

Pawan Kalyan directs officials to use drones as wild elephants threaten villages in Tirupati

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Forest and Environment, Pawan Kalyan, on Sunday directed Forest Department officials to use drones to monitor the movement of a herd of elephants roaming near Erravaripalem, close to Chandragiri in Tirupati district. He asked the department to alert and reassure the public and continuously monitor the elephants' movements. He told officials to identify their paths using drones and keep residents of nearby



See 2nd page

Pawan skips 'At Home' event due to high fever

Amaravati: Deputy Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan skipped the "At Home" reception at Lok Bhavan on Saturday evening after developing a severe fever, his office said. Lok Bhavan officials have been informed of his inability to attend the event. Pawan Kalyan participated in the 80th Independence Day celebrations in Kakinada on Saturday morning and later travelled to Rajamahendravaram, where he inaugurated the Cen-

See 2nd page



Sri Lanka Rejects Guntur Chilli Consignments Over Quality Concerns

Guntur: Sri Lankan authorities have reportedly rejected chilli consignments exported from Guntur, citing concerns over high levels of aflatoxins and excessive moisture content. The development has raised concerns among chilli exporters and farmers in Andhra Pradesh, as Guntur is the state's major centre for chilli trade and exports. Chilli brought by farmers to the Guntur market yard is exported to other countries. Also Read - Flight Services From Visakha Airport To Be Suspended From Sunday Midnight Advertisement Earlier in June, China had rejected chilli consignments from three Indian exporters over quality concerns.



Now, Sri Lankan authorities have reportedly directed the return of several containers of chilli consignments. Exporters who travelled to Sri Lanka are holding discussions with the

authorities to resolve the issue. Sri Lankan standards authorities have reportedly tightened quality requirements amid growing awareness about food safety

See 2nd page

AP to Conduct Simulation Exercises to Test Disease Outbreak Preparedness

Vijayawada: The Andhra Pradesh health department will conduct simulation exercises for the first time to assess the State's preparedness to respond to public health emergencies arising from disease outbreaks, health and family welfare commissioner K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu said on Saturday. The first phase will focus on leptospirosis in Krishna district on August 18 and 19, followed by highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in West Godavari district on August 20 and 21. Similar exercises will subsequently be conducted for dengue in Visakhapatnam, scrub typhus in Vizianagaram



and cholera/severe diarrhoeal diseases in Guntur. Also Read - Flight Services From Visakha Airport To Be Suspended From Sunday Midnight Advertisement The exercises will simulate real disease outbreaks and assess the response of the health system

See 2nd page

Bihar recorded highest-ever voter turnout after SIR exercise, says Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar

Patna: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar on Sunday asserted that the "successful" Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar last year had led to a significant rise in voter turnout in the assembly polls that followed. Speaking to reporters at Patna airport, the CEC, who is on a two-day tour of the state, said the voting percentage in the 2025 Bihar assembly polls was higher than turnouts witnessed in advanced countries such as the US, the UK and France. "Bihar is the land where Vais hali, the cradle of democracy, is situated. We take pride in the fact that the SIR was conducted here successfully for the first time," Kumar said. The CEC pointed out that following the mammoth exercise, conducted over a three-month period during which around 70 lakh names were knocked off the electoral



rolls, a sharp rise was seen in the voter turnout when assembly polls which were held soon afterwards. "As you all know, men and women came out in large numbers to vote and the turnout broke all records in the state. It may be noted that the voter turnout in Bihar assembly polls was higher than what has been seen, over the years, in major democracies like the US, the UK, France, Spain and Japan," the CEC added. The assembly polls held in November last year registered a voter turnout of 67.25 per cent, which, according to the Election Commission, was the highest for the state since Independence.

CJP seeks immediate arrest over alleged assault death in West Bengal

New Delhi: The Cockroach Janta Party on Sunday demanded the immediate arrest of those responsible for the alleged assault that led to the death of Janab Mafik, the father of CJP volunteer Shaik Abdul Hafeez, in West Bengal. The 25-year-old Hafeez was allegedly attacked after inspecting a government school as part of the CJP's "School Thik Karo" campaign. Mafik died on Saturday from severe head injuries sustained during the alleged assault at the family's residence, according to a statement from the CJP. The incident took place in the Karisunda area of Bankura district after Hafeez participated in the nationwide "School Thik Karo" Abhiyan at the local government school in his village on August 13 to assess the condition of its infrastructure, it said. The CJP alleged that armed individuals identified as local BJP workers forcibly entered Hafeez's residence later that



evening. According to the statement, Hafeez alleged in a video recorded from the hospital that a school teacher had informed the political workers about his civic inspection, which prompted the subsequent attack. The alleged assailants demanded that Hafeez record a video apologising for highlighting the condition of the school and claiming that he had done so under external influence, the CJP said. "When Hafeez refused to comply, the individuals alleg-

edly launched a violent assault on his family," it said. Hafeez suffered a severe neck injury while his father sustained critical blunt-force trauma to the head, according to the statement. Following the assault, Hafeez recorded a video from the hospital documenting his injuries and was subsequently forced to flee to Kolkata due to continuing safety concerns, the CJP said. His father later succumbed to the injuries on August 15, it said.

KING
DAILY NEWSPAPER

Phule couple – Pioneers of the education revo- lution in India

India is a land of ancient civilisation, profound knowledge, rich cultural traditions and countless social reformers who have shaped the course of our history. Across different periods, great visionaries have challenged social inequalities, fought injustice and worked towards building a society founded on equality, humanity and social justice. Among these illustrious reformers, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Savitribai Phule occupy a unique and unforgettable place. They transformed education into a powerful instrument of social liberation and devoted their lives to fighting caste discrimination, gender inequality, social oppression and deeply rooted social evils. Even today, more than a century after their time, the ideals of the couple continue to inspire millions of Indians, particularly those belonging to socially and economically marginalised communities. Reform born in a garden of flowers: Jyotirao was born in 1827 in Maharashtra, into a family traditionally engaged in horticulture and the cultivation of flowers. Growing up amidst flowers, he went on to sow the seeds of equality, justice and social awakening across Indian society.

Management From a young age, he was deeply disturbed by the inequalities he witnessed around him—caste discrimination, gender injustice, economic disparities, child marriage, the suffering of widows and the hardships faced by farmers. He firmly believed that education was the most powerful instrument to challenge ignorance, discrimination and social oppression. In his vision, education was not a privilege reserved for a few; it was a fundamental means of empowering every individual and transforming society. At a time when education was largely restricted to privileged sections, Jyotirao Phule dreamed of democratising knowledge and making education accessible to all. Savitribai – His equal partner in the revolution: The marriage of Jyotirao and Savitribai marked a historic turning point in the Indian social reform movement. Savitribai became not merely his life partner but his equal companion in the struggle for social transformation. Jyotirao first began the educational revolution within his own home by teaching Savitribai to read and write. She soon became an educator, reformer and a powerful force in the movement for women’s emancipation.

Together, they challenged the deeply entrenched belief that women did not need education. Their partnership demonstrated the power of an equal and progressive marriage—one founded on shared ideals, mutual respect and a common commitment to social justice. The beginning at Bhide wada: In 1848, the Phule couple opened a school for girls at Bhide wada in Pune, marking a historic milestone in the development of women’s education in India. At a time when educating girls was strongly opposed by conservative sections of society, Savitribai courageously walked into classrooms to teach girls. She faced immense social resistance, humiliation and opposition, but remained steadfast in her mission. The school became a symbol of a new educational awakening.

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Continu, from1st page

villages updated. Pawan Kalyan held a teleconference with Forest Department officials regarding reports that elephants from the Seshachalam forest area were roaming in two herds and destroying crops in fields along the forest fringes during the night. He directed the Forest, Revenue, and Police departments to work in coordination to minimise loss of life and property. Pawan Kalyan suggested arranging special night patrols in villages adjacent to the forest. He emphasised the need to raise awareness among the public in vulnerable areas to prevent them from visiting their fields at night and to implement necessary safety measures.

