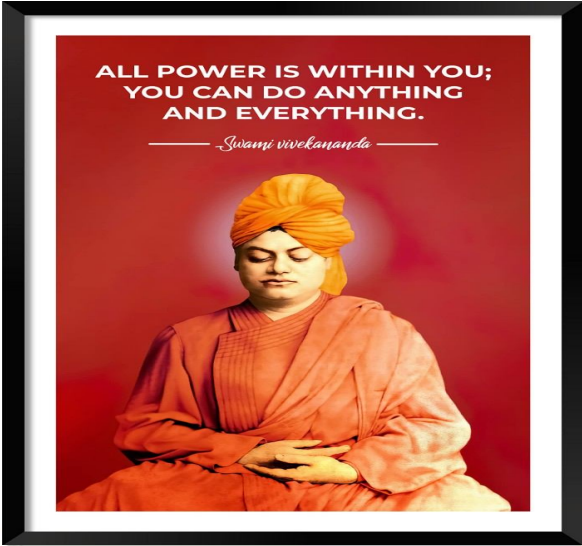
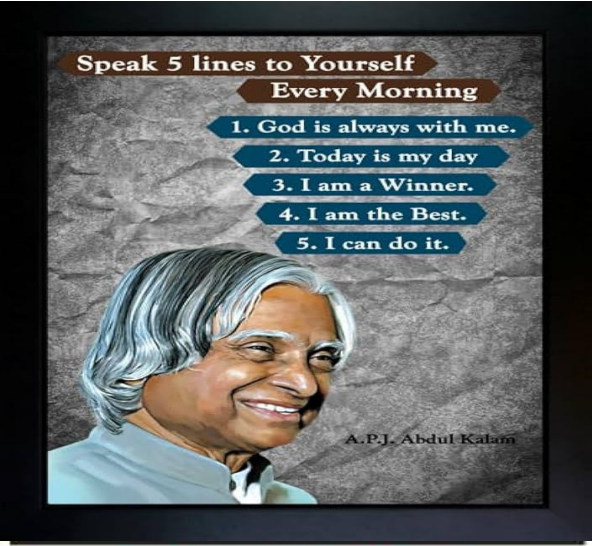




ED Arrests AP Ex-Minister in Liquor Scam

HYDERABAD: Directorate of Enforcement (ED) officials arrested Andhra Pradesh former minister and YSRC leader Karumuri Venkata Nageswara Rao from his residence in Kondapur here, in connection with the ₹195-crore liquor transport scam case. He had been evading arrest after both the Telangana High Court and the Supreme Court rejected his anticipatory bail and pre-arrest bail petitions, sources in the ED disclosed. Also Read - Toy Exports Boost Telangana Clusters



The case pertains to Nageswara Rao's alleged manipulation of tenders awarded for the transportation of liquor for the AP State Beverages Corporation Limited between 2020 and 2024. The ED registered a case following evidence that he had taken a ₹28-crore

bribe from liquor traders during the YSRC government's tenure. According to the agency, the then government paid ₹35 per km for transporting liquor, against the norm of ₹13. The ED also alleged irregularities in the award of contracts for liquor transport.

Revanth Reddy Thanks Kharge for Support Amid US Tour Row

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Sunday thanked AICC chief Mallikarjun Kharge and other party leaders for supporting him after the Centre denied him permission to travel to the US. Reddy, who is in London, said he will speak about all the related issues once he returns to Hyderabad. The Telangana CM had planned to undertake a 10-day visit to the UK and US. Following the denial of permission, he decided to return to Hyderabad from London on August 23. Also Read - ED Arrests AP Ex-Minister in



Liquor Scam Reddy, in a post on 'X', said : "My deepest gratitude for the strong support from our leader and Congress party national president, Shri Mallikarjun Kharge ji

@kharge on the issue of the Centre denying me permission to travel to the USA. I am very thankful to my party, all the leaders and people across the country who supported in

this issue in national interest." Reddy said he has concluded all his meetings and scheduled events in London. Also Read - H1N1 Cases Rise: Fever Hospital Sees 500 Outpatients a day "I am grateful for the overwhelming support that I have received in past three days. In a few hours, I will be taking a flight back home to Hyderabad instead of proceeding to Boston as per original schedule, after the MEA (Central Govt) denied permission for my USA tour for political reasons," the Telangana CM said. CM Reddy was denied politi-

cal clearance for his planned trip to the US because the proposed programme for the visit was not "appropriate", the Ministry of External Affairs said on Friday. Also Read - Governor to Visit Nizamabad Tomorrow The remarks came after Reddy's office said the CM had been forced to cancel his visit to the US after the MEA declined permission for the travel. During the planned US trip, Reddy was to visit the campuses of Harvard University, MIT and other institutions. Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao on

India Can Be Global Shipbuilding Hub

KOLKATA: Defence minister Rajnath Singh asserted on Sunday India's potentiality to become a global shipbuilding hub. He underlined the scope in view of a recent drop in shipbuilding capacity in many western countries. Mr Singh was speaking at Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) after performing 'Bhumi Pujan' of five brownfield projects worth around ₹3,500 crores of investments in West Bengal in presence of chief minister Suwendu Adhikari. Also Read - C'garh Agri Varsity Adopts Password Protected E-Papers To Plug Exam Leaks The defence minister said, "The demand for all types of vessels has been growing. Our navy is also expanding and so are the challenges in maritime defence. Many nations such as the UK once expand-



ed their empires with maritime power. But their shipbuilding capacities decreased in recent years. There is a gap in global shipbuilding capacity. This is a golden opportunity for India." Elaborating the reasons behind the global changes in ship production, he explained, "One reason is it takes around five years to build a ship. By the time you complete the construction, the technology used in its various systems and weapons becomes outdated. Also Read - Irani Asks Rahul To Back Early Rollout Of Women's Quota We have our new

generation of engineers and IT experts. We can become a world-class ship designing hub and can export designs also. In production, we have our workforce which other nations are losing. If we modernise our manufacturing capacity, India will become the world's biggest maritime hub." Mr Singh then pointed out, "We can also become a hub of ship repair, maintenance and overhaul in the Indian Ocean region. GRSE should focus itself on these lines. The projects we started today are a step towards the global market."

Hyderabad: Marking 1,000 days of the Congress government in power, the BRS announced a major week-long Statewide campaign from September 2 to highlight the Congress government's failures and betrayal of the people. The party working president KT Rama Rao called on the cadre to take the unfulfilled promises and public issues to every village through various formats and programmes. During a teleconference with senior leaders, elected representatives and the State executive committee

on Sunday, Rama Rao gave detailed instructions to the party leaders to organise innovative programmes from September 2. The campaign will focus not only on the Congress' election promises but also on its administrative failures, corruption, irregularities, and problems faced by different sections of the State. He reminded them that the Congress came to power by making 420 promises, 13 declarations and six guarantees, with a promise to implement them within 100 days. However, he pointed out that it had



failed to fulfil even a single major promise after 1,000 days. The BRS working president asked the party cadre to distribute "Baaki Cards" (Debt Cards) to remind people about the financial benefits prom-

ised by the Congress to various sections, which were not delivered. "The Congress betrayed every section of the State. It is time that we remind people about its promises and failures in implementation along with pending benefits owed to each section including farmers, agricultural labourers, elderly people, women, students and youth," he remarked.ing students and their parents. He also asked the party to highlight the Congress government's failure to

provide jobs and fulfil commitments to the youth."The BRS has been fighting on issues of students, youth and the unemployed. We must reach out to larger sections of the people once again, to initiate a wider discussion on the ruling Congress over its failed promises," he added. The BRS will separately engage auto drivers, women, farmers, tribals, Dalits, BCs, government employees and retired employees, with programmes aimed at highlighting their specific grievances.

Jagan Questions Drop in Andhra Govt School Enrolment



Amaravati: YSRCP supremo YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Sunday alleged that government school enrolment in Andhra Pradesh has declined sharply, with Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) Plus data for 2025-26 contradicting the government's claim that more than 1.1 lakh students shifted from private schools to government schools, as government school enrolment has in fact declined sharply," said Jagan in a post on X. According to him, if government schools had actually experienced such a large influx of students, their overall enrolment should have increased. The opposition party leader said the government school enrolment fell from

40,50,116 in 2023-24 to 34,93,450 in 2025-26, a decline of over 5.5 lakh students. During the same period, the number of government schools came down from 45,000 to 44,222, while government-aided schools declined from 991 to 797. Also Read - Kurnool District All Set To Emerge As A Major Industrial Hub On the other hand, enrolment in schools under private management increased from 45,53,380 in 2023-24 to 48,40,296 in 2025-26, he claimed. Jagan said enrolment in government and government-aided schools has declined while private school enrolment increased, which highlighted the plight of government schools in Andhra Pradesh and proved the state government's claim incorrect. He alleged that the private education sector in Andhra Pradesh was dominated by several major private educational institutions and claimed that the government maintained close ties with them.

70% Posts in Congress For Seniors, 20% For Newcomers: TPCC

NIZAMABAD: TPCC president and MLC B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said on Sunday that 70 per cent of posts in the Congress government would be given to long-standing party workers, while 20 per cent would be reserved for newcomers. Speaking at a meeting of Congress workers from the erstwhile Nizamabad district, the TPCC president said party workers who had worked hard for the Congress would be given priority in appointments to various posts. He said representation would be balanced among different sections while filling the positions. Also Read - Toy Exports Boost Telangana Clusters He said Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge Telangana Meenakshi Natarajan had decided that 70 per cent of posts should go to long-standing party workers and that the same format was being followed at the AICC level. Those who had continuous-



ly worked for the party over the past five years would be given opportunities, he said. Goud said first priority would be given to party workers, including those associated with NSUI and Youth Congress. All party committees would be filled, with 20 per cent of the positions reserved for newcomers. Also Read - ED Arrests AP Ex-Minister in Liquor Scam He said Minister Seethakka had suggested giving approval for market committees and assured party workers that their efforts would be recognised. "The power we have achieved is the result of the hard work of our party workers. The Congress will never forget their efforts," he said. Goud also said his 35-year dream of establishing an engi-

neering college and an agriculture college had been realised during his tenure as PCC president. Also Read - H1N1 Cases Rise: Fever Hospital Sees 500 Outpatients a day He expressed confidence that the Congress would return to power in the upcoming elections with 100 seats under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Government adviser P. Sudarshan Reddy, Rural MLA Dr Bhupati Reddy, DCC presidents Nagesh Reddy and Bobbili Ramakrishna, corporation chairpersons, Farmers' Commission members Gadugu Gangadhar, Sunil Kumar Reddy and Vipul Goud, frontal organisation leaders and party workers participated in the meeting.

