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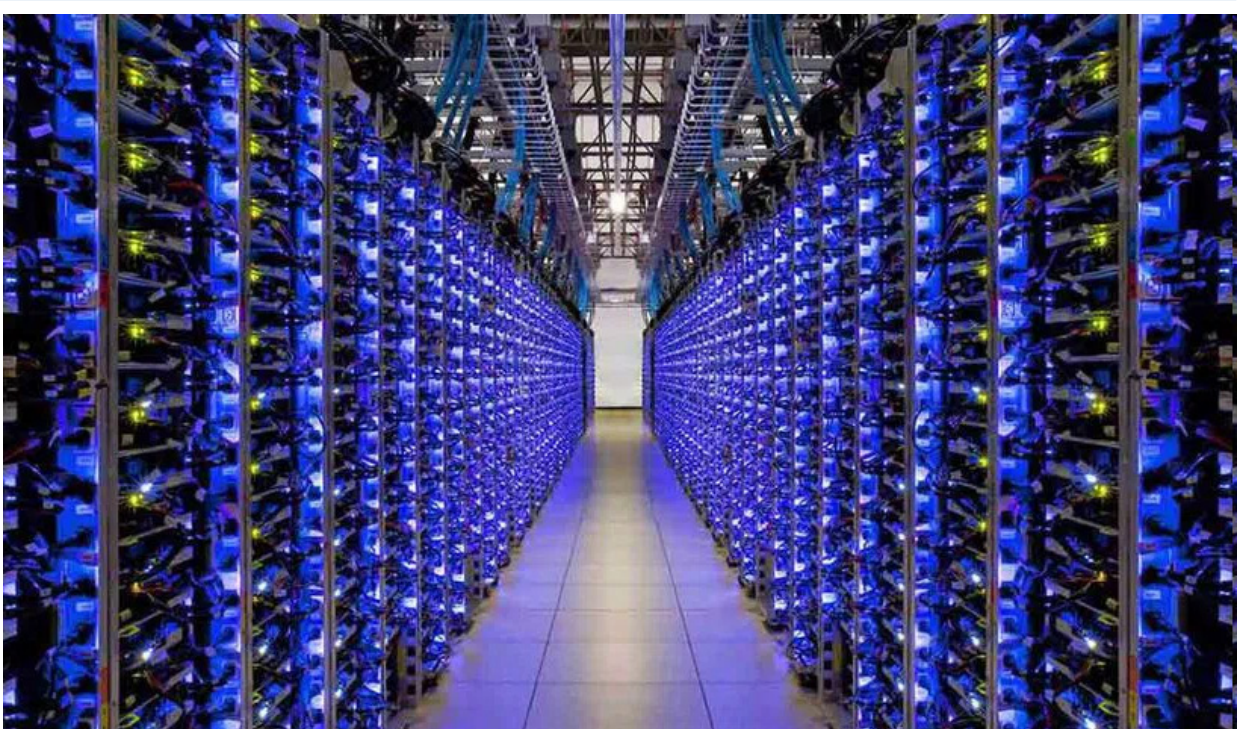
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### Andhra Pradesh plans 15 GW transmission network for data centres

**(king Reporter)** Amaravati: The Andhra Pradesh government has drawn up a roadmap to build transmission infrastructure capable of meeting a 15 GW demand from 16 data centre projects and other consumers by 2034, an official said on Wednesday. K Vijayanand, Special Chief Secretary (Energy), said the Transmission Corporation of Andhra Pradesh estimates that 16 major data centre projects are currently in various stages of development in the Visakhapatnam region. "To meet this growing demand, APTRANSCO has prepared a comprehensive, phased power transmission strategy to reliably support more than 15 GW of data centre load by 2034 while allowing for future expansion," an official press release quoted Vijayanand as saying. He observed that the Visakhapatnam region has already attracted investment proposals from several prominent national and international companies, including Google, Reliance, Tata Consultancy Services (HyperVault), CtrlS and GMR. In addition to the data centre projects generating 9.1 GW of IT power load, associated infrastructure requirements and international operational

standards are expected to raise the total power demand to nearly 15 GW by FY 2036-37, the press release said. To meet this demand, APTRANSCO will develop a 765 kV, 400 kV and 220 kV transmission network, connecting key substations at Pendurthi, Maradam, Achyutapuram, Palasa, Padmanabham and Makavaripalem. Consequently, Visakhapatnam is emerging as one of the largest digital infrastructure clusters in the country, the press release said. A key focus of the plan is the development of the Rambilli Data Centre Cluster. "To support the large-scale investments proposed in the area, a new 400/220 kV substation, along with dedicated high-capacity transmission infrastructure and transmission corridors, will be established," the press release said. Similar infrastructure will also be developed for emerging data centre hubs in Tarluvada, Mudasarlova, Polepalli and Chinnipalem. According to Vijayanand, the southern state is following an "infrastructure-first" approach by expanding transmission capacity even before demand fully materialises. This strategy is



expected to provide investors with long-term confidence, reliability and operational stability, he said. By building a strong, scalable and future-ready transmission network, Vijayanand noted that Andhra Pradesh is laying the foundation for future innovation, investment and employment opportunities. Leading global technology companies and infrastructure developers are showing keen interest in establishing hyperscale data centres, artificial intelligence infrastructure, cloud computing facilities and next-generation digital services in the state, he said. "Andhra Pradesh is preparing today

for tomorrow's opportunities by creating world-class power infrastructure required for this sector. The state's goal is not merely to meet demand but to stay ahead through proactive and planned infrastructure development," he said. These initiatives will further strengthen Andhra Pradesh as one of the most attractive destinations for world-class digital infrastructure investment, Vijayanand said. He said the state government is taking decisive steps to position Andhra Pradesh as one of Asia's most significant digital infrastructure destinations.

### Andhra Pradesh Pushes In-Line Chlorination to Scale Safe Drinking Water



**(king Reporter)** Vijayawada: The Government of Andhra Pradesh, in collaboration with Evidence Action India, organised a State Conclave on Safe Water Through In-Line Chlorination (ILC) in Vijayawada, reaffirming its commitment to ensuring safe drinking water across rural areas. The conclave, held at the Andhra Pradesh State Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (APSIRD&PR), brought together senior officials, engineers, development partners, and community representatives to accelerate the implementa-

tion of ILC systems across the state. Officials highlighted the state's plan to scale ILC across all feasible Single Village Schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) 2.0. The initiative aims to strengthen water quality through chlorination, real-time monitoring, and improved implementation at all levels. Shri K. Venkata Krishna, Officer on Special Duty to the Deputy Chief Minister, stressed the need for habitation-specific action plans and coordinated efforts to ensure safe and sustainable drinking water access for all.

### AP Slaps GST Demand Notice of Rs 9.63 crore on Eternal Ltd

**(king Reporter)** Vijayawada: The Andhra Pradesh government has issued the order by the deputy commissioner of state tax, special circle-1, Andhra Pradesh. The order was issued by the deputy commissioner of state tax, special circle-1, Andhra Pradesh. As per the notice, the company has been asked to pay GST dues of `6.48 crore, along with interest of `2.49 crore and a penalty of `64.87 lakh. The total demand, including tax, interest and penalty, amounts to approximately `9.63 crore. The company disclosed receipt of the demand order through a regulatory filing. Further details



on its response to the notice were not immediate. mand-notice-of-rs-963-crore-on-eternal-ltd-1962782

### Minor incident Triggers Panic at Vizag Steel Plant; No One Injured

**(king Reporter)** Visakhapatnam: Even as a detailed probe into the recent blast at Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is on, one more incident took place on Thursday triggering panic among the employees. However, no one was injured. Molten steel spilled from the ladle at the argon rinsing station in the Steel Melting Shop-1 (SMS-1) section of the plant. However, fortunately, no one was present at the time, averting a major incident. The incident happened around 5.30 am on Thursday. Also Read - VSP Tragedy: NHRC Takes Suo Motu Cognizance Of Workers' Death Advertisement Meanwhile, the death toll from the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant explosion has risen to nine, following the death of another worker on Wednesday. A sudden severe explosion in Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (Vizag Steel Plant) in Vizag killed eight workers and injured six more on June 8, followed by another



worker succumbing to severe burn injuries today. "The latest casualty is identified as Pydiraju, who succumbed to burns at 8.17 am this morning," Visakhapatnam district joint collector G Vidhyadhari told PTI. She said the body was shifted to King George Hospital in the port city for post mortem. Later, Pydiraju's body was handed over to his family members. Pydiraju was one of the two workers among the six injured who suffered 90 percent burns, the joint collector added.