Instructions were issued to take proactive measures to prevent loss of life and property caused by elephants. It was directed that warnings be disseminated in villages using loudspeakers, mobile messages, and local information systems. Officials must continuously monitor the situation and deploy ‘HANUMAN’ teams wherever necessary to ensure public safety, while also ensuring that field-level staff remain vigilant around the clock, he said. The Deputy Chief Minister appealed to the public to stay alert and strictly adhere to the guidelines issued by Forest Department officials. He stated that immediate compensation would be paid through the Forest Department as soon as officials prepare reports on the crop damage. Pawan Kalyan had said on August 13 that deployment of ‘Kumki’ elephants to check wild elephants creating havoc has resulted in a 70 per cent reduction in human fatalities in forest fringe areas in the state. Addressing national-level World Elephant Day celebrations, he said the elephant-human conflict management also led to a decrease in crop damage. He noted that, with the assistance of the Karnataka government, four ‘Kumki’ elephants were brought and specially trained to help prevent human-wildlife conflicts, adding that these measures are yielding positive results in the agency areas.

Pawan skips ‘At Home’ event due to high fever

Continu, from1st page

tral Craft Wood Bank established by the forest department. However, his condition worsened during the programme, forcing him to cut short the event. Doctors examined Pawan in Rajamahendravaram. After getting some relief, he left for Hyderabad, according to his office. Pawan had recently undergone surgery on his right shoulder. He is also expected to consult medical specialists in Hyderabad regarding the post-surgery physiotherapy required for his recovery. His health has also kept him away from several recent government engagements. He did not attend the inauguration of the Seed Access Road in Amaravati by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on August 13. Municipal administration minister P Narayana had met Pawan Kalyan a day earlier and invited him to the inauguration. However, the deputy chief minister travelled to Visakhapatnam on August 13 for other pre-scheduled engagements. Pawan Kalyan has also been absent from the last three Cabinet meetings, with party leaders attributing his absence to health-related reasons.

Sri Lanka Rejects Guntur Chilli Consignments Over Quality Concerns

Continu, from1st page

and health. According to exporters, samples of chilli consignments sent from Andhra Pradesh through Chennai port to Sri Lanka are being tested in laboratories. Notices have reportedly been issued to exporters over concerns about elevated levels of aflatoxins and moisture content. Excessive moisture can lead to fungal growth, which may result in consignments being rejected on food safety grounds. The development has raised concerns among chilli farmers and traders in Guntur, with exporters worried that stricter quality standards in international markets could affect shipments from the region. The issue is also likely to have an impact on the Guntur chilli market and exports, depending on how the quality concerns are resolved.

AP to Conduct Simulation Exercises to Test Disease Outbreak Preparedness

Continu, from1st page

tem and other government departments from detection to containment. Officials will examine early detection, information flow, investigation, sample collection and testing, availability of medicines and equipment, public communication and inter-departmental coordination. Unlike routine mock drills that test specific emergency responses, the simulation exercises will assess the performance of the entire response system and identify gaps in surveillance, communication, laboratory coordination, logistics, risk communication and emergency management. The leptospirosis exercise in Machilipatnam will assess environmen-

Payakaraopeta Saris Win Markets, Weavers Lose Out



Visakhapatnam: The heritage of exquisite Payakaraopeta handloom cotton and silk saris, featuring intricate designs and weighing barely 600 grams, has endured the numerous challenges posed by mechanisation and unjust marketers. Despite the struggle, creations of Payakaraopeta Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society retain the beauty of the bygone era. According to society’s manager G.V. Nageshwar Rao, even now, 24 women weave the traditional saris daily in the society’s building, while an additional 292 members contribute their works intermittently.

Payakaraopeta handloom workers compete with power looms. They continue to create jamdani saris, a craft introduced in 1994. Jamdanis from Payakaraopeta occupy a unique niche in the market. Known for their all-over designs, border patterns and palla butta motifs, these saris are admired for their elegance and craftsmanship. Each sari requires more than 10 days to complete, with prices ranging from ₹3,500 to ₹20,000. They are distributed far beyond Payakaraopeta in cities such as Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai.

While sourcing raw materials from Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Chirala, weavers voice concerns about inadequate marketing facilities and their dependence on traders, who control much of the trade. In Payakaraopeta’s Yarraveedhi, local shop owner Malla Sambasiva Rao Chinnaji reflects on a unique fabric called “Nool Number”, which has disappeared due to a lack of branding. He compares it to Uppada cotton, which gained wider recognition. “If our ancestors had branded Nool Number, it would have stood alongside Uppada or Ponduru cotton,” he maintains. The closure of cooperative society shops has relegated Payakaraopeta’s artisans to work as labourers for suppliers of raw materials from Hyderabad, Chirala and Uppada, who dominate the market. Artisan G. Trimurthulu, over 60, states that he has stayed in the craft for lack of any alternatives. His eldest son supplements the weaving income with masonry work, as they cannot rely solely on handloom work. Rising prices of silk and yarn have reduced production, with each worker producing barely six saris a month and earning around ₹6,000 or less. Although saris are being made, there is not enough income due to the lack of fair pricing,” maintains handloom artist G. Naga Satti Babu. Adding to these struggles is climate change. “Everyone talks about climate change, but we experience it at the loom,” say weavers in Nakkapalli. “We work from 4.30 am to 9 am or 10 am. The increasing heat prevents us from weaving in the afternoon. Even a single drop of sweat can stain the sari,” says one of the weavers. Payakaraopeta society manager Nageshwar Rao characterises the story of Payakaraopeta as a tale of both resilience and decline. Once renowned for its delicate cotton and silk saris and unique fabrics, the town now struggles to sustain its weaving tradition. While jamdani saris still find buyers in major cities, a lack of branding, marketing support and fair pricing has left artisans vulnerable. Younger generations are increasingly turning away from the craft, leaving only older weavers to carry forward a legacy that risks fading into obscurity. Payakaraopeta’s handloom industry, once a symbol of artistry and pride, now stands at a crossroads. “Our survival depends on recognition, support and renewed interest in preserving traditional weaving against the tide of mechanisation,” says Bandaru Ramalakshmi.

tal surveillance, information gathering and reporting, logistics and supply systems. The HPAI exercise in Bhimavaram will test inter-departmental coordination, emergency plan implementation and sample collection, packaging and transportation. The dengue exercise will focus on coordination with the private sector, mosquito surveillance, active case searches and public awareness. The scrub typhus exercise will assess inter-departmental coordination and the functioning of emergency operations centres, while the cholera exercise will examine coordination and water, sanitation and hygiene measures. The exercises aim to identify coordination gaps, resource shortages and procedural bottlenecks before an actual outbreak occurs and address them to ensure a swift response. The State IDSP unit, district medical and health officers, district surveillance teams and officials from the Animal Husbandry, Food Safety,

Holiday likely in AP, Telangana on 21 August amid Varalakshmi Vratam

Hyderabad: The schools and other government organisations in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh likely to have holiday on 21 August 2026 amid Varalakshmi Vratam festival. The holiday will be applicable to schools, colleges, and government offices. Students, teachers, and government employees in the states will get a day off on the occasion. The day is celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion by women during the month of Shravana and observed with special prayers. The government has declared the day a holiday in recognition of its cultural significance. Junior, degree, and professional colleges (subject to government orders), government offices, and other government institutions such as integrated schools and residential educational institutions will also be closed.



