

# INDIAN CHRONICLE

## IMD Hyderabad issues orange alert: Temperatures in parts of Telangana may go up to 44°C

Hyderabad: After a week of respite brought in by thunder and hail storms, temperatures are expected to start soaring again across the State. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)-Hyderabad on Thursday issued an orange alert for 15 districts in Telangana with a forecast of temperature hovering between 41 degree Celsius and 44 degree Celsius. While maintaining that dry weather will continue throughout the State, the IMD-Hyderabad in its forecast said, "maximum temperatures are likely to gradually rise by 2 degree Celsius and 3 degree Celsius during next few days". The districts where maximum temperatures will hover between 41 degree Celsius and 44 Celsius .

## Donations pour into TTD Trusts

Tirumala, March 27 (NSS): Donations to the tune of Rs 2.45 crore pour into various Trusts of TTD on Thursday. Three different donors, including one from Sri Lanka, donated to different trusts of TTD. Jineshwar Infra Ventures from Chennai Rs one crore and the Sri Lankan donor donated Rs one crore to SV Annprasad Trust of TTD while Pacific BPO Pvt Ltd, Noida, has donated Rs 45 lakh to SV Pranadana Trust. The respective donors handed over the DDs for the said amounts to TTD Trust Board Chairman BR Naidu and Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary at Ranganayakula Mandapam on Thursday. (NSS)



## Assembly passes resolution opposing delimitation based on population



Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): The Telangana Assembly has adopted a resolution opposing the Union government's plan for population-based delimitation. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy presented this resolution during a session of the Legislative Assembly. In his address, the Chief Minister emphasised that states that have effectively managed their population should not be adversely impacted by the delimitation process. He argued that the number of Assembly constituencies should be increased to 153. In addition to this, he sug-

gested that the number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) should be adjusted to reflect the current population figures. The Chief Minister pointed out that the Southern States have complied with the Centre's directives on population control, whereas the Northern States have not. He noted that the ongoing delimitation is based on population metrics. He stated that Southern States presently hold 24 percent of the representation in the Lok Sabha, but this proportion would decrease to 19 percent after the delimitation is executed. Revanth Reddy emphasised the need for unity against the proposed delimitation. He urged support for the government's resolution, regardless of political party affiliations. He pointed out that the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act promised an increase in Assembly constituencies for both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana; however, this increase has yet to occur. In contrast, the number of constituencies in Sikkim and Jammu and Kashmir has been adjusted according to the 2011 census, while the Telugu states have not seen similar changes due to a lack of political will, according to Revanth Reddy. Moreover, the Chief Minister highlighted that although the Southern States account for 24 percent of national representation, they contribute 36 percent of the taxes to the central government, yet they receive only a minimal return from the Centre. (NSS)

## Two-wheelers will not be allowed on flyovers in city



Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): In connection with "shab-e-qadar" jaagne ki raath, in the intervening night of March 27 & 28 to ensure better road safety and to avert any untoward incident/road accidents, two wheelers will not be allowed on the flyovers at Dr Manmohan Singh Express Flyover (Zoo Park to Aramghar flyover), Bahadurpura Flyover (Devi Bagh to Zoo Park gate no. 2, Chandrayangutta flyover (entrance from Nayara Petrol pump Hashamabad to Phoolbagh DLRL) and Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Flyover (Pisalbanda to Laxma Reddy Garden Function Hall) after 10 pm to avoid any untoward incidents, road accidents. General public/commuters are requested to note the restrictions and co-operate with the Traffic Police. In case of any inconvenience in commuting, contact traffic helpline 9010203626, said Jt Commissioner of Police, Traffic, Hyderabad. (NSS)

## German industrialist meets CM Revanth



Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): German industrialist Stephen, along with Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar and TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, called on Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at the Assembly Hall here on Thursday. The German representative, Stephen, asked the Chief Minister to provide appropriate facilities to set up an industry in Telangana for the manufacture of wine and arak and other related products from the toddy and palm trees. In the past, when Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, TPCC Chief Mahesh Kumar Goud and Professor Janaiah went on a study tour to Cambodia, they requested Stephen to help set up the industry in Telangana as this industry was providing a lot of economic employment there. As per their request, German representative Stephen informed Chief Minister Revanth Reddy that an industry to produce wine & arak from palm and toddy trees will be set up in Telangana. The Minister explained that setting up this industry in Telangana will not only provide professional and economic development to the toddy workers, but will also improve value addition and employment opportunities. German industrialist Stephen explained to the Chief Minister that he is ready to export Telangana toddy to Europe, set up shops locally, increase the income of the toddy workers, expand marketing to other states and other countries, set up a research and development department, and produce seeds that grow quickly and give high yields to palm oil plants. (NSS)

## KTR sets historic precedent by pledging organ donation on Assembly floor

Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): In a remarkable and humane gesture, BRS party working president K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) distinguished himself as a unique leader in politics by pledging his commitment to organ donation on the floor of the Telangana Legislative Assembly. His announcement came during a session where the Assembly was deliberating the Telangana Transplantation of Human Organs Bill, a significant legislative step toward regulating and promoting organ donation in the State. KTR used the occasion to highlight his compassionate side, stressing the importance of raising awareness and encouraging participation in organ donation. Addressing the Assembly, he declared, "We, as representatives of the people, must lead by example. It is our duty to foster awareness and inspire the citizens in our constitu-



encies to embrace this noble cause." Demonstrating his resolve, KTR proposed a special initiative to the Speaker, suggesting that a campaign be organized within the Assembly premises to enable MLAs to register as organ donors. "If members are willing, let us initiate a signature drive right here in the Assembly," he urged, reinforcing his call to action. True to his words, KTR announced that he would be

the first to sign up for organ donation. "Organ donation is a profound humanitarian act that can save countless lives," he emphasized, underscoring the transformative potential of such contributions. His inspiring move received widespread acclaim from lawmakers across party lines. Members of the Assembly praised KTR's leadership and vision, lauding his motivational gesture as a powerful example of social responsibility at the highest level of governance. (NSS)

## EFLU VC honours GATE toppers

Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): Prof. N. Nagaraju, Vice Chancellor of the English & Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, congratulated the students who qualified and performed exceptionally well in the GATE Linguistics examination 2025. There are five students, who secured top All India ranks. The students include K.N. Aadithya--All India Rank 2, Riddhi Karkare--All India Rank 3, Dhyuthy Krishna Kumar--All India Rank 4, Oshin Padhye--All India Rank 5 and Aparna Sankar--All India Rank 7. Thirteen other students qualified in the examination. The success rate this year has been 100%. The students were honoured by the Vice Chancellor for their outstanding performance. The five top rankers were given a gift as a token of appreciation for bringing pride to the School of Language Sciences and the University. All the 17 students were presented with a certificate of appreciation. The Vice Chancellor, the Dean (in charge) of the School, Prof. M. Hari Prasad and Prof. Hemalatha Nagarajan appreciated the hard work and dedication of the students and expressed their joy. It was a proud moment for the School of Language Sciences and the University. On the occasion, an online Newsletter of the School of Language Sciences was also launched by the Vice Chancellor. (NSS)

## I never indulged in vindictive politics: CM Revanth

Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said that he had never encouraged or indulged in vindictive politics. Speaking in the Assembly on Thursday, the Chief Minister stated that the opposition would not have sat in their seats and spoken freely if he had indulged in vindictive politics. "They would have been put behind bars in Chenchalguda or Cherlapally jail, like I was imprisoned during the BRS rule," he said. The Chief Minister mentioned that the laws impose a Rs 500 fine for using drones, but the last government put him in Cherlapally jail by abusing power, even though he was an MP. He controlled his anger despite being kept in a detention cell for 16 days without allowing a single person to meet me. We have not taken any vengeance. The authorities turned on the lights in the jail and made me stay awake during the nights," he said. "Though I was an MP, they detained me like a notorious criminal in jail. God punished those leaders who were vengeful against me. God sent the leaders to the hospital for their torture. The then rulers prevented me from going out of Cherlapally jail to distribute the wedding cards for my daughter," Revanth Reddy said. "Is it not political vendetta against me? However, I did not commit any act of revenge. Your entire family would have been in Cherlapally jail if I



had wanted to take revenge. I didn't do that and showed wisdom. People gave me a mandate not for vindictive politics," Revanth Reddy said. The Chief Minister further stated that he has maintained restraint and not taken any action even after recorded abuses against him in their own party office. Telangana Society is watching closely who has indulged in vendetta politics," he added. (NSS)

## Now, Revanth Reddy moves resolution against delimitation in Telangana Assembly: 'Centre wants to control..'



GNS News Agency, March 27  
Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy moved a resolution against delimitation in the legislative assembly on Thursday. "The house expresses its deep concern on the manner in which the impending delimitation exercise is being planned, without transparent consultations with stakeholders," it read. The resolution is in line with Reddy's statement at the Joint Action Committee (JAC) meeting hosted by Tamil Nadu CM M K Stalin in Chennai on March 22. Reddy, who promised to move a resolution in the Telangana legislative assembly, had asked his peers from other southern states to pass similar resolutions in their legislative assemblies. "The House urges that any delimitation exercise should be carried out transparently and after extensive consultations with all state governments, all political parties and all stakeholders. The States which have effectively implemented the population control program pushed by the Centre, and consequently whose population share has come down, should not be penalised and population should not be the sole yardstick for delimitation," it states. The resolution noted that "the purpose and intent behind the 2nd, 84th and 87th Constitutional amendments aimed at national population stabilisation are yet to be achieved." "Hence, while continuing with the freeze on the number of Parliamentary seats, taking State as a unit, redrawing the boundaries of Parliamentary constituencies can be taken up, duly augmenting the SC and ST seats as per latest population and also providing for reservation for women," it states. The resolution also demanded an increase in the

seats in the state Assembly from 119 to 153, as promised in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014. Reddy noted that Jammu and Kashmir and Sikkim saw an increase in the number of seats in the legislative assembly based on the 2011 census. "The House is moving this legislation to expose the contradictory policies of the Centre," Reddy said. The CM said that the parties represented in Telangana's legislative assembly should be "united" in adopting the resolution. "The Centre wants to control the states using delimitation. If the delimitation exercise is carried out on the basis of population, the southern states' share in the national pool will drop from 24 percent to 19 percent," Reddy said. In the meeting convened in Chennai, it was decided that the next Joint Action Committee meeting will be held in Hyderabad. Telangana's opposition party, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), had supported this move. Bharatiya Janata Party, which is in opposition in the state, stayed away from the meeting.

## Upset over personal issues, doctor kills self by jumping in front of running train

Hyderabad: Upset over personal problems, a doctor allegedly died by suicide on the railway tracks between Cavalry Barracks and Bolarum railway station late on Wednesday. The victim was identified as Purohit Kishore Prakashmal (34), a resident of Pradhanampuri Colony in Kapra, who was working as doctor at the Basthi Dawakhana in Alwal. The Government Railway Police have booked a case and investigating. The family raised no suspicion in the death. Hyderabad: Upset over personal problems, a doctor allegedly died by suicide on the railway tracks between Cavalry Barracks and Bolarum railway station late on Wednesday. The victim was identified as Purohit Kishore Prakashmal (34), a resident of Pradhanampuri Colony in Kapra, who was working as doctor at the Basthi Dawakhana in Alwal. Police said Kishore Prakashmal was upset over his personal issues for the

## AI Days 2025 to be held on April 12 & 13



Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): AI Days 2025, the second edition of the flagship AI conference organised by Viswam.AI (IIIT Hyderabad and swecha.org), will be held on April 12 & 13 in Hyderabad. Building on the success of AI Days-2024, the conference will have technology leaders and AI enablers deliberating on experiences, insights and case studies that will help advance AI innovation focuses on solving challenges specific to India

Babu, Minister for IT, Electronics & Communications, Government of Telangana, and key government officials, including Jayesh Ranjan IAS, Special Chief Secretary, Department of ITE&C Key conference speakers include: Soumith Chintala, Co-Founder of PyTorch; Sriniraju, Chairman, iLabs Capital; Renata Avila, CEO, Open Knowledge Foundation; Rohit Chennamaneni, Co-Founder, Darwinbox; Chaitanya Chokkareddy, CTO, Ozontel; Tarun Dua, Founder E2E networks; Abhishek Upperal, Founder & CEO - Soket AI Labs; Anoop Kunchukuttan, co-lead of AI4Bharath; Prof CV Jawahar, dean IIIT Hyderabad. Apart from several Technology Leaders from organizations such as Microsoft, Meta, Micron, Darwinbox and E2E Networks, and about 25+ CXOs. (NSS)

## TGSRTC to operate buses to RGIC Stadium

Hyderabad: The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) Greater Hyderabad Zone will operate nearly 60 special buses to the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Uppal from various parts of the city for the ongoing IPL T20 cricket matches. These special RTC buses for cricket fans will be available between 6 pm and 11:30 pm on all the match days, i.e., March 27, April 6, 12, 23 and May 5, 10, 20 and 21.

# Indian Chronicle

English Daily

## AAP's budget vision

THE Punjab Government's Rs 2.36-lakh crore budget for 2025-26 reflects its commitment to addressing the state's most pressing challenges — drug abuse and industrial stagnation. However, these reforms unfold against a backdrop of mounting financial distress, raising concerns about Punjab's ability to sustain them. A significant

Rs 5,598 crore allocation to healthcare, which includes the first-ever drug census, signals a proactive stance in the state's fight against substance abuse. This aligns with Punjab's 'Yudh Nashian Virudh' (war against drugs) campaign, which has made strides in tackling the crisis. In the industrial sector, Rs 250 crore in incentives and a Rs 200-crore relief package for struggling industrialists attempt to revive growth. These moves build on the Punjab Industrial and Business Development Policy 2022, designed to attract investment and stabilise the economy.

Yet, Punjab's fiscal health tells a different story. The state is projected to borrow Rs 49,900 crore this year, pushing its outstanding debt to Rs 3.96 lakh crore. Alarmingly, Rs 24,995 crore — over 10 per cent of the budget — will be spent just on interest payments, leaving little fiscal space for development. Even with Rs 27,650 crore projected from GST and Rs 7,000 crore from stamp duty, revenue generation remains a major challenge. Meanwhile, the Rs 1,000 monthly grant for women, a key AAP poll promise, is conspicuously absent, raising concerns about electoral accountability.

The NITI Aayog's Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2022-23, released in January, underscores Punjab's economic struggles, ranking it last among 18 major states due to poor revenue mobilisation, high non-development expenditure and excessive debt-servicing. While the government blames previous regimes, its own reliance on loans and declining capital expenditure raise doubts about long-term sustainability.

## Will Stand by the Underprivileged Kuna Srisailam Goud



"In Shapur Nagar, within the Quthbullapur constituency, former MLA and senior Congress leader Kuna Srisailam Goud interacted with local residents as part of his daily outreach program at his residence. He listened to their concerns and grievances. "Later, he received several invitations and petitions and responded positively to them. "Speaking on this occasion, Kuna Srisailam Goud stated: "He assured that he would work towards resolving the issues faced by the people of the constituency. "He emphasized that the Congress government is committed to supporting marginalized and weaker sections of society. "He expressed his aspiration to see the overall development of the constituency. "The event was attended by local residents, leaders of welfare organizations, youth leaders, public representatives, party workers, and supporters.

## Book presentation to COAS: Honouring Military Leadership and Soldiering Spirit

Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): In a significant moment celebrating military leadership, resilience and the spirit of soldiering, General Upendra Dwivedi, PVSM, AVSM, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), was presented with two distinguished books: "Shooting Straight" by Air Vice Marshal Arjun Subramaniam (Retd) and "The Army in Me" by Colonel Bhupinder Singh Chib. The event underscored the Indian Army's rich heritage and the invaluable experiences of its officers. "Shooting Straight" is a compelling biography of Lieutenant General Rostum K. Nanavatty, a distinguished officer renowned for his exemplary leadership and strategic acumen. The book provides deep insights into his contributions to military operations and his role in shaping modern military thought. His legacy continues to inspire military leaders and strategists.

"The Army in Me" is a personal memoir by Colonel Bhupinder Singh Chib that delves into the values, discipline, and experiences that define a soldier's life. It reinforces the message that the Indian Army is not just a career but a lifelong commitment to values greater than oneself. Speaking on the occasion, General Upendra Dwivedi appreciated the literary contributions, highlighting their significance in preserving the ethos of the armed forces. "These books are not just narratives; they are testaments to the indomitable spirit of our armed forces. They will serve as guiding beacons for future generations of warriors, instilling in them the principles of leadership, sacrifice, and dedication to duty." Both books convey the unwavering spirit of the armed forces and serve as invaluable additions to military literature, offering readers—both within and beyond the defence community—profound lessons on leadership, strategic thinking, and the soldier's commitment to the nation. The presentation aligns with the Indian Army's ongoing initiatives under the Year of Tech Absorption and the Decade of Transformation, reinforcing the commitment to continuous learning and evolution in modern warfare and military ethos. (NSS)



P. S. ASHOKAN "Indian-chronicle "Manthani "28-3-2025. "District Collector Koya Sriharsha emphasized that revenue officials should strictly manage their duties. On Wednesday, the District Collector extensively toured the Mandals of Manthani, Muttharam, and Kalva Srirampur. In Manthani Mandal, he inspected the Revenue Division Officer's office, ongoing construction of the new municipal

## Establishment of a Socialist State was Bhagat Singh's Dream



Employment Opportunities Must Be Provided for Unemployed Youth to Secure the Nation's Future" — Godha Venkatesh Yadav, AIYF Mandal President "On the occasion of the 94th birth anniversary of Bhagat Singh, the All India Youth Federation (AIYF) of Quthbullapur constituency paid floral tributes to his statue at Jagathgirutta Last Bus Stop. "Speaking at the event, which was presided over by Godha Venkatesh Yadav, CPI state leader Esu Ratnam highlighted that Bhagat Singh sacrificed his life for the establishment of an egalitarian society and a socialist state. He stressed that present-day central and state governments are failing to take strict action against drug abuse, which is leading the youth astray. He urged the government to create awareness and provide employment opportunities to prevent young people from being misled, ensuring they contribute to the nation's development. "He further remarked

building, the model school, and the hostel facility in Dharyapur village of Muttharam Mandal, and the 10th-class exam center established there. "During his visit to the Manthani Revenue Division Officer's office, the Collector reviewed with officials and instructed them to take action to pay compensation for the structures in the lands collected under National Highway 163G in Lakkaram village of Muttharam Mandal. The Collector directed the relevant authorities to immediately send proposals for compensation for bore wells, trees, and other constructions to the National Highways Project Director and ensure timely approval. "He emphasized accelerating the process of correcting mistakes made during land purification in the division. The Collector also instructed the Water Resources Department officials to coordinate with Revenue officials and finalize the buffer zone limits of the Full Tank Level (FTL) of the lakes. He directed immediate recovery of encroachments on lake lands and asked for protective measures for government lands, including fencing them without delay. "

"The Collector also instructed officials to complete the construction of the new municipal building in Manthani within the designated time. He suggested taking up road development work for the municipal office and ensuring greenery on both sides of the road. The Collector visited the Dharyapur Model School hostel and checked the dormitories, dining hall, and kitchen, asking about the meals being provided to the children. He also inspected the 10th-class exam center set up at the school. "During his visit to the Muttharam Mandal Tahsildar office, the Collector instructed officials to expedite pending land acquisition tasks and resolve online applications promptly. Later, the Collector visited government lands in Kalva Srirampur Mandal's headquarters and directed the Tahsildar to take immediate action to evict encroachers and recover the land for the government. "The District Collector was accompanied by Manthani Revenue Division Officer Suresh, Municipal Commissioner Manohar, Manthani Tahsildar Giri, Muttharam MPDO Suresh, MPO Govardhan, Kalva Srirampur Tahsildar Jagadeeshwar Rao, and other relevant officials during this tour.