Farmers Losing Land to Airfield Raise Concern

ADILABAD: Farmers losing their land for development of the joint-use airfield here have raised their concern over revenue officials' move to issue land-acquisition notifications only for three villages instead of for all identified affected villages in one go. The officials are all set to acquire land in five gram panchayats. Farmers say officials are trying to divide them to acquire their lands at lower prices, but they will unitedly fight for better compensation for the oustees. Also Read - Toy Exports Boost Telangana



Clusters A meeting held at Kachkanti village on Sunday discussed the problems of the farmers losing their lands and their future course of action. Revenue officials meanwhile pasted the land acquisition details at the gram panchayats that are notified in the notification. The farmers of villages that are being affected by the proposed joint use airfield are

planning to form a joint action council to present their demands before the state government and district officials. Also Read - ED Arrests AP Ex-Minister in Liquor Scam The state government issued GO-36 dated July 25, sanctioning ₹2278.14 crore for development of the joint-use airfield at Adilabad. The state government will acquire a total of 2009.23 acres, including 1609.23 acres for the Indian Air Force and 400 acres for the Civil Aviation Enclave, MRO, cargo facilities and hangars (where planes are kept). On August 20, the

Telangana auto-rickshaw drivers on strike from Sunday midnight

Hyderabad: Auto-rickshaw drivers across Telangana will go on strike from Sunday midnight, demanding implementation of welfare promises made by the ruling Congress, ahead of the last Assembly elections. Thousands of drivers would take out a protest march from Sundarayya Vignana Kendram to RTC Cross Roads on Monday. He also called for burning effigies of the government at district headquarters.

Speaking to the media after a meeting of various auto workers' unions at Telangana Bhavan on Sunday, Auto Workers JAC chairman and BRTU Auto Workers union president Vemula Maraiiah said the Congress government failed to fulfil any of its promises to auto drivers in nearly three years in power, including setting up a welfare board and providing Rs 12,000



annually. He said the Rs 5 lakh accident insurance provided under the previous BRS government had also been discontinued.

Claiming that Telangana has around 25 lakh auto drivers, he demanded comprehensive welfare measures and a dedicated government online app to support them. He urged drivers to participate in the strike and not to fall for misleading false propaganda of cer-

tain unions. He also appealed to the public to cooperate. Auto Workers JAC chairman and BRTU Auto Workers union president Vemula Maraiiah said the Congress government failed to fulfil any of its promises to auto drivers in nearly three years in power, including setting up a welfare board and providing Rs 12,000 annually. He said the Rs 5 lakh accident insurance provided under the previous BRS govern-

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ED arrests ex-Andhra minister Nageswara Rao in APSBCL liquor tender case

Hyderabad: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Sunday arrested former Andhra Pradesh Minister Karumuri Nageswara Rao in connection with its money-laundering investigation into alleged irregularities in the Andhra Pradesh State Beverages Corporation Ltd (APSBCL) liquor transportation tender case.

According to sources, Rao was arrested from Kondapur in Hyderabad, where he was allegedly staying while avoiding the agency's proceedings. His anticipatory bail pleas had earlier been rejected by the Andhra Pradesh High Court and the Supreme Court.

Following his arrest, Rao was shifted to the



ED office at Basheerbagh in Hyderabad for further proceedings.

The case has been registered under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)

and is based on an FIR filed by the Andhra Pradesh CID following a vigilance report. The probe pertains to alleged manipulation of liquor transportation contracts during the previous government and the alleged

diversion of proceeds through subcontracting arrangements.

The ED is investigating the financial transactions and the alleged role of individuals involved in the tender process.

Former Gun-toting Women Maoists Walk The Ramp

Raipur: Nine surrendered women Maoists, who once wore green fatigues and moved through the dense forests of Bastar, walked the ramp with beaming smiles at an event here showcasing traditional handloom and Kosa silk dresses of Chhattisgarh. The women, eight of them from Sukma and one from Bijapur, appeared at a state-level weavers' conference on National Handloom Day on August 7. For 22-year-old Punem Jyoti of Elmagunda village in Sukma's Chintagufa area, the moment was something she had never imagined. "I had never imagined that something like this would happen in my life," said Jyoti, who surrendered in Hyderabad in December last year. Also Read - Father, Son Die After Suffering Electric Shock at Farm in Bhupalpally Speaking in a mix of Hindi and the local Gond dialect, she said her life has changed significantly after leaving the Maoist movement.



Another 28-year-old former Naxalite said she had never seen a fashion show during her life in the forests. "We had never seen such things in the jungle," she said with a laugh. Wishing anonymity, the woman, who surrendered in Hyderabad in April, said she knew a thing or two about performing before an audience because of the Maoists' cultural wing. Also Read - 15 Telangana Police Officers Got Gallantry,

Meritorious Service Medals "We had seen women performing in the cultural wing. That helped us learn some of the nuances of ramp walking," she said. "We are happy that after quitting violence, we are living a peaceful and respectful life," she added. Of the nine women, seven surrendered in Hyderabad in neighbouring Telangana, while one each surrendered in Sukma (Chhattisgarh) and

Mulugu in Telangana over the last one-and-a-half years. Also Read - Two More Doctors Suspended at Jogipet Hospital in Sangareddy All of them are currently undergoing rehabilitation at the Punarwas Kendra in Sukma, a government official said. These women received seven days of specialised training from professional experts from Mumbai in ramp walking, grooming, attire and speaking confidently on the microphone, he said. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, who was present at the event, interacted with the women. The state government has been providing skill development opportunities to surrendered cadres as part of its rehabilitation efforts, with the aim of helping them secure dignified livelihoods and become economically self-reliant, the official said.

Congress high command faces tough call on Konda Surekha as BC groups rally support

Hyderabad: Amid the political unrest in the ruling party, triggered by Forest Minister Konda Surekha's daughter Konda Sushmitha's comments against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, two questions are dominating discussions in Gandhi Bhavan, the party headquarters.

Will the high command approve the removal of Surekha from the Cabinet? If she is removed, who will replace her? These questions are being widely debated within the party and political circles too.

Also Read Driver of Konda Surekha's former OSD held in assault, extortion case Several MLAs have demanded strict action against the Minister. SC Welfare Minister Adhuri Laxman and Animal Husbandry Minister Vakiti Srihari have also criticised the conduct of Surekha and her daughter. Party sources said the State leadership was firm about taking stern action against the Minister. However, some leaders believe it may not be easy for the high command to act against her as she is a woman and belongs to the BC community.



The issue has assumed significance as the Congress government is already facing criticism over its failure to fulfil its promise of implementing 42 per cent reservations for BCs. Besides, some BC organisations have rallied behind Surekha and warned of consequences if she is removed from the Cabinet.

"It will not be easy for the high command to take a decision. It could prove counterproductive in the long run," a senior party leader said.

TPCC Disciplinary Committee Chairman Mallu Ravi has already

said there is no time frame for taking a decision. However, there is speculation within the party that action could be initiated against Surekha after Revanth Reddy returns to Hyderabad on Monday.

Unconfirmed reports suggested that AICC in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan was seeking the opinions of senior MLAs and Ministers before taking a decision.

Meanwhile, speculation is also rife over Surekha's possible replacement in the Cabinet. Vemulawada MLA Aadi Srinivas is being seen as a strong contender as he belongs

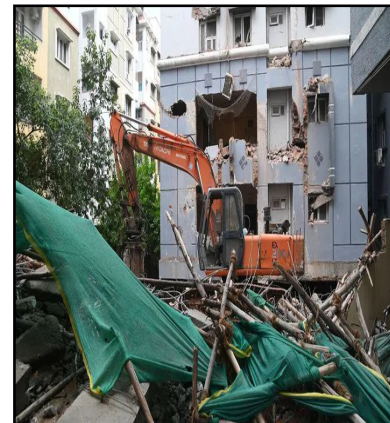
to the BC community and is considered close to the Chief Minister.

Another section of leaders believes that if the high command decides to remove Surekha, MLC Vijayashanthi could be considered for the post. The move could help the high command assert its authority while also countering criticism over the removal of a woman Minister by replacing her with another woman. The high command had surprised the party by announcing Vijayashanthi's candidature in the MLC elections last March. She is also considered close to the central leadership.

Gachibowli building collapse: Police take accused Mohammed Sajid into custody

Hyderabad: The police took Mohammed Sajid, cited as accused in connection with the collapse of an illegal under-construction building at Anjaiah Nagar in Gachibowli, into custody on Sunday.

A criminal case is registered against Sajid for allegedly constructing the unauthorised structure. The police cited another person who is a contractor as an accused



in the case as well. The

ill-fated structure was being constructed on a 50-square-yard plot over a nala, raising serious concerns over violations of building norms and safety regulations.

The victims were identified as Umesh Khare and

Mopath, both migrant tile workers from Madhya Pradesh who were engaged in construction work at the site.

Among the injured was a 25-year-old resident of Jayadarsini Residency, an adjacent apartment complex, who was asleep when debris from the collapsed building fell on him. Two other workers also sustained injuries in the incident.

Law Equal for All: TDP MP Seeks Speedy Trial of Political Cases

Amaravati: Raising the issue during parliamentary proceedings, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) Rajya Sabha member Chintakayala Vijay has called for faster trial proceedings related to political leaders, saying that the rule of law must prevail equally for ordinary citizens and individuals holding public offices. Highlighting that numerous criminal matters against political leaders have remained unresolved for over a decade due to frequent judicial transfers and shortages, he urged the government to expand the capacity of Special CBI Courts. Chintakayala Vijay, TDP Rajya Sabha MP, said that the law is equal for everyone, regardless of whether a person holds public office or is an ordinary citizen. Also Read - AI Surveillance Helps Trace Missing Students In 90 Minutes The Member of

Parliament raised concerns in Parliament over delays in the disposal of criminal cases involving public representatives and called for strengthening the capacity of Special CBI Courts. Addressing the House, the MP said the issue was not about any one individual but about ensuring timely justice and maintaining public confidence in the judicial system. Citing the case of former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSRCP President YS Jagan Mohan Reddy as an example, the MP said around 31 criminal cases have been registered against him since 2013 and that nearly 13 years have elapsed since the cases were filed. Also Read - Sindhu's Sports Centre In Vizag Picks Up Pace The MP further stated that discharge petitions in these cases



have reportedly been heard by around eight different judges over the years. However, owing to frequent judicial transfers and a shortage of judges, the petitions are yet to reach a final decision. Questioning the pace of judicial proceedings, the MP asked, "If discharge petitions alone take 13 years, when will the actual trial be completed?" Noting that delayed judicial proceedings severely

impact public confidence in the justice delivery mechanism, the MP remarked on the state of long-pending litigations. The MP urged the government to strengthen the capacity of Special CBI Courts to ensure speedy disposal of cases involving public representatives. Delays in judicial proceedings undermine public faith in the rule of law and the justice delivery system, Chintakayala Vijay said.

