



The Pioneer

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For India, climate justice is a moral duty: Modi

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SUMEET VYAS
I'VE ALWAYS HAD AN URGE TO TELL MY KIND OF STORIES

P9



'I won't do anything that's not comfortable FOR ME'

P11

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The Pioneer

The departments that were given to me have problems. They were disturbed in the last 10 years. Not just sports, all five departments given to me are in a state of confusion. The Animal Husbandry Department is confusing. After the sheep and buffalo scam, should I clean up the mess or start afresh? Telangana was created over Neelu, Nidhulu, Niyamakalu. Without jobs in the last decade, what should I do if I am given Youth Affairs?

- Vakiti Srihari, Minister for Animal Husbandry

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DON'T MISS...

B.Ed candidates for 70% direct posts

B.Ed aspirants from across Telangana have stepped up their demand for justice in the upcoming DSC recruitment, calling for an increase in direct recruitment quota for School Assistant posts from the current 30% to 70%. A delegation of representatives from the Telangana B.Ed Candidates Association met MLC Dr Dasoju Sravan Kumar at Telangana Bhavan on Monday and submitted a memorandum to be conveyed to former CM Chandrashekar Rao. The aspirants ...

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'Appreciate Beijing's sensitivities on Tibet'

China said on Monday it protested to India over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's greetings to the Dalai Lama on his 90th birthday and the attendance of Indian officials at the celebrations, stressing New Delhi should fully appreciate Beijing's sensitivities on Tibet-related issues. The position of the Chinese government on Tibet-related issues is consistent and clear, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here. Mao was replying to a question on Prime Minister Modi's greeting...

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India aims to double maize output

India can more than double its maize production to 86 million tonne by 2047 from the current 42.3 million tonne, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Monday, calling for development of high-yielding seed varieties with higher starch content. Speaking at the 11th maize summit organised by industry body FICCI, Chouhan said the world's fifth-largest maize producer needs to boost productivity without using genetically modified seeds. "We don't use..."

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Aussies beats West Indies in second test

Australia completed its recovery to win the second cricket Test against West Indies by 133 runs with a day to spare, clinching the series to retain the Frank Worrell Trophy. Australia dismissed West Indies for 143 in 34.3 overs on Day 4 to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-test series. On Saturday, half-centuries by Steve Smith and Cameron Green had helped to put Australia back in charge after the visitors lost early wickets in their second innings, at one stage slipping to 28-3. After resuming Sunday at 221-7...

-SPORTS

Big push to women's empowerment in TG

CM promises 60 seats for women in the Assembly poll
Reiterates govt's goal of making 1cr women millionaires

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy declared that 60 tickets would be reserved for women in the next Telangana Assembly elections, signalling a major political push ahead of the expected implementation of the women's reservation quota in legislative bodies.

The announcement came during the launch of 'Vana Mahotsavam 2025' at the Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University in Hyderabad on Monday, where the Chief Minister declared that the government intends to plant 18 crore saplings across the state this year.

Revanth said the women's quota legislation would be historic and that Telangana would be among the first states to implement it. "As soon as the law comes into force, I will ensure 60 women are given tickets from our party in the next Assembly elections," he said. Reiterating the government's commitment to women's empowerment, the Chief Minister listed ongoing schemes aimed at women's welfare and self-reliance.

"This year alone, loans of Rs 21,000 crore have been disbursed to women's self-help groups," he said.

The government has entrusted women with responsibilities like setting up solar plants, managing government schools, and operating buses. "We are turning women into bus owners by helping them lease 1,000 buses to the TGSRTC," he said.

The CM also announced that women's groups are now being helped to market their products directly in IT zones like Hitech City,

with access to corporate clientele. Plans are underway to form self-help groups in urban areas as well, expanding beyond the rural focus.

Revanth reiterated his goal of making one crore women millionaires under the Indiramma Rajyam scheme and said the government is committed to ensuring women live with dignity and financial stability.

Touching upon the green campaign, the Chief Minister recalled Prime Minister Modi's call to citizens to plant a sapling in the name of their



mothers. "Let's also plant saplings in our children's name and make this a family tradition. Nature will protect us only if we protect it," he said.

He urged every household to plant at least two saplings and care for them. "If we do this, Telangana will soon become a green zone," he added.

Telangana Cabinet meeting on July 10

The Telangana Government has scheduled a meeting of the Council of Ministers on July 10 at 2 pm, at the Chief Minister's Conference Hall located on the sixth floor of the secretariat. The notification was issued by Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao on July 7, and marked 'most immediate.'

Sources indicated that key issues like local body elections and farmer-related concerns are likely to dominate the

discussion.

With the High Court directing the state to conduct local body elections before September 30, there is a clear indication that the Cabinet may deliberate on this seriously. This comes amid growing pressure on the government to comply with judicial timelines and initiate preparations. The onset of the rainy season is expected to bring agricultural issues to the forefront of the Cabinet agenda.

Discussions are likely to revolve around ensuring support for farmers during kharif, including the timely supply of inputs and water management.

The implementation of social welfare schemes like the Indiramma Housing Scheme will also be taken up. The housing initiative, which has drawn considerable political attention, is likely to be discussed again to accelerate its rollout.

Harish, KTR blast Revanth over water, promises & governance

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLA Harish Rao and BRS Working President KT Rama Rao blasted Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and the Congress Government, accusing them of betraying farmers, stalling development, and failing to deliver on electoral promises at an event held at the Telangana Bhavan on Monday.

The occasion marked the formal induction of several Congress councillors and workers from Medak into the BRS under the leadership of Medak constituency in-charge Padma Devender Reddy. Harish and KTR welcomed the new members, vowing to revive the party's strength in the erstwhile Medak dis-



trict.

Harish, in his address, said that Medak was considered special by KCR and credited the former Chief Minister with transforming the district's image.

"People once mocked Siddipet for pigs and Medak for donkeys. Today, both are symbols of progress," he said.

He highlighted projects like the modernisation of the Ghanpur Canal and the establishment of degree and residential colleges for SC/ST students.

Directing flak at Revanth Reddy, Harish said the Congress Government had already exposed its administrative failures.

"Tractors given during KCR's rule are now gathering dust as there is no diesel to run them. Farmers aren't ploughing fields, and Rythu Bandhu is being used as a political tool, distributed only between elections," he said.

He accused the government of failing to

Continued on Page 2

Has the law become KCR's puppet under Cong rule: Sanjay

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, asked the Congress Government to reveal whether the law has now become a puppet in the hands of former Chief Minister KCR.

"I'm asking whether Rs 1 lakh crore was looted in Kaleshwaram? Isn't it true that many lives were destroyed through phone tapping? Even after the court ordered an inquiry and action in the e-formula car race case, why haven't there been any arrests? Isn't the KCR family involved in the drugs case, farm-house case, sheep scam, and electricity purchase scam? Isn't that the truth? Yet, why haven't a single arrest been made? Under the Congress Government, the law has become a toy in KCR's hands," Sanjay said.

He said that before Telangana was



formed, KCR couldn't even pay the dues of vehicle finance firms, and his car was nearly seized once.

"When my son wears a new shirt, KCR's son trolls him as he pleases. KTR is now at the level of arguing with my son. I recently built a small house. So now there's a campaign saying I have thousands of crores. I challenge KCR, let's find out who owns how much wealth. Who has proxy

Continued on Page 2



Kaleshwaram report may be submitted by July-end

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The PC Ghose Commission, tasked with investigating irregularities in the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, is likely to submit its report to the Telangana Government by the end of July.

The commission, led by retired judge Pinaki Chandra Ghose, examined financial irregularities, construction defects, and administrative lapses in the Medigadda, Annaram, and Sundilla barrages.

The inquiry has already recorded the statements of 115 individuals, including senior irrigation department officials and political leaders like KCR, Harish Rao, and Eatala Rajender. The commission also examined flaws in the tender invitation process and irregularities in fund collections.

The final report will include BRS Cabinet minutes submitted by the state government. Based on its findings, the government is likely to take crucial decisions regarding the future of the Kaleshwaram Project, repairs to barrages, and action against those found responsible.

Luggage packed, will move out of official residence: Ex-CJI D Y Chandrachud

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the wake of the controversy over his stay at the official residence beyond permissible time, former Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Monday cleared the air saying his luggage was packed and he along with his wife and children would soon move to

a paid government accommodation. Chandrachud, his wife Kalpana and daughters Priyanka and Mahi, both of whom are persons with disabilities, were living in the official CJI residence of 5, Krishna Menon Marg, New Delhi.

"We have actually packed up our luggage. Our luggage is already completely

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Jubilee Hills by-poll a challenge for BJP, says Ramchander

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP chief N. Ramchander Rao said the Jubilee Hills by-poll would be a challenge to the BJP and that the Congress will not win if there is a strong opposition party.

He said that the BJP did not focus on the last local body elections, but this time the party will focus on it. The party will



announce a comprehensive state committee within 25 days, Ramchander said.

He said that he will discuss with the senior BJP leaders about the composition of the state committee and that the party will give priority to all social wings in the state committee.

He explained that there are no factions in the party and that it would move ahead as per the party line.

Srisaillam gets over 1.7 lakh cusecs, inflows surge in Krishna basin

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Heavy rains in the upper catchment areas have led to massive inflows into major reservoirs in the Krishna Basin, with data recorded at 3 pm on Monday (July 7) showing a steep rise, particularly at Srisaillam and Nagarjuna Sagar. Water levels in all eight monitored reservoirs have risen, leading to precautionary measures.

According to data from the Department of Water Resources, the Srisaillam reservoir recorded inflows of 1,71,550 cusecs and outflows of 83,545 cusecs, with the water level reaching 880 feet and a storage of 191.65 TMC.

Nagarjuna Sagar received 58,391 cusecs and released 4,724 cusecs, with the reservoir now holding



165.23 TMC against its full capacity of 312.05 TMC.

Almatti, in Karnataka, reported 1,05,000 cusecs inflow and discharged 1,15,000 cusecs, while Narayanapur recorded inflows of 1,15,000 cusecs and an outflow of

1,12,577 cusecs. Ujjaini in Maharashtra is currently holding 108.84 TMC of water, with inflows of 15,381 cusecs.

The Tungbhadra reservoir in Karnataka registered inflows of 52,452 cusecs

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Ajay Devgn proposes world-class film studio in Telangana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Renowned Bollywood actor Ajay Devgn met with Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at his official residence in New Delhi on Monday and expressed keen interest in establishing a world-class film studio in Telangana.

During the meeting, Ajay Devgn proposed the development of an international-standard film studio equipped with state-of-the-art animation, VFX, and AI-powered smart studios. He also expressed willingness to set up a skill development institute to train professionals in various domains of the film industry.

Ajay Devgn requested the Chief Minister to provide support for set-



ting up the studio in Telangana, highlighting the state's potential as a premier

Continued on Page 2

Kapil Dev offers support for Sports University

Former Indian cricket team captain Kapil Dev met Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at his official residence in New Delhi on Monday and hailed the TG Government's initiatives for the development of sports.

During the meeting, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy briefed Kapil Dev about the government's plans to establish the Young India Sports University in Telangana and outlined the comprehensive steps being

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City Pioneer

The Pioneer

HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | JULY 8, 2025

03

CITY EVENTS

Tuesday Night Live

With Goonj (Band)

Venue

Stone Waters - Kitchen & Lounge
July 8, 7 pm.

Faaltugiri:

Comedy Show by Manish Chaubey

Venue

Aaromalé
Till July 13, 7 pm.

International Summer Camp

For Boys & Girls On Yoga Practice

Venue

Kanha Shanti Vanam
Till July 14, 9:30 am.

Hi Life Exhibition

Venue

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre
July 8, 10 am.

PDSU members held while marching to CM's house

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Over 40 members of the Progressive Democratic Students Union (PDSU) were taken into preventive custody on Monday morning while attempting to march towards the residence of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy in Hyderabad. West Zone DCP SM Vijay Kumar, addressing the media, said that police had made prior security arrangements after receiving inputs about the planned protest. The student activists were trying to put the demands in front of the government to address their immediate release of fee reimbursement arrears and pending scholarships.



Surprise inspections at 11 wellness centres across TG

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With the directions of Telangana Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha, Aarogyasri CEO Uday Kumar, along with senior health officials, has launched surprise inspections at wellness centres across the State to assess their functioning and service delivery.

The inspections come in the wake of public complaints regarding poor functioning at some wellness centres.

Concerned by these reports, the Health Minister reportedly pulled up officials

and ordered on-ground assessments to ensure accountability and improvements.

Over the past two days, inspection teams have visited 11 wellness centres to check the availability of medicines, doctor and staff attendance and overall operational standards.

The centres inspected include: Vanasthalipuram, Khairatabad, Kukatpally, Sangareddy, Siddipet, Mahabubnagar, Nalgonda, Khammam, Warangal, Karimnagar and Adilabad.



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana High Court served notices to five, including Sohini Builders on Monday while dealing with the Congress MLAs Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed appealing to protect the encroached government land located in Khajaguda.

It may be recalled that four Congress MLAs - J Anirudh Reddy, Yennam Srinivas Reddy, Murali Nayak Bhukya and Kuchukulla Rajesh Reddy filed PIL in the High Court in this regard.

In fact, the High Court directed the five to submit

counters within two weeks. The petitioners mentioned in their PIL that the private persons encroached thousands of acres of worth government land in Khajaguda and have

been constructing multi-floor buildings there. They also informed the court that nothing had happened even though they lodged a complaint with the HYDRRA.

Akasa Air ties up with GMR for maintenance of 737 MAX Fleet

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a major boost to India's Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) sector, GMR Aero Technic has signed a three-year agreement with Akasa Air to provide base maintenance support for its Boeing 737 MAX fleet. The scheduled base checks will be carried out at GMR's state-of-the-art MRO facility within the GMR Aerospace & Industrial Park in Hyderabad.

This partnership is seen as a significant step in strengthening India's domestic aviation ecosystem. With Akasa Air growing rapidly since its entry into the skies, the airline has opted for a dependable MRO partner to keep pace with its expanding fleet and operations. GMR Aero Technic, with its modern infrastructure and technical depth, emerged as the natural choice.

Ashok Gopinath, President and Accountable Manager, GMR Aero Technic, described the partnership as a "testament to the confidence that forward-looking airlines place in our technical proficiency, operational integrity and customer-centric approach." He

added that the agreement reflects GMR's readiness to meet the dynamic needs of modern aviation and will help its airline partners sustain peak operational performance.

Belson Coutinho, Co-Founder and COO of Akasa Air, said, "At Akasa Air, we place utmost importance on the safety and reliability of our fleet.

Partnering with GMR Aero Technic aligns with our commitment to maintaining the highest technical standards as we scale rapidly." He also



noted that the partnership reinforces the airline's support for India's growing MRO ecosystem.

The agreement further solidifies Hyderabad's position as a key hub for aviation maintenance, marking yet another milestone for the city's industrial and aerospace infrastructure.



GOVT HOSPITALS' EQUIPMENT REPAIR

HM: Central system must ensure engineers respond in 6 hours

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha has directed officials to prioritise the maintenance of medical equipment in government hospitals across the State. Stressing the need for systematic coordination, he instructed the Health Secretary to establish a Central Monitoring Unit within Telangana State Medical Services and Infrastructure Development Corporation premises, comprising five biomedical engineers. A senior biomedical engineer will be appointed as General Manager of the Equipment Division within TGMSIDC to oversee operations.

To decentralise and strengthen the system, sub-units will be set up in all erstwhile district headquarters. Depending on the requirement,

one or two biomedical engineers will be stationed in each sub-unit. In addition, hospital technicians and electricians will be given basic training in equipment maintenance.

The Minister outlined a clear timeline for repair response in the event of equipment malfunction, the hospital superintendent must notify the relevant sub-unit and TGMSIDC head office within one hour. Within six hours, a biomedical engineer must visit the hospital and diagnose the issue. Minor repairs must be resolved within a day at the hospital level. Major repairs are to be completed within three days, ensuring the equipment is restored to working condition. If spare parts are needed, immediate communication must be made with the equipment supplier to expedite repairs.

Minister Rajanarasimha said that hospital superintendents hold the primary responsibility for ensuring that all equipment is operational. He insisted that every machine and piece of furniture should directly benefit patients and warned of strict action against negligence in maintenance duties.

To standardise equipment distribution, the Minister directed the creation of a hospital-wise equipment list based on facility size and requirements. A three-member committee comprising NIMS Director Dr Beerappa, Director of Medical Education Dr Narendra Kumar and VVP Commissioner Ajay Kumar has been appointed to draft the report. This report will serve as the basis for ensuring essential equipment is available at all government hospitals.

Four foreign nationals involved in drug peddling held in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a major crackdown on overstaying foreigners involved in illegal activities, the Hyderabad City Police's Narcotics Enforcement Wing (H-NEW) apprehended four foreign nationals - two Nigerians, one Tanzanian, and one Sudanese - who were found associating with drug peddlers in Hyderabad and Bengaluru. Authorities confirmed that all four had overstayed their visas

and were involved in activities detrimental to national security. The arrested individuals are: Maxwell Anthony Izuchukwu (29), Nigeria; Chinaza Nnanna Vivian alias Ibrahim Niasha (38), Nigeria; Mwajuma Almasi Masisila (30), Tanzania; and Ahmed Hamid Abujabr Hamid (27), Sudan. According to police, Mwajuma Almasi had arrived in Hyderabad on a tourist visa and was residing in Banjara Hills. She was found associat-

ing with the other three accused. Though no drugs were recovered during the search, their link to known drug peddling networks and lack of valid visa documents prompted immediate action. The H-NEW team, in coordination with the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) and the concerned embassies, initiated deportation proceedings. Officials said all four will be blacklisted and barred from re-entering India.

"If they are allowed to remain, they will certainly return to drug trafficking," the police noted. H-NEW urged parents to monitor their children's activities and report any drug abuse information to 8712661601. The operation was led by GS Daniel, Inspector of HNEW, and Sub-Inspector C Venkata Ramulu, under the supervision of YVS Sudheendra, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Task Force/HNEW.

126 petitions received across six GHMC zones

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) in the Prajavani programme on Monday, received a total of 126 petitions and Commissioner RV Karnan has instructed officials to address citizen grievances.

The Commissioner said that officials must ensure timely redressal and prevent repeat complaints from the same individuals. He stated that department heads (HoDs) should be proactive and responsive to public concerns, ensuring citizens do not have to approach the administration multiple times for the same issue.