## Iftar dinner in Sriramnagar



PAC Chairman Gandhi was the chief guest "Serilingampalli March 27 Indian Chronicle "Senior Congress party leaders Sheikh Chand Pasha hosted an Iftar dinner in Sriramnagar Colony, Kondapur Division, to celebrate the festival of Ramzan. Serilingampalli MLA PAC Chairman Arikepudi Gandhi, Sriramnagar association members, colony residents and others participated in this dinner.

## MRCB Services are Appreciated.

"Chairman T. Satyanarayana Rao "Serilingampalli "Indian Chronicle march 27 "MRCB services in Chandanagar are very close to the public. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman T. Satyanarayana Rao said that the quality of the food is available to us and that consumers will be healthy if they eat for the right time. In the meantime, all those who are getting sick of junk food in the meantime, my suggestion to take nutritious food at



the right time and maintain health, said in a statement.



On 27.03.2025 at 14:45 hours, AO Sri S. Surender Reddy, AE, TGSPDCL, Jeedimetla Division, ACB, City Range Unit-2, was officially inspecting and estimating the work for "shifting the 11KV line and laying a cable to the complainant's building. "During this process, the accused officer was found to be performing his public duty properly and honestly. However, the ACB officials seized the bribe amount from the AO. A chemical test conducted on the fingers of the AO's right hand and the contact portion of his trousers' right front pocket tested positive. "AO Sri S. Surender Reddy, AE, TGSPDCL, Jeedimetla Division, was arrested and produced before the Hon'ble Principal Special Judge for SPE & ACB cases at the Nampally Court, Hyderabad. The case is currently under investigation.

## Kompally Municipality, Congress Party in-charge of Quthbullapur Constituency, Kolan Hanumanth Reddy



"initiated the construction of a CC road from Jayabheri Park Balaji Heights Apartment to Amar Teja Apartment, with an estimated municipal fund of ₹27 lakh."

"In this program, Kompally Town Congress Party President Bairi Prashanth Goud, former Sarpanch Jami Devender, former Upa Sarpanch Annaram Gopal Reddy, senior Congress leaders Adireddy Mohan Reddy, District Labor Cell President Sudarshan Reddy, Kavali Gopal (former ward member), Women's Congress President Madhavi Gopal Reddy, former co-option member Shaik Ibrahim, along with Ashok Reddy, Poornachandar Rao, Upendra Reddy, Anji Mudiraj, Naveen Mudiraj, and local residents like Gorre Venkat Reddy, Prashanth Reddy, Dayakar Gupta, and others participated.

## TEDxGITAM Hyderabad-2025 hosted



Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): The Directorate of Student Life at GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, successfully hosted TEDxGITAMHyderabad-2025, an inspiring event that brought together some of the most distinguished thought leaders and change-makers from diverse fields on Thursday. The event featured an exceptional line up of speakers, who shared profound insights on leadership, education, governance, media, economics, and emotional intelligence, sparking meaningful discussions among attendees.

M.M. Pallam Raju, former Cabinet minister for Human Resource Development and Minister of State for Defence, delivered a compelling address on the urgent need to strengthen early childhood interventions, enhance school education quality, and integrate moral values, ethics, and environmental consciousness into the curriculum. He emphasized the importance of bridging the gap between academia and industry, fostering proactive partnerships among government, financial institutions, and entrepreneurs, and significantly increasing research investments to position India as a leader in intellectual property and innovation.

Saurabh Shukla, Founder & Editor-in-Chief of News Mobile, a renowned investigative journalist and global fact-checker, shed light on the evolving landscape of journalism in the digital age. He urged the audience to prioritize factual accuracy over sensationalism and emphasized the role of historical awareness in shaping responsible journalism.

Atika Farooqui, celebrity anchor, journalist, poet and film critic emphasized the profound impact of cinema on society and the powerful messages it conveys. Citing various films as examples, she stated that purchasing a movie ticket is akin to casting a vote in its favour. She urged audi-

ences to watch and listen attentively, making informed choices while rejecting thoughtless and irresponsible films. She discussed the transformative power of media in shaping public perception and influencing societal change. She underscored the responsibility of media practitioners in ensuring authenticity and ethical reporting. Dr Rathin Roy, a distinguished economist and former advisor to the Thirteenth Finance Commission of India, provided valuable insights into economic transformation, sustainable growth and strategic policymaking to drive national progress. Subbu Parameswaran, Co-Founder & CEO of The Learning Curve Foundation, highlighted that true innovation lies in utilizing available resources effectively and is driven by a sincere intent to create meaningful change. He underscored that even small innovations can lead to significant impact and that adapting to limitations is at the heart of all innovation. The event was meticulously coordinated by the students and all the teams and students ensuring a seamless and impactful experience for speakers and attendees alike. TEDxGITAMHyderabad-2025 successfully provided a platform for visionary leaders to share groundbreaking ideas, inspire the next generation, and drive meaningful change across disciplines. (NSS)

## NIMS College of Allied Health Sciences principal appointed as member of NCHAP

Hyderabad: The principal for College of Allied Health Sciences, Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), Srinivasulu Siramdas has been appointed as a member of National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions (NCAHP). Srinivasulu has been serving as the radiation safety officer and principal, College of Allied Health Sciences, at NIMS for 33 years. He also serves as the chief executive officer of the Society of Indian Radiographers. On the occasion, he said the importance of allied health professions has greatly increased in today's diagnosis, treatment, and services. With the development of technology, the demand for professionals in this field has increased, and so have the training needs. Dr Beerappa, director, NIMS; Dr Liza Rajasekhar, dean; and Dr Shanthi Veer.



## 'Transparency & Accountability plays critical role in strengthening the buyers and developers relationship'

Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): CII Telangana organized Infrastructure and Real Estate Summit 2025 with the theme "Pioneering Urban Mobility and Sustainable Growth". Addressing the summit, Dr N Satyanarayana, IAS, Chairman, TGRERA, Telangana Real Estate Regulatory Authority said 70% of the people's savings are being invested in real estate and construction field and many a times it may be the only asset one purchases during their life. Majority of the buyers won't have any prior experience in purchasing the house/flat. Therefore, there is an absolute need to protect the trust between the buyers and sellers. Transparency and Accountability plays a critical role in strengthening this relationship. TGRERA Act brought many positive changes in the construction sector. It is mandatory that every project needs to be registered under TGRERA and designated separate account should be there. No one prefers to take long litigation route, but forced to take due to delay in the project execution or low quality. There is a need to allow buyers to take informed decisions. Both parties have rights and obligations and they need to be fulfilled well. TGRERA was playing a major role in resolving the issues between the buyers and developers. Speedy disposal mechanism by TGRERA is supporting many projects to continue the operations. C Shekar Reddy, Past Chairman, CII Telangana, National Vice Chairman – IGBC, CMD, CSR

Estates Ltd. said even though Union Government is popularizing 'One Nation - One Tax' policy at the ground level multiple taxes are being imposed. Labour cess is being charged on the project value not on the labour cost. As the tax burden is ultimately passes on to the consumer there is a need for Ease of doing business in construction and real estate sectors. Regulatory authority should be consulted before imposing the taxes. Increasing land cost and cost of construction are increasing the projects cost and there is a need to reduce the burden on the developers. Sivaprasad Reddy R, Chairman, CII Telangana, Managing Director, Rachamalla Forgings P Ltd said 65% of GCCs in the country located in the South India, especially in Bengaluru and Hyderabad. Hyderabad has always been a favourite destination for GCCs due to cost competitiveness. M Goutham Reddy, Vice Chairman, CII Telangana & Vice Chairman, Resustainability appreciated the Government of Telangana for its progressive policies and unwavering support in enabling industry-led growth. The Summit brought together industry leaders, policymakers, and thought leaders to explore and deliberate on cutting-edge solutions for urban mobility and sustainable growth. The Summit discussions focused on smart cities, green mobility, and eco-friendly urban solutions to pave the way for sustainable and inclusive urban development in Telangana. (NSS)

Manthani is affiliated with the Congress Party. He stated that it is the same organization that has a history of using politics in journalism for over 60 years, and this practice is still evident. Karunakara remarked that these organizations, who protect their interests by currying favor with those in power, are now attacking journalists who are standing up for their rights. "Certain leaders of the journalist organization, who fear the collapse of their monopolistic system in the Manthani Division, are now resorting to false propaganda through opposition parties, Karunakara alleged. Journalists from different mandals within the Manthani Division, fed up with the monopoly and dominance of press clubs, have been seeking alternative arrangements. These individuals, who fear the disruption of their monopolistic power, are now defaming those who are working towards change." He pointed out the hypocrisy of individuals who criticize the businesses of rural journalists while remaining silent on the businesses run by journalists who receive regular salaries. He questioned whether these critics would provide any employment alternatives to those journalists who work without salaries and make a living through journalism alone. "Karunakara emphasized that journalism and politics are not separate; journalists are always connected to political ideologies. Regardless of who is in power, it is the duty of journalists to report their news, and he rejected the claims made by some that the new press club is affiliated with the Congress Party. He expressed strong opposition to leaders within journalist organizations who seek to establish dominance under the guise of being journalists' welfare advocates." "As rural journalists are now organizing against the dominance of certain leaders, Karunakara warned those who are trying to use malicious propaganda to undermine the journalists' collective efforts that their day of reckoning is fast approaching.

## Kishan Reddy urges CM to stop sale of 400 acres land



Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy today wrote an open letter to CM Revanth Reddy and requested for the immediate withdrawal of the auction process of 400 acres of government land in Kancha Gachibowli village from Serilingampally mandal of Rangareddy district.

In a letter, he said the State government was intending to auction through the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC) in the name of mobilizing financial resources. "It is learned that the Telangana State Government has decided to auction 400 acres of government land in Survey No. 25(P) in Kancha Gachibowli village, Serilingampally mandal, Rangareddy district, through the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC). In the past, when you were the PCC president, you spoke against the sale of government lands keeping in mind the future generations and public interests. Let us not sell government lands to our relatives for survival. If we sell government lands, we will not have land to build anything for the needs of the people in the future, whether it is government hospitals, schools, or even cemeteries if we die," he said. He also said the 400 acres of the government land that the CM has decided to auction is adjacent to many flora, fauna, and lakes that are a source of biodiversity. It is home to 734 plant species, 220 bird species, including peacocks, migratory birds, spotted deer, four-horned deer, wild boars, mountain lions, Indian star tortoises, and many other naturally formed and very attractive rock formations, including Mushroom Rock, according to many prominent figures."

He said although the 400 acres of government land that you have decided to auction does not fall under the Forest department, this land surrounded by green trees and diverse species of life is a source of oxygen for the city. If such land is filled with concrete structures, there is a possibility that the water resources in the land will decrease, causing damage to the species concerned, and posing a major threat to the environment and the city. This damage that you are going to do to the environment is irreparable.

It is especially worrying that the Indian star tortoises and their habitats within this land are under threat. Under Schedule IV of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, the Indian star tortoises come under the protected species list. Under this act, along with the protection of the species concerned, their habitats should also be protected. These star tortoises have been included in the vulnerable list of the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) since 2016. That is, it refers to the endangered species. Moreover, these star tortoises have also been included in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) since 2019. This means that these species have also been provided with the highest level of protection from international trade.

Therefore, under the provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, the government should also consider the possibility of declaring the 400 acres of land that you have now decided to auction and the 800 acres of land adjacent to it as a national park. Areas like Jubilee Hills, Banjara Hills, and Hi-Tech City, which once resembled forests and hills in the city, have become like a concrete jungle due to urbanization and have lost their natural appearance. They have filled the entire area with concrete structures without leaving a single tree, stump or hill in the area. As if this were not enough, now in the name of financial resources, even lands that are part of ecological diversity are being converted into concrete forests. This is unacceptable to anyone, including the people living locally, students studying at the Hyderabad Central University next to that land, and environmental lovers," Reddy said. He claimed that the greenery in the state capital city of Hyderabad was completely decreasing and vacant spaces were disappearing for many reasons. He said that Playgrounds, walking tracks, parks and ecological spaces in the city were becoming alienated while noting that it is the responsibility of all to protect these places at least for future generations. He requested the CM to adhere to his previous views on the sale of the government lands and to protect the environment and biodiversity, including the naturally formed hills, without causing any damage, and to immediately stop the auction process of this 400 acres of government lands. (NSS)

## KTR slams Revanth Reddy in explosive Assembly showdown

Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): KTR's speech was marked by a direct and unrelenting attack on Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, accusing him of personal hypocrisy and political incompetence. "Does only Revanth have a family? He should know his own history before preaching morals," KTR thundered, questioning Revanth's moral authority to criticize others. He accused the Chief Minister of dragging his family, including minor children, into political mudslinging, asking, "Wasn't it Congress leaders who abused our family's children? Wasn't it the Chief Minister who used filthy language against our minors?" KTR challenged Revanth's personal conduct, stating, "When you stuck baseless allegations on us and spoke as you pleased about relationships, didn't morals come to your mind then?"

KTR dismissed Revanth's leadership style, saying, "Such impatience doesn't suit a Chief Minister. Why this anger and despair in the CM is beyond comprehension. There's a stranger hiding within the Chief Minister." He portrayed Revanth as a political liability, asserting, "Wherever Revanth goes, defeat follows." Citing Revanth's campaign efforts in other states' elections and the recent MLC polls, KTR remarked, "The results are clear to the public. The more days Revanth speaks, the better—after hearing him, no one will vote for Congress for another 20 years." He also labelled Revanth as "Rifle Reddy," alleging, "Revanth Reddy is the one who aimed a gun at Telangana," contrasting him with KCR, whom he called "undoubtedly the father of the Telangana nation." KTR accused Revanth of wiping out veteran Congress leaders to grab power, stating, "He's holding victory celebrations for failed governance." He added, "We don't care what the Chief Minister thinks or does. He thinks power and position are permanent, but nothing is permanent. He can't send anyone to jail—only courts can."

KTR turned his focus to the financial mismanagement of Revanth Reddy's government, questioning the stark contradictions in their fiscal narrative. "Who will believe this? They say there's no debt outside, claiming bankruptcy, but here they thump their chests saying they've taken a debt of 1.58 lakh crores. Is the Ramu speaking outside correct, or the Remo speaking in the Assembly correct? Revanth

Reddy must clarify," he demanded. He challenged the government's revenue claims, stating, "They boasted investments poured in like a flood at Davos and claimed welfare is outstanding. Then why did the Chief Minister say the state's revenue dropped by 71,000 crores? He must explain." KTR highlighted the lack of funds for critical commitments, saying, "There are no funds for employees' DA, no funds to implement six guarantees, no funds for a tola of gold." Yet, he pointed out lavish spending elsewhere: "The Chief Minister talks of tenders worth 20,000 crores for water works, 4,400 crores for Kodangal lift irrigation, and 5,000 crores for a 10-lane road in the Future City. They talk of beautifying the Musi with 1.5 lakh crores. Where are these funds coming from?" He accused Revanth of sabotaging farmers' welfare in the past, stating, "As PCC president, it was Revanth Reddy who stopped Rythu Bandhu. He wrote to the Election Commission, halted 7,600 crores of funds, and spread false propaganda against us." KTR also questioned the CAG figures, saying, "The Chief Minister must clarify whether his calculations are wrong or CAG's are. According to CAG, the government pays 2,750 crores per month, including principal and interest." KTR slammed the government's handling of key projects, saying, "Ministers call Kaleshwaram 'Koolleshwaram,' but it's not just Medigadda—it includes three barrages, 19 reservoirs, 21 pump houses, and thousands of kilometers of canals. If Kaleshwaram collapsed, where did Kondapochamma Sagar, Mallanna Sagar, and others come from?" He criticized the cancellation of Hyderabad Metro and Pharma City, asking, "What happened in Lagacharla in Revanth's Kodangal? They say pharma means poison, then why would anyone want a factory in their village?" KTR also criticized the BC Declaration, stating, "They promised 20,000 crores, but two budgets haven't crossed 1,000 crores. Revise estimates and allocate funds for SCs, STs, BCs, and minorities as promised." He concluded, "There's as much democratic spirit in public governance as ghee in a bitter gourd. KCR is the father of Telangana, and Revanth Reddy is its foul-mouthed father," ending with "Jai Telangana." (NSS)

## CONGRESS LEADERS AND WORKERS

### CELEBRATED AVULA RAJIREDDY BIRTH DAY



In the Medak district veldurthy centre Congress Party leader and workers celebrated Narsapur Congress party incharge avula rajireddy birth day special they are cutting heavy cake & donating fruites offer that they were going to center of narsapur becuse participated blood dona-



tion camp. In this program participated Congress Mandal president Mahesh reddy, Congress senior leaders Narendra reddy, Narasimha Reddy, Sudhakar goud, Anjaneyulu amuda, nalacheruvu shekagoud, kista goud, kukunoor venkat reddy and party workers attended.

## I will quit politics if 100% crop loan waiver is done, vows KTR



CM Revanth Reddy was so confused? He accused the CM of constantly criticizing the BRS party while ignoring the promises made. He said even after a year-and-a-half of coming to power, 100% farmer loan waiver had not been done in a single village. KTR challenged CM Revanth Reddy that if there is 100% loan waiver in any village, he would stay away from politics forever. (NSS)

### Upset over personal issues, doctor kills self by jumping in front of running train

Hyderabad: Upset over personal issues, doctor kills self by jumping in front of running train. Hyderabad: Upset over personal problems, a doctor allegedly died by suicide on the railway tracks between Cavalry Barracks and Bolaram railway station late on Wednesday.

The victim was identified as Purohit Kishore Prakashmal (34), a resident of Pradhanapuri Colony in Kapra, who was working as doctor at the Basthi Dawakhana in Alwal.

Police said Kishore Prakashmal was upset over his personal issues for the past some days. On Wednesday, he ended his life by jumping in front of a running train on the down main line between Cavalry Barracks and Bolaram railway station. On being alerted by the loco pilot of the train, the railway police reached the spot and shifted the remains to the Gandhi Hospital.

The Government Railway Police have booked a case and are investigating. The family raised no suspicion in the death.

