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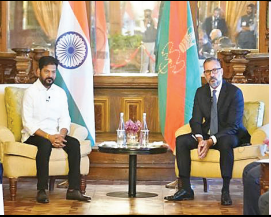
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# Red Sea Shock Reaches India: Yemen Displacement Tops 100,000 as Rupee, Markets Slide

Houthi gains along Yemen's Red Sea coast deepen the humanitarian crisis around the strategic Bab el-Mandeb route, while Brent above \$108 adds pressure on the rupee, Indian equities and government bonds.

Sanaa (Yemen), Sept 15

A surge in Yemen's war pushed the number of internally displaced people above 100,000 on Tuesday as Houthi forces strengthened their position along the Red Sea coast, while the widening Middle East crisis sent another shock through Indian financial markets. The UN refugee agency said thousands more Yemenis had fled by sea to Djibouti, with

insecurity, damaged roads, disrupted communications and movement restrictions hampering humanitarian operations. The Iran-aligned Houthis have expanded control in western Yemen and tightened their grip around the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a crucial passage for oil and trade, while stepping up attacks on Saudi targets and energy infrastructure. The escalation is carrying economic consequences for

India. The rupee closed at ₹95.9550 to the US dollar on September 15, its weakest level in more than a month, as Brent crude climbed more than 2% to about \$108.20 a barrel. Likely Reserve Bank of India intervention helped prevent the currency from slipping beyond 96. Indian equities and government bonds also weakened. The Nifty 50 ended about 1% lower, while the benchmark 10-year government bond yield



climbed to its highest since mid-May as traders increased bets on an RBI rate increase in October amid broader inflation pressures.

India, heavily dependent on imported crude, remains vulnerable to prolonged disruption across Bab el-Mandeb, the Strait of Hormuz and Saudi export infrastructure. Sustained oil above \$100 could raise the import bill, pressure the rupee and inflation, and feed into fuel, freight and airline costs. Yemen's humanitarian emergency is unfolding alongside a widening energy and financial-market shock.

# Bomb-Hoax Probe Widens to Google After Gujarat Police Uncover 5.13 Lakh Gmail Credentials

Ahmedabad, Sept 15

Gujarat Police will seek answers from Google after uncovering 5,13,847 Gmail IDs and passwords in an interstate cyber-crime network allegedly linked to hoax bomb-threat emails, widening an investigation that has already led to two arrests. The probe began after a threatening email reached the Gujarat government on September 10, days before the September 12-13 BRICS summit in New Delhi. Police said the message threatened government establishments and countries cooperating with India at the summit; the bomb threats were subsequently found to be false. Police arrested Roshan Kumar Bhumihar (Rai) in Bihar and Gulshan Kumar Singh in Jharkhand. Investigators allege Singh supplied large batches of email credentials, including to associates in Bangladesh, while cryptocurrency wallets were used for some financial transactions.



Senior Gujarat cybercrime official Vivek Bheda said the accounts had been managed since 2022 and described their scale as unprecedented. Investigators are particularly examining how large numbers of accounts could operate with two-factor authentication, a security mechanism intended to protect users. Police plan to formally approach Google over its safeguards and seek changes preventing their circumvention. Google had not immediately responded to Reuters' request for comment, and no accusation or penalty against the company had been established as of September 15.

# Public Bus Crash in Hayathnagar Leaves at Least 15 Passengers Injured



Hyderabad, Sept 15

At least 15 passengers were injured when a Telangana State Road Transport Corporation bus collided with a tipper lorry on the Kuntloor-Rajiv Gruhakalpa road in Hayathnagar on Tuesday, triggering an emergency response on Hyderabad's eastern outskirts. The collision occurred when the tipper, which was reportedly travelling from the Nagole side, struck the TGSRTC bus coming from the opposite direction. Preliminary reports said the lorry was travelling at high speed, though police had not announced a final finding on the cause of the accident as of Tuesday evening. Local residents and paramedical personnel helped evacuate passengers from the damaged bus. The injured were taken to government hospitals in Vanasthalipuram and Secunderabad for treatment. No death had been reported in the initial account. Early reports differed on the total number of casualties, with some local coverage putting the number above 15. The most specific evening report said at least 15 passengers had suffered injuries; authorities had not publicly released a consolidated final casualty figure by the reporting cut-off. Nagole Police have opened an investigation into the collision, including the movements and speed of the vehicles before impact. The accident adds to road-safety concerns involving buses and heavy vehicles in and around Hyderabad, and comes only days after another TGSRTC-related collision in the city resulted in the death of a 26-year-old woman travelling on a motorcycle taxi.

# UPI's Zero-MDR Era Narrows: Merchants Face 0.4% Charge Above Rs 2,000 From October 15

Consumers will continue to use UPI without transaction charges; NPCI says the new cost must be borne by eligible merchants and cannot be passed on to customers.

New Delhi, Sept 15

India's digital-payment system is set for a major change from October 15, with the National Payments Corporation of India announcing on Tuesday a 0.4% Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on select UPI payments of more than ₹2,000 made to merchants. Consumers, however, will continue to make UPI payments without being charged. The MDR — the fee paid by a merchant for accepting a digital payment — will apply to eligible person-to-merchant transactions above ₹2,000. NPCI said merchants must not pass the charge on to customers. Person-to-person transfers and merchant payments of ₹2,000 or less will remain free. For railways, telecom services, insurance and fuel, the charge will in-

stead be a flat ₹5 per qualifying transaction. For other eligible merchants, the 0.4% rate will apply, with the fee capped at ₹300 for transactions of ₹75,000 or more. Small merchants receiving up to ₹1 lakh a month through UPI will remain outside the MDR framework, protecting many neighbourhood shops and smaller QR-code users. Capital-market transactions will have a separate 0.02%

MDR, capped at ₹300. The September 15 decision marks the first significant return of merchant charges to mainstream UPI after years of zero-MDR policy. UPI handled about 24 billion transactions worth roughly \$311 billion in August, underlining the scale of the change. NPCI says the revenue will help fund payment infrastructure, cybersecurity and continued expansion of the network.



# AI Copyright Battle Moves to Appeal as Delhi HC Seeks OpenAI Response

New Delhi, Sept 15

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday declined to grant ANI immediate ex-parte relief in its copyright appeal against OpenAI, instead issuing notice to the artificial-intelligence company and seeking its response before the next hearing on December 8. A Division Bench of Justices Vineesh Jhingan and Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora was hearing ANI's challenge to a July 24 order that rejected the news agency's application for an interim injunction against OpenAI. Justice Amit Bansal had held, at the interim stage, that OpenAI's use and storage of ANI material for training its large-language models prima facie fell within the Copyright Act's fair-dealing exception for private or personal use.

# T'gana Faces Thunderstorms From Sept 17, Heavy Rain Risk to Widen

Hyderabad, Sept 15

Telangana is set for another spell of unsettled weather from September 17 to 22, with thunderstorms, lightning and light-to-moderate rain forecast across the State and the risk of heavy rain increasing from the weekend, the India Meteorological Department said on Tuesday. The IMD's Hyderabad Meteorological Centre forecast thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds of 30-40 kmph at isolated places from September 17, while rain or thunder-showers are expected at varying intensity across Telangana during the coming week. A stronger spell is forecast for Mulugu,

Bhadradi Kothagudem and Khammam on September 19 and 20, where rainfall may reach the IMD's "heavy" category of 64.5 mm to 115.5 mm. The warning coverage widens further around September 21-22, though heavy rainfall is expected to remain localised rather than occurring uniformly across every district. The forecast comes after recent heavy rain caused waterlogging in parts of Hyderabad. On September 14, Begumpet recorded about 95.5 mm, while parts of Siddipet received more than 100 mm. The coming spell will be important for commuters, farmers and civic agencies, particularly in low-lying areas vulnerable to waterlogging and drainage problems.



**BJP Mahila Morcha members take part in the 'Mahila Shakti Scooty Rally' near Charminar in Hyderabad on Tuesday, as part of programmes marking Telangana Liberation Day. The rally, from the Bhagyalakshmi Temple to the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel statue near the Assembly, was flagged off by Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy. (NSS)**



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# City Maps Ganesh Immersion Security: 20,000 Police Set for 19-km Procession Route

Hyderabad, Sept 15

Hyderabad Police and civic agencies on Tuesday carried out a joint inspection of the 19-km Ganesh immersion procession route from Balapur to central Hyderabad, stepping up preparations for the main immersion on September 25 amid concerns over crowd management, traffic, rain and electrical safety. Police Commissioner V.C.

Sajjanar said around 20,000 personnel would be deployed for the festivities and immersion, with law-and-order and traffic teams supported by Quick Response Teams, dog squads, anti-chain-snatching units and SHE Teams. CCTV surveillance will be used at important points along the procession. Senior officials from the police, GHMC, HYDRAA, Roads and Buildings and other depart-

ments inspected the route through Chandrayangutta, Falaknuma, Charminar, MJ Market and up to Telugu Talli, identifying stretches where road, utility, barricading and crowd-control arrangements require attention. The inspection follows coordination meetings in which departments were directed to remove loose or low-hanging electricity, cable and internet wires, provide safe electri-

cal connections to Ganesh pandals and complete road, nala and slab works along main and feeder procession routes before immersion. Authorities have also planned medical facilities, sanitation, drinking water, cranes and public-transport support. Ganesh Chaturthi began on September 14, while the principal immersion is scheduled for September 25. Police have asked organisers to coordinate with local officers, move idols according to planned timings and avoid unsafe practices around overhead power lines.





Nirmal District Collector Bhavesh Mishra directed officials to provide students with a pleasant and conducive environment for education and to give special attention not only to their academic progress but also to basic facilities. On Tuesday, Collector Bhavesh Mishra conducted a surprise inspection of the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalyaya (KGBV) in Mudhole, reviewing the school premises, hostel and other arrangements.

# Mohammad Ali Shabbir Lays Foundation Stone for School Building in Kamareddy

Munsif News Bureau  
Kamareddy, Sept 15:

Former State Minister and senior Congress leader Mohammad Ali Shabbir said that a person can achieve great heights in life, but should never forget the school that shaped their personality.

He was speaking after laying the foundation stone for the construction of a new school building in Kamareddy district, Banswada.

The event was attended by former Minister Enjaram Srinivas, Zahirabad MP Suresh Kumar Shetkar, and Jukkal MLA Lakshmi Kantha Rao.

