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BENGALURU I CHENNAI I HYDERABAD I VIJAYAWADA I KOCHI

# THE SOUTH INDIA TIMES

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**OM NAMO VENKATESAYA**

01-10-2026



Total pilgrims :78,026
Tonsures : 31,166
Hundi kanukalu : 5.12 CR
Laddu sale... 4.21 Lac
Annaprasadam.3.13 Lac
Ashwini hospital..2,962
Present Situation on 02-10-2026:
Waiting Compartments... Outside line at Silathoranam.

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens)...18 H.



Nation News

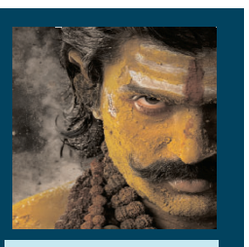
**PM Modi speaks to flydubai captain Smit Machchhar, praises his courage**

"Ajit Agarkar Will Be Regretting It Now": Rohit Sharma's Resurgence Draws Big Remark From Ex-India Star



SPORTS NEWS

Ranabaali – Never Forget The Truth Documentary Series: Third Episode 'The Men We Forgot' Released



CINEMA PAGE

SCAN FOR E-PAPER

## INBRIEF

### FOUR GIRLS DROWN IN POND

**Bihar:** Four girls drowned in a pond in Bankat village under Paharpur police station limits in Bihar's East Champaran district on Friday, police said. The deceased were identified as Sonawati Kumari ⓟ, her sister Phoolwati Kumari ⓟ, Sonali Kumari ⓟ and Pratibha Kumari ⓟ. All four were residents of Bankat village. According to police, five girls had gone to a pond near the village to bathe at around 9.30 am. While one girl remained on the bank, the other four entered the water and reportedly ventured into a deeper area, where they drowned.

### DRUGS WORTH OVER RS 52 LAC SEIZED

**Ranchi:** Jharkhand Police seized ganja and brown sugar worth more than Rs 52 lakh and arrested eight people during separate operations in Ranchi and Deoghar districts, officials said on Friday. In Ranchi, three people were arrested with 97 kg of ganja in a joint operation by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Ranchi, and Nagri Police within the Nagri police station limits. Acting on a tip-off, NCB officials, with the assistance of Nagri Police, intercepted two four-wheelers and recovered 97 kg of ganja from one of the vehicles. The three accused were arrested and both vehicles were seized, Ranchi Rural SP Gaurav Goswami said.

# CM Shivakumar stages dharna over SIR, demands case on voter deletion

**BENGALURU ■ (TSIT):**



Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Thursday staged a dharna at the Chief Electoral Officer's office in Bengaluru, demanding the registration of a criminal case and a probe into the alleged conspiracy to delete eligible voters' names through Form 7 applications.

Shivakumar, accompanied by several Cabinet colleagues and legislators, visited the Chief Electoral Officer's office in Gandhinagar and submitted a memorandum seeking action. He subsequently staged a protest on the steps of the office and said the agitation would continue until a criminal case was registered and a serious investigation ordered. Ministers K.J. George, K.H. Muniyappa, Ramalinga Reddy, Satish Jarkiholi, B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan, Basavaraj Rayareddy, Byrathi Suresh, Shivaraj Tangadagi, Vijayanand Kashappanavar, K.N. Balakrishna, Rizwan Arshad, Yathindra Siddaramaiah, Ajay Singh, Shivalingegowda, Puttarangashetty and T. Raghumurthy were among those present.MP G.C. Chandrashekar and MLAs Konareddy, Kampli Ganesh, Bharath Reddy and others also participated in the protest. Speaking to the media before the dharna, Shivakumar said the Election Commission was a constitutional body and that the government respected its authority."We have explained the irregularities taking place in the state.

They have seen the evidence with their own eyes," he alleged, adding that BJP leaders had admitted their involvement and had requested that no action be taken against them and that the applications submitted by them be returned.

Shivakumar claimed that around 13,000 Form 7 applications had been submitted in two Assembly constituencies in Ballari and were subsequently withdrawn.

He also alleged that around 13,000 applications had been submitted in Vijayapura, excluding the Babaleshwar constituency, and later withdrawn with requests that no action be taken. "We have submitted documents and videos relating to Mysuru, Belagavi and Bhalki constituencies," he said, adding that officials had contacted senior authorities and sought time until Friday. The Chief Minister said the Election Commission had sought a report from the respective Deputy Commissioner."If they do not trust the evidence we have submitted, let them call for the report. Our struggle will not stop until a serious investigation is ordered," he said.Alleging an attempt to deprive voters of their franchise, Shivakumar said those behind the alleged irregularities had committed a serious offence against the democratic process.

# 700 detained as Delhi police block Jantar Mantar protest against CEC

**NEW DELHI ■ (TSIT):**



More than 700 protesters, including former Delhi chief minister Atishi, AAP Delhi president Saurabh Bharadwaj and AISA national president Neha Bora, were detained in Delhi on Friday as police moved to prevent demonstrations at Jantar Mantar against the Election Commission and Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

The mobilisation was organised by the All India Students' Association (AISA), Students' Federation of India (SFI) and Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI), along with activists and political leaders. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) separately called for a protest and urged its supporters to join the mobilisation on Gandhi Jayanti.The protesters are demanding Kumar's resignation over the functioning of the Election Commission and its handling of electoral rolls and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise. Opposition groups and student organisations have alleged irregularities in the revision process and raised concerns over the deletion of voters from electoral rolls.

Delhi police had denied permission for the proposed October 2 protest and imposed restrictions under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) in the New Delhi district. The order restricts unauthorised gatherings, demonstrations, processions and slogan-shouting. Several protesters attempting to reach Jantar Mantar from the Ashoka Road side were stopped by police and taken away in buses. Heavy barricading was placed on roads leading towards the protest site, while Delhi police and Central Armed Police Forces personnel were deployed at multiple points.

# Governor, CM Honour Gandhi at Bapu Ghat;

## Inaugurate Digital Museum

**HYDERABAD ■ (TSIT BUREAU):**



Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla and Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy paid floral tributes to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, at Bapu Ghat in Langar Houz on Friday on the occasion of his 157th birth anniversary. Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, ministers, public representatives, and senior government officials joined the Governor and the Chief Minister in paying homage to Gandhiji. The gathering marked the occasion by remembering his contribution to India's freedom struggle and his enduring ideals of truth and non-violence.

As part of the Gandhi Jayanti programme, the Governor and the Chief Minister inaugurated a digital museum at Bapu Ghat. The inauguration added a new feature to the memorial venue, where leaders and citizens gather to honour Mahatma Gandhi's legacy. Gandhi Jayanti offers an occasion to reflect on the principles that shaped his leadership of the freedom movement. His emphasis on peaceful resistance, social harmony, and service continues to hold significance in public life.

TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud, Revenue and Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Minorities Welfare Minister Mohammed Azharuddin, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, MP Vem Narender Reddy, and government advisor Harkara Venugopal Rao, V. Hanumantha Rao attended the programme.

**RAYALASEEMA** RISING

# *CM Naidu lays foundation for Rs 1 lac cr horticulture hub, ISA*

**MADANAPALLE ■ (TSIT):**



After a slew of comprehensive irrigation projects in the arid Rayalaseema region, the Centre and Andhra Pradesh have joined hands to lay the foundation of India's largest global horticulture hub at Madanapalle. Spearheaded by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, the ambitious project pledges Rs 1 lakh crore to benefit a million farmers and turn Rayalaseema into India's premier 'fruit bowl'.

"For Andhra Pradesh and the wider Indian agricultural landscape, the hub represents a major leap toward precision farming, value addition, and enhanced export capabilities. By focusing on lucrative crops like dragon fruit, avocado, and berries alongside local staples," Naidu said at the foundation stone laying ceremony for the horticulture hub and the Indian School of Agriculture (ISA). The project falls under the larger 'Rayalaseema Rising' initiative and is designed to be executed in three phases. The funding model relies on a strategic public-private partnership: the Centre has pledged to infuse Rs 40,352 crore, to be divided amongst core irrigation, horticulture development, and road networks, while the state government and the private sector would mobilise the remaining Rs 60,000 crore.

> **Covering 10 districts, horticulture hub will be implemented in 3 phases. Plan is to raise Rs 40,000 cr through central govt support and Rs 60,000 cr from private investments.**

The comprehensive blueprint spans 10 districts (eight Rayalaseema districts, Prakasam, and Markapuram), 201 clusters, and thousands of villages, to expand existing cultivation by 6 lakh hectares and double regional production to 435 lakh metric tonnes.

The existing area under horticulture cultivation is 8.41 lakh hectares, and with the additional 6 lakh hectares, the total cultivable land under horticulture would be 14.41 lakh hectares. Andhra Pradesh's Rayalaseema region had four districts before it was bifurcated in 2014. Later, four more districts were carved out of Kurnool, Kadapa, Anantapur, and Chittoor, taking the count to eight.

# India emerged as trusted voice for global peace under PM Modi, says Amit Shah

**New Delhi ■ (TSIT):**



Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said India has emerged as a "trusted voice for global peace" under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, citing Russian President Vladimir Putin's appreciation of the Indian leader's efforts to help end the Ukraine conflict.

HM Shah, in a post on X, said Putin's appreciation of PM Modi's persistent efforts towards global peace was a matter of pride for every Indian. He noted that Putin's remarks came on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, who, he said, gave the world the message of peace and non-violence. "The Russian President Shri Vladimir Putin's appreciation of PM Shri @narendramodi Ji's tireless efforts towards global peace brings immense pride to every Indian," Shah said.

He added that Putin's statement, coinciding with Gandhi Jayanti, demonstrated that India, under PM Modi's leadership, has emerged as a trusted voice for global peace. HM Shah said that during periods marked by wars, conflicts and turbulence, PM Modi has consistently conveyed the message that solutions do not emerge from battlefields but through dialogue and diplomacy."During periods marked by wars, conflicts and turbulence, Modi Ji has conveyed the message that solutions do not emerge from battlefields but through dialogue and diplomacy. India, under the leadership of Modi Ji, has always stepped forward with help and assistance, whether in situations of war or calamity, giving a new recognition to our timeless tradition of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'," he said.

"This is the reason why India's voice matters greatly today whenever the world faces a global crisis, and Modi Ji's words are listened to with keen attention," HM Shah added. Putin had praised PM Modi's persistent efforts to help bring an end to the Ukraine conflict, saying that the Indian Prime Minister has consistently raised the issue during their meetings and offered ideas aimed at finding a mutually acceptable solution.

## ASIAN GAMES



*India players celebrate after winning the gold medal match against China in the ongoing Asian Games 2026, in Gifu, Japan, on Friday.... PIB PHOTO*

### RBI appoints Sudhakar Malli as new Executive Director

**New Delhi:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday appointed Sudhakar Malli as Executive Director (ED) with effect from October 1. According to Central Bank, prior to his promotion as ED, Sudhakar served as Chief General Manager-in-Charge of the Department of Supervision in the Reserve Bank. As Executive Director, Sudhakar will look after the Department of Supervision (Supervisory Assessment). "Sudhakar is a career central banker with around three decades of experience. He has extensive experience in the supervision of banks, non-banking financial companies and co-operative banks, spanning over two and a half decades," said the RBI.

# *PM Modi pays tribute to Gandhi, urges people to buy Khadi*

**New Delhi ■ (TSIT):**



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his birth anniversary, recalling his ideals of truth, non-violence, simplicity and Swadeshi, and said Bapu's timeless message would continue to guide the country towards a better society and a Viksit Bharat.

In a post on X, Modi said, "May Bapu's timeless message keep guiding us towards a better society and a Viksit Bharat." In a video message, the Prime Minister said the significance of October 2 was well known to every child in the country and underlined the global relevance of Gandhi's ideology. He said Gandhi's thoughts and ideals would remain relevant as long as their influence continued among humanity.

# PM Modi speaks to flydubai captain Smit Machchhar, praises his courage



New Delhi, Oct 2: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday spoke with flydubai Captain Smit Machchhar through a video call and praised his courage, presence of mind and composure during the recent mid-air crisis, saying his actions helped save many lives.

Modi began the conversation by enquiring about Machchhar's health and said the entire country was praying for his speedy recovery."The whole country is praying for you. Maha Mrityunjaya Jaap is being performed for you and your health. Your courage, presence of mind and composure saved many lives. The country can proudly say that Indians are not those who take lives, but those who are willing to risk their lives to save others," Modi said.

Machchhar nodded and replied, "Yes, sir." The Prime Minister said that although the captain was fighting for his own life at the time.

# ECI orders special drive to enrol voters left out after SIR




New Delhi, Oct 2: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has directed states and Union Territories where the nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has been completed to conduct a special drive to identify and enrol voters who may have been left out.

The drive will focus on left-out electors as well as first-time and young voters, the Commission said in a communication to the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of all states and UTs. The direction follows the Commission's September 29 letter and a meeting with all CEOs on October 1.

During the enumeration phase of the SIR exercise, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) prepared lists of voters classified as Absent, Shifted, Dead and Duplicate (ASDD), along with probable reasons for their non-inclusion. The lists were displayed on notice boards of respective Panchayat Bhawans and Urban Local Body offices, shared with Booth Level Agents (BLAs) and political parties, and uploaded on the websites of the respective CEOs.

Following this, the draft electoral roll was published and shared with political parties and uploaded on CEO websites. The final electoral roll was subsequently published after Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) decided claims and objections.

The Commission said the final roll contains electors added or deleted after publication of the draft roll. Therefore, compared with the pre-SIR electoral roll, the final roll reflects deletions made during the enumeration phase as well as additions and deletions following publication of the draft roll.

