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PM Modi gifts unique Indian artworks, speciality tea, handloom silk to Indonesian leadership



New Delhi : In a gesture aimed at further strengthening the deep-rooted cultural and diplomatic ties between India and Indonesia, Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented an array of exquisite gifts to the Indonesian leadership during his visit from July 6 to 8. Showcasing India's rich artistic heritage and master craftsmanship, PM Modi gifted unique artworks and speciality tea to the Indonesian President and handloom silk to the Speaker of the Indonesian Parliament.

These gifts, ranging from the traditional Aipan art of Uttarakhand to the world-renowned Ikat of Odisha, were carefully curated to reflect the shared values and historical bonds between the two neighbours. Prime Minister Modi gifted an Aipan to Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto. It is a traditional folk art from the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, created mainly by women during festivals on floors and walls using a terracotta-red base (Geru) and intricate

white patterns made from rice paste (Biswar). Drawn freehand with remarkable precision, the art reflects centuries-old traditions passed down through generations.

This artwork is dedicated to Lord Shiva and features sacred geometric motifs symbolising cosmic energy, highlighting the deep bond between art and spirituality in India. It also celebrates the shared cultural heritage of India and Indonesia, making it a meaningful symbol of the close friendship and enduring cultural ties between the two countries.

In another gesture of appreciation for Indian craftsmanship, PM Modi gifted Manohari Gold Tea to the Indonesian President. Manohari Gold Tea is one of India's finest speciality teas, showcasing the rich tea heritage and craftsmanship of Assam. Made exclusively from the tender buds of the P126 tea clone, it is hand-plucked, hand-rolled, and naturally sun-dried during the second flush season in June, giving it its distinctive golden appearance, delicate flavour, and exceptional quality. Produced in extremely limited

quantities of about 25 grams a day, it is among the world's rarest artisanal teas. Naturally rich in antioxidants and tea polyphenols, it offers a smooth, naturally sweet brew with floral and subtle malty notes, reflecting India's excellence in producing world-class speciality teas.

PM Modi gifted a Traditional Kashmiri Papier-Mache Bowl featuring hand-painted floral and bird motifs to the Indonesian President, representing a fine example of Kashmir's renowned handicraft tradition. Handmade from processed paper pulp and decorated using the traditional Naqashi technique, it features intricate hand-painted floral motifs, birds, ornamental patterns, and fine gold detailing, finished with a glossy lacquer that enhances both its beauty and durability. The artwork symbolises beauty, peace, and harmony with nature while reflecting the Valley's rich artistic heritage. Recognised worldwide for its elegance and craftsmanship, the bowl represents India's enduring tradition of creativity, cultural refinement, and master artisanship.

Omar Abdullah's "Hiding Behind Court" Jibe At BJP Over Rs 100 Crore Notice

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday hit back after receiving a Rs 100 crore legal notice from the BJP, saying the National Conference will now respond in the same coin by serving legal notices to BJP leaders in J&K for making slanderous remarks against the party. The notice served by the BJP seeks an apology from Abdullah or evidence to corroborate his allegation that the BJP offered Rs 20 to Rs 30 crore to National Conference legislators to switch sides.

Abdullah said he had received an electronic copy of the notice and took it as a compliment. "I am perhaps the only politician who has been bestowed with a 'love letter' like this by the BJP. I consider this a mark of respect that I am obviously a political force they cannot ignore," he said while interacting with media persons in Srinagar. Abdullah accused the BJP of hiding behind the court instead of countering the charges politically. "This is also symbolic of the way the BJP fights. They take a po-



litical fight and hide behind the court," he said. "I could have made the same statement in the Assembly, which cannot be challenged outside. But I made the point on a political stage, expecting they would respond politically. Instead, they have chosen to settle scores in court," he added. Abdullah said the National Conference would now initiate legal action against BJP leaders, especially one of their senior leaders who has been making accusations against the party. "For the last few months, senior BJP leaders have been

Badrinath Employee Arrested in Donation Scam

Dehradun: Police have arrested an absconding employee of the Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee in connection with the alleged misappropriation of devotees' offerings at the Badrinath Temple. Accused Pramod Nautiyal was arrested from Dehradun late on Sunday night after evading arrest for several days. Police said Nautiyal was taken into custody at around 11 pm and is being brought to Badrinath for questioning and further legal proceedings. Investigators had been searching for the accused

after collecting evidence in the case and conducting raids at several suspected hideouts. His arrest came after sustained efforts by a special police team. The case surfaced after complaints of financial irregularities in the handling and deposit of donations received at the temple. During the preliminary inquiry, investigators found indications of alleged discrepancies in the donation amount, following which an FIR was registered against the employee. Nautiyal had been on the run since the case was lodged.



Police officials said the accused will be questioned to ascertain whether other individuals were involved in the alleged fraud. Investigators are also examining financial records, documents and trans-

action details linked to the temple's donation management system. The investigation gathered further momentum after police scrutinised CCTV footage of the donation counting process.

Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis Visits Pawan Kalyan at Mumbai Hospital, Wishes Him Speedy Recovery



Mumbai, July 13: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis visited Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister

Pawan Kalyan at a hospital in Mumbai, where he is recovering after undergoing shoulder surgery. During the visit, Fadnavis en-

quired about Pawan Kalyan's health condition and wished him a speedy recovery. He also sought details regarding the treat-

ment being provided by doctors and his post-surgery progress. Pawan Kalyan thanked Devendra Fadnavis for personally visiting the hospital and showing concern for his well-being. Sources said the two leaders also shared a brief and cordial interaction during the meeting. According to people close to Pawan Kalyan, his condition is stable and he is resting as advised by doctors. Following the successful surgery, his fans and Jana Sena Party workers have been praying for his speedy recovery.

Barrage Gates to Be Restored Before Godavari Pushkaralu: CM

Rajahmundry, July 13: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said that the Dhavaleswaram Cotton Barrage provides irrigation water to nearly one million acres of farmland. On Monday, he inaugurated the construction works for new gates at the barrage and emphasized the government's commitment to strengthening irrigation infrastructure. Addressing the gathering, Chandrababu criticized the previous YSRCP government, alleging that it ne-

glected the barrage and failed to replace damaged gates even after some were washed away. The Chief Minister announced that the restoration of the barrage gates would be completed before the upcoming Godavari Pushkaralu. He also stated that 72 percent of the Polavaram Project had been completed and claimed that if the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) had remained in power, the project would have been completed by 2021. Chandrababu said the government aims to dedi-

cate the Polavaram Project to the nation before the next Godavari Pushkaralu. He noted that the state had spent Rs.24,000 crore on irrigation development over the last two years and highlighted the repairs undertaken after the Tungabhadra dam gates were damaged. The Chief Minister said organizing the Godavari Pushkaralu on a grand scale is the responsibility of the government. He also stated that payments for paddy procured from farmers were being credited within 24 hours, adding

that the government is simultaneously pursuing welfare and development initiatives. Speaking about Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, Chandrababu said the Jana Sena leader enjoys immense public support. He noted that Pawan Kalyan recently underwent shoulder surgery and that he personally visited him in Mumbai. The Chief Minister added that he advised Pawan Kalyan to return to official duties only after making a full recovery.

Strict Action Against Irresponsible Social Media Posts: AP Home Minister Anitha



From Our Staff Reporter

Anakapalli District, July 13: Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha has warned that strict action will be taken against individuals who make irresponsible posts on social media. She noted that cybercrime and social media-related cases have been increasing in Anakapalli district. On Monday, the minister received public grievances during the Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS) programme at the Anakapalli District Superintendent of Police (SP) Office. Speaking to the media on the occasion, Anitha said the weekly PGRS initiative has been yielding positive results by ensuring prompt resolution of public complaints. The Home Minister stated that complaints received at the Anakapalli SP Office are being resolved quickly and justice is being delivered to the victims. She revealed that the overall crime rate in the district has declined by 15 percent this year. Anitha also said that crimes against women have decreased by 7 percent in the district. She added that the government is taking special measures to prevent road accidents and improve public safety.

Jagan Betrayed Rayalaseema : Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu

From Our Staff Reporter
Hindupur, July 12: Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu alleged that former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy had neglected the development of Rayalaseema and failed to make meaningful progress on irrigation projects during his tenure.

Speaking after inaugurating the widening works of the Handri-Neeva Madakasira Branch Canal near Rachapalli in Hindupur mandal of Sri Sathya Sai district, Ramanaidu said there was little visible progress in irrigation infrastructure during the previous government's five-year rule. He also alleged that payments



related to Handri-Neeva motors and electricity bills were not cleared. The inauguration was attended by Hindupur MLA and actor Nandamuri Balakrishna, who operated an excavator at the project site, while the minister unveiled the foundation plaque. Ramanaidu stated that after the coalition government assumed office, Rs.25,000 crore had been allocated to the irrigation sector, of which Rs.12,000 crore was earmarked for Rayalaseema. In contrast,

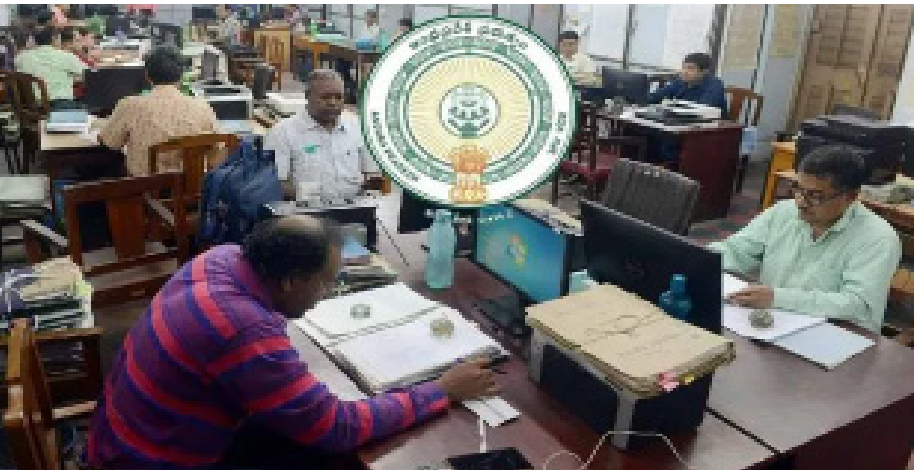
he claimed that only Rs.2,000 crore had been allocated to the region during the previous administration. The minister said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu is giving priority to the long-pending Madakasira Branch Canal project with the goal of transforming Rayalaseema into a prosperous region. He added that Rs.790 crore has been allocated for the development of the Hindupur, Penukonda and Madakasira constituencies.

AP Government Gives CPS Employees One-Time Option to Choose Old Pension Scheme

From Our Staff Reporter
Amaravati, July 13: The Andhra Pradesh Government has announced a major relief for employees covered under the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS). The Finance Department has issued G.O. Ms. No. 53, providing eligible employees with a one-time option to switch from the CPS to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). According to the order, employees whose recruitment notifications were issued

before September 1, 2004, but who joined government service after that date, will be eligible to exercise this option. The government has now allowed such employees to opt for the Old Pension Scheme. The Finance Department stated that eligible employees must submit their choice to the competent authorities within three months from the date of issuance of the Government Order. The government clari-

fied that once an employee opts for either the OPS or CPS, the decision will be final and irrevocable. Employees who do not exercise any option within the stipulated period will continue under the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) by default. The Finance Department has officially released G.O. Ms. No. 53, detailing the eligibility criteria and procedure for exercising the one-time option.



EDITORIAL

The lines of the crows are the lines of time

If there are ten famous painters who draw social figures with a pen, Kurella Srinivas is one of them. When you mention Kurella, you think of the great teacher Kurella Vitthalacharya, who lived his life with books. Another name that comes to mind when you think of Kurella is Srinivas. When you think of him, many pictures come to mind. If you add up all the lines he drew, it becomes a poem of lines. When you think of him, my face in the mirror becomes a painting, a splash of colors. All the lines he drew are the covers of thousands of books and appear in rows of books. Kurella is the cover page of many books written by poets and writers. The salvation for the letters of writers is when all their letters become a book! When it becomes a book and takes on another form, the cover is very important. Many such covers have come from the brush of Kurella. They are one, three, four.. ten.. hundreds, even thousands of books. Srinivas became the cover of the letters, which are perishable, but the fact that the cover is a letter also stands forever with the letter. Kurella Srinivas comes from a background that has made ornaments that blind the beauty and provided social ornaments. The lines he drew have become ornaments for the Telugu society's alphabet. He has drawn hundreds of thousands of pictures for children's literature that children read. It is said that the world is shaped in the classroom itself. Kurella has drawn many pictures for the textbooks of that class. He has drawn many paintings that have inspired the creativity of millions of students. Those millions of students do not know who Kurella Srinivas is, but they know the paintings that Kurella has drawn very well. We tend to ignore many things that need to be calculated. It is not known how many people have drawn lines and drawn pictures and become children's painters after seeing the paintings that Kurella has drawn. But the idea that has entered the minds of people grows into a new concept in some form. In this way, who can say how many new concepts have erupted and taken on many forms from the paintings drawn by a painter? Kurella, who is a painter, is an art teacher. A teacher by profession but an artistic art teacher by nature. Like Picasso, whom he loved, Kurella also gets ecstatic in the classroom after seeing the paintings he has drawn. He teaches the children as a direct instructor. He becomes a classroom where he shows the pictures of the textbooks he has drawn and comes before the children. Kurella Srinivas, the picture syllabus of the textbooks of the two Telugu states. Kurella Srinivas, the art teacher who the school education department is proud of.

