

## Hyderabad's Manam Chocolate featured among World's Greatest Places by TIME

India: TIME recently revealed its annual list of the World's Greatest Places, highlighting 100 extraordinary destinations to visit and stay. Among them is Manam Chocolate, an international award-winning Indian Craft Chocolate™ brand. About Manam Chocolate in Time.com Read more here: <https://time.com/6992360/manam-chocolate> Manam Chocolate is the contrivance of Chaitanya Muppala, whose family owns Hyderabad's beloved Almond House, known for its traditional sweetmeats. With Manam Chocolate, Muppala aims to elevate Indian craft chocolate. Unlike Swiss and Belgian chocolates, Manam has a unique origin story. The brand collaborates closely with farmers and fermenters in Andhra Pradesh's West Godavari district to spotlight Indian-grown cacao on the global stage. In less than a year, Manam has earned accolades from the International Institute of Chocolate and Cacao Tasting and the U.K.'s Academy of Chocolate. Inside Manam's chocolate factory in Hyderabad's Banjara Hills, visitors find beautifully packaged bars in flavors like chai biscuit and pistachio fudge, alongside curry leaf shortbread biscuits and almond praline clusters. The factory also features croissants, toasted coconut macarons, and chakkarakeli banana soft serve. The café downstairs, with its airy glass-walled atrium and cacao tree centerpiece, serves sweet and savory items.

TIME compiled its list by soliciting nominations from its international network of correspondents and contributors, focusing on places offering new and exciting experiences. "We launched Manam Chocolate a little under a year ago with the mission to offer a craft chocolate experience from India, by Indians, for the world. We are humbled to be recognized on a list of global prestige so early in our journey. Being on the TIME annual list of the World's Greatest Places 2024 – amongst some of the best and most exciting places on earth, is a huge honour for us at Manam Chocolate. It is not just an honour we take seriously but a commitment we make to continue our efforts to build the best craft chocolate experience for the world, from India", said Chaitanya Muppala, Founder Manam Chocolate & CEO Distinct Origins. See the full list here: [time.com/worldsgreatestplaces](https://time.com/worldsgreatestplaces) Manam Chocolate is an international award-winning, premium Indian Craft Chocolate™ brand, signifying 'We' or 'Us' in Telugu. It represents a collective of passionate craftspeople, including farmers, fermenters, chocolate makers, chocolatiers, and storytellers, working together to advance Indian Craft Chocolate™. The brand explores the potential of cacao beyond bean-to-bar, offering over 300 unique products in categories like signature tablets, bonbons, truffles, nama, barks, fudge, palettes, rochers, clusters, macarons, gianduja, spreads, cakes, past-



ries, viennoiserie, hot and cold beverages, and baking ingredients. Manam Chocolate launched its flagship experiential space, the Manam Chocolate Karkhana, on August 15, 2024, at Road No 12, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. This 10,000 sq. ft. immersive space combines retail with the craft of

chocolate-making and chocolaterie, inviting visitors to explore and interact with cacao and chocolate in various forms. Manam Chocolate's products are also available pan-India through its webshop, [www.manamchocolate.com](http://www.manamchocolate.com). The brand has won 17 awards at the 2023 Academy

of Chocolate Awards in the UK, including 1 Gold, 10 Silver, and 5 Bronze, and was named the 'Overall Winner' in the 'Brand Experience' category. Manam Chocolate also received the prestigious International Chocolate Award from the International Institute of Chocolate and Cacao Tasting.

## More Indian students opted for higher studies in Canada than United States, 14 studying in Pakistan too: Govt

New Delhi: It's not the United States, but Canada is the most preferred destination for Indian students, if the statistics about Indian students studying abroad are any indication. As per the information given to the Parliament by the Government on Thursday, Indian students studying in Canada outnumbered those studying in the United States. And most interestingly, there are 14 Indian students pursuing their higher studies in Pakistan too. According to a PTI report, over 13 lakh Indian students are currently pursuing higher studies abroad in 2024. Out of which, 4,27,000 were studying in Canada and 3,37,630 students in the US.

This information was shared by the Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh in a written response in Rajya Sabha to queries on whether the government maintains data of emigrant students going abroad for studies. In his re-

sponse, Singh shared country-wise details of Indian students studying abroad, spanning 108 countries, including the US, the UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, France, Singapore, Russia, Israel and Ukraine. According to the data shared, as on date, 13,35,878 Indian students are pursuing higher studies abroad in 2024. For 2023, the figure was 13,18,955, while it was 9,07,404 for 2022. In the current year, of the 1,33,5878 Indian students 4,27,000 were studying in Canada and 3,37,630 students in the US, 8580 in China, eight in Greece, 900 in Israel, 14 in Pakistan and 2510 in Ukraine.

"Indian Missions/Posts abroad constantly engage with Indian students studying overseas and encourage them to either register with them or on the Global Rishta Portal. They organise 'Welcome Ceremonies' for Indian students who travel abroad for the first time and brief them on



security issues in the host countries.

"They also advise them to register with the Indian Missions/Posts and to regularly stay connected. Indian Missions/Posts use the aforesaid method to collect data of Indian students abroad through voluntary registrations. Indian Missions/Posts abroad also coordinate with the concerned authorities in the host Governments to secure data on the number of Indian students studying overseas," the minister said in his response.

# What does Haniyeh's death mean for Israel-Iran rivalry?

On July 20, Israel carried out a massive air strike on Hodeidah, the Red Sea port city in Yemen, that is controlled by the Houthis militia