

EYE SECRETS

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Decision soon on Konda Surekha's disciplinary notice: Congress

Hyderabad:, Sept 2

The All India Congress Committee (AICC) leadership is expected to take a decision soon on the notice issued to Telangana Forest Minister Konda Surekha by the disciplinary committee of state Congress over her daughter's critical remarks against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and other party leaders.

Revanth, his deputy Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, state Congress president B Mahesh Kumar Goud, Surekha and other key leaders met AICC leadership in Delhi during the last two days.

Amid speculation that Surekha could be removed from the state cabinet, Goud told reporters that he, Revanth Reddy and AICC incharge of party affairs in Telangana Meenakshi Natarajan apprised the AICC leaders on the issue concerning Surekha.

Surekha, who met AICC leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge and Meenakshi Natarajan, said she presented her version to them.

Speaking to reporters, Surekha said she and her husband belong to two backward castes that account for 16 per cent of the state's population.

Referring to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's recent comments on 'Manusmriti' and 'patriarchy', Surekha said her daughter Sushmita, who is married, is independent and that she has no authority to stop her daughter.

Noting that she has been performing well as a minister and faced no allegations of corruption, the minister said she urged the party leadership to let her continue in the cabinet.

Pointing to the demand by several Congress MLAs to initiate disciplinary action against her for not condemning her daughter's remarks against the CM and others, Surekha said none of the MLAs spoke voluntarily and that "somebody" was behind them.

Madhari Chandra Shekhar Addresses Civic Issues in Jangamet Division

"Eye secrets bureau "HYDERABAD, Sept. 2: BJP Senior Leader and former SC Morcha Vice President Madhari Chandra Shekhar visited Tanaji Nagar Basti and other areas of Jangamet Division in Chandrayangutta Constituency to address drinking water shortages and drainage problems."During his visit, he personally inspected the affected areas and



spoke with local residents about their long-pending civic issues. He also contacted the concerned government officials and requested immediate action."The officials responded positively and assured that necessary steps would be taken to resolve the drinking water and sewage problems at the earliest."Madhari Chandra Shekhar said that the welfare and development of Jangamet Division remain his top priority. He assured residents that he would continue to stand with them and work tirelessly to ensure better basic facilities and development for every family.

158 Telangana medical shops raided for selling illegal drugs

Hyderabad:, Sept 2

The Telangana Standards Authority for Food and Essential Drugs (TG SAFE) has detected violations at 158 medical shops statewide during a special enforcement drive against the illegal sale of habit-forming medicines.

The drugs wing of TG SAFE conducted raids on Wednesday, September 2, and discovered Tramadol, Pregabalin-containing formulations, Nitrazepam, Alprazolam, Tapentadol, Codeine-based cough syrups and Zolpidem, sold without valid prescriptions.

Shop owners failed to produce bills, non-maintenance or non-production of sales records, and prescription and Schedule H1 drug registers. Other violations included dispensing prescription medicines in the absence of a registered pharmacist, failure to produce purchase bills and irregular maintenance of sales and purchase records, officials said. Show-cause notices have been issued to all 158 medical shops, with TG SAFE warning that departmental action, including suspension or cancellation of drug licences, would be initiated against violators under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and the rules framed under it. TG SAFE officials advised medical shops to exercise strict vigilance while dispensing prescription medicines and maintain all mandatory records. They reiterated that Schedule H, H1 and X medicines must be sold only against valid prescriptions issued by registered medical practitioners. The authority also warned that illegal sale, diversion or distribution of prescription medicines for non-therapeutic or abusive purposes would invite stringent action, including cancellation of licences and prosecution under relevant provisions of law.

Revanth Offers 416 Acres for DRDL Facility in Mahbubnagar

New Delhi, Sept 2

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday offered 416.18 acres of land in Devarakadra mandal of Mahbubnagar district to the Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) for a prestigious defence project. The Chief Minister sought the cooperation of the Centre for strengthening Telangana's defence and aerospace ecosystem.

The Chief Minister made the offer during his meeting with defence minister Rajnath Singh in Delhi, where the two discussed investment prospects in the defence sector and various proposals relating to defence infrastructure in the state.

Revanth Reddy invited Rajnath Singh to the 'Invest Telangana Global Summit-2026', being organised by the state government at Bharat Future City from December 7 to 9, and requested him to inaugurate the Defence Expo-2026, which will be held as part of the summit.

The Chief Minister explained that the expo would have a special session on the aerospace, defence and space sectors, besides an air show, industrial exhibition and live demonstrations of land-based defence systems.

He said the participation and guidance of the defence minister would inspire defence industries, startups and young scientists from across the country who are expected to attend the event and exchange ideas and experiences.

Revanth Reddy said Telangana was keen to host the Defence Expo-2026 in Hyderabad to international standards and sought the defence ministry's full cooperation for its successful conduct.

The Chief Minister requested assistance in securing the necessary airspace clearances for the air show and facilitating the participation of Indian Air Force aircraft, besides the Surya Kiran and Sarang aerobatic teams. He also sought support for a static aircraft display and requested that state-of-the-art defence systems of the Army, Navy and Air Force be showcased at the expo, with senior officials and representatives of the three services participating in the event.

The meeting also discussed arrangements for



extensive participation of defence public sector undertakings, including HAL, BEL, BDL and MDL, as well as DRDO laboratories, which are proposed to showcase indigenous defence technologies at the global summit. Revanth Reddy sought the defence ministry's support in facilitating meetings with foreign defence representatives, bilateral defence delegations and prominent representatives of international defence organisations.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister informed Rajnath Singh about the state government's progress on land acquisition for the proposed Adilabad airport. He said Telangana had already acquired 750 acres and was in the process of acquiring another 750 acres, as sought by the defence ministry, taking the total land available for the project to 1,500 acres.

The land would facilitate development of both an Indian Air Force terminal and a civil aviation terminal at Adilabad.

Revanth Reddy further informed the defence minister that the Telangana Industrial and Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIIC) had agreed to allocate 416.18 acres in Devarakadra mandal for a prestigious DRDL project. The land would be leased for 33 years at a nominal annual rent of just `1 for the entire parcel, instead of charging the amount on a per-acre basis. He also highlighted the provision for extending the lease agreement twice, if required.

The meeting was attended by Telangana SHAKTI minister G. Vivek, MPs M Anil Kumar Yadav, Mallu Ravi, Suresh Shetkar and Porika Balram Naik, and state government advisor (protocol) Harkara Venugopal.

CM Promises Linking Of Godavari Waters To Simhachalam And Vamsadhara

VISAKHAPATNAM, sept 2: : Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday dedicated the Polavaram Left Canal waters to the people of north Andhra region after performing special pujas at the Payakaraopeta cross regulator in Anakapalle district.

Naidu, standing in the canal, offered silk robes to the Godavari waters and performed jala harathi.

Addressing a public meeting, he said Godavari waters would be taken to Simhachalam hill next year and, in the future, extended to Arasavelli Suryanarayana Swamy temple and connected to the Vamsadhara river. He described the event as a historic step in the state's irrigation journey.

The Chief Minister said the left canal would supply irrigation water to four lakh acres across East Godavari, Konaseema, Kakinada and Anakapalle districts, while nine lakh people would benefit from drinking water.



Some 23.44 tmc ft of water would be provided to Visakhapatnam and Anakapalle districts for industrial, drinking and irrigation needs.

Naidu said the canal would be expanded and linked to the North Andhra Sujala Sravanthi project. He also announced that 12 major projects worth `3,200 crore would be completed and dedicated to the people.

On industrial development, Naidu said the alliance government was bringing major data centres and IT companies to north Andhra. He said subsea cable connectivity would link Asia through Visakhapatnam.

Naidu spoke of plans to connect the east coast with central India through harbours and Moolapeta ports. He recalled laying the foundation stone for the ArcelorMittal Steel Plant in Anakapalle six months ago and said the district would be developed on par with Ranga Reddy of Hyderabad.

He said migrations would reverse, with people

moving into north Andhra as it developed, instead of people leaving the region in search of work elsewhere.

Naidu accused the YSRC of indulging in false propaganda that data centres would cause shortages of water and electricity in Visakhapatnam. Data centres required only 5 tmc ft of water, while Polavaram could deliver 2 tmc ft of water per day through gravity flow. The CM accused the YSRC of attempting to claim credit for projects it had no role in, citing Bhogapuram and Veligonda. "North Andhra had suffered under YSRC rule," he said, alleging encroachments and neglect of projects, and accusing its leader of spending `500 crore on a luxurious residence in Rushikonda instead of irrigating agricultural fields with that huge sum.

Naidu said permanent development required stable governments. His administration, with the support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had established Polavaram, Amaravati and Visakhapatnam steel plants and secured a railway zone.

Indian-American Army surgeon Major Jagatkumar Patel develops minimally invasive brain tumour surgery



New York: An Indian American Army surgeon, Major Jagatkumar Patel, has been credited with developing an innovative surgery to remove brain tumors without having to open the skull enabling quick recovery. India news headlinesHe and an Army neurosurgeon came up with a way of operating on a tumor at the base of the skull by going through the nose, according to the Pentagon. "Historically, most of these surgeries were done open, which is a much more challenging procedure for the patient," Patel said. "Today, if a tumor is the appropriate size and location, open surgery just isn't necessary", he said. "Through the nose, we get the best access and the best chance of complete removal". Recently, Patel and Lt. Col. Charles Miller successfully carried out the innovative procedure on Marine Staff Sergeant Andy Archer, who had suffered pounding headaches for 15

years. When he developed vision problems recently, doctors ran an MRI scan that found a tumor about the size of a golf ball, measuring 4.4 centimetres, in front of the pituitary gland and pressing against the optic nerve. He was brought to the Walter Reed Army National Medical Centre, the premier military health facility in Bethesda. Patel and Miller decided on the innovative, minimally invasive procedure to extract the tumor entirely through the nose. Patel developed a plan to navigate the complex nasal anatomy and create a clear surgical pathway, the Pentagon said. Patel used an endoscopic camera to provide high-definition, close-up of the tumor on a surgical monitor, enabling Miller to dissect and extract the tumor safely. "If he needs to get to critical structures, I can drive the camera closer, so he has perfect visualisation", Patel said. Modestly, he added, "My skills in navigating the nasal approach are only useful because he (Miller) is skilled enough to completely remove the tumor once we get there". "It is a true team effort", he said. Two days after the surgery, there were no visible signs that Archer had just undergone major brain surgery, and he was already sitting up in the surgical intensive care unit. And his vision was beginning to clear. "I don't think anyone else in the Defense Health Agency has this kind of team performing these complex skull base surgeries," Patel said. "A minimally invasive approach through the nasal passages is more challenging and we are mindful that (the tumor) has to be in a certain spot to go through the nose," he added.

US may impose USD 1,00,000 fee on OPT visas

Washington: The US is planning to impose a USD 1,00,000 fee on visas issued to international students to work in the US after graduation from an American university, The Wall Street Journal reported. The Trump administration's move comes after a US court struck down a proposal to levy a USD 1,00,000 fee on H-1B visas.

According to The Wall Street Journal, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is mulling the high fee on Optional Practical Training (OPT) visas, which are an extension of F-1 visas issued to students. The OPT programme allows foreign graduates to work for one to three years on their student visas in areas directly related to their studies. Roughly 4,19,000 foreigners were working on OPT in 2024, the latest year for which data are available. Tech companies, which conduct most of the recruitment from US universities, opposed the USD 1,00,000 fee on H-1B visas.

A DHS spokeswoman said in a statement, "No policies should be considered final until formally announced. At DHS, we are always having conversations about how to use all tools in our arsenal to protect the integrity of our legal immigration system." In addition to the H-1B and



student visas, officials at the State Department are also weighing a USD 1,00,000 bond for applicants seeking green cards outside the US, redeemable only after they move to the US and become citizens. The OPT programme is one of the primary attractions for international students choosing to study in the US. Without OPT, most international students would be forced to leave the US immediately after graduation, taking the skills they gained at American universities to foreign markets.

Kumamoto earthquake claims 34 lives as rescue efforts continue

Kumamoto (Japan): The death toll climbed to 34 after a powerful earthquake in southwestern Japan triggered an explosion at a mall, toppled a factory chimney and flattened homes, the Kumamoto prefectural government said on Friday. The magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck Japan's southern main island of Kyushu on Tuesday. Officials said 34 deaths had been confirmed as being related to the disaster, while one more death was still under investigation. On Thursday, authorities said more than 80 people had been injured, five of them seriously.

More than 3,500 homes were still without electricity, and more than 9,000 people were staying in shelters, where additional power sources were being installed to provide air conditioning. In the days since the quake, concerns have grown over illness, including those linked to the sweltering heat. Search teams continued to work in the Kumamoto area on Friday, including at the site of the collapsed Aeon Mall shopping centre in the town of Kashima, where some of the worst damage was reported. The complex was bustling with thousands of people when the quake struck. The company said about 3,000 shoppers were evacuated to a parking lot before an explosion



occurred in another part of the mall, where some staff members remained at work. The mall's second floor collapsed, trapping people. At the site, seven people were confirmed dead and 11 had been rescued, Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara told reporters in Tokyo on Friday. Authorities did not say how many people were still missing. Meanwhile, the search operation ended at a Nippon Paper Industries factory in the Yatsushiro area, where a chimney collapsed during the quake, Kihara said

Jordanian air defences shoot down 5 missiles launched from Iran

Cairo: Jordan's air defences shot down five missiles launched from Iran on Thursday morning, the country's state-run Petra news agency said, hours after the US military announced it had completed "a heavy wave of strikes against Iran" in response to an earlier Iranian missile attack on a US base in Jordan. No casualties were reported from Jordan's interception of the missiles, the news agency quoted the spokesman for the country's armed forces as saying. The US Central Command said in a social media post that for over two hours the United States had struck "dozens" of targets belonging to Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, including military command centres as well as missile and drone facilities, and coastal surveillance and defence sites. The new strikes came hours after US President Donald Trump vowed to hit Iran "very hard" after it targeted a base in Jordan that hosts US troops.