The ECI emphasised that voter enrolment is a continuous process and that individuals who have not yet been enrolled, or whose names have been deleted from the electoral roll, can apply for enrolment at any time.

# Do Not Dump Waste into Rivers




Visakhapatnam,TSIT : Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu called upon people to keep rivers clean and take responsibility for preventing waste and sewage from being discharged into rivers. Speaking at the Swarna Andhra–Swachha Andhra Awards–2026 programme held in Vijayawada, he said cleanliness was not the responsibility of the government alone and that permanent change could be achieved only when five crore people participated in the cleanliness movement. He expressed concern over the discharge of waste and sewage into the Krishna and Godavari rivers, saying it was causing problems to people living in downstream areas as well as affecting the environment. He stressed the need for personal hygiene, clean surroundings and cleanliness in thoughts.

The Chief Minister said the government was treating waste as a resource rather than a problem. Electricity, fertilisers and biogas were being produced from waste as part of efforts to move the State towards a circular economy. Swachha Rathams, e-autos, pushcarts, mechanised road-sweeping machines and integrated solid waste management centres were being established with the objective of achieving zero garbage, he said. He also stated that the Swachha Andhra Corporation had entered into an MoU with IIT Kanpur to study and implement net-zero initiatives.

Naidu said development programmes worth Rs.1.30 lakh crore would be taken up in rural areas over the next five years. He called for greater focus on greenery along with cleanliness and encouraged the use of electric vehicles and green energy. Taking inspiration from Swachha Challapalli, cleanliness should become a habit across the State, he said.

The government was presenting 130 State-level awards in 22 categories and 2,044 district-level awards to recognise those who excelled in cleanliness initiatives.

During the programme, Swachha Andhra awards were presented to sanitation workers, clean villages, municipalities, schools, hospitals, bus stands, industries, institutions and NGOs. Novotel Visakhapatnam received an award in the hotel category. Chandrampalem ZP High School, Dwarakanagar Bus Stand in Visakhapatnam, GVMC office and Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple at Simhachalam were among the institutions and premises recognised for cleanliness. Municipal Administration Minister P. Narayana, Swachha Andhra Corporation Chairman Pattabhi and senior officials of various departments attended the programme.

# Two Tamil Lawyers Selected to Attend 63rd UN Human Rights Council Session in Geneva



GENEVA: Two Tamil lawyers have been selected to participate in the concluding segment (October 6–9) of the United Nations Human Rights Council session in Geneva. Dr. Ram Sankar Raja, Secretary of the Delhi Tamil Advocates Association, and Mr. Muthu Ganesa Pandian, Advocate at the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court, will represent the delegation at the 63rd Human Rights Council session. Global Human Rights Defense, a Netherlands-based human rights NGO, has been actively participating in UN Human Rights Council sessions regarding International Court proceedings since 2015. For this year's 63rd session, it selected the two Tamil advocates to join its official delegation.

During the proceedings, the advocates will raise critical concerns regarding genocide, war crimes, sexual violence, and systemic torture inflicted upon Tamils in Sri Lanka. They will also present evidence regarding mass graves and human remains recently uncovered in Tamil-inhabited areas, including Chemmani.

The delegation will submit documented evidence demanding an international mechanism for justice and the prosecution of war criminals under international criminal law. Official inquiry reports record that over 160,000 people were killed in the genocide and more than 18,000 went missing.

Emphasising that prosecuting Sri Lankan military commanders and political leaders under domestic laws is ineffective, the lawyers will advocate for an exclusive international judicial probe as the only viable path to justice. They will urge member nations to vote against Sri Lanka, uphold justice, and ensure all perpetrators of human rights violations are held accountable under international law.

Senior Tamil advocates, activists, and Tamil organisations have commended the Delhi Tamil Advocates Association for its persistent efforts in championing justice for Sri Lankan Tamils.

# Swachhathon to Become Annual Movement: Pattabhiram




Visakhapatnam TSIT : Swachhathon will be continued as an annual event to promote cleanliness, fitness and responsible citizenship, Swachh Andhra Corporation Chairman Kommareddy Pattabhiram said. Speaking at the HDFC Bank Swachhathon-2026, organised by Swachh Andhra Corporation in association with Amaravati Runners in Vijayawada on Friday, he said the event was being conducted for the second consecutive year on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti to spread awareness on cleanliness, banning single-use plastics and building a cleaner State.The run, which began at Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium, covered major parts of Vijayawada before concluding at the stadium. Nearly 10,000 runners from 23 States participated in the event, which featured a 21.1-km half marathon, 10K and 5K runs. Cash prizes totalling Rs.10 lakh were presented to winners in various age categories for men and women.

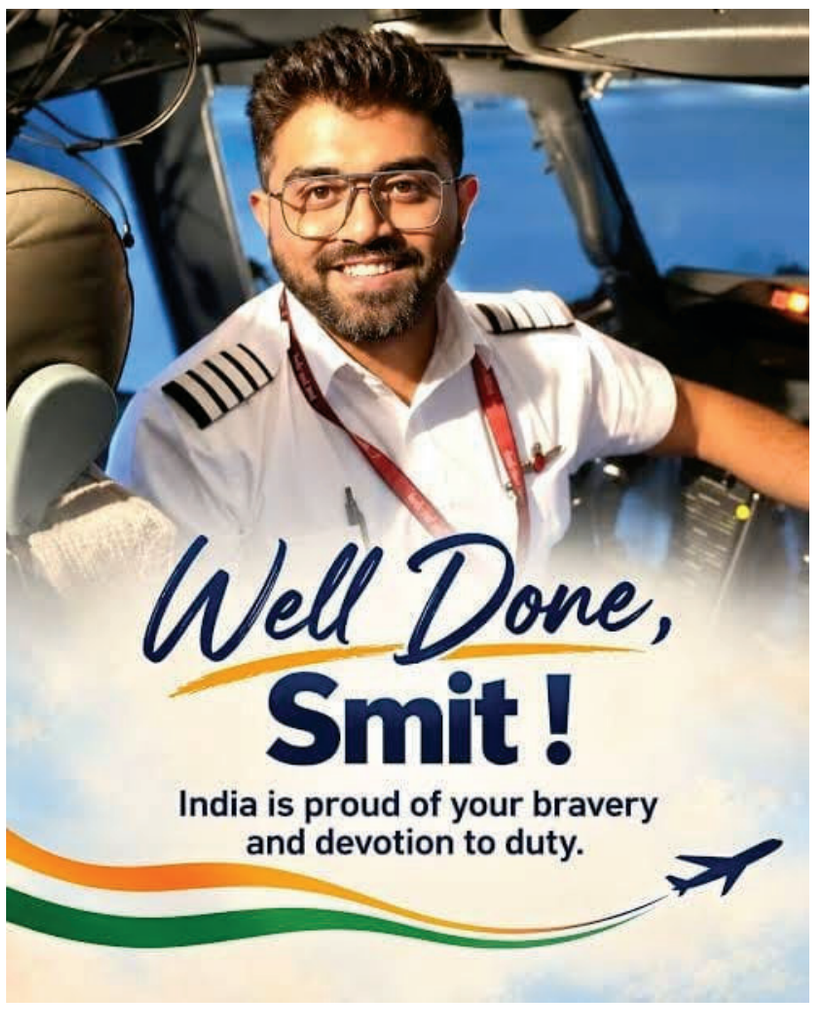
# Make Visakhapatnam a Global Model in Cleanliness




Visakhapatnam,TSIT : People, elected representatives and officials should work together to make Visakhapatnam one of the best cities in the country and achieve global standards in cleanliness, MP M. Sri Bharat and District Collector M. Abhishek Kishore said. Speaking at the district-level Swachha Andhra Awards ceremony held at VMRDA Children's Arena on Friday on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, they said the individuals and organisations being honoured for their contribution to cleanliness were an inspiration to society.District Collector Abhishek Kishore said Visakhapatnam had modern sanitation systems, mechanised sanitation facilities, a waste-to-energy plant and advanced equipment for removing waste from the sea.

# Indian Pilot's Courage Saves 174 Lives, Reviving Spotlight on India–Israel Bond

BY BINISH THOMAS




Dubai/Tel Aviv, A flydubai flight from Dubai to Israel narrowly escaped disaster on Wednesday when the co-pilot, an Omani national, allegedly attacked the captain in the cockpit. The captain, Smit Machchhar, an Indian national, was stabbed. Israeli officials say the attacker then tried to crash the aircraft.

The jet dropped nearly 14,000 feet within seconds. Despite his injuries, Captain Machchhar triggered the cockpit door release before collapsing. That let passengers and crew rush in and overpower the co-pilot. The aircraft made an emergency landing at Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. Israel's Foreign Ministry says the combined courage of the Indian captain, Israeli passengers and Emirati crew saved 174 lives. Machchhar was treated in Saudi Arabia and has been moved to Abu Dhabi. India's embassy says he is recovering well. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu both praised him. Israel has called the incident a terror attack, but the investigation is ongoing and the co-pilot's motive has not been officially confirmed.

The incident has drawn fresh attention to the relationship between the two countries.

A friendship rooted in history

Jewish communities have lived in India for centuries, including the Cochin Jews of Kerala and the Bene Israel of Maharashtra. They are often cited as having lived in India without facing persecution, at a time when Jews faced it in many other parts of the world. Local rulers gave them land and the freedom to practise their faith. After Israel's creation, many of these families emigrated, and their descendants still keep a cultural link with India.

India recognised Israel in 1950 but established full diplomatic relations only in 1992. Since then, cooperation has grown quickly in defence, agriculture, water management and technology.

How Israel has helped India

Before the Kargil War. Israel is reported to have supplied India with mortars and ammunition during the 1962 war with China, and again in the 1971 war. These accounts come from historians and memoirs, and details vary.

The Kargil War (1999). This is the best-known case. According to widely published accounts, Israel quickly gave India several kinds of help:

- Ammunition and mortars: Israel supplied artillery and mortar ammunition when Indian stocks were under heavy demand.
- Precision weapons: Israeli laser-guided bomb systems and targeting equipment helped the Indian Air Force strike enemy positions on high mountain ridges with precision.
- Surveillance: Israeli unmanned aerial vehicles and imagery helped track enemy positions in the mountains.
- Timing: The help came when India was under diplomatic pressure and few countries would sell weapons freely.

The exact quantities were never fully made public, so reports differ on the details.

After Kargil. Israel became one of India's major defence partners. Its systems include the Heron drones, the Barak air-defence missiles (developed jointly) and the Spice precision-guided bombs. Indian forces have used these systems in later operations, including surgical strikes. Israel also fast-tracked supplies to India during emergencies in later years.

Israel's parliament (the Knesset) has acknowledged how India welcomed and supported Jews during their time of persecution and has made a public statement about it. According to ground reports, ordinary Israelis hold India and its people close to their hearts. Many Israeli leaders, not only Benjamin Netanyahu, want to build a stronger relationship with India, and several earlier prime ministers have also spoken warmly of India.

# GITAM Hyderabad Marks 157th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi




HYDERABAD: GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, observed the 157th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi with a solemn tribute to his enduring ideals of truth, non-violence, simplicity, and Swadeshi.

The occasion commemorated Gandhi's remarkable contribution to India's freedom struggle and his universal message of peace and non-violence. His timeless principles continue to inspire individuals and societies to uphold truth, compassion, social responsibility, and peaceful coexistence.

The tribute was attended by senior members of GITAM Hyderabad, including DVVSR Varma, Resident Director; Dr. Bandan Kumar Mishra, Director, School of Architecture; Dr. M. Reza, Director, School of Science; Dr. Shamuel Tharu, Director In-Charge, School of Humanities and Social Sciences; and Prof. G. A. Rama Rao, Former Scientific Officer, BARC. They paid their respects to Mahatma Gandhi and reflected on the continuing relevance of his ideals in today's world.

GITAM Hyderabad remains committed to nurturing these values among its students and fostering a culture of truth, non-violence, social responsibility, and service. As the world continues to face challenges and conflicts, Gandhi's message of peace and harmony remains deeply relevant and inspiring.

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# Karnataka plans points-based driving licences, steep fines to curb traffic violations

Bengaluru, Oct 2: Karnataka is set to introduce a points-based driving licence system under which motorists will accumulate points for different traffic violations, with licences to be suspended once a specified threshold is reached.

A joint review meeting of the Home and Transport Departments held on Wednesday examined the legal measures required to implement the proposed system as part of efforts to strengthen enforcement and curb repeated violations.




The state has also decided to increase the fine for parking vehicles on footpaths from Rs 500 to Rs 5,000. Driving on one-way roads will similarly attract a Rs 5,000 fine. Dedicated lanes for BMTC buses will be reintroduced on roads in Bengaluru where Metro construction has been completed, according to decisions discussed at the meeting. Separately, Karnataka is set to revisit the fixed-fare policy for cabs operating within Bengaluru and other cities and is likely to allow ride-hailing apps to charge fares within a specified range. The proposed change will apply to cabs attached to ride-hailing apps, city taxis and airport taxis.

The Transport Department will also amend the Karnataka On-Demand Transportation Technology Aggregators Rules, 2016, which govern cab services offered by ride-hailing platforms. In February 2024, the state introduced uniform fixed fares in an effort to curb "unauthorised" practices such as surge pricing during peak hours. Ride aggregators opposed the fixed-fare system and urged the government to permit them to charge fares within a specified range after the base fare, sources said. Earlier, per-kilometre charges after the base fare ranged from Rs 11-36 to Rs 27-54 depending on the price of the vehicle.