### Bankable Urban Projects Crucial for AP's Growth, Says Suresh Kumar

**(king Reporter)** Vijayawada: Urban Local Bodies must move beyond preparing routine project estimates and focus on developing structured, finance-ready infrastructure proposals capable of attracting investment, principal secretary to municipal administration, Suresh Kumar, said on Wednesday. Addressing the valedictory session of the two-day HUDCO-APUFIDC/UiWIN capacity-building workshop on urban challenge fund - project preparation and municipal finance lab here, he said the success of the programme would be measured by the number of projects that progress after the workshop. The workshop, held on June 9 and 10 at Fortune Murali Park Hotel, brought together more than 200 participants, including municipal commissioners, engineers, finance officers and officials from ULBs, along with experts from



HUDCO, APUFIDC, CDMA, PH & MED, APUIAML and the finance department's PPP cell. Unlike conventional training programmes, the workshop functioned as a project preparation and municipal finance laboratory, helping civic bodies convert priority urban infrastructure proposals into bankable projects with defined technical scope, DPR requirements, financing plans, revenue models, risk structures and implementation roadmaps.



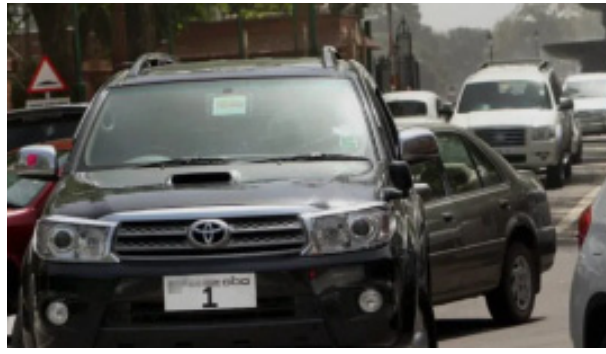
## Time to contain electrical fires, the silent killers

India faces a growing electrical safety crisis with rising electrical fires and electrocution deaths. Discover the need for stricter inspections, modern infrastructure, safety regulations, and a National Commission for Electricity Safety to protect lives and property. By all appearances, India is progressing rapidly—soaring skylines, expanding cities, smart appliances, electric vehicles, data centres and round-the-clock power supply. Yet beneath this development story is a silent and growing national crisis: electrical fires and electrocution deaths. Nearly 40 Indians reportedly lose their lives every day due to electrical accidents and electrical fires. Thousands more suffer injuries, loss of homes, destruction of businesses and lifelong economic distress. Despite this alarming scale, electricity safety continues to remain one of the most neglected aspects of public governance. The recent fire tragedies in Delhi, including the heart-breaking Hauz Khas incident involving former Competition Commission chairman Dhanendra Kumar, has yet again exposed the dangerous state of electrical safety in urban India. Overloaded air-conditioners, ageing wiring, poor earthing, loose connections and absence of effective protection systems are increasingly turning homes and commercial buildings into death traps. What makes the situation more worrying is that India's urban growth is happening vertically and aggressively, even in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, without matching upgrades in electrical infrastructure and safety enforcement. Buildings are rising faster than safety systems. The problem is not the absence of regulations. We already have the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) Safety Regulations and the National Electrical Code. The real issue is weak implementation, poor inspections and lack of accountability. In many states, electrical inspections have unfortunately become little more than paperwork exercises. Safety certification often ends with issuance of No Objection Certificates rather than rigorous technical scrutiny. This culture must change urgently. The time has come for a national electricity safety movement backed by strong institutions, modern engineering practices and strict enforcement.

The first urgent reform should be mandatory third-party electrical safety inspections. Independent agencies, on the lines of quality certification bodies, should periodically inspect all high-rise buildings, malls, hospitals, educational institutions and commercial complexes. Thermal imaging, harmonics analysis, insulation testing and earthing verification should be mandated before energisation and during periodic renewals. Second, scientific load studies must become mandatory for individual connections and large buildings. The electrical demand profile of Indian households has transformed dramatically over the past decade. Several air-conditioners, EV chargers, lifts, pumps and high-load appliances are now common, but many buildings still operate on obsolete sanctioned loads and old wiring systems. This mismatch is a major cause of overheating and fires. Third, India needs standard operating procedures (SOPs) for electrical emergencies. Fire departments, utilities, district administrations and building operators must work under coordinated emergency protocols for electrical accidents, shutdown procedures and rescue operations. Mock drills should become mandatory for all major establishments.

## Transport Department extends deadline to reserve fancy vehicle registration numbers

Hyderabad: The Transport Department has extended the time available for owners of newly purchased vehicles to reserve fancy or special registration numbers. The department has announced that vehicle owners can now choose and reserve their preferred registration numbers within two months from the date of issuance of the Temporary Registration (TR). Under the existing 'Vahan' system, a Temporary Registration issued for a new vehicle remains valid for 30 days. However, to provide greater convenience to vehicle owners, the Transport Department has decided to allow a two-month window from the TR issuance date for reserving fancy or special registration numbers. Transport Department officials have advised vehicle owners who opted for a fancy number at the time of purchase but have not yet reserved one to do so at the earliest. The department further warned that if a fancy or special number is not reserved within



the two-month period, the 'Vahan' software will automatically assign a routine or random registration number to the vehicle. The Transport Department has urged eligible vehicle owners to complete the reservation process within the stipulated timeframe to avoid automatic allocation of a regular registration number by the system. According to the department, once the two-month deadline expires, the 'Vahan' platform will automatically generate and allot a standard registration number, leaving no further opportunity to select a fancy or special number.

## Telangana BIE releases inter supplementary results, 49.29 pc students pass



Hyderabad: The intermediate public advanced supplementary examinations 2026 results were declared on Thursday, with 49.29 percent students clearing the exams. As per the Telangana Board of Intermediate Education (TG BIE), a total of 1,31,128 general and vocational stream students appeared for the second year exams and 64,639 (49.29 percent) passed. Results have been hosted on the website <https://tgbie.cgg.gov.in> or <https://results.cgg.gov.in>. Girls continued to outperform boys. A total of 47,395 girls appeared and 52.56 percent cleared, while 83,733 boys recorded a pass percentage of 47.45. As for the intermediate first year, 2,67,331 students took the exams and 68.84 percent cleared. Here too 1,23,974 girls dominated the results, recording a

pass percentage of 76.10, while 1,43,357 boys registered 62.57 percent passes. Candidates who wish to apply for recounting and re-verification-cum-scanned copy of valued answer script have to pay Rs.100 and Rs.800 respectively per paper via the BIE website <https://tgbie.cgg.gov.in> between June 12 and 18. The Board asked students to download and take a colour printout of an online memorandum of marks from the website: <https://tgbie.cgg.gov.in> from Thursday (5 pm). Further, the BIE informed all the students, parents and principals that a physical copy of the memorandum of marks will not be supplied separately. Students should download and keep it as a record till the pass certificate is supplied by the Board.

## Driver burnt alive as lorry catches fire after collision on NH-44 in Nirmal

Nirmal: A driver was burnt alive when a lorry caught fire after colliding with another lorry on a national highway at Medipalli village in Nirmal mandal in Adilabad district, on Wednesday night. Police said that the driver, identified as Jawari Singh from Sonala mandal in Adilabad district, was killed instantly. He was trapped in the blaze that erupted due to impact of the collision of two lorries on national highway 44. Despite efforts made by police, he could not be rescued in time and died on the spot. Following a complaint lodged by a family member of the driver, a case has been registered. Investigations into the incident are underway.



## ACB arrests senior assistant for accepting bribe



Karimnagar: Anti-Corruption Bureau sleuths arrested a senior assistant of the district welfare department, Danuka Radhika, for allegedly accepting a bribe to clear contractors' bills. According to ACB officials, Radhika collected a bribe of Rs 2.37 lakh from contractors to clear bills related to the supply of eggs and pulses to ICDS. The contractors were allegedly asked to transfer the amounts through UPI to her benami bank accounts. As this was established during the investigation, ACB officials arrested Radhika.

## 'Arrive Alive' initiative cuts road accidents by 15 pc in Warangal limits: DGP



Jangaon: DGP (Operations) Anil Kumar stated that the 'Arrive Alive' programme implemented over the past six months has led to a 15 percent reduction in road accidents in the Warangal Commissionerate limits. He noted that road accidents could be controlled only through public participation and cooperation. Everyone should follow traffic rules as a personal responsibility to prevent road accidents. Anil Kumar, along with Warangal Commissioner of Police Sunpreet Singh participated in 'Arrive Alive' programme held at Jangaon district headquarters under the aegis of the Warangal Commissionerate Police. Addressing the local public and youth the DGP noted that as many as 1,73,000 people across the country had lost their lives in road accidents in recent times resulting in a 3 percent loss to the national GDP. Over 7,000 people died in road accidents in Telangana last year. Many families have been devastated and left destitute due to the accidents, yet public behaviour remains unchanged. In foreign countries, where traffic rules were extremely strict and violations incur heavy fines; in India, however, lenient penalties fail to instill fear in motorists, contributing to the high rate of road accidents, Anil Kumar said. CP Sunpreet Singh, highlighting a stark contrast, said, while the State records around 900 murders annually, over 8,000 people lose their lives in road accidents each year, a matter that demands serious reflection from everyone.

