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India Emerges AI Data Centre Hub

Global tech giants, Indian firms invest billions in AI infrastructure

New Delhi, July 9: India has emerged as one of the world's leading destinations for AI data centres, with global technology giants Google, Microsoft and Amazon, along with major Indian conglomerates, committing billions of dollars to build next-generation AI infrastructure, according to an article published in The Citizen. The report states that Mumbai, Chennai and Visakhapatnam have become key AI data centre hubs due to their proximity to undersea

cable networks, while inland cities such as Hyderabad and Pune are rapidly expanding their cloud and AI infrastructure. Google has reportedly committed \$15 billion towards AI infrastructure in the region, while the Adani Group plans to invest \$100 billion to develop a 5GW AI platform by 2035. The article notes that AI data centres require massive electricity, water, advanced fibre connectivity and reliable renewable energy to support specialised comput-

ing systems. India's growth has also been supported by favourable government policies, including concessional financing, tax incentives and tax holidays for companies investing in green AI infrastructure until 2047. With operational data centre capacity expected to reach 6.5GW by the end of the decade, India is projected to emerge as one of the world's leading AI powers, behind only the United States and China in global AI competitiveness.

Explosions Rock Bandar Abbas

Tehran, July 9: Fresh explosions were reported on Thursday in Iran's strategic port city of Bandar Abbas, as military tensions between the United States and Iran intensified across the Gulf region. Iranian media reported that the blasts were heard along the southern coast of Bandar Abbas and were believed to be linked to exchanges of fire in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said three of its soldiers were killed in a US strike carried out earlier in the day. Meanwhile, Bahrain and Kuwait announced that their air defence

systems successfully intercepted Iranian missiles and drones. Kuwait said it destroyed three ballistic missiles, one cruise missile and 10 drones, with debris causing minor damage and injuring one person. The US Central Command (CENTCOM) confirmed launching another wave of strikes on nearly 90 Iranian military targets, including air defence systems, missile and drone facilities, coastal surveillance assets and naval infrastructure aimed at reducing Iran's capability to threaten commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's IRGC and army claimed they



retaliated by targeting US military bases and facilities in Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. The latest escalation comes even as Tehran and Washington were engaged in negotiations under a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at reaching a final agreement within 60 days.

IMF Sees India Staying Strong

Resilient economy despite oil shock; FY2026 growth forecast at 6.4%

Washington, July 9: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said India's economy remains resilient despite rising global oil prices triggered by the Middle East conflict, while slightly lowering its 2026 growth forecast to 6.4%. In its latest World Economic Outlook update, the IMF reduced India's 2026 growth estimate by 0.1 percentage point from its April projection but raised the 2027

forecast by 0.2 percentage point, citing stronger domestic demand and resilient economic activity. IMF officials said India has weathered global uncertainty better than many economies, though higher energy prices are expected to weigh on growth this year. The Fund expects growth to strengthen in 2027 as the energy shock eases, with medium-term growth projected at around 6.5%. The

IMF also retained its global growth forecasts at 3% for 2026 and 3.4% for 2027, while warning that any further escalation of the Middle East conflict could push oil prices higher and increase volatility in global markets. India, which imports over 80% of its crude oil, remains vulnerable to prolonged disruptions in oil supplies through the Strait of Hormuz, a key global shipping route.



BRS Got ₹1,400 Cr Illegally: Kavitha

Hyderabad, July 9: Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS) chief K. Kavitha on Thursday alleged that the ₹1,400 crore lying in the bank accounts of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) was amassed through "quid pro quo" deals and demanded that the money be distributed among the families of Telangana martyrs. Addressing Singareni Collieries workers at Kothagudem, Kavitha launched a sharp attack on her brother and BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) and her cousin, former minister T. Harish Rao, accusing both of corruption. Making it clear that she has no plans to return to the BRS, Kavitha said, "As long as I am alive, I will never rejoin the BRS." She alleged that the ₹1,400 crore in the party's accounts was received through alleged quid pro quo arrangements involving contractors from Andhra Pradesh. Calling it "corruption money," she urged the



mandatory for all private educational institutions with more than 500 students to procure milk exclusively from Vijaya Dairy. The TRS chief said that if her party comes to power, it would review all land allotted by both the previous BRS government and the present state government to contractors from Andhra Pradesh and reclaim every parcel of such land. Accusing the BRS of attempting to prevent her party from securing the TRS acronym, she questioned why the BRS had filed more than 1,000 complaints with the Election Commission if it truly believed her party posed no threat. Kavitha also demanded that medical board meetings for dependent employment in Singareni Collieries be conducted twice every month. She warned that if the government failed to make a clear announcement on the issue, she would launch an indefinite hunger strike.

