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NATIONAL | NEWS

PM participates in the valedictory session of the two-day National Departmental Summit on Water

WORLD | NEWS

Putin's veiled threat to UK part of Russia's campaign against West

CINEMA | NEWS

MALAVIKA MOHANAN NAILS EFFORTLESS ELEGANCE IN WHITE

Sita's sacrifice greater than Rama's: Shivakumar

CITES SONIA GANDHI'S SACRIFICE & LEADERSHIP



BENGALURU (TSIT):

Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Wednesday said Sita's character in the Ramayana was "much greater" than that of Lord Rama, citing her sacrifices and struggles as an inspiration for women. Speaking at the fifth edition of "Together We Grow—International Women Entrepreneurship Day" in Bengaluru, Shivakumar praised women entrepreneurs who overcame challenges to

build successful businesses. He also cited Congress leader Sonia Gandhi as an example of sacrifice and leadership, saying she faced personal tragedies but continued to lead the party and chose not to become Prime Minister. Shivakumar highlighted the government's women-centric initiatives, including the Shakti scheme and Gruha Lakshmi, under which 1.22 crore women receive Rs.2,000 per month, besides

loans and subsidies. He called for greater women's leadership from gram panchayats to Parliament and said the 33 per cent reservation would create more opportunities for women to emerge as leaders. The Chief Minister also urged women entrepreneurs to support Karnataka's development and appealed for backing for the proposed Bengaluru tunnel road project.

Kiren Rijiju holds series of bilateral talks on sidelines of NAM Summit in Belgrade



BELGRADE (TSIT):

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju held a series of bilateral meetings with leaders from several nations on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in Belgrade. The discussions were focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation and expanding engagement in key sectors.

Rijiju met with Saudi Arabia's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Waleed A. M. Elkhereiji, as the two leaders discussed ways to deepen the close and longstanding partnership between India and Saudi Arabia and explored avenues to broaden cooperation across areas of mutual interest.

Taking to X, Rijiju posted, "Met with H.E. Waleed A. M. Elkhereiji, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Exchanged views on further

strengthening the close & enduring India-Saudi Arabia partnership & advancing cooperation across areas of mutual interest."

The Minister also met Ana Brnabic, President of the Serbian National Assembly, where the two sides exchanged views on the enduring India-Serbia relationship and the role of parliamentary engagement in fostering closer ties between the two countries and their people. Following the meeting, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister took to X on Wednesday and said, "Had a warm & meaningful meeting with H.E. Ana Brnabi, President (Speaker) of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. Reflected on the strong bonds of friendship between India & Serbia & the important role of parliamentary exchanges in bringing our two countries & our people closer."

Retired Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra to be first CEO of Ram Temple

AYODHYA (TSIT): Retired Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra is set to become the first Chief Executive Officer



(CEO) of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, according to people familiar with the Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust's decision. Mishra, who held several senior command positions in the Indian Air Force, served as chief of the Western Air Command during Operation Sindoor. His appointment follows a month-long selection process in which 5,585 applications were screened. Of these, 111 candidates were interviewed online and 16 were shortlisted for face-to-face interviews in Ayodhya. The CEO will function independently without government interference and report to the Trust's General Secretary. The official is expected to oversee long-term planning and strengthen temple and donation management. The appointment comes amid controversy over alleged irregularities in temple donations, which resulted in eight arrests and the resignation of Trust General Secretary Champat Rai, according to the report.

SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

01-09-2026

Total pilgrims : 78,310
Tonsures : 34,573
Hundi konukulu : 4,58 CR
Laddu sale : 4,14 Lac
Annaprashadam : 2,52 Lac
Present Situation on 02-09-2026:
Waiting Compartments...31

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens), 12H.

Short Takes

THE STORM SET THE PAPER, INDIA TOPPED THE WORLD

New Delhi (TSIT): A storm is the most honest examiner in economics. It sets the same paper for every economy at the same hour, and it marks without mercy. The past thirteen months were such an examination. The steepest American tariffs faced by any major trading nation. An oil shock. The Hormuz disruption. A supply chain squeeze in every part of the world. Now read that question paper again, because every question on it was hardest for India.

THREE NEW MEMBERS APPOINTED IN RAM TEMPLE TRUST



Ayodhya, Sep 2 (TSIT): The Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust appointed three new members to the Trust on Wednesday, one of whom is said to be a relative of former Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Ashok Singhal. According to TV reports, Delhi-based Mahesh Bhagchandka and Ayodhya-based Madan Mohan Pandey and Shikohabad-based Nirmala Yadav are among the three newly appointed Trustees.

IRAN'S IRGC CLAIMS ATTACKS ON US BASES IN KUWAIT, JORDAN AND IRAQ

Tehran, Sep 2 : Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) on Wednesday claimed that it carried out attacks on the US Ali Al-Salem base in Kuwait, a military camp housing US Marines in Jordan and destroyed a US surveillance balloon control system at an American base in Iraq, local media reported. In the statement, the IRGC said that it successfully hit the living quarters and command post of the US Ali Al-Salem base's American commander in Kuwait.

CM Vijay to withdraw cases against farmers, teachers

CHENNAI (TSIT):

The Tamil Nadu government has announced the withdrawal of all criminal cases registered against farmers and teachers who participated in peaceful protests between May 2021 and April 2026 in support of their livelihood, rights and other legitimate demands.

Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay announced the decision in the Legislative Assembly under Rule 110, describing it as an effort to protect democratic rights and rebuild trust between the government and ordinary citizens.

The order will cover cases filed against farmers who opposed the proposed State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu industrial estate in Tiruvannamalai district. Cases registered during the prolonged



agitation against the proposed greenfield airport at Parandur in Kancheepuram district will also be withdrawn. Residents of Parandur and surrounding villages had organised sustained protests against the airport project, arguing that it would lead to the acquisition of fertile agricultural land, damage waterbodies and destroy traditional sources of income.

Godavari waters reach North Andhra: CM Naidu

VISAKHAPATNAM (TSIT)

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday welcomed the arrival of Godavari waters in North Andhra by offering Jala Harathi at the Payakaraopeta Cross Regulator in Anakapalli district. After sprinkling the sacred water on his head, he unveiled a commemorative plaque and offered a Sashtanga Namaskaram to the river.

Large numbers of farmers, women and local residents gathered on both sides of the canal to welcome the waters with flowers and traditional harathi. The Chief Minister said the Godavari waters released through the Polavaram Left Canal would provide irrigation to 2.87 lakh acres and drinking water to 9.23 lakh people in East Godavari, Kakinada, Konaseema and Anakapalli districts.

The government has spent Rs.4,192 crore on the Left Canal and plans to spend another Rs.800 crore to complete the remaining works.



The waters would also be used to fill the Yeleru Canal and 110 tanks in Anakapalli district, ensuring irrigation to the Pushkara, Yeleru, Pampa, Tandava, Varaha and Mamidigedda ayacuts. Officials said 23.44 TMC of water has been planned for industrial, drinking water and irrigation requirements in Visakhapatnam and Anakapalli districts. Addressing a public meet-

ing, Chandrababu Naidu said the arrival of Godavari waters would transform the barren lands of North Andhra into fertile agricultural fields and usher in a new era of prosperity. He said the Left Main Canal would be further expanded and connected to the North Andhra Sujala Sravanthi project.

Twelve major projects in North Andhra would be completed at a

cost of Rs.3,200 crore, while 36 projects worth Rs.35,000 crore would be completed over the next three years.

The Chief Minister said abundant water availability would attract industries, investments, data centres and IT companies, creating employment and livelihood opportunities. Visakhapatnam would emerge as an AI City, Google hub and centre of the knowledge economy, he said. He also announced plans to take Godavari waters to Simhachalam next year and subsequently to Arasavalli and the Vamsadhara. Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu, Ministers Nimmala Ramanaidu, Vangalapudi Anitha, P. Narayana, K. Atchannaidu, Kollu Ravindra and K. Parthasarathi, MPs CH Vijay and C.M. Ramesh and other public representatives participated in the programme.

Nepal PM calls for global response to rising Himalayan climate risks

KATHMANDU (TSIT):

Nepal Prime Minister Balendra Shah on Wednesday called for stronger international attention to growing climate-related risks in the Himalayan region as the death toll from devastating floods in the Bhotekoshi River crossed 1,100. Addressing the House of Representatives, Shah said Nepal must highlight more forcefully the disasters it is facing due to climate change.

At least 1,114 bodies swept away by last week's floods had been recovered by 9 am Wednesday, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA). Around 3,916 people remain out of contact. Experts said an avalanche blocked the Lengde Khola, a tributary of the Bhotekoshi River near the Nepal-China border. The accumulated water later breached the natural barrier, triggering a massive flood that swept downstream towards the Trishuli River and devas-



tated settlements and infrastructure. Shah said the disaster had raised questions about how such an event occurred and what it meant for Nepal's future. "The huge disaster, whose impacts of climate change we have suddenly experienced, has kept us working around the clock to manage the damage. At the same time, another profound question has arisen in our minds: How did this disaster come upon us?" he said. Referring to expert assess-

ments, Shah said the incident was a serious warning that climate change was increasing risks in the Himalayan region.

"We must make the international community aware of the disasters we are experiencing as a result of climate change. Climate change is a global challenge. Its impacts and efforts to mitigate and manage them are the shared responsibility of the global community," he said. Shah also defended the government's response to questions

over whether timely warnings were issued to the public. "As soon as we received information that the flood was approaching, our security personnel were deployed to alert residents. However, they themselves went missing during the operation," he said.

Some media reports had suggested that the Nepali government was reluctant to accept international assistance for the rescue and relief of flood victims. Seven days after the disaster, Shah told Parliament that the government had never adopted a policy of refusing international assistance during major disasters.

"We had been coordinating with international countries from the very beginning to seek assistance as needed in the affected areas. We had also tried to expedite the process of receiving international assistance," Shah said. "Our friendly neighbours, India and China, had already sent technical experts.

CM Revanth seeks Rajnath's support for 'Invest Telangana' summit

HYDERABAD (TSIT):

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy sought met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi and sought cooperation for the 'Invest Telangana Global Summit-2026' being organised by the state government at the 'Bharat Future City' from December 7 to 9.

The Chief Minister briefed the Defence Minister on the main objective of the global summit and requested him to inaugurate the Defence Expo-2026, which is to be conducted as part of the summit. He highlighted that the Defence Expo would feature a special session on the aerospace, defence, and space sectors, alongside a prestigious air show, industrial exhibition and live demonstrations of land-based defence systems.