A cultural troupe and the traffic police performed cultural programmes to educate the public about the consequences of violating traffic rules. The DGP presented certificates of appreciation to police personnel and RTC drivers for their exemplary driving skills. DCPs Rajamahendra Naik, Ankit Kumar and Dara Kavitha; additional DCP Prabhakar Rao, ACPs Bhim Sharma, Narsaiah and Satyanarayana and others were present.

# Fresh vessel incident reported off Oman's Shinas port, details awaited

Muscat: A fresh vessel incident has been reported off Oman's Shinas port, and details are being ascertained, the Indian Embassy in Muscat said. "We have learnt of an incident involving a vessel off Shinas port of Oman, earlier today. We are closely monitoring the situation and coordinating with the local authorities for further details", the embassy said in a post on X. The development marks the third vessel-related incident reported off Oman in recent days. The first incident involved MT Marivex on June 8, when a fire erupted aboard the vessel carrying 24 Indian seafarers south of the Strait of Hormuz. The fire was reported at around 1:30 pm on Monday, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways said at an inter-ministerial briefing. "This is the preliminary information which we have received. Based on this, as per available information, all Indian seafarers are pres-

ently safe. So, whether the ship was hit by a projectile or not, presently we are trying to get absolute information. As you are aware, the fire incident was at 1:30 today," Opesh Kumar Sharma, Director in the Shipping Division, had said. The official said that they were in touch with the owners and trying to ascertain the facts, adding that they were also in touch with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian mission in Oman. The second incident on June 10 involved an attack on a commercial vessel, Settebello, off the coast of Oman. Of the 24 Indian crew members onboard the vessel, 21 were rescued while three others were killed. In a statement on Thursday, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said that three Indians seafarers who were reported missing are now confirmed dead. "It is deeply unfortunate to learn of the tragic incident



aboard the Palau-flagged MT Settebello. Sadly, three Indian seafarers initially reported missing are now confirmed dead after bodies have been located and identified," Sonowal posted on X. "This is a profound loss to our maritime family. The Modi Govt stands firmly with the

bereaved during this difficult hour and is fully committed to supporting the next of kin. I have directed officials to ensure immediate repatriation of the rescued crew members and swift return of the mortal remains of the deceased for their final rites," he added.

## Indian judiciary promotes mediation as robust dispute resolution mechanism: CJI Surya Kant

New Delhi: Indian judiciary has promoted mediation not only as an alternative but as a robust dispute resolution mechanism, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant said during a panel discussion conducted by the Indian High Commission in London. Stating that mediation was very close to his heart, the CJI said that the Supreme Court Legal Service Committee (SCLSC) has created a huge team of trained mediators. "I can say proudly that in every town, in every street (in India) people know what mediation is," the CJI said. The High Commission in London on Wednesday hosted a high-level panel discussion on "Technology and the Future

of Mediation" and brought together leading judicial and legal figures from India and the United Kingdom, according to a press statement. Besides the CJI, the panel featured Lord Hamblen of Kersey, Judge of the UK Supreme Court; Kirsty Brimelow KC, President of the Bar Council of England and Wales; and Brett Dixon, Vice President of the Law Society of England and Wales. High Commissioner Kumaran P made the opening remarks. The discussion was moderated by Tanvi Dubey, Advocate-on-Record of the Supreme Court. Speaking on the role of the judiciary in promoting mediation, the CJI outlined the evolution of mediation in In-



dia, dividing it into two phases: that is, before and after the enactment of the Mediation Act, 2023.

The CJI said that before the legislation came into force, courts had actively encouraged mediation as a robust dispute resolution mechanism. Referring to his early years as a high court judge in 2004, he highlighted the establishment of mediation centres at the trial court, high court and Supreme Court levels. "The Mediation Act, 2023 is the culmination of a statutory and judicially created regime that has evolved over decades," he said. The CJI highlighted judicial initiatives aimed at building mediation capacity, including mandatory train-

ing programmes for mediators through State Judicial Academies and the role of the National Legal Services Authority and Lok Adalats in familiarising citizens with consensual dispute resolution mechanisms. Responding to a question on whether mediation should be preferred over arbitration, the CJI emphasised that both mechanisms have important roles to play. "I do not discourage arbitration," he said, adding that growing commercial engagement between nations inevitably generates disputes. However, he stressed that parties should first attempt to resolve differences through mediation because of its affordability, speed and ability to preserve commercial relationships. Distinguishing between the two mechanisms, the CJI said, "In arbitration, the passing of an award is often the beginning of further litigation. In mediation, once the process is successfully concluded, it brings closure to the dispute. That is the beautiful difference between mediation and arbitration".

## UNAMA urges Taliban to revoke policies restricting Afghan women's rights

Kabul: United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has expressed grave concern over the arrest of at least 30 women and the reports of excessive use of force by Taliban authorities against residents protesting the arbitrary detentions in Afghanistan's Herat. According to UNAMA, these arrests were carried out between June 6 and 7 for allegedly violating dress code instructions, while dozens more women reportedly received verbal warnings. Following the protest over the arrest in the Jibreil area of Herat City on June 9, the UN mission said that at least one person, a boy, was killed by gunfire, while



several others suffered injuries from being beaten with sticks. It is also verifying reports of a second fatality during the protests. "A woman's detention in Afghanistan carries enormous stigma, which can put women at risk of further violence and isolation in their families and communi-

ties even after they are released," said the Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan and Officer-in-Charge for UNAMA, Georgette Gagnon. "The de facto authorities are obliged under international law to uphold the rights of all Afghans to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, liberty and security of person, and freedom from arbitrary detention," Gagnon added. UNAMA reiterated that all law enforcement measures must comply with international legal standards, including the principles of necessity, proportionality, and non-discrimination in the use of force. It stressed the need for people to have the right to express dissent peacefully without fear of violence, intimidation, or reprisals. The UN mission further called on the Taliban authori-

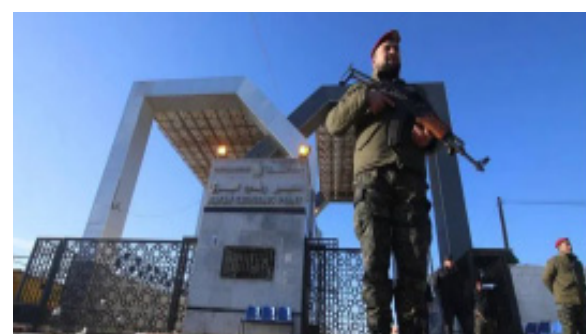
ties to revoke all policies and practices that restrict the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Afghan women and girls, including restrictions on freedom of movement, expression, education, employment, and participation in public life. The arrest of Afghan women and girls came after the Taliban's Directorate for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice in Herat issued a directive, which ordered male family members to ensure that women follow the Taliban's interpretation of Islamic dress requirements. According to the directive, women seen in public without a prayer veil, with uncovered faces, or wearing tight clothes or makeup could face detention and will be taken to a women's detention facility. The international community had condemned the detention of Afghan women and girls in Herat.

## Three injured in head-on collision between two cars in Ranga Reddy district

Hyderabad: At least three persons were injured in a head on collision between two cars at Ibrahimpatnam road in Ranga Reddy district on Thursday. The condition of one of the injured was stated to be critical. According to the police, the accident took place at Aghapally village on the Nagarjunasagar Road in the morning. Soon after the accident the local people gathered and shifted the injured people to hospital in 108 ambulance. The local police arrived at the spot and started investigation. The accident is attributed to overspeeding.

## Medical evacuation from Gaza ready as Rafah crossing reopens: UN office

United Nations: With the reopening of the Rafah crossing, UN humanitarian said medical evacuations of people seeking treatment outside Gaza are now ready to resume. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the Rafah crossing on the Egyptian border reopened for a limited number of people travelling in both directions after a two-day closure imposed by the Israeli authorities. Assistance was also offered to people returning to the Gaza Strip. The Kerem Shalom/Karem Abu Salem crossing also reopened for the transport of food and other humanitarian supplies. However, operations remain severely constrained as it is currently the only crossing point available for cargo, OCHA said in its latest situation update, reports Xinhua news agency. The World Food Program



me reached about 1.4 million people in the Gaza Strip last month with assistance, including food parcels, bread bundles, hot meals and malnutrition treatment. The agency also provided cash assistance to about 500,000 people, according to an update posted on its website. Palestinian armed elements backed by Israeli forces on Tuesday detained several Palestinians, including ambulance crew members from the Pales-

tine Red Crescent Society, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). In a post on the social media platform X, OHCHR urged Israel to ensure public order and safety in Gaza and to refrain from and prevent "such violations of international law, including the obstruction of medical services." In the West Bank, reports of violence by Israeli forces and settlers against Palestinians continue. OCHA said that from the beginning of the year through Monday, 57 Palestinians, including 13 children and two women, were killed across the West Bank. Of them, 41 were killed by Israeli forces, 13 by Israeli settlers and three by either Israeli forces or settlers. So far this year, OCHA has documented more than 980 settler-related incidents resulting in casualties or property damage across more than 230 communities, averaging six incidents per day. "The United Nations reiterates its call for the protection of civilians, including health-care workers, and full respect for international law," the humanitarian office said.

