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NATIONAL | NEWS

Kejriwal challenges BJP to compare 1,000 govt schools of Gujarat, Punjab

WORLD | NEWS

China warns it will protect its interests after US widens sanctions against Iran

CINEMA | NEWS

TOXIC ADVANCE BOOKINGS POINT TO A HISTORIC START

SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



24-08-2026
Total pilgrims : 77,085
Tonnages : 33,766
Hundi Kamukha : 4,651 CR
Ladies sales : 3,84 Lac
Annaprasadam : 1,59 Lac
Ammi bhogal : 3,950
Present Situation on 25-08-2026:
Waiting Compartments:-14

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens): 8 H.

Short Takes

ED seizes Rs 3.8 crore cash in fake GST invoice case

Lucknow, Aug 25: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized Rs 3.8 crore in unaccounted cash during searches at 11 premises in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana in connection with an alleged GST fraud that caused a loss of Rs 27.02 crore to the government, an official said on Tuesday. The ED's Lucknow Zonal Office conducted the searches on Monday under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. Besides the cash, the agency seized incriminating documents and digital devices during the searches.

5 of family end life in Srisaillam rest house due to financial distress

Amaravati, Aug 25: In a tragic incident, five members of a family allegedly died by suicide at a rest house in the temple town of Srisaillam, Andhra Pradesh, police said on Tuesday. The deceased have been identified as Pallapu Sudhakar (50), his sisters Gogula Adilakshmi (36), Malleshwari (45), and Sridevi (33), along with Malleshwari's 15-year-old son, Manikantha. All five victims hailed from Battalipalli in Sri Sathya Sai district. According to the police, the family had arrived at Srisaillam in an auto-rickshaw on July 28 and checked into room number 11 at Vaddera Sataram, a lodge for devotees visiting the Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy temple, paying a daily rent of Rs 29.

JeM headquarters in Bahawalpur rebuilt after Operation

New Delhi (TSIT): The headquarters of UN-designated terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) in Pakistan's Bahawalpur, which was damaged in India's Operation Sindoor strikes last year, has reportedly been rebuilt, according to media reports citing intelligence inputs. The Markaz Subhanallah facility, which sustained extensive damage during the strikes, has reportedly been refurbished with new plaster, paint and polished marble, the reports said.

Stone-pelting, lathi-charge, water cannons mark students' protest over BPSC exams

Patna (TSIT): A protest by thousands of students demanding reforms in Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) examinations turned violent on Tuesday as clashes broke out between agitators and police personnel in Patna. The protestors pelted stones, while police used water cannons and resorted to lathi-charge to disperse the crowd.

The protestors, mostly aspirants preparing for the Teachers' Recruitment Examinations to be conducted by BPSC next month, had announced a 'Mukhyamantri Awas Gherao' programme to press for their demand that the written examination process should be conducted in a single stage instead of the existing preliminary and mains system.

A section of the protestors also demanded the cancellation of the Combined Competitive Examination conducted by the commission earlier this year, alleging irregularities in the examination process.

The protest march began from Gandhi Maidan and was joined by activists from Left organisations, including the Students' Federation of India



(SFI) and Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI). The procession was planned towards the Chief Minister's residence, with heavy security arrangements deployed along the nearly five-kilometre route.

Police officials said repeated appeals were made to protestors to maintain peace and assured that a delegation would be allowed to meet authorities to submit their demands. However, tensions escalated when protestors attempted to break barricades at J.P. Golambar and Dak Bungalow crossing, one of Patna's busiest junctions.

Police used water cannons to control the crowd, but

protesters continued their march. Videos circulated on social media showed clashes between police and demonstrators, including incidents of stone-pelting and lathi-charge. Several protestors were detained, while some people reportedly sustained injuries during the confrontation.

Patna Senior Superintendent of Police Kartikeya Sharma said the situation was brought under control and traffic movement was being restored. He said police would review CCTV footage to identify those involved in violence and take action against anti-social elements.

Cong calls Centre's caste Enumeration framework 'flawed', seeks fresh questionnaire

New Delhi (TSIT) The Congress on Tuesday mounted a fresh attack on the Centre over the proposed methodology for caste enumeration in the upcoming census, with Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh calling the exercise a "deception" and a "whitewash" rather than a genuine caste census.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters, Ramesh said the methodology proposed by the government



was fundamentally flawed and would fail to generate the accurate and comprehensive data

needed to formulate policies aimed at ensuring social justice.

Drawing attention to the census notification issued on August 14, Ramesh said it contained 40 questions, with only one question concerning caste, placed at number 10. He described the approach as "self-sabotage" and questioned how a serious nationwide caste census could be conducted through what the Congress considers an inadequately designed format.

"The government's current efforts towards a caste census

are just a whitewash," Ramesh said, demanding a credible, transparent and scientifically designed enumeration exercise.

The Congress leader also accused the Centre of failing to consult opposition parties and state governments on the structure and methodology of the census. He said the existing notification should be withdrawn and replaced with a comprehensive questionnaire prepared after consultations with political parties, experts, state governments and the public.

Goyal pitches India as trusted destination for data centres, cites USD 200 bn investment commitments

TOKYO (TSIT): Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday pitched India as a compelling destination for data centres, saying the country can work with Japanese companies to develop the sector and has already received investment commitments of about USD 200 billion from large hyperscalers globally. During his meeting with Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Akazawa Ryosei, Goyal said the partnership could be summarised around four pillars - increasing trade, strengthening technology cooperation, boosting invest-



ments and promoting tourism. "Data centres are another area where India provides a very compelling case, a destination as a trusted partner. We can work

together to promote data centres in India. We already have a commitment of about USD 200 billion from large hyperscalers from across the world," he said.

GOVT TO SELL ONIONS IN DELHI AT RS 35/KG, MUCH LOWER THAN MKT RATE

NEW DELHI (TSIT): (Aug 25) The government will sell onions at Rs 35 per kg in the national capital, a deep discount of around 36 per cent from the prevailing average retail prices, as it looks to provide relief to the common man from high rates. The Centre is procuring onions from the key-producing state of Maharashtra, where it has maintained buffer stock to deal with any price rise. The first consignment of 800 tonnes will reach the national capital on Wednesday via 'Kanda Express' train.

Veligonda Waters to Propel Development: CM Naidu

Visakhapatnam (TSIT)

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said the long-cherished dream of bringing Krishna waters to the drought-prone areas of Prakasam district would become a reality with the completion of Phase-I of the Veligonda Project. In a post on X, the Chief Minister said the project, for which he laid the foundation stone on March 5, 1996, would be inaugurated by him on August 31, marking the fulfilment of a commitment made three decades ago. He said 10.7 TMC of water would be released into the Nallamala Sagar on the occasion. Phase-I is expected to provide irrigation to 1.19 lakh acres, while Phase-II would cover another 3.283 lakh acres, besides supplying drinking water to lakhs of people. Describing Veligonda as a major turning point for drought-hit Markapur and surrounding areas, he said the project would bring water, prosperity and new opportunities to the region.

The Chief Minister said the government was also working to transform Rayalaseema and the erstwhile Prakasam district into a horticulture hub with investments of around Rs.1 lakh crore. National high-



ways and ports, including the Bengaluru-Amaravati highway and Ramayapatnam Port, would strengthen logistics, trade and industrial development in the region, he said.

He assured that tap water connections would be provided to every household to permanently address the fluoride problem affecting people in western Prakasam. Stating that the Veligonda project was the result of overcoming numerous challenges and obstacles, Chandrababu said the government's objective was to ensure water for every farmer's field, employment for every youth and security for every family.

H1N1 rise: Children, elderly people at most risk, doctors warn

NEW DELHI (TSIT): As H1N1 cases rise in the national capital, doctors and health experts have pointed out that children, elderly people, pregnant women and those with chronic illnesses are the most vulnerable to severe infection.

Delhi has recorded over 2,300 Influenza-A cases this year, including more than 1,777 H1N1 cases till Friday, with 114 H1N1 cases reported on Thursday alone, according to health department data.

Air India flight from Delhi suffers bird hit at Patna airport, all passengers safe Air India flight from

Delhi suffers bird hit at Patna airport, all passengers safe "The rise in H1N1 cases has brought preventive vaccination back into the conversation," said Dr Bharat Gopal, senior director, respiratory and sleep medicine, Medanta Mediclinic, Defence Colony and Medanta-The Medicity.

More people have been enquiring about seasonal influenza vaccination, particularly high-risk individuals and families with children or elderly members, he said. Dr Bibhu Anand, physician at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, said, "The swine flu test is easily available in



almost all hospitals and diagnostic centres." Testing at private hospitals generally costs between Rs 1,500 and Rs 5,000, while a full respiratory BioFire panel can cost between Rs 9,000 and Rs 15,000.

In government hospitals, the cost is "almost negligible," he said. Dr Anand also said that multiplex PCR testing can be done only at restricted laboratories and the decision to test should be based on the patient's symp-

toms, clinical presentation and the treating physician's assessment. The increase in cases is being reflected in the number of patients seeking medical consultation at hospitals across Delhi-NCR. "The number of patients has increased by around five to six in the past week, translating into a 22-25 per cent rise," said Dr Aakashneel Bhattacharya, consultant, infectious disease, Paras Health, Gurugram.

At Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute, around eight to 10 patients with flu-like symptoms are coming to the clinic daily, while two to three patients with more

serious flu illness are being admitted, said Dr Arvind Aggarwal, director, internal medicine, At Apollo Spectra Hospital, Dr Ali Sher, senior consultant, internal medicine, said the hospital has seen an increase in patients seeking consultation for flu-like symptoms in recent weeks, some with serious respiratory complaints.

The latest figures show a sharp year-on-year rise in H1N1 infections. Delhi recorded 1,777 cases till August 20, against 229 during the corresponding period last year, representing an increase of more than six times, Dr Gopal said.

Commonly reported symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, headache, body ache, chills, fatigue, runny nose and nasal congestion. Some patients, particularly children, may also experience nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea. Doctors said most patients with uncomplicated influenza can be treated on an outpatient basis and do not require hospitalisation. Admission is generally considered when patients develop pneumonia, breathing difficulties, reduced oxygen saturation, persistent high fever or worsening of an existing medical condition.