According to the Chief Minister's Office, Revanth Reddy sought the full cooperation of the Defence Ministry to successfully organise the Defence Expo-2026 in accordance with international standards. The Chief Minister appealed to Rajnath Singh to provide assistance



mainly in granting the necessary airspace clearances for the airshow and ensuring the participation of Indian Air Force aircraft, as well as the 'Surya Kiran', 'Sarang' aerobatic teams and also the support for the static aircraft display. The Union Minister has been requested that state-of-the-art defence systems belonging to the army, navy, and air force be showcased and that senior officials and representatives from the three armed services participate in the event.

CM Revanth Reddy emphasised the presence and guidance of the Defence Minister at the expo, where the defence industries, startups and young scientists from across the country would also join and share their experiences and ideas.

'Cheap, disgraceful act': BJP, SP slam Pakistan PMO over edited SCO summit

New Delhi, Sep 2 : BJP and Samajwadi Party leaders on Wednesday criticised the Pakistan Prime Minister's Office (PMO) for sharing an edited photograph of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting, that left out Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other leaders, calling it a "cheap and disgraceful act".

Talking to reporters, West Bengal Minister Dilip Ghosh said that such actions only damage Pakistan's image internationally.

"The people of Pakistan indulge in such fraud and trickery, which is why no one in the world trusts them. Whether PM Modi's photo is there or not makes no difference at all. They are only tarnishing their own country's image," he said.

Speaking to IANS, Samajwadi Party leader S.T. Hasan also criticised the move, saying Pakistan should not stoop to such a low level.

"This is a very cheap and disgraceful act. Pakistan should not stoop to such a low level. Our country is far ahead of Pakistan in every respect. Its only job is to spread terrorism, and it has shot itself in the foot," he said.



Hasan further said that Pakistan had failed to respond to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks on terrorism during the SCO Summit.

"They could not respond to our Prime Minister's remarks on terrorism and remained silent. Since they had no answer, they edited the picture out of frustration. Such actions serve no purpose and only make them look embarrassed," he said.

The X post by the Pakistan Prime Minister's Office featuring world leaders at the SCO Summit in Kyrgyzstan's Bishkek drew attention on Tuesday after the image was cropped on both sides. The

edited photograph left out Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, and several other leaders.

"Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with heads of States at the SCO Council of Heads of State Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on 1 September 2026," the Pakistan PMO said in the post on Tuesday.

However, a few hours after the Pakistan PMO's post, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif shared the original photograph featuring all the leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Today, I was honoured to address the SCO Council

of Heads of State Meeting in Bishkek as Pakistan assumed the SCO Chairmanship for 2027. I congratulated the Kyrgyz Republic on successfully hosting the Summit and steering the Organisation with distinction," Sharif said in his post, recalling his country's "immense sacrifices in the fight against terrorism".

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Modi said on Tuesday at the 26th SCO Summit that the West Asia conflict must be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy. He also urged member states to shun "double standards" while unitedly countering the challenge of terrorism.



Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday paid a courtesy visit to AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge and AICC General Secretary Jairam Ramesh in New Delhi. The Chief Minister met the senior Congress leaders during his visit to the national capital and exchanged views with them.

Applications Invited for Contract-Based Posts at Government Medical College.

Mancherial, September 2, TSIT :

Applications are invited for recruitment to various posts on a contract basis at the Government Medical College, Mancherial, Principal Dr. M. Devoji said in a statement on Wednesday.

The recruitment is being taken up for the posts of

Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor and Tutors on a contract basis. The appointments will be valid up to March 31, 2027, or until the actual need ceases or regular appointments are made, whichever is earlier.

Interviews will be conducted on September 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Government

Medical College located at Gudipet in Hajipur mandal.

Eligible and interested candidates can obtain the notification, details of the available posts and application form from the college website, <https://www.gmcmancherial.org/>. The Principal urged eligible candidates to make use of the opportunity.

Collector Inspects Resurvey Works, School and Anganwadi Centre in Khanapur

M a h a b u n a g a r , September 2 (TSIT Bureau) : District Collector Khushboo Gupta on Wednesday visited Khanapur village in Jadcherla mandal and inspected the ongoing land resurvey works, Mandal Parishad Primary School and Anganwadi Centre.

The Collector reviewed the progress of the land resurvey with the concerned officials and urged villagers to extend their full cooperation to the process. She said the resurvey would help clearly record land details and boundaries and prevent land-related disputes in the future. She also advised villagers to provide accurate details of their lands to the officials. Later, the Collector inspected the Mandal Parishad Primary School



and enquired about the quality of the mid-day meal being served to students. She also checked whether eggs and other nutritious food were being provided to the children regularly. At the Anganwadi Centre, the Collector noticed issues relating to electricity, lighting and fans and

directed the concerned officials to take immediate steps to rectify them. Anganwadi staff informed her that the electricity connection issue had been brought to the notice of officials several times. Responding to this, she instructed the officials to resolve the problem without delay.

Eye tests held for students in Jagityal

Jagityal, September 2, TSIT: As part of the National Eye Donation Fortnight celebrations, eye examinations were conducted for students at the Zilla Parishad High School in Korutla, Jagityal district. Under the supervision of District Deputy Medical Officer Musku Jaipal Reddy, the students underwent vision tests and were given several suggestions regarding eye health. The medical officer advised students to pay special attention to their eye health from a young age. Awareness was created among the students about the

adverse effects of excessive use of mobile phones, computers, and televisions on eye health. He advised them not to neglect any eye-related problems and to consult a doctor immediately if they experience any symptoms or difficulties. He stated that eye donation is a noble act that can bring light into another person's life even after one's death. School teachers, medical staff, and students participated in the programme and gained awareness about the importance of eye health and eye donation.



BRS Slams Congress Over Unfulfilled Promises, Stages Massive Protest in Gadwal.

Jogulamba Gadwal TSIT. The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) staged a massive protest rally, dharna and public demonstration in Gadwal on Wednesday, alleging that the Congress government had failed to fulfil its election promises during its 1,000-day rule.

Addressing the gathering, former Telangana State Sports Authority chairman Dr. Anjaneya Goud launched a scathing attack on the Congress government, alleging that the administration had betrayed the people after coming to power with assurances of six guarantees and 420 promises.

He alleged that the government had failed to effectively implement welfare programmes and claimed that schemes such as Rythu Bima, Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak had been neglected. He also accused the government of failing to protect the interests of farmers in the erstwhile Gadwal region, par-

ticularly with regard to the government explain the status



utilisation of Krishna and Tungabhadra river waters.

Dr. Anjaneya Goud further alleged that farmers were facing hardships while unemployed youth and students were disappointed over the lack of employment opportunities. Questioning the Congress government over its promise to provide two lakh jobs, he demanded that the

of the recruitment commitment. He also levelled allegations of large-scale irregularities and illegal activities in Gadwal, claiming that issues relating to land, sand, soil and other natural resources were frequently being reported in the local media. He alleged that the government had failed to take effective action against such activities.

STAY VIGILANT AGAINST CYBER FRAUD



Bhadradri Kothagudem (TSIT): District SP Rohit Raju advised students to remain alert against cyber fraud, drug abuse and other antisocial activities. Addressing a cybercrime awareness programme at Abdul Kalam College on Wednesday, he explained scams involving digital arrests, fake police or government officials, fraudulent investment offers, fake apps and malicious links. He urged students not to share personal details, passwords, photos, videos or OTPs with strangers and to avoid suspicious links and unknown contacts on social media. He also advised them to stay away from drugs, focus on studies and participate in sports and cultural activities. He urged students to approach parents, teachers or police without fear if they faced any problems. The SP interacted with students and answered questions on cyber-crime, social media, drug abuse, the POCSO Act and personal safety. He advised victims of cyber fraud to immediately call 1930 and report the incident without delay. Kothagudem DSP Adinarayana, CI R. Venkateswarlu and Sis Ramana Reddy, Zubeda Begum, Kalyani and Ramadevi participated in the programme.

Calculate the ten years of BRS rule: MLA Meghareddy Dhawajam

Wanaparthi (TSIT): Wanaparthi MLA Thudi Meghareddy criticized that it is ironic to blame the people who have been in power for a decade and watered down the hopes of the people. What has been done to the people in the last ten years of rule? We are ready to release a white paper including calculations on the progress of the constituency.. And do you have the guts to open the log of your ten years of deposit expenditure?

•White paper on development.. Rs.2,389 crore work report: MLA Meghareddy

disclosed the details in a press conference organized at the Vanaparthi district Congress party office. He said that many development works have been expedited in Vanaparthi constituency at a cost of Rs.2,389 crores and a white paper with full details regarding the progress of the projects will be released soon. It has been explained that about Rs.1,000 crore has been spent in the constituency for the implementation of six guarantees for the welfare of the poor. He said that while paying huge interest on the debts left by the previous government, the welfare schemes are being continued continuously.

Is it a publicity stunt on projects? : The MLA severely criticized BRS's double stance in the matter of credit for irrigation projects. He denied that while 90



percent of the works in the Kalvakurti Lift Scheme (KLL) had been completed in the past, only the remaining 10 percent of the works were done and they claimed to have built the entire project themselves as political magic. He accused them of ignoring the previous work done in the case of Palamuru-Ranga Reddy upliftment and trying to put everything in their own account. He clarified that Rs.182 crores have been paid directly to the farmers for land acquisition within the constituency while solving the pending issues.

Challenging the allegations on the temple platform: The MLA reacted strongly to the personal allegations. He stated that his land purchase was a public matter and ZPTC Raghupathi Reddy was an eyewitness to the transaction. "Do you have the guts to

come to Venkateswara Swamy Temple to prove my hard-earned wages? Let's settle it there," he challenged. Raghupathi Reddy demanded to reveal the facts that he is ready to register 39 pits of land in anyone's name. Verdict before the people: DCC president Shivsena Reddy: DCC district president Shivsena Reddy said that opposition leaders who claim to be intellectuals should introspect. He said that the Congress government is giving a big boost to the irrigation sector while carrying the burden of past debts in the budget. He appealed to the opposition parties to stop campaigning and give an account of the work done during the ten years of government directly before the people. Many important Congress leaders and activists participated in this meeting.