Telangana govt announces auto rickshaw electric conversion scheme

Hyderabad: Telangana government announced a Rs 200 crore scheme to convert auto-rickshaws into electric vehicles. According to reports, the state government has named the scheme as ‘Telangana Auto-Rickshaw Electric Conversion Scheme-2026’, which proposes to provide support for the conversion of 18,766 auto-rickshaws in the CURE area. Under the scheme, 11,254 diesel auto-rickshaws and 7,512 petrol auto-rickshaws will be converted into electric vehicles with auto-rickshaw drivers will receive a 1.5 Lakh subsidy to convert their auto-rickshaws to electric vehicles. There is



an additional 1.5 Lakh subsidy on the purchase of a new electric auto-rickshaw. Moreover, Auto-rickshaw drivers will be allowed to retrofit their existing auto-rickshaws with AIS-123 approved kits on a fixed or swappable battery swap system. Alternatively, drivers can choose to purchase a new electric

auto-rickshaw by surrendering their existing petrol or diesel auto-rickshaws. The Telangana government has also proposed a three-tier monitoring system for the auto-rickshaw conversion scheme. It may be noted that the auto-rickshaw conversion scheme 2022 has been initiated to reduce pollution levels and

cut down on fuel costs for auto-rickshaw drivers. Meanwhile, the Telangana government allocated Rs 50 crore each from the SC, ST, BC, and Minority department budgets to support the auto-rickshaw conversion scheme. The Telangana auto-rickshaw scheme will not only promote sustainable development in the state but also cut down greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. It is pertinent to note here that the auto-rickshaw conversion scheme 2022 is only the beginning of a much larger plan to gradually replace petrol and diesel auto-rickshaws with electric ones in Hyderabad and the state.

Three injured as APSRTC bus rams private bus in Suryapet

Nalgonda: Three persons suffered minor injuries after an APSRTC bus rammed into a private travels bus from behind on NH 65 at Akupamula in Suryapet on Sunday morning. The private travels bus was heading to Hyderabad from Narsapur when the accident occurred. The APSRTC bus was travelling from Eluru to Hyderabad when it hit the private bus from behind at Akupamula, according to reports. A total of 63 passengers were travelling in the two buses. Officials heaved a sigh of relief as there was no loss of life. The collision was so severe that the RTC bus driver was trapped inside the cabin. Fire department and police personnel stepped in to rescue him from the damaged cabin. The



officials worked for more than two hours before safely bringing the RTC bus driver out, reports added.

Dalit Bandhu clocks five years: Congress yet to fulfil promise of Rs.12 lakh assistance

Hyderabad: When the Dalit Bandhu scheme was launched in August 2021, it brought about a significant change in the lives of Dalits and strengthened their confidence and self-respect. Besides providing welfare support, the scheme helped beneficiaries develop entrepreneurship skills and establish income-generating activities. Several beneficiaries, particularly women, made good use of the financial assistance and scripted success stories. Ragula Sagar and Nerella Shekhar, two beneficiaries from Rajanna Sircilla, joined hands and purchased a bus to operate on hire with the RTC. However, after the Congress government came to power in 2023, the community has been deprived of similar support, leaving many beneficiaries disappointed. The Congress had promised to increase the assistance from Rs.10 lakh under Dalit Bandhu to Rs.12 lakh. However, even after two and a half years, the Congress government is yet to fulfil the promise, leaving the Dalit community disappointed. The previ-



ous BRS government launched Dalit Bandhu on August 16, 2021, to provide SC households with a grant of Rs.10 lakh each without any bank loan linkage.



H-City Project: Rs.1,090 Crore Plan to Ease Traffic Around KBR Park

Hyderabad: The Telangana government has launched the Hyderabad City Innovative and Transformative (H-City) project to curb the rapidly growing traffic congestion in the metropolis and upgrade its transport infrastructure to international standards. As part of the initiative, the government has commenced construction of 14 major structures, comprising seven multi-level steel flyovers and seven directional underpasses, at six key junctions around KBR Park with an estimated budget of Rs.1,090 crore. To ensure smooth, uninterrupted, and rapid completion of these construction works for early public utility, a one-way traffic system will be implemented around KBR Park starting August 18. Speaking about the implementation of the one-way system, Hyderabad City Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar, IPS, said the measures were being introduced to minimise inconvenience to commuters while significantly reducing the construction timeline. He said the decision was taken after comprehensive studies, two rounds of trial runs and close coordination with the GHMC to address ground-level challenges. "Once these multi-level structures are completed, traffic issues at KBR Park Entrance, Road No. 45, Film Nagar, Maharaja Agrasen, and Cancer Hospital junctions will be 100% resolved, ensuring signal-free travel. At the heavily congested Jubilee Hills Check Post Junction, travel bottlenecks will be reduced by 80%. As a result, travel time between the core city and the IT corridor will be significantly minimized, saving fuel worth crores of rupees," Sajjanar said. Sajjanar further said that reducing prolonged vehicle idling at traffic junctions would help lower carbon emissions around KBR Park and contribute to environmental protection. The commissioner explained that commuters may experience initial inconvenience due to route changes following the August 18 one-way implementation; this temporary measure is crucial for completing construction on schedule and securing smooth travel for future generations. We request all commuters, local residents and citizens to extend their full cooperation to the Police Department during this project," he said. Sajjanar also said the police department was in continuous consultation with local residents, morning walkers and resident welfare associations (RWAs) in the KBR Park area, adjusting traffic plans dynamically to avoid inconvenience. The Commissioner appealed to city residents to cooperate with the authorities in implementing the project, which is aimed at providing a permanent solution to traffic congestion in the KBR corridor.

Avinash Mohanty Appointed Commissioner of Telangana SAFE



Hyderabad: Senior IPS officer Avinash Mohanty, a 2005-batch officer, has been appointed as the Commissioner of Telangana SAFE (Telangana Standards Authority for Food and Essential Drugs). Mohanty, who was earlier serving as the Director General of the Drugs Control Administration, Telangana, will hold the new position in addition to his normal duties. The Telangana government has decided to bring the Food Safety Department and Drugs Control Department under a unified administration, TG SAFE (Telangana Standards Authority for Food and Essential Drugs).



CAG flags E. coli bacteria in drinking water at stations, cites violation of Railway Board norms

New Delhi: E coli bacteria has been found in drinking water samples picked up from water coolers at several railway stations, a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General has said. Unhygienic conditions were also found in railway washrooms, the auditor said. “Water sample from water cooler was positive for E.coli at two stations (Coimbatore and Palakkad Junctions) in SR (Southern Railway), one station (Hyderabad) in SCR (South Central Railway), four stations (Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Bhiwandi Road, Kalyan and Lonavala) in CR (Central Railway) and one station (Madhupur) in ER (Eastern Railway),” the report which studied passenger services at 512 non-suburban grade stations across all zones said. Book Walking Tours “Test results of drinking water samples collected from taps in platforms at 49 stations in eight zones during 2022-23 and 56 stations in 9 zones during 2023-24 indicated presence of Total coliforms bacteria (including E-coli),” the report stated. Some strains of E.coli bacteria can lead to food poisoning, diarrhoea and kidney failure. The audit found bacteriological tests, other than total coliforms, to be unsatisfactory at eight stations in four zones during 2022-23 and 11 stations in five zones during 2023-24. The CAG said the report covered instances identified during its 2019-20 to 2023-24 test audit, along with earlier cases not reported previously and, wherever necessary, instances from after 2023-24 as well. According to the report, there are 5,908 railway stations under the Non-Suburban Group (NSG), and Indian Railways operated over 7,424 passenger trains (non-suburban) daily and carried 292.4 crore non-suburban passengers in 2023-24. Outlining the purpose of the detailed inspection, the CAG said the Railway Board had issued various guidelines for the provision of passenger amenities at stations and that an audit was conducted to assess whether Indian Railways’ efforts to ensure the provision of passenger amenities and sanitation at stations yielded the intended benefits. The audit found that 458 out of the 512 selected stations, accounting for more than 89 per cent, were deficient in the provision of Minimum Essential Amenities (MEA).