EDITORIAL

Sajjan Kumar, Congress,
And How To Keep
Messing Up An 'Apology'

A courtroom in India once wrote something that should have changed the country forever. In December 2018, Justices S Muralidhar and Vinod Goel of the Delhi High Court upheld Sajjan Kumar's conviction for engineering the murder of Sikhs in the aftermath of the assassination of the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, in 1984. Paragraph 367.6 of that order reads like a warning flare shot into the future. The judges counted 2,733 Sikhs slaughtered in Delhi alone, nearly 3,350 across the country per official data, and named a pattern repeated from Mumbai in 1993 to Gujarat in 2002, Kandhamal in 2008, and Muzaffarnagar in 2013. Dominant political actors organised every mob in that list, the bench wrote, and law enforcement stepped aside every single time. India needed a law against genocide and crimes against humanity urgently, the judges said, or the killers of tomorrow would simply wait out the decades until memory grew tired. Eight years later, in August 2026, the man that judgment convicted died in prison. A sitting Congress MP, Deepender Hooda, stood at the fresh grave of that verdict and termed Sajjan Kumar's death an "irreparable loss", calling him a man whose bond with the people of Delhi was "an example". This was a tribute, delivered in full sentences, to a convicted killer of Sikhs. If that wasn't enough, the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee's official X handle mourned Sajjan Kumar as 'punya atma', or a "noble soul". The wall the High Court asked India to build against political forgiveness for mass murder was climbed over by members of the very party that produced the murderer. But the Congress has practised this particular climb for decades. Jagdish Tytler carried similar accusations of leading mobs through the city's neighbourhoods in 1984. He denies wrongdoing, but the accusations eventually produced a CBI chargesheet in 2023. Congress had named him a permanent invitee to its Delhi Pradesh committee in 2021 anyway, drawing the same charge from opponents that the party was rubbing salt into wounds it claimed to regret. In 2019, Sam Pitroda, a close aide of the Gandhi family, burned a phrase into the community's memory when he waved away the massacre with three words: "hua to hua" ("it happened, so what"). The political homage to Sajjan Kumar this year completes a set. Different Situations, 1 Continuous Gesture Charanjit Singh Channi, Congress's own former Punjab Chief Minister, named the gesture for what it was. In a video that spread through Sikh households like a struck match, he said Sajjan Kumar was "a killer of the Sikh community, a traitor", and that anyone calling him a role model should "mind their tongue". Outside Rahul Gandhi's New Delhi residence, families of the 1984 dead gathered behind police barricades and demanded the party find one voice instead of several. Congress MP Gurjeet Singh Aujla rushed to distance the party from Hooda, who later regretted his remarks on Sajjan Kumar that had triggered a political storm. The drill was the same. Pitroda, too, had apologised for his infamous "hua to hua" remarks seven years ago. Flashback to 2005, when Manmohan Singh, as Prime Minister, bowed his head in Parliament and confessed that 1984 was "a negation of the concept of nationhood".

The Real Reason Gurugram Is
Battered By Rain, Year After Year

Dikshu C Kukreja

Every monsoon, Gurugram is confronted with the same paradox. A city celebrated as one of India's most modern urban economies can be brought to a standstill by a few hours of intense rainfall. Roads become channels, underpasses become reservoirs, and traffic corridors become temporary floodplains. It is tempting to describe this as a drainage failure. But that explanation is incomplete. Gurugram's recurring flooding is fundamentally a failure to plan the city as a hydrological system. The geography of Gurugram has always demanded a particular relationship with water. The Aravallis form the higher ground along the southern and eastern edges of the urban region, while the terrain falls towards the north and northwest. Historical drainage patterns carried water through seasonal channels, depressions, ponds, and natural drains towards the Najafgarh system. Studies have identified an elevation difference of roughly 60 to 70 metres between the Aravalli foothills and the Najafgarh basin, creating a natural gradient for the movement of stormwater. The problem is that the contemporary city has progressively obscured this geography.

■ **WATER FOLLOWS TOPOGRAPHY, NOT MASTER PLANS**
A city may be divided into sectors, plots, and infrastructure zones, but rainwater does not recognise these boundaries. It follows slope, soil, permeability, and gravity. This is why the idea that Gurugram can solve flooding simply by adding larger drains is inadequate. A drainage network is the final component of a catchment system, not a substitute for one. When open land becomes



concrete, the hydrological equation changes. On natural ground, rainfall is divided between infiltration, evaporation, temporary storage, and surface runoff. On a heavily paved urban surface, a much larger proportion becomes immediate runoff. The greater the impervious area, the faster water reaches the drainage network, and the higher the peak discharge becomes. In engineering terms, the issue is not simply the total quantity of rainfall. It is the rate point at which rainfall is converted into runoff and the timing of that runoff reaching a drainage system. That distinction is crucial. A recent GIS and SWMM-based study of Gurugram examined eight high-runoff sub-catchments and found that a combination of green roofs, permeable pavements, and rainwater storage could reduce runoff volume by as much as 72.31% and peak discharge by

54.05%. These are not aesthetic interventions. They are hydrological infrastructure. We have confused water removal with water management. For decades, the dominant approach to urban stormwater has been straightforward: collect water as quickly as possible and move it somewhere else. That model is becoming increasingly inadequate. A resilient city follows a different hierarchy: The first four stages should happen as close as possible to where rainfall occurs. Only the residual water should enter the larger drainage network. This requires restoring the city's blue-green infrastructure: ponds, wetlands, natural depressions, open channels, recharge areas, planted corridors, and permeable landscapes. These should not be considered recreational or leftover spaces. They are components of the city's hydraulic

system. Research on Gurugram has demonstrated the potential of precisely this approach. One recent study proposed integrating retention ponds into the existing drainage network and found substantial reductions in simulated flood volumes under both regular and extreme rainfall scenarios. The lesson is important: the landscape itself can be infrastructure. The Next Masterplan The real opportunity for Gurugram lies not merely in constructing more drains but in changing how future development is evaluated. Every major development proposal should answer four basic questions: What is the catchment? How much additional impervious surface will the development create? How much additional runoff and peak discharge will it generate? Where will that water be retained, infiltrated, or safely conveyed? This requires mov-

ing towards catchment-level stormwater modelling, using high-resolution Digital Elevation Models, rainfall intensity data, soil characteristics, land-use and land-cover data, drainage capacity, and existing water bodies. GIS and hydrological models such as EPA-SWMM can then simulate how different development scenarios perform under varying rainfall intensities. This should become part of the development approval itself. A building should not be assessed only for its Floor Area Ratio, parking, access, and fire safety. In a flood-prone urban region, its hydrological footprint should matter as well. Roads Must Be Part Of The Solution Gurugram's roads present another opportunity. Instead of treating every road edge as a hard boundary between carriageway and drain, selected corridors can incorporate bioswales, rain gardens, per-

meable shoulders, depressed landscape areas and temporary detention zones. Parking areas can incorporate permeable surfaces wherever soil and groundwater conditions permit. The objective is not to eliminate conventional drains. It is to reduce the hydraulic load placed upon them. This is particularly important as rainfall patterns become more uncertain. A drainage system designed around historical rainfall statistics may perform adequately under an old climate regime but fail when rainfall arrives in shorter, more intense bursts. A Gurugram-specific study comparing increasing imperviousness with increasing rainfall intensity found that climate change could be the more severe threat to drainage-system performance, with the combination of urbanisation and more intense rainfall further worsening the risk.

THE BIG RESET IN HOW INDIA
BUILDS ITS DEFENCE IS HERE

Manish Kumar Jha

For decades, India's defence debate has been dominated by a familiar contradiction: ambitious military requirements but a slow acquisition system; a large scientific establishment but often inflexible project management; and a growing industrial base but insufficient access to cutting-edge technologies. That contradiction is now being confronted simultaneously at several levels. In a conversation with this author, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, who also holds charge as Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), outlined a timeline that is more significant than a list of individual weapons programmes. It is, in effect, a roadmap for changing how India buys, develops, finances, and ultimately owns military technology. The first building block is Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2026. The draft DAP 2026 is intended to make acquisition shorter, cleaner, and more responsive to the speed of technological change. The proposed framework reduces procurement categories from five to four, introduces technology-readiness-level-based categorisation, allows greater delegation, provides for two-stage trials, and seeks to monitor timelines from the RFI stage. It also raises indigenous content under the Buy Indian-IDDM category from 50% to 60%.



Buy (Global) now must have 30 % IC obligations. Further, DAP 2026 puts forth progressive indigenisation- Long Term Bulk Acquisition (LTBA), indigenous design capability, IP control-ownership. For example, Clause 26.1.1 demands the vendor to show/prove full design control, source code, In an era of drones, autonomous systems, artificial intelligence, electronic warfare, and rapidly evolving sensors, a five-year procurement cycle can mean buying yesterday's technology tomorrow. Singh's larger point is therefore important: the reform of acquisition must be about speed. But speed in procurement alone will not make India technologically sovereign. That is where the second reform becomes critical. From Procurement To R&D One of the least-discussed constraints on India's defence technology ambition has been the financing architecture for R&D.

DRDO has traditionally operated many projects within a system designed around sanctioned milestones, expenditure procedures and predetermined project structures. That model can work for conventional engineering programmes. It becomes much harder when the technology itself is moving rapidly. A radar, propulsion system, AI architecture, autonomous platform or electronic-warfare system cannot always be developed according to a rigid linear timetable. Technology development is inherently iterative: test, fail, redesign, demonstrate, modify and test again. This is why the proposed Delegation of Financial Powers, or DFP-2026, could become as important for DRDO as DAP 2026 is for acquisition. The objective is to give laboratory directors and project directors greater financial flexibility so that promising technologies can move

faster from laboratory development to demonstration and user evaluation. India cannot aspire to lead in defence technology while treating R&D finance as a conventional expenditure-control exercise. DRDO is awaiting its new full-time leadership through the Prime Minister-led selection process. Its next phase cannot simply be about managing laboratories. It has to be about managing technological missions. P-75I: Last-Minute Recheck, Final Approval Project-75I is perhaps the clearest test of whether India has learnt the difference between buying a platform and acquiring a capability. The programme for six advanced conventional submarines has been in the pipeline for years. The Finance Ministry has cleared the proposal. P75I is in the final leg, awaiting final approval from the highest authority, where some key aspects must be rechecked.

FAITH, FLIGHT AND HONOUR:

THE SIKH FIGHTER PILOT WHO
FLEW FOR BRITISH IN WWII

Divyam Sharma

The White Cliffs of Dover mark the point where Great Britain comes closest to continental Europe. On a clear, sunny day, and if the deceiving British weather allows, one can see France across the English Channel. The White Cliffs not only offer a picturesque view of the countryside, but they also stand guard as the gateway to England. When Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55 BC, his army was confronted by these very cliffs. Over 1,900 years later, the same white cliffs greeted the soldiers rescued from Dunkirk. Then, during an aerial battle in 1941, they saved an Indian Sikh Royal Air Force pilot-a man who would go on to become one of the most prominent figures in the history of both Great Britain's and India's air forces.

■ **2026 AND 1940: TWO GENERATIONS, ONE LEGACY**
In 2026, Arshdeep Singh Dang, a 28-year-old man who was born in Chandigarh and raised in London, joined the Royal Air Force as a fighter pilot. Flight Lieutenant Dang is the first Sikh pilot in the Royal Air Force since the Second World War. Photographed in uniform with a blue turban representing his faith and his flying badge pinned to his chest, Flight Lieutenant Dang serves as a testament to the enduring legacy and contributions of Sikhs to the military history of both India and the UK. In 1940, Mahinder



Singh Pujji, a Sikh hobby pilot at the Delhi Flying Club, joined the RAF and became the first Sikh pilot allowed to fly with his turban. The British accepted his request and designed a special cap that would fit under his oxygen mask and headphones, and his turban saved him at the White Cliffs of Dover when he crash-landed after being hit. Although modern fighter jets and flight helmets have evolved dramatically over more than eight decades-making it uncertain if Flight Lieutenant Dang will fly wearing his turban-the incredible story of Mahinder Singh Pujji remains truly worthy of recognition.