At the GHMC head office, 74 petitions were submitted. These included 37 related to the Town Planning wing, 7 each to the Tax and Housing departments, 5 to Vigilance, 4



to Engineering, 3 to Health and Sanitation and 2 to Finance. Additionally, there was one grievance each for the Legal, LWS (Local Water Supply), Admin, UBD (Urban Biodiversity) and UCD (Urban Community Development) wings. Four complaints were also received through phone-in services.

Across the six GHMC zones, a total of 126 petitions were recorded. The highest number was in the Kukatpally Zone with 55, followed by Serilingampally Zone with 28, Secunderabad Zone with 27, LB Nagar Zone with 9, Charminar Zone with 6 and Khairatabad Zone with one petition.

Lt Gen Brar applauds TASA's excellence during Op Sindhoor

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Lieutenant General Karanbir Singh Brar, PVSM, AVSM, General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Dakshin Bharat Area, visited the Headquarters of Telangana and Andhra Sub Area (HQ TASA) in Secunderabad to review the operational readiness and combat efficiency of units under his command.

During the visit, Lt Gen Brar interacted with troops and assessed the preparedness of various formations.

He emphasised the significance of maintaining peak training standards and administrative efficiency in all operations.

A highlight of the visit was his appreciation of HQ TASA's performance during Operation



Sindhoor, which he described as an exemplary demonstration of operational strength, coordination and discipline. The success of the operation, according to Lt Gen Brar, reflects the high standards and commitment of the Indian Army's southern formations.

HC issues notices to five, including Sohini Builders for encroachment

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana High Court served notices to five, including Sohini Builders on Monday while dealing with the Congress MLAs Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed appealing to protect the encroached government land located in Khajaguda.

It may be recalled that four Congress MLAs - J Anirudh Reddy, Yennam Srinivas Reddy, Murali Nayak Bhukya and Kuchukulla Rajesh Reddy filed PIL in the High Court in this regard.

In fact, the High Court directed the five to submit

Safety Club to empower students launched

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a move aimed at nurturing a culture of safety and resilience among students, the Hyderabad City Police on Monday launched the 'Safety Club' initiative in educational institutions, with a special focus on four key areas - physical safety, cyber safety, substance abuse prevention and mental health. The programme was inaugurated at AV College, Hyderabad, with participation from students of AV College, St Theresa and Bharat Scouts and Guides.

Launched in collaboration with the Telangana government, civil society partners and school authorities, the ini-



tiative aligns with the vision of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who is also an alumnus of AV College.

Welcoming the gathering, AV College Principal Rajalingam said the concept of safety today goes far beyond campus gates. "In this era of rapid change, we need to protect students digitally, emotionally and mentally. We are proud

that this new initiative begins in a college that produced Telangana's current Chief Minister," he said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police, Central Zone, Shilpavalli, described the Safety Club as a platform to empower young minds. "This is not about policing youth. It is about creating confident, capable students who can respond,

report and resist.

Hyderabad is the safest city today because of proactive programmes like this. It also plays a key role in making Telangana drug-free," she said, commending the efforts of SHO Domalguda and ACP Gandhinagar in organising the launch.

Hyderabad Collector Harichandana, who delivered the keynote address, praised the programme for instilling civic sense and responsibility among students. "This initiative must become a movement across schools and colleges. Young people must develop the strength to resist distractions and focus on hard work," she noted.

The Safety Club will function under a structured format with the school principal as Chairperson, a teacher (Balamitra) as Convener, a parent as Safety Guide, and student volunteers as Safety Advocates. Monthly reviews, safety walks and student feedback sessions will be conducted to ensure active engagement.

The club's core activities include cyber awareness drives, anti-drug campaigns, peer-led mental health programmes, legal literacy sessions and digital detox toolkits for families. Speakers urged students to become peer ambassadors of safety and pledged to keep their campuses drug-free and emotionally supportive.





Application for admission to Navodaya Vidyalayas

PNS ■ MAHABUBABAD

Mahabubabad District Collector Adwaith Kumar Singh has announced that online applications are invited for admissions into Class 6 at Navodaya Vidyalayas.

On Monday, the Collector unveiled the admissions brochure at his office.

On this occasion, the District Collector stated that the notification for the academic year 2026-27 has been released.

The Collector mentioned that the last date to apply is July 29, 2025.

He informed that online applications are invited for admissions into Class 6 in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas for the academic year 2026-27, and this notification has been issued by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti.

He suggested that students wishing to apply can do so through the website <https://navodaya.gov.in>.

‘Cong govt will not compromise on water rights of Telangana’

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

The Telangana government, which has remained steadfast in its support for the poor, has made an important announcement regarding the distribution of ration cards.

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Monday announced that new ration cards will be distributed to every eligible person starting from July 14. He mentioned that during the 10-year rule of BRS, the then government had not sanctioned ration cards to the poor.

However, within 18 months, the Indiramma government came to power, and the Congress government fulfilled its election promises. While people's government is fulfilling every promise, opposition parties are unnecessarily criticising the six guarantees, he added.

Speaking at the distribution of Indiramma houses sanction proceedings in Nagarkurnool district, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy criticised the previous BRS government, saying that ration cards



Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Minister for Excise Jupally Krishna Rao distributing Indiramma houses sanction letters to beneficiaries in Achampet constituency of Nagarkurnool district on Monday

were given only in constituencies where by-elections were held, and not a single ration card was issued in other areas. However, the Indiramma government is not only providing new ration cards but also offering subsidised rice to all the poor, which, according to him, is only possible due to the blessings of the people. He urged people not to forget the good work of the government and hoped that

in any upcoming elections, the government would continue to have the support of the people.

Minister Srinivas Reddy made severe allegations against the previous BRS government. He accused BRS and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao of trampling the rights of Telangana farmers for their personal gain and colluding with neighbouring states. He also took the previous

government to task for sidelining the Pranahita project for the sake of commissions and promoting the Kaleshwaram project, claiming that the foundation laid by the BRS government was responsible for the current issues with the Banakacherla project.

He emphasised that as long as the Indiramma government remains in power, not a single drop of water or Telangana's rights will be allowed to be stolen by anyone.

He assured the people that the government is committed to fulfilling all promises made to the poor, with sincerity and honesty. He mentioned that Indiramma houses are being provided to all eligible poor people, irrespective of caste, religion, or politics. The first phase of Indiramma houses has already been distributed, and the second, third, and fourth phases will also be provided, he added. He assured those who have not yet received their houses should not lose hope. The government would ensure that every eligible family gets Indiramma house.

Swing turns death-trap for nine-year-old girl

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

In a heartbreaking incident at Chitkul village under Patancheru mandal, a 9-year-old girl tragically lost her life at home.

The girl, Sahasra, was playing on a makeshift swing she had created by tying a towel to a ceiling fan during a power outage. Unfortunately, when the electricity was restored, the fan began to spin, causing the towel to tighten around her neck and lead to a fatal accident.

Sahasra was the daughter of Latha and Narsimhulu and the middle child

among three siblings. Her elder sister is studying at a residential school, while Sahasra and her younger brother, Ganishwar, attended a local school together.

On the day of the incident, their parents had gone to visit their daughter at the residential school. While playing at home, the tragic event occurred.

Ganishwar quickly noticed something was wrong and rushed to alert their grandmother, turning off the fan and trying to remove the towel. Sadly, it was too late, and Sahasra's life had already been cut short.



Mystery behind murder of five-year-old girl cracked

Police arrest girl's paternal aunt and remand her in judicial custody

PNS ■ JAGTIAL

The mystery behind the brutal murder of a five-year-old girl named Aakula Hithiksha at Korutla in the district has been unraveled. Police reportedly identified her aunt (paternal uncle's wife) as the one who murdered the child. Investigations revealed that the woman killed Hithiksha out of anger and resentment toward her Hithiksha's mother.

Aunt, identified as Mamatha, has been arrested by the police and sent to judicial custody. Hithiksha, a resident of the Jagtial district, was murdered by her paternal aunt due to long-standing grudges. Police investigations found that Mamatha harboured jealousy over the financial success of Hithiksha's

father and felt looked down upon by Hithiksha's mother. This resentment, coupled with Mamatha's own financial struggles and heavy losses in online betting, led her to commit the crime.

Following the murder, police took Mamatha into custody and uncovered

crucial evidence during interrogation. According to their findings, Mamatha changed from a sari into a Punjabi dress after the murder, which was confirmed through CCTV footage. The cameras also captured her leaving the house after the incident.

Mamatha has since been arrested and remanded to custody. It is also notable that she has two children of her own. Following her arrest, Hithiksha's grandfather and father took custody of the child's mother.



GREEN PHARMA CITY PROJECT

Plots allotted for displaced persons in Mirkhanpet, Mucharla and Panjaguda

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

In a landmark initiative for displaced farmers, the Hyderabad Green Pharma City project in Mirkhanpet, Mucharla, and Panjaguda revenue villages under Kandukur Mandal in Rangareddy District, a historic decision was taken in ensuring justice and equitable compensation. The Congress government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, has allocated 121 square yards of developed residential plots per acre of acquired land to farmers who lost their land for the project, free of cost. These plots have been fully registered in the names of the beneficiaries with complete ownership rights, reflecting the Congress party's commitment to farmer welfare and transparency.

The state government's vision is to transform this region into a "Fourth City", a significant step towards the development of East Hyderabad. This ambitious project underscores the government's focus on equitable



Congress Party in-charge for Maheshwaram constituency Kichannagari Laxma Reddy with displaced persons in Green Pharma City project villages on Monday

land acquisition and regional growth.

During the plot distribution ceremony, Kichannagari Laxma Reddy (KLR), the Congress Party in-charge for Maheshwaram constituency, addressed the displaced farmers with a crucial message. He urged them not to sell their allotted plots at low prices, emphasizing the rapid development of the area. "The value of these plots is expected to rise to Rs 1 lakh per square yard in the near future. These plots are valuable assets that will secure the financial future of your

children," KLR advised, encouraging farmers to retain their plots as long-term investments.

The event saw significant participation from local public representatives, Congress party leaders, workers, and a large number of displaced farmers. The Congress government's decision, rooted in the principles of development, justice, and equality, has opened new avenues of hope for the displaced farmers, ensuring their economic stability and inclusion in the region's growth.

Govt prioritises welfare of farmers: MLA Shankar

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

In a significant step towards rural development and farmer welfare, Shadnagar MLA and Chairman of State Public Sector Enterprises, Veerlapalli Shankar, along with Ranga Reddy District Cooperative Central Bank (DCCB) Chairman Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, performed the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society (PACS) building and warehouse in Chegur village, Nandigama Mandal, Rangareddy District. The event, organised under the leadership of former MPP Shiva Shankar Goud, also included a media conference where MLA Shankar addressed key achievements of the Congress government.



Governor lauds Kakatiya University

PNS ■ WARANGAL / HANAMKONDA

Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma visited Warangal and Hanamkonda districts on Monday, where he participated in the 23rd convocation ceremony of Kakatiya University and later reviewed the status of TB eradication programmes with local officials.

At the convocation held on the university campus, the Governor congratulated the graduating students and medal winners. "This is not just a celebration of your academic achievement, but a transition into a world of greater responsibility," he said. "You are not



Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma speaking at the 23rd convocation ceremony of Kakatiya University in Hanamkonda on Monday

merely receiving degrees today — you are receiving the trust of the nation."

Commending the university's recent milestones, the Governor highlighted its A+ accreditation by NAAC in 2023 and its inclusion in the 151-200 band of the 2024

NIRF rankings. He also noted that the College of Pharmaceutical Sciences was ranked 84th nationally and the university stood third in the UI Green Metric rankings — the highest position for any institution in Telangana.

Following the ceremony, Jishnu Dev Varma held a review meeting at the Integrated District Office Complex (IDOC) in Hanamkonda with the Collectors of Warangal and Hanamkonda to assess TB eradication efforts. The Governor emphasized the need for intensified awareness campaigns, early diagnosis, and consistent community partic-

ipation to meet India's national goal of eliminating tuberculosis.

He also called upon the Indian Red Cross Society branches in Hanamkonda and Warangal to work more closely with the respective district administrations. The Governor acknowledged the philanthropic gesture of Engala Venkat Ram Reddy, Managing Trustee of Engala Charitable Trust, who donated Rs.60,000 for food support to 10 TB patients over the coming year.

District Collectors Dr. Satya Sharada and Sneha Shabarish, along with other senior officials, accompanied the Governor during the visit.

Deputy Tahsildar caught taking bribe

PNS ■ NALGONDA

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) arrested Deputy Tahsildar Shaik Javeed, who was working on deputation in the Civil Supplies Department in Miryalaguda, Nalgonda district, for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs.70,000.

According to ACB Telangana, the officer had initially demanded Rs 1 lakh from the complainant for conducting a Panchanama Report of three seized vehicles to facilitate their release from the Joint Collector's Court. Upon the complainant's negotiation, the bribe amount was



Deputy Tahsildar Shaik Javeed

reduced to Rs 70,000.

Officials stated that Javeed misused his official position and dishonestly performed his duties, amounting to a punishable offence under Section 7(a) of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The ACB had registered a case against him last month on June 7 and arrested him on July 7. He has been produced before the First Additional Special Judge for SPE and ACB Cases at Nampally, Hyderabad.

The case is under investigation.

The ACB has urged the public to report any bribe demands by government officials via their toll-free number 1064 or on WhatsApp at 9440446106. Citizens may also reach out through Facebook or on X (@TelanganaACB). Officials have assured that the identity of complainants will be kept confidential.

Officials told to redress public grievances

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRCILLA

District Collector Sandeep Kumar Jha has directed officials to resolve petitions received at Prajavani programme in a time-bound manner. The Prajavani programme was conducted on Monday at the auditorium in the District Integrated Office Complex. On the occasion, the Collector received 151 applications and instructed the officials concerned to address and resolve them promptly.

832 govt schools to be improved under PM SHRI scheme

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar said that each selected school will get central funding ranging between Rs 1 crore and Rs 2.25 crore under the scheme

PNS ■ JAGTIAL

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, stated that the PM SHRI scheme introduced by the Narendra Modi-led Central government is an excellent initiative.

He mentioned that under this scheme, each selected school is being provided Central funding ranging from Rs 90 lakh to Rs 2.25 crore.

In Telangana, 832 schools have been selected under the PM SHRI scheme and are receiving central funding. The central government is fully cooperating with state governments in this regard.

He said that while the Modi government is taking all necessary steps to strengthen the public education system, a few state leaders have sold themselves out to corporate lobbies and are supporting them while neglecting government schools.

Today, during his visit to Medipalli and Bheemaram mandals in Jagtial district, the Union Minister inaugurated several developmental works funded by the Central government. He visited Venkatravupet School, which



was selected under the PM SHRI scheme in Venkatrapalle, and addressed the students and teachers there.

He said on the occasion that "I have come here to Venkatravupalle School as per the directions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, following its selection under the PM SHRI scheme.

Modi is working with determination to develop government schools on par with private institutions.

During the UPA regime, only Rs 68,000 crore was allocated to the education sector in the budget. In contrast, the Modi government has allocated Rs 1.28 lakh crore for this financial year alone and has spent over Rs 8 lakh crore in

the past 11 years.

Teachers in government schools are all qualified, having completed courses like DEd, BED, etc. But in private schools, that is not the case — many teachers are unqualified. Unfortunately, even basic staff, like attenders are also missing in government schools nowadays. Though state governments have changed over the years, there has been no intention to reform the education system."

As part of the initiative, it was decided to include 14,500 schools across the country under the PM SHRI scheme, and so far, 13,076 schools have already been selected. In Telangana, 832 schools have been selected under the PM

SHRI scheme and are receiving central funding. The central government is fully cooperating with state governments in this regard.

The central government is also encouraging students pursuing higher education — including degrees in engineering, medicine, and even those studying abroad — by offering scholarships. "I urge students to take advantage of these opportunities, serve the country, and aspire to become like Ambedkar, Gandhi, Sardar Patel, and Narendra Modi," he said. "I have made efforts to bring as many schools as possible in the Karimnagar Parliamentary Constituency under the PM SHRI scheme. Likewise, very soon, Navodaya and Sainik Schools will be established in Rajanna Sircilla district and Husnabad Assembly constituency.

"In addition, we will be distributing free bicycles to Class 10 students in government schools — around 20,000 bicycles in total. These bicycles have been purchased using CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) funds. The distribution will begin on July 9 and be completed within a month," he explained.

Master plan for renovating Sri Raja Rajeshwara swamy temple

PNS ■ VEMULAWADA

A comprehensive master plan has been prepared to develop the Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swamy Temple in Vemulawada.

Several modern facilities will be built for the convenience of devotees, including a queue complex, four-sided compound walls, gopurams (temple towers), a Kalyana Mandapam (marriage hall), Aveti Mandapam, accommodation facilities, temple offices, a spacious new Dharma Gundam (sacred tank), Yagashala (ritual hall), facilities for offering animal sacrifices (Kode Makkulu), a modern Kalyanakatta (hair offering center), and a daily free meal center (Nitya Annadana Satram) similar to the one at Tirumala.

With the initiative of Government Whip and local MLA Adi Srinivas, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, along with several Ministers, formally launched the temple expansion and development works on November 20 last year with an allocation of Rs 76 crore. Additionally, foundation stones



were laid for road expansion works with a budget of Rs 47 crore and for the Nitya Annadana Satram with Rs 35 crore. A total of Rs 150 crore has already been allocated for the temple's development. The developmental works are set to begin. The temple remains open during the time when the developmental works are carried, according to sources.

Meanwhile, Vemulawada Sri Raja Rajeshwara Divine Temple is famously known as the "Dakshina Kashi" (Southern Kashi). It is also referred to as Bhaskara Kshetram and

Harihara Kshetram.

The celestial wedding of Sri Raja Rajeshwara and Goddess parvati is celebrated annually with grand splendour. Unlike in Shiva temples where the wedding is held on Maha Shivaratri, in Vemulawada, the wedding takes place after the spring festival (Vasantotsavam) and continues for five days with great grandeur. About 100 priests and Vedic scholars conduct this divine marriage ceremony.

Devotees from the twin Telugu states, as well as Karnataka, Maharashtra, and

Chhattisgarh, flock to witness this holy event.

For the convenience of the pilgrims, the temple authorities, police, municipal, and revenue departments make extensive arrangements.