Three Labourers Killed As Tunnel Of Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Collapses

Chamoli: At least three labourers were killed after a tunnel belonging to the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation (THDC) collapsed on Thursday at Pipalkoti in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand. The incident has been confirmed by Chamoli District Collector Gaurav Kumar. So far, 18 people have been safely rescued from the tunnel while the rescue operation is underway. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said that the teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and Uttarakhand State Disaster Response Force have rushed to the spot. He also said that his government's top priority is the safe evacuation of each and every person who has been trapped



inside the tunnel. In a post on X, Dhami said, "Reports have been received regarding the ingress of debris and water into the THDC tunnel at Pipalkoti. Given the seri-

ousness of Three Labourers Killed As Tunnel Of Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Collapses In Uttarakhand the situation, teams from @NDRFHQ and @uksdrf

have been immediately dispatched to the site. Instructions have been issued to the district administration and all concerned agencies to carry out relief and rescue oper-

ations on a war footing." Three Labourers Killed As Tunnel Of Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Collapses In Uttarakhand ously monitoring the situation. Our top priority is to safely evacuate every person trapped inside the tunnel. "I pray to the Almighty for everyone's safety," added Dhami. Dhami spoke to Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren and Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai and appraised the duo about the situation. Labourers from both Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are among those trapped in the tunnel. Dhami also spoke with the labourers who have been rescued and are undergoing treatment at the hospital.

Punjab SIR: Draft electoral Roll published; Over 20 Lakh Names Deleted

Chandigarh: The draft electoral roll for all assembly constituencies in Punjab under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) 2026 was published on Thursday in accordance with the programme announced by the Election Commission of India, officials said. As part of the revision process, a meeting under the chairpersonship of Punjab Chief Electoral officer (CEO) Anindita Mitra was held on Thursday with representatives of recognised political parties. During the meeting, Mitra handed over the draft electoral roll to the representatives of the recognised political parties, according to an official release. They were also briefed about the prescribed forms: Form 6 for inclusion of names, Form 6A for the inclusion of NRI voters, Form 7 for deletion of names, and Form 8 for correction of entries or shifting. She further informed them that young citizens turning 18 by October 1, 2026 are eligible for enrolment.



The representatives of political parties were apprised of various platforms, including the Citizen Service Portal and the 'Book a Call Request with BLO' facility. Mitra said for the convenience of electors, a one-day special camp under SIR is being organised at all polling booths on August 16 to facilitate

electors in checking the details. BLOs will be present at polling stations from 10 am to 1 pm to assist in checking details in the draft roll and to support voters with all electoral services. She further said a help desk will be set up at the DEO and ERO offices across the state to display the published draft electoral roll. The CEO added

that electors can check their details in the published draft electoral roll, available on the website of CEO Punjab (www.ceopunjab.gov.in) and on the portal (voters.eci.gov.in). Voters whose names do not appear in the draft roll will be present at polling stations from 10 am to 1 pm to assist in checking details in the

draft roll and to support voters with all electoral services. She further said a help desk will be set up at the DEO and ERO offices across the state to display the published draft electoral roll. The CEO added that electors can check their details in the published draft electoral roll, available on the website of CEO Punjab (www.ceopunjab.gov.in) and on the portal (voters.eci.gov.in). Voters whose names do not appear in the draft roll will be present at polling stations from 10 am to 1 pm to assist in checking details in the

'Don't Shake Up The System': IAF Chief Backs Theaterisation, But Urges Step-wise Transition For 'Minimal Disruption'

New Delhi: Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal A P Singh has said that the Indian Air Force (IAF) is not against theaterisation, though he insists on having an objective approach for any new initiative that should ensure minimal disruption to the existing structures. The Air Chief Marshal called for not "shaking up" the existing system and batted for looking internally to further enhance India's military prowess rather than copying anything from another country. He made the remarks during his address at an event in Kanpur on Saturday. The government had announced the theaterisation plan in 2019 to ensure greater synergy among the three services. However, no visible forward movement has been made towards it. IAF Chief Backs Theaterisation, But Urges Step-wise Transition For 'Minimal Disruption'



(ANI) Under the theaterisation model, the government seeks to integrate the capabilities of the army, air force and navy and optimally utilise their resources for wars and operations. "I can assure my own people here that the Air Force is not against theaterisation the way the media puts it," he said. "What the Air Force

has been insisting is that let us look at it objectively. Let us look at what it is that is ailing us, what are the things that are not correct, and we need to correct that and not something that we may pick up from somewhere else," he said. Air Chief Marshal Singh underlined the need to have a structure based on India's requirements. "So let's not just pick up

something and use. Let us look at it objectively. Let us go about it in a step-wise manner so that there is minimal disruption and we don't shake up the system, especially at this time when we have made it very clear that Operation Sindoor is still alive. "We need to be prepared that way," he said. The Chief of Air Staff said the Air Headquarters has also

been looking at the issue. "I'm sure the government will take the right decision based on all inputs that are given to the government," he said. As per the theaterisation plan, each of the theatre commands will have units of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force and all of them will work as a single entity looking after security challenges in a specified geographical territory. At present, the Army, Navy and the Air Force have separate commands. The Air Chief Marshal also strongly backed the government's initiative to reduce dependence on imports of military hardware and said the Indian private sector can join hands with foreign manufacturers to boost production. He talked about the option as Indian entities at times may not be able to bring out everything in time because they also have their hands full.

Lady Passenger Loses Cool, Damages Airport Property After Flight Cancellation In Bhubaneswar; Complaint Lodged



Bhubaneswar:

'Palpable tension prevailed at Biju Patnaik International Airport here on Thursday evening after an IndiGo flight to Kolkata was cancelled due to a technical issue, leaving several passengers stranded. Enraged over the flight disruption, a female passenger, whose child was unwell, allegedly damaged airport equipment worth around Rs 49,000, a video of which has now gone viral on social media.

As per a complaint lodged with the Airport Police Station, passenger Mamoni Kharat, who had booked the IndiGo flight 6E 7352 from Bhubaneswar to Kolkata, allegedly damaged airport property after the flight was cancelled. The flight was scheduled to depart at 2:35 PM but was first delayed until 5:30 PM. At around 6 PM, passengers were informed that the flight has been cancelled due to a techni-

cal issue. Following the cancellation, Kharat allegedly became agitated and damaged some equipment at the airport. "The damaged items include a monitor estimated at Rs 22,000, a keyboard estimated at Rs 4,000 and a passport-swiping machine estimated at Rs 23,000. The total estimated damage has been put at Rs 49,000," the complaint mentioned. CISF officials, IndiGo staff, Airports Authority of India (AAI) staff and SITA staff, who were present at the airport, tried to explain the situation to the passenger but to no avail. In the video, which has gone viral, the woman can be seen in a fumed state and allegedly damaging equipment while also arguing with and abusing the airport staff. She is also heard speaking about her child, who she said was in poor health. Other passengers were also seen coming out in her support. Authorities said the passenger authorities reported the incident to the Airport Police," he told ETV Bharat. Pradhan said the female passenger was later able to travel to Kolkata on another connecting flight.

Sugar Prices Climb Sharply, Industry Stakeholders Expect Import And Early Crushing To Ease Pressure



New Delhi: The government's move to allow the import of 10 lakh tonnes of raw sugar has brought some relief ahead of festive season when the demand usually rise. But the bigger question is that whether this quantity will be enough of more import will be needed later during the year. ETV Bharat spoke to industry expert on this. They believe that there is no immediate cause for concern, as sugar stocks in the country are sufficient and the new crushing season is expected to begin earlier than usual. They also believe that allowing mills to sell their October production freely in domestic market should help improve supplies and cut prices in coming week. Sugar Prices Climb Sharply Infographics for exports of sugar Director General of Indian Sugar & Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA)

Deepak Ballani said that ISMA notes the Centre's decision to permit the import of 10 lakh tonnes of raw sugar at nil duty is a step that sends a clear signal to the market that speculative and unwarranted price increases will not be allowed to persist. "We wish to reassure consumers that there is no shortage of sugar in the country; stocks with mills are adequate to meet domestic demand until the new season's sugar arrives, and with crushing expected to be advanced by 10-15 days, fresh supplies will reach the market earlier than usual," Ballani said. According to him the recent rise in prices is not supported by market fundamentals and reflects speculation and panic buying ahead of the festival season. "The permission is a precautionary measure that adds further comfort during the peak festival months, not a response to any

supply gap. The industry will cooperate fully with the Government on the expeditious import and processing of raw sugar and the early start of crushing, and we are confident that with these measures, sugar prices will cool down and stabilise soon," he said. Sugar prices have risen sharply in recent days adding more concerns ahead of the festive season. The all India average retail price climbed to Rs 60.26/Kg on August 22 from 51.68 on August 17. A month ago on July 22, sugar was selling at an average Rs 48.52 per Kg while the price stood at Rs 46.25 per kg on the same day last year, according to Department of consumer affairs price monitoring division. Stakeholders also believe that the government is taking every possible step to bring down sugar prices in India and is expected to succeed.

Historian Sumit Sarkar Passes Away At 87

New Delhi: Noted historian Sumit Sarkar died on Thursday at his Delhi residence from age-related ailments, historian and family friend G Arunima told PTI. He was 87. "Professor Sarkar was unwell for a long time, but for some time now, he had been suffering with age-related issues. He was not publicly active, since he had a fall some years ago," Arunima said.