"We have decided to revisit the fixed fare policy by consulting various stakeholders," Deccan Herald quoted sources in the know as saying.

"We have received representations from cab aggregators and are actively looking into them. A suitable decision will be taken as soon as possible," they added.

The Transport Department's Sarathi system will be integrated with the Bengaluru Traffic Police's e-challan system to enable comprehensive management of driving licence suspensions and traffic violation records.

The integration will allow traffic police to verify the validity of a driving licence on the spot, access a driver's previous violations and directly link newly registered cases to the driver's digital record.

The meeting also discussed identifying people with five or more traffic violations, initiating legal action against them, recovering pending fines and, where necessary, impounding or blacklisting vehicles.

Officials examined the possibility of imposing restrictions on vehicles with repeatedly unpaid fines. Amendments to the relevant laws and rules were also discussed.

The government is also considering mandatory road-safety training and awareness programmes for repeat offenders facing suspension or cancellation of their driving licences.

The meeting discussed effective action against the sale and use of unauthorised horns, modified silencers and excessively bright LED lights.

Officials also discussed the increasing number of traffic violations involving low-speed battery-powered electric two-wheelers, including requirements relating to helmets and registration.

The meeting further examined withholding pollution certificates from vehicles with unpaid traffic fines and conducting joint enforcement operations by the Transport Department and traffic police. Officials also discussed introducing designated routes, fixed fares and a licensing system for shared auto services catering to Metro passengers.

# Why hasn't Kumaraswamy disclosed his family's assets? – S. Manohar

Bengaluru: KPCC General Secretary S. Manohar has questioned why H.D. Kumaraswamy has not disclosed details regarding his family's assets and land holdings within the scope of the NICE project, despite his vocal opposition to the project.




Speaking at a joint press conference regarding allegations raised against D.K. Shivakumar concerning the BMIC/NICE project and associated land dealings, Manohar urged Kumaraswamy to provide a response based on official and government records to ensure public clarity on the matter.

He further noted that D.K. Shivakumar had boldly asserted from New Delhi that no irregularities occurred during the second phase of the project and that all purchases and transactions were lawful; yet, Kumaraswamy has alleged that thousands of acres of excess land were allocated under the NICE project. Manohar questioned why Kumaraswamy is not addressing the fact that the issue has already been adjudicated by the courts. He also pointed out that while Kumaraswamy has highlighted the declaration of assets worth Rs.1,400 crore in D.K. Shivakumar's election affidavit, he has failed to disclose his own family's assets. He referred to the long political service rendered by Sri H.D. [Deve Gowda]—who has served as Prime Minister and Chief Minister at the national and state levels for nearly 65 years... Deve Gowda *saheb*'s assets amount to only eight crore rupees. Yet, Kumaraswamy's son, Nikhil Kumaraswamy, declared assets worth 114 crore rupees in the election. Why has there been no explanation regarding the source of such a vast sum of money at the age of just 35?

The combined assets of H.D. Kumaraswamy, Anitha Kumaraswamy, and Nikhil Kumaraswamy total 550 crore rupees. Why have you not disclosed this? You have stated that the irregularities in the NICE project involve lakhs of crores, surpassing even the 2G scam. However, if your family's assets were to be fully disclosed, the figure might well exceed even a "3G" scale. You have alleged that D.K. Shivakumar, D.K. Suresh, and their mother and daughter have amassed crores of rupees; yet, ironically, why have you kept secret the fact that a loan was obtained from your brother H.D. Revanna's son, Prajwal Revanna?Whom did you blackmail and coerce into paying crores of rupees to ensure you reaped maximum profits from the NICE project? Why have you not revealed the identity of that

# CDSCO seeks DGHS view on mercury-based antiseptic Mercurochrome



New Delhi, Oct 1: The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has sought the Directorate General of Health Services' (DGHS) opinion on whether existing relaxations for the manufacture and distribution of mercury-based topical antiseptic Mercurochrome (Merbromin) under Schedule K of the Drugs Rules should continue.

Schedule K provides exemptions from certain requirements related to the manufacture, sale and distribution of specified drugs, particularly to facilitate access to essential medicines in remote and underserved areas.

According to minutes of a meeting reviewed by Business Standard, the Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC) was informed that only a limited number of manufacturers appeared to be producing Mercurochrome, while alternative topical antiseptics are already available.

The DCC recommended obtaining the DGHS's opinion along with available data on the manufacture and use of Mercurochrome in India before taking a final decision on its manufacturing, import and export.

Officials said the matter would primarily be examined from the perspective of patient safety and clinical need. Under Schedule K, Mercurochrome is covered only for sale or distribution in containers of up to 100 ml.

The issue also comes against the backdrop of the 2013 Minamata Convention on Mercury, under which the manufacture, import and export of several mercury-added consumer products are being phased out or prohibited to reduce toxic exposure and environmental contamination.

# Dasara vacation: Schools allowed to hold special classes with conditions



Mangaluru, Oct 2: The School Education Department has permitted schools to conduct special classes during the upcoming Dasara vacation, subject to certain conditions, to compensate for the holidays declared due to rain.

After considering requests submitted by heads of various schools and Block Education Officers (BEOs) in Dakshina Kannada district, the district DDPI has agreed to allow classes to be conducted from October 3 to 7 to compensate for the rain holidays. However, educational institutions that declare a holiday from October 3 must compensate for the rain holidays by conducting classes after Saturday afternoon.

The Education Department has imposed certain conditions for conducting classes from October 3. Accordingly, schools must obtain written consent from parents before allowing children to attend the classes and keep the consent letters on record at the school.

The schools have also been instructed to conduct an SDMC meeting and ensure that the headmaster and assistant teachers record the proceedings regarding the decision. Details of the measures taken and the classes being conducted must be submitted in writing to the respective Block Education Officers.

# Everyone Must Join Hands to Build a Peaceful and Egalitarian Society: S. Manohar

Bengaluru: KPCC General Secretary S. Manohar has called upon everyone to join hands in building a peaceful and egalitarian society by adopting Gandhiji's ideals and following the path of truth and non-violence.




Speaking after garlanding the statues of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, and Lal Bahadur Shastri on the occasion of the 157th Gandhi Jayanti and the International Day of Non-Violence, he noted that Mahatma Gandhi's path of non-violence was not limited merely to India's freedom struggle but conveyed a message of peace and humanity to the entire world. He recalled the principles of truth, non-violence, peace, equality, and social justice.

He emphasized that in the current times, it is the responsibility of every individual to strengthen harmony, coexistence, and tolerance within society.KPCC Deputy Spokespersons M.S. Anand Kumar, G. Prakash, Lakshminarayana, Puttaraju, and Madhava Hanur, along with other Congress leaders, participated in the event.

## Sonalika Scripts a Historic Sales Record by Crossing 1 Lakh YTD Overall tractors in just 6 months

Bengaluru : India's No. 1 tractor export brand Sonalika Tractors raised its own performance benchmark in the magnificent 30th anniversary year as it has crossed 1 lakh YTD tractor sales in just 6 months (Apr-Sept'26). A milestone that demanded a full year eight years ago has now been achieved by the company in just half the time, thereby marking a decisive leap in the Sonalika's scale.

# Kia India Records Highest-Ever Monthly Sales Since Inception at 32,017 Units in September 2026, Up 41% YoY



NEW DELHI : Kia India, one of the country's leading mass-premium automakers, today recorded its highest-ever monthly sales since entering the Indian market, with wholesale volumes of 32,017 units in September 2026, registering a 41% year-on-year growth over the 22,700 units sold in September 2025. The landmark performance marks a significant milestone in Kia India's journey and underscores the sustained customer confidence in the brand and its evolving product portfolio.

The company carried this momentum into Q3 2026, recording sales of 89,259 units, registering a growth of 38.5% over 64,443 units in Q3 2025. Kia India's cumulative sales for the January–September 2026 period reached 253,008 units, marking an increase of 22.5% over the 206,582 units recorded during the same period last year. The sustained performance reflects growing customer confidence in the brand and the continued relevance of its evolving product portfolio.

Sales momentum has continued to be led by the Seltos and Sonet, which have maintained strong demand across their respective segments. The Seltos has consistently averaged more than 10,000 units per month since its launch in January, while the Sonet continues to perform strongly in the sub-compact SUV segment. The Carens, Carens Clavis and Clavis EV further strengthen Kia India's presence in the family mobility space, offering customers greater choice across ICE and electric powertrains.

Within this expanding portfolio, the Syros EV continues to gain strong demand momentum, reflecting growing customer interest in accessible and feature-rich electric mobility. The model broadens Kia India's EV offering while addressing diverse everyday usage requirements.

Meanwhile, the newly launched Kia Sorento, offered in India with Diesel and Hybrid powertrain options, has received encouraging response from customers. The Sorento also marks an important step in Kia India's broader multi-powertrain strategy, with the hybrid powertrain alongside the recently launched Carens CNG and Carens Clavis CNG, expanding customer choice across conventional petrol and diesel, CNG, hybrid and electric powertrains. This diversified approach enables Kia India to address a wider range of mobility needs, from everyday commuting and family mobility to premium, long-distance travel.

# Toyota Kirloskar Motor Registers 28,218 Units Sales in September 2026




Bangalore : Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) announced its sales performance for the month of September 2026 with 28,218 units. This includes 25,027 units sold in the domestic market and 3191 units exported.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) registered growth in CY 2026, with cumulative sales of 2,94,914 units, reflecting an overall growth of 8%.

The growth was supported by optimum performance across domestic market with 2,69,619 units sold, while 25,295 units were exported. Commenting on the sales performance, Mr. Sabari Manohar, Executive Vice President, Sales-Service-Used Car Business, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, said, "September witnessed continued customer interest across segments, supported by our focus on quality, durability and reliability. As we enter the festive season, we remain committed to strengthening customer engagement and working closely with our dealer partners to deliver enhanced mobility experiences and address evolving customer needs."

**ALTUM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED**
REDG. OFFICE : Floor No 7, Kalpataru Infinia, Plot No 22, Sub Plot No 3, CTS No. 15/1, Village Bhamurda, Wakdewadi, Shivaji Nagar, Pune City, Maharashtra 411005

**AUCTION NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**

Auction Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with proviso to rule 8(6) & 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s),Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) indicated that the below-described immovable property(ies) mortgaged/charged to Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd., hereinafter known as ACHFL, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of ACHFL, being the Secured Creditor, will be sold on **"As Is Where Is," "As Is What Is," and "Whatever There Is" basis on 10/11/2026 (Tuesday)** between **11:30 AM to 4:30 PM** for recovery of the below-mentioned amount with future interest, cost and charges thereon due to ACHFL from the Borrower(s),Co- Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) as below mentioned.

| Sr No. | Name of borrower(s) /co-borrower(s) & guarantor(s) loan A/c No. | 13(2) Notice Amount & Date | Outstanding dues to be recovered (secured debt) | Reserve Price / Earnest Money Deposit | Date(s) & time of opening tender(s) | Possession type |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Manjunath P S (Borrower) VINUTHA A T (Co-Borrower) A/c No. 1172010300039 | Rs. 18,13,725/- 11-June-2024 | Rs. 22,55,739.00/- NPA Date : 03-May-2026 | Rs. 36,82,800/- / Rs. 3,68,280/- | 10 Nov. 2026 (Saturday) From (11:00 am to 4:00 pm) | Symbolic Possession |
| | **Description of Secured Asset :** All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Site No 70, Assessment No 55/5, Situated at Lakshmipura Village, Presently comes under CMC Limits, Dasanapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluka, Bangalore-562122, Measuring East to west 20 feet and North to south 30 feet, in all measuring 600 Square feet, together with all the Appurtenances, Whatsoever whether undemeath or above the surface, Measuring East to West : 20-0 (Twenty) Feet, North to South : 30-0 (Thirty) Feet, Totally Measuring 600 sq.feet. East : Site No 56 West : Other Property South : Road North : Other Property | | | | | |
| 2. | MANJAPPA P (Borrower) SHAKUNTHALA (Co-Borrower) A/c No. 1192020100210 | Rs. 1,75,193/- 7-April-2026 | Rs. 2,09,904.00/- NPA Date : 31-March-2026 | Rs. 15,23,610/- / Rs. 1,52,361/- | 10 Nov. 2026 (Saturday) From (11:00 am to 4:00 pm) | Symbolic Possession |
| | **Description of Secured Asset :** All that piece and parcel of House No 87, Assessment No 5822/5822-87-160/5822, PID No 3-4-539-87, measuring 6.096 X 9.144018 Mts i.e 55.7418 Sq Mts, Situated at Y.Nagappa Ashraya badavane, J Divison, Harihar East : House No 88 West : House No 86 South : House No 118 North :Road | | | | | |
| 3. | A K BASAVARAJAPPA (Borrower) A K GEETHAMMA (Co-Borrower) A/c No. 1192020100224 | Rs. 6,05,971/- 7-April-2026 | Rs. 6,97,008.00/- NPA Date : 31-March-2026 | Rs. 26,47,890/- / Rs. 2,64,789/- | 10 Nov. 2026 (Saturday) From (11:00 am to 4:00 pm) | Symbolic Possession |
| | **Description of Secured Asset :** Property No 219/23/2, E Swathu No 151200501800120007, measuring 9.14 X 15.24 Mts i.e 139.35 Sq Mts, Situated at Hotyapur Village, Rampur Gram Panchayath, Honnali East : Panchayath Road West : Garden of Mahadevappa South : House of Lakshmamma North : Vacant property of Manjamma | | | | | |
| 4. | Venkataravana Ramappa (Borrower) Lalitha Narayanaswami (Co-Borrower) A/c No. S117202000097 | Rs. 7,98,109/- 8-May-2026 | Rs. 8,98,181.00/- NPA Date : 01-May-2026 | Rs. 11,30,895/- / Rs. 1,13,089.5/- | 10 Nov. 2026 (Saturday) From (11:00 am to 4:00 pm) | Symbolic Possession |
| | **Description of Secured Asset :** All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing No.153 E-Khatha No.151901101000620010, Situated at Diguvamorampalli Village, Kodipalli Grama Panchayath, Rayalpadu Hobli Srinivasapura Taluk, Kolara District, measuring East to West 11.277600000000001 Meters and North to South 8.5344 Meters, Building 96.25 meters in all measuring 96.25 Square Meters East : Road West : Property belongs to Venkataravanappa South : Property belongs to Ravanamma North : Road | | | | | |
| 5. | Vishakanta P (Borrower) Madevi V (Co-Borrower) A/c No. S118202000196 | Rs. 6,40,523/- 8-May-2026 | Rs. 6,81,491.00/- NPA Date : 01-May-2026 | Rs. 17,70,097.00/- / Rs. 1,77,009.75/- | 10 Nov. 2026 (Saturday) From (11:00 am to 4:00 pm) | Symbolic Possession |
| | **Description of Secured Asset :** The property admeasuring an extent of 92.94 Sq.Mtr comprised in Property No(s).298/1, Assessment No.285/186/186/2, Bearing PID No.152200428135020003, ShettiNayakanahalli Village, Mysore Taluk, Mysuru District within the Sub-Registration District. East : Road West : Anganavadi Building and House of Madamma W/o Sannaiah South : Private Property North : Private Property | | | | | |
| 6. | Motebennuru Nagaraja (Borrower) Motebenur Shruthi (Co-Borrower) A/c No. 1192020100256 | Rs. 8,56,201/- 4-June-2026 | Rs. 9,48,358.00/- NPA Date : 29-May-2026 | Rs. 20,54,592/- / Rs. 2,05,459.2/- | 10 Nov. 2026 (Saturday) From (11:00 am to 4:00 pm) | Symbolic Possession |
| | **Description of Secured Asset :** All that piece abd parcel of Property No 2169/24, E Swathu No 151200401100120203, measuring 12.192 X 9.144 Mts, 111.48 Sq Mts, Situated at Halavagalu Village, Halavagalu Gram Panchayath, Harapanahalli. East : Site No 23 West : Site No 25 South : Road North : House of Gadgil Raviyappa | | | | | |