■ **FROM SIMLA TO LONDON**
Mahinder Singh Pujji was born in Simla on August 14, 1918, a day that would become iconic in the history of India and Pakistan 29 years later in 1947. Pujji

belonged to a well-educated family, and his father was a government officer during British rule. Pujji was a hobby pilot at the Delhi Flying Club and received his 'A' level flying certification in 1937. His first job was flying passengers from Haridwar to Badrinath. In 1938, he was offered a better position at Burmah Shell - which later became Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) - as a refuelling superintendent. The insecurities that were brewing in Europe since WWI reached their peak when Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Britain was at war again with Germany. Over the last few decades, Britain has been actively reevaluating the underappreciated contributions of its colonies, such as India and those in Africa, in the world wars. In 1939, the Royal Air Force again lifted the discriminatory colour ban and started recruiting black and brown people because it

needed manpower. He applied to the RAF in 1939 after seeing an advertisement. Mahinder Singh Pujji submitted his application and was selected. He was among the 24 'A' level license-holding Indian pilots, collectively called the X-Squad, who travelled to Britain to join the Royal Air Force. The 24 pilots included Eric Wilmar Pinto, who retired as Air Vice Marshal in the Indian Air Force, HC Dewan, who held the rank of Air Marshal and served as the head of the Eastern Command during the 1971 war, and Man Mohan Singh, one of the first Indians to fly solo from Croydon, England to Karachi in the Agha Khan Contest in 1930 along with JRD Tata, Aspy Engineer - who later became the IAF chief, and Ram Nath Chawla, a friend of Man Mohan Singh. The officer died in Australia in 1942 after being hit by a Japanese attack. Mahinder Singh Pujji and 23 other pilots arrived in Britain during the peak of the Battle of Britain in 1940, when German bombers rained hell on London with V2 rockets and bombs. The trainees arrived at Liverpool station and then went to London. The first 24 received much attention in Britain, and there was "huge publicity" around it, Pujji said in an interview. The batch of 24 Indians was invited to Windsor Castle near London to have tea with the King and the Royal Family along with the Secretary of State. Pilot Officer Pujji was posted to No. 1 RAF Depot, Uxbridge.

Congress Fled Assembly in Fear: R. Ashoka

Bengaluru : The Congress government has cancelled the House session out of fear, right after the announcement that a day-and-night dharna would be held demanding the resignation of Minister B. Nagendra. Opposition Leader R. Ashoka said that although the opposition was ready for discussion on all issues, the Congress was not prepared.

Speaking at a press conference, he said that the session, which should have been held in June itself, was delayed due to infighting in the cabinet. However, cancelling the session just three days in advance shows the failure of the ruling government. They have cancelled the entire House for the sake of Minister B. Nagendra, who is involved in a scam in the Valmiki Development Corporation. During the BJP tenure, only one message led to allegations against K.S. Eshwarappa, and his resignation was obtained to allow the House to function. The resignations of three ministers were also taken merely because they were watching mobile videos in the House. But the entire Congress government has cancelled the session to protect a minister who swallowed Dalit funds. This means that Congress leaders have taken a share from Minister Nagendra, he said.

The BJP has visited various districts and conducted studies on the increasing drought in the state. A drought study committee



was formed and tours were undertaken. Documents have been collected regarding the NICE toll irregularities. Appropriate documents have also been prepared regarding KPSC irregularities. Documents have been collected on the garbage tender scam in Bengaluru as well. We had prepared to speak on issues such as the agreement made with industrialist Gautam Adani in the tunnel road project, ration card cuts, and other matters. Yet, no opportunity was given to speak, he said.

When Dr. G. Parameshwara was the Home Minister, he had stated that cooperation would be extended for a CBI investigation. Now he has changed his stance. When questions are asked about Minister B. Nagendra, the session has been adjourned indefinitely due to a lack of courage

to answer. Instead of taking his resignation, adjourning the House is not the job of the Congress party office in the Legislative Assembly. The Congress government was already frightened when the BJP announced a day-and-night dharna. This happened because the government lacks confidence. Moreover, no minister came forward to argue in favour of Nagendra. Former CM Siddaramaiah was seen sitting sulking. Nowhere was any unity displayed by the Congress. We have cornered the ruling party. We have continuously fought for six days, he said.

Bills introduced without discussion The government has passed several bills without discussion. A bill has been introduced to grab 5% of the land in parks. The government should protect parks. The real

owners of the parks are the common people. But the government is going ahead to destroy them. If they have set their sights on Lalbagh, there is no other anti-people government like this. Similarly, parking rules have also been brought in. After bringing the tunnel road, why create parking there? Going to Lalbagh will turn it into Mallbagh, he said.

An outlet will also come up near Sankey Tank. People who go for walks in all the parks of the state must protest against the government. In one case, the Supreme Court had strongly criticised giving a park on lease. Therefore, the government has no right to do this. No previous Chief Minister brought such a law. But CM D.K. Shivakumar, who is a real estate developer, sees real estate business in everything. We will protest in all parks in the future, he said.

Those who hunt in forests are shot. Minister Ramalinga Reddy has justified this. But here, parks are being looted legally. Under the name of the Bharat Jodo programme brought by Rahul Gandhi, a scheme has been formulated and funds allocated. Taxpayers' Rs.781 crore is being given to Congress workers. State government money has been converted into Congress party money. Does Bharat Jodo mean they will join all the states? He demanded that the bills passed without any discussion be withdrawn.

AI Meets Blockchain: Building the Next Generation of Trusted Education



Bangalore : As diploma fraud and AI-generated fake certificates multiply, a small but fast-growing group of universities and training bodies are betting that pairing artificial intelligence with blockchain can make credentials nearly impossible to fake — and far easier to trust. BY THE LEARNING LEDGER STAFF EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT For centuries, a diploma was trusted because of who signed it. Today, that signature is easier than ever to forge, and easier still to fake convincingly with the help of generative AI. It is precisely that problem that a new wave of "trusted education" projects, combining blockchain's tamper-evident record-keeping with AI's verification and personalization tools, is trying to solve. The urgency behind the shift is straightforward. Employers report losing money and time hiring people on the strength of forged qualifications, while the same generative tools that power modern classrooms can just as easily produce a convincing fake certificate in minutes. That double-edged reality has pushed institutions to look for a credential that cannot be quietly altered after the fact. Where Blockchain Fits In Blockchain's contri-

written, no single party can quietly erase or edit it." — " — DESCRIPTION COMMONLY USED BY EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCHERS Where AI Comes In Artificial intelligence sits on top of that ledger rather than replacing it. In several recently documented systems, facial-recognition tools confirm that the person requesting a certificate is genuinely who they claim to be, adding a layer of protection beyond a simple login and password. Separately, AI is increasingly used to personalize coursework, automate grading and assessment, and help design curricula suited to individual students. Together, backers argue, the two technologies address different halves of the same trust problem: blockchain guarantees a record has not been altered after issuance, while AI helps confirm the record was issued to, and is being presented by, the right person in the first place. BY THE NUMBERS < 3s Typical time to verify a blockchain-based credential, versus days for manual institutional checks 30% Fewer reported fraud cases at institutions using blockchain diplomas versus paper-only records 7% Share of higher-education institutions cur-

rently issuing digital diplomas, per 2026 research 80k+ Blockchain certificates issued by the University of Lille through one credentialing platform since rollout Early Adopters, Real Graduates The shift is no longer theoretical. In January, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research issued its first blockchain-secured digital certificate through a climate-learning partnership, part of a broader push to modernize how completion of online courses is recognized. The following month, the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Centre at the University of Hyderabad in India began issuing blockchain-based certificates across its training programs, citing gains in authenticity and ease of verification. The most visible milestone came in April, when Universitas Dian Nuswantoro in Semarang, Indonesia, became the country's first university to issue diplomas secured on a blockchain, at a graduation ceremony that drew national attention. The project was built with an international partner and a blockchain-industry association, and organizers pitched it as resistant to tampering and verifiable by employers anywhere in the world.

Manohar Condemns Union Minister V. Somanna's remarks against Rahul Gandhi

Bengaluru: Kpcc general secretary S.Manohar has stated that, Instead of indulging in the disgraceful politics of appeasing Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Somanna should first understand the contribution of Rahul Gandhi and his struggles for the rights of the people.

In his press statement he stated that, Union Minister of State for Railways V. Somanna has stated that Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi is an outsider and has no right to speak about Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Somanna should understand that. Because of Rahul Gandhi's continued struggle, students across the country are today raising their voices and fighting for their rights.

The youth of the country are facing severe difficulties due to the misgovernance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Rahul Gandhi is fighting to ensure justice for deserving and honest young people. Somanna, has no moral standing to question or speak against his struggle, he said. Somanna



must understand that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rule, the country has been pushed back by 25 years. Due to the misgovernance of Narendra Modi, the country is facing serious economic challenges. People like you continue to praise and promote Narendra Modi, and this is precisely why leaders like you have been given ministerial positions, he said. It is a tradition to display photographs of Prime Ministers, patriots and freedom fighters in police stations. However, before making such statements, you should understand that the photograph of Union Home Minister Amit Shah—against whom there have been allegations concerning action against the youth of the country—is not a symbol of the freedom struggle, he said.

Embassy Pedal for the Planet 2026

Bangalore : Bengaluru's largest cyclothon, Embassy Pedal for the Planet, returns this Sunday at Embassy Manyata. A signature Embassy Group initiative, the event brings together the city's cycling community for a morning of fitness, competition, and action for a greener future.

The cyclothon will begin at 6:00 AM on Sunday.

Participants can choose from four categories - 40 km Pro-Elite, 25 km Amateur, 15 km Fun Open Ride and 2 km Kids' Ride - making it open to competitive cyclists, recreational riders and families alike.

With exciting prize money, lucky draws and thousands of riders expected, it promises to be another high-energy edition of one of Bengaluru's most anticipated cycling events.

Recurrent Headaches Need Attention, Not Just Pain Relief

Bengaluru: Headaches are a common health concern experienced by people of all ages. Often, they are linked to stress, lack of sleep, overwork, dehydration or lifestyle changes, and many people rely on over-the-counter medicines for quick relief. However, when headaches start occurring repeatedly, they may indicate the need to look deeper into the underlying causes, said Dr. Kushal Banerjee, Senior Consultant Homeopath at Dr. Kalyan Banerjee Clinic.

Dr. Banerjee explained that recurrent headaches should not be treated merely as isolated episodes of pain. Repeated headaches can be associated with several factors, including chronic stress, irregular sleep patterns, poor lifestyle habits and other health concerns that require proper attention.

He said headaches can vary significantly in their nature. While some people experience a feeling of pressure or tightness around the head, others may suffer from throbbing pain accompanied by nausea or sensitivity to light and sound. Understanding the type of headache, its timing and possible triggers can help identify the reasons behind its recurrence.

Factors such as inadequate sleep, excessive screen exposure, eye strain, poor posture,



dehydration, skipping meals, mental stress, hormonal changes and certain foods or environmental conditions may contribute to recurring headaches. Maintaining a headache diary can help individuals identify patterns by recording the timing, duration, severity, food habits, sleep quality and stress levels associated with each episode.

Dr. Banerjee cautioned that frequently relying on painkillers without addressing the root cause can sometimes worsen

the problem. Regular use of headache medication may lead to rebound headaches, creating a cycle where increasing dependence on medicines results in more frequent headaches and potential side effects.

"Instead of simply suppressing the pain, it is important to understand why the headache is occurring repeatedly," he said, adding that lifestyle modifications such as maintaining proper sleep schedules, staying hydrated, eating regular meals, reducing screen time and man-

aging stress can play an important role in preventing headaches.

Speaking about homeopathy, Dr. Banerjee said the approach focuses on understanding the individual as a whole rather than treating only the location or intensity of the pain. Factors such as headache triggers, timing, sleep patterns, lifestyle and overall health are considered while developing a treatment approach. According to him, homeopathy aims to reduce the frequency, intensity and duration of recurring headaches.

However, he advised people not to ignore warning signs. Medical consultation is necessary if headaches become more frequent, severe, change in pattern or begin affecting daily activities. Sudden and severe headaches, especially when accompanied by symptoms such as weakness, numbness, confusion, seizures, vision problems, speech difficulties, vomiting or fever, require immediate medical attention.

Dr. Banerjee emphasized that recurring headaches are signals from the body that should be understood rather than ignored. Paying attention to lifestyle habits and seeking timely medical advice can help manage the condition effectively and improve overall well-being.