The Shiva Lingam he installed is the one is now revered as Sri Raja Rajeshwara. Devotees believe that bathing in the Dharma Gundam and worshipping this Shiva Lingam grants blessings such as progeny for childless couples and removal of sins accumulated over lifetimes.

ACROSS THE STATES



29 foreign nationals living illegally in Delhi held

Twenty-nine foreign nationals, including 18 Bangladeshi, staying illegally in the country were apprehended from southwest Delhi's Dwarka, officials said on Monday. The deportation orders of the detained individuals have been issued, they said. Of the total, 18 are Bangladeshi nationals, four from Ivory Coast, three from Nigeria, two from Liberia, and one each from Tanzania and Benin, they said. All of the foreign nationals were found overstaying or residing illegally in the country. After being arrested, they were handed over to the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) for deportation, a senior police officer said. The foreign nationals were produced before the FRRO, which issued orders for their deportation. They have since been moved to a detention centre, he added.



Nine dead as mini bus overturns in Punjab

A mini bus overturned near Sagran village of Hoshiarpur district on Monday, leaving nine people dead and 33 others injured, police said. A car was also involved in the accident, they said. Mukerian Deputy Superintendent of Police Kulwinder Singh Virk said the bus, with about 40 passengers, was on its way to Dasuya from Hajipur town when the accident occurred. Police stated the driver is said to have lost control over the vehicle, though exact cause of the accident is under investigation. The injured passengers were admitted to Dasuya Civil Hospital for treatment. On receiving information, Hoshiarpur Deputy Commissioner Aashika Jain and Senior Superintendent of Police Sandeep Kumar Malik reached Dasuya to oversee the rescue and relief operations. DC Jain said the government would provide an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh each to the families of the deceased and Rs 50,000 to those seriously injured.



Refused money for alcohol, UP man stabs wife

A labourer allegedly stabbed his 40-year-old wife to death on Monday here in Anjanshaheed village after she refused to give him money to buy alcohol, police said. According to police, Nure Alam, who works as a labourer in Mumbai, had returned to his village four days ago to observe Muharram. Around noon on Monday, he asked his wife Roshan for money to buy liquor. When she refused, the couple got into a heated argument, and in a fit of rage, Nure allegedly stabbed her with a kitchen knife in the chest. Roshan was rushed to a hospital by the locals, but doctors declared her dead on arrival, police said. To much shock of the villagers, Nure Alam roamed around the village after killing his wife. Jyampur police took Nure Alam and Roshan's body into custody. Neighbours told police that Nure Alam was addicted to alcohol and would often beat his wife.



Sudden deaths to be treated as 'notifiable disease'

Says Karnataka Health Minister

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Monday decided to treat sudden deaths as "notifiable disease" and conduct post-mortem in such cases.

State Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said there will be more screening of people above the age of 15 years in the state. The minister's remarks came in the wake of a spate of heart attacks in the state, especially in Hassan district. He also sought to clarify that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's statement linking Covid vaccine with the spate of heart attacks was not with any malafide intention.

"We have decided to announce sudden deaths as a notifiable disease. The government should be notified if sudden deaths happen outside hospitals," Rao said in a press conference. He said autopsy

will be made compulsory in cases of sudden deaths.

The minister underlined the need for screening more people, including children about 15 years of age at least once a year "because there are people who have diseases since birth". Rao also announced incorporating a subject on heart attacks and diseases causing sudden deaths in the textbooks.

"We have sent a format to the education department to include a chapter on sudden deaths in their curriculum. This will be included in next academic year," Rao said. It has also been decided to impart training to people on cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Further, the Puneeth Rajkumar Hrudaya Jyoti scheme, which is going on in 86 hospitals in the state, will be extended to Taluk level hospitals this year, the minister said.

Sena targets Uddhav with 'Mumbai mayor' banner

PNS ■ THANE

A tense situation prevailed at Tembhi Naka junction in Thane city on Monday morning after supporters of the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena put up a banner targeting Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray. A civic team accompanied by local police removed the banner amid opposition from Sena workers.

The banner, displayed near the office of late Shiv Sena leader Anand Dighe, featured the names of two local leaders of Shiv Sena and a cartoon standing next to the throne of "Mumbai Mayor" along with a cash box.

It seems to be a direct response to Uddhav and Raj Thackeray who shared a common stage for the cause of Marathi language after almost two decades.

BJP trying to intimidate people, says Kharge

Calls for united fight for 'jal, jungle and zameen'

PNS ■ RAIPUR

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday accused the ruling BJP of reneging on its pre-poll promises and asked people to remain united in the fight to protect their 'jal, jungle and zameen' (water, forest, land).

He alleged the BJP was trying to intimidate "everyone" in the country and misusing central probe agencies against its opponents.

Speaking at a public rally titled, 'Jai Jawan-Jai Kisan-Jai Samvidhan' at Science College Ground in Raipur amid heavy rains, the Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha claimed the poor are being "looted" under the Modi government.

Hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Kharge said he has time to visit foreign nations, but has no time to tour Manipur,

For India, climate justice is a moral duty: Modi

PNS ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

Under its presidency, India will work to define BRICS in a new form and it will be 'Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability', Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the summit of the grouping on Monday.

India will hold the BRICS presidency next year.

In an address at a session on environment and global health, Modi also said that the health of the earth and the health of people are connected to each other.

"For India, climate justice is no alternative; it is a moral duty," Modi said, adding: "Where some people measure it in numbers, India lives it in values."

The prime minister also indicated India's possible priorities during its presidency of the BRICS grouping.

"Under India's BRICS presidency, we will work to define BRICS in a new form. BRICS will mean -- Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability," he said.

Modi also underlined the need to remain prepared for any eventualities.



"Under India's BRICS presidency, we will work to define BRICS in a new form. BRICS will mean -- Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability"

The COVID pandemic taught us that viruses do not come taking visas, and solutions, too, are not chosen by looking at passports, he said.

The prime minister also said the developing nations must have the same confidence about the future that the developed nations have.

The self-confidence about the future that developed countries have -- the same self-strength should also be in these countries, he added.

The top leaders of BRICS held deliberations on a range of pressing challenges facing the globe at the grouping's two-day annual summit in this seaside Brazilian city.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin skipped the summit. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Egypt's Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi also didn't attend the gathering.

The BRICS has emerged as

an influential grouping as it brings together 11 major emerging economies of the world, representing around 49.5 per cent of the global population, around 40 per cent of the global GDP and around 26 per cent of the global trade.

BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, with Indonesia joining in 2025.

Rahul accuses Modi govt of making the rich richer

Questions its silence on F&O manipulation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday accused the Narendra Modi government of making the rich richer and pushing ordinary investors to the brink of ruin by being silent on "manipulation" by big players in the futures and options (F&O) market.

Gandhi, in a post on X, said he had predicted the loopholes in the F&O market.

"I clearly stated in 2024 -- the F&O market has become a playground for 'big players,' and small investors' pockets are continuously being drained.

Now SEBI itself is admitting that Jane Street (Group) manipulated thousands of crores. Why did SEBI remain silent for so long?" he asked in



his post in Hindi.

The Congress leader accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Centre of turning a blind eye to the revelation and wondered if there were more players rigging the market.

"At whose behest was the Modi government sitting with its eyes shut? And how many more big sharks are still shorting retail investors?" he said.

"In every case, it is clear --

the Modi government is making the rich richer and pushing ordinary investors to the brink of ruin," he alleged.

Gandhi tagged his September 24, 2024, post in which he had stated, "Uncontrolled F&O trading has grown 45x in five years. Ninety per cent of small investors have lost Rs 1.8 lakh crore in three years."

It went on: "SEBI must reveal the names of the so-called 'Big Players' making a killing at their expense."

The Congress' head of media and publicity department, Pawan Khara, also joined in on the issue with Gandhi alleging that the market watchdog has ignored alleged corruption in the market and said SEBI has to answer a lot of questions.

'Appreciate Beijing's sensitivities on Tibet'

China protests to India over Modi's greetings to Dalai Lama

PNS ■ BEIJING

China said on Monday it protested to India over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's greetings to the Dalai Lama on his 90th birthday and the attendance of Indian officials at the celebrations, stressing New Delhi should fully appreciate Beijing's sensitivities on Tibet-related issues.

The position of the Chinese government on Tibet-related issues is consistent and clear, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here.

Mao was replying to a question on Prime Minister Modi's greeting the Dalai Lama on his 90th birthday and the attendance of Indian officials, including Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, at his



birthday celebrations.

"As is widely known, the 14th Dalai Lama is a political exile who has long engaged in anti-China separatist activities and seeks to separate Xizang from China under the cloak of religion," she said. China refers to Tibet as Xizang.

"India needs to be fully cognizant of the sensitivity of issues related to Xizang, see clearly the anti-China and separatist nature of the 14th Dalai Lama, honour

the commitments India has made to China on issues related to Xizang, act prudently, and stop using those issues to interfere in China's internal affairs. China has protested to India regarding its actions," Mao said.

Prime Minister Modi on Sunday extended warm wishes to the Dalai Lama and said he has been an enduring symbol of love, compassion, patience, and moral discipline.

"His message has inspired respect and admiration across all faiths. We pray for his continued good health and long life," Modi posted on X.

Union ministers Rijiju and Rajiv Ranjan Singh, Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu, and Sikkim minister Sonam Lama had attended his birthday celebrations in Dharamshala.

North-East to be country's development engine, says Scindia

PNS ■ INDORE

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Monday said the Narendra Modi government is moving towards making the north eastern region the country's development engine.

Total investments of Rs 5 lakh crore have been made in this region, comprising Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim, in the last 11 years, the Union Minister for Development of Northeast Region told reporters here.

"We are moving towards making the Northeast region the engine of the country's development as per the resolution of PM Modi. Investments of Rs 5 lakh crore has been made in this region during the last 11 years.

A foetus grows and develops in an amniotic sac during pregnancy.

However, in planned C-sections -- usually performed before labour has started naturally -- the baby does not experience this stress and is not exposed to vaginal bacteria, the team said.

The difference in exposure to vaginal bacteria and immunological factors thereof may help the increased risk of acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in a planned -- and not emergency -- C-section, the researchers added.

The findings help contribute towards understanding what causes acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in children.

lymphoblastic leukaemia, compared to those born vaginally.

However, compared to an emergency C-section, birth via a planned C-section was associated with a 21 per cent higher risk of developing acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, the most common form of childhood leukaemia.

"We observed an increased (acute lymphoblastic leukaemia) risk among children delivered by planned C-section (of 21 per cent)," the authors wrote.

Emergency caesarean sections usually begin as a vaginal delivery, which causes stress for the baby and exposure to vaginal bacteria if the amniotic sac has ruptured, they said.



during 1982-1989 and 1999-2015 from the Medical Birth Register.

More than 3.75 lakh of these (15.5 per cent) were born by a C-section, of which 1,495 later

developed leukaemia -- a cancer affecting blood and bone marrow.

Overall, children born by a C-section were seven per cent more likely to develop acute

planned C-sections carry an increased risk of certain diseases, compared to emergency ones.

"We don't want mothers to feel anxious about medically indicated C-sections. But when this result is combined with other study results showing that the risk of later asthma, allergies, or type 1 diabetes increases in children born by planned C-section, there is reason to discuss C-sections that are not medically indicated," lead author Christina-Evmorfia Kampitsi, researcher at Karolinska Institutet, said.

The study, published in The International Journal of Cancer, looked at nearly 25 lakh children born in Sweden

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Having a planned caesarean section during delivery could be related to an increased risk of leukaemia -- a blood cancer -- later in the child's life, compared with an emergency C-section, a study has found.

A C-section delivery of a child involves making a surgical cut in the mother's abdomen and uterus. The need for delivering via a C-section can be planned or arise as an emergency during labour.

Researchers at Karolinska Institutet said that exposure of a baby to vaginal bacteria in an emergency C-section -- which usually begins as a vaginal delivery -- could be why



Editor's
TAKE

A Diplomatic win for India on terror and trade

BRICS strongly condemns terrorism and endorses India's view on tariff and global trade

India could not have asked for more from the BRICS Summit at Rio, Brazil. It gave a stamp of approval to India's contention on terror and tariffs, the two primary concerns of India and for that matter, the Global South. The BRICS Summit unanimously voiced its concern for a more equitable global trade environment. In a powerful declaration adopted on Sunday, the BRICS nations — Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa — condemned the Pahalgam terror attack "in the strongest terms" and reaffirmed their commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms. Though the document did not explicitly name Pakistan, its reference to "cross-border terrorism," "terrorism financing," and "safe havens" strongly mirrored India's stand and was a rebuke to Islamabad, which has used non-state actors to indulge in acts of terror and has used it as a tool of diplomacy.

It was indeed a balanced declaration, which, while upholding India's view on terrorism, did not link it to any religion, nationality, civilisation, or ethnic group — a principle New Delhi has all along maintained and cherished. India firmly believes that terrorism has no religion or nationality; it is a crime against humanity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, addressing the summit, struck a resolute tone: "Condemning terrorism must be a matter of principle, and not just of convenience," he said. "If our response depends on where or against whom the attack occurred, it shall be a betrayal of humanity itself."

In one sentence, Prime Minister Modi gave a subtle warning to China, which has on various occasions blocked UN action against Pakistan-based terror outfits. Modi further emphasised the need for unambiguous global action: "There must be no hesitation in imposing sanctions on terrorists. The victims and supporters of terrorism cannot be treated equally."

The BRICS declaration echoed this sentiment, underlining "zero tolerance" for terrorism and calling on all nations to fulfill their obligations under international law, including the UN Charter. This is seen as an indirect reminder to China, whose diplomatic shielding of Pakistan at the UN has repeatedly frustrated India's counter-terrorism efforts.

The other highlight of the BRICS Summit has been its stand on global trade. On trade, the Summit also acknowledged India's position on unjust tariffs and the need for fairer global trading systems. The leaders backed India's concerns over protectionism and unilateral trade measures imposed by some advanced economies, mainly the USA. The summit gave unequivocal support for a level playing field and denounced the tariff regime propagated by American President Donald Trump. However, Trump was quick to retaliate and said that those countries that align with BRICS would have to pay an additional 10 per cent tariff. In all, the BRICS Summit in Brazil offered India both a platform and validation. The clear articulation of New Delhi's core concerns — from terrorism to trade justice — and their endorsement in the final declaration marks a strategic and moral victory for Indian diplomacy on the global stage.

Van Mahotsav: Planting trees, protecting lives

As India marks Van Mahotsav 2025, the "Festival of Trees" carries more urgency than ever. What began in 1950 as a tree-planting initiative by KM Munshi has since evolved into one of the nation's most vital environmental movements

Every year, from July 1st to 7th, India celebrates Van Mahotsav, the "Festival of Trees." Initiated in 1950 by Shri KM Munshi, the then Union Minister for Agriculture, this national tree-planting drive was envisioned to encourage forest conservation and environmental stewardship. Over the decades, it has grown into one of India's most impactful ecological campaigns, raising awareness about the vital role trees play in sustaining life.

In 2025, as India and the world face intensifying climate challenges, this celebration takes on renewed urgency. The theme for this year, "Planting Trees for Resilience," underscores the reality that trees are not just green adornments of nature — they are our protectors. They safeguard our homes, farmlands, water sources, urban landscapes, and, ultimately, our lives.

The monsoon season has once again brought severe devastation — floods, landslides, cloudbursts, and flash floods across regions like Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and the Northeast. Hills have collapsed, rivers have overflowed, and entire communities have been swept away.

At the same time, parts of central, western, and southern India are battling delayed or inadequate rainfall, resulting in droughts, plunging water levels, failing crops, and depleting groundwater. This simultaneous crisis — flooding in some regions and drought in others — is becoming more frequent each year.

A major contributor to this imbalance is environmental degradation, especially deforestation due to development, mining, road-building, and unregulated urbanisation. Trees play a critical role in managing rainfall by absorbing water, reducing surface runoff, and binding soil. When forests are cleared, rainwater rushes unchecked over barren land, causing erosion, landslides, and flooding.

In cities, the loss of tree cover leads to clogged drains, flash floods, and higher temperatures. In villages, it exacerbates droughts and depletes soil fertility.

Experts warn that over 60 per cent of India's land is vulnerable to natural disasters. According to the Swiss Red Catastrophe Report, India suffered economic losses of over \$12 billion (₹1 lakh crore) in 2023 alone due to natural calamities — a significant jump from the decade's annual average of \$8 billion.

In this context, tree planting is more than an environmental activity — it is a life-saving strategy. Trees act as natural infrastructure. Their roots stabilise soil, absorb rainwater, reduce landslide risks, purify air, lower temperatures, and recharge groundwater.



They are among the most effective defences against climate-induced disasters, especially in a geographically diverse country like India. Consider Odisha's mangrove forests. During the devastating 1999 super cyclone, villages shielded by mangroves suffered far less damage than those without.

Since then, Odisha has restored large tracts of mangroves, offering effective protection during cyclones like Phailin (2013) and Fani (2019). Research shows that just one hectare of mangroves can reduce wave energy by up to 60 per cent, shielding communities from tidal surges and storm winds.

In hilly states like Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, deforestation on slopes has intensified landslides. Yet reforestation efforts, especially those led by Eco Task Forces supported by the Army, have helped reclaim barren hills. Indigenous trees like oak, pine, and bamboo are being planted to stabilise slopes and prevent erosion. Studies confirm that tree-covered villages endure less monsoon-related damage.

In drought-prone regions like Marathwada and parts of Rajasthan, agroforestry is proving transformative. Farmers who integrate trees such as neem, moringa, or amaltas with crops report improved soil moisture, more stable yields, and better drought resistance.

These trees also provide fruit, fodder, and shade while supporting groundwater recharge. In some cases, farmers have recorded yield increases of up to 30 per cent due to agroforestry practices.

Urban India, too, is reeling from rising temperatures and air pollution. In 2024, several cities hit scorching highs of 48–49°C, leading to heatstroke-related deaths. Urban trees act as natural air conditioners, cooling their surroundings by up to 10°C. To promote green urban spaces, the Government of India launched the *Nagar Van Yojana* (NVY) in 2020, aiming to establish 1,000 *Nagar Vans* or urban forests in cities.

The programme encourages active involvement of communities, local bodies, NGOs, and educational institutions to build cleaner, greener, and healthier cities. India's broader climate commitments also emphasise forest restoration. Under the Paris Agreement, the country has pledged to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ by 2030 through increased forest and tree cover.