It said that at these 458 stations, MEAs were either not provided at all or were available below the prescribed norms. “In April 2018, RB (Railway Board) issued comprehensive instructions prescribing Minimum Essential Amenities (MEA), Recommended Amenities (RA) and Desirable Amenities (DA) for stations categorised as NSG 1 to NSG 6. RB stipulated that MEAs were to be ensured at all stations by 31 August 2018,” the report said. “RB’s instructions (April 2018) mandated that MEAs be provided first at all stations, irrespective of category. These include drinking water, waiting halls, seating arrangements, platform shelters.

Hyderabad-based pharma firms donate Rs 1 crore to medical charity of Tirupati temple

Tirupati: Two Hyderabad-based pharmaceutical firms have donated Rs 50 lakh each to Sri Venkateswara Pranadana Trust, a medical charity run by the Tirupati temple. Rameswara Rao, chairman of CHAP, a Hyderabad-based pharmaceutical company, and a director of Sai Chandana, another pharmaceutical firm, handed over demand drafts towards the donation to TTD Chairman BR Naidu at the TTD Chairman’s Camp Office in Tirumala. “Two Hyderabad-based pharmaceutical firms have donated Rs 50 lakh each, totalling Rs 1 crore, to the Sri Venkateswara Pranadana Trust,” a release from the temple body on Saturday said. Established in November 2001, the trust aims to provide free medical treatment to poor patients suffering from life-threatening diseases related to the heart, kidneys, brain, cancer and others. TTD is the official custodian of the Sri Venkateswara temple in Tirupati, considered the richest Hindu shrine in the world.

J’khand agitation Day 23: Protesters criticise Rahul Gandhi over ‘hollow’ assurances

Ranchi: As the protest over alleged irregularities and paper leaks in recruitment examinations conducted by the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) and Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC) entered its 23rd day on Sunday, the students lashed out at Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi for his “hollow” assurances to them. Moreover, the protesters have planned to burn the effigies of the Congress leader as well as Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren during a demonstration later in the day. A student protester, Ravindra Kumar Paswan, told IANS that the agitators have decided to continue their protest against the ruling alliance in Jharkhand till their demands are met “After days of protest, we are now changing our mode of agitation, and somewhere the government itself is responsible for this. We have been protesting peacefully and following Gandhian principles for the past 22 days, but the government seems to be ignoring us. The government is now forcing us (students) to follow the path of Bhagat Singh,” he said. He added: “Now we have decided to undertake a do-or-die battle. Until the JSSC examination is cancelled, a CBI probe is ordered, and till all examinations, which have been conducted by TDPL, are not cancelled, we will continue our protest.” Paswan said that students are extremely frustrated over the government not listening to their demands despite so many days of agitation. “Today we are going to burn effigies of (Jharkhand Chief Minister) Hemant Soren and (Lok Sabha LoP) Rahul Gandhi. We will burn Rahul Gandhi’s effigy also because Congress is in alliance with the JMM in Jharkhand and despite giving assurances over phone call and social media post, he (Gandhi) is not doing anything for us. The assurances are of no use,” he said. Criticising the LoP, the



student protester said: “Why is Rahul Gandhi not helping us despite giving assurances? On one hand, he (Gandhi) says that he is standing with the students, while on the other, his party’s Minister does not have control over their language. If Rahul Gandhi is a senior leader of the Congress, then how come he doesn’t have control over what his party’s leader says?” Paswan was referring to Jharkhand Minister and Congress leader Shilpi Neha Tirkey who had reportedly remarked that the student delegation who met the government did not include the actual fasting or protesting students. “So, the JMM and the Congress party are equally responsible. Even if Congress is really concerned about the students, then it should clear its stand on the matter... all of us students are fighting hard against both the JMM and Congress,” the protester asserted. A controversy erupted a day earlier after Jharkhand Loktantrik Krantikari Morcha (JLKM) leader Devendra Nath Mahto was allegedly not allowed to leave the hospital premises, where he has been admitted following health deterioration due to a hunger strike, to join the ‘Tiranga Yatra’ in Ranchi.

Bankim Chandra’s descendant writes to Sonia Gandhi, expressing anguish over Vande Mataram ‘insult’

New Delhi: BJP MLA from West Bengal and direct descendant of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Sumitro Chatterjee, has written to Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi expressing “deep anguish” over what he described as an insult to Vande Mataram at the Congress headquarters on Independence Day. In his letter, Chatterjee, who is an MLA from the Naihati Assembly constituency in North 24 Parganas district, demanded an unconditional apology to the citizens of India, particularly the people of West Bengal, over the alleged incident involving the singing of the full version of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay’s iconic composition. Chatterjee wrote that while the country was observing the 80th anniversary of Independence, “when the entire nation is devoted to the worship of the Motherland”, the events at the All India Congress Committee headquarters were “not merely unfortunate, but a shameful repetition of a historical mistake”. He said that when Congress workers were singing the full version of Vande Mataram, he was deeply distressed by what he described as Sonia Gandhi’s “visible discomfort, displeasure and repeated attempts to stop it”. “As an ordinary Indian citizen, a patriot and, above all, a direct descen-



dant of Rishi Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay’s family, I am writing this letter today with deep pain, emptiness and anguish,” Chatterjee wrote. Referring to the historical significance of the song, Chatterjee cited Sri Aurobindo, writing: “The mantra was given, and within a single day an entire nation was initiated into the religion of patriotism.” He added that Aurobindo had described it as “not merely a mantra, but a religion of patriotism”. Chatterjee said the mantra inspired countless fearless revolutionaries, including Khudiram Bose, to face the gallows and embrace death. “Today, in the land of independent India, your intolerance towards the full recitation of that very mantra, Vande Mataram, appears to be a grave insult to the sacrifices of millions of martyrs,” he wrote.

He also recalled the role of Vande Mataram in the freedom movement, citing nationalist leader Bipin Chandra Pal, who wrote that after the Partition of Bengal, the song was on the lips of every revolutionary. Chatterjee said “Swadeshi”, “Boycott” and “Vande Mataram” became living synonyms of the freedom movement. The BJP MLA further referred to Sarala Devi Chaudhurani’s rendition of the full song at the 1905 Banaras Congress session, Bal Gangadhar Tilak hearing supporters chant it during his 1909 sedition trial, and the nationalist student movement at Osmania University in 1938. He also highlighted Rabindranath Tagore’s 1896 rendition of Vande Mataram at the Indian National Congress session in Calcutta, quoting Tagore’s description of the song’s “magical words” and their power to break barriers and move hearts.



Shah Rukh Khan, Ajay Devgn, and Tiger Shroff under FDA scanner over Vimal advertisement

Mumbai: The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has reportedly issued show-cause notices to Bollywood actors Shah Rukh Khan, Ajay Devgn and Tiger Shroff over their advertisement for Vimal Elaichi. The regulator has alleged that the campaign amounts to surrogate advertising for



Vimal Pan Masala, which is banned in Maharashtra. The action comes as part of the state FDA's wider crackdown on gutkha and pan masala products containing tobacco or nicotine. The show-cause notices were delivered to Ajay Devgn at his residence in Juhu and Shah Rukh Khan at Mannat in Bandra. Tiger Shroff was served the notice through his production company, Tiger Shroff Productions LLP. In the notice issued this week, The FDA has sought an explanation from the actors regarding their involvement in the advertisement, alleging that the campaign creates an indirect association with the Vimal Pan Masala brand and could amount to its surrogate promotion. The notice stated, "Upon examination of the said advertisement, it prima facie appears that the advertisement promotes the Vimal brand, which is mainly associated with Pan Masala, a product prohibited for manufacture, storage, transportation, distribution, and sale in the State of Maharashtra for a period of one year, with effect from the date specified in the Prohibition Or-

der dated the 13th July, 2026, issued by the Commissioner of Food Safety, Maharashtra State, under Section 30(2)(a) of the FSS Act, 2006." The FDA has invoked Section 24 of the Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, 2006, which bars misleading or deceptive advertisements concerning food products. It has also cited Section 53, which allows for a penalty of up to Rs 10 lakh against those involved in publishing misleading food advertisements. The notices issued to the actors are part of the Maharashtra FDA's broader drive to strengthen food safety enforcement across the state. The regulator has been taking action against several violations, including food and milk adulteration, the sale of unhealthy food products near schools, and the manufacturing and distribution of prohibited gutka and tobacco-containing pan masala. In recent months, the FDA has stepped up inspections and enforcement efforts, conducting seizures and taking action against those found breaching food safety norms.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu to headline 'Celebrity MasterChef Tamil'