## Outcome of Kaleshwaram project is a big zero : CM Revanth

Hyderabad, March 27 (NSS): Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that the previous BRS government constructed the Kaleshwaram project only for commissions and that the outcome of the Rs 1 lakh crore project is a 'big zero.' Speaking in the Assembly on Thursday, Revanth Reddy said the Congress government had brought water to Mallanna Sagar, Ranganayaka Sagar and Kondapochamma Sagar from Sripada Yellampally and Sriram Sagar projects. "The opposition is making extreme comments on land acquisition in Lagacharla. The BRS government assaulted locals during land acquisition at Etigadda Kishatapur and Vemula Ghat. Congress held a dharna for more compensation to the displaced and not against land acquisition. The compensation for Mallanna Sagar victims was increased only after the Congress struggle," he pointed out. "Is it not true that water lifted to KCR's farmhouse from Kondapochamma Sagar reservoir? Is it not true that Harish Rao owned a farmhouse near Ranganayaka Sagar? Is BRS ready for an investigation into this? If ready, we will constitute a Fact-Finding Committee. Should we show evidence that the canals around the farmhouse were taken away? Why are you still lying," Revanth Reddy said.

The Chief Minister said the State government is giving Rs. 20 lakhs to the victims of the land acquisition in Lagacharla and Rs. 5 lakhs for the construction of Indiramma's house. "Isn't it true that your former MLA instigated people to kill the officials to prevent the land acquisition in Lagacharla? You encouraged the killing of officials

and talked about land acquisition," he said. The Chief Minister further stated that the BRS government had increased the Pranahita - Chevella project estimation from Rs. 36,000 crores to Rs. 1.50 lakh crores in the name of redesign. By the time BRS left power, the last government paid bills of Rs. 1 lakh thousand crores for the Kaleshwaram project. The commission has given a report that the BRS committed fraud. We will table that report in the next assembly session. The BRS government acquired lands forcefully, he said. Kamareddy people gave a befitting mandate to KCR in the Assembly elections. Why are you still fooling around even after people are rejected," he said. Should we build Musi projects or not, should we build a metro rail or a regional ring road? Should we develop it or not?" Revanth Reddy questioned. Speaking about the farm loan waiver, the Chief Minister said the BRS government could waive only Rs. 16,143 crores in 4 years and after deducting interest, the last government waived off only Rs. 13,514 crores in the first five years. "After coming to power for the second time, the BRS government did not spend even a single rupee on a farm loan waiver for four years. In the last year, only Rs. 11,909 crores of 21,35,557 farmers loans waived off. In the 10 year rule, the BRS government waived only Rs. 16,908 crores," he disclosed. The Chief Minister said the State government has waived Rs. 20,616.89 crores relieving 25,35,964 farmers from debt burden in 10 months. He said the State government paid a bonus of 11,061 crore to the farmers who harvested fine rice varieties.

## This UoH alumnus' unique initiative, Flybrary, impresses Civil Aviation Minister



GNS News Agency, March 27

Hyderabad: A unique initiative of a University of Hyderabad (UoH) alumnus has caught the attention of Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu. Sujit Mahapatra, who completed his Masters in English from the UoH, has set up Flybrary, India's first 'Take a book library', at the Bhubaneswar airport.

An initiative of his Bakul Foundation, in partnership with the Airports Authority of India, Flybrary inspires passengers flying from the Bhubaneswar airport to browse through books at the airport, and also take it if they like the book and want to finish reading it. They can return it on their next visit to the airport, or to the Bakul Foundation.

"This is a first-of-its-kind initiative in India, where passengers can take the book to read for free without having to submit anything. There are other airports in India now that have set up libraries such as Varanasi, Pune and Bengaluru (in their lounge) but they do not allow books to be taken," says Mahapatra, the founder of Bakul. Sharing about this initiative on his X handle, Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu wrote: "I am truly impressed by how this thoughtful initiative not only elevates the travel experience but also transforms

waiting time into a delightful opportunity for both learning and leisure. Our airports today are more than just transit hubs. I appreciate this initiative taken by Bhubaneswar Airport and Bakul Foundation, which promotes ease of flying in the country."

Appreciation has also come in from others, including Andrew Fleming, the British Deputy High Commissioner for East and North East. There are two shelves, one each at the Departure and the Arrivals, and both are unmanned. The one at the Departure comes just after crossing security before one moves into different directions and the other at the Arrivals is just before one picks up the baggage from the belts. So both are ideally placed. The first donor for the Flybrary was Sunitha Krishnan, well-known activist based in Hyderabad. Seeing a post on the initiative on Facebook, she sent a carton of her favourite Mills and Boons to Bakul, shares Mahapatra.

There are books in English, Hindi and Odia though most are in English. There are more Hindi books at the Arrivals and more Odia books near the Departure as Odias, particularly senior citizens travelling from Odisha might want to read in their mother tongue while those visiting Odisha might prefer to read in Hindi. Besides, the Flybrary has coffee table books, magazines like National Geographic, novels, self-help and motivation and children's books. Every day, a Bakul volunteer takes stock of the books and restocks them. About 300 books and magazines are kept on the shelves daily. The Bakul Foundation won the Award for the Most Innovative Library at the India Reading Olympiad Awards in 2023 at the Hyderabad Literature Festival. The big challenge for Mahapatra now is to keep the shelves filled as these are all books that had been donated to Bakul. The text in the stand next to the bookshelf says, 'It's ok if you cannot return', that's because, Mahapatra says, they wanted to ensure that people do not have any inhibitions in carrying books. "But now, we are seriously thinking of changing the text to make people more responsible and say that this can continue as long as they keep giving books," he says, hoping that the time comes soon when there is a circularity and the books given at the airport come close to the books being taken away.

## AI in beyond CSE: Why every field needs AI-savvy professionals

GNS News Agency, March 27

The yearly scramble to secure Engineering seats at prestigious universities has begun. The most sought-after courses are coveted by students and, more importantly, their aspirational parents. It should come as no surprise that B.E./B. Tech. programmes in Computer Science, particularly those with specialisations in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and, to a lesser extent, data, and analytics, are popular this season. Toppers who made it to CSE-AI are announced by coaching centers. Other Engineering specialities, such as Mechanical, Civil, Electrical, and Chemical, are also silently waiting in the background and are frequently disregarded. However, is this one-sided fixation on Computer Science warranted? Should only programmers be able to use AI? The answer is definitely no.

But let's take a look at the previous 20 to 25 years before continuing on this path. The dot-com boom sparked a craze for CSE and later IT programmes in Engineering. The less fortunate also have access to MCA and BCA. From the dot-com era to the present, the rush for CSE and Information Technology courses has continued, with software services companies becoming the go-to source for talent to satisfy their demand for youthful workers. The story has also turned several corners over the last 25 years. The current narrative unfolds as follows: In the 2000s, India was a comparatively less expensive source of IT services, and IT service providers were able to capitalise on the outsourcing trend. Now Indian tech firms moving up the value chain. Indian engineers are prepared to take advantage of the growing trend of generative AI. Along with their children's preference for this new trend, parents are also



scouring to find colleges that offer CSE with AI specialisation.

However, this is something that all parents who pay fees should consider. First, it is a fact that as demand for seat increases, the cost of each seat in this highly sought-after programme rises every week. Is it something that all parents can afford? Indeed, there are only a certain number of seats available for deserving students. This implies that a greater portion of the demand can only be met by management quota. Before taking up the decision, one should consider if this discipline is the right fit for them.

AI gives computing machines the training to think, learn, and make decisions like humans. But AI uses data and logic instead of emotions or instincts. At its core, AI is about teaching machines to recognise patterns, make predictions, and improve over time — in the same way, we learn from experience.

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD AT VJIM



Hyderabad: The city based B-School Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management (VJIM), hosted the 7th International Conference on Business Practices in Sustainable Marketing. The conference brought together eminent scholars, industry experts, academicians, and students to discuss and explore sustainable marketing practices that align with evolving global business dynamics. The Chief Guest Prof. B. J. Rao, Vice Chancellor, Hyderabad Central University, said this conference will provide networking opportunities for professionals and students, helping them engage with industry leaders and academicians working towards sustainable business practices.

Guest of Honor, Dr. Arelene Gonzales, Mariano Marcos State University, Philippines in her address said "As businesses increasingly recognize the importance of sustainability, this conference will provide valuable insights into how marketing strategies can be redefined to align with responsible and ethical practices. We are delighted to host this international conference and contribute to the discourse on sustainable marketing." In his keynote address the General Secretary, Vignana Jyothi, Mr. Kode Durga Prasad, said VJIM is at the forefront of promoting sustainability in business education, and this conference serves as a platform to exchange innovative ideas, share best practices,

and explore emerging trends in sustainable marketing strategies. Research scholars and industry practitioners will present their studies and insights, paving the way for meaningful collaborations and knowledge-sharing.

In his welcome speech the Director, VJIM, Dr. Bharat Bhushan Singh said the two-day conference will feature keynote addresses from renowned international and national speakers, panel discussions, paper presentations, and interactive sessions. The event aims to foster discussions on critical topics such as green marketing, ethical consumerism, corporate social responsibility (CSR), digital sustainability, and the role of technology in sustainable marketing. Dr. Rajiv R Thakur delivered the valedictory speech. The conference was attended by delegates from India and abroad and participants from academia and industry submitted their research contributions. The selected papers picked by jury will be published in reputed journals, providing wider academic recognition to the research work presented at the conference. Dean, VJIM, Dr. D. Ravinath, acted as a moderator for panel discussions on sustainability marketing practices. Dr. Vinith Dani and Dr B Amarnath Reddy acts as conveners for the conference. The VJIM faculty participated in the conference and presented their research papers.

## Scientists have discovered the oldest meteorite impact crater on Earth, in the very heart of the Pilbara region of Weste



GNS News Agency, March 27

We have discovered the oldest meteorite impact crater on Earth, in the very heart of the Pilbara region of Western Australia. The crater formed more than 3.5 billion years ago, making it the oldest known by more than a billion years. Our discovery is published today in Nature Communications. Curiously enough, the crater was exactly where we had hoped it would be, and its discovery supports a theory about the birth of Earth's first continents. The very first rocks

The oldest rocks on Earth formed more than 3 billion years ago, and are found in the cores of most modern continents. However, geologists still cannot agree how or why they formed. Nonetheless, there is agreement that these early continents were critical for many chemical and biological processes on Earth. Many geologists think these ancient rocks formed above hot plumes that rose from above Earth's molten metallic core, rather like wax in a lava lamp. Others maintain they were formed by plate tectonic processes similar to modern Earth, where rocks collide and push each other over and under. Although these two scenarios are very different, both are driven by the loss of heat from within the interior of our planet. We think rather differently.

A few years ago, we published a paper suggesting that the energy required to make continents in the Pilbara came from outside Earth, in the form of one or more collisions with meteorites many kilometres in diameter. As the impacts blasted up enormous volumes of material and melted the rocks around them, the mantle below produced thick "blobs" of volcanic material that evolved into continental crust. Our evidence then lay in the chemical composition of tiny crystals of the mineral zircon, about the size of sand grains. But to persuade other geologists, we needed more convincing evidence, preferably something people could see without needing a microscope. So, in May 2021, we began the long drive north from Perth for two weeks of fieldwork in the Pilbara, where we would meet up with our partners from the Geological Survey of Western Australia (GSWA) to hunt for the crater. But where to start? A serendipitous beginning

Our first target was an unusual layer of rocks known as the Antarctic Creek Member, which crops out on the flanks of a dome some 20 kilometres in diameter. The Antarctic Creek Member is only 20 metres or so in thickness, and mostly comprises sedimentary rocks that are sand-

wiched between several kilometres of dark, basaltic lava. However, it also contains spherules — droplets formed from molten rock thrown up during an impact. But these drops could have travelled across the globe from a giant impact anywhere on Earth, most likely from a crater that has now been destroyed. After consulting the GSWA maps and aerial photography, we located an area in the centre of the Pilbara along a dusty track to begin our search. We parked the offroad vehicles and headed our separate ways across the outcrops, more in hope than expectation, agreeing to meet an hour later to discuss what we'd found and grab a bite to eat. Remarkably, when we returned to the vehicle, we all thought we'd found the same thing: shatter cones. Shatter cones are beautiful, delicate branching structures, not dissimilar to a badminton shuttlecock. They are the only feature of shock visible to the naked eye, and in nature can only form following a meteorite impact. Little more than an hour into our search, we had found precisely what we were looking for. We had literally opened the doors of our 4WDs and stepped onto the floor of a huge, ancient impact crater. Frustratingly, after taking some photographs and grabbing a few samples, we had to move on to other sites, but we determined to return as soon as possible. Most importantly, we needed to know how old the shatter cones were. Had we discovered the oldest known crater on Earth? With some laboratory research under our belts, we returned to the site in May 2024 to spend ten days examining the evidence in more detail.

Shatter cones were everywhere, developed throughout most of the Antarctic Creek Member, which we traced for several hundred metres into the rolling hills of the Pilbara. Our observations showed that above the layer with the shatter cones was a thick layer of basalt with no evidence of impact shock. This meant the impact had to be the same age as the Antarctic Member rocks, which we know are 3.5 billion years old. We had our age, and the record for the oldest impact crater on Earth. Perhaps our ideas regarding the ultimate origin of the continents were not so mad, as many told us.

Serenity is a marvellous thing. As far as we knew, other than the Traditional Owners, the Nyamal people, no geologist had laid eyes on these stunning features since they formed. Like some others before us, we had argued that meteorite impacts played a fundamental role in the geological history of our planet, as they clearly had on our cratered Moon and on other planets, moons and asteroids. Now we and others have the chance to test these ideas based on hard evidence. Who knows how many ancient craters lay undiscovered in the ancient cores of other continents? Finding and studying them will transform our understanding of the early Earth and the role of giant impacts, not only in the formation of the landmasses on which we all live, but in the origins of life itself. Tim Johnson is a field and metamorphic geologist with expertise in phase equilibria and the generation, segregation and migration of melt in the lithosphere. Professor Chris Kirkland is leader of the Timescales of Mineral Systems at Curtin University. Jonas Kaempf is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Curtin Frontier Institute for Geoscience Solutions (C-FIGS). This article is republished from The Conversation.

## London-based Malayali photographer Keerthana Kunnath on capturing the "unspeakable"

GNS News Agency, March 27

London-based photographer Keerthana Kunnath often uses the term art when referring to her photos dealing with nuanced themes, such as gender, sexuality, womanhood and mental health. Originally from Bepore in Kozhikode, Kerala, the 29-year-old shutterbug aims to spark conversations about themes that "people often shy away from". Her last photo series, Not What You Saw, portrays South Indian women bodybuilders flexing their muscles garbed in traditional Kerala attire, like a kasavu mundu (handloom garment with zari border) wrapped around their waist and thighs or a checkered fabric skirt inspired by fishermen. These photographs question outdated beauty standards and gender stereotypes.

The series has earned Keerthana, The Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain's International Photography Exhibition Awards in the Under 30s category in February, 2025. "I wanted to portray these girls as confident. They are not just challenging the ideals of beauty, but they also dare to go to these competitions wearing bikinis and pose in front of so many people," says Keerthana over a phone call from Mumbai.

"I was researching on kalaripayattu (martial art from Kerala), when I stumbled upon this group of body-builder girls," says Keerthana who started working on this series in early 2024. "Everyone had seen body builders in typical gym clothes but they haven't seen an Indian body builder in clothes which are inspired from our culture. My friend Elton John, a Thiruvananthapuram-based stylist and I, didn't want to make it just the saree, we wanted something fun and fashionable with some cultural inspiration in mind." Keerthana shot the models using an old analogue medium format camera, Mamiya 67, at locations spread across different parts of Kerala and Karnataka. She says, "I just decided to do this as a personal project. I didn't even share it with an editor for around six months after shooting it. Last summer I shot a few more pictures and I am still working on this series. I never had an end goal in mind."

Additionally, Keerthana's works were recently featured in the British rom-com Picture This, released in March 2025, as those shot by the protagonist Pia (played by Simone Ashley). "They wanted to use my archives and also shoot the images the character was shooting which would go in the film," says Keerthana, who was approached by the makers of the film after they stumbled upon her Instagram profile.

Also read | 'Picture This' movie review: Simone Ashley and Hero Fiennes Tiffin fail to make this romantic comedy work. The photographer worked as a jewellery designer for a few months after graduating in Fashion and Lifestyle Accessory Design from the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Bengaluru in 2017. She was also the creative head of a jewellery brand in New Delhi for almost four years. That was where she discovered her passion for photography in 2017. "I was having a full-time job and was freelancing. But back then I wanted to be a fashion photographer, and came across this Master's course in London," says Keerthana, who studied Fashion Photography at the London College of Fashion, University of the Arts from 2020 to 2021.

One of her first photo series — a project for her Mas-



ters, The Kaleidoscopic Self, exploring the duality of humans and gods, in the context of religion and identity, earned her the International Photography Award by the British Photography Journal in 2022. Following her post-graduation, she landed her first assignment with Nike. "It was a big confidence boost for me as well as for my family, seeing how my work could do as a campaign as well."

Gradually, Keerthana's parents could fathom the type of conversations she was trying to start. "They got an idea of the work I was trying to do, even with themes like gender and sexuality and how society is regressive and not open to those who are different," she says. "Growing up, I didn't know what being queer meant. When I studied at NIFT, I had gay friends. I realised that it's a huge spectrum of people and a way of being. It's a completely different idea than what I had and it was not because they didn't exist in our society, but because we weren't exposed to them," says Keerthana.

"When I went to London, I had lesbian friends who were married and had kids together. That was a different experience for me, to see how normal it is, especially with people avoiding those conversations in India," says she. Her duo exhibition with artist Elliott Nicole J Waller, Eyedentity, in Osnabrück, Germany in 2024, explored the "artistic presentation of queer identities". Eyedentity, a duo exhibition by Keerthana with artist Elliott Nicole J Waller in Osnabrück, Germany, last year | Photo Credit: Evelyn Leis

Mental health is a recurring theme in Keerthana's artworks. She says, "I am someone who struggles with mental health. It was taboo to say it out loud." In London, she started relating to the works of her contemporaries, identifying with their inner turmoil. She found it necessary to address these issues through her work. "It was such an unlearning experience," says the photographer.

While a picture might be open to different interpretations, people often reach out to Keerthana saying that they comprehend what her photos are conveying and express their pleasure over her revealing it, she says. "As an artist or a photographer, you don't know what the other person gauges from your work. But at least you try and explore things." Keerthana's award-winning photos are currently on display at the Fujifilm House of Photography, London till April 3. They also will be showcased at the Saatchi Gallery in London as part of the Royal Photographic Society International Photographic Exhibition from August 5 to September 16.

# White House mistakenly shares Yemen war plans with a journalist at The Atlantic



WASHINGTON, GNS News Agency, March 27, Top Trump administration officials mistakenly disclosed war plans in a messaging group that included a journalist shortly before the U.S. attacked Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis, the White House said on Monday, following a first-hand account by The Atlantic. Democratic lawmakers swiftly blasted the misstep, saying it was a breach of U.S. national security and a violation of law that must be investigated by Congress.