The India State of Forest Report 2023 indicates that 25.17 per cent of the country's land is under forest and tree cover, with a carbon stock of 30.43 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. Government programmes like the Green India Mission and CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority) aim to strengthen afforestation efforts nationwide. However, the responsibility of greening India cannot rest with the Government alone — it must become a collective move-

ment. The recent "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" campaign, launched by the Prime Minister in 2024, encouraged millions to plant a tree in memory of their mothers, transforming tree planting into a deeply personal and community-centred act.

Educational institutions across India are nurturing eco-conscious students through the *School Nursery Yojana* and *Eco-Clubs*. In villages, joint forest management committees, in collaboration with local residents, are reviving degraded forests. For many rural and tribal communities, forests are their lifeline, providing food, herbs, bamboo, and other essentials. Thriving forests enhance water availability, support agriculture, and build disaster resilience.

As we celebrate Van Mahotsav this year, let us move beyond symbolic acts. Tree planting must be thoughtful and context-sensitive — choosing native species, matching local soil and climate conditions, and ensuring sapling care for at least two to three years to ensure survival and growth.

Every sapling planted today is a promise — to the environment, to future generations, and to ourselves. Trees are our shield, our lifeline, and our legacy. This Van Mahotsav, let every school, roadside, farm, and barren hill become a beacon of restoration. For in each tree lies the hope of a greener, safer, and more resilient tomorrow.

(The writer is former Executive Director, National Institute of Disaster Management, Government of India. Views are personal)

PIC TALK



Pilgrims on the way to the holy cave shrine of Amarnath, at Sheshnag area in Anantnag district.
Photo: PTI

Why human touch still matters in a tech-driven world

SECOND Opinion

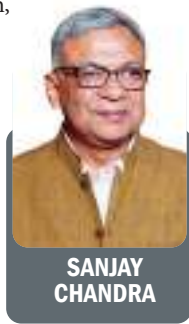
Technology has revolutionised our lives in unimaginable ways. The pace of change may have been slow initially, but the foundations laid earlier have ensured that it has grown exponentially since the turn of the century. However, a few recent incidents made me realise that these machines can only be as good as the way they are programmed, utilised, and improved upon. One weekend, we ordered dinner through a major food delivery app. Our order was accepted by the kitchen, and soon enough, the delivery partner was also assigned.

I called the delivery boy, who had remained stationary at the restaurant location even past the expected delivery time. The rider confirmed that he was waiting outside the mall for a call from the restaurant to pick up the food. The restaurant was unreachable on the contact number that I could dial only through the app. By now, the delivery time had also been revised. A call to the helpline in Bangalore resulted in their calling the same unreachable number. The order was promptly cancelled, and the money was refunded. Another time, the restaurant on the same platform confirmed handing over the food to the rider. This time, he was unreachable. I received a message that the delivery would be made within the next few minutes, even though the app was reflecting the deliv-

ery boy at the same location near the restaurant the entire time. A few days later, I ordered an Ayurvedic medicine through a leading medicine delivery app. An expected delivery time was promptly given, which continued to remain on display, even till the actual delivery — almost three hours later. A leading national airline has also developed a similar interface for flyers. This platform provides almost real-time updates. My recent flight to Delhi from Raipur was delayed by a few hours due to operational issues.

The app continued to display the status of the incoming flight as "Taxiing." I could not fathom whether it was at the departing or the arriving airport. There was no staff at the boarding desk. There were no updates, either on the phone or through announcements, for a long time. I was a grumpy old man as I landed after midnight. These are not isolated cases. There are numerous examples of the cancellation of cabs by drivers. Many have unpleasant experiences with other platforms. The messages in all such cases are automated without confirmation by a helpdesk executive.

A positive confirmation, either by an executive or even by the concerned parties on the app, with adverse consequences in case of default, might be one of the solutions. My 95-year-old father sometimes gets frustrated when he is unable to locate a file on his laptop or smartphone. He blames it on the electronic device. I tell him that the gadgets and virtual services will do what they are wired to do.



SANJAY
CHANDRA

These modern gadgets and apps are supposed to make our lives simpler and not complicate them beyond the daily stress we already undergo in this fast-paced world. I would certainly be happy if a helpdesk executive connects with me, apologises and compensates me for the deficiency in service, without me having to dial an unreachable number, or dial a highly busy number which is connected after numerous attempts and pressing several keys. It is not an impossible ask.

AI has pervaded all walks of our lives through our smartphones and computers. I find all my social media handles and internet explorers flooded with feeds and advertisements about a product or service over which I may have spent a little more time than a fleeting glance on a platform.

I have a sneaking suspicion that AI captures our requirements — even snooping through our conversations. One day, I was discussing something with my wife. The next time I opened my mobile, I had a lot of feeds about the said product. Humans are the only beings on Earth with a highly evolved intellect that is working around the clock for a life of comfort for mankind. A trained backend official should be used not only to soothe frayed nerves but also as a feedback mechanism for software and machine improvement. This would be an investment worth making and should not be treated as an unnecessary expense. We must understand that humans and technology are co-dependent for a mutually beneficial relationship.

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

Letters to the Editor

A test to remember!

Team India's emphatic 336-run victory over England in the second Test at Edgbaston has etched a new chapter in Indian cricket history. This win was not just a comeback after the first Test defeat but a dominant all-round performance that showcased India's growing strength in overseas conditions. Several records tumbled during this memorable match. Captain Shubman Gill, in his debut as Test skipper, led from the front with a brilliant double century (269 runs), becoming the youngest Indian captain to achieve this feat.

On the bowling front, the lethal spells of Mohammad Siraj and Akashdeep — claiming six wickets in the first and second innings respectively — dismantled the English batting line-up. This 336-run victory is now India's biggest Test win in England and ranks among their most significant overseas triumphs. It is a powerful reminder that Indian cricket is evolving beyond home dominance, excelling in pace, spin, temperament, and leadership — even on foreign soil.

Such performances not only bring immense joy to fans but also inspire a new generation of cricketers. Kudos to Team India! Team India's record-breaking win at Edgbaston marks a historic shift in their overseas dominance. With Gill's stellar captaincy, fiery bowling, and all-round brilliance, this victory signals a new era of confidence and capability abroad. A proud moment that will inspire generations to come.

VIJAY KOSHTI | SANGLI

Time for Parliament to act on Justice Varma case

Apologies "Opposition for Justice Varma impeachment" (July 4), the discovery of burnt sacks of currency on the premises of Justice Yashwant Varma, his subsequent transfer to the Allahabad High Court, and his indictment by a Supreme Court-appointed committee raise serious concerns. While due process has found him guilty, the final responsibility now rests with Parliament.

The Rajya Sabha or Lok Sabha must decide whether to initiate impeachment — a constitutional mechanism that reinforces public faith in the judiciary. India has seen few such cases. In 1993, Justice V Ramaswami faced impeachment for financial misconduct but escaped removal due to the lack of a two-thirds majority.

Justice Soumitra Sen was impeached by the Rajya Sabha in 2011, while other proceedings — against Justices JB Pardiwala, SK Gangele, and CV Nagarjuna Reddy — were either unsuccessful or dropped. The resignation of Justice PD Dinakaran amid serious charges in 2011 is another reminder that timely action is crucial to prevent deeper erosion of public trust.

The judiciary is revered as the temple of justice. If Parliament fails to act decisively on the Justice Varma case, it risks diluting that sanctity. Justice must not only be done but must also be seen to be done — both in the courtroom and in the halls of power.

AP THIRUVADI | CHENNAI

Thackeray cousins join hands

This is in response to the news report titled "Thackeray cousins join hands" (July 6). No one, except in self-defence or defence of others, has any legal, democratic, moral, or constitutional right to physically assault another person — even if that person is an alleged criminal.

Assaulting someone merely for not speaking Marathi in Mumbai is reprehensible and deserves the strongest condemnation. Equally condemnable is the vandalism of property belonging to any entrepreneur who publicly refuses to speak Marathi while residing in Maharashtra.

That said, every individual has a moral responsibility to respect and learn the language of the land that provides them with livelihood, shelter, and opportunities. Ignoring the local language reflects an exploitative mindset that treats the region solely as a means for material gain. Migrants must respect the linguistic identity of the states they settle in, just as all residents of Maharashtra should embrace Marathi with pride. The unity of the Thackeray cousins is a reminder to rise above political egos when the dignity of the mother tongue is at stake — though never through violence. Finally, India must uphold its federal spirit. Imposing Hindi across non-Hindi-speaking states only invites resistance. Let each state celebrate its own language, with English as a neutral link for national and global communication.

KAJAL CHATTERJEE | KOLKATA

JUST A SIMPLE BUDDHIST MONK: THE NOBEL LAUREATE DALAI LAMA

On his birthday, the Dalai Lama said he was "just a simple Buddhist monk" and that he will continue to focus on his commitments of promoting human values and religious harmony. He also vowed to keep defying China for years.

One thing I don't understand is why China gets irritated and scared of the Dalai Lama, and runs for their money! Seeing it in a geopolitical context, it is clear it is not his zest or jest; rather it is the Dalai Lama Digest! It's China's worry that the spiritual leader expressed his hope to live for another 30 to 40 years, serving people until he is 130 years old.

Though the Dalai Lama is not like our non-biological Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he hoped to live past 130 years of age. Speaking to followers in McLeodganj, the spiritual leader recently made a speech amid continuing debates on succession, having previously hinted that he would live to be 110 or 113.

Scripture shows that the majority of

sages in India are recognised for renunciation, which is also the core of the sacred text Bhagavad Gita. Not only the age factor, but also to burn the heart of China, the Dalai Lama allayed their concerns about the future of the institution of the Dalai Lama by saying that he would reincarnate as the leader of the faith upon his death, and that his non-profit institution, the Gaden Phodrang Trust, had the sole authority to recognise his successor.

This statement was interpreted as a message to China. Immediately, China has said that the succession will have to be approved by its leaders. Whatsoever, in 1959, after a failed uprising in Tibet, he fled to India with over 80,000 followers. In India for more than 60 years, he has worked to promote peace, love and compassion. Happy birthday to Your Holiness — may your peace spread through the world, especially to China.

BIDYUT K CHATTERJEE | FARIDABAD

Please send your letter to the letterstopioneer@gmail.com. In not more than 400 words. We appreciate your feedback.

250 years of American democracy and the machinery of power

The US democracy sold as pure, moral and unprecedented is increasingly under lens. Behind the facade of democratic virtue lies a history of conquest, slavery and imperialism; carefully constructed narratives masking brutal truths for 250 years are now crumbling

FIRST
Column

We have been deceived — again and again — into believing that US democracy was born as a noble product of collective will. The story handed down to us is that George Washington, in a moment of virtuous restraint, rejected Colonel Lewis Nicola's suggestion to crown him king, choosing instead the path of liberty and republicanism. This moment is celebrated as the moral genesis of American democracy. But 250 years on, the illusion fractures under the weight of historical reality.

What has been marketed to the world as democracy is, in fact, a meticulously engineered architecture of power: elitist at home, imperial abroad. The so-called "rules-based order" championed by American diplomats is not a codified universalism — it is an ideological cudgel wielded only when convenient, a system of selective legality designed to mask naked geopolitical aggression.

America's origin myth is steeped not in egalitarianism but in extermination, slavery, and expansionism. The Declaration of Independence, crafted by men who themselves owned human beings, is less a document of freedom than a philosophical smokescreen. The economic engine of the new republic ran on the backs of enslaved Africans — auctioned, whipped, raped, and bred like livestock. The foundational wealth of the United States was extracted not merely through commerce or innovation, but through racialised brutality institutionalised as law.

Simultaneously, Indigenous nations were decimated by policies so ferocious they now fall under the ambit of genocide. The Trail of Tears, initiated under Andrew Jackson, led to the deaths of thousands during forced removals. The Sand Creek Massacre (1864), the Bear River Massacre (1863), and the slaughter at Wounded Knee (1890) are but a few unambiguous testaments to settler — colonial annihilation. These were not chaotic by-products of war — they were methodical acts of ethnic cleansing, carried out under Government authority. The Indian Boarding Schools, operating well into the 20th century, functioned as laboratories of cultural erasure. Native children were stolen from their families, stripped of language and identity, and subjected to systematic abuse. Many perished. Their bodies remain buried, literally and metaphorically, in the margins of American history books.

Slavery's formal abolition was a bait-and-switch. The 13th Amendment, often cited as a moral landmark, explicitly permits involuntary servitude "as punishment for crime." This clause birthed the carceral leviathan that now holds more than two million people — disproportionately Black and Brown — in cages. Chain gangs were simply replaced by prison labour. Jim Crow laws mutated into mass incarceration. Democracy, in the land of its supposed origin, has been operationalised as an instrument of racial management.

Beyond its borders, the United States has imposed its will through fire and steel. Since the



mid-20th century, over 800 American military bases have metastasised across the globe — encircling rivals, destabilising regions, and foreclosing sovereign futures. The map of US bombings reads like a grim eulogy for the postcolonial world: Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945), Korea (1950-53), Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia (1964-75), Grenada (1983), Panama (1989), Iraq (1991, 2003), Yugoslavia (1999), Afghanistan (2001-2021), Libya (2011), Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan — the list is encyclopaedic, the outcomes catastrophic.

These assaults were not aberrations. They are the sinews of US foreign policy. Civilian casualties, mass displacement, decimated infrastructure — these are collateral sacrifices at the altar of

American primacy. The 2003 invasion of Iraq, launched under the pretext of non-existent weapons of mass destruction, killed hundreds of thousands

AMERICA'S ORIGIN MYTH IS STEEPED NOT IN EGALITARIANISM BUT IN EXTERMINATION, SLAVERY, AND EXPANSIONISM. THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, CRAFTED BY MEN WHO THEMSELVES OWNED HUMAN BEINGS, IS LESS A DOCUMENT OF FREEDOM THAN A PHILOSOPHICAL SMOKESCREEN



NILANTHA
ILANGAMUWA

Air India crash sparks safety, insurance, and policy overhaul

BY IFRA KHAN

The Air India Flight 171 crash, which claimed over 240 lives in Ahmedabad, has triggered a major overhaul in India's aviation, insurance, and safety policies. With insurance claims expected to reach US\$475 million, the tragedy has spotlighted gaps in airline liability, compensation norms under the Montreal Convention, and the role of global reinsurers.

As the Tata Group and insurers expedite relief and settlements, the disaster underscores the need for stronger compliance, transparent investigations, and long-term safety reforms to restore public trust in Indian aviation.

The Indian aviation industry is facing a crisis of confidence after the catastrophic crash of Air India's Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, which claimed the lives of all except one passenger in Ahmedabad on June 12, 2025. The Air India 171 flight took over 240 lives, including several on the ground.

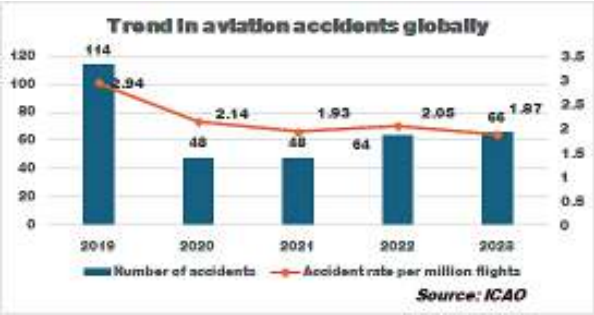
Despite being statistically rare, aviation accidents evoke intense public fear and scrutiny because of their catastrophic nature, high fatality rates, and dramatic media coverage. Unlike car crashes, which happen frequently and individually, a single plane crash often results in the loss of hundreds of lives at once, amplifying its emotional and psychological impact. Air travel also symbolises technological mastery and safety, so when failures occur, they shake public trust not just in airlines, but in regulators, manufacturers, and human judgment. The suddenness, scale, and helplessness associated with such tragedies make them resonate deeply, prompting calls for accountability and systemic reform.

Since its takeover by Tata Sons in 2022 from the government, Air India has been working towards becoming a 'world-class' airline, even amidst persistent issues like delayed flights and subpar service standards. But this devastating tragedy has not only eclipsed those efforts—it has dealt a severe blow to the airline's credibility and long-term ambitions.

Air India's resources will now be diverted toward addressing the aftermath of the crash—managing insurance claims, identifying the cause, implementing corrective safety measures, and rebuilding its reputation. Tata AIG is the lead insurer, with participation from New India Assurance, ICICI Lombard, and a few public sector companies.

Insurance claims related to the crash are anticipated to reach approximately US\$475 million, covering both the aircraft's hull and engine as well as liability for the loss of lives, according to a report by Bloomberg News. Policybazaar data indicates that Air India's entire fleet is insured for around US\$20 billion, with an annual insurance premium of nearly US\$30 million.

All affected passengers will receive compensation under Air India's insurance cover, and since the flight included people of various nationalities,



the Montreal Convention will guide payouts. India, a signatory since 2009, mandates a minimum compensation of 128,821 Special Drawing Rights (SDRs)—around ₹1 1.5 crore per victim—regardless of fault. Crucially, the treaty also allows for unlimited liability if negligence is proven.

Historically, the process of determining compensation in aviation disasters has been shaped by a combination of international conventions, domestic legal systems, and the unique circumstances surrounding each crash. A notable example is the 2015 Germanwings Flight 9525 tragedy, where the co-pilot deliberately crashed the aircraft, killing all on board. In that case, Lufthansa — the parent airline — offered initial financial assistance to victims' families, but many chose to pursue higher compensation through courts, citing alleged negligence in failing to properly assess the pilot's mental health.

In contrast to the Montreal Convention's provisions, countries still governed by the older Warsaw Convention enforce much lower compensation ceilings (as low as US\$8,300), creating significant disparities across regions. Airlines also tend to offer interim relief to address immediate financial needs.

For instance, Germanwings provided upfront payments of around 54,000 to each affected family. However, inconsistencies in these practices have led to calls for greater global uniformity. Together, these cases underscore the complex interplay between legal obligations, humanitarian considerations, and reputational management in the aftermath of aviation tragedies—and set an important precedent for how compensation may unfold in the Air India Flight 171 case.

Given the magnitude of potential claims, Indian insurers are unlikely to bear the full risk alone. Reinsurance giants like Lloyd's of London, Swiss Re, and Munich Re are expected to absorb a significant portion of the liabilities, making this a globally shared financial event. As investigations unfold, reinsurers will play a critical role in evaluating Air India's compliance with safety protocols and pilot assessments.