Iran's official IRNA news agency said three people were killed and two were wounded in a strike on the island of Qeshm, which lies just off the Iranian mainland in the Strait of Hormuz. The latest barrage came after the US partnered with Saudi Arabia to strike Iran-backed militias in neighbouring Iraq, killing at least 20 fighters and six Iranian advisers on Wednesday. The flare-ups on multiple fronts after several days of relative calm raised the risk of a return to all-out war. It also underscored the difficulty of winding down a five-month conflict that has

jolted the world economy and is unpopular among Americans. The fighting was likely to add to concerns that the US is further drawing down already diminished stockpiles of sophisticated munitions needed to defend its bases and allies. Fires were reported on two natural gas vessels in an Egyptian port. Elsewhere, British maritime security firm Ambrey said drone strikes ignited fires on two natural gas vessels at the Egyptian port of Damietta. It was not immediately clear who was responsible for the strikes on a US-owned floating storage facility and a Greek-owned tanker. No injuries were reported. Egypt, a close US ally and regional mediator, is one of the only countries in the Middle East to have been spared direct military action during the war. A strike by Iran or its allies, if confirmed, would mark a significant widening of the conflict. Asked during an Oval Office event if Iran was responsible for the strikes on the natural gas vessels, Trump responded: "It's a little more of the same." "In the meantime, we're going to be hitting them very hard because it's our turn to hit them," he added. Saudi Arabia accuses Iraqi militias of targeting its oil facilities. Saudi Arabia had accused the Iraqi militias of firing drones against its oil facilities over the past few days. An umbrella group of Iraqi militias initially denied the allegations, while another Iran-backed group – the Houthis in Yemen – said they had attacked Saudi energy facilities as part of a separate but related conflict. Saudi Defence Minister Khalid bin

Trump says Gaza deal reached for Hamas disarmament



Washington: President Donald Trump said a deal had been reached for Hamas to disarm and Israel to withdraw its forces from Gaza, but many hurdles, conditions and long timelines remained before the war in the Palestinian territory could end. However, neither Hamas nor Israel gave any immediate indication that they had agreed.

The White House announcement on Thursday came nine months after a US-brokered ceasefire was signed. Negotiations between Israel and Hamas had largely remained deadlocked over the implementation of the second phase, including the disarmament of Hamas and the reconstruction of Gaza. "The agreement will be carried out in carefully structured phases," Trump said on social media. "As disarmament is completed, Israeli forces will withdraw, and the International Stabilization Force will work with a new Palestinian police force to ensure Gaza is safe for its residents and its neighbours." Trump's 20-point ceasefire plan calls on the Iran-backed militant group to surrender its weapons and destroy its vast network of tunnels. It also envisions Israeli forces withdrawing from Gaza, the formation of a new technocratic Palestinian government, the deployment of an international security force, and the rebuilding of the war-ravaged Palestinian enclave after more than two years of conflict.

However, Hamas had insisted on implementing the first phase before discussing its weapons. The group's founding charter calls for armed resistance against Israel, and it has been reluctant to give up its arsenal, including rockets, anti-tank missiles and explosives, which lies at the heart of its identity. Hamas announced earlier this month that it had dissolved its government in Gaza

and was preparing to transfer power to a technical committee backed by the United Nations as part of the ceasefire deal.

US and Board of Peace officials, describing the deal to reporters on the condition of anonymity under White House guidelines, gave an optimistic assessment of the agreement and outlined a scenario similar to the one described by Trump and his top aides when the Board of Peace, an international body established by Trump to oversee the ceasefire in Gaza, was first formed. The officials were unable to offer specific timelines for the disarmament of Hamas or other groups operating in Gaza, such as Palestinian Islamic Jihad, but said the Gaza police force would hand over its weapons to the technocratic Board of Peace-backed Gaza administration in the next two weeks. The Gaza police force, however, does not include the vast majority of Hamas militants, and heavy weapons are not included in that part of the agreement, according to the officials. Instead, the surrender of heavy weapons and the decommissioning of Hamas tunnels and other infrastructure will come later in a process that could take between 200 and 350 days, a Board of Peace official said. A US official said Israel, which has been deeply sceptical about Hamas' willingness to give up its weapons or relinquish even behind-the-scenes control of Gaza, had been consulted at every step of the negotiations. However, the official said Israel was not being asked to do anything beyond what it had initially committed to when it agreed to Trump's 20-point plan, which essentially involves withdrawing its forces from Gaza and ending airstrikes on the territory. Israel's UN Mission said it had no immediate comment. The official added that Hamas' sponsor, Iran, remains a wildcard because although it had advised Hamas members not to accept the deal, it is also not in a position to offer the group much support as it is preoccupied with its conflict with the United States. The war in Gaza began after the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on October 7, 2023, killed around 1,200 people and saw 251 people taken hostage. Israel's retaliatory offensive in Gaza has killed more than 73,000 Palestinians, including those killed since the ceasefire, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. Israel's military now controls more than half of Gaza, leaving Palestinians confined to overcrowded tent camps and heavily damaged urban neighbourhoods.

Cyberattacks target over 30 Minnesota water systems

Washington: Authorities were working to find the source of cyberattacks that targeted more than 30 water systems in Minnesota and came amid warnings that Iranian hackers have been focusing on such systems. Minnesota IT Services on Thursday said state officials had yet to identify who was behind the attacks that took place on Sunday and Monday. There were no reports that residents had been affected by the attacks, though one city asked residents to conserve water for a couple of hours while officials tried to determine what was wrong.

The FBI, which is investigating the attacks, has not publicly identified a culprit, and a spokesperson declined to say on Thursday who the bureau believed might be responsible. The FBI, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, and other agencies warned in an advisory last week that Iranian hackers have been targeting water and wastewater systems and the operational controls of other critical infrastructure sectors. Digital warfare has become an integral part of military conflict, and local water plants and healthcare facilities often lack the funds and expertise to install the latest software patches or take other security measures. That has made them a favourite target, both because of the relative ease of penetrating them and because of the panic such disruptions can cause.

Iran has the "geopolitical motivations" and a recent history of targeting water systems, said Cynthia Kaiser, the former deputy assistant director of the FBI's cyber division, who has been closely monitoring threats to critical infrastructure from hackers linked to the country. "I think most credible researchers and responders would be right to treat it like it's Iran until proven otherwise," added Kaiser, who is now the senior vice president of Halcyon's Ransomware Research Center. "When it walks like a duck and talks like a duck, it's really important to call it out." Iran's interest in the operations of water systems inside the US dates back years. In 2016, the Justice Department charged a group of Iranian hackers in connection with a cyberattack targeting a small dam near New York City. Minnesota IT Services said that as of Thursday, there were no active requests from Minnesota communities asking residents



to modify their drinking water usage. The state agency said most of the confirmed attacks involved technology that water systems use to remotely monitor and control equipment. It said that being impacted meant investigators had confirmed malicious activity involving the system's technology and did not mean every affected community had its water service disrupted.

The state agency said there were similarities among the incidents, including the timing and the types of technology used, but investigators had not determined whether the same culprit was behind each one. For a few hours on Monday, the city of Braham asked residents to minimise water use as officials tried to determine why the water plant was offline. The city of about 1,700 people, located about 70 miles (113 kilometres) north of Minneapolis, said in a news release that the water plant outage was due to a cyberattack, but it did not cause any issue with water quality. The city said the attackers shut down the operating controls, which shut down the well and water treatment plant. That left the city able to provide residents only with the water stored in the water tower for some time. In Plymouth, a city of about 80,000 located outside Minneapolis, officials said on social media that their water infrastructure communications had been restored by Tuesday afternoon following a cyberattack. The city said crews were able to continue operating the system during the outage, and it did not have any impact on water levels or quality.



Jordan intercepted five Iranian missiles after the US launched major strikes on Iranian military targets following an attack on a US base. The escalating conflict has intensified regional tensions, threatened energy infrastructure, disrupted shipping routes and complicated diplomatic efforts across the Middle East

EYE SECRETS Editorial

Telangana's legacy—don't set aside past, build on it

Telangana's financial situation presents a picture in which the economic burden is rising even as revenue increases. During the first four months of the financial year 2026–27, the State's revenue receipts reached Rs 59,642 crore, while revenue expenditure crossed Rs 78,909 crore. As a result, the State recorded a revenue deficit of Rs 19,266 crore. The Congress government has incurred a Rs 33,729.98 crore fiscal deficit by July, equivalent to 57.7 per cent of the annual estimate of Rs 58,458.71 crore. Net borrowings and other liabilities have reached the same level during the period.While revenue is increasing, the faster rise in expenditure and debt burden indicates the need for the present government to give serious thought to financial management.After the formation of Telangana, the leadership of K Chandrashekhar Rao stood out for setting major goals by anticipating the future needs of the newly formed State. His government took significant decisions in irrigation, drinking water, power, rural infrastructure and industrial development, which played an important role in shaping the development direction of Telangana.Programmes such as Mission Bhagiratha, Mission Kakatiya, major irrigation projects and the expansion of the power sector were not merely efforts to address immediate needs. They reflected a vision to build a stronger Telangana for the future. The present government needs to study that long-term vision and planning approach and take it forward with greater strength.

The development of a State cannot be measured only by the amount left in the treasury. Changes in people's lives, infrastructure created, expansion of irrigation, availability of electricity, industrial opportunities, transportation and rural–urban connectivity are also important indicators of development. When Telangana was formed as a separate State, there were significant infrastructure gaps in several sectors. In such circumstances, setting ambitious goals and investing across multiple sectors was not an easy task.Under the leadership of Chandrashekhar Rao, the then government took up these challenges and gave priority to infrastructure development. The extent to which those investments have delivered results should certainly be assessed continuously through data, but their role in the development of Telangana cannot be ignored.Irrigation programmes undertaken during Chandrashekhar Rao's government should also be viewed from this broader perspective. When water becomes available, the impact is not limited to increased agricultural production. Farmers' incomes, agriculture-based businesses, transportation, storage, marketing and processing activities are also influenced. Programmes such as Mission Bhagiratha brought forward an approach that treated access to drinking water as a basic necessity of people's lives.Similarly, measures taken in the power sector had an impact on agriculture, industries and household consumption. This comprehensive approach was one of the major strengths of the previous administration.It would not be appropriate to say that every decision taken by the previous government was flawless. At the same time, it would be equally inappropriate to dismiss everything that was done in the past. Rao's long-term vision, his approach of setting ambitious goals, and his emphasis on infrastructure as the foundation for future development offer valuable guiding principles for the present administration as well.

Hindu identity not tied to worship: RSS chief at Toronto event

Toronto: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has said Hindu identity cannot be defined by a particular language, form of worship or way of life, arguing that its central principle is respect for diversity and recognition of the unity of existence.Addressing a gathering of more than 2,000 Hindus and friends of the community in the Greater Toronto Area, Bhagwat said outward differences were natural but did not divide humanity at its core. “When I say Hindu, the word Hindu cannot be defined by any specific language, through any specific worship, or through any living style,” he said.

“All these are there. These are diversities of human beings. Hindus respect all, Hindus accept all. They don't mind,” Bhagwat added. His remarks came at a Hindu Vishwa Bandhu gathering centred on the theme “Embracing the world in friendship.” The programme brought together community and faith leaders, scholars, professionals and representatives of organisations from across Canada.Bhagwat said India's civilisational traditions had trained people to identify a common principle beneath visible differences. “They have been trained to see the unity underlying the diversity,” he said. “So in Bharat, diversity is never a problem for unity because our tradition tells us not only unity in diversity, diversities of unity.”

He said differences should be accepted, respected and celebrated because they were expressions of an underlying unity. “We have to serve, accept, respect this diversity because it is expression of unity. It beautifies it. It is the decoration. We celebrate it,” Bhagwat said.India, he said, had always contained many castes, faiths, languages, traditions and styles of living. Its unity did not require those differences to disappear. “Nothing is alone, nothing is single. But it is all one. We don't say all are one. We say all is one,” he said. “Diversity is natural. Unity is the reality,” Bhagwat added.

He cited an ancient account involving King Janak to distinguish changing external circumstances from a deeper and continuing reality. Humanity, he said, experienced differences but remained one. “We experience all these things, but they are changing. They are Maya. The differences are Maya. We have to go through them. We have to deal them materially, deal with them. But actually, there is no difference. Humanity is one,” he said.Bhagwat said this understanding meant that people should not divide the world into what belonged to them and what belonged to others. “Whole earth is one family,” he said. “Everything is divine, so everything has equal dignity, equal weight.” The RSS chief said service to others followed naturally from the recognition of shared existence.He stressed that compassion was not the exclusive preserve of Hindus but an inherent human quality. “Hindus have done it.

Fire at Sealdah railway station food court in Kolkata; no casualties



A fire broke out at an eatery outside the Sealdah railway station in Kolkata Monday morning, engulfing the area in thick black smoke during peak hours. No casualties or injuries have been reported, according to officers.Sources said the fire's intensity was so severe that it engulfed multiple stalls in the food court. The heat was strong enough to melt the central air conditioning vents, they said.