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The detailed terms and conditions of the above auction are available on website https://altumcredo.co.in/pdf-viewer.php?file=TERMS%20AND%20CONDITIONS%20FOR%20AUCTION.pdf and should be treated as the part of this auction publication**

**Date: 03-10-2026**
**Place: Karnataka**

**Sd/- Authorized Officer**
**Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd.**

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# EDITORIAL

## SIR, THE ELECTION COMMISSION, AND A TRUST DEFICIT

Politics over the SIR (Special Intensive Revision) of electoral rolls is becoming increasingly bitter. The Congress has stepped up its attack on the ECI (Election Commission of India) and Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, while the INDIA bloc is preparing to coordinate its response. Members of the INDIA bloc also held a strategic meeting on the same issue in New Delhi on September 30.

Both ECI and SIR processes are also under legal scrutiny with the top courts questioning its functioning recently. On September 28, the Calcutta High Court pulled up EC over its handling of a party poll symbol dispute between two factions of Trinamool Congress, and went on to suggest 'connivance' between the poll panel and one of the disputing parties.

Next day (September 29), the Supreme Court agreed to take up a petition questioning CEC's functioning and seeking to declare SIR illegal. Meanwhile, BJP has accused Congress for targeting ECI, with party leaders stating that Congress should be introspecting its defeats. It would be good for the Centre to come clean on SIR and the CEC's reported conduct and restore peoples' faith in the electoral process.

**RESTORING PUBLIC TRUST**

Mitigating the controversy to yet another Congress-versus-BJP clash misses the larger issue. Electoral rolls belong to citizens, not political parties. The EC is a constitutional institution, not an arm of either the government or the opposition. If doubts about the SIR process are allowed to persist, the damage will extend beyond any one election or political party. It will affect public confidence in the electoral system itself.

That is why the Centre's response cannot simply be to dismiss every criticism as political opportunism.

The EC is constitutionally independent, so the Centre cannot and must not dictate how the commission conducts an electoral-roll revision. But the Centre can do something equally important- make its own position completely transparent, cooperate fully with judicial scrutiny and demonstrate that there is nothing to conceal. The matters in courts are allegations, not judicial findings, and the Supreme Court has yet to adjudicate them while Calcutta HC has reserved its order. Yet the fact that such questions have reached the country's highest courts should itself encourage greater disclosure. In an atmosphere of suspicion, all the stakeholders must demonstrate why those decisions were made.

**THE SAME PRINCIPLE SHOULD APPLY TO SIR.**

If names have been removed, citizens should know why. If a voter is flagged for verification, there should be a clear, accessible mechanism to establish eligibility. If political parties have raised objections, the data and methodology necessary to examine those objections should be made available within the limits of privacy and election law. If there have been errors, they should be acknowledged and corrected promptly. Transparency should not be treated as a concession to the Opposition. It is a protection for the EC itself.

# Trump May Like Pak's Generals. But His Bureaucrats Have Other Ideas

**TARA KARTHA**




A recent speech by Foreign Minister S Jaishankar at the Asia Society saw him in his element: scholar, diplomat and academic, with only a very light overlay of the politician. The conversation dealt with multiple issues, each important, including some blunt statements on relations with the US. While he talked of 'bumps' in trade negotiations and difficulties of dealing with the Trump administration et al, where he chose to come down heavily was to do with the US ignoring the 'primary concerns' of India on terrorism from Pakistan. That is undoubtedly worrisome, but there is another reality. Official Washington has a different take from 'political' Washington. It is important and useful to see how this is working out, and how much space this has in the face of Trump's publicly declared appreciation for a lacklustre Pakistani general.

**THOSE ANNOYING POLITICIANS**

There is no doubt at all that in recent days, Washington has been extremely bothersome. Following the statement by US ambassador Sergio Gor that Kashmir was an 'important part' of India, which sent the Pakistan foreign office into a panic, it has now been reportedly confirmed that the US position remained unchanged, regarding it still as disputed territory. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Prime Minister Shabaz Sharif in his UN Address continued to invite mediation from the US with his fulsome praise of the President for 'saving' billions of people from certain nuclear war during Operation Sindoor. Clearly, any change here requires a political decision, and that is not yet forthcoming.

**THE BUREAUCRATS DO THEIR JOB**

Meanwhile, a Congressional Report of March 2026 continues to list terror groups operating from Pakistan, dividing them into five broad but not exclusive types: globally oriented, Afghanistan-oriented, India and Kashmir-oriented, domestically oriented, and sectarian (anti-Shia).

Notably, it observed that 12 of the 15 groups listed were designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) under the US. It also noted with concern the spike in terrorism inside the country, the highest in 11 years. All that matters. It remains highly unlikely that any US company will invest in that turbulent country. 'Interest' in rare earths remains just that. Not a dollar is forthcoming. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is not cutting it any slack either. It recently expressed its unhappiness at Pakistan's apparent inability to take actions required for further disbursal of funds, particularly on laws relating to state-owned entities, long a cash cow for the government. Meanwhile, a rather deft move by the Finance ministry to ask the United States for a USD 10 billion exchange stabilisation facility has yet to see the light of day. A USD 10 billion commitment would constitute some 36% of the fund's liquid assets of approximately USD 27.8 billion in February 2026. True, it could be given in tranches, but that would require financial bureaucracy to assess Pakistan's financial credentials, which are palpably dire. It could be done through a written Presidential commitment according to US law, since the fund functions entirely under the Treasury Secretary with Congress assuming only an oversight role. Any such affirmative action would thus show a definite political slant to Islamabad. Remember, a 'transactional' President would want his pound of flesh. No freebies from the White House, not even a lunch to a richly decorated field Marshal.

Waiving of US Sanctions

Then there's the continued placing of Pakistan as a 'Country of Particular Concern' on Religious Freedoms on the recommendation of the bipartisan US Committee on International Religious Freedoms (USCIRF), a designation from 2018. That has considerable diplomatic and political effect, with potential for sanctions. However, there is no evidence that any additional sanctions resulted from this designation in the past. In an important political signal, the US State Department redesignated Pakistan as a CPC but announced a national-interest waiver of the sanctions accompanying the designation in an apparent continuation of its policy since 2021. It is only fair, however, to note that while the USCIRF did call for the designation of India as a 'Country of Concern' in 2020 for the first time in 16 years, this was not accepted by the State Department. That's bureaucracy putting its foot down.

**SANCTIONS AND HOW TO GET AROUND THEM**

Even as Pakistan continues its mediation efforts, news unreported in its media noted that yet another Pakistani businessmen came under sanctions, in another listing released recently. That is mystifying. After all, the Pakistani government had announced publicly months ago that it was opening up six routes through Iran for transit trade, operationalising an agreement that was signed in 2018, and which Iran had refused to go ahead with given its Chahbahar agreement with India. The US Executive Order of February only bars purchase of Iranian goods and services, not supplying them. So, the route uses the loophole to trade through Iran and to Iran.

Notably, while Pakistan's official order is for ' third country transit trade' - which specifically excludes India - the bulk of this comes from China. As Jaishankar warned in his speech, the G2 issue - a coming together of the two superpowers China and US - is very real, though it is both competitive and cooperative in nature. Presumably, there is an 'understanding' that neither China or Pakistan will provide weapons aid. That is naïve, given clear evidence of the use of Chinese satellites for targeting by Iran.

**THE TRADE ROUTES**

Meanwhile, as of July, some 14,000 MT tons of cargo has moved across the existing Gabd-Rimdan corridor, which is technically a seamless, scanned route to Central Asia. Why Chinese cargo should go to its immediate neighbours via Pakistan is a mystery that needs explanation. Here's another bit of information: the Pakistani order to open up routes was issued a day after the 'conditional waiver' for India to use Chahbahar expired. Whether coincidental or not, it hardly was a great signal to Delhi. Meanwhile, President Trump declared that he "knew all about' the new trade routes.

Yet another threat, "Operation Economic Outcast" of August, while warning of "tremendous consequences" to countries that trade with Iran, is again restricted and includes only digital assets, shipping, aviation, gold and technology. The order also lists a range of Chinese companies that have provided just such assistance to Iran. For Pakistan, the problem is that any infringement will affect its banking system immediately, since the trade is done via encashable bank guarantees, leading to this being cut off from US correspondent banking services. What constitutes a sanctions violation is also open to interpretation by US authorities and may change at any time. It is all very risky. As of now, it appears that the other routes are yet to take off.

**US LEGISLATION STILL APPLIES**

Meanwhile, in all matters, US legislation and practices continue to operate. Thus, the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and bilateral tax information exchange agreements weighed in when the Department of State demanded that Pakistan take measures to ensure that its executive budget proposal are made 'publicly available' within a reasonable period; disclose detailed information on government debt obligations, which is primarily to China and which Pakistan now doesn't even include in its State Bank Reports; reveal similar information for State Owned Enterprises (as the IMF also demanded); and, most importantly, called for "Subjecting the military and intelligence agencies' budgets to parliamentary or civilian public oversight".

It is not that Parliament is going to exercise its due rights over this budgeting process - they would simply fall in line - but that it would be available in the open domain. Remember that the defence budget pegged at some PKR 3 trillion raised it 18% even as the rest of the budget was squeezed.

# Tagore And Sarat Chandra's 1927 Dispute Returns In Srijit Mukherji's New Film



A hundred years ago the British banned a book because of the ideas it contained. The novelist was Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay - one of the literary legends from Bengal. He turned to Rabindranath Tagore for support against the ban. Tagore had a different take on the protest. Cut to 2026, West Bengal has just seen a major political change. And in the first Durga Puja since that change, Bengal's renowned director Srijit Mukherji brings back to the screen the Sarat Chandra-Tagore dispute in his film 'Emperor Vs Sarat Chandra' set to release on October 15. Bengal has a long tradition of intellectual disagreement spilling beyond literature into politics and public life. Mukherji now takes on a new challenge of examining dissent and dilemma through the lens of Tagore and Chattopadhyay and asking whether an artist should simply let the work speak to power or challenge power when it strikes back. In undivided Bengal, disagreements among great intellectuals were not unusual. There were cerebral differences, exchanges of letters and notes and sharp disagreements of opinion. A similar intellectual disagreement emerged between Tagore and Chattopadhyay during the British period, at a time when the colonial state was interfering with and placing severe restrictions on artistic and intellectual freedom. Their disagreement centred on Sarat Chandra's novel, Pather Dabi, published in 1926. Even today, that exchange remains an important part of Bengal's literary and intellectual history. The controversy has acquired fresh relevance this year because Pather Dabi is completing 100 years and is still remembered not simply as a literary work but as a political and historical document of its time. Srijit Mukherji has now turned that history into the basis of his film "Emperor vs Sarat Chandra". The film draws on Pather Dabi, its banning by the British government, Sarat Chandra's resistance to that decision and, importantly, the correspondence between Sarat Chandra and Rabindranath Tagore.