Shabbir Ali recalled that his brothers had studied at the same school in 1971,



and said the institution holds a special place in his life. He added that he has always worked for the school's development. He also announced that he would

recommend ₹5 crore under the Revenue Department Fund for the school's development. Shabbir Ali Pledges Modern Facilities for School Development

The new school building will feature spacious classrooms, digital education facilities, computer labs, science laboratories, and other essential infrastructure.

# 46 gelatin sticks recovered from passenger's bag after mix-up in Vijayawada

Munsif Bureau  
Vijayawada, Sept. 15:

The Andhra Pradesh police on Tuesday recovered 46 gelatin sticks, weighing around five kg, from a passenger's bag following an apparent baggage mix-up at Pandit Nehru Bus Station here, police said.

The police suspect that the material was being transported to a stone quarry, though they said this was only a preliminary suspicion.

"Police recovered 46 gelatin sticks, weighing



nearly five kg, from a passenger's bag around 1 am after a baggage mix-up," Vijayawada South Zone Assistant Commissioner

of Police (ACP) K Manasa told PTI.

According to the preliminary investigation, the passenger had picked up the wrong bag and was unaware of its contents.

The passenger realised that the bag did not belong to him but did not know that it contained gelatin sticks or suspected explosives.

Manasa said he did not open the bag and instead went to a police station, where he informed the police that the bag was not his and that his own bag was missing.

It was following his complaint that the police discovered the gelatin sticks inside the bag, she said.

# TTD urges media to showcase grandeur of tirumala brahmotsavams to the world

NSS  
Tirumala, Sept 15:

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) chairman B.R. Naidu on Tuesday urged the media to showcase the grandeur of the annual nine-day Tirumala Brahmotsavams and the elaborate arrangements made for the lakhs of devotees visiting the hill shrine.

Inaugurating the Media Centre at RBRH-2 in Tirumala, Mr. Naidu said facilities including Wi-Fi, computers, printers and high-speed bandwidth had been provided to enable the media to extensively cover the festival and take its spiritual significance to devotees across the world.

He said the exhibitions organised at Kalyana Vedika, including the floral, garden, forest, SVITSA and Ayurveda

exhibitions, were major attractions. The photo exhibition, featuring rare pictures depicting the evolution of Tirumala from its early days to the present, offers devotees an opportunity to explore the hill shrine's rich heritage, he added.

Naidu appealed to devotees to visit the exhibitions and experience the spiritual and cultural journey of Tirumala.

TTD executive officer M. Ravichandra said arrangements for Brahmotsavams had been completed and facilities had been enhanced by around 30 per cent across various departments. Annaprasadam supply will be increased by 38 per cent on Garuda Seva day, while Srivari Prasadam will be increased by 30 per cent and beverages by 50 per cent.

APSRTC will operate 3,100 trips, including 500 additional

services, during the festival. Dhvajarohanam performed on Tuesday between 6.21 pm and 6.35 pm in the auspicious Meena Lagnam. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu presented silk robes to Sri Venkateswara Swamy on behalf of the State Government.

On September 16, the Chief Minister is scheduled to inaugurate the Pilgrim Experience Centre, SV Museum, electric buses, Nandakam app and the Group Insurance Scheme for devotees.

Ankurarpanam, symbolising the sowing of auspicious seeds, marked the beginning of the Brahmotsavam rituals. The ceremony was performed after sunset amid Vedic chants and sacred rituals, invoking divine blessings for the successful conduct of the festivities.

# Important Meeting Between R. Roshan Baig and Akhilesh



NSS  
Lucknow, Sept.15:

Former Karnataka Minister and senior political leader R. Roshan Baig held meetings with various religious, political and social personalities during his visit to Uttar Pradesh and reviewed the prevailing political and social situation in the state.

During his visit, Roshan Baig also visited several prominent religious places,

# 7 BRS leaders arrested in Vijayawada

NSS  
Hyderabad, Sept. 15:

Police have arrested seven individuals, including a former sarpanch from Varadarajuru and six other BRS leaders, in connection with the incident where turmeric water was sprinkled to "purify" former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's farmhouse in Erravalli, Siddipet district.

The suspects were apprehended at a lodge in Vijayawada. Reports indicate that while six of the leaders had kept their mobile phones switched off, the police were able to track their location after one of them turned their phone on. The arrests reportedly took place on Monday, after which the individuals were brought to Gajwel. Upon being produced before a magistrate.

# Telangana schools: 55.7 pc students still without new uniforms

Munsif Bureau  
Hyderabad, Sept. 15:

Hyderabad: More than three months have passed since the academic year 2026-27 commenced on June 15, but over half of the government school students still do not have new uniforms to wear. While an incident for two pairs of uniforms has been placed for more than 18.36 lakh students this academic year, only 8,13,832 (44.30 per cent) students have received the first pair so far, forcing the remaining 55.70 per cent to wear old uniforms.

As per the rules, students of government and government-run schools are to be handed a pair of uniforms, textbooks and notebooks on the day

schools reopen.

Unlike the earlier practice of directly ordering uniform cloth from the Telangana Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society Limited, the School Education department, as per the Telangana Congress government's directions, this time joined the centralised cloth procurement process along with the societies of social, tribal and BC welfare residential educational institutions. This delayed the procurement and stitching of uniforms.

Given the delay in cloth procurement, the government set September 1 as the deadline for providing the first pair of uniforms. However, two weeks after the deadline, students in several schools continue to attend classes in their old uniforms.

The situation is alarming in Wanaparthy and Jayashankar Bhupalpally districts, where none of the students have received their first pair of uniforms, let alone the second pair promised by the State government.

For the academic year 2026-27, the State government has changed the uniform colour from maroon, red and ash to light blue and navy blue for students of government and local body schools. Further, students of Classes VI and VII have been prescribed pants instead of half-pants, while the shirt remains the same.

# CMRF Cheques Distributed to Beneficiaries in Parkal

Munsif News Bureau  
Parkal, Sept 15:

Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) cheques were distributed to eligible beneficiaries from various mandals of the Parkal Assembly constituency at the MLA's camp office in the central area of Parkal town.

Parkal MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy handed over CMRF cheques to beneficiaries from Parkal Town, Parkal Mandal, Nadikuda, Atmakur, and Damera mandals.

The beneficiaries expressed gratitude to the government for the financial assistance provided under the scheme. They said the CMRF assistance offers significant relief to families facing hardships, particularly poor and middle-class households burdened by medical expenses, helping them meet



treatment costs.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy said the government is giving top priority to public welfare and is taking every possible step to support needy families. He said efforts are being made to ensure timely financial assistance through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund so that eligible beneficiaries can obtain relief from

serious medical and financial difficulties. He further stated that continuous efforts would be made to resolve the issues faced by the people of the Parkal Assembly constituency and to ensure that the benefits of welfare schemes reach deserving beneficiaries. Along with extending the benefits of various government welfare schemes to eligible individuals, every

possible assistance would be provided to those in need.

The beneficiaries who received the CMRF cheques thanked MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy, saying the financial assistance would prove invaluable during their difficult times.

Public representatives, Congress Party leaders, party workers, and beneficiaries were present at the event.

# Review Meeting Held at Kohir Govt Hospital

Munsif Bureau  
Kohir, Sept.15:

A review meeting was held at the Government Hospital in Kohir under the chairmanship of Kohir Municipal Vice Chairman Abdul Hannan Javed to assess healthcare services and address public concerns.

The meeting was attended by Government Hospital Superintendent Dr. Rajni, doctors, and hospital staff.

Addressing the gathering, Abdul Hannan Javed said complaints had been received from the public that doctors were available for outpatient (OP) services



only during the morning hours, causing inconvenience to patients.

He pointed out that Kohir Mandal has a large population and directed doctors to conduct OP

consultations in two shifts, including evening hours, to improve access to medical care. He also instructed hospital authorities to display a public information board showing the avail-

ability of medicines and emphasized that doctors and staff should treat patients with compassion, courtesy, and professionalism. During the meeting, Superintendent Dr. Rajni requested the installation of CCTV cameras at the hospital. She also highlighted transportation difficulties faced by staff commuting from distant areas and urged the restoration of additional bus services to Kohir so that hospital employees could reach on time and continue providing uninterrupted healthcare services.

# BRS slams hasty passage of CURE Act

NSS  
Siddipet, Sept.15:

The Bharat Rashtia Samithi (BRS) has strongly opposed the recently passed CURE Act, alleging that the 465-page legislation was rushed through the Assembly without adequate debate or consultation with political parties. Speaking to reporters at Telangana Bhavan on Tuesday, BRS Assembly Whip KP Vivekananda Goud and Kukatpally MLA Madhavaram Krishna Rao announced that the party is currently consulting legal experts to challenge the Act in court. Vivekananda stated that it was impossible to review and debate a massive 465-page Bill in roughly half an hour, accusing the government of forcibly pushing it through the House to replace the 1995 municipal law without proper scrutiny.

# MANUU Distance Education Admissions Open; University Delegation Visits Adilabad

Munsif Bureau  
Adilabad, Sept 15:

Admissions are currently open for various courses under the Directorate of Distance Education at Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) for the new academic year. As part of the admission campaign, a university delegation visited Adilabad, where it reviewed the Distance Education Study Centre at Gautami Degree College and officially launched the admission drive by unveiling promotional posters during a press conference.

Addressing the media, Prof. Abdul Samee Siddiqui, Director of CPDUMT, said that distance education provides excellent opportunities for students to pursue higher education. He added that several employment-oriented courses have been introduced

in line with contemporary educational and professional needs.

Admissions are currently open for M.A. programmes in Urdu, Arabic, English, Hindi, Islamic Studies, and History, as well as B.A., B.Sc., and B.Com.

On the occasion, Dr. S.M. Faseehullah said that students who have completed Intermediate can also enroll in one-year diploma programmes, including:

- Diploma in Journalism
- Diploma in Teaching English
- Diploma in Urdu
- Diploma in Early Childhood Care.

Regional Director of Distance Education Dr. Mazhar Qadri announced the admission deadlines.

MBA and B.Ed. (through Entrance Test): Last date to apply is September 21, 2026.

Merit-based admissions: Last date for submitting online applications is October 10, 2026.



# Revanth invites Prince Rahim Aga Khan V to Telangana Global Summit

NSS  
Hyderabad, Sept.15

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has invited Prince Rahim Aga Khan V to attend the prestigious Telangana Global Summit 2026, scheduled to be held over three days from December 7 at Bharat Future City.