## Three missing Indian seafarers onboard MT Settebello confirmed dead: Sonowal



New Delhi: Three Indian seafarers onboard the Palau-flagged MT Settebello, initially reported missing, are now confirmed dead, Union Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said on Thursday after bodies were located and identified. It is deeply unfortunate to learn of the tragic incident aboard the Palau-flagged MT Settebello, Sonowal said in a social media post. "Sadly, three Indian seafarers initially reported missing are now confirmed dead after bodies have been located and identified," he added. The minister added that this is a "profound loss to our maritime family". "The Modi Govt stands firmly with the bereaved during this difficult hour and is fully committed to supporting the next of kin," he added. Sonowal said he has

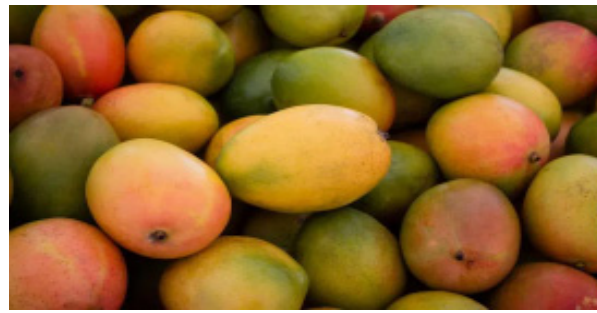
directed officials to ensure immediate repatriation of the rescued crew members and swift return of the mortal remains of the deceased for their final rites. India on Wednesday summoned the US charge d'affaires to strongly protest a US military attack on a commercial vessel off the Oman coast that left three of the 24 Indian crew members missing. The attack on commercial vessel Settebello came two days after a Palau-flagged vessel with 24 Indians came under attack of the US Navy as the ship tried to evade the US blockade of Iranian ports.

The US Central Command acknowledged the strike on the vessel, saying it violated the ongoing US blockade of the Iranian ports by attempting to transport oil from Iran.

## In a U-turn, Nepal says no ban on import of Indian mangoes

Kathmandu: In a U-turn, Nepal has said that it has not imposed a ban on the import of Indian mangoes and asserted that permission has been issued for the fruit's entry into the Nepalese market in response to demand and in accordance with certain regulations. The development came days after Nepalese officials said the government restricted the import of Indian mangoes that contained excessive pesticides and due to a lack of quarantine facilities in the border areas, mainly the Madhesh province. In a statement issued on Wednesday, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forest and Environment said that there are no restrictions on importing mangoes from India. The Plant Quarantine and Pesticide Management Centre under the ministry said its attention to the matter was drawn after reports regarding restrictions on Indian mangoes appeared in various media outlets and social media. The centre has not imposed any restrictions on the import of mangoes from India, and permission has been issued for the fruit's entry into the Nepalese market based on demand in pursuance of certain regulations, it said. A large consignment of mangoes from India was halted a few days ago at the Bhitamod Quarantine check post in Madhesh province due to suspected harmful pests in the fruits.

However, the consignment has now been released following the issuance of a plant health certificate from Indian authorities, said Manish Kumar Pal, spokesperson at the Ministry of Land



Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives of Madhesh Province. Bhuvaneshwar Purbe, general secretary of the Fruit and Vegetable Traders' Association in Janakpur, Madhesh province, earlier said halting Indian imports could lead to shortages in the domestic market. He had advised the government to strengthen quarantine systems and allow Indian fruits to enter the Nepalese market after proper quality testing, instead of imposing a complete import ban, according to The Rising Nepal daily. According to him, though over 50 tonnes of mangoes arrive from neighbouring districts in Janakpur, which is later supplied to Kathmandu and other parts of the country, the local production alone may not be sufficient to meet the entire demand. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forest and Environment also said that measures are being adopted to restrict the entry of plants infected with pests. The measures are taken under the Plant Quarantine and Protection Act 2064 Bikram Samvat in connection with the following bio-security measures, the statement said. Measures are being taken for Indian mangoes, such as passing them through hot water at up to 48 degrees Celsius for an hour, said the centre.

## Fresh setback to TMC as Rajya Sabha MP Prakash Baraik resigns from Upper House

New Delhi: Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha MP Prakash Chik Baraik resigned from the Upper House on Thursday, the third party MP to quit this week. Baraik met Rajya Sabha Chairman CP Radhakrishnan and submitted his resignation, sources said. In his resignation letter, the West Bengal MP wrote, "I do hereby resign from the membership of Rajya Sabha, which may please be accepted with immediate effect." He also thanked the chairman, deputy chairman and officials of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat for their cooperation during his tenure. A tribal leader from West Bengal, Baraik was serving as a member of the Parliament



tary Standing Committee on Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and the Consultative Committee on Tribal Affairs. His resignation comes amid a series of exits from the Trinamool Congress. On Monday, Rajya Sabha MP Sukhendu Sekhar Ray resigned from the Upper House and subsequently announced his

## Lalu Prasad celebrates birthday with family amid warm wishes from supporters

Patna: Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief and former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav celebrated his birthday with close family members at his residence in Patna, with photos and videos from the celebration quickly going viral on social media. The birthday celebrations began shortly after midnight, when family members gathered to cut a cake and extend greetings to the veteran leader. The event reflected a warm family atmosphere, drawing attention from party workers and supporters across Bihar. Former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav appeared especially emotional and enthusiastic during the celebrations. He personally had his father cut the cake, fed him a piece afterwards, and sought his blessings. Images from the occasion highlighted the close bond between the father and son. Among those present at the residence were former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi, Rajya Sabha member Misa Bharti, and Tejashwi Yadav's wife Rajshri Yadav. Family members wished Lalu Prasad Yadav good health and a long life during the celebration. Although Tej Pratap Yadav and Rohini Acharya were not physically present, they joined the family virtually through a video call during the



cake-cutting ceremony and conveyed their birthday greetings online. Both Tej Pratap Yadav and Rohini Acharya had shared emotional messages on social media expressing their affection and respect for their father. Lalu Prasad Yadav's daughter, Rohini Acharya, captured public attention by sharing an emotional message on her father's birthday. Posting a picture with him, she wrote that no one else could take her father's place in her life. She stated that Lalu Yadav held her hand at every step, taught her how to get back up after falling, and stood by her like a shield during every difficult time. Supporters of the RJD leader also flooded social media platforms with birthday wishes, prayers, and messages celebrating Lalu Prasad Yadav's political legacy and wishing him continued good health.

## Niti Aayog Governing Council meeting begins under PM's chairmanship

New Delhi: Niti Aayog's 11th Governing Council meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, began here on Thursday to deliberate on the government's approach for inclusive human development with the goal to attain the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. "Chairing the 11th meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog," PM Modi said in a social media post. "Guided by the spirit of cooperative federalism, we are working together to accelerate India's development journey. The collective efforts of the Centre and States will play a pivotal role in realising our shared vision of Viksit Bharat," he added. The Council will take up the 'Inclusive Human Development Framework', anchored around four core pillars — foundational human capital and future-ready skills; productive employment, entrepreneurship



and decentralised growth; health, nutrition and wellbeing; and equity and dignity for all, an official statement had said. Measures to promote entrepreneurship, enhance skilling, and create sustainable employment opportunities across the country will also be discussed, it had said. The governing council will also focus on the recommendations of the 5th National Conference of Chief Secretaries held during December 26-28, 2025. Generally, the meeting of the entire council happens every year. Last year, it was held on May 24.

## RBI likely to reopen licensing window for urban co-operative banks: Report

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is likely to revive the issuance of fresh licences for urban co-operative banks (UCBs), a move that would end a two-decade pause on new entrants in the sector, according to a report. According to a report in NDTV Profit — citing sources — the central bank is expected to approve fresh licences for UCBs, a practice it had discontinued in 2004. The development comes after the RBI released a discussion paper in January seek-

ing feedback on whether it should resume granting licences to urban co-operative banks. The RBI has received positive responses to the proposal, with industry participants supporting the move while also suggesting that the proposed minimum capital requirement of Rs 300 crore be reduced, the report said. It further noted that regulatory oversight and supervisory standards for urban co-operative banks have improved significantly since 2004, giving the central bank greater comfort in considering the resumption of licensing. In its discussion paper, the RBI outlined several potential benefits of allowing new UCBs to enter the sector.

These included stronger supervisory mechanisms, enhanced financial inclusion, improved financial health of co-operative banks and support from the umbrella organisation for the sector in areas such as capital, technology and knowledge-sharing. Meanwhile, the paper highlighted a number of challenges, including difficulties in raising capital, limited incentives for investors due to the face-value entry and exit framework for shareholders, governance concerns, technological limitations and the relatively small contribution of UCBs to the overall banking system.

