

KOCHI | VIJAYAWADA | CHENNAI | BENGALURU | HYDERABAD

THE SOUTH INDIA TIMES

NATIONAL DAILY NEWSPAPER

Essence of the South

For Website Visit epaper.thesouthindiatimes.comwww.thesouthindiatimes.com[/thesouthindiatimes.yahoo.in](https://t.me/thesouthindiatimes)

NATIONAL | NEWS

PM Modi urges citizens to join 'Nasha Mukti Yuva' campaign to build drug-free India

WORLD | NEWS

ICELAND VOTES AGAINST RESTART-ING EU MEMBERSHIP TALKS



HEBAH PATEL GOES BOLD IN BLACK

CINEMA | NEWS



SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

29-08-2026

Total pilgrims : 85,246
Tonnages : 34,085
Hundi kamalka : 4,30 CR
Lambis sale : 4,51 Lac
Aarogyaaram : 2,22 Lac
Aarogya Hospital : 3,081
Present Situation on 30-08-2026:
Waiting Compartments : 20

Approx. Darshan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens) : 10- 12 H.

Short Takes

Dalit teen dies by suicide after being humiliated at school

Madurai (TSIT): A government school headmistress (HM) in Usilampatti in this district has been booked for abetment after a Dalit girl seeking admission in the institution died by suicide due to alleged humiliation at the hands of the accused. The HM also allegedly made a casteist slur at the deceased. The 16-year-old girl's relatives have been protesting, demanding action against the Government Model Secondary School headmistress who allegedly rebuked and made a casteist slur against the girl for asking her mother not to stand with folded hands in front of her.

INDIA HANDS OVER FOURTH CONSIGNMENT OF RELIEF MATERIALS TO FLOOD-HIT NEPAL

Kathmandu (TSIT): India has handed over relief materials for flood victims in Nepal brought by its fourth flight carrying relief supplies. "The fourth flight carrying 11 tonnes of relief supplies has arrived in Nepal, with the materials handed over to the concerned authorities as part of ongoing support following the devastating floods," the Indian External Affairs Ministry said. The consignment includes a tunnel technical team equipped with search-and-rescue equipment, as well as a team of forensic experts for DNA analysis. The relief supplies include blankets, sleeping bags, tarpaulins, plastic sheets and hygiene kits.

Mobile phones may get cheaper as GST Council mulls tax cut

New Delhi : The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council may consider reducing the 18 per cent tax on mobile phones at its September 12 meeting. The proposed rate cut comes amid a slowdown in mobile handset demand. The Council is scheduled to meet after a gap of 374 days. Unlike its previous meeting, which focused largely on GST rate rationalisation, the upcoming session is expected to give greater attention to easing compliance for businesses. GST compliance reforms likely to dominate meeting. Besides the mobile phone tax proposal, the Council is expected to examine several issues linked to GST compliance and input tax credit. One major concern is the inverted duty structure, where the GST paid on inputs is higher than the tax charged on the final product.

Uzbekistan honours PM Modi with highest state award

TASHKENT (TSIT).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with Uzbekistan's highest honour, the 'Oliy Darajali Do'stlik' Order, by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in Tashkent on Sunday, in recognition of his contribution to strengthening India-Uzbekistan relations.

The honour adds to the growing list of international awards received by Modi from countries and organisations across the world. He has received more than 30 prestigious international honours, including state decorations and other recognitions. Earlier in July, Indonesian President Prabowo



Subianto conferred Indonesia's highest honour, the 'Bintang Adipurna of the Republic of Indonesia', on Modi. During his visit to Tashkent,

Modi also held delegation-level talks with President Mirziyoyev. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Foreign Secretary Vikram

Misri, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Secretary (West) Sibi George and other senior officials were present at the meeting. The Prime Minister was accorded a ceremonial welcome after arriving in Tashkent. President Mirziyoyev personally received him, with the two leaders exchanging warm greetings before the formal talks. Modi also witnessed a special yoga session featuring 52 practitioners from Uzbekistan. The session highlighted the growing popularity of yoga in the Central Asian country and added a cultural dimension to his diplomatic engagements.

Congress govt restored democracy, welfare in Telangana: Uttam

HYDERABAD (TSIT)

Telangana Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy on Sunday said the Congress government's completion of 1,000 days marked a milestone in restoring democratic governance, expanding welfare and accelerating development in the State.

In a statement, Uttam Kumar alleged that governance during the previous 10-year BRS regime was concentrated in one family and said the Congress government had made the administration more accessible to people through direct consultations, Praja Vani and Assembly debates.

He highlighted welfare measures including free RTC bus travel for women, free electricity up to 200 units under Gruha Jyothi, LPG cylinders at Rs 500, enhanced Rajiv Aarogya Sri coverage up to Rs 10 lakh, fine rice distribution and Indiramma housing assistance of Rs 5 lakh.

Uttam Kumar said crop loans of up to Rs 2 lakh had been waived for around 25 lakh farmers, while Rythu Bharosa assistance had been increased to Rs



Uttam Kumar said crop loans of up to Rs 2 lakh had been waived for around 25 lakh farmers, while Rythu Bharosa assistance had been increased to Rs 12,000 per acre.

12,000 per acre. Paddy procurement and bonuses for fine varieties had also strengthened the rural economy, he claimed.

He said nearly 70,000 government jobs had been filled and several development initiatives, including Young India Skills University, Advanced Technology Centres, integrated residential schools, irrigation

projects, roads and urban infrastructure, were progressing.

Despite the financial burden inherited from the previous BRS government, the Congress government had protected welfare expenditure and increased productive capital investment, Uttam Kumar claimed.

He said the first 1,000 days had demonstrated the government's commitment to social justice, food security, women's empowerment, farmer welfare and sustainable development, and vowed to continue the efforts with greater determination.

High-speed rail corridors will transform Telangana: Min Kishan Reddy

HYDERABAD (TSIT):

Union Minister G Kishan Reddy on Sunday, August 30, said the proposed high-speed rail corridors linking Hyderabad with Bengaluru, Chennai and Pune would be game-changers for Telangana.

The projects would accelerate industrialisation, improve connectivity and help ease traffic congestion in Hyderabad, he said. Reddy, who inspected Vikarabad Railway Station near here, said the Rail Manufacturing Unit at Kazipet was nearing completion and would soon be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The union minister of Coal said the indigenous railway safety sys-



tems KAVACH and KAVACH 2.0 were being implemented in Telangana for the first time.

Five Vande Bharat trains are currently operating from Hyderabad, further improving rail connectivity, he said. Highlighting the NDA government's initiatives to modernise the railway network in Telangana, Reddy said redevelopment works were underway at Vikarabad railway station at Rs 27

crore. As part of the Centre's efforts to strengthen railway infrastructure across Telangana, 40 railway stations are being redeveloped. Vikarabad, Tandur, Nampally, Secunderabad, Moulali and Charlapalli are among the stations being upgraded to international standards, he said.

Telangana's railway infrastructure was witnessing rapid development under the Modi government, with major projects worth thousands of crores progressing across the state, Reddy said. He added that doubling, tripling and quadrupling of railway lines was underway, while 100 per cent electrification of railway lines in Telangana had been completed.