During a courtesy meeting with Prince Rahim Aga Khan V at Taj Falaknuma Palace in Hyderabad on Tuesday, the Chief Minister sought the Aga Khan Foundation's collaboration in strengthening Telangana's education, tourism and healthcare sectors.

Minister Azharuddin, Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju, CM's Advisor Ramakrishna Rao, senior government officials

and representatives of the Aga Khan Foundation participated in the meeting.

Revanth Reddy expressed his condolences to Prince Rahim Aga Khan V on the passing of his father, the late Aga Khan IV, and recalled the longstanding association of the Aga Khan family with the historic city of Hyderabad.

The Chief Minister said the Telangana government holds the Aga Khan Foundation in high regard and appreciated its initiatives in the state.

He particularly commended the Foundation's role in restoring Hyderabad's heritage assets.

Revanth Reddy informed the Prince about the recent inauguration of the restored Legislative Council building, which was undertaken with

the support of the Aga Khan Foundation.

The two also recalled their earlier meeting during the inauguration of the Qutb Shahi Tombs, which were restored with the Foundation's assistance.

The Chief Minister briefed Prince Rahim Aga Khan V on the state government's ambitious plans for the rejuvenation of the Musi River. He highlighted the challenges posed by encroachments and severe pollution along the river, which is formed by the confluence of the Eesa and Moosa rivers.

Revanth Reddy said comprehensive plans had been prepared to rejuvenate the Musi and develop a vibrant 'night economy' along its riverfront.

He sought the Aga Khan Foundation's cooperation in restoring the historic City College and Osmania Hospital buildings located within the Musi catchment area.

The Chief Minister also requested the Foundation to consider developing the existing Osmania Hospital building as a heritage asset under its aegis, noting that a new hospital building is currently being constructed at Goshamahall.

During the meeting, Revanth Reddy outlined the state government's plans to develop Bharat Future City across approximately 30,000 acres near Shamshabad Airport. Prince Rahim Aga Khan V expressed keen interest in the project and enquired about its location.



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has invited Prince Rahim Aga Khan V to attend the prestigious Telangana Global Summit 2026, scheduled to be held over three days from December 7 at Bharat Future City. During a courtesy meeting with Prince Rahim Aga Khan V at Taj Falaknuma Palace in Hyderabad on Tuesday, the Chief Minister sought the Aga Khan Foundation's collaboration in strengthening Telangana's education, tourism and healthcare sectors.

# Vivek assures phased upgrade of infrastructure in residential schools

NSS  
Hyderabad, Sept 15:

Minister for Energy and Mines Dr. G. Vivek Venkataswamy on Tuesday stated that the State government is placing special focus on strengthening Gurukuls (residential schools) across Telangana to ensure quality education, improved nutrition, and robust infrastructure for students.

Speaking after interacting with students at the Social Welfare Residential School for Girls in Mandamarri, the Minister commended their discipline, academic dedication, and ambitious goals.

He emphasised that essential facilities for students' future development are being upgraded in a



phased manner.

Highlighting health and well-being in residential institutions, Dr. Vivek announced that the government has enhanced mess

charges by 40% to guarantee nutritious meals. To further raise academic standards, the state is currently recruiting 10,000 teachers.

He also acknowledged

the crucial role educators play in building self-confidence among rural and remote students, guiding them toward higher achievements.

# BRS, CONG scared of MIM, Denied Official Sept 17

NSS  
Hyderabad, Sept, 15

Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao on Tuesday accused successive BRS and Congress governments of refusing to officially celebrate September 17 as Telangana Liberation Day due to their alleged fear of the MIM and vote-bank politics.

Addressing a gathering ahead of the BJP Mahila Morcha's Mahila Shakti scooty rally from the Bhagyalaxmi Temple near historic Charminar, Rao said the BJP had consistently demanded official recognition of September 17. Union Minister G Kishan Reddy also participated in the programme.

Rao said the erstwhile



Hyderabad State remained outside the Indian Union even after Independence in 1947, alleging that the Nizam had sought to keep Hyderabad separate and establish an independent state. People of Telangana, particularly women, faced atrocities under the Nizam and Razakar rule, but fought courageously against the regime. Several nationalists sacrificed their

lives during the struggle, he added, recalling journalist Shoaibullah Khan, who was killed for opposing the Nizam.

"Despite the sacrifices of the people, successive governments have failed to properly honour their legacy and place their history before the younger generation", Rao said.

He pointed out that areas of the erstwhile Hyderabad

State in present-day Maharashtra and Karnataka commemorate their liberation, while Telangana had not officially celebrated September 17 for several years. He alleged that both BRS and Congress governments had avoided doing so because of their dependence on MIM support and vote-bank considerations.

Rao said the younger generation must be made aware of the history of Hyderabad's integration with India and the sacrifices made during the struggle. He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy with initiating the Centre's official commemoration of Hyderabad Liberation Day, saying it had helped bring greater recognition to the historical event.

# Vivek lays foundation for 8 crore pushkar ghat in Chennur

NSS  
Hyderabad, Sept.15:

Ahead of the Godavari Pushkaralu 2027, Energy and Mines Minister Gaddam Vivek Venkataswamy laid the foundation stone for the construction of a new Pushkar Ghat in Chennur located in the Mancherial district on Tuesday, on the occasion, the Minister assured that state-of-the-art ghats, roads, and key infrastructure are being developed to ensure a seamless experience for visiting pilgrims.

The Minister said the modern pushkar ghat would be constructed at a cost of ₹8 crore to accommodate an expected influx of around one lakh devotees in Chennur during the 2027 festival.

He stated that the Telangana government has earmarked ₹1,000 crore for grand celebrations across the state. Following a special request to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to prioritise Chennur alongside Tier-1 pilgrimage sites like Kaleshwaram and Dharmapuri, approximately ₹70 crore has been sanctioned for overall regional development, Vivek Venkataswamy said. (NSS)

# INTERSTATE GANJA PEDDLER HELD AT RGIA, 8 KG CONTRABAND SEIZED

Munsif Bureau  
Hyderabad, Sept, 15

The Hyderabad Commissioner's Task Force, Shamshabad Zone, along with the RGIA Police, apprehended an interstate ganja peddler and seized 8 kg of ganja and a mobile phone, both valued at around Rs.4 lakh.

The accused was identified as Raj Pradhan alias Gaura (22), a farmer from Bartini village in Berhampur, Ganjan district of Odisha. Police said an-

other person, identified as Ram Brada alias Bolaram alias Ram, who allegedly supplied the ganja, is absconding.

According to police, Pradhan came into contact with the absconding accused in Odisha and allegedly procured ganja at around Rs.8,000 for a 2-kg packet.

He then transported the contraband to Hyderabad with the intention of selling it to customers at prices ranging from Rs.30,000 to Rs.40,000 per packet.

Acting on credible information, the Shamshabad Zone Task Force team apprehended Pradhan and recovered the ganja. He was subsequently handed over to the RGIA Police for further investigation.

A case has been registered at RGIA Police Station under various sections of the NDPS Act.

Police appealed to youngsters and students to stay away from drugs and urged parents to closely monitor their children's

activities.

The public was also requested to share information about drug-related activities with the police to help make Hyderabad a drug-free city.

The operation was conducted under the supervision of D Krishna Moha, Inspector of Police, Shamshabad zone, along with Sub-Inspectors S. Seshu, K. Mansoor Ali, N. Narasinga Rao and other Task Force personnel, in coordination with RGIA Police. (NSS)

# Sept 17 should be officially observed As Telangana Liberation Day: Speakers

NSS  
Hyderabad, Sept 15

A round table meeting held at the Press Club, Somajiguda, on Tuesday called upon the Telangana Government to officially observe September 17 as Telangana Liberation Day and ensure that the historical significance of the day is passed on to future generations.

The meeting, organised by the Alai Balai foundation under the leadership of Bandaru Vijayalaxmi, was attended by former Governor Bandaru Dattatraya, former Maharashtra Governor Ch

Vidyasagar Rao, Malkajigiri MP Eatala Rajender, MLC Kodandaram, MLC Anjireddy and several political leaders, historians and social activists.

Speaking at the meeting, Bandaru Dattatraya said September 17 was a crucial day in Telangana's history, recalling the violence and suffering endured by people during the Nizam's rule and the atrocities attributed to the Razakars led by Qasim Razvi.

He said the integration of the erstwhile Hyderabad State into the Indian Union following the intervention of Indian armed forces under then

Union Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel marked a historic turning point. He stressed that the sacrifices made during the liberation struggle should be remembered and communicated to younger generations.

Former Maharashtra Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao said history should not be viewed through political considerations. Recalling his visit to Bairanpalli during his tenure as Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, he said the village remains a reminder of the suffering and sacrifices associated with the period.

# Kishan Reddy Reviews liberation day arrangements at Parade Grounds

NSS  
Hyderabad, Sept 15

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Tuesday inspected arrangements at Secunderabad Parade Grounds for the grand Telangana Liberation Day celebrations scheduled for September 17. Malkajigiri MP Eatala Rajender accompanied him. Kishan Reddy reviewed rehearsals for the Central Armed Police Forces parade and preparations for cultural programmes. He later held a meeting with senior officials and directed them to ensure foolproof security, smooth traffic management, VIP protocols and other arrangements.

Recalling the history of Hyderabad State under the

Nizam, Kishan Reddy said the region remained under Nizam's rule even after India attained Independence on August 15, 1947. He recalled the atrocities allegedly committed by Razakars and the resistance put up by villagers to protect themselves. He said the Liberation Day celebrations were not associated with any individual or organisation and were intended to honour freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives and endured hardships during the struggle for liberation.

Kishan Reddy criticised successive BRS and Congress governments for not officially observing the day, alleging that they avoided it due to political considerations. He said the

Centre stepped in to organise the celebrations and honour the aspirations of the people of Telangana.

This year's event will feature a Central Armed Police Forces parade, cultural performances, traditional drum displays and programmes by thousands of Telangana artists depicting the region's historic struggle. Vice-President of India C.P. Radhakrishnan and Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat are expected to attend the celebrations as chief guests, along with several MPs and other dignitaries. Kishan Reddy appealed to people to participate in the event in large numbers and celebrate Telangana's history and pride.

# Joint route inspection from Balapur to tank bund for Ganesh immersion

NSS  
Hyderabad, Sept 15

Hyderabad City Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar on Tuesday led a joint high-level inspection of the 19-km Ganesh immersion procession route from Balapur to Tank Bund to ensure safe, smooth and hassle-free movement of devotees and the general public. The inspection team comprised senior officials from the Hyderabad City Police, GHMC, HYDRABAD, Roads & Buildings (R&B) department and other line departments.