Mumbai: Soon-to-be mom Samantha Ruth Prabhu has been roped in to headline the cooking reality show 'Celebrity MasterChef Tamil'. Spilling her excitement about her latest venture, Samantha shared that food has a wonderful way of bringing people together. The 'Yashoda' actress added that she is looking forward to seeing some of the beloved celebrities from the Tamil film industry sweating it out in the kitchen, while also creating memories. Talking about the show, Samantha said, "I'm incredibly excited to finally share this with everyone. Celebrity MasterChef Tamil is unlike anything I've done before, and that's exactly what made it impossible to say no. Food has a wonderful way of bringing people together, creating memories, and revealing a side of you that the cameras don't usually get to see. What I'm most excited about is watching some of our favourite Tamil celebrities step into the kitchen, take risks, make mistakes, surprise themselves, and compete with a lot more passion than you'd expect!" "I wish I could tell you

who's cooking, but where's the fun in that? I can't wait for everyone to experience what we're cooking up with Sony VIZHA," she went on to add. Backed under the banner of Banijay Asia, 'Celebrity MasterChef Tamil' will be adapting the format of the globally popular show, 'Master Chef', while keeping true to the local flavours with familiar personalities from Kollywood. 'Celebrity MasterChef Tamil' is expected to premiere shortly on Sony VIZHA and Sony LIV. Additionally, exclusive content will also be available across digital and social platforms. On the personal front, Samantha will soon be embracing motherhood as she is all set to welcome her firstborn with her filmmaker husband, Raj Nidimoru. The 'Majili' actress had confirmed her first pregnancy while addressing the media during the success meet of her last release, 'Maa Inti Bangaaram'. Revealing that she will be taking a maternity break after concluding her current professional commitments, Samantha had said.

Athiya Shetty becomes muse for Manish Malhotra's celebration of handloom and bandhani

Mumbai: Fashion designer Manish Malhotra showcased the timeless beauty of Indian craftsmanship through actress Athiya Shetty's elegant saree look. Athiya looked stunning in a handloom Bandhani saree from Malhotra's collection. The designer took to Instagram to share glimpses of Athiya's look and reflected on his longstanding association with traditional Indian textiles. In the caption, Manish that handloom, Bandhani and sarees have been an integral part of his work for decades, from designing costumes for films to creating his fashion collections. He added that, for him, tradition is not about simply looking back at the past, but about embracing it and finding new ways to make it relevant and personal. He wrote, "Handloom. Bandhani. Colour. The saree. Treasures of Indian fash-



ion that I have personally loved and worked with for decades — from creating costumes for the movies to my collections today. For me, tradition has never been about looking back. It's about loving it, living it and constantly finding a new way to make it your own. Here @athiyashetty Gorgeous and chic in our timeless Bandini – Handloom #mmsaree .. styling @stylebyami @manishmalhotraworld." The photos feature Athiya Shetty striking different poses in an elegant saree, which she paired with statement jewellery, including a neck-

lace and earrings. She kept her hair open and opted for subtle makeup. Manish Malhotra has long been passionate about Indian handlooms, textiles and traditional craftsmanship. Over the years, he has incorporated regional weaves such as Kanchipuram, Paithani and Bandhani into his couture collections and film designs. For the unversed, Malhotra's appreciation for traditional Indian textiles grew during his work in films in the early 1990s, when his collaborations with legendary actors such as Sridevi introduced him to the rich heritage of South Indian fabrics and indigenous weaves. The designer has also worked closely with skilled weavers and acclaimed artisans to create bespoke sarees and ensembles that preserve the richness of India's traditional craftsmanship while giving them a modern appeal.

Erica Fernandes reveals how she transforms into characters for '108 Base Hospital – Uri'



Mumbai: Television actress Erica Fernandes has opened up about her approach to getting into and coming out of characters. Speaking exclusively to IANS, the 'Kasautii Zin Dagi Kay' actress said she finds the transition relatively easy. Erica revealed that she completely embraces her character while on set but is able to return to her real self once the shoot is over. Speaking about her acting process, the actress said that when actors are on set, they become their characters, but once the work is done, they return to their own lives. She added that she did not face any particular difficulty in disconnecting from her role after shooting. "Personally, I can get into and come out of a character quite easily. When we are on set, we become our characters, and once we are done, we return to ourselves." Erica Fernandes, who is currently seen in the military-medical show "108 Base Hospital – Uri," also revealed that she did not find it difficult to step out of her character after filming. She said there was no particular scene that made it challenging for her to disconnect from the role once the shoot was over. "So there wasn't any particular scene where I found it difficult to come out of the character. But the cases in this show were very in-

teresting and we learnt a lot from them. There were many unique situations that made the experience enjoyable." Speaking about her preparation for the role, the 'Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise Bhi' actress revealed that she invested considerable time in researching the medical profession to accurately portray the mannerisms, body language and working style of doctors and emergency medical professionals. "I did a lot of research. In fact, everyone on our set calls me 'Dr. Fernandes' because I became so involved in the character. For about a month, I watched several medical shows and videos, studied the body language of doctors and surgeons, and watched videos related to medical procedures and treatments. I hope that research is visible on screen," she said. "108 Base Hospital – Uri" stars Erica Fernandes as Dr. Major Naina, Gashmeer Mahajani as Dr. Major Aniruddh, Nikkhil Khurana as Major Sameer Dixit, Ayoshi Talukdar as Dr. Captain Mili Banerjee, Hiten Tejwani as Dr. Col Suryakant Thakur and Smita Bansal as Lt. Col. Principal Matron Kavita Jha. The military-medical drama premiered on August 15, coinciding with Independence Day, and airs every Saturday and Sunday on COLORS and JioHotstar.

Rain washes out first session of India-Sri Lanka Galle Test



Galle: Persistent showers forced an early lunch break to be taken on day two of the opening Test between India and Sri Lanka at the Galle International Stadium here on Sunday, with not a single ball bowled in the opening session due to heavy rain. The second session is tentatively scheduled to begin at 12:20pm local time and IST, subject to weather conditions and outfield clearance. Rain hit the coastal city during the early morning hours, which led to the entire ground being under covers. Play was originally slated to start at 9:45am, 15 minutes ahead of the scheduled time of 10am to compensate for overs lost to inclement weather on day one. “Update from Galle. Start of play on Day 2 has been delayed due to rain. Stay tuned for further updates,” the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) posted on its ‘X’ account. Although the rain briefly subsided mid-morning to allow the 130-member ground staff to begin removing covers, another spell of downpour returned and dashed hopes of an early start and washed out the first session entirely. With the weather forecast remaining