I know Kurella well as an artist. I know the creator of the Kurella surname as a jewelry maker. Kurella Srinu became closer to me through our professor Ramoju Raghu. He fulfilled his responsibilities as a disciplined teacher. He stood in the history of Telugu literature and culture as a painter with the same responsibility. He was a teacher in the classroom. A painter who adored the art of painting and wrote works with his brush. Kurella Srinivas is a teacher who gives lessons, a wise man with social concerns, and a practitioner who constantly studies society. A reciter of hymns who constantly draws the thoughts he has seen and the scenes he has seen. He knows the interpretation of the verses. Kurella Srinivas is the one who has evolved and worked in various ways throughout his life and has woven the nest of teaching hymns into Telugu society. He has drawn valuable illustrations for the book 'Thatiz KCR' I wrote on Kalvakuntla Chandrasekhar Rao, the leader of the Telangana state movement, activist, and Telangana Pradatta. Kurella KCR has drawn illustrations for the book 'Okkaganokkadu'. Kurella Srinivas stands in the midst of famous painters who make the two Telugu states proud - Vaikuntam, Lakshman Goud, Kapu Rajaiah, Kondapalli Seshagiri Rao, Ele Lakshman, and cartoonist Shankar. Kurella! The lines you have drawn will remain as timelines with time. History will not forget Chitta Prasad. This land will not forget the songs of clay. Kurella! I wish that the whole land will be covered with your songs, that you should draw lines of light on behalf of all the backward people, for the common good.

Sharad Pawar Has An Old 'Two Plus Two' Bargain For Delhi

Many moons ago, Delhi's political folklore records, Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao asked his Defence Minister Sharad Pawar a deceptively simple question: how much is two plus two? Pawar's reply was vintage Pawar: "It depends whether you are buying or selling." Three decades later, the question has returned in a more consequential form. How much are eight Lok Sabha MPs worth when the government is searching for the numbers to pass a constitutional amendment capable of altering India's political map for a generation? The answer, once again, depends on who is buying and what is being sold.

A Long Rematch
The Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-first Amendment) Bill, 2026, was introduced on April 16 and defeated a day later. It received 298 votes in favour and 230 against, short of the 352 votes then required. The bill sought to raise the constitutional ceiling on Lok Sabha seats from 550 to 850 and permit Parliament to determine which census would be used for the next delimitation. That defeat came before the Bengal and Tamil Nadu elections rearranged the opposition's internal balance. Since then, reports have come out about a large group of Trinamool MPs moving towards the BJP, six of Shiv Sena (UBT)'s nine Lok Sabha MPs gravitating towards the Eknath Shinde camp, and the DMK breaking with the Congress. Seven AAP members in the Rajya Sabha also defected to the BJP in April. The arithmetic has improved for the government, though it has not made arrangements seamless. One post-election calculation put the NDA-aligned Lok Sabha tally at 324 after the reported Trinamool and Sena defections; even adding the DMK's 22 MPs would have left it six short of the April threshold. In the Rajya Sabha, esti-

mates placed the NDA near 148, still dependent on regional parties, abstentions, and attendance. This is why the Monsoon Session of Parliament beginning July 20 is the INDIA bloc's litmus test. The government is expected to revive the measure, while Amit Shah has floated a uniform 50% increase in seats as an assurance that no state needs to lose seats in absolute terms. But absolute numbers are not the real argument. Relative political weight is.

A Trap, A Promise
The bill bundles two different propositions. One is the implementation of 33% reservation for women in Parliament and state assemblies. The other is the redistribution of representation among states after the census. The 2023 women's reservation amendment made implementation contingent on a later census and delimitation. The 2026 bill attempted to accelerate the process by allowing the latest published census to be used. That allows the government to ask its opponents an emotive question: are they opposing women's representation? Southern parties ask a different one: should states that successfully reduced population growth lose influence to those that did not? PRS projections illustrate the anxiety. If the Lok Sabha remained at 543 and seats were reapportioned by population, Tamil Nadu could fall from 39 to 32 and Kerala from 20 to 15, while Uttar Pradesh could rise from 80 to 89 and Bihar from 40 to 46. Even with a larger House, relative shares would change. There is another concern. Raising the Lok Sabha ceiling to 850 without restructuring the Rajya Sabha would reduce the Upper House's relative weight. The bill would also leave Parliament with substantial discretion over the census to be used (the 2011 count, or the ongoing one,

which will be completed in 2028-29) and timing, through a later law. The dispute is, therefore, not simply over seat totals; it is over who controls the rules of India's next federal bargain.

The Pawar Premium
Enter Sharad Pawar, who appears to be keeping two doors open. Reports say the NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) has explored both a reunion with the faction founded by the late Ajit Pawar and a merger with the Congress. Several accounts suggest that a majority of its legislators and MPs prefer the NDA route. The party has eight Lok Sabha MPs, 10 Maharashtra MLAs, and one Rajya Sabha member - small in ordinary times, significant in a Constitutional cliff-hanger. The public picture is less tidy. Supriya Sule has repeatedly denied reports of joining the NDA and insists the eight MPs remain with the opposition. Rohit Pawar has said a reunion of the factions was unlikely soon and separately described a Congress merger as possible at the appropriate moment. Reports that Sule and Rohit are the principal holdouts are plausible, but the precise claim that everyone except them is ready to cross over remains unverified. The Delhi theory is that Narendra Modi and Amit Shah may demand Pawar's support on delimitation before blessing reunification and entry into the NDA family. There is no public confirmation of such a condition. Yet the logic is clear. Leaders of the Ajit Pawar faction have acknowledged that reunion would require the BJP's consent, while the government's hunt for Constitutional-amendment votes gives it every incentive to turn organisational accommodation into Parliamentary commitment.

Eight Votes, And The Meaning Of Opposition
Eight Pawar MPs would not guarantee passage. But Con-



stitutional amendments are shaped not only by 'yes' votes, absences and abstentions alter the threshold among those present and voting. Pawar's support could also persuade other regional actors to negotiate. More importantly, it would give the NDA political cover: a veteran federal leader from western India certifying that delimitation is not merely a northern majoritarian project. For INDIA, that would be devastating. If Pawar supports the bill while formally remaining in INDIA, the bloc must decide whether it has a common Constitutional floor or is merely an election-time photograph. Pawar could still turn the test around. He might condition support on safeguards: no reduction in any state's existing representation, a transparent formula for expansion, an independent and consultative delimitation process, a stronger Rajya Sabha, and separation of women's reservation from contentious reapportionment. He could then claim not that he surrendered to the NDA, but

that he forced it to rewrite the bargain. Shah's offer of uniform expansion has opened the door to precisely such negotiation.

The DMK's estrangement from Congress does not automatically make it pro-delimitation; Tamil Nadu's structural interests may prove stronger than coalition resentment. The same is true of other regional parties that can bargain with Delhi but cannot wish away the demographic consequences. INDIA's real test is whether it can turn these separate anxieties into a coherent federal alternative rather than assume anti-BJP sentiment is sufficient glue. Pawar has spent a lifetime demonstrating that political equations are rarely solved on paper. But this transaction is larger than Maharashtra, party reunification, or ministerial accommodation. If he buys entry into the NDA by selling opposition unity on delimitation, two plus two may still equal four in Parliament. Outside it, the political cost could be incalculable.

Trump's Quiet Turkey 'U-Turn' Has Loud Consequences For India

US President Donald Trump recently announced the lifting of sanctions on Turkey and signalled openness to restoring Ankara's access to the top-end American fifth-generation F-35 fighter jets. They had been denied to Turkey for years after the latter acquired the Russian S-400 air defence system. The US may also provide engines for Turkey's homegrown KAAAN fighter aircraft. Turkey is reportedly seeking an initial delivery of six jets. The policy pivot was announced alongside Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at a NATO summit in Ankara on July 8, 2026. However, Trump is expected to face heavy opposition in Congress for this change in policy.

The high-stakes geopolitical nature of the statement has not gone down well with Israel and Greece. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strongly opposed the potential sale, including the engines, and is actively lobbying against the deal, warning that providing F-35s to Turkey will "destroy the balance of power in the Middle East". Similarly, Athens vehemently opposes the move, expressing alarm that advanced stealth fighters in the hands of Turkey could alter the military balance in the Eastern Mediterranean. The deal would have implications for India as well, as Turkey openly supports Pakistan with military hardware and had delivered cargo aircraft loads during Operation Sindoor. This when President Trump has already picked Pakistan as a key interlocutor in the back-channel talks and negotiations with Iran, praised its mediation efforts as "fantastic", and displayed a strong personal rapport with Pakistani

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir.

The Best In Class
The Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II is widely considered the best overall 5th-generation fighter jet in service due to its unmatched multirole versatility, advanced sensor fusion, and active global production pipeline. The F-35's avionics compile data from 360-degree cameras, radar, and electronic warfare suites to give the pilot a complete, real-time picture of the battlefield without breaking stealth. Featuring a tiny radar cross-section (often compared in size to a golf ball), it allows pilots to penetrate dangerous airspace and strike targets while remaining functionally invisible to advanced enemy radars. F-35 aircraft operational campaigns have included crucial roles in suppressing enemy air defences, eliminating hostile drones, and conducting penetrating strategic strikes across the Middle East, Europe, and the Mediterranean. To date, the US has built and delivered over 1,340 F-35 variants globally. Ten countries already operate the jet, while another 11 nations have placed orders and are awaiting deliveries. The average annual production is 156 aircraft, but last year, a record 191 jets were delivered. This surge effectively cleared backlogs that had accumulated due to previous software and hardware upgrade delays. The main assembly plant is in Fort Worth, Texas, alongside secondary final assembly locations in Italy and Japan. There are three variants of the jet F-35A (Conventional Takeoff and Landing), F-35B (Short Takeoff and Vertical Landing), and the F-35C (Carrier-Based Variant). While the

F-35 dominates in networking and multirole capabilities, there are other 5th-gen fighters too. There is the larger and older F-22 Raptor, which is still widely regarded as the better air-superiority and dogfighting aircraft due to its thrust-vectoring manoeuvrability and twin engines. China's Chengdu J-20 "Mighty Dragon" heavy stealth fighter is designed primarily for long-range interception and strike missions, but its true combat capabilities remain closely guarded. The People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) has inducted over 300 J-20 fighters. The Russian Sukhoi Su-57 5th-generation aircraft is also highly agile and cost-effective, but experts generally agree its stealth and avionics fall short of Western F-35 standards. Russia has built approximately 44 Su-57s as of mid-2026. Meanwhile, China's Shenyang J-35 fifth-generation fighter has entered serial production and is currently in active service with both the PLAAF and the PLA Navy (PLAN). Pakistan has already signed an initial collaborative agreement to acquire up to 40 J-35AE export variants.

Why The Change Of Heart In Washington

The F-35s had been denied to Turkey initially because Ankara had purchased and integrated the Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile system. Washington argued that operating this Russian system alongside the F-35 could expose the stealth jets' classified capabilities to Moscow, resulting in Turkey's removal from the Joint Strike Fighter programme in 2019. Congress later reinforced this position by making any F-35 transfer contingent on Turkey no longer



possessing the S-400. Even so, Ankara has done nothing meaningful since 2019 to meet that condition. On the other hand, in fact, Turkey has escalated its rhetoric against Israel, threatened Greek sovereignty, entrenched its military presence in occupied northern Cyprus, and sought leverage over Europe through coercive regional behaviour. Turkey also continues to deepen its exposure to China in strategic sectors, including telecommunications. This matters because it was Washington's concerns over Huawei and Chinese 5G infrastructure in part that had once derailed the UAE's pursuit of the F-35. The same standard should apply to Turkey. Erdogan wanted a formal public reversal in Ankara. He did not get that. The question now is whether Washington can resist the next round of Turkish pressure. Any decision will be conditioned on a proposed roadmap to transfer Turkey's Russian-made S-400 defence systems to a third country.

India's Headache

The Turkey-Pakistan military aviation nexus has rapidly evolved into a major strategic alliance. Centred on joint development and technology-sharing, the partnership fea-

tures collaboration on Turkey's KAAAN stealth fighter, the induction of Bayraktar TB2 drones, and the joint production of Ankara unmanned aerial vehicles. Pakistani engineers are also actively involved in the development of Turkish Aerospace Industries' (TAI) KAAAN programme, gaining access to next-generation aerospace design. Pakistan has heavily integrated Turkish-made UAVs into its arsenal. Agreements between TAI and Pakistan's National Engineering and Science Commission (NESCOM) focus on the joint production of Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) platforms like the Anka drone. Turkish-manufactured munitions, such as the Kemankes cruise missiles, have been procured by Pakistan to upgrade the operational capabilities of its Air Force (PAF). High-level leadership meetings between the PAF and the Turkish Air Force routinely reaffirm a shared commitment to joint training, aerospace innovation, and emerging technologies. The nexus significantly alters the regional security dynamic, providing Pakistan with critical non-Western technology to modernise its aerial and drone capabilities.