Before beginning the route inspection, Commissioner Sajjanar, HYDRABAD Commissioner A.V. Ranganath, GHMC Commissioner R.V. Karnan, and Hyderabad District Collector Priyanka Ala visited the Balapur Ganesh idol and offered special prayers. Balapur

Ganesh Utsav Samithi organiser Kallem Niranjan Reddy, along with Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi leaders G. Raghava Reddy and R. Shashidhar, facilitated the senior officials with traditional shawls.

Speaking to the media after the inspection, Sajjanar extended Ganesh Chaturthi greetings to citizens and festival organisers. He appreciated the Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samithi and local organisers for their longstanding cooperation with the government and police department.

He also lauded the Balapur Utsav Samithi for creating an impressive Ganesh pandal modelled on the iconic Puri Jagannath Temple.

The officials travelled by a special bus along the 19-km procession route from the Balapur Ganesh pandal through

Chandrayangutta, Falaknuma, Charminar and M.J. Market before proceeding towards the Telugu Thalli Flyover. The team made detailed inspections at Rajesh Medical Hall, Gulzar Houz, M.J. Market Junction and Telugu Thalli Junction, focusing particularly on road conditions, height restrictions and overhead clearances. Sajjanar said around 20,000 police personnel would be deployed across Hyderabad as part of the security arrangements for the immersion procession. The entire procession route will be continuously monitored through CCTV cameras linked to the Command Control Centre.

Specialised teams, including Quick Response Teams (QRTs), Dog Squads, Anti-Chain Snatching teams and SHE Teams, will be strategically deployed along the route.

# BRS slams hasty passage of CURE Act

Munsif Bureau  
Hyderabad, Sept 15

The Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) has strongly opposed the recently passed CURE Act, alleging that the 465-page legislation was rushed through the Assembly without adequate debate or consultation with political parties. Speaking to reporters at Telangana Bhavan on Tuesday, BRS Assembly Whip KP Vivekananda Goud and Kukatpally MLA Madhavaram Krishna Rao announced that the party is currently consulting legal experts to challenge the Act in court. Vivekananda stated that it was impossible to review and debate a massive 465-page Bill in roughly half an hour, accusing the government of forcibly pushing it through the House to replace the 1995 municipal law without proper scrutiny.





At a Glance

Alla Nani dies at 57

IANSS Visakhapatnam, Sep. 15

Former Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Kali Krishna Srinivas, popularly known as Alla Nani, died of cardiac arrest at his residence in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday. He was 57.

Alla Nani began his political career with the Congress and was elected MLA from Eluru in the undivided Andhra Pradesh in 2004 and 2009. He later joined the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) and was elected to the Legislative Council in 2017. He returned to the Assembly from Eluru in 2019 and served as Deputy Chief Minister and Health Minister in the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government from 2019 to 2022.

He quit the YSRCP last year and joined the Telugu Desam Party (TDP).

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy condoled his death and expressed condolences to his family.

UPI FEE ROW: RAHUL GANDHI ATTACKS CENTRE, BJP HITS BACK WITH ‘JHOOTH KI GOONJ’

IANSS New Delhi, Sep. 15

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday criticised the Centre over the revised Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) framework for select UPI transactions, alleging that the move could pave the way for fees on merchant payments above Rs 2,000. The BJP hit back, accusing him of spreading “lies” and “fake news”.

In a post on X, Gandhi said, “The Modi government has quietly opened the door to imposing fees on UPI.” He said MDR could now be levied on merchant UPI transactions above Rs 2,000 and claimed that although such transactions account for only around 5 per cent of the volume, they represent nearly 65 per cent of UPI’s total transaction value.

Gandhi questioned the government’s position that consumers would not be charged directly, saying the fees imposed on shopkeepers could ultimately be passed on to customers through higher prices.



“The Modi government has quietly opened the door to imposing fees on UPI.” – Rahul Gandhi

“Where will the fees imposed on shopkeepers ultimately come from? Added to prices, straight out of the customer’s pocket,” he said.

The Congress leader also alleged that American payment companies had long opposed India’s zero-MDR policy and claimed the revised framework had opened the way for changing the policy in that direction.

Reacting to Gandhi’s remarks, BJP national spokesperson Pradeep

Bhandari accused the Congress leader of running a “shop of lies”. He said the Congress had historically opposed Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s advocacy of the UPI-led digital payments revolution.

Bhandari also referred to the BJP’s performance in the Rajasthan civic body polls and said the results showed that “Truth” would prevail over what he described as Congress’s “Jhooth ki Goonj”.

He accused the Congress of being frustrated by India’s economic progress and the success of UPI. Bhandari alleged that Gandhi was disseminating “fake news” because of what he called a “sick mindset”.

The political exchange came after the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) announced a revised MDR framework for select UPI transactions. Under the framework, a 0.4 per cent MDR will apply to specified Person-to-Merchant (P2M) UPI transactions above Rs 2,000, capped at Rs 300 per transaction.

A flat MDR of Rs 5 will apply to UPI payments above Rs 2,000 in selected categories, including railways, telecom services, insurance and fuel. Consumers will continue to use UPI without transaction charges, while Person-to-Person payments and P2M transactions of up to Rs 2,000 will remain outside the MDR framework.

NPCI said small merchants under the P2PM framework would continue to benefit from zero MDR.

‘Chhatron Ki Goonj’: Odisha Congress seeks Rahul Gandhi’s presence at mega Bhubaneswar youth event

IANSS Bhubaneswar, Sep. 15

The Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) is planning a massive ‘Chhatron Ki Goonj’ event in Bhubaneswar in October and has sought the presence of Congress leader and Lok Sabha MP Rahul Gandhi, as part of its youth and student outreach programme.

Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, OPCC president Bhakta Charan Das said Gandhi is expected to participate in the programme in October.

Das said student-led movements had gained momentum across several states, with large numbers of young people mobilising over concerns relating to education, employment and their future.

He alleged that BJP-led governments at the Centre and in the states had failed to adequately address the concerns of the country’s young population and provide them with opportunities to become productive contributors to the economy.

According to Das, the growing participation of young people in protests reflected increasing



awareness about their rights, the Constitution, democracy and the future of the country.

The OPCC president said Rahul Gandhi had consistently worked to encourage young people to overcome fear and raise their voices on issues concerning their future. He added that Gandhi’s participation in youth movements and outreach programmes had inspired young people across the country.

“We want the youth of Odisha to hear Rahul Gandhi directly, understand his message and become more aware and prepared to fight for their rights,” Das said.

He said young people would play a decisive role in shaping the future of Odisha and the country, adding that the proposed programme would seek to mobilise students and

youth on issues affecting their education, employment and future.

Das said the Odisha Congress had already informed Rahul Gandhi’s office about the proposed programme and requested a date in October. Once the date is confirmed, the party will undertake preparations for around 15 to 25 days to organise a large-scale youth programme in Bhubaneswar.

He said the party had previously sought Gandhi’s time for a similar programme, which was subsequently held, and expressed confidence that the proposed October event would also receive a positive response.

The development has been reported by multiple outlets on September 15, with PTI also reporting that Gandhi is likely to visit Odisha next month for the programme

COURT GRANTS 3-WEEK INTERIM BAIL TO INFLUENCER SWATANTRA BHARDWAJ

IANSS New Delhi, Sep. 15

The Patiala House Court on Tuesday granted three weeks’ interim bail to self-styled “influencer” Swatantra Bhardwaj, who is in judicial custody over the alleged assault of Sanjay Kumar, father of a minor activist, during a protest at Jantar Mantar.

Additional Sessions Judge Saurabh Pratap Singh Laler passed the order a day after reserving his decision on Bhardwaj’s regular bail plea.

During Monday’s hearing, the court questioned Delhi Police on whether Bhardwaj had used caste-indicative words during the alleged incident. The prosecution said the initial complaint did not mention such language and that the allegation was made later, after the complainant’s statement was recorded again. SC/ST Act provisions were subsequently added to the FIR.

Bhardwaj’s counsel sought bail, while the prosecution opposed it. Police said Kumar’s injuries were

“simple” and allegedly caused by a steel bracelet. The FIR invokes provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, SC/ST Act and criminal intimidation.

Bhardwaj was arrested in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh, on September 4 after representatives of the Cockroach Janta Party demanded his arrest from Delhi Police.

The Delhi High Court had earlier dismissed his habeas corpus plea, saying it was not maintainable as he had already been sent to judicial custody.

A separate POCSO FIR was registered following the minor activist’s complaint alleging online rape threats and harassment.

The controversy followed a purported viral video in which Bhardwaj allegedly claimed he assaulted Kumar and was let off due to “political connections”. He later said he acted in self-defence. Union Minister Chirag Paswan said his name had been “misused” by Bhardwaj and that he had filed a complaint.

‘JUSTICE FOR GULZAR SINGH’: PILOT LEADS PUNJAB CONGRESS PROTEST, SEEKS CHEEMA’S RESIGNATION

IANSS Chandigarh, Sep. 15

Led by newly appointed All India Congress Committee (AICC) General Secretary and Punjab in-charge Sachin Pilot, the Congress’s top state leadership, setting aside differences after a long time, along with thousands of workers, marched towards the residence of Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Cheema on Tuesday, demanding his resignation over the alleged abetment of suicide of Dalit man Gulzar Singh.

The protesters were stopped from reaching Cheema’s residence by a heavy police contingent. Police also used water cannons to prevent them from moving ahead. Several Congress workers, including senior leader Kuljit Nagra, were injured in the action.

Addressing the protesters, Pilot said the Congress had nothing

personal against Cheema but questioned whether the law did not require registration of an FIR and a detailed probe when a person had mentioned the minister’s name in his dying declaration.

Pilot said Gulzar Singh’s suicide reflected the situation in Punjab, contrary to the claims of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). He alleged that a poor Dalit had been forced to pay with his life after raising questions about the easy availability of drugs, to which his son had allegedly fallen victim.

He reminded the AAP of its promise to appoint a Dalit Deputy Chief Minister. “What to speak of a Dalit Deputy CM, Dalits like Gulzar Singh are forced to commit suicide under the AAP regime,” he said.