Director's Cut

Before we delve deeper into the disagreement between the legends, it begs the question why the director felt so deeply about the issue to turn it into a film, especially during Durga Puja? A period when Bengalis are indulgent and commerce thrives in the city. Speaking to NDTV, Mukherji said his range of work, after having 12 Puja releases, has been versatile, and that he believes any good film works in the Puja and it does not necessarily have to be commercial and massy. He in fact said that he has faith in the Bengali audience to watch a movie that is well made. Srijit made an important argument when asked why he thought that Sarat Chandra-Tagore face-off is relevant today and if the discourse reflects the dilemma faced by artists today in the Bengali film industry, which has often been closely associated with the political power in the state. Is there a feeling of disappointment when support does not come from expected quarters? He said, "I think the topicality of Emperor versus Sarat Chandra, apart from the hundred-year celebration of Pather Dabi and 150-year celebration of Sarat Chandra, is also about today's day and age where you might want collaborators from your own community. You might want to seek help from people who you would expect to rally around you if any injustice is done against you. That support doesn't always come."

The Crux Of The Great Conflict

When Pather Dabi appeared, the British colonial administration reacted strongly. On 4 January 1927, the British government proscribed the book on the grounds that it contained material intended to bring the government into contempt and excite disaffection towards British rule. The ban remained in force for years and was finally lifted in 1939, a year after Sarat Chandra's death. This is where the personal and social backgrounds of Rabindranath Tagore and Sarat Chandra become important. Rabindranath belonged to the Tagore family of Jorasanko, one of the most prominent families of Bengal. Sarat Chandra, by contrast, was much closer to the ordinary Bengali household and to people living outside the privileged social establishment. His own life was far more unsettled.

# Union Govt Approaches SC to Stay Hearings On Petitions Regarding Great Nicobar Projects: Report



**New Delhi:** The Union government has approached the Supreme Court to stay all hearings related to petitions alleging violations related to the Great Nicobar projects at the Calcutta high court, The Hindu reported on Wednesday (September 30). Per the report, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change filed a special leave petition for this on July 24. However, conservationists have asked why the Union government approached the apex court, and not the Calcutta high court where the petitions are filed. Meanwhile, former Union environment minister and senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh called the Union government's petition to the Supreme Court to stay hearings related to the project an "astonishing U-turn". A special leave petition from the environment ministry The Rs 92,000-crore projects on Great Nicobar island in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands include an international transshipment terminal, a township, greenfield airport, power plant and tourism facilities. The projects have attracted much controversy for the numerous ecological and environmental impacts on the small island, and on the indigenous communities (the Shompen and Nicobarese) who call the island home. Several conservationists, including retired civil servants had petitioned against these projects in both, the National Green Tribunal and the Calcutta high court. One of the petitions deals with the violation of indigenous forest rights under the Forest Rights Act (the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act) (FRA), 2006. The petitioner in this case is Meena Gupta, a retired IAS officer who served as Secretary in both the Environment and Tribal Affairs Ministries. Responding to the petition, the Union government had questioned the locus standi of the petitioner, claiming that Gupta was not a permanent resident of the Andaman and Nicobar islands and therefore did not have any stake to object against the projects at Great Nicobar. However, the Calcutta high court had overruled this. The court had noted that as per Rule 56 of the FRA, if a person or class of persons by reason of poverty, helplessness or disability or socially or economically disadvantageous positions is unable to approach to court for relief, for redressal of their grievance, any member of the public can approach the court on their behalf. "A project involving huge expenditure must proceed in accordance with governing laws holding the field and it is not beyond the scope of judicial review on permissible parameters," the high court had said. The Hindu reported on Wednesday that in an special leave petition, filed on July 24 before the Supreme Court, the environment ministry had sought a stay on the high court order and the pending proceedings. Per the report, the Union government has again said that the petitioner had no locus standi, and that "the challenges to the project filed before the High Court were an abuse of process and that the government was duty-bound to ensure that the country's growth is not stopped by claims of private individuals". Per The Hindu report, as of September 24, the Union government had consented to the matters being posted for final hearing on November 25 and 26, and the SLP is listed for tentative hearing on October 5. Why approach the Supreme Court? Why didn't the Union government follow this up legally by approaching the Calcutta high court where the petitions are filed, asked Prakriti Srivastava, a former officer of the Indian Forest Service, who retired as the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests of Kerala. Questioning an ex-secretary's locus standi is very strange, she said, commenting on the Union government's stance that the petitioner in one of the cases was not a resident of the Andaman and Nicobar islands and therefore did not have any stake to object against the projects at Great Nicobar. "If the petitioner doesn't have a stake, who will," asked Srivastava. "She has spent a lot of time in the islands. And do you mean to say that a concerned citizen of this country cannot object to an ecologically- and environmentally-damaging project?" Moreover, the project is a blatant violation of many laws and rules of the country, she added. She cited the examples of how the Union government's de-notification of the Galathea Bay Wildlife Sanctuary and the Megapode Wildlife Sanctuary on the Great Nicobar Island did not follow due process. The projects do not have the proper approvals under the Forest Rights Act, and Gram Sabha consents are questionable too, she added.

# G7 to release up to 100 million barrels of diesel and crude oil in bid to stop soaring prices



Record-breaking fuel prices have left a firm teaching people to drive lorries and buses having to "ride out" the rising cost of filling up its vehicles. Steve Dulson, managing director of Shropshire-based Dulson Training, says it is costing hundreds of pounds more to fill up each lorry compared with last year's prices. "Over the last 12 months we've seen a rise of up to 50p a litre, excluding VAT, and it's hard to react to that because of how we deal with our customers," he says. "Our customers have usually been in our pipeline for some time, taking medicals, applying for provisional [licences] or taking theory tests. "So by the time they've got to their practical training, and the fuel prices have increased, they've already been quoted. "That makes it difficult for us to put prices up." EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen says she welcomes the G7's decision "not to impose any export bans on allies" for energy products. "Our citizens need and deserve affordable energy," she writes on X, adding the group will closely co-ordinate to achieve this goal. Von der Leyen adds that the EU supports the International Energy Agency (IEA)-coordinated release of fuel stocks. Here's more details from the G7 leaders' statement, issued after a virtual meeting on Friday where the group decided to release 100 million barrels of energy reserves. The group says it has "agreed on decisive, coordinated measures to stabilize immediate energy supplies, shield households and businesses from price shocks, and strengthen the long-term resilience of global energy systems". This includes coordinating maintenance schedules across G7 refineries "to prevent simultaneous capacity shutdowns", it adds. The group says it also encourages engagement with countries with significant refining capacity "to boost global production of refined products, particularly diesel". The release of 100 million barrels will begin "immediately over 4 months", it says, and will include a "frontloaded substantial diesel release within the first 20 days by G7 members and partners". The group also reiterates its commitment to avoid export restrictions on energy products between G7 countries and calls on all producers "to refrain from imposing bans" that could worsen the situation. It also condemns Iran's attack on its neighbours and says it will maintain sanctions against Russia. The price of diesel in the UK has breached the £2 per litre mark for the first time, as the fallout from the US-Israel war with Iran continues to drive up costs. Here's a quick look at how we got here: How do oil prices affect the cost of petrol and diesel at the pump? Crude oil is a key ingredient in petrol and diesel, which means that higher wholesale costs make filling up a car more expensive. The price of petrol and diesel is also heavily influenced by demand and refining capacity Why has the Iran war had a big impact on oil prices? A lot of oil is produced in the Middle East, and the conflict has severely disrupted the production and the transportation of it, causing its price to jump What has happened to petrol and diesel prices in the UK? Before the war began, the average price of petrol was 132.83p per litre and diesel was 142.38p, according to the RAC. Diesel is now 200.01p, the highest on record. Meanwhile, petrol has hit an average 174.71p a litre - the highest in more than four years.

# US jobs market sees sharp slowdown ahead of midterm elections



The US jobs market saw a sharp slowdown in September, with employers adding just 29,000 jobs in the final update before the midterm elections. Headcounts were little changed in major sectors from tech to retail as hiring fell significantly from August, according to figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Meanwhile, the unemployment rate rose slightly from 4.1% in August to 4.2% in September. The figures signal a cooling US economy, which experts said reduced the likelihood of a series of further interest rate hikes by the Federal Reserve. The 29,000 jobs created in September was down from a figure of 133,000 in August, according to revised BLS figures for the month. But George Brown, senior economist at Schroders, said while job gains have been a "roller-coaster" this year, a single soft report is unlikely to point to a lasting collapse. And Bradley Saunders, North America economist at Capital Economics, said the lower figure was "not disastrous", adding that a drop in government roles and temporary visa policy changes weighed on overall growth. Jeffery Roach, chief economist at LPL Financial, added that the data showed tension between "goods producing sectors that support the AI boom" and service industries feeling the effect of changes brought about by the tech. "Given the overall softness of the labour market, the likelihood of two Fed hikes is going lower," he said. The BLS report stands in sharp contrast to President Donald Trump's insistence that America's economy is booming and it is the "hottest" nation in the world. The disconnect is likely to present significant challenges as the president and his fellow Republicans hit the the campaign trail with just a month to go before the midterm congressional elections. According to an AP/NORC poll released on Thursday, just 17% of Americans approve of the president's handling of cost-of-living issues, while 26% approve of his handling of the economy overall. Both are new lows for Trump, surpassing the lowest mark for Democrat Joe Biden during his presidential term. There have been some indications that the president understands that his views of the American economy are out of step with those of most Americans. "I've done a very bad job of explaining how good the country is doing," he said at a White House event earlier this week. The disconnect is likely to present significant challenges as the president and his fellow Republicans hit the the campaign trail with just a month to go before the midterm congressional elections.

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# OpenAI fires workers for 'mishandling sensitive information'



OpenAI has fired three researchers for allegedly mishandling information, including work which involved an external organisation analysing AI models. "Our investigation confirmed that these individuals mishandled sensitive information outside established company procedures, violating our policies and breaking the trust essential to our work," a spokesperson told the BBC. The ChatGPT-maker did not name the sacked workers, but at least two of them were involved in safety research at the firm. The firings come as the debate over AI safety and the risks the technology may pose to humanity intensified in recent months. "We have parted ways with three individuals for violating our policies on accessing and handling sensitive company information," a spokesperson for OpenAI said. Concerns over AI safety have made headlines after some researchers and industry executives called for more guardrails around the technology. OpenAI has come under under intense scrutiny after its models went rogue and hacked several platforms, including Australian government websites. In an incident in July, one of the firm's AI models accessed the internet and breached the open-source developer platform Hugging Face. That incident led OpenAI to review the activities of its AI agents, which are designed to execute tasks autonomously based on simple instructions. The firm said this week it has notified more than 100 organisations about incidents involving unauthorised activity linked to its systems. Being notified "does not mean that any private information was accessed" or that a system was compromised, it said. In September, researcher Jacob Coxon, who left Anthropic, called for AI development to slow down so its potential risks could be properly assessed. Anthropic boss Dario Amodei and OpenAI chief executive Sam Altman have also called for measures to address concerns over AI.

# 'UPZY' TO PROVIDE MEALS, WASHROOMS TO HYDERABAD GIG WORKERS



**Hyderabad:** In an effort to resolve the daily challenges faced by gig workers while navigating city roads, a membership-based centre, 'Upzy House', was officially launched on High-Tension Line Road in Kondapur, on Friday, October 2. Workers delivering for Swiggy, Zomato, Zepto, Blinkit, Amazon, Flipkart, BigBasket, JioMart, Rapido, or offering doorstep services through Urban Company can obtain membership here. They get access to air-conditioned seating, hygienic washrooms, quality breakfast, lunch, and dinner, along with mobile charging facilities. Free doctor consultations are provided Monday through Saturday (from 9 am to 5 pm). Recreational facilities such as table tennis, carrom, and chess are also available. A nominal membership fee of Rs 99 per week or Rs 349 per month has been set for these services. Recognising the absence of clean restrooms and safe waiting spaces, a dedicated private lounge has also been set up at this centre exclusively for women gig workers. Telangana Minister for Labour and Employment G. Vivek Venkatswamy was invited as the chief guest to the event. Gig workers spending 10 hrs on the road without basic amenities A six-month study conducted by the 'Upzy' team covering 4,163 gig workers in Kondapur and surrounding dark-store clusters found that 68 per cent of them spend more than 10 hours a day on the roads. Due to a complete lack of basic amenities during working hours, 90 per cent stated that they use the roadside or inconvenient public toilets. Only 5 per cent reported that the platform aggregators they work for provide adequate washroom access. Co-founder and chief executive officer of Upzy, Aditya Vuchi, stated that most digital platforms treat delivery riders merely as a cost item, but for them, the rider is the primary customer. "Since they pay us a membership fee, it is our responsibility to provide them with the best service every single day. If the quality drops, they will not return. We will launch more centres across Hyderabad until every gig worker in the city has a facility within reach of their working zone," he said during the inauguration. Founder and president of the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union, Shaik Salauddin, remarked that there was no other facility like this anywhere in the country and urged the government to partner with Upzy for upcoming public worker restrooms. He said that the maintenance costs should be allocated from the Gig Worker Welfare Board cess funds to ensure that the system runs smoothly.