The SIR process should be expedited and completed 100 percent



Madanapalle, July 13: On Monday, Central Election Commission Secretary Naveen Kumar, who visited the district headquarters Madanapalle, held a review meeting at the Collectorate on the progress of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process in the district, election preparations, and voter list update. District Collector Nishant Kumar, Joint Collector Shiv Narayana Sarma, Sub Collector Challa Kalyani, District Revenue Officer Chandrasekhar Reddy, Thamballapalle ERO Madhava Krishna Reddy and others participated in this meeting. On this occasion, District Collector Nishant Kumar explained the progress of the SIR process in the district through a power point presentation. He said that he is continuously holding meetings with representatives of political parties, conducting field visits along with EROs, AROs, and BLOs to create awareness among voters. He explained that the SIR process is progressing rapidly in the district with the help of BLOs. A total of 12,32,436 enumeration forms have been distributed

in the district, of which 12,05,362 forms have been digitized, making 97.80 percent progress, the Collector said. He revealed that steps have been taken to complete the remaining process within the stipulated time. Later, Central Election Commission Secretary Naveen Kumar said that special attention should be paid to the digitization of the remaining forms and the SIR process should be completed 100 percent in every polling station. He suggested that special meetings be held with BLAs and BLOs on Tuesday and lists of Absent, Shifted, Dead (ASD), double entries etc. should be submitted, verified at the field level and pending issues should be completed. The officials were advised to take all steps as per the guidelines of the Election Commission to prepare the voter list in a completely transparent and accurate manner. Central Election Commission SO Anita Kurkeja, ASO Udit Kumar, Collectorate Election Department Superintendent Peer Munni and staff participated in this meeting.

Free eye examination, eye membrane, special response to surgery camp

Palamaneru, July 13: Shankara Nethralaya, Chennai, Blindness Prevention Organization, Mahathi Foundation, Baireddypalle, Arvind Krishnaswamy – Srimati Jaya Krishnaswamy (USA) conducted by the free eye examination and eye membrane surgery camp at Sri Sai Balaji Towers in Palamaneru town received special support from the public. In the tests conducted on the 4th day of the camp, a total of 90 patients were examined for eye examination, out of which 18 were selected for eye membrane surgery. Additionally, 7 patients were referred to JCOC Chennai for special treatment. So far 257 people have been selected for eye examinations and 74 people for eye membrane surgery. In the camp referred to JCOC, Chennai, 33 eligible patients were provided free eye membrane surgery, free IOL lens, medi-



cines, black spectacles and necessary services by MESU to 33 eligible patients. As the camp is going on, the organizers have asked those suffering from eye problems to take advantage of this opportunity to undergo free tests.

We will remain indebted to Chandrababu Garu for life

Ramakuppam, July 13: Expressing heartfelt gratitude to Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu for sanctioning funds for bringing canal water and for commencing works to several tanks in Gudipalli Mandal, which have been facing drinking and irrigation water problems for many years, said Chandra Sekhar, Kuppam Constituency TDP Coordination Committee Convenor and Former Market Committee Chairman in a statement on Monday. He stated that the people of Gudipalli Mandal will remain indebted to him for life. Under Kuppam constituency, in Gudipalli Mandal, Rs. 67.98 crore has been sanctioned in the first phase to lift water from the Handri-Neeva canal to the tanks in Pogurupalli, Dasimanipalli,

Chinnagollapalli, and Sanganapalli panchayats. He also thanked the CM for sanctioning funds to supply water by gravity from Jogyanooru tank to Settipalli tank, Beggilapalli tank, Agaram Kavalivani tank, and Gowni tank. The people of Gudipalli Mandal will be indebted to CM for generations, he said in the statement.



Rs.4.41 Crore to TTD BIRRD Trust



Tirumala, 13 July : Hyderabad-based RS Brothers Retail India Limited on Monday donated Rs.4.41 crore to the TTD-run BIRRD Trust. The donation DDs were handed over by the company's Chairman, Potti Venkateswarlu, and Directors S. Rajamouli, T. Prasada Rao, and Potti Malathi Lakshmi Kumari to TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu and Additional EO Ch. Venkaiah Chowdary at the Ranganayakula Mandapam in the Srivari Temple.

Former Minister Appalaraju's Son Arrested in Rash Driving Case

Srikakulam, July 13: Police have taken Arav, the son of former Andhra Pradesh minister Seediri Appalaraju, into custody in connection with a rash driving case. He is currently being questioned at the Kasibugga Police Station.

According to police, the incident occurred three days ago in Kasibugga, where a shepherd identified as Danayya lost his life after being hit by a speeding motorcycle allegedly ridden by Arav. The case came to light after investigators examined

CCTV footage from the area. Police said that during the initial stages of the investigation, a youth named Siddu surrendered before authorities, claiming that he was riding the motorcycle at the time of the accident. However, a detailed investigation reportedly revealed a different sequence of events. Investigators gathered CCTV footage showing

Arav refuelling the motorcycle at a nearby petrol station shortly before the accident.

incident. Officials stated that the additional video evidence and findings from the investi-



Police also examined evidence indicating that he received treatment at a private hospital in Palasa on the day of the

gation helped establish the facts of the case, leading to Arav's detention for further questioning.

ANALYSIS: HOW DERA, DYNASTY, AND DRUGS WILL DEFINE PUNJAB'S 2027 MANDATE



Chandigarh: Punjab has witnessed four consecutive assembly elections that were dominated by a powerful interlocking triad: deras, dynasty, and drugs. These three Do not only influenced the elections but also overshadowed existential crises like growing unemployment, deteriorating law and order, and a dwindling state economy. As Punjab moves into a multi-cornered electoral battle ahead, the political parties are facing new challenges to realign their political motives, goals, and reclaim lost political ground. Upheaval in the state's traditional power structures, cracks in the dynasty fortress, rebellion within political parties, a frustrated, hyper-connected generation of voters, and failed promises to curb the menace of drugs are all expected to pave the way for a new political era in 2027.

The Importance Of Deras

The socio-religious sects known as Dera in Punjab have influenced politics and elections for the past four to five decades. Out of a total 9,000 Deras, about 300, including the Dera Sacha Sauda (DSS), Radha Swami Satsang Beas (RSSB), and Dera Sachknand Ballan

(DSB), are considered major institutions. Deras are a veritable goldmine for political parties as far as the Dalit and backward class communities of voters are concerned. A study conducted by the Lokniti-CSDS in 2022 had found that one-fourth of Punjab's electorate, mostly marginalised sections and Dalit communities, identify themselves as followers of specific Deras. While the DSS has a stronghold in the Malwa region, Dera Sachkhand Ballan is part of the Doaba region and Radhaswami Satsang Beas is part of the Majha area - three cultural and geographical regions that cover all 117 assembly segments. The Malwa, Majha, and Doaba regions have 69, 25 and 23 assembly constituencies, respectively. The Doaba region has the highest concentration of Deras, including Dera Sachkhand Ballan, Radha Soami Satsang Beas, Divya Jyoti Jagriti Sansthan, and Dera Sant Sarwan Dass. Dera Sachkhand Ballan is a prominent Ravidasia dalit community Dera, Radha Soami Satsang attracts a mix of followers and is known as the most influential. Dera politics has changed over time. Political analysts say

they are not inclined towards a particular party. Shiromani Akali Dal's efforts to woo the Dera Sacha Sauda followers backfired in 2017 and 2022 following the controversies surrounding its chief Gurmit Ram Rahim. Radha Soami Satsang claims to be apolitical, but reports suggest it indirectly supported the Shiromani Akali Dal, as Bikram Majithia is a distant relative of the Dera chief. Top politicians can be seen visiting the Deras to seek political blessings. PM Modi visited Dera Sachkhand Ballan on February this year to participate in the 649th birth anniversary celebrations of Sant Guru Ravidas Ji, besides seeking blessings from Dera Chief Sant Niranjan Dass. Later, in a calculated move, he was also conferred the Padma Shri. Newly appointed Punjab BJP chief Kewal Singh Dhillon also recently met Mr Dass. PM Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, Arvind Kejriwal, and Rahul Gandhi have met Radha Soami Satsang Beas Dera chief Gurinder Singh Dhillon in the past. "Deras may or may not support political parties, but their influence is limited and divided. Their followers come from various backgrounds;

some are Sikhs, some Hindus, some dalits, or some from urban pockets. Deras may ask their followers to vote for a particular party, but the downside may have different political views or inclination," says Prof. Pramod Kumar, Chairperson, Institute for Development and Communication (IDC), Panjab University, Chandigarh.

The Sunset Of Dynasties

Dynasty politics has historically been a focal point of Punjab's politics. To understand how dynasty politics and the interpersonal relationships between key politicians influenced the political landscape, it's important to discuss the six most influential families. The family of late chief minister Pratap Singh Kairon is considered one of the most influential of its time. Kairon was close to Jawahar Lal Nehru. The Patiala Maharaja family, Majithias, Brars, Mann, and Badals, who are all Jats. Interestingly, there are multiple high-profile matrimonial ties uniting Punjab's top political families. While late Parkash Singh Badal's son Sukhbir Singh Badal is married to the daughter of Satyajet Singh Majithia, his daughter Parmeet Kaur is married to Pratap Singh Kairon's son Adesh Pratap Singh Kairon. Captain Amrinder Singh's and Khalistan supporter Simranjit Singh Mann's wives are real sisters. Captain Amrinder Singh, Harcharan Singh Brar, and Pratap Singh Kairon are also relatives. Captain's brother Malvinder Singh's sister-in-law is married to the family of Harcharan Singh Brar, whose wife is a niece of Partap Singh Kairon.

These families ruled the state for decades, but now, the dynastic politics seems to have lost its sheen. They are not as influential today

as they used to be in the past. Captain Amrinder Singh lost the assembly election in his home turf Patiala in 2022, and all Badals, including the late Parkash Singh Badal, Sukhbir Singh Badal, Bikram Majithia and Manpreet Singh Badal, faced humiliating defeat from newcomers from the Aam Aadmi Party. But this does not mean that the dynasts have lost interest in politics. Sukhbir Badal, Bikram Majithia and Manpreet Badal, along with the family of Captain Amarinder Singh's family, including his wife Preet Kaur and daughter Jai Inder Kaur, besides others, are likely to get tickets from their respective political parties. "The Dera and Dynasty have exhausted their electoral currency value. It has been spent in the past. It is not Dynasty, Dera, and Drugs but Doles, Drugs, and Deras which can influence 2026 assembly elections," Professor Pramod Kumar added.

Chasing A Mirage

While dynasty politics and dera politics, according to psephologists, will not impact the 2027 assembly

elections much, the state's drug problem will be a major poll plank. Causing generational trauma to Punjab, the menace of drugs remains a mere political stepping stone for leaders across party lines. Captain Amrinder Singh had promised to end it in four weeks; Arvind Kejriwal promised action within two to three months. The BJP promises to completely eradicate Punjab's drug menace within two years of forming a state government. While annual heroin seizures averaged between 300 and 500 kg during the SAD-BJP regime annually between 2012 and 2017, they went up to 700 kg during the Congress regime between 2017 and 2022. The seizures went up by 2,000 kg in the post-2022 period during the AAP regime. Drawing heavy criticism from the opposition and people who allege that drug trafficking has only spiralled during the AAP regime. The party, however, created a perception about controlling drugs and exposing the top brass. Arrests of opposition leaders like Bikram Majithia of SAD and Sukhpal Khaira of Congress resulted in nothing as

they were granted bail. Three AAP leaders have also been arrested for drug smuggling. While the party's youth wing leader, Lovepreet Singh, was arrested with 4.3 kg heroin in March 2026, Moga Mayor Baljit Singh Chani was suspended for involvement with a drug racket in November 2025. The party's local village headman, Paramjit Singh, was also arrested in a drug smuggling case in February 2023 in Tarn Taran. After having failed to control the drug problem through enforcement, the AAP government has now initiated a structural shift by implementing evidence-based anti-drug education in the school curriculum. "As far as the issue of drugs is concerned, people will not trust Congress and AAP, whose promises are untrue. Be it Captain Amarinder Singh's vow to end the menace, holding Gutka Sahib (holy Sikh book), or the changing timeline of the ruling AAP from two to three months and then six months or more. All eyes will be on the BJP as Union Home Minister Amit Shah has promised to break the nexus in two

years. AAP may be vocal about its tirade against drugs, but the BJP will be a major beneficiary," says Prof Ashutosh Kumar, Head, Department of Political Science, Panjab University. To conclude, Punjab's old trinity of deras, dynasty and drugs is under pressure and lacks certainty. The political parties are, in fact, playing a cautious game regarding the use of drug money and Dera votes. The Shiromani Akali Dal is shying away from seeking help from Dera Sacha Sauda because hardliner groups, besides the Akal Takht, are eager to expose those who helped Gurmeet Ram Rahim in a blasphemy case. CM Bhagwant Mann himself is facing a sacrilege allegation and has been declared Guru Dokhi. Political parties will also be cautious about giving tickets to dynasts who were defeated in the 2022 assembly elections. The internal rebellion in Congress, the disintegration of the Shiromani Akali Dal, and the rise of the hardliner Amritpal-led Akali Dal (Waris Punjab De) may surprise the election outcome in 2027.