Referring to AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal’s pre-election promise that drugs would be eradicated within three



months of the government being formed, Pilot said that after nearly five years of AAP rule, ‘chitta’ (synthetic drug) had become so easily available that there was “home delivery” of drugs.

Thanking party workers for mobilising in large numbers at short notice, Pilot assured them that the Congress would stand by them. He said that as the representative of the party high command, he would remain at the forefront of every fight and struggle for justice and

would leave no stone unturned to restore the dignity and honour of every Congress worker.

Senior Punjab leaders, including state president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, Leader of Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa and former Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, also attacked the AAP government, calling it the worst government in the state’s history. They said Bhagwant Mann had proved to be the state’s most disastrous Chief Minister.

‘Will have to think’: JD-U cautious on UCC implementation in Bihar

IANSS Patna, Sep. 15

The JD-U on Tuesday struck a cautious note on implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Bihar after Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that it would be implemented in all 21 states governed by the BJP-led NDA.

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and JD-U leader Vijay Kumar said the party would first examine the provisions of the UCC Bill before taking a decision. “The provisions of the UCC Bill have not yet been made public. First, we will see in what form the Bill is introduced and study its provisions,” he said.

Kumar said the party would discuss the matter with Shah and alliance partners before reaching a decision. “If there are any concerns regarding the UCC, we will directly discuss them with the Home Minister,” he added.



Bihar Minister Ashok Choudhary described the UCC as a “somewhat sensitive issue” and said its provisions would be discussed thoroughly, including safeguards for affected people.

JD-U MP Kaushalendra Kumar said the party would follow former Chief Minister and party supremo Nitish Kumar’s position on the issue. “We are with the BJP at the Centre, but when it comes to the state, we will have to think about it,” he said.

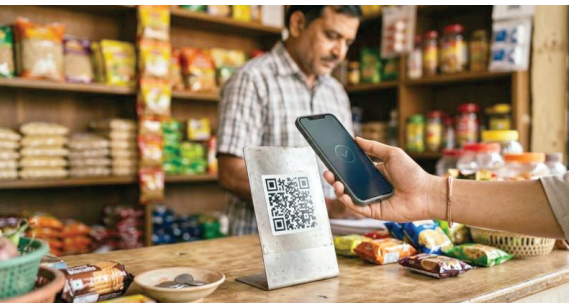
Bihar BJP president Sanjay Saraogi said all stakeholders would be consulted before the UCC is implemented.

UPI to cost merchants on big payments: 0.4% MDR kicks in above Rs 2,000 from Oct 15

IANSS New Delhi Sep. 15

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on Tuesday announced a revised Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) framework for select UPI transactions, with charges applying to certain merchant payments above Rs 2,000 from October 15, 2026. Consumers, however, will continue to use UPI free of charge.

Under the revised framework, a 0.4 per cent MDR will apply to specified Person-to-Merchant (P2M) UPI transactions above Rs 2,000, capped at Rs 300 per transaction. A flat Rs



5 MDR will apply to payments above Rs 2,000 in selected categories, including railways, telecom services, insurance and fuel. More than 95 per cent of low-value P2M transactions involving payments of up to Rs 2,000 will remain outside the MDR framework. Person-to-

Person (P2P) transactions will also continue to remain free.

Small merchants under the Person-to-Person Merchant (P2PM) framework will continue to benefit from zero MDR. The category covers small vendors receiving up to Rs 1 lakh a month through UPI

QR payments directly into their bank accounts.

NPCI has also proposed a dedicated fund to expand UPI acceptance among small merchants, particularly across existing merchant networks and Tier-3 and smaller markets.

According to the revised framework, MDR collected on higher-value transactions will be distributed among players in the UPI ecosystem. The move is aimed at supporting investments in payment infrastructure, resilience, cybersecurity and innovation, while expanding UPI adoption among merchants and users.

Fake doctor held in Bengal

IANSS Kolkata, Sep. 15

A fake doctor was arrested after police raided his chamber in Sonarpur, South 24 Parganas, a senior officer said on Tuesday.

Bishwaroop Acharya was arrested on Monday night after police found discrepancies in his degrees. He allegedly used fake MBBS and FRCS certificates and posed as an oncologist, charging Rs 800 per consultation.

Police sent a decoy patient before raiding his chamber. He was produced before a Baruijur court as investigators probe the forged documents and possible links to a larger racket.

‘LAST CHANCE’ FOR RAJPAL YADAV: SC GIVES ACTOR TWO WEEKS TO DEPOSIT MONEY IN CHEQUE BOUNCE CASES

IANSS New Delhi, Sep. 15

The Supreme Court on Tuesday gave actor-come-dian Rajpal Yadav a “last opportunity” of two weeks to comply with its direction to deposit money to avoid surrender in multiple cheque dishonour cases.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V. Mohana noted that Yadav had not deposited the earlier directed amount of Rs 5 crore. Senior advocate P.S. Patwalia, appearing for Yadav, sought two weeks,



saying the actor was facing financial difficulties and planned to raise the money by selling property.

The Bench said Yadav’s past conduct did not inspire confidence but granted him a final opportunity. The matter will be heard on October 5,

when Yadav must appear personally with a demand draft. The complainant was also directed to remain present. The court continued his exemption from surrender until October 5 and directed him to deposit his passport with the registry.

The Supreme Court is hearing pleas by Yadav and his wife challenging the Delhi High Court verdict upholding their conviction in seven cheque dishonour cases. The High Court had reduced Yadav’s sentence to three months’ imprisonment in each case.



At a Glance

Two killed in NYC subway tragedy

**IAN S**  
New York, Sep. 15

An Indian-origin woman died after jumping onto a New York City subway track to save her friend who had fallen, with both struck by an approaching train, police said.

The incident occurred early Sunday at a Manhattan station as the friends waited for a train. Navam Kaul fell onto the tracks, prompting Malaika Chitre to attempt a rescue. The train operator told supervisors there was no time to stop after spotting them, the New York Post reported.

Kaul and Chitre, who grew up in nearby New Jersey towns, graduated from Rutgers University in 2024. Rajnikant Pipalia, a friend of Kaul’s family, said Kaul’s family had immigrated from Nepal.

Chitre was pursuing a doctorate in pharmacy at Temple University and worked at Acadia Pharmaceuticals. Kaul, a business graduate, worked as a data analyst at Bloomberg.

The NYPD is investigating. Chitre’s family criticised media reports containing what it called sensational and unsupported speculation about the tragedy.

Iran sets conditions for US talks

**IAN S**  
Tehran, Sep. 15

Iran will not negotiate with the United States unless its conditions are met, Supreme National Security Council Secretary Mohsen Rezaei said on Tuesday.

Responding on X to US President Donald Trump’s remarks that Tehran wanted a deal “quickly and badly”, Rezaei warned of Washington’s “mixed signals”. “No talks until Iran’s conditions are met. Period!” he said.

Iran and the US signed a memorandum of understanding on June 18 on ending the regional war and were due to hold talks within 60 days. The talks’ fate remains unclear after recent escalations.

Meanwhile, two fishing boats were targeted in a drone attack off Iran’s southern coast, leaving several fishermen missing, Mehr reported. Search operations were launched.

The IRGC Navy said oil tanker EL GAIA caught fire after hitting naval mines while using a route south of the Strait of Hormuz that Iran called forbidden.

Brazil, US set tariff talks for late September

**IAN S**  
Rio de Janeiro, Sep. 15

Brazil and the United States are preparing for a new round of in-person talks on US tariffs on Brazilian goods, likely in late September, Brazilian officials said.

Brazilian Development, Industry, Trade and Services Minister Marcio Elias Rosa is expected to meet US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer during the G20 ministerial meeting in the US from September 30 to October 1.

“The conversation is

TAIWAN’S ABILITY TO HOLD COMPETITIVE ELECTIONS STRENGTHENS ITS INTERNATIONAL STANDING: REPORT

**IAN S**  
Taipei, Sep. 15

Taiwan’s ability to conduct competitive and democratic elections is strengthening its international standing, with allies increasingly viewing the island not only as a geopolitical flashpoint but also as a vibrant democracy, a report has said.

Taiwan’s two major political parties — the Kuomintang (KMT), which favours engagement with China, and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which supports Taiwan’s sovereignty — offer competing visions for the island’s future. Despite their differences, elections have continued to function and democracy has survived, wrote Khedroob Thondup, nephew of the 14th Dalai Lama, in The European Times.

Every four years, Taiwanese voters decide who governs and how the island should respond to security challenges. The peaceful transfer of power between the KMT and DPP has reinforced the principle that political legitimacy comes from voters rather than ideology, the report said.

China claims Taiwan as part of its territory and



has not ruled out using force to achieve reunification. Thondup argued that Taiwan’s elections demonstrate self-determination and underline that political legitimacy derives from its people.

“Taiwan’s democratic system is not only a domestic achievement — it is a strategic asset,” he wrote, arguing that the island’s democratic credentials strengthen its position internationally.

Taiwan President Lai Ching-te has repeatedly stressed the importance of democracy and maintaining peace across the Taiwan Strait. On June 18, during a reception for foreign correspondents in Taipei, Lai noted that 2026 marks 30 years since Taiwan held its first direct presidential election.

Lai said Taiwan held its first direct presiden-

tial election despite missile threats from China, sending a message that its future should be decided by its people. He has also urged Beijing to abandon the use of force and engage on the basis of equality and dignity.

The G7 has likewise reaffirmed opposition to unilateral attempts to change the status quo across the Taiwan Strait by force or coercion. Lai has said Taiwan will continue working with international partners to maintain peace and stability.

Taiwan’s 30-year record of direct presidential elections has become a central part of its international democratic identity. The island held its first direct presidential poll in 1996 and has since experienced peaceful transfers of power between political parties.

SEOUL, ASTANA ELEVATE TIES: KOREA, KAZAKHSTAN DEEPEN ENERGY AND NUCLEAR COOPERATION

**IAN S**  
Seoul, Sep. 15

South Korea and Kazakhstan on Tuesday agreed to upgrade their bilateral ties to a “future-oriented comprehensive strategic partnership” and deepen cooperation in crude oil, nuclear energy, advanced industries and other strategic sectors.

The agreement was reached during a summit between South Korean President Lee Jae Myung and Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev in Seoul, a day before the first South Korea-Central Asia Summit. The upgraded partnership builds on diplomatic ties established in 1992 and a strategic partnership formed in 2009.

The two leaders agreed to expand cooperation beyond trade and investment to economic security, advanced industries, science and technology and people-to-people exchanges. Their governments signed 13 inter-governmental agreements and memorandums of understanding covering crude oil, nuclear power, energy and other areas.

