



THE Hans India



Emotional availability is the new attraction: The rise of affectional dating

Cool indifference, mystery, and emotional distance were once rewarded in the dating culture. The less invested you were, the more desirable you seemed.

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While a vrata covers a wide range of ritual vows in Hinduism, the Christian approach is centered on voluntarily humbling oneself before God through fasting, prayer, and sacrifice to focus on spiritual growth.

Resilient India posts all-time high \$863 bn exports in FY26

India's exports reached a record \$863 billion in FY2025-26, demonstrating resilience despite disruptions caused by the West Asia conflict and US tariffs, a senior Commerce Ministry official said on Wednesday.

Why the first five years are the most critical stage of learning and development

Research indicates that most neural connections are formed during the first few years, with nearly 85 per cent of brain development occurring before the age of five.

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KEEP HORMUZ OPEN: MODI

Raises safety of seafarers with Trump at G7 Summit

EVIAN-LES-BAINS

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged US President Donald Trump to ensure the safety of seafarers and maintain freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, highlighting India's dependence on the strategically vital maritime route amid efforts to secure a peace agreement with Iran.

During a bilateral meeting with Trump on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in France, Modi said the reopening and protection of the Strait of Hormuz was crucial not only for regional stability but also for the global economy. "You and I agree that keeping the Strait of Hormuz open is vital for the global economy," Modi said, stressing that India has consistently advocated unrestricted maritime movement.

Modi and Trump held wide-ranging talks focusing on the proposed bilateral trade deal, bilateral defence and security ties and the West Asia crisis.

"Lakhs of Indian seafarers operate in maritime sector; I believe that their security is equally important," PM Modi told President Trump. India lost 3 Indian seafarers in an



US President Donald Trump with PM Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the G7 summit in Evian-les-Bains, France, on Wednesday

attack by US Navy last well at MT Settebello. Two more vessels with Indian crew on board were also attacked in the same week.

Modi thanked President Trump for his efforts to restore peace in West Asia and expressed hope for a lasting resolution to the conflict. "We have always said that

there should be freedom of navigation...Lakhs of Indian seafarers operate in the maritime trade sector. I believe that their security is equally important. I am confident that the deal (with Iran) will have provisions for the security of the seafarers," Modi said in his media comments.

Continued on Page 7

DON'S BIG PROMISE 'IF INDIA IS ATTACKED, WE WILL BE THERE FOR MODI'

Says Trump on defence ties with India

EVIAN-LES-BAINS: While commenting on the defence relationship between the US and India, US President Donald Trump said even though the countries do not have a formal defence agreement, Washington would be there for New Delhi. Answering a question about defence ties, Trump said, "I think it's a great relationship. Cont'd on P7

'A TOTAL KILLER, A TOUGH TRADER'

Trump all praise for PM at G7 bilateral

EVIAN-LES-BAINS: US President Donald Trump on Wednesday



showed praise on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in France's Evian on the sidelines of the G7 Summit 2026. Assigning adjectives like "a killer and a tough trader" to PM Modi, Trump said he has immense respect for the leader. "He's a very tough

negotiator... You look at this man. I'll give you a lesson. He's the most beautiful-looking man. He looks so nice, like an angel. But actually, he's as tough as a killer... But he looks so good. So he gets you by surprise. There are a few people like this," Trump said as the two leaders held a bilateral meeting in France. Continued on Page 7



'We're the most famous couple'

MELONI TELLS PM MODI AT G7 SUMMIT

EVIAN-LES-BAINS

LEADERS of the Group of Seven (G7) gathered in France's Evian-les-Bains on Tuesday to discuss key global challenges, reaffirm their support for Ukraine, and welcome

the breakthrough deal between the US and Iran. Amid this serious event, a brief interaction between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Italian counterpart Giorgia Meloni has caught all the attention on social media,

with the 'Melodi' buzz making a return. A viral video shows PM Modi and Meloni greeting each other and shaking hands moments before lining up for a group photo with other leaders, including US President Donald Trump. Cont'd on P7



Modi flags concerns over impact of West Asia crisis

REPORT: P7



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu reviews agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture sectors at the Secretariat in Amaravati on Wednesday

EL NINO CONCERNS

CM calls for crop diversification

- ▶ Directs officials to focus on market-driven cultivation, natural farming
- ▶ Seeks solutions for problems of chilli, tobacco, totapuri mango growers

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday directed officials to formulate crop cultivation strategies suited to the changing weather conditions associated with the El Nino phenomenon, with a special focus on crop diversification and market-linked farming.

Reviewing the agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture sectors at the Secretariat, the Chief Minister instructed officials to guide farmers on the cultivation of agricultural, commercial and

horticultural crops based on last year's experiences and prevailing market trends.

Naidu emphasized the need to accelerate the adoption of natural farming across the state and stressed the importance of certification and traceability to improve market access. He said he would personally participate in awareness programmes to encourage farmers to adopt scientific and sustainable cultivation practices.

The Chief Minister directed officials to address issues affecting chilli, tobacco and totapuri mango farmers.

Continued on Page 7

WINDOWS

India, EU agree to sign FTA by year-end

EVIAN-LES-BAINS: India and the European Union will sign the ambitious free trade agreement

by the end of this year, top EU leader Ursula von der Leyen said on Wednesday after holding talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi that largely focused on boosting two-way economic engagement against the backdrop of a fragile geopolitical environment. In the meeting, held on the sidelines of the G7 summit in this French commune, the two sides also resolved to step up security and defence cooperation. Besides Von der Leyen, the President of the EU Commission, the meeting was joined by European Council President Antonio Costa.

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Competitive exams may soon come with a nationwide lockdown

GOING THE GOA WAY!

AP introduces beach shack bar policy



HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh government has announced a new Excise Policy under which bar licences will be granted to beach shacks along the State's coastline, aiming to promote coastal tourism, generate employment, and create a transparent regulatory framework for tourism-linked enterprises.

The policy, which will be effective from September 1, 2026, to August 31, 2029, follows recommendations made by the Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted to review and reform the State's excise policies. The

government has approved detailed guidelines for the establishment and operation of bars in beach shacks and notified the same through an Extraordinary Gazette issued on Wednesday.

Andhra Pradesh has a coastline stretching over 975 kilometres across 12 coastal districts, offering significant potential for tourism development. Although a regulatory framework for beach shacks was introduced in 2016, no licences were issued and the policy lapsed in 2022. The new policy seeks to revive the concept with stronger safeguards and clear operational guidelines.

Continued on Page 7



Telegram moves Delhi HC against govt curbs

Centre claims 'shocking' activities on platform

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the Centre to file its reply on Telegram's plea against its order temporarily restricting access to the messaging app ahead of the June 21 NEET-UG 2026 re-examination. As the matter came up before a vacation bench of Justice Tejas Karia, Telegram's counsel claimed the curbs were illegal, but Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta defended the government action, saying the platform was being misused and he would reveal "something shocking" on Thursday. The court adjourned the hearing to Thursday and issued notice to the Centre. During the hearing, Telegram's counsel questioned the legality of the government order blocking the platform. Cont'd on Page 7

Uddhav Sena stares at split

6 MPs set to join Shinde camp ■ NDA to get boost in Lok Sabha

MUMBAI

SIX Shiv Sena (UBT) MPs reportedly formed a separate group in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday and submitted a letter to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. The six MPs are expected to join the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena on Friday, the party's foundation day. Sena functionaries said the process of forming the separate group was completed smoothly.

The Shiv Sena (UBT) has nine MPs in the Lok Sabha.



Barring Arvind Sawant, Anil Desai and Rajabhai Waze, all the remaining MPs are understood to have joined the new group.

Sena (UBT) MPs Sanjay Raut, Sawant and Desai also met Birla and urged him not

to recognise any separate group formed by defecting Sena (UBT) MPs. However, Sena functionaries claimed that Birla had recognised the group of six MPs as a separate bloc.

Continued on Page 7

SAMAJWADI SPLIT NEXT?

- ▶ Claims UP minister
- ▶ Akhilesh responds

NEW DELHI: Amid turmoil in TMC and buzz of a brewing split in Shiv Sena (UBT), speculation of a possible split in former Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party (SP) surfaced after state minister OP Rajbhar claimed that the Opposition party could face a major exodus. Continued on Page 7

DEAL NOT FINAL: TRUMP

Changes tune on Tehran ■ Threatens to drop bombs

EVIAN-LES-BAINS

JUST as things were looking up for the peace efforts in the Middle East, US President Donald Trump on Wednesday crushed hopes again, with fresh warnings to Iran.

During his remarks at the G7 Summit in France, Trump said that no deal had been finalised with Iran and warned he would



resume "dropping bombs" and go back to shooting if Tehran did not abide by its obligations.

Trump clarified that only

a memorandum of understanding was in the works, and that no deal had been finalised. "If I don't like it, we will go back to shooting at them," Trump said, adding: "If they don't behave, we'll go right back to dropping bombs right smack in the middle of their head." He made the remarks sitting alongside Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

Continued on Page 7



Take yoga to every household: CM to officials

Baba Ramdev to join CM at Undavalli for Yoga Day fete

HANS NEWS SERVICE

AMARAVATI: Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday directed officials to take yoga to every household in Andhra Pradesh by integrating the practice with the state's flagship Sanjeevani health programme, while calling for the successful implementation of the Yogandhra initiative.

Reviewing preparations for International Yoga Day celebrations at the Secretariat, the Chief Minister stressed the need to encourage people to adopt yoga as part of their daily lives and focus on preventive healthcare. He instructed officials to prepare a year-long action plan under the theme "Yoga for Every Household" and suggested instituting special awards next year for yoga master trainers who deliver exceptional performance.

Continued on Page 7

Meta starts charging for Insta, FB & WhatsApp

NEW DELHI

Launches a new 'Meta One' subscription brand



algorithm-driven social feed of the last 15 years is winding down.

Analysts believe that it's an urgent attempt to offset soaring AI costs as Mark Zuckerberg tries to play catch up in the AI space where it is lagging behind. Meta increased its 2026 capital expenditure forecast to an unprecedented \$125 billion - \$145 billion, primarily to fund AI compute infrastructure, data centres, and higher component costs.

Instagram Plus costs \$3.99 a month. Subscribers get story insights showing how many

people rewatched a story, unlimited custom audience lists beyond Close Friends, the ability to spotlight a story for a week, the option to extend a story past 24 hours, a preview mode that lets one to watch

other people's stories without showing up as a viewer, and Super Heart animated reactions. One can also post straight to the profile without it appearing in followers' feeds. While Facebook Plus

is also \$3.99 a month and gives you a similar bundle, focused on profile customisation, reactions and analytics, WhatsApp Plus is cheaper at \$2.99. "It is not about social expression. It is about personalising the messaging app: custom themes, ring-tones, more pinned chats, list customisation and premium stickers," say the experts.

Then there is the AI tier. Meta is testing Meta One Plus at \$7.99 and Meta One Premium at \$19.99 for heavier Meta AI users. The Premium plan unlocks deeper reasoning

on complex tasks and more image and video generation across Meta's apps. Free Meta AI access remains but with usage limits. These plans start testing next month in Singapore, Guatemala and Bolivia.

For creators and businesses, Meta One Essential at \$14.99 bundles the Verified badge, impersonation protection and an enhanced linksheet. The top tier, Meta One Advanced at \$49.99, promises higher placement in Facebook and Instagram search, a bolder Follow button on Reels, automatic follow invitations, deeper competitive analytics and team access controls. Continued on Page 7

Mangalagiri to be developed as No1 constituency: Lokesh

- Minister for Education and IT, Nara Lokesh takes part in foundation-laying ceremony for various development projects

- Says the government is fulfilling its election promises in a phased and transparent manner

- Directs officials to complete the long-pending Nidamaru railway over bridge within 18 months

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TADEPALLI

MINISTER for Education and IT, Nara Lokesh has asserted that the coalition government is committed to transform Mangalagiri into the number one constituency in the state across all sectors. Addressing the media during the inauguration and foundation-laying ceremonies for various development projects in the constituency, Lokesh highlighted the government's development agenda and responded sharply to criticism from the opposition.

Lokesh stated that comprehensive infrastructure



Minister Nara Lokesh at the inauguration ceremony of several development programmes in Mangalagiri on Wednesday

development is underway in Mangalagiri, including underground drainage, underground power supply, drinking water facilities, hospitals, parks, lakes, community halls, libraries, and improved crematoriums. He announced that the constituency's long-awaited underground drainage project, estimated to cost around Rs 1,200 crore, would be personally monitored by him to ensure timely completion without causing inconvenience to residents.

The minister said the government has already launched several welfare initiatives, including enhanced pensions, free bus travel for women, free LPG cylinders, financial assistance under

“Talliki Vandanam,” and support schemes for farmers, fishermen, and auto drivers. He claimed that the government is fulfilling its election promises in a phased and transparent manner. Taking aim at YSRCP chief and Pulivendula MLA Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, Lokesh remarked that if the opposition leader spent more time in Andhra Pradesh instead of Bengaluru and Hyderabad, he would better understand the development taking place in the state. On the issue of teacher recruitment, Lokesh declared that no force could stop the government from conducting DSC recruitment. He said 16,000 teacher posts had already been filled within

Challenges for open debate on DSC exam

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GUNTUR

MINISTER for HRD Nara Lokesh challenged for an open debate on the DSC examination conducted to fill vacant teacher posts. Addressing the media in Tadepalli on Wednesday, he expressed his readiness to clarify any doubts regarding the DSC examination. He said, “If anybody has the courage, they may come forward. I will clarify their doubts.”

He vehemently condemned the YSRCP leaders' allegations of irregularities in the DSC examination.

He made it clear that the YSRCP cannot stop the DSC examination and remarked that the coalition government is releasing a job calendar, not a Sakshi

calendar.