Jadeja prefers slow turner in Galle to balance batting, bowling roles

Galle: India’s veteran left-arm spin-bowling all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has expressed satisfaction with the pitch conditions for the ongoing first Test at the Galle International Stadium, adding that while dry surfaces offering turn and bounce excite spinners, he personally prefers a slow turner over a rank turner as that aids him in contributing with the bat. On day one’s play, left-hander Devdutt Padikkal hit a stroke-filled, unbeaten 131 off 178 balls and took India to a commanding 288/2 in 73 overs in the side’s landmark 600th Test match. “Being a spinner, if I see the wicket is dry, if I see there are a few cracks in the middle of the wicket, I always feel that, okay, it might be good for the spinners because some might turn, some might keep low. “So, I always feel if wicket is dry, then you’ll get more turn and bounce, as we have on this wicket, because this wicket is also very much on the dry side. The odd ball is turning, odd ball is going straight and keeping low. As the game progresses, I would say more turn and bounce will be there. Spinners will enjoy this wicket,” Jadeja said in a chat with broadcasters ahead of day two’s play, which has been delayed due to rain. Asked about whether the track will deteriorate rapidly, Jadeja added, “Yesterday also when they were bowling, ball was gripping, odd ball was turning from the start. So I would say as the game progresses, we don’t know how much weather will allow, but yeah, as the game progresses, wicket will start turning.” Quizzed about his past experiences of playing on extreme turners, Jadeja recalled, “A few times, when we played in India, I think one was in Indore and the other one was in Pune where Smith score a hundred. So those two wickets I felt it was looking like a rank

gloomy for rest of the day, the groundsmen face an uphill task to dry the outfield and prepare the playing surface once the weather clears. Earlier on Saturday, India ended their 20-Test wait for a century from the crucial number three position when left-hander Devdutt Padikkal hit a stroke-filled, unbeaten 131 off 178 balls and take the visitors to a commanding 288/2 in 73 overs in the side’s landmark 600th Test match. Padikkal found solid support in vice-captain KL Rahul, who despite going into his shell at times, compiled a fluent 77 before being forced to retire hurt due to forearm cramps. Yashasvi Jaiswal was run-out for 32 in a chaotic mix-up, while Indian skipper Shubman Gill was dismissed for 16. Rishabh Pant was unbeaten on 27 alongside Padikkal when stumps were called on day one. Sri Lanka struggled to maintain consistent pressure despite the pitch offering occasional sharp turn for the spinners. With the second new ball just seven overs away, Sri Lanka will face an uphill battle to curtail India’s control once play resumes in what is also Galle’s 50th Test match.



turner. “As a spinner, if you see the wicket, you always feel happy and you start getting excited. But I don’t want to play on the rank turner because I need to score runs as well. So I would prefer a slow turner to start with and as the game progresses, then if ball starts turning, that would be an ideal wicket.” Reflecting on his growth as a Test batter and how he built the temperament for long innings, Jadeja candidly spoke about his early career struggles with self-doubt, especially when pushed down the batting order. “When I started, I used to bat at number 4. If you look at my entire Ranji Trophy career, my average is more than 60. Whatever Ranji Trophy and Duleep Trophy first-class cricket I have played domestically, my batting average is more than 60. So somewhere, I had that belief that I had that ability. But sometimes what happens is that you come into the Indian team and you don’t get that batting number. “And sometimes the situation is such that I have batted at number 8 and 9 as well. So, when you are sitting in the dressing room with your pads on, next to you, a fast bowler is selecting a ball. So seeing all those things, my morale, my confidence, would go down. Sometimes you think to yourself, ‘I have to go and score runs.’

Sindhu draws strength from past World Championships heart-breaks ahead of home campaign

New Delhi: PV Sindhu’s five World Championships medals have been built across more than a decade of highs and disappointments, and as she begins another campaign in New Delhi on Monday, the ace Indian shuttler said the setbacks she experienced along the way played a major role in shaping the player she has become. Sindhu’s World Championships journey began with bronze medals in 2013 and 2014, followed by silver in 2017 and 2018 before she finally claimed gold in 2019. Looking back, she singled out the painful defeat to Nozomi Okuhara in the 2017 final as one of the moments that changed her approach. “Having five medals at the world championships, of course, is an amazing journey, and each medal gave me a different kind of experience. Back then, in 2013, I had bronze; in 2014, again bronze; then silver, silver, and then gold. The transition was wonderful to see, and there were a couple of amazing moments. The first one was, as you said, getting a medal itself, which is definitely an amazing moment, but apart from that, the moment when I became much stronger was when I lost at the 2017 World Championships.

“After playing a very hard-fought match, 1 hour 50 minutes against Okuhara in Glasgow, that itself triggered something. It was very hard, and I was very hard on myself because I was almost there, but I couldn’t get that goal. It was just a matter of one or two points, and that made me much stronger. There were times when I lost even in 2018, when I was training, and then I lost the first game, and I lost the gold. So these are some of the moments, especially at the world championships, that made me much stronger and helped me come back much stronger,” Sindhu said in the pre-match press conference at the Indira Gandhi Stadium on Sunday.

Seven years on from her title-winning campaign, Sindhu said the player returning to the World Championships in 2026 is considerably different from the one who lifted the trophy in 2019. The changes, she said, extend beyond her game and into the way she reads situations on court. “There have been quite some changes, I would say, in terms of the game and in how you think and strategise. Overall, I feel the game, bad-



minton, and the sport itself have changed. Earlier, women’s singles was more attacking and faster-paced. But now it’s more about long rallies and staying on court for longer periods of time. So you need a lot of patience in that respect. But when you look back, since then until now, as a person, in terms of experience, there have been a lot of changes. And I feel now I am much more experienced. Irrespective of playing the sport for a longer period of time, I am definitely much more experienced in terms of how to deal with things on court. Sometimes there is drift. And sometimes, how do you control the shuttle? It might not go your way all the time. So, how do you adjust and make sure it is convenient for you?,” she added. That experience, however, has not removed the nerves that accompany the start of a major tournament. Sindhu acknowledged that the butterflies are still there, even after years of competing at the highest level. “Actually, yes, and at the same time, as I mentioned earlier, I’ve had a lot of experience. I’ve faced a lot of matches in the previous years, and I’ve played a lot of first-round matches where I’ve had butterflies and felt a lot of pressure. I won’t deny that there is pressure. There is pressure, but at the same time, I just want to give my best because I know I’ve played hard and I’ve worked hard in my training and in my profession, so I just have to go out there on the court and just, like, put my best out there, irrespective of whatever the result is,” Sindhu expressed. And amid all the changes in the sport and in her own career, Sindhu said one quality has remained intact. “The hunger for the game hasn’t changed, and I definitely know it’s in me. I can still do it, so the hunger for the sport hasn’t changed either.” That hunger will now be tested once again at a World Championships, where Sindhu is chasing another medal, this time with the added weight and opportunity of competing at home.

India vs Sri Lanka 1st Test: Day two play to begin at 2:35 pm after rain delay in Galle

Galle: Relentless and stop-start rain since Sunday morning has finally relented to pave the way for play to commence on day two of the first Test between India and Sri Lanka, with action now set to commence at 2:35pm at the Galle International Stadium here on Sunday. Following a completely washed-out morning session and a delayed afternoon session, bright sunshine broke through the rain and clouds, allowing the ground staff to clear the covers and prepare the playing surface. Initially, the play was to resume at 2:15pm, before a late short spell of rain meant the start time became 2:35pm. A tea break will be taken from 4pm to 4:20pm, with the final session scheduled to be played from 4:20pm to 5:45pm. Play can also be extended by an additional 30 minutes to maximize overs lost to weather disruptions. Play was originally scheduled to begin 15 minutes ahead of time at 9:45 am local time to compensate for overs lost to inclement weather on day one. But now the rain has meant the officials are targeting to bowl 43 overs on day



two. Earlier on Saturday, India ended their 20-Test wait for a century from the crucial number three position when left-hander Devdutt Padikkal hit a stroke-filled, unbeaten 131 off 178 balls and take the visitors to a commanding 288/2 in 73 overs in the side’s landmark 600th Test match. Padikkal found solid support in vice-captain KL Rahul, who despite going into his shell at times, compiled a fluent 77 before being forced to retire hurt due to forearm cramps. Yashasvi Jaiswal was run-out for 32 in a chaotic mix-up, while Indian skipper Shubman Gill was dismissed for 16. Rishabh Pant was unbeaten on 27 alongside Padikkal when stumps were called on day one.