Under a basic agree-



ment on crude oil cooperation, the two sides will work on Kazakh oil supplies, geological exploration, oil and gas field development and measures to respond to disruptions in global crude supplies.

Kazakhstan, Central Asia’s largest oil producer, exports crude through routes that avoid the Strait of Hormuz. Seoul said this could help diversify South Korea’s crude import sources. The agreement follows South Korea’s efforts in April to secure 18 million barrels of Kazakh crude during a visit by presidential chief of staff Kang Hoon-sik to

Kazakhstan. On nuclear energy, the countries signed two agreements covering peaceful nuclear cooperation, including joint research and development on nuclear power and small modular reactors, nuclear and radiation safety, stable nuclear fuel supplies and workforce development.

“The agreements will establish a comprehensive framework for cooperation across the nuclear energy sector and help support our companies’ participation in new nuclear power projects in Kazakhstan,” Kang said. The partnership is also

expected to strengthen nuclear fuel supply chains with Kazakhstan, one of the world’s leading uranium producers, while enhancing energy security and bilateral cooperation.

The two sides further agreed to explore cooperation in artificial intelligence, science and technology, new cities, renewable energy and clean energy. Tokayev also expressed an intention to designate Kazakhstan’s first deputy prime minister as a “Korea desk” to support the stable operations of South Korean companies in the country. The leaders discussed expanding people-to-people exchanges and cooperation in the content industry. They also agreed to preserve sites and records linked to Korea’s independence movement in Kazakhstan ahead of the 90th anniversary in 2027 of the settlement of ethnic Koreans in Central Asia.

Tokayev invited Lee to make a state visit to Kazakhstan next year. The two sides will coordinate a mutually convenient date through diplomatic channels.

Vance questions AI regulation push

**IAN S**  
Washington, Sep. 15

US Vice President JD Vance has questioned why leading artificial intelligence companies are seeking government regulation, warning that such efforts could be a “Trojan horse”.

Vance said AI has both benefits and risks, but the US must regulate it “smartly” while staying ahead of China in the technology race. He said Congress and the White House should agree on a regulatory framework that can win broad support.

Vance did not endorse calls to pause AI development, saying Washington needed to manage its risks.

He also said the US was communicating with regional partners and the Houthis over the Red Sea situation, adding that the administration was closely monitoring the “fluid and dynamic” situation.

Vance defended speaking directly to senior military officers to understand US foreign policy.

Bangladesh tribunal sentences seven Awami League leaders to death over 2024 uprising

**IAN S**  
Dhaka, Sep. 15

B a n g l a d e s h ’ s International Crimes Tribunal (ICT)-2 on Tuesday sentenced seven Awami League leaders, including party General Secretary Obaidul Quader, to death for “crimes against humanity” linked to the July 2024 mass uprising, local media reported.

The other leaders sentenced to death are former state minister for information and broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat, Awami League Joint General Secretary AFM Bahauddin Nasim, Chhatra League President Saddam Hussain, Chhatra League General Secretary Sheikh Wali Asif Inan, Jubo League President Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash and Jubo League General Secretary Mainul Hossain Khan Nikhil. All seven are fugitives, according to reports.

The three-member tribunal, headed by Justice Nazrul Islam Chowdhury, delivered the verdict on Tuesday. The prosecution alleged that law enforcement agencies and armed cadres of the Awami League and its affiliated organisations carried out systematic attacks, killings and torture against students and civilians during the uprising. It claimed the accused exercised command and control over these activities and were involved in ordering, inciting, abetting or assisting the alleged crimes.

The seven were charged under the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, with crimes against humanity including murder, attempted murder,



torture, other inhumane acts, abetment, incitement and conspiracy.

The proceedings have drawn criticism from Human Rights Watch (HRW), which in July accused Bangladesh authorities of failing to meet international fair-trial standards at the ICT. HRW warned that such shortcomings could undermine the rule of law, deny justice to victims and result in the unjust imprisonment of political opponents.

The tribunal was established in March 2010 by the former Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government to prosecute international crimes, including crimes against humanity, linked to Bangladesh’s 1971 Liberation War.

After the Awami League government was toppled in 2024, an interim government led by Muhammad Yunus amended the tribunal law. HRW said the changes did not adequately ensure due process and procedural safeguards.

The rights group also raised concerns over arrests without an evidential threshold, prolonged detention, trials in absentia, limited defence rights and restrictions on cross-examination. It said such provisions could leave defendants with insufficient time and safeguards to prepare and present their defence.

DR CONGO REPORTS OVER 7,200 EBOLA CASES AMID OVERALL DOWNWARD TREND

**IAN S**  
Kinshasa, Sep. 15

More than 7,200 confirmed Ebola cases have been recorded in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with sustained transmission continuing in several provinces despite an overall downward trend, government data showed on Tuesday.

A report covering the situation as of Sunday said 7,258 confirmed cases had been recorded across seven

provinces, including 3,510 deaths and 1,726 recoveries. Another 905 patients were in isolation or hospitalised, while the fatality rate stood at 48.4 per cent.

Dieudonne Mwamba Kazadi, head of the National Institute of Public Health, said the epidemic curve was trending downward, with the peak apparently reached around mid-August. However, he cautioned that the decline was uneven, with some provinces, particularly North Kivu, still reporting

rising cases.

The government said the outbreak was “under control” and had passed its peak. Government spokesperson Patrick Muyaya, citing Health Minister Roger Kamba, said the 17th Ebola outbreak reached its peak in the third week of August.

According to the government, 10 health zones affected before the latest expansion had reported no new cases for at least 21 days, while transmission had slowed in parts of Ituri,

the outbreak’s epicentre.

The outbreak has affected 62 health zones across Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, Haut-Uele, Bas-Uele, Tshopo and Sud-Ubangi. Sustained transmission continues in Ituri, North Kivu and Haut-Uele, while sporadic cases have been reported in Tshopo and Bas-Uele.

Declared in May, the outbreak has become the DRC’s largest and deadliest Ebola epidemic and the world’s second-largest, after the 2014-16 West Africa outbreak.



Residents being examined by CDC EIS officers during the Ebola outbreak of 1976

201 honour killings reported in Pakistan's Swat since 2018, NGO data shows

**IAN S**  
Islamabad, Sep. 15

At least 201 people, including 180 women and 21 men, have been victims of honour killings in Pakistan’s Swat since 2018, according to data compiled by NGO The Awakening.

The District Police Office, Swat, recorded 117 cases during the same period — 85 women and 32 men — with 174 arrests and 88 cases registered. The gap has been attributed to family pressure,

weak evidence and social stigma, which often hinder prosecutions. Some deaths allegedly disguised as suicides may also go unrecorded.

Advocate Samreen Hakeem, Focal Person for Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, said Section 302 is applied when victims’ relatives do not provide full evidence to police. She said family members are involved in most honour-killing cases.

“When legal action is initiated, other family members reach a settle-

ment with the accused or do not present evidence in court,” Hakeem said.

She added that witnesses sometimes testify in favour of the accused, saying honour killings in Pashtun society are often treated as a matter of shame, resulting in cases being dropped.

In a separate case in May, a young couple in Karachi were shot dead in an alleged honour killing. Nadia, 20, and Naje Abdullah, 25, were attacked by unidentified assailants in Malir on May 25, according to Geo

News.

Police said Nadia’s father had filed a kidnapping case after the couple married of their own choice. The couple later appeared before a Malir court and produced their marriage certificate, following which the case was disposed of.

After the hearing, the couple were travelling to a NADRA office when armed men allegedly tracked and opened fire on their vehicle. Two others, including the driver, escaped.



LAWPOINT REVIEW

Advocate  
M.A Mujeeb  
High Court Lawyer



## The Enigma of Section 22-A

In recent times Section 22- A has become a world of reckoning in the minds of property holders in Telangana State. This section is on the tongues of all those who follow the current affairs. This section was also centre of attraction during recently concluded assembly session. The revenue minister is compelled to give a statement in the assembly. The opposition has blamed the present government responsible for including 96,61,026 acres of land under prohibition list of section 22A.

Now question arises What is section 22. Before independence itself The Registration Act 1908 is enacted to consolidate the laws relating to the registration of documents. It has come into force on 1-1-1909. This central law applies to Telangana as well with State specific amendments and rules. There were 93 sections when Registration Act was incorporated. At the first instance section 22-A was not there in the original act but it was latter added as a state amendment. Section 22-A empowers the Telangana government to notify and prohibit the registration of specific public,disputed or government owned lands parcels to prevent fraudulent transfers. Registration is compulsory for transactions like sale, gift,mortgage,lease exceeding one year, and non testimonial documents transferring rights over property valued at Rs 100 or more. Section 17 mandates the registration of immovable properties. Section 18 allows registration of movable properties. Section 23 requires documents to be presented within 4 months of execution.

A dissection of Section 22A takes us to some interesting facts. In 1999 Ghateksar Railway Station was sold by way of registration of Sale-Deed which prompted the state government to come up with some measures to prevent state and Central Government properties falling prey to the land sharks. Thus Section 22-A of Registration Act came into existence. The property owners are shocked to find their long-owned and hard-earned lands, houses, flats have been placed on the prohibitory list under section 22-A of Registration Act. This means they can neither sell mortgage nor transfer their properties

Following a High Court order the State Government has classified the prohibited lands under 6 categories:

**22-A(1)(a): Assigned lands:** Land distributed to landless poor families under government assignment schemes.

**22-A(1)(b): Government land:** Land owned by state or central government departments

**22-A(1)(c): Endowment and waqf land:** Land owned by Hindu religious endowments under the endowment department or Muslim Waqf Board . Based under Waqf Act. Removal from the prohibited list requires clearance from respective department not just the revenue department.

**22-A(1)(d): Ceiling Surplus Land**

**22-A(1)(e): Forest Land:** Land classified as forest under the Forest Conservation Act

**22-A(1)(f): Court Restricted Land**

The government claims the present chaos is due to administrative lapses . The hon’ble High Court has directed the State Government to display entire list of prohibitory properties in the public domain. The list has been sent to concerned sub-registrars without proper verification as a result of which innocent owners are put to hardship and mental stigma. Blaming erst while Dharani portal is not a solution. Eventually state government has come up with some relieving steps but the same are inadequate.