Nepal flood toll rises to 734 as 2,498 remain missing

KATHMANDU (TSIT):

The death toll from the devastating flash floods that struck Nepal has risen to 734, while 2,498 people, including 589 foreign nationals, remain missing, according to the latest figures released by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) on Sunday. The toll is expected to rise further as rescue teams continue searching through areas devastated by floods, mud and debris following Wednesday's disaster. Bodies have been recovered from several affected districts, with the highest number reported from Chitwan, Nawalparasi East and Nawalparasi West. The disaster has also left hundreds of people injured. Security forces have so far rescued more than 8,000 people, while search operations continue for thousands who remain unaccounted for. Among those missing are hydropower project workers, local residents, foreign nationals and people travelling with foreign tourists. With authorities facing difficulties in storing and identifying the large number of recovered bodies, the Nepal government has decided to bury unidentified and unclaimed remains in airtight bags while preserving DNA samples and other evidence for possible identification at a later stage.

149 Indians rescued from Nepal floods so far: MEA

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

A total of 149 Indian nationals have been rescued so far in Nepal following the devastating floods, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Sunday. The MEA shared a list of all 149 Indian nationals rescued as of 5:30 pm on Sunday in a post on X. Meanwhile, the fourth Indian flight carrying 11 tonnes of relief assistance landed in Nepal, with the relief material handed over to the concerned authorities.

"Standing with Nepal. The 4th flight carrying 11 tonnes of relief assistance landed in Nepal, and relief material has been handed over," the MEA posted on X.

The consignment includes a tunnel technical contingent equipped for search and rescue operations, a team of forensic experts for DNA analysis, and relief supplies such as blankets, sleeping bags, tarpaulins, plastic sheets and hygiene kits.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Saturday that 16 trucks carrying equipment for a 230-foot Single Lane Modular Steel Bridge had reached Nepal. "Equipment for installation of seven more Bailey bridges will be supplied soon. Technical teams for their installation are expected



to reach shortly. So far, a total of 68.5 tonnes of relief material comprising essential medicines, portable generator sets, food packets, water purification tablets and technical equipment have been airlifted to Kathmandu," he said in a post on X.

Meanwhile, Indian Ambassador to Nepal Naveen Srivastava on Sunday met members of the Indian Forensic Team deployed in Nepal to assist in identifying the mortal remains of victims of the devastating flash floods. The ambassador reiterated that India would continue to strongly support Nepal's ongoing rescue and relief operations. "Ambassador Naveen Srivastava met members of the Indian Forensic Team deployed to Nepal. The team will work alongside their Nepali counterparts in analysing DNA samples to assist in identifying the mortal remains of the victims of the recent flash floods," the MEA said in another post on X.

Bhagwat's Hindu-Muslim remarks spark political row

New Delhi (TSIT): Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat's recent remarks on Hindu-Muslim unity in New York have triggered political reactions, with BJP leaders backing his assertion of inclusivity while Opposition parties questioned his position and commitment to equality and plurality in India. BJP National Spokesperson RP Singh said Hinduism was inherently inclusive and could not be confined to a particular sect, religion or mode of worship. "Hindu is inclusive. 'Hindu' is not the name of a sect, nor the name of a religion, nor can 'Hindu' be tied to a specific mode of worship.



Tamil govt plans to sell onions at subsidised rates through ration shops

CHENNAI (TSIT):

The Tamil Nadu cooperative sector is preparing to sell onions at subsidised prices through ration shops after a rise in retail rates placed pressure on household budgets across the state.

Onions, a staple used in kitchens, have become more expensive over the past few weeks. Large onions, which were available for about Rs 30 a kg at the end of last month, are now being sold at nearly Rs 60 a kg in many retail markets. Prices of small onions, or shallots, have risen steeply, climbing from around Rs 40-50 a kg last month to nearly Rs 70 a kg.

The increase has affected consumers already coping with higher prices of several essential vege-



tables. With market rates continuing to remain firm, the cooperative sector has decided to intervene by procuring onions in bulk and supplying them through the public distribution system at prices substantially below prevailing retail levels. As part of the initiative, the state has approached the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India, commonly known as NAFED, seeking an allocation of 70,000 kg of onions.

India emerges as key exporter of petrol to Russia

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

India has emerged as a key exporter of petrol to Russia, with shipments touching nearly 1 million barrels over the past two months as widespread Ukrainian drone attacks have crippled the country's refineries, forcing Moscow to take recourse

to imports to meet domestic demand, according to a report by ship-tracking data and energy analytics firm Vortexa.

Russia's seaborne gasoline imports surged to a record 470,000 tonnes in August, with long queues of cars at local filling stations reflecting the shortage of fuel amid the shutdown in

refineries due to Ukraine's drone attacks deep into Russian territory. The report states that Russia's domestic fuel production dropped by as much as 70 per cent. This has also forced Russia to ban exports of petrol and diesel to tackle the acute shortage.

Vortexa said as many as 32 attacks were carried out



on Russian refineries during July and August, averaging roughly one every two days. Indian refiners were among important suppliers along with Turkey and Morocco to help Russia meet the shortfall in domestic production of fuels. Trade sources said much of India's supply came from

Nayara Energy's refinery at Vadinar on the Gujarat coast, in which Russian oil major Rosneft has a share. As global refining capacity faces uncertainty, India is expanding its position as the world's third-largest refiner, with capacity rising from 272 MMTPA towards 300 MMTPA, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas

Hardeep Singh Puri said earlier this month. Meanwhile, India has diversified its sources for the import of crude oil to 41 countries compared with 27 earlier, following the breakout of the Iran war and closure of the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 per cent of the world's oil and gas exports transits during normal times.

PM Modi urges citizens to join 'Nasha Mukta Yuva' campaign to build drug-free India

New Delhi, Aug 30 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that the 'Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat' campaign is currently gaining momentum across the country to eradicate substance abuse and build a drug-free India by 2047.He also called on the public to participate in the campaign in large numbers by making content for social media, short plays, songs, etc, to make people aware of the campaign.Speaking during the 137th episode of his monthly radio programme, 'Mann Ki Baat', PM Modi said, "The 'Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat' campaign is currently



gaining momentum across the country. The goal is clear - drug-free youth, drug-free India. Many people, particularly our youth, have become a large part of this. After all, this is our collective resolve towards their health, happiness and bright future in India."

"Addiction does not affect just one person, but the consequences are felt by the entire family and society," he added.

The Prime Minister

praised people who raise awareness against drugs and come forward to help those who are dealing with addiction.

He also urged people to make slogans and songs to make people aware of the drug-free India campaign.

"Can you come up with slogans for the 'Nasha Mukta Bharat' campaign? Can our young musicians make songs that contain the message of a drug-free life? Can students and theatre groups write heart-touching short plays that address the dangers of drugs as well as show a way to break free from them? There is no dearth of excellent content creators in our country. I urge them to make content in different languages that can help society in this direction," PM Modi said.

"Many times, a creative effort is more effective than a formal campaign. Come, let us play our role in keeping India's youth away from drugs, free from drugs," he added.

Earlier on August 2, the Prime Minister had virtually launched the 'Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan' as a nationwide movement. The campaign connected over 28,000 locations nationwide with the participation of more than 1 crore youth.

Chidambaram calls exam malpractice law 'useless', slams Centre over bills

New Delhi, Aug 30: Congress leader P Chidambaram on Saturday criticised the BJP-led Centre over the recently passed Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, calling it a "useless law" and alleging that several bills were passed in Parliament without meaningful debate.



Speaking at an event on the recently concluded monsoon session of Parliament, Chidambaram said the new legislation merely prescribed punishments for unfair practices instead of effectively preventing them.

He questioned whether the law would stop malpractice in public examinations, pointing out that examinations had continued to be cancelled in several states even after the legislation was passed. "Just yesterday, a public examination was cancelled. The day before yesterday, another public examination was cancelled. In Maharashtra, two public examinations were cancelled. In Rajasthan, one public examination was cancelled," he said.