Seven Buses Gutted in Massive Fire at Private Garage in Vijayawada

Vijayawada, July 12: A major fire broke out on Sunday at a private vehicle repair garage located in the JRD Tata Industrial Estate at Kanuru in Krishna district's Penamalur mandal. The blaze reportedly started in a bus that had been brought in for repairs and quickly spread to nearby vehicles, resulting in the destruction of seven buses. The garage, named Anusha Garage, is operated by Shekhar and specializes

in bus body-building and repair works. A total of 13 travel buses had been parked at the facility for repairs and modernization work. Since it was a holiday, Shekhar, his family members, friends, and workers had gone to the Mahankali Temple at Morampudi near Tenali to fulfill a religious vow.

Fire Detected Through Live CCTV Feed

After completing temple rituals, Shekhar



checked the garage through live CCTV footage on his mobile phone and noticed flames emerg-

ing from the AC compressor mounted on top of a bus bearing registration number AP39 VD 8989.

For 900 Years, It Was Believed To Be Saraswati Sculpture. Then A Revelation



Bhopal: A missing veena, a broken hand, an unexpected question from museum authorities and a digital examination have revealed that a striking 12th-century sculpture preserved at the State Museum in Bhopal, believed to be goddess Saraswati for nearly nine centuries, is not her at all. Archaeologists have identified the idol as that of Goddess Gayatri, the divine personification of the Gayatri Mantra, the Vedas, sacred wisdom and spiritual illumination. The discovery has transformed a familiar museum object into one of the rarest known sculptural representations of Gayatri in India. It has also corrected what experts describe as a historical misidentification that survived for centuries. In the official register, the red sandstone sculpture had been recorded as Goddess Saraswati. Archaeologist Ramesh Yadav, associated with the Directorate of Archaeology, Archives and Museums, told NDTV that the sculpture had initially been entered in the museum records as Saraswati, but a closer examination revealed significant differences. "This is a second statue. It

the surviving contours, the position of the hand and traces of the original object. "There are common iconographic markers. A swan is depicted at the base. One hand is broken, leading the initial identifier to assume it once held a veena. However, subsequent examination revealed that it held a lotus, or padma, rather than a veena. The visual distinction is subtle, but while Saraswati holds a veena, this figure held a lotus," Yadav told. That distinction became the key to solving the mystery. Archaeologists then examined the other attributes carried by the deity and compared them with descriptions of Gayatri found in the Puranas and classical texts on temple art and sculpture. The four-armed goddess is seated in lalitasana. Her lower right hand holds an akshamala, or rosary, while her upper right hand carries a lotus. Her lower left hand holds a book identified with the Vedas. The upper left hand is broken but is believed to have originally held another lotus or sacred object. A finely carved swan appears near her right leg. In Indian tradition, the swan symbolises wisdom, spiritual discrimination and the ability to distinguish truth from illusion. Flying celestial garland bearers are carved on both sides of the stone panel, affirming the goddess's divine status. "The image matches classical descriptions of Gayatri in the Silpasastras," Yadav said. "The four-armed goddess sits in lalitasana, holding a rosary, lotus and the Vedas. A finely carved hamsa beside her symbolises sacred wisdom, while celestial garland bearers affirm her divinity. Together, these attributes identify the deity as Gayatri rather than Saraswati." Although Gayatri became

closely associated with Saraswati in later Hindu traditions, ancient texts describe her as an independent Vedic goddess with her own theological and iconographic identity. The earliest foundation of the Gayatri tradition is found in the Rigveda through the celebrated mantra invoking Savitr, the divine solar power, and seeking the illumination of human intellect. The identification has also challenged assumptions about the sculpture's artistic origin. Since it was found at Dhar, the historic capital of the Paramara dynasty, it had naturally been viewed through the lens of Paramara art. However, archaeologists now say the sculpture differs significantly from the traditional Paramara style and exhibits a strong Western Chalukyan influence. "Stylistically, it deviates from the Paramara style. Since the Chalukyas from Gujarat ruled Dhar during the 12th century, the statue exhibits the influence of the Chalukya art style, which is a distinctive characteristic," Yadav said. The modelling of the body, elaborate ornamentation, refined execution and treatment of the garments are seen as characteristic of the Western Chalukyan sculptural tradition. "Temples constructed in the Dhar and Jabua regions during the 12th century differed from the Paramara style, and this stylistic influence was evident in the sculptures as well," he said. The breakthrough emerged from Madhya Pradesh's growing use of 3D technology for the digital documentation of sculptures and archaeological objects. "We are employing 3D technology for documentation purposes," Yadav said.

Man Fined Rs 1 Lakh For 3-Year-Old's Rape, Panchayat Used It For Liquor Party

Ranchi: A village Panchayat in Gumla district, Jharkhand, attempted to cover up the rape of a three-year-old girl by fining the accused man and using part of that money to hold a celebration, before police stepped in and made an arrest. The accused, Sunil Lohara, went to the victim's home on Saturday evening. Her mother was present at the time. Lohara asked the mother to let him hold the child while she went about her tasks, then took the girl to another room, where he raped her. When the child, injured and distressed, began crying, her mother rushed to her. The child was first taken to see a private doctor. Rather than the case going straight to the police, the matter was taken up by the village Panchayat. Some members reportedly wanted to keep the case within the village rather than reporting it. A meeting was held on Sunday, where the accused was fined Rs 1 lakh,



apparently as a way of settling the matter locally instead of involving the law. The accused paid Rs 20,000 of that fine. The council then used this money to hold a celebration involving meat and alcohol. The accused was reportedly told to pay the remaining Rs 80,000 within a week. Ghaghra police station in-charge Mohan Kumar said officers received information that villagers were try-

ing to suppress the case, and that pressure from within the village had kept it from reaching the police station. Following this, Ghaghra police went to the village and registered a case based on a statement from the victim's mother. The accused was arrested. Police said someone from the village had alerted them to what was happening. When officers arrived on Sunday, the celebration funded by

the fine was under way. The accused was arrested during the gathering, and police also recorded a statement from the child's mother. Lodo Ekka, head of the Arangi Panchayat, said a meeting was held in Palma village following the assault, but that he had not been informed of it. He said he only learned about the meeting once police arrived and the matter came to light. Police say further legal proceedings are under way.

4 Techies Die After Car Rams Truck. They Were Driving To Jim Corbett Park

Rampur district: Four people have died, and three others were injured after their car rammed into a stationary truck in Rampur district, Uttar Pradesh. Twelve people had set out from Delhi for a company holiday to Jim Corbett Park in Ramnagar, Uttarakhand, travelling in two vehicles. Seven were in the car that crashed, while the other five, travelling separately, escaped the accident. The

group worked together at a Delhi-based tech company and were on a company-organised trip when the accident took place. Those who lost their lives have been named as Abhishek Agnihotri, 30, Kartik, 24, Neeraj, 24, and Gulbuddin, 35. Abhishek Agnihotri was driving the car at the time of the crash. One of the four was from Baghpur, while the others were from Delhi. Abhishek Agnihotri, Kartik

and Neeraj died at the scene, while Gulbuddin died later after being taken to hospital. The crash happened at around 5 am on the Swar-Tanda road. Police said the vehicle had to be cut open using a cutter to free the four bodies and the injured passengers inside. The three surviving passengers were first admitted to the district hospital before being referred on to Delhi for further treatment. According to police, initial

findings suggest the crash happened because the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel. The car struck the rear of a truck that was on the road at the time. Rampur Superintendent of Police Somendra Meena visited the crash site and directed officials on the response. Police said the bodies of those who died have been sent for post-mortem examination, and further legal proceedings related to the case are underway.

KDMC Hospital Staff Goes On Strike After Shiv Sena Corporator Allegedly Assaults Doctors, Nurses & Visiting Gynaecologist

Mumbai: A shocking incident has come to light at Kalyan-Dombivli Municipal Corporation's (KDMC) Shastrinagar Hospital in Dombivli, where nurses and hospital staff were allegedly assaulted by Shiv Sena corporator Ramesh Mhatre. The incident, which occurred late on Monday night, left several staff members in tears and triggered a strike, disrupting routine hospital operations. CCTV footage of the incident, which has since gone viral on social media, allegedly shows Mhatre physically assaulting hospital staff, including a female doctor and a nurse. The visuals also show the corporator, along with several others, allegedly assaulting another hospital employee. The incident has sparked widespread outrage online, with many users questioning the corporator's conduct, particularly towards women.

Patient's admission led to confrontation

According to a report by The Times of India, the incident began after 33-year-old Priyanka Ugma, a resident of Kopar Road, was admitted to the hospital. She was nine months pregnant, and doctors found that two loops of the umbilical cord were around the foetus, following which they planned a lower segment caesarean section (LSCS). Hospital sources



said doctors anticipated that the newborn might require admission to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) after delivery. However, since the hospital's NICU was full, the medical team began making alternative arrangements for the baby. During this time, the patient's relatives allegedly contacted Shiv Sena corporator Ramesh Mhatre, who, along with several others, reportedly entered the hospital and confronted the medical staff. During the altercation, the corporator and the patient's relatives allegedly assaulted a nurse, a female doctor and a visiting gynaecologist. Following the incident, the patient was shifted to KDMC-run Vasant Valley Maternity Hospital, where the caesarean section was successfully performed. The newborn was admitted to the NICU for observation.

Doctors launch work boycott

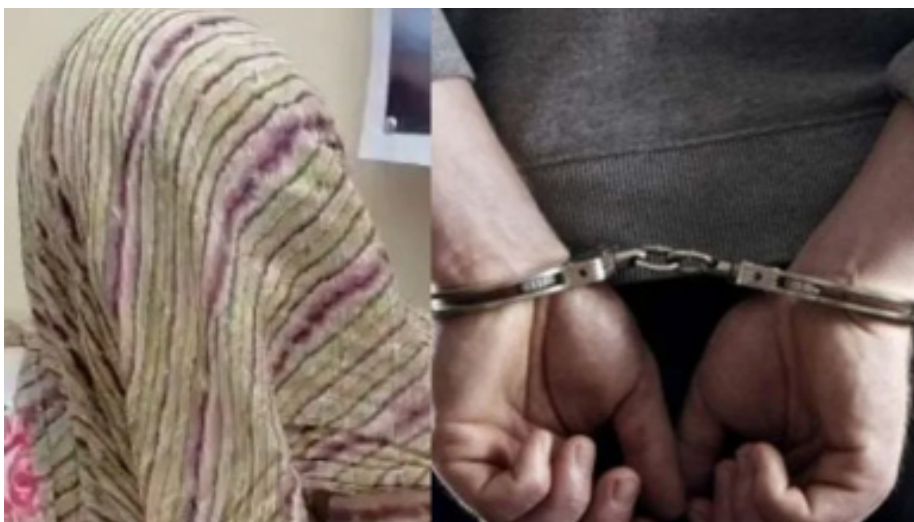
According to reports, protest against the alleged assault, doctors and nurses launched a work boycott on Tuesday morning, suspending routine outpatient and other non-emergency services. Emergency medical services, however, continued to function normally. The protesting staff demanded strict action against all those involved in the assault. The Central Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors (MARD) also condemned the incident, stating that the investigation is ongoing. Central MARD President Dr Atharv Shinde said the exact reason behind the assault has not yet been verified. He urged all public health departments to immediately register an FIR and inform the association whenever such incidents

occur. He further said that Central MARD will write to the Public Health Department and the Ministry of Home Affairs regarding this incident and previous attacks on healthcare workers, demanding justice. If appropriate action is not taken, the association plans to seek an appointment with the Chief Minister of Maharashtra after the Assembly session to present the matter in detail.

Hospital assures further action

Meanwhile, Shastrinagar Hospital's Chief Medical Officer, Dr Sadiya Pinjari, confirmed that while routine services were temporarily suspended due to the staff protest, emergency medical services continued uninterrupted. She added that the matter would be reported to the police and further action would be taken following the investigation.

6-Year-Old Boy Sexually Assaulted By Attendant At Bengal School



Paschim Medinipur: A six-year-old Class 1 student was sexually assaulted by the toilet attendant of his school in West Bengal's Paschim Medinipur. The accused was arrested after a massive protest outside the school. The survivor's mother told the media that her son told her that the toilet attendant had subjected him to "oral molestation". "My son is six years old and went to school on Friday. When we went to pick him up, he said he had something embarrassing to tell

me. Upon reaching home, he revealed that the boys' restroom attendant had closed the door and molested him - he subjected him to oral molestation," news agency ANI quoted her as saying. She said the accused let go of her son only because his friends knocked on the toilet door. "He only let go when my son's friend knocked on the door; otherwise, my son was suffocating and could have even lost consciousness," she said. She accused the school adminis-

tration of attempting to suppress the crime to protect its reputation. "When we complained, the principal simply defended the accused. He neither informed the police nor allowed us to do so, claiming it would bring disrepute to the school," she alleged, adding that the accused was arrested because all parents supported them. "All the parents stood by me; we filed an FIR (First Information Report), and the accused was subsequently arrested. The school took

no initiative. All the parents have gathered here to protest against the crime. We demand the removal of the principal. Instead of helping, the teachers are making inappropriate remarks; we also demand the suspension of these teachers," he added. Police said the accused was arrested following the parents' complaint. "We immediately registered a case regarding the molestation of a minor child. We reviewed and seized the CCTV footage and have forwarded it for further action. We are issuing several directives to the school: separate restrooms will be designated for Class 5 students; cameras will be installed outside the restrooms to monitor entry and exit; and an attendant will be stationed outside the bathrooms to assist any child facing difficulties. Staff will be hired only after a thorough background check. We will implement all necessary measures to ensure that such incidents do not recur in the future," said the city's police chief, Papiya Sultana.