PM participates in the valedictory session of the two-day National Departmental Summit on Water Security organised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, in New Delhi

EDITORIAL

Why 'Free Coaching' Sounds Good But Seldom Works

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day address from the Red Fort, announced that the government would provide free online coaching to students preparing for competitive examinations. The programme, according to the Prime Minister, would use India's digital public infrastructure and teaching talent, reduce the financial burden on families and allow students to prepare while staying at home.

The concerns that the announcement seeks to address are real. The cost of coaching has increased, students routinely move to coaching hubs, and many parents believe that not enrolling their child in a coaching institute puts them at a disadvantage. However, while free online coaching sounds promising, its ability to deliver what conventional coaching does remains questionable.

THE COACHING INDUSTRY

The private coaching industry in India has grown rapidly over the last two decades. It is a parallel education system, specialising in entrance examinations for medicine, engineering, management, government services and several other careers. A study on the growth of the coaching business in India pointed out that it has grown enough to cast a shadow on the formal education system.

India's private coaching and test-preparation industry is estimated at roughly Rs 58,000 to Rs 1,00,000 crore, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10% to 14%, with online and hybrid coaching segments surging even faster at over 15%. The latest Comprehensive Modular Survey on Education in 2025 found that nearly a third of all Indian students had taken private coaching during the academic year. The proportion was 30.7% in urban areas and 25.5% in rural India. At the higher-secondary level, urban households spent an average of Rs 9,950 per student annually on private coaching, compared with Rs 4,548 in rural areas. However, free online coaching by the government is not exactly a new idea. The PM eVIDYA platform already provides IITPAL lectures prepared by IIT professors for JEE and NEET. The National Testing Agency's E-Abhyas offers test practice. SATHEE, developed by the Ministry of Education and IIT Kanpur, provides free preparation for JEE, NEET, CUET, and other examinations, and reportedly has over 15 lakh registered learners. There are also separate free or subsidised coaching schemes for Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, De-notified Tribes and other disadvantaged groups. Thus, the government does not lack platforms or content. What is not very clear is how many students use these programmes regularly, complete them, and eventually succeed in the examinations.

Is Online Coaching Enough?

Coaching is not merely about lectures. A well-designed coaching programme involves a tight schedule, regular tests, doubt-clearing sessions, analysis of student performance, remedial inputs, and continuous follow-up. The better programmes also help students develop examination strategies and ensure that those falling behind are identified early.

China's Quiet Power Grab Is Hiding In Plain Sight

TARA KARTHA

This time around, the meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is going to be viewed rather differently. Earlier, hardly anyone noticed its somewhat lengthy and verbose statements. This time, however, every foreign correspondent worth his salt is going to be glued to its every move, every handshake, and body language. And that is not just because of the Iran war, or the Ukrainian escalation, though those things are important. It is that Chinese President Xi Jinping is to arrive in Washington at the end of this month, after his visit to India. The equations built before that, in India, Egypt, and the massive SCO meeting, will matter in how the meeting with US President Donald Trump turns out. And that, in turn, will feed back into how everyone else weighs their options. It is like a series of jigsaw puzzle pieces falling into place, in unpredictable ways.

■ AN ECONOMIC MAZE, WITH ONE ANCHOR

First, the SCO itself. It is all very impressive upfront. Some 20-plus countries are meeting at the summit, which includes not just the member states - Russia, China, Belarus, India, Iran, Pakistan, and four Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan - but also some 15 dialogue partners or observers; after last year's Tianjin summit, all have been converted to 'Partners'. That list includes Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the UAE, among others. Three aspects are common among all members, and, increasingly, the 'Partners'. All are neighbours of China, and for



all, it is their biggest trading partner. That means this is a huge Chinese-dominated economic maze. The third is that almost all are also operating Chinese equipment - with Uzbekistan recently opting to buy J-10 CE fighter jets - adding to an existing roster of Chinese-made weaponry. Notably, this buy replaces ageing Soviet-era weaponry. Russian equipment is nowhere to be seen, as it struggles with replacing its own inventory. In short, China is the top dog in this grouping, and everyone knows it.

■ 'AND SO WHAT?'

The question is what it does about it. For that, a disaggregation of the Bishkek Declaration, which oddly, is available so far only in Russian, is indicative, even if the text itself meanders on about multiple issues - this being a consensus document.

The text stresses the desirability of strengthening the UN, concedes with Iran, swears to help Afghanistan stabilise, and, rather surprisingly, comes down heavily on cross-border terrorism and drug trafficking. But if the existing cooperation on terrorism through the SCO centre for the purpose - the Regional Anti Terrorism Structure (RATS) - is any guide, it won't deliver much.

Even so, Beijing seems serious. It faces a massive drug misuse problem among its teens and has cracked some 12,000 cases so far in 2026. And - surprise! - it also cooperates closely with the US for interdiction. That means it is serious. It has also extended the list of precursors. Indian pharma companies had better watch out. A lot of those vital chemicals, deliberately or otherwise, are going from here. But look at not just the

Declaration but also 28 other documents signed, and a pattern emerges. The main document stresses connectivity, thus enhancing the movement of Chinese goods well beyond its borders. Then consider President Xi's speech. A key sentence is that it welcomes all "to take an active part in the 'Big Market for All: Export to China' event series to seize the opportunities to China's super-sized market". That's the exact opposite of what the US is doing. But dig a little deeper, and you'll find that it's not that easy to export to China. In fact, an advisory from the Indian embassy warns of fraud and cheats, quite apart from high tariff barriers. No, China has no intention of doing the SCO members any favours. Quite the reverse. Look also among the welter of mundane documents at an 'Action Plan (Roadmap) for the Development of Ports and

Logistics Centers 2026-2030', and a 'Concept for the Establishment of Regional Data Processing Centers, Computing Capacities and the Development of the Artificial Intelligence Industry within the SCO'. Guess where those ports are going to be and whom they are likely to benefit. Pakistan will certainly see a boost in its already rapidly rising port capacities following the complete breakdown of Chabahar and other Iranian ports. And yes, the race for hugely environmentally damaging and power-hungry data centres has begun in the SCO as well, with the poorest countries likely to be targeted to expend their resources. In short, China is not very different from the exploitative US companies that look for foreign shores, including India, when they feel hemmed in by environmental laws of their own coun-

tries.

■ WHAT THE SCO HAS AND HASN'T DONE

Now consider the SCO for what it has actually done to deal with the multiple crises that it outlines. On the face of it, it seems China has done nothing to help Iran in its corrosive war with the US. But then, a US force battering itself against the Iranians suits Beijing very well. Not only does it leave it free to exercise its 'rights' in Taiwan, but it also gives it an image of being the less destructive power. In fact, that's the central message in Bishkek. In addition, it has managed to play Washington so well that its own oil shipments were earlier exempt from sanctions, while India was arm-twisted. There is also the mystery of how a battered Iran continues to produce drones, missiles, and all its sub-components.

Bayern Munich Academy Chief Lays Down Football Roadmap For India: "Don't Repeat China Mistake"

SAHIL BAKSHI

India has long searched for the right formula to develop football at the grass-roots and youth levels. While various academies, leagues, foreign partnerships, and pathway programmes have been introduced over the years, consistency remains a significant hurdle. During a recent visit to Germany, NDTV explored the world-renowned academy of the country's premier football club, Bayern Munich. In an exclusive 3-part interview, Bayern Campus Director Jochen Sauer outlined the blueprint for building a successful football system from the ground up. While acknowledging that he does not possess in-depth knowledge of Indian football, Sauer highlighted that the country already holds a crucial ingredient: a genuine appetite for sport. According to Sauer, the greater challenges lie in establishing a clear development structure, educating high-calibre coaches, and, crucially, giving a long-term strategy sufficient time to bear fruit. He also stressed that India must focus on the fundamentals by ensuring aspiring youngsters receive ample opportunities simply to play the game. During the chat with NDTV, Sauer also pointed out his experience of working with China, where the constant changes in strategy, youth development system, structure and approach continued to derail the country's football aspirations. He warned India against repeating such mistakes and urged the country's football administration to stick to a 10-year project with a uniform system in place. Q. What are the biggest lessons a country like India can learn from the Bayern Campus? Jochen Sauer: It is difficult for me to answer because I am not too involved in the details of Indian football. But what I believe is that Indian people are very dedicated to sport in general, and that already helps. India is also a country that has grown very quickly over the last decades. If you are trying to take a sport to the highest level, the most important thing is structure. A country has to think about what the struc-



ture of football should be. What is the league system? What is the youth system? How can we get the best talents competing against each other at the highest level? That is most important ingredient is finding a structure. Q. How important is consistency in that structure? Jochen Sauer: You have to have a clear plan and follow it for at least 10 years. I have some experience from when we opened or cooperated with two or three academies in China. The ongoing discussion there was always about changing the strategy, having a youth system, then not having a youth system, linking academies to top clubs, then linking them to universities and going back and forth. I think that is the biggest mistake you can make. You have to have a structure, have a clear plan, and follow the plan for at least 10 years. Youth development always needs time. Q. Can you give an example from Bayern itself? Jochen Sauer: Uli Hoeness (Supervisory board member at Bayern Munich) already asked the question after two years of the Campus: "Where are the top talents?" I told him, "Uli, ask me in five years." We were talking about 11- and 12-year-old kids. If you want to know how good they are, ask me in five years, when they are 17 or 18, and then I can answer the question. It is similar for a country. If you want to

build something, have a strategy, have a plan, and stick to it for at least 10 years. Then you can see whether it works and think about changing things. Q. If India were starting from a blank slate, what should be the biggest priority? Jochen Sauer: For sure, it is working with the youngest players. Working with the youngest means they need to learn about playing football. You can see it with young players from Africa. They go to school, but as soon as they have a ball at their feet, they play with it. Sometimes the focus is too much on having a structure in an academy, developing players physically, focusing on athletics, and so on. I think that is completely wrong. The game is a game. The game is played with the ball. You need to give those kids the ball. As soon as they can train with the ball, they are lucky, happy, and having fun. That is the most important thing: trying to play the game. Bayern Munich On Working With Indian Talent: Over the years, Bayern have worked with talented footballers from India. Some have even been included in their world squad, with Aryan Bose being the most recent example. He was added to the Bayern World squad in June 2026. Sauer feels young footballers in India are way more talented now than they were 10-15 years ago.

URBAN FLOODING: RAIN WOES OR PLANNING FAILURE?

-Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

Indian cities seem to repeat the same story every monsoon—a few hours of heavy rain, waterlogging on roads, vehicles stuck in traffic jams, flooded underpasses, water entering homes and shops, and the administration scrambling for relief and evacuation efforts. Rapidly developing metropolitan areas like Delhi-NCR and Gurugram are examples of this. The question is, are floods in these cities solely the result of excessive rainfall? The answer is no. Urban flooding is a crisis born out of the interaction of natural rainfall and human disruption. While changing weather has certainly increased the risk, poor urban planning and weak governance have exacerbated the situation. Urban flooding occurs when rainwater exceeds the city's drainage, groundwater infiltration, and natural or artificial water storage capacity. In rural areas, water has the space to spread and seep into the ground through fields, ponds, and natural channels, but increasing concretization in cities blocks natural waterways. As a result, even heavy rainfall over a short period can cause widespread waterlogging. The primary reason for Indian cities becoming flood-prone is changing rainfall patterns. Climate change is increasing the frequency of heavy rainfall over short periods of time in many areas. Drainage systems designed based on historical rainfall averages are unable to handle such intense rainfall. The intense monsoon

rains in Delhi-NCR are a case in point. The problem isn't just the total amount of rainfall, but also the excessive concentration of rainfall over a short period of time. Another major reason is rapid concretization. Cities like Gurugram have seen rapid expansion of residential colonies, high-rise buildings, commercial complexes, and roads over the past few decades. Ground that previously absorbed rainwater is now covered with cement and asphalt. This reduces groundwater recharge and increases surface runoff. When large amounts of water flow simultaneously to roads and drains, the drainage system quickly fails. Encroachment on natural drains and waterways also exacerbates urban flooding. Urban development often ignores the fact that every watercourse has its own natural flow area. Narrowing drains, covering them, or building on their banks obstructs water flow. Similarly, the disappearance of ponds, lakes, and wetlands robs cities of their natural water storage areas. The degradation of wetlands and water bodies in Delhi-NCR points to this problem. Weak and unorganized stormwater drainage systems further exacerbate the problem. In many cities, the capacity of drains has not been increased to meet local needs and current rainfall conditions. In many places, sewer and stormwater drainage systems are interconnected, causing both systems to be overwhelmed during heavy rains. Furthermore, plastic and

other solid waste clogs drains. This means that as much as rain is a major problem, so too is the waste we ourselves dump into the drainage system. Therefore, it's not appropriate to consider urban flooding solely as a natural disaster. It's also a failure of governance. In cities, responsibilities for roads, building construction, drainage, land use, environment, and disaster management are often divided among different agencies. When an area becomes waterlogged, assigning responsibility becomes difficult. Lack of coordination leads to one department building a road, another constructing a drain, and a third granting land use permission, but planning doesn't consider the entire catchment area as a single unit. Flood risk and catchment areas are not adequately addressed in urban master plans. Despite existing regulations governing construction in low-lying areas, floodplains, and around water bodies, they are not effectively enforced. Unauthorized construction and encroachment gradually destroy natural waterways. Pre-disaster risk reduction should be a priority, rather than focusing on post-disaster relief and rescue. Building climate-resilient cities requires first considering the city as a natural watershed, not just a collection of buildings and roads. The concept of a "sponge city" can be useful for this. Its aim is to capture, absorb, and reuse rainwater within the city, rather than letting it drain rapidly. Permeable

surfaces, rain gardens, rainwater harvesting, and local water harvesting structures can be developed in parking areas, sidewalks, and other suitable locations. At the same time, "blue-green infrastructure" must be integrated into urban planning. Ponds, lakes, wetlands, rivers, streams, urban forests, and green spaces are not just aesthetically pleasing; they are the city's natural flood-fighting system. Their conservation and restoration help retain water, infiltrate the ground, and regulate temperatures. Stormwater drainage design capacities will also need to be adjusted to account for future climate conditions. Instead of relying on outdated rainfall data, it's essential to incorporate updated climate models and extreme rainfall projections into planning. GIS-based flood-risk maps can be developed to determine which areas should limit construction and where additional water storage capacity needs to be developed. It is also essential to provide local bodies with financial resources, technical expertise, and adequate decision-making power. Each city should develop a comprehensive Urban Flood Risk Management Plan, integrating drainage, land use, water bodies, waste management, and disaster management. Clear accountability should be established between municipal bodies and relevant agencies. Ultimately, extreme rainfall cannot be completely prevented, but it can be significantly reduced from becoming an urban disaster.

Stock markets tumble in early trade on escalating tensions

Mumbai: Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty slumped in early trade on Wednesday, September 2, tracking a bearish trend in global equities and higher oil prices due to escalating conflict in West Asia. The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 788.52 points to 76,155.76 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty slumped 269 points to 23,786.80. Among the 30 Sensex firms, InterGlobe Aviation, Eternal, Mahindra & Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv and Bajaj Finance were the major laggards. Adani Ports and Sun Pharma were the winners. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 0.76 per cent higher at USD 95.37 per barrel. "Indian markets are likely to remain under pressure as surging crude oil prices and rising global bond yields continue to weigh on investor sentiment amid the escalating conflict in the Middle East. While India's resilient



domestic growth outlook provides an underlying cushion, external macroeconomic and geopolitical risks are expected to dominate near-term market direction, keeping the broader outlook cautious," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth-tech firm, said. Crude oil has emerged as the key near-term risk for domestic equities, he said adding that WTI crude has surged more than 8 per cent over the past two sessions following renewed US-Iran military tensions, reigniting concerns over potential disruptions

to energy supplies from the region. "The escalation of the US-Iran conflict and the consequent 5 per cent spurt in Brent crude overnight to USD 96 is a sentiment negative," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi tumbled over 3 per cent, Japan's Nikkei 225 index dropped nearly 3 per cent. Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index also traded lower. US markets ended lower on Tuesday.

BESSENT URGES G20 COUNTRIES TO ADOPT TRUMP'S TARIFF PLAYBOOK

Asheville(US): US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent says he's urging some of his G20 counterparts to take a page from the Trump administration's playbook of using tariffs and other measures to crack down on trade imbalances. Bessent told reporters that he had warned other nations at the beginning of President Donald Trump's second term that the new US "tariff wall" would mean that Chinese goods would flood their markets. "And unfortunately, I was right," Bessent told reporters on the sidelines of the G20 finance minister meetings. "The rest of the world probably needs to take a hard look at what they should be doing to protect their citizens' jobs, their manufacturing base, so that everything they do doesn't get offshored." The Trump administration's tariff policies have been criticised by economists and politicians for raising costs for US consumers and, in many cases,



for punishing allies. The Tax Foundation, an independent think tank, found that the tariffs imposed by the Trump administration throughout 2025 raised the overall retail price of imported consumer goods by roughly 7 per cent relative to pre-tariff trends. Supreme Court rules Trump's tariffs as unconstitutional Ultimately, the US Supreme Court in February decided that the sweeping global tariffs that Trump

imposed under an emergency powers law during his second term in office were unconstitutional. The Trump administration has been overhauling its approach, and is eyeing an additional 7.5 per cent tariff on Chinese imports after investigating alleged Chinese excess industrial capacity and forced-labour regulations. Bessent met with his counterparts from China at the summit, though he did not provide

details of how those talks went. "I often say in our trade discussions with China that we do not want to pull apart from them, but we have to de-risk," Bessent said during a conversation on Tuesday with Fox Business commentator Larry Kudlow, who was a top economic adviser to Trump in his first term. China's trade surplus barrier to economic growth: Bessent "We have more in common with the Chinese on

Iran than we disagree on," Bessent said. "The Chinese agree Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. The Chinese agree that there should be freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz." Bessent has said China's trade surplus, which reached a record-high USD 1.2 trillion in 2025, is a barrier to global economic growth — as well as what he calls excessive regulation. Meanwhile, global debt has reached a record high of USD 353 trillion, with the US debt reaching a record USD 40 trillion in August. Markets have been concerned about a sell-off in US government bonds, but Bessent told reporters "I don't think we're in any kind of dire situation" on bond markets. "The rest of the world probably needs to take a hard look at what they should be doing to protect their citizens' jobs, their manufacturing base, so that everything they do doesn't get offshored," he said.

FORMER DIPLOMAT SYED AKBARUDDIN APPOINTED TO RBI CENTRAL BOARD



Hyderabad: Syed Akbaruddin, a former diplomat and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, has joined the Reserve Bank of India's Central Board as a part-time, non-official director for a four-year term. Akbaruddin has joined the Central Board alongside Annie George Mathew, former Special Secretary, Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, and Janmejaya Kumar Sinha, Chairman of Boston Consulting Group (BCG), India. The appointments bring together experience across diplomacy, public finance, economic policy and business strategy and raise the number of directors to 14. Mathew, 62, a former Special Secretary in the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of

Finance, is serving as a full-time member of the Sixteenth Finance Commission. Sinha, 66, is an economist and management consultant who has held senior leadership roles at BCG. A 1985 batch Indian Foreign Service officer, Akbaruddin brings more than three decades of experience across diplomacy, international affairs and public policy. He served as India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 2016 to 2020 and was earlier the official spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs. Commenting on the appointment, Akbaruddin, currently the Dean of the Kautilya School of Public Policy here, said, "It is an honour and a privilege to serve on the Central Board of the Reserve Bank of India, one of the country's premier public institutions. I am grateful for the trust placed in me and look forward to contributing, with humility and diligence, to its deliberations in the service of India's economy and people." Following his diplomatic career, Akbaruddin has been serving as Dean of the Kautilya School of Public Policy since 2021.