He criticised the YSRCP for not conducting even a single DSC examination to fill teacher posts during its tenure. He said that if they had conducted a DSC examination, they would have understood the system better.

He urged YS Jagan Mohan Reddy to see the development in Tadepalli. He also slammed the latter for extending support to those who allegedly abuse women.

Lokesh questioned whether Jagan Mohan Reddy would accept abusive comments being made against his wife and daughters. He recalled that the TDP had taken action against those who made derogatory remarks against Jagan Mohan Reddy's family members.

150 days and promised more notifications after the next TET examination. He also challenged the opposition to a public debate on DSC and reservation policies.

Lokesh further directed officials to complete the

Foundation stone laid for railway over bridge at Nidamaru

The ROB will be constructed in place of Railway Level Crossing Gate No. 14 on the Mangalagiri-Nidamaru road along the Namburu-Mangalagiri railway section

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GUNTUR

UNION Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications, Dr Pemmasani Chandrasekhar, along with Minister for Human Resources Development Nara Lokesh, laid the foundation stone on Wednesday for the construction of a Railway over Bridge (ROB) at Nidamaru at an estimated cost of Rs 142 crore.

The ROB will be constructed in place of Railway Level Crossing Gate No. 14 on the Mangalagiri-Nidamaru road along the Namburu-Mangalagiri railway section. The project is expected to provide seamless connectivity between Mangalagiri, Amaravati Capital Region, and the Tadikonda constituency.

The railway crossing at Nidamaru has long been a major bottleneck for commuters due to frequent gate closures, causing traffic congestion and delays. Recognising the hardships faced by the public, Minister Nara Lokesh took the initiative to secure government approval and sanction for the project.

Speaking on the occasion, the leaders said the



Union Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications Dr Pemmasani Chandrasekhar and HRD Minister Nara Lokesh unveil the commemorative plaque marking the commencement of the Railway Over Bridge construction works at Nidamaru on Wednesday

ROB would significantly improve transportation infrastructure in the region and enhance connectivity to the State capital. Once completed, it will considerably reduce travel time and distance between Mangalagiri and Amaravati, benefiting thousands of daily commuters.

Residents of Betapudi, Nidamaru, Kuragallu and Neerukonda villages are expected to benefit greatly from the project through faster and safer travel.

The proposed ROB will be constructed at a height of 10 metres above the railway track and will have a total length of 767.50 metres, including 362 metres

towards Amaravati and 405.50 metres towards Mangalagiri. The structure will be equipped with crash barriers on both sides, a central divider, and service roads with drainage facilities. Including the service roads, the total width of the ROB will be 28 metres.

MLC Alapati Rajendra Prasad, Padmasali Welfare and Development Corporation Chairman Nandam Abaddaiah, TDP Politburo member Guttikonda Dhananjay, TDP Guntur Parliamentary Constituency General Secretary Pothineni Srinivasa Rao, and Mangalagiri TDP President Padavala Mahesh were among those present.

OIL PALM EXPANSION PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KAKINADA

IN a significant initiative aimed at promoting oil palm cultivation in the district, Kakinada District Collector M N Harendhira Prasad on Wednesday inaugurated the oil palm expansion programme by planting an oil palm sapling at Talluru village.

Addressing farmers, the collector said that oil palm cultivation plays a crucial role in meeting the country's growing edible oil requirements and has the potential to provide farmers with sustainable and higher long-term income.



District Horticulture Officer T Veera Cyril, who participated in the programme, created awareness among farmers about government subsidies, technical support, and incentives available for intercropping in oil palm plantations.

Horticulture Department Officer A Sreevali, Assistant Director of Agriculture G Srinivas, MPDO Satya Hari Krishna Reddy, and Tahsildar K Padmaja were present.

The collector noted that 30 farmers from Talluru village have adopted crop diversification this year by taking up oil palm cultivation in 60 acres. He called upon more farmers to expand oil palm cultivation by availing themselves of the various incentives and assistance programmes offered by the government.



Union Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications Pemmasani Chandrasekhar inaugurates a mobile medical van in Guntur on Wednesday

Mobile medical van launched

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GUNTUR

IN a significant step towards bringing primary healthcare services closer to the people, Union Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications, Dr Pemmasani Chandrasekhar, inaugurated a mobile medical van at the Collectorate here on Wednesday. The initiative has been launched with the support of HDFC Bank.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Chandrasekhar said the mobile medical van is aimed at providing essential healthcare services at the doorsteps of people across Guntur district, particularly those living in rural and underserved areas.

Dr Chandrasekhar further stated that approximately Rs 45 lakh would be spent annually on the operation and maintenance of the newly launched mobile medical van to ensure uninterrupted and quality healthcare services for the public. Representatives of HDFC Bank said the mobile medical van is expected to benefit nearly 1,000 people every month and around 12,000 people annually.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GUNTUR

FORMER Minister Ambati Rambabu and Jana Sena Party leaders Narendra and Navarang on Wednesday demanded a probe by a sitting High Court judge, along with a CBI inquiry, into the alleged custodial death of Sai Krishna. Addressing a press conference at Ambati Rambabu's residence in Siddhartha Nagar, Guntur, the leaders alleged that the coalition government had failed to ensure justice in the case. They expressed concern over the circumstances surrounding Sai Krishna's death and highlighted the plight of his family, particularly his mother, who they said was seeking answers and justice.

The leaders questioned the manner in which the authorities had handled the incident and called for a transparent and impartial investigation to uncover the facts. They maintained that accountability must be fixed if any wrongdoing is established during the course of the inquiry.

Demanding stringent action against those responsible, they urged the government to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and register murder cases against the individuals found involved in the alleged custodial death. They emphasised that regardless

of the allegations or charges a person may face, custodial torture and death cannot be justified under any circumstances and are contrary to the principles of justice and the rule of law. The leaders further stated that an investigation conducted under the supervision of a sitting High Court judge would help ensure transparency and public confidence in the inquiry process. They also reiterated their demand for a CBI investigation, saying it would provide an independent assessment of the case. Ambati Rambabu, Narendra and Na-

varang assured Sai Krishna's family of their support and said they would continue to raise the issue until justice is delivered. They also called for measures to prevent similar incidents in the future and to strengthen safeguards against custodial abuse.

SAI KRISHNA DISAPPEARANCE CASE CM orders suspension of Vijayawada CI

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday ordered the suspension of Krishnalanka circle inspector Nagaraju and directed an IPS-level investigation into the disappearance of Sai Krishna from Vijayawada, following a high-level review meeting at the State Secretariat.

Soon after returning from his Singapore visit, the Chief Minister convened a meeting with Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and senior police officials to review the sensational case. During the meeting, officials briefed the two leaders on the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Sai Krishna, a resident of Krishnalanka.

Expressing concern over the allegations linked to the case, the Chief Minister directed senior police officials to immediately suspend CI Nagaraju and ordered that the matter be investigated by a

senior IPS officer. He stressed that the probe must be impartial and thorough and called for stringent action against all those found responsible.

Chief secretary G Sai Prasad, DGP Harish Kumar Gupta, intelligence chief Mahesh Chandra Laddha and Vijayawada police commissioner Rajasekhar Babu attended the review meeting.

Meanwhile, YSRCP state spokesperson Vanaveeti Narendra alleged that the incident had raised serious questions about governance and accountability. He claimed that Sai Krishna was taken into police custody but was never produced before a court and alleged that his body was cremated without being handed over to family members. Demanding action against all those involved, including senior officials, Narendra questioned whether such an incident could have occurred without political backing and criticized what he described as attempts to settle the issue rather than ensure justice.

Rudra Raju warns against large-scale voter deletions

- Says Cong party will closely monitor the revision process and ensure that no eligible voter is deprived of the constitutional right to vote

- Criticised the Election Commission for not holding wider consultations with political stakeholders before launching the exercise

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

FORMER AP Congress Committee (APCC) president and special invitee to the Congress Working Committee (CWC), Gidugu Rudra Raju, on Wednesday expressed serious concerns over the Election



Gidugu Rudra Raju

Commission of India's ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state, alleging that the exercise could result in large-scale deletion of genuine

voters. Addressing a press conference here, Rudra Raju said the SIR process, covering more than 4.16 crore voters in the State, is currently underway with house-to-house verification scheduled from June 15 to July 14, followed by publication of draft electoral rolls on July 21. Claims and objections can be filed between July 21 and August 20, while the final electoral rolls will be published on September 22.

He said the Congress party would closely monitor the revision process and ensure that no eligible voter is deprived of the constitutional right to vote.

Party cadres would assist citizens in verifying voter details, filing complaints and seeking cor-

rections wherever necessary.

Rudra Raju alleged that similar revision exercises conducted in several States had resulted in large-scale deletions of voter names. Referring to figures from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, he said the experience of SIR elsewhere had raised concerns among opposition parties about the possibility of genuine voters being removed from electoral rolls.

He criticised the Election Commission for not holding wider consultations with political stakeholders before launching the exercise. A revision of electoral rolls should be carried out transparently and with the participation of all political parties, he said.

Hans India Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Mangipudi Sriharsha R/o H.No.67-1-36/3, NSN School back Side, Darsipeta, Patamata, Vijayawada, N.T.R. District, Andhra Pradesh, 520010. Have Changed My Name As "MANGIPUDI SREEHATHA" For Future Purpose. (Th_34250)

CHANGE OF NAME & D.O.B

I, RAMALAKSHMAMMA, is legally wedded wife of Ex No: 8034619L, Rank: RECRUIT, Name: UTTARADHI BHASKARA CHARI Presently residing of Cumbum Village & Post, Cumbum Mandal & Tehsil, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh-523333, have changed my Name from **RAMALAKSHMAMMA to UTTARADHI RAMALAKSHMAMMA** and Date of Birth 10-08-1984 to 05-05-1983 as per affidavit dated 15-06-2026 Pri. Judi. Magistrate of 1st Class, Giddalur. (Th_BSR)

CHANGE OF SURNAME

I, MIRZA MOHAMMED HYDER ABBAS (Old Name), S/o Mirza Mohammed Hussain R/o 3/338, Inukuduru peta, Machilipatnam, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh, India. Hence I have changed my name to **MIRZA MOHAMMAD HYDER ABBAS** (New Name). Hereafter my name is known as **MIRZA MOHAMMAD HYDER ABBAS** (New Name) (Th_34250)

CHANGE OF SURNAME & GIVEN NAME

I, MOHAMMED ILIYAS, (old Name) S/o, SHAIK ABDUL BASHEER BASHA, resident of D.NO:17-9-30/1, BESIDE AZAD NAGAR MASJID ANANDAPET, 6TH LINE, GUNTUR- 522003, A.P, India Hence I have Changed My Surname and Given Name is Known As **SHAIK MOHAMMED ILIYAS** (New Name) hereafter My Surname and Given Name to **SHAIK MOHAMMED ILIYAS** (New Name) (Th_34250)

REMOVING OF SURNAME

I JAIN LAKSHYA KUMAR (Old Name) S/O, PRAFUL KUMAR, resident of D.NO. 27-27.5, MUDDALAPALLI STREET, GOVERNORPET, VIJAYAWADA, 520002, AP, INDIA, HENCE I HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO **LAKSHYA KUMAR** (NEW NAME) HEAR AFTER MY NAME IS KNOW AS **LAKSHYA KUMAR** (New Name) (Th_34250)

CHANGE OF SURNAME

I, ABURI LAKSHMI MOUNICA (Old Name) resident of 3-234-A NEAR VRO OFFICE LINGAPALLE MAANDALAM KOTHAPALLE ELURU, ELURU DISTRICT, A.P., Hence I have Changed My Surname to **KAKARLA LAKSHMI MOUNICA** (New Surname) W/o **KAKARLA SIVA RAMA KRISHNA**, hereafter My Surname is Known as **KAKARLA LAKSHMI MOUNICA** W/o. **KAKARLA SIVA RAMA KRISHNA**. (Th_34250)

CHANGE OF NAME

I, D SARASWATHI is legally wedded spouse of No.15330233F Rank SPR Name: VENKATESWARLU MARAM REDDY (Late), Residing at H.No.2-72, Main Road, Nikaram Pali (Vil & Po), Markapur (M), Markapuram (Dt) AP - 52328. Do hereby declare that I have changed my name as from **D SARASWATHI to DONDA SARASWATHI & D.O.B: 10/07/1987**. Due to Variation of name & DOB in the Army and Civil Document Vide affidavit Sworn before Public notary dated 15/06/2026. I declare that both names are one and the same person. (Th_Madan Nellore)

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Shaik Karimunnisa, (old name), D/o Shaik Alla Bakshu, Residence of D.No. 8-93 Muslim Bazar, Amaravathi Mandal Palnadu Dist. Andhra Pradesh- 522020. I have changed my name as shaik Mohammed Karimunnisa (New Name), Dio Shaik Alla Bakshu Here after my name is Shaik. Mohammed Karimunnisa (New name), Dio Shaik Alla Bakshu. (Th_Rajarao)

CHANGE OF SURNAME

I, RAHAMATULLA, (Old Name) S/o, AHAMADULLA KHAN, resident of D.No. 1-1-1/2, 1ST WARD OLD TOWN, REPALLE, BAPATLA-52265, A.P, India Hence I have changed My Surname to **RAHAMATULLA KHAN** (New Name) hereafter My Surname is Known As **RAHAMATULLA KHAN**. (New Name) (Th_34250)

CHANGE OF SURNAME

I YAKKATEELA RAVI KANTH. (Old Name) S/o. PEDDA ANJIAH YAKKATEELA Resident of 4-68/A, MUTUKURU VILLAGE DURG MANDAL, PALNADUPIN: 522612, Andhra Pradesh India Hence I have changed my name to **YAKKATEELA RAVI KANTH** (New name) hereafter My Name is Known As **YAKKATEELA RAVI KANTH** (New name) (Th_34250)

REMOVING OF SURNAME

I JAIN SARIKA(OLD NAME W/O. PRAFUL KUMAR, resident of D.NO. 27-27.5, MUDDALAPALLI STREET, GOVERNORPET, VIJAYAWADA- 520002, AP, INDIA, HENCE I HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO **SARIKA** (NEW NAME) hereafter My Name is Known As **SARIKA** (New Name) (Th_34250)

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AP team studies Singapore models for Amaravati growth

- A delegation led by MA&UD minister Narayana visited Singapore to study global best practices in urban planning, sustainable infrastructure and scientific waste management
- Officials hold discussions with NUS Cities and Surbana Jurong on climate resilience, smart infrastructure, digital twin technology, urban analytics and capacity-building initiatives for Amaravati
- The team also examined Singapore's waste-to-energy and resource recovery systems at the Tuas South Incineration Plant, with plans to explore suitable models for Andhra Pradesh's urban development

HANS NEW SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

A high-level Andhra Pradesh delegation led by municipal administration and urban development (MA&UD) minister P Narayana visited Singapore to study global best practices in urban planning, sustainable infrastructure and scientific waste management, with a focus on applying key learnings to the development of Amaravati and other cities in the state.