RBI to stay in ‘wait-and-watch’ mode, supply side induced hike in inflation under watch



New Delhi: While a policy rate hike is surely not a zero probability event, the bar for the same appears high for now, with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) likely to look through the supply side induced increase in inflation, according to a new report. Stream History Documents Yes Bank’s own estimates indicate headline WPI averaging 9.0 per cent for the year while headline CPI is expected to be at 4.8 per cent (year-on-year). “As we had indicated in our CPI note, ‘Steady upward climb without rude surprises’, given that recent supply-side shocks have not yet translated into broad second-round effects, the case for the RBI to maintain a ‘wait-and-watch’ approach remains intact,” the note mentioned. The uncertainty bordering the resolution of the West Asia crisis is the crucial risk for manufacturing input costs. With the gap between retail and wholesale inflation persisting, one cannot rule out pass-through from the WPI side to the CPI, “even as we think that the government will hesitate from further passing on under-recoveries of the OMC to pump head prices of petrol and diesel,” according to the

note. Headline WPI for July came in at 9.8 per cent YoY, in line with expectations (9.75 per cent), exhibiting a mild softening from 9.9 per cent YoY in June. “Even as input price concerns show some easing, the critical issue is its sustainability, given uncertainties on the West Asia crisis resolution. As we await for a sense of the extent of pass-through from the WPI to the CPI, we reiterate our view for the RBI to stay on wait-and-watch and delay any rate action, despite expectations of Headline CPI rising,” Yes Bank said in its note. For July WPI print, core side price rise remains a concern with underlying price pressures in manufactured categories continuing to firm. On the producer-side, Output PPI remained broadly aligned with wholesale price trends, while the Input PPI provided some respite as input costs eased for the second consecutive month, partly driven by the cooling in petroleum and chemical-linked inputs. However, it needs to be noted that most global commodity prices remained firm in July, and similar trends are seen for August, said the note.

Gold prices rise 0.86 per cent as weak US data lifts demand

New Delhi: Gold prices surged 0.86 per cent on a weekly basis as a slew of weaker-than-expected US economic data reinforced expectations that the US Federal Reserve will hold interest rates unchanged. On Friday, MCX gold futures (October) gained 0.73 per cent and stood at Rs 154,590. On the other hand, MCX silver futures (September) advanced 0.15 per cent and stood at Rs 2,36,272 per kg. Moreover, the price of 10 grams of 24-carat gold was at Rs 1,49,621 on Friday, up from Rs 1,42,863 seen at Monday’s market opening, according to data published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA). Gold and silver also benefited from crude oil staying volatile amid lingering Middle East tensions, lower Treasury yields and a weaker US dollar, market participants said. The yellow metal climbed to its highest level in over two months before modest profit-taking later in the week, finally posting a monthly gain of more than 10 per cent. Similarly, the white metal advanced and modestly outperformed gold, narrowing the gold-silver ratio. According to commodity market experts, immediate resistance is placed at \$4,470-\$4,500 for COMEX gold, while support lies at \$4,400-\$4,370. For MCX Gold, immediate resistance is placed at Rs 1,55,500-Rs 1,56,000, while the support lies at Rs



1,53,300-Rs 1,52,700, they added. Crude oil rebounded sharply from the previous week’s sell-off as hopes for a near-term resolution to the US-Iran standoff over the Strait of Hormuz faded. Although crude oil prices retreated from their mid-week highs, both WTI and Brent posted solid weekly gains. Investors remain keen on the minutes of the Federal Reserve’s July policy meeting, due on August 19, and developments surrounding the Strait of Hormuz. Additionally, July consumer inflation remained broadly contained, with core CPI easing to 2.5 per cent, reinforcing expectations that the Federal Reserve is likely to leave interest rates unchanged at its September meeting.

Domestic investors remain net buyers, FIIs turn optimistic



Mumbai: Domestic institutional investors (DIIs) have been net buyers in every single week in last one month, totalling Rs 38,715.18 crore. August buying (month-to-date) reads FIIs at more than 4,115.93 crore against DIIs at Rs 17,053 crore, a genuine improvement in foreign tone, according to analysts. In last one month, FIIs sold heavily through the first two weeks — Rs 4,205.56 crore, Rs 3,892.77 crore and the index bottomed at 23,767.45 on precisely the day that pressure peaked. They then flipped to buying from July 28 onwards, and Nifty recovered to 24,774.30 by August 3. Even so, the cumulative figure remains negative at Rs 3,173.68 crore, meaning three weeks of buying could not undo two weeks of damage, said Pabitra Mukherjee, Deputy Vice President-Research, Bajaj Broking. Last week, FIIs closed as modest net buyers of Rs 1,228.24 crore, opening with two sessions of buying, reversing into two of selling, and returning as buyers on the final day. According to Ajit Mishra-SVP, Research, Religare Broking

Ltd, markets ended the week lower as elevated crude oil prices, renewed geopolitical uncertainty and mixed global cues weighed on investor sentiment. Volatility remained elevated as participants assessed the final leg of the Q1 FY27 earnings season and evaluated the potential impact of higher energy prices on inflation, the rupee and corporate margins. For the week, the Sensex declined 0.62 per cent to close at 78,009.25, while the Nifty fell 0.83 per cent to settle at 24,366. Rising crude oil prices and renewed geopolitical tensions remained the key headwinds for domestic equities. Brent crude stood around US\$87.18 per barrel after testing the US\$90 mark, raising concerns over India’s import bill, currency stability and inflationary pressures, said the analyst. Downloading Interactive Geographic Maps Investors continued to monitor the final leg of the Q1 FY27 earnings season, with stock-specific developments remaining an important driver of market activity, said market participants.

IPO wave: six companies eye nearly Rs 5,600 cr next week

New Delhi: The primary market is set for another busy week, with six companies, including Blackstone-backed Horizon Industrial Parks and Lalithaa Jewellery Mart, set to raise nearly Rs 5,600 crore collectively through initial public offerings (IPOs). The upcoming issues follow the launch of five IPOs in the past week, while three companies had already tapped the market earlier this month. Horizon Industrial Parks will kick off the week on August 17 with its Rs 2,600-crore IPO, followed by jewellery retailer Lalithaa Jewellery Mart’s Rs 1,700-crore issue on the same day. Shankesh Jewellers and film and television producer Sunshine Pictures will open their IPOs on August 18, worth Rs 367 crore and Rs 282 crore, respectively. Gaja Alternative Asset Management, which operates under the Gaja Capital brand, will launch its Rs 550-crore IPO on August 19, while Tempsens Instruments (India) will open its issue on August 20. Together, the six companies are looking to raise around Rs 5,600 crore through the public issues, making it another busy week for the primary market. The funds raised through the fresh issue across the six companies will largely be used for business expansion, capital expenditure, debt repayment and other corporate purposes. With the addition of these issues, the number of companies launching IPOs in 2026 is expected to rise to 54. Horizon Industrial Parks’ Rs 2,600-crore issue comprises entirely a fresh issue and has a price band of Rs 57-60 per share.