Chidambaram alleged that examinations were also being cancelled in

Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, arguing that the law had failed to address the underlying problem. He said the legislation should instead have been titled a bill prescribing punishments, likening its approach to "locking the stable after the horse has bolted".

Chidambaram also criticised the functioning of Parliament during the monsoon session, alleging that there was virtually no debate on the 12 bills passed by both Houses. "Although a list was released claiming that 12 bills were passed, not a single one was passed following discussion," he alleged. Comparing Parliament with the Tamil Nadu Assembly, he said ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader



PM pays floral tribute to former Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri at Shastri Memorial in Tashkent...

Nagendra resignation reshapes Karnataka Cabinet arithmetic

Bengaluru: The resignation of B Nagendra from the Karnataka Cabinet has reopened the political arithmetic for filling two vacant ministerial berths, with the ruling Congress weighing caste, regional and gender equations amid renewed Opposition pressure over the Valmiki corporation issue.

Nagendra resigned from the Council of Ministers amid the controversy surrounding the alleged illegal transfer of funds from the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation. His exit has created a fresh vacancy for Scheduled Tribe representation and eased one of the



hurdles before Chief Minister DK Shivakumar as the Congress works on a Cabinet reshuffle.

With two berths vacant, discussions within the party are focusing on three broad considerations - women's representation, regional balance and the demand to retain adequate representation for the Scheduled Tribe community.

The name of Annapurna Tukaram has emerged in the discussions, particularly in the context of Ballari representation, though there are reportedly differences among local Congress leaders over her induction. Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar is also being considered under the women's quota. Another formula being discussed is to accommodate Basavaraj Shivanna, which could also help address competing political equations within the Congress. At the same time, MLA M Krishnappa is understood to be unhappy over being left out of the ministerial exercise.

Odisha govt orders salary deduction for non-payment of court-ordered maintenance

Bhubaneswar, Aug 30 (UNI) The Government employees in Odisha who default on paying court-ordered maintenance or alimony to their wives or children will now have the amount deducted directly from their salaries, with Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi issuing a directive in this regard.

The decision follows repeated complaints received during the Chief Minister's grievance hearings from women and children who have been denied maintenance despite court orders.

On average, two to three such cases are reportedly brought to the grievance cell during each hearing.

Taking a serious view of the issue, Majhi on Sunday directed the government to ensure that court-mandated maintenance is recovered from the salaries of defaulting employees and paid directly to the beneficiaries.

Under guidelines issued by the State Government, once a court order directing payment of maintenance or alimony is received, the departmental Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) concerned will deduct the specified amount from the employee's monthly salary.

The amount will then be transferred electronically to the bank account of the employee's wife or children. It was "not acceptable" for a government employee to defy a court order and deny financial support to his wife and children, Chief Minister Majhi said in a statement. The government has also decided to integrate court-ordered maintenance payments with the Human Resources Management System (HRMS) to make the process automated and more effective. The move intends to ensure timely compliance with court orders and provide financial relief to women and children who have been deprived of maintenance.



Tashkent, Aug 30 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday visited the Mahatma Gandhi Centre at the Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies. PM Modi interacted with Indologists and students at the centre, and also signed the visitors' book. Earlier in the day, PM Modi paid tribute to former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri at the Shastri Memorial here.

Lal Bahadur Shastri served as India's Prime Minister from June 9, 1964 to January 11, 1966. He coined the popular national slogan "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan". In a post on X, PM Modi stated, "Paid homage to former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri Ji in Tashkent. We remember a towering statesman

whose unwavering commitment to the nation continues to inspire generations."

PM Modi held delegation-level talks with Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the Presidential Palace in Tashkent and reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral ties.

The talks focussed on expanding cooperation in the areas of trade and investment, infrastructure, critical minerals, mining, defence and security, innovation, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, health, information technology, digital public infrastructure including UPI and education, among others, according to the statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

PM Modi was conferred with Uzbekistan's highest honour, "Oliy Darajali Do'stlik" Order by President Mirziyoyev for his contribution to strengthening friendship between the two countries.

The two leaders also jointly planted a tree at the Presidential Palace in Tashkent under India's 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative and Uzbekistan's 'Yashil Makon' green efforts.

Prior to the talks, PM Modi was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the Presidential Palace in Tashkent.

PM Modi also witnessed a special yoga session featuring 52 practitioners from Uzbekistan during his visit to the Central Asian nation.

PM Modi is on a two-day State visit to Uzbekistan. In a special gesture, President Mirziyoyev welcomed PM Modi on his arrival at the airport in Tashkent. After concluding his engagements in Uzbekistan, PM Modi will travel to Kyrgyzstan for a two-day visit, where he is scheduled to attend the 26th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit and the Opening Ceremony of the 6th World Nomad Games.

Haryana Police cracked down on drug trafficking; Three held with poppy husk, heroin & charas

Panchkula (TSIT) Haryana Police have intensified their crack-down on narcotics, arresting three persons in separate operations in Sirsa and Jhajjar and recovering 9.73 kg of poppy husk, 6.099 grams of heroin and 1.035 kg of charas, police said. A Haryana Police spokesman said two of the arrests have been made by CIA Ellenabad in Sirsa district as part of the special anti-drug campaign being carried out under the supervision of Superintendent of Police Deepak Saharan.

In the first case, a CIA Ellenabad team was patrolling and checking in the Rori area when it noticed a woman sitting along the roadside with a plastic sack. Police said she allegedly attempted to leave after noticing the police

vehicle. She was searched in the presence of a woman police official and a gazetted officer as per procedure, leading to the recovery of 9 kg 730 grams of poppy husk.

The accused has been identified as Manpreet Kaur, wife of Gurjeevan Singh, a resident of Rori in Sirsa district. A case under the NDPS Act has been registered at Rori police station. She has been produced before a court and sent to judicial custody.

In another operation, CIA Ellenabad arrested Ramandeep alias Gaura, a resident of Ward No. 7, Rania, from the Nanuana Road area and allegedly recovered 6 grams and 99 milligrams of heroin from him. Police said the suspect allegedly tried to turn back after seeing the police team. He was intercepted

and searched in the presence of a gazetted officer. A case under the NDPS Act has been registered at Rania police station.

Police said the accused will be produced before a court for remand to ascertain the source of the heroin, its intended recipients and possible links to a wider drug network.

Meanwhile, in a separate crackdown in Jhajjar Police Commissionerate, a CIA Jhajjar team arrested a Himachal Pradesh resident and recovered 1 kg 35 grams of charas from his possession.

The operation was conducted under the directions of DCP Crime Shubham Singh after police received information about a person allegedly looking to sell narcotics on the Jhajjar-Gurugram road.

Kumaraswamy slams Rahul Gandhi's silence over KPSC recruitment scam

Bengaluru, Aug 30 : Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, H.D. Kumaraswamy, on Sunday launched a scathing attack on the Congress government over the alleged irregularities in Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) recruitments, questioning Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi's silence on the issue. The statements have assumed significance in the backdrop of arrest of IAS officer Gyanendra Kumar in connection with the KPSC recruitment scam.

"Rahul Gandhi ji, where are you? Your KPSC is rotting. You travel across the

country engaging with students and youngsters. When will you come to Bengaluru and hold talks with the victims of the KPSC irregularities? Let us see," Kumaraswamy said. Addressing the media at the Janata Dal-Secular Headquarters, J.P. Bhavan, in Bengaluru, Union Minister Kumaraswamy questioned the Karnataka government's commitment to cleaning up the recruitment system.

"Karnataka Home Minister Priyank Kharge speaks about the RSS every morning, but apparently cannot spot the mess in his own department.