Meanwhile, claim settlements are expected to vary based on several factors, including passenger nationality, travel class, and whether they held individual travel insurance policies. Passengers

with additional personal coverage may receive supplementary payouts beyond the airline's liability. Families of ground victims, including those who lost homes or businesses, will also seek compensation for property damage and loss of livelihood. However, the claims process may be complicated in cases where entire families perished, leaving no immediate next of kin.

In addition to insurance payouts, Tata Group has announced ₹1 crore in compensation for each deceased person's family, including those who died on the ground. The company also stated it would cover medical expenses for those injured and ensure necessary care and support. The crash impacted several people in the Meghani Nagar area near the airport, including doctors, students, hospital staff, and residents.

The insurance industry is navigating an unfamiliar situation — balancing thorough checks with the need for swift, compassionate action. To speed up the process, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) issued a circular on June 14 directing insurers to submit weekly claim updates from June 16. It also asked them to appoint nodal officers, waive formalities like FIRs and postmortem reports, and expedite disbursements under life and personal accident policies. As the insurance and legal processes unfold, the crash of Air India Flight 171 is likely to become a reference point for future aviation safety and compensation practices in India. It underscores the pressing need for robust compliance mechanisms, timely audits, and better coordination among insurers, regulators, and airlines.

The tragedy also brings to light the human cost of aviation failures, demanding not just financial settlements but also policy reforms that prioritise preventive measures. For Indian aviation to restore public confidence, it must now focus on transparent investigations, survivor support, and long-term safety investments. Whether through fair compensation, regulatory accountability, or global insurance cooperation, the collective response to this disaster will shape the future trajectory of India's aviation sector.

(The writer is Business Correspondent at India Business & Trade. Views are personal)

and unravelled an entire region. It was not just a war crime; it was an act of ontological vandalism.

Meanwhile, the CIA functioned as the state's clandestine sword arm—executing assassinations, staging coups, and manipulating foreign Governments with pathological impunity. Operation Ajax in Iran (1953), the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in Congo (1961), the orchestration of Chile's 1973 coup and Salvador Allende's death, the slaughter following Suharto's rise in Indonesia — these are not Cold War footnotes. They are the operational grammar of empire. From Latin America's death squads to Africa's proxy militias, the US exported death in the name of freedom, dissolving democracies while preaching democratic virtue. The façade cracked further on 22 June 2025, when the US military launched the airstrikes on alleged Iranian nuclear sites. Again, no Senate approval. Again, no UN mandate. No evidence presented, no imminent threat substantiated. Just premeditated violence delivered from above, wrapped in the rhetoric of preemption.

These violations are not the exceptions — they are the doctrine. They expose the hollow core of the "rules-based international order" that American officials regurgitate at every diplomatic summit.

How an ancient Indian path became a global movement

Yoga, an ancient practice rooted in the spiritual and philosophical traditions of India, has long transcended its geographical and cultural origins. Though born in the Indian subcontinent thousands of years ago, yoga today is a global phenomenon — practiced from the skyscrapers of New York to the deserts of Dubai, from Berlin's wellness studios to Japanese Zen gardens. This global embrace reflects more than just a fad; it signifies a deeper, growing understanding of yoga's essence as a holistic path to self-awareness, health, and spiritual balance. Yoga traces its origins to northern India more than 5,000 years ago. The earliest mention of the word "yoga" appears in the Rig Veda. But yoga was never meant to be confined to a region. The West encountered yoga during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, initially as an esoteric philosophy rather than a physical practice. Swami Vivekananda's speech at the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago in 1893 was among the earliest sparks that ignited Western curiosity. But it was only in the mid-20th century that yoga truly began to spread in the West, thanks to several pivotal Indian yogis.

One of the most influential figures was Swami Vishnudevananda, a direct disciple of Swami Sivananda, the founder of Sivananda Yoga. Born in Kerala, Swami Vishnudevananda was tasked by his guru to bring the knowledge of yoga to the West. In 1957, he travelled to North America and founded the International Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres.

Swami Vishnudevananda's approach was holistic. He emphasised the "Five Points of Yoga": proper exercise, proper breathing, proper relaxation, proper diet, and positive thinking with meditation. These principles formed the bedrock of the Sivananda tradition. He didn't merely transplant yoga as a fitness regime but presented it as a complete lifestyle. He also became known as a peace ambassador, famously flying over war zones in a small plane painted with the word "OM," dropping leaflets promoting peace. His mission embodied the core spirit of yoga, unity, peace, and spiritual awakening. While Swami Vishnudevananda spread classical yoga, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi introduced Transcendental Meditation (TM) in the 1960s, bringing a simplified and accessible form of yogic meditation to the West. TM attracted global attention when The Beatles and other celebrities became his followers.

This initiated a trend where yoga and meditation were not only health tools but also became fashionable symbols of spiritual exploration. In the 1970s, Bikram Choudhury introduced Bikram Yoga, a heated, high-intensity series of 26 postures. His brand of yoga gained rapid popularity, especially in the United States. It reflected the West's initial fascination with yoga's physical benefits, flexibility, strength, and detoxification, often sidelining its deeper spiritual com-

Where were the rules when the International Atomic Energy Agency's findings were ignored? When do civilians become uncounted corpses? Sovereignty is sacred — until it obstructs US interests. Legality is upheld — until it isn't. Morality is espoused — until it becomes inconvenient.

Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony is not an abstraction here. American dominance is sustained not only through bombs and bases but through narratives. The cinematic heroism of soldiers, the pageantry of the 4th of July, the mythologising of the Founding Fathers — all cultivate acquiescence. This is not democracy; it is imperial pedagogy. History is sculpted to erase Indigenous resistance, to sanitise slave rebellions, to omit the bloodied cost of expansion. Power survives by shaping memory.

Domestically, this hegemony manifests as a fortified police state. Urban policing is militarised, racialised, and terminally unaccountable. Surveillance pervades every digital crevice. Billionaires underwrite elections while voters are purged from the rolls.

Meanwhile, whistleblowers like Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden are criminalised for revealing the very duplicities on which the system runs. Justice is rationed. Dissent is criminalised. The machinery of control is bipartisan. And yet, resistance grows quieter when comfort replaces conviction. US policymakers have long perfected a dual strategy: attracting the brightest minds from other nations through the front door with scholarships and opportunity, while welcoming corrupt elites through the back door, bringing with them vast stolen wealth. This was not a coincidence; it was policy. Intellectual capital is harvested, while accountability is outsourced. Those who manage to benefit — regardless of where they come from — often learn to stay silent. Silence becomes the currency of survival.

Meanwhile, American officials, often standing in nations hollowed out by these very dynamics, deliver polished speeches about anti-corruption and a "rules-based order." It is disarming to witness a person speak of justice while actively undermining it, to see a smile accompany the quiet betrayal of their conscience. At 250 years, the United States is not an enlightened republic; it is a paradox on the verge of collapse. It exhorts others to uphold international law while treating treaties as toilet paper. It funds brutal regimes while sermonising about human rights. It cloaks militarism in democracy and calls it liberation.

To participate in this pageantry is to be complicit. To swallow the official myths is to ingest poison disguised as principle. American democracy, if it is to mean anything, must be exhumed, dismantled, and reimagined — not venerated as sacred scripture, but interrogated as a living contradiction.

(The writer is Colombo based journalist and columnist. Views are personal)



SHARMILA
DAS

ponents. Initially, yoga in the West was heavily skewed toward physical postures (asanas), often practiced in gyms and health clubs. However, with increasing exposure and maturity, many practitioners began exploring its subtler dimensions: breath control (pranayama), meditation (dhyana), ethical living (yamas and niyamas), and self-inquiry.

Mindfulness, now a buzzword in wellness circles, is deeply rooted in yogic and meditative practices. Concepts like ahimsa (non-violence) and santosha (contentment) began finding resonance in the personal growth movements. Yoga gradually reclaimed its identity as not just a tool for physical fitness, but as a transformative path toward mental clarity and spiritual alignment.

A turning point in yoga's global journey came in 2014, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed the idea of an International Day of Yoga at the United Nations General Assembly. In his speech, Modi described yoga as "India's invaluable gift to the world," emphasising its role in fostering unity between mind and body, man and nature. The proposal received overwhelming support from 177 countries, the highest number of co-sponsors ever for a UN resolution. Thus, June 21, the summer solstice and the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, was declared International Yoga Day. Since 2015, millions across continents have participated in mass yoga sessions every year, a global testament to its universal appeal.

Surprisingly to some, yoga is now making steady inroads into regions traditionally seen as culturally distant from its roots. In the Middle East and the Arab world, yoga is increasingly practiced not only in private studios but also publicly and even officially endorsed in some countries. Governments in the UAE and Saudi Arabia have supported yoga for its health benefits. In 2021, Saudi Arabia officially recognised yoga as a sports activity, and it is now part of wellness programs in schools and workplaces.

Women in these regions are also taking to yoga in large numbers, seeing it as both empowering and spiritually enriching. The West is also actively experimenting with yoga, often blending it with other practices. From yoga with weights to aerial yoga, from goat yoga to VR-assisted meditation, the creativity seems boundless. While some purists criticise this as dilution, others argue it's part of yoga's organic evolution, much like how Indian martial art niyudh (barehanded combat) evolved into kung fu in China and karate in Japan. Just as India's ancient martial systems found expression in new forms across Asia, yoga too is likely to evolve further in the West, spawning new schools, philosophies and applications, perhaps some yet unimaginable today.

(The writer is certified Sivananda Yoga teacher with over 30 years of practice. Views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS



Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC mobilises Rs 700 cr

Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC on Monday said it has raised Rs 700 crore through the first closure of its Structured Opportunities Fund – Series II, a Category II Alternative Investment Fund (AIF). The capital raised includes co-investments, the asset management firm said in a statement. The fund aims to raise Rs 1,250 crore with a greenshoe option of an additional Rs 1,250 crore, aiming for a total mobilisation of Rs 2,500 crore. The fund focuses on performing credit opportunities, offering capital solutions across growth, strategic, and opportunistic requirements. With a focus on structured credit transactions for mid-to-large corporates in asset-heavy sectors such as manufacturing, infrastructure and industrials, the fund seeks to build a diversified portfolio of 10-12 investments targeting mid-teens internal rate of return (IRR) range. The fund has already deployed part of the committed capital across select opportunities in sectors such as chemicals, auto and financials.



Rupee plunges 47 paise to close at 85.87 against US dollar

The rupee fell sharply by 47 paise to close at 85.87 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday amid rising global crude oil prices and a strong American currency. Outflow of foreign funds fuelled by uncertainties over US President Donald Trump's trade tariffs put further pressure on the local unit, according to forex traders. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.53 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 85.51-86.03 before settling at 85.87 (provisional), lower by 47 paise from its previous close. The rupee had settled at 85.40 against the US dollar on Friday. The rupee fell on constant buying by oil companies and importers as Saudi Arabia raised oil prices for Asian deliveries despite increase in output for the month of August and expectations for an increase of the output in September, Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said. "Trump's (tariff) deadline of July 9 was approaching and there has been no sign of India-US trade deal happening... the rupee has fallen as the market is not expecting the deal to be done soon and the US could impose additional duties on India exports," he said.



Gold falls to Rs 98,570/10 g amid muted demand

Gold prices fell by Rs 550 to Rs 98,570 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday following muted global trends and continued tariff threats from US President Donald Trump. According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at Rs 99,120 per 10 grams on Saturday, up by Rs 100 from the previous close. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity declined by Rs 500 to Rs 98,100 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). It had settled at Rs 98,600 per 10 grams in the previous market session. Silver prices remained unchanged for the second straight session at Rs 1,04,800 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday. Bullion traders said the fall in gold prices was in line with subdued global trends and profit-booking by investors at higher levels. Moreover, seasonal demand in the physical market remained subdued, contributing to the decline in prices.

Pressure from Trump for trade deals before deadline

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

The Trump administration is stepping up pressure on trading partners to quickly make new deals before a Wednesday deadline, with plans for the United States to start sending letters Monday warning countries that higher tariffs could kick in Aug 1.

That furthers the uncertainty for businesses, consumers and America's trading partners, and questions remain about which countries will be notified, whether anything will change in the days ahead and whether President Donald Trump will once more push off imposing the rates.

Trump and his top trade advisers say he could extend the time for dealmaking but they insist the administration is applying maximum pressure on other nations.

Kevin Hassett, director of the White House National Economic Council, told CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday that Trump would decide

But hints at more time for talks



when it was time to give up on negotiations.

"The United States is always willing to talk to everybody about everything," Hassett said.

"There are deadlines, and there are things that are close, so maybe things will push back past the deadline or maybe they won't. In the end the president is going to make that judgment."

Stephen Miran, the chair of

the White House Council of Economic Advisers, likewise said countries negotiating in good faith and making concessions could "sort of, get the date rolled."

The steeper tariffs that Trump announced April 2 threatened to overhaul the global economy and lead to broader trade wars.

A week later, after the financial markets had panicked, his administration suspended for

90 days most of the higher taxes on imports just as they were to take effect. The negotiating window until July 9 has led to announced deals only with the United Kingdom and Vietnam.

Trump imposed elevated tariff rates on dozens of nations that run meaningful trade surpluses with the US, and a 10% baseline tax on imports from all countries in response to what he called an economic emergency. There are separate 50% tariffs on steel and aluminum and a 25% tariff on autos.

Since April, few foreign governments have set new trade terms with Washington as the Republican president demanded.

Trump told reporters Friday that his administration might be sending out letters as early as Saturday to countries spelling out their tariff rates if they did not reach a deal, but that the US would not start collecting those taxes until Aug 1.

India aims to double maize output to 86 mn tonne: Agri Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India can more than double its maize production to 86 million tonne by 2047 from the current 42.3 million tonne, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Monday, calling for development of high-yielding seed varieties with higher starch content.

Speaking at the 11th maize summit organised by industry body FICCI, Chouhan said the world's fifth-largest maize producer needs to boost productivity without using genetically modified seeds.

"We don't use genetically modified seeds, but we can still raise the productivity levels," Chouhan said.

India's average maize productivity stands at 3.7 tonne per hectare, with some states like West Bengal and Bihar performing above the national average, but



overall yields need to increase, he said.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed 265 maize varieties, including 77 hybrids and 35 bio-fortified varieties, but more work is needed, according to the minister.

"There is a need to increase starch level

in maize. We need to increase it to 72 per cent from the current 65-70 per cent level so that maize can be used in better way," Chouhan said.

India's maize production has grown from 10 million tonne in the 1900s to the current 42.3 million tonne.

To boost production, states like Punjab and Haryana, which focus on paddy cultivation, should diversify to maize, the minister said.

Chouhan noted that maize prices, which were below the minimum support price (MSP) of Rs 2,400 per quintal, have firmed up following the government's ethanol blending target of 20 per cent by 2025-26.

The minister expressed concern over the sale of substandard seeds, fertilisers and pesticides, calling for a policy framework to take action against such suppliers and manufacturers.

Drone can boost India's mfg potential to USD 23 bn by 2030: Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Buoyed by rising demand from sectors like defence, agriculture, logistics, and infrastructure, the drone industry is expected to boost the country's manufacturing potential to USD 23 billion by 2030, says a report.

As drones emerge as a key component of modern warfare strategies, India's Operation Sindoor in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack has marked a notable shift in the country's adoption of drones, the report by Nexgen said.

The report, based on a survey of 150 companies from 15 cities, revealed that 40 per cent of drone companies believe that

agriculture and precision farming are anticipated to drive the largest demand for drones in India by 2030, following the defence sector.

Estimates suggest the global agricultural drones market size will reach USD 5.89 billion by 2030. In its endeavour to further support this momentum, Delhi is hosting the largest Drone International Expo 2025, scheduled for July 31 to August 1, 2025. Organised by Nexgen Exhibitions, the Drone International Expo 2025 is showcasing the latest innovations from over 6 countries, including Russia, Taiwan, Canada, Ukraine, and India.

Focus on driving offline payments to boost fin inclusion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

DFS Secretary M Nagaraju on Monday urged fintechs to focus on driving offline payment solutions to enhance financial inclusions.

Also, he urged fintechs to use technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance user convenience by simplifying the payment process.

Speaking at the CII Summit on Financial Inclusion and FinTech, Nagaraju requested "fintechs to focus their attention on payment solutions for offline payment".

Additionally, he highlighted that financial inclusion is

DFS secretary urges fintechs



increasingly recognised as a major factor in economic growth and poverty alleviation on a global scale.

"Financial inclusion is being increasingly recognised as one

of the key drivers of both economic development as well as poverty evaluation all over the world," he said.

Nagaraju stressed on the critical role played by fintechs

in advancing financial inclusion and consumer protection.

"FinTech should actually look at least consumer protection, ensure that the consumers who are using your ecosystem are not unfairly treated, and their complaints are addressed properly and they are protected," he added.

He pointed out that seven of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) are directly connected to financial inclusion. This suggests the importance of improving access to financial services for the unbanked and under-served populations, he said.

Sensex, Nifty close unchanged amid caution ahead of US tariff deadline

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed almost unchanged on Monday in a highly volatile trade amid caution ahead of the July 9 US tariff deadline, weak trends in Asian markets and foreign fund outflows.

After oscillating between highs and lows, the 30-share BSE Sensex finally ended 9.61 points or 0.01 per cent up at 83,442.50. The index hit a high of 83,516.82 and a low of 83,262.23 during the day.

The 50-share NSE Nifty ended unchanged at 25,461.30 with 22 of its constituents settling higher and 28 in the red.

Gains in FMCG and oil shares were offset by losses in IT and metal shares.

Volatile trends engulfed markets amid concerns surrounding the US-India trade deal, experts said.

July 9 marks the end of the 90-day suspension period of the Trump tariffs imposed on dozens of countries, including India. An additional import

duty of 26 per cent was announced on Indian goods entering the US.

"Indian equity markets ended on a flat note on Monday, with the benchmark Nifty opening at 25,450, touching an intraday low of 25,407 and a high of 25,489. The index largely traded in a narrow range throughout the session as investors remained cautious ahead of the anticipated US tariff announcements.

"Market participants appeared reluctant to take

aggressive positions, keeping the broader index range-bound," Sundar Kewat, Technical and Derivatives Analyst, Ashika Institutional Equity, said.

From the Sensex firms, Hindustan Unilever, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Trent, Reliance Industries, Asian Paints and ITC were among the gainers.

However, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Tech Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Maruti and Eternal were among the laggards.

Don't see many other risks like Jane Street: Pandey

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Sebi Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey on Monday said the capital markets regulator does not see "many other risks" like the manipulations done by the hedge fund Jane Street.

Speaking to reporters days after a Sebi order pointed towards gains of over Rs 4,800 crore made by Jane Street, Pandey said Sebi is mulling upgrading its surveillance systems.

"And I don't think there are very many other risks," Pandey said, replying to a specific question on whether there are other funds or investors who may have manipulated the markets in a similar way.

What happened in the Jane Street matter was "basically" a surveillance issue, and the reg-

ulator is upping its focus on the aspect just because of that, the career bureaucrat-turned-regulator said.

Stressing that the action being taken against Jane Street is within the confines of the regulatory powers that exist, Pandey suggested that it is not regulatory powers but better surveillance and enforcement that can help act against any wrongdoers.

In an order released in the early hours of Friday, the market regulator found Jane Street, a New York-based hedge fund, guilty of manipulating the indices by taking bets in the cash, and, futures and options markets simultaneously for making handsome gains.

It has suspended the hedge fund from accessing the market and impounded over Rs 4,843 crore in gains.

IESW 2025 to be launchpad for over 300 product innovations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The four-day India Energy Storage Week (IESW 2025) beginning on Tuesday will be the launchpad for over 300 unique product innovations in electric vehicles, charging infrastructure, solar, green hydrogen, batteries and renewable energy sector.

Industry body India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA) is organizing IESW 2025 here from July 8-11, 2025, a statement said.

To further strengthen the transition towards a resilient energy system that aligns with the vision of net zero emission

goals, the IESW 2025 is going to be the launchpad for over 300 unique product innovations in EVs, charging infrastructure, solar, green hydrogen, batteries and RE, it stated.

The event will be showcasing cutting-edge futuristic energy storage solutions, including Lithium Ion, Lithium Sulfur, Sodium Ion batteries, and other technologies from across the globe.

India will witness one of the biggest gatherings of Ministries, Government Representatives, and Companies from over 20 Countries at the 11th edition of IESW 2025, it stated.



The IESW 2025 will hold seven-plus new factory/product announcements. Voltra Energy

is going to announce its Giga factory as the company aims to revolutionise India's energy

future with advanced Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) utilizing cutting-edge technology and world-class infrastructure.

SR Portables, an Australian renewable energy solutions company, is launching Thor Solar Hybrid Inverter (5 kW model), designed specifically for the PM Surya Ghar Scheme.

Polyprotic, a leading specialty chemicals company in India, will announce the launch of three high-performance extraction solvents at IESW 2025. IESW 2025 will also felicitate MOU signings between governments and corporations to fuel

India's Net Zero goal.

The IESA and Bundesverband Energiespeicher Systeme (BVES), (Energy Storage Association Germany) will sign an MoU to establish a framework for cooperation and collaboration between the Parties to promote the advancement of energy storage technologies.

The MOU between Energy and Research Institute (TERI) and Skill Council for Green Jobs (SCGG) will aim at identifying the skill gaps in area of renewables and energy storage and create skill development programs in the sector.



RRBs' IT integration to be completed by Sep 30: NABARD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

NABARD Chairman Shaji KV said on Monday IT integration of recently amalgamated Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) on the principles of 'One State One RRB' is expected to be completed by September 30.

The amalgamation of RRBs on the principles of 'One State One RRB' became effective from May 1. This was aimed at improving scale efficiency and cost rationalisation.

With this, now, there are 28 RRBs in 26 states and 2 UTs with more than 22,000 branches covering 700 districts.

Speaking at a CII event, Shaji said that as of May 1, integration of all the RRBs at the state level has been done, and by September, the IT integration of RRBs is expected to be completed.

The chairman said that NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) is working on building a common digital infrastructure with RRBs. They are rolling out credit infrastructure and government data systems to reach rural populations.

However, challenges like low internet bandwidth and awareness exist, but efforts are being made with various organisations to address these.

He mentioned digitising agri value chains, with around 20 already digitised. NABARD

Shaji said that the government is now working on additional stacks like Agri Stack (for agriculture), Fisheries Stack, and Cooperative Stack

is working with several banks to bring more farmers, especially those without land records, into the system.

Also, it is working with blockchain-based crop traceability and BC (Business Correspondent) networks for better reach in rural areas.

Shaji said that the government is now working on additional stacks like Agri Stack (for agriculture), Fisheries Stack, and Cooperative Stack.

'Cooperative stack' is expected to integrate various schemes through Primary Agricultural Credit Societies to create a unified system for dispensing benefits in rural areas.

He said that NABARD is leading the digitisation of cooperatives, with about 70,000 societies already digitised.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
PUBLIC HEALTH & MUNICIPAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
'E' PROCUREMENT NOTICE (NOTICE INVITING TENDER)
'e'Proc. Notice No. 06/SE/PH/TUFDIC/Unit-IV/Wq/NIT/2025-26/333 Dt: 05-07-2025
1) Development of road stretch from AMC Chourastha to Kanta Chourastha by widening and providing central dividers in Bellampally Municipality under TUFDIC Assistance Rs. 2.7 Crores (2nd Call).
2) Development of Junction at Kanta Chourastha in Bellampally Municipality under TUFDIC Assistance (Reserved for SC Contractors) - Rs. 100.00 Lakhs (2nd Call).
3) Construction of Balance Veg & Non Veg market works in Bellampally Municipality under TUFDIC Assistance - Rs. 100.00 Lakhs (2nd Call).
Bid Down Load Start Date: 09-07-2025 and End Date: 23-07-2025
Further details can be seen @e-procurement market place i.e., www.tender.telangana.gov.in and for any further clarifications required, please contact office of the Superintending Engineer, P.H TUFDIC, Unit-IV, Warangal.
Sd/- Superintending Engineer P.H TUFDIC, Unit-IV, Warangal
DIPR R.O.No: 4687-PP/CJA/ADVT/1/2025-26, Date: 07-07-2025

SUMEET VYAS: I'VE ALWAYS HAD AN URGE TO TELL MY KIND OF STORIES

Known for taking bold creative risks, Sumeet Vyas discusses how he consciously avoids comfort zones, instead seeking roles that challenge his instincts and push emotional boundaries. In an exclusive conversation with *The Pioneer*, the actor reflects on his evolving journey through theatre, web series, films and audio storytelling

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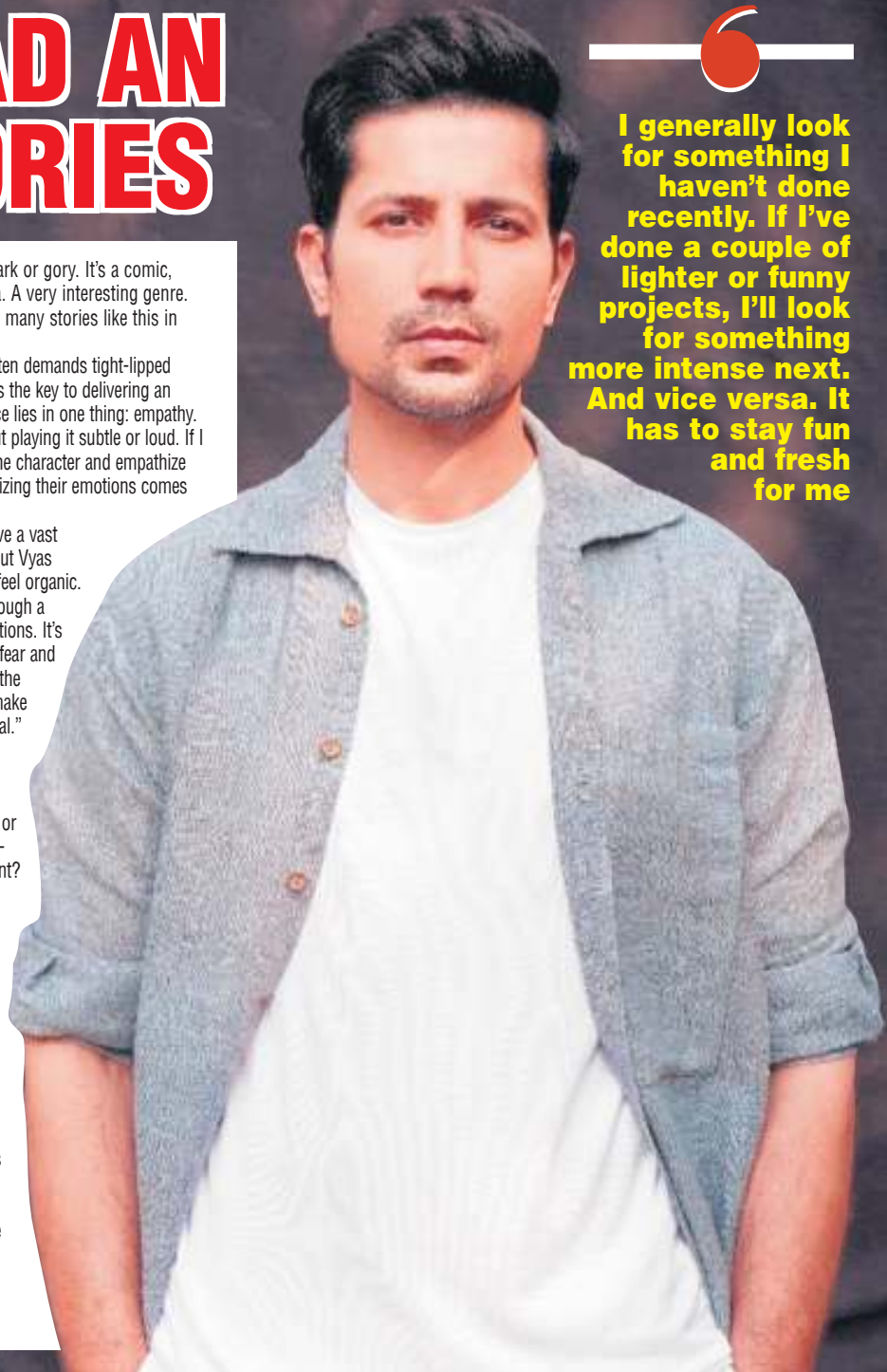
What happens when an actor refuses to play it safe—even when success makes it easy to do so? You get a career as layered, surprising and quietly revolutionary as Sumeet Vyas's. Long before OTT was a buzzword and web series became mainstream, Sumeet was already carving his own path—one that prioritised authenticity over applause and craft over convenience. Now, in his latest film *Detective Shergill*, Vyas steps into a genre-blending narrative that's part murder mystery, part comedy and wholly reflective of the artistic risks he thrives on. In this exclusive conversation with *The Pioneer*, the actor opens up about embracing discomfort,

the characters that shaped him and why chasing complexity is what keeps his passion alive. "I've learned that I really enjoy and embrace risks," shares *Tripling* creator and lead actor Sumeet Vyas with a smile. "As a performer, I get very bored when I get comfortable." It's this desire to escape comfort that's guided Vyas through his most unexpected turns. Whether it's portraying the charmingly awkward Mikes in *Permanent Roommates* or delving into dramatic territory in *Aurangzeb*, he finds creative fuel in the unfamiliar. "Every time I get into a trap of doing something that works and I get the chance to repeat it, something just switches off in me," says the *Tripling* star. "I don't want to do it again. I want to try something else—something that has an element of risk and reward." That drive to tell stories his own way has been the backbone of his digital journey. Long before the term web series entered popular conversation, Vyas was helping shape the landscape. "More than being hungry, I've always had a strong urge to tell my kind of stories," explains the *Veere Di Wedding* actor. "And the digital space allowed people like me to do that—to tell stories differently and do our thing. That's what kept me going back then and it still does." Of course, experience has added layers to his process. While instinct remains his creative compass, he now approaches projects with both heart and head. "You can't be completely idealistic or naive about how things work," reflects the *Aurangzeb* actor. "Over time, I've learned to check if the people making the script have the resources to do justice to it. Are we creatively aligned? Are we on the same page? These things matter now." One of the things that continues to set Vyas apart is his deliberate shift across genres. From light-hearted romantic comedies to deeply introspective dramas, he doesn't allow himself to repeat roles. "I generally look for something

I haven't done recently. If I've done a couple of lighter or funny projects, I'll look for something more intense next. And vice versa. It has to stay fun and fresh for me," shares the *Jugaadistan* actor. That's exactly what he found in *Detective Shergill*—a fresh, unpredictable tone that instantly stood out. "There wasn't just one thing that drew me to it," says Vyas, who starred in *English Vinglish* and *Ribbon*. "I liked the script—it was a full drama. I've known the director, Ravi Chhabria, since he was an assistant on *Aurangzeb*. I was thrilled he was finally making his own film." He also shares his admiration for the film's producers, *Tiger Zinda Hai* director Ali Abbas Zafar and Himanshu Mehra, calling them "exceptional" and "some of the best people I've worked with in a long time." In *Detective Shergill*, Vyas plays Angad, a wealthy heir whose entitlement masks a deeper emotional void. Known for portraying grounded and relatable characters, this role offered a new challenge. "From the outside, he looks like a spoiled brat. But for him, this life of privilege is his reality," says the *Raat Jawaan Hai* actor. "He doesn't see himself as entitled—he believes this is how life is supposed to be." Portraying Angad required Sumeet to let go of judgment—something he admits wasn't easy. "I've judged people like this all my life. To play someone like Angad, I had to first empathize with that mindset," he reveals. "That was the toughest part—trying to understand how someone like that thinks, without judging them." He built the character from the inside out: a man burdened not just by privilege but by emotional neglect. "He feels like he was never loved enough, like his sister was always the more loved one. That's his lifelong gripe. He's not just arrogant—he's hurt." Though *Detective Shergill* is, at its core, a murder mystery, Vyas explains that the storytelling tone is far from what one might

expect. "It's not dark or gory. It's a comic, wholesome drama. A very interesting genre. We don't have too many stories like this in our industry." For a genre that often demands tight-lipped restraint, Vyas says the key to delivering an honest performance lies in one thing: empathy. "I never think about playing it subtle or loud. If I can stop judging the character and empathize with them, internalizing their emotions comes naturally." Angad may not have a vast emotional graph, but Vyas ensures his shifts feel organic. "He doesn't go through a wide range of emotions. It's mostly arrogance, fear and defensiveness. So the challenge was to make that journey feel real." And what about future roles? Is he leaning more toward complexity or open to lighter, full-blown entertainment? "I loved playing Angad—it pushed me to places I don't usually go. It was intense and challenging and I truly enjoyed it," Vyas shares. "So yes, I hope more such characters come my way." And if past choices are anything to go by, the journey ahead is sure to be as dynamic and layered as the man himself.

I generally look for something I haven't done recently. If I've done a couple of lighter or funny projects, I'll look for something more intense next. And vice versa. It has to stay fun and fresh for me



When Hyderabad sat on the floor and vibed—Literally!

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What better way to end the weekend than with a Sunday evening that feels like a warm hug to the soul? In a city where the Gen Z corporate crowd often finds solace in techno beats and club bangers, Hyderabad recently experienced something refreshingly different—something intimate, soulful and slow. As people grow weary of high-energy party scenes, many are now seeking comfort in moments of calm—spaces where music feels more like a conversation than a concert. Last weekend, *The Pioneer* witnessed one such experience unfold in the heart of the city. Hosted by Airlive, Jubilee Hills, this special jamming session brought together a unique blend of poetry, music and nostalgia. The session featured the *Backstage Siblings*—Raghav and Prachi along with Sahil, an effortless performer who hails from Kolkata and brought in his poetic rhythm to the mix. Their set was nothing short of a soothing escape. Over 300 people gathered for the event and from the very first note, the trio managed to hold the crowd's attention with ease. The show kicked off at twilight and as dusk settled in, the vibe only got warmer. What truly made the night special was the setup—most of the audience sat cross-legged on soft carpeted floors, creating an atmosphere reminiscent of jam sessions in your cousin's living room. There were kids, adults, grandparents—truly a crowd ranging from age 9 to 99—all soaking in the vibe together. To get the audience going, the performers carefully built their set with a mix of sing-along segments, poetry and impromptu crowd interactions. There was an undeniable charm in their sibling-like banter, which made everyone feel like they were part of an inside joke. They seamlessly moved through retro Bollywood tunes, romantic tracks and childhood and adulthood-themed poetry, which struck a chord with many. Sahil's poetry added another layer of intimacy to the evening. From verses about love and growing up to reflections on friendship, the emotional range was

vast yet relatable. And just when you thought it couldn't get more delightful, they surprised the crowd with quirky throwbacks: the Doraemon theme song, the Nirma washing powder jingle, the Jungle Baat Chali Hai anthem from Mowgli, and even a patriotic song—each received with loud cheer and smiles. One of the most heartwarming parts of the evening was how interactive the session was. The performers took song requests directly from the crowd. In fact, one attendee cheekily passed a song suggestion on a tissue paper and yes, they sang it—"my moment!" as they described it. The trio also got a chance to connect with the Backstage siblings Raghav, Prachi and Sahil, of course. Stay tuned! But for now, here's what we heard from the audience out there. "I experienced something like this for the first time—sitting on the floor and vibing my heart out," shared Preeti Raj, a 21-year-old college student. "It went really well. It was *Ekdashi* (a sacred fasting day) and they even sang devotional songs like Hare Govind Krishna and Shri Man Narayan. We are Sindhi and they also sang *Jhulela*—it was amazing," said Deepa Savlaani, a 53-year-old homemaker. "We had an amazing experience. All the retro and Bollywood vibes were so healing, especially with the daily hustle in life," said Harsh Agarwal, a 27-year-old IT professional. The show concluded with a magical 30-second meditation, accompanied by a peaceful rendition of Shri Krishna Govinda. That brief moment of stillness felt like a collective exhale—purely blissful and almost beyond words. From the very first strum to the final hum, the energy in the room was gentle, powerful and full of heart. The lighting was subtle and ambient, perfectly setting the tone for an experience that felt more like home than a performance space. It wasn't just a musical gig—it was a shared moment of calm, of laughter, of memories and meaning. As Hyderabad constantly searches for new weekend adventures, this anti-concert jamming session brought something fresh to the table. And judging by the way the crowd walked out—hearts full, humming old melodies—it's safe to say: the city is ready for more.