Woman Gives Birth to Quadruplets

Three girls, a boy born prematurely in rare Rajasthan case

Jaipur, July 9: In a rare medical occurrence, a woman in Rajasthan's Jhalawar district delivered quadruplets — three girls and a boy — at the Hira Kunwar Ba Women's Hospital. The babies were born through a Caesarean section at around 11:50 a.m. on Wednesday and have been admitted to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) as they were delivered prematurely at 29 weeks of gestation. The mother, Jyoti Kashyap, wife of Arun Kashyap, is reported to be in stable condition and has been shifted to the gynaecology ward. According to doctors, the newborns have low birth weight, with three babies weighing around 1.1 kg each and the fourth baby girl weighing 1.2 kg. All four require specialised care due to underdeveloped lungs and are receiving respiratory support. Paediatrician Dr. Naresh Meena said the babies are under constant monitoring by a team of specialists, while Dr. Vishal Nagar described the delivery as an exceptionally rare event. "This is the first quadruplet birth I have witnessed in my medical career," Dr. Nagar said. This is the couple's second childbearing, and they already have a four-year-old daughter. Doctors remain optimistic about the babies' recovery but said they would require intensive care over the coming days.



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EDITORIAL

India's Rising Middle Class

India's middle class has emerged as one of the country's greatest economic strengths. With rising incomes, improved education, expanding employment opportunities, and greater access to technology, this segment is reshaping the nation's economy and society. Today, the middle class is not only driving consumption but also influencing innovation, entrepreneurship, housing, healthcare, education, and digital transformation. However, its rapid growth also presents significant challenges that policymakers cannot afford to ignore. The expanding middle class has become a powerful engine of economic growth. Increased purchasing power has boosted demand for homes, automobiles, consumer electronics, financial services, travel, and quality healthcare. This growing demand fuels manufacturing, services, and retail sectors, creating employment opportunities and attracting both domestic and foreign investment. India's vibrant startup ecosystem has also flourished by addressing the aspirations and changing lifestyles of middle-income households. Digital adoption has further strengthened this transformation. The widespread use of smartphones, digital payments, e-commerce, and online education has made financial and commercial services more accessible than ever before. The middle class has played a pivotal role in accelerating India's digital economy, supporting innovation and improving productivity across industries.

However, rising aspirations are accompanied by growing pressures. Inflation, increasing housing costs, healthcare expenses, and the rising cost of quality education continue to strain household budgets. For many families, income growth has not kept pace with the rising cost of living. The dream of owning a home, securing quality healthcare, and providing higher education for children remains financially challenging despite higher earnings. Employment is another area of concern. While the economy continues to create opportunities, many young graduates face skill mismatches and underemployment. Stable, high-quality jobs remain essential for sustaining the growth of the middle class. Investments in manufacturing, technology, research, and skill development will therefore be crucial in generating long-term employment. Healthcare and social security also require greater attention. A single medical emergency can significantly affect the financial stability of middle-income families. Expanding affordable health insurance, strengthening public healthcare, and improving pension systems can enhance economic resilience and reduce household vulnerabilities. Urban infrastructure presents another challenge. Rapid urbanization has increased pressure on transportation, housing, water supply, waste management, and public services.

PM Modi 'True Friend of Australia'

Australian PM welcomes Indian leader at 'Melbourne Meets Modi' event



Melbourne, July 9: Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Thursday described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "true friend of Australia" while welcoming him at the 'Melbourne Meets Modi' community event held at the packed Marvel Stadium. Addressing thousands of members of the Indian diaspora, Albanese said it was an honour to host PM Modi, calling him "a very dear friend" and praising the growing partnership between the two democracies. "Prime Minister Modi, my friend, welcome to marvellous Melbourne. As a true friend of Australia and a very dear

friend of mine, it is an honour to host you this evening," Albanese said. The Australian Prime Minister remarked that although Marvel Stadium had witnessed many historic events, the Indian community gathering was among its most significant, reflecting the strength and dynamism of Australia-India ties. Recalling his visits to India, Albanese spoke fondly of the warm hospitality he received and remembered his ride with PM Modi at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad during his 2023 visit. Highlighting the contribution of the Indian diaspora, Albanese said the more than

one million Australians of Indian origin have played a vital role in strengthening Australia's economy and multicultural identity. He praised the community for its contributions to key sectors such as healthcare, information technology, education, and small businesses, and said Indian Australians are always among the first to volunteer during national emergencies. Describing the Indian community as the "living bridge" between the two nations, Albanese said their commitment, aspirations and cultural values have made Australia a stronger and more vibrant country.