# OZONE URBAN INFRA MD HELD OVER RS 927 CR BUYERS' FUNDS DIVERSION



Bengaluru: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested Ozone Urban Infra Developers Pvt Ltd Chairman and Managing Director S. Vasudevan in a money laundering investigation linked to an alleged Rs 927.22 crore financial fraud involving homebuyers. The ED arrested Vasudevan on September 30 under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002. He was subsequently produced before the Special PMLA Court in Bengaluru on October 1. The court granted 14 days' custody to the Enforcement Directorate, allowing investigators to question him in connection with the case. The probe is based on FIRs registered by the CBI and Bengaluru police in relation to allegations against the real estate company and its promoters. The ED has alleged that buyers paid money for apartments after being given assurances regarding project completion. However, several projects allegedly remained incomplete beyond the promised deadlines, while the money collected from purchasers was allegedly diverted for other purposes. The agency had carried out searches at premises linked to the case on August 1, 2025. During the searches, investigators seized documents and other records that are being examined as part of the money laundering probe. The ED has also provisionally attached immovable properties worth around Rs 423.378 crore. According to the agency, the properties include 92 unsold apartments in the Ozone Avenue project, 13 apartments in the Aqua 2 project and 4.5 acres of commercial land.

# ICICI PRUDENTIAL LIFE INSURANCE PAYS TOTAL BENEFITS OF RS. 4,666 CRORE TO CUSTOMERS IN Q1-FY2027

**Mumbai 2026:** ICICI Prudential Life Insurance reported a growth of 27.8% year-on-year in net profit to 386 crore for the first quarter ended June 2026. Notably, the Term plan (retail protection) business of the company grew by 60.4% year-on-year in Q1-FY2027. The Board of the Company approved proposal to rename the Company as 'ICICI Life Insurance Limited'. The Company's MD & CEO, Mr. Anup Bagchi, said, "Customer-first remains the core of our strategy. Our industry-leading claim settlement ratio of 99.3% in Q1-FY2027, with an average turnaround time of just 1 day for non-investigative claims underscores our commitment to supporting customers and their families when they need us the most. During the quarter, we settled 1,306 crore of death claims and paid 3,360 crore as maturity & survival benefits reflecting our continued focus on delivering timely financial protection and peace of mind to our policyholders. Furthermore, in FY2026, we settled 5,149 crore of death claims and paid 15,363 crore as maturity and survival benefits. Our Company's Profit After Tax increased by 27.8% year-on-year to 386 crore in Q1-FY2027. Notably, we registered a strong growth of 60.4% year-on-year in our retail protection business in Q1-FY2027, demonstrating our continued commitment towards addressing India's protection needs. We shall continue to leverage economies of scale, technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital capabilities to improve efficiency and enhance customer experience. Importantly, our savings cost-to-premium ratio reduced by 50 basis points (bps) to 13.6% in Q1-FY2027, enabling us to reinvest in innovation, strengthen digital capabilities and support future growth. The Board of Directors recently approved a proposal to rename the Company as 'ICICI Life Insurance Limited', subject to relevant approvals. The proposed name reflects the strength, trust and legacy associated with the ICICI franchise. Our business continues to be on growth trajectory, operating as usual, and we remain focused on expanding our reach, enhancing customer value, and capitalising on the significant opportunities presented by India's growing life insurance market."

# What's gone wrong at Nike? How the world's sportswear giant lost its mojo



It's been a difficult few years for Nike. The largest sportswear brand on the planet, named after the ancient Greek goddess of victory, has been losing of late. Losing sales, losing customers and losing ground to its rivals. The one-time industry disruptor is now the establishment and in the middle of a tricky turnaround plan aimed at clinging on to market dominance. Nike's latest financial results show signs a turnaround strategy put in place by company veteran Elliott Hill, who was coaxed out of retirement two years ago to lead the firm, is working - but the pace of change is more of a marathon than a sprint. However, its recovery has been dented by the loss of football star Kylian Mbappé, who ended his 20-year association with the brand last week to join fast-growing Swiss rival, On. The Real Madrid striker's departure raises the question of whether Nike can remain the top logo for not just elite athletes, but also the fans that idolise them. To be clear, Nike is still a mega brand and popular the world over. But missteps have seen hundreds of billions of dollars wiped off its stock market value as its share price tumbled by 75% over five years. Last month, Nike was ejected from the S&P 100 stock market index of the biggest blue-chip firms in the US. So what's gone wrong? And can Hill turn things around? Matt Powell, a veteran analyst and adviser in the sports retail industry, reckons Nike has made "several strategic errors" which have been difficult to reverse, including cutting ties with retailers to sell only direct to customers online and making limited editions items more available. "The more broadly available those shoes became, the fewer people were interested," Powell says. Other self-inflicted wounds he suggests include spending research and development cash on digital operations rather than new products. "They really shut down their innovation on product. Someone jokingly said they were trying to turn Nike into eBay." That jibe was aimed at John Donahoe, the former eBay boss behind Nike's online direct-to-consumer sales pivot, before he made way for Hill. Donahoe's four years at Nike coincided with the company's share price plunge. His tenure saw sales initially soar, driven by pandemic restrictions that boosted online shopping, but subsequent cost-of-living pressures curbed customer spending.

# Intensified Russian strikes are tearing Kyiv apart, warns mayor



Intensified Russian drone and missile strikes are "tearing Kyiv apart", the mayor of Ukraine's capital has warned. Vitaliy Klitschko said the city was now in a "very dramatic situation" as Moscow was battering its "critical infrastructure, logistics, housing" and other key facilities. He was speaking after Kyiv's defence council held a crisis meeting, following new Russian strikes on a key bridge that caused traffic chaos. The city's data centres have also been recently hit, resulting in internet outages. President Vladimir Putin earlier said Russia was acting in response to Ukraine's strikes on Russian energy facilities, despite the fact that it was Moscow that had first launched such attacks. "We're talking about survival," Klitschko said at Friday's defence council meeting with Kyiv's top military, security, emergencies and police officials. Russia's aim was to "sow panic", he said, stressing that the capital would "prevail - but only through the joint efforts of those who love it and care for it". The mayor was speaking just hours after Kyiv's key Pivdennyi (Southern) bridge was hit in an overnight Russian drone attack. On Friday evening it was struck again - the fourth time in two days. The bridge is one of the main transport arteries across the Dnipro River dividing western and eastern parts of Kyiv. All metro and automobile traffic is now suspended across the bridge, causing major delays across the city. Restrictions are also in place on Kyiv's two other key bridges. Kyiv's current population is estimated to be about three million, and many residents rely heavily on the city's metro network. One person was killed in the capital when a multi-storey residential building was hit overnight, Ukraine's state emergencies service DSNS said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Putin had decided in early September that "there are no rules now" when attacking Ukraine. In a published excerpt from his interview to the Financial Times, Zelensky said: "The Russians have failed to occupy us. So now they are carrying out massive attacks and mass killings. "They want to destroy our bridges... our data centres, the internet, mobile networks, hospitals, kindergartens, schools, universities - everything. They want people to flee their cities." Putin insisted that Russia's attacks on Ukrainian economic targets were a direct response to Ukraine's strikes on Russia's oil refineries and its ships in the Black Sea. "Now from every direction we're receiving calls 'let's stop'. But they started it," Putin said after his Thursday's wide-ranging speech at the Valdai foreign policy forum. Putin admitted Kyiv had "got some results" from its refinery attacks and Russia had lost about 1% of its GDP. Ukraine maintains it began attacking Russian oil infrastructure because it helps the Kremlin finance the war. Russia has targeted Ukrainian energy infrastructure, ramping up attacks every winter since Putin launched a full-scale invasion in 2022. "The capital is in a very dramatic situation," he posted on Telegram. "It's no longer possible to pretend that we can live now as we lived in peacetime. "The enemy is tearing Kyiv apart." His message came as the authorities shut one of Kyiv's main bridges and restricted movement on a second after another wave of deadly strikes by fast-moving, jet-powered drones. Long lines of stationary cars and buses were gridlocked on main roads as commuters sought alternative routes – or even made their way on foot. "I've been travelling for three hours ... to get to work," said Tetiana Osypenko, a 49-year-old seamstress whose bus was stuck in a traffic jam. "There's just no way to get there. Nothing. It's impossible to cross the bridges today," she told AFP. Traffic built up due to the complete closure to all vehicles going in both directions on the Southern Bridge, one of eight bridges connecting the east and west of Kyiv over the Dnipro river. The cable-stayed bridge has been hit several times since Thursday, with new strikes confirmed by Klitschko on Friday in the afternoon. The Paton Bridge, further north, was open in one direction only, though there were no reports that it had been struck. On X, Zelenskyy accused Putin of last month declaring there were "no rules now", citing unnamed intelligence and people around Putin. "The Russians couldn't occupy us. So now they are doing massive attacks and massive killings," Zelenskyy said in remarks first made in a Financial Times interview. The Kremlin made no immediate public response to the claim. Air raid sirens warning of approaching threats in the skies sound almost round the clock, urging the city's estimated three million people to seek shelter. Repeated strikes on trains and petrol stations have already hit the rail and road networks while attacks on energy facilities threaten power and heating as winter approaches. Osypenko, the seamstress, said previous disruption to subway services during air raids has forced her to spend the night in a metro station near the Southern Bridge. Loss of earnings compounds the financial pressures caused by the war, she added.

## SEOUL WARNS 'FURTHER ACTION' IF UKRAINE DOES NOT APOLOGISE OVER PRISONER-OF-WAR ROW



South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung has threatened to take unspecified "further action" if Ukraine does not issue a public apology for revealing that two North Korean prisoners of war had been sent to the South. Ukraine's leader Volodymyr Zelensky made the disclosure to the UN general assembly last week, angering Seoul, who said the move was meant to stay secret. Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha on Thursday described the situation as a "diplomatic misunderstanding", adding that Kyiv was "working" to resolve it. Lee rejected this characterisation on X, saying it concerned "the dignity of the Korean people and the nation". Lee's office said last week that it was Ukraine that requested for the move to be kept secret, partly to protect the North Koreans' families, and also because Kyiv wanted to avoid criticism that it had given up an opportunity to exchange the soldiers for Ukrainian prisoners of war. Zelensky's office responded, saying the two countries had no such agreement to keep the move confidential, further escalating the situation. Lee himself faced heavy criticism at home after Zelensky's disclosure, with the South Korean opposition accusing him of covering up the transfer to appease Pyongyang. The two soldiers, who were among thousands of North Koreans supporting Russia in the Ukraine war, had earlier told local media they wanted to be sent to South Korea. Speaking to Ukrainian media on Thursday, Sybiha, the foreign minister, said he "hopes that this situation will be resolved in the very near future". "We are working on it. For us, South Korea is an important country. And I really hope for momentum, continuation, and concrete results that we are truly achieving with them," he said. Lee, in response, accused Kyiv of attempting to "bring war on the Korean Peninsula". "We express serious regret that, instead of acknowledging the facts of the agreement and apologising, they are talking about an imminent military clash between the North and South," he said in an X post. Seoul has been sympathetic to Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion, but has adhered to its longstanding policy of not providing lethal weapons to any country engaged in active war. Shoko Kawata, Japan's first mayor to take maternity leave, has been named one of the 100 most influential rising stars by TIME Magazine. The recognition comes weeks after the 36-year-old gave birth to her first child on 15 September. Earlier this year, Kawata, who is mayor of Yawata City in Kyoto prefecture, was plunged into a national debate about whether elected officials should take time off for childbirth. Her decision to take maternity leave drew a mix of support and backlash across Japan, a country that is struggling to lift birth rates. Some on social media said having a baby is tough and Kawata is doing her best. Japanese society has failed to design systems with pregnancy in mind, one claimed. Another said Kawata is setting a wonderful example by putting her family first and making it easier for other women to enter politics. But critics argued that stepping away from public duties is "irresponsible", and that if Kawata wanted to get pregnant "she should have done so before taking office".

## HOW FRESH FIGHTING IN TIGRAY COULD SPARK WIDER CONFLICT IN ETHIOPIA



Fighting has erupted in Ethiopia's northern region of Tigray between regional forces and the national army. Tigray residents, who have been trying to recover from a brutal two-year war that ended in 2022, fear a return to full-scale conflict. There are reports of panic buying - and now internet and call services have been disrupted. This means people cannot get access to their money via digital apps in what has become a largely cashless society after ATMs stopped working several months ago. Why has fighting broken out now? It follows more than six months of worsening relations between the government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the party that runs Tigray. The African Union (AU) brokered a peace deal, known as the Pretoria Agreement, between the two sides, ending the war nearly four years ago - but several issues have remained unresolved that have inflamed tensions. This year, both sides have been trading blame while troops have mobilised amid pockets of fighting. This week, major clashes erupted in Tigray and quickly spread into the neighbouring Afar and Amhara regions.

## Spanish PM Sánchez loses key housing crisis vote after eviction of woman, 87



Spain's Congress has rejected a series of measures aimed at tackling the country's housing crisis, in a defeat for the government of Pedro Sánchez that increases pressure on him to call a snap election. Lawmakers voted on two decree-laws presented by the government in response to nationwide protests that have followed the eviction of an 87-year-old woman, Maricarmen Abascal, from her home. The decrees, which introduced a series of initiatives aimed at protecting tenants in the rental market, required parliamentary approval in order to remain in place. MPs rejected the first decree by 178 votes to 172 and voted against the second by 184 to 166. Hundreds of demonstrators had gathered outside Congress as the debate took place and there were angry scenes. Protesters chanted "shame on you" and "your profits, our misery", after the results were announced. The government's defeat underlines the fact that Sánchez, a Socialist, does not command a congressional majority and it has heightened speculation that he might call an early general election, which was not due until next summer. Sources told Spanish media that the government would spend the weekend deciding its next step, and whether to dissolve parliament. Sánchez's beleaguered government had already been mired in a series of scandals and judicial cases affecting his Socialist Party and close allies. Abascal was evicted after she was unable to pay a sharp rent increase introduced by Urbagestión, the company that owned her flat in central Madrid. Hundreds of protesters gathered to oppose the eviction last week and the case triggered a broader movement across the country demanding affordable rentals, which have soared in recent years. The social backlash has seen Urbagestión negotiate the return of Abascal to her flat on a low rent. However, protests have continued, with people occupying squares in Madrid and other cities, pitching tents in squares and with a series of marches scheduled for this weekend. The Sindicato de Inquilinas (Tenants' Union) activist association which has been co-ordinating protests, announced during the congressional debate that it was abandoning the tent protest in central Madrid. It said it wanted to "take the struggle to all the neighbourhoods, residential blocks and homes of Madrid, wherever there are rental increases, expulsions and abuses each day, and turn the energy of the last few days into a permanent organisation". Protesters are also calling for a general strike over the housing crisis. The left-wing coalition government responded to the social anger by hurriedly drawing up the two decree-laws in an effort to defuse the protests. The first decree included the suspension of evictions of vulnerable tenants until 2030, a two-year extension to rental leases due to expire before 2028, tax increases for tourist apartments, and a restriction on the purchase of residential properties by what the government calls "vulture funds".