Candidates who did not deserve to be selected have allegedly been given appointments through compromised examinations. Is your (Congress) government really capable of cleaning up KPSC?" he asked. Kumaraswamy

alleged that the state government had previously brought in a person with a controversial record in the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) and appointed him as KPSC Chairman in the name of reform. "You once claimed that you would clean up the system and then brought a person who had already faced allegations of wrongdoing in BDA and made him the KPSC Chairman. Under his tenure, posts were allegedly put up for sale for crores of rupees. Today you boast that you will fill 75,000 government vacancies. Will those appointments also be made through such

irregularities?" he asked. "Where is Rahul Gandhi? Bring him to Bengaluru once. Let him sit with the youngsters and engage with them on KPSC. Then the truth will come out," Kumaraswamy said. The Union Minister again challenged Rahul Gandhi to come to Bengaluru and interact directly with young people affected by the recruitment controversies.

"It is painful to even speak about the irregularities that have taken place during your (Karnataka) government. You are afraid to even open your mouth about the alleged irregularities in the recruitment of Assistant

Executive Engineers-Grade I in the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department," he said. Kumaraswamy alleged that question papers were taken to resorts and provided to candidates who had allegedly paid money. "Question papers were allegedly taken to resorts and given to candidates who paid money. They were even trained on how to write the answers. And Rahul Gandhi, your leader, travels across the country giving speeches and engaging with students. Bring him to Bengaluru once. Let him sit face-to-face with youngsters and discuss the KPSC irregularities," the Union Minister said.

EDITORIAL

FOUND HUMANITY
AMID RUINS

It was the beginning of October 2023. The hills of Manipur were beginning to grow cold and the conflict that had erupted months earlier showed no sign of ending. There was no network, no certainty, and very little hope. Our hometown, which is 36 kilometres from Imphal, had been deeply affected by the violence. By night, gunshots and distant explosions became our lullaby. By day, the sound of helicopters cutting through the sky announced another uncertain morning.

Everywhere I looked, I saw people gathered in clusters. Families sat outside temporary shelters. Elderly men stared into the distance. Mothers held restless children close to their chests. They were homeless, displaced, exhausted. Yet, they gathered each day with a quiet faith that somewhere, somehow, someone in Delhi would do something magical to stop the war that had entered our homes. Conflict has a way of shrinking life. People stop talking about dreams and begin talking about survival. The future becomes a luxury. The next meal becomes a concern. Warm clothes become valuable. A blanket becomes precious. Yet, in those dark months, I learned something remarkable. Sometimes the smallest things carry the greatest weight. I remember the arrival of humanitarian aid. The trucks would come carrying supplies sent by organisations, churches, NGOs, and ordinary people from different parts of India. Word spread quickly. Before long, queues would begin to form. Men, women, and children waited patiently under the sun, holding bags and sacks, hoping there would be enough. The items being distributed were ordinary things. Blankets, soap, sugar, rice and toothpaste etc. They were daily necessities that most people rarely think twice about.

But I remember watching people receive them as if they were treasures. Not because the items themselves were extraordinary, but because of what they represented. Someone remembered us. Someone, hundreds, even thousands, of kilometres away, had heard about our suffering and decided that it mattered. A bar of soap could not end a conflict. A packet of sugar could not rebuild a burned village. A blanket could not erase grief but for many families standing in those queues, those small items carried a message more powerful than their practical value.

I remember an elderly woman carefully folding a newly received blanket before placing it inside her bag. I remember children smiling over biscuits distributed alongside relief supplies. I remember volunteers apologising when supplies ran short, as though they were personally responsible for a tragedy far bigger than themselves. The aid brought necessities, but it also brought dignity. It reminded people that beyond the hills and roadblocks, beyond the headlines and political debates, there were strangers who cared. Another small thing that left an immense impression on me was the arrival of volunteer doctors. At that time, healthcare had become difficult to access. Travel was dangerous and hospitals felt far away. Many people lived with untreated illnesses and injuries. Anxiety and fear had become constant companions. Then doctors began arriving – some through humanitarian organisations, some through churches and volunteer groups. Others simply offered their time and expertise because they believed they should. I still remember seeing them move from one patient to another in crowded camps and makeshift clinics.

Modi Receives Uzbekistan’s Highest Honour, India-Uzbekistan Ties Elevated

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday (August 30, 2026) was conferred with Uzbekistan's 'Oliy Darajali Do'stlik' Order, the country's highest honour, from Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in Tashkent. "Honoured to receive the 'Oliy Darajali Do'stlik' Order. I dedicate this to the enduring bond between India and Uzbekistan," Modi said in a post after the award ceremony. Modi is on a two-day official visit to the country. Elevation of bilateral ties, \$5 billion trade target During the bilateral visit, India and Uzbekistan agreed to upgrade their bilateral relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership, the Union external affairs ministry said. The two countries have also established a long-term framework for uranium supplies and set a target to increase bilateral trade to \$5 billion by 2030. The decisions were taken during Modi's meeting with Mirziyoyev in Tashkent on Sunday. "The talks focussed on expanding cooperation in the areas of trade and investment, infrastructure, critical minerals, mining, defence and security, innovation, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, health, information technology, digital public infrastructure including UPI and education, among others. They set a target of \$5 billion of bilateral trade by 2030," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a statement. The elevation of ties reflected the expanding scope of cooperation between the two countries, Jaiswal added. "Both leaders witnessed the exchange of several MoUs and agreements covering a wide range of areas, including mining, culture, education, tourism, ayurveda, among others. A Letter of Intent for the restoration and conservation of the Buddhist sites of Fayaz Tepa and Kara Tepa in Uzbekistan was also agreed upon," Jaiswal said.



Long term Uranium supply, other MoUs exchanged During the meeting, Modi said the two countries would work towards a long-term uranium supply arrangement. The two sides also agreed to create a Coordination Council headed by their foreign ministers. The existing joint commission will similarly be upgraded from the level of secretaries to ministers. "Both sides will jointly organise a business summit featuring business leaders from both nations. We will also establish a long-term arrangement for the supply of uranium," Modi said. Several agreements and memoranda of understanding were exchanged during the meeting. They cover areas including mining, culture, education, tourism and ayurveda. Background Modi arrived in Tashkent on Saturday. He met Mirziyoyev for dinner after his arrival, with the two sides discussing cooperation in areas including trade, tourism, health, energy and

defence. Modi also visited the Yangi Uzbekistan Monument with the Uzbek president and laid a wreath there. He also attended a yoga event organised by people in Uzbekistan. The visit is the first leg of Modi's four-day Central Asia trip. He is scheduled to travel to Bishkek for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation leaders' summit from August 31 to September 1. Prime Minister today paid floral tributes at the Shastri Memorial in Tashkent. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the passing away of the former Prime Minister in Tashkent in 1965. The memorial is situated on a street named after Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri. The life and legacy of the former Prime Minister is fondly remembered in Tashkent. In addition to the memorial and the street, there is a local school and the Indian Cultural Centre in Tashkent named after him. After offering respects at the Shastri Memorial, Prime Minister visited the Tashkent State

University of Oriental Studies. At the university, Prime Minister Modi was received by the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan and the rector. He interacted with the Indologists and scholars pursuing academic interests at the Mahatma Gandhi Centre of the university. The university has an impressive record of teaching Hindi language and other Indian subjects. During his State Visit, Prime Minister announced Lal Bahadur Shastri Scholarship for Hindi language for Uzbek students. This year marks the 80th year of Hindi teaching at the university. Given the close cultural affinities between the two countries, there is admirable interest among the Uzbek students to learn Hindi. There are over 3000 words which are common between Uzbek and Hindi languages. At the invitation of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the Prime Minister of the Republic of