FROM TECH NECK TO DOOMSCROLLING FATIGUE

September 2, 2026: How does an iconic Ayurvedic brand stay relevant to a generation that skips ads, calls out anything inauthentic and refuses to live with discomfort? For Zandu Balm, from the house of Emami Ltd, the answer is simple: Don't lecture Gen Z. Speak their language. In its latest campaign, #UndoWithZandu, India's No.1 pain relief balm, Zandu reimagines pain through a distinctly Gen Z lens, turning screen-time headaches, tech neck, doomscrolling fatigue and everyday frustrations into relatable "Peedas" that today's young consumers instantly recognise. At the heart of the campaign is "Peedaland", a surreal world where youngsters find themselves battling the aches and annoyances of modern life. Enter a vivacious lead character who arrives as the ultimate problem-solver, helping them find their way out with a simple call to action: "Peeda ko karo Undo with Zandu." The campaign marks a strategic shift for Zandu Balm as it connects with 16-28-year-old consumers whose everyday peedas stem as much from digital lifestyles as physical exertion, while reinforcing the brand's ambition to own the



broader cultural space of Peeda and bridge generations of users. When Legacy Meets Culture For decades, Zandu Balm has been a trusted fixture in Indian households, known for providing quick relief from headaches, body aches and cold through its Ayurvedic formulation. While the product proposition remains

unchanged, the conversation around pain has evolved. The insight is rooted in a simple observation: Gen Z doesn't sit with a problem. They deal with it. Immediately. Direct, expressive and self-aware, they prefer confronting discomfort rather than enduring it. Zandu Balm therefore expands the idea of "Peeda"

beyond physical pain to capture the everyday friction points of modern life - from career stress and burnout to situationship drama, overthinking and Monday blues. The result is a blend of humour, cultural relevance and product efficacy, delivered through contemporary storytelling. Speaking on the new campaign, Mr. Mohan Goenka, Director, Emami Limited, said, "Few brands have shaped popular culture the way Zandu Balm has. Its memorable integration with the chartbuster 'Munni Badnaam Hui' became a defining moment in Indian advertising, generating unprecedented buzz and cementing the brand's recall across generations. Building on that legacy, #UndoWithZandu reflects our approach to keeping the brand culturally relevant that reimagines everyday 'peedas' for today's digitally connected consumers. The challenge for a heritage brand is not preserving relevance but continuously earning it. For many Indians, Zandu Balm is a brand they have grown up with. Our ambition is to build the same enduring trust with the next generation, while continuing to evolve with the way they live today."

HYDERABAD ACCOUNTS FOR 91 PC OF TELANGANA'S GST COLLECTIONS



Hyderabad: The city accounted for more than 91 percent of Telangana's Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue in August 2026. The city collected Rs 3,956 crore in GST during August 2026 out of Telangana's total collection of Rs 4,341 crore, as per the data from the state commercial taxes department quoted in a Times of India report. Hyderabad GST collections rise 20.5 pc Hyderabad's GST revenue increased by Rs 674 crore in August compared with Rs 3,282 crore collected during the same month in 2025. The increase from Hyderabad alone made up 96.3 per cent of the Rs 700-crore rise recorded in Telangana's GST collections during the month. Between April and August 2026, Hyderabad collected Rs 18,892 crore in GST, up from Rs 15,535

crore during the same period in 2025. City has nearly 4 lakh GST taxpayers Telangana has around 5.8 lakh registered GST taxpayers, of whom approximately 4 lakh are located in Hyderabad. The capital city generated Rs 3,956 crore of the Rs 4,341 crore collected by Telangana in August. The GST collection per taxpayer is higher in Hyderabad, as in August, it was around Rs 98,900. It is Rs 74,845 in the entire Telangana. With a large share of the state's taxpayers and GST revenue concentrated in Hyderabad, efficient tax administration has become important for revenue collection and taxpayer services. The city collected Rs 3,956 crore in GST during August 2026 out of Telangana's total collection of Rs 4,341 crore.

UWA INDIA GETS FINAL APPROVAL FOR MUMBAI CAMPUS

Hyderabad 2026: The University of Western Australia (UWA), a global top 100 university and a member of Australia's prestigious Group of Eight, has received a Letter of Approval (LOA) from the University Grants Commission (UGC) for its international branch campus in Mumbai, marking a significant milestone ahead of the campus opening in September 2026. The approval brings UWA closer to welcoming its first cohort of students in Mumbai and marks the beginning of a new chapter for students seeking a globally recognised Australian university education without leaving India. Dr Diane Smith-Gander AO, Chancellor, The University of Western Australia, said: "The opening of UWA Mumbai is an important milestone for the University and for our relationship with India. Most importantly, it is about creating new opportunities for students, giving them access to a globally recognised UWA education while they remain connected to the



opportunities, communities and aspirations of India. We are delighted to be at this point in our journey and look forward to welcoming our first students to Mumbai." With the campus set to welcome students in September, UWA Mumbai

will offer an education experience that combines UWA's academic standards and global outlook with access to Mumbai's dynamic business, technology, finance and innovation ecosystem. His Excellency, Mr Nagesh Singh, High Commissioner

of India to Australia, said: "UWA's Mumbai campus is another strong example of the growing depth of the Australia-India education relationship. It gives Indian students the opportunity to experience an Australian university education in India, while creating new connections between our two countries. I look forward to seeing the first cohort of UWA students begin this exciting new chapter in Mumbai." Professor Amit Chakma, Vice-Chancellor, The University of Western Australia, said: "Receiving the UGC Letter of Approval is an important step towards welcoming our first students to UWA Mumbai. Our focus now is on creating an exceptional student experience from day one – an experience that combines UWA's academic excellence and global perspective with the opportunities available in India. We are particularly excited to welcome our students to AI Jumpstart and Orientation, where they will begin building the skills, connections and confidence that will shape their UWA journey."

REVISIONS REFLECT DATA UPGRADE: GOVT DEFENDS NEW GDP ESTIMATES

New Delhi: The statistics ministry on Wednesday, September 2, defended the methodology behind its newly released economic growth estimates, saying revisions to last year's GDP and the divergence between different price measures reflect updated data and estimation techniques rather than an attempt to artificially boost headline growth. The clarification came two days after the government released an updated series of annual and quarterly GDP estimates with 2022-23 as the base year, incorporating a new Producer Price Index (PPI), Banking Services Price Index and additional administrative data. The ministry's detailed questions-and-answers addressed concerns ranging from negative implicit price deflators in manufacturing to the sharp difference between nominal and real growth in mining, as well as the sizeable statistical discrepancy between production- and expenditure-side estimates. India's economy grew 7.8 per cent in real



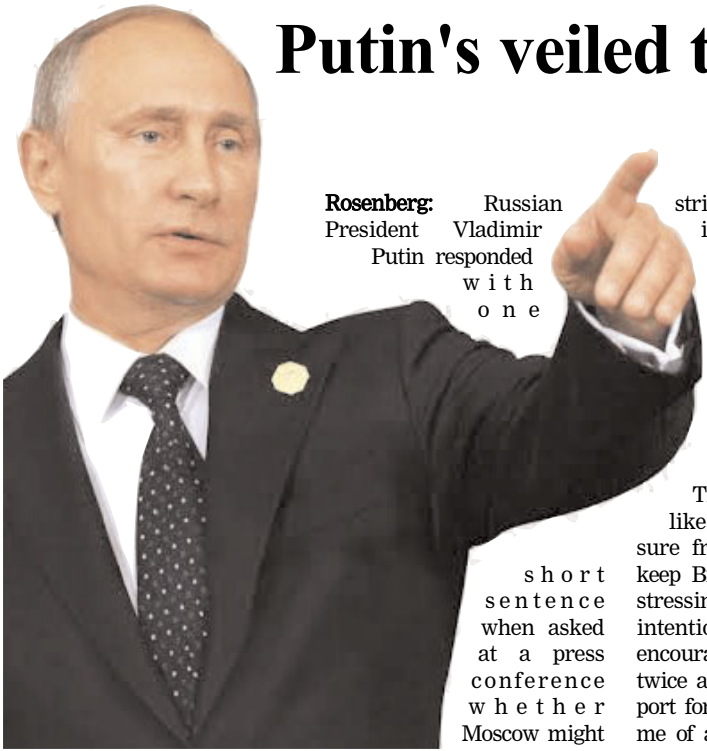
terms in the first quarter of fiscal 2026-27, according to the revised GDP series. The ministry said a negative implicit GVA deflator for manufacturing should not be interpreted as evidence that factory-gate prices declined. Manufacturing GVA in the June quarter was compiled using a double-deflation method, under which output and intermediate consumption are separately adjusted for price changes before real GVA is derived. When input prices rise faster than output prices, nominal GVA can grow more slowly than real GVA, producing a negative implicit deflator even when

both output and input prices are increasing. Manufacturing real GVA grew 9.2 per cent in the quarter compared to nominal growth of 7.7 per cent, resulting in an implicit GVA deflator of minus 1.5 per cent, the ministry said. It cited textiles and cotton spinning, basic metals, and rubber and plastic products among activities where input-price growth exceeded output-price growth. The ministry also pointed to international experience, saying negative or volatile manufacturing deflators can emerge in economies using double deflation during periods of energy and raw-material price shocks.

■ WHY AGRICULTURE PRESENTS DIFFERENT CASE
Agriculture presents a different case because quarterly agricultural GVA is first estimated at constant prices using production data, with current-price estimates subsequently derived using the relevant producer-price index. The agriculture, forestry and fishing output PPI rose about 5 per cent in the quarter, resulting in a positive implied inflation rate of 3.9 per cent, the ministry said. It also rejected claims that the Q1 2025-26 current-price GDP estimate was reduced from Rs 86.05 lakh crore to Rs 80 lakh crore to make the latest growth rate appear stronger. The Rs 86.05 lakh crore figure was calculated under the superseded 2011-12 base-year series and was initially published in August 2025. When the government introduced the 2022-23 base-year series in February 2026, the corresponding Q1 estimate was revised to Rs 80.32 lakh crore.



More than 900 killed in Gaza this year despite ceasefire, Hamas-run health ministry says



Putin's veiled threat to UK part of Russia's campaign against West

Rosenberg: Russian President Vladimir Putin responded with one short sentence when asked at a press conference whether Moscow might strike military facilities in the UK in response to British arms supplies to Ukraine. "That's a secret. A military secret." Military secret is not a "yes". And not a "no". It leaves us hanging. And that, I suspect, is the point. Those two words feel like psychological pressure from the Kremlin: to keep Britain guessing - and stressing - over Moscow's intentions, as well as to encourage the UK to think twice about its staunch support for Ukraine. It reminds me of a newspaper article I read a few days ago. Moskovsky Komsomolets had suggested that UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham should be seeing Russia, not in his dreams, "but in his nightmares". Scary language. But short on detail about what those nightmares will look like. We cannot conclude that Russian missiles are about to be used against targets in the UK. But look what's happening elsewhere in Europe. Germany now says Russia was responsible for last month's drone attack at Leipzig airport. Putin accused Germany of "planting the evidence". But German Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt described "the well-established pattern of Russian hybrid operations in Europe". Could such "operations" now be stepped up in the UK? Yet it wasn't just Britain that received veiled threats at Putin's press conference. So did the West in general. Putin referred to Western countries as sharks. "If anyone tries to drag us down the food chain, to gobble us up or devour us, they might get punched in the teeth," he said. "Russia is ready to do that, despite the rapidly growing appetites and teeth of these sharks." Increasingly Russia's president is mixing the geopolitical with the zoological.