The visit was undertaken on the directions of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who has stressed

the need to build Amaravati and major urban centres by adopting international standards in planning, governance and infrastructure development.

The delegation, which included MA&UD principal secretary S Suresh Kumar and APCRDA additional commissioner Praveenchand, held discussions with leading Singapore institutions such as NUS Cities, Surbana Jurong and the Tuas South Incineration Plant.

At NUS Cities, officials explored opportunities for collaboration in urban planning, climate resilience, gov-



Members of AP municipal administration and urban development department delegation at Tuas South Incineration Plant in Singapore on Wednesday

ernance, capacity building and data-driven city management. Discussions centred on how global expertise could support Amaravati, one of the world's largest greenfield capital city projects. Areas identified for possible cooperation included urban analytics, digital twin technology, climate studies, executive training programmes and the establishment of an Urban Futures Lab.

The delegation also visited the Surbana Jurong Innovation Hub in Singapore's Jurong Innovation District

to understand how urban planning can be integrated with economic development, sustainability and smart infrastructure. Officials examined technologies related to energy-efficient buildings, intelligent monitoring systems, green construction practices and innovation-led urban growth.

As part of its study on municipal solid waste management, the team toured the Tuas South Incineration Plant and interacted with officials of Singapore's National Environment Agency.

The visit provided insights into waste collection, waste-to-energy conversion, ash management, resource recovery and environmental safeguards.

Speaking during the visit, minister Narayana said the state government is committed to building clean, green and economically productive cities. He noted that Singapore's success highlights the importance of integrated planning, institutional coordination and long-term urban governance.

Principal secretary Suresh Kumar said the visit offered valuable insights for Amaravati's development and opened avenues for technical collaboration and knowledge exchange. He added that the government would examine suitable models and technologies that could be adapted to Andhra Pradesh's urban development and waste management initiatives.

The MA&UD department said the outcomes of the visit would be reviewed further to identify actionable partnerships, pilot projects and capacity-building programmes aimed at strengthening urban development across the state.

Amarnath hits back at TDP over 'fabricated' row

- YSRCP leader and former minister says his recent remarks were not meant against women but against home minister Anitha's comments

- States that irrespective of the party affiliation, women deserve to be respected and he will continue to support the party women

- Accuses the coalition govt of using 'fabricated' controversies to divert attention from its failures

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM

FORMER IT minister and YSRCP regional coordinator Gudivada Amarnath said that his recent remarks were never meant against women but in response to unparliamentary language used by home minister Vangalapudi Anitha against Vijayamma, YS Bharathi Reddy and former chief minister Y S Jagan Mohan



Former IT Minister and YSRCP regional coordinator Gudivada Amarnath speaking at a media conference in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday

Reddy for quite a while. Despite their political affiliation, Amarnath told in a media conference here on Wednesday, that women deserve to be respected and that his family political legacy that continued for three generations always upheld dignity and values.

However, Amarnath claimed that controversy was deliberately created over his remarks by the TDP three days after his speech to gain political advantage and divert attention from the coalition government's alleged failures.

He questioned the selective outrage of TDP leaders, wondering why were quiet when derogatory remarks were made against Y S Vijayamma, Y S Bharathi Reddy, former minister R K Roja, among

others, or when leaders in their own party made 'objectionable' statements targeting other women.

Referring to home minister Anitha's recent comments such as 'who is he?', 'that fellow', addressing a former minister, Amarnath said it clearly indicates her arrogance. "No matter what, I will continue to defend YSRCP leaders and workers against personal attacks and stand by my remarks against the Home Minister as I did not say anything wrong," he said. The former minister alleged that the coalition government is using 'fabricated' controversies to divert the attention from its failure in maintaining law and order in the state.

Pointing out to rising number of murders, attacks on women, political violence, missing children cases, lock-up deaths and the escape of a ganja smuggler from police custody, Amarnath questioned the Home Minister's silence over such burning issues. "However, her attack on the opposition continues," he remarked. Underlining YSRCP's commitment to women and Dalit empowerment, Amarnath stated that leaders who insulted Dalits and were silent on derogatory remarks made against women have no moral right to lecture others on dignity and social justice.

Lokesh pitches Anantapur as satellite hub

- Invites Pixelpspace CTO to set up factory in AP after land hurdles in Bengaluru
- Promotes Space Cities, aerospace parks, and ready-to-use industrial ecosystems
- Continues AP's push to woo aerospace firms from Karnataka with investor-friendly policies

VIJAYAWADA

IT and electronics minister Nara Lokesh invited the chief technology officer (CTO) and founder of a company that builds and operates remote sensing satellites to Anantapur after the latter posted that getting land for making a satellite factory on the outskirts of Bengaluru is more difficult than making satel-



lites. "Trying to get land for making a satellite factory in the outskirts of BLR has been way more difficult than actually making said satellites," Kshitij Khandelwal, CTO and founder of Pixelpspace, posted on X.

Lokesh invited Kshitij to Anantapur near Bengaluru. "Kshitij, there's a new investor-friendly destination on the outskirts of Bengaluru. It's called Anantapur," he said.

He added that Andhra Pradesh is building Space Cities, aerospace parks and ready-to-go industrial ecosystems so founders can spend their time building sat-

ellites instead of hunting for land. The minister even asked the Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB) to contact Kshitij.

Earlier, responding to Kshitij's post, Karnataka's minister for large, medium industries and infrastructure development, M B Patil, said that his office would get in touch with him. This is not the first time that Lokesh has tried to woo aerospace firms from Karnataka. Last year in October, Lokesh extended an open invitation to aerospace companies to consider Andhra Pradesh as an option after then Karnataka Chief

Minister Siddaramaiah announced withdrawal of the proposed land acquisition in Devanahalli taluk for an aerospace park near Bengaluru, following opposition from farmers who were set to lose their land for the project.

"Dear Aerospace industry, sorry to hear about this. I have a better idea for you. Why don't you look at Andhra Pradesh instead? We have an attractive aerospace policy for you, with best-in-class incentives and over 8000 acres of ready-to-use land (just outside Bengaluru)! Hope to see you soon to talk across the table," Lokesh had posted while tagging a story on the Karnataka government's decision.

Earlier, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu had ruffled feathers in Karnataka by offering a 10,000-acre land parcel in Anantapur district to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for potential expansion.

PMVBRY to disburse Rs 2,400 cr sops

- Over 1.92 cr first-time employees to get wage incentive up to Rs 15,000 in two instalments
- Employers eligible for Rs 3,000 per month per new hire, with extended benefits for manufacturing sector
- National event at Vigyan Bhawan to mark rollout; regional disbursal in Krishna district at VR Siddhartha Engineering College

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE Government of India has launched the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar



Additional Central Provident Fund Commissioner Andrew Prabhu and Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-II Abdul Khader addressing the media in Vijayawada on Wednesday

Yojana (PMVBRY), formerly known as the Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme, with the objective of promoting large-scale employment generation, improving employability, and expanding social security coverage across sectors, particularly in manufacturing.

With a total financial outlay of Rs 99,446 crore, the scheme aims to facilitate the creation of more than 3.5 crore jobs nationwide over two years. Of these, nearly 1.92 crore beneficiaries are expected to be first-time entrants into the formal workforce. The benefits apply to jobs created between August

1, 2025, and July 31, 2027.

Addressing a press briefing at the EPFO zonal office here on Wednesday, Andrew Prabhu, additional Central Provident Fund commissioner and Abdul Khader, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-II, explained the significance and implementation of the scheme.

Under Part A, first-time employees registered with EPFO and earning up to Rs 1 lakh per month are eligible for an incentive equivalent to one month's wage, up to Rs 15,000, paid in two instalments after six and twelve months of continuous service. The second instalment

is linked to completion of a financial literacy programme.

Under Part B, employers will receive incentives of up to Rs 3,000 per month per additional employee for two years. Manufacturing sector employers will receive the benefit for an additional two years. The incentives are aimed at encouraging sustained employment and formal workforce expansion.

To mark the successful implementation of the scheme, a national-level event will be held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on Friday, in the presence of the Prime Minister. Benefits worth approximately Rs 2,400 crore will be disbursed to eligible beneficiaries. In the erstwhile Krishna district, a regional event will be organised at VR Siddhartha Engineering College, Kanuru, with participation from public representatives, industry leaders, employers, employees and EPFO officials.

43 doctors dismissed for unauthorised absence

- Action follows disciplinary proceedings against doctors absent for up to four years
- 34 doctors submit resignations after notices; government processing cases
- Health dept cracks down on absenteeism across public hospitals

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE state government has initiated the process of permanently removing 43 civil assistant surgeons from service for prolonged unauthorised absence from duty, health minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav announced on Wednesday.

The minister said disciplinary action was taken after the doctors failed to respond to show-cause notices and charge memos issued under service rules, despite some remaining absent from government service for as long as four years.

The action comes a month after the government removed 51 doctors working in teaching hospitals under the Directorate of Medical Education for similar violations. The latest proceedings involve doctors serving under the Directorate of Secondary Health



Services, including specialists in General Medicine, Orthopedics, Gynecology and other disciplines.

According to the health department, a total of 118 permanent doctors were found to be unauthorisedly absent from duty. Under existing government rules, doctors who remain absent without authorization for more than one year are liable for removal from service.

Of the 118 doctors, 43 have now reached the final stage of disciplinary proceedings for dismissal. Another 34 doctors submitted their resignations after receiving show-cause notices and charge memos. The government is in the process of accepting the resignations of 15 doctors, while disciplinary inquiries are continuing against others.

Director of secondary health Chakradhara Babu said 11 inquiry officers have been appointed district-wise under the Andhra Pradesh Civil Services (CCA) Rules, 1991, to examine cases involving 19 doctors who resigned after charges were framed. Explanations will be sought and further action taken based on inquiry reports.

12 days on, missing toddler mystery deepens

- Search for the two-year-old girl from Ch Agharam enters its 12th day, with police probing all possibilities, including abduction, animal attack and family-related disputes
- Investigators have analysed CCTV footage, mobile data from 170 phones, surveyed all 470 houses and questioned nearly 150 residents, besides tracing seasonal workers and nomadic groups
- Search operations have been expanded to a 10-km radius covering water bodies and 11 hills, while the family's pet dog, which disappeared with the child and returned days later before dying, remains a key focus of the probe

KAKINADA

THE search for a two-year-old girl who went missing from Ch Agharam village in Kakinada district entered its 12th day on Wednesday, with police continuing an extensive investigation and exploring all possible angles, including abduction, an animal attack and family-related disputes.

The child disappeared on June 6 after reportedly walking towards a cashew plantation near her village



along with the family's pet dog. She was last seen near a fence bordering the plantation. A villager who noticed her tried to alert the family but was attacked by the dog when he approached. By the time relatives and villagers reached the spot about 35 minutes later, the child had vanished.

A large-scale search operation involving police, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), dog squads, technical teams, forest officials and other departments has been underway since then.

Police said they have examined CCTV footage, questioned transport operators and analysed mobile phone data from the area. Around 170 mobile numbers active near the scene at the time of the incident have been identified and are being scrutinised. Investigators have also surveyed all 470 houses in the village and questioned nearly 150 residents.

Authorities are tracing seasonal workers and nomadic groups that frequented the area during the cashew season. A group that had camped nearby with dogs before the incident is also being questioned. Police dis-

Home minister visits the family, vows full support

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KAKINADA

HOME minister Vangalapudi Anitha on Wednesday visited the family of two-year-old Gnaneshwari, who has been missing from Tuni, and assured them of the government's full support in tracing the child.

Speaking to the family members, the minister described the disappearance of the toddler as deeply distressing. She said the grief of Gnaneshwari's mother, who has been anxiously waiting for her daughter's return, was beyond words. Anitha said the police swung into action immediately after receiving information about the child's disappearance and launched extensive search operations. She noted that investigators were examining both technical evidence and field-level inputs, with multiple teams conducting searches and pursuing all possible leads. The home minister clarified that the government had shown no negligence in handling



Home minister V Anitha interacts with the parents of the missing girl at Ch Agharam in Tuni mandal on Wednesday

the case. She said the investigation was being monitored on a daily basis and assured the family that search efforts would continue until the child's whereabouts were established.

"The government stands firmly with Gnaneshwari's family and will provide all necessary support," she said.

Anitha also expressed concern over what she described as misinformation being circulated on

social media platforms and certain YouTube channels regarding the case. She urged those spreading unverified information to stop immediately and warned that legal action would be initiated against individuals or platforms found disseminating false reports. The minister reiterated the government's commitment to finding the missing child and ensuring that the investigation proceeds without interruption.