## Kriti Kharbanda's witty remark on viral 370 biryani controversy: Inflation is temporary, delusion is forever

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Kriti Kharbanda, who was recently seen in the 2nd season of the streaming show 'Rana Naidu', has reacted to the ongoing controversy surrounding offensive remarks of an audience member during comedian Pranit More's stand-up gig. The actress recently took to the Stories section of her Instagram, and shared a picture of herself, and made a sharp remark against the person, who used objectionable language against the female members of society. Offering her share of criticism, the actress said that while inflation is temporary, delusion is forever. She wrote on the picture, "Manifesting (Not) the confidence of someone who treats ₹370 like venture capital. Inflation is temporary. Delusion is forever". The actress' post quickly travelled on the Internet, with netizens linking it to the controversial crowd-work clip from comedian Pranit More's show that recently sparked outrage online. Although Kriti did not directly mention the controversy or any individual in her story, social media users were quick to connect the dots because of the timing and wording of her post. Her witty one-liner, especially the com-



parison of INR 370 to "venture capital". was widely interpreted as a sarcastic take on the discourse dominating the internet. The controversy started when an audience member claimed that he spent INR 370 on chicken biryani for a woman on a date, and he was entitled to "recover" his money, heavily implying he was owed physical intimacy. The now-viral incident has triggered widespread criticism and conversations around misogyny and consent. Several celebrities and public figures have already reacted strongly to the controversy over the last few days. Actors like Ayesha Khan and Rashami Desai publicly criticised the viral remarks, while even Mumbai Police joined the online conversation with a social media awareness post around consent.

## Ananya Panday enjoys peaceful getaway with meditation, ayurveda and sound therapy

Mumbai: Actress Ananya Panday on Thursday took to social media to share a glimpse of her peaceful four-day wellness retreat focused on relaxation, healing, and self-care. The 'Student of the Year 2' actress revealed that her time away included meditation, morning walks



in nature, Ayurvedic massages, and various holistic therapies such as sound healing, aqua therapy, and acupuncture. Ananya also mentioned spending time learning more about her body through both clinical and ayurvedic approaches, along with reading, enjoying nature, and spending quiet time to unwind. Taking to Instagram, she posted a series of her images and wrote, "four relaxing days filled with meditation, morning walks in the green, ayurvedic massages, oxygen therapy, yummiest food, clinical + ayurvedic knowledge about my body, aqua therapy, sound therapy in the worlds largest sonorium, some cute doggies, acupuncture, my fave reading and alone time and so much more." Also Read - Kriti Kharbanda's witty remark on viral 370 biryani controversy: Inflation is temporary, delusion is forever Advertisement Discover more Entertainment News Digest Hyderabad City News political In the images, Ananya could be seen striking

candid and happy poses for the camera. She also gave a glimpse of the serene surroundings of the place by sharing visuals of the peaceful and calming environment where she spent her wellness retreat. On the professional front, Ananya Panday was recently seen in the film "Chand Mera Dil," which was directed by Vivek Soni. The film, which also starred Lakshya Lalwani, explored a love story between two college students whose relationship is tested as they step into adulthood and begin to deal with new responsibilities. Movies Daughter of veteran actor Chunky Panday, Ananya made her debut in 2019 with romantic comedy "Student of the Year 2." She also appeared in "Pati Patni Aur Woh," and "Dream Girl 2." On the digital front, she has received appreciation for her performances in projects like "Gehraiyaan," "Kho Gaye Hum Kahan," "CTRL," and the series "Call Me Bae." She was last seen in the role of a lawyer in the courtroom drama "Kesari Chapter 2."

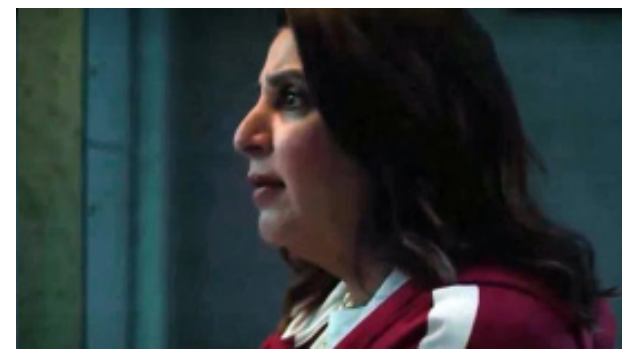
## Badshah's wife Isha Rikhi shares first official husband-wife pic after fans pressurise her for answers

Mumbai: Punjabi actress Isha Rikhi has finally put months of speculation to rest by confirming her marriage to rapper-singer Badshah by sharing their first official picture together as husband and wife. During an AMA session on her social media account, she was flooded with questions from curious fans on social media demanding her for answers on her marriage with the rapper. During an interactive 'Ask Me Anything' session, Isha found herself answering many questions related to her personal life, particularly

her relationship with Badshah. Fans were seen repeatedly questioning why the couple was not following each other on Instagram and why she had never posted a picture with him despite reports of their marriage circulating for months. Sharing a screenshot of one such question, a fan asked, "Why u haven't post any picture with Badshah your husband, U r his wife not even a single pic." Soon after, Isha shared what appears to be the couple's first official post-marriage picture. In the picture, the actress is seen sitting on

## Farah Khan on 'Lock Upp': No filters, retakes, just famous people attempting to reveal their true selves

Mumbai: Filmmaker-choreographer-Youtuber Farah Khan, who will be seen hosting Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa alongside Riteish Deshmukh, has said that the upcoming reality show has no filters, retakes, just famous people attempting to reveal their true selves under pressure. Farah Khan said: "Across my career, I've seen a lot, but Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa is a different beast. No filters, no retakes, just famous people attempting to reveal their true selves, under real pressure. That's where the asli entertainment begins." "Riteish and I have very different styles, which makes this chaos even more fun. If you think you've seen drama before, think again... Netflix has ensured this is drama ka bhi baap." A collaboration between Netflix and Ekta Kapoor's Balaji Telefilms Ltd, Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa pushes contestants beyond performance into unfiltered reactions. Riteish said: "What makes Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa engaging is that it's a reflection of the times we live in, and that can be both fun and fascinating." "Every contestant enters with their truth and a strategy, but inside Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa, everything gets tested. Farah and I will have a front-row seat to every twist, conflict, and revelation. One thing is certain: nobody walks out the same." Hosted by Riteish and Farah as the formidable 'Jailers', Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa places 14 well-known personalities as 'inmates' inside a controlled, high-pressure jail unlike anything seen before in Indian reality entertainment. Cut off from the outside world, stripped of comforts, and



subjected to increasingly challenging tasks, the inmates must navigate shifting alliances and difficult choices.

Ekta said: "I've always believed great entertainment isn't just watched – it's talked about, debated, and impossible to ignore. Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa was created to spark exactly those kinds of conversations, and this partnership with Netflix takes that energy to a truly global stage. And if the inmates think they'll have it easy, they clearly haven't met our Jailers yet." Tanya Bami, Series Head, Netflix India, said, "As we ramp up our Unscripted slate, we are excited to bring forward our headlining series for the year – Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa, a bold disruptive and thrilling show to our audiences. We're excited to introduce a show that not only entertains but also sparks conversation and reflects the complexity of human behavior under pressure." "Captive reality is a genre we have been keen to dive into and Lock Upp stands out as a concept we have been very excited about bringing to Netflix. Ekta created something differentiated and memorable and together we have adapted this much loved format for our members." "Lock Upp: Sach ya Sazaa" will stream on Netflix from June 27.

## Vir Das unveils cast for psychological horror film 'Baara Number'

Mumbai: Actor-comedian-filmmaker Vir Das has roped in Sheeba Chaddha, Arunoday Singh, Ahsaas Channa and Atul Kulkarni, among others, for his next directorial venture "Baara Number", a found-footage psychological horror film. Das made his directorial debut earlier this year with the spy comedy "Happy Patel: Khatarnak Jasoos" earlier this year. For the new project, he will once again collaborate with "Happy Patel" co-director Kavi Shastri, who will serve as a creative producer. Das will also lead the film's cast that also includes Niharika Lyra Dutt, Shriya Pilgaonkar, Suhail Nayyar, Puja Sarup and Naveen Kaushik, according to a press release. "What made this project especially exciting was bringing together a group of actors whose work I've admired for years. Sheeba, Atul, Arunoday, Shriya, Ahsaas, Niharika, Suhail and Naveen each bring a distinct energy, intelligence and authenticity to the film. "Horror works best when audiences believe every moment is real, and this ensemble has elevated the material beyond anything I imagined when we first started writing it," Das said in a statement. "Baara Number" is positioned as a found-footage horror narrative that aims to go beyond conventional genre tropes, weaving psychological depth with atmospheric storytelling. Found-footage horror is a genre popularised globally by films such as "The Blair Witch Project" and "Paranormal Activity". In such movies, the narrative presents events through the lens of cameras and takes the form of a raw, documentary-like quality that heightens suspense and realism. The film, which has been in development for some time, is said to explore both external tension and internal human emotions. Das, known for featuring in movies such as "Delhi Belly", "Go Goa Gone" and series "Call Me Bae", will produce "Baara Number" through his banner Zazu Productions.