EU AND NATO VOW TO STEP UP PRESSURE ON RUSSIA AFTER 'NEW ESCALATION' IN GERMANY

The heads of Nato and the European Commission have warned that Russia is growing increasingly reckless and vowed to respond to a "new normal". "Leipzig marks a new escalation on European Union soil directly attributed to Russia," said Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, a day after Germany blamed Russia for a failed drone attack last month on Leipzig airport. "We have to step up and that means being ready to respond to Russia's recklessness faster and better," von der Leyen said. Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte said the whole alliance, which includes the US, stood "in full solidarity with Germany". Russia has rejected German accusations that a drone carrying explosives deliberately targeted a Ukrainian cargo plane on 4 August. The drone was defused by a robot at Leipzig/Halle airport and a second drone is thought to have collided with another cargo plane. A third drone was reportedly found 10 days later at the airport, which is an important Nato hub and is regularly used by Ukrainian Antonov transport aircraft. It was not until Tuesday that the German government said police investigations and intelligence finding had proved that Russia was behind the incidents. The interior minister said that the drone's configuration, components, explosives and detonator were all known from other Russian hybrid operations. Two suspects have reportedly been identified in the Leipzig attack, including a Belarusian who



a Russian passport who entered on a tourist visa, and another with Latvian and Russian passports who arrived by plane in Berlin and flew out two days before the failed attack. Berlin has said it will close the Russian consulate in Bonn as well as the Russian House cultural institution, widely suspected in Berlin of acting as a propaganda outlet for the Kremlin. The Russian foreign ministry promised to respond in "mirror-image" fashion and said Berlin had offered no evidence to back its claims. Vladimir Putin has condemned Germany's measures as a serious mistake that "clearly runs counter to the interests of the German people". Asked whether Moscow would be prepared to sever relations with Berlin, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko said "maybe", but for now it was giving diplomacy a chance. Critics in Germany suggested the German response was relatively weak, but Berlin has its eye on a more co-ordinated

response with its allies, including extended EU sanctions and entry restrictions on Russian visitors across the bloc. Von der Leyen was clear in her statement that the Leipzig attack had involved "military-grade material carried out by Russian operatives on European Union soil". "We will not tolerate it," she said. While she was meeting Rutte in Brussels, EU foreign ministers had gathered at Wicklow in Ireland, where France's Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot said action could be taken on a European level against Russia's so-called "shadow fleet" of ships carrying oil and other cargo aimed at avoiding EU sanctions. Barrot and fellow ministers from Belgium and the Netherlands said they had summoned Russian ambassadors in protest at the attack. Lithuania's Foreign Minister Kestutis Budrys said it was obvious that Russia saw no political cost in its hybrid operations against European allies.

Lizzo 'grateful' after judge dismisses lawsuit against production company

US pop star Lizzo has spoken out after the remaining claims in a lawsuit against her production company were thrown out by a US district judge. The singer's former wardrobe assistant Asha Daniels alleged she had been subjected to "degradation, forced physical labor, denial of medical care, sexual harassment, and racial harassment" while briefly working for Big Grrrl Big Touring in 2023. District judge Fernando L Aenlle-Rocha filed a ruling to dismiss the claims by the stylist on Tuesday, according to court documents. In an Instagram post, Lizzo said she was "relieved" at the outcome and will "continue to fight" every claim made against her and her company. In 2024, judge Aenlle-Rocha ruled that Daniels could not sue the Grammy winner as an individual, but Big Grrrl Big Touring Inc remained a defendant. In his ruling this week, he said the former wardrobe assistant



did not identify any conduct by company employees that would demonstrate "general hostility to women in the workplace" or "disparate treatment of men and women". He also wrote that this alleged conduct and these alleged incidents, "while inappropriate and unprofessional", fell "within the scope of what the Supreme Court has held to be outside the protection" of the "ordinary tribulations of the workplace". Aenlle-Rocha also responded to an incident in which the stylist claims her foot was run over by a heavy clothes rack.

Iran says US strike killed four at wedding in 'war crime' as US denies targeting civilians

Iran has accused the US of a war crime after officials said a missile strike killed four people including two children at a wedding celebration. The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) said shrapnel from a missile hit a family wedding ceremony at a home in southern Iran, causing the deaths. Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei called the incident a "war crime". A US Central Command (Centcom) spokesperson said it "never targets civilians", adding that it was aware of the reports. Iranian authorities said another 14 people were killed elsewhere. In response, Iran launched missiles and drones at US targets in Jordan, Kuwait, Iraq and Bahrain. Most of the drones and missiles Iran launched at neighbouring countries were reportedly intercepted. Kuwait said a drone started a fire in a residential complex but caused no casualties. Centcom said strikes on Iran followed "recent attempted attacks" by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) against American



forces and commercial shipping in the crucial Strait of Hormuz waterway, through which around 20% of global oil and gas shipments usually pass. The Iranian military's Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters warned that operations against American forces in the region would continue until the US "regrets" its crimes. US President Donald Trump described Tuesday's strikes on Iran as "large and powerful". Centcom said the targets included air defense

sites, radar systems and maritime assets. Iranian media reported explosions across the southern provinces of Hormozgan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Kerman and Khuzestan. The IRCS said at least four people were killed and 67 others were injured when shrapnel from a missile hit a family wedding ceremony at a home in the coastal town of Kuhestak, in Sirik. Citing the Hormozgan Governorate, Iranian media named the dead as

Zarkhatoun Taheri, 50; Kolsum Mallahi Nazhdnia, 43; Mohammad Mallahi, 16; and Amirali Karimi, four. Media outlets initially quoted the IRCS as saying that five people were killed. "Unfortunately, this is a residential building. And unfortunately, this happened during my daughter's wedding ceremony," Ali Mallahi, father of the bride and owner of the building, said in a video broadcast by state TV. "It is a very saddening incident... Thank God the casualties were not higher." The IRGC meanwhile said that four members of its aerospace force, which oversees Iran's ballistic missiles, were killed by US attacks in Kermanshah, and that three members of the paramilitary Basij Resistance Force were killed on Lavan island, in the Gulf. Early on Wednesday, the IRGC and the regular Iranian military announced that they had launched ballistic missiles and drones towards US bases in Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates in retaliation for the US strikes.

Madagascar ex-Senate chief sentenced to hard labour over deadly Gen Z protest crackdown

Madagascar's former Senate president has been sentenced to 10 years of hard labour over his alleged role in the violent crackdown on youth-led protests that helped bring down the previous government last year. Richard Ravalomanana, a retired general and close ally of former President Andry Rajoelina, was found guilty of complicity in murder by a court in the capital, Antananarivo, on Tuesday. Prosecutors accused him of giving instructions to security forces to use violence against demonstrators during the so-called Gen Z protests in September and October 2025. Ravalomanana denied the allegations and said he would appeal against the judgement. The protests began a year ago, initially sparked by anger over persistent power and water shortages, before developing into a broader movement against Rajoelina's government. At least 22 people were killed and more than 100 injured during the unrest, according to UN figures



cited by local media. The protests eventually triggered a political crisis that led to Rajoelina's removal from power and the installation of a new administration led by Col Michael Randrianirina. The crackdown was led by the gendarmerie, where Ravalomanana retained considerable influence at the time. He "directed violent actions to suppress the demonstrations", a state prosecutor said in December 2025. Ravalomanana was removed as Senate president in October, shortly after the protests, and was arrested at his home in December after failing to respond to a summons from the gendarmerie.



US sailors arrive in Thailand's Pattaya after record 250 days at sea

Zelensky says airlines should avoid Russian airspace as Ukraine escalates drone operations

Ukraine's president has told airlines that Russian airspace will be "effectively closing" as his country escalates its drone strikes. "We want to warn every airline that uses Russian airspace, every insurer, everyone who still uses key Russian airports: the Russian sky is becoming completely dangerous," Volodymyr Zelensky said. Ukraine has since formally notified the UN of the risks to civilian aviation. Russian President Vladimir Putin said the comments amounted to a "declaration of state terrorism". Most Western commercial airlines do not fly over Russia because of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, but carriers in countries like Turkey and China do. Explaining the



elevated airspace risk in his nightly video address on Tuesday, Zelensky said that "Ukraine does not threaten civilian aviation as such - not a single civilian aircraft" and did not want the loss of innocent lives. "There will simply be drones in Russia's skies on a scale that has to be taken into account," he said. Zelensky directed the warn-

ing to airlines continuing to operate flights to Russian airports, especially in major cities like St Petersburg and Moscow. In a statement on X, Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said that Ukraine had officially notified the International Civil Aviation Organization that Russian airspace was not safe for civilian aviation. "We want to prevent

unintended incidents," he said, adding: "The war is returning home to Russia." On Wednesday afternoon, flight tracking website FlightRadar24 showed many planes flying over Russia, including arriving and departing from the two main airports, which had some delays, but few cancellations. Several airlines that fly through Russia told the BBC that they were carefully monitoring the situation. Qatar Airways, which flies into Moscow and travels through Russian airspace to get to the US west coast, said its flight planning was "guided by rigorous and continuous monitoring of airspace security, safety assessments, and geopolitical developments".

"WORLD LAUGHING AT US":

Pakistan Selector Blames Babar Azam, Explains Mass Sackings

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) selection committee chief Aaqib Javed finds himself in the line of fire over the decision to remove several players from the squad midway through the England Test series. Javed was at the centre of the PCB decision that saw 7 new players being sent to the United Kingdom ahead of the 3rd and final Test while white-ball coach Mike Hesson was suddenly given the charge of the Test team, replacing Sarfaraz Ahmed. In a conversation with Geo TV, Javed explained what caused the board to spring such big changes all of a sudden. Javed didn't spare Pakistan Test captain Babar Azam or head coach Sarfaraz as he pointed out the factors that led to Pakistan's horror show in England. Javed accused the captain-coach duo of failing to take certain decisions on



the field, prompting the board to step in. They [the management] had a pace all-rounder available, a second wicketkeeper, a fast bowler in Ubaid Shah. But those decisions were not being made. I spoke to the captain [Babar Azam] and coach

and asked them to put Ubaid in because the other bowlers [Mohammad Abbas, Mohammad Ali and Khurram Shahzad] are all similarly paced," Javed said. "No batter in our top seven bowls. We should have included an all-

rounder, but most importantly, get in Ubaid Shah, who bowls close to 140kph. One fast bowler changes the composition of your attack. I understand dropping [Salman] Agha, who's out of form, but you should have played Ghazi Ghorri instead

of [Mohammad] Rizwan [as the wicketkeeper]. When management fails to make tough calls, action has to be taken. We have already lost the series, and the world is laughing at us because we aren't even competing," he added, taking a direct swipe at Babar and Sarfaraz. The PCB has long been accused of meddling in day-to-day affairs on the field. Javed had no qualms in admitting that the board officials step in from time to time, even in cases of playing XI selection, a role usually fulfilled by the coach and the captain. "When decisions aren't aligned with planning, messages are sent to fix the playing XI and balance the combination," he said. When asked about the decision to send 7 new players to England, Javed said that since the series is already lost, there's no harm in trying new players.