GPS tracking later showed it had travelled nearly eight kilometres along a route previously identified by a police dog squad. Despite fresh searches, no clue was found. The dog subsequently died and underwent a post-mortem examination. Search operations have now been expanded from a six-kilometre radius to nearly 10 kilometres, covering water bodies and 11 interconnected hills.

Govt’s U-turn on Harappan ‘Dancing Girl’ is quite baffling

MORAL policing begins quite early these days. Now, sanskari commissars ensured that Class 9 students didn’t see the iconic ‘Dancing Girl’ of Mohenjo-daro in its present form—with the torso uncovered. For decades, school students have seen the artefacts of the Indus Valley Civilisation, including the Dancing Girl, in the textbooks published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), an autonomous organisation established by the government in 1961. Its primary objective, its website says, was to assist and advice the Central and state governments on policies and programmes for qualitative educational development. Accordingly, its duties include preparation and publication of

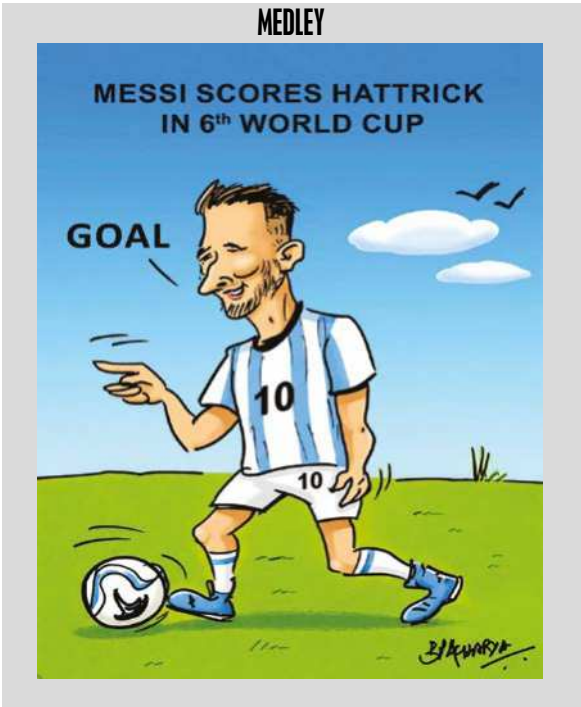
“model textbooks, supplementary materials, newsletters, journals, and educational kits, multimedia digital content, and other educational materials.” What kind of “model textbook” can preach moral policing over accurate presentation of facts and visuals? This was not the first time that sanskaris have objected to the famed bronze figurine, but their objections were reportedly brushed aside by “some government expert.” Still, the retouched photograph is featured in the opening chapter, ‘History of Arts,’ of Madhurima, the new arts education textbook for Class 9. In the doctored image, the figurine’s torso was shaded from the shoulders down. Historian Michel Danino, who headed the textbook development committee

for NCERT’s new Class 6 social science books, had told a newspaper last month that the NCERT was against placing the Dancing Girl on the opening page of a chapter on Indus Valley Civilisation. Danino, who is no longer a member of the committee, said “shading of her [Dancing Girl’s] trunk is an act of censorship; unless we wish to return to Victorian morality, such prudishness is misplaced—should students, then, be barred from entering the National Museum, where the original figurine is housed, not to speak of many semi-nude or nude statues of goddesses, apsaras, etc.?” He expressed indignation at the creation of “a fake artefact which exists nowhere. That is just not done.” He is wrong: it is done in India—not

merely done, but disturbingly normalised. Shading of the Dancing Girl’s torso is not an isolated lapse in judgement; it belongs to a long and growing tradition of sanitising history to suit contemporary notions of propriety. Instead of allowing students to encounter the past on its own terms, institutions entrusted with education are recasting it through the lens of present-day moral anxieties. The result is neither history nor pedagogy, but a carefully curated fiction.

The irony is difficult to miss. The same civilisation whose achievements are celebrated in textbooks is deemed unsuitable for students when represented through one of its most famous artefacts. A bronze figurine created nearly

4,000 years back is altered because modern gatekeepers fear that young readers may see what generations of scholars, museum visitors and school-children have seen without scandal. The artefact survives; only its representation is censored. Such interventions reveal a troubling lack of confidence in both students and teachers. If adolescents can study wars, famines, social hierarchies and political violence, surely, they can also view an ancient sculpture in its original form. To suggest otherwise is to confuse education with protectionism and learning with moral supervision. Thankfully, the government has decided to restore the original Harappan Dancing Girl in textbooks. At least, for now.



FASTING ACROSS RELIGIOUS FAITHS



TALKING OF MANY THINGS

DR MOHAN KANDA

IN the Vedas ‘vrata’s or ‘noma’s are religious rituals, vows, or observances aimed at fulfilling a desire, seeking blessings, ensuring family welfare, to attain specific goals such as health, wealth, prosperity or overcoming adversity. They involve specific, ritualized restrictions, such as avoiding certain foods on specific days, strict adherence to certain customs and vows, or a ‘sankalpam’, to gain spiritual merit. They primarily serve to align the individual with cosmic order, purify the mind and body, and foster discipline through voluntary sacrifice. They also represent a divine ordinance acting as a binding commitment to ethical conduct and spiritual focus, often involving fasting or specific ascetic practices to propitiate deities.

Such rituals call for spiritual discipline and lead to purification, adherence to divine laws and atonement, or ‘prayaschitta’, to neutralize past sins, negative karma, or to overcome defects in one’s life. By sacrificing comforts such as food, the devotee creates a closer connection with the Almighty, thus fostering gratitude and devotion. In Vedic literature, Agni is often termed vratapā protector of the vrata, indicating that these observances ensure orderly behav-

iour and divine protection.

A ‘mauna vrata’ is one form of such rituals. It is a spiritual and intentional vow of silence rooted in Indian traditions, where an individual abstains from speaking for a set period to cultivate inner peace, self-discipline, and introspection. It aims to reduce external stimuli, conserve mental energy, and achieve clarity of thought by turning one’s focus inward.

Such a vow, however, is generally not permissible in Islam, and is considered an innovation or ‘bid’ah’. The Holy Quran, no doubt, mentions a fast of silence observed by Maryam, an ardent devotee of Allah and the only woman mentioned by name in that scripture, who is recognized as a paragon of purity, piety, and submission to Allah. That practice, however, was for previous generations and was cancelled by Prophet Muhammad, who emphasized that abstaining from permissible speech is not an act of obedience.

The religious scriptures of major faiths contain many references to such practices. For instance, Parvati, the principal Hindu Goddess of love, beauty, marriage, children, and devotion, who is the consort of Lord Shiva, represents the divine feminine energy, or ‘Shakti’ that balances Shiva’s asceticism. She began to be known as ‘Aparna’, or without leaves, because of the extreme penance she undertook to marry Lord Shiva, during which she gave up all food, including leaves. The name signifies her intense dedication and sacrifice, establishing her as a model of devotion.

Likewise, ‘Varalakshmi’ vrata is a significant Hindu puja, observed on the second Friday of the ‘Shravana’ month. It is

While a vrata covers a wide range of ritual vows in Hinduism, the Christian approach is centered on voluntarily humbling oneself before God through fasting, prayer, and sacrifice to focus on spiritual growth. The Islamic equivalents of vrata are generally called ‘Sawm’ or fasting or ‘Siyam’.

dedicated to Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity, to whose boon granting form, married women fast and pray, for the well-being, health, and longevity of their husbands and children.

In ‘Maha Bhagavata’, Satyabhama, one of Lord Krishna’s consorts, is famously known for her beauty and immense wealth. She believes that she holds the absolute highest place in Krishna’s heart and wants to ensure that she would have Lord Krishna as her husband in every birth. The celestial musician and an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu, Sage Narada, informs her that in her current birth, she has Lord Krishna as her husband on account of her good fortune. To continue to have that fortune in all her future lives, she performs a special vow, which involves gifting Krishna to Narada and then trying to buy him back. Satyabhama tries to weigh Krishna against all her wealth, jewels, and gold, but the scales continue to remain lower on Krishna’s side. It is only when she stops being proud and asks for help, and when a single Tulasi leaf is placed, with pure devotion, on the scale by Rukmini, consort of Krishna, and the first Queen of ‘Dwaraka’, the Kingdom of Krishna, and the embodiment of Goddess Lakshmi, that the scales balance. The message conveyed is that Krishna can be pleased only with sincere devotion, or ‘bhakti’, but not with wealth.

Also in the Hindu mythology is described the tale of how

the severe and intense penance of the venerated Sage Vishwamitra, characterised by decades-long austerity and aimed at surpassing Sage Vashistha, transforms him from the powerful warrior King Kaushika to a revered ‘Brahmarshi’, the penance involves overcoming massive temptations, including Apsaras, or celestial nymphs, Menaka and Rambha, before finally mastering his anger and ego to attain supreme spiritual status. Yet another example can be found in Ramayana. Ravana, the ten-headed demon king of Lanka and an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva, performs an intense penance to Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva to gain immense power, knowledge, and invincibility. He sacrifices his ten heads, which grow back each time, symbolizing his dedication. This devotion grants him boons, making him a dominant ruler, a master of scriptures, and the possessor of the Celestial Weapon, ‘Chandraras’.

Turning to Christian equivalents of such rituals, we find that the equivalent of a vrata is found in the spiritual disciplines of fasting and abstinence.

For example, ‘Lent’, the 40-day period before Easter, beginning on ‘Ash Wednesday’, is somewhat like a long-term vrata, involving abstinence, fasting, increased prayer, and acts of charity. The fasting is designed to foster self-denial, focus on prayer, and draw closer to God. Denying oneself food entirely for a period to focus on spiritual matters, is on the lines of Jesus’

40 days in the wilderness. Likewise, a ‘vow’ is a personal, voluntary promise made to God, such as committing to a season of fasting, a specific prayer routine, or abstaining from a habit.

Some examples are, the ‘Daniel Fast’, which is a common practice based on the Bible where individuals abstain from rich foods, such as meat, dairy or wine, for 21 days, consuming only vegetables and water and the ‘Ember Days’, which are traditional days of prayer and fasting which occur quarterly.

In summary, while a vrata covers a wide range of ritual vows in Hinduism, the Christian approach is centered on voluntarily humbling oneself before God through fasting, prayer, and sacrifice to focus on spiritual growth.

The Islamic equivalents of vrata are generally called ‘Sawm’ or fasting or ‘Siyam’. Like the Hindu custom, Islamic fasting involves abstaining from food, drink, and sexual activity, from dawn until sunset to cultivate self-control, piety, and devotion to God. Examples include, ‘Ramadan’, also known as ‘Ramzan’, or obligatory fasting. The month-long fast during Ramadan is the most significant form of worship, to a mandatory, universal vow observed by all able Muslims. Several other fasts are also undertaken, such as ‘Sunnah’ fasts, or recommended vows, which are voluntary fasts, like the Hindu ‘Kamya Vratas’ or vows for desire. ‘Shawwal’, or fasting six days after Ramadan, observing the ‘Ashura’, or fasting on the 10th of Muharram. In addition, ‘Kaffarah’ or expiation fasts undertaken to make up for breaking a previous fast or as a penalty for certain transgressions and ‘Nazar’ vows, or specific voluntary fasts a person

promises to keep if a particular wish is fulfilled are also known. Fasting on Mondays and Thursdays is highly recommended by Prophet Muhammad.

A lighthearted tale now, to lighten the mood. The story goes that a representation was made by Chitrugupta, record keeper of Yama, the Hindu God of Death, Justice and Afterlife, to Lord Brahma, the God of Creation, and the first deity of the Holy Trinity or ‘Trimurti’s, along with Vishnu and Shiva, about the embarrassing consequences of the Varalakshmi vrata. The gist of the grievance was that on account of the observance of the ritual, women were succeeding in getting the same husband for seven successive births. The women were happy. Not so, however, their husbands because men, by nature, would like a different wife in each birth. Lord Brahma was in a dilemma, as the vrata was an ancient tradition, regarded holy and desirable. Chanakya, the legendary Indian philosopher, teacher, economist, and royal strategist, known for masterminding the establishment and celebrated famously for his sharp political wisdom, was summoned to assist in the resolution of the crisis. The brilliant Chanakya, as always, came up with a novel and unique solution and suggested that Lord Brahma insist that the boon would be granted to women only on the condition that the mothers-in-law also would be the same in all the births! The ladies observing the tradition, understandably, refused to accept the condition. Both parties, men, and women were happy, not to mention Lord Brahma!

(The writer was formerly Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh)

LETTERS

The Rs 1,600 crore SCCL black hole

Accountability can no longer wait as a staggering, cavernous discrepancy given that nearly 40 lakh tonnes of coal, valued at an estimated ₹1,600 crore, have vanished into thin air from the stockyards of the state-run Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL). It came to light after physical inspections of several mining sites reportedly revealed empty, dusty stockyards, directly contradicting official records that boasted of substantial reserves. The opposition was quick to accuse the Congress-led state government of presiding over, or turning a blind eye to, large-scale irregularities and the potential illegal diversion and black-marketing of a vital national resource. In governance, silence is rarely interpreted as neutrality; more often, it is read as complicity or paralysis. As the controversy snowballs, the Telangana government’s lack of a detailed, transparent response is only fuelling the narrative of a systemic cover-up. SCCL is a critical pillar of Telangana’s industrial and energy backbone. When a resource as heavily regulated and physically massive as coal disappears on this scale, it points to either a catastrophic failure of internal audit mechanisms or a deeply entrenched, highly coordinated network of illicit siphoning. The state leadership must act swiftly to clear the air, because in a democracy, the smoke from such a political storm will not dissipate until the truth is unearthed.