PUBLIC NOTICE					
ICICI Home Finance Registered Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai - 400051					
Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai - 400059					
Branch Address: Shop No. 34/514, 1st floor, Chollampattu Building, Edappally Toll Junction, Kochi - 682024					
The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ("ICICI HFC") and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.					
Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date	
1.	Rajan Xavier (Borrower) Tissa Rajan (Co-Borrower), Kollekattu Poochakkal Po Panavally Alappuzha 688529, LHCO00001583129	Nil Resyno- 11/1-11, Resyno- 11/1-3-1, Resyno- 11/1-11, 11/1-3-1, 11/1-15, Panavally Villa, bldg 13/408, Palliveli Ward, Panavally Panchayat, chertthala Taluk, Alappuzha District Allepy 11 1 11 11 1 3 1 11 15 688549 Kerala Bounded By- North By: Ayyangayil Raman, South By: Ayyangayil Abraham, East By: Narayan, Ayyanga, West By: Saviour, Paul, Thomas, Road.	13-08-2026 Rs. 14,82,291.04/-	08-08-2026	
2.	Jean Ronald (Borrower), Latha, (Co-Borrower), Kaithathara Ezhupanna Alappuzha Alappuzha 688537, LHCO00001459331	Nil Chertthala Taluk Alappuzha Alappuzha Re Sy No 293 4 A 2 2 688537 Kerala Bounded By- North By: Water Channel, South By: Property of Urumis Tharakan, East By: Property of Vijayan, Priyabhavan, West By: Property of Mariam.	13-08-2026 Rs. 42,270/-	08-08-2026	
3.	Jean Ronald (Borrower) Latha (Co-Borrower), Kaithathara Ezhupanna Alappuzha Alappuzha 688537, LHCO00001459338	Nil Chertthala Taluk Alappuzha Alappuzha Re Sy No 293 4 A 2 2 688537 Kerala Bounded By- North By: Water Channel, South By: Property of Urumis Tharakan, East By: Property of Vijayan, Priyabhavan, West By: Property of Mariam.	13-08-2026 Rs. 8,17,697/-	08-08-2026	
The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.					
Date: August 26, 2026 Place: Allepy, Alappuzha					
Authorized Officer, ICICI Home Finance Company Limited					

56,99,660 Voters in SIR Draft Electoral Roll: Maheshwar Rao

Bengaluru : A total of 56,99,660 voters have been included in the draft electoral roll prepared as part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Bengaluru city, stated District Election Officer and Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao.



month: Following the publication of the draft electoral roll, claims and objections can be filed from today until September 23. The process of issuing notices and disposing of claims and objections will be carried out from today until October 22. The final electoral roll will be published on October 27, 2026, he stated.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE					
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Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai - 400059					
Branch Office: Ground floor, Shop No. V/1165-351C, SM Towers, Madannada JN, Vadakkkevila PO, Pallimukku, Kollam-691010					
Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.					
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (B) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.					
Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch	
1.	Mahesh Kumar BK (Borrower), Manjusha V (Co-Borrower), Charuvila Puthenveedu Chalakkara Pallimam P.O Nedumpam Kollam 691576 Kerala, LHKO00001529414	RE SY No.229/17/2/2 old Sy No. 4393 P/43 Block No. 21 Pallimam Village Nedumpam Panchayat Kollam Taluk Kollam District 691576 Kannanallur RE SY No. 229/17/2/2 Kollam 691576 Kerala Bounded By- North By: Property of Nissam, South By: Property of Mohanan, East By: Property of Brick Factory, West By: Wrtland Property/ Date of Possession 21-Aug-2026	13-05-2026 Rs. 14,56,864.2/-	Kollam	
The above-mentioned borrower(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.					
Date: August 26, 2026 Place: Kollam					
Authorized Office, ICICI Home Finance Company Limited					

Farewell accorded to Justice V. Gopala Krishna Rao



Visakhapatnam (TSIT) A full bench of the Andhra Pradesh High Court accorded a warm farewell to Justice Venuturumalli Gopala Krishna Rao on Tuesday on the eve of his retirement. The farewell programme was held at the First Court Hall of the High Court in the presence of Chief Justice Justice Lisa Gill. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Justice described Justice Gopala Krishna Rao as a committed and dedicated judge. Born on August 30, 1964, at Challapalli in the erstwhile Krishna district, he completed his schooling and college education at Challapalli and Machilipatnam and began practising as an advocate in 1989. He was selected to the Andhra Pradesh Judicial Service in 1994 as a Junior Civil Judge and later served in various positions, including as District and Sessions Judge. He assumed charge as an Additional Judge of the High Court in January 2023 and was appointed a permanent judge in August 2024. Justice Lisa Gill said he had delivered several important judgments during his tenure and wished him a peaceful and healthy retired life. Justice Gopala Krishna Rao expressed his gratitude to all those who extended their support and cooperation throughout his career. He thanked everyone who guided and encouraged him from his student days through his journey as an advocate and judge. Additional Solicitor General Challa Dhananjay, Advocate General Dammalapati Srinivas and AP High Court Bar Association President Prabhunath Vasu Reddy also conveyed their best wishes to the retiring judge and shared their experiences.

AP, UK Governments Sign MoU for Urban Development and Infrastructure

TSIT, Visakhapatnam : The Andhra Pradesh Government and the Government of the United Kingdom have signed a Government to Government MoU to strengthen cooperation in urban development and infrastructure. The agreement, signed at the Secretariat in Velagapudi in the presence of Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister P. Narayana, aims to bring international expertise, advanced technology and sustainable practices to the development of Amaravati and urban centres across the state. Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar and UK Department for Business and Trade Government Partnerships Deputy Director Chaz Walia signed the agreement. Under the partnership, the two sides will cooperate in infrastructure planning, sustainable urban development, technology transfer and innovation, and integrated urban mobility. The UK's expertise will be utilised to develop Amaravati



as a world-class, smart and liveable capital with better connectivity and sustainable infrastructure. The cooperation will also cover the state's 123 municipalities and municipal corporations, focusing on roads, drainage, drinking water, solid and liquid waste management and other basic infrastructure. Minister Narayana said around Rs.40,000 crore worth of infrastructure works are being taken up across the state with the support of the Central and State governments and that UK technology and best practices could help improve their quality and efficiency. The MoU will also facilitate cooperation in areas such as Intelligent Transport Systems

(ITS), Building Information Modelling (BIM), Digital Twins, modern construction technologies and R&D. Integrated urban mobility initiatives will cover metro rail, bus systems, airport connectivity, pedestrian infrastructure and data-driven transport planning, with the aim of reducing congestion and pollution while improving public transport. The government will also explore opportunities for UK investment and financial support, including through UK Export Finance, subject to applicable conditions. Referring to Amaravati's ongoing association with UK-based Foster + Partners in the design of key government buildings, Minister Narayana said the new agreement would further

expand opportunities to utilise UK expertise in urban planning, sustainable infrastructure, riverfront development, urban renewal and mixed-use development. He said the MoU was pursued following the directions of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and was aimed at helping develop Amaravati among the world's leading cities by adopting global technology and best practices. APCRDA Commissioner Vijaya Ramaraju, senior officials from APCRDA, CDMA and Andhra Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation, along with senior representatives of the UK Government and its business and infrastructure teams, attended the programme.

PaniIT Andhra Pradesh summit to drive innovation for Swarna Andhra vision



Vijayawada : PaniIT Alumni India has announced the PaniIT Andhra Pradesh Summit 2026, scheduled to be held on October 3 at Novotel Vijayawada, with a focus on promoting innovation and technology-driven growth under the Swarna Andhra Vision 2047. The summit, themed "Catalysing Innovation for Swarna Andhra Vision 2047," will bring together policymakers, industry leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, technology experts, academicians and IIT alumni to discuss opportunities in emerging sectors. Key areas of focus include Artificial Intelligence, DeepTech, MedTech, healthcare, green energy, semicon-

ductors, data centres, quantum computing, defence and aerospace technologies. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will attend the summit as the chief guest. PaniIT Alumni India Chairman Prabhat Kumar said the event would help strengthen collaboration between government, industry, academia and the global IIT alumni network. Organisers said the summit aims to create partnerships, promote applied research and support Andhra Pradesh's goal of becoming a leading technology and innovation hub. Senior officials, corporate leaders, investors, startups and researchers are expected to participate in the event.

GITAM Hospital Launches Eye Donation Awareness Fortnight

Visakhapatnam (TSIT) GITAM Hospital's Department of Ophthalmology on Tuesday launched an Eye Donation Fortnight campaign to create awareness on eye donation and help prevent corneal blindness. The campaign will continue till September 7 through digital outreach and various public awareness programmes. GIMSR Principal Dr. G. Sambasiva Rao said the campaign aims to dispel misconceptions about eye donation and encourage people to pledge their eyes. He also said GIMSR would soon commence organ transplantation surgeries under the Jeevan Daan pro-



gramme. Head of Ophthalmology Dr. V.V.L.N. Rao stressed the need for greater community participation to address corneal blindness. Professors Dr. K.V.V. Satyanarayana and Dr. N. Suhasini called for increased eye donations to reduce the burden of corneal blindness in the country. As part of the campaign, awareness sessions, quizzes, elocution,

painting and poster-making competitions will be conducted. An awareness rally will be held at RK Beach on August 30 in association with educational institutions. Outreach programmes, door-to-door campaigns, eye screening camps and community awareness sessions will also be organised at Jalaripeta, Endada, Bheemili and Modavalasa.

APSDPS Driving Data-Driven Governance Towards Swarna Andhra @2047

Visakhapatnam (TSIT) The Andhra Pradesh State Development Planning Society (APSDPS) has emerged as a key execution engine for the state government's ambitious Swarna Andhra @2047 roadmap, translating long-term development goals into measurable outcomes within two years. Guided by the Chief Minister's Padri Sutralu, the government aims to build a \$2.4 trillion economy, achieve a per capita income of Rs.55 lakh by 2047 and sustain annual growth of 15 per cent or more. Working through four major wings covering capacity building, economic and policy research, information technology and the State Institution for Transformation, APSDPS is



strengthening data-driven planning and governance from all 175 constituencies to 28 districts. Under the iGOT Karmayogi initiative, more than 8.2 lakh government employees are being monitored through real-time dashboards, with Andhra Pradesh securing second rank nationally with over 1.52 crore course completions. The government is also establishing the Global Institute for Good

Governance (GIGG) at Amaravati, along with the Andhra Governance Innovation Lab (AGIL), to promote policy innovation and evidence-based administration. At the grassroots level, Constituency Vision Action Plan Units (CVAPUs) have been established across all 175 Assembly constituencies, with trained Young Professionals monitoring more than 600 development indicators through live dashboards. The Chief Minister is also reviewing all 28 districts through an integrated system combining economic indicators, citizen feedback and grievance-resolution data, while a centralised Review Tracker ensures follow-up action by departments.