Sarkar is survived by his wife and historian Tanika Sarkar and son Aditya Sarkar, associate professor of South Asian History at the University of Warwick. His last rites are likely to be performed on Saturday. A confirmed date and time will be announced later. Born in 1939 to historian Sushobhan Sarkar, Sumit Sarkar studied History at Presidency College, Calcutta and the University of Calcutta. Sarkar took up teaching jobs as a lecturer at the University of Calcutta and as a reader



at the University of Burdwan. His longest stint as professor of history was at the University of Delhi. Some of his most seminal works, including "The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal", "Modern India: 1885–1947", and "Writing Social History", established him as an authoritative voice in examining colonialism, nationalism and the freedom movement through the experiences of different social groups, classes and popular movements. A Marxist historian, Sarkar is known for his

studies of the Swadeshi movement and for challenging conventional, leader-centred accounts of Indian nationalism. He was one of the founding members of the Subaltern Studies Collective, but later began to critique it.

Sarkar received the Sarit Chatterjee Memorial Award from the Indian History and Culture Society for his work on the Indian freedom movement in 2003. The next year, he was given the Rabindra Puraskar for his book "Writing Social History", which

he returned in 2007 in protest against the treatment of farmers by the CPI(M) led Left Front government in West Bengal. Tributes poured in on social media from readers and historians alike. "Rest in power, Sumit. Professor Sumit Sarkar, doyen amongst historians and the kindest of human beings, passed away. His contribution to modern Indian history is immeasurable," Arunima posted on X. Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Kumar Jha remembered Sarkar for his understanding of Gandhi. "And how can one forget your understanding of Gandhi as someone who did not seek to make everyone think alike, but created an 'umbrella' under which people who did not think alike could struggle together. That idea, like so much of your work, continues to speak to our present," Jha wrote on X.

Author Nilanjana Roy

I-Day 2026: 1057 Personnel From Police, Fire, Civil Defence Honoured With Gallantry, Service Medals

New Delhi: As many as 1,057 personnel from the Police, Fire Services, Home Guard and Civil Defence (HG&CD) and Correctional Services have been honoured with Gallantry and Service Medals on the occasion of Independence Day 2026. As per the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), a total of 301 personnel have been awarded Gallantry Medals for acts of courage, while 756 others have received Service Medals this year. Of the 301 personnel who have received Medals for Gallantry (GM), 272 are police personnel and 29 are Fire Service personnel. The Gallantry Medal is awarded for acts of courage in saving lives and property, preventing crime or arresting criminals, while considering the risks involved in the performance of official duties. MHA informed in a release that 197 per-



sonnel of the 301 Gallantry Medal recipients are from Left Wing Extremism-affected areas, 51 from Jammu and Kashmir, 12 from the Northeast and 41 from other regions. 756 Receive Service Medals. A total of 92 personnel have been awarded President's Medal for apart, 664 personnel Distinguished Service Medal for apart, 664 personnel have been honoured with Medals for

Meritorious Service (MSM). This recognition is for valuable service marked by resourcefulness and devotion to duty. Of the 664 MSM recipients, 606 are from Yce (PSM). The PSM is given for a special and distinguished record of service. Of the 92 recipients, 83 are from the Police Service, four from the Fire Service, three from Civil Defence and Home Guard Service, and two from

Correctional Service. This apart, 664 personnel have been honoured with Medals for Meritorious Service (MSM). This recognition is for valuable service marked by resourcefulness and devotion to duty. Of the 664 MSM recipients, 606 are from the Police Service, 28 from the Fire Service, 18 from Civil Defence and Home Guard Service and 12 from Correctional Service.

Accept Responsibility With Humility: Pralhad Joshi On Appointment As Education Minister

New Delhi: Newly appointed Union Education Minister Pralhad Joshi said he accepted the responsibility with a sense of duty and humility. Joshi has been appointed as Education Minister after President Droupadi Murmu accepted Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation from the Union Council of Ministers following widespread student-led protests across the nation over the NEET paper leak. Joshi has been given additional charge of the Education Ministry besides his role as Consumer Affairs Minister. "I have just got to know that the Prime Minister has given me a responsibility. I accept this responsibility with a sense of duty and humility," he told reporters on Saturday night. "In the last 12 years of Prime Minister Modi's government, many his-



torical achievements have been made. In the last four to five years, Dharmendra Pradhan also implemented the National Education Policy, and several important initiatives were undertaken," Joshi said. "Under the guidance of the Prime Minister, I will try to perform to the best of my ability and fulfil my responsibilities with dedication," he added. Earlier in the day,

Pradhan resigned from his post following the Cockroach Janta Party-led student protests across the country, demanding his ouster over the NEET paper leak controversy. Pradhan said it was not a matter of "individual prestige" for him and he was disturbed to see the series of events that have unfolded in the last 10 days. In response to Pralhad Joshi receiving the additional charge of

the Education Ministry, Saurav Das, Chief Spokesperson of the Cockroach Janta Party, warned that anyone becoming the Education Minister should understand that the youth are watching closely. "Our concerns have been addressed. Those demands resonated with the youth across the country, which is why this movement gained nationwide support," Saurav Das said.

Yamuna Floodplain Damage: SC Sets Aside NGT Order Against Art Of Living, Orders Refund Of 5 Crore Fine



New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Saturday set aside an order passed by the National Green Tribunal in 2017, holding Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's Art of Living Foundation responsible for the damage caused to the Yamuna floodplains due to its World Culture Festival in 2016.

The judgment was delivered by a bench comprising Justices Satish Chandra Sharma and N K Singh. The judgment came on an appeal filed by Vyakti Vikas Kendra India, associated with the Art of Living Foundation.

The apex court directed the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) to refund the Rs 5 crore environmental compensation deposited by the foundation. The detailed order will be uploaded later in the day.

The World Culture Festival was held from March 11 to 13, 2016, on the Yamuna floodplains in Delhi. The Rs 5 crore was deposited pursuant to an interim order passed by the NGT in March 2016, shortly before the three-day festival was scheduled to begin. The tribunal allowed the event to proceed while directing the foundation to deposit the amount as environmental compensation. The tribunal had also directed that the amount would be adjusted against the compensa-

tion ultimately determined after assessing the environmental damage. The bench said there is no doubt in the proposition that the polluter must pay and must be held absolutely liable for environmental degradation caused by it.

The bench said the alleged person must be a "polluter" before being held absolutely liable in law, and no doubt, if this link is established, no excuse matters. However, the principle cannot be invoked unless the degradation is attributable to the alleged person, it noted.

"In the present case, the causal link has not been established by any standard. In fact, there is ample material on record prior to its handing over to the appellant," said the bench. The bench said the material on record actually proves that damage, if any, cannot be attributed to the appellant. It is a different matter that the tribunal overlooked the exculpatory material, it added.

The bench said the tribunal completely altered the character of the dispute before it, converting it into a proceeding for fresh development of the Yamuna floodplain and, in doing so, it burdened the appellant to bear the expenses of such development activity.

Effectively, the tribunal burdened the appellant with the task of developing something that it never destroyed, it added. The bench noted that a committee, constituted by government officials, inspected the event site and reported that the site where the event in question was held was fully covered with grass and portions thereof were under water. It also reported that there was no debris at the site and no significant wetland/water body was found in the area allotted for the event, noted the bench. "This committee examined the google earth images of the event site taken before and after the event, and reported that there was not much difference in the condition of the area before and after the event", it said. The bench said the third report, filed by a committee, effectively nullified the allegations of damage and removed the taint of causing damage/degradation from the event organised by the appellant.

"However, the Tribunal rejected this report on the ground that the committee was not supposed to report on damage, and was only tasked to propose an action plan. In doing so, the facts reported by the committee were neither challenged nor disproved," it noted.

The bench said the tribu-

nal chose to focus on the fact that the committee had exceeded its domain and needlessly reported about the absence of any damage at the site.

"We cannot approve of the approach adopted by the Tribunal. As a neutral fact-finding body, the Tribunal ought to have taken all relevant material into consideration for deciding the liability of the appellant," it said. "The appellant is entitled to refund of the amount of Rs. 5 crores deposited by it to DDA, in compliance of the Tribunal's order dated 09.03.2016. The same shall be refunded by DDA within four weeks from today," it added.

The bench said the tribunal ought to have questioned how the satellite image presented a flowery picture of the floodplain; however, it did not. In fact, a huge amount of debris/construction material was removed by none other than the appellant, immediately after handing over of site, to make way for the event, it noted. "In the face of such material, the committee's description of the pre-event state of the floodplain, describing it as a green vista, is unreliable. In our opinion, the satellite image dated 05.09.2015 is not a reliable document, not only because it is generated from the internet, but also because it is in stark contrast with the entire

Defence PSU Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Plans To Set Up Manufacturing Unit In Andhra Pradesh

Amaravati: A key defense sector entity Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) has come forward to establish a manufacturing unit in Andhra Pradesh.

The MDL has expressed its readiness to develop the proposed shipbuilding cluster at Dugarajapatnam with representatives from the company recently discussing the proposal with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu.

According to official estimates, the MDL—a "Navratna" company—could invest approximately ₹26,000 crore in developing the shipbuilding cluster. For the facility, the state government is also considering entering into an agreement with MDL for the construction of the Dugarajapatnam shipyard. Officials have said that during discussions with the Andhra Chief Minister, the company proposed a 30% subsidy on capital investment, and the state government is currently



"considering the quantum of the subsidy" that could be sanctioned. While the Centre will bear the cost of the common infrastructure required for the development of the port at Dugarajapatnam, the state government will provide the land for the development of the shipbuilding cluster.

Officials said the AP Maritime Board has initiated action to acquire 2,200 acres of land for the construction of a port and a shipyard, while the

government has decided to allocate 1,000 acres for the shipyard and 1,350 acres for ancillary industries.

The AP Maritime Board and the Visakhapatnam Port Authority will oversee the development of the Dugarajapatnam port and the shipbuilding cluster.

For the project, the government has issued an Expression of Interest (EoI) to appoint a technical consultant for preparing a Detailed Project Report (DPR)

regarding the development of the Dugarajapatnam Port and the shipbuilding and ship repair cluster.

According to officials, proposals will be evaluated on August 24, and a firm will be selected to prepare the DPR. "The selected firm will prepare estimates for the necessary infrastructure work, as well as a master plan that includes the shipyard layout for the port and shipbuilding cluster," officials said.