LAKSHYA SEN BOWS OUT; KIDAMBI SRIKANTH, TANVI SHARMA PROGRESS IN CHINA MASTERS

Lakshya Sen was knocked out of the China Masters after a listless performance in the opening round but Kidambi Srikanth and Tanvi Sharma registered straight-game wins to progress to the second round of men's and women's singles competition here on Wednesday. Lakshya, a 2021 world championships bronze-medallist, played an error-riddled game to go down 14-21 7-21 in 38 minutes to world No. 9 Canada's Victor Lai, who won his second bronze medal at the World Championships last month. It was Lakshya's third defeat to the Canadian with his only win being at the All England Championships in March this year. Srikanth, a 2021 world championships silver-medallist, however, progressed after beating Chinese Taipei's Chi Yu Jen 21-16 21-15 in another men's singles opener. The former World No. 1 Indian, who reached the US Open final this year, will face Lai next. Tanvi, who won her maiden



BWF World Tour title at the Taipei Open last month, defeated Denmark's Amalie Schulz 21-16 21-17 to also advance to the women's singles second round. The 17-year-old from Punjab, a bronze medallist at the Junior World Championships in Guwahati last year, will face Japan's Tomoka Miyazaki next. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, a two-time world championships bronze winner, also moved to the next round with a 21-11 21-16 win over Malaysia's Junaiddi Arif and Kang Khai Xing. The Asian Games gold medallist pair will next take on the

Popov brothers - Christo and Toma Junior - of France. India's mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto too entered the next round after defeating Thailand's Tonnakorn Saeheng and Tonnicha Saeheng 21-8 21-9. The duo will meet Chinese Taipei's Liu Kuang Heng and Hsu Yin-Hui next. However, Devika Sihag went down 18-21 15-21 to Bulgaria's Kaloyana Nalbantova to end her campaign. Mixed doubles pair of Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Gadde also couldn't cross the opening hurdle, losing 16-21 18-21 to Chinese Taipei's Wu Guan Xun and Lee Chia Hsin.

Transfer Deadline Day 2026: Full List of Every Completed Signing And Loan Deal in Europe

English Premier League clubs flexed their financial muscle once again on deadline day, spending a mind-boggling USD 4.7 billion on players over the summer. Manchester City matched the all-time British transfer record to sign Argentina midfielder Enzo Fernandez from Chelsea for a fee of 125 million pounds (USD 169 million) in the final hours of the transfer window. Chelsea and Tottenham also spent well over USD 400 million in the summer transfer window, proving why England is in a league of its own compared to other top leagues in Europe when it comes to financial pull. In comparison to England, the combined expenditure of



Europe's remaining top five leagues like Spain, Germany, France, and Italy reached a cumulative sum of USD 3.8 billion spent over the summer. The fee for Fernandez is a joint British record,

equalling the amount Liverpool paid last year for Alexander Isak. They are tied in fourth place on the all-time list of the most expensive football players, behind Neymar (Barcelona to PSG for 222

million euros), Kylian Mbappe (Monaco to PSG for 180 million euros), and Ousmane Dembele (Borussia Dortmund to Barcelona for 148 million euros), according to Transfermarkt

BCCI MAKES BIG CHANGE TO SELECTION POLICY AFTER RECENT BACKLASH: REPORT

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced the squad for the 3-match T20I series against Afghanistan on Tuesday, though the selections came with a few conditions. The likes of Nitish Kumar Reddy, Jasprit Bumrah, Washington Sundar and Harshit Rana had an asterisk next to their names, suggesting that the board isn't 100% sure of their fitness. A report has now explained the new approach the BCCI has adopted over players' selection amid recent criticism of its handling of injured players. The last few months have seen the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) coming in the line of fire over poor management of



injured players. The likes of Harshit Rana, Jasprit Bumrah, Washington Sundar and even Nitish Kumar Reddy were called up for international assignments, only to be ruled out after cameos on the field. According to a report in Cricbuzz, the BCCI has now decided not to name a player

there's an attempt to have absolute transparency in selection affairs. "They (players) understand that they're not yet ready to participate in the national series. It's always player-centric and team-centric. So that communication is happening seamlessly. I think what the BCCI has done is there's transparency in all the fitness reports and also in the selection. "At the end of the selection, whether it's a release to the press, it's clearly mentioned that these players are picked subject to fitness. Means if they don't clear the fitness test, the selectors will know who the other players are who will go in their place if they don't clear the fitness test.

Cristiano Ronaldo's Sister Meets Kerala Chief Minister, Carries A Special Message For CR7



Major Champions Patrick Reed, Bubba Watson Set To Turn Up For DP World India Championship

Masters Champions Patrick Reed and Bubba Watson are set to make their debut at the star-studded DP World India Championship to be held at Delhi Golf Club from October 15 to 18. Current Race to Dubai leader Reed, along with fellow winner at Augusta National, Watson have confirmed their participation in tournament which will witness a field of global stars, including defending champion Tommy Fleetwood, Career Grand Slam winner Rory McIlroy and 2026 Open Champion Ryan Fox.



More Than Rs 400 Crore Spent: Premier League Clubs Smash Records In 2026 Summer Transfer Window



Premier League clubs smashed their spending record for a single transfer window for the second straight season as Manchester City's signing of Enzo Fernandez took the total outlay close to GBP 3.5 billion (\$4.7 billion, approx. Rs 446 crore). A frantic final two days of the window, which closed at 2200 GMT on Tuesday, pushed spending in the summer window significantly beyond last season's record of GBP 3.14 billion. More than half of the clubs in the English top flight broke their transfer records, with multiple deals topping GBP 100 million. Chelsea midfielder Fernandez, 25, signed for Enzo Marsca's City late Tuesday for GBP 125 million, matching the British record fee Liverpool paid 12 months ago for forward Alexander Isak. Argentina's Fernandez will be part of a

new-look City midfield alongside England's Elliot Anderson, who arrived from Nottingham Forest shortly after the World Cup for GBP 116 million. City also snapped up Senegal forward Iliman Ndiaye from Everton on Tuesday in a deal worth GBP 65 million, taking their summer spending above GBP 450 million. The club are embarking on a new era with a significantly reshaped squad following the departure of manager Pep Guardiola, who oversaw a decade of unprecedented success at the Etihad. Former Ballon d'Or winner Rodri, who captained Spain to World Cup glory in July, has joined Barcelona while long-serving pair Bernardo Silva and John Stones have also left City. "At Manchester City, we are always looking to bring in world-class players and Enzo fits the bill.

"HIS MIND IS CONSTANTLY RUNNING":

Gujarat Titans Star Makes Big Revelation On Shubman Gill's Captaincy Skills

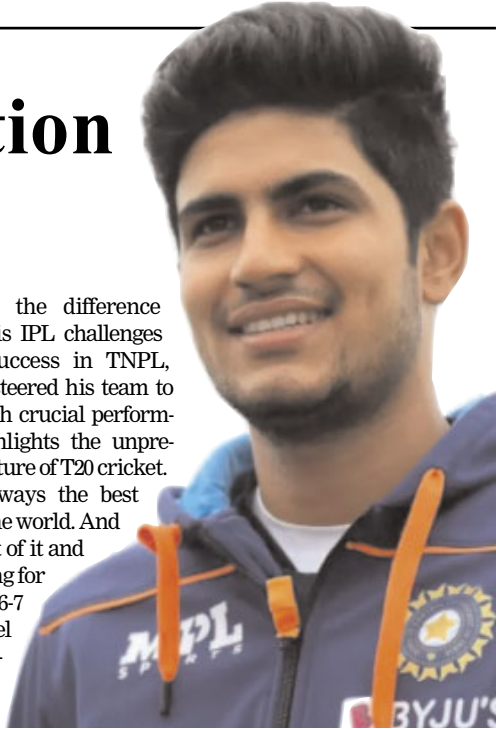
Gujarat Titans batter Shahrukh Khan has praised Shubman Gill's evolution as a leader, describing the India Test and ODI captain as a highly tactical cricketer whose mind is always working on the game. Shahrukh has been in the Gujarat Titans dressing room with Gill and has witnessed the young batter develop from an emerging IPL leader into India's captain. He noted that Gill's leadership qualities are not always obvious exter-

nally but become more clear to teammates who train with him daily. "Obviously, as a captain, he has grown immensely from captaining Gujarat Titans to captaining the country's Test side. I don't have to explain how good a captain he is. Because we saw the series in England, the way he captained, how aggressive he was whenever the team needed him to be. And looking at his journey as a captain, it's been wonderful to share the dressing room

alongside him, where he understands players very well," Shahrukh said in an exclusive conversation with IANS. Gill's rise is noteworthy considering the responsibility he has assumed at a young age. Shahrukh considers his tactical awareness to be one of the key strengths of his captaincy. "He is somebody who is very tactical. Doesn't look like much when you see from the outside. But as teammates, when you see him every day at practise and

in the game, his mind is constantly running on what to do," he said. "He has got so many options in his head which he more often than not chooses the right thing. And to be playing under him is a pleasure." Shahrukh's remarks follow a challenging IPL 2026 season for him. Though retained by Gujarat Titans for Rs 4 crore, he failed to make a significant impact and was dropped from the playing XI halfway through the season. For

Shahrukh, the difference between his IPL challenges and his success in TNPL, where he steered his team to victory with crucial performances, highlights the unpredictable nature of T20 cricket. "IPL is always the best league in the world. And to be a part of it and to be playing for the last 6-7 years, I feel very fortunate and lucky.