Badshah's lap while hugging him affectionately. Responding to the growing curiosity, Isha wrote, "I'm officially being flooded with questions like, 'Are you married?', 'Are you married to Badshah?', 'Why don't you follow each other?' and 'Why don't you post pictures together?'" She then confirmed the rumours once and for all, writing, "Yes, I am married." Addressing the most frequently asked question regarding their social media activity, the actress said, "Now, coming to the most asked question: Why don't you follow each other? Honestly, I think my husband owes all of you an explanation. Pati Dev (Badshah), the audience has questions. Please address them as soon as possible,"



adding a laughing emoticon. The discussion gained traction after Badshah had shared a series of romantic photographs and wedding pictures featuring a mystery woman on social media. While neither of them had publicly addressed their relationship until now, Isha chose to set the record straight during the interactive session on her social media account.

## English cricket has quickly found itself in another mess. Ben Stokes is in the middle of it

London: Having just dealt with a shambolic Ashes tour featuring reports of excessive drinking and unprofessionalism, the England and Wales Cricket Board is fighting another fire just one week into the international summer. This time, the captain is at the heart of it all. Ben Stokes, for so long the face of the English game, has been dropped from the test team after breaking a curfew he helped to draw up himself by going on a night out with teammate Gus Atkinson to celebrate a victory over New Zealand in the first match of the series on Sunday. Stokes' precise involvement in what the ECB is describing as an "incident" after midnight in a London nightclub isn't fully clear. What is clear, however, is that his presence there has left England's leadership group in another sticky situation — just when they were looking to show they had learnt their lesson. Why was English cricket in a rebuilding phase? This summer was supposed to be a reset for England after an Ashes tour Down Under that was humiliating on and off the field.

Not only did England lose 4-1, the team's players came under scrutiny for their lack of professionalism — notably because of its apparent drinking culture. A video emerged appearing to show Ben Duckett disorientated and unable to remember how to get back to the hotel. Another video on social media showed batter Jacob Bethell dancing in a club. England was 2-0 down in the series by then. When the embarrassing tour was over, Harry Brook apologized for clashing with a nightclub bouncer during a short tour of New Zealand that preceded the Ashes. Brook, England's test vice captain and skipper of the ODI and T20 teams, was hit by the bouncer after being denied entry to the club.

No one from the leadership team — Stokes, coach Brendon McCullum and director of cricket Rob Key — lost their jobs following the post-Ashes review, with ECB chief executive Richard Gould saying: "I've seen the driving ambition and determination we're lucky enough to have within our leadership group to take the lessons from the Ashes." Stokes' night out with Atkinson. One of the decisions taken after the Ashes was to reimpose a midnight curfew on players and staff around games that was dropped in 2022. It didn't take long for that to be broken, by the captain of all people. Stokes said in his post-match news conference after beating New Zealand at Lord's that "I won't be really happy until I get to share a beer with the boys."

That was early on Sunday afternoon. It seems he stayed out until after midnight and ended up with Atkinson in a club, where a member of England's security staff was reportedly struck — and left bloodied and in need of medical attention, according to the BBC — by a rugby player from English club Saracens



who was also out that night. The ECB said in a statement on Monday that it was "investigating a breach of team protocols" and Stokes and Atkinson "were present at a nightclub in the early hours of Monday morning when an incident took place." On Wednesday, they were both dropped for the second test, amid reports that Stokes was weighing up his test future.

### Where does it leave England?

For starters, without its inspirational captain. England has chosen not to give the captaincy to Brook — just imagine the line of questioning in his first news conference as the team leader, given his recent disciplinary history — and instead reverted back to Joe Root, a safe pair of hands in many senses. However, in a crisis, Root is a solid choice to lean on. The ECB stressed he was "interim captain," suggesting this wouldn't be a long-term solution. It also leaves England without a bowler in Atkinson who cleaned up New Zealand's second innings with figures of 5-30 to clinch a hard-earned victory. Jofra Archer comes into the squad in his place having missed the first test while he was recuperating in Barbados after the Indian Premier League.

And what about Stokes? That's the big question now. A slew of former England captains — Michael Vaughan, Michael Atherton, Nasser Hussain — have all said what the 35-year-old Stokes has done is misguided but shouldn't be a sackable offense, and that they hope he stays on in the role. There is a home Ashes series in 2027, which Stokes may view as a chance at redemption after last winter. It also gives him a year to regain some batting form after a dip over the past couple of years that has seen him make one century and two fifties in 23 test innings since November 2024. Stokes is an England great, the key player in the country's 50-over and T20 World Cup-winning teams from 2019 and 2022, and someone with 121 tests to his name. Hussain said Stokes will be going through some dark times and believes he'll be asking himself if he has any more to give. "I also have the feeling," Hussain said on the Sky Sports Cricket Podcast, "that in a few years' time, if you look back and say, Why did Ben Stokes retire from the game of cricket? Why did one of our great leaders and captains and players retire? Because he broke a curfew that he himself set? I think that would be sad and not the right way to go out."

## BCCI announces India Women's U-19 squads for Sri Lanka series

Hyderabad: The BCCI women's selection committee has picked the India Women's U19 squads for the upcoming IDFC First Bank Sri Lanka Women's U19 Tour of India. The tour will comprise three T20 matches and three One-Day matches. India Women's U19 T20 squad: Bhavika Ahire (C) (WK), Ira Jadhav, Tanishka Sharma, Ishwari Awasare, Avni Chawda, Mahto Nidhi, Purva Siwach, Kumari Palak, Mahak Narwase (VC), Kashvi Kandikuppa, Maniar Maitri, Gouri Goyal, Janvi Vikar, Anaadi Tagde, K Deeksha (WK) India Women's U19 one-day squad: Bhavika Ahire (C) (WK), Ira Jadhav, Deeya Yadav, Ishwari Awasare,



V Pratiksha, Mahto Nidhi, Purva Siwach, Kumari Palak, Mahak Narwase (VC), Kashvi Kandikuppa, Vidhi Parmar, Gouri Goyal, Janvi Vikar, Anaadi Tagde, K Deeksha (WK).

## Rohit, Kohli's experience will be invaluable for Gill at 2027 World Cup: Suresh Raina



New Delhi: Former India batter Suresh Raina touched upon the importance of ODI skipper Shubman Gill having veterans Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma's experience by his side in the 2027 World Cup, saying, "The presence of experience from the two veterans can make all the difference." Kohli and Rohit, who have retired from T20I and Test cricket, remain exclusively active in ODIs. During the 2019 ODI World Cup, Rohit was the top scorer with 648 runs in nine games at an average of 81.00 with five hundreds and a half-century. He also became the first batsman in World Cup history to score five centuries in a single edition.

In the 2023 edition, Kohli was the leading run-scorer, amassing a historic 765 runs in 11 innings. Sachin Tendulkar's record (673 runs) for most runs in a single edition. Kohli was named the Player of the Tournament. "Physical and mental preparation will be key for Virat Kohli. He looks very strong in white-ball cricket. The same goes for Rohit Sharma. Both are proven run-scorers in ICC World Cups. Rohit topped the run charts in 2019, and Virat did the same in 2023. They have also won ICC trophies, which adds immense value to their leadership and presence. They know how to handle pressure in knockout games. They have been there, done that," Raina said on JioStar. "Experience matters in big tournaments. The young batters around them will benefit from their guidance. For Shubman Gill, captaining India in a World Cup, having Rohit and Virat alongside him will be a huge advantage. Their ex-

perience will be invaluable on and off the field. In a high-pressure tournament like the World Cup, that kind of presence can make all the difference," he added.

Meanwhile, former spinner and coach Anil Kumble praised Gill for not letting the captaincy affect his batting. "Shubman Gill is a very experienced captain. We have seen it in the IPL, he has rotated his bowlers well, used his spinners at the right time, and handled pressure situations with clarity. His form with the bat has not dipped. Sometimes, when players take up the captaincy role, they go through a dip in form. That is not the case with Shubman. He does not let the pressure of captaincy affect his batting. What helps him is the presence of experienced players around him. "The Indian ODI team is very strong. Having players like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma on the field helps him read the game better. They can guide him with field placements, bowling changes, and key tactical decisions. Shreyas Iyer is now the T20I captain, and he can share his inputs as well. So, Shubman doesn't have to carry the burden alone. He has the right mindset and the right people around him to succeed," he said. India will play three ODIs against Afghanistan from June 13 in Dharamsala, followed by fixtures in Lucknow (June 17) and Chennai (June 20). However, Kohli has been ruled out of the upcoming three-ODI series against Afghanistan after injuring his hamstring during Royal Challengers Bengaluru's run to the IPL 2026 title last week. Yashasvi Jaiswal has replaced him in the squad.