Supreme Court Seeks Centre's Airfare Regulation Rules In Sealed Cover Within 2 Weeks



New Delhi: The Supreme Court has directed the Centre to place before it, in a sealed cover within two weeks, the rules it has framed to regulate airfares, after the government informed the court that the proposed framework is ready and will be placed before Parliament within 30 days. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was hearing a petition seeking regulatory

guidelines to address unpredictable fluctuations in airfares and alleged exploitative pricing by airlines. During the hearing, the Centre told the court that rules to regulate airfare pricing have already been framed and are expected to be laid before both Houses of Parliament within the next 30 days. Taking note of the submission, the bench directed the government to submit a copy of the rules

before the court within two weeks, irrespective of whether they have been tabled in Parliament. "Considering the submissions, we grant two weeks' time to place before this court the rules which have been framed, irrespective of whether they have been placed before the Parliament or not, in sealed cover. List on August 3," the court ordered. The petition seeks directions to the Centre and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to frame binding rules governing airfare pricing. It has also sought measures to cap surge pricing, regulate baggage and other ancillary charges, prescribe uniform cancellation and refund norms, and establish an independent aviation regulator with powers to protect con-

sumer interests. The issue had come under sharp scrutiny during an earlier hearing on January 21, when the top court expressed concern over steep increases in airfares during festivals and major events. "Look at the exploitation you did during Kumbh," Justice Mehta had remarked, referring to the sharp spike in ticket prices during the Kumbh Mela. "Not only Kumbh, but every festival," Justice Nath had added. Justice Mehta had also pointed to airfare trends for Prayagraj and Jodhpur, observing that ticket prices during festival periods were nearly three times the normal fares. The matter will now be taken up again on August 3 after the Centre places the draft rules before the court.

Rs 10,000 SIP in Mutual Funds: See how your investment could grow in 10, 15 and 20 years



New Delhi: In mutual fund investment, investors can benefit from the power of compounding and rupee cost averaging by investing a fixed amount regularly through SIPs. A systematic investment plan (SIP) is the simplest way to invest in mutual funds. This is the best option for first-time investors and salaried individuals who are looking to invest a fixed sum every month. However, investors choose funds according to their risk appetite, investment goals, and investment horizon. They can also increase the SIP amount as and when possible. This method is also called step-up SIP. In this article, we will calculate what your investment could grow into in 10

years, 15 years, and 20 years if you make a Rs 10,000 monthly SIP in mutual funds. Let's take a look:

Rs 10,000 monthly SIP

If an individual invests Rs 10,000 per month for 10 years, the investment could grow to Rs 22,40,359 at an assumed return of 12 per cent, show calculations. The total invested amount would be Rs 12,00,000, while the estimated returns would be Rs 10,40,359, assuming an annualised return of 12 per cent.

See calculations of Rs 10,000 monthly SIP for 10 years

Invested amount - Rs 12,00,000
Estimated returns - Rs 10,40,359
Investment period - 10

years

Total value - Rs 22,40,359
Calculations of Rs 10,000 monthly SIP for 15 years

Invested amount - Rs 18,00,000
Estimated returns - Rs 29,59,314
Investment period - 15 years

Total value - Rs 47,59,314
Calculations of Rs 10,000 monthly SIP for 20 years

Invested amount - Rs 24,00,000
Estimated returns - Rs 67,98,574
Investment period - 20 years

Total value - Rs 91,98,574

FAQs

Should I stop SIP during market corrections?

No, it is not advisable to stop your SIP during market corrections. It allows investors to accumulate more mutual fund units at lower prices.

Should I do a step-up SIP later?

Yes, you can increase your investment amount whenever you can to get more benefits of compounding.

Is there a minimum period to invest in SIP?

No, there is no time limit to stay invested. However, one should consider a long term goal.

Can I pause SIP for some time?

Yes, you can pause your SIP for some time and re-start it whenever possible.

Can I withdraw money anytime from the SIP?

Yes, most open-ended mutual funds allow investors to withdraw money at any time. However, there may be an exit load as per the fund manager's conditions.

Do I need to do KYC before starting an SIP?

Yes, KYC is mandatory before you start investing in mutual funds.

Is there a maximum limit to invest in mutual funds?

No, there is no maximum limit on investing in mutual funds through SIP.

Planning to buy iPhone 17? Demand surges amid fears of a price hike; many variants go out of stock

New Delhi: If you have been planning to buy Apple's iPhone 17, you may not want to wait much longer. The latest iPhone has seen a sharp rise in demand across India as buyers rush to purchase the device amid concerns that Apple could increase its prices in the coming weeks. The buying spree has already resulted in limited availability across retail stores and e-commerce platforms, with several colour and storage variants going out of stock.

The surge comes at a time when Apple has already increased prices of products such as the MacBook, iPad, Apple TV and HomePod in India following rising global component costs. Although the company has not announced any price hike for the iPhone 17, speculation over a possible increase has prompted many consumers to buy the device at the current price.

Why is demand for the iPhone 17 rising?

Retailers and market analysts say customers are advancing their purchase plans due to fears that iPhone prices could rise because of increasing component costs and supply chain pressures. The demand surge has led to:

Heavy buying across retail stores and online platforms.

Several iPhone 17 variants going out of stock on Amazon and Flipkart.

Popular colour and storage combinations becoming difficult to find. Limited inventories despite promotional sales. Many customers purchasing the device at the full MRP instead of waiting for festive discounts.

iPhone shipments expected to cross 3.5 million units. The buying rush is also expected to reflect in Apple's India sales numbers. According to industry estimates, iPhone shipments in India during the April-June quarter are expected to cross 3.5 million units, compared with around 3.1 million units in the corresponding period last year. Shipments are also expected to be higher than those recorded in the January-March quarter, highlighting sustained demand

for Apple's smartphones in the country.

Why are fears of a price hike growing?

Industry experts attribute the concerns to rising manufacturing costs across the consumer electronics industry. Some of the key reasons include:

Global memory and storage component prices have increased.

Growing demand for AI devices has pushed up semiconductor costs.

Supply chain expenses remain elevated. Consumer electronics companies are facing margin pressure. Apple has already revised prices of products including the MacBook, iPad, Apple TV and HomePod in India, fuelling expectations that iPhone prices could also be reviewed.

iPhone 17 specifications

The standard iPhone 17 brings several upgrades over its predecessor, mak-



ing it one of Apple's biggest updates to the non-Pro lineup.

Key specifications include:

Display: 6.3-inch Super Retina XDR OLED display with ProMotion (adaptive refresh rate up to 120Hz)

Processor: Apple A19 chip

Storage: 256GB and 512GB options

Rear cameras: 48MP Fusion main camera and 48MP ultra-wide camera

Front camera: New Centre Stage front camera

Battery: All-day battery

life with faster charging support

Connectivity: USB-C, Wi-Fi 7, Bluetooth and 5G

Software: iOS 26 with Apple Intelligence features

Build: Ceramic Shield 2 protection with IP68 water and dust resistance

Has Apple increased iPhone 17 prices?

As of now, Apple has not announced any increase in the official price of the iPhone 17. The current buying rush is being driven largely by market expectations after the company raised prices of several other product categories.

Rs 1.40 dividend: This PSU stock's record date is nearing; check if you're eligible



New Delhi: BHEL Dividend Record Date: Shares of Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) ended Monday's trade with gains of more than 3 per cent, even as investors turned their attention to the company's upcoming dividend record date. The stock settled at Rs 408.75, up 3.42 per cent on the NSE. The state-owned engineering major has fixed July 17, 2026, as the record date for its proposed final dividend of Rs 1.40 per equity share for FY26. The ex-dividend date also falls on the same day. Subject to shareholder approval at the company's annual general meeting, the dividend will be paid on or before September 3. For investors looking to receive the dividend, timing is important. Since the stock will trade ex-dividend on July

17, anyone buying the shares on or after that date will not be eligible for the payout. Only shareholders whose names appear in the company's records on the record date will receive the dividend.

Dividend comes after a strong finish to FY26

The announcement follows a year in which BHEL posted a sharp improvement in both revenue and profitability. For the March quarter, the PSU reported revenue from operations of Rs 12,310 crore, compared with Rs 8,993 crore in the same period a year earlier, translating into a growth of about 37 per cent. Operating performance also strengthened considerably. EBITDA climbed to Rs 1,754 crore from Rs 832 crore in the year-ago quarter. As a result, the operating margin improved

to 14.2 per cent, up from 9.2 per cent a year earlier. The company also reported other income of Rs 243 crore, higher than Rs 149.27 crore recorded in the corresponding quarter last year. Expenses moved up as execution gathered pace. Total expenditure during the quarter rose to Rs 10,842.69 crore, compared with Rs 8,448.14 crore a year ago. Even so, the increase in revenue outpaced the rise in costs, allowing margins to expand.

Annual profit triples

The improvement was even more visible when looking at the full financial year. BHEL reported a net profit of Rs 1,600.26 crore for FY26, nearly three times the Rs 533.90 crore posted in FY25. Annual revenue also moved higher, rising 19 per cent to Rs 33,782.18 crore from Rs 28,339.48 crore a year earlier. The numbers indicate stronger project execution and better operating leverage, helped by healthy activity across the power and industrial segments. Over the past year, the company has continued to benefit from higher order execution as government spending on infrastructure and power projects remained robust.

SBI Funds Management IPO: 10% stake now, another 10% over 10 years; MD lays out dilution plan

New Delhi: Ahead of the opening of the SBI Funds Management IPO, Managing Director & CEO of SBI Funds Management Limited Devashish Mishra said the company has no plans for aggressive stake dilution after the public issue. Instead, it intends to reduce its holding in phases over the next 10 years. Speaking ahead of the IPO launch, Mishra said the current issue involves only a 10 per cent stake sale. The company plans to divest another 10 per cent over the next decade. "We are selling only 10 per cent now. The plan is to sell another 10 per cent over the next 10 years. We intend to dilute around 5 per cent every five years," Mishra said. He also said around 2 per cent of the company has been earmarked for employees, underlining the company's focus on employee participation.

Not dependent only on SBI branches

Mishra also rejected the view that SBI Mutual Fund's business is largely dependent on the State Bank of India's branch network. He said only around Rs 2 lakh crore of the company's nearly Rs 13 lakh crore assets under management (AUM) comes through SBI Bank branches. "This is not a business that depends only on SBI branches. Out of



nearly Rs 13 lakh crore in assets under management, only about Rs 2 lakh crore comes through SBI Bank branches," he said. His comments come at a time when investors are assessing the company's long-term growth prospects ahead of its market debut.

SBI Funds Management IPO opens on July 14

The SBI Funds Management IPO will open for subscription on Tuesday, July 14, and close on Thursday, July 16. The public issue is priced in the range of Rs 545 to Rs 574 per equity share. Investors can bid for a minimum of 26 equity shares and in multiples of 26 shares thereafter. The anchor investor allocation is scheduled for Monday, July 13.

Rs 11,102 crore offer for sale

The IPO is entirely an Offer for Sale (OFS) worth up to Rs 11,102 crore. No fresh shares are being issued, and the company will not receive any proceeds from the issue. Under the OFS, State Bank of India will sell up to 12.83 crore equity shares, representing a 6.3 per cent stake. Amundi India Holding will offload up to 7.56 crore equity shares, or 3.7 per cent. Together, the two promoters currently own nearly 98 per cent of SBI Funds Management. Their combined stake will reduce after the IPO.

India's largest passive fund manager

SBI Funds Management is India's oldest asset management company and serves as the investment manager for SBI Mutual Fund, which started operations in June 1987. Accord-

ing to the company's drafted herring prospectus (DRHP), it is also India's largest passive asset manager. As of December 31, 2025, it managed passive quarterly average assets under management (QAAUM) of Rs 3,99,953 crore through exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and index funds. This gave it a 29.6 per cent share of India's passive mutual fund market.

Listing timeline

The basis of allotment is expected to be finalised on July 17. Refunds and credit of shares to successful bidders' demat accounts are likely on July 20. The shares are scheduled to list on the BSE and NSE on July 21. The company has said the listing will improve its brand visibility, strengthen its market presence and provide a public trading platform for its equity shares.