India, His Excellency Mr. Narendra Modi, paid a State Visit to the Republic of Uzbekistan from 29 to 30 August 2026. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks in a warm, friendly and constructive atmosphere. The Leaders conducted a comprehensive review of the current state and future prospects of the Uzbekistan-India bilateral relations, exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest, and identified priority areas for further practical cooperation. The Leaders expressed satisfaction with the strong level of collaboration between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of India. They noted that the relationship is firmly anchored in longstanding bonds of friendship, as well as deep historical and cultural affinities between the two nations. Reaffirming their shared resolve, the Leaders underscored their commitment to further deepening

bilateral ties and elevating cooperation to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that advances the core interests of both nations. The Leaders welcomed the close alignment of their positions and the growing importance of Central Asia. Amid a complex geopolitical situation, they stressed the need for a free, open and rules-based international order. Building on their multilateral cooperation, Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and bilateral agreements, they reaffirmed their commitment to long-term, mutually beneficial cooperation for both peoples and future generations, agreeing to deepen political dialogue and the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership across trade, economy and investment, transport connectivity, digital transformation (IT, AI, space, cybersecurity), energy transition, critical minerals, food security, health-care, pharmaceuticals and education.

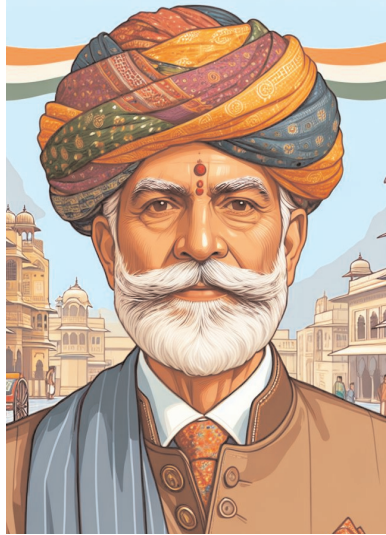
'Haryanvi Literature-Art Confluence' organized in the memory of Manumukt 'Manav'

The book 'My soil, my letters' was released



(The book 'Mhari Matti, Mhare Akhar', edited by Bhiwani's writer and columnist Dr. Satyawan Saurabh and Dr. Priyanka Saurabh and dedicated to Dr. Manumukt 'Manav', was released by the guests on the stage. This first short story collection in Haryanvi dialect contains three short stories each by thirty-three short story writers, totaling ninety-nine short stories, including one from Auckland (New Zealand), twenty-seven from Haryana, three from Rajasthan, and one each from Chandigarh and Punjab. Reviews of the released book were presented by Sushilkumar 'Naveen' (Tosham) and Satyaveer Nahadia (Rewari).)

Narnaul. A "Haryanvi Sahitya-Kala Sangam" was organized today at the international cultural center, "Manumukt Bhawan," located in the local HUDA Sector, under the joint aegis of the Manumukt "Manav" Memorial Trust, Narnaul, and the Haryana Kala Parishad, Kurukshetra. Following a prayer song presented by Industry Extension Officer Dr. Sunil Bhardwaj, the event, under the inspiring guidance of Chief Trustee Dr. Ramniwas "Manav" and the able direction of Dr. Pankaj Gaur, was presided over by Dr. Manoj Kumar Garg, Vice Chancellor of Singhania University, Paseri Badi (Rajasthan) and former Indian Administrative Service officer. Mahesh Joshi, Vice



President of the Haryana Kala Parishad, was the chief guest, and Padmashree Dr. Santram Deswal, a senior litterateur and educationist from Sonipat, was the special guest. All the distinguished guests paid tribute to the late Manumukt "Manav" and praised the important literary, cultural, and social work being undertaken by the Trust in his memory. Disclosing this, Trustee Dr. Kanta Bharti reported that more than two dozen literary figures from across the country participated in this event, organized to mark the 13th death anniversary of the late Indian Police Service officer, Dr. Manumukt 'Manav'. On this occasion, the book "Mhari Matti, Mhare Akhar," edited by Bhiwani-based literary figure and columnist Dr. Satyawan Saurabh and Dr. Priyanka Saurabh and dedicated to Dr. Manumukt 'Manav', was released by the guests on stage. This first short story collection in the Haryanvi dialect includes three short stories each by thirty-three short story writers, totaling ninety-nine short stories, including one from Auckland (New Zealand), twenty-seven from Haryana, three from Rajasthan, and one each from Chandigarh and

Punjab. Sushilkumar 'Naveen' (Tosham) and Satyaveer Nahadia (Rewari) presented reviews of the released book. In the second phase of the event, Sanjay Pathak (Jaitpur), Pravendra Pandit (Alwar), Prof. Poets such as Jyoti Raj (Sonipat), Rajpal Yadav 'Raj' (Gurugram), Dr. Mukut Agarwal and Dalbir Singh 'Phool' (Rewari), and Dr. Jitendra Bhardwaj and Oshin Shukla 'Sakshi' (Narnaul) recited poetry, which was widely appreciated. At the end of the program, the Trust honored all participating writers, including the president, chief guest, and special guest, with robes, mementos, and certificates of honor, and bestowed the 'Dr. Manumukt 'Manav' Memorial Award. *Notable presence of these:* In this special function which lasted for about two and a half hours, apart from litterateurs like Krishna Kumar 'Nirman' (Karnal), Dr. Rajkala Deswal (Sonipat), Dr. Suresh Vashisht and Krishna Jaimini (Gurugram), Rajpal Singh Gulia (Jhajjar), Bhoop Singh Bharti, Dr. Dharamveer Yadav and Savita 'Aruna' (Rewari), Amar Chand Bainiwal (Fatehabad), Dr. Satyapal Sharma and Ashok Vashisht (Hisar), Bhupendra Godara and Suman Godara (Siwani Mandi), Harmahendra Yadav of Toronto (Canada), Dr. Pawan Tripathi, Vice Chancellor of Singhania University, Pacheri Bari (Rajasthan), Chief Financial Officer Sunil Kumar Sobti and Sanjeev Grover, Ground Water Officer Rakesh Kumar of Dadri, CMGGA Prakhar Sachan of Narnaul, former AGM Amarjeet Yadav, former Block Education Officer Mukesh Kumar, Dr. Jitendra Bhardwaj, Suresh Chand Sharma, Banwari Lal Sharma, Krishna Kumar Sharma, Advocate, Baldev Singh were present. The presence of dignitaries like Chahal, Mohammad Shafi, Satyaveer Chaudhary, Dr. Pushpalatha Bhardwaj, Dr. Sharmila Yadav, Dr. Vandana Kumari etc. was noteworthy.