Carney says Canada To Match New US Tariffs 'Dollar For Dollar'; Retaliatory Tariffs To Take Effect On Sept 8

Ottawa: Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on Saturday promised to match the new levies "dollar for dollar" to protect Canadian workers, farmers, families and businesses, after trade negotiations between the two countries collapsed.

He announced that retaliation would begin on September 8, and Canada's tariff increases would target steel, dairy products, appliances, agricultural equipment, pulp and paper, and electronics. In a post shared on X, Carney said, "For over a year, Canada has worked intensively and in good faith with the United States to negotiate a new comprehensive trade deal. We have been pragmatic, patient, and persistent. Our goal has always been to get the best deal for Canadians, never a deal at any price or on any time frame."

Carney further said he had instructed Canadian negotiators to return to Ottawa after over a year of discussions with Washington, adding that Canada could not accept the offer made by the United States. "Late last evening I instructed our



negotiators to return to Ottawa. We cannot accept what the U.S. has offered, and we will not give what they have asked," he said.

"Canada will match the U.S.' new tariffs dollar for dollar to protect Canadian workers, farmers, families, and businesses. We take this step confident that it is in the best interests of Canada," Carney added. The Canadian Prime Minister added that Ottawa would announce details of its retaliatory tariff measures in the coming days. The new measures will come into force on the Tuesday after Labour Day. "In the coming days, we will release the details of these new tariff measures, which will come

into force the Tuesday after Labour Day," the post concluded. The latest escalation between the two countries, which once held one of the world's most durable trade alliances, plunges them deeper into a trade war that has kept both sides of the border on edge throughout Trump's second term in office. Carney's latest remarks came after trade negotiations between Washington and Ottawa broke down late Friday night, with the United States imposing a 50 per cent tariff on nearly USD 28 billion worth of Canadian imports from 12:01 am ET. Carney described Washington's last-minute demands as "unfair and uneconomic", saying they raised

questions over the reliability of any potential agreement. He said Canada had made significant progress in recent weeks during the negotiations, but the outcome did not meet Ottawa's objectives.

"Last-minute changes in the U.S. proposed terms were unfair, uneconomic, and called into question the reliability of any deal," he said. Carney said the Canadian government would introduce additional measures to support workers and businesses, building on nearly USD 25 billion in assistance provided over the past 18 months. The Prime Minister also outlined Canada's broader economic strategy, saying the country was working to strengthen its domestic economy and diversify trade partnerships.

"We have recognised from the beginning that America has changed, and that we will not return to our old relationship," Carney said. He said Canada was advancing nearly USD 500 billion in major infrastructure projects while seeking new export markets for Canadian businesses.

A Moderate Earthquake Shakes Northeast Japan, Injuring Over 20 People In Tokyo Region



Tokyo: A moderate earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 5.9 rattled eastern Japan, including the Tokyo area, early Sunday, injuring more than 20 people, most of them slightly, officials said. There was no danger of a tsunami. According to the Japan Meteorological Agency, the quake occurred in the southern Ibaraki prefecture, at a depth of 70 kilometers (42 miles), an area of Japan prone to frequent quakes. The U.S. Geological Survey recorded a preliminary magnitude of 5.8. Three people were injured in four prefectures in the region — nine in Saitama, another nine in Kanagawa, four in Chiba and one in Ibaraki — according to prefectural officials.

Most of them were injured when they fell down or hit themselves against furniture or doors as they were caught off guard by the quake while sleeping and got out of bed in a panic, officials said.

Among them was a woman in her 80s who fell off the bed and suffered a serious hip injury in Yokohama, in the Kanagawa prefecture, the Yomiuri newspaper reported. The quake caused delays to express trains serving Tokyo and Narita Airport and other local trains serving northeastern regions, but Shinkansen bullet trains were running normally, their operator East Japan Railway Co. said. The government set up a task force to assess the extent

of possible damage, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said on X. The tremor set off emergency quake alerts on mobile phones and also significantly shook Tokyo. NHK public television showed traffic on roads in nearby cities, including Mito and Saitama, seemingly normal. An underground water pipe ruptured in Tokyo's eastern ward of Koto, with water pouring out onto the road, NHK footage showed. The pipe has been repaired and the leak

stopped later. The earthquake caused blackouts to about 460 homes in Tokyo but power was restored by later Sunday morning, according to TEPCO Power Grid. There were no reports of anomalies from about a dozen nuclear power plants and other facilities that handle nuclear materials, the Nuclear Regulation Authority said. Last month, a magnitude 7.1 quake struck the Kumamoto area on Japan's southernmost island of Kyushu, killing 38 people and injuring

US Military Casualties Rise To Over 770 As Iran Conflict Enters Sixth Month



Iran's top security official Mohsen Rezaei warned that any country participating in the US economic war against Iran will be considered an "enemy" by Tehran. Rezaei, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, made the remarks on Saturday in an interview with state-run IRIB TV. He said Iran would first negotiate with such countries and ask them to stay out of the conflict, but warned that if they refuse, Tehran will strike their interests, and that if surrounding countries choose to join the US siege, Iran "will not let even a single drop of oil be exported from the Strait of Hormuz." He noted that Iran has learned how to bypass US sanctions and continue oil sales over the years. Rezaei also repeated that the Hormuz Strait will remain closed unless the United States fulfils its commitments under the Iran-US peace memorandum of understanding signed in June, adding that Washington must act first this time. Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi said that the US anti-Iran economic operation is doomed to fail like its other coercive measures against the country. "14 years ago: 'Most crippling sanctions in history.' Failed. 8 years ago: 'Maximum pressure.' Failed. 5 months ago: 'Unconditional surrender.' Failed. Today: 'Most crushing economic operation ever.' Bound to fail," Araghchi posted on social media platform

X. The remarks came after US President Donald Trump announced on Wednesday "the most crushing economic operation ever taken" against any country providing a lifeline to Iran, describing it as an "economic warfare and isolation on an unprecedented scale."

"This will be Economic Warfare and Isolation on an unprecedented scale," Trump posted on Truth Social, calling the move "an ECONOMIC D-DAY."

On June 18, the United States and Iran signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on ending the war in the region on all fronts, including Lebanon. Under the MoU, they were scheduled to hold negotiations within a period of 60 days, which ended on Monday, to reach a final agreement, but the talks' fate remains unclear following the escalation between the two countries last month. 10:30 AM, 23 Aug 2026 (IST)

US-Iran War LIVE | US Military Casualties Rise To Over 770 As Iran Conflict Enters Sixth Month
The number of US service members killed or wounded in the Iran war has risen to more than 770, according to casualty figures provided by the Pentagon, reported by The Washington Post on Friday, as the conflict enters its sixth month.

The Washington Post reported that the Pentagon's casualty reporting system showed 774 US

service members killed or wounded, including 18 killed and 756 wounded in the conflict. According to the Post, the Pentagon added scores of new troops to the wounded list in recent days, even as the United States and Iran have largely remained under a ceasefire in recent weeks. It noted that some of the newly added figures could reflect a delay between an injury being recorded in the military's medical system and its appearance in the Pentagon's casualty database. 10:24 AM, 23 Aug 2026 (IST)

Security Chief Says Trump's 'Recklessness' Sparked Fresh Race To Acquire Nukes

Iran's Supreme National Security Council Secretary Mohsen Rezaei has accused US President Donald Trump of undermining global nuclear security, alleging that Washington's military aggression against Tehran has driven other nations to seek atomic weapons.

Iran's Tasnim news agency quoted Rezaei as saying that countries had seen membership in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as ineffective in preventing US attacks. "Trump's recklessness, with his attacks on Iran, has increased the desire of people around the world to acquire nuclear weapons, especially when they saw that membership in the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was ineffective in preventing attacks from the United States," Rezaei said. "Trump has created nuclear insecurity instead of nuclear security," he added.

US-Iran War LIVE | Trump Shares Hormuz Image As 'New US Territory'

Tensions between Washington and Tehran escalated further on Sunday after US President Donald Trump again shared an image that depicts the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz as "NEW US Territory", even as Iran reiterated that the crucial maritime corridor will remain closed unless the United States alters its stance.

The latest post on Truth Social

Washington: Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna, a 2028 US Presidential aspirant, on Saturday said he was detained by gun-wielding Israeli settlers while on a visit to Palestine.

Khanna, a Democrat from California, was visiting on Wednesday the ruins of Khirbet Zanuta, a Bedouin village in the southern West Bank that was abandoned after attacks from Israeli settlers when the incident took place.

"Israeli settlers, brandishing American-made M4s, detained me and other Americans on my trip to Palestine. When the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) arrived, they sided with the settlers and continued our detention. They made a huge



mistake," Khanna said in a post on X. Khanna's experience was reported by a photographer of The New York Times, who was accompanying the Congressman. "I felt powerless in that situation, which is not an easy thing, as I have a lot of privilege in life," the New York Times quoted Khanna as saying.

The report said Khanna was eventually allowed to continue his journey after calls to the US embassy and Israeli police. "Imagine how people feel every day, Palestinians under the occupation, if they could make an American congressman feel powerless for 90 minutes," Khanna said. US politi-

cians — Democrats and Republicans alike — have been visiting the West Bank from time to time since the October 7, 2023, attack on Israel by Hamas started a war in the region.

Republican Mike Johnson, the House Speaker, and Democrats — Chris Van Hollen and Jeff Merkley visited the region last year. Former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel is also on a visit to Israel. Emanuel, who briefly served as the White House Chief of Staff during President Barack Obama's tenure, is also considered a presidential aspirant.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri Seeks Lanka's Cooperation For Early Release Of Indian

Colombo: India on Wednesday urged Sri Lanka to cooperate in the early release of Indian fishermen and their boats detained by its authorities, while reiterating that a humanitarian approach should guide the handling of the long-pending issue.

The matter figured prominently during Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's discussions with the Sri Lankan leadership during his official visit to Colombo, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Misri arrived in Colombo for a day-long visit. It was his first stand-alone visit to Sri Lanka as Foreign Secretary. He held separate meetings with President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, Prime Minister Harini Amarasinghe, Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath and Foreign Secretary Aruni Ranaraja. During the talks, Misri discussed issues about fish-



ermen and requested Sri Lanka's cooperation for the early release of fishermen and boats detained in the island nation, the MEA statement said. "He also requested that even as bilateral mechanisms continue to work towards finding a resolution of the various issues, a humanitarian approach keeping in view the livelihood requirements of fishermen should continue to guide our approach," it

said. The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with Lankan Navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats in several alleged incidents of illegally entering Sri Lankan territorial waters. The Palk Strait, a narrow strip of water separating Tamil Nadu from Sri Lanka, is a rich fishing ground for fishermen from both countries.