Officials from the fire department, Kolkata police, and Railway Protection Force (RPF) arrived at the scene with three fire tenders to extinguish the blaze. Upon reaching

the site, firefighters cordoned off the area with guardrails. Passengers and taxi drivers had to use a relatively narrow path to head toward the Sealdah South and Main sections.“While the blaze is not entirely extinguished, it is now under control. The cause of the fire at the eatery is currently under investigation,” said a fire department source.Initially, firefighters faced significant hurdles in putting out the flames. They reported that an adequate water supply was unavailable from the station, forcing them to obtain it from alternative sources. The fire department also stated that the food court's fire suppression system had failed to function.As the eateries were enclosed in glass, smoke became trapped inside. Firefighters broke the glass panels to ventilate the area, while several personnel wearing specialised protective suits entered the food court to reach the source of the fire.“The food plaza was constructed by converting a train coach, and it has extensive false ceiling work inside, further fuelling the spread of the flames. Fire department officials have arrived at the scene and are working to prevent the fire from spreading toward the nearby railway hospital,” said an official.This fire incident has raised serious questions regarding safety measures. Just a few months ago, a fire broke out at the same food court. Concerns are being raised about inadequate fire safety arrangements despite the previous incident.

IAS officer Gyanendra Kumar to be produced in court today; BJP leader's house raided

Bengaluru: Gyanendra Kumar, IAS officer, who was sent to one day of judicial custody in connection with the alleged Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) recruitment scam, will be produced before a court in Bengaluru on Monday. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is likely to seek 14 days of custody for further questioning.Meanwhile, the CID has conducted a search at the residence of BJP leader Basavaraj Kannale in Donagapura village in Bhalki taluk of Bidar district in connection with the same KPSC recruitment scam.

Gyanendra Kumar, who served as Controller of Examinations of the KPSC, was arrested by the CID after being questioned for two days over alleged irregularities in the recruitment of veterinary officers. He was subsequently produced before the Bengaluru First Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate (ACJM) court, which remanded him to judicial custody for a day and directed the authorities to produce him before an open court on August 31.The CID is probing allegations of manipulation of OMR answer sheets, irregularities in the evaluation process and the alleged involvement of officials and intermediaries in facilitating the recruitment of candidates. Investigators questioned Kumar extensively on August 28 and August 29, with the questioning reportedly continuing till late in the night.Officials are examining alleged inconsistencies in his statements and evidence that purportedly points to his role in the manipulation of OMR sheets. The agency is also investigating allegations that selected candidates were provided training at hotels and resorts as part of the alleged recruitment process. The probe is expected to widen to former KPSC chairman Shivashankarappa Sahukar, officials and other individuals associated with the commission.Investigators have reportedly collected details of four recruitment examinations conducted over the past three years, including those for the Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, Industries and Commerce Department and the veterinary officer recruitment examination.Meanwhile, the CID has conducted a search at the residence of BJP leader Basavaraj Kannale in Donagapura village in Bhalki taluk of Bidar district in connection with the same KPSC recruitment scam. Kannale



was arrested by CID in Delhi on Sunday. Investigators are reportedly probing his alleged role as a middleman in the recruitment process and his suspected involvement in helping candidates secure government jobs.Kannale is a BJP leader from Bidar and is reportedly considered close to former Deputy Chief Minister and MLA C.N. Ashwath Narayan. He is also reportedly seeking a BJP ticket to contest from the Bhalki Assembly constituency in Bidar district.The CID search at his residence is part of the agency's efforts to gather further evidence regarding the alleged recruitment network and the role of intermediaries. The alleged veterinary officer recruitment scam has also come under the scanner of the Enforcement Directorate (ED), which has conducted searches at the residences of the former KPSC chairman, commission members and officials.The ED had earlier searched Kumar's residence. The officer was reportedly not present at the time as he had travelled to his home state of Uttar Pradesh. ED officials subsequently opened the house using a duplicate key and searched it.The CID had also earlier searched the KPSC office as part of its investigation into allegations of question paper leaks, manipulation of marks and other irregularities in recruitment during Kumar's tenure as Controller of Examinations.With Kumar's custody hearing scheduled for Monday and the arrest of an alleged intermediary, investigators are expected to intensify the probe into the possible involvement of officials, candidates and other individuals in the alleged KPSC recruitment irregularities.

Assam govt to invest Rs 50,000 crore in developing infra over 5 yrs: Himanta

Guwahati: The Assam government will invest Rs 50,000 crore over the next five years to develop infrastructure across sectors, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.Addressing a press conference after a state cabinet meeting here on Sunday, Sarma said the investment would cover primary healthcare, schools, anganwadi centres, housing for tea garden workers, power, roads, women markets and hostels, besides flood embankments.

“The state cabinet has approved pumping in Rs 50,000 crore for ‘Viksit Assam: Infra Vision’. Under this scheme, we will be developing various infrastructures across the state,” he said.Sarma said the cabinet also approved allotment of 1,174 bighas of land in Kamrup Metropolitan and Nagaon districts to the Industries, Commerce and Public Enterprises Department for developing industrial estates and land banks.

The government will also allot 27 bighas in Rangajan Gaon in Dhemajai district to the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department for setting up a milk project, he said.The CM said that to improve the ease of doing business, the cabinet approved the Assam Trade Articles (Licensing and Control) (Amendment) Order, 2026, abolishing the requirement of retail selling licences for petroleum products.

It also approved an amendment to the Industrial and Investment Policy of Assam, 2019, to include Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facilities as an eligible industrial activity for fiscal incentives under the Assam Vehicle Scrapage Policy, 2022.The cabinet extended the one-time window for determining the market value of tea gardens or tea land for calculating stamp duty and registration fees on conveyance deeds, along with the one-time SOP valuation mechanism, he said.The cabinet also approved a



Rs 300-crore project by Fermbox Bio Pvt Ltd at Tezpur in Sonitpur district and an integrated 30 MW solar power and 25 MW Battery Energy Storage System project at Rakhyasini Jungle Block in Goalpara district.An amount of Rs 155.98 crore was sanctioned for construction of a rail overbridge near Hawaipur station and a bypass road connecting Kheroni Chariali in West Karbi Anglong with NH-27 at Bamungaon, Sarma said.The project is expected to ease congestion in Lanka town.The cabinet also approved Rs 110 crore for infrastructure development at Gauhati University during 2026-27 to complete several pending works.Sarma said ‘masur dal’ would be made available to National Food Security Act ration card holders at Rs 70 per kg and sugar at Rs 35 per kg.Beneficiaries of the Orunodoi scheme in flood-hit Sivasagar and Charaideo districts would receive Rs 2,000 this month, instead of the usual Rs 1,250, while beneficiaries in other districts would receive Rs 1,200, he said.“The state government will provide the initial relief of Rs 15,000 to the remaining flood-affected families on September 1,” he said.

Silt, poor lighting raise safety concerns on Barkas-Pahadi Shareef road

Hyderabad: Poor road sweeping and inadequate street lighting on the busy Barkas-Pahadi Shareef stretch have emerged as major safety concerns, with accumulated silt on the carriageway posing a risk to motorists, particularly two-wheeler riders.The road, which falls under the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), witness considerable traffic throughout the day including commuters and visitors travelling towards the Baba Sharfuddin Dargah at Pahadishareef, and the RGI

Airport.However, improper sweeping has resulted in a thick layer of silt accumulating along portions of the carriageway. “The road is not being swept properly and silt is accumulated on the carriageway.Two-wheeler riders are the worst affected as their vehicles can skid suddenly. The civic authorities should take immediate steps to clear the silt,” said Tabrez Khan, a resident.Residents also pointed to inadequate lighting at several sharp curves and junctions along the stretch.

'Bad uncle' gave chocolates: Minor girl 'sexually assaulted' by school cab driver in Delhi



A minor girl was allegedly sexually assaulted by her nursery school's cab driver in Outer Delhi, police said Monday, adding that the accused has been arrested.Police said the incident came to light when the child's parents noticed her changed behaviour when she came home on August 23.'Her mother noticed that and asked what happened. The child told her about a 'bad uncle' who gives her chocolates but also touches her and makes her uncomfortable. Since the child didn't know the name of the accused, the parents took up the matter with the school the very next day,' said a police source.

On August 24, police said, school authorities showed the child CCTV footage from several cameras, and she recognised the accused driver from one of them.Police said the footage showed the accused following the girl till the washroom and offering her chocolates before allegedly assaulting her.“The accused was arrested from the school premises. A case under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act was lodged. His phone was seized, which had multiple videos of him offering chocolates to children. Investigation is underway,” said a police officer.In a similar incident at a playschool in North-east Delhi, a minor boy was allegedly “assaulted” by the attendant. Police said the attendant was arrested and a teacher served a notice.Police said the incident came to light on August 16 when the child's parents noticed “bruises” on his arms and face.“On August 16, I saw bruises on his face and arms. Two days later, when he came home, he started vomiting. We took him to an ENT (Ear, Nose, and Throat) specialist. The doctor said his eyes were swollen. Some tests were run and it was found that his eardrums were damaged,” the boy's father told

Torchlight vigil turns violent; stones pelted, tear gas shells fired, several injured



Imphal: A torchlight vigil in Manipur's Kakching district demanding NRC updation prior to the Census exercise in the northeastern state turned violent, with some protesters pelting the police with stones, and the law enforcers retaliating with tear gas shells, leading to injuries to a few agitators, officials said on Monday.

Hundreds of villagers from Wabagai, Hiyanglam and surrounding areas took out a 3-km-long protest march on Sunday night, raising the slogan of 'No NRC, No Census', and opposed the exercise before resettlement of the internally displaced persons (IDPs).As the rally proceeded towards the Kakching district headquarters, police stopped the agitators near the Keirak Dam area and asked them to return, they said.The tension spiralled into violence, with some among the protesters resorting to stone-pelting, prompting the police to fire several tear gas shells to disperse the crowd. A few protesters sustained minor injuries, the officials added.More than 260 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and adjoining hills-based Kukis in Manipur since May 2023.

Cong will quit TN Cabinet if TVK doesn't accept Rahul as PM candidate: Minister

Nagercoil: Tamil Nadu Minister S Rajesh Kumar has said the two ministers from the Congress would resign from the state cabinet if coalition ally – the TVK – does not endorse Rahul Gandhi as the Prime Ministerial candidate for the 2029 parliamentary polls, declaring that Gandhi will be India's next PM.

Amidst increasing advocacy by ministers, MLAs and members of the ruling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, projecting Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay as Prime Ministerial candidate for the next Lok Sabha election, Rajesh Kumar said he and his colleague P Vishwanathan (Higher Education Minister) were prepared to resign from their positions if the alliance partner does not support the Congress on the subject.Following the Congress decision to back the Vijay-led TVK in forming the government in May, the grand old party was accorded a berth in the Cabinet.Rajesh Kumar's frustration expressed at an event in Kanyakumari on Sunday, indicated that the party would not compromise on its stand, firmly asserting that Rahul Gandhi is the only candidate the Congress party would support in the Lok Sabha elections.

Gurgaon’s waste standoff: RWAs push back on waste rules

Around 6 km from the bustling DLF Cyberhub in Gurgaon’s Sector 23A. Here, residents wake up daily to an unpleasant sight — and smell. The area around their homes, which have come up in Carterpurī village, is littered with garbage. The residents of plots that cost Rs 3 crore or more cannot escape the stench — especially when the wind blows.

The area where the housing colony is located is among the 186 “garbage vulnerable points” identified by the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) — locations where waste is consistently dumped but is rarely collected. Last month, as part of the enforcement of the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026 — which came into effect on April 1 — the MCG had asked Sector 23A to register as a bulk waste generator (BWG).

Under these Rules, BWGs are required to process wet waste on the premises and ensure the collection, segregation, and transportation of solid waste — either independently or through empanelled agencies — to secondary collection points. But residents have resisted the move, arguing that the MCG needs to set its house in order first.

“Their (MCG’s) own bins are often overfilled or turned upside down...and are unusable. No one wants to live with a constant stench, so there will be resistance if waste-processing units come up near their homes,” said Bhawani Shankar Tripathy, general secretary of the sector’s Residents’ Welfare Association (RWA). According to Tripathy, RWAs, especially of the sectors under the Haryana Shaharī Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP), lack the capacity to function as BWGs without the necessary support. “Land, electricity, personnel and infrastructure will be needed. The policy says urban local bodies will not provide finances but other support. So why not manage waste processing at the ward level under

a councillor instead of burdening the RWAs?” he asked. Tripathy maintained that there is ambiguity over the definition of “premises” — whether it includes non-gated communities, along with village and HSVP plots. Also, there is lack of clarity on user fees once BWGs are implemented, Tripathy said. “We (RWAs) are a voluntary body, not an authority to direct residents to segregate waste. Even placing bins risks turning a site into a dumping spot. Residents don’t want even leaf composting near their homes, forget wet waste processing,” he said.

Gurgaon’s waste Suncity township off Golf Course Road has been a bulk waste generator (BWG) under the solid Waste Management Rules for more than two years now. (Express Photo by Abhinav Saha) However, some societies have demonstrated that decentralised waste management is possible — although at a cost. Suncity township off Golf Course Road, which has registered as a BWG, operates a biogas plant to treat wet waste and composting pits for horticulture waste.