AI Effect on Jobs: HDFC Bank trims over 8,000 support roles in FY26; FMCG firms follow suit



New Delhi: HDFC Bank cut its workforce by over 3,300 employees in FY26. But the real story isn't the number. It's where the cuts happened. Non-supervisory staff fell by more than 8,000. At the same time, the bank added roles at the management level. That split shows where automation is biting first. And it's a pattern now showing up well beyond banking. Across banking and FMCG, the same story is repeating. There are fewer hands on routine, repetitive work. And there's rising investment in the technology replacing it. AI and digital banking spending has climbed sharply over the past year. FMCG companies, meanwhile, are leaning into smart manufacturing and AI-driven analytics on the factory floor. The upshot for companies is simple: do more with fewer people. For employees in certain roles, it's a far less comfortable shift.

What HDFC's numbers show
HDFC Bank's back-office operations have become far more automated over FY26. That's cut into demand for the manual processing roles that once made up most of its non-supervisory workforce. At the same time, junior and middle management headcount grew by nearly 4,800 combined. Read the table closely, and the bank isn't just shrinking. It's reshaping itself. There are fewer people doing manual, repetitive work. There are more people in roles built to oversee the automated systems now doing that work instead. It

looks like a template other large employers are starting to borrow.

Key highlights

Total workforce declined by 3,343 employees year-on-year. Senior management strength increased by 15 employees. Middle management grew by 1,252 employees. Junior management saw the biggest increase among managerial roles, rising by 3,543 employees. Non-supervisory staff declined sharply by

8,153 employees, accounting for the overall fall in headcount.FMCG follows a similar script Consumer goods majors are telling a comparable story. HUL cut more than 700 jobs in FY26. Dabur trimmed over 570. Nestle's permanent staff count held roughly flat at 8,382, down only marginally on the year. Not every company is pulling back, though. Marico and Tata Consumer kept hiring through the same stretch.

Kalyan Jewellers shares jump 8%: Citi sees more upside after Q1 update; should you buy?

New Delhi: Kalyan Jewellers Share Price: Shares of Kalyan Jewellers India Ltd surged over 8 per cent on Monday, extending their recent rally after global brokerage Citi reiterated its 'Buy' rating on the stock and maintained a target price of Rs 750. The stock was trading at Rs 514.35, up 8.02 per cent, in afternoon trade. The sharp rally pushed the company's market capitalisation above Rs 53,000 crore and marked a strong turnaround in investor sentiment after weakness seen earlier this month.

Citi retains 'Buy', sees further upside

The rally gained momentum after Citi reaffirmed its positive view on Kalyan Jewellers despite the company's June-quarter revenue growth coming in slightly below the brokerage's expectations. The brokerage maintained its Rs 750 target price, which still implies meaningful upside from the

current market price.Citi said the company's 38 per cent year-on-year consolidated revenue growth during the June quarter did not change its long-term investment thesis. It believes Kalyan Jewellers' franchise-led expansion strategy will continue to support profitable growth while improving return on capital employed (RoCE). The brokerage also highlighted Candere, the company's digital-first jewellery platform, as a key long-term growth driver.business update shows healthy growth

Kalyan Jewellers reported 38 per cent growth in its India business during the June quarter, supported by same-store sales growth (SSSG) of 28 per cent. Its international operations also remained strong, with revenue growing around 35 per cent year-on-year. The company's West Asia business recorded growth of approximately 30 per cent, while overseas operations contributed nearly 14 per cent of consolidated

revenue.The standout performer continued to be Candere, where revenue jumped 112 per cent compared with the same period last year. The company also continued expanding its retail footprint, opening 12 Kalyan showrooms and five Candere stores during the quarter. This took its total network to 524 outlets as of June 30. Management said the second quarter has begun on a positive note as demand remains healthy ahead of the festive and wedding season.

Sharp reversal in sentiment

The latest rally marks a significant turnaround for the stock. Immediately after the June-quarter business update, Kalyan Jewellers shares had fallen nearly 7 per cent as some investors were disappointed with revenue growth that trailed market expectations and lagged larger peer Titan. However, sentiment has improved following Citi's bullish commentary and continued confidence in the company's expansion strategy.

Defence Secretary and Japanese Vice Minister of Defence for International Affairs co-chair 8th India–Japan Defence Policy Dialogue in Tokyo

Reiterate commitment to promoting a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific region



New Delhi, July, 13 (PIB): India and Japan held their 8th Defence Policy Dialogue in Tokyo, Japan on 13 July 2026. The Indian delegation was led by Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh and the Japanese delegation was led by Vice Minister of Defence for International Affairs Mr. Kano Koji. Both sides reviewed the significant progress made in bilateral defence cooperation since the previous Defence Policy Dialogue and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. The two countries held comprehensive discussions on the prevailing regional and global security environment and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest. The dialogue reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral defence engagements, including military-to-military exchanges, co-operation between joint headquarters, maritime cooperation, defence exercises, capacity building, defence equipment and technology cooperation including maritime technology, and enhanced institutional interactions. Both sides welcomed the steady expansion of defence cooperation and underscored the importance of maintaining regular high-level exchanges and dialogue mechanisms. They

discussed probable outcomes for the forthcoming Ministerial visits including 2+2 later this year. The two delegations also discussed ways to deepen cooperation in emerging domains, including defence industrial collaboration, technological innovation, cyber security, space, and other areas of shared strategic interest. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the growing convergence between India and Japan on regional and global security issues and agreed to continue working closely in the Indo-Pacific. They reiterated their commitment to promoting a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific region founded on respect for international law.

Defence Secretary appreciated Japan's continued engagement with India in the defence sector and highlighted the importance of strengthening practical cooperation under the framework of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. Mr. Kano Koji reaffirmed Japan's commitment to further expanding defence ties with India across priority areas. Earlier in the day, Defence secretary called on Japanese Minister of Defence Mr Shinjiro Koizumi, and conveyed greetings of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh. Both sides reaffirmed the growing momentum of India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership.

Ministry of Rural Development, and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. During the meeting, the Central team will present the status of major flagship programs, including PM-KISAN, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana, Minimum Support Price operations, Viksit Bharat-GRAM G, rural roads and housing initiatives, and funds allocated to Panchayati Raj Institutions. Detailed discussions will also be held on the future roadmap for accelerating agricultural growth and rural development in the state. Later in the afternoon, Shri Chouhan will visit the ICAR-Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres at Barrackpore, where he will interact with jute farmers and women from Self-Help Groups. The Union Agriculture Minister will hear first-hand from farmers about the challenges they face in jute cultivation, including retting, water availability, pest and disease management, production costs, and market prices. Discussions will also focus on measures to enhance farmers' share in the jute value chain.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan to Review Farm, Rural Schemes in West Bengal

New Delhi, July, 13 (PIB): Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan will be on a two-day visit to West Bengal on July 13–14, 2026. During the visit, he will hold key discussions with Chief Minister Shri Suwendu Adhikari on agriculture and rural development, besides interacting directly with jute farmers and women from Self-Help Groups. Chouhan will arrive in Kolkata on the evening of July 13 and proceed directly to the Chief Minister's residence. A dinner meeting between the Union Minister and the Chief Minister will focus on strengthening cooperation between the Centre and the State on key issues, including agriculture, farmers' welfare schemes, rural roads, housing, and employment. On July 14, a high-level review meeting will be held at the New Secretariat Building in Kolkata. The meeting will be attended by the Chief Minister, the Chief Secretary, senior officials of the concerned State departments, and senior officers from the Government of India. The Union Minister will be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, the

Ministry of Rural Development, and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. During the meeting, the Central team will present the status of major flagship programs, including PM-KISAN, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana, Minimum Support Price operations, Viksit Bharat-GRAM G, rural roads and housing initiatives, and funds allocated to Panchayati Raj Institutions. Detailed discussions will also be held on the future roadmap for accelerating agricultural growth and rural development in the state. Later in the afternoon, Shri Chouhan will visit the ICAR-Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres at Barrackpore, where he will interact with jute farmers and women from Self-Help Groups. The Union Agriculture Minister will hear first-hand from farmers about the challenges they face in jute cultivation, including retting, water availability, pest and disease management, production costs, and market prices. Discussions will also focus on measures to enhance farmers' share in the jute value chain.

Scientists from ICAR-CRIJAF will showcase improved jute varieties and demonstrate modern retting techniques, water conservation practices, and simplified processing and marketing technologies. Women Self-Help Groups will also be introduced to opportunities in jute-based products and value addition, with a focus on promoting rural entrepreneurship, increasing household incomes, and creating sustainable employment opportunities in villages.

Through this two-day visit, featuring high-level consultations with the State leadership as well as direct engagement with farmers in the jute belt, the Central Government, under the leadership and guidance of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, is reinforcing its commitment to placing agriculture and rural development at the forefront of its policy priorities in West Bengal.

LOKAYAN 26 - INDIAN NAVAL SHIP SUDARSHINI PARTICIPATES IN GRAND PARADE OF SAILS AT BOSTON, USA



New Delhi, July, 13 (PIB): Indian Naval Sail Training Ship INS Sudarshini arrived at Boston on 12 Jul 2026 after her successful participation in the Sail4th 250 celebrations at New York. The ship took part in the Grand Parade of Sails, marking the commencement of Sail Boston 2026. Shri Raghuram Sastry, Consul General of India in Boston, embarked INS Sudarshini for the Grand Parade of Sails and the ship's ceremonial entry into Boston. Sailing proudly with the Indian Tricolour, INS Sudarshini passed prominent landmarks including Castle Island and the Seaport District before berthing at Boston Fish Pier. Joining an international fleet of over 60 tall ships from more than 20 nations, INS Sudarshini is representing India as a maritime ambassador of goodwill during her ongoing Lokayan 2026 transoceanic expedition. Reinforcing the Indian Navy's commitment to maritime diplomacy, international goodwill and cultural exchange, the ship will remain open to visitors from 12 to 15 Jul 2026. Following successful port calls at Norfolk, Baltimore, and New York, INS Sudarshini's participation in Sail Boston 2026 further strengthens the growing India-US maritime partnership and showcases India's rich seafaring heritage on the global stage.

MIB Invites Proposals for Industry-led Challenges under WAVES 2027 Create in India Challenge Season 2

New Delhi, July, 13 (PIB): Proposals are invited from various industry associations, organisations and institutions working in the Media and Entertainment Sector for the conceptualisation, designing and execution of industry-led challenges under the Create in India Challenge (CIC)-Season 2, a flagship initiative under the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. For CIC-Season 2, a unified portal has been created for submission of proposals and selection of challenges and their respective executing entities, through a transparent and merit-based mechanism.

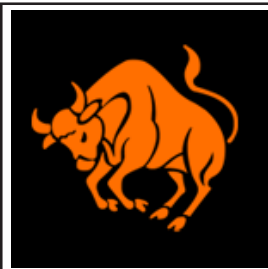
CIC – Season 2 aims to execute industry-led, government-supported, youth oriented challenges that identify and nurture creative talent, promote upskilling and capacity building, mentoring and training, encourage innovation, and create opportunities for collaboration across the Media & Entertainment domains, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), AVGC-XR, Digital Media, and other technology-driven creative sectors, culminating in the showcasing of winners and winning outcomes at 'CreatoSphere' during WAVES 2027. For Season 2, more than 50 industry-led challenges, with a special focus on emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital & Social media and AVGC-XR sector, are envisaged under the Create in India Challenge (CIC) banner. To support the successful implementation of selected challenges, the Ministry may provide a One-Time Grant (OTG) of up to ₹1 crore per challenge, subject to the proposals focused approach, outcome orientation, upskilling initiatives, grassroots outreach, and various technical and financial evaluation criteria and the terms and conditions specified in the IFP document.

Today's Horoscope



Aries

Your continuous positive thinking will be rewarded. As you are likely to succeed in your endeavour. Married natives of this zodiac sign are likely to attain monetary benefits from their in-laws' side today. Safeguard your interest when dealing with friends-business associates and relatives- as they might not be considerate to your needs. Chances of meeting the love-liest bass in the lake are high on your cards. You have the ability to achieve lots- so go after the opportunities that come your way. Today, students should avoid postponing their work until tomorrow, and complete their tasks in free time. This will prove to be beneficial for you. It might become the best eve of your life with your spouse today. Remedy :- For more auspiciousness in your family life, recite Hanuman Chalisa, Sankat Mochan Ashtak, and Lord Ram Stuti.



Taurus

Take a balance diet to improve your physical health. Real estate investment would be lucrative. Your witty nature would brighten the environment around you. Romance and socializing will rule your mind despite pending jobs. You would have high energy which you should put towards professional endeavors. You will try to devote your time to your lover, but due to some important work, you will not be able to do the needful. Do you think that married life is all about compromises? If yes, you will know today that it's the best thing ever happened to you. Remedy :- Mix wheat, whole red lentils and red vermillion in water while bathing, for good health.



Gemini

Today your confidence will grow and advancement is certain. Sudden inflow of funds takes care of your bills and immediate expenses. Joyful time with family and friends. Past happy memories will keep you busy. You will benefit from the changes occurring at work. Repeating things in life that are no longer important isn't the right thing to do. By doing this, you are just wasting your time. An old friend of yours might come along with the old beautiful memories you have with your life partner. Remedy :- Gifting a pair of white ducks as curios/showpiece items to your sweetheart will make your love life better.