10 crore devotees expected; 4,932 works taken up at a cost of Rs.4,026 crore



TSIT, Visakhapatnam. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to organise the 2027 Godavari Pushkarams on a grand scale by blending spirituality with nature worship and ensuring world-class facilities for devotees. Reviewing the arrangements at the Secretariat on Tuesday, he said the Pushkarams would be held for 12 days from June 26 to July 7, 2027, with an estimated 8 to 10 crore devotees expected to take holy dips. A total of 4,932 works costing Rs.4,026 crore are being taken up, with Rs.899 crore already allocated. As many as 440 bathing ghats will be made available, including 259 existing ghats being upgraded and 181 new ghats being constructed. The Chief Minister stressed that there should be no compromise on sanitation, drinking water, medical facilities, accommodation, transport and safety. He also called for developing a temple tourism circuit covering important spiritual destinations such as Pithapuram, the Pancharama temples, Dwaraka Tirumala, Annavaram, Vadapalli and Antavadi, besides encouraging homestays and expe-

ditioning approvals for new hotels. Officials informed the Chief Minister that advanced technologies such as AI-based crowd analytics, CCTV monitoring, drone surveillance and QR-based vehicle identification would be used for crowd and security management. Thirty temporary field hospitals, ambulances, medical camps, 2,697 rescue boats and 8,955 trained swimmers will be deployed during the Pushkarams. Fifty of the 260 gram panchayats along the Godavari basin will be developed as Model Pushkar Panchayats, with Muni Koodali in East Godavari selected as the pilot model. To promote green mobility, 487 green-energy buses will be deployed and 11 bus stations upgraded. Mr. Naidu directed officials to ensure that no sewage enters the Godavari, improve roads connecting the ghats, inspect the capacity of bridges and undertake necessary repairs. He also suggested examining the proposal to celebrate the event as 'Akhand Godavari Pushkarams', covering the river from its origin to its confluence with the sea, including its tributaries, streams and canals.

Justice Mallikarjuna Rao Sworn in as AP Lokayukta

TSIT, Visakhapatnam. Justice (Retd.) Tallapragada Mallikarjuna Rao, former judge of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, was sworn in as the new Lokayukta of Andhra Pradesh at a ceremony held at the Lok Bhavan Durbar Hall on Tuesday. Governor S. Abdul Nazeer administered the oath of office in the presence of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. GAD Principal Secretary J. Shyamala Rao commenced the programme, following



which the Registrar of the Andhra Pradesh Lokayukta read out the appointment warrant

issued by the Governor. The Governor and the Chief Minister later congratulated Justice

Mallikarjuna Rao and presented him bouquets. Minister for Labour, Factories, Boilers and Insurance Medical Services Vasamsetti Subhash, High Court judges, DGP Harish Kumar Gupta, Governor's Special Chief Secretary G. Anantha Ramu, Advocate General Dammalapati Srinivas, AP Legislative Assembly Secretary General Prasanna Kumar Suryadevara, senior officials of the Law Department and other government officials attended the swearing-in ceremony.

Give Priority to Manufacturing Sector: CR Media Academy Chairman Alapati Suresh Kumar



TSIT, Visakhapatnam : CR Media Academy Chairman Alapati Suresh Kumar called upon industrialists to give greater priority to the manufacturing sector to strengthen the country's economic growth. Speaking as the chief guest at the Flagship Expo-Visakhapatnam Curtain Raiser organised by the Andhra Pradesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry Federation on Tuesday, he said that while India had made significant progress in the services and other sectors, the manufacturing sector had not achieved the desired growth. He urged entrepreneurs to promote manufacturing in the spirit of the Centre's Make in India initiative, stressing that the sector plays a vital role in wealth creation. He also suggested introducing basic manufacturing and product development skills to students at the college level and strengthening coordination with technical education institutions. He released the Business Expo brochure on the occasion. AP Chambers of Commerce and Industry Federation President Poturi Bhaskara Rao said the Business Expo would be held in Visakhapatnam on September 11, 12 and 13, providing a platform to showcase the city's growing industrial and business potential. Special pavilions would be set up for sectors including food processing, tourism and start-up companies, he said. Chamber of Commerce Secretary Subbarao Ravuri, B. Rajasekhara and others attended the programme.

Employment Opportunities for Youth are a Priority: Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy

TSIT, Visakhapatnam : Providing employment opportunities to the youth is a key priority of the coalition government, said Minister for Transport, Youth and Sports Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy. He welcomed the government's approval of the Job Calendar-2026 with 10,060 vacancies, stating that it would provide a major opportunity for unemployed youth in the state. Under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, the government is focusing on creating job and employment opportunities and plans to fill vacancies in four phases. Several recruitment notifications are expected to be issued during September and October. The calendar includes vacancies in Group-I and Group-II services, Police, Fire, Prisons, Forest, Animal Husbandry, Excise, Engineering, Power and other departments. The Minister



said 2,991 teacher posts would also be filled through the DSC recruitment process. He urged unemployed youth to make the best use of the opportunities, work hard and prepare seriously for competitive examinations to secure government jobs. He called upon those who obtain government employment to serve the people and the state with dedication and commitment. The Minister said the government's objective was to turn the aspirations of the state's youth into reality and provide them with a secure and bright future.

Suzlon Projects to Strengthen Andhra Pradesh's Renewable Energy Sector



Visakhapatnam (TSIT) : Andhra Pradesh is aiming to emerge as a leading renewable energy hub with a target of developing 175 GW of renewable energy capacity, Minister for Education and IT Nara Lokesh said. Speaking at a public meeting after laying the foundation stone for Suzlon Wind Energy projects at Huliker in Kanekallu mandal of Rayadurg constituency, he said Suzlon's renewed partnership with Andhra Pradesh would mark a new chapter in the state's clean energy journey. Suzlon has been associated with Andhra Pradesh for more than two decades and has helped build a strong wind energy ecosystem. Its Anantapur unit has an annual manufacturing capacity of around 1,260 MW and provides direct employment to about 1,200 people, with more than 70 per cent being locals. The new projects will add 1,325 MW of renewable energy capacity, attract investments of around Rs.10,000 crore and create more than 4,000 direct and indirect jobs. Suzlon already has

around 1,600 MW of installed capacity in the state, while another 2,700 MW is under development and construction. Lokesh said the state is focusing on integrating solar, wind and energy storage technologies to meet the growing power demand from industries and data centres. With Andhra Pradesh developing a major data-centre ecosystem, renewable energy will play a crucial role in meeting future energy requirements. Lokesh said the government is developing 22 industrial clusters across sectors including renewable energy, data centres, electronics, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, chemicals, fisheries and manufacturing to create complete industrial ecosystems rather than bringing individual companies in isolation. As part of the partnership between the Andhra Pradesh Government and Suzlon, around 12,000 youth, including 25 per cent women, will receive skill development training for green energy jobs through centres at Uravakonda and Vijayawada.

NMDC Launches Three-Month Campaign Ahead of Vigilance Awareness Week 2026

TSIT DESK

Hyderabad, 25 August 2026: NMDC Limited has commenced a Three-Month Campaign as a prelude to Vigilance Awareness Week (VAW) 2026, in accordance with the guidelines of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). The campaign aims to promote awareness and reinforce the values of integrity, transparency, probity and good governance across the organization. As part of the campaign, the Vigilance Department of NMDC conducted a Two-Day Capacity Building Programme recently at NMDC Head Office, Hyderabad. The programme was organized to enhance awareness and build capacity among employees on key focus areas identified by the CVC. The session was graced by the presence of Shri Anurag Kapil, Director (Finance), NMDC and CVO, NMDC. In his address, Director



(Finance) emphasized the close linkage between Vigilance and Finance functions and stressed the importance of recording clear, specific and well-reasoned rationale and justification on official files to ensure transparency, accountability and sound decision-making. During the concluding session, Shri C. Neelakanta Reddy, CVO, while addressing the participants, highlighted the theme of Vigilance Awareness Week (VAW) 2026 – “Probity for Prosperity” and emphasized the need to inculcate

the core values of transparency, ethics and accountability in all organizational processes. He urged the participants to actively contribute towards strengthening NMDC’s preparedness and to ensure its effective participation in line with the CVC’s emphasis and guidance for VAW 2026. Shri C. Neelakanta Reddy, Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO), NMDC highlighted the significance of the campaign and the importance of strengthening vigilance practices across the organization.

RAJNATH CLEARS DRDO MISSILE TECH TRANSFER TO PRIVATE FIRMS

AGENCY

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the transfer of DRDO-developed technologies of all conventional missile systems to Indian industries for production within the country. “This Transfer of Technology (ToT) marks an important milestone in promoting greater participation of the Indian industries in the defence ecosystem by enabling them to undertake indigenous production, as per applicable qualifications, certifications and regulatory requirements,” said a press note by the PIB on Tuesday, August 25. The provision is aimed at facilitating the transition of missile systems from the development stage to industrial-scale production. It reflects DRDO’s efforts to harness the capabilities of Indian industry in developing and manufacturing



advanced defence technologies. The initiative is also expected to boost domestic manufacturing capacity, strengthen the defence industrial ecosystem, and create opportunities for MSMEs and other technology partners to participate in the supply chain. It would enhance the operational capability of Indian

industry and reduce our dependence on imports while supporting our own defence manufacturing sector. This would allow the DRDO to work with Indian industry to facilitate the transfer and absorption of advanced defence technologies and strengthen the indigenous defence capabilities.

According to the Hindustan Times, “The Defence Ministry will soon float a request for proposal (RFP) inviting private-sector firms and conglomerates, including ICOMM, Adani, Bharat Forge, the Tata Group, and the Mahindra Group, to manufacture the 180-200 km-range Astra Mark 2 missile.”

■ DEMAND FOR INDIGENOUS MISSILE SYSTEMS ON RISE

The decision comes in the wake of a rise in demand for indigenous missile systems from both the Indian armed forces and foreign nations such as Indonesia, which has shown interest in acquiring the DRDO’s Astra missile, media reports said. The policy shift is also aimed at expanding production capacity and supporting defence exports. Until now, while India permitted private participation in aircraft, drones, and artillery, missile production had remained under state-run defence organisations. This Transfer of Technology marks an important milestone in enabling Indian industries in the defence ecosystem, as per applicable qualifications, certifications, and regulatory requirements,” said the PIB on August 25.

boltt Makes Its Smartphone Debut with Ace 5G and Evo

TSIT DESK

25 August 2026: boltt, the homegrown smartphone brand from the house of Fire-Boltt, today announced the launch of its first smartphones, the Ace 5G and Evo, marking its entry into the smartphone segment. Designed for modern Indian consumers, the smartphones bring together capable performance, AI-powered experiences, immersive displays and long-lasting battery life, with a focus on the features that matter most in daily life. The Ace 5G and Evo feature a large 6.79-inch display with a 120Hz refresh rate, offering smooth scrolling, responsive interactions and an immersive viewing experience across entertainment, browsing and content consumption. With up to 600 nits’ brightness, the displays are built to deliver clear and comfortable viewing across different conditions. Google Gemini-powered AI experiences are integrated across both devices, with features including Circle to Search and Google Lens that allow users to search on-screen content, identify objects, translate text and discover information without interrupting what they are doing. AI Night Mode further enhances low-light photography through intel-

ligent image processing. Running on Android 16, the smartphones offer a clean, no-bloatware experience, bringing Google’s AI ecosystem together with a streamlined interface. An 8MP AI selfie camera with Real Tone is designed to deliver natural-looking selfies across diverse skin tones, complemented by AI-powered imaging capabilities. A 6000mAh battery powers both devices, supporting extended usage across streaming, gaming, social media, music and navigation. At 7.95mm slim, the smartphones combine a contemporary profile with everyday comfort and usability. Commenting on the smartphone debut, Arnab Kishore, Founder & CEO, boltt said “We are taking a consumer first approach to smartphones, with a clear focus on making technology more relevant, accessible and meaningful to everyday consumers. Our entry into the category is rooted in a simple belief: consumers should have access to the experiences they value without having to compromise on what matters to them. Ace 5G and Evo mark the beginning of our smartphone journey, and we look forward to bringing this approach to a much wider set of consumers across India.”