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

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



'Political Correctness' In America The second Trump administration is attempting a substantial transformation of American military culture. Hegseth has promoted a warrior ethos and greater emphasis on combat effectiveness. Simultaneously, he has attacked what he regards as political correctness in the military. This transformation is important because cultural change has been imposed through repeated intervention with the senior leadership of the services. And more critically because that intervention is now producing operational penalties. It also matters because of when it is happening. The United States has been at war with Iran since 28 February. The forty days of active fighting ended in a ceasefire in April, but the Strait of Hormuz remains closed. The blockade is still being enforced and strikes continue. Three carrier strike groups and three

Army divisions are committed in the largest Middle Eastern deployment since 2003. Armies normally ensure stability of senior appointments once a war begins. This one is being trampled in the middle of one. The first cost is capability. Cheap drones, long-range precision weapons and electronic warfare are forcing a rethink of established concepts. George had raised an Unmanned Assault Battalion within the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Italy to prototype a tactical unmanned systems unit drawing on Ukrainian experience. Its soldiers rotated through Kyiv and trained against Ukrainian operators playing the adversary force. General Christopher LaNeve, Hegseth's former senior military aide and now acting Chief of Staff, is closing this forward-thinking endeavour under a back-to-basics approach. General Chris Donahue, the European commander who

backed it, was removed in July. The US Army is dismantling its main platform for learning the decade's most consequential tactical lesson. The second cost is civilian casualties. Last year, Hegseth offered commanders three options for the Pentagon's Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response programme: cut maximum staff while keeping it operational, retain a small central office, or abolish it. Nine commands chose the first and two rejected all three, asking that it be preserved intact. Hegseth gutted it anyway. American operations have since killed hundreds of noncombatants, according to a ProPublica investigation. Now senior Pentagon official Elbridge Colby has proposed restoring about a third of the capability. Both these penalties are intensified by a third: command continuity. Repeated removals affect those who remain: without any explicit loyalty test.

Sugar Prices Remain Firm Across India Despite Measures To Check Rise

Sugar prices remained elevated across India on Sunday despite a series of measures aimed at improving domestic availability and containing the price rise, with retail rates staying above Rs 60 per kg in most markets, according to a report. The all-India average retail price of sugar climbed to Rs 64.24 per kg on August 30, from Rs 63.12 a week earlier, marking a 1.77% increase, news agency PTI reported, citing the consumer affairs ministry data. The average price is now around 30% higher than a month ago and 38.63% above year-ago levels. Retail prices varied widely across markets, with the maximum recorded at Rs 74 per kg and the minimum at Rs 40 per kg. Sugar was selling at Rs 62 per kg in Delhi, Rs 66 in Mumbai, Rs 63 in Chennai and Rs 68 in Ranchi. Wholesale prices also remained firm at Rs 59.73 per kg, compared with Rs 58.66 a week earlier. Wholesale rates have risen



about 31% over the past month and 38.63% from a year earlier. The price pressure persists even though ex-mill sugar prices have fallen nearly 20% after the government allowed duty-free imports of 10 lakh tonnes of raw sugar. Industry sources said a Rs 2-3 per kg difference between ex-mill and wholesale prices, and Rs 7-8 per kg between ex-mill and retail rates, is generally considered normal. Besides allowing imports, the gov-

ernment has tightened stockholding limits for bulk consumers and dealers, and had earlier prohibited sugar exports. The Centre has accused mills of pushing up prices, maintaining that domestic stocks are adequate. However, sugar production for the 2025-26 marketing year is estimated at 306 lakh tonnes, lower than the earlier projection of 343 lakh tonnes, while annual domestic consumption is estimated at 280-285 lakh tonnes.

Trade Setup For Aug 31: Next Nifty Hurdle Near 24,400; Analysts Flag Bearish Bias Despite Rebound



The NSE Nifty 50 is likely to remain in a cautious and range-bound setup at the start of the new week, with technical indicators continuing to point towards a bearish bias despite Friday's pullback. Analysts believe the index needs to reclaim key moving averages and overcome immediate resistance levels before a meaningful recovery can take shape. "Today's pullback, however, has not altered the broader technical setup. The index remains below all key moving averages, indicating a bearish bias. The upward-sloping trendline supports near 24,090 and the previous swing low at 24,025 remain intact. Until these levels are decisively breached, bulls are unlikely to give up. On the higher side, the recent swing high of 24,378 is likely to offer immediate resistance to

Nifty," said Nandish Shah, deputy vice president at HDFC Securities. On the upside, 24,378 remains the key hurdle. A sustained move above this level could improve market sentiment and provide confirmation that the recent rebound is gaining strength. "From a technical perspective, Nifty continues to trade below its 20-day and 50-day EMAs, keeping the short-term structure cautious. The daily RSI remains neutral near the 50 mark, indicating a lack of strong directional momentum. Meanwhile, the rising ADX from lower levels suggests that volatility could gradually increase, although the absence of a decisive breakout continues to point towards a range-bound setup," said Sudeep Shah, head of technical and derivatives research at SBI Securities.

MOBILE PHONES MAY GET CHEAPER AS GST COUNCIL MULLS TAX CUT

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council may consider reducing the 18 per cent tax on mobile phones at its September 12 meeting. The proposed rate cut comes amid a slowdown in mobile handset demand. The Council is scheduled to meet after a gap of 374 days. Unlike its previous meeting, which focused largely on GST rate rationalisation, the upcoming session is expected to give greater attention to easing compliance for businesses. GST compliance reforms likely to dominate meeting Besides the mobile phone tax proposal, the Council is expected to examine several issues linked to GST compliance and input tax credit. One major concern is the inverted duty structure, where the GST paid on inputs is higher than the tax charged on the final product. The Council may also consider measures to protect genuine buyers who lose input tax credit when suppliers subsequently fail to pay their tax liabilities. Another proposal involves greater automation in GST administration. Refund processing could move towards a risk-based automated system using GSTN and e-invoicing data. Compensation Cess also on agenda The accumulated Compensation Cess may also require attention. The



September 12 GST Council meeting is therefore expected to consider both the mobile phone GST rate and wider changes aimed at simplifying compliance, unlocking working capital and reducing recurring tax disputes. While the council's previous session focused heavily on tax rate rationalization, this upcoming meeting is expected to prioritize easing compliance burdens for businesses. Rate adjustments remain on the table, most notably a proposed reduction of the GST on mobile handsets from 18 per cent to a lower bracket, though the official agenda has not yet been circulated. One of the biggest structural concerns is the inverted

duty structure, under which GST paid on inputs can exceed the tax payable on the final product. This has resulted in accumulation of credits for manufacturers, textile and pharmaceutical companies and FMCG firms. "GST 2.0 simplified slabs, but it also deepened the inverted tax problem," said Brijesh Kothari, Partner at Khaitan & Co. While provisional refunds introduced in Budget 2026 have provided some relief, he said the underlying issue remains because the refund formula does not cover input services. A legislative change to allow refunds of input-service credit is therefore required, he said. The issue has also been flagged by

Sivakumar Ramjee, Executive Director-Indirect Tax at Nangia Global. The Supreme Court's rulings in the VKC Footsteps/Transtonnellstroy matter upheld the existing framework restricting inverted-duty refunds to input goods, leaving the policy question for the GST Council, he said. "Should genuine GST paid on services remain locked as working capital?" Ramjee said, adding that the Council also needs to provide statutory protection to bona fide buyers who lose ITC because a supplier subsequently defaults on its tax payment. The latter concern extends beyond inverted-duty refunds.

INDIA EMERGES AS KEY PETROL SUPPLIER TO RUSSIA



hit a record high as the conflict in the Gulf squeezes supply from other sources. India imported more than 2.6 million barrels per day of Russian crude in June and July, up from a low of 1 million bpd in February and accounting for more than half of the country's crude imports. It's likely that fuel exported to Russia may have

been made from Russian crude. Russia, one of the largest crude exporters, has to import gasoline after Ukrainian drone attacks on its energy infrastructure led to up to 70 per cent drop in domestic production. This has triggered a fuel supply crunch that has forced Moscow to import petroleum products while continuing to

impose restrictions on fuel sales across the country. India, Turkey, and Morocco supplied gasoline to Russia in August, as Moscow grappled with a growing mismatch between domestic fuel supply and demand. Russia in July extended its full export ban on gasoline for both producers and non-producers through the end of January

2027. Its diesel export ban was extended through September 1, 2026. Around 55 per cent, or about 260,000 tonnes, of Russia's imported gasoline in August arrived on sanctioned tonnage, Vortexa said. "All India-origin gasoline cargoes Russia imported in August were carried on sanctioned fleets and involved dark ship-to-ship (STS) transfers in the Mediterranean," it said. Overall, around 40 per cent of Russia's August gasoline imports moved via ship-to-ship transfers, with the majority conducted in the dark, with vessels switching off their automatic identification system (AIS) signals. While gasoline imports have surged, Russian diesel exports remain severely constrained by the export ban, refinery damage and disruptions at fuel terminals. Vortexa said 32 attacks were carried out on Russian refineries during July and August, roughly one every other day.