Calicut Krishnan Ramanathan, Ghaziabad-201001

Need to diversify fuel sources

THIS is further your editorial ‘India must diversify fuel supply chains despite US-Iran MoU’ (THI June 17). It rightly calls for diversifying fuel supply chains, but the larger lesson is to diversify fuel sources. Dependence on imported oil leaves nations vulnerable to geopolitical tensions, shipping disruptions and price volatility. India should accelerate investments in solar, wind, tidal and geothermal energy, which are clean, green, neat, renewable and effectively inexhaustible. Every unit of energy generated domestically strengthens energy security while reducing pollution and import bills. The most durable solution lies in expanding indigenous renewable energy capacity and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

Harsh Pawaria, Rohtak

EU is bang on: Strait of Hormuz

The editorial ‘India must diversify fuel supply chains despite US-Iran MoU’ prudently points out the need for India to be in its guard in expanding energy sources, notwithstanding the MoU being signed between the US and Iran facilitating the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. One prominent point that stands out is that Israel is not a willing entity to this deal. It is quite clear that the MoU is more on Iranian terms as the US wants to end the war in a hurry despite Israel’s consternation. India must think in terms of more fuel storages being built to tide over any future crisis. Meanwhile, the EU’s view that the Strait of Hormuz must be a free and unhindered sea route without any toll or restrictions is a level-headed proposition that the world wants urgently.

K R Venkata Narasimhan, Madurai

thehansreader@gmail.com

BENGALURU ONLINE

Cabinet expansion decision rests with high command: Ahmed

BENGALURU: Amid growing political buzz over the Legislative Council elections and the much-anticipated Cabinet expansion in Karnataka, senior Congress leader and former minister Zameer Ahmed Khan met former MP D.K. Suresh in Bengaluru on Wednesday, triggering fresh speculation in political circles.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Zameer Ahmed said the Congress is a high-command-driven party and all decisions regarding Cabinet expansion will be taken by the party leadership. “I was expecting a ministerial berth in the first list, but it did not happen. I am hopeful of finding a place in the second list. Even if that does not happen, I have no disappointment. I have never publicly demanded a ministerial position.

My supporters have staged protests seeking representation for me, which is natural,” he said. Rejecting reports of dissatisfaction, Zameer asked reporters whether his face reflected any disappointment. He also highlighted his proximity to the party leadership, stating that he had actively campaigned for the Congress during elections in Kerala and Telangana. On the upcoming Legislative Council election, Zameer expressed confidence about the Congress securing victory. Referring to the Congress Legislature Party meeting held at a resort in Bidadi, he said around 140 legislators were united behind the party candidates. “We are fully united. Even if 28 legislators vote for a candidate, victory is assured.

Read more at <https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

Merit or birthright? Why Telangana’s ‘local only’ judge demand threatens impartial justice

CHOLLETI

An extraordinary general body of the Telangana High Court Bar Association (THCBA) on Monday passed a resolution requesting that the High Court and the Supreme Court collegium prioritise practising advocates “belonging to Telangana origin only” when recommending names for elevation to the High Court. The resolution invokes themes that resonate across India — representation, social justice and the value of lawyers who have sustained practice in a particular High Court — and raises fundamental legal and constitutional questions about who may be considered for judicial office and how the collegium should weigh ‘locality’ against merit and other legitimate criteria.

The resolution and the rationale:

According to the association’s extraordinary meeting and subsequent resolution, the request calls for the collegium to follow principles of social justice and ensure that elevation to the bench gives “proper representation to all the sections of people,” by prioritising advocates of Telangana origin, who practise in the Telangana High Court. The association’s stated concerns are familiar: local advocates are thought to have better knowledge of regional laws, languages, social contexts and institutional practices. Long standing practitioners claim an established relationship with the court and its litigational culture. And a perception exists that too many judicial vacancies are filled by outsiders or by candidates perceived as less connected to local bar and bench communities. These are legitimate policy concerns that speak to questions of trust, accountability and the bench’s social composition.

The Legal framework:

The constitutional text sets the outer bounds of eligibility. Article 217 requires a person to have been an advocate of a High Court for at least 10 years to be qualified for appointment as a High Court judge. Article 124 sets similar eligibility for the Supreme Court. These articles impose nationality and experience thresholds but are silent on place of origin or state of enrolment beyond the requirement of practice at a High Court. The Collegium process and the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) — the procedural matrix evolved by the Supreme Court and used by High Court collegia — stress merit, integrity, standing at the Bar, experience, published judgments and encourage regard for social diversity and representation. The MoP contemplates weight being given to professional standing and to consultative inputs from the local bar and judges. It does not, however, endorse categorical exclusion of candidates who are not of a particular state origin.

Precedents and bar-level pushback around locality demands:

Demands by bar associations and local bodies for prioritising local practitioners are not new. Reports show that bar bodies in different jurisdictions in India have protested proposals to elevate advocates, who do not practise regularly before a particular High Court, or asked that local counsel be given preference. Some associations have even threatened abstentions or abstaining from work when they believe consultative norms were ignored. Conversely, proposals to elevate advocates from the Supreme Court or advocates who practise mainly outside a High Court’s rolls have also drawn objections. These episodes demonstrate a recurring tension: local bars

want a say and protection for home-grown talent; collegia seek to balance merit, representation and institutional needs.

Legal and constitutional objections to ‘TG-only’ rule:

A categorical rule that only advocates of Telangana origin may be considered presents myriad problems. First, it risks conflict with equal treatment norms and the constitutional commitment to non-discrimination — appointments must be open to all who meet the constitutional eligibility criteria. Second, the constitution’s experience thresholds refer to practice in a High Court. They do not confer a right to geographic exclusion. Third, limiting the pool to state origin advocates may curtail merit: the collegium system, for all its scrutiny, seeks candidates with outstanding ability and temperament. Artificially narrowing that pool could compromise overall judicial quality. Fourth, such a rule may undercut impartial justice by introducing parochial pressures into what is designed to be a consultative but expert process. Finally, the practicalities of modern legal practice — interstate mobility, Supreme Court practice, multi-jurisdictional litigation — mean many of the best candidates have diverse practice footprints that transcend state borders. Constitutional text and the MoP do not support a parochial quota. They permit, instead, a nuanced approach that properly values local experience as one of several factors.

Weighing local practitioners:

That said, the association’s concerns have merit when framed as preferences rather than inflexible rules. Local practitioners often bring deep familiarity with state statutes, local languages and socio



legal context — qualities that improve judicial access and legitimacy. Where a High Court has a sustained deficit in representation by persons from particular social classes, castes, genders or regions of the state, active attention to homegrown candidates can promote social justice and public confidence. The collegium legitimately considers representational balance. The MoP expressly mentions social diversity and dispersal as considerations. The answer is not categorical exclusion but calibrated prioritisation: clearer consultative engagement with the local bar, well publicised shortlists that include local talent, and affirmative outreach to underrepresented communities within the state.

Practical recommendations to reconcile local claims and constitutional norms

A balanced way forward would preserve collegial independence while responding to legitimate local anxieties:

The High Court Collegium should publish general criteria it emphasises in each round (e.g., representation, local experience) and record consultative inputs from the bar — without compromising confidential elements of the vetting process.

Rather than an exclusionary demand, the bar association could submit a ranked shortlist of local advocates with verified credentials and judgments for the collegium’s consideration; this preserves the collegium’s final discretion while ensuring local talent is visible.

The MoP could be clarified —

Pawan fulfils ailing fan’s wish with personal visit

WARANGAL

ANDHRA Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena Party president Pawan Kalyan on Wednesday visited the residence of 17-year-old Niranjan in Hanamkonda, fulfilling the young fan’s long-cherished wish to meet him.

Niranjan, who is battling a rare genetic disorder that has left him bedridden, was personally comforted by the Deputy Chief Minister during the emotional visit.

Pawan Kalyan enquired about his health, interacted with his parents, and offered spiritual support by presenting Tirupati temple Teertha Prasadam. He also extended financial assistance of Rs.1 lakh towards medical expenses.

Moved by the family’s circumstances, Pawan Kalyan directed Jana Sena leaders to help improve the family’s livelihood by facilitating a canteen business. He further promised to arrange special prayers at the revered Bhadrakali Ammavari Temple and present a consecrated silver idol of Goddess Bhadrakali to the family.

The Deputy Chief Minister also fulfilled another wish of Niranjan by promising to arrange a pet dog after learning of the teenager’s fondness for



• **During the interaction, Niranjan shared old photographs and videos of himself performing dance routines imitating Pawan Kalyan from the time when he was healthy, earning him the nickname “Chota Gabbar Singh”**

• **PK enquired about his health, interacted with his parents, and offered spiritual support by presenting Tirupati temple Teertha Prasadam**

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animals. During the interaction, Niranjan shared old photographs and videos of himself performing dance routines imitating Pawan Kalyan from the time when he was healthy,

earning him the nickname “Chota Gabbar Singh”.

Following the visit, Pawan Kalyan proceeded to the Bhadrakali Temple in Warangal to offer prayers.

Keep Hormuz open: Modi

Continued from page 1
"We met in Washington last time... since then we’ve been moving forward together. It is a joy for us that our teams are working together, we’re moving forward at a fast pace," Modi said.

Trump described the meeting as "great" as heaped praise on Modi. "I think India plays a big role in everything as long as he (PM Modi) is the leader. India is going to play a big role," Trump said in response to a question on whether New Delhi has a role to play in West Asia. "As long as I am at the White House, India has a friend in the US," he said, answering a question on the strain in India-US ties.

‘A TOTAL KILLER, A TOUGH TRADER’

Continued from page 1
"As long as I am President, they (India) have a great friend in the White House...Everyone here loves India, and they have tremendous respect for this (PM Narendra Modi) man," he added.

"People say he's such a nice man. I said he's very tough. He's a tough trader, and he loves the Indian people, but he also loves the USA.

He had 'Howdy Modi' in Houston. The stadium was full... We'll be going to India sometime in the future," Trump said.

In a potent remark, Trump, putting on display his bonhomie with the Indian leader, said his country would come to India's help should any country attack it. He, however, put a condition: PM Modi should be the leader.

"I think it is a great relationship...If they were attacked, we would be there to help them...If anybody attacks that man, we are going to be there...If they are attacked and he (PM Modi) is the leader, we are going to be there to help," he said.

‘We’re most famous couple’

Continued from page 1
While the audio isn't very clear, PM Modi appeared to refer to their popularity on social media to Meloni. To this, the Italian Prime Minister said, "Yes, we are the most famous couple on Instagram".

This came nearly a month after PM Modi, during his trip to Rome, gifted Meloni a packet of Parle's Melody toffee - in reference to the viral 'Melodi' term. Sharing the video of PM Modi's 'sweet' gesture on her social media accounts, Meloni wrote, "Thank you for the gift".

The post featured both PM Modi and Meloni holding a packet of the popular Indian candy, known by its 'very, very chocolaty' tagline, as they laughed over the cheerful internet trend. In the clip,

the Italian Prime Minister says, "Prime Minister Modi brought as a gift a very, very good toffee." "Melody," then said PM Modi.

'Melodi' - a blend of Meloni and PM Modi's names - began as an internet joke after their bilateral meeting in 2023. The term, often used in many viral clips and memes depicting warm, unscripted moments between the two leaders at multilateral summits, has racked up millions of views.

Meloni had used the term in a post first in 2024, along with a selfie with PM Modi. "Hi friends, from #Melodi," she had posted on X. In June 2025, she posted a selfie video with PM Modi from their G7 Summit interactions and captioned it as: "Hello, from the Melodi team." Since then, similar interactions

at global events have reinforced the perception of a warm personal chemistry between the two leaders.

However, the PM Modi-Meloni bond is not a mere photo opportunity; it is a foreign policy in motion. Italy has emerged as India's most consequential global partner, with both nations working towards the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) that anchors Rome as Europe's gateway to the Indo-Pacific. Bilateral trade between the two nations has crossed \$16.77 billion. Last month, PM Modi met Meloni over dinner during the last leg of his five-nation visit. They visited the iconic Colosseum, where the two leaders engaged in deep conversation over a wide range of subjects.

SAMAJWADI SPLIT NEXT?

Continued from page 1
In a cryptic post on X, Rajbhar alleged that senior SP leader Ram Gopal Yadav had approached the Centre amid mounting pressure over alleged corruption cases and claimed that several party leaders were preparing to switch sides. "A major split is going to happen in the Samajwadi Party.

Ram Gopal Yadav has submitted a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah ji. Everyone in Uttar Pradesh knows who the mastermind behind the mining scam and Gomti River Front scam is. As the noose tightens, the SP is getting anxious," the post in Hindi stated. Forget Maharashtra and Bengal— the

entire SP is sitting ready to join the BJP. Rajbhar added in the post. Responding to the claims, Samajwadi Party supremo took a sharp dig at the Uttar Pradesh minister, questioning his statements and motives. BJP engineered splits in many parties, poached SP MLAs, MLCs in Uttar Pradesh before, Akhilesh Yadav reportedly said.

On Rajbhar's remark, Akhilesh Yadav said, "Dana aur gana kab tak chalega yeh afsana (how long will their 'benefits and songs' continue)". Samajwadi Party spokesperson Manish Singh also responded, asking Rajbhar to assess his own capabilities first before commenting on SP.

Take yoga to every household: CM to officials

Continued from page 1

Naidu also directed officials to launch a dedicated Therapeutic Yoga programme for people suffering from chronic illnesses and other health conditions, integrating yoga more closely with public health initiatives.

As part of the Yoga Day celebrations, the Chief Minister will participate in a special yoga programme at the Undavalli Caves on June 20 alongside yoga guru Baba Ramdev, who is visiting Andhra Pradesh as a special guest. The state-level Yoga Day event will be held on June 21 at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium in Vijayawada, where arrangements are being made for 5,000 to 6,000 participants. Both Chandrababu Naidu and Baba Ramdev will attend the programme. Officials informed the Chief Minister that a contingency plan has also been prepared to conduct the event at the Ambedkar Kalavedika in Vijayawada with around 1,000 participants in case of adverse weather conditions.