Dull, tired skin? Here's how nature can help you detox naturally

In an age where environmental pollutants, processed foods and digital stress have become part of everyday life, it's our skin that often bears the brunt of this modern lifestyle. As the body's largest organ and the first line of defense against the outside world, our skin is constantly exposed to toxins, UV rays, harsh weather and artificial chemicals. Over time, this relentless exposure takes a visible toll, leaving the skin dull, congested and inflamed. These are clear signs that your skin is overloaded and is in desperate need of a detox.

But what exactly does a skin detox mean and can nature really help restore your skin's health and vitality? Let's find out.

WHAT DOES A SKIN DETOX ACTUALLY DO?

A skin detox is the process of eliminating toxins and impurities from the surface of the skin and its deeper layers to rejuvenate and revitalize its appearance and function. While the skin naturally detoxifies through sweating and cell turnover, factors like pollution, synthetic cosmetics, stress, poor diet and lack of sleep can disrupt this process, leading to breakouts, dryness, dullness and early signs of aging.

WHY YOUR SKIN IS CRYING OUT FOR A DETOX?

Let's find out some key reasons why a regular detox can be essential:

1. Environmental pollutants

Urban air pollution exposes skin to free radicals, heavy metals and particulate matter that weaken the barrier, trigger inflammation and speed up aging. A 2024 report links chronic exposure to oxidative stress and collagen breakdown. Without proper detox and protection, this damage builds up, making skin-purifying practices essential.

2. Product buildup

In the quest for flawless skin, we often layer multiple skincare and cosmetic products containing synthetic ingredients like silicones, parabens and harsh preservatives. Such products may initially offer quick fixes, but can gradually clog pores and disrupt the skin's microbiome and hinder its natural renewal process. A skin detox resets and rebalances your complexion by clearing away accumulated residue and allowing the skin to breathe freely again.

3. Digital pollution

It is no surprise that your digital devices can take a toll on your skin. The blue light emitted by phones, tablets and laptops penetrate the skin more deeply than UV rays and can trigger oxidative stress, leading to premature aging, hyperpigmentation and a gradual loss of skin elasticity. Taking regular breaks from digital devices to minimize stress on the skin and protect it from visible ageing is therefore important.

4. Unhealthy lifestyle habits

An unhealthy lifestyle consisting of poor diet, chronic dehydration, elevated stress levels, smoking and inadequate sleep will lead to toxin accumulation in the body, which often is reflected in your skin. Common signs include dark circles, persistent dullness, puffiness and breakouts. A balanced lifestyle with good nutrition, hydration, sleep and stress control can greatly enhance your skin's health and clarity.

HOW DOES A SKIN DETOX WORK?

A skin detox helps eliminate impurities, toxins, and dead skin cells that build up on the surface, allowing your skin to breathe and function at its best. It works to restore balance, stimulate circulation, and improve overall clarity. The outcome: the skin looks and feels fresher, healthier, and naturally radiant.

HOW NATURE CAN HELP IN SKIN DETOX?

Nature is a powerful healer, and when it comes to detoxifying your skin, it offers a range of solutions that are gentle, sustainable and effective.

1. Neem for deep purification

Neem is one of the most iconic herbs used in Himalaya's skincare line and for good reason. Known for its powerful antibacterial and antifungal properties, neem helps cleanse the skin by removing impurities, bacteria and excess oil that can clog pores and lead to breakouts. Whether used in face washes, masks or scrubs, neem helps purify the skin from within, leaving it clear, calm and refreshed.

2. Turmeric for detox and radiance

Turmeric is revered in modern skincare for its powerful detoxifying and anti-inflammatory properties. Rich in curcumin, turmeric fights free radicals, reduces inflammation and brightens skin complexion. When applied as a mask, it draws out impurities, calms irritated skin and reduces acne, hyperpigmentation and uneven skin tone.

3. Aloe vera for soothing and hydration

Aloe vera is known for its cooling and healing properties, and detoxifies the skin by soothing irritation, reducing redness and replenishing lost moisture, especially after sun exposure or environmental stress. Aloe vera also aids in skin regeneration by helping to fade acne scars and promoting a smoother, supple complexion.

4. Walnut shells for natural exfoliation

Exfoliation is a key step in detox process and natural walnut shells offer an exclusive, gentle way to remove dead skin cells and build-up. When used in scrubs, finely ground walnut shells help stimulate blood circulation, unclog pores and promote cellular renewal, helping the skin to breathe better and absorb nutrients more efficiently, resulting in a radiant appearance.

5. Licorice and white lily for brightening

Licorice and white lily are two botanical ingredients known for their skin-detoxifying and brightening effects. Licorice extract helps lighten dark spots, reduces hyperpigmentation and soothes inflammation. White lily offers antioxidant protection while calming the skin, making it ideal for those dealing with uneven tone, sensitivity or environmental stress.

6. Outdoor exposure for well-being

Spending time in natural environments has been scientifically linked to reducing cortisol levels and inflammation and improved overall well-being. Walking through a forest or by the sea or sitting in a garden in natural sunlight in early morning hours offer more than mental relaxation and helps the skin synthesize vitamin D, which plays a role in skin repair and immune function.

Detoxing your skin isn't about just keeping it clean, it's giving the care and attention it deserves to thrive fully. It's about creating space for your skin to breathe, reset and heal. By embracing gentle, nature-based remedies and listening to your body's needs, you can empower your skin to renew and radiate from within. So, next time your skin feels tired and overwhelmed, go for a detox routine and let nature take the lead in restoring your natural glow.

(The author, Krishna Bhama, is the principal scientist, R&D, at Himalaya wellness.)



Bajaj Electronics hosted the grand unveiling of the much-anticipated OPPO Reno14 Series 5G at its SR Nagar Branch, which was attended by popular actress Eesha Rebba. The Reno14 Series 5G promises to redefine mobile photography with its cutting-edge AI features and premium performance.



Popular actress and television host Anasuya Bharadwaj along with MLA Dhanpal Suryanarayana Gupta inaugurated the latest showroom of Ekadhi Silver Jewellery in Nizamabad, marking a new chapter in the brand's journey of elegance and excellence in silver craftsmanship. The grand inauguration ceremony witnessed enthusiastic participation from jewellery enthusiasts and fans of the actress.

The Day 2 of GymQuinn 2025 was held with electrifying energy and a charged atmosphere, as young gymnasts lit up the arena with breathtaking performances across various categories. From artistic floor routines to dynamic team acrobatics, each event reflected hours of dedication and training.



Meridian School, Madhapur hosted its Annual Career Fair, bringing together over 100 prestigious universities and welcoming more than 500 students from leading Hyderabad schools. Under the leadership of Karanam Bhavani and attended by M.D. Renuka Butta, CEO Tejaswi Butta, and President Lalitha Naidu, the event served as a dynamic platform for students and parents to interact with university representatives, explore academic options, and gain valuable insights into future-ready programs, scholarships, and career paths.



Young author Devansh Alijar has launched his book Stop - Don't Buy Jewelry Until You Read This, aimed at educating consumers about the hidden aspects and common scams in buying gold and diamond jewelry. At the launch event held in Jubilee Hills on Sunday, Devansh highlighted how people from all walks of life purchase jewelry but often lack awareness about key factors like gold pricing, wastage, making charges, and diamond carat evaluation.

ROYAL BACKING FOR CHARMINAR IN 2025 RELIGIOUS EVENT

In a significant step towards cultural unity and historical relevance, Charminar was chosen as the symbolic venue for the 2025 Bibi ka Alam procession, with the agreement and endorsement of Nawab Raunaq Yar Khan, who was democratically acknowledged by the royal Asaf Jahi family as the IX Nizam of Hyderabad.

The decision was made in coordination with the Shia Council, who deemed Charminar the most appropriate and representative site to participate in the blessings of the procession. The historic structure, built by the secular Qutb Shahi dynasty, not only marked the founding of Hyderabad but also incorporated Shia architectural motifs, reinforcing its deep-rooted spiritual symbolism and plural legacy. Once associated with royal exclusivity, Charminar has now been repositioned as a space accessible to all, reflecting the city's timeless spiritual heritage.

Nawab Raunaq Yar Khan had expressed his commitment to ensuring that his extended royal family in India could be smoothly integrated into the fabric of modern democratic India. He emphasized that his priorities included representing and securing justice for royal descendants under Indian law. He also asserted that traditions from the Nizam era must evolve to resonate with present-day aspirations and values of inclusivity.

The Bibi ka Alam procession, one of



the city's largest and most revered Muslim gatherings, traces its origins to the Qutb Shahi rulers, who practiced Shia Islam. The Nizams, while following a different school within Islam, were known for their secular approach and deeply respected the Alam. Notably, Mir Osman Ali Khan, the last Nizam, revered the procession and contributed priceless jewels, which are now part of the sacred relic. However, his personal preferences regarding venues and traditions were seen as less relevant in today's inclusive context.

The 2025 procession was seen as a new chapter in the city's cultural narra-

tive, with Nawab Raunaq Yar Khan receiving support from numerous royal descendants of H.E.H. Osman Ali Khan and earlier Nizams. Their numbers reportedly continue to grow, further strengthening his progressive initiatives.

The Shia Civil Council for Social Justice also agreed to abide by Nawab Raunaq's guidance, acknowledging his leadership role in evolving traditions respectfully. Political parties across the spectrum were expected to lend support to some of Nawab's efforts, especially those aimed at preserving cultural identity while promoting social harmony.

Superstar Kichcha Sudeepa acquires Bengaluru Racing Team

The Indian Racing Festival (IRF) has just entered a thrilling new chapter as

Kannada megastar Kichcha Sudeepa officially acquires the Bengaluru franchise and launches his racing team: Kichcha's Kings Bengaluru (KKB). This landmark move is more than a business decision—it's a defining cultural crossover between the silver screen and the speed track, bringing with it the energy and influence of one of South India's

most celebrated stars into the high-stakes world of motorsport. A commanding presence on

screen, Sudeep now shifts gears to make his mark as an owner, visionary, and sporting ambassador, driving a new era of racing from Karnataka to the national stage. The Indian Racing Festival 2025 kicks off this August, with franchise teams from Bengaluru, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Chennai, Goa and more battling it out across thrilling street circuits and world-class tracks.



LISTINGS

WD Purple Fuels India's Smart Surveillance Growth

WD Purple and WD Purple Pro drives from Western Digital are at the heart of India's evolving smart city surveillance ecosystem, enabling 24/7 video recording, real-time analytics, and long-term data retention across urban infrastructure. With the Smart Cities Mission launched in 2015, India has transformed how cities operate and deliver citizen services. As of today, 7,380 out of 8,075 projects have been completed with an investment of Rs 1.47 lakh crore. These projects include smart traffic systems, AI-enabled crime monitoring, and integrated transport—all of which rely on video surveillance as a foundational layer. Unlike standard consumer or enterprise drives, WD Purple drives are engineered specifically for the demands of continuous video capture. In smart cities, surveillance systems run non-stop, generating massive volumes of data. WD Purple's enhanced endurance and reliability ensure that this data is captured, stored, and available when needed most—without frame loss or degradation.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



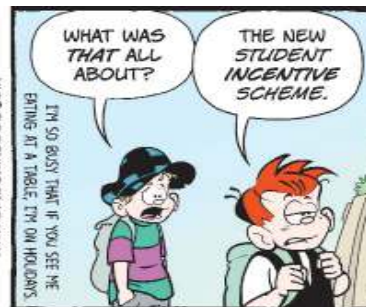
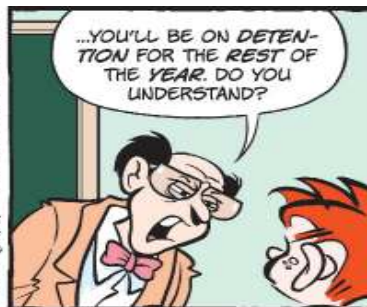
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NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



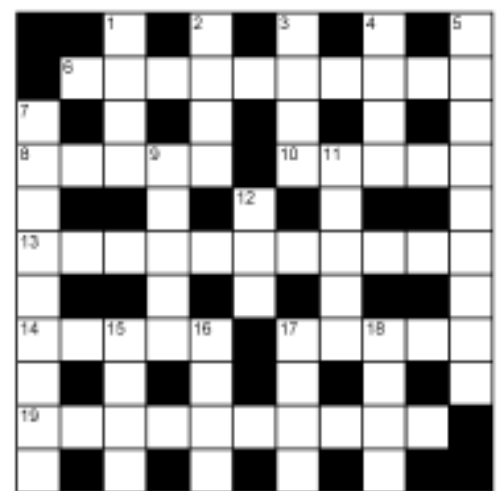
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- The group of people who are in charge of a country
- Correct
- A black and white animal
- Coming nearer to
- Before second
- Bad smell
- A popular jam flavour
- Cows and goats have these
- Throbbled painfully
- A month
- Uncommon
- A place with houses, shops, schools
- Unlook
- Rowers pull on these

DOWN

- Measuring a lot from one end to the other
- A compass direction
- Break suddenly
- Stitched
- People who are unknown to you
- A meal



SUDOKU

2	1	7	9					
				1				
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		4	2			5		
7			4		5			2
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Yesterday's solution								
9	7	4	6	3	1	5	8	2
8	5	1	2	4	7	3	6	9
2	3	6	8	9	5	1	4	7
7	4	3	9	5	6	2	1	8
6	9	8	3	1	2	7	5	4
5	1	2	4	7	8	9	3	6
3	2	7	5	8	4	6	9	1
1	8	5	7	6	9	4	2	3
4	6	9	1	2	3	8	7	5

Rules

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆



'I won't do anything that's not comfortable for me'

SURESH KAVIRAYANI
sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

Malayali actress Malavika Manoj, who first made her mark with the Tamil hit *Joe*, is now set to charm Telugu audiences with her debut in *Oh Bhama Ayyo Rama*, directed by Ram Godhala and starring Suhas in the lead. Though fairly new to the industry with only a few films under her belt, Malavika is determined to stay true to her instincts.

After *Joe* turned out to be a success, Malavika began receiving offers from Telugu filmmakers. However, she turned them down, stating that she "didn't like the stories." What caught her attention in *Oh Bhama Ayyo Rama* was the role of Satyabhama. "She has a bit of a hyper nature and shows attitude, but she's a pure soul. It's a completely different character, so I agreed to do it," said Malavika.

Despite not knowing Telugu, Malavika confidently took on the role with some preparation. "There was no workshop. I did a couple of days of rehearsal and then started shooting. The director of this film is really a sweetheart. He used to send me the dialogues and voice notes and made me feel comfortable. Because of him, I did this role," she said.

When asked about the differences between film industries, Malavika observed, "I don't find much difference between Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu. Everyone is professional and caring on the sets. Except for

Malayali actress Malavika Manoj, who rose to fame with the Tamil hit *Joe*, makes her Telugu debut with *Oh Bhama Ayyo Rama* alongside Suhas. She opens up about playing a spirited character like Satyabhama, overcoming language barriers, balancing studies with shoots and why she chooses roles based on comfort over glamour

the language, it's very comfortable working here." One of the more challenging scenes she shot involved water—despite not knowing how to swim. "That scene was very important and we couldn't postpone it as it was happening in Warangal. I was scared, but there were people helping me and I completed it," she recalled. Malavika is currently watching Telugu films to learn the language. "I used to watch dubbed versions, but now I'm watching them in Telugu. I want to learn the language. I prepared for it, so the barrier wasn't a big problem."

On choosing roles in the future, she stated firmly, "I want to try something different. If I do the same kind of roles, both I and the audience will get bored. If I like the story, I'll do it—otherwise, I won't do anything that's not comfortable for me."

Malavika also spoke about her co-star Suhas, calling him a professional. "He's a reserved person. I'm reserved too and a bit

soft. Apart from scenes or rehearsals, we didn't speak much. But he's professional and it was nice working with him." Following the release of the trailer, viewers noticed that her role appears quite prominent. "I'm lucky that I got a role which is a bit dominant in my first Telugu film," she said.

Coming from a non-film background, Malavika shared that her family was initially unaware of how big the industry could be. "I'm the first person in the industry from my family. When I did my first Malayalam film, I was in Class 10. Just a couple of months ago, I completed my graduation."

Interestingly, her parents initially thought she was going out for a regular job. "They agreed and felt happy about my film career. They're supportive and don't think much about it. But my relatives were scared initially, questioning whether the industry is safe. Now, after seeing my films, they feel proud." Despite the attention she received after *Joe*, Malavika remained selective. "I got many offers. Even if the story is good, sometimes I feel it's not right for me. It would be better if someone else did the role. I want to do films I'm comfortable with."

Reflecting on how she got into acting, Malavika revealed she wasn't initially interested. "I'm a shy person and not comfortable acting in front of the camera. I had never done theatre or drama in school. But after posting some random pictures on Instagram, people approached me. I gave it a try and ended up liking my debut film. That's when I decided to continue."

Balancing her studies with her shoots was never a burden. "I'm an average student and don't put in too much effort. During breaks on sets, I'd revise one day before and write my exams. Luckily, I passed."

When it comes to glamour roles, she added, "I won't say anything good or bad about it. But I'm not doing them because I'm not comfortable with it." Asked about her criteria for choosing films, she summed it up clearly: "I don't have a fixed checklist. I just listen to the story—if I like it and the scenes are comfortable, I'll do it. If it has any glamour scenes, I won't be comfortable and I won't take it up."



Venky confirms *Drishyam 3*

There have been many reports and speculations about *Drishyam 3*—specifically whether Venkatesh will reprise his role in the Telugu version of this popular franchise. While Mohanlal is doing the Malayalam version and Ajay Devgn is leading the Hindi version, clarity on the Telugu sequel was awaited.

Now, putting all rumours to rest, Venkatesh confirmed at the NATS 2025 (North Atlanta Telugu Society) event that he is doing *Drishyam 3* in Telugu. He also shared exciting updates about his upcoming line-up.

"I will start my next with Trivikram Srinivas and then I play a guest role in Chiranjeevi and Anil Ravipudi's film. This

guest role is funny and will bring laughs to the audience. I am also doing *Drishyam 3* with Meena," revealed Venkatesh.

He also mentioned that he is joining hands again with director Anil Ravipudi for another project. The two earlier collaborated on *F2* and *Sankranthiki Vasthunnam*, both of which were huge hits.

"I'm also doing a big project with my friend, who is a big star," he said. It's worth noting that this will be Venkatesh's first full-fledged film under Trivikram Srinivas's direction. Although Trivikram had worked as a writer on Venkatesh's earlier films, this time he will be wielding the megaphone.