THINK TANK GTRI CALLS FOR REVIEW OF QUALITY CONTROL ORDERS



Economic think tank GTRI on Sunday called for review of quality control orders (QCOs) to ensure that these norms protect consumers without becoming import restrictions or licensing barriers. Mandatory quality certification under these orders raises costs, hurts MSMEs and makes goods more expensive, the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said. It added that if other countries adopt similar orders, Indian exporters could be forced to obtain separate country-specific certifications even when their products already meet recognised international standards, and bear huge travelling and per-diem costs for visiting officers, licensing, renewal and testing fees. This would raise export costs, delay shipments and create new barriers to trade, GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said. "A top-level review is needed to ensure

that QCOs protect consumers without becoming import restrictions or licensing barriers. Without wider reform, the system risks weakening MSMEs, raising prices and discouraging the manufacturing investment that Make in India seeks to attract," he said. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal recently stated in Tokyo that India would develop a framework to ease or waive mandatory quality certification for high-technology industries. The announcement followed concerns raised by Japanese companies about India's Quality Control Order system. "The proposed relief for high-technology industries is welcome. But India needs a broader review of its QCO regime, which is raising costs for manufacturers, disrupting supply chains and discouraging investment," he said.

Star Health strengthens Virtual Doctor Consultations and Home Health Care in AP

Andhra Pradesh, August 2026: With the ongoing monsoon season in Andhra Pradesh, a significant rise is being observed in seasonal infectious diseases, including dengue, viral fevers, respiratory infections such as H1N1, and flood-linked illnesses such as leptospirosis. As families navigate these seasonal health risks, timely medical consultation and early intervention remain critical, Star Health and Allied Insurance Company Limited (NSE: STARHEALTH, BSE: 543412), one of India's leading standalone health insurance companies, is stepping up its monsoon healthcare outreach in the state. Star Health's FY26 data for Andhra Pradesh recorded a 13x increase in Home Health Care utilisation in FY26 compared with FY25. The state saw the highest number of Home Health Care cases for dengue, viral fever and lower respiratory tract infection. Alongside this growth, the company has seen strong demand for its Virtual Doctor Consultation service across the state, with a growing number of customers choosing it as their first point of medical consultation. The outreach focuses on early investigation and timely medical advice by connecting policyholders to 'Talk to Star' and Home Health Care support, while enabling the general public to access free 24/7 Virtual Doctor Consultations through the Star Health Customer app.



Commenting on the initiative, Mr. Srinivas KBB, Business Head, Star Health Insurance, said: "This year, we are seeing growing attention around respiratory infections such as H1N1 in addition to dengue and viral fever. Many patients initially dismiss symptoms as a common cold or seasonal fever. Early access to a doctor can help families make informed decisions and seek the right care pathway sooner. Behind every monsoon infection is a family managing uncertainty, disrupted routines and concern for a loved one. The 13x increase in Home Health Care utilisation across Andhra Pradesh during FY26 highlights the growing demand for timely support

that is easier to access, particularly for children, senior citizens and patients who may find hospital visits difficult. Our responsibility goes beyond arranging treatment. We want patients and caregivers to feel informed, supported and confident about the next step in their care. Through 'Talk to Star', policyholders can receive guidance on Home Health Care or planned hospitalization, while the public can access free 24/7 Virtual Doctor Consultations through the Star Health Customer app. Our focus this monsoon is to help people seek advice early, receive appropriate care and recover with less stress and disruption."

■ LOWER COSTS AND RAIN-READY CARE: THE CASE FOR HOME HEALTH CARE

Data from the National Statistical Office's 80th round survey on household health expenditure, released in 2026, highlights the financial burden of illness and hospitalisation on households. In Andhra Pradesh, the average cost of hospitalisation was ₹40,720 in rural areas and ₹45,629 in urban areas, while the overall average stood at ₹42,517 per hospitalisation. Healthcare expenses remain high across the board, leaving many individuals and families to cover a significant proportion of these costs out of pocket. All the more reason why prevention and early detection is important.

1 IN 8 NEW CARS IN TELANGANA IS ELECTRIC THANKS TO TAX WAIVER

Hyderabad: Electric cars outpaced electric two-wheelers in Telangana through 2025-26, accounting for more than 10 per cent of new car sales every single month and touching over 15 per cent at their peak, according to an analysis by the Transport Department. Electric cars held a double-digit market share in every month of the financial year, while electric two-wheelers stayed in single digits for much of the first half, pointing to growing acceptance of electric vehicles in the passenger car segment. 12.5 pc of new cars are electric Across the year, electric cars made up 12.5 per cent of the state's new car market, well ahead of the 8.9 per cent share held by electric two-wheelers and the 8.8 per cent share across all vehicle categories. Of roughly 1.50 lakh new car registrations in the state, 18,853 were electric, meaning that nearly one in every eight cars sold in Telangana ran on electricity. Over the same period,



the state registered 53,354 electric two-wheelers. The gap between the two segments was at its widest in August, when electric cars accounted for 15.2 per cent of new car registrations against 8.8 per cent for two-wheelers. The Transport Department's analysis draws on 10.3 lakh vehicle registration records covering all fuel types and vehicle classes between April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026. Tax waiver drove 20 pc jump Much of the momentum is being credited to the state government's decision to scrap the cap on its elec-

tric vehicles (EV) tax exemption, after which registrations rose by around 20 per cent. Average monthly EV registrations climbed from about 6,333 before the exemption to 7,592 through 2025-26. Introduced on November 16, 2024, the policy gives eligible EVs registered in Telangana a full waiver of road tax and registration fees, with no ceiling on the number of vehicles covered. It applies to electric two-wheelers, private cars, commercial passenger vehicles, auto-rickshaws, light goods carriers, tractors and certain

buses, and runs until December 31, 2026. Monthly figures show the market building steadily through the year, peaking at 10,705 registrations in October 2025 during the festive season, and holding between 8,000 and 9,000 vehicles a month for much of the period that followed, comfortably above the pre-exemption baseline. Commercial EVs responded fastest The growth was not confined to private vehicles. Commercial EVs, including autos, cabs, goods carriers and buses, showed the quickest initial response, with monthly registrations rising 17 per cent immediately after the exemption came into force before settling at around 800 vehicles a month over the financial year. Across all categories, more than 91,000 electric vehicles were registered in the state during the year, with over Rs 6,000 crore invested in the sector, translating to roughly one in every 11 vehicles sold in Telangana now being electric.

the latest F1 test serving as valuable preparation and a confidence boost ahead of the resumption of the season. Maini will return to competitive action at Monza, where he will resume his Formula 2 championship challenge. Kush Maini, BWT Alpine F1 Team Reserve Driver, said: "Always unreal to get behind a F1 car, no matter how many times it's been. We maximised the run plan and gained loads of mileage and experience. I'm hoping the data & performance from this test helps the team move forward in their championship campaign in 2026."