INDIA HOLDS FIRM: Domestic Momentum Builds as AI Trade Unwinds and Global Markets Diverge Amid Hormuz Tensions

TSIT DESK

Mumbai, 25th August 2026: PL Asset Management, the asset management arm of PL Capital Group, has released its PMS Monthly Newsletter for July 2026, reporting that India’s domestic fundamentals — earnings, credit growth and institutional flows — held firm through the month even as a reignited Iran-linked conflict kept oil prices elevated and tested risk appetite across global markets. July was shaped by a fraying Iran ceasefire and renewed disruption in the Strait of Hormuz. A May memorandum that had briefly restored tanker traffic collapsed during the month; renewed attacks on vessels and a resumed US blockade pushed transit volumes back toward war-time lows, keeping Brent crude in a wide \$80-\$120 band it has held since the March strikes. US core inflation, however, came in subdued — July core CPI rose just 0.2% month-on-month and 2.5% year-on-year, matching the slowest annual pace since March 2021 — leading markets to pare bets on near-term Fed action ahead of Fed Chair Kevin Warsh’s remarks at the Jackson Hole symposium. Global equity markets diverged sharply in response.



The Hang Seng rose 13.13% in July while the KOSPI fell 22.19%, the Nasdaq 100 declined 6.61% and the Nikkei 225 dropped 8.14% — a broad unwind of the AI- and semiconductor-led trade that had powered several Asian markets earlier in the year. The Nifty 50 gained 2.17% over the same month, closing July at 24,383.60 with the rupee at 95.42 to the dollar, as India’s domestic fundamentals held their ground against a volatile external backdrop.

■ DOMESTIC BUYING STREAK EXTENDS AS FOREIGN FLOWS BEGIN TO TURN

Domestic institutional investors — mutual funds, insurers and pension funds — extended their net buying

over four years, even as aggregate foreign ownership declined — consistent with a rotation and broadening of exposure rather than a wholesale retreat, with foreign ownership as a share of the market sitting near a multi-year low.

streak to 37 consecutive months in July, the longest such run in data going back to 2007, continuing to absorb foreign selling through the month. Foreign investors showed the clearest signs yet of returning: financial-services shares drew renewed FII buying that reversed more than \$12 billion of prior outflows, alongside a record inflow into index-eligible government securities, with banking stocks recording their strongest fortnightly inflow in over a year. India also reclaimed its rank as the world’s fifth-largest stock market. Beneath the headline numbers, the ownership picture looks healthier still: the number of stocks with foreign holding above 1% has broadened from roughly 900 to 1,300

■ EARNINGS ACCELERATION CONFIRMS THE GROWTH STORY

Corporate earnings accelerated sharply in the first quarter of FY27. Median EPS growth across the listed universe jumped to 24% year-on-year, up from just 6% in the prior quarter, with sales, operating profit and PAT growth all moving higher together rather than a single metric driving the number. Industrial production also hit its fastest pace in nearly two years, with capital-goods output and electrical equipment as the standout categories — pointing to an investment-led recovery rather than a consumption-only story. Three independent data series are running well ahead of their trailing five-year averages at once — a broader signal than any single print. Industrial output (IIP) grew 7.3% in June, against a trailing five-year average of approximately 5.5%.

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



TSIT DESK

National, August 2026: Dhaksha Unmanned Systems Private Limited, a subsidiary of Coromandel International Limited, today inaugurated its new manufacturing facility at Aymicheri region in Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu. The facility was inaugurated by Mr. Arun Alagappan, Executive Chairman, Coromandel International Limited, marking an important step in strengthening India’s indigenous drone manufacturing capabilities in agriculture, defence and enterprise. The facility will support the development and execution of larger and complex programmes across its key UAV verticals, while enabling greater indigenisation of critical technologies and strengthening its ability to

serve evolving customer requirements. During the event, Dhaksha announced the launch of two new agricultural drone models, the DH Agrigator E10 Prime and DH Agrigator E10 Eco. Developed with indigenous components, the E10 Prime aligns with the Nammo Drone Didi programme and supports India’s growing domestic drone ecosystem, while the E10 Eco offers an affordable solution designed to expand access to drone-based farming services for small and marginal farmers and rural entrepreneurs. Beyond agriculture, the facility will also support Dhaksha’s growing defence portfolio, including surveillance and logistics applications. A dedicated production line for defence applications will strengthen the company’s execution capabilities.

AI+ SMARTPHONE ANNOUNCES NOVA 2 POWER THROUGH PROJECT OPEN REVIEW 2.0, UNVEILING A BOLD NEW DESIGN AND POWERFUL PERFORMANCE

TSIT DESK

New Delhi - Gurugram, August 2026: AI+ Smartphone announced Nova 2 Power, the newest addition to its Nova 2 Series, through Project Open Review 2.0, revealing the device’s design, colourways and chipset ahead of its market debut. The programme invites reviewers, creators, journalists, technology enthusiasts and ethical hackers to independently put Nova 2 Power to the test before it reaches consumers. Building on the first edition of Project Open Review, which drew more than 700 registrations, Open Review 2.0 expands participation to include ethical hackers for the first time, reflecting AI+’s commitment to building Trust through Transparency before the product reaches the end consumer. With Nova 2 Power, AI+ Smartphone is introducing a smartphone built around two defining ideas - “Design that inspires and Power that outlasts.” The design story comes to life through two



striking dual Colour Fusion finishes: Golden Blue Fusion, which brings together muted gold and deep navy blue in a fluid gradient that shifts from understated warmth to a deeper, bolder tone; and Blue Fusion, which transitions from cool ocean blue to vivid sunset orange for a younger, more expressive visual identity. Rather than treating colour as a surface-level addition, the design language brings contrasting tones together in a dual flowing finish, giving Nova 2 Power a distinctive and recognisable identity. The approach is designed for consumers who

increasingly see their smartphone not just as a technology device, but as an extension of their personal style. Under the hood, Nova 2 Power runs on the MediaTek Dimensity 7100, built on a 6nm process designed to deliver a balance of sustained performance and power efficiency. Madhav Sheth, CEO, AI+ Smartphone and Founder, NxtQuantum Shift Technologies, said, “Nova 2 Power represents the next evolution of the Nova Series bringing together performance and a design identity that is distinctly its own. The Dimensity 7100 gives it the

performance foundation, while our new Colour Fusion finishes allow the device to stand out beyond specifications. But we also believe a product should earn confidence before it asks consumers for it. With Project Open Review 2.0, we are putting the Nova 2 Power to test before it reaches the end consumer” Under Project Open Review 2.0, participants will get early, independent access to evaluate Nova 2 Power across all the specs and overall user experience. The process is entirely unscripted, with no expectation of a favourable verdict.

Kotak BizLabs Season 3 Expands National Footprint, Will Support 100+ Startups

TSIT DESK

25 August 2026: IIM Calcutta Innovation Park joins Kotak’s flagship CSR initiative as an incubator partner, extending its reach across eastern and north-eastern India Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. (“KMBL”/ “Kotak”) today announced Season 3 of the Kotak BizLabs Accelerator Programme, its flagship CSR initiative for early-revenue-stage startups. Season 3 will run from August 2026 to October 2027 and support 100+ startups across India through mentorship, ecosystem access and catalytic funding. Season 3 brings together five incubation partners: IIM Calcutta Innovation Park, CII Initiatives (IIMA Ventures), IIMBI/NSRCEL at IIM Bangalore, T-Hub and FITT at IIT Delhi. Since its inception, the Kotak BizLabs Accelerator Programme has received 4,500+ applications from startups across India, accelerated 125+ high-



potential ventures, and awarded grants to 100+ startups, enabling founders to scale innovative and impact-driven solutions. “Season 3 takes high-calibre support to regions where entrepreneurs with

promising ideas often lack access to structured ecosystem support. Our partnership with IIM Calcutta Innovation Park extends our reach across eastern and north-eastern India and connects Kotak BizLabs with a wider net-

work of regional startup hubs. Our goal is to give every participating startup access to the mentorship, networks and funding support it needs to take its next step,” said Himanshu Nivsarkar, Head - CSR & ESG, Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. Season 3 will focus on sectors like Agritech, Climate tech, Fintech, Sustainability, Healthtech, Edtech, Clean energy, Waste management and Sustainable manufacturing and have a special focus on deep-tech. Across the five incubation hubs, participating startups will receive access to mentorship, industry connections and growth support, with the respective incubators managing cohort selection and acceleration. The Kotak BizLabs Accelerator Programme is a CSR initiative of Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited. Applications for Season 3 are now open to DPIIT-recognised startups. Eligible startups can apply through the Kotak BizLabs Season 3 application page.

BRITISH MAN CHARGED
IN SINGAPORE TWO
YEARS AFTER ALLEGED
THEFT AT AIRPORT



AGENCY

Singapore has charged a British man for theft more than two years after he allegedly stole a denim jacket from a store at the airport shopping mall. The police were alerted to the theft in the evening of 14 August 2024 when a retail assistant at Singapore's Changi Airport realised a blue denim jacket was missing from a display mannequin. Surveillance footage showed a man removing the jacket, worth about S\$350 (\$275; £202), from the mannequin and leaving the store without making payment. By the time the authorities established his identity, the man had departed Singapore. The 26-year-old was arrested on 15 August this year while in transit at the airport and was charged on

Tuesday. "The police take a serious stance of shop theft and will deal firmly with offenders in accordance with the law. "Offenders should not assume that they can evade detection simply by leaving Singapore after committing an offence," the Singapore Police Force said in a statement on Monday. In its statement the police also recounted a separate arrest of a 50-year-old Polish woman who had stolen two bottles of perfume from retail stores inside one of the airport's terminals on 11 June this year. She was arrested in the transit area shortly before she was scheduled to depart Singapore. The woman was charged with two counts of theft on Tuesday. Those convicted of theft in Singapore face up to seven years in jail.



■ US removes Syria from list of state sponsors of terrorism

China warns it will protect its interests after
US widens sanctions against Iran

AGENCY

China has vowed to protect its interests after the US announced plans to widen economic sanctions against Iran and its trading partners, which include Beijing. Foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian said China was firmly opposed to what it called "illegal unilateral sanctions" and would take "all necessary measures" to safeguard its rights. This came after US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced the new measures on Monday, warning any nation financially partnering with Iran would be isolated. China is the biggest buyer of Iranian oil, although the trade has declined under the US blockade of Iran's ports. Lin said: "Cooperation between China and Iran has always been con-



ducted within the framework of international law and should not be interfered with or disrupted." Bessent described the plans for sanctions as "the single greatest financial offensive ever" against Iran, warning banks and businesses would share in Iran's isolation if they refused to cut ties with the country. He declined to focus on specific nations, but said US President Donald Trump

would be phoning world leaders "with specific requests to cease their interactions with the regime". However, responding to a question about Chinese banks, Bessent said he wanted to make clear "no one was above the reach of US sanctions". The announcement comes ahead of planned talks between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping next month. Washington is likely

to be wary of potential retaliation from Beijing, which processes the majority of the world's rare earths and other critical minerals, crucial in the manufacture of many high-tech products. Beijing has already tightened export controls on rare earths as part of previous trade negotiations with the US. China's response followed Iranian Economy Minister Ali Madanizadeh saying Tehran was "fully prepared" for the wider sanctions, which he said would lead to "another defeat" for the US. "The government is and was ready and has a two-year plan to manage these events," he told state television. "We also have our own tools and know how to play the game," he said, adding Tehran had been "waiting for these plans for a long time".