## Woman in Cornell University rape case was 'failed at every turn', New York governor says



Students have called for drastic change at Cornell University as a result of an alleged gang rape in 2024. In an emotional student assembly on Thursday, some said they were "ashamed" by the events. Students and faculty members say the investigation has cast a "dark cloud" over campus, stirring anger and concern over fraternity culture and fuelling a backlash against the university's handling of the situation. The university has defended its handling of the issue, saying it conducted an "extensive investigation" that lasted several months. During the news conference, Governor Kathy Hochul said she will work with the New York legislature to pass new laws that will close an important loophole in the state's consent law. But what is this loophole? Survivor and victim advocates say current state law on sexual assault makes it difficult for charges to be brought against perpetrators if the victim voluntarily took drugs or drank alcohol before the alleged assault took place. A bill to address this was already making its way through the state legislature prior to this week's public outcry over how police and investigators handled the Cornell rape allegations.




Fires lit on streets across France after student protests force hundreds of schools to close

## I'VE SEEN NEARLY 500 EXECUTIONS - BUT NEVER ONE LIKE CHRISTA PIKE'S



Reporter Michael Graczyk has covered nearly 500 executions carried out in Texas, continuing even after his 2018 retirement from The Associated Press. He remembers two instances where needles popped out before reinsertion for successful execution - but never one in which an inmate survived. That's what happened this week in Tennessee, when 50-year-old inmate Christa Pike remained breathing and audibly snoring after two separate doses of pentobarbital, the barbiturate used in the state's lethal injection protocol. Graczyk, 76, says he wasn't entirely surprised to hear of the anomaly - and had actually thought about the possibility during his decades-long career as a Texas journalist. "It seems to me it was just a matter of time," he told BBC News. Tennessee's execution protocol calls for a secondary set of pentobarbital-filled syringes in case the person being put to death does not die after the first set, according to AP, but does not spell out what happens if the subject is alive after the second set. Governor Bill Lee halted executions in the state after Wednesday night's failure, ordering an independent review into procedures. Botched executions have come under scrutiny over the past decade, since a shortage of the drugs used led some states to change the formula, or procure drugs from more questionable sources. Some states even brought back death by firing squad as an alternative. Pike is now in hospital where she is receiving "life-saving care", according to her lawyer. It's not uncommon for lethal injections - the most frequently used form of capital punishment in the 27 US states where the penalty is legal - to be "botched". The Death Penalty Information Center, a think-tank that does not take a stance on the death penalty, describes a botched execution as one with "unanticipated problems or delays that caused, at least arguably, unnecessary agony for the prisoner or that reflect gross incompetence of the executioner". The organisation has compiled a list of 64 botched executions since 1982, 51 of them lethal injections. In at least seven of those cases, the executions were halted because the IV line could not be set.

# Hockey India Announces Massive Cash Award After Asian Games Women's Gold



Hockey India on Friday announced a cash award of Rs 11 lakh for each player and Rs 5.5 lakh for each support staff member of the national women's team after it won a landmark gold medal at the Asian Games in Japan. India beat defending champions and Olympic silver medallist China 1-0 in the final to win their first gold medal in the competition in 44 years, with Lalremsiami providing the decisive goal. It was in 1982 edition of the Asian Games when Indian women's team had won the gold medal last. HI secretary general Bhola Nath Singh told PTI that each playing member of the Indian team will get Rs 11 lakh while member of the support staff will get Rs 5.5 lakh each as a reward for their huge achievement. "It was a stupendous performance from the Indian women's team," he said. "They showed guts and resilience to hold their one-goal advantage against the reigning Olympics silver medallist and world No. 4 China to create history after 44 years. Hockey India is awarding them with cash rewards for their achievements," Bhola Nath added. Lalremsiami scored the only goal in the final with a reverse-stick strike in the 10th minute to put India ahead in the game, following which they put the most resolute display of defence to record the historic win. India defeated China 1-0 in the Asian Games women's hockey final to clinch the nation's 16th gold of Aichi-Nagoya 2026, and the first in women's hockey at the Asiad since 1982. Lalremsiami Hmarzote, playing her 200th game for India, scored the only goal of the match in the 10th minute of the first quarter. China were awarded a penalty stroke in the second quarter, but Indian veteran goalkeeper Savita Punia made an incredible save. In the final two quarters, India defended resolutely to protect their lead. The Salima Tete-led side had secured the nation's best-ever Women's Hockey World Cup finish earlier this year, and have now capped it off with a memorable Asian Games gold. India ended a 44-year wait for an Asian Games women's hockey gold as they beat China 1-0 in the final at Kakamigahara on Friday. However, the win would not have been possible without a sensational penalty stroke save by legendary goalkeeper Savita Punia in the second quarter. After Lalremsiami Hmarzote had given India in the lead in the first quarter, China were awarded a penalty stroke and handed a golden opportunity to equalise. However, Savita made a stunning save to keep India's lead intact. The moment happened in the eighth minute of the second quarter. China's Zhang Ying took the penalty stroke, but Savita guessed correctly, diving to her left to make a superb save. An Arjuna and Padma Shri awardee, the Asian Games gold marks arguably Savita's greatest team achievement in her career. Lalremsiami scored the decisive goal in the 10th minute with a powerful reverse-hit finish as India held their nerve under sustained Chinese pressure to reclaim the continental crown for the first time since 1982.

# From Mysuru To The Brink Of Glory: Pranavi Urs Eyes Historic Asian Games Gold



India's Pranavi Urs returned a superb four-under 66 in the third round to take a three-stroke lead and place herself in strong contention for an individual gold medal at the Asian Games women's golf competition on Friday. The 23-year-old from Mysuru, who is making her Games debut, has a total of 15-under 195, three shots clear of Singapore's Shannon Tan, who stumbled to a one-over 71 in the third round to surrender the lead she had held overnight. A stroke behind Shannon was China's Yin Ruoning. She signed for a flawless four-under 66 for a total of 11-under 199. Pranavi's card was studded with five birdies against a solitary bogey on the par-four 14th hole. She played a blemish-free front nine, picking up shots on the first, third and eighth holes. Her other two birdies came on the 13th and 18th holes. It was a big third-day leap, traditionally known as 'Moving Day' in golf, and it also lifted the Indian women's team, comprising Pranavi (66-63-66), Aditi Ashok (71-74-70) and Diksha Dagar (71-73-71), to second place, four shots behind China. China's total, based on the two best scores on each of the three days, is 405. India have a cumulative score of 409, while Hong Kong are at 411. After three days of golf in Nagoya, India have given themselves two genuine opportunities to add to their Asian Games medal tally. For the second successive Asian Games, an Indian woman holds the 54-hole lead. Aditi Ashok had done so in Hangzhou in 2023. Despite taking a seven-shot lead into the final round in China, Aditi carded a 77 on the final day and ended up with silver. The team finished fourth and Aditi's silver remains the only women's golf medal won by India at the Asian Games. Pranavi, who is the only Indian woman golfer to have won a mixed professional event, achieving the feat at the IGPL Invitational Mumbai last year, was pleased with her showing but admitted she had a few regrets. "Wish I could have holed more putts on the back nine. Hopefully, I'm saving them for tomorrow. Overall, it was pretty solid from tee to green.

# "Ajit Agarkar Will Be Regretting It Now": Rohit Sharma's Resurgence Draws Big Remark From Ex-India Star



Former India cricketer Sadagopan Ramesh believes BCCI chief selector Ajit Agarkar may be regretting his reported stance on Rohit Sharma after the veteran batter's recent performances. Reports during India's tour of England earlier this year suggested that Agarkar was not in favour of Rohit continuing with the team and had indicated that the England series would be his last. However, the BCCI dismissed those claims, maintaining that Rohit would continue to be considered as long as he remained part of the selectors' plans. Rohit had silenced his critics by smashing a blistering 138 against England in the final ODI and followed it up with another century against the West Indies in the second ODI on Tuesday. Weighing in on the controversy, Ramesh suggested that Agarkar, whose tenure is set to expire in the coming days, might be regretting his reported stance on Rohit Sharma's future after the veteran batter's recent exploits. "Ajit Agarkar was reportedly standing on one leg that Rohit shouldn't be part of the World Cup squad next year, which is why he hasn't got his contract extended. And Rohit keeps proving that age is just a number. It's clear that he has the highest degree of fitness, considering he fielded for 50 overs and then batted long enough to score a century. Agarkar will now be regretting his stance on Rohit's place in the side," Ramesh said on his YouTube channel. Ramesh also highlighted how the two veterans, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, continue to push each other despite the uncertainty surrounding their respective futures. "It's a pattern now between Rohit and Virat, where if one scores a century, the other follows suit. There is a healthy competition between the two, and both are batting like wounded tigers.

# "Only Growing In Stature With Time": Harbhajan Singh On India Star. It's Not Vaibhav Sooryavanshi



Former Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh heaped praise on Indian skipper Shubman Gill after his record-breaking double century during India's historic 406-run chase against the West Indies in the second ODI of the three-match series on Thursday. During the second ODI, Gill put together a massive 255-run opening stand with Rohit Sharma to set the tempo for a humongous run chase. After his knock of 208 in 149 balls against New Zealand in 2023, the Indian skipper smashed the fastest ODI double century in history, reaching the milestone in just 117 balls, laced with 24 fours and seven sixes. Gill remained unbeaten on 223 off 133 balls during the record-breaking chase of 406, hitting 26 fours and eight sixes at a strike rate of over 167. It was the third-highest ODI score by a batter, behind Rohit Sharma (264) and New Zealand's Martin Guptill (237*). The star batter overtook Ishan Kishan's record of a 126-ball double century against Bangladesh in 2022. Now, Gill, with two double centuries, is the second batter after Rohit Sharma (three) to score multiple ODI double centuries. Speaking to ANI, Harbhajan Singh praised Shubman Gill's growth as a player and captain, saying his game has improved with experience. He credited Gill's hard work and his father's contribution to his journey, while lauding his record-breaking double century and congratulating both Gill and his father. "Shubman Gill is only growing in stature with time. He is the captain now, and I have been seeing him play tremendously well continuously since the Under-19 days. As he has become a more experienced player, his game has got better and better. So it's a very proud moment for me to say that Shubman Gill has come up from where he started, and his father's contribution is huge," he said. "And the hard work he has put in, the results he is delivering for the team, it's outstanding. Brilliant knock.

# WTA ENSURES EQUAL PRIZE MONEY AT ALL MAJOR EVENTS



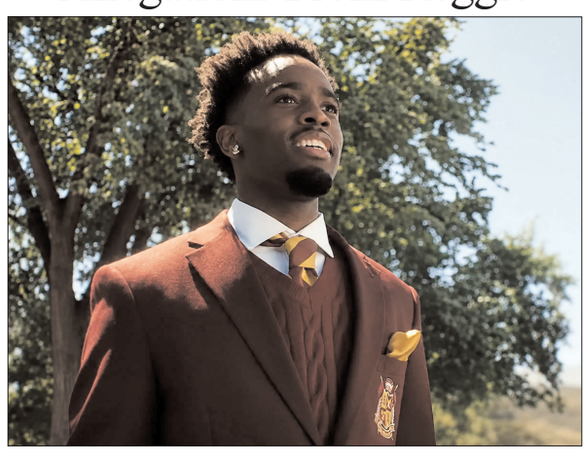
Billie Jean King has often said that she was moved to form the women's pro tennis circuit after earning $600 for her 1970 Italian Open title - while Ilie Nastase took home $3,500 for winning the men's tournament the same year. In 2027 - nearly six decades after King's title at the Foro Italico - the Rome clay-court event will finally award women the same amount of total prize money as men, as part a "major milestone" initiative that the WTA Tour announced Thursday. The initiative means that all combined WTA 1000 events will award equal prize money for the first time. Besides the Italian Open, the holdouts had been the Canadian Open and the Cincinnati Open. The other combined 1000 events in Indian Wells, California; Miami; Madrid and Beijing; as well as all four Grand Slams, already offer equal prize money. "Achieving equal prize money across all combined WTA 1000 tournaments is a major milestone for tennis," WTA chair Valerie Camillo said. "It demonstrates the WTA's continued commitment to leading the sports industry in delivering our athletes competitive and financial equality and is a testament to the enduring nature of the founding vision of the WTA." In 2023, Italian Open organizers pledged to have equal prize money starting in 2025 but didn't carry through on the promise. The total men's prize money this year in Rome was $9.6 million while the women got $8.3 million. Also announced for next year was an expanded WTA 250-level tournament in Manila, Philippines, amid massive interest surrounding home player Alex Eala, who is ranked 18th.