Baba Ramdev is scheduled to arrive in the state on June 19 as part of the yoga promotion campaign and will meet the Chief Minister during his visit. During the review, officials reported that 2.6 lakh people have been trained as yoga instructors under the Yogandhra programme and that more than one crore people have registered to participate in Yoga Day events across the state. They also informed the Chief Minister that yoga programmes will be conducted at 1.33 lakh centres on June 21.

State-level yoga competitions are scheduled to be held in Vijayawada from June 18 to 20. On Yoga Day, the Chief Minister will also release the Yoga@Destination calendar outlining yoga-related activities planned across the state until next year's International Yoga Day. Government advisor Mantena Satyanarayana Raju, health and family welfare commissioner Chakradhar Babu, NTR District Collector Lakshmi Shah and Joint Secretary Ronanki Gopalakrishna were among those present at the review meeting.



Beach shack policy gets industry backing

Withdraw beach shacks proposal: YSRCP

Alleges that Visakha MP Sribharath has been lobbying for this for a long time

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TADEPALLI

YSRCP has demanded the withdrawal of the proposal for beach shacks along Visakhapatnam's RK Beach and slammed MP Sribharath for pushing it forward.

Speaking to the media here on Wednesday, party spokesperson Konda Rajiv Gandhi said that liquor would be sold all along the beachfront in the name of beach shacks, which is highly objectionable and not in tune with the promotion of tourism.

While health and education were the twin pri-

orities of YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, it seems the coalition is concentrating on wine and dining.

He said the beach has a distinct ambience and sanctity, and devotional bells ring on festive occasions. "The Beach Road in Visakhapatnam has a slew of temples and serves as a place of relaxation for common people.

The proposed shacks would disturb the tranquility of the area. We demand that the proposal be withdrawn and that the city's peace and order be preserved. The MP's educational institutions

are also located along the beachfront, and his family has promoted the university at the cost of the age-old Andhra University," he said.

He said, "When there was turmoil at Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP), the MP did not respond. When gross injustice was done to the railway zone, he remained silent.

However, he, a beneficiary of government land allotments, has come forward with a proposal for beach shacks, which we oppose tooth and nail and demand be withdrawn immediately," Rajiv Gandhi said.

consultants from successful beach tourism destinations such as Kerala, Goa, Odisha, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Drawing on their experience, it said, would help create a robust, sustainable and investor-friendly framework for the policy's successful implementation.

While welcoming the initiative, the association proposed several modifications to enhance the commercial viability and attractiveness of the scheme.

It recommended extending the operating hours of beach shacks up to 10 p.m. to improve tourist engagement and business prospects. The association also requested the government to increase the maximum permissible area for beach shacks from the proposed 1,500 square

feet to 3,000 square feet, stating that the current limit may not be sufficient to provide quality visitor amenities and operational facilities.

It further urged the government to permit the sale of all categories of alcoholic beverages and cocktails, similar to practices followed in leading beach tourism destinations across the country.

To encourage investor confidence, the association

recommended that licence fees remain unchanged during the licence period instead of being subjected to annual escalation. It also sought a minimum licence or lease tenure of five years, arguing that the proposed three-year period may not be adequate for infrastructure development and recovery of investments.

The association additionally requested the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Depart-

ment to frame comprehensive operational guidelines in consultation with stakeholders, including hospitality industry representatives and tourism operators.

Swamy expressed confidence that incorporating these suggestions would strengthen the policy, boost tourism, generate employment, and contribute significantly to the economic growth of Andhra Pradesh's coastal regions.

Telegram moves Delhi HC against govt curbs

Continued from page 1

He said that over 150 million users had been affected by the Centre's action on Tuesday. SG Mehta sought an adjournment, saying that he had not put several things on record. "If the court posts the matter for Thursday, then there is something shocking I can show. One channel starts, it is prohibited, and then another is started. And with a QR code, you can make a payment. This is continuous," he said. "This has not happened overnight. We have been dealing with complaints since May. I don't wish to go beyond this. This platform is being misused, and imagine the situation which may arise," Mehta added. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), acting on recommendations of the National Testing Agency (NTA), issued a direction

under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, restricting access to the Telegram platform in India till June 22, covering the day of the NEET (UG) 2026 re-examination and its immediate aftermath. A separate direction requires Telegram to disable in India the message-editing feature for already-posted messages till June 30, 2026, addressing the specific structural feature through which the platform has been used to fabricate after-the-event "paper leak" evidence in respect of national examinations, according to an NTA statement. "Both measures have been taken in the interest of public order, in response to the organised use of the platform by cheating rackets to defraud candidates appearing for the NEET (UG) 2026 re-examination scheduled on 21 June 2026," the NTA said on Tuesday.

CM calls for crop diversification

Continued from page 1

He ordered a meeting with tobacco buyers and suggested exploring storage options to help farmers secure better prices. He also called for plans to promote the cultivation of high-demand pulse crops and instructed officials to continuously analyse market trends before making crop planning decisions. Highlighting the need to improve farmer incomes, Naidu stressed value addition in agriculture and horticulture and directed officials to hold consultations with aqua farmers, industry associations and aqua feed manufacturers to address sector-specific concerns. Reiterating the government's commitment to supporting farmers during challenging times, the Chief Minister said all policy decisions should be aimed at improving farm profitability and ensuring long-term sustainability. Agriculture Minister K Atchannaidu, Chief Secretary G Sai Prasad and senior officials attended the review meeting.

Modi flags concerns over impact of West Asia crisis

Evian-Les-Bains: PM Modi on Wednesday proposed a framework to boost connectivity and trade by combining the strengths of the G7 nations, India and the Global South even as he flagged concerns over long-lasting consequences of the West Asia crisis on developing countries. The Prime Minister floated the proposal for setting up the International Mobilisation Partnership for Accelerating Connectivity and Trade (IMPACT) while speaking at an outreach session of the G7 summit in this French commune.

Meta starts charging for Instagram, Facebook & WhatsApp

Continued from page 1

These business plans are being tested in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Thailand and Bangladesh first. Importantly, none of this replaces the existing Meta Verified subscription. According to the experts, subscriptions could bring in \$20 billion of high-margin revenue annually by 2030. Deutsche Bank notes subscriptions could deliver as much as \$15.6 billion of additional revenue next year.

According to company data, 97.6% of Meta's revenue last year came from advertising, an alarming sign of the lack of progress it's made in growing beyond its core business in the last two decades since its founding.

In contrast, Google, a company also built on the back of ads, had more non-ad revenue a decade ago than Meta had last year. That probably explains Zuckerberg's sudden urgency more than anything else. In the meantime, users don't seem too enthused by the premium offerings that are more like a pay-to-play bet at the moment.

'If India is attacked, we will be there for Modi'

Continued from page 1

I can tell you this: without even having a contract – we don't have a formal [mutual defence] contract; you have to have the right contract – but if they were attacked, we would be there to help." In a light-hearted remark, Trump later said the United States would be there to support India under PM Modi's leadership and then later joked and said that the situation might be different under a different leader. "Now, if there is a new leader, I am not sure about it. But if they are attacked and he is the leader, we are going to be there to help," Trump said.

Uddhav Sena stares at split

Continued from page 1

Amid reports of "Operation Tiger" being underway to engineer a split in the Sena (UBT), the party has issued a whip directing all its Lok Sabha MPs to attend a meeting of the parliamentary party in Delhi on Thursday at 11 a.m. The whip was issued by MP Anil Desai, the party's chief whip in the Lok Sabha.

Sena (UBT) functionaries said party chief Uddhav Thackeray may also travel to Delhi in an attempt to pacify the MPs and could attend the parliamentary party meeting on Thursday.

Late on Tuesday, Sena (UBT) parliamentary party leader Arvind Sawant wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, requesting him not to entertain any claim seeking recognition of a separate group or a merger with another political party by the defecting MPs. Sawant said the party's claim that Shiv Sena (UBT) represents the "real Shiv Sena" remains sub judice before the Supreme Court and that his letter was being written without prejudice to that claim.

He was responding to reports that certain MPs elected on the Sena (UBT)'s symbol had either approached, or were contemplating approaching, the Speaker seeking recognition as a separate group or merger with another political party within the Lok Sabha.

Emotional availability is the new attraction: The rise of affectional dating

ASKARI JAFFER

Cool indifference, mystery, and emotional distance were once rewarded in the dating culture. The less invested you were, the more desirable you seemed. But that dynamic has quietly collapsed. Daters have come a long way, and they have emotionally matured. Modern singles are no longer chasing emotionally unavailable matches. 8 out of 10 single men and women from metros and suburbs explained that dating someone who isn't emotionally available for you can leave you feeling drained, confused, and constantly looking for clues and overanalysing every interaction trying to figure out whether they are in it for the long haul. Today, users are attracted towards emotional openness, consistent effort, and intentional communication. The new-age daters call it Affectional Dating.

Ravi Mittal, the Founder and CEO of India's most popular dating app

QuackQuack, commented, "Emotional availability came out as the strongest action trigger among the Tier 1, 2, and 3 daters in the last two years. From our surveys, we have noticed that more than 55% users lose interest in their match if they are emotionally aloof during the initial days of chatting. That "too cool to care" really doesn't work in modern dating. It's a major reset in online dating. Honestly, this is one of the reasons why the number of intentional matches on online dating platforms has risen."

End of the "Cool And Unbothered" Era

Less is more; that's not a concept the dating world believes in anymore, at least not when it comes to emotional availability. Dating advice has revolved around "no double texting," maintaining emotional distance during the early stages, and keeping an air of mystery to let the spark live longer. But after years of getting stuck in exhausting situationships and decoding dry texts, daters today have

The era of playing "cool and unbothered" in dating is fading, as modern singles increasingly value emotional openness, consistency, and genuine connection over mystery and emotional distance. A new trend called Affectional Dating is reshaping relationships, with daters prioritising vulnerability, intentional communication, and emotional availability from the very beginning

a brand new approach, and it is all about wearing your heart on your sleeve. More and more dating app users are prioritising their match's degree of emotional availability and intentionality over fleeting physical traits.

Vulnerability is not "Too Much."

There's a notable shift in how conversations are progressing on dating apps. Users might be taking their time to commit, but they are not afraid to open up early. Within the first 2 weeks of chatting, most daters already

start discussing emotional expectations, mental health management, baggage from past experience, boundaries, and even their relationship needs. This might have seemed too vulnerable too soon a few years back, but with the changing dating style, emotional openness from the beginning is becoming the norm. Over 41% of men and women in their 20s shared that pretending to be emotionally unaffected at all times and trying to keep up the wall while connecting with someone is exhausting.



Comeback of Affection

Five years back, showing affection openly was almost reduced to being cringe. People were cautious about when and where they are

being affectionate, especially on dating apps where connections happen virtually and one wrong move can make you seem unnecessarily clingy or needy. Most daters

would intentionally play cool to hold the upper hand in the connection. But the mentality has shifted dramatically in the last two years, when online matches are more

openly expressing their interest without worrying if they come off "desperate." The rise of Affectional Dating makes it easier for people to be their authentic selves.

LOOK OUT

Meet the artisans

Some art forms don't belong in museums. They belong in homes, in daily conversations, and in the hands of people who appreciate the story behind the object.

MAATI – The Crafts School, an initiative by Kadam India supported by the Tata Trusts, is bringing an immersive two-day showcase to Hyderabad in partnership with Mysore Saree Udyog. The exhibition celebrates the living traditions of hand-painted Madhubani art alongside contemporary Bihar craftsmanship. This curated exhibit is designed for textile connoisseurs, art and culture tastemakers, conscious textile retailers, architects, interior designers, collectors, and anyone drawn to authentic legacy artistry.

The heart of the showcase is four women artisans traveling from MAATI's clusters in Madhubani and Darbhanga.

This is a rare opportunity to meet the makers and engage directly with their creative processes and explore handcrafted textile collections that bridge generations of visual memory with contemporary living.

Beyond design, the exhibition carries a real-world urgency.

MAATI works in regions of Bihar where

MAATI showcases Madhubani art and contemporary Bihar crafts in Hyderabad

recurring climate and environmental challenges threaten traditional ways of life year after year.

By creating direct market access and nurturing independent creative enterprises, the initiative supports artisan communities in building long-term, climate-resilient livelihoods.

The event offers a unique platform for Hyderabad's art, design, and textile community to engage with authentic handcrafted traditions while supporting artisan-led enterprises and the preservation of India's rich cultural heritage.

Dates: 19th and 20th June 2026.

Venue: MSU Store, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad.



Women led startups at India's first SHElterTech Accelerator organised by We Hub

WE Hub concludes India's First SHElterTech accelerator

WE Hub, India's first state-led nodal agency for women entrepreneurs, has successfully concluded the SHElterTech Acceleration Program, a first-of-its-kind initiative designed to position women founders at the forefront of innovation in the housing and construction sector. Implemented in partnership with the Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter (TCIS), specialised center within the global nonprofit organisation Habitat for Humanity International, the program culminated in a Cohort Showcase and Industry Networking Meet that brought together Telangana's leading real estate developers, CSR foundations, architects, institutional investors and government stakeholders.

The closing ceremony was graced by VP Gautham, IAS, Managing Director, Telangana Housing Corporation Limited (THCL), as the Chief Guest.

The cohort featured innovative startups including Q Gen-Next Sustainable Technology Pvt. Ltd., Hubeco Green Ventures Pvt. Ltd., C-DISC Technologies Pvt. Ltd., Structural Integrated Panels Pvt. Ltd., Greenbanana Environment Solutions Pvt. Ltd., and ECOSTP Technologies Pvt. Ltd.