Operation Thunderbolt Hits Drug Hub

Hyderabad, July 9: Hyderabad City Police on Thursday conducted a massive cordon-and-search operation, codenamed 'Operation Thunderbolt', in Mangar Basti under the Habeeb Nagar Police Station limits to crack down on drug trafficking and anti-social activities. The operation began at 3.30 a.m. under the guidance of Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar, with the participation of 1,100 personnel drawn from the Hyderabad Narcotics Enforcement Wing (H-NEW), Task Force (H-FAST), Central Crime Station (CCS), CAR Armed Forces and local police. The special drive was supervised by Additional CPs S.M. Srinivas and Tafsir Iqbal, while DCP Task Force Gaikwad Vaibhav Raghunath monitored the field operations. Police seized 150 ganja sachets, one kilogram of dry ganja, 32 cough syrup bottles and liquor bottles during the extensive search. A total of 65 suspects were taken into custody, including 15 drug offenders and 50 suspected property offenders, along with habitual criminals, chain snatchers and individuals with pending non-bailable warrants. Police said the operation was launched based on intelligence inputs about widespread drug consumption and trafficking in the locality.

Every Village Road in India to be mapped

New Delhi, July 9: In a major initiative to revolutionize rural infrastructure, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has announced a pioneering proposal to implement a standardized, digital coding and grading system for every internal road within India's villages. By creating a unified national database, this "whole-of-government" effort aims to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural areas, ensuring that every home and institution in "Grameen Bharat" is easily reachable. The Ministry has launched a public consultation process. Under the proposed system, roads will be categorized into a simple three-tier framework: Main Roads, Cross Roads, and Other/Connected Roads. Each segment will be assigned a unique alphanumeric code that links it directly to national databases. This digital identity will be powered by advanced technologies, including DIGIPIN for precise

geo-spatial coordinates and the Ministry's "Gram Manchitra" platform for real-time monitoring and planning. To ensure accessibility for everyone, physical signboards will be installed in both the local language and Romanized English, complete with QR codes. For decades, the lack of systematic mapping for internal village roads has created significant hurdles in daily life. Emergency responders, such as ambulance and fire services, have often struggled to locate specific paths during critical moments, while postal and courier services have faced challenges in last-mile delivery. Fur-



thermore, government officials have historically lacked a reliable database to plan maintenance or infrastructure upgrades. The implementation of this system will empower local Gram Panchayats, the primary authority for identifying and naming these roads, to better manage their own infrastructure. Beyond simple naming, the integration of these codes into national systems will drastically improve administrative efficiency and transparency. From ensuring that government welfare schemes reach the intended beneficiaries to providing private navigation apps with the data needed to map rural lanes,

the initiative is designed to bring ease of living to every citizen. This initiative represents a significant extension of the success achieved by the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), which has already completed over 771,000 kilometres of rural roads as of 2025. By extending this connectivity from the village boundary directly to the doorstep, the government is ensuring that no area remains underserved. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj invites the public to participate in this nation-building exercise by providing their insights on local road layouts, potential implementation challenges, and community involvement strategies. Interested parties can submit their feedback via email or through their local Gram Panchayat offices, helping to shape a more connected, accessible, and digitally empowered rural India. Details are in the link attached.

India Prepares for El Niño

New Delhi, July 9: India is gearing up for the possible impact of a strong El Niño, with climate experts warning that the current weather pattern could intensify into a "Super El Niño" between late 2026 and early 2027, posing risks to agriculture, power generation and water resources. According to scientists, El Niño is caused by unusual warming of the central and eastern Pacific Ocean, disrupting global weather patterns. A Super El Niño occurs when sea surface temperatures rise more than 2°C above normal, making it one of the strongest climate events. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast below-normal rainfall for July at less than 94% of the Long Period Average (LPA), with central and western rain-fed regions expected to face greater stress. Maximum and minimum temperatures are also likely to remain above normal across most parts of the country. A review meeting chaired by

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister P.K. Mishra assessed preparedness for the kharif season, directing continuous monitoring of the El Niño situation and district-level contingency planning. The Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) warned that India's power sector could face severe pressure due to lower hydropower generation and rising electricity demand for cooling. Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the Centre is closely monitoring the situation and remains optimistic that rainfall will improve during July. He noted that the rainfall deficit has narrowed from 33% in June to 24% in July, with the number of rainfall-deficient districts dropping from 262 to 178. Meanwhile, INCOIS has warned that warmer seas could trigger marine heatwaves, coral bleaching, reduced fish catch, and an increased risk of coastal erosion and flooding along India's east coast during the coming months.