Court fame Sridevi bags Tamil lead in KJR's next

After impressing audiences and critics alike with her breakthrough performance in the hit Telugu film *Court*, actress Sridevi is now set to take a major leap in her career—as a female lead in an upcoming Tamil film. Her debut film *Court*, which revolved around the POCSO Act and was produced by actor Nani, became a blockbuster success. The film's powerful storyline, combined with Sridevi's emotive performance, made her an overnight sensation in the Telugu film industry.

Now, she's stepping into the Tamil cinema space, joining actor KJR in her next project. KJR, who recently made his debut as a lead actor in the bilingual sports courtroom drama *Gurtimpu* (in both Telugu and Tamil), is now gearing up for his second outing as a hero.

The official pooja ceremony for the yet-to-be-titled film was held on Monday morning in Chennai, marking the formal launch of the project. The film is being produced by Mini Studio, the same production house behind the critically acclaimed Mark Antony. In Telugu, the film will be presented by Gangaa Entertainments. The project also marks the directorial debut of Regan Stanislas, a protégé of the well-known Tamil filmmaker Prasanth Pandiyarajan. With a solid background in storytelling and direction, Regan is expected to bring a fresh narrative voice to the big screen.

Sridevi, who received accolades for her bold and mature performance in *Court*, will now play the female lead opposite KJR. This film not only marks her debut as a lead heroine but also introduces her to the Tamil audience.

The music will be composed by Ghibran, known for his innovative and soul-stirring soundtracks, adding more excitement to the project. The film is being bankrolled by S Vinoth Kumar under the Mini Studio banner.



Puri Jagannadh, Vijay Sethupathi film begins shoot in Hyderabad

Director Puri Jagannadh, who is in need of a major commercial comeback, has begun shooting his upcoming bilingual film featuring Vijay Sethupathi in the lead. The film, which also stars Samyuktha as the female lead, is produced by Puri Jagannadh himself, with Charmme Kaur presenting it.

This marks the first collaboration between Puri Jagannadh and the versatile Vijay Sethupathi and expectations are running high. The film officially commenced its regular shoot on

Monday in Hyderabad. The production is currently focusing on key sequences featuring Vijay Sethupathi, Samyuktha and other prominent cast members on a lavish set. The team has planned a continuous shooting schedule with minimal breaks to maintain momentum.

Puri is reportedly leaving no stone unturned and is taking extreme care in every aspect of the production. The film also stars Tabu and Vijay Kumar in pivotal roles, promising an intriguing mix of performance-driven characters and commercial appeal.



Sagar makes a comeback with action-drama *The 100*

Sagar, a popular household name in Telugu households thanks to his television roles in serials like *Chakravakam* and *Mogilirekulu*, is returning to the silver screen. Known for his iconic role as RK Naidu in *Mogilirekulu*, Sagar is now gearing up for his next big-screen outing, *The 100*.

Sagar made his debut as a lead actor in the 2016 film *Siddhartha* and *The 100* marks his second film in a lead role. Ministers Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and Sridhar Babu attended the film's

pre-release event held in Hyderabad. Earlier, Pawan Kalyan launched the trailer and many celebrities have extended their support for the film.

"To reach a larger audience, I requested Pawan Kalyan to launch the trailer and he agreed and did so," said Sagar. He further added that he showed the film to former Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu, who appreciated it. "He gave his blessings," Sagar shared.

The actor also heaped praise on the film's director, Sashi. "He

is a passionate director and with this film, he's going places. After hearing the story, I was excited to show it to the audience as early as possible," said Sagar.

Describing the film's concept, he said, "For every Yuga, one weapon emerges to save the world—Rama Banam in Treta Yuga, Sudarshana Chakra in Dwapara Yuga and now in Kali Yuga, it's *The 100*. Everyone should watch this film." He further added that while it's a commercial entertainer, it also carries strong family emotions.

Kantara: Chapter 1 wraps shoot; Rishab Shetty's bold new avatar revealed

The Kannada blockbuster *Kantara* not only captured hearts in its home state but became a massive success across multiple languages. Rishab Shetty, who played the lead role and also directed the film, emerged as a creative force to reckon with. Released in 2022, *Kantara* took Indian cinema by surprise and following *KGF*, cemented Kannada cinema's global expansion.

With its spiritual themes, rooted storytelling and powerful visuals, *Kantara* turned out to be one of the biggest sleeper hits of the year. The film, produced by Hombale Films (*KGF*, *Salaar*), broke several box-office records and earned a place among the biggest pan-India successes.

Now, the much-anticipated prequel, *Kantara: Chapter 1*, has officially completed its shoot. On the occasion of Rishab Shetty's birthday, the makers dropped a brand-new poster featuring his intense new look from the film and confirmed the wrap.

"Yes, a prequel to the masterpiece that moved millions, *Kantara: Chapter 1*, has officially wrapped up its shoot," the makers announced. Sharing the poster on social media, they wrote, "Where legends are born and the roar of the wild echoes. #Kantara – A prequel to the masterpiece that moved millions. Wishing the trailblazing force behind the legend, @rishabshettyofficial, a divine and glorious birthday." The makers also revealed that they are planning to release the film on October 2, 2025.



Edgbaston Test win will be my happiest memory: Gill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Birmingham

Leading India to their first ever Test win over England at Edgbaston will remain one of his “happiest memories” whenever the time comes to call it quits, said India captain Shubman Gill revelling in the resounding series-levelling victory here.

For the 25-year-old whose captaincy stint began with India losing the series opener at Leeds, Gill underlined an all-round show from the team to make a strong comeback that was also the team's first win over the hosts in Edgbaston.

“This is something that I would cherish for the rest of my life; probably whenever I would retire, I think this would be one of my most happiest memories,” Gill said in a video shared by BCCI.

“I was meant to take the last catch of this match, and (I am) very content and happy that how we were able to finish this

match. “(There are) three more important matches to go; a quick turnaround after this one and I think it's good because the momentum is now with us.”

Gill said Indian players took responsibility for their performances.

“The way everyone came in contributed with the ball, with the bat, those are huge positives,” he said.

“When there are different people stepping up and different people performing at different stages, that's what you want. That's what makes a champion team, and those were some great signs for us.”

In his dressing room speech, the Indian skipper lauded his teammates.

“We have worked very hard to win this position. Over the past six to eight months, I knew how hard it was to be able to get a Test win, especially to do it here where we haven't won a Test match ever,” he said.

“I just want to say that I'm very proud of you, everyone,



Indian cricket team at Edgbaston in Birmingham, England

PTI

because I think on day one, we mentioned it's going to take each and every one of us to win a Test match, especially here in this country and everyone contributed,” Gill added.

Mohammed Siraj said Akash Deep was meant to get a five-wicket haul. Siraj's 6/99 also proved instrumental in India's win.

“To be honest it was an important match of an important series. As a player, it feels great to create such memorable (moments) and history,” Siraj said. “Whenever he was bowling, I was positioned at mid-off. I was telling him don't just go after taking wickets, keep bowling in one area and you will get the wickets.”

“Jaisa first innings me bola tha, agar uski kismat me hai, to panja milega. Second innings, next day, dekho panja mil chuka hai (I had said in the first innings that if he has a five-for in his fate, he will get it. Look, he got one in the second innings),” an elated Siraj added. Siraj said he would rate this

as the third biggest Test win of his career.

“This is the third best match of my life. First was Gabba, then Lord's and now this. I cannot describe this feeling,” he said.

Akash Deep added, “The biggest thing is that I took five wickets and our team won. It is a proud moment for me that I contributed in the team's win. I won't be as happy had I taken a maiden five-for and the game ended in a draw.”

India vice-captain Rishabh Pant said this team wants to “defy all the past”, referring to the side's underwhelming overseas record.

“The last time we came here, the task was incomplete at Edgbaston and this time, so happy that we were able to achieve it,” he said.

“One thing that we always talk about is how we can learn as a team and defy all the past, whatever we have done but bringing this team together and making it to a different level, that's all we need.”

Australia beats West Indies in second test, clinches series

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ (Grenada)

Australia completed its recovery to win the second cricket Test against West Indies by 133 runs with a day to spare, clinching the series to retain the Frank Worrell Trophy.

Australia dismissed West Indies for 143 in 34.3 overs on Day 4 to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-test series.

On Saturday, half-centuries by Steve Smith and Cameron Green had helped to put Australia back in charge after the visitors lost early wickets in their second innings, at one stage slipping to 28-3.

After resuming Sunday at 221-7 — and a lead of 254 runs — Australia was all out for 243, setting West Indies a



Australia's Mitchel Starc embraces captain Pat Cummins, right, after defeating West Indies on day four of the second cricket Test match at the National Cricket Stadium in St George's, Grenada

AP

tricky target of 277 for victory. Shamar Joseph took 4-66.

At 33-4, West Indies' chase was in trouble. The match was over in the afternoon session. Left-arm pace bowler Mitchell Starc returned 3-24 from eight

overs to lead the Australian attack. Josh Hazlewood took two wickets and offspinner Nathan Lyon returned 3-42 from 5.3 overs to clean up the lower order.

A six-wicket match haul

moved Lyon to within one of Glenn McGrath at No. 2 on Australia's all-time list of leading wicket-takers.

Lyon has 562 wickets from 139 Tests dating back to 2011. McGrath took 563 in 124

Tests from 1993-2007. Shane Warne, the great legspinner who died in 2022, tops the Australian list with 708 wickets in 145 Tests from 1992-2007. Captain Roston Chase top scored for West Indies in the second innings with 34 before he was trapped lbw by Starc with a ball that kept low as it angled toward leg stump.

Shamar Joseph clouted three sixes in a run-a-ball 24 before he skied a catch off Lyon to Beau Webster in the deep and was the next-to-last wicket to fall.

Australia wicketkeeper Alex Carey was voted player of the match for his innings-savaging 63 in the first innings, 30 in the second and four catches behind the stumps.

“To be able to do that and win a series for Australia is fantastic,” Carey said. The

Caribbean tour was a vast improvement for his team on the previous bilateral series in Australia in 2023-24 when the West Indies troubled the home team and scored an upset win in the Gabba test.

“They came out two years ago, and they challenged us. For us to win this series outright, it has been a fantastic tour.”

Australia captain Pat Cummins said the series win happened at a good time for his team which lost last month to South Africa in the World Test Championship final.

“An away (series) win as well, they're not the easiest to come by, so really pumped with how we've bounced back after Lord's,” Cummins said. “It's a dream start, two from two gets us into the (new WTC) cycle and we've played some really good cricket.”



Sanjog Gupta

FILE PHOTO

ICC appoints Sanjog Gupta as its new CEO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Dubai

Indian media mogul Sanjog Gupta was on Monday named the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Jay Shah-led International Cricket Council (ICC), replacing Australian Geoff Allardice, who stepped down before the Champions Trophy earlier this year citing personal reasons.

Gupta, who was serving as the CEO (Sports and Live Experiences) at JioStar, will be taking charge of his new role with immediate effect. He will be the seventh CEO of the ICC, which said it received more than 2,500 applications from 25 countries from which 12 candidates were shortlisted.

“Candidates ranged from leaders associated with sport's governing bodies to senior corporate executives from across sectors,” the ICC said.

The names were forwarded to the Nominations Committee comprising ICC deputy chairman Imran Khwaja, ECB chairman Richard Thompson, SLC president Shammi Silva and BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia.

They recommended Gupta for the role which was approved by ICC chairman Jay Shah.

“Sanjog Gupta has been a driving force behind the trans-

formation of sports broadcasting in India and globally,” the ICC said.

The governing body also noted Gupta's role in establishing and expanding other leagues such as the Pro Kabaddi League and the Indian Super League (football) while promoting global events like Premier League and Wimbledon.

“Sanjog has played a pivotal role in shaping the continued growth of marquee Cricket properties such as ICC events & IPL, establishing domestic sports leagues like PKL and ISL, furthering the popularity of global sporting events such as Premier League and Wimbledon and scaling the business across consumer and commercial objectives,” it said.

Shah said Gupta's experience in sports strategy and commercialisation will be vital for the ICC. “Sanjog brings extensive experience in sports strategy and commercialisation, which will be invaluable for the ICC,” he said.

“His deep understanding of the global sports as well as M&E landscape combined with his continued curiosity about the cricket fan's perspective and passion for technology will prove essential in our ambition to grow the game in the coming years.”

Ben Stokes lauds Akash Deep, says India outplayed England

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Birmingham

England captain Ben Stokes conceded that India well and truly turned the tables on his team in every department of the game with pacer Akash Deep's “incredible” skill-set making the decisive difference in the second Test here.

Playing his first game of the series, Akash Deep picked up a match haul of 10 wickets to fashion a famous 336-run win for India, who had never won on this ground prior to Sunday. The five-match showdown is now locked 1-1 with the third Test at Lord's from July 10.

“I thought Akash exposed that crack last night and this morning. His ability to use and change his angles consistently and still be so accurate. He was zoning in on that crack. That one Harry Brook got this morning you can't do anything about that,” Stokes said in the post-match press conference.

The hallmark of his effort was relentlessly attacking the stumps

from a good length and using the angles effectively. He was able to generate the most amount of seam movement in the match.

He got one length ball to hit the crack and nip back sharply to thud in to Harry Brooks' pads. The England batter could not do anything about that peach.

“Standing at the other end when Jamie Smith got a couple of those early on. It was seaming a foot off it. Incredible skillful to hone in on that zone while still changing his angles on the crease. I thought it was good,” said Stokes.

Resuming the day at 72 for three, England could only bat 52.1 overs on day five in the improbable chase of 608. The Stokes led side doesn't believe in draws but the captain said in as many words the target was out of reach.

“300 and something is obviously a big margin (for the defeat). We knew what task we had ahead of us going into when we first went out to bat. That changed when you lose three wickets last night and lose two



India's Akash Deep celebrates the dismissal of England's Ollie Pope on day five of the second cricket test match between England and India at Edgbaston in Birmingham

PTI

early wickets,” he said.

“The task today was batting out the 80 overs. The result we always try to push towards, and look for, was beyond...For us as a batting unit, to

go out and bat the 80 overs was to go and play the way we play and focus on the fact that we knew we had to bat 80 overs.”

“India pushed to get 600 for some

obvious reasons,” he said referring to India's delayed declaration on day four. Asked to pick two important moments of the game, Stokes said, “There were two moments in the game. Having them 200 for five and then not quite being able to blast them open, like we know that we can.”

“They ended up getting a big first innings total, obviously after us having a good start, having them five down for not too many on the board.”

“Then obviously being 80 for five in reply to the first innings, it's obviously going to be tough to get back into a position where you look to push on and be on the winning side at the end of the game.”

Stokes acknowledged the superiority of India's pace attack.

“We nicked a few more than India did. It's one of those, where we went past the bat a few times, had a few nicks go in the game. We nicked them and India caught them. It can be such a frustrating game some times and be out there to watch this stuff unfold in front of you.”

England need to prepare well to face Bumrah at Lord's, says McCullum

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Birmingham

England “ran second for five days” in the second Test but the hosts need to ensure they are well planned and prepared for facing the challenge of Jasprit Bumrah's return for the third Test at Lord's, says head coach Brendon McCullum.

Bumrah sat on the sidelines and watch his teammates complete their England demolition job in the second Test here to level the five-Test series 1-1, winning by a monumental 336 runs for their also maiden Test win at Edgbaston.

Bumrah, who is slated to play only three of the five Tests of this series, was confirmed to make a comeback at the home of cricket by India captain Shubman Gill after the second Test win. “Bumrah will more than likely come back in for the next one so we've just got to make sure we well planned and well prepared and ready for the next challenge,” McCullum said. “It will be quite different I



India's Jasprit Bumrah trains before the start of play on day five of the second cricket test match between England and India at Edgbaston in Birmingham, England

PTI

imagine to this surface and that's probably a good thing for us.” “We ran second for five days. I thought India played exceptionally well. Shubman Gill was at an elite level and played brilliantly on this pitch. We weren't quite able to play how we wanted to on it and they thoroughly deserved to win,” he added. The former New Zealand captain admitted England made the wrong call of

putting India in to bat after winning the toss and overall, assessed the pitch incorrectly.

“I think, as the game unfolded, we probably looked back on that toss and said did we miss an opportunity there and it's probably fair,” McCullum said.

“We didn't expect that the wicket would play quite as it did and hence we probably got it slightly wrong.”

“But we did have them 200

for five and we weren't able to capitalise on that position and when you win the toss and bowl you're hoping to, well you're not anticipating the opposition's going to score 580 and then from that point we're behind the game.”

“We're not rigid with our plans. It's just we thought this pitch might get better to bat on as we went through the five days but as we saw it didn't.”

Former India captain MS Dhoni turns 44

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

Legendary Indian wicketkeeper-batter Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who is the only captain in the history of international cricket to have won the ODI World Cup, the T20 World Cup and the Champions Trophy, turned 44 on Monday.

Under Dhoni's captaincy, the Indian Test side also held the number 1 spot for a period of 18 months. Last month, Dhoni was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame for the class of 2025.

While he retired from international cricket nearly five years ago, Dhoni continues to feature in the Indian Premier League for Chennai Super Kings despite a nagging knee injury.

Dhoni stood in for regular CSK skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad for the majority of this year's IPL after the latter suffered an elbow injury, and led their faltering and imbalanced side with resilience to notch up a few impressive victories towards the end of the season.

The knee injury aside, the years that have passed by have also taken some sting away from Dhoni's aggressive batting.

Dhoni batted as low as at number 8 in a few games but despite the fading powers, the superstar continues to draw full-houses during two months of IPL wherever he plays across the country.

Each of CSK's five title wins in the IPL



Former Indian cricket team captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni

FILE PHOTO

have come under Dhoni and the franchise continues to expect their ‘Thala’ to return once again for the 2026 edition. Dhoni, however, made no such promise.

“It depends. Again, I would say the same thing (that) I have four-five months to decide, there's no hurry to decide what needs to be done,” Dhoni said.

“Every year, it's 15 per cent more effort to keep the body fit - not to forget this is top-level cricket.

“It's professional cricket, you have to

be at your best and it's not always performance that you can count, because if cricketers start retiring because of performance then a few of them will retire when they're 22.”

For now, he is enjoying his time away from spotlight in Ranchi, his hometown.

“What is important to see is how much hunger you have, what kind of fitness you have, and how much you can contribute to the team, and whether the team needs you or not,” he had said.