Addressing the gathering, VP Gautham, IAS, said: "The Government of Telangana is committed to expanding

affordable housing in urban areas and improving the quality of homes in rural communities. Achieving this vision requires smarter construction solutions that reduce costs, improve efficiency and shorten project timelines. Startups are critical partners in this journey. The innovators in this cohort are solving real-world challenges and developing practical solutions that can make a meaningful impact. We are ready to work with them."

SHElterTech was conceptualised to address a critical gap identified through the SHElterTech Gender Analysis Study, which found that women entrepreneurs in the housing and construction sector often face barriers not in technical expertise or ambition, but in accessing markets, capital and industry networks.

In response, WE Hub designed a focused Growth and Market Activation Program aimed at creating tangible business opportunities through customer pilots, strategic partnerships, investment access and regulatory support.

The cohort showcased a diverse range of innovations spanning modular construction systems, zero-excavation foundations, passive cooling technologies, sustainable building materials and nature-based water treatment solutions. These innovations align closely with Telangana's vision of creating faster,

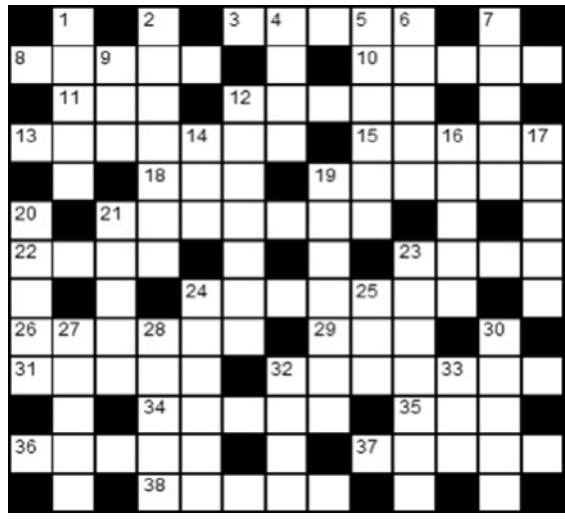
greener and more sustainable housing infrastructure.

A key highlight of the program was structured business matchmaking, enabling founders to engage directly with enterprise buyers, developers, CSR partners and investors, transforming networking opportunities into potential pilot projects and commercial partnerships.

Reflecting on the program's impact, Sita Pallacholla, CEO, WE Hub, said: "Women founders in the housing sector consistently told us that while they had the capability and innovative solutions, they lacked access to customers, capital and decision-makers. Bridging that gap is exactly why WE Hub exists. SHElterTech demonstrates what becomes possible when women entrepreneurs are provided with the right ecosystem, opportunities and connections to scale."

The event was also attended by Soumya Chanda, Executive Director, Vasavi Group, along with representatives from leading real estate firms, investors and ecosystem partners.

With the successful completion of SHElterTech, WE Hub reinforces its commitment to fostering inclusive innovation and ensuring that women-led enterprises play a pivotal role in shaping Telangana's housing sector, economic growth and sustainable development.



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

3 Pale green mosslike lichen (5)

8 Around (5)

10 A dolt or a dullard (5)

11 Automated online program (3)

12 Moist (5)

13 A word that means the same (7)

15 Jewel, trinket (5)

18 Large (3)

19 Sacrificial tables (6)

21 Entourage (7)

22 One feeling remorseful or one

23 Just (4)

24 First (7)

26 Petroleum byproduct (6)

29 Our country, abbr. (3)

31 Former French coin (5)

32 Power to convince (7)

34 Italian city (5)

35 Yes for Yves? (3)

36 Ringo ____ of the Beatles (5)

37 Babble (3,2)

38 English county (5)

DOWN

1 Fortune-teller (5)

2 10th month (7)

4 Shanty town (4)

5 Fit to eat (6)

6 Check accounts (5)

7 Participant (5)

9 Harry Potter's best friend (3)

12 Sanitary principles (7)

14 The egg of a parasitic insect, esp. of a louse (3)

16 Mud hut (5)

17 Moneylending (5)

19 Public sale (7)

20 Suffering (5)

21 Amitabh's leading lady in many a movie (5)

23 Actors don't die they just ____ (4,3)

24 Brings upon oneself (6)

25 Suffix to denote continuation? (3)

27 Veracity (5)

28 Cave (5)

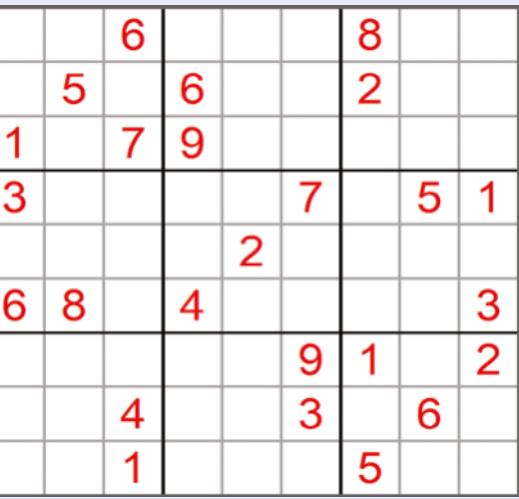
30 Offspring (5)

32 Refer to (4)

33 Religious sister (3)

Solution to June 17





SUDOKU

Solution to June 17





Since we have concluded the mother of all trade deals, we have been moving fast to deliver on our commitments. We will sign the Free Trade Agreement by the end of the year and accelerate work on an investment agreement

-UrsulaVon der Leyen, President, European Commission

BIZ BRIEFS

Dark Chocolate range by ITC

Fabelle Chocolates, ITC's homegrown luxury chocolate brand, unveiled its new 64 per cent Dark Chocolate range. Crafted with premium Ghana OriginCocoa, the range features various flavours including, Cranberry Noir, Orange Eclipse and No Added Sugar Dark Chocolate Bar. Subash Balar, Business Head – Confectionery, ITC Ltd, said: "The modern Indian consumer is rethinking indulgence, seeking greater transparency, balance, and choice without giving up on experience."

ABHFL expands presence in TG

Amita Birla Housing Finance Limited (ABHFL), a housing finance company, has expanded its footprint in Telangana with the launch of a new branch in Sangareddy. With this, ABHFL's total network in the state has increased to 10 branches. To mark the launch, the company is offering zero login fees along with spot loan sanctions of up to Rs50 lakh, valid from June 17 to 30.

GI ingredients by VAAA Super

Aetus Enterprises LLP has launched VAAA Super Foods, a premium food brand focused exclusively on GI-tagged (Geographical Indication) ingredients sourced from their native regions and offered in single-origin form. The brand has debuted with three products — Lakadong Turmeric Powder from Meghalaya, Byadagi Chilli Powder from Karnataka, and Gulbarga Toor Dal from Kalaburagi, Karnataka. The products are available through Amazon India and the company's website.

SBI Life rolls out campaign

SBI Life Insurance, an insurance company has released a new Digital Video Campaign (DVC) under its long-standing #Papa-HainNa digital initiative, to commemorate Father's Day. The new digital film is based on the story of a father who discovers that preparing a child for the future is not only about shielding them from every challenge, but about empowering them to navigate life on their own – letting them fall so they can learn to rise, confidently.

Vedanta Power debuts on D-St

Vedanta Power Limited (VPL), the power generation business of Vedanta Group, listed its shares on the BSE and NSE. The historic listing ceremony on 15th June was led by Vedanta Group Chairman Anil Agarwal, formally marking Vedanta Power Limited's debut on the Indian Stock Exchanges. Anil Agarwal, Chairman, Vedanta Group, said: "24 years ago, Vedanta became the first Indian company to list on the London Stock Exchange and went on to become a FTSE100 company."

Resilient India posts all-time high \$863 bn exports in FY26

Engineering goods, electronics, pharma and petroleum products powered record exports as SEZ expansion gathers pace

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S exports reached a record \$863 billion in FY2025-26, demonstrating resilience despite disruptions caused by the West Asia conflict and US tariffs, a senior Commerce Ministry official said on Wednesday.

Speaking at an outreach programme on the achievements of Gujarat's Special Economic Zones (SEZs), Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce Ajay Bhadoo said India's export ecosystem had remained strong through a challenging global environment.

"This has been a very difficult year, from US tariffs to the West Asia crisis, but India has proved its resilience," he said.

- **Growth achieved despite US tariffs and West Asia conflict**
- **Exports have nearly doubled from \$441 billion in a decade**
- **Gujarat contributed around \$110 billion in exports**



Bhadoo noted that India's total exports have nearly doubled over the past decade, rising from around \$441 billion to \$863 billion, driven by engineering goods, petroleum products, electronics, pharmaceuticals, gems and jewellery, and chemicals.

He said Gujarat contributed nearly \$110 billion to the country's exports and would continue to play a key role in export growth.

The government plans to

promote more SEZs across the country. Bhadoo highlighted the recent notification of Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing Pvt Ltd's semiconductor SEZ at Dholera as part of this effort.

Kandla SEZ Zonal Development Commissioner Dnyaneshwar B. Patil said Gujarat's SEZs accounted for around 21 per cent of India's total SEZ exports. Investments and employment in the state's SEZs have also risen

significantly over the past decade, with jobs increasing to more than 2.22 lakh.

Patil said four semiconductor SEZs, including projects by Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing, Micron Technology, Kaynes Semicon and CG Semi Technologies, have been notified in Gujarat. He outlined a roadmap targeting 20 per cent annual export growth and 10 per cent annual employment growth from Gujarat's SEZs.

RBI removes rate caps on select NRI deposits till Sept 30

MUMBAI

THE Reserve Bank on Wednesday temporarily withdrew interest rate ceiling on fresh Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) deposits of 3-5 years' maturity till September 30, a move aimed at attracting foreign capital.

It has also temporarily withdrawn restriction on interest rates on Non-Resident External (NRE) deposits of 3 years and above tenors, including deposits that are renewed upon maturity, till September 30, 2026.

"The interest rate ceiling applicable to fresh FCNR(B) deposits mobilised by banks, including the deposits that are renewed upon maturity, for three years and above



-- up to and including five years tenors, is temporarily withdrawn with effect from June 17, 2026, for the period until September 30, 2026," the central bank said in a circular.

The relaxation came into effect from Wednesday.

An FCNR (B) deposit is a term deposit account meant for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to park overseas earnings in foreign currencies in India.

The notification also said interest rates on NRE/NRO

deposits should not be higher than those offered by the bank on comparable domestic rupee term deposits.

Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had announced a host of measures to attract foreign capital in the backdrop of rupee depreciating against the US dollar.

One of the measures was a facility of concessional forex swap for bearing the full hedging cost shall be provided till September 30, 2026 to AD banks for raising fresh 3-5-year FCNR(B) deposits. Separate notifications in this regard have also been issued for commercial banks, co-operative banks, regional rural banks, and small finance banks.

APITCO pacts with MSM Unify for skill development initiative

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

MSM Unify, an education and workforce platform of MSM Global Education Private Limited, has been empanelled by APITCO Limited as a training provider and consulting firm. The two years agreement, authorises MSM Global Education to perform assignments across skill development, capacity building, professional training, and educational consultancy in partnership with APITCO. The empanelment positions MSM Unify to participate in India's government-led skilling ecosystem.

Sanjay Laul, Founder, MSM Unify, said: "India's skilling challenge is not a government problem alone.

Centre garners ₹3,000 crore from GIC Re stake sale

NEW DELHI: THE government on Wednesday said it has sold a five per cent stake in the public sector reinsurance company, the General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC), with an enthusiastic response from investors to the offer for sale.

The stake sale is expected to garner about Rs 3,000 crore to the exchequer, taking the total proceeds from five PSU disinvestments so far in the current fiscal to around Rs 16,000 crore.

Non-retail investors oversubscribed the offer for sale (OFS) on Tuesday, putting in bids worth Rs 4,000 crore. The OFS opened for retail investors on Wednesday.

"Offer for Sale (OFS) in GIC Re closed with enthusiastic response from the in-



vestors. Government of India has divested 5 per cent of its stake in GIC Re with full subscription of base and green-shoe offer," Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Arunish Chawla said on X.

Through the two-day OFS at a floor price of Rs 352 per share, the government proposed to divest 2 per cent of equity holding in GIC, with an additional 3 per cent as a green shoe option, taking the total stake dilution to 5 per cent, equivalent to over 8.77 crore shares.

Tesla expands India footprint with Hyderabad experience centre

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

AMERICAN electric vehicle manufacturer Tesla has entered the Hyderabad market with the launch of its first Experience Centre in Telangana.

Located at Knowledge City in HITEC City, the facility showcases the Model Y Rear-Wheel Drive and Model Y Long Range variants, which are now available for booking through Tesla's official website. The company has also started delivery and after-sales services from its facility at Bollaram Industrial Area. Customers who place orders before June 30, 2026, will receive a complimentary Wall Connector.

With the Hyderabad launch, Tesla now operates Experience Centres in Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, Gurugram. These centres offer customers hands-on access to Tesla vehicles, product demonstrations and test-drive opportunities. Test drives for the Model Y can be scheduled through the Experience Centre or Tesla's customer support.

The 2026 Model Y Premi-

The experience centre at HITEC City showcases Model Y variants; deliveries to begin in July



um Rear-Wheel Drive offers seating for up to five passengers, 2,138 litres of storage space and power-folding seats. Powered by ultra-responsive motors, it accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in 5.9 seconds and delivers a WLTP-certified range of up to 500 km. Deliveries are expected to begin in July 2026.

Tesla also showcased the Model Y Long Range All-Wheel Drive SUV, designed as a family vehicle with a three-row, six-seat configuration. It offers a WLTP-certified driving range of up to 681 km, accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in 5.0 seconds and

provides cargo space of up to 2,539 litres.

The company emphasized that its vehicles have earned top safety ratings from leading international safety assessment organizations, including Euro NCAP and ANCAP, reinforcing Tesla's reputation for vehicle safety and engineering excellence.