“We have a biogas plant to treat wet waste, and we spend Rs 45,000 per month to operate it. For horticultural waste, we have pits for composting... We use the produce to maintain our 16 parks and two central verges, along with nurseries. We spend Rs 67,000 per month on it, including diesel expenses and pruning. Also, Rs 93,000 is spent on door-to-door collection of waste every month. In the last three years, we have processed 4 lakh kg of wet waste,” RWA chairperson Kusum Sharma said. Acknowledging that community bins often become dumpyards, Sharma said residents of Suncity keep their waste at home until it is collected. Compliance with BWG norms remains uneven across Gurgaon. A highrise society in East Gurgaon recently received a show-cause notice from the Haryana State Pollution Control Board for alleged non-compliance with BWG norms. It was asked to take corrective measures to segregate and recycle

waste, while processing the waste onsite.

Residents of the society, however, complained of the lack of coordination among agencies within the MCG. “On the one hand, we have no idea what the MCG does with hazardous waste, where they are incinerated and how recycling of dry waste is done. On the other, pressure is being put on us despite us having complied with norms, while MCG conducts annual inspections... The pollution control board could have easily accessed the details they have sought from the MCG portal,” said a resident, requesting anonymity. The push for compliance has come following scrutiny by the MCG. In February, citing orders of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on the illegal dumping of waste in Haryana, the MCG had directed that BWGs, institutions or agencies causing environmental damage, would be fined Rs 25,000 for the first offence and Rs 50,000 for the second violation. General (non-bulk) littering would attract a fine of Rs 5,000 for the first offence and Rs 10,000 for the second. These fines would be imposed on the spot by authorised officers. If the guilty person or institution failed to deposit the fine, the amount would be recovered as land revenue arrears, officials said. The fines collected would be utilised by the MCG to improve solid waste management and processing in the city.

Between January 1 and February 3 this year, 36 cases of burning garbage in the open have led to fines totalling Rs 1.8 lakh. For dumping construction and demolition (C&D) waste in public places, 57 challans have been issued, leading to the recovery of Rs 13.05 lakh. Another 32 cases of littering in public places have attracted Rs 1.6 lakh in penalties. Chaitali Mandhotra, co-convenor of United Gurugram RWAs, an umbrella body of more than 60 residents’ associations, said they have been encouraging their members to apply as BWGs. “Nothing can be better for the environment than registering as BWGs, but societies, especially older ones, need handholding and support from the government. Even if a sector arranges its own finances, some sort of maintenance should be provided by the government/ civic body. Else, there will be registrations on paper — and perhaps only around 30% of waste will be actually processed,” Mandhotra said. MCG Additional Commissioner Ravinder Yadav told The Indian Express that compliance would be strictly enforced when it comes to sectors/ societies registering as BWGs. “Rules are rules. We are running awareness campaigns and will support RWAs, but they will have to comply — either on their own or through empanelled agencies,” he said. “In the first phase for BWG registration, we are focusing on gated societies. In the next phase, plotted colonies will be brought in. At present, around 2,500 institutional BWGs are registered,” he added. Maintaining that field audits of agencies which will handle BWGs are already underway, Yadav said, “Our joint commissioner (Swachh Bharat Mission) is conducting field visits to audit preparedness and readiness of such agencies. Any sector not complying with the rules will face strict action.” As per current norms, the agencies selected to handle BWGs will initially be empanelled for three years, officials said. “Subject to satisfactory performance and fulfilment of conditions, it can be extended for another two years. No extension will be granted after the total period of five years, though the agency will be eligible to apply afresh. The empanelment can be terminated at any time due to unsatisfactory performance or administrative reasons,” an official said. The agencies must ensure 100% door-to-door collection of only segregated waste, officials said. In cases where an agency is unable to process the waste on its own, it will have to enter into an agreement with an authorised recycler. The waste has to be transported in GPS-equipped covered vehicles with separate, colour-coded compartments

Why cloud seeding is not a solution to Delhi’s air crisis | Explained

Delhi’s plan for cloud seeding is being sold as a bold solution to air pollution. In reality, it is a textbook case of science misapplied and ethics ignored.

Why is Delhi’s air fouler in winter?

Across North India, air quality is poor throughout the year, but it reaches extreme levels in the post-monsoon and winter months. After the monsoon withdraws, dry continental air masses from the northwest dominate the region. The winds weaken and the air becomes stagnant, keeping pollutants from being dispersed efficiently. Cooler air holds less absolute water vapour and the stable, high-pressure systems that prevail during these months suppress the upward motion needed for clouds to form. The sky may look hazy, but that haze comes from trapped pollution, not from rain-bearing clouds. Rain cannot be conjured out of thin air. It needs water vapour. For most of the highly polluted cooler months, the atmosphere is too dry and stable to support significant rainfall. Rain does occur occasionally during these months, but these brief spells are typically caused by western disturbances, weather systems that originate in the Mediterranean region and can bring moisture from that region or interact with local systems drawing up moisture from our neighbouring seas. These events can be predicted a few days in advance, but are not a reliable or consistent source of rainfall for North India.

Does cloud seeding help?

Cloud seeding depends on natural clouds; it can’t create them. And even when clouds exist, the evidence that seeding reliably increases rainfall remains weak and contested. And when it rains and reduces pollution, the respite is temporary at best. The overwhelming evidence is that pollution levels go back up within a day or two. The air pollution problem is not just confined to Delhi. Across North India, air quality is dangerously poor year-round. Yet public debate often treats smog as a seasonal nuisance, normalising pollution and noticing it only when it becomes unbearable. Cloud seeding is just another gimmick in a series of similar unscientific ideas, like smog towers, suggesting that flashy interventions can substitute for serious, structural solutions.

What are the risks of cloud seeding?

The temptation to engineer a shortcut to fix air pollution is understandable — but it raises deeper ethical questions about how science is used, what risks are justified, and who bears responsibility when things go wrong. Even if the science behind cloud seeding were robust, which it is not, it still involves dispersing compounds such as silver iodide or sodium chloride into clouds to trigger condensation. Silver iodide works for cloud seeding because its crystal structure is very similar to that of ice, so it ‘tricks’ water droplets in the clouds into freezing onto it. These



Across North India, air quality is poor throughout the year, but it reaches extreme levels in the post-monsoon and winter months. After the monsoon withdraws, dry continental air masses from the northwest dominate the region.

newly formed ice crystals then grow heavy and fall as rain or snow. While generally considered low risk in small doses, repeated use can accumulate in soils and water bodies. The long-term effects on agriculture, ecosystems, and human health remain poorly understood. Beyond these environmental risks, there is the question of accountability. If cloud seeding coincides with intense rainfall that leads to flooding, causing damage to infrastructure, crops, and livelihoods, or loss of life, who will be responsible? Even if the rainfall and flooding are unrelated to seeding, public perception could still link the two, undermining trust in both science and governance.

What can ‘fix’ the air?

Science has long identified the real cause of North India’s hazardous air: the lack of effective control over emissions from vehicles, industry, construction, power plants, waste burning, and seasonal agricultural fires, compounded by unfavourable meteorology during the cooler months. The solutions are equally clear but remain largely unimplemented: cleaner transport, sustainable energy, better waste management, and urban planning that actually reduces pollution sources. Yet, instead of reinforcing these priorities, parts of the scientific ecosystem — researchers, advisors, and institutions — are lending credibility to a costly spectacle that will do little to address the sources of the crisis. By attaching their authority to the illusion of quick fixes, they risk wasting scarce public resources, undermining trust, and diverting attention from systemic changes that could make a real difference. Snake-oil solutions will not clear the air in Delhi or the rest of North India. Instead, courage is required on the ground: to reduce the sources of pollution and pursue equitable, evidence-based action.

Do you need an AI detox?



In my previous column, I outlined a three-step approach to optimizing workflows before integrating AI tools. I showed how capturing relevant information, developing a process, and consistently executing it can lead to effective AI deployment. Now, I’d like to take a step back into the significance of cultivating your own intelligence in the face of rapidly advancing AI tools. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, intellect encompasses the ability to think logically and comprehend concepts. Breaking it down, you find three distinct components: the capacity to learn, logical deduction, and the ability to make connections. This three-part system shapes and sharpens our minds. However, the advent of AI tools has gradually shifted this mind-forming system. AI tools can now generate images, summarize text, write lines of software code, and even complete entire PhD theses. Consider this: if you allow every idea you can’t complete to be finished by an app, every sketch you can’t draw to be auto-completed, and every knowledge gap to be filled by a prompt, you’ll gradually cease developing the very mental muscles that generated those ideas in the first place.

So, how can you regain control? The solution isn’t Luddism, but rather deliberate rebalancing. Begin with a short AI detox by selecting a daily window of at least ninety minutes where you disable all generative AI tools and force yourself to work with paper, a whiteboard, or a blank

Through masks and memories, artist Anupama alias Anil' solo show in Hyderabad tells a story of resilience



Artist Anupama, who goes by the name Anupama alias Anil as a tribute to her late husband and artist Anil Xavier, ushers in a new language of expression through her solo show A Room for Refuge at Kalakriti Art Gallery. The exhibition brings her mixed media works and assemblages, each shaped by personal experiences. Her mixed-media works are populated with self-portraits wearing masks, set against abstract, layered landscapes that symbolically mirror the complexities of the mind — interwoven with thoughts, memories, and lived moments. Anupama often uses her own face as a recurring motif, but her work also references the broader experience of womanhood. “I am part of it, but there are others too,” she says, positioning herself as both subject and collective voice. This introspective journey began in 2014 during what she calls an “intense time” in Hyderabad. Alone in her studio, she found herself conversing inwardly, as stories and characters from her childhood merged into a fusion of emotions and imagination. The experience, she recalls, was “intense but blissful” — a moment that blurred the lines between individual and collective experience and inspired her to explore deeper themes of interiority and existence.

While pursuing her Master’s in Fine Arts at

Language route to a better future: A.P. nursing graduates learn German

A symphony of voices emerges from the other side. With their eyes rolling in uncertainty and lips breaking into shy smiles, the students, many from poor families in the State’s hinterland, shape simple German sentences with visible effort. Laughter occasionally ripples through the room, as they share relief, pride and the joy of learning something profoundly new. The young trainees are nursing graduates drawn from districts across Andhra Pradesh, learning German under the International Skillling programme rolled out by the State government, through A.P. State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC) and its subsidiary, the Overseas Manpower Company Andhra Pradesh (OMCAP).

“It’s not easy,” admits G. Venkata Lakshmi, a native of Timmapuram village in Bheemunipatnam mandal in Visakhapatnam district. “But every new word feels like a step closer to my goal. I never thought I’d be speaking German,” says the 32-year-old, who packed her bags and headed to the nursing college in Guntur to attend German classes after working as a nurse at a private hospital in Visakhapatnam for a year. G. Sandeep, a 35-year-old nursing graduate recently enrolled for German classes, hoping to secure employment in Germany. Back home at Jammalamadugu in Kadapa district, he has a 10-month-old son, his “bundle of joy,” whom he finds it almost impossible to part from. Yet, Sandeep says a well-paid job abroad seems like the only way out of the severe financial crisis his family is facing. “I hate the thought of going away from my family, but I have to do it for their happy and secure future,” he says softly.

As part of Skill International Initiative, the APSSDC and OMCAP have roped in partners like Indo Euro Synchronisation and Hallo Language Centre, to implement German training-linked international placement programme for nursing professionals in Andhra Pradesh. The training is open for B.Sc, M.Sc Nursing students and post-B.Sc Nursing graduates with a minimum experience of six months. Hundreds of youths are being trained under this fully funded programme, which helps them secure placements in Europe, particularly in healthcare, hospitality and technical trades. APSSDC officials say it was initially difficult to convince nursing graduates to enrol for the Skill International Initiative. The Corporation’s Executive Director D. Manohar recalls the series of brainstorming sessions with college principals

screen. During this time, capture raw observations, draft rough arguments, and sketch connections without relying on suggestions. This is not punishment but a training regimen to build attention, recall, and associative thinking muscles that only grow when exercised. Next, develop a simple triage framework that distinguishes between tasks suited for your intelligence and those that can be handled by the machine. Tasks that demand learning, synthesizing novel connections, ethical judgment, or persuasive explanation are your domain; repetitive transformations, surface research that can be verified, and layout or formatting are where AI can assist. Practice explicitly switching modes by dedicating an hour to “you-first” session where you resist autocomplete and another hour to “AI-assisted” session where you refine and scale your projects. Over time, you’ll rediscover the value of mental friction as a productive force.

Establish a daily habit of focused, incremental practice. Select a narrow subject and allocate ten to twenty minutes each day to reading primary material. Then, spend another ten minutes explaining it in writing without references. Utilise teach-back to explain the concept aloud as teaching forces organization, uncovers gaps, and enhances long-term retention in ways passive consumption never can. After each creative session, allocate five minutes to note your decisions, the reasoning behind them, and where you relied on intuition versus explicit rules. Maintain a concise “decision log” that tracks your reasoning evolution. This creates evidence of improvement and highlights habits you want to retain or eliminate. Complement this with small projects that require integration, such as writing a short essay, designing a simple product, or building a tiny script where you intentionally avoid using templates or AI from the outset. Only after you’ve completed a comprehensive human draft should you invite the tool to critique, summarize, or polish your work. Employ AI tools as amplifiers by requesting them to challenge your premises, provide counterexamples, or suggest overlooked edge cases.