## Sunit Chowrasia takes two-shot lead at DP World PGTI NexGen event

Hyderabad: The 31-year-old Sunit Chowrasia of Kolkata fired a bogey-free eight-under 62 to surge into a two-shot lead after round two of the inaugural Rs 25 lakh DP World PGTI NexGen Vijay Kumar Memorial being played at Lucknow Golf Club. Sunit (70-62), the nephew of Indian golfing legend SSP Chawrasia, who had shot an opening round of 70, climbed from tied 13th to the top of the leaderboard with a total score of eight-under 132. The Kolkata golfer, currently sixth on the DP World PGTI NexGen Order of Merit, produced the lowest round of the tournament with eight birdies and no bogeys on Wednesday. Overnight leader Abhishek Kumar (65-69) of Panchkula slipped to second place at six-under 134 after carding a second successive bogey-free round of one-under 69. Chowrasia, winner of the last NexGen event, the Alpha Sports Academy Golf Championship hosted by Patna Golf Club, started his round from the par-4 ninth in the shotgun format. He picked up three birdies on his opening nine before catching fire on his second nine, where he added five more birdies, including four consecutive gains from the third through the sixth hole. Sunit, now



looking to win back-to-back titles on the NexGen Tour, said, "I got off to a steady start and was three-under through my first nine holes. The momentum really picked up on the second nine where I made four consecutive birdies from the third to the sixth," Sunit said. "I kept the ball in play, gave myself plenty of opportunities and was able to convert the chances I created." The 24-year-old Abhishek Kumar, who won the season-opening NexGen event in Faridabad, currently ranks fourth on the Order of Merit. Abhishek admitted patience was crucial on a day when he frequently had to recover from difficult positions.

## Gold, silver prices fall up to 2 pc amid West Asia tensions

Mumbai: Gold and silver prices traded lower on Thursday, with precious metals falling by up to 2 per cent amid escalating tensions in the West Asia conflict. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures (August) declined as much as 1 per cent or Rs 1,573 to hit an intraday low of Rs 1,46,444 as of around 12 pm. The yellow metal was trading at Rs 1,47,860, down 0.11 per cent or Rs 157. It touched an intraday high of Rs 1,48,089, up 0.04 per cent or Rs 72 from the previous close. On the other hand, silver futures (July) were trading at Rs 2,34,500, down Rs 1,005 or 0.43 per cent. The white metal touched an intraday low of Rs 2,30,493, declining 2.12 per cent during the session so far.

It recorded an intraday high of Rs 2,35,402, down 0.04 per cent or Rs 103 from the previous close. Earlier in the day, gold and silver opened at Rs 1,46,518 and Rs 2,31,671, respectively, on the MCX. In international markets, precious metals also remained under pressure. COMEX silver was trading at \$63.90, down over 1.29 per cent, while COMEX gold was trading 0.68 per cent lower at \$4,105.30 per ounce. According to commodity analysts, precious metals remained under pressure as investors assessed the latest developments in the West



Asia conflict. Gold stabilised near multi-month lows after the US military confirmed the completion of its latest strikes on Iran, raising expectations that diplomatic negotiations could resume. They said easing safe-haven demand, coupled with expectations that US interest rates could remain higher for longer, weighed on bullion prices. Higher interest rates reduce the appeal of non-yielding assets such as gold and silver. Market participants also continued to monitor inflationary pressures stemming from rising energy prices and their potential impact on the US Federal Reserve's policy path. Meanwhile, crude oil prices surged sharply, with Brent crude rising over 2 per cent to trade near \$95 per barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude climbed 4 per cent to \$93.64 per barrel.

## Sensex, Nifty fall in early trade as US-Iran tensions and rising oil prices weigh on markets



Mumbai: Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early deals on Thursday, tracking weak trends in global equities and rising crude oil prices amid escalating tensions between the US and Iran. Unabated foreign fund outflows and a spike in US inflation also dented markets' sentiment, according to market analysts. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 358.54 points to 73,624.64 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 117 points to 23,098.30. From the 30-Sensex firms, HCL Tech, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, Eternal and Trent were among the laggards. Power Grid, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel and InterGlobe Aviation were among the winners. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 1.70 per cent higher at USD 94.68 per barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,124.98 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data. "Fresh military action by the United States against Iranian targets has reignited concerns over the stability of the Middle East, raising fears that recent diplomatic efforts may be losing momentum and increasing the risk of a broader regional conflict," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth-tech firm, said. Adding to the cautious mood, the latest

US inflation data, while broadly in line with market expectations, showed consumer prices rising to their highest level in three years, he added. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index quoted lower. US markets ended significantly lower on Wednesday. "Wall Street witnessed a sharp correction overnight, with the Dow Jones falling over 950 points. The weakness was broad-based as investors moved away from risk assets amid fears that escalating geopolitical tensions could disrupt energy markets and keep inflationary pressures elevated," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder, Livelong Wealth, said. Asian markets are reflecting a similar sentiment this morning, he said. "For Indian markets, the biggest concern remains crude oil. Rising oil prices not only threaten India's inflation trajectory but also add pressure on the fiscal balance, corporate margins and the rupee," Hariprasad added. On Wednesday, the Sensex trimmed most of its intraday gains during the fag-end of trading and settled 64.42 points, or 0.09 per cent, higher at 73,983.18. The Nifty, however, dipped 27.15 points, or 0.12 per cent, to end at 23,214.95.

## Eros Innovation unveils mythology-inspired cinematic universe at London Tech Week

Hyderabad: Eros Innovation on Tuesday announced a slate of new content initiatives centred on Indian mythology, film franchises and restored classics, alongside a £265 million (about Rs. 3,000 crore) investment commitment in the United Kingdom over the next five years. The announcement was made during London Tech Week, where the company unveiled three major programmes: Eros Brahmand, a mythology-inspired cinematic universe; Eros Universe, which seeks to expand popular Indian film titles into new franchise stories; and Eros Remastered, a programme aimed at reviving classic films for contemporary audiences. According to the company, it has also licensed a cultural dataset valued at USD 1.7 billion by OxValue.AI in association with the University of Oxford. At the centre of the announcement is Eros Brahmand, a mythology-based cinematic universe comprising nine original titles: Nandi – War of Kailasa, Dwaarka: Gateway to the Universe, Vimaan Wars, Mahabharat 5000 A.D., Yakshinis, Brahmarakshak, Garuda, Kumbhayanna and Mansa Devi. The company said the initiative seeks to reinterpret Indian mythology and folklore through a modern cinematic approach. Under Eros Universe, six existing film properties will be expanded into new stories and character-driven franchises. The titles identified for expansion include Tanu Weds Manu, Phobia, English Vinglish, Desi Boyz, Rangeela and Tere Naam. The company said these stories will be developed across films, animation projects, microdramas and other formats. The third initiative, Eros Remastered, will begin with



the restoration and reimaging of Kochadaiyaan, the 2014 film starring Rajinikanth and widely recognised as India's first motion-capture feature film. The project will be overseen by filmmaker Soundarya Rajinikanth, who directed the original film. Eros Innovation said its planned £265 million investment in the UK would support the development of AI-powered music studios in London, microdrama production infrastructure, animation capabilities, and Large Cultural Model (LCM) training and research initiatives in collaboration with British academic institutions. The company also outlined plans for a Global Cultural Exchange framework aimed at enabling collaboration among creators, institutions, archives and cultural ecosystems while maintaining data sovereignty, rights protection and local governance standards. London is expected to play a key role in the proposed initiative.

## TCS partners with Anthropic, to enable 50,000 employees to use Claude AI



New Delhi: Indian IT giant Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Thursday announced a global strategic partnership with US-based AI firm Anthropic and said it will enable 50,000 associates across functions to use Claude as part of its enterprise-wide AI adoption strategy. According to TCS, it will set up a dedicated business unit to deliver joint industry solutions and deep AI expertise on the Claude family of models through early access to Claude models. It further noted that the partnership aims to move AI projects beyond pilots in regulated industries. "Combining TCS' governance, controls and implementation expertise will enable enterprises to deploy Claude confidently in production, not just in experimentation," the IT firm said. Combining scaled internal deployment, joint go-to-market offerings, industry co-innovation, and workforce enablement, the partnership gives clients a practical path to enterprise-wide adoption and measurable outcomes, the company added. The partnership also extends to TCS products, platforms and domain specific solutions. Diligenta, TCS's FCA-regulated life and pensions business in the UK, serving over 22 million life and pensions customers,

will use Claude to improve customer experience through agentic process transformation at scale. Further, BFSI products and platforms teams will leverage Claude Code to enhance productivity in software engineering and IT operations. TCS will also bring its domain-led engineering expertise to the Claude Code ecosystem through reusable skills and plugins, including capabilities such as claims adjudication and lending advisory. "Enterprise AI value comes from understanding business context, orchestrating complex systems, and applying deep AI engineering talent," said K. Krithivasan, CEO and MD, TCS. The partnership will help customers move faster to production, especially in industries where trust, resilience, and regulatory discipline are critical, he added. Dario Amodei, co-founder and CEO, Anthropic, said that the partnership deepens the company's commitment to India, its second-largest market. "By combining Anthropic's capabilities with Tata Group's scale, trusted relationships, and nation-building commitment, we will accelerate enterprise reinvention and equip India's youth with the skills to lead in the AI era," said N Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons.