Tesla's expansion comes at a time when India's electric vehicle market is experiencing rapid growth, with manufacturers increasingly investing in charging infrastructure, customer support networks, and localized sales operations.

Bullion loses sheen on weak global cues

NEW DELHI: Gold prices plunged by Rs 4,800 to Rs 1.54 lakh per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday, while silver dropped by Rs 5,300, as traders stayed away from precious metals amid a strong rupee and weak global trends.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity depreciated Rs 4,800 to Rs 1,54,400 per 10

grams. It had closed at Rs 1,59,200 per 10 grams in the previous session. Silver also weakened sharply, falling by Rs 5,300 to Rs 2,55,400 per kilogram. The white metal had settled at Rs 2,60,700 per kg on Tuesday.

In the international markets, spot gold slipped marginally to trade at \$4,327.54 per ounce, while silver fell 0.18 per cent at \$69.89 per ounce.

Analysts said domestic

demand remained weak for the second straight day as investors chased higher returns amid firm equity markets. Gold prices declined on Wednesday as investors took a cautious approach ahead of several important US economic events, including the US Federal Reserve's monetary policy decision, Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

AI workforce tops 9.2 lakh as hiring priorities evolve

Demand shifts from experimentation to enterprise-wide implementation

MUMBAI

EMPLOYERS in India are now seeking deployment of artificial intelligence in governance and scaling up workflow, reflecting a shift in the hiring trend of AI talent from experimentation to execution, a report said.

Hiring demand has shifted decisively from AI experimentation to implementation, with employers increasingly seeking professionals who can deploy, manage, integrate and scale AI solutions across core business operations, according to staffing and workforce solutions company Qness Corp's 'India AI Workforce Analysis 2026' report.



The report, based on secondary data and 3.5 lakh job postings, found that India has around 9,20,000 AI professionals. Of them, 2,57,000 are in core AI roles and 6,63,000 in AI-embedded roles.

The report found differ-

ences in job descriptions. Global capability centres (GCCs) are hiring for reusable internal AI platforms, enterprise integration and governance, while IT services firms are recruiting to deliver AI across client pro-

grammes. Enterprises are hiring selectively to connect AI to finance, risk, operations, customer experience and employee systems, the report said. It said about 66-68 per cent of demand from 3.5 lakh active postings is for core AI roles, while 32-34 per cent is for AI-embedded roles.

However, this demand mix is the reverse of the supply base, where 72-74 per cent of the overall 9,20,000 workforce sits in AI-embedded roles and only 26-28 per cent are employed in core AI roles, said the report.

"What stands out in our analysis is the emergence of three distinct engines of AI growth. GCCs are building reusable AI platforms and

governance capabilities, IT Services are industrialising AI deployment at scale, and enterprises are embedding AI directly into business workflows and decision-making. Together, they are creating a new talent landscape where execution capability matters more than experimentation," Qness IT Staffing CEO Kapil Joshi said.

He said, more than 70 per cent of India's AI workforce now holds roles outside traditional AI specialists, while nearly one-third of all AI demand is emerging from business functions such as operations, customer service, marketing, finance, governance, and workforce management.

SpaceX overtakes Microsoft, becomes fourth-most valuable US company

NEW DELHI

SPACEX continued its stellar post-listing rally on Tuesday, overtaking Microsoft to become the fourth-largest company in the US by market capitalisation while announcing a \$60-billion all-stock acquisition of AI coding platform Cursor.

Shares of the Elon Musk-led company rose about 8 per cent in early trading, lifting its market value to nearly \$2.74 trillion. The gain pushed SpaceX ahead of Microsoft and further widened its lead over Amazon, valued at around \$2.65 trillion.

The latest rise extends a remarkable run since SpaceX's record-breaking stock mar-

ket debut on Friday. After soaring 20 per cent on its first full trading day, the stock has continued to attract strong investor interest, making it one of the most closely watched IPOs in recent years.

Investor enthusiasm has been driven by both SpaceX's core space and satellite businesses and its aggressive expansion into artificial intelligence. The acquisition of Cursor, a rapidly growing AI coding assistant valued at \$60 billion, marks one of the company's biggest AI bets. Cursor develops software that can autonomously write code and assist developers, competing with leading AI coding tools such as Claude Code and Codex.



‘The Odyssey’ India premiere

Christopher Nolan, Matt Damon and Tom Holland to visit Mumbai



India is set to witness a landmark cinematic event as acclaimed filmmaker Christopher Nolan will visit Mumbai this July for the Indian premiere of his highly anticipated



mythological action epic ‘The Odyssey’. Joining the Academy Award-winning director will be Hollywood stars Matt Damon and Tom Holland, along with Oscar-winning producer Emma



Thomas. In a major recognition of the Indian market, Universal Pictures International has included Mumbai as an official stop on ‘The Odyssey’s global premiere tour, alongside

prominent international cities such as London, Paris, and New York. Notably, this marks the first-ever Christopher Nolan film to have its premiere in India, underlining the growing significance of the country in the global entertainment landscape.

The grand premiere is scheduled to take place at PVR Icon IMAX, Phoenix Palladium, Mumbai. The film is slated for a worldwide theatrical release on July 17, with advance IMAX ticket bookings already open across India.

‘The Odyssey’ is being hailed as a technological milestone in filmmaking. Shot across multiple international locations, it is the first feature film in cinema history to be filmed entirely using IMAX cameras. The production utilizes newly developed IMAX film technology, promising an immersive large-screen experience for audiences worldwide.

Written and directed by Christopher Nolan, the film reimagines Homer’s legendary tale of Odysseus and his decade-long journey home following the fall of Troy. The project boasts an impressive ensemble cast featuring Matt Damon, Tom Holland, Anne Hathaway, Robert Pattinson, Lupita Nyong’o, Samantha Morton, Zendaya, and Charlize Theron. Produced by Emma Thomas and Christopher Nolan under their Syncopy banner, ‘The Odyssey’ is among the most anticipated global releases of the year.

The Mumbai premiere is expected to become one of the biggest Hollywood events ever hosted in India, bringing together international cinema icons and Indian movie enthusiasts on a historic occasion.



Rakul Preet Singh focuses on growth, meaningful roles over stardom

Actress Rakul Preet Singh says her priority remains professional growth and meaningful storytelling as she continues to evolve in a career spanning multiple film industries. The actress recently opened up about her approach to acting, fame, and the growing influence of social media on performers.

According to Rakul, audience appreciation is the greatest reward for any actor, and she believes success should be measured by the impact of one’s work rather than celebrity status. She emphasized that while stardom is gratifying, her primary focus has always been on delivering memorable performances and being

part of stories that resonate with viewers.

Reflecting on her journey in cinema, Rakul revealed that she consciously chooses projects that challenge her creatively. The actress said she does not want to be confined to a specific image or genre and instead looks for opportunities that help her discover new dimensions of her craft. She believes every film should contribute to her growth as an artist and offer valuable learning experiences.

The actress also shared her perspective on social media and its effect on actors. Rakul noted that when she entered the industry, social media was not as influential as it is today. However, she feels that the digital space has

become increasingly powerful, particularly in recent years.

While acknowledging that online opinions can affect newcomers, Rakul advised actors to remain focused on their work and avoid getting distracted by constant commentary on social platforms. She stressed that paying excessive attention to online chatter can be counterproductive and may negatively impact an artist’s confidence and performance.

With a strong belief in authenticity and continuous learning, Rakul Preet Singh continues to shape her career around meaningful cinema and personal growth, reinforcing her position as one of the industry’s versatile performers.



‘The India Story’ poster unveils Kajal Aggarwal as a fierce lawyer

The makers of ‘The India Story’ have released the film’s first official poster, offering a powerful glimpse into a socially relevant courtroom drama centered on the alarming issue of food adulteration. Backed by Zee Studios in association with MIG Production & Studios, the film is gearing up for a worldwide theatrical release on July 24, 2026.

The newly unveiled poster features Kajal Aggarwal in the role of a determined lawyer, while Shreyas Talpade appears as a distressed father fighting for justice. A young girl portrayed as his daughter is also featured prominently, highlighting the emotional core of the narrative.

Adding to the intrigue, the poster showcases the iconic Bombay High Court in the backdrop, along with a pesticide cylinder placed inside a courtroom witness box. The imagery strongly hints at a legal battle linked to food contamination and its devastating impact on ordinary families.

Directed by Chetnan DK and written and produced by Sagar B. Shinde, ‘The India Story’ aims to spotlight a major public health concern that affects millions but often receives limited attention. By combining emotional storytelling with legal drama, the film seeks to raise awareness about the dangers of food adulteration and its long-term consequences.

The project will be released in Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil, expanding its reach to audiences across the country. The film’s technical crew includes cinematographer Nishant Bhagwat, music composer Mangesh Dhakde, editor Ashish Mhatre, lyricist Shakeel Azami, and sound designer Anmol Bhawe.

With its socially relevant theme, compelling characters, and thought-provoking premise, ‘The India Story’ is emerging as one of the most anticipated issue-based dramas of 2026.

Hrithik Roshan cameo adds excitement to ‘Alpha’

The newly released ‘Alpha’ trailer has significantly raised expectations for the upcoming action thriller, offering audiences a more impactful glimpse into the film than its previously released teaser. With the movie scheduled to arrive in theatres on July 3, the latest promotional material has successfully reignited interest and generated fresh momentum ahead of release.

Following a teaser that received a mixed response from viewers, the makers appear to have struck the right chord with the trailer. Packed with high-octane action sequences, stylish visuals, and stronger emotional undertones, the trailer presents a much more compelling picture of what audiences can expect from the film.

Leading the charge is Alia Bhatt, who impresses in a powerful action-oriented role.

The actress showcases a confident and intense screen presence, highlighting a new dimension to her on-screen persona. Sharvari also leaves a strong impact, with her action scenes emerging as one of the major highlights of the trailer.

Adding further intrigue is Bobby Deol, whose character appears menacing and formidable. His commanding presence enhances the suspense surrounding the film’s narrative. Veteran actor Anil Kapoor also plays a significant



role, bringing additional depth and gravitas to the ensemble cast.

One of the trailer’s biggest crowd-pleasing moments is the tease of a special appearance by Hrithik Roshan. The brief glimpse of the superstar has already become a major talking point among fans, strengthening the connection between ‘Alpha’ and the expanding YRF Spy Universe.

With expectations riding high, ‘Alpha’ is considered one of the most important upcoming projects from Yash Raj Films. Industry observers believe the film’s box-office performance could influence the future trajectory of the studio’s ambitious spy franchise.

If the teaser left audiences wanting more, the trailer has successfully delivered the excitement and scale many were hoping for, setting the stage for a highly anticipated theatrical release.

Pragya Jaiswal’s photoshoot gains traction

Actress Pragya Jaiswal continues to command attention on social media despite not having a film release scheduled this year. The actress, known for her elegant fashion choices and strong online presence, has once again become the center of discussion with a stylish new photoshoot that is rapidly gaining traction among fans.

The latest photographs showcase Pragya in a contemporary fashion ensemble featuring a lace bralette paired with a light blue oversized shirt. Complementing the look are white denim shorts that have become a major talking point on social media. The relaxed styling and modern fashion approach have earned appreciation from followers, with many praising her effortless sense of style.

Captured beside a sunlit window, the photos highlight the actress’s confidence and natural charm. Her minimal makeup, soft hairstyle, and understated accessories add to the overall appeal, creating a sophisticated yet relaxed look. The visuals reflect a blend of glamour and simplicity that has resonated strongly with fashion enthusiasts.

While fans continue to await updates regarding her upcoming film projects, Pragya has successfully remained in the spotlight through her active social media engagement. The actress frequently shares glimpses of her fashion shoots, travel experiences, and lifestyle moments, helping her maintain a strong connection with her audience.

Over the years, Pragya Jaiswal has built a reputation not only for her performances on screen but also for her evolving fashion choices. Her latest photoshoot further reinforces her status as one of the most stylish actresses in the industry.

Although there are no immediate movie releases on the horizon, the actress continues to make headlines through her fashion-forward appearances, proving that her popularity extends well beyond the silver screen.



‘Cocktail 2’ revives iconic song ‘Tum Hi Ho Bandhu’ with a new twist

As the release of ‘Cocktail 2’ draws closer, the makers have unveiled a refreshed version of the iconic chartbuster ‘Tum Hi Ho Bandhu,’ bringing back one of Bollywood’s most-loved party anthems for a new generation of listeners. The recreated track is expected to play a key role in the film’s music album and has already generated considerable excitement among fans.



Actor Shahid Kapoor, who headlines the sequel, shared the song on social media with a playful message announcing the film’s arrival. The much-awaited romantic entertainer is scheduled for a theatrical release on June 19. Originally featured in the 2012 blockbuster ‘Cocktail,’ ‘Tum Hi Ho Bandhu’ became an instant sensation. The song was composed by Pritam, penned by Irshad Kamil, and sung by Kavita Seth and Neeraj Shridhar. It was picturized on Saif Ali Khan, Deepika Padukone, and Diana Penty. For the sequel, music producer Abhijit Vaghani has recreated the track with contemporary arrangements while preserving its original spirit. He revealed that the goal was to retain the song’s timeless energy while introducing modern musical elements that appeal to today’s audiences. The release of the revamped anthem follows the launch of other tracks from the film, including ‘Tujhko,’ ‘Vallah,’ ‘Mashooqa,’ and ‘Jab Talak,’ all of which have contributed to the growing buzz around the project. Serving as a spiritual successor to the original romantic drama, ‘Cocktail 2’ aims to recreate the magic of its predecessor while presenting a fresh story for audiences. With the return of ‘Tum Hi Ho Bandhu,’ the film has added another nostalgic element to its promotional campaign, further raising expectations ahead of its release.