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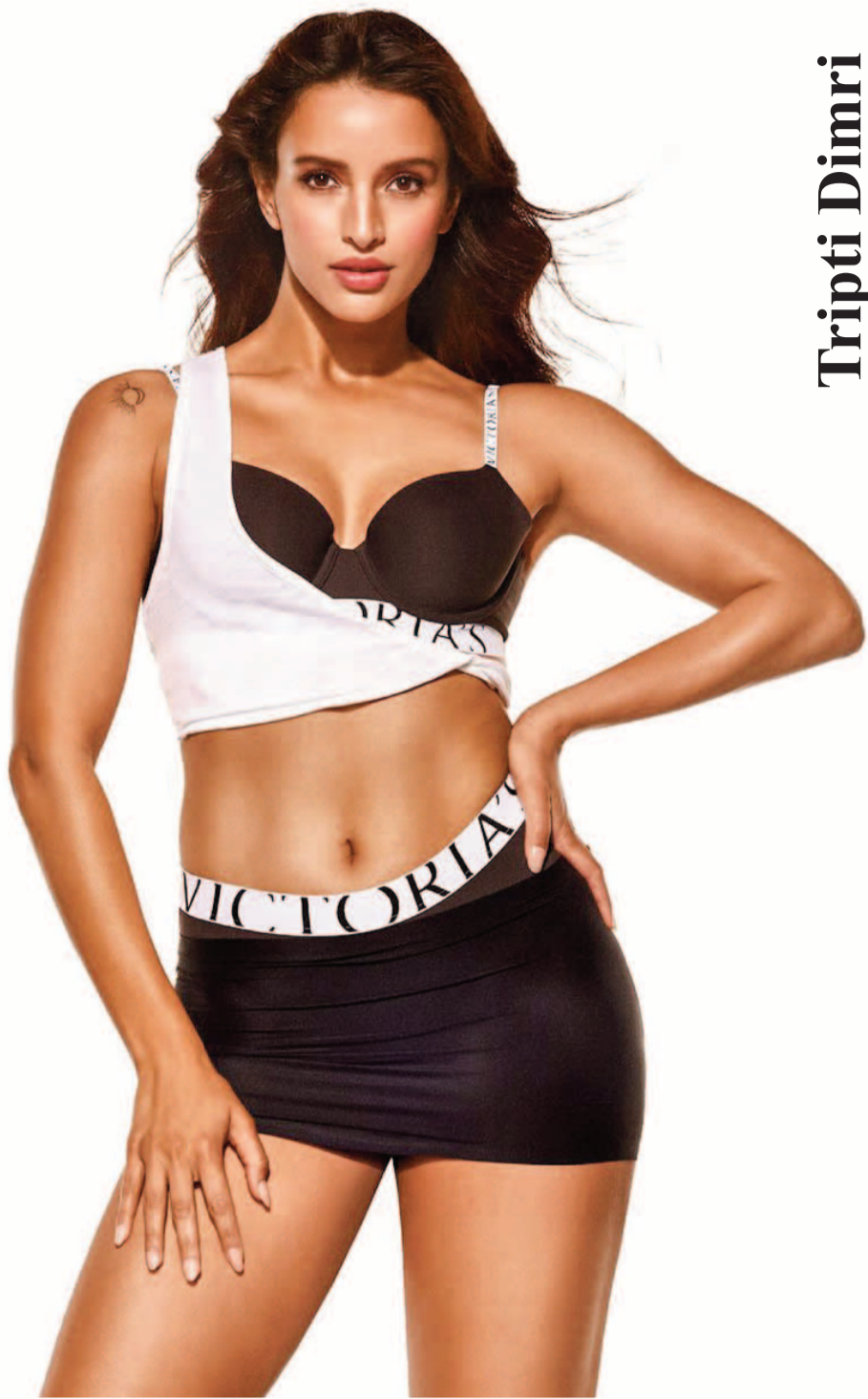
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Rashmika Wraps Underwater Action

