Grand Press Meet Held for Unique Political Entertainer Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam



The film 'Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam' is set for a worldwide grand theatrical release on September 4. Produced under the banner of Moving Dreams India Private Limited, 'Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam' stars Suman, Saikumar, Nataraj, Varun Sandesh,

Vithika Sheru and others in key roles. Directed by Jai Jnana Prabha Thota and produced by Merum Bhaskar, this political entertainer is scheduled for a worldwide grand theatrical release on September 4. The film will be released across the Telugu states through PVR Cinemas Distribution.

Cult Producer SKN Launches Teaser for 'Missing Meghana'



Cult Producer SKN Launches Teaser for 'Missing Meghana' The teaser for the upcoming film 'Missing Meghana', produced by Panchumarthi Naresh Babu under the banners of First Copy Movies and KD & Co and directed by Vachaspathi, was grandly launched by cult producer SKN. The film stars Ram Karthik, Ammu Abhirami, Vaidika Senjaliya, and Ankit Koyya in the lead roles, alongside Goparaju Ramana, Vempa Kasi, Koushik,

Mahipal, Ruchitha, Nalini, Srinivas, Azeem, and Pandu in pivotal roles. Recently, the film's first look and title motion poster were unveiled by sensational director V. V. Vinayak, while the first single, 'Pilla Pilla Pilla', was launched by legendary producer Suresh Babu. Now, producer SKN has officially released the film's teaser. The cinematography is handled by Chota K. Naidu's contemporary Sam K. Naidu, with music composed by R. R. Dhruvan.

"Killer" release date announcement glimpse raises expectations for the film



Starring Jyoti Poorvaj and Poorvaaj in the lead roles, "Killer/KillR" is a sensational sci-fi thriller. Manish Gilada, Chandrakanth Kollu, Vishal Raj, Archana Ananth, and Gautham Chakradhar Koppishetti play other important roles. Produced by Poorvaaj and Padmanabha Reddy A. under the Think Cinema and AU & I Studios banners, with the blessings of Dhyanam Nannagaru, the film is presented by Urveesh Poorvaj. Poorvaj is directing the movie. Today, the makers officially announced the release date of "Killer." The film is set to have a worldwide grand theatrical release on October 17, on the auspicious occasion of

Vijayadashami. The release date announcement glimpse of "Killer" is intriguing from beginning to end and has further increased curiosity around the film. According to the glimpse, on October 17, the day the film releases, aliens make contact with Dr. Poorvaaj, one of India's greatest scientists. The alien informs him that they are sending a spaceship to Earth and asks him to convey the message to others, stating that they intend to save humanity. "Our future is that alien's past." Why did the alien from another timeline choose to contact Dr. Poorvaj? Why does it want to send a spaceship to Earth? What threat is humanity facing? What kind of help is the alien planning to provide?

I am very happy to play the role of Ravi Teja's daughter in 'Irumudi'. The audience will definitely love the film: Baby Nakshatra

Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja's most awaited movie 'Irumudi'. Priya Bhavani Shankar is playing the heroine. Directed by Shiva Nirvana and produced by Mythri Movie Makers, this movie has already raised huge expectations with its glimpses, trailer and songs. The movie, which is going to hit the theatres on August 21, is going to provide the audience with a different family entertainer experience with emotions and action. On this occasion, Baby Nakshatra, who played a key role in the movie, shared the features of the movie at a press conference. -My name is Nakshatra. I am from Kerala. I am studying in the seventh grade. So far, I have done six films in Kannada, Malayalam, and Tamil languages.

How did the 'Irumudi' opportunity come about?

-Director Shiva Nirvana first contacted my mother after seeing my reels on Instagram. I am very happy that 'Irumudi' is my first Telugu film. Isn't the story based on 'Irumudi' Ayyappa Swamy? You're from Kerala. Have you ever been to Sabarimala?

I went to Sabarimala once.

How did it feel to work with Ravi Teja?

I felt very happy. He is very friendly with me. I like him a lot. Among Ravi Teja's films, I like 'Vikramarkudu' a lot.



What will your role be like in 'Irumudi'?

-My character's name in this is Manikantha. I am going to be seen as Ravi Teja's daughter. Priya Madam is playing the role of my mother. Both Ravi Teja and Priya Madam are very friendly with me. I have dubbed for this film myself. You worked with big heroes like Prithviraj garu, Shivaraj Kumar garu, and Ravi Teja garu at a young age, right? How does it feel?

I am very happy. I would like to thank my mother on this occasion. She supports me a lot.

How do you balance movies and studies?

-My teachers are especially supportive of me. I am able to make films only with the support of my parents and teachers.

ANAND DEVERAKONDA & VAISHNAVI CHAITANYA'S EPIC – FIRST SEMESTER UNVEILS SOULFUL THIRD SINGLE 'MANASA VACHA'



The makers of the much-awaited youthful romantic entertainer EPIC – FIRST SEMESTER have unveiled the film's third single, 'Manasa Vacha', a soulful musical piece that beautifully captures the emotions of love and longing. Composed by the immensely talented Hesham Abdul Wahab, 'Manasa Vacha' comes alive through the deeply soulful voices of legendary singers K. S. Chithra and S. P. Charan. Their expressive vocals, combined with Hesham's evocative composition, make the song a truly memorable musical experience. Penned by Sri Harsha Emani, the song beautiful-

ly conveys the emotions of the lead pair, portrayed by Anand Deverakonda and Vaishnavi Chaitanya. The visuals complement the music with an emotional and soulful journey, showcasing the depth of their relationship and the feelings that unfold along the way. Directed by Aditya Haasan, EPIC – FIRST SEMESTER is produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas, presented by Srikara Studios, with music by Hesham Abdul Wahab. EPIC – FIRST SEMESTER is set to hit theatres worldwide on September 11, 2026.