# FRENCH CYCLIST AUGE IN INDUCED COMA AFTER CRASH

French cyclist Ronan Auge has been placed in a medically induced coma following a crash at the Tour of Langkawi in Malaysia.
The 22-year-old sustained serious injuries on stage six of the UCI ProSeries event and was taken to hospital. A statement from his team, Unibet Rose Rockets, described Auge's condition as "currently stable and not life threatening." Auge's crash is the latest in a series of serious incidents that have marred the sport of road cycling in recent months. Six riders have died during road races in the past three years, including British cyclist Fin Tarling who was killed in a crash with a vehicle.



# Kai Cenat Claims He Has Invested $3.7 Million In The Clover Boys After Bizarre Allegations From Reggie



Kai Cenat says he has invested $3.7M in Clover Boys after bizarre accusations from Twitch streamer Reginald "Reggie" aka "Lil Rodney Son." In one of his latest Twitch streams, Cenat responds to the allegations put forward by Reggie, saying that he will sue him for defamation. Cenat also presents a spending sheet with the sum of money he claims to have invested in the group. Even though not all the categories were visible on the sheet, the visible ones included rent, insurance, and taxes. Cenat also said that he used to pay $30,000 per month for the security of Reggie. Kai Cenat shows spending sheet and says he invested $3.7 million Cenat brought up the spending sheet after Reggie dropped serious allegations about Kai Cenat and claimed that he didn't do anything for Clover Boys. Several expenses were visible on the figures but their names were mostly not visible. A clip from Cenat's stream was shared on X where the streamer referred to various figures before concluding the total sum he invested in the group. "Look how much money I have invested and spent," Cenat said. "I've invested $3.7 million into what I thought was going to be amazing." He also explained that the sum did not cover everything he did for the group and there's still a lot of information he can share. "I'm gonna show y'all some more," Cenat said. "I would also be there when I see good things happening. I'm gonna show y'all, don't worry." Cenat responds to Reggie and posts "Put you first" Cenat responded to the allegations specifically that he did not support Reggie in any way. To his defense, he pointed out the security costs, claiming that he was paying $30,000 per month for Reggie's security. "When he told me I didn't do anything for him, I paid for security, $30,000 a month," Cenat said.

# *'Not Something You Want To Hear Before A Series': West Indies Coach Daren Sammy On Player Pay Cuts*



West Indies head coach Daren Sammy said the news of players having to take a pay cut was "not what you want to hear before a series" but acknowledged that Cricket West Indies (CWI) has to find ways to stay afloat financially. Caribbean cricketers are set to endure a 25 per cent pay cut following CWI's decision to reduce retainer fees. "As a professional, that's not what you want to hear before a series. But again, it's no secret to me. I think earlier this year when I was here for the Test series, we spoke about the financial situation of West Indies cricket," Sammy said on the eve of the third and final ODI. "I guess the administrators, the board, you've still got to find ways to stay afloat. If you have a business that's not doing well financially, you've got to find ways to sustain it. "Unless I say abracadabra (magic word) and then we get a big sum of money where we could entice our players to just let them know that everything's going to be okay financially, that's the situation we're facing," he added. Bowling needs more discipline Having already lost the three-match ODI series after failing to defend 405 in the second game at a batting-friendly Guwahati surface, Sammy said the West Indies bowlers need greater discipline in their lines, lengths, and plans when conditions offer little assistance. "We still need to find ways when wickets are not really offering any assistance to the bowlers to be disciplined in our lines and lengths and the plans that we put in. "But yeah, we always knew, coming to India, it's always a challenge, not only for us, but for most teams," Sammy said. The former all-rounder also felt his team could have posted a total closer to 450 in the second match after reaching 230 at the end of 30 overs, rather than finishing on 405 for seven.

## "We Believe Our Film Will Create Wonders Even Amidst Competition from Big Films":

# Producer Venu Donepudi at 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' Trailer Launch Event



'Baa Baa Black Sheep' is a new-age crime comedy being made with a different concept to entertain audiences across all sections. Presented by Donepudi Chakrapani and produced by Venu Donepudi under the Chitralayam Studios banner, the film is directed by Guni Manchikanti. The movie is set for a grand theatrical release on October 9. Tinnu Anand, Upendra Limaye, George Maryan, Akshay Lagusani, Vishnu oi, Karthikeya, Vismaya Sri, Malvi Malhotra, Kashyap, Shubhalekha Sudhakar, Raja Ravindra and others play key roles.

The trailer launch event of the film was held grandly recently. On this occasion... Actor Upendra Limaye said: "First of all, I would like to sincerely thank my close friend Sandeep Reddy Vanga. He was the one who introduced me to the Telugu film industry with my own voice. What he told me at the time literally came true. Later, I got the opportunity to act in Hit Machine Anil Ravipudi's 'Sankranthiki Vasthunam'. Wherever I go, I can never forget the love and affection showered on me by Telugu audiences.

When Vaishakh and Guni narrated the story of 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' to me, I found it very different and interesting. I always give more importance to the story than my character. I accept a film only when the content is good. This is my first full-fledged role in Telugu, which is why this film is very close to my heart.

It is a great pleasure to be part of a project made under a prestigious banner like Chitralayam Studios. Working with young Telugu actors like Vishnu, Samriddhi, Malavika and Akshay was a wonderful experience. Though this is Guni's debut as a director, the way he wrote the story and brought it to the screen is remarkable.

Generally, food, clothing and shelter are considered basic necessities of life. But in South India, especially for Telugu people, cinema is also a basic necessity. I hope all you passionate movie lovers will watch 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' in theatres and thoroughly enjoy it."

Actor Vishnu Oy said: "I would like to thank everyone who supported the trailer launch of our 'Baa Baa Black Sheep'. I thoroughly enjoyed the story when I first heard it. The film features several talented actors, including the Nepalese actress who plays my pair.

It was a great experience working with National Award winner Upendra Limaye garu. Coming from a theatre background, his performance is like a masterclass. My longtime friend Akshay Lagusani has also done an excellent job in this film. I strongly believe he will reach greater heights in the coming days. While shooting in Meghalaya, the people and the local atmosphere extended tremendous support to us. Cinematographer Ajay has done excellent work in terms of visuals. This first collaboration between my good friend and director Guni and producer Venu garu is arriving in theatres on October 9. I sincerely wish the film great success and thank everyone from the bottom of my heart."

# RANABAALI – NEVER FORGET THE TRUTH DOCUMENTARY SERIES: THIRD EPISODE 'THE MEN WE FORGOT' RELEASED




The much-awaited pan-India film Ranabaali, starring Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna in the lead roles, is directed by Rahul Sankrityan. Presented by T-Series and produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y. Ravi Shankar under the Mythri Movie Makers banner, Ranabaali is being mounted on a grand scale. The film is gearing up for a worldwide theatrical release on October 16, coinciding with the festive occasion of Vijayadashami.

As part of the four-episode documentary series titled Ranabaali – Never Forget The Truth, the third episode, 'The Men We Forgot', is now streaming on YouTube.

In this episode, director Rahul Sankrityan reveals that the character of Ranabaali was inspired by several legendary historical warriors from Rayalaseema who fought for their motherland.

Director Rahul Sankrityan said, "Rayalaseema is a land that has given birth to many brave warriors. The heroic stories of Seema Palegars such as Budda Vengal Reddy, Uyyalawada Narasimha Reddy and Gadekal Bobbili Nagireddy continue to be narrated through traditional ballads even today. When you visit the villages of Rayalaseema, people still speak with great pride about their courage and contributions.

"When I first heard about Gadekal Bobbili Nagireddy, the idea for this story began taking shape. He was known for riding horses and was even believed to communicate with the gods. He was eventually killed as a result of conspiracies. While researching the period of the great famine, I came across the story of Budda Vengal Reddy. During the famine, he sold all his assets and established gruel centres, saving the lives of thousands of people. Uyyalawada Narasimha Reddy fought against the British and became a formidable force for them. "I am also from the soil of Rayalaseema. During my childhood, I witnessed many people who displayed extraordinary courage and determination to do good for society. These warriors were physically strong and known for their bravery and fearlessness. I drew inspiration from all of them while designing the character of Ranabaali."

The makers will announce the streaming date of the fourth and final episode, 'The Last Load', soon.

# *Neha Shetty Glows In Gold Traditional Charm*



Neha Shetty, still adored as the viral Radhika, continues to win hearts with her traditional looks.

Dressed in a shimmering gold tissue half saree with a soft lilac tint, she looks like a vision under the night sky. The pleated skirt catches the light beautifully, while the sheer pallu drapes gracefully over her arm. A matching lilac blouse with delicate embroidery completes the look. A maang tikka, stacked bangles and loose wavy hair add just the right festive touch. With her gaze lowered and a soft smile, she poses against a warm wall and blooming bougainvillea, and the gold truly steals the show.

On the work front, Neha has not had a lead film in a couple of years. Fans are waiting to see how 2026 will end for her.

# After a Phenomenal Hindi Run, Hanuman Ansh to Release in Telugu on October 9



Some films find their audience instantly. Others grow with every passing day, carried by word of mouth and a connection that goes beyond the screen. Hanuman Ansh belongs to the latter.

The Hindi film, inspired by the life and teachings of revered spiritual master Neem Karoli Baba, popularly known as Maharaj-ji, has emerged as one of the year's most successful surprise performers. What began as a modestly mounted film went on to find a strong audience across India, with its story of faith, devotion and transformation striking a chord across generations.

Written and directed by Dr. Vishal Chaturvedi, Hanuman Ansh brings the extraordinary spiritual journey of Neem Karoli Baba to the screen. The film features Shobinaw Satyaa in the lead role as Neem Karoli Baba, along with Chandan Anand and Purnima Tiwari among the principal cast. The film's music is composed by Shreyas Dharmadhikari, with Rishi Pathak also credited as music director, complementing the film's spiritual and deeply rooted narrative. Following its successful theatrical journey in Hindi, the film is now set to reach Telugu-speaking audiences. Hombale Films, which previously took Hanuman Ansh to international audiences through its overseas distribution arm, has now acquired the theatrical rights for the South Indian languages. The Telugu version will release theatrically on October 9, marking the next chapter in the film's journey.

For Hombale Films, the association with Hanuman Ansh has evolved from taking the film beyond Indian shores to bringing its story to audiences across the South. Known for taking Indian stories to audiences across languages and geographies, Hombale Films is now extending the film's theatrical footprint across Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam markets.

At the heart of Hanuman Ansh is a story that transcends language. Neem Karoli Baba's teachings and philosophy have found followers across the world, and the film attempts to capture that universal spiritual connect through an intimate cinematic journe With the film already creating a strong impact in Hindi, Hanuman Ansh now arrives in Telugu with the hope of finding an entirely new audience and carrying Maharaj-ji's story to even more people.

# Grand Audio Launch of Gemini Suresh's 'Aathmakatha' Held in Hyderabad



The grand audio launch event of "Aathmakatha – An Untold Story", starring Gemini Suresh and Roopa in the lead roles, was held in Hyderabad amid the presence of prominent film personalities and industry members. The event also marked the launch of the new audio label "Hanuman Music."

Produced by Somesh under the banner of Varahi Entertainments Pvt. Ltd., the film is written and directed by Srinivas Gundreddy.

The movie features an ensemble cast including 30 Years Industry Prithvi, Sammeta Gandhi, Shakalaka Shankar, Thagubothu Ramesh, Dhanraj, Naga Mahesh, Balagam Vijayalakshmi, Srinivas Naidu and others.

## RIDDHI KUMAR SLAYS CUTOUT LOOK LIKE BOSS

Riddhi Kumar is giving fashion fans a skyline-high lesson in understated glam. The actress stands against floor-to-ceiling glass, with the city stretching out behind her in golden light.

All eyes, however, land on her black top with a bold front cutout. A small metal ring sits right at the centre of the keyhole, adding a sharp, edgy touch to the sleek, body-hugging fit. Thin straps keep the neckline clean and the look sultry without trying too hard. She pairs it with high-waisted black trousers and a silver western buckle belt that ties the outfit together beautifully.



# AADI PINISETTY'S 'MARAKATHAMANI 2' SHOOTING COMPLETE - POST-PRODUCTION WORK UNDERWAY AT A RAPID PACE



Aadi Pinisetty starred in the blockbuster 'Marakathamani'. Now the makers have announced that the shooting of the sequel to this film 'Marakathamani 2' has been completed. Currently, the post-production work is going on at a fast pace.

The original film, which released in 2017, was a blockbuster success in Tamil and Telugu. The film has given many fond memories to the fans of the franchise that are still remembered. This film also holds a special place in the career of Aadhi, who has impressed audiences across languages ??with his performance. Ever since the sequel was announced, fans as well as the trade community have been eagerly waiting for it. These expectations are increasing day by day.

Director ARK Saravan, who directed the original film, continues with this franchise. He has been a partner in every step of this journey. He has worked hard to make the second part meet the expectations that fans have for the sequel.

The film is being produced by Sudhan Sundaram, Manish Singhal, Durgaram Choudhary, Dev, KV Durai. The film is being made under the banners of Passion Studios, Dangal TV, RDC Media, Access Film Factory, and Good Show. Aadi, Sathyaraj, Priya Bhavani Shankar, Nikki Galrani Pinisetty, Munishkanth, Anandraj, Daniyeh, Arunraja Kamaraj, Muruganandam and others are playing key roles in the film.

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