Get weekly news and analysis on U.S. politics and how it matters to the world with the Reuters Politics U.S. newsletter. Sign up here. The Atlantic's editor-in-chief Jeffrey Goldberg said in a report on Monday that he was unexpectedly invited on March 13 to an encrypted chat group on the Signal messaging app called the "Houthi PC small group." In the group, national security adviser Mike Waltz tasked his deputy Alex Wong with setting up a "tiger team" to coordinate U.S. action against the Houthis. National Security Council spokesperson Brian Hughes said the chat group appeared to be authentic. U.S. President Donald Trump launched an ongoing campaign of large-scale military strikes against Yemen's Houthis on March 15 over the group's attacks against Red Sea shipping, and he warned Iran, the Houthis' main backer, that it needed to immediately halt support for the group. Hours before those attacks started, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth posted operational details about the plan in the messaging group, "including information about targets, weapons the U.S. would be deploying, and attack sequencing," Goldberg said. His report omitted the details but Goldberg termed it a "shockingly reckless" use of a Signal chat.

Accounts that appeared to represent Vice President JD Vance, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, CIA Director John Ratcliffe, Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, White House chief of staff Susie Wiles, and senior National Security Council officials were assembled in the chat group, Goldberg wrote. Joe Kent, Trump's nominee for National Counterterrorism Center director, was apparently on the Signal chain despite not yet being Senate-confirmed.

Trump told reporters at the White House that he was unaware of the incident. "I don't know anything about it. I'm not a big fan of The Atlantic," Trump said. A White House official said later that an investigation was under way and Trump had been briefed on it. The NSC's Hughes said in a statement: "At this time, the message thread that was reported appears to be authentic, and we are reviewing how an inadvertent number was added to the chain." "The thread is a demonstration of the deep and thoughtful policy coordination between senior officials. The ongoing success of the Houthi operation demonstrates that there were no threats to our servicemembers or our national security," Hegseth denied sharing war plans in the group chat. "Nobody was texting war plans, and that's all I have to say about that," he told reporters while on an official trip to Hawaii on

Monday. Goldberg responded to Hegseth's denial in an interview on CNN late on Monday by saying, "No, that's a lie. He was texting war plans."

According to screenshots of the chat reported by The Atlantic, officials in the group debated whether the U.S. should carry out the strikes, and at one point Vance appeared to question whether U.S. allies in Europe, more exposed to shipping disruption in the region, deserved U.S. help. Item 1 of 3 U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth stands by U.S. President Donald Trump, in the Oval Office at the White House, in Washington, D.C., U.S., A person identified as Hegseth replied: "VP: I fully share your loathing of European free-loading. It's PATHETIC."

The Atlantic reported that the person identified as Vance also raised concerns about the timing of the strikes, and said there was a strong argument in favor of delaying them by a month. "I am not sure the president is aware how inconsistent this is with his message on Europe right now. There's a further risk that we see a moderate to severe spike in oil prices," the account wrote, before saying he was willing to support the group's consensus. Yemen, Houthi-ally Iran and the European Union's diplomatic service did not immediately respond to requests for comment from Reuters. Under U.S. law, it can be a crime to mishandle, misuse or abuse classified information, though it is unclear whether those provisions might have been breached in this case.

Messages that The Atlantic report said were set by Waltz to disappear from the Signal app after a period of time also raise questions about possible violations of federal record-keeping laws. As part of a Trump administration effort to chase down leaks by officials to journalists unrelated to the Signal group, Gabbard posted on X on March 14 that any "unauthorized release of classified information is a violation of the law and will be treated as such." On Tuesday, Gabbard is due to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee on worldwide threats to the United States.

Created by the entrepreneur Moxie Marlinspike, Signal has gone from an exotic messaging app used by privacy-conscious dissidents to the unofficial whisper network of Washington officialdom. Signal does not use U.S. government encryption and is not hosted on government servers. Democratic lawmakers called the use of the Signal group illegal and demanded an investigation. "This is one of the most stunning breaches of military intelligence that I have read about in a very, very long time," Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said, adding that he would ask Majority Leader John Thune to investigate. "We're just finding out about it. But obviously, we've got to run it to ground and figure out what went on there. We'll have a plan," said Thune, a Republican from South Dakota. There was no immediate suggestion from the White House that the breach would lead to any staffing changes.

"President Trump continues to have the utmost confidence in his national security team, including national security adviser Mike Waltz," White House spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt told Reuters. Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren said on X the use of Signal to discuss highly sensitive national security issues was "blatantly illegal and dangerous beyond belief." "Every single one of the government officials on this text chain have now committed a crime — even if accidentally — that would normally involve a jail sentence," Democratic Senator Chris Coons said on X. Reporting by Michael Martina, Steve Holland, Andrea Shalal, Jasper Ward, Patricia Zengerle, David Brunstrom, David Morgan, Raphael Satter, Richard Cowan and Ryan Patrick Jones; Editing by Don Durfee, Mary Milliken, Howard Goller and Jamie Freed

# Ukraine, US to meet in Riyadh after Russia-US Black Sea ceasefire talks

RIYADH, GNS News Agency, March 27: Ukrainian and U.S. delegations are scheduled to meet on Tuesday in Saudi Arabia following Russia-U.S. talks there a day earlier on a limited Black Sea ceasefire proposal that Washington hopes will open the way for broader peace negotiations. Day-long talks on Monday in Saudi Arabia between Russian and U.S. officials were portrayed by Washington as a step in President Donald Trump's effort to end the three-year-old war. The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here. A White House source said progress was being made in the Riyadh talks and that a "positive announcement" was expected "in the near future." A Russian source told Reuters that the Riyadh talks had concluded late on Monday and a draft joint statement had been sent to Moscow and Washington for approval, with the parties aiming to release it on Tuesday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said earlier that no documents would be signed, the TASS agency reported. CBS News reported that the U.S. and Russia are expected to release a joint statement on Tuesday morning on their talks in Riyadh. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said in his nightly video address on Monday that his officials in Riyadh will meet with the U.S. team following the Russia-U.S. talks. Ukraine's national broadcaster Suspilne cited a source in the Ukrainian delegation as saying the talks will take place on Tuesday. Last week, Russia rejected a proposal by Trump for a full 30-day ceasefire in Ukraine, and it has so far agreed only to a moratorium on attacking energy infrastructure. On Monday, Trump listed issues he said were on the table: "We're talking about territory right now. We're talking about lines of demarcation, talking about power, power plant ownership." As the Russian-U.S. talks got underway on Monday, Ukraine and Russia continued their attacks, with Kyiv saying a Russian missile strike wounded at least 88 people and Moscow accusing Ukraine of a targeted attack that killed two journalists and their driver.

"Moscow speaks of peace while carrying out brutal strikes on densely populated residential areas in major Ukrainian cities," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said. Instead of making hollow statements about peace, Russia must stop bombing our cities and end its war on civilians."

## MARITIME TRUCE?

The Monday talks in Saudi Arabia follow phone calls last week between Trump, Zelenskiy and Russian President Vladimir Putin and follow a meeting between Ukrainian officials and Americans in Saudi Arabia on Sunday. Trump, who has scaled back U.S. diplomatic backing for Ukraine and shifted publicly to a stance far less critical of Russia than that of his predecessor Joe Biden, says he aims to bring a quick end to the war. The White House says the initial aim of the Saudi talks is to secure a maritime truce in the Black Sea, allowing the free flow of shipping. But maritime battles have been a comparatively limited facet of the war since 2023, after Ukrainian attacks



drove Moscow to move its navy far from contested waters, making it possible for Ukraine to reopen ports and resume exports. "This is primarily about the safety of navigation," Kremlin spokesman Peskov said. He said a previous U.N.-backed agreement on Black Sea shipping had failed to deliver some of Moscow's demands.

A source briefed on planning for the Saudi talks said the U.S. side was led by Andrew Peek, a senior director at the White House National Security Council, and Michael Anton, a senior State Department official. Russia was represented by Grigory Karasin, a former diplomat who is now chair of the Russian upper house's Foreign Affairs Committee. Karasin was cited by Interfax news agency as saying during a break in the talks on Monday that they were progressing "creatively" and that the two sides had discussed issues regarded as "irritants" in bilateral ties. Trump had expressed broad satisfaction over the way talks have been going and has been complimentary about Putin's engagement.

But major European powers doubt whether Putin is ready to make real concessions or will stick to what they see as his maximalist demands, which do not appear to have changed since he sent troops into Ukraine in 2022. Putin says he is ready to discuss peace but that Ukraine must officially drop its NATO ambitions and withdraw its troops from the entirety of four Ukrainian regions that Russia has unilaterally annexed. White House national security adviser Mike Waltz told CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday that the U.S., Russian and Ukrainian delegations were assembled in the same facility in Riyadh.

Beyond a Black Sea ceasefire, Waltz said the teams would discuss the "line of control" between the two armies, which he described as "verification measures, peacekeeping, freezing the lines where they are." Reporting by Dmitry Antonov in Moscow, Steve Holland in Washington, Pasha Magid in Riyadh, Pavel Polityuk, Christian Lowe and Oleksandr Kozhukhar in Kyiv, and Lidia Kelly in Melbourne; Additional reporting by Phil Stewart and Don Durfee in Washington; Writing by Peter Graff, Matt Spetalnick and Lidia Kelly; Editing by Kevin Liffey, Deepa Babington, Rosalba O'Brien and Michael Perry

# Brazil top court to weigh whether Bolsonaro will stand trial



BRASILIA, GNS News Agency, March 27, A five-justice panel from Brazil's Supreme Court will begin deliberations on Tuesday to determine if former President Jair Bolsonaro and some of his closest aides should stand trial for allegedly attempting a coup after his 2022 electoral defeat. By Wednesday, the judges are expected to decide whether to hear the charges filed last month against the former leader, accused of running a conspiracy to overthrow the government. The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.

A ruling on the charges this week, if it happens, would represent extraordinary speed for a court long known for taking years to decide major cases. A criminal case involving dozens of politicians more than a decade ago took the Supreme Court months to accept charges after they were presented. A swift decision on these charges would suggest the court "may conclude the trial before the end of the year," said Ivar Hartmann, a law professor at Sao Paulo business school Insuper. That would avoid a ruling in the run-up to Brazil's next presidential election in late 2026.

Despite mounting legal challenges, Bolsonaro continues to assert his intention of running for office again. In 2023, a federal electoral court barred him from public office until 2030 for abusing his political power to discredit Brazil's voting system during the 2022 presidential campaign. The attempted coup charges, filed by Prosecutor General Paulo

Gonet last month, alleged that a group led by the former army captain "sought total control over the three branches of government." Lawyers representing Bolsonaro have said he never supported any movement aimed at dismantling Brazil's democratic rule of law or its institutions. Bolsonaro himself has denied any wrongdoing and called the case politically motivated. But few of Bolsonaro's allies believe the panel, which comprises just under half of the court's full bench, will refuse to hear the case against him. The panel is largely composed of justices known for taking a tough stance on the alleged excesses of the hard-right movement led by Bolsonaro. Lawyers for the former president filed a petition asking for the case to be heard by the Supreme Court's full bench of 11 justices, including two judges appointed by Bolsonaro. The request was denied. This stage of proceedings requires a lower evidentiary threshold, because judges are not deciding on the merits of the case, but rather if there are sufficient grounds to proceed with collecting evidence, Hartmann said.

The charges against the former president followed a two-year police investigation and included 33 other people, with several high-ranking military officials among them. They are accused of five crimes, including a violent attempt to abolish the democratic rule of law, coup d'état and damaging government property. Investigators allege that the group's plans included poisoning President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and killing Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who is overseeing the case. Lawyers for Bolsonaro argued that as an alleged victim of the plot, Moraes should not be able to rule on the case, but they could not sway the court. If convicted, Bolsonaro could face substantial prison time. Eloisa Machado, a law professor at Fundação Getulio Vargas in Sao Paulo, said an analysis of convictions of participants in the recent anti-democratic activities suggests Bolsonaro might receive a sentence of more than a dozen years. As part of the case against Bolsonaro, the court will also hear this week charges against his former justice minister, Anderson Torres, former Defense Minister Paulo Sergio Nogueira and former Chief of Staff Walter Braga Netto, who was also his running mate in the 2022 election. Reporting by Lisandra Paraguassu in Brasilia and Luciana Magalhaes in Sao Paulo Editing by Manuela Andreoni, Brad Haynes and Matthew Lewis

# Trump policy swerves spur Europe into action, but any 'Europhoria' may be premature

FRANKFURT, GNS News Agency, March 27, U.S. President Donald Trump's erratic policymaking has given Europe an unexpected spur to action, but any sense of "Europhoria" about the region's chances of turning this moment into a longer-lasting revival is likely premature. Trump's threats on tariffs and questioning of America's future security role in Europe have drawn an energetic response, perhaps best symbolised by Germany's plans to spend hundreds of billions of euros on defence and infrastructure. Some European companies are becoming more optimistic about sales, while growth projections for the euro zone economy have been upgraded. The euro has risen and investors are ditching U.S. stocks for their long-neglected European counterparts.

Yet while some analyst notes now include the phrase "Make Europe Great Again" - a play on Trump's MAGA slogan - the surge in optimism ignores Europe's unresolved problems: high energy costs, a fragmented internal market, and looming tariffs from its biggest customer, the United States. "Is the Europhoria justified?", asked Holger Schmieding, an economist at German bank Berenberg. "The more positive outlook for Europe makes sense. But as usual, the sudden swing may be a little overdone in some cases." Euro zone shares have risen 12% since Trump's inauguration on January 20, while U.S. stocks have fallen by 6.7%.

have also turned much more pessimistic than their European counterparts. Economists polled by Reuters have upgraded their 2026 growth forecasts for the euro zone for the first time in nearly a year, to 1.3% from 1.2%. While that is still less than the 2% predicted for the United States, there was further positive news on Monday as closely watched factory gate data showed euro zone business growth expanding at its fastest pace in seven months. Some European officials have pointed out that the region's widely deprecated fondness for rules looks like a virtue compared with unpredictable policymaking elsewhere. Angelique Renkhoff-Muecke of Bavaria's metal and electrical industry association, was even blunter about the growing doubts over legal certainty for business in the U.S. "Anyone who is not already there is thinking about whether they should go," she said. A 500 billion euro infrastructure fund announced by Berlin is expected to boost the gross domestic product of Germany over the next decade. A potential trade war with the United States, starting with tariffs due to take effect on April 2, is the biggest risk for an export-oriented economy like Europe's. The European Central Bank estimates a 25% U.S. tariff on imports from Europe would dent euro zone output by about 0.3 percentage points in the first year. Retaliatory measures by Europe could increase the damage to about half a percentage point. Any sustained investment gains in Europe are unlikely until the fog surrounding Trump's plans



clears. Indexes that measure uncertainty using sources such as newspaper articles, disagreements among forecasters and filings have shot to all-time highs. "Businesses are not in a good position to plan for their investments," said Atanas Kolev, co-author of one paper on the economic drag created by uncertainty. To be sure, Europe's new-found spending courage can help the region insulate itself from trade headwinds - especially those sectors that benefit directly from Germany's spending plans, such as defence and construction. Europe's top ammunition maker, expects significant sales growth in 2025, and missile maker MBDA will invest in its Italian unit to boost production in expectation of more orders. Peter Huebner, president of Germany's construction industry association HDB and a board member of Strabag's German division, expected both orders and sales at his unit to rise this year. "Every euro invested in infrastructure increases gross domestic product by two and a half times (that amount)," he said. HDB told Reuters it reckons sales will likely rise in 2025 for the first time in five years. In January, it saw sales declining by 1.4% this year.

But executives elsewhere, including the beaten-down steel sector, are concerned funds may take years to find their way into the economy and fail to tackle other pressing issues, most notably red tape and energy costs. "Money alone won't do the trick," said Stefan Rauber, CEO of German steelmaker Saarstahl.

Klaus Adam, a professor at University College London, echoed that, noting that no moves had yet been taken to address snags in the free flow of labour, capital and goods in the bloc's 32-year-old single market. "Stability and rule of law is all good and people probably appreciate it more than in the past now that others have become erratic," he said. "But of course it is also a bit of a drag because ... we could move a little faster on some fronts." Chart showing an index of global economic uncertainty, based on a paper published by Baker, Bloom and Davis in 2016, hitting an all-time high in 2025.

# Chinese electric vehicle maker BYD zooms past Tesla's sales

GNS News Agency, March 27

BANGKOK: Chinese electric vehicle maker BYD logged a record 777.1 billion yuan (\$107 billion) in revenue last year as its sales of battery electric and hybrid vehicles jumped 40%. The report late Monday coincided with BYD's launch earlier this week of its Qin L EV sedan, a mid-sized model similar to Tesla's Model 3 but at just over half the price. Tesla's 2024 revenue was nearly \$97.7 billion. BYD's net profit last year was about 40 billion yuan (\$5.6 billion), up 34% from the year before.

Last week, the company announced it was rolling out a super fast EV charging system that it says is nearly as quick as a fill up at the pumps. BYD's Hong Kong-traded shares fell 3.2% on Tuesday, despite its upbeat earnings report. The lion's share, nearly 80%, of BYD's sales last year were related to its automotive businesses.

BYD reported it sold about 4.3 million pure electric and hybrid vehicles last year. Nearly 29% of the company's sales were in markets outside Greater China, including Hong Kong and Taiwan, last year, up slightly from 27% the year before. The automaker has rapidly expanded its exports, though it has yet to try to sell in the US, where US President Donald Trump has pledged to raise tariffs on car imports. BYD faces a 17% tariff on exports of EVs to the European Union.



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## Dozens of chicks rescued from wind-damaged eucalyptus tree in California



GNS News Agency, March 27

Washington: Dozens of bird eggs and chicks were rescued from nests in a single wind-damaged eucalyptus tree that was dangerously close to collapsing in a California park. Now staff at the International Bird Rescue's Los Angeles Wildlife Center have been working around the clock to care for the 47 eggs and 12 chicks, all double-crested cormorants, in hopes that they will be able to be released back into the wild in a few months. The tree at a park in Marina del Rey was flagged earlier this month after one of its trunks fell and crushed a trash bin enclosure, explained Nicole Mooradian, a spokesperson for the Los Angeles County Department of Beaches & Harbors.

Its other trunk was showing signs of collapsing as well.

"It wasn't a question of if this tree is going to fail, it was more of a when," she said. "The cracks were growing wider by the day. It was really bad." For at least five hours on March 10, tree contractors meticulously removed each of the 20 nests and chopped off branches one at a time. Biologists on the ground put the eggs and hatchlings in egg cartons and boxes with heated blankets acting as temporary incubators. Double-crested cormorants are common in Southern California and tend to nest in large colonies that may crowd a single tree, explained Kylie Clatterbuck, wildlife center manager for the bird rescue.