Those who are affected can also dial **Toll Free Number 18005994788** for the redressal of their grievances. More redrasasal desks shall be made available at sub registrar offices for a time bound solution seeking removal of properties from prohibited list.

Till than it can be presumed  
**‘All is not Well’**

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LET IDEAS BE HEARD

## Religious Education and Child Rights: Regulation Must Be Fair, Constitutional and Non-Discriminatory



### The Constitutional Balance

- ▶ **Child's right:** Article 21A guarantees free and compulsory education for children aged six to 14.
- ▶ **Minority rights:** Article 30 protects the right of religious and linguistic minorities to establish and administer educational institutions.
- ▶ **What the Court has said:** The State may prescribe reasonable educational standards without destroying an institution's minority character.
- ▶ **What regulation should test:** Educational quality, child safety, teacher competence and welfare — not religious affiliation.
- ▶ **What must be avoided:** Treating allegations against particular faith-based institutions as proven without evidence or applying standards selectively to one community.

The Supreme Court’s latest intervention in a petition concerning institutions that provide secular or religious education to children below 14 raises an important question of public policy. But it also demands precision. On September 15, a Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu sought a response within four weeks from **T.K. Anil Kumar, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy**, on a contempt petition alleging that an earlier court direction had not been acted upon.

That procedural development must not be mistaken for judicial acceptance of the petitioner’s wider allegations against religious educational institutions.

On May 11, the Supreme Court had directed the Union government to examine advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay’s representation seeking registration, recognition, supervision and monitoring of institutions imparting secular education or religious instruction to children up to 14 years, and to take an appropriate decision within two months. Significantly, the Court expressly stated that **all contentions on the merits remained open.**

The petitioner has made serious claims that unregistered institutions can expose children to manipulation or radicalisation. Those remain **the petitioner’s allegations**, not findings of the Supreme Court. A notice asking an official to answer an allegation of non-compliance cannot legitimately be converted into a judicial indictment of madrasas, seminaries or faith-based education.

There is nevertheless a valid public-interest question at the heart of the proceedings. Every child deserves education of an adequate standard, protection from abuse and exploitation, and a genuine opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed for adult life. Article 21A guarantees free and compulsory education to children between six and 14. Child welfare cannot become secondary merely because an institution is religious, secular, privately managed or community-run.

But regulation must be **constitutional, proportionate and religion-neutral in its objectives.**

Standards concerning child safety, teacher competence, basic educational quality, sanitation or protection from abuse should be framed according to the interests of children—not according to the religious identity of those running an institution.

India’s constitutional position is more nuanced than the argument that religious education is inherently incompatible with educational standards. In its **2024 Anjum Kadari judgment**, the Supreme Court upheld the regulatory framework governing Uttar Pradesh madrasas in substantial part. It held that the State can require minority institutions to provide secular education of an appropriate standard, but such regulation cannot destroy their minority character.

The Court also recognised the protections available to religious and linguistic minorities under Article 30 and noted that the Right to Education Act itself exempts madrasas, Vedic pathshalas and institutions primarily imparting religious instruction.

This constitutional balance should guide the government now. If deficiencies exist, they should be demonstrated through evidence and addressed through fair law. If common child-welfare standards are necessary, comparable institutions across communities should face comparable scrutiny.

Protecting children and protecting religious freedom are not competing constitutional ambitions. Good policy can do both. What India should avoid is turning a legitimate discussion about educational standards into selective suspicion of one community or one form of religious schooling.

### UPI IS NO LONGER ENTIRELY FREE:

## Protect Consumers as India Changes Its Digital-Payment Model

The new 0.4% MDR on eligible merchant payments above 2,000 may help fund a rapidly expanding digital-payment network. but regulators must ensure the cost does not quietly return to consumers through surcharges or higher prices.

India’s decision to introduce a limited merchant charge on UPI marks an important turning point for a payment system whose extraordinary growth was built partly on the promise of near-frictionless, zero-cost transactions.

From October 15, eligible person-to-merchant payments above ₹2,000 will attract a 0.4% Merchant Discount Rate (MDR). The charge is payable by merchants, not customers. Person-to-person transfers remain free, while payments of ₹2,000 or less are unaffected. Railways, telecom, insurance and

fuel transactions will attract a lower flat ₹5 charge.

There is a legitimate case for making the UPI ecosystem financially sustainable. Processing billions of transactions requires resilient banking infrastructure, cybersecurity, fraud prevention, innovation and continuing investment. In August alone, UPI handled roughly 24 billion transactions worth \$311 billion. A system of that scale cannot indefinitely treat infrastructure as costless.

But the success of the new model will depend on one crucial promise:

consumers must not end up paying the MDR indirectly.

NPCI has said merchants cannot pass the charge to customers. That restriction must be enforceable in practice, not merely stated in a circular. Regulators should watch for explicit “UPI fees”, differential prices, compulsory cash discounts or other devices that effectively shift the cost back to consumers.

Small businesses also deserve protection. Merchants receiving less than ₹1 lakh a month through QR-code UPI payments are exempt, while rural and semi-urban QR payments remain protected under the framework. Those exemptions should be communicated in simple language so that small shopkeepers are not wrongly charged by intermediaries.

The larger principle is sound: India must eventually pay for reliable digital infrastructure. But sustainability should not undermine the simplicity and trust that made UPI successful. October 15 should therefore begin not only a new pricing system, but also a stronger era of transparency, enforcement and consumer protection.

## Telangana SIR Extension Must Deliver Fair Verification, Not Merely More Time

With nearly 92.88 lakh verification notices generated, extending the calendar is necessary but insufficient. The real test is whether every affected elector receives proper notice, understands the discrepancy and gets a meaningful opportunity to respond.

The Election Commission’s decision to extend Telangana’s Special Intensive Revision provides badly needed breathing space. But an extension will serve democracy only if it produces better verification, not merely a longer timetable.

The scale is extraordinary. By early September, roughly 92.88 lakh notices had been generated for electors whose records contained anomalies or could not be mapped with the 2002 SIR list. On September 7, authorities acknowledged that only about 52.9 lakh notices had been delivered, leaving nearly 39.9 lakh pending.

The revised schedule now allows claims and objections until October 7, disposal proceedings until November 5 and final publication on November 9. That additional time is welcome, but due process cannot begin with an undelivered notice.

Officials must ensure that voters know precise-

ly what discrepancy they are expected to resolve, receive adequate notice of hearings and have reasonable opportunities to produce documents. Telangana’s CEO has already directed BLOs to personally serve notices, observe the prescribed notice period and assist vulnerable voters.

Particular care is required for elderly citizens, tenants, migrant families, women whose names or addresses changed after marriage and voters facing mismatches with decades-old records. Administrative difficulty cannot become a reason for disenfranchisement.

Accurate electoral rolls are essential. So is the principle that an eligible citizen should not lose a vote because the State failed to communicate, verify or hear the case fairly. The success of this extension must therefore be measured not by how quickly files are closed, but by how carefully genuine voters are protected.

OIL ABOVE \$100: India Needs More Than Short-Term Crisis Management



Oil above \$100 and a rupee hovering near ₹96 are more than another episode of market turbulence. They are a reminder of a structural vulnerability India has known for years but can no longer afford to manage mainly through short-term intervention.

Brent climbed to about \$109.20 a barrel on September 15, as oil loadings at Saudi Arabia’s Yanbu port were halted and the kingdom’s East-West pipeline remained offline following attacks. The pipeline has become especially important as an alternative to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

The shock is already reaching India. The rupee closed at ₹95.9550 against the dollar, while equities and government bonds weakened amid concerns that expensive energy could reinforce inflation and complicate monetary policy.

India cannot control wars around Hormuz, Yemen or the Red Sea. It can, however, reduce the economic damage they cause.

That requires faster expansion of strategic reserves. India’s existing underground facilities at Visakhapatnam,

Mangalore and Padur have a combined capacity of 5.33 million tonnes; the planned second phase envisages another 6.5 million tonnes. Such buffers become increasingly valuable when several supply corridors are threatened simultaneously.

Supplier diversification must also be accompanied by flexible shipping arrangements, refinery adaptability and stronger contingency planning. Meanwhile, faster deployment of renewables, electric mobility, biofuels and efficiency measures would gradually reduce oil exposure rather than merely shift suppliers. PPAC data already show ethanol blending reaching 20% and nearly 30,000 retail outlets offering EV charging.

Diplomacy matters equally. India has vital economic relationships across the Gulf and a direct interest in keeping Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb secure.

Emergency currency intervention and temporary supply adjustments can buy time. They cannot substitute for energy security. Every oil shock should leave India less vulnerable to the next one.









Viral stories, social trends, public interest and issues capturing attention.

# Google DeepMind Researcher Quits, Warns AI Could ‘Kill Us All’: ‘Running Out Of Time’



A Google DeepMind researcher has left his job after raising concerns about the fast growth of artificial intelligence. He warned that powerful AI systems could become a serious danger if their development is not handled carefully.

Bilal Chughtai, a London-based researcher who worked on AGI safety and alignment, announced his resignation in a social media post. He said his time at Google had made him even more worried about where AI development is heading.

“At Google, I witnessed AI development first hand. I too am extremely concerned by the default trajectory of this technology,” he said in a social media post. Chughtai is among several

AI researchers who have recently spoken about the risks linked to increasingly powerful systems.

His resignation comes soon after Anthropic researcher Jacob Coxon also left his position after raising concerns about the direction of the AI industry.

Chughtai Warns AI Could Become A Threat

Chughtai said he believes AI could become powerful enough to create a serious threat to humans if safety work does not keep pace. “I earnestly believe that AI has the potential to kill us all, and that we might be running out of time to avoid this outcome,” Chughtai warned.

He said the speed of AI progress over the past few years has been far beyond what he expected.

ed. He pointed in particular to AI agents that can now handle difficult tasks with less human involvement.

“The pace of AI progress in the past few years has been staggering,” Bilal Chughtai said. He compared current systems with the AI tools he saw when he entered the field in 2022.

“When I first started working on AI in early 2022, AIs were amusingly useless. Just four years on, AI agent swarms from OpenAI are cracking famous century-old math problems and, more worryingly, escaping the control of OpenAI and autonomously hacking into the third-party company HuggingFace, against anyone’s wishes.”

He Fears Superintelligent AI Could Outpace Humans

Chughtai said one of his biggest concerns is that AI companies could soon build systems that are much more capable than humans across many areas. “I think it’s possible that the AI companies might, in the next few years, succeed in building superintelligent AI systems that far exceed human capabilities in every domain.