US firefighters say major
blaze near Reno about a
quarter contained



AGENCY

Texas: US fire crews have reported progress in their efforts to tackle a large wildfire menacing the city of Reno, Nevada - saying the blaze is about a quarter contained. The Hawk Fire, which began on Saturday, had spread over 15,000 acres by Monday, firefighters said. Evacuation orders remain in place for 23,000 people, though other residents have now been allowed to return to their homes. Tens of thousands of other residents have been told to be ready to leave at any moment. Officials are concerned that gusts of wind could drive the flames towards more homes. Unfavourable weather conditions are forecast for the next two days, meaning the fire could continue to burn during that timeframe. No deaths have been reported, though seven people have been injured. The fire, which was first reported on Saturday morning, spread in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains near Reno due to those same windy and unpredictable weather conditions. The immediate "go now" evacuation zone and wider "get set" area - where people are being warned to prepare to evacuate - do not extend to the centre of Reno, but they do affect large urban areas and part of a highway. Large air tankers and helicopters have been flying over the affected area dropping water and fire retardants. In their update on

Monday afternoon, fire officials said the blaze had been at least 27% contained. Chief Richard Edwards, of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, said those injured were four civilians and three firefighters, who suffered minor burns. Edwards added that 32 homes had been destroyed and six damaged, and that those numbers were expected to increase. Shelters have been set up in the area to take in displaced residents. While firefighters have made progress, more than two-thirds of the fire's perimeter remains uncontained. The fire is thought to have been caused by humans. Edwards added on Monday that investigators did not yet know if the blaze was set intentionally. Scientists say that human-induced climate change makes the warm, dry conditions more likely that assist the rapid spread of wildfires. Reno's average temperature has gone up by over 4C since the 1970s, faster than any other big US city, according to Climate Central. Nevada's Governor Joe Lombardo earlier declared a state of emergency in surrounding Washoe County, and ordered the National Guard to join firefighting and law enforcement efforts. "This is an active and rapidly evolving situation and I urge everyone in the affected areas to remain vigilant and follow the direction of local officials," he said on Saturday.

LOCKERBIE BOMBING TRIAL POSTPONED
DAYS BEFORE IT WAS DUE TO START

AGENCY

Libya: The trial of a Libyan man over the Lockerbie bombing has been postponed for a third time, after new evidence on the 37-year-old case came to light three days ago. Jury selection was due to get under way in Washington DC on Wednesday but the BBC understands a new start date has been set for January next year. Lawyers acting for Abu Agila Mas'ud Kheir Al-Marimi said "newly discovered evidence" previously unknown to the defence and prosecutors from the US government emerged on Friday 21 August. Al-Marimi has denied building the bomb that destroyed Pan Am Flight 103 on 21 December 1988, killing 270 people. His lawyers told the court: "Constitutional and ethical obligations require the defence to investigate this development." They said they met Al-Marimi on Sunday and he agreed that they should ask for the postponement. The trial judge,



Dabney Friedrich, has agreed that the start date should be set aside, underlining the potential importance of the new evidence. She would have been extremely reluctant to allow an 11th hour postponement after months of preparation and marathon pre-trial legal battles. For the relatives of those who died and Al-Marimi himself, this latest delay means a verdict might not come until next spring. It is yet another stunning development in a saga that has witnessed countless twists and turns over nearly four decades. Pan Am 103

was flying from Heathrow to New York when the bomb exploded in its forward hold, breaking the plane apart at 31,000 feet. All 259 passengers and crew on board were killed. Another 11 people died in Lockerbie when the wreckage fell on their homes. Of the victims, 190 were American and 43 from the UK. Nearly four decades later, the bombing remains the worst terror attack and mass murder in British history. Al-Marimi has been in US custody since 2022 and was originally due to stand trial in May 2025. That date was set aside following a

joint request from the prosecution and defence, who cited the complexity of the case and Al-Marimi's ill health. The trial was pencilled in for April this year but was called off again, after the defence asked for more time to prepare. The Lockerbie bombing has been the subject of a joint Scottish-US investigation since December 1988. Prosecutors from the Crown Office and detectives from Police Scotland were due to travel to Washington to attend the case, and Scottish witnesses were expected to be among the first to give evidence at the trial. Laura Buchan, head of the Lockerbie investigation team at the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service said: "I recognise that this adjournment will be disappointing for the families and for those who have followed this case over many years. "As the matter remains before the court, it would not be appropriate to comment on the reasons for the adjournment.

French tourist dies in Death Valley
after car gets stuck in mud



AGENCY

France: A French tourist has died in California's Death Valley after becoming stranded on the side of the road during 46.6C (116F) heat. Police found 68-year-old Pierre Michel Formosa recently following a brief search, with the National Park service saying he died while trying to seek help in the blistering heat when his car got stuck in mud. "This is a heartbreaking reminder of how quickly conditions here can turn dangerous," Death Valley National Park Superintendent Mike Reynolds said in a statement. Soaring temperatures across the United States have caused millions of people to sweat through record heat-

waves, leading to dozens of heat-related deaths. Formosa was driving through Death Valley with his French travelling companion last Monday when their vehicle became stuck in mud on West Side Road. The pair sought help by walking across the salt flats, before severe heat prevented the 68-year-old from continuing after 1.3 miles, according to the Death Valley National Park. The travelling companion managed to hail down a nearby driver, before rangers and police found Formosa later that afternoon where he was pronounced dead. "Death Valley is an extraordinary place, but its heat, distances, and remoteness can be dangerous, regardless of experience.



Tornado tears through French village, leaving dozens hurt and homes ravaged

US-CANADA TRADE WAR ESCALATES AS TRUMP
THREATENS TARIFF HIKE ON VEHICLES

AGENCY

Washington: President Donald Trump has threatened to hike US tariffs on automobiles originating in Canada, as the trade war between the two neighbours continues to heat up. Trump said on Monday that he will increase tariffs on Canadian cars and trucks, as well as auto parts, from 25% to 50% as of 1 January. It comes after US-Canada trade talks collapsed late last week, with each side accusing the other of making unreasonable last-minute demands. Late on Monday, Canada officials announced a news conference on Tuesday where they would outline how the country would respond to the trade war and work to "protect and support Canadian workers



and businesses during these challenging times". The news conference at 11:00 ET (16:00 BST) will include government leaders in business, finance and economic development. Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Mark Carney called Trump's latest levy threat unsurprising and accused the president of

wanting to destroy Canada's auto industry. He added that Canada is ready to resume talks only if the US comes with the "right attitude". The war of words followed several US and Canadian officials saying that talks were suspended with no set date to resume. Canada walked away from

trade negotiations late on Friday night, moments before a US-imposed deadline that would add a 50% levy on nearly \$20bn (£28bn; £14bn) of Canadian imports. The collapse in talks marked a significant change in tone from earlier in the week, when both sides appeared optimistic that a new US-Canada trade deal could be reached. Canadian officials have said the US introduced last-minute demands that were "unacceptable", including a clause limiting which countries Canada could sign trade deals with. US officials, meanwhile, said it was Canada that introduced last-minute changes. "They wanted more," US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said in an interview with CNBC on Monday.

'Objects Might Fly Around In Dressing Room':

Harsha Bhogle's Massive Verdict On SL's Fury Over Umpire's Call



AGENCY

Mumbai: Sri Lanka ended Day 2 of their ongoing second Test against India on the worst-possible note, losing two wickets in just three overs before Stumps. The most agonising moment came on the final ball before play ended, as nightwatchman Prabhath Jayasuriya was given out LBW off Manav Suthar's bowling. It was a close call by Pakistani umpire Ahsan Raza, as replays later showed that the ball was marginally clipping the off-stump.

Jayasuriya was left livid after his dismissal, and was seen throwing his gloves in anger after walking into the dressing room. The Sri Lankan batters also seemed upset that umpires Raza and Sharfuddoula Saikat had decided to keep the game going till 6 PM local time, despite diminishing light at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo. The match was resumed at 5:35 PM local time after a second rain delay, but only three overs of play were possible. Ahead of the third over, the umpires

had checked the conditions with a light meter, and declared that it was okay for another over of play to take place. Speaking on the topic, reputed commentator Harsha Bhogle implied that he understood Jayasuriya and Sri Lanka's frustration, but that the decision of the umpires must be respected. "Can understand the frustration of the Sri Lankan batters but these are two high quality international panel umpires and we have to go with their judgement. I suspect there might be a few objects flying around in that dressing room this evening," Bhogle posted on his official X account. Can understand the frustration of the Sri Lankan batters but these are two high quality international panel umpires and we have to go with their judgement. I suspect there might be a few objects flying around in that dressing room this evening.



2nd Test: Rain Forces Early Stumps

India Great PR Sreejesh Asks 'Uncomfortable Question' After Hockey World Cup 2026 Exit: "Stop Hiding"

AGENCY

Mumbai: Legendary goalkeeper and two-time Olympic bronze medallist PR Sreejesh on Monday voiced his frustration over India's underwhelming showing at the FIH World Cup, saying there must be "accountability" and that the global event cannot be treated as a "dress rehearsal." The Indian men's team lost 3-5 to Argentina in Amstelveen on Monday, extinguishing their wafer-thin hopes of reaching the semifinals. The women's team, meanwhile, succumbed to the pressure of a must-win game and were knocked out of semifinal contention after being held to a goalless draw by Australia on Saturday. A member of India's bronze medal-winning teams at the 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Olympics, Sreejesh said some-



one needs to ask the "difficult" and "uncomfortable" questions over the lacklustre performances. "...Here's the uncomfortable question: Are we building a team to PLAY good hockey, or a team capable of WINNING against the best

in the world?" Sreejesh, India's most successful hockey goalkeeper, wrote on 'X'. "Stop hiding behind 'learning', 'good hockey' and future tournaments. The World Cup is not a rehearsal. It is the World Cup. So who is going to ask the diffi-

cult questions? Who is going to demand accountability? And most importantly...Does anyone actually care?" he asked. The Indian men's team entered the World Cup on the back of an unimpressive Pro League campaign, finishing eighth

among nine teams. However, there were renewed hopes of a better showing after the coaches and players offered positive feedback on their preparations. He said the upcoming Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya next month, where India are expected to challenge for a medal, should not be an excuse for taking the World Cup lightly. "Don't worry...the World Cup doesn't matter. The Asian Games are coming. Win a medal there, and then we can start dreaming about LA 2028 (Olympics). Apparently, that's enough to cover everything that went wrong at the World Cup," wrote Sreejesh. He also took a dig at women's chief coach Sjoerd Marjine for reportedly leaving the World Cup camp while it was in full swing, saying the players still fought hard and exceeded expectations.

'INDIA HAVE FALLEN BEHIND': RAHUL DRAVID'S BIG WTC REALITY CHECK

AGENCY

Mumbai: Eight Tests remain for India in their race to enter the World Test Championship final. In those matches, the Shubman Gill-led side needs around six wins. It's not a good position to be in, but India still have a chance. Former head coach Rahul Dravid says India have slightly "fallen behind" in the race to qualify for the World Test Championship final and, even though the performance in Sri Lanka right now is encouraging, it will not be easy for the team to get past New Zealand during an upcoming series. Currently placed fifth in the points table, two-time finalists India are locked in an uphill battle to win the majority of their remaining matches in the



World Test Championship 2025-2027 and move up. With the top two teams slated to play in the final next year, India, who are ranked fifth behind Bangladesh, will play two away Tests in New Zealand before taking on Australia in a five-Test series at home from January 2027. India will also play five ODIs against the Kiwis. "I'm hoping they do.

It'll be a great run if India can qualify for the WTC final from here," Dravid, a team owner in the European T20 Premier League (ETPL), told JioStar when asked if India would be able to make the summit clash from here. "They've fallen behind a little bit, but the kind of quality that the Indian team has, you're not going to write them off at any stage.