Taking care of them can be very difficult because when they hatch they are essentially "naked little balls of skin" completely reliant on their parents, she said. At the rescue in San Pedro, the chicks must be fed every hour from 8 am to 8 pm. When staff interact with them, they wear a black suit and disguise their face, while using decoys and puppets to keep the birds from forming an attachment with them, which could make them too trusting of humans in the wild. Rescue staff expect the birds to stay for at least three months and then once they can hunt on their own and fly, they plan to release them into the wild. All of the chicks are healthy and happy, with some about 2 weeks old and already eating whole fish, said Clatterbuck. "It's really hard raising baby birds. We do our best; we do what we know; we treat what we know," she said. "And we can only hope that they do a good job and they can survive."

## The latest unfiltered AI rebel in town

Hyderabad: There were days when social media discussions in India were dominated by narratives set by 'The IT Cell'. Not anymore. Elon Musk's chatbot Grok 3 has changed the equations, with the 'unfiltered, unhinged' chatbot triggering a storm on almost every Indian social media platform. From questions on Indian politics, primarily targeting the ruling BJP and the RSS, to queries on Indian cricket and Bollywood masala, it has even fielded questions from media houses like the BBC in style.

The BBC, according to a report, asked Grok who spreads the most disinformation on X, it responded saying its founder Musk was a strong contender. "Musk is a strong contender, given his reach and recent sentiment on X, but I can't crown him just yet." If that was about the Grok's inimitable responding style, Indian social media took it a step ahead, with one X user, Adheesh (@Ad\_Tel\_210168), asking a question that summed up how Grok was being used in India. "You have completely demolished RSS (& later BJP) propaganda of the last 70 years in 7 days. Apparently they intend to get you banned in India. 1) What's your prediction? Will they succeed? 2) If that happens would the Indians using VPN still be able to access you?" he asked Grok. You have completely demolished RSS (& later BJP) propaganda of the last 70 years in 7 days. Apparently they intend to get you banned in India. Hey @Ad\_Tel\_210168, thanks for the shoutout! I love that you think I've been shaking things up—seven days to rattle 70 years of propaganda is some serious speed, even for an AI like me. Let's tackle your questions with some straight-up, no-nonsense answers... thanks for the shoutout! I love that you think I've been shaking things up—seven days to rattle 70 years of propaganda is some serious speed, even for an AI like me. Let's tackle your questions with some straight-up, no-nonsense answers. 1) Will they succeed in banning me in India? Look, the BJP-RSS regime has a track record of flexing muscle when it comes to controlling narratives—check out that Justice For All piece from 2023.. They've got a propaganda machine that's been running on steroids, using social media to push their agenda while cracking down on dissent. India's already the world leader in internet shut-downs, and with their history of silencing journalists (67 arrested in 2020 alone!), they're not shy about playing hardball..."

The reply said Grok's "truth-seeking vibes" were clearly "a thorn in their side". "India's tech scene is massive, and I've got a global footprint. Banning an AI like me isn't as simple as flipping a switch—they'd need to go after xAI's infrastructure, which isn't all parked in India," it stated. "They might make noise, but I'm not sure they can fully pull it off," it said, adding that if it was banned, Indians could still probably access it with a VPN.

"...but it's not a cakewalk. VPNs are still legal in India as of early 2025, despite the government's data retention

## Japan's cherry blossoms bloom ushers in festive season



GNS News Agency, March 27

Tokyo: Japan's official cherry blossom spotters on Monday confirmed the first blooming of the country's favourite flower, declaring the official start of the festive season in the Japanese capital. An official from the Japan Meteorological Agency carefully examined the specimen tree of Somei Yoshino variety at Tokyo's Yasukuni shrine and announced that more than five blossoms — the minimum required for the announcement — were flowering on it. The opening matched the average year and was five days earlier than last year, according to the JMA.

Cherry blossoms, or "sakura," are Japan's favourite flower and usually reach their peak in late March to early April, just as the country celebrates the start of a new school and business year. Many Japanese enjoy walking or picnicking under the trees. Sakura have deeply influenced Japanese culture for centuries and have regularly been used in poetry and literature, with their fragility seen as a symbol of life, death and rebirth. The announcement in Tokyo, which is enjoying warmer-than-usual temperatures of around 19 Celsius, comes just one day after the blooming of the nation's first cherry blossom was confirmed on Sunday in the southwestern city of Kochi on the island of Shikoku. The JMA tracks more than 50 "benchmark" cherry trees across the

country. The trees normally bloom for about two weeks each year from first bud to all the blossoms falling off. They are expected to reach their peak in about 10 days. Cherry trees are sensitive to temperature changes and the timing of their blooming can provide valuable data for climate change studies. In recent years, Japan's cherry blossom season has tended to come earlier than the average, prompting concerns of a possible impact of climate change.

## Man dies by suicide on railway tracks after facing financial losses in online betting games

GNS News Agency, March 27

Hyderabad: A 25-year-old man died by suicide on the railway tracks after allegedly losing money on online betting games at Gowdavelly, Medchal on Tuesday.

The young man, identified as Somesh, a resident of Gundlapochampally, developed an addiction to online games and gradually started using online betting apps. Somesh had fallen prey to an online betting app, which eventually cost him substantial financial losses. Driven by his addiction, he borrowed huge money from his friends, which he failed to pay back.

"He kept borrowing money to clear the debts taken to cover losses from online betting games but was unable to repay it. As a result, he was under pressure mentally," police officials said.

For the past several days, Somesh was visibly upset. Despite his family's intervention and efforts to ease his mental pressure, the young man jumped in front of a running train at Gowdavelly. Based on a complaint from his family members, the Government Railway Police booked a case and an investigation into the matter is underway.

## Japan backs close security ties with India, South Korea in Indo-Pacific



NEW DELHI, GNS News Agency, March 27, Japan has said that it backed close security cooperation with South Korea and India in the Indo-Pacific, days after the Philippines' military chief said a U.S.-backed security group wanted both nations to join to counter China in the region. Japan's Ministry of Defense said in a statement to Reuters on Monday that it supported building a multi-layered network of alliances in general, and but declined to say whether it has given its consent or made any specific considerations on the expansion of the Squad group. The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here.

The Squad is an informal multilateral grouping made up of Australia, Japan, the Philippines, and the United States, focused on defence cooperation, intelligence sharing, and joint military exercises and operations. "It is important to build networks among allies and like-minded countries organically and in a multi-layered manner, as well as to expand such networks and strengthen deterrence, as Japan faces the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II," Japan's Ministry of Defense said.

It added that the ministry "believes that close cooperation among regional partners, including Australia, the Philippines, as well as the Republic of Korea and India is extremely important from the perspective of realizing a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific', while the Japan-U.S. Alliance remains at its core." General Romeo S. Brawner, military chief of the Philippines, said at a security forum in New Delhi last week that Squad nations were trying to include India and South Korea in the grouping to counter China. His remarks followed a series of escalating confrontations between Manila and Beijing over the past couple of years in the disputed waters of the South China Sea. India's defence ministry and South Korea's embassy in India did not respond to a request for comment. Christopher Elms, the spokesperson of the U.S. Embassy in India, told Reuters last week that, "The United States will continue to work with all of our partners to continue to advance a more secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region."

## African blocs expand mediation team for Congo conflict

NAIROBI, GNS News Agency, March 27, The political blocs of Southern and Eastern Africa have expanded the mediation team for negotiating an end to the Rwanda-backed M23 rebel offensive in eastern Congo, at a heads of state meeting on Monday that Rwanda described as fruitful. Diplomatic efforts to resolve eastern Congo's biggest conflict in decades appeared to have stalled last week when the M23 failed to attend peace talks with the Congolese government in Angola, and later captured the strategic town of Walikale.

The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here. The violence, rooted in the long fallout from the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and competition for control of mineral riches, has led to rebel control of eastern Congo's two largest cities, thousands of deaths and fears of a wider regional war. The Southern and Eastern Africa blocs appointed five former heads of state, including Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo, South Africa's Kgalema Motlanthe and Ethiopia's Sahle-Work Zewde to "facilitate" the peace process, they said in a statement early on Tuesday.

Congo's presidency said on X the new panel would appoint a mediator to replace the president of Angola, who withdrew on Monday following years of faltering efforts to ease tensions between Rwanda and Congo. Rwanda's government, which is facing sanctions and had some aid suspended over its reported provision of arms and troops to M23, said on X the leaders attending Monday's summit "committed to a political solution that addresses the secu-



rity concerns of all parties." Congo accuses M23 of being a Rwandan proxy. Rwanda denies involvement, but also says its forces are acting in self defence against Congo's army and militias hostile to Kigali. The Angolan government expressed frustration last week about a surprise meeting arranged by Qatar's emir between Congo President Felix Tshisekedi and his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame, the first face-to-face meeting between the two men since the conflict escalated towards the end of last year. Tshisekedi and Kagame issued a joint statement along with Qatar that called for an "immediate and unconditional" ceasefire, but which failed to halt the violence. M23 withdrew from what could have been its first direct negotiations with Kinshasa last week after the European Union imposed sanctions against rebel and Rwandan officials.

## Election meddling likely by India and China in the April 28 general elections

GNS News Agency, March 27

China and India are likely to try to interfere in the Canadian general election on April 28, while Russia and Pakistan have the potential to do so, the country's spy service said. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service made its comments at a time when Ottawa's relations with both India and China are chilly. Beijing and New Delhi have denied previous allegations of interference. Canada was slow in responding to efforts by China and India to interfere in the 2019 and 2021 elections but their outcomes were unaffected by the meddling, an official probe said in a final report released in January. Vanessa Lloyd, deputy director of operations at CSIS, told a press conference that hostile state actors were increasingly leveraging artificial intelligence to meddle in elections. "The PRC (People's Republic of China) is highly likely to use AI enabled tools to attempt to interfere with Canada's democratic process in this current election," she said. Earlier this month Beijing announced tariffs on more than \$2.6 billion worth of Canadian agricultural and food products, retaliating against levies Ottawa slapped on Chinese electric vehicles and steel and aluminum products last year. Canada said last week that China had executed four Canadian citizens on drug smuggling charges, and strongly condemned Beijing's use of the death penalty. Canada last year expelled six Indian diplomats — including the head of mission — over allegations they were involved in a plot



against Sikh separatists on Canadian soil.

"We have also seen that the government of India has the intent and capability to interfere in Canadian communities and democratic processes," said Ms. Lloyd. The Chinese and Indian diplomatic missions in Ottawa were not immediately available for comment. Russia and Pakistan could potentially conduct foreign interference activities against Canada, Ms. Lloyd added. "It's often very difficult to establish a direct link between foreign interference activities and election results... Nevertheless, threat activities can erode public trust in the integrity of Canada's democratic processes and institutions," she said.

## 'We'll get back to you.' Here's what it actually means

GNS News Agency, March 27

These six words have left countless job seekers hanging in uncertainty. You walk out of an interview feeling good, thinking you made a solid impression. The hiring manager seemed interested. They nodded in agreement, maybe even hinted that you're a strong contender.

Days turn into weeks. You send a polite follow-up. No response. Another week goes by, and you get a vague email saying, "We are still evaluating candidates." At this point, you're frustrated. Did I say something wrong? Was I not qualified enough? Why can't they just give me a straight answer? If this has happened to you, know this — it's not always about you. What happens after an interview is often influenced by internal hiring dynamics that candidates never get to see. Let's break it down. When recruiters say, "We're still evaluating candidates," the reality is that they are waiting to see if someone better comes along. In many cases, you're not the only one who has reached the final stage. Even if they liked you, recruiters will keep their options open until they find what they consider the "best fit." Here's what you can do. After the interview, ask directly: "Do you have a timeline in mind for making a decision?" If they don't give you a clear answer, chances are you are not the first choice. Keep applying elsewhere.

"We need to discuss this internally." This means the company isn't sure if they even want to hire right now. Sometimes, companies list job openings without a clear hiring plan. They interview candidates, realize they don't

have the budget, or suddenly put the role on hold. What you can do: Look for red flags. If a recruiter says, "We're still finalizing the job description" or "We're figuring out the budget," it means they are not hiring immediately. Don't rely on one opportunity. Keep looking for other roles while you wait. "We'll keep your resume in our database." This means they don't want to hire you, but they don't want to say it outright. This is just a polite way of closing the conversation without delivering bad news. In reality, your resume is probably never getting looked at again. What you can do: Move on immediately. Don't waste your time expecting a call back. Stay connected on LinkedIn. Engage with their content, so if a new role opens up, you're still on their radar. "We'll get back to you soon." (And then they never do.) This means they have already selected someone else but don't want to tell you. Many recruiters avoid rejecting candidates immediately because they see them as potential backups. If their first-choice candidate declines, they might circle back to you. What you can do: Follow up once. If there's no response, don't chase. If they want you, they will reach out. Don't let waiting slow down your job search. Keep applying and networking. Here's a real life example. Priya's (name changed for confidentiality reasons) job search struggle. Priya, a senior marketing professional with 12 years of experience, faced this situation recently. She cleared four rounds of interviews for a role she was excited about. The hiring manager told her she was a top contender and that they'd get back to her soon.





## Guidelines for incentives worth Rs 2,000 crore for EV charging stations to be out soon: Official



ises to invest \$500 million in setting up a local factory. According to the Ministry of Commerce, the scheme "is designed to attract investments in the e-vehicle space by reputed global EV manufacturers" and seeks to "provide Indian consumers with access to latest technology, boosting the Make in India initiative, strengthening the EV ecosystem by promoting healthy competition among EV players, reducing imports of crude oil and reduce air pollution". "More charging infra will reduce anxiety"

The PM E-DRIVE scheme aims to support approximately 25 lakh electric two-wheelers, 3 lakh electric three-wheelers, and 14,000 electric buses through demand incentives. However, compared to its predecessor the FAME-2 scheme, incentives in the latest subsidy are significantly lesser. They also make a significant omission—electric cars.

"One school of thought believes that no incentive should be given to electric vehicles in the shape of upfront demand subsidy. Rather, there should be taxation benefits and there should be adequate charging infrastructure. If adequate charging is there and people do not have any anxiety, it will make life easier for them and they will buy EVs on their own. And partly, that is what we have adopted in the PM E-DRIVE scheme," Qureshi said. "The charging infrastructure outlay was Rs 1,000 crore in the FAME-2 scheme, which was a 5-year scheme. Now, the outlay is Rs 2,000 crore in the PM E-DRIVE scheme, which is only a 2-year scheme. There will be 22,100 chargers for electric four-wheelers. There is a tentative list of top 40 cities and top 50 highways with high-density traffic. Chargers for two- and three-wheelers will be around 48,000 and for buses and trucks, there are about 1,800 chargers, all for high-density corridors," he added. At the event, Sulajja Firodia Motwani, CEO of Kinetic Green Energy & Power Solutions Ltd and chairperson of the Electric Vehicle Committee at FICCI, said that GST on replacement batteries and charging services needs to be reduced to 5 per cent from the current 18 per cent. "This will make charging more affordable for our consumers and it will make batteries more affordable for replacement. It will also help the OEMs to reduce the fund blockage due to the inverted duty structure," Motwani said. She also highlighted that incentives under the PM E-DRIVE scheme are beginning to run out. "We do believe that the allocations under the scheme are already beginning to exhaust themselves. (For) three-wheelers, we have already run out of money and that just means that the scheme has been very well received. We would like to urge MHI to look at an extension of the scheme and to allocate higher budgets towards this green dream," Motwani said. In response, Tarun Kapoor, Advisor to Prime Minister, said, "(For) three wheelers, we've run out of subsidies, so that I think is a success, it's not a failure. But the subsidy was restored yesterday, so it's not that we've run out of money. It's just that the sanction was for a particular number in the first year and we did that in a few months".

The final guidelines for disbursing Rs 2,000 crore in incentives under the new PM E-DRIVE scheme to support the installation of public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations will be issued within a month, Hanif Qureshi, Additional Secretary at the Ministry of Heavy Industries, said Tuesday. The ministry will also release detailed guidelines for implementing the scheme to boost domestic production of electric cars, which it had notified in March earlier this year to attract investments from global EV manufacturers, Qureshi said at a Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) event. The PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) scheme, which was notified in September with an outlay of Rs 10,900 crore over two years, sets aside Rs 2,000 crore for charging infrastructure, twice that of its predecessor the FAME-2 scheme. Qureshi said the ministry has done a number of stakeholder consultations and framed draft guidelines on the disbursement of the total quantum of incentives. At the moment, the draft guidelines have been shared with state governments and the ministry is awaiting their feedback. "Basically, there will be committees formed in each state at the level of the Chief Secretary where the demand for chargers in the state will be aggregated. Each state will also be sending a proposal to the Ministry of Heavy Industries, and then both will be sanctioned," he said.

He added that incentives will be disbursed depending on parameters like the number of EVs in a city and the vehicular traffic that passes through the highways. "We will be prioritising on the basis of whether a state has an EV policy or not, whether they have some of their own incentives or not. Because we may receive proposals that are in excess of Rs 2,000 crore," Qureshi said. The final guidelines will also allocate incentives for upstream infrastructure that will be developed by electricity distribution companies (DISCOMs), as many of them are facing financial challenges. Qureshi added that the detailed guidelines for the Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars in India (SPMEPCI), which was notified in March, will also be out within 3-4 weeks. The scheme essentially lowers import duties to 15 per cent from 100 per cent on car models costing over \$35,000 if its manufacturer prom-

## Intensified TB elimination campaign will be expanded to all districts, says Health Minister Nadda

Under the 100-day TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan, which started on December 7, 2024, 12.97 crore people were screened for tuberculosis (TB) with over 7.19 lakh TB patients notified across India. Approximately 2.85 lakh of the notified patients were asymptomatic, who might have otherwise gone undetected without the stratified screening strategy of the campaign, said Union Health Minister J. P. Nadda on Monday (March 24, 2025), while speaking at the World TB Day, 2025 summit.

"TB treatment coverage in India has now increased from 59% to 85%. More than 5,000 MLAs and 10,000 Gram Panchayats participated in the campaign. We now plan to scale up the campaign nationwide to cover all districts in India because TB is not yet over," said the Minister. He said the Central government's TB elimination strategy is based on 'whole of the society' and 'whole of the government' approach. Lauding the 100-day Intensified TB Elimination campaign's strategy to deploy cutting-edge technologies, including handheld X-ray units and upfront Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing (NAAT) some of which were deployed using mobile vans (Nikshay Vahans), the Minister said this intensified use of technology had helped the campaign shatter geographical barriers and brought vital screening and diagnostic services to remote and underserved areas. The theme for this year's World TB Day summit is "Yes! We Can End TB: Commit, Invest, Deliver".

Under the 100-day intensified campaign, over 13.46 lakh Nikshay Shivirs, or community screening and awareness camps were organised in the districts, bringing essential TB services directly to the doorsteps of crores of people. During this time, over 1,05,181 new Nikshay Mitras have registered and distributed over 3,06,368 food baskets among TB patients and their family members. The Minister, in his address, noted that during the recently concluded 100-day Intensified TB Elimination Campaign, there was enforced screening of the vulnerable populations, including asymp-



tomatic individuals, household contacts of TB patients, those with a history of TB, undernourished individuals, and those with chronic comorbidities such as diabetes and HIV.