Fishermen from both countries are arrested frequently for inadvertently trespassing into each other's waters. In the last week of July, the Sri Lankan navy arrested nine Indian fishermen and seized their trawler for allegedly poaching in the island data, this year, as of April 15, 128 Indian fishermen were arrested, with 18 trawlers being seized by the Sri Lankan Navy for alleged poaching.

Beyond the coding boom—the silent evolution of technology and entry-level work



Every year, thousands of young graduates flood the bustling tech corridors, clutching degrees long viewed as a definitive passport to economic security. For decades, the unwritten contract of the corporate and IT sectors was simple: you started at the bottom, handled the tedious “grunt work”, sorting databases, drafting basic reports, testing standard lines of code, or writing repetitive summaries, and gradually worked your way up the ladder. It was an essential corporate apprenticeship in which professionals made low-stakes mistakes and gradually learned the nuances of their industry.

Also Read
Opinion: Fear of being replaced — Navigating value in an AI-driven workplace
Opinion: Automation and future of work
 Today, however, that traditional career ladder is facing a profound structural disruption. The bottom rungs are missing, and the entry-level white-collar job is rapidly transforming or, in some cases, evaporating entirely.

Beyond Prompt

Until recently, public anxiety surrounding artificial intelligence was largely focused on basic generative tools. We marvelled at chatbots that could write a quick email, answer simple queries, or draft a generic marketing paragraph on command. These tools still required a human operator to constantly sit at the screen, type in specific prompts, and piece the outputs together. AI was treated merely as an efficient digital assistant.

But the technological landscape has moved far beyond simple prompt-and-response mechanisms. We have entered the era of autonomous ‘Agentic AI.’ These are independent software systems capable of executing complex, multi-step workflows entirely on their own.

Instead of asking a system to write a single email, companies can now assign an AI agent a broad, complex objective, such as auditing a logistics budget, running a localised marketing campaign, or writing an entire software patch. The agent works inde-

pendently for hours, diagnoses its own bugs, refines its methods, and delivers a completed project without human intervention.

Immediate Casualty

The immediate casualty of this operational shift is the traditional entry-level white-collar worker. From a purely corporate standpoint, the mathematics are stark. Why hire a team of junior analysts to spend 40 hours compiling and processing market data when an autonomous digital agent can complete the task in 40 seconds for pennies? The machine wins on speed, volume, and cost every single time. As a result, Global Capability Centres (GCCs) and IT service providers are quietly restructuring their hiring practices, leaning away from mass entry-level recruitment.

This creates a massive paradox for a rapidly developing tech ecosystem like India’s. If the entry-level ‘cognitive grunt work’ is automated, how do we train senior leaders, architects, and managers of tomorrow? If young professionals are never given the chance to learn the foundational, routine aspects of an industry, how will they develop the institutional intuition required to make high-level decisions? One cannot effectively govern a system without ever understanding how its core pieces fit together.

The future of white-collar work lies not in creating content from scratch but in exercising judgment over what automated systems produce. In the AI era, the defining skill will be serving as the ‘human in the loop’

To navigate this transition, both our skill development models and educational frameworks must move away from past metrics. For too long, professional success has been measured by volume, how fast a person can code, how many pages of a report they can generate, or how efficiently they can manage a spreadsheet. We are currently training young minds to excel at tasks that machines have already mastered.

ates a financial strategy, a legal brief, or a technical design, it operates entirely on patterns, his-

torical datasets, and probabilities. It completely lacks empathy, contextual awareness, and an understanding of human consequences. It cannot look a client in the eye, navigate the delicate political dynamics of a boardroom, or determine if a decision is commercially sound but socially or ethically bankrupt. These deeply human elements—critical thinking, ethical scepticism, and emotional intelligence—are the true safe havens against automation.

Consequently, a young professional’s value will no longer be determined by output speed, but by their ability to audit, stress-test, and find the subtle flaws within an algorithmically generated solution. Their job will be to locate the rot in the digital foundation before it compromises the structure.

Shifting Focus

This shift underscores a broader reality that policymakers and industry leaders are increasingly acknowledging: traditional white-collar roles can no longer rely on rote academic certification. The focus must pivot drastically toward high-value skill development and practical problem-solving. Corporations must view entry-level positions not as a source of cheap, repetitive labour but as an essential long-term investment in human capital, restructuring junior roles so that young professionals spend less time on data entry and more time learning to govern automated systems.

The anxiety among today’s youth is understandable, but it shouldn’t lead to despair. The world of work is not ending; it is merely being rewritten. The traditional, predictable entry-level desk job may be fading, but the societal demand for human wisdom, oversight, and strategic vision has never been higher. To ensure our young work force thrives, we must stop preparing them to compete against machines and finally teach them how to command them.

When an AI agent generates a financial strategy,

a legal brief, or a technical design, it operates entirely on patterns, historical datasets, and probabilities. It completely lacks empathy, contextual awareness, and an understanding of human consequences. It cannot look a client in the eye, navigate the delicate political dynamics of a boardroom, or determine if a decision is commercially sound but socially or ethically bankrupt. These deeply human elements—critical thinking, ethical scepticism, and emotional intelligence—are the true safe havens against automation.

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Organ donation — let life continue



Organ transplantation is one of the remarkable achievements of modern medicine. A patient with irreversible kidney, liver, heart or lung failure, who once had very limited prospects for survival, can today receive a functioning organ and return to a productive life. Yet transplantation has a limitation that medical technology alone cannot overcome: an organ must first be donated before it can be transplanted.

Opinion: Organ donation in India — Life beyond death needs trust
Editorial: National drive needed for organ donation

India performs a large and increasing number of organ transplants, but the need remains far greater than the availability of organs. Thousands of patients continue to wait for a suitable kidney, liver, heart or lung. Some deteriorate or die while waiting. National Organ Donation Day should remind us that organ donation is a shared responsibility involving individuals, families, hospitals, governments and society.

Transplant Law began developing in India several decades ago. However, the absence of an adequate legal framework in the early years created serious concerns. Commercial kidney transplantation, brokers arranging donors, exploitation of economically disadvantaged people and transplantation based on financial transactions threatened both medical ethics and public confidence. India needed a law that could enable legitimate transplantation while preventing the human body from becoming a commodity. The Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994, provided a framework for organ retrieval and transplantation and, importantly, gave legal recognition to brain-stem death. Amendments in 2011 expanded its scope to tissues, leading to the present Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act (THOTA) and the rules governing transplantation.

The principle behind the law is fundamental: human organs may be donated for transplantation, but they cannot be

traded for financial gain. Commercial dealings in organs, the involvement of brokers, fraudulent documentation and illegal transplantation are offences. The law provides for imprisonment and substantial financial penalties, apart from professional consequences for medical practitioners found participating in unlawful transplantation.

These safeguards are essential because transplantation can retain public confidence only when donation is voluntary, allocation is fair and financial power cannot determine access to an organ.

Living donation has played an enormous role in India, particularly in kidney and liver transplantation. Living donation must, however, remain voluntary and medically safe. Financial hardship should never compel a person to become an organ donor. The second source is deceased organ donation, particularly following brain-stem death. Brain-stem death is the irreversible loss of all brainstem functions and is death as recognised under the transplant law when established according to prescribed medical criteria. Following certification of brain-stem death and the required consent, organs such as the kidneys, liver, heart and lungs may be retrieved for transplantation.

Tissues including corneas, skin, bone and heart valves can also benefit patient s. Countries such as Spain have consistently demonstrated the potential of a well-organised deceased-donor programme. The United States and several European countries have also developed extensive systems for donor identification, organ retrieval, allocation and transplantation. India has made impressive progress in transplantation, but a substantial proportion of kidney and liver transplants still depend on living donors. The lesson from countries with strong deceased-donation programmes is not merely about legislation. Successful systems identify potential donors in hospitals, have trained transplant coordinators, communicate sensitively

with families, maintain transparent waiting lists and allocation systems, and build public confidence over many years. NOTTO and a National System The National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO) provides the national framework for organ and tissue donation and transplantation, supported by Regional Organ (ROTO) and Tissue Transplant Organisations (SOTTO). A transparent system for registering patients awaiting transplantation, allocating deceased-donor organs and coordinating retrieval and transplantation across hospitals is essential.

Every donated organ is precious. An organ donated in one hospital may need to reach a recipient in another hospital or even another city within hours. Coordination among doctors, transplant coordinators, hospitals, government agencies, police and transport systems can determine whether that organ is successfully transplanted. The experience of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh demonstrates how state-supported deceased-donor programmes can change the transplantation landscape. Green corridors and rapid transport arrangements have enabled organs to reach recipients within the narrow time available for successful transplantation. The next step should be to extend donor identification beyond major transplant centres. Every hospital with an intensive care unit should understand its responsibility in recognising potential brain-stem-dead donors, completing certification according to law and providing families with an opportunity to consider donation. A potential donor should not be lost simply because the hospital lacks awareness or coordination.

Organ Trafficking The shortage of organs creates another danger: illegal organ trade. When poverty, debt or social vulnerability is exploited to obtain an organ, donation loses its ethical meaning. Brokers, commercial transactions, forged relationships and coercion must be investigated and

punished under the law. At the same time, reports of illegal transplantation should not create fear about legitimate organ donation. The answer to organ trafficking is not less transplantation. It is more transparent, regulated and equitable transplantation.

A strong deceased-donation programme can itself reduce dependence on desperate arrangements and commercial exploitation. Signing a donor pledge is valuable, but discussing the decision with family members is equally important. When death occurs suddenly, relatives are grieving and must make difficult decisions within a limited period. Knowing what their loved one wanted can make that decision clearer. This conversation does not require a hospital. It can begin at home.

Families who are approached for donation must also be treated with dignity. They deserve clear explanations about brain-stem death, the donation process and what will happen afterwards. Consent must be informed and voluntary. There should be no coercion and no commercial consideration. That is the sanctity of organ donation.

Awareness to Action India does not lack compassion. What we need is a system that converts willingness into donation. Potential donors must be identified in hospitals. Brain-stem death certification should become consistent and timely. Transplant coordinators need appropriate training. Waiting lists and organ allocation must remain transparent.