Rashmika Mandanna has completed filming an ambitious underwater action sequence for her upcoming pan-India film 'Mysaa', describing it as the most challenging experience of her career. Sharing an update on Instagram, Rashmika posted a picture from the pool and wrote that the sequence was "the most challenging thing I've ever had to do in life," adding that the demanding shoot has made her even more excited about the film. The actress reportedly performed the entire underwater fight sequence without a body double, spending nearly 20 hours underwater over two days to complete the stunt. The makers claimed the sequence is India's first female-led underwater fight scene and released behind-the-scenes glimpses from the shoot. They said the action set piece is expected to be a landmark moment in Indian cinema. Directed by Rawindra Pulle and produced by Unformula Films, Mysaa is an emotional action thriller set against a tribal backdrop. The film marks Rashmika Mandanna's first female-led pan-India action film and is slated for release later this year, with the teaser expected to be unveiled soon.

'Lenin' Gets U/A Certificate

Akhil Akkineni's upcoming Telugu action drama 'Lenin' has been cleared for release with a U/A certificate by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). Announcing the development, Annapurna Studios said the film is ready to hit theatres from July 10. Directed by Murali Kishor Abburu, Lenin stars Bhagyashri Borse as the female lead, playing the role of Bharathi. The film has generated strong buzz after veteran actor Nagarjuna praised the first cut, saying audiences would witness "a new Akhil" in the film. Initially scheduled for release on May 1, the film was postponed twice before locking July 10 as its release date. Featuring the tagline "No war is more violent than love", Lenin has music composed by Thaman, cinematography by Naveen Kumar, and editing by Navin Nooli. The film is expected to showcase Akhil in a powerful new avatar.



'The Vvaan' Release Postponed Again



The makers of 'The Vvaan', starring Sidharth Malhotra and Tamannaah Bhatia, have announced that the film will now release in theatres on September 25, 2026. A new poster unveiled on Thursday features the protagonist standing between a bull and a tiger, hinting at the film's folklore-inspired conflict and mystical narrative. Presented as a grand fantasy adventure, The Vvaan blends action, comedy, folklore and supernatural elements, supported by large-scale visual effects and extensive world-building. The film has witnessed multiple release date changes since its announcement. Originally scheduled for October 24, 2025, it was later shifted to May 15, 2026, then August 28, 2026, before finally moving to September 25 due to extended post-production and VFX work. Written by Arunabh Kumar and directed by Deepak Mishra, the film

is produced by Shobha Kapoor, Ekta R. Kapoor, Arunabh Kumar and Niraj Kothari under Balaji Motion Pictures.



'Jana Nayagan' Gets A Certificate

Much-awaited action entertainer 'Jana Nayagan', starring Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay in his final film as an actor, has been cleared for release by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) with an 'A' certificate. Though the makers are yet to make an official announcement, producer-distributor Dhananjeyan shared a copy of the censor certificate on social media, confirming that the film has received clearance. Industry sources indicate that KVN Productions is planning to release the film on July 24, although the release date has not yet been officially confirmed. Originally slated for a Pongal release in January, the film was delayed after it was referred to a Revising Committee under the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules. Directed by H. Vinoth, the film features an ensemble cast including Bobby Deol, Pooja Hegde, Mamitha Baiju, Prakash Raj and Gautham Vasudev Menon. Jana Nayagan has generated massive buzz as it marks Vijay's farewell to cinema before dedicating himself full-time to politics.

Dhanush Never Wanted Films: Kasthuri Raja

Veteran filmmaker Kasthuri Raja has revealed that his son Dhanush never wanted to become an actor and even pleaded with him to leave the film industry during the early phase of his career. Speaking at the pre-release event of 'Love Oh Love', starring his grandson Pavish, Kasthuri Raja said Dhanush was reluctant to enter cinema and continued asking to quit until his fifth or sixth film. Recalling the shooting of 'Thulluvadho Ilamai', he said Dhanush would often cry before



scenes and repeatedly request, "Dad, let me go." Kasthuri Raja added that Selvaraghavan, unlike

Dhanush, was the only one in the family who willingly chose cinema. Despite initially discouraging his children from joining films, he insisted Selvaraghavan complete his engineering degree before entering the industry. Praising the team of 'Love Oh Love', Kasthuri Raja lauded the producers, director and actors for their teamwork and professionalism. He also appreciated Pavish and Naga Durga for their sincere performances and youthful energy in the film.