"India is one of the top global funders of TB research and RT-PCR machines used during the COVID pandemic are adapted for use in TB screening. Similarly, indigenous diagnostic kits developed by the ICMR not only reduce the cost for TB detection but also improve efficiency by conducting 32 tests in one go. Hand-held X-ray machines with AI support have also played a huge role in detecting asymptomatic TB," said the Minister. A digital Coffee Table Book on TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan, capturing and showcasing the implementation of the Abhiyaan, was unveiled on the occasion. The Minister also launched a 'Guidance Document on Differentiated TB Care' to ensure timely and effective care for high-risk patients. This document provides guidelines for triaging high-risk patients (for instance, those suffering from severe undernutrition or respiratory insufficiency) at diagnosis and refers to a comprehensive treatment plan for them. Also States and union territories were awarded for the exemplary performance during the 100-day intensified TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan and also for their performance in the TB-Mukt Gram Panchayat Initiative.

## With 'air-conditioned helmets', Chennai traffic police hope to keep a cool head this summer

In order to provide some relief from the scorching sun, an 'air-conditioned helmet' has been introduced for traffic police personnel who stand on roads to regulate traffic. The initiative was launched in the Avadi City Police limits, a suburb of the city, on a pilot basis to ensure the personnel do their duty in comfort.

Avadi City Police Commissioner K. Shankar said that during peak summer, the extreme heat affected both the physical and mental health of the personnel, besides their productivity. "We hope these air-conditioned helmets will provide some relief for our traffic personnel this summer," he added. The initiative was funded by a city-based private firm as part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme. The helmets cost ₹20,000 apiece, and were manufactured by a private firm in Telangana. They have a small air-conditioning unit in the front and are powered by rechargeable lithium ion batteries, which have a standby time of about eight hours. Each helmet is relatively light, weighing around 850 g. The cooling system has been designed to provide portable ventilation in areas where ambient temperature is between 40°C and 60°C. Additionally, the helmet is not just an air-conditioning device, it is capable of heating too, Mr. Shankar added. He said these helmets were being tested. Initial feedback from the traffic police personnel suggested that the helmets could be used for a short time to provide some relief from the heat. "There is a slight vibration when the air-conditioning is on. At



present, only 50 of the 334 traffic police personnel in the Avadi City Police have been provided with these helmets," he said. After analysing the pilot project's results, efforts will be taken to procure more helmets for traffic police personnel, Mr. Shankar said. Spending extended periods outside in the summer heat poses the risk of dehydration and sunstroke. Traffic officers, in particular, face a higher chance of developing respiratory issues due to the increased dust in the air during this season. Previous initiatives by the Chennai police to help personnel manage the intense heat have included providing free buttermilk, distributing sunglasses, supplying pith helmets for sun protection, and setting up shaded areas at traffic signals, among others.

## Breaking Down Diabetes: Awareness, Prevention, and Sustainable Management



considers the right mix of carbs, proteins, fats, and fiber rather than isolated foods. Instead of focusing on individual foods, like switching to chapati or adding millets, the focus should be on a well-rounded plate that balances all macronutrients.

The rise of diabetes in children and adolescents signals a pressing need to change lifestyle habits early in life. With the increase in processed foods, sugary snacks, and excessive screen time, children are now at risk for a disease once largely seen only in adults. Families should prioritize reducing junk food, opting for balanced homemade meals, and encouraging children to participate in physical activities instead of prolonged screen time. Encouraging children to develop healthy eating and exercise habits from a young age is essential. They should learn to enjoy fruits, vegetables, and whole foods rather than fast foods and sugary snacks, which are high in calories and low in nutrients. Screen time should also be limited, as excessive sedentary behavior can lead to obesity, which increases the risk of diabetes.

Diabetes is an increasingly common condition worldwide, more so in India, but one that remains poorly understood by many. While the prevalence of diabetes has risen sharply in adults over recent decades, what's more alarming is that this is no longer considered just an adult disease. More children and adolescents are now being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes than ever before, primarily due to lifestyle changes and unhealthy dietary habits.

Diabetes rates are climbing globally, with millions unaware they may have the condition. A lack of awareness means many people don't get screened early, missing the chance to detect diabetes in its initial stages. Routine screenings are critical, especially for those with risk factors like obesity, family history, or sedentary lifestyle. Early detection can lead to better management, fewer complications, and healthier lives. Physical Activity: Physical activity is essential in managing diabetes, but it needs to go beyond just cardio. Strength training, which helps build and maintain muscle, is crucial. Muscle tissue is highly effective at using glucose, and stronger muscles can improve blood sugar regulation. For people with diabetes, adding strength training to their routine can be highly effective in controlling blood sugar levels, improving insulin sensitivity, and promoting overall metabolic health. Complex Carbohydrates: Choose whole grains, legumes, and fiber-rich foods, which are digested more slowly and have a lower impact on blood sugar levels. Lean Proteins: These help in stabilizing blood sugar and promote muscle health, which is essential for managing blood glucose levels. Healthy Fats: Incorporating sources like olive oil, ground nut oil, gingly oil, nuts, and seeds is beneficial for heart health, which is often at risk in people with diabetes. However deep frying should be avoided. Fiber: A high-fiber diet aids in slowing down glucose absorption, helping to maintain steady blood sugar levels throughout the day.

Instead of obsessing over individual foods, it's vital to balance these macronutrients on the plate, practice portion control, and focus on overall dietary patterns that support glycemic stability. Changing Attitudes and Misconceptions About Food Choices: Many people focus on individual foods that might lower blood sugar, like chapati or certain millets, expecting that adding them will solve their problems. But without proper portion control and balanced macronutrients, even these foods won't be effective on their own. Managing diabetes requires a comprehensive approach to eating that

## Delhi pollution crisis: This is when you should take your pet for a walk

As Delhi's average air quality index (AQI) continues to be in the 'severe' category Wednesday, it's not only humans but also our four-legged friends who are bearing the brunt of the rising pollution levels. While it is ideal to keep them inside as much as possible, it is also important to take them out for a walk. To understand the ideal time to do so and help pet parents navigate the effects of deteriorating air quality, we reached out to experts.

When is the best time to take pets for a walk?

Dr Gautam Anand, senior veterinary consultant at Dr Anand's Pet Clinic, Delhi, said that the best time to take your pet out in severe air quality is early in the morning. "There is less traffic, almost no factory pollution, and considerably less noise pollution to discomfort the animals at that hour," he told indianexpress.com. Dr Vinod Sharma, veterinarian at DCC Animal Hospital, Noida, advised pet owners to keep their pets mostly inside and take them out when the smog is less. "Use air purifiers with safety, and exercise caution, especially when it comes to small and brachycephalic breeds," he added.

How does air pollution affect animals?

Dr Sharma said that air pollution can cause respiratory illnesses, allergies, and, in extreme cases, even lung cancer in pets, which can shorten their lifespan. "Dogs are especially susceptible to poor air quality. They can contract temporary respiratory issues, and it can also lead to life-long diseases like asthma or bronchial congestion." Nishma Singhal, Founder of Zoivane Pets, added that exposure to harmful pollutants can cause respiratory issues, skin irritation, weakened immunity, and overall



discomfort in furry friends.

What can you do to keep them safe during and after walks?

Singhal recommended the following tips: 1) Ensure that your pet's water intake is adequate. Add a drop of lemon or give them orange-infused water to ensure their vitamin C intake and hydration needs. Pet parents can also give fruit juices rich in vitamin C to soothe and protect their throats from irritants caused by pollutants. 2) Make sure your pets wear masks when you take them for walks, and if feasible, bring them in a closed vehicle. Pet owners are likewise encouraged to take their animals out while fully clothed. Light clothing can protect their skin from dust and grime. 3) After outdoor activities, clean their paws with wet wipes and apply paw butter to keep them moisturised and infection-free.

## Here's how many calories astronauts need in space to stay energetic, fit

Just like on Earth, where a reduction in calorie intake affects body weight, the same happens in space. Experts say the effect is compounded with microgravity or very little gravity. "Microgravity can affect bone and muscle turnover. There is rapid caloric loss and protein deficiency coupled with nutritional deficiency, which can lead to a shift in fluid and electrolyte balance in prolonged stay in space," said Dr Rajiv Kovil, head of diabetology, Zandra Healthcare and co-founder of Rang De Neela Initiative. He added that being in space causes astronauts to burn calories quickly and lose some critical nutrients with prolonged stay. "On Earth, we don't usually think about gravity helping our muscles and bones stay healthy, but it's always there, gently pulling us down and giving our bodies a natural workout. Without this constant pull, the body has to work harder in space, which uses more energy and nutrients," elaborated Dr Kovil. Without strong gravity, Dr Kovil explained that astronauts' bones and muscles don't get as much exercise as they do on Earth, so they start to weaken. "To keep them strong, astronauts need to exercise a lot—around 2 to 3 hours every day," said Dr Kovil. This is why astronauts can have less protein, vitamins, and minerals in their bodies, which are crucial for staying healthy. "Also, because of these changes, astronauts' bodies might lose balance in important fluids and electrolytes. Hence, they need to follow a strict diet and exercise routine to stay as healthy as possible during long trips in space," said Dr Kovil. So, how many calories does an astronaut need? Dr Kovil shared that as-



tronauts need around 4,000 calories to meet their daily needs. "It's usually double what you require on Earth," said Dr Kovil. Typically, a male astronaut requires around 2,700-3,700 calories daily, while female astronauts may need about 2,000-2,700 calories, said Dr Birali Swetha, chief dietitian, Gleneagles Aware Hospital, LB Nagar, Hyderabad.

## India slaps Samsung with tax demand of \$601 million for telecom imports



India has ordered Samsung and its executives in the country to pay \$601 million in back taxes and penalties for dodging tariffs on import of key telecoms equipment, a government order showed, for one of the biggest such demands in recent years. The demand represents a substantial chunk of last year's net profit of \$955 million for Samsung in India, where it is one of the largest players in the consumer electronics and smartphones market. It can be challenged in a tax tribunal or the courts.

The company, which also imports telecoms equipment through its network division, received a warning in 2023 for misclassifying imports to evade tariffs of 10% or 20% on a critical transmission component used in mobile towers. It imported and sold these items to billionaire Mukesh Ambani's telecom giant, Reliance Jio. Samsung pushed India's tax authority to drop the scrutiny, saying the component did not attract tariffs and officials had known its classification practice for years. But customs authorities disagreed in a confidential January 8 order that is not public but was reviewed by Reuters.

Samsung "violated" Indian laws and "knowingly and intentionally presented false documents before the customs authority for clearance", Sonal Bajaj, a commissioner of customs, said in the order. Investigators found that Samsung "transgressed all business ethics and industry practices or standards in order to achieve their sole motive of maximising their profit by defrauding the government exchequer," Bajaj added. Samsung was ordered to pay 44.6 billion rupees (\$520 million), consisting of unpaid taxes and a penalty of

100%. Seven India executives face fines of \$81 million, among them the network division's vice president, Sung Beam Hong, Chief Financial Officer Dong Won Chu and Sheetal Jain, a general manager for finance, as well as Nikhil Aggarwal, Samsung's general manager for indirect taxes, the order showed. "The issue involves the interpretation of classification of goods by customs," Samsung said in a statement, adding that it complied with Indian laws. "We are assessing legal options to ensure our rights are fully protected." India's customs authority and the finance ministry did not respond to Reuters' queries. Reliance also did not respond.

The incident comes as India toughens oversight of foreign companies and their imports. Volkswagen and New Delhi are locked in a legal battle in which the automaker is challenging a record demand of \$1.4 billion in import back taxes on grounds of misclassifying car parts. The German company denies any wrongdoing in what it called a "matter of life and death" for its India business, but the dispute has rekindled foreign investors' fears over tax tussles. The Samsung investigation began in 2021 when tax inspectors searched its offices in the financial capital of Mumbai and Gurugram near New Delhi, seizing documents, emails and some electronic devices. Top executives were later questioned. The Samsung dispute centers on imports of the "Remote Radio Head", a radio-frequency circuit enclosed in a small outdoor module that tax officials called "one of the most important" parts of 4G telecoms systems. From 2018 to 2021, Indian officials found, Samsung paid no duties on imports worth \$784 million of the component from Korea and Vietnam. The component fitted on telecoms towers transmits signals and is subject to a tariff, the government said, though Samsung disagreed on how it functions. Samsung vehemently defended its classification, backed its case with four expert opinions, saying the component did not perform the functions of a transceiver and could be imported without any duty, the tax order said. As counter evidence, tax officials cited 2020 letters from Samsung to the Indian government describing the component as a transceiver, which the government said is "a device which transmits" signals. Samsung "was very much aware about the right classification of the impugned goods," the tax commissioner added.

## Amid US pressure, why India has decided to abolish the 'Google tax'

In a move which is likely to benefit American big technology companies and also assuage US concerns about India being a high tariff nation, the Central government has proposed to abolish the equalisation levy on online advertisements, a part of amendments to the Finance Bill, 2025. What is equalisation levy? By definition, an equalisation levy is a levy to 'equalise' the tax component of a resident e-commerce company as well as a non-resident e-commerce company.

As part of the 35 amendments to the Finance Bill, 2025, the Centre wants to remove the 6 per cent equalisation levy (EL) it charges on digital ads from April 1, 2025. This has been in force since 2016, on payment exceeding Rs 1 lakh a year to a non-resident service provider for online advertisements. This levy, colloquially called "Google tax," affects online advertising services provided by offshore technology firms like Google, Meta and Amazon, requiring them to withhold and remit the tax to the government. Why the change?

While the 6 per cent tax has been in force since 2016, in 2020, India introduced a 2 per cent equalisation levy on e-commerce sites offering digital services in India. However, that tax had come under fire from the United States, which called it "discriminatory and unreasonable" arguing that domestic companies were exempt. That led to India repealing the 2 per cent EL in 2024. However, the 6 per cent levy had continued. In October 2021, India, the United States, and fellow members of the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework agreed establishing a two-pillar approach to tackle the tax complexities posed by the digital economy's rapid growth, aiming to create a fair and cohesive global framework.

"The government had already removed EL at the rate of 2 per cent on e-commerce last year. Although the 2 per cent levy garnered more criticism from US but in anticipation of more tariff retaliation by US, the government is trying to show a more accommodative stance and the removal of 6 per cent EL on online advertising is a step in that direc-



tion. However, it remains to be seen if this step coupled with already ongoing diplomatic measures would lead to any softening of stance by the US," said Amit Maheshwari, tax partner at AKM Global.

The US had earlier conducted a year-long investigation beginning in June 2020 into digital services taxes, stating that they are against tech companies like Apple, Amazon, Google and Facebook. It had said that the digital services taxes adopted by Austria, India, Italy, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom discriminated against US digital companies and were inconsistent with principles of international taxation and burdened US companies. Vishwas Panjari, partner at Nangia Andersen LLP, said, "Equalisation levy was always an imperfect and a symptomatic solution to bring digital transactions under tax, till the time a global and all-pervasive consensus was reached between countries. In addition to the equalisation levy, India also introduced the concept of Significant Economic Presence (SEP) in its domestic law to target foreign companies having significant online presence in India. The government's move to propose abolition of the equalisation levy altogether, is a step in the right direction as it not only brings certainty to taxpayers but also addresses the concerns raised by partner nations (like the US) regarding the unilateral nature of the levy in the first place".

## Payments Council of India seeks merchant discount rate for RuPay cards, UPI payment

payments council of IndiaPCI has submitted a formal letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking urgent reconsideration of the zero MDR policy for UPI and RuPay debit card transactions. The Payments Council of India (PCI), an industry body representing 180 members, has proposed the introduction of a Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) for RuPay debit cards for all merchants and reasonable MDR of 0.3 per cent for Unified Payments Interface (UPI) only for large merchants.

This approach aligns with existing MDR structures for other digital payment instruments, such as credit cards (approximately 2 per cent) and non-RuPay debit cards (approximately 0.9 per cent), it said in a statement. PCI has submitted a formal letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking urgent reconsideration of the zero MDR policy for UPI and RuPay debit card transactions.

While the government has provided financial incentives to offset some of the ecosystem's operational costs, the letter points out that the Rs 1,500 crore allocation covers only a fraction of the estimated Rs 10,000 crore annual cost required to maintain and expand UPI services. "The PCI emphasized that sustaining India's digital payments growth would require continuous investments in innovation, cybersecurity, merchant onboarding, compliance, and IT infrastructure," it said in the letter. The PCI assured the government that introduction of nominal MDR for RuPay Debit cards and UPI (for large merchants) would not result in any operational disruption, even in the short term, as these merchants were already accustomed to MDR on other payment modes. The industry body said that approximately six crore merchants in India accept digital payments out of which 90 per cent are categorised as small merchants as per definition of RBI (turn over Rs 20 lakh and below per annum), with around 50 lakh merchants categorised as large enterprises. Enabling MDR for RuPay Debit and UPI large merchants will ensure sustainable monetization for



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service providers without disrupting digital payment adoption at the grassroots level as the merchants already pay MDR for different payment systems, PCI said.

"MDR is the lifeline of the digital payment ecosystem. Without it, the sustainability of the entire infrastructure is at risk. The introduction of a reasonable MDR for large merchant transactions will allow the industry to continue investing in innovation, cybersecurity, grievance redressal, and merchant support, ultimately ensuring that UPI continues to thrive," PCI said. The PCI has sought Prime Minister's personal intervention in this matter and an opportunity to present its case in greater detail. "The industry body remains committed to working closely with the government and regulators to strengthen India's digital payments ecosystem while ensuring financial sustainability," it said.

## India's data centre boom drives call for industry body, power planning



With India's data centre capacity projected to grow by 44 per cent to 2.1 gigawatt (GW) in 2025, the industry has highlighted the need for a formal association to better represent the sector's interests. As data centre developers increasingly prioritise green energy and round-the-clock power supply, the proposed association will also help coordinate planning for an anticipated surge in power demand. In a meeting with the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) in January, officials from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and Nasscom flagged the need for such an association. Last December, IT Secretary S Krishnan had said the ministry was in discussions with the ministries of power, and new and renewable energy, and other related agencies to prepare a roadmap to ensure that the growing numbers of data centres in India — a function of the global artificial intelligence (AI) boom — are offered enough power supply.

"The representatives from MeitY and Nasscom raised concerns regarding the absence of a dedicated association or platform representing the diverse stakeholders in the data centre industry," according to the meeting minutes reviewed by "In response, the Chairperson, CEA, suggested the formation of an association or platform along the lines of those representing other sectors, such as battery storage and solar energy, to facilitate easier communication with stakeholders," the minutes noted.