The company plans to use the proceeds to repay borrowings. Lalithaa Jewellery Mart has fixed a price band of



Rs 190-201 per share. Its Rs 1,700-crore issue comprises a fresh issue of up to Rs 1,200 crore and an OFS of up to Rs 500 crore. Shankesh Jewellers’ Rs 367-crore issue comes with a price band of Rs 88-93 per share. The IPO comprises a fresh issue of up to 2.95 crore equity shares and an OFS of up to 1 crore equity shares. Sunshine Pictures has fixed a price band of Rs 342-360 for its Rs 282-crore offering. The IPO comprises a fresh issue of 48 lakh equity shares and an OFS of 30.37 lakh equity shares, taking the total offer size to 78.37 lakh shares. Promoters Vipul Amrutlal Shah and Shefali Vipul Shah will sell shares through the OFS. Gaja Alternative Asset Management has set a price band of Rs 152-160 per share for its Rs 550-crore IPO. The issue comprises a fresh issue of up to Rs 450 crore and an OFS of up to Rs 100 crore. Tempsens Instruments (India) will offer a fresh issue of Rs 95 crore along with an OFS of 1.85 crore shares. Separately, air freight forwarding and logistics company Skyways Air Services is scheduled to launch its Rs 583-crore IPO on August 24, keeping the primary market pipeline active beyond the coming week.

Two dead, two missing after car plunges into canal in AP's West Godavari

Amaravati: Two persons died, and two others went missing when a car in which they were travelling plunged into a canal in Andhra Pradesh's West Godavari district, said police on Sunday. The incident happened late on Saturday night. According to police, a car lost control and fell into the Narsapuram canal near Itempudi in Irgavaram mandal. Four of the occupants in the car went missing while one person managed to come out safely. Police rushed to the spot and launched a search for the missing persons with the help of divers and firefighting personnel. The bodies of two of the missing were found on Sunday. The accident occurred when the victims were heading to Mori village in East Godavari district after attending a wedding of a friend at Peravali village. The missing persons were identified as Pothula Lakshmi Bhanu (18), Rajaram (17), D. Nagi Reddy (18) and Sai Surya (19). The bodies of Lakshmi Bhanu and Nagi Reddy were pulled out of the canal

by firefighting personnel on Sunday morning. The bodies were shifted to a government hospital for post-mortem examination. Rescue workers pulled out the car out of the canal. The search was on for the remaining missing persons. Police investigation revealed that the group of youth were heading to Mori village to meet a friend. It was raining in the area, and the person driving the car lost control. The victims were washed away. One of them held on to a tree and managed to come out with the help of locals. Meanwhile, a youth drowned in Nagarjuna Sagar backwaters in Nalgonda district of Telangana. The incident occurred when a group of friends went for a pleasure trip to Vizag Colony backwaters. They were swimming when one of the youths was washed away in the Krishna River. After a search for more than two hours by the local authorities, the body of Durga Tirumalles was retrieved.

IPS Officer Manish Devraj Patil Appointed Investigation Officer in Medico Priyanka's Case

Amaravati: The Andhra Pradesh government has appointed IPS officer Manish Devaraj Patil as the investigation officer in medico Priyanka's case who died after being critically injured when a car allegedly driven by youths under the influence of alcohol hit her. The government has issued orders appointing him to oversee the investigation. Devaraju is currently serving as the Additional SP of East Godavari district. The government has directed him to supervise the probe in coordination with the concerned police officials and ensure that the investigation is conducted thoroughly. The authorities have also been directed to



ensure that the accused are punished as per the law. The government has directed Rajamahendravaram South Zone DSP Shiva Priya and Prakash Nagar Police Inspector Bajilal to assist Devaraj in the investigation.

West Godavari: Four Missing, One Rescued After Car Plunges Into Canal



Godavari: Four youths are missing and one person was rescued after the car they were travelling in lost control and plunged into a canal at Iragavaram in Itempudi shortly after midnight on Sunday. According to reports, Pothula Lakshmi Bhanu (18), Rajaram (17), Nagireddy Duswanth (18) and Sai Surya (19) are among those missing. All five youths are friends, reportedly from Morey village in East Godavari district and were engineering students. They had travelled to Penumarru in West Godavari district to attend their friend's wedding. Also Read - Flight Services From Visakha Airport To Be Suspended From Sunday Midnight Advertisement The accident oc-

curred when the youths were returning after attending the wedding. Santhosh, who was also travelling in the car, was rescued. Police and rescue teams reached the spot and launched a search operation. Two bodies have reportedly been recovered so far, while search operations are continuing to trace the missing youths. A 15-member NDRF team from Kakinada has joined the rescue operations. Tanuku MLA Radha Krishna and Achanta MLA Pithani Satyanarayana visited the spot, took stock of the situation and directed the authorities to expedite the recovery of the bodies. The family members and relatives of the missing youths were inconsolable.

Flight Services From Visakha Airport To Be Suspended From Sunday Midnight



With flight services scheduled to operate from the Alluri Sitharamaraju International Airport from August 17, movement of commercial flights at the Visakha airport would be suspended from Sunday midnight. The Union civil aviation ministry informed that the operation of scheduled commercial flights would be suspended at the Visakhapatnam airport (INS Dega) for 30 years. However, this regulation would be relaxed during emergency conditions. Non-scheduled commercial flight services, Indian Air Force, Armed forces, police flights, departure and arrival of government guests would continue at the Visakha airport. The VTZ travel code assigned to the Visakhapatnam airport would be transferred to the Alluri Sitharamaraju airport from August 17 midnight. Actually, the Bhogapuram-Singapore first flight was scheduled to

take off on August 16. However, it was deferred to August 17. Indigo had already chalked out plans to operate flights from Bhogapuram to Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, and Tirupati on the first day.

Other airliners are also releasing schedules to run flights from Bhogapuram airport. All flights scheduled to operate from Visakha airport from August 16 midnight would take off from Bhogapuram. Bhogapuram-Hyderabad flights are scheduled to run at 8.55 and 10.40, 1.00 pm on August 17, 4.25 in the evening, 7.20, 8.40 and 9.20 pm in the evening. Delhi flights would operate at 8.20 am, 10.45 pm, Bengaluru at 2.55 in the afternoon and 9.10 pm, Chennai at 12.15 and 6.35 pm, Kolkata at 7.50 pm, Mumbai at 3.05 pm and Tirupati at 1.50 pm.

Public Smoking Sparks Outrage at Tirumala's Srivari Mettu

Tirumala: A video of a man allegedly smoking a cigarette while sitting on the steps near the Srivari Mettu footpath in Tirumala has gone viral on social media, drawing criticism from devotees. Some devotees told the man that smoking was prohibited in the area. However, he reportedly ignored their warnings and continued smoking. He allegedly finished the cigarette before leaving the spot. The incident has caused anger among devotees, who questioned how such an activity could take place in a prohibited area within the temple premises. They said



smoking in such a sacred place was unacceptable and demanded strict action against the person involved. Devotees also questioned the TTD staff over the security lapse and urged authorities to prevent such incidents in the future.

TTD to announces schedule for release of November quota Tirumala darshan tokens

TTD will release the online quota for Srivari Arjita Sevas namely Suprabhatam, Thomala, Archana, and Ashtadala Pada Padmaradhana—scheduled for November on the 18th of this month at 10:00am. Online registration for the electronic dip (lucky dip) for these seva tickets will remain open until



10:00 AM on the 20th. Selected devotees must make the payment and secure their lucky dip tickets between the 20th and the afternoon of the 22nd. On the 21st, tickets for Kalyanotsavam, Oonjal Seva, Arjita Brahmotsavam, Sahasra Deepalankara Seva, and Salakatlavavitrotsavam will be released at 10:00 AM, while the quota for virtual sevas and their associated darshan slots will be released at 3:00 PM on the same day. On the 24th, the quota for Angapradakshinam will be released at 10:00 AM; the SRIVANI Trust break darshan quota at 11:00 AM; and the quota for free special entry darshan tokens for the elderly, the chronically ill, and the differently-abled at 3:00 PM. On the 25th, the quota for Rs. 300 Special Entry Darshan tickets will be released at 10:00 AM, followed by the quota for booking rental accommodation in Tirumala and Tirupati at 3:00 PM.