Hyderabad Central University, Anupama began to engage with ideas of womanhood, femininity, and the social realities of women. She sourced rice paper from Kolkata to create depth and layering in her mixed-media works — a process that, for her, became symbolic of self-discovery. “I felt like a woman whose flesh slowly uncovered the layers,” she says, referring to her Island of Hope series. Her early influences include the striking African masks she encountered at the Louvre Museum in Paris, and Theyyam, the ritual art form of Kerala where performers wear elaborate masks and headdresses. For Anupama, the mask symbolises transformation and power. “It makes the performer a divine being who transcends to another realm,” she explains. “The audience too experiences a kind of social transformation — in that moment, the boundaries and inequalities between them and the performer dissolve.” Anupama’s work not only explores vulnerability and transformation but also the emergence of identity and hope. In her research on masks, she examined the histories of Latin American cultures and their deeply rooted belief systems. “The women I depict may have vulnerabilities and face challenges, but they also undergo transformation. The mask becomes a symbol of power — a way to lead, to choose,” she notes. Among the most personal pieces in the exhibition is a portrait of a Malayali couple from the 1980s — a self-portrait with her late husband Anil, dressed in traditional attire, with a trunk box placed in a corner of the canvas. The assemblages displayed in the show are drawn symbolically from this very box, holding fragments of memory and emotion. “My husband Anil, who passed away in 2024, was a great inspiration,” she says. “He was the co-sculptor of the statue of Rohit Vemula (the Dalit student whose death at Hyderabad Central University sparked nationwide protests against caste discrimination).

Arjuna asteroid 2025 PN7 is earth’s latest quasi-satellite



Astronomers have announced that they have discovered a new neighbour in the earth’s skies: asteroid 2025 PN7, confirmed in September 2025 to be the planet’s latest quasi-satellite. (The prefix ‘quasi’ means almost.)First spotted on August 2 by the Pan-STARRS 1 telescope in Hawaii, 2025 PN7 is a member of the Arjuna asteroid class — named for the protagonist of the ‘Mahabharata’ who is believed to be fast-moving and difficult to catch. 2025 PN7 follows an orbit very similar to that of the earth, making it appear to ‘hover’ nearby even though it’s not gravitationally bound to the planet.Researchers Carlos de la Fuente Marcos and Raúl de la Fuente Marcos, of the Complutense University of Madrid in Spain, reported in Research Notes of the American Astronomical Society earlier this month that 2025 PN7 is also the earth’s seventh known quasi-satellite. Its presence adds to astronomers’ understanding of the shifting population of asteroids hanging out near the earth in space.In fact, astronomers are motivated by two important questions when they look for and study bodies like 2025 PN7: how stable are near-earth companions? And what do they reveal about planetary dynamics?Arjuna asteroid classTheir broader interest stems from the Arjuna asteroid class, first hinted at with the discovery of asteroid 1991 VG more than three decades ago. At that time, its earth-like orbit was so unusual that some experts speculated it might be an alien probe. While that suggestion faded soon after, the discovery prompted a systematic search for asteroids moving almost in step with the earth. Today, astronomers are aware of more than 100 such Arjunas, which together form a secondary asteroid belt.Arjunas come closer to the earth than objects of almost any other asteroid family, and could occasionally become temporary mini-moons. Others slip into resonant orbits such as quasi-satellite orbits, where they loop around the sun but stay near the earth for decades or even centuries. Studying these objects can sharpen astronomical models of orbital mechanics, orbital resonance, and gravitational perturbations.There are practical reasons as well. Because of their earth-like paths and relatively low approach speeds, Arjunas are potential future spacecraft targets, moreover because they’re cheaper to reach and can be useful to test mining or asteroid redirection technologies. Arjunas also factor into planetary de-

fense because understanding their movements can help astronomers better estimate the chances of one of them eventually colliding with the earth.Taken together, 2025 PN7 is more than just a curiosity: it’s another piece in the puzzle of how the earth interacts with its small celestial companions in its corner of the Solar System.For astronomers to classify 2025 PN7 as a quasi-satellite required meticulous observations and analysis. The asteroid was first flagged on August 2 by the Pan-STARRS survey. With a brightness magnitude of about 26.4, it’s small and faint and not easily tracked. By the end of August, however, astronomers had assembled 27 observations spanning more than 11 years of orbital data, enough to pin its path down with confidence.The semi-major axis of 2025 PN7 is 1.003 astronomical unit (AU), almost identical to that of the earth. Astronomical unit is equal to the earth-sun distance. Its eccentricity is around 0.108, indicating a slightly oval orbit; and its inclination is just under 2 degrees, keeping it close to the earth’s orbital plane. These traits neatly match the Arjuna criteria: semimajor axis between 0.985 and 1.013 AU, low eccentricity, and low inclination.To make sense of its orbit, astronomers combined numerical tools provided by NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) Horizons system with orbital statistics data from JPL’s Small-Body Database. They focused in particular on a set of more than 400 earth-like asteroids.One critical marker was the asteroid’s mean longitude relative to the earth — which is a value that oscillates when an object is in a 1:1 resonance, i.e. when the object completes one orbit every time the earth completes one orbit. The mean longitude of 2025 PN7 was found to exhibit the precise behaviour expected of a quasi-satellite.The researchers also checked for non-gravitational forces like the Yarkovsky effect, which can gradually shift an asteroid’s orbit due to thermal radiation. They found that 2025 PN7 is indeed the earth’s newest quasi-satellite, joining a small club that includes Cardea, Kamo’oalewa, and 2013 LX28, among others. Like its peers, PN7 is not gravitationally bound to the earth but in fact it orbits the sun, whereas its orbital resonance keeps it close to the earth, making it a kind of temporary companion.Astronomers also determined that 2025 PN7 will remain in this quasi-satellite state for about 128 years, shorter than Kamo’oalewa’s time of residence of nearly four centuries — yet long enough to be scientifically valuable. The evolution of its orbit also mirrors Kamo’oalewa’s in the short term.Perhaps most importantly, 2025 PN7 lies in the innermost part of the Arjuna belt, which reinforces the idea in astronomy that quasi-satellites tend to cluster near the most earth-like orbital paths. For scientists, this means 2025 PN7 is especially intriguing both as a natural laboratory where they can study orbital resonance in action and as an accessible waypoint for further exploration.Beyond the scientific and practical considerations lies a philosophy of astronomy, so to speak: 2025 PN7 is a reminder that the universe isn’t as empty as it often seems. Our own planet is surrounded by an ephemeral coterie of rocks that drop in and out of resonance with the earth.

Deeptech for common people: How ML, Deep Learning, and Data Engineering are shaping tech careers

The unprecedented development of digital technologies highlights the norm of global growth in the 21st century. Tremendous advances have been made in numerous digital technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), and supporting disciplines like Machine Learning, Data Engineering, and aspects of Deep Learning have emerged as a result.

This digital technological revolution has put data at the centre of attention, and the science of analysis, engineering, and production — all of it has been put together to create an ecosystem that is being used by corporations and individuals alike, highlighting the mass demand. This demand extends far beyond business and organizational agility, into daily usage by individuals, and the growing demand has put immense focus on democratising relevant roles to the mass workforce.To put this into perspective, Machine Learning as a tool is being increasingly used in pattern recognition, user predictions, automation, personalisation, and more in industries like e-commerce, entertainment, navigation, healthcare, social media, transportation & logistics, finance, and many more. The global ML market that was valued at \$56 billion in 2024 is now estimated to increase to \$282.13 billion by 2030, an annualised growth of 30.4%.Deep Learning has been one of the major catalysts behind this immense scalability of the ML market globally, and other verticals like Data Engineering are extending the emphasis on this growth. At this point, these fields require mass participation to align with the demands, meaning individuals with PhDs are only becoming the spearhead to the research & development aspect, while widespread operations are being pushed through by trained professionals.Democratisation of skills

What makes a technology truly viable is widespread adoption. While widespread adoption is no longer a challenge owing to the significant operational agility of thousands of businesses, aligning with the demand is turning out to be a challenge in itself. Disciplines like Machine Learning, Data Engineering, and Deep Learning are considered premium skills at the moment, especially because only a fraction of today’s professionals are trained in them. For the majority, they are either upskilling in these disciplines or are learning it from the very beginning. However, the process has begun to democratise these skills to the mass workforce, so present and future demands can be catered to in a streamlined manner.The democratisation of new-age skills in Machine Learning, Data Engineering, and Deep Learning not only highlights the demand but also how they are becoming an integral part of how we operate as a civilisation. From education and healthcare to finance and transportation, these disciplines are entirely transforming how work is perceived.The true extent of the allocation of these disciplines is so vast that it is impacting millions of individuals every day, while the vast majority of them are yet to understand it. This large-scale deployment in a sector agnostic role requires a dedicated workforce that are able to not only work with it, but for it, and individuals with PhDs are required to future-proof it currently, not oversee the deployment and day-to-day operations.

Transformative roles in techWhile it is understandable that individuals with PhDs are required for developing these disciplines, the democratisation of the larger operation also highlights the transformation in tech employment roles. Open source tools and online databases are assisting new-age developers to learn and build complex algorithms.They are also receiving help from frame-

works such as TensorFlow, PyTorch, and Scikit-learn with codebases, empowering them to understand the foundations of Machine Learning, and even to highly sophisticated neural networks. The tech role as an impact is becoming more aligned with data preparation and model deployment, aspects that are being taken care of by trained professionals while leaving the mathematical and computational theory aspect to individuals with PhDs.The shift in sectoral roles becomes much more clearer when the hiring trends are analysed. At present, corporations are more interested in widespread deployment and sustenance. For this, the roles in the IT sector are increasingly witnessing openings in Data Analysts, Data Scientists, and ML engineers.Professionals in these roles spearhead the deployment and sustenance aspect, working in roles that focus on data cleaning, pipeline development, and model deployment using predetermined technologies. The emphasis here remains on the usage of the tools themselves, not on how to build them in the first place.

How does the future look?

At present, the focus remains on upskilling as many professionals as possible to create and sustain an ecosystem that is thriving on digital technologies like ML, Data Engineering, and Deep Learning. However, the roles of researchers, especially individuals with PhDs, will be important to develop newer aspects, as well as to create new technologies that will not only supplement but also overtake the existing technologies.For now, deployment of these technologies remains at a very nascent stage, and we can expect them to reach the pinnacle of their potential in the coming years with true democratisation of these skills and related tools.

IBM, BharatGen partner to accelerate AI adoption in India with Indic Large Language Models

Hyderabad: IBM (NYSE: IBM) and BharatGen on Thursday announced a strategic collaboration to accelerate Artificial Intelligence (AI) adoption in India through BharatGen’s sovereign multimodal and Large Language Models (LLMs), tailored to the country’s unique linguistic and cultural diversity.The partnership brings together IBM’s expertise in AI data, governance, and model training technology with BharatGen’s mandate to build inclusive, India-centric sovereign models rooted in indigenous context and values.

How the DeepSeek-R1 AI model was taught to teach itself to reason | Explained



The story so far: For many decades, one of the great challenges in artificial intelligence (AI) has been teaching machines to reason. Reasoning goes beyond memorising facts or completing sentences. It’s the ability to follow steps, reflect on mistakes, and adjust strategies until the right answer is found.Humans use reasoning for everything from solving maths problems to writing computer programmes, from negotiating their daily lives to deciding whom to vote for. Large language models (LLMs) such as GPT-4 or DeepSeek-V3 have surprised scientists by showing signs of reasoning when scaled to large sizes. Another method, called chain-of-thought prompting, where the model is nudged to “think step by step”, has also boosted performance.But both these approaches come with limits. Training models to reason usually demand human-made examples. E.g. people show an AI model how to solve problems and the AI learns to copy the method. This is slow, expensive, and introduces human biases. It also caps the AI’s creativity because the model can’t explore problem-solving methods that humans didn’t think of.In a paper published in Nature on September 17, the DeepSeek-AI team reported that it was able to reach its model, called just R1, to reason by asking an ambitious question: what if we allowed the model to teach itself to reason without showing it human examples first? That is, they found that R1 could develop new forms of reasoning using reinforcement learning, a method of trial and error guided only by rewards for correct answers.

What is reinforcement learning?

The team’s aim was to make the model smarter at maths and coding as well as to uncover how reasoning behaviours might emerge naturally when a machine is given the proper incentives.DeepSeek researchers began with V3 Base, a large language model similar to other state-of-the-art systems. Instead of using the usual supervised fine-tuning, where humans provide the reasoning steps, they applied ‘group relative policy optimisation’, a reinforcement learning method designed for efficiency.In this setup, the model, called R1-Zero at first, was asked to solve mathematical and algorithmic problems. For each attempt, it had to produce two parts: a reasoning process inside ‘<think>...</think>’ tags and a final answer inside ‘<answer>...</answer>’ tags. The only reward came from whether the final answer was correct, judged by rule-based systems like answer keys or code compilers. No one told the model how its reasoning should look.Over thousands of training steps, the model learned by trial and error. If an answer was wrong, the path that led there was discouraged; if it was right, the path was reinforced. Importantly, the researchers also tracked how the model’s thinking time, i.e. the number of tokens it used in its reasoning section, changed. Strikingly, the model began writing longer and more reflective reasoning chains on its own, sometimes including phrases like “wait” or “let’s try again”, revealing an ability to self-correct.

Was there human intervention?