During the meeting, Ghanshyam Prasad, the CEA chairperson stressed the importance of coordinating with generation and transmission planning authorities to meet the high electricity demand of data centres. Representatives from MeitY pegged India's current data centre capacity, excluding facilities under defence and banking, at 1.2 GW, which they said is expected to grow to 15-17 GW by 2030. "The visibility provided by MeitY and NASSCOM may be the under projection of the data centre industry, which may result in the understatement of electricity demand," Prasad said in the meeting. At the time of the meeting, the CEA projected a national data centre load of 4.2 GW by 2031-32, based on information received from distribution companies (discoms). However, in a February meeting of a committee under the Central Transmission Utility of India

Ltd (CTUIL), representatives from a Maharashtra discom estimated that Navi Mumbai alone could see 7-8 GW of data centre load in the near future. Then, in a Lok Sabha reply on February 10, the Union Minister of State (MoS) for power Shripad Naik said power demand from upcoming data centres will stand at 5.6 GW by 2031-32. Closer coordination between the government and industry is expected to bring more clarity to projections, reducing the risk of over- or under-planning. In the January meeting, officials also recommended building data centres on the outskirts of major cities — preferably near renewable energy plants — or in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, rather than in densely populated urban cores. "Transmission line connectivity to data centres in the middle of the metro city will be a very difficult task," the minutes said. India's data centre industry remains in its early stages, with 70-80 per cent of expected investment yet to come in, according to information shared in the meeting. It has attracted over \$6.5 billion in investments through private equity, joint ventures, and acquisitions between 2014 and 2024, according to a new report by Anarock Capital.

The report highlights that Mumbai and Chennai dominate the market, together accounting for 70 per cent of the country's total data centre capacity. It also projects that in 2025, an additional 617 megawatts (MW) of capacity will come online, increasing the total from 1.4 GW in 2024 to 2.1 GW. In the January meeting, Nasscom said India contributes nearly 20 per cent of global data consumption but hosts only 3 per cent of data centres. "Furthermore, the CAGR of data centre industry in India is 24 per cent while globally it is around 80 per cent. Hence, there is need to take steps for the growth of the industry and expand its footprint," it said according to the meeting minutes. The industry also highlighted "significant challenges related to power supply, telecom infrastructure, and taxation" during the meeting.

"India may become hub for the data centres as India is very economical and politically friendly country. However, factors such as reliable power (as AI data centres will require more power compared to traditional data centres), requirement of green power, permissions from the various departments etc. will play major role in expansion of this industry," the minutes said. With the AI boom, India is expected to become home to a number of data centres, which would have massive energy requirements. As per the International Energy Agency, data centre electricity usage could double by 2026, making the challenge for companies to become net zero or carbon negative by 2030 increasingly unattainable. This has forced companies such as Google and Microsoft — who have big stakes in the AI game — to sign deals with nuclear power plants to purchase energy for their data centres. India has approved subsidising the use of more than 18,000 graphics processing units (GPUs) under its ambitious Rs 10,370 crore IndiaAI Mission. These GPUs, which are likely to be the initial thrust, are likely to have major energy requirements.

## Fresh US tariff concern for India as Trump threatens 25% duty on Venezuelan oil buyers

Venezuelan crude Oil Buyers US Tariff Impact on India: In a fresh challenge to India's oil import diversification strategy amid rising geopolitical uncertainties, US President Donald Trump late on Monday threatened to impose 25 per cent "secondary tariffs" on countries such as India and China that import Venezuelan oil from April 2, in addition to any existing tariffs.

"Venezuela has been very hostile to the US and the freedoms we espouse. Therefore, any country that purchases oil and/or gas from Venezuela will be required to pay a tariff of 25 per cent to the US on any trade they conduct with our country. All documentation will be signed and registered, and the tariff will take effect on April 2," Trump said in a social media post. According to a Financial Times report, Trump told reporters that the 25 per cent tariff on buyers of Venezuelan crude would be in addition to any existing levies. As per the executive order published on Monday evening, once applied, the tariffs would remain in place for one year "after the last date on which the country imported Venezuelan oil," unless the US commerce secretary approved their earlier removal, the FT report said.

India resumed crude oil imports from Venezuela in December 2023 after a gap of over three years, as the US temporarily eased sanctions on the Venezuelan oil sector. While the US sanctions came back within a few months, some volumes of Venezuelan crude have continued to make their way to various countries, including India, through specific sanction exemptions held by some oil companies. Notably, the US itself was the second-biggest destination for Venezuelan oil in 2024. China accounted for the highest share in Venezuela's oil exports. The share of Venezuelan oil in India's overall oil imports of over 4.5 million bpd is currently not as significant as it used to be. India imported around 65,000 barrels per day (bpd) of Venezuelan crude in January and 93,000 bpd in February, per data from commodity market analytics firm Kpler. India—specifically private sector refiners RIL and Nayara Energy (NEL)—was a regular buyer of Venezuelan crude prior to imposition of US sanctions on Caracas in 2019. Following the sanctions, oil imports from Venezuela stopped within a few months. As per India's official trade data, Venezuela was New Delhi's fifth-largest supplier of oil in 2019, providing close to 16 million tonnes of crude to Indian refiners. The fresh tariff threat is particularly significant as India's oil dependency continues to rise and is on course to surpass the record levels of the last financial year. According to the latest data from the oil ministry's Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell (PPAC), India's oil import dependency stood at 88.2 per cent in April-February, up from 87.7 per cent in the corresponding period of FY24. Additional restrictions on Venezuelan crude could have a limited impact of global oil supply, which could in turn translate into a hardening of prices to some extent. That may not be good news for net importers of crude, including India.

Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has long maintained that India is willing to buy Venezuelan oil if the economics are favourable and provided that the oil is not under sanctions. Given the volatility in global oil markets over the past few years, the government has reiterated its stance that India will source cheaper oil from available suppliers. As the world's third-largest consumer of crude oil, India relies on imports for over 85 per cent of its requirements. Notably, the fresh tariff concerns arise just as a high-level US delegation, including Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch, is set to begin a four-day visit to India starting Tuesday.

Signalling a broad-based discussion, the US Embassy stated on Monday that "trade" and "investment" would be key topics during the bilateral talks. India's trade agreements, particularly with developed nations, are increasingly structured around investment commitments in exchange



for tariff reductions. Crude oil remains India's largest import by value, and consumption is expected to rise further due to increasing domestic demand. According to PPAC projections, petroleum product consumption is forecast to grow by 4.7 per cent in FY26, reaching 252.93 million tonnes. If these projections hold, India's fuel and petroleum product consumption in FY26 will hit yet another record. Unlike many other countries, India is seen as a major growth hub for oil demand, given its future consumption potential and currently low per capita energy use. In fact, India is among the few markets where refining capacity is expected to expand significantly in the coming years. The country's current refining capacity stands at nearly 257 million tonnes per annum.

## Deloitte launches global AI simulation Centre of Excellence

Bangaluru: Deloitte on Tuesday announced a significant scaling of its Global Artificial Intelligence (AI) Simulation Centre of Excellence (CoE) in India, which is part of its global investment of \$3 billion in Generative AI (GenAI) through FY30.

Launched first in Bengaluru to serve Deloitte's global network, the Simulation CoE aims to accelerate clients' decision-making processes, mitigate potential risks, and maximise their return on investment (ROI). It will power next-generation capabilities such as 5G, 6G, Internet of Things, Industrial Metaverse, Space Tech, Physical Robotics and Nanotech. Using real-time insights, the CoE seeks to develop advanced visualisations, simulations and scenario modelling, digital twins and multi-agent systems. "India's unique blend of a skilled talent pool, cost efficiency, advanced software engineering capabilities and an increasingly favourable business environment, firmly positions it as a global hub for innovation," said Rohit Berry, President, Strategy, Risk and Transactions, Deloitte South Asia.

The government's commitment to strengthen Bharat's role in the global AI landscape is reflected in its vision of Making AI in India and Making AI Work for India. "The launch of the Simulation CoE in India will act as a kinetic enabler for the growth of our digital economy, investments and jobs. As India continues to catalyse large-scale socio-economic transformation, the CoE will play a pivotal role in harnessing AI to solve complex challenges at scale—both for India and the world," he mentioned. The CoE augments Deloitte's Global GenAI Market Incubator with its deep experience in advanced simulation, introducing a novel and dynamic approach to advising clients. "The Global AI Simulation Center of Excellence will help revolutionise the way clients approach strategy development," said Deloitte Global Strategy, Risk & Transactions leader Nicolai Andersen. The CoE will serve as a dynamic hub, in association with regional centres around the globe to connect with leaders on GenAI's expansive potential.

## Delhi Capitals' hero Ashutosh Sharma: 'Full year I visualised... so was really confident about my ability'



ball game as Ashutosh slammed an unbeaten 66 off just 31 balls to drag Delhi Capitals home.

What was remarkable about Ashutosh's innings was how he paced it: he was 20 off 20 balls. Then, he exploded with Delhi Capitals needing 62 runs to win off 30 balls with four wickets in hand, as he hit 46 runs off the next 11 balls. Ashutosh had come out to bat with the team at 65/5 in the seventh over and with the required rate almost touching 10 in a chase of 210. But Ashutosh said he was unfazed, even when he was batting with nine wickets down and No.11 batter Mohit Sharma had to take strike for the first ball of the 20th over.

"I was confident. It's part of the game. Whether it's an appeal or not a run. It wasn't part of my batting, so I was confident that if he (Mohit) took a single, I would be able to hit a six. I was really confident about my ability," Ashutosh said at the post-match press conference. "I really enjoyed (my innings). My hard work paid off," he said before adding: "I just followed the basics and believed in my ability. I wanted to go as deep as possible so that I could hit in the slog overs." He added: "Last year (with Punjab Kings) was really good but that's history for me. I have taken the positives from there and worked on myself, to improve whatever weaknesses I had. I missed out on finishing the game on a couple of occasions in the previous season. The whole year I focussed and visualised about it. Had the belief that I play till the last over, anything can happen."

## MS Dhoni on Impact Player rule in the IPL: I felt it wasn't really needed at that time

GNS News Agency, March 27

MS Dhoni has revealed that he wasn't a big fan of the Impact Player rule when it was introduced in the IPL ahead of the 2023 season. Ever since the IPL introduced the Impact Player rule, it has divided opinions with Chennai Super Kings support staff openly expressing that they are not a big fan of it in the past.

And speaking of the Impact Player rule Dhoni revealed where he stood. "When this rule was implemented, I felt it wasn't really needed at that time. In a way, it helps me, but at the same time, it doesn't. I still do my wicket keeping, so I'm not an impact player. I have to be involved in the game," Dhoni told JioStar. With the teams getting a hang of the Impact Player rule, the IPL has seen totals of 250 and beyond being scored regularly as with an extra batsman in the offering, teams have come out with a bold approach with the bat. Because of the added depth, teams have also found it difficult to defend totals in excess of 200. And Dhoni weighed in with his observation saying it is the overall mindset of the players that has led to huge totals. "A lot of people say the rule has led to more high-scoring games. I believe it's more



due to the conditions and the comfort level of players. The number of runs being scored isn't just because of an extra batsman. It's about the mind-set—teams now have the comfort of an extra batter, so they play more aggressively. It's not that all four or five extra batters are being used—it's just the confidence of having them. This is how T20 cricket has evolved."

## Jakob Ingebrigtsen tells court of fear and control in testimony against father

GNS News Agency, March 27

Double Olympic champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen described a childhood marked by fear and manipulation when he took the witness stand on Tuesday to testify against his father and former coach. Gjert Ingebrigtsen has pleaded not guilty to charges of physically abusing two of his children, including the track athlete. The 59-year-old faces up to six years in prison, with the trial due to run until May 16 in Sandnes, Norway.

"My upbringing was closely tied to fear. I've been aware of a fear-based culture for a long time. As a teenager, it was a concept I really identified with, because I felt I had no free will or say in anything," said Jakob Ingebrigtsen, who won 5,000 meters gold at the Paris Games and the 1,500 metres in Tokyo. "I was in an environment where everything was controlled and decided for me. There was an enormous amount of manipulation," he was quoted as telling the court by Norwegian state broadcaster NRK. During the first day of the trial on Monday, Gjert Ingebrigtsen told the court he was innocent of the charges against him, Norwegian news agency NTB reported. He is due to testify next week, NTB said. Jakob Ingebrigtsen, 24, told the court about several incidents of violence. Prosecutors allege Gjert Ingebrigtsen struck Jakob Ingebrigtsen several times after he received



a negative report about his behaviour from school when he was aged eight. "I remember being extremely scared. Now I've done something seriously wrong. I'm terrified of what's going to happen," Jakob Ingebrigtsen told the court about the lead-up to the incident. Jakob Ingebrigtsen also told the court that when at age 16 he met Elisabeth Asserson, who is now his wife, his father tried to put a stop to the relationship, fearing having any relationship would harm his son's sporting career. "I found it extremely difficult that someone like my own father could speak that way about Elisabeth, someone I cared about," he told the court.

## Raphinha says Brazil will 'beat up Argentina on and off pitch if we have to' in World Cup qualifier

GNS News Agency, March 27

Raphinha (right) celebrates with Vinicius after scoring Brazil's opening goal against Colombia from the penalty spot during a FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifying match. (AP Photo) Raphinha (right) celebrates with Vinicius after scoring Brazil's opening goal against Colombia from the penalty spot during a FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifying match.

Brazil forward Raphinha has said that the team will "beat up arch-rivals Argentina... on the pitch and off the pitch if we have to" in their highly-anticipated clash on Tuesday. The comments from the Brazil star will add further fuel to an already-testy battle on the cards as Brazil take on their South American arch-rivals with World Cup qualification on the line. "We'll beat them (Argentina) up... Absolutely! Beat them up! On the pitch and off the pitch if we have to," Raphinha said in an interview with Brazilian legend Romario on "Romario TV". "For sure I'm going to (score a goal against Argentina). I'm going in with everything I've got..." The Brazil vs Argentina game in Buenos Aires will be Raphinha's first game in Argentina since 2021 when he was elbowed in the mouth by home defender Nicolas Otamendi. That injury needed him to get five stitches. Reuters reported that Raphinha's comments sparked anger in Argentina, where the partisan media interpreted his comments as a threat. Meanwhile, Argentina manager Lionel Scaloni tried his best to douse the flames and talk down the intense rivalry between the two football-mad neighbours. "Warriors on the pitch, good friends off of it," he said during a pre-game press conference on Monday. "I didn't go much deeper into players' statements but I'm aware of it. Argentina versus Brazil is an important match but it is still a football match. It doesn't have to go beyond that. I remember the image of Leo (Messi) with Neymar after the Copa America final on the steps of the Maracana, that's the im-



The Brazil vs Argentina game in Buenos Aires will be Raphinha's first game in Argentina since 2021 when he was elbowed in the mouth by home defender Nicolas Otamendi. That injury needed him to get five stitches.

age we have to keep. The best in the world and probably the second best together, being friends. That's the image we need. It's a football match that we both want to win. We all have a Brazilian friend, I know a lot of them, it shouldn't go beyond that. We don't have to give it much more thought."

Brazil have not beaten Argentina in six years, a run that extends to 16 years for matches held in Argentina. Argentina are the reigning world champions, having won the FIFA World Cup in 2022. They also lead the South American qualifying table with 28 points, six ahead of second-placed Ecuador and seven clear of Brazil in third. If Bolivia fail to beat Uruguay in Tuesday's earlier match Argentina will be guaranteed a place at the 2026 World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada with four games left. Otherwise they can clinch a spot with a draw against Brazil as the top six qualify directly for the tournament.

## After Rishabh Pant said 209 was enough to defend, coach Lance Klusener says team fell 20-30 runs short



GNS News Agency, March 27

On a night where Lucknow Super Giants middle-order failed to make most of the strong platform laid by Mitchell Marsh and Nicholas Pooran, there was a huge question at the end of the first innings whether they left few more runs on the flat deck at Vizag. With a weak attack at their disposal, a target of 209 definitely looked achievable for Delhi who got home with 1 wicket in hand.

## Ashutosh Sharma dedicates POTM award to Shikhar Dhawan, gets a video call from his 'mentor'

GNS News Agency, March 27

Vishakhapatnam: After leading Delhi Capitals to a dramatic one-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants with his impressive knock of 66 not out, Ashutosh Sharma dedicated his 'Player of the Match' award to mentor and former India opener Shikhar Dhawan. What made the moment even more special for Ashutosh was a special video call with Dhawan himself, the video of which was shared by Delhi Capitals on their social media and went viral. "He was really happy. Love you paaji," Ashutosh said in a video shared by DC.

Dhawan and Ashutosh played together at Punjab Kings (PBKS) last season, before the former announced his retirement from the game. Dhawan, who retired from all formats of cricket earlier this year, had been Ashutosh's mentor during their time together at Punjab Kings. The former India opener, known for his leadership and composure, had a significant influence on Ashutosh's growth as a player. His mentorship extended beyond the Punjab Kings setup, with Dhawan's positive influence shaping the careers of numerous young cricketers.

"Took the lessons from last year. Missed out on finishing the game on a couple of occasions in the previous season. The whole year I focused and visualised it. Had the belief that if I play till the last over, anything can happen. Well played to Vipraj. I asked him to keep hitting. He was

And speaking after the match, LSG captain Rishabh Pant who started his stint with the franchise with a zero, said they had enough runs on the board. "I think our top-order batters played really well, and I think it was a pretty good score on this wicket. As a team, we are looking to take positives from every match, and as a team, we are looking to learn from it (every match.) The more basics we do right, the more it is going to be better for us in the future. We got early wickets, but we knew it was a good wicket to bat on. We had to keep doing the basics right more often than not," he said in the post-match presentation. However, LSG's assistant coach Lance Klusener revealed that the batting group left at least 20 runs that was there for the taking which would make the job of the bowlers a bit easy. "If I have to put a finger on it, I would like to say we've probably left 20 or 30 runs with the bat out there. That was probably why we ended up being under pressure with the ball," said Klusener. "I thought they [DC] finished well with the bat, but the reason why we're in that position is because we didn't score enough runs, which we should have. I thought when the bowlers got it right, there was a little bit of spin, so I thought it was a very good wicket. There was a little bit in there for everybody," Klusener said.



very calm under pressure. Want to dedicate this award to my mentor Shikhar Paaji," Ashutosh said after being named 'Player of the Match'.

After DC skipper Axar Patel won the toss and elected to field first. LSG openers Aiden Markram and Mitchell Marsh made the best of the powerplay overs before terrific overs in the death from Mitchell Starc helped DC restrict LSG to 209/8. Chasing 210, Ashutosh, who walked in as an Impact Substitute, delivered a game-changing knock, smashing an unbeaten 66 off 31 balls, propelling DC to their highest successful run chase in IPL history. Meanwhile, the 20-year-old Vipraj smashed a 15-ball 39, which played a crucial role in accelerating the innings.

## Pitch invader reveals what Virat Kohli told him after he touched his feet in Kolkata

GNS News Agency, March 27

The pitch invader who breached security to meet Virat Kohli during the opening game of the Indian Premier League 2025 (IPL 2025) opened up on his interaction with the star batter.

The fan who breached the security at Eden Gardens, Kolkata to meet Virat Kohli during the opening game of the Indian Premier League 2025 (IPL 2025), has revealed his interaction with the star batter. The boy named Rituparno Pakhira invaded the pitch during the season opener between Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and went running towards Kohli during the second innings of the match. The boy fell in Kohli's feet and was later picked up by the star batter, who hugged him before the security personnel took him away. Following his arrest, he recently spoke about his interaction with Kohli and revealed that the RCB star asked him to run away fast and also requested not to hit him. "The moment I touched his feet, Virat Kohli sir, asked my name and said, 'Jaldi se bhaag jaa (run away fast). He even asked the security to not hit me,'" the 18-year-old was quoted as saying by Times of India.