Cancer

A special compliment from a friend would be the source of happiness. This is because you have made your life like trees-which give shade to the others while they themselves stand in the sun and endure the scorching heat. Financial position will improve through speculation or unexpected gains. Good time to get involved into activities that include youngsters. Exciting day of romance- Plan something special for the evening and try to make it as romantic as possible. Problems with servants-colleagues and co-workers cannot be ruled out. Today, you'll plan to reorganize your house and clean the mess, but will not get any free time today. Remedy :- For quick growth in the area of profession, rise up early in the morning, greet the rising Sun and chant Gayatri Mantra 11 times.



Leo

Health remains good. Those who invest their money in the stock market can suffer losses today. It will be better for you to become attentive and alert regarding your investments. Be independent and take your own decisions when it comes to making fresh investments. Use your discretion power in love today. Take advantage of new moneymaking ideas that strike your mind today. You will love walking under the clear sky and breathing clean air in your free time today. You will remain mentally calm, which will benefit you throughout the day. Today, you will forget all the sad memories about your married life and cherish the wonderful present. Remedy :- For good financial life, flow/offer raw turmeric in running water.



Virgo

Outdoor sports will attract you-Meditation and yoga will bring gains. Today, you can learn the skill of accumulating and saving money and put it to the right use. Your family members are likely to create a mountain out of a molehill. Romance on the card but sensual feelings may erupt which would spoil your relationship. Do not make any commitment unless you are sure of honoring it. You will be able to make time for yourself today despite a busy routine. You can do something creative today in your spare time. Today, you might stay stressed due to the health of your spouse. Remedy :- Love life will run smoothly by presenting black-white clothing as a gift to your boyfriend/girlfriend.



Libra

You may get rid from prolong illness. Those who are operating small-scale businesses can get any advice from their closed ones today, which can benefit them financially. You will have trouble in controlling your emotions- but do not nag people around you or you will be left all alone. Likely to be rewarded for fair and generous love. Web designers have a very good day. Concentrate all your attention as you are likely to shine. Some may also get overseas opportunities. You will want to devote your free time tending your mother's needs, but won't be able to do so due to something urgent coming up. This can trouble you. If you were craving for the love of your spouse, the day will bless you. Remedy :- It will be auspicious for family life to have fruit-bearing plants at home.



Scorpio

Pleasure trips and social get-togethers will keep you relaxed and happy. Someone with big plans and ideas will catch your attention- Verify the credibility and authenticity of the person before making any investments. Everyone wants to be your friend today- and you would be too happy to oblige. You are likely to be misunderstood in lover affair. A day of careful moves- so don't present your ideas until you are sure it won't fail. A sparkling laughter filled day when most things proceed-as you desire. After a bad phase of misunderstanding, the day will bless you with the love of your spouse in the evening. Remedy :- Strengthen your financial condition by helping and serving saintly people, monks, nuns, and others belonging to religious orders.



Sagittarius

Stress need not be ignored. It is rapidly becoming an epidemic as serious as tobacco and alcohol. Today, seek the blessings of your elders before going out of the house, as it will benefit you. Children spend more time on sports and other outdoor activities. Your courage would win the love. Good day for recreation and entertainment but if you are working then you need to look carefully at your business dealings. Today, you can go to a park or shopping mall with young members of the family. Your spouse will be full of energy and love today. Remedy :- Use Red carpet or bedsheet



Capricorn

Friends supportive and will keep you happy. Wishes will be fulfilled as blessings and good fortune comes your way- and as hard work of the previous days brings results. Assist your wife in domestic chores to lessen her workload. It would encourage the sense of sharing and happiness. Even your precious gifts/presents might not bring in the cheerful moments, because it could be discarded by your lover. Your consistent hard work will pay really well today. Travel opportunities should be explored. If you want the day to go well, just don't utter a single word if the mood of your spouse is off. Remedy :- Love relationship can be made stronger by gifting blue flowers to your girlfriend/boyfriend.



Aquarius

You should spend your extra time in pursuing your hobbies or doing things that you enjoy the most. You should not lend your money to anyone without considering it, as it can create major problems in the future. Visiting relatives would be much better than you might imagine. Today, you and your love partner will delve into the ocean of love, and will experience the high of love. Attending a trade show and seminars will help improve your business contacts. Today, some of your friends can come over to your house and spend time with you. However, it won't be good for you to consume toxic substances such as alcohol, cigarettes etc. during this time. Remedy :- To grow economically, pour oil over the roots of a Peepal tree.



Pisces

Chances of your recovering from physical illness are high which will enable you to participate in sports competition. New sources of income will generate through people you know. Excellent day to plan out things for your progeny. Some difference may crop up with your darling-You will have difficulty trying to make your mate understand your position. Take advantage of new moneymaking ideas that strike your mind today. People of this zodiac sign need to take out time for themselves today, as excessive work can mentally stress you out. If you didn't ask your spouse before creating any plan today, you might get an adverse reaction. Remedy :- Chant (Om Bhram Bruhaspatayai Namaha) 11 times.

Rwanda Mountain Gorilla Rally 2026: India's Naveen Puligilla and Musa Sherif win ARC3 class, finish 4th overall



Hyderabad: Team Duran Racing's ace rally duo of Hyderabad's Naveen Puligilla and co-driver Musa Sherif of Kasaragod produced a commanding performance to win the ARC3 class in the 2026 Rwanda Mountain Gorilla Rally, the third round of the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC), which concluded on Sunday, 12th July, 2026. Apart from securing the ARC3 class victory, the Hyderabad-Kasaragod pair punched well above their weight in their Ford Fiesta Rally3, prepared and serviced by MRU Motorsport Africa, to finish an outstanding fourth overall against a highly

competitive field that included several more powerful Rally2 cars. The rally attracted 17 entries from Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Denmark and India. Touching speeds of nearly 170 kmph on the demanding gravel stages, Naveen and Musa dominated the ARC3 category by winning 12 of the 18 special stages. Holding a comfortable lead of nearly two minutes, they eased their pace during the final two stages to seal a convincing class victory. The pair completed the rally in 2 hours, 13 minutes and 48.3 seconds despite overcoming a mapping sensor issue during one of the

special stages. "This rally featured some of the toughest and most technical gravel stages I have competed on, but they were also among the fastest. I am delighted to win the ARC3 category and finish fourth overall against such a competitive international field. It is a proud moment for all of us," said Naveen Puligilla. Naveen, the reigning 2025 Indian National Rally Champion in the 3T class, partnered seasoned co-driver Musa Sherif, an eight-time Indian National Rally Champion with more than 34 years of rallying experience. "Naveen was exceptionally fast and consistent throughout the rally, and

the car performed brilliantly from start to finish. Winning the ARC3 class and finishing fourth overall against several Rally2 cars reflects the hard work and dedication of the entire team," said Musa Sherif. With this result, Naveen and Musa moved up to second place in the ARC3 championship standings, strengthening their challenge for the continental title. The achievement adds another milestone to their growing international success. In November 2025, the pair created Indian motorsport history by becoming the first all-Indian driver and co-driver combination to secure a podium finish in any FIA World Rally Championship category after finishing second in the WRC3 class at Rally Saudi Arabia. The gruelling Rwanda Mountain Gorilla Rally, held from July 10 to 12 across the challenging gravel roads of Rwanda's Bugesera District, covered a total distance of 307.52 km, including 252 km of competitive stages spread across 18 special stages. Kenya's Karan Patel claimed the overall rally victory ahead of Tanzania's Ahmed Huwel and Kenya's Aakif Virani, while Naveen Puligilla and Musa Sherif finished an impressive fourth overall, ahead of several higher-specification Rally2 cars.

Motivated by the way Stuart Broad bounced back after my six sixes, says Yuvraj Singh

New Delhi: Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh has expressed immense pride in ex-England pacer Stuart Broad's remarkable career turnaround, after he hit him for six sixes in an over in the 2007 Men's T20 World Cup, adding that seeing his evolution gives him a lot of motivation and pride. "I'm actually very proud of his journey and very motivated by the way he bounced back after those six sixes. I know I was the guy who hit him for those six sixes, but I've also been hit for five sixes, so I know how it feels, although I wasn't a full-time bowler.

"To come back from that moment and go on to take more than 600 Test wickets is remarkable. He's one of the greats of the game, and what he's achieved in cricket is tremendous. He never gave up, believed in himself, and became one of the best bowlers in the world," Yuvraj said to JioStar on the sidelines of attending the Wimbledon men's singles final.

Shifting his focus to the competition, Yuvraj lauded 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic's longevity, drawing a parallel between the Serbian's mental fortitude and his own successful battle against cancer. Though Djokovic lost out to eventual champion Jannik Sinner in the



semi-final, he still commands a great fan following, especially in the Indian cricketers. "The self-belief that Djokovic carries is impeccable. Every time he didn't get the crowd's support, it only fired him up even more. There were times when people said he wouldn't be able to win, but he did. Similarly, people told me that I wouldn't be able to play after cancer, but I came back and scored my highest ODI score. "The self-belief he carries, winning 24 Grand Slams, is unreal. He's still playing at the highest level, reaching semi-finals and finals. It's amazing that he's still going. I'm sure the next generation will learn from

what he brings to the game. "I look at the young generation here, players like Abhishek Sharma and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, and the game has become incredibly fast. If you look at Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz, their game is played at such a high pace. It's great to see how the game continues to evolve," he elaborated. Wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson also noted the holistic lifestyle maintained by Djokovic, which propels him to perform at his absolute best, has been a source of motivation for him. "My parents were big fans of Andre Agassi. They used to tell me a lot of stories about him.

When we were growing up, it was Nadal and Federer, and more recently, Novak Djokovic. "The way he carries himself, both on and off the field, is a great inspiration to athletes around the world. Being a sportsperson is not just about what you see on television. It's equally about what you do off the field, how you prepare yourself, how you recover, the mental battles you fight, and how you take care of your body and mind. "I've heard him speak a lot about how he looks after both his mind and his body, and I think that's a great learning, not just for me, but for athletes around the world," he concluded.

Former England batter Mark Butcher slams hosts as India close in on historic Lord's win



London: Former England batter Mark Butcher has lauded India's absolute dominance in the ongoing one-off Test match at Lord's, adding that the visitors had completely out-bowled England by executing the basics of the game much better. Harmanpreet Kaur-led India now need to pick just four wickets on the final day of the first-ever women's Test at Lord's to complete a famous victory and Butcher did not mince words

about the gulf in performance between the two bowling units. "India have been dominant, pretty much from the off. I think the dye was cast from the first session of the Test when England won the toss and bowled first. There was a bit of assistance for the seamers on that day and fluffed their lines – they couldn't hold to a line and length and India got off to an absolute flier. "India's 280 in the

first innings has proven to be a lot of runs when the pitch was probably at its spiciest. From that moment onwards, England haven't been allowed back in the game. Let's face it, they have been out-bowled five to one in terms of line and length and India have done the basics better, that's it," said Butcher to broadcasters ahead of day four's play. Chasing a monumental, world-record target of 457 runs, England collapsed to a precarious

130/6 on day three. Given that the highest successful fourth-innings chase in women's Test history stands at a mere 198, an English victory was always highly improbable. However, the home side would have hoped to put up a more resilient fight against a disciplined Indian bowling attack. With England still requiring a distant 327 runs for victory, the final day's play has been reduced to a matter of 'when' rather than 'if' for India to seal the match in their favour. The only silver lining for England's batting line-up has been wicketkeeper-batter Amy Jones, who fought valiantly to remain unbeaten on 52. While Amy will be aiming to convert her half-century into three figures on the final day, a potential milestone for her will offer little solace to England after enduring a chastening few days of Test match cricket.

Shubman Gill, Mosaddek Hossain, and Nathan Smith nominated for ICC Player of the Month for June 2026



New Delhi: India captain Shubman Gill's spectacular run with the bat has earned him a nomination for the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for June, the game's governing body announced on Monday. For the monthly honour, Gill faces competition from Bangladesh all-rounder Mossadek Hossain and New Zealand fast bowler Nathan Smith, who have also been shortlisted following their standout performances. Gill was in sublime form during India's home assignment against Afghanistan, leading from the front in both Test and ODI formats. The elegant right-hander kickstarted the month with a commanding 126 in India's innings victory in the

one-off Test in New Chandigarh. The knock marked his 11th Test century, punctuated by 15 boundaries and a six. Gill carried his red-hot form into the subsequent ODI series, where he amassed a staggering 238 runs in just two innings. After a brisk 66-ball 84 in the opening ODI in Dharamshala, Gill smashed a magnificent 154 off 110 balls in Lucknow. Despite battling severe cramps during the innings, he accelerated brilliantly to anchor India's victory, ultimately walking away with both the Player of the Match and Player of the Series accolades, as the hosts completed a 3-0 sweep with a win in Chennai. Meanwhile, Bangladesh's Hossain made a fairytale return to international

cricket after a four-year hiatus. The all-rounder was named Player of the Series in Bangladesh's historic 2-1 ODI series triumph over Australia. In the opening game, Mossadek slammed an unbeaten 86, picked up two wickets, and took a stellar catch to script only Bangladesh's second-ever ODI win over Australia. He finished as his team's top scorer with 157 runs. On the other hand, Smith was rewarded for spearheading a depleted Kiwi pace bowling attack to clinch a memorable 2-1 Test series win in England. Smith finished as the leading wicket-taker of the series with 16 scalps, including a sensational 6-70 at Lord's, and earned the Player of the Series award.