## Jagan demands CBI probe into irregularities in DSC exam, recruitment

Amaravati: Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party President Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy alleged large-scale irregularities in the Mega District Selection Committee (DSC) exam and recruitment process and demanded a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Addressing a press conference on Thursday, he said that all the facts coming to light regarding the Mega DSC for recruitment of teachers are extremely shocking. He alleged that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's government has betrayed the trust of lakhs of candidates through scams, severely damaging the lives of talented aspirants. The former CM claimed that such a disastrous recruitment process was never witnessed anywhere. Stating that DSC represents the hopes and future of lakhs of youth, he said resorting to corruption and irregularities even in such a recruitment process was highly deplorable. "If lies, deceit, betrayal, backstabbing, and scams were dressed in a shirt and pants,

that would be Chandrababu Naidu," he remarked. Jagan Mohan Reddy reminded Chandrababu Naidu that Gen Z is watching all the irregularities. "Remember Chandrababu, this is Gen Z. Gen Alpha is also coming. If you cause trouble instead of admitting your mistakes, cockroaches will rise," he said. "We are also cockroaches in the state of Andhra Pradesh," he remarked when asked about the Janata Cockroach Party launched through an online movement after the leak of the NEET paper. The former CM said if youth are hurt, they will take up such an approach. YS Jagan said the issue of DSC irregularities should be highlighted in the June 12 protest 'Vennupotuku Rendellu' (two years of betrayal) planned to mark two years of TDP-led coalition government. The YSRCP chief gave details of alleged irregularities from the question paper to recruitment and said Chandrababu Naidu's governance was laden with leaks and corruption since 1995. "Lakhs of



aspirants had worked hard for the 16,000 posts, but the process is filled with irregularities. Videos have surfaced that the posts were for sale," he said. He claimed that the flaw began with the Chandrababu Naidu government sidelining the DSC Convener and entrusting both question paper preparation and examination management to the SCERT Director, concentrating key responsibilities in a single authority and allegedly undermining transparency in the recruitment process. He said details like how many had access to the question paper and how much money changed hands will come out only if a third-party agency investigates the issue. He said that the merit list was not displayed at district level, which is the norm, but was

centralised in the name of an online procedure. "Making a big mockery of the DSC, Chandrababu Government has issued GOs stating that under sports quota candidates need not write the qualifying exam and just participation is enough for the job and opened the gates to accommodate their favoured people. The participation certificates were given by TDP MLAs and MPs certifying that they participated in College, University and district-level competitions and secured jobs. On the other hand, genuine candidates and National Games gold medalists who were called for the interview did not get the job. In all, 270 persons got jobs in Sports quota without writing the qualifying exam," he said. The former CM claimed that while Chandrababu Naidu's governance is always found wanting when it comes to conduct of exams, YSRCP has the distinction of flawless recruitment of 1.30 lakh staff in a record time of four months from notification to issuance of job letters. "Chandrababu is the accused in this case along with his son Lokesh, who is the Education Minister, and if he sits in judgement, there would be no justice, which is the reason why we are demanding a CBI inquiry," he added.

## TDP, Jana Sena candidates to be elected unanimous for RS, official announcement awaited

It seems four candidates from the TDP and Jana Sena parties have been elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha from Andhra Pradesh. With the deadline for the withdrawal of nominations having passed and only four candidates remaining in the fray for the four available seats, their election is considered a certainty. Sana Satish, Bashyam Ramakrishna, and Chintakayala Vijay filed nominations representing the TDP, while Lingamaneni Ramesh filed on behalf of Jana Sena. Since only these four candidates remained in the contest, their election is effectively confirmed. Returning Officer Vanitha Rani is set to officially hand over the certificates of election (Form-22) to the successful candidates shortly. The Election Commission of India had announced the election schedule on June 1 for Rajya Sabha seats across 10 states, including Andhra Pradesh. According to the schedule, elections for a total of 27



Rajya Sabha seats were to be held on June 18. The terms of 24 Rajya Sabha members are set to expire during June and July. Additionally, by-elections were required for three other seats that had fallen vacant before the completion of the incumbents' terms. National Politics Updates The Commission had announced that nominations would be accepted from June 1 to June 8, with the scrutiny of nominations scheduled for the 9th and the deadline for withdrawal set for the 11th. The Election Commission stated that the entire election process would be concluded by June 20.

## Major accident averted after Molten steel spill at Vizag Steel Plant



Major accident averted after Molten steel spill at Vizag Steel Plant. Another incident has occurred at the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant as Molten steel spilled onto the floor from a ladle at the Argon Rinsing Station within the SMS-1 (Steel Melting Shop-1) unit. Fortunately, a major disaster was averted as no one was present in the area at the time. The incident reportedly took place around 5:30 AM on Thursday. Staff were alerted when the molten steel, which is at an extremely high

temperature, suddenly spilled out of the ladle.

A major tragedy was narrowly avoided because no workers or staff were in the vicinity; otherwise, there could have been a significant loss of life. Following the incident, plant safety personnel and technical experts immediately arrived at the scene and brought the situation under control. An inquiry into the cause of the molten steel leak is reportedly underway.

## APSDMA issues rain alert to AP amid surface trough in Bay of Bengal

Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority MD Prakhar Jain stated that rains accompanied by lightning are likely in several districts of the state on Thursday. Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority MD Prakhar Jain stated that rains accompanied by lightning are likely in several districts of the state on Thursday due to a trough extending from the central Bay of Bengal to Karnataka, Coastal Andhra, and Telangana. He mentioned that light to moderate rains with lightning are expected in the Markapuram and Rayalaseema regions. Hyderabad City News He added that light rains accompanied by lightning might occur in isolated areas across the districts of Alluri Sitarama Raju, West Godavari, Eluru,



Krishna, NTR, Guntur, Bapatla, Palnadu, Prakasam, and Nellore. He noted that by 5 PM on Wednesday, rainfall of 72.5 mm was recorded in Garikipalem and 64.5 mm in Laveru, both in Srikakulam district. Meanwhile, he revealed that a maximum temperature of 44.3 degrees Celsius was recorded in Makavarapalem (Anakapalli district) and Kovvur (East Godavari district).

## Kurnool ZP proposes reservoirs, orders crackdown on low-hanging power lines

Kurnool/Nandyal: Kurnool Zilla Parishad Chairman Errabothula Papireddy has emphasized that the construction of reservoirs is the only sustainable and permanent solution to the persistent drinking water crisis in the western parts of the erstwhile Kurnool district and other vulnerable regions. Addressing the ZP General Body Meeting held on Wednesday, he noted that despite the availability of water from the Tungabhadra and Penna rivers, inadequate storage infrastructure continues to result in recurring drinking and irrigation water shortages. He called for collective action by officials, MLAs, MLCs, and ZP members to formulate long-term proposals for submission to the government in the form of a resolution. He instructed the Rural Water Supply Department to ensure the proper functioning of mother water plants and RO systems across eight fluoride-affected mandals in Kurnool and Nandyal districts. He also cautioned that ongoing NH-167K highway works could disrupt existing drinking water pipelines and insisted that alternative arrangements must be completed before any removal of infrastructure. Stressing the need for water conservation and scientific storage planning, he highlighted concerns over groundwater depletion and fluoride contamination and urged immediate attention to long-term solutions. On the elec-



tricity front, the Chairman expressed concern over low-hanging and unsafe power lines leading to frequent accidents involving people, livestock, and heavy vehicles. He directed officials to strictly follow safety norms, repair hazardous installations on priority, and ensure timely compensation to families of electricity accident victims. He also underlined the need to strengthen government school infrastructure, including sanitation, drinking water, and toilets, while intensifying efforts to improve Class 10 pass percentages through targeted academic interventions. District Collectors of Kurnool and Nandyal Dr A Siri and G Raja Kumari assured that all issues raised during the meeting would be addressed promptly in coordination with concerned departments. They reviewed progress in agricultural dry sowing, CPWS drinking water schemes, and solar rooftop initiatives under net-zero waste programmes in schools and hostels. The Collectors also outlined proposals for infrastructure development, including bridge construction under MGNREGA, seasonal hostels for migrant children, and accelerated recruitment of assistant engineers in the electricity department.