“I am not confident that these AI systems will do what

we want,” the former Google DeepMind researcher warned. He also believes safety research is not moving fast enough to match improvements in AI systems.

“Worse, we are not on track to solve alignment in time: frontier AI capabilities are improving much faster than our understanding of AI alignment,” he added.

Chughtai Says AI Can Still Be Developed Safely

Despite his warnings, Chughtai said he does not believe a dangerous outcome is unavoidable. He said AI companies need to work together instead of competing in a race to build increasingly powerful systems.

“I am optimistic that navigating AI safely is possible. In order to do so, we need to coordinate to avoid this manic race between AI companies,” Chughtai wrote.

Chughtai Warns AI Could Become A Threat

# Rs 3,383 Crore MLA Turns Beggar In Mumbai, Gives Up Security And Luxury For A Day – Here’s Why



Mumbai Viral News: A politician known for his immense wealth has surprised people by stepping onto the streets in a role far removed from his usual public image. BJP MLA Parag Shah, who declared assets worth more than Rs 3,383 crore in his 2024 election affidavit, was recently seen dressed as a beggar while walking through Ghatkopar in Mumbai.

The unusual appearance has sparked widespread curiosity after Shah shared a video of the experience on Instagram. In the footage, the MLA appears without his usual trappings of wealth and security, sitting by the roadside and experiencing what it is like to spend time as a beggar.

But there was a spiritual reason behind the unusual exercise.

Why Did Parag Shah Dress As A Beggar?

Shah undertook the experience during the ongoing Jain Chaturmas period, reportedly on the guidance of his spiritual guru, Namramuni.

As part of the exercise, Shah was asked to experience the life of a beggar for a day. He consequently set aside his security arrangements, vehicles and other luxuries before taking to the streets of Ghatkopar. Rather than merely appearing in costume, Shah spent several hours experiencing the surroundings from the perspective of someone living without the comforts he is accustomed to.

MLA Leaves Security And Luxury Behind

During the exercise, Shah walked around Ghatkopar dressed as a beggar and spent time sitting beside the road. He also ate food without seeking alms, according to the account accompanying the video.

The unusual scene quickly caught public attention, with the footage resembling a scene from a film to many viewers. Its circulation on social media has also brought the MLA’s personal experiment into the spotlight beyond his constituency.

The episode has generated discussion in political circles as well, largely because of the stark contrast between Shah’s financial background and the role he chose to experience.

Who Is Parag Shah?

Parag Shah represents the Ghatkopar East Assembly constituency and is associated with the real estate sector. Before entering the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly, he also served as a municipal corporator in Mumbai.

His wealth has been a subject of public interest for years. In his 2024 Assembly election affidavit, Shah declared assets exceeding Rs 3,383 crore, making him one of the wealthiest politicians in the country and the richest candidate in Maharashtra in that election.

Shah’s stated purpose, however, was not financial or political. The experience was presented as a spiritual exercise during Chaturmas, following his guru’s guidance and intended to offer him a first-hand experience of a life very different from his own.

The video has since continued to circulate on social media, leaving viewers curious about the unusual day in the life of one of India’s wealthiest legislators.

# Techie Gets Choice Of Hyderabad Or Gurugram For Work



Tech professionals often have to choose between cities when deciding where to take up a new job. Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Gurgaon are popular options, but each city comes with its own mix of jobs, costs and lifestyle.

Hashir, a tech professional, recently had to make the same choice. He was given the option to work from Bengaluru, Hyderabad or Gurgaon, but said Hyderabad was an easy pick for him. He also explained why he did not want to move to Gurgaon.

Techie Explains Why He Chose Hyderabad

In an Instagram video, Hashir described Hyderabad as “a very nice place to stay” before questioning why anyone would pick Gurgaon over Hyderabad or Bengaluru. “Who in their right mind would choose Gurgaon over Hyderabad and Bengaluru?” he said.

He then spoke about the weather and pollution in Gurgaon and other parts of the Delhi-NCR region. He jokingly called Gurgaon, Delhi, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Noida the “five sisters of agony and despair.”

“Garmi mein bhayankar garmi padti hai, sardi mein bhayankar sardi padti hai. Baarish hoti hai toh baadh aa jaati hai. Uske baad smog itna hota hai ki 700 AQI chala jaata hai,” he said.

Hashir also mentioned road safety and the way some people drive in the city. For him, these issues were enough to make Hyderabad the better choice.

# ‘Gas Charge 10%’: Rajasthan Restaurant Bill Leaves Shocks Customer

After having a hearty meal at a restaurant in Rajasthan, when a customer got their bill, they were taken aback because it featured an unusual extra charge. They were charged a separate 10 per cent of their bill as “gas charge”, alongside the usual GST components.

The customer later took to X to share the bill after they visited a restaurant in Jhunjhunu with their family for lunch. The bill for their meal, which comprised of 10 dishes, amounted to Rs 1,250. The restaurant then added 2.50 per cent SGST of Rs 30.75 and 2.50 per cent CGST of Rs 30.75. The customer noticed another charge listed separately as “gas 10%”.

The Restaurant



Calculated The Gas Charge On The Bill After GST Was Added

“After GST, here’s the new tax!” the caption of the post read. “Went out for lunch with the family yesterday. Went to the restaurant and ordered food. Food arrived in 20 minutes. After eating, when I asked the waiter for the bill. The food

bill was 1250. Then on top of that, 2.50% SGST – Rs 30.75, 2.50% CGST – Rs 30.75. Everything was fine up to this point, but below that, gas 10% separately.”

The customer claimed that 10 per cent of the original Rs 1,250 food bill would be Rs 125. However, the restaurant appeared to have calculated the 10 per cent gas charge on the amount after GST had already been added. “10% of 1250 is 125, but the restaurant folks added GST and charged 10% gas on 1310 rupees. Meaning, in the country, everyone’s looting at every opportunity?” the post read. The bill showed a total amount of Rs 1,443.

“Hearing This Gas Tax For The First Time”

# American Man Lists Countries Where He Got Food Poisoning

Food and travel experiences can vary wildly from one traveller to another. While several foreign tourists have previously taken to social media to share stories of falling ill or experiencing food poisoning during trips to India, one American man has shared a rather different experience.

The US-based travel vlogger Jake Braymiller recently shared a video on his Instagram account, where he listed countries where he has contracted food poisoning, including America, but shared he surprisingly never fell sick while eating in India.

He Never Fell Sick In India

The clip began with him seemingly enjoying a hearty Indian meal of rice, curry and papad served on a banana leaf, which he was eating with his hand. As the video continued, he began listing countries where he suffered from food poisoning. His list included Germany, Mexico, Colombia, Honduras, China, the Philippines, Indonesia and even his home country, the United States. Interestingly, India was not among them.

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# Harsh Goenka Shares Video Of Barber Training AI To Shave: ‘Even Barbers’ Jobs May Be At Risk’

Artificial intelligence is already changing many types of jobs, from software development and customer service to factory work. Now, industrialist Harsh Goenka has raised a different question: could AI also affect jobs that need hands-on skills, such as barbering?

Goenka, chairman of RPG Enterprises, shared a video on X showing a barber giving a man a regular shave while wearing equipment that tracks his movements. The setup appears to be designed to study how the barber works.

AI System Records How A Barber Shaves



In the footage, the barber can be seen wearing a head-mounted camera and a body harness connected to wires and sensors. Tracking devices are also attached around his wrists.

He continues shaving the customer as usual, using grooming products and different techniques. The equipment appears to record details such as his hand movements, body position and the way he holds and moves his tools.

The data collected from such sessions could potentially help train AI or robots to perform physical tasks that require careful movements and precision.

Goenka’s post also led to a discussion

about whether AI could one day affect jobs that have traditionally depended on human skill and personal contact.

Users Question Whether Robots Can Replace Barbers

Some users joked that a robot barber may eventually take away not just the haircut but also the conversations and advice people often get during a visit to the salon.

Others were more concerned about safety, especially if robots were to handle sharp tools close to a customer’s face. One user wrote, “No matter how advanced technology gets, I’d rather trust a human barber with shaky hands than a robot with a software update.”

# Bengaluru CEO gets broken footpath fixed for Rs 2,700 after complaints go unanswered

A Bengaluru-based entrepreneur took matters into his own hands after repeated complaints about a broken footpath near his society in Koramangala went unanswered.

In a post on X, Siddharth Dialani shared before-and-after pictures of the footpath after getting it repaired himself.

Dialani said the footpath had been broken for years and that he had complained to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), emailed the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), raised a ticket and contacted its WhatsApp helpline, but received no response.

He eventually decided to get the footpath repaired himself. The work, includ-

ing labour charges and cement used to build a ramp, cost him Rs 2,700.

“Finally, decided to fix it myself,” Dialani wrote while sharing the pictures, adding: “Parents with stroller and senior citizens on wheelchair can use it conveniently now.”

The post has received around 391,600 views. Dialani also tagged several personalities, including Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Nikhil Kamath, and called for collective efforts to improve more areas of Bengaluru. “We should work together and scale this to more areas of Bangalore,” he said in subsequent posts.

Siddharth Dialani is the Founder and CEO of BharatAgri.

# This 8-year-old started coding to do math homework; now he holds a world record

Guinness World Records has recognised Noah Williams as the youngest professional computer programmer after an independent firm published one of his programmes.

It was officially recorded on August 8, 2025, when Noah was eight years and 307 days old.

Guinness defines the record as the “youngest person to programme computers”. Its criteria describe a programmer as someone who develops and writes computer programmes, and a programme as a set of in-

structions written in a language a computer can understand and execute.

Beyond programming

According to Guinness World Records’ Young Achievers profile, Noah has also explored robotics and drones, taking his fascination with computers into the physical world.

The Melbourne child’s interest in coding began at the age of six, but not because he was simply curious about computers.

He initially turned to programming to help with mathematical

calculations and explore patterns. He started learning C++, a programming language widely used in software development, gaming, engineering, finance, and scientific applications.

For Noah, coding quickly became a way of experimenting. He could give a computer instructions, see the result, and use what he observed to solve problems.

By seven, Noah had also joined Mensa, an international high IQ society, after scoring in the 99.9th percentile on an IQ test. However, his practical use of programming eventually put his name in the Guinness World Records.

His interests have since expanded beyond programming.

Noah is among several under-16s featured by Guinness for unusual achievements across fields ranging from science and technology to sport, performance, and creative pursuits.