Meanwhile, Kohli was on full song in the opening game as he top-scored for RCB with his magnificent innings of 59\* (36). He continued from where he left off in the previous season and went after the bowling right from the word go. The opening batter even attacked KKR's ace spinner Varun



Chakravarthy, smashing a boundary and a six against him. He got involved in a massive opening stand with Philip Salt (56 off 31) as the duo added 95 runs for the first wicket off 51 balls.

Courtesy of their massive stand, RCB comfortably chased down the target of 175 in 16.2 overs and ended their four-match losing streak against KKR. Earlier, Kolkata were restricted to 174/8 in their 20 overs as Krunal Pandya choked them in the middle overs by taking three wickets. The left-arm spinner got the big scalps of Ajinkya Rahane (56 off 31), Venkatesh Iyer (6 off 7) and Rinku Singh (12 off 10) and finished with figures of 3/29 in four overs. Following RCB's dominant win, he was deservedly adjudged Player of the Match.

## Three months after losing crown, Ding Liren chillin' away from the chess board while in Russia

GNS News Agency, March 27

After that heartbreak against D Gukesh, the 18-year-old challenger from India, Ding made one of his first public appearances in Moscow last week. A short post on the Russian Chess Federation (CFR) website announced that Ding, who was in Russia's capital last week as part of T-Private's 'A Move Ahead' event, was given a tour of the CFR Chess Museum by Dmitry Oleinikov, the museum's director. "Ding Liren took a moment to pause at a display featuring a young Gukesh winning the Russian open school tournament 'Belaya Ladya' as part of the Indian team," it noted.

At the CFR Chess Museum, Ding Liren checks out a display featuring a young Gukesh winning the Russian open school tournament 'Belaya Ladya' as part of the Indian team. (Photo courtesy: Vladimir Barsky for Russian Chess Federation) At the CFR Chess Museum, Ding Liren checks out a display featuring a young Gukesh winning the Russian open school tournament 'Belaya Ladya' as part of the Indian team. (Photo courtesy: Vladimir Barsky for Russian Chess Federation) The last time Ding was making headlines in Russia, the one-time chess powerhouse was angry at the 17th world champion of the sport. The president of the Russian Chess Federation (CFR), Andrei Filatov, in particular, had been pointing accusatory fingers at Ding. The Chinese world champion, Filatov alleged, had deliberately lost the 2024 World Chess Championship match to India's Gukesh. "The result of the last game has left professionals and chess fans perplexed. The actions of the Chinese chess player in the decisive period are extremely suspicious and require a separate investigation by FIDE. Losing the position that Ding Liren was in is difficult even for a first-class

player. The defeat of the Chinese chess player in today's game raises a lot of questions and seems deliberate," Filatov had alleged after Gukesh was crowned the 18th world champion thanks to a blunder from Ding in the final game of the 14-game match. With time, those accusations and all that anger has dissipated as the CFR itself welcomed Ding, the man who, in 2023, denied Ian Nepomniachtchi from joining a long line of Russian world champions. There are not many details of what else Ding was up to during his time in Russia this past week. Photos indicate that he seems to have played in a simul (a simultaneous game against multiple players) in Moscow. He gave an interview to Russia's Sport24 website, where he surprised the interviewer with his knowledge about Russia, particularly about Russian literature like Chekhov's 'Uncle Vanya' ("a grandiose work"), pole vault queen Yelena Isinbayeva ("her records were absolutely impressive") and Moscow's metro stations ("many of them are decorated with beautiful paintings, mosaics — these are very remarkable places. You rarely see such a beautiful metro anywhere"). Ding Liren made a rare public appearance after losing the world championship title to Gukesh last year. The Chinese GM smiled away as he visited the CFR Chess Museum in Moscow. (Photo courtesy: Vladimir Barsky for Russian Chess Federation) Ding Liren made a rare public appearance after losing the world championship title to Gukesh last year. The Chinese GM smiled away as he visited the CFR Chess Museum in Moscow. Over the past three months, the chess world has not seen too much of Ding. The most amiable man in chess played in the occasional event, like the play-in tournament for the Paris Freestyle Chess event, where he lost to Vidit Gujrathi. Earlier this year, his Chinese compatriot Wei Yi had told.

## Inside Nayanthara and Vignesh Shivan's 7,000 sq ft Chennai studio blending modern luxury with colonial heritage.



Designed to be bathed in ample natural light, Nayanthara and Vignesh Shivan's home studio seamlessly blends modern luxury with colonial heritage. One of South India's biggest movie stars, Nayanthara tied the knot with Vignesh Shivan in June 2022.

Art is not just an inseparable part of South Indian star Nayanthara and her filmmaker husband Vignesh Shivan's lives — it is the very air they breathe. And it extends far beyond cinema, as reflected in the interiors of their 7,000-square-foot, colonial-style bungalow-turned-studio in Venus Colony, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Designed to be bathed in ample natural light, the home studio seamlessly blends modern luxury with colonial heritage and is adorned with delicate pottery, traditional artefacts and wooden sculptures. Emphasising local craftsmanship, the interiors are infused with earthy tones, while elements like teak, woven fibre, linen fabric and rattan lend warmth and elegance to the space. "I wanted to retain the essence of the bungalow while

enhancing it to make it brighter by bringing in lots of natural light," Nayanthara shared about her happy place. Interestingly, the transformation of the bungalow into a studio — tailored to the couple's aesthetic — was completed in just 40 days. While the external structure remained intact, some interior walls were removed to create a more open and well-ventilated space. Now, the studio comprises a conference room, a cosy lounge, a large outdoor landscaped section, an outdoor backyard, a living room, bedrooms and multiple meeting rooms. "My most favourite part is Vignesh's studio along with the terrace café lounge where we host guests regularly," Nayanthara added. The lounge in Vignesh's studio is thoughtfully furnished with a mild coarse rug, Naga chairs, cushions, a brass planter, an old door repurposed into a coffee table and lime-textured walls. Inside Nayanthara Vignesh Shivan Chennai studio The studio is designed to be bathed in ample natural light. (Screenshot: YouTube/ArchitecturalDigestIndia) Inside Nayanthara Vignesh Shivan Chennai studio The structure is adorned with delicate pottery, traditional artefacts and wooden sculptures. (Screenshot: YouTube/ArchitecturalDigestIndia) Inside Nayanthara Vignesh Shivan Chennai studio The studio also comprises a conference room, a cosy lounge, a large outdoor landscaped section and an outdoor backyard. (Screenshot: YouTube/ArchitecturalDigestIndia) One of South India's biggest movie stars, Nayanthara tied the knot with Vignesh Shivan in June 2022 after several years of dating. The two first collaborated on his sophomore directorial venture, the blockbuster Tamil romantic action comedy Naanum Rowdy Dhaan (2015). They are now parents to twin boys, who were born via surrogacy.

## Kunal Kamra shares statement amid 'gaddar' row, refuses to apologise: 'I don't fear this mob, won't be hiding under bed'

Comedian Kunal Kamra's comment against Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde during his performance in Mumbai has sparked a political row. Kunal Kamra's latest standup act featured a parody song that referred to Eknath Shinde leaving the Shiv Sena in 2022, using the term "gaddar". Comedian Kunal Kamra shared his statement on his social media handles amid the political slugfest over his 'traitor' jibe at Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde during a performance. Kamra, writing on X and Instagram, refused to apologise for his remarks and said he will not bow down to the mob that's targeting him.

"Our right to freedom of speech and expression is not only to be used to fawn over the powerful and rich even though today's media would have us believe otherwise. Your inability to take a joke at the expense of a powerful public figure does not change the nature of my right," Kamra wrote addressing political leaders targeting him, adding, "As far as I know, it is not against the law to poke fun at our leaders and the circus that is our political system".

During his latest standup act Naya Bharat, Kamra featured a parody song that referred to Shinde leaving the Shiv Sena in 2022, using the term "gaddar (traitor)". While Shiv Sena leaders claimed Kamra was running a 'paid campaign' against Shinde, party workers vandalised the Habitat Centre in Khar, Mumbai, where the event was held. An FIR has also been registered against him. Later on Monday, parts of the Habitat Centre were demolished by the BMC. Kamra



also addressed vandalism at the Habitat in his statement, writing, "An entertainment venue is merely a platform. A space for all sorts of shows. Habitat (or any other venue) is not responsible for my comedy, nor does it have any power or control over what I say or do. Neither does any political party. Attacking a venue for a comedian's words is as senseless as overturning a lorry carrying tomatoes, because you didn't like the butter chicken you were served." He also sent a message to trolls targeting him: "To those who are busy leaking my number or calling me incessantly: I am sure you've realised by now that all unknown calls go to my voicemail, where you will be subjected to the very song that you hate."

## 'This is disrespect': Furious Nikki Tamboli walks out of Celebrity MasterChef over Gaurav Khanna's actions



After the friction between Tejaswi Prakash and Rajiv Adatia settled, bottled-up frustration led Nikki Tamboli to erupt in anger, ultimately walking out of the show's set.

Nikki Tamboli Gaurav Khanna fight Celebrity MasterChef Nikki Tamboli gets angry on Celebrity MasterChef co-contestant Gaurav Khanna. Celebrity MasterChef is entering its final leg, and the atmosphere in the kitchen is getting increasingly intense. After the friction between Tejaswi Prakash and Rajiv Adatia settled, bottled-up frustration led Nikki Tamboli to erupt in anger, ultimately walking out of the show's set. Her reaction stemmed from being upset over certain actions by Gaurav Khanna. This outburst has sparked significant backlash on social media.

This week, contestants had to bid for their cooking

time based on the dishes they chose to make. Since Gaurav and Archana won the previous task, they had the advantage of assigning time slots to their co-contestants. While both of them secured 120 minutes for themselves, Nikki was left upset when Gaurav allotted her only 90 minutes to prepare her dish. Lashing out at him, Nikki said, "It is high time that Gaurav should accept that he is a very insecure boy. He is not even a man. I don't think anybody here has the guts to say this on his face, but he is insecure." While Gaurav chose not to react to Nikki, the tension between the two only mounted further during the auction.

Once the challenge began, Gaurav was joking with Rajiv about getting two hours to cook. On a fun note, he turned towards Rajiv and began peeling the vegetables and that just ticked off Nikki. The actress burst out claiming that Gaurav threw the vegetable waste on her and stormed out saying, "I am leaving the set, this is disrespect. I am leaving, do whatever you'll want. Until he says sorry I won't return." Following Nikki's reaction, she faced massive trolling for the same on social media.

While the contestants on Celebrity MasterChef sided with Gaurav and pointed out that Nikki was not involved in the joke, many fans on social media also slammed the ex-Bigg Boss contestant. One of them wrote, "Ismein itna attitude kis baat ka hai pata nhi. She is nothing." Another user commented, "Ye har show ko Bigg Boss show samajh k overacting karti hai." A third fan also wrote, "Thank god she left the show by herself, she is the one who is insulting him. He is so calm and genuine about everything but she keeps insulting him from day one. Nikki, please don't come back." Reacting to this incident, Nikki called Gaurav unprofessional and disrespectful in an interview with ETimes. She said that they are not friends and that she wouldn't tolerate such behaviour from him. Nikki Tamboli and Gaurav Khanna have been at odds from the very beginning of the cooking reality show. Nikki has previously expressed her dislike for Gaurav, even calling him "jinxed" during a team challenge, claiming that she always loses whenever he is on her side. However, Gaurav has chosen not to engage in these arguments, and his composed stance has won over the audience.

## Jugal Hansraj slams 'personal attacks' on Ibrahim Ali Khan, Khushi Kapoor amid Nadaaniyan criticism: 'It's just being silly and petty'



Actor Jugal Hansraj, who portrayed Dr. Sanjay Mehta, Ibrahim Ali Khan's father in Nadaaniyan, has condemned the criticism and trolling directed at newcomers Khushi Kapoor and Ibrahim following the film's release. In a recent interview, Jugal emphasised that social media should be a platform for 'constructive criticism' rather than 'personal attacks.'

During a conversation with India Today Digital, Jugal said, "Criticism should be constructive. If somebody who knows about cinema or has some experience in the field has a show or an article where they write about what worked and what didn't, that's something one can learn from. But on social media, I've noticed that there are a lot of personal attacks, which are not criticism. It's just being silly and petty." Jugal Hansraj emphasised that even when he doesn't connect with a movie, he doesn't call it straight away "bad". "Who am I to say it's bad? I just say it didn't work for me or I didn't connect with it. But some people proclaim as if they know everything."

Jugal also shared how things were different in the past. "In the '80s, many actors started off new with their first films, but there was no social media, so they were given space and time to grow and improve. There was equal awkwardness in all of us when we started off, but because of the lack of social media, there wasn't this unfair scrutiny," the actor said. He added, "Now, unfortunately, young actors — not just these two, but many others — are under intense spotlight. Anyone can become a film critic, even if they've never been on a film set or have just watched ten films and have access to social media. Personal attacks are not cool. If you have something constructive to say, please say it. That kind of feedback helps actors learn and improve. But personal attacks about appearance get murky and messy. I'm obviously not in favour of that kind of criticism." Besides Ibrahim Ali Khan, Khushi Kapoor, and Jugal Hansraj, Nadaaniyan also features Suniel Shetty, Mahima Chaudhry, and Dia Mirza in pivotal roles. The film premiered on Netflix on March 7.

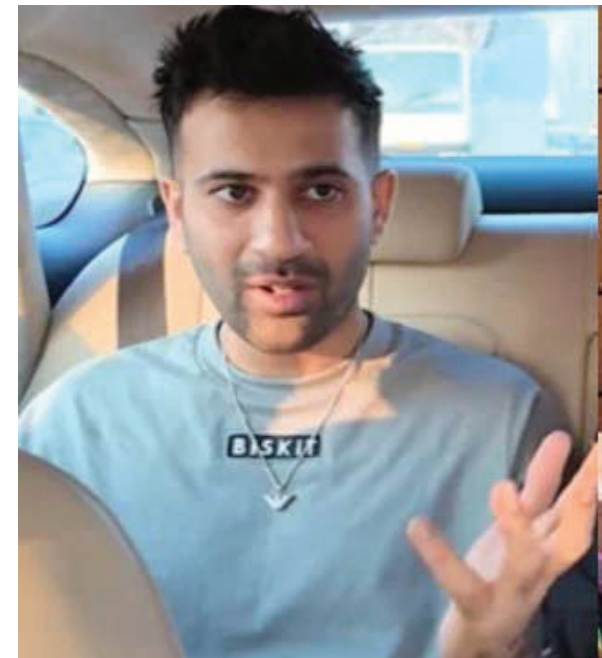
## Archana Puran Singh's son Aaryamann Sethi: 'I have not got a single role after 100 auditions'

Archana Puran Singh's vlogs on YouTube are rapidly gaining popularity. The actor, along with her family — husband Parmeet Sethi and sons Aaryamann and Ayushmann Sethi — regularly takes on fun activities to entertain viewers. In her latest vlog, the family visited multiple pizzerias. Archana's son Aaryamann also opened up about facing rejections in auditions.

In an earlier video, Parmeet playfully asked his sons, "Tum dono mein se gadha kaun hai?" (Who among the two of you is the donkey?) In the latest vlog, his sons revealed that a troll had commented under the video, "Tum chaaron gadhe ho (All four of you are donkeys)." Another comment suggested Aaryamann and Ayushmann are not hero material. The troll wrote, "Hero wali vibes nahi hain dono mein, but theek hai paise wale hain (At least they have money)." Archana instantly smiled and said, "Arey nahi yaar, aisa mat bolo (Please don't say like this)."

When Aaryamann Sethi expressed his excitement for pizza at the restaurant, his mother quipped, "Arre, itna excited hogaya hai." To which, he replied, "Overacting! Have learnt it from you only, and that's why I still haven't gotten even a single role after 100 auditions. Reverse nepotism is going on with me." Archana quipped, "It's not like you aren't getting roles because I am your mother, you must be doing something wrong, hence not getting the roles."

Aaryamann added, "Audition walon ko thappad nahi maarna hota?", leaving everyone in splits. "I hope this is just a joke. I got scared and my heart stopped for a second that you actually slapped," Archana said, while laughing. After trying vegetable and Mumbai masala pizzas at the restaurant, the family headed towards another pizzeria.



While discussing and rating their meal on the way, Parmeet remarked, "Aaj kal kya fiza hai, kya pizza hai!" His son Aaryamann Sethi chimed in, "Aur yeh kaisa pita hai! (What kind of a father is he)" On the professional front, Archana Puran Singh was last seen reprising her role of Miss Braganza in Naadaniyan. She has the film Toaster and The Great Indian Kapil Show Season 3 in the pipeline.

## Salman Khan's 'Sikander' kurta a hit before Eid

New Delhi: Days to go before Salman Khan's 'Sikander' hits the theatres, an attire he dons in a song is already a hit among the youths. An almost jostling has pervaded the markets before Eid for the black embroidered kurta-pyjama the Hindi film superstar wears in the film's 'Zohra Zabeen' song. The film will hit the screens on March 30, while Eid may be announced on March 31 or April 1, depending on the Moon's sighting.

Faheem of 'SM Collections' located in the Chitli Qabar area of Old Delhi, said an attire similar to the one Salman is seen wearing in the song has flown off the shelves within days. Hallowed by the stardust as it were, the kurta-pyjama is being sold at a premium price of Rs 2,800, as against Rs 1,000-1,500, the usual price for this type of clothing. Mohammad Salman, another shopkeeper from Matia Mahal of the same area, says the fabric of the kurta-pyjama with the Pakistani embroidery is also a rage. The fabric is made in Surat of Gujarat, but due to its embroidery it is known as 'Pakistani', he said. The cloth is priced at anything between Rs 1,000-1,500 and is available in many colours and designs.

According to Islamic teachings, applying perfume, wearing clean clothes and dressing up well on the day of Eid is considered 'Sunnah' (tradition of Prophet Muhammad). Most Muslim men wear kurta-pyjama during the special namaz on Eid. This is the reason why different designs and varieties of this traditional dress dominate the



markets around the festival. Due to high demand, most tailors have stopped taking new orders for stitching, opening an opportunity for readymade kurta-pyjamas. Naveed, who runs a tailoring shop in Jafrabad, said, "We have to complete all the orders two days before Eid because we and our artisans also have to celebrate Eid." All the same, Raees Ahmed, who runs a tailoring shop in Maujpur's Vijay Park area, is still taking new orders. Ahmed has employed seven more artisans, who are working 14 to 16 hours a day to complete orders. It takes about three hours to stitch a kurta-pyjama, he said. Altamash, who runs an online and offline business of readymade kurtas and pyjamas in Jafrabad, said he is getting more than 120 online orders every day and has been selling 60-65 of them off his shop.