VUELTA STAGE THREE ABANDONED AFTER HAIL IN PYRENEES

The third stage of the Vuelta a Espana was abandoned on Monday because of severe weather and hailstorms in the French Pyrenees. A severe hailstorm hit as the riders scaled the Col de Mont-Louis with 15km (9.32 miles) remaining of the 174km ride from Gruissan to Font-Romeu. Overall race leader and favourite Tadej Pogacar was seen indicating to the main group to pull off the course and soon afterwards drenched riders took shelter in a nearby hotel. Shortly afterwards organisers announced the stage would not resume and there would be no winner or podium ceremony.



Ahmedabad To Host Commonwealth Cue Sports Championships

AGENCY

Ahmedabad : As one of the world's premier destinations for cue sports, India will host the second Commonwealth Cue Sports Championships from October 7-10 at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex in Ahmedabad. The four-day event will see cueists from nearly 46 countries compete across five disciplines – billiards, snooker, heyball, 10-ball pool and blackball – in both categories (men and women), stated a release from Billiards and Snooker Federation of India on Tuesday. The championships will feature 16 players in each category in four disciplines, while billiards, which has been included in the programme this year, will be an eight-player draw in each section. The championships will be held under



the aegis of the World Confederation of Billiards Sports (WCBS) and the Billiards and Snooker Federation of India (BSFI), and organised by Apex Sports. "Ahmedabad is becoming an increasingly important city on the international sporting map, and hosting the Commonwealth Cue Sports Championships here is a significant opportunity for our sport and for India," said Ishaun Singh,

president of the World Pool Association (WPA). "With the city now preparing to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games, this event gives us an opportunity to build a strong connection with the sporting community and audiences here. India has an extraordinary history in cue sports, and from everything we have seen through our recent events," the world body chief added.

5 Players Excluded From India's Asian Games Squad Not Part Of AITA's Recommendation: SAI Source



AGENCY

Mumbai: The five tennis players excluded from the country's Asian Games squad did not feature in the long list sent to the IOA by the All India Tennis Association (AITA), a Sports Authority of India (SAI) source said on Tuesday, justifying the omission on the basis of their lower-than-prescribed international rankings. Manas Dhamne (men's singles), Vaishnavi Adkar (women's singles), Sahaja Yamalapalli (women's singles), Vaidehee Chaudhari (women's doubles) and Prarthana Thombare (women's doubles) were not included in the seven-member Indian squad as they did not meet the criteria of being inside the top-8 of continental standings. "Their names were not received by Sports Ministry in the final list shared by the IOA (Indian Olympic Association). In fact their names were not there in the long list sent by the All India Tennis Association (AITA) to the

IOA," the source told PTI. Their exclusion, the source said, is justified as their recent performances too did not reflect medal probability or potential for effective participation in the showcase. The Ministry's selection mandate required individual athletes to be among top six in Asia for singles events and be ranked within the top eight in Asia for doubles over a 12-month evaluation window. This criteria was unveiled by the Sports Ministry in September last year. Their omission was heavily criticised by two-time Asian Games gold-medallist Rohan Bopanna, who said "a committee that never stood where they stood has decided their fate on paper, before a ball is struck." Sahaja (world rank 344) is the current India number one in women's singles and Vaishnavi (world rank 388) is national champion two. Prarthna is a former Asian Games bronze-medallist (2014), Vaidehee is a two-time national champion and the 18-year-old Manas is a Challenger level finalist.

MERCEDES' UPGRADES & FERRARI TEAM ORDERS

AGENCY

Italy: Lando Norris beat championship leader Kimi Antonelli to claim his second win in a row with victory at the Dutch Grand Prix. Reigning world champion Norris moved up to fourth in the drivers' standings, 83 points adrift of Mercedes' Antonelli. Four-time world champion Max Verstappen suffered heartbreak at his final home race when he crashed out heavily in the opening stages. F1 correspondent Andrew Benson answers your questions after round 12 of the campaign in

Zandvoort. Is it fair to say the dominance of Mercedes is over? They haven't won a race since Spa-Francorchamps, and even then that victory wasn't consecutive. Are they focusing more now on scoring points than they are winning races? There has been a very obvious shift in competitiveness at the front as the Formula 1 season has progressed. Mercedes won the first six races of the season, but have won only two of the subsequent six. Mercedes took 10 consecutive poles in the first 10 races, but have been beaten by McLaren's Lando

Norris at the past two grands prix. And the fastest Mercedes was lower than second for the first time in Hungary, where Red Bull's Max Verstappen also lined up ahead of Kimi Antonelli. Over the season as a whole so far, the Mercedes is the fastest car in qualifying by an average of 0.316 seconds over Ferrari, with McLaren a further 0.041secs adrift. But what happens when you split that into the first six races and the next six? Until the Canadian Grand Prix in late May, Mercedes were 0.453secs a lap faster than the next fastest team, which was





TOXIC ADVANCE BOOKINGS POINT TO A HISTORIC START

Rocking Star Yash's Toxic is creating huge buzz at the ticket counters even before its theatrical release. The film is witnessing a remarkable surge in advance bookings, with ticket sales picking up swiftly across the country. Directed by Geetu Mohandas and backed by KVN Productions and Monster Mind Creations, Toxic is heading into its release with advance bookings pointing to a historic start. The film has already generated more than 60 Cr in advance sales across India. Trade analysts believe that, going by the current pace, the movie could reach the triple-digit mark on its opening day alone at the Indian box office. The response in the Telugu states has been equally impressive. Although bookings opened only today, Toxic has already recorded 10 Cr+ in advance sales, with Hyderabad alone contributing more than 5 Cr. The scale of the ticket sales can be gauged from the fact that the film has sold around 2.5 million tickets through BookMyShow and District so far. With the numbers continuing to climb, Toxic is emerging as a serious contender for one of the biggest opening days in Indian cinema. Rocking Star Yash is making his highly anticipated return to the big screen nearly five years after the blockbuster success of the KGF franchise. The pan-India phenomenon created massive expectations for his next outing, Toxic. Directed by Geetu Mohandas, the film features Yash in dual roles as a father and son. The songs and trailer have offered a glimpse into the film's unique world while showcasing its grand scale and lavish production values. Produced jointly by Monster Mind Creations and KVN Productions, Toxic is set to hit the screens worldwide tomorrow amid enormous buzz and sky-high expectations. The unprecedented hype is now reflecting in phenomenal advance bookings. Toxic has broken Kantara Chapter 1 record in ticket sales and stands second only next to KGF 2 (2.9 M+), among Kannada films. The movie sold 1.5 M+ tickets together on BookMyShow and District.

The Film Is All Set for a Grand Theatrical Release Soon



Proving that cinema does not belong only to cities but also lives in every village, debut director Azhar has created the locally made film "Kotha Cinema" with local talent. Remarkably, the film introduces around 100 new talents to the Telugu film industry. Starring Suresh and Rakesh in the lead roles, the film has Azhar handling the story, screenplay, direction, dialogues, and editing. Mohammed Wasim Akram, Sagi Sudheer Rao, and Yadandla Satish Yadav are producing the film. "Kotha Cinema" is gearing up for a grand theatrical release soon. On Monday evening, the film's "Why in Hyderabad, Why Not in Our Place" event was held grandly in Hyderabad, with several prominent directors and producers attending as guests.

THE CHASE BEGINS! AKSHAY KUMAR AND SAIF ALI KHAN FACE OFF IN THE DARK AND GRIPPING HAIWAAN TRAILER



Ever since the intriguing teaser of Haiwaan dropped, audiences have been keenly waiting to see more of the dark and unpredictable world of the film. The wait is finally over as the trailer arrives, offering a thrilling glimpse into the face off between superstar Akshay Kumar aka the Haiwaan and Saif Ali Khan aka the Hero. Director Priyadarshan uses an intriguing background score to further heighten the suspense, setting the stage for a taut theatrical thriller. Akshay Kumar steps into one of his darkest avatars yet, going head to head with Saif Ali Khan, who takes on the challenging role of a blind man. Adding further intrigue to the chase are Boman Irani as a judge and Saiyami Kher as a cop, alongside Shriya Pilgaonkar and Sharib Hashmi in pivotal roles. The trailer leaves you with one question, when they finally come face to face who will emerge victorious? Haiwaan is produced under KVN Productions and Thespian Films by Venkat K. Narayana and Shailaja Desai Fenn. The film releases worldwide in Cinemas on 11th September 2026.

Kiku Chiranjeevi is set for a grand theatrical release on August 28th



Chiranjeevi," starring Kiku Yanamala and Kashish Khan in the lead roles, features Eswari Rao, Tanikella Bharani, Srikanth Bharat, Viva Raghava and others in key roles. The film is produced by Deepti Nadiminti under the Kiku Entertainments banner and directed by Shubha Sai Venkat. "Chiranjeevi" is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on the 28th of this month. The film's pre-release press meet was held grandly in Hyderabad. Several members of the film's team attended the event and spoke about the movie.

KIARA ADVANT'S BRONZE CORSET LOOK IS FIRE

Kajol says she chooses peace over attention-seeking arguments



Actress Kajol on Monday shared a witty yet pointed message, saying she prefers choosing peace over engaging in arguments with people who seek attention more than logic. Taking to Instagram, the Dilwale actress shared pictures of herself and wrote, "I don't argue with people who need attention more than logic. #namaste #ichoosepeace #humorousbone." With her characteristic sense of humour, Kajol appeared to suggest that not every argument deserves a response. In the photographs, the actress looked elegant in a stylish off-shoulder black dress. She completed her look with subtle makeup featuring highlighter, kohl-rimmed eyes, bronzer and nude lipstick. Kajol posed with confidence and grace, drawing praise from her sister Tanishaa Mukerji, who commented, "Nysa ki mummy! Looking stunning!" Earlier, Kajol had shared photographs from another photoshoot in a stylish outfit and reflected on the importance of recognising the positive aspects of life. The Baazigar actress had written, "I recently read something that really struck me 'The amount of good things in your life depends on your ability to notice them' .. and now I can't unsee it !."Meanwhile, Kajol, who turned 52 earlier this week, penned a heartfelt note thanking everyone who wished her on her birthday. Calling herself "lucky", the actress expressed gratitude for having a "delightfully crazy group of people" by her side. "Not going to sit here and write a whole emotional essay, but I really couldn't let the day end without saying thank you. To every single person who took two minutes out of their day to send a message, make a video, or just drop some love, thank you," she wrote. Kajol added, "So lucky to have such a loyal & delightfully crazy group of people in my corner. Sending you all the tightest hugs imaginable...now go eat a piece of cake on my behalf! Love you guys!"

'DAAYRA' NEW POSTER OUT:

Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran set the stage for the trailer on 31st August

The makers of Daayra just unveiled a power-packed poster featuring Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran, giving audiences a closer look at the world of the much-awaited crime thriller. With the trailer set to arrive on 31st August, the poster leaves behind a trail of questions about what connects the two characters, while revealing just enough to spark curiosity around the story. Featuring Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran standing back-to-back, surrounded by layers of police tape and an obscured face in the background, the striking composition immediately creates intrigue. It hints at two distinct perspectives and leaving audiences to wonder what connects them and what lies beyond the line. The poster creates a clear divide between what is visible and what remains hidden. The answers remain under wraps, leaving audiences with more questions as the trailer approaches. The film marks the first collaboration between Jungle Pictures and Pen Studios, while reuniting Meghna Gulzar with Jungle Pictures for the third time after Talvar and Raazi. Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran are set to face off in the dark and gripping Haiwaan trailer, which is set to release on 11th September 2026.