7 PM Productions Launches NEW FILM ‘EMI’



Following the blockbuster success of The Great Pre-Wedding Show, 7 PM Productions has announced its next film. Titled “EMI,” the movie aims to encourage new talent and features fresh actors and technicians. The film is directed by Nikhil Kuvvarapu. Darahas, who has earned recognition through web series such as Lal Salaam and Hostel Days, is making his debut as a lead actor with this film. Shailaja, who gained recognition for her key role in Little Hearts, is making her debut as a heroine with “EMI.” The film was formally launched today with a traditional pooja ceremony. Hero Aadi Saikumar

gave the first clap for the muhurtham shot, while director Sai Marthand switched on the camera. Director Rahul Srinivas of The Great Pre-Wedding Show handed over the script. Whether it is a bike, car, or even a high-end smartphone, buying almost any major item today comes with the burden of paying EMIs. For most middle-class families, managing monthly EMIs has become an unavoidable part of life. “EMI” revolves around the struggles faced by young people who purchase various products on EMI and the challenges they encounter while trying to repay them. The film is being developed as a complete entertainer with

strong, heartfelt emotions at its core. The makers believe that every scene will connect with both youngsters and family audiences. The team is planning the production meticulously and is also gearing up for an extensive promotional campaign to take the film to a wider audience. Along with “EMI,” 7 PM Productions is also set to produce another ambitious film in collaboration with The Great Pre-Wedding Show director Rahul Srinivas. The cast and crew details of this project will be announced soon. Going forward, 7 PM Productions plans to produce a series of back-to-back films with fresh and engaging concepts.

“I Am Confident That ‘Maa Ramudu Andarivadu’ Will Be a Big Success”: Senior Actor Suman



Produced by Anumula Lakshman Rao and Pallakonda Sriramulu under the banners of Anumula Productions and Sriram Creations, ‘Maa Ramudu Andarivadu’ is directed by Yeddanapudi Maikil. The film stars Sriram and Swathi Mandadi in the lead roles, while senior actor Suman, Sammeta Gandhi, Naga Mahesh, and Baahubali Prabhakar play key roles. Anand Bharathi, Gaddam Naveen, Chittibabu, Gold Reddy, and others are part of the cast.

Highlights

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In the presence of several prominent members of the film industry. Producer Venkat Duggireddy and director Srinivasa Teja attended the event as chief guests. They extended their best wishes to the entire team and expressed their hope that the film would achieve great success and bring recognition to the movie's team. Speaking on the occasion Senior actor Suman,

who plays a key role in the film, said: “Many people have already proved that talent is more important than glamour in the film industry. The same can be said about our hero Sriram, who has immense talent. He has delivered a very good performance in the dual role. My character in this film is quite different. I play the Chief Minister, a role that delivers a strong social message.

ALLARI NARESH PROMISES A CLEAN, HILARIOUS ENTERTAINER WITH ‘RAMBHA URVASHI MENAKA’

Allari Naresh is going to entertain with the fantasy comedy entertainer ‘Rambha Urvashi Menaka’. Directed by Chandra Mohan Chintada, this film is being produced by Rajesh Danda and Nimmakayala Prasad under the banners of Annapurna Studios and Hasya Movies. The teaser and trailer have increased the interest in the film. The film will be released grandly in theaters worldwide on September 4. On this occasion, hero Allari Naresh shared the features of the film in a press conference.



■ HOW WILL THE STORY OF ‘RAMBHA URVASHI MENAKA’ BE?

‘Usually in such socio-fantasy stories, humans go to Indralokam and Yama. But in this one, ‘Rambha Urvashi Menaka’ comes down from heaven. In this, the protagonist has a drama company since childhood. He worships ‘Rambha Urvashi Menaka’ like a goddess. His character is to become a hero without working hard. He believes that if the gods bless him, he will be the hero in the next Rajamouli movie. His family has a book that comes from his great-grandfathers. It is believed that if you draw a pattern in it, the gods will come and fulfill your wishes. It will be very interesting to see how the hero drew that pattern and what events happened after Rambha Urvashi Menaka arrived. What were the elements that excited you after the direc-

tor told you this story? ‘It felt like I heard a good comedy entertainer after a long time. The audience is also missing comedy films like ‘Kita Kithalu’ and ‘Bendu Apparao’ from me. When I was looking for such a story, this story told by director Chandra Mohan was liked by me as well as Nagarjuna garu, Supriya garu, Rajesh garu, and Nimmakayala Prasad garu. Even though we knew that the budget would be high in terms of CG work, we started thinking that it would be a good film.

■ WHAT WILL YOUR CHARACTER BE LIKE IN THIS?

‘My character is very entertaining. He has debts to everyone. No one in the village trusts him. He is a character that everyone thinks is a bit negative. He faces a lot of difficulties.

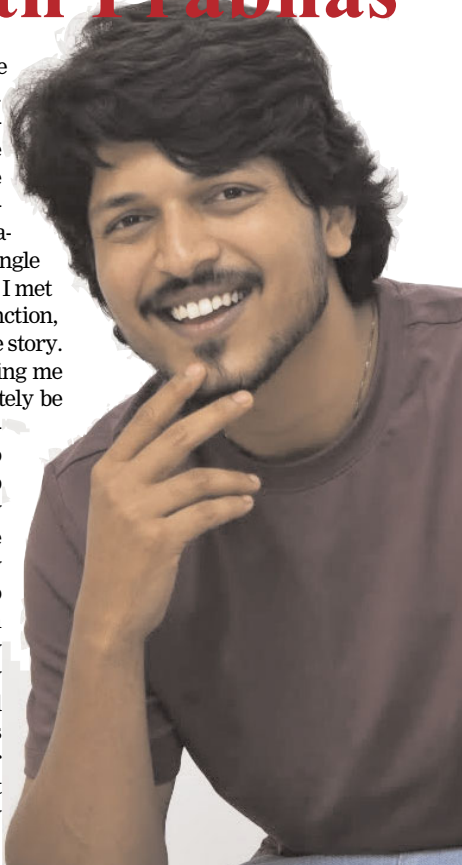
"ROMANCHAKAM" IS A FRESH LOVE STORY;

Audiences Will Enjoy Every Scene While Watching the Film: Sumanth Prabhas

Presented by blockbuster director Sandeep Reddy Vanga and produced under the Bhadrakali Pictures banner, "Romanchakam" stars Sumanth Prabhas and Ananthika Sanilkumar in the lead roles. The film is produced by Pranay Reddy Vanga and directed by debutant Venu Gopal Reddy. Blending love, humour and suspense, the film is gearing up for a grand worldwide theatrical release on the 3rd of this month as an interesting, youthful entertainer. Ahead of the release, hero Sumanth Prabhas spoke about the film during an interview held today. It felt really special and happy to meet Prabhas garu for our movie. Meeting him brought back memories of my past and my entire journey. We went to meet him with certain expectations, but Prabhas garu received us very warmly. I could see the love for a true fan-boy in him. No one in my family has a film background, and they don't know much about the industry. So, they didn't really support me much. They only told me to be good to every-

one and to think positively. I acted in a film called Mem Famous, which was set against a Telangana backdrop, and it was well received by audiences here. Later, I did Godarigattupaina, which had an Andhra backdrop, and that film was appreciated by audiences in Andhra Pradesh. These two films gave me an opportunity to showcase my versatility as an actor. Romanchakam is set against the backdrop of Hyderabad. In this film, I play a young man who completes his engineering and tries to start a startup company. The character is cute and innocent. In real life, my father wanted me to become an SI. I got the opportunity to act in Mem Famous while I was pursuing my degree. Romanchakam is a film that people from the age of six to sixty can enjoy equally. You can watch it with your family or friends. Although I had already done two films as a hero, director Venu Gopal garu conducted workshops for six months to help me transform myself according to what the character demanded. I had an idea of how to portray the character,

but the workshops helped me sharpen my performance. When I look at my performance from the beginning to the end after completing all the workshops, I can see a huge difference. There were even occasions when we practised a single scene for two or three months. I met Sandeep anna at an awards function, and he told me, "There is a cute story. Listen to it." Since he was telling me the story, I felt it would definitely be good. When Venu anna narrated the script, I enjoyed all two and a half hours of it. Sandeep anna and Pranay anna may appear a certain way from the outside, but they are actually very sweet people. Those who have travelled with them would know that. I was very happy that Vijay Deverakonda anna attended our pre-release event. It was also very encouraging to hear him speak so positively about me. I have always been greatly inspired by Vijay anna.



ASHIKA RANGANATH SLAYS IN EMERALD GREEN GOWN

Ashika Ranganath made a striking appearance at the trailer and audio launch of “Sardar 2” in Chennai, turning all eyes on her with a bold fashion choice. She wore a deep emerald green gown featuring a high-neck cutout bodice and a flowing floor-length skirt, striking a confident pose against a rustic, weathered backdrop that added drama to the pictures. The structured bodice with its ruched detailing and waist cutout gave the gown a modern, edgy silhouette, while the rich green hue and soft curls kept the overall look elegant. Minimal jewelry and a subtle make-up palette let the gown take center stage, making it one of her most striking event looks in recent times. Ashika has been keeping busy with the promotions of “Sardar 2,” and her latest appearance has only added to the buzz around the film.



MALAVIKA MOHANAN NAILS EFFORTLESS ELEGANCE IN WHITE

Malavika Mohanan is turning heads once again, this time in a breathtaking all-white saree look. She wore a sheer, delicately embellished white saree with intricate floral detailing, paired with a matching embroidered blouse. Her soft curled hair, minimal jewelry, and dewy makeup gave the entire look an ethereal, bridal-like charm.



Standing gracefully in a marble corridor with soft natural light, Malavika struck a candid, thoughtful pose that added to the elegance of the pictures. The sheer fabric and delicate detailing on the saree brought a romantic, dreamy quality to the shoot, while the simplicity of the white palette let her natural beauty take center stage.



DIRECTOR SAI RAJESH UNVEILS ‘DEAR HEART’ MOTION POSTER

The motion poster of ‘Dear Heart’, a film presented by Bobba's Presents under the Vaarahi Arts banner and produced by Raavi Sowjanya, was unveiled by popular Cult director Sai Rajesh. Starring Lakshman Tekumudi, Radhika Joshi, and Supriya Chavan in the lead roles, the film is directed by GD Narasimha. Actors Suresh Guru, Prudhvi Raj, Sathya Prakash, Jabardasth Nookaraju, Jagadeeshwari, and others play key roles in the movie. The recently released motion poster has garnered attention with its soulful portrayal of love. The poster carries an emotional narration: “Some love stories are remembered only for a few days... but some stories remain etched in our hearts as long as time exists. Every time you came before me, even time seemed to stop for a moment and look at you.