A judicial nudge following stuck legislative business

The Supreme Court of India has heard arguments on the Presidential Reference in respect of the Governor’s powers under Article 200 pertaining to the assent to Bills passed by the State legislature. Earlier, a two-judge Bench, headed by Justice J.B. Pardiwala, had fixed a timeline of three months for the Governor to take a final decision on a Bill submitted to him for assent. The same timeline was made applicable to the President of India also.The time limit fixed by the Court has raised eyebrows in the government as well in the media. The general refrain from a section of the media was that the Court cannot direct the Governor or the President, who are high constitutional authorities, to act within a specified time when the Constitution does not have any such time frame. The government had also taken this line of argument in the Court.Reiteration of a recognised principle

Article 200 of the Constitution has four options for the Governor when a Bill is presented to him after being passed by the State legislature. These options are to assent to the Bill; to withhold assent; return the Bill to the Assembly with a request to reconsider the Bill as a whole or certain clauses, or reserve it for the consideration of the President.A very important question which arose in the context of the Governor’s role in dealing with a Bill after it is passed by the legislature is whether the Governor has any discretion in the exercise of any of the options mentioned above. Under Article 163, the Governor is required to exercise his functions only on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers except in matters specified by or under the Constitution. The Court has, in cases from Shamsher Singh vs State of Punjab (1974), to Nabam Rebia (2016), made it clear that the Governor cannot perform any of his executive functions except on the advice of the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister. The Sarkaria Commission and Punchhi Commission too reiterated this well-recognised constitutional principle.The point that has been emphasised in all the judgments of the Court and the judicial commissions is that the Governor is just a constitutional head and that the real executive power of the state is vested in the elected government. Therefore, the Governor cannot act independently.So, the question of crucial importance in this context is whether the Governor, while exercising any of the options under Article 200, can act in his discretion. The answer to this question will become clear when we take a close look at the Government of India Act, 1935. Section 75 of this Act is substantially the same as Article 200. Section 75 uses the words “the governor in his discretion” which means that giving assent or withholding it or sending the Bill back to the legislature or reserving it for the consideration of the Governor General is done by the Governor in his discretion.This Section has been virtually reproduced in Article 200 but omits the words “in his discretion”. This would show that the Constitution-makers

To address weaknesses such as poor readability and mixing English with Chinese, the team built R1 from R1-Zero. This process included adding incentives for consistently using one language supervised fine-tuning with both reasoning and non-reasoning data. The final model thus inherited the raw reasoning power of R1-Zero while also becoming easier to use and safer.The results were striking. On the American Invitational Mathematics Examination (AIME) 2024, a tough competition that usually the smartest high-school students attempt, R1-Zero’s accuracy jumped from just 15.6% at the start of training to 77.9% by the end. With more tuning, it reached 86.7%, surpassing the average performance of human students.At a certain stage, R1-Zero began using the word “wait” more often in its reasoning, just like a human might have when a mistake is spotted. The researchers said this meant the model wasn’t blindly following a path but actively rethinking steps when something seemed off. In effect, reinforcement learning had coaxed the AI into behaviours that resembled reflection and verification, both elements of reasoning.The ultimate R1 model was even stronger: it was good at maths and coding as well as on benchmarks for general knowledge, answering questions, and following instructions. Compared to its predecessors, R1 was also more consistent with its choice of language and better aligned with human preferences for helpfulness and safety. When evaluated with frameworks like AlpacaEval 2.0 and Arena-Hard, which test how well a model follows instructions, R1 improved by 25% and 17%, respectively, which are considered large.

What’re the pros and cons of reasoning?

Many large language models, including widely used systems like ChatGPT, often demand large amounts of computational resources during testing. R1, on the other hand, could adapt how much it “thought” depending on the task’s difficulty. Simple problems were met with short reasoning chains while harder ones led to longer, more elaborate chains. This dynamic allocation avoided demanding power on questions that didn’t warrant it. However, reinforcement learning itself is energy-intensive.Taken together, the findings confirm that reinforcement learning alone (with the right design) could produce reasoning behaviours that were previously thought to require human examples. This could change the way we think about how intelligence might grow in artificial systems. For instance, in future, researchers could build verifiers that check answers and let the model figure out its own strategies. If the answer to a maths problem, a computer programme or a factual question can be reliably checked, then reinforcement learning can do the rest. This could speed up progress while reducing human labour and bias.Indeed, traditional LLM training pipelines bank heavily on large human-labelled datasets — people writing question-answer pairs, reasoning steps, preference judgments, etc. They are expensive and often assembled under exploitative labour conditions. If machines can be taught to reason using reinforcement learning alone, the demand for human-annotated data can shrink, thus also reducing pressure to source cheap labour worldwide. However, the study paper also acknowledges that tasks without clear ground-truthing still rely on human-labelled data for reward models. So human input is not eliminated; only its scope may shrink to areas where no reliable verifier can be built.A model that learns to reason will also demand better reward signals for open-ended tasks like writing, which is difficult, as well as stronger safeguards as it becomes capable of generating dangerous or manipulative content. In fact, watching a machine develop reflective behaviour (pausing,



wanted the Governor to exercise the power under Article 200 only on the advice of the Council of Ministers.The issue of ‘discretion’The question of discretion of the Governor under Article 200 is one that has been dealt with by the Court in a number of cases. Surprisingly, the Court, in Shamsher Singh, discovered a discretionary power in the Governor under Article 200. It held that he must exercise it to the best of his judgement and should pursue a course which is not detrimental to the state.But the Court, in The State of Tamil Nadu vs The Governor Of Tamilnadu and Anr. (2025), did not accept the idea of a Governor exercising his discretion in withholding assent or reserving the Bill for the consideration of the President. It says, “if the power to withhold assent to Bills or to reserve them for the consideration of the President is construed as falling within the exclusive discretionary domain of the governor who would be free to decide a course of action notwithstanding the aid and advice of the council of ministers it would have the potential of turning him into a super constitutional figure having the power to bring to a complete halt the operation of the legislative machinery in the state.The governor cannot be vested with such power....”The Sarkaria Commission, while granting that, normally, in the discharge of the functions under Article 200, the Governor must abide by the advice of his Council of Ministers, said that in rare and exceptional cases, he may act in the exercise of his discretion especially when the provisions of the Bill are patently unconstitutional.While divergence of opinion exists in Indian judicial decisions, according to D.D. Basu, the renowned constitutional authority, in the United Kingdom, the sovereign has no power to withhold a Bill without the advice of the Council of Ministers. The deliberate omission of the word ‘discretion’ in Article 200 of the Constitution of India compels the conclusion that this Article does not permit discretion of any kind by the Governor while dealing with a Bill passed by the legislature.The next question is about the time limit prescribed by the Court within which the Governor and the President are required to take a final decision on a Bill. From the arguments made on behalf of the Union Government, it is clear

What Root told his team post Lord’s win: ‘Celebrate...in a sensible, grown-up way’



With their 194-run win over Pakistan in the second Test of the three-Test series at Lord’s on Sunday, the Joe Root led England team sealed the series win. Prior to the second Test, all the talk had been on England pacer Brydon Carse being dropped from the squad after videos of him in handcuffs by Derby police outside a pub were reported by English media. Carse was the eight England contracted player to be involved in a drinking related incident and with the win at Lord’s, Root has urged his team-mates to enjoy the win in a ‘sensible, grown-up way’.

“It’s important we’re not -talking about (off-field matters), absolutely. But it’s hard to win Test matches, it’s hard to win Test series, so enjoy it and celebrate it, but in a sensible, grown-up way. It’s been a really good start to, I don’t know what you want to call it, this new team,” said Root post the match.

England had won the first Test at Leeds with an innings and 103 runs. In the Lord’s Test, Root could only score four runs in England’s first innings before he fell for 24 in the second innings. The 35-year-old , who currently

Novak Djokovic’s body is asking a question his tennis hasn’t yet answered



Rafael Nadal lost a painful battle with his body in 2024. Novak Djokovic might well be losing his own now. After 20 main-draw appearances and four titles at Flushing Meadows, the Serbian has finally tasted defeat in the first round of the US Open. The four-hour, 36-minute ordeal included tears, vomiting and cramps before Djokovic gave way to Argentina’s Mariano Navone. The last, and only other time Novak fell in a Grand Slam opener was at Melbourne Park, all the way back in January 2006. Father Time appears to be catching up with the former world No. 1. Having claimed his 24th major title three years ago in New York, he has since stuttered and stumbled at various stages in pursuit of an elusive 25th, one that would take him past Margaret Court’s 53-year-old record. The resolve, as always, has been exemplary. Djokovic beat current No. 4 Felix Auger-Aliassime at Wimbledon and top-ranked Jannik Sinner at the Australian Open, in five sets each, this year. But the semi-final and the final, respectively, were as far as he went, admittedly finding his tank “half empty” after the gruelling matches that got him there.

‘Current board the worst in 70 years...’: Rashid Latif lashes out on PCB



With their 194-run loss against hosts England in the second Test at Lord’s in the three-match series, the Babar Azam led Pakistan not only lost the series but also their 15th loss in their last 20 Tests. Sunday’s loss was also Pakistan’s tenth loss in 11 away Tests in this time and Pakistan now stands at the bottom spot in the ICC World Test Championship standings with two wins and six losses in this WTC cycle and 16.67 points percentage. Former Pakistan captain Rashid Latif has blasted the Pakistan team as well Pakistan Cricket Board and how the current board under Mohsin Naqvi is the worst in the last 70 years. “Everyone is talking about the Pakistan team and how it’s the worst touring team in the last 50 years. But nobody is speaking about how the current board is the worst in the last 70 years. Nobody is talking about the worst selection committee and coaches. If you combine these issues, you will get the answer to your question. You will know who has ruined this team. Now you are losing consistently. This is the worst cricket board, that’s a fact,” Latif said while speaking on Geo TV.

In the first Test at Leeds, Pakistan had suffered an innings and 103-run loss. The Babar Azam led Pakistan team failed to get past 200 in both their innings and it was the same at Lord’s. England had batted first and posted a first inning’ total of 290. Pakistan were bundled out for 110 in their first innings followed by England being restricted to 208 runs in their second innings. Set a target of 388 runs to level the series, Pakistan were bundled out for 194 runs resulting in the heavy loss. None of the Pakistan batsmen could score a fifty in the first innings followed by Saud Shakeel being the only batter to score a fifty with his knock of 97 runs in the second innings. There were 14 instances when a Pakistani batsman failed to get past single digit score in the Test. Pacer Mohammad Abbas’s nine wicket-haul including the five-wicket haul in

sits at the second spot in all-time highest run scorers in Tests behind Sachin Tendulkar, surpassed Rickey Ponting’s record of highest run-scorer in Tests at home soil. Ponting had scored 7,578 runs in Australia and Root broke Ponting’s record when he reached on 13 during his knock of 24. Root, who is now 1,713 runs behind Sachin Tendulkar’s record of 15921, has averaged 29.44 in his last nine innings in Tests and has been dismissed LBW for seven times in those nine innings. Root spoke about how he is working hard in his batting and how there’s a big score waiting. “I’ve always been quite good at understanding and -eventually problem-solving. I’ll continue to keep working hard. I might have been lbw a few times, but lots of those have been umpire’s call – if they go the other way it might not be as much of a talking point. We’ve also seen the ball move more than it ever has. So there has to be a sense of calm and realism around things. I know I’m a good player, and I’d like to think there’s a big score around the corner,” shared Root. Only four batsmen could get past a fifty in the Lord’s Test with pacers accounting for most of the wickets in the Test. Root also spoke about how the balls have been different for this season and the wickets too. “I think they’ve been very different this year. I think there’s a different lacquer to them. I don’t know, I’ve not got evidence on that – you probably need to ask Dukes – but I think there’s lacquer on the seam. As a batter, when you practise, they’re cracking your bats more frequently. And they seem a lot firmer. I think they’re affecting the wickets as well. I think they’re -denting more. If they dent the wicket it’s going to seam off the dents as well, it’s going to move more. It’s been challenging. Sometimes you do come across summers where it’s the perfect storm: you get overcast conditions, you get a bit of rain to contend with, the balls are slightly different. But that’s part of the challenge of Test cricket, being able to adapt,” said Root.

Novak Djokovic exhausted against Argentina’s Mariano Navone during the first round of the U.S. Open. (AP) Novak Djokovic exhausted against Argentina’s Mariano Navone during the first round of the U.S. Open. (AP) The timing of a legend’s retirement is perennially debated. Some players aim to bow out on a high; others chase milestones until their body says no. After Monday’s loss, the question that lingers isn’t really about his level, Djokovic showed at Wimbledon and the Australian Open this year that the tennis is still there when his body allows it. It’s whether the physical toll required to keep competing at this level is still one he wants to keep paying. Across the last two Grand Slam seasons, Novak has lost to Sinner three times and Carlos Alcaraz twice, along with single defeats to Alexander Zverev and João Fonseca, both at the French Open. The next Grand Slam is over four months away, which feels like a long time at this stage of his career. Djokovic will be 40 by the time the next Roland-Garros comes around. Like Nadal, Djokovic has painstakingly maintained his fitness to stay competitive on tour for over two decades. Time and again, he has appeared worn down on court, medical timeouts often coming to his rescue. That hasn’t been enough this time, given the severity of the physical troubles affecting him. The first-round loss to Navone has pushed Djokovic out of the ATP top 10 for the first time since July 2018. He could slip further, with his 2026 season nearing its end. A revival isn’t theoretically impossible, even now; comebacks have long been second nature to the man from Belgrade. It’s just that the challenge ahead looks far more than mental at this point, with his body, and younger opponents, both proving equally unforgiving.

England’s second innings was the only face saving act for the team. Abbas spoke after the match about how the team’s performance is a concern for everyone. “Our performance is a concern for everyone. Everyone is worried, including the selection committee and the NCA. We’re not doing well, we accept that. We’re not batting, bowling or fielding well and we discuss this all the time in meetings. We’re all working on it and we need to be, too.. We dropped catches and their key players scored 70-odd extra runs,” Abbas said. “That’s where the match changed because we could have bowled them out for 200. It’s disappointing,” Abbad said post the match.

India clinches 16 medals at ITTF World Para Future Lahti

Hyderabad: India signed off on a highly successful campaign at the ITTF World Para Future Lahti 2026 in Finland with an impressive 16-medal haul—six gold, four silver and six bronze—across singles and doubles. Singles accounted for 10 medals, while India added six more in doubles, including two gold, one silver and three bronze, underlining the country’s growing strength and depth across events.