RAJ TARUN’S NEW MOVIE TITLED “TORTOISE”; FIRST LOOK POSTER RELEASED



The identity of the young hero seen sleepwalking had been going viral on social media until yesterday, creating a lot of curiosity among movie lovers. Bringing an end to the suspense, the makers have now revealed who the young hero is and what his upcoming film is. The young hero seen sleepwalking is Raj Tarun, and his new movie has been titled “Tortoise,” the makers announced today. Along with the title announcement, they also unveiled the

film’s first look poster. Amrutha Chowdary, Avasarala Srinivas, and Dhanya Balakrishna are playing other key roles in the movie. “Tortoise” is being produced by Vijai Chowdary, Sasidhar Nalla, and Ramiseti Rambabu under the banners of SK Golden Arts, Prashvitha Entertai9ment, and NVL Creations. Directed by Rithwik Kumar, the film is said to be an intense action thriller that blends suspense and drama. Manasa Kumar and

Santhosh Emmadi are serving as co-producers. The first look poster released along with the title announcement has created considerable interest around the film. In the poster, Raj Tarun is seen sitting beside a dead body, with bloodstains on him, while a knife lies next to him. The intriguing visual suggests that Raj Tarun is portraying an intense and distinctive character unlike anything he has attempted in his career so far. The makers are expected to reveal more updates about

KANAKA DURGA JOINS Z5 TELUGU’S POST-THEATRICAL SLATE

Birla Studios & Temple Town Pictures’ Much-awaited Faith Drama - Kanaka Durga Announced by Z5 Telugu in Its Massive Post-Theatrical Film Slate! Birla Studios & Temple Town Pictures’ much-awaited faith drama, Kanaka Durga, is a part of Z5 Telugu’s massive post-theatrical film slate. Kanaka Durga marks an exciting creative collaboration that brings together a powerful story rooted in the enduring power of divinity. The film stars Allari Naresh and Kajal Choudhary in the lead, with Pradeep Maddali at the helm as director and BVS

Ravi as the writer. Kanaka Durga is a Thaman S musical. Set against a world where devotion, action, emotion and music all come together, Kanaka Durga draws inspiration from the divine energy and spiritual significance of the all-powerful Goddess Kanaka Durga. The film aims to create a stirring cinematic experience that celebrates devotion while delivering a compelling story for contemporary audiences. Currently filming, Kanaka Durga is presented by Birla Studios and is being produced by Temple Town Pictures.



Telugu Zee 5 Accelerates Growth with a Bold New Wave of Originals and Blockbuster Entertainment

-From NBK111, Vrushakarma and January 12 Vidudhala to Panchanama and Jayammu Nishchayammu Ra 2, Telugu Zee 5 brings together bold, homegrown stories that speak to the heart of South India- At Zee 5, the belief is simple: India’s entertainment future will be shaped by the strength of its many languages and the creators who continue to push creative boundaries. Today, Telugu Zee 5 is taking its content offering to the next level with an expansive slate that spans iconic franchises, original series, marquee films, strategic partnerships, and a wider range of



blend has paved the way for a rich and diverse storytelling ecosystem, fostering stories that resonate deeply with audiences while continually redefining the conventions of popular entertainment. Telugu Zee 5’s new slate is strengthened by collaborations with some of the industry’s most established names, including Vyjayanthi Movies, Sukumar Writings, Sri Venkateswara Cine Chitra (SVCC), Prime Show Entertainment, Shine Screens, Vriddhi Cinemas, Manam Enterprises LLP, Birla Studios, Temple Town Pictures, Udaya Bhanu Productions and Sri Chakra Movies LLP.

entertainment experiences than ever before. With one of the industry’s most loyal

and discerning audiences, Telugu entertainment has consistently struck a bal

ance between cultural authenticity and creative innovation. This unique

IRUMUDI
UNSTOPPABLE!
CROSSES Rs. 150 CR!



ARUNACHALA CREATIONS, HARSH ROSHAN NEXT THELLA KAAGITHAM IS ALL SET FOR WORLDWIDE RELEASE ON OCTOBER 2ND

Young and talented actor Harsh Roshan is all set to begin an exciting new chapter in his career with his next film Thella Kaagitham under the Arunachala Creations banner. Backed by producer Krishna Kommalapati, the project comes after the actor’s impressive success with acclaimed films like Court and Band Melam. Making his directorial debut with this venture is Ramesh Bandreddi, who is expected to bring a fresh perspective to the romantic entertainer with a strong focus on emotions, romance, and relatable storytelling. The film has been generating considerable buzz among movie lovers. Thella Kaagitham is described as a heartwarming musical love story that revolves around youthful emotions and memorable relationships. For this musical love story, music director Vijai Bulganin brings the narrative to life with his soulful tunes. The first single, “Chilaka,” has become a



huge chartbuster, trending everywhere and creating a strong buzz. Everyone is now eager to witness this musical love tale. Today, the makers announced the much-awaited release date.

Thella Kaagitham is all set for a grand release on October 2nd. The release date poster has impressed everyone, with Harsh Roshan and Nakshatra looking great together.

Dheeraj Mogilineni Launches ‘Summer Holidays’ School Song



Making Summer Holidays with children has given me immense happiness and satisfaction as a producer”: producer Dheeraj Mogilineni at the School Song launch event
Producer and distributor Dheeraj Mogilineni has earned a reputation for delivering content-driven films to audiences. Under his banner, Dheeraj Mogilineni Entertainments, he is currently producing a children’s film titled Summer Holidays. Summer Holidays is being directed by Srikar, who has crafted a beautiful story that takes audiences back to the nostalgic memories of childhood. Master Rohan, Master Arun, and Baby Khushi play key roles in the film. The movie is gearing up for a grand theatrical release soon. The School Song from the film was launched at an event held in Hyderabad today. The event was attended by the film’s cast and crew and was conducted in a lively and festive atmosphere.

HEBAH PATEL GOES BOLD IN BLACK

Hebah Patel, who has quietly clocked a decade in the industry, dropped a fresh set of pictures that’s got fans talking. She served understated elegance in a black georgette saree with intricate white floral embroidery sprawled across it, paired with a simple black blouse, a pearl choker, and soft curls, proof that sometimes minimal styling makes the loudest statement. Despite a decade-

long innings, Hebah has largely stuck to smaller films and cameo appearances rather than bagging big-ticket roles. That said, she isn’t slowing down, she has Aadya, a Tamil film that’s already completed, and Rudra Kaala, a Kannada film currently in production, lined up next. Her notable films include Eedo Rakam Aado Rakam, Ekkadiki Pothavu Chinnavaada, Andhagadu, 24 Kisses, and Orey Bujiga.



SHRADDHA DAS ENTERS SAREE SEASON IN STYLE

Shraddha Das, who has shared screen space with top heroes like Allu Arjun, Venkatesh, and Ram Pothineni in memorable cameos over the years, seems to have officially entered “saree season”, and she’s making sure to do it in style. In her latest pictures, she’s draped in a stunning pastel pink and rust ombre saree featuring an abstract tie-dye pattern with subtle gold foil detailing running through the fabric, giving it a textured, artistic finish. She paired it with a matching structured blouse, letting the

saree’s play of colors, from soft blush to deep terracotta, take center stage. Ruby-studded jewellery, including a statement choker and matching earrings, added just the right pop of color against the muted palette, while her soft wavy hair and dewy makeup rounded off the effortlessly chic look While Shraddha hasn’t landed a big lead role in a while, having largely stayed in the cameo and supporting space in recent times, she continues to keep her fashion game strong and stay relevant with fans through her style updates.