ICC Women's Player of the Month: India's N Sree Charani nominated alongside Kathryn Bryce and Danni Wyatt-Hodge

New Delhi: Rising India left-arm spinner N Sree Charani has been nominated for the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for June 2026, following a spectacular individual campaign at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. The young left-arm spinner is joined on the shortlist by Scotland captain Kathryn Bryce and England's veteran opener batter Danni Wyatt-Hodge. While India's tournament campaign came to an end in the group stages, Charani emerged as the silver lining, finishing the marquee event as its leading wicket-taker. Charani spun a web around batting line-ups to pick 14 wickets in just six T20Is at a remarkable average of 11 and a highly impressive economy rate of 6.69. She picked up at least two wickets in all five of India's Group 1 encounters. Her tournament-defining spells included standout figures of 3-21 against arch-rivals Pakistan, a lethal 4-19 against the Netherlands, and a masterful 3-24 against South Africa. For the monthly honour, Charani faces stiff competition from Danni, who enjoyed a prolific month at the top of the order. She amassed 287 runs in six T20Is at an astronomical average of 71.75 and a strike rate of 151.85. She finished as the tournament's leading run-scorer and scripted history by becoming the first woman to breach the 300-run mark in a single edition of the

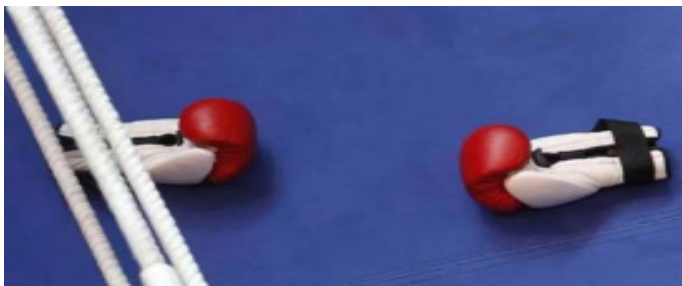


T20 World Cup, ending with 302 runs. Her tournament highlights included a blazing, unbeaten 105 against Sri Lanka, 65 against the West Indies, and a match-winning 89 not out that knocked out defending champions New Zealand. Meanwhile, Kathryn makes the cut on the back of her supreme all-round capabilities. She was instrumental in leading Scotland

to a home tri-series triumph over Bangladesh and the Netherlands in the run-up to the T20 World Cup. She accumulated 178 runs at a strike rate of 140.15 and picked up 11 wickets in June. In the T20 World Cup, she spearheaded Scotland's campaign, notably scoring a commanding 60 in their opening match against Ireland.

India assured of medals as eight boxers enter Asian U-23 finals

Hyderabad: India continued its strong showing at the Asian U-19 & U-23 Boxing Championships, with eight boxers advancing to the finals in the men's and women's U-23 categories, while seven boxers secured bronze medals after semifinal finishes in Jakarta. In the U-23 Women's category, five Indian boxers progressed to the finals. Nisha (54kg) defeated Hyeju Lee (KOR) by RSC in Round 1, while Nikita Chand (60kg) registered an RSC win in Round 1 against Sari Kokufu (JPN). Kajal (65kg) secured an RSC victory in Round 2 over Gulzina Melsvek (KGZ). In the higher weight categories, Muskan (75kg) won 5:0 against Toirova Oysha (UZB), and Priyanka (+80kg)



recorded a dominant 5:0 win over Panar Seiitkhankyzy (KAZ). In the U-23 Men's category, three Indian boxers advanced to the finals. Vishvanath Suresh (50kg) registered a commanding 5:0 win over his opponent from the Philippines, while Ganga (55kg) edged past his Japanese opponent with a 3:2 split decision. Vanshaj (65kg) also impressed with a 4:1 victory over his

Kyrgyzstan opponent to secure his place in the final. India also added seven bronze medals from the semifinal finishes. In the U-23 Women's category, bronze medals were secured by Tanu (51kg), Prachi (57kg), Shivani (70kg) and Naina (80kg). In the U-23 Men's category, bronze medals were won by Hitesh (70kg), Neeraj (75kg) and Ishan Kataria (+90kg).

Ram Gopal Varma to Akhil Akkineni You are the best actor in the Akkineni family



on @iamnagarjuna Your ease is remarkable even when there's no emotion in the scenes and in the emotional scenes you KILLED it. A BIG SHOUT OUT to #MuraliKishorAbburu for giving you AWESOME chords to PLAY."

The film, which also stars Bhagyashri Borse and Sunil, is an epic revenge and action drama set in the village of Srirampuram. It draws heavy thematic inspiration from the Mahabharata, following the protagonist's quest to end a bloody, long-standing cycle of violence tied to a turbulent village festival. The makers had released a glimpse video of the film on the occasion of Akhil Akkineni's birthday last year. The film's title glimpse opens with scenes reminding one of the final battle in the epic Mahabharata. Talking about Akhil, Akhil debuted as a child artist in the film Sisindri in 1995. He made his debut as a lead actor with Akhil in 2015. He later went on to star in Hello in 2017 and Mr Majnu. He achieved his commercial breakthrough with the romantic comedy Most Eligible Bachelor in 2021. Meanwhile, RGV, has directed films across multiple genres. He is popular for having gritty realism, technical finesse in his cinema. Varma is tagged as one of the pioneers of new-age Indian cinema.

Maverick filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma has written a message for Akhil Akkineni, son of superstar Nagarjuna, and said that he is the "best actor" in the Akkineni family. RGV took to his X, formerly called Twitter, to heap praise on Akhil and his latest release "Lenin," directed by Murali Kishor

Abburu. He wrote: "Hey @AkhilAkkineni8 Just saw #Lenin, and apart from the FILM being GREAT, I realised that you are the BEST ACTOR in the #Akkineni family." The filmmaker said that he swears on his superstar father Nagarjuna for this comment. As he added: "...and I swear this

Aishwarya Lekshmi's Traditional Glam Is Simply Unmatched



Aishwarya Lekshmi's Gatta Kushthi 2, co-starring Vishnu Vishal, has emerged as a big success, collecting Rs 25 crore in its first week at the Indian box office.

Alongside this career high, she has been treating fans to gorgeous traditional looks lately. Her latest picture in a royal purple Kanjeevaram saree with a golden zari border and contrasting orange pallu is winning hearts online. She kept the styling simple with a sleeveless orange blouse, a delicate necklace, statement bangles, and soft waves, letting the saree do all the talking.

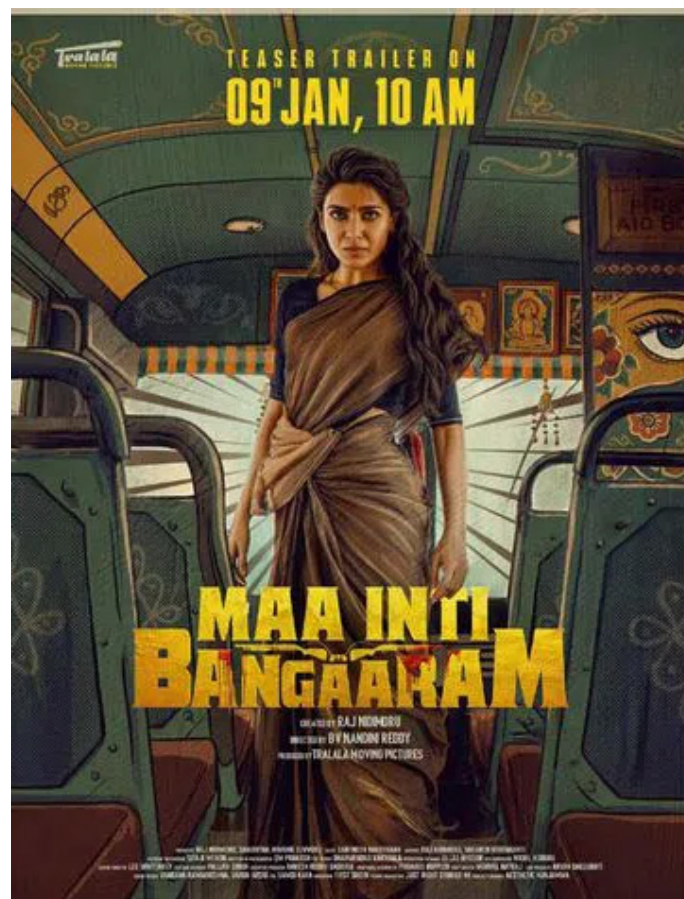
On the work front, Aishwarya has done a good number of Telugu films too, including Ammu, and is currently shooting for SYG – Sambarala Yeti Gattu opposite Sai Durga Tej. With back-to-back exciting projects and stunning fashion moments, Aishwarya Lekshmi is clearly having a great year.

Samantha's 'Maa Inti Bangaram' scripts history; first female-led Telugu film crosses Rs 100 crore

Actress Samantha's 'Maa Inti Bangaram' has become the first female-led Telugu film to gross a whopping Rs 100 crores worldwide, its makers claimed on Sunday. Tralala Moving pictures, the production house of actress Samantha which has produced this film, took to its Instagram timeline to announce that the film had emerged a blockbuster.

It wrote, "GOLDEN CENTURY FOR #MaaIntiBangaaram. #MiB creates HISTORY by becoming THE FIRST EVER FEMALE LED TELUGU FILM to gross 100 CRORES Worldwide." The action entertainer, which hit screens on June 19, featured Samantha Ruth Prabhu in the lead and was directed by Nandini Reddy. In fact, Samantha, just before the release of the film, had disclosed how she had taken quite a few blows while performing the action sequences in the film and how she had even bled while performing the stunts in the film. At a pre-release event that was held at Chennai, Samantha was asked about the action sequences in the film being realistic. Responding to the question, Samantha had said, "If you see in the film, there are no slow motion sequences, no flying shots, no build up shots. It's extremely realistic. It's real punches. I too have suffered blows. I've bled. They are extremely realistic action sequences. I did all the action sequences myself. That is why everybody likes the action and it looks like I did it."

'Maa Inti Bangaaram' is a family action comedy drama created by Raj Nidimoru and directed by Nandini Reddy. Apart from Samantha, the film featured Diganth and Gulshan Devaiah in key roles. Actors Sree Mukhi, Gautami, Anand, Lakshmi, Srinivas Gavireddy, and Manjusha too were seen in pivotal roles in the film. Samantha, in January this year, had said: "Maa Inti Bangaaram tells the story of a woman whose strength comes as much from her vulnerability as from her courage. Playing this character and nurturing this film as a producer has been an incredibly fulfilling journey for me."



SS Karthikeya Reveals the Right Way to Promote Pan India Film

Gone are the days when big stars alone could bring crowds to theatres on a pan-India level. Recent big films like Devara and Peddi failed to generate that pan-India craze successfully. What is the key to achieving such success across India? Well, the same question was posed by Gulati to S. S. Karthikeya, one of the producers of Fahadh Faasil's Don't Trouble The Trouble and the man behind RRR pan India Marketing. The young producer did not shy away from answering and stated that, first and foremost, if a film is bad, it will not click anywhere. He added that the pan-India market is a completely different ball game. Karthikeya also said that planning pan-India promotions or hosting multiple events in

different cities just a month before release will not work. According to him, a film needs to be seeded in other markets right from the beginning to gain traction. He pointed out that this is exactly what was done for films like Baahubali and RRR. Considering this, one can understand why S. S. Rajamouli presents his films on a pan-India level from the very beginning, creating awareness about the project well in advance. For example, the title launch of Rajamouli's Varanasi was showcased even to international journalists, as he knew that his target audience extended beyond India this time around. It will be interesting to see whether upcoming filmmakers with pan India subjects adopt this approach or not.



Can Nag Ashwin Settle the Karna Debate Before Kalki 2?

Even two years after its release, Kalki 2898 AD continues to spark discussions on social media. With work on the sequel progressing, the spotlight has once again shifted to Karna's character and the way it was presented in the climax. While many appreciated the interpretation, others continue to question it. The latest debate intensified after a social media user commented on Karna's portrayal. Responding to it, director Nag Ashwin said he is clear about his interpretation and asked people to read the Mahabharata carefully. He also suggested referring to Vivek Debroy's translation to better understand the character. Nag Ashwin's reply has once again triggered discussions among mythology enthusiasts. Many believe the complete picture will emerge only after the second part releases, as Karna's journey is expected to play a much bigger role in the sequel. Interestingly, there was no major debate about



the Karna episode before the release of the first film. The discussions and controversies surfaced only after audiences watched the climax, and despite the criticism, the episode worked effectively for the film. The situation will be different for Kalki 2. This time, audiences already know that Karna will be central to the story. That also means pre release debates and negativity could begin much earlier than before. Nag Ashwin may have to address these concerns with better clarity before the film arrives in theatres. A convincing narrative and clear communication could help avoid unnecessary controversies and keep the focus on the film itself. Kalki 2 is still a long way from release and is unlikely to hit theatres before the end of 2027 or the first quarter of 2028. With ample time left, debates around Karna and the film's mythology are only expected to grow. Nag Ashwin has enough time to address the concerns more comprehensively before the film reaches audiences.