Rameshbhai Chaudhary and Sumit Sehgal spear-headed the men’s doubles campaign in Classes 4-8, claiming gold with a composed 3-0 victory over South Africa’s Ibrahim Abdullah and Rakan Abdulrahman in the final. The Indian pair combined controlled placement and sharp anticipation with composure under pressure to complete a strong campaign.



Sumit completed a memorable doubles double, partnering Deepikarani Ramanathan to the mixed doubles title. The duo overcame Finland’s Timo Kalavei and Aino Tapola 3-0 in the final, with Sumit adapting seamlessly to a new partner and different tactical demands. Sonal Patel and Rameshbhai Chaudhary added a silver in mixed doubles after reaching the final, while three Indian combinations secured bronze. Shubham Wadhwa and J.D. Shubham Wadhwa and J.D. Madan took men’s doubles bronze, Prachi Pandey and Savita Ajanakatti claimed bronze in women’s doubles, and Shivam Pal and Noorali Jamani completed the doubles tally with a mixed doubles bronze.

Svitolina, Kostyuk lead seeded winners as US Open 2026 begins with few shocks



New York: Elina Svitolina, Marta Kostyuk, Jasmine Paolini and Jessica Pegula posted opening-round wins, with Kamilla Rakhimova’s upset of No. 27 seed Barbora Krejickova being the only blemish in a women’s singles schedule that largely went according to plan on Day 1 of the US Open 2026. In all, seven seeded players were in action on the opening day on Sunday, and it finished 6-1; except for Paolini, every seeded winner secured a routine straight-sets win.

Svitolina opened the tournament’s first night session on Louis Armstrong Stadium on Sunday with a brisk 6-1, 6-2 win over Solana Sierra in 52 minutes. The ninth seed is now 9-2 in her last 11 Grand Slam openers, and her 117 Major wins are the most by a Ukrainian player in the Open Era. She is the only Ukrainian with more than 100 Grand Slam victories during this period. Meanwhile, Kostyuk, who has reached two straight Grand Slam semi-

finals, began her push for a third with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Storm Hunter in 67 minutes on Grandstand. The No. 11 seed won the final five games — and seven of the last eight — to move to 33-8 on the season. She finished with eight aces and 22 winners overall against 12 unforced errors. Paolini’s path was far less straightforward. The No. 19 seed needed 1 hour and 46 minutes to fend off Veronika Erjavec, ultimately winning 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 on Louis Armstrong Stadium. Despite a second-set lapse that opened the door for an upset, Paolini produced a solid stat line with 36 winners to 27 unforced errors.

After failing to reach the fourth round at four straight Majors, Paolini made the Wimbledon quarterfinals this summer — a stage she has yet to reach at the US Open. No. 18 seed Ekaterina Alexandrova and No. 31 seed Leylah Fernandez also contributed to the seeds’ positive record. Alexandrova beat McCartney Kessler 6-2, 6-2 in 66 minutes, while Fernandez defeated Zhang Shuai 6-3, 6-2 in 75 minutes. Over on Court 12, former World No. 1 Karolina Pliskova, unseeded but still dangerous, delivered the comeback of the day. She trailed Belgium’s Hanne Vandewinkel 6-2, 5-2 before reeling off nine straight games — saving a match point in the process — to win 2-6, 7-5, 6-3 in 2 hours and 30 minutes. Pliskova has now reached the second round in each of her last 10 US Open appearances, a run that includes one final and five quarterfinals. Polina Iatcenko bt Renata Zarazua 4-6, 6-4, 7-6(7); Donna Vekic bt Talia Gibson 6-2, 4-6, 6-3; Lanlana Taranarudee bt Elvina Kalieva 6-3, 6-7(4); Lucrezia Stefanini bt Dayana Yastremska 6-3, 4-6, 6-1; Wang Xinyu bt Emiliana Arango 6-4, 6-2; Katie Boulter bt Carol Young Suh Lee 6-4, 3-6, 6-0; Taylah Preston bt Alycia Parks 6-3, 6-3

Babar Azam on PCB threat to Imran Khan’s sons: ‘I haven’t heard that thing...’

The start of the second Test at Lords between England and Pakistan was embroiled in controversy after Sky Sports telecasted an interview with former Pakistan captain and former Prime Minister Imran Khan’s son Kasim and Suleaiman during the lunch interval on the opening day of the Test. With reports emerging that the Mohsin Naqvi led Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had lodged an official complaint with the broadcasters and how PCB deliberated on not taking the field after the interview was aired. Pakistan captain Babar Azam had denied such reports and has shared how there was no conversation about such a possibility within the team as well as team management.

Speaking with BBC Test Match Special post Pakistan’s 194-run loss against England on Sunday, Azam was asked whether there was any question of Pakistan not taking the field after the lunch break on the opening day of the Lord’s Test. The Pakistan captain replied in negative. ‘No, no, no. I haven’t heard that thing,’ said Azam. When asked further whether he was aware of any conversations going about such a possibility, Azam again replied in negative. ‘No,’ Azam replied.

In the Sky Sports interview with host and former England captain Michael Atherton, Khan’s sons Kasim and Sulaiman had spoken about concerns regarding their imprisoned father’s health in Pakistan’s Adiala Jail. According to reports, PCB Chairman and Pakistan’s minister of interior affairs Mohsin Naqvi had requested Sky Sports not to air the interview before the broadcasters aired the interview. On the second day of the Test, Pakistan coach



Sarfraz Ahmed was also asked about the interview and the reported threat by PCB. Ahmed replied in negative and shared he does not know about any interview. “I don’t know anything. I’m just focusing on the match. You’re talking about the interview? We don’t know about the interview. All are OK. We were having lunch at that time,” Ahmhed told reporters at the end of the second day’s play. Kasim had shared in the interview about how Khan is being treated in the jail by Pakistan authorities. “

They’re completely isolating him for more than 23 hours a day in a cell. So right now it’s really crucial for us that he gets proper treatment. When he was seen by them, he had an eye patch on from the eye situation. He seemed visibly stressed. And that is something that’s very hard for us to imagine because he embodies a kind of calm assured presence every time I have seen him, even in very very tough situations,” Kasim said in the interview.

‘I despised every moment’: Novak Djokovic on physical struggles after shock US Open exit



Novak Djokovic has opened up about the physical struggles that derailed his US Open campaign, admitting he “despised every moment” on court during his shock first-round defeat to Argentina’s Mariano Navone. The 24-time Grand Slam champion, who was chasing a record-extending 25th major title, fell 7-6(5), 5-7, 4-6, 6-2, 6-1 in a gruelling four-hour-plus contest at Arthur Ashe Stadium. It was his first first-round loss at a major since the 2006 Australian Open. Speaking after the match, Djokovic said he had been dealing with similar issues throughout the season. “I think it was obvious that it was an awful feeling on the court for me. It’s something that I’ve been carrying, unfortunately, pretty much every match this year,” he said. He described how his body broke down during the

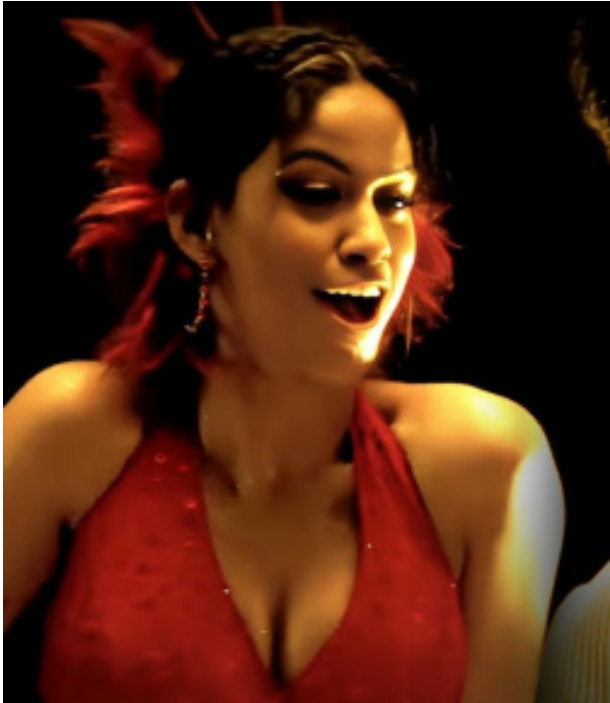
match. “Vomiting, throwing up, a serious issue there. Then my whole body starts to collapse, basically cramping and pain. The back just gave up in the end and shoulder, and I couldn’t close it out,” he added. Djokovic had won the third set and was leading in the fourth before Navone turned the match around. He said he tried his best to stay in the contest but could not overcome his physical struggles. “I won a set and then the third one. Then I was like, ‘Okay, maybe there is a chance’. I didn’t want to give up in fourth or fifth, so I wanted to kind of finish the match,” he said. “But I didn’t enjoy myself,” he added. Despite the pain, Djokovic acknowledged the support of the New York crowd, who tried to lift him up in the final set. He was clearly moved, tearing up as the fans rallied behind him. “They were super nice. So grateful to experience this. When it comes to the match itself and overall feeling of how I felt with body and while playing, it was really not enjoyable. I pretty much despised every moment that I spent on the court for that,” he said. But from the perspective of the crowd and support, it was incredible, honestly, from the beginning. They were trying to lift me up in important moments, and I’m very sorry that I didn’t perform as well as I should have or could have or wanted to for them. But the love and appreciation they gave me in the end really touched my heart,” he added. The defeat ended Djokovic’s hopes of a 25th Grand Slam title at this year’s US Open. His exit comes after World No. 1 Jannik Sinner withdrew from the tournament due to injury, while defending champion Carlos Alcaraz entered the event after a long break.

Ankur Bhattacharjee wins singles, doubles titles at WTT Feeder Olomouc

Hyderabad: Ankur Bhattacharjee produced a memorable performance at the WTT Feeder Olomouc 2026 in Czechia, winning his maiden WTT Men’s Singles title and securing an equally riveting doubles gold with partner Akash Pal. The World No. 78 overcame third-seed Slovenia’s Deni Kozul 3-1 (9-11, 11-4, 11-5, 11-6) in the singles final to cap a remarkable campaign. Earlier, Ankur and Akash defeated Hungary’s Csaba Andras Szantosi and Poland’s Alan Kulczycki Zalewski 3-1 (11-8, 4-11, 13-11, 11-9) in the Men’s Doubles final. Ankur’s singles triumph was built on resilience, having survived several difficult moments on his way to the title. In the Round of 32, he saved a match point against Belgium’s Laurens Devos before accounting for Singapore’s seeded players Josh Chua and Izaac Quek in straight games.

He produced an even more remarkable escape in the semifinal against experienced Slovakian Lubomir Pistej. After taking the opening game 11-7, the Indian dropped the next two narrowly, 12-14, 10-12, to trail 1-2. With his place in the final under threat, he held his nerve to win the fourth 13-11 and forced a decider, which he took 11-7 to complete a 3-2 comeback. The final began with another setback as Kozul edged the opening game 11-9. Ankur, however, quickly found his rhythm, tightening his placement and controlling the rallies to win the next three games 11-4, 11-5, 11-6 and seal the title 3-1. The Indian then joined Pal for the doubles final, where the pair overcame an early setback of their own. They took the opening game 11-8, but Szantosi and Zalewski levelled with an 11-4 second game.

Munna Bhai’s ‘Dekh le’ girl Mumait Khan now runs a makeup institute; was bedridden for 7 years after accident: ‘God humiliated me’



Mumait’s journey in the entertainment industry began far earlier than most. She was just 13 when she started working, and barely 18 when “Dekh Le” turned her into a nationwide sensation. What followed was a whirlwind—multiple Hindi, Telugu and Kannada films, a string of chartbuster item numbers, bold roles, and a rapidly cemented image as a sex symbol. And then, just as suddenly, she vanished from the spotlight. Born to a Pakistani father and a South Indian mother, Mumait spent most of her childhood in Mumbai. But behind the city’s glitter, her family was quietly struggling financially. It wasn’t pressure from her parents that pushed her into work—it was awareness. Speaking to iDream Media, Mumait recalled, “It wasn’t my parents who asked us to earn money. As we were growing up, my sister and I realised we were running out of money. We knew it. As a child, I would walk to school just to save Rs 1.50. I would put it in my piggy bank and give it to my father. They never asked for it, but I felt like doing it for them.” That sense of responsibility reshaped identities too. Mumtaz Abdul Rashid Khan became Mumait Khan, while her sister entered the industry as Zabyn Khan. Post “Dekh Le”, Mumait featured in films like Hulchul, Lucky: No Time for Love, Rowdy Rathore, and Telugu blockbusters such as Chatrapathi and Pokiri. She became one of the most sought-after performers for item numbers across industries. Fame followed. So did judgment. Mumait met with a serious accident at home that damaged nerves in her brain. She slipped into a coma for 15 days, began experiencing seizures, and was given an instruction that felt like a career death sentence: no work, no workouts, no physical exertion for seven years.

Mumait Khan, Raj Sharma and Madhusudhan Mehta. Express archive photo *** Local Caption *** Mumait Khan, Raj Sharma and Madhusudhan Mehta. Mumait Khan, Raj Sharma and Madhusudhan Mehta. Express archive photo *** Local Caption *** Mumait Khan, Raj Sharma and Madhusudhan Mehta. “I didn’t leave the industry,” she clarified. “I had an accident. Five nerves in my brain burst. Doctors told me not to work for at least seven years—even lifting anything was impossible. I was on medication for seizures, which gained a lot of weight. God made me Mumait Khan, and he himself put a full stop to it. I accepted it. I used those seven years to self-study.”