National and State registries should provide reliable information about donation, transplantation and outcomes. Above all, the public must trust the system. An organ should never be available to the highest bidder. It should go to an appropriate patient according to transparent medical and allocation criteria. National Organ Donation Day gives every family an opportunity to discuss a question that is usually avoided: What should happen to our organs after death if they can save another person’s life? We spend

East Bengal Script Stunning Comeback To Beat Al Arabi 4-1, Qualify For ACL Two Group Stage

East Bengal produced a stunning late comeback to beat Kuwait's Al Arabi SC 4-1 in extra time and qualify for the group stage of the AFC Champions League Two at the Salt Lake Stadium, here on Wednesday.



The new-look home side under Antonio Lopez Habas looked set for a disappointing exit after trailing 0-1 with just 14 minutes of regulation time remaining following Anayo Iwuala's 76th minute strike from a penalty. But Jay Gupta's 90th-minute equaliser changed the game before East Bengal, who are playing with an all-Indian defence in the absence of Spanish centre back Nacho Monsalve, took complete control in extra time against the Kuwait Premier League runners-up. Captain Mohammed Rashid put the hosts ahead in the 108th minute before substitute David Lalhlansanga added a third in the 117th. Rohit Danu completed the turnaround in the first minute of stoppage time in extra time.

East Bengal, who won the Indian Super League last season, their first top-flight triumph in 22 years to qualify for the continental competition, will now enter the West Region group stage in the continent's second tier club football. The group phase will feature 16 teams playing in a round-robin format with home-and-away fixtures. The first half was played at a frantic tempo with both teams not planning on sitting back. Al Arabi sounded the opening warning with Zeid Qunbar dragging a shot wide from outside

the box in the fifth minute. Backed by the home crowd, East Bengal kept Sulaiman Abdulghafoor busy with the Al Arabi custodian fielding Basim Rashid's powerful effort before reading Jesin Thonikkara's attempted curler perfectly. Al Arabi were left wondering how they did not go ahead in the 23rd minute when Kenean Maleko burst into the box and his shot from an acute angle appeared to squirm past Prabhshukhan Gill, only for the East Bengal goalkeeper to recover in time to claw the ball away

from the goal line. East Bengal came close soon after the restart when Bipin Singh missed a golden opportunity in the 50th minute. Jesin raced forward on the counter and played the ball across to Bipin, who had a clear sight of goal. But after taking a touch, he fired his effort wide. Al Arabi made East Bengal pay for the miss in the 76th minute with Iwuala slotting home from 12 yards after Sandip Mandi had hauled Maleko down in the box. Iwuala sent a low, powerful effort into the bottom-left corner as

Sarvesh Kushare Dazzles In Diamond League Debut With Third-Place Finish In Monaco

Indian high jumper Sarvesh Kushare shone on his Diamond League debut, securing a podium finish with his performance. He finished in third place in Monaco on Friday and became only the fourth Indian athlete to finish in the top three at a Diamond League meet. He has joined the elite list of Neeraj Chopra, Vikas Gowda and Murali Shreshankar, who all have secured a podium finish at least once in a Diamond



League meet. The 31-year-old registered his best successful try of

2.26m to occupy the third position in a field including world-class

performers. He cleared 2.12m, 2.16m, 2.20m, 2.23m and 2.26m, clearing every height in his first attempt before falling short of clearing 2.28 m height. The Maharashtra-based athlete is having a breakthrough season so far. He recently jumped 2.31m at the National Championships in Bhubaneswar and rewrote Indian athletics history. He broke Tejaswin Shankar's eight-year-old national

Gukesh Crumbling Under Pressure, Needs To Shut Out Noise



World champion D Gukesh is crumbling under the weight of expectations and needs to shut out the noise to regain his form ahead of his title defence, said American Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura, who also revealed that the 2028 Chess Olympiad could potentially be his last tournament featuring "true classical" chess. Gukesh has faced a slump since his historic 2024 World Championship win, dropping down in ratings after finishing last at both Norway Chess and a recent event in Chennai, alongside low finishes at the Tata Steel Chess and Prague Masters. "I don't know what Gukesh can do different-

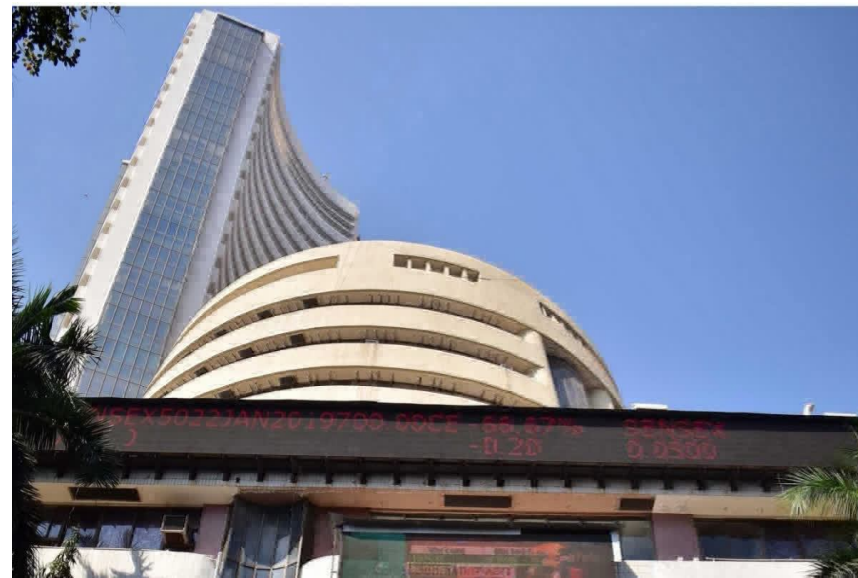
ly. I know what he should have done differently, which is to basically be willing to take draws in a lot of games instead of trying to play for the win," Nakamura said to a query by news agency PTI on Wednesday. "But obviously, I'm not Indian. So, I don't necessarily understand the culture, all the pressure that he's facing. But I get the general sense that there's a lot of pressure whether it's external, whether it's internal. I think he's crumbling because of it." I think if he can kind of just, like, block it all out, forget that he's world champion. You know, this is obviously quotable. But sort of forget that he's never going to be

Magnus Carlsen. I'm quite confident his rating will go back up." Gukesh's classical FIDE rating dropped to 2703 in the August 2026 list. "I don't know if it'll go to 2,800. But I mean, he'll definitely get to, like, 2,740 at least if he kind of just puts a couple of things out of his mind. But obviously, it's very hard," Nakamura continued. "I mean, he's one of the world champions. And you're not the best player. And everyone's comparing you to probably the greatest player of all time. And it's very difficult mentally." Nakamura, however, does not believe Gukesh's upcoming title defence against Uzbek challenger Javokhir Sindarov is a foregone

conclusion despite considering him the underdog. "Even though I think, Gukesh is the big underdog in the match, I don't think it's that unlikely that he wins the match. It's like 75-25 in favour of Sindarov... if the match happens today, Sindarov is playing better. So Sindarov is likely to win. But as I said, 75-25 doesn't necessarily mean you're going to win every time." But I think it's going to be a close match. I don't think it's going to be some blowout like a lot of people think it will be. "Nakamura's assessment of Gukesh also comes in the context of what he sees as a remarkable transformation in Indian chess although he still believes

Mcap Of Five Of Top-10 Most Valued Firms Jumps Rs 1.54 Lakh Cr; TCS Biggest Winner

The combined market valuation of five of the top-10 most valued firms jumped Rs 1.54 lakh crore last week, with IT major TCS emerging as the biggest winner, in line with a positive trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex climbed 582.06 points, or 0.75 per cent, and the NSE Nifty went up by 127.4 points, or 0.52 per cent. "Indian equity markets ended the week on a firm footing, extending their recovery despite heightened geopolitical tensions, elevated crude oil prices, and persistent uncertainty surrounding the global interest-rate outlook." Sentiment remained supported by encouraging Q1 FY27 earnings from the IT sector as TCS closed with nearly 10 per cent of weekly gains, renewed buying interest in financial stocks, and resilience in domestic economic fundamentals," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. While Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Bajaj Finance emerged as the gainers, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), Larsen & Toubro and Hindustan Unilever faced erosion in their valuations. TCS added Rs 72,072.3 crore, taking its market valuation to Rs 8,20,672.70 crore. The country's largest IT services company reported a 4.61 per cent increase in its June-quarter net profit to Rs 13,349 crore, and guided towards an improvement in demand, impacted by the West Asia crisis, returning in the ongoing



quarter. ICICI Bank's valuation surged Rs 29,062.06 crore to Rs 10,34,441.77 crore, and that of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 23,884.93 crore to Rs 17,95,091.26 crore. The valuation of Bajaj Finance climbed Rs 21,946.5 crore to Rs 6,57,274.28 crore, and that of State Bank of India went up by Rs 7,338.34 crore to Rs 9,63,768.78 crore. However, the market capitalisation (mcap) of Larsen & Toubro eroded by Rs 18,097.72 crore to Rs 5,24,840.68 crore. The valuation of LIC declined by Rs 12,080.75 crore to Rs 5,48,124.30 crore. Bharti Airtel's mcap tumbled Rs 7,706.45 crore to Rs 11,91,067.77 crore, and that of HDFC Bank edged lower by Rs 7,084.61 crore to Rs 12,62,369.81 crore. The mcap of Hindustan Unilever dipped Rs 1,221.79 crore to Rs 5,03,775.86 crore.

Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm, followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State

Bank of India, TCS, Bajaj Finance, LIC, Larsen & Toubro and Hindustan Unilever. The combined market valuation of five of the top-10 most valued firms jumped Rs 1.54 lakh crore last week, with IT major TCS emerging as the biggest winner, in line with a positive trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex climbed 582.06 points, or 0.75 per cent, and the NSE Nifty went up by 127.4 points, or 0.52 per cent. "Indian equity markets ended the week on a firm footing, extending their recovery despite heightened geopolitical tensions, elevated crude oil prices, and persistent uncertainty surrounding the global interest-rate outlook." Sentiment remained supported by encouraging Q1 FY27 earnings from the IT sector as TCS closed with nearly 10 per cent of weekly gains, renewed buying interest in financial stocks, and resilience in domestic economic fundamentals," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. While Reliance

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Sebi Proposes Mandatory Colour-Coded Credit Risk-O-Meter For Debt



Markets regulator Sebi on Thursday proposed introducing a mandatory colour-coded 'Credit Risk-o-Meter' for debt securities, to help investors assess credit risk more easily before investing. Inspired by the risk-o-meter framework for mutual funds, the proposed tool will use a standardised, colour-coded scale to depict the credit risk associated with a debt security. The move is aimed at simplifying complex credit ratings, enabling investors to assess and compare debt securities more easily and align their investments with their risk appetite, Sebi said in a consultation paper. Under the proposal, issuers and online bond platform providers (OBPPs) will be required to display the

Credit Risk-o-Meter in offer documents, abridged prospectuses, private placement memorandums, advertisements and on their web and mobile platforms. The meter will have six colour-coded risk levels, ranging from Irish Green for the lowest rating, while all ratings will have to be disclosed alongside it. For unsecured debt instruments, issue that the Credit Risk-o-Meter represents only the credit risk associated with the debt security. The name of the credit rating agency (CRA) and the

Caramel for moderate risk and Dark Orange for moderate risk of default. "By simplifying risk evaluation, this tool enhances market transparency, improves investor understanding while supporting regulatory goals of investor protection and market development," Sebi said. The regulator has also proposed that issuers and OBPPs clearly disclose

actual credit rating of the security will have to be disclosed in text immediately below the Credit Risk-o-Meter.

In cases where a debt security has ratings from multiple CRAs, the meter will be based on the lowest rating, while all ratings will have to be disclosed alongside it. For unsecured debt instruments, issuers will have to prominently disclose the same in bold red text below the Credit Risk-o-Meter. OBPPs will also be required to immediately communicate any change in the Credit Risk-o-Meter of a debt security on their platforms. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has sought public comments till September 3 on the proposal.

Shreya Kalra Takes Home Trophy And Rs 1 Crore



She lifted the winner's trophy and took home the cash prize of Rs 1 crore during the grand finale held on August 5. Hosts Riteish Deshmukh and Farah Khan announced her name as the winner, while actor Shivangi Joshi finished as the first runner-up. The finale featured five contestants: Shreya Kalra, Shivangi Joshi, Yogesh Rawat, Ram Kapoor, and Shilpa Shinde. After weeks of tough competition, the title came down to Shreya and Shivangi. When the winners were announced, Shreya hugged Shilpa Shinde before receiving the trophy from the hosts. Shreya was one of the most talked-about contestants throughout the season. She grabbed attention with her outspoken nature, fearless attitude, and strong gameplay. She often got into arguments with fellow contestants,

including Shilpa Shinde and Akanksha Chamola, but managed to stay in the spotlight from the beginning until the finale. As the game progressed, Shreya also showed smart strategy inside the house. She made important decisions at crucial stages and used her special advantage to protect herself from elimination. Her gameplay divided opinions, but it helped her reach the final and eventually win the show. View this post on Instagram
 A post shared by Shreya kalra (@shreyakalraa)
 The final voting also went in Shreya's favour. The "Janta Ki Jury" gave her 18 votes, while Shivangi received five. Overall, Shreya secured 23 votes compared to Shivangi's 16, sealing her victory. Yogesh Rawat finished as the second runner-up. His journey was remarkable as he re-entered the competition through a wild card entry after being eliminated earlier. Ram Kapoor and Shilpa Shinde also made it to the top five after putting up strong performances throughout the season. Ahead of the grand finale, actor Harshad Chopda was eliminated after choosing to make Shivangi Joshi the show's first finalist. Lock Upp Season 2 is

Social media influencer emerged as the winner of Lock Upp Season 2. Shreya Kalra has

got into arguments with fellow contestants,

Suvinder Vicky Thought His Dhurandhar 2 Dialogues Would Be 'A Big Beep'



Suvinder Vicky thought his character in Dhurandhar: The Revenge might end up with more beeps than dialogues. The actor, who played Arjun Rampal's father in Aditya Dhar's action drama, was surprised by the amount of abusive language written for his character and even joked that the filmmaker should have made him mute. But director Aditya Dhar was confident that the dialogues would make it to the final cut. In a recent interview with a newswire, Vicky recalled his conversation with Dhar before shooting the scenes. "I told Aditya that my whole dialogue will be a big

beep; he should have instead made me play a mute character in the film because I'm abusing so much. But he told me confidently that nothing will be cut." That confidence also made Vicky think about improvising some of his lines. However, Dhar had one clear boundary. According to Vicky, the director told him, "We will not go to mothers and sisters. It is also our responsibility to not hurt sentiments in films." The abuses were part of the script. Vicky also made it clear that the strong language was not something he created on set. He credited the writing team for the dialogues while also acknowledging the director and his

own performance. "I'm lucky to work with great directors. In this, the credit goes to Aditya Dhar and to me also because I also gave my hundred per cent effort. Also, galiyon ka shrey hamare script writer ko bhi jayega, because I didn't make any of those; that was all written in the script," he said. Arjun Rampal told him to go all out. Vicky and Rampal were already familiar with each other before Dhurandhar: The Revenge. The two had worked together in Satluj, which helped them approach their intense scenes with an existing equation. Vicky said he warned Rampal about the dialogues

before filming. Rampal's response was simple: "It is part of life, camera ke samne faad de." Vicky's next stop is Awarapan 2 Dhurandhar: The Revenge continued the story of Ranveer Singh's Jaskirat Singh Rangi, who becomes Hamza Ali Mazari and gets deeper into Karachi's criminal underworld. The film also featured Arjun Rampal, Akshaye Khanna, Sanjay Dutt and R Madhavan. For Vicky, he would next be seen in Awarapan 2. He stars alongside Emraan Hashmi, Disha Patani and Shabana Azmi in the Nitin Kakkar-directed sequel, which releases in cinemas on August 14.

Yash's Film Crosses Rs 24 Cr; Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat Among Top Contributors



Yash's much-awaited film Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups is seeing strong demand ahead of its theatrical release. The Geetu Mohandas directorial has sold nearly 4 lakh tickets in India through advance bookings so far, with Karnataka leading the way. The film has collected Rs 16.02 crore in advance sales, while the figure rises to Rs 24.7 crore when blocked seats are included. Toxic sells nearly 4 lakh tickets. According to the latest advance booking figures shared by industry tracker Sacnilk, Toxic has sold 3,91,796 tickets across India so far. These bookings have generated a gross collection of Rs 16.02 crore from 11,999 shows. Including blocked seats, the film's advance booking collection has reached Rs 24.7 crore. With more time left

before its release, the Yash-starrer is expected to add more to its pre-release numbers. The early demand has been seen across several parts of the country. While Karnataka remains the biggest contributor, the film is also getting bookings in states such as Maharashtra and Gujarat. Karnataka leads Toxic advance booking. Yash's home state Karnataka is driving the film's advance sales. Toxic has collected Rs 13.45 crore from the state so far, with a 40% occupancy across 1,703 shows. The film has already recorded strong demand across several shows in Karnataka. Around 641 shows are almost full, while another 304 shows are filling fast. The strong response in Karnataka is mainly coming from the Kannada version of the

film, which continues to account for a major share of its advance bookings. Maharashtra and Gujarat also show demand. Maharashtra is currently the second-highest contributor to Toxic's advance bookings. The film has earned Rs 2.15 crore from the state across 2,133 shows. The current occupancy stands at 4%, with 12 shows almost full and 45 shows filling fast. Gujarat has also recorded steady demand. The film has collected Rs 1.52 crore from 2,238 shows in the state. It has an occupancy of 5%, with 24 shows almost full and another 42 shows filling fast. While the numbers outside Karnataka are still much lower, the advance bookings show that interest in Toxic is not limited to Yash's home market.

Hindi version also sees good response

Apart from the Kannada version, the Hindi version of Toxic is also seeing strong interest from moviegoers. The film is also expected to benefit from its Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam versions as bookings continue to open and gain pace across different markets. With the film still some time away from its theatrical release, the advance sales could rise further in the coming days. Toxic faces pre-release controversy. The strong advance booking numbers come amid some controversy surrounding the film. The teasers and a song featuring intimate scenes received criticism from some sections of viewers, with concerns raised over alleged obscenity and the portrayal of women.

Raveena Tandon Says Today's Comedy Is A 'Tightrope Walk': 'Someone Always Gets Offended'



Raveena Tandon believes making people laugh has become much harder than it was during the 1990s. The actor, who starred in several popular comedy films in that decade, says today's filmmakers have to be extra careful because even a small joke can lead to criticism on social media. In a recent interview with a news agency, Raveena spoke about how comedy has changed over the years. According to her, the fun,

carefree humour that audiences enjoyed in the 90s is now difficult to recreate. "Making people laugh without someone getting offended is probably the ultimate tightrope walk today; it is tough... In the 90s, there was an uninhibited, innocent, and totally unapologetic madness to our films. Chi Chi (Govinda) and I would react purely on instinct," she said. "We weren't overthinking how a joke would look on a 15-second

internet clip or if a line would trigger a social media debate. That raw, purely character-driven, loud-and-proud humour of the 90s is rare now because filmmakers are constantly second-guessing themselves. We've become a bit too cautious, and comedy desperately needs freedom to breathe," she said. Raveena was part of many successful comedy films, including Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, Aunt No. 1, Dulhe Raja and Pardesi Babu. These films, many of them featuring Govinda, remain fan favourites even today. The actor has now returned to the comedy genre with Welcome to the Jungle, directed by Ahmed Khan. The film also reunites her with her Mohra co-stars Akshay Kumar and Suniel Shetty. Talking about her comeback to comedy, Raveena said the genre has played an important role in her career and helped her grow as an actor. "Comedy aught me spontaneity, improvisation, and the importance of losing all inhibitions on screen. It is an incredibly giving genre; if you can successfully make people laugh, they keep you in their hearts forever. Returning to it now with Welcome to themany of them featuring Govinda, Jungle feels like coming home to a room full of old friends," she added. Welcome to the Jungle is the third film in the Welcome franchise. Directed by Ahmed Khan, the film features a massive ensemble cast, including Akshay Kumar, Suniel Shetty, Pooja Bhatt, Johnny Lever, Rajpal Yadav, Arshmany of them featuring Govinda, ad Warsi, Tusshar Kapoor, Shreyas Talpade, Jackie Shroff, Lara Dutta, Jacqueline Fernandez, Disha Patani, Urvashi Rautela and several others. The comedy entertainer has also the mark since its release.