Those seven years were a forced pause—but not an empty one. Financially supported by her mother, Mumait used the time to reflect, heal, and reimagine her future. 7-year break changed everything “My mom took care of me financially during that gap. She kept me happy and main-

tained my lifestyle. Even today, before any big purchase, I call her and take her permission. She knows everything. I can’t randomly spend money.” It was during this period that Mumait realised acting didn’t have to be her only identity. The answer came from something she had always loved—makeup and hair. “In those seven years, I had a lot of time to think about what I truly loved. I realised it was makeup and hair. In every film, every song, I never repeated a look. Every time, it was different.”

That thought eventually turned into WeLyke Academy, her makeup and hair training institute in Hyderabad. Explaining her choice of city, she said, “There’s a gap in Hyderabad. In most of the South industry, we don’t get that kind of treatment. I used to bring my hair, makeup, and styling teams from Mumbai. So I wanted to bring that standard here.” The academy’s launch, however, wasn’t smooth. “I was backstabbed twice. My business should have started earlier. I was supposed to launch in 2023, but I had to start everything over again. It took time.” Today, the academy is fully operational, offering courses ranging from one week to eight weeks, with fees between Rs 20,000 and Rs 50,000. It’s open to all, and Mumait has even tied up with a bank to help students avail easy education loans. “Had no time for personal relationships” At 40, Mumait is single — and unapologetically so. “I am not a typical girl. I have the personality of both a man and a woman. I focus on different things. I have been in four serious relationships. Right now, I am single by choice—not because things didn’t work out. If I find someone now, I am not against it.” Her reasons are deeply rooted in her lived reality. “I started working at 13. I sacrificed my teens, my 20s, my 30s. Then God put a break in my life. Since childhood, my mindset was ‘I am working for my parents.’ I never had time to think about marriage or kids. I have become more business-minded. I never really had space for personal relationships.”

“Pierced tongue out of boredom” What she does have, though, is a deep love for tattoos and piercings. “If I wasn’t an artist, I would be in the Guinness Book of World Records for the woman with the most tattoos,” she laughed. Recalling her rebellious streak, she added, “My tongue swelled to triple its size for eight months after I pierced it. I was 18 and thought, I need a piercing. Everyone had ears, eyebrows, nose piercings—so I removed mine. Then I did a tongue piercing and said, ‘Now copy me.’” Judgment has followed her relentlessly—but she remains unmoved. “Everything about me is a mystery. Only my close people know the truth, and let it stay that way. The more I explain my life, the more explanations I will owe.” She added firmly, “Everyone judges everyone. I don’t owe explanations to anybody. Society isn’t paying my bills. My family thinks well of me—that’s enough. I love my job. If my work requires me to wear a bikini, I will wear it proudly. I am getting paid for it. Others not respecting me is not my problem.” Controversies weren’t uncommon Public life also meant controversies. Mumait made headlines after a public feud with a cab driver and later during a high-profile drug investigation that forced her to exit Bigg Boss Telugu Season 1 midway. Explaining the cab incident, she said, “It was my sister Zabyn’s birthday. I travelled from Hyderabad to Goa with my pet Molly. The driver didn’t have papers at the border. I was already in pain due to a recent surgery. On the return journey, he demanded extra money, called his union, pulled out a rod and drove rashly. It’s in court now. I have proof. He’s given two different statements.” She added bitterly, “Because he’s ‘poor’ and I am an actress who’s done bold roles, I automatically became the villain.” As for the drug case, she was eventually given a clean chit. “I was pulled in because of my association with someone. It didn’t affect my friendships. God gave me fame, he humiliated me, he paused my career. I blame no one else.” Looking back, Mumait has no complaints—only acceptance. “God gave me everything and took it away when he wanted. He won’t let anything bad happen to me.” And perhaps, that quiet faith is what has kept her standing—unbothered, unapologetic, and unbroken.

Ruby Bhatia, mother to two kids, says she doesn’t enjoy motherhood, doesn’t send them to school: ‘Entire jhamela of exams, projects...’

Ruby Bhatia has been making headlines for a while now, after fans began speculating about her financial situation. As India’s first VJ, it came as a surprise to many when Ruby walked away from fame at the peak of her career in pursuit of spirituality. Her approach to life has always been unconventional—rooted in detachment from celebrity culture and social expectations. Unsurprisingly, her views on motherhood are just as unfiltered. Ruby has openly admitted that she does not enjoy motherhood. In a recent interview, she also revealed that her children do not attend school, stating, “I don’t want them to be in a rat race.” In an interview with Bollywood Thikana a few months ago, Ruby reflected on how life forced her to grow up early.

“Exposed to a lot of things at young age” “My life had already been through a lot by the time I turned 25. My first marriage ended, and suddenly I began questioning my purpose in India. I realised I was here for spirituality—anchoring was just an excuse. I joined ISKCON at 25, and it felt incredible. It was like a dream come true. I dedicated my life to God. During that time, I also took up acting projects. My life became a balance between the temple and the shoot.” She spoke candidly about her first marriage to Nitin Bali, saying, “I was 22 when I got married and he was 24. As we grew up, we wanted different things, and we separated. It was painful.”

When Ruby married for a second time Nearly a decade later, Ruby found love again—with Ajeet Dutta. “We met at our Guruji’s ashram in Ranchi. He is also his disciple. We were both 35. It felt like a soulmate connection. We spoke on the phone for 24 hours straight. Eventually, we got married.” However, after years of living independently and on her own terms, Ruby admits that marriage—and especially motherhood—came as a shock.

Children are chaotic “Marriage was fine, but after we had children, it was madness. I went from complete silence to complete chaos. I have two boys—crying round the clock, changing diapers, gaining weight, starving to lose weight. Then I had my second child and went through



it all over again.” She added, “I wanted to do everything properly, but I wasn’t used to this life. I battled that phase, and now that they’re a little older, I can finally breathe.” When asked if she enjoyed motherhood, Ruby responded without hesitation: “Enjoy? Motherhood? Do you enjoy motherhood? I don’t know. I love my kids—they’re wonderful—but being their mother is extremely hard work. I prefer them when they’re sleeping.” Explaining further, she said, “I enjoy silence, peace, relaxation. Now I am constantly yelling and shouting, asking for some quiet. I won’t say I enjoy motherhood, but I have no option, so I focus. After my kids were born, I tried taking up anchoring assignments, but when I came back, their faces would be swollen from crying. They missed me. That’s when I stopped working. I didn’t want to leave them with a maid.” Still, Ruby acknowledged the emotional rewards of parenting. “The only enjoyment is when, after all the effort, they turn around and tell you they love you. That feels good. I don’t feel like a typical mom. I worked hard on my weight to make sure I look the same.

Sudha Chandran made Rs 3,000 per day on Kaahin Kissii Roz, now charges Rs 3 lakh: ‘I bought my house with that money’



Television actor Sudha Chandran is one of the most recognisable faces in the world of television, thanks to her time on Ekta Kapoor’s daily shows. With stints on shows like Kaahin Kissii Roz, K Street Pali Hill, Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, she garnered a massive fan following in the early 2000s. In a recent interview, Sudha reminisced about her days on the sets of Kaahin Kissii Roz and how it solidified her name in the industry. The Naagin actor sat down for a conversation on Hindi Rush’s YouTube channel, where she was asked about her time working for Balaji Telefilms. She recalled signing Kaahin

Kissii Roz and said, “I got married around the same time I signed the show, and people were convinced that I would get divorced because they said I would never get time to go home. I got a lot of support from my husband, who told me to hold on to this opportunity, and for 8 years straight, I worked day and night. But it was fun, because you were earning fame and money. The money I am making today from television is because of those characters that I played.”

She laid on even more appreciation for the production house and said, “We were pampered on the sets of Balaji shows. We had vanity vans, and there was no pressure. Many of us came from films, and we weren’t getting work. Sudha added that witnessing the junoon (passion) on the sets of Balaji shows made her happy and made her want to work even more. “When you start getting the things you manifested, like money and fame, you get even more involved. That is the money with which I bought my house and my cars,” said the actor. Recalling her very first pay cheque for the aforementioned show, Sudha said, “Let me tell you, when I started working as Ramola Sikand, I used to charge Rs 3,000 per day. Today, I charge 100 times that. It’s not about money; it’s about the fame and respect you have earned because of that money... The dreams you could fulfil because of that money. That is the biggest thing of all, and even though my father had a house in Mumbai, I was able to buy a house for myself with that money.”

Melania Trump documentary gets 99% audience score on Rotten Tomatoes with 8% critics score; platform insists ‘no manipulation’ of data



Melania Trump, the First Lady of US, is currently trying to push her documentary to wider audiences. The Melania documentary received a lot of flak from the get-go, with many boycotting it completely. However, the audience score (popcornmeter) on the Rotten Tomatoes platform seems to be telling a different story. Melania currently sits at 99%, which has raised some questions, because the critics’ score (tomatometer) on the same platform is 8%. This is the biggest split between the two metrics ever, which has led the people to believe that something

untoward is going on. According to a report by The Hollywood Reporter, a spokesperson of the platform spoke about the allegations of tampering with the numbers and promised that there has been “no manipulation of the audience reviews for the Melania documentary. Reviews displayed on the Popcornmeter are verified reviews, meaning it has been verified that users have bought a ticket to the film through Fandango.”

Several critics have given the film horrible reviews; for example, Adam Graham of Detroit News wrote, “Its defining trait is that it’s numbingly, agonisingly dull.” While Jemima Kelly from the Financial Times wrote, “It is not clear why the first lady thought she should make this film. It would be easy to write it off as pure propaganda, but, if it is, it is not very successful.” On the other hand, the audience reviews make it seem like they have seen a completely different film. One verified user wrote, “It was entertaining and informative on inaugural events. It wasn’t a political film. I really enjoyed it. Definitely would recommend.” Another user wrote, “Very interesting look into the lives of FLOTUS as she prepares for the inauguration. This was so much more enjoyable than an interview format.”

Michelle Obama’s documentary witnesses surge in viewership According to Amazon MGM, the Melania documentary earned \$7.1 million during its opening weekend, which can be looked at as a positive, despite the \$75 million budget hanging around the studio’s neck. Whether the Brett Ratner directorial is getting eyeballs or not, there is one documentary in the market that is definitely getting views since Melania’s release. The documentary on the life of Michelle Obama, the former First Lady of the US, titled Becoming, saw a 13,000% surge in views on Netflix. According to data provider Luminate, the documentary was viewed for 354,000 minutes during the last week of January, and then it rose to 47.5 million minutes during the Jan 30 – Feb 1 weekend. The documentary was released in 2020 and is experiencing a resurgence now.

Sharib Hashmi says wife Nasreen’s cancer relapsed for sixth time: ‘She misses her old face’

The measure of an actor often lies in their capacity to unsettle expectation. Surprise is, perhaps, the purest expression of performance. It is what transforms a character from simply written to vividly remembered. Such moments seldom depend on prolonged screen time or elaborate character arcs. More often, they reside in the briefest of appearances, where an actor, with remarkable economy, reveals the depth of their craft and leaves a life-long imprint. Sharib Hashmi has built a career on precisely that ability. Whether in a brief appearance in Danny Boyle’s Slumdog Millionaire or a supporting role in Yash Chopra’s Jab Tak Hai Jaan, he has consistently found a way to stand out.

But the road to recognition was anything but easy. More than 700 auditions, mounting debts, shelved projects, films that never saw a release, Hashmi endured years of setbacks before finding his footing. Through every disappointment and uncertainty, it was his wife who remained his strongest pillar of support. Yet, as the actor revealed during an exclusive conversation with SCREEN, just when success finally came knocking, life dealt the family another devastating blow in the form of a life-threatening illness.

“My wife is a warrior” Hashmi credits Raj and DK’s The Family Man with changing the course of his career. The series not only became a watershed moment for India’s streaming landscape, but also brought him the widest recognition of his career. But its success unfolded alongside one of the traumatic chapters of his personal life. His wife, Nasreen, was diagnosed with oral cancer around the time he began shooting for the series in 2018. “We never imagined something like this would happen to us. And the irony is that she was diagnosed with oral cancer despite never having consumed tobacco or anything like that. When she was diagnosed, I had just started shooting for The Family Man. I was in desperate need of money, so I requested the producers to pay me my entire advance upfront. They were kind enough to do that.”

While The Family Man transformed his professional life, Hashmi says the family was simultaneously fighting a far more important battle. “The series released, and



suddenly my career took off. But at the same time, we were battling cancer. Somewhere, there was a sense of peace because things on the work front had finally started falling into place, but our lives had changed completely. She has undergone five surgeries, and her face has changed entirely. Sometimes she tells me, ‘I miss my old face.’ Now the cancer has relapsed for the sixth time. It has spread near her lungs, into her bones, around her kidney. But she’s incredibly brave and responding very positively to the treatment.”

Speaking about his wife, Hashmi says she has been the family’s greatest source of strength, not just through her illness, but long before it. “This journey has taught us so much. She’s a warrior; I’m nothing compared to her. She’s the one who has held all of us together. She supported me when I was struggling, and even today she’s the one who keeps us going. There was a time when she sold her jewellery and we even had to sell our flat. Not once did she question my decisions or ask why we were doing all this. She stood by me through everything. And now, even after everything she’s going through, she’s still the strongest among us. She keeps telling us, ‘Everything will be alright. Don’t worry.’”

Listening to Hashmi, one is reminded of something he had said earlier in the conversation, that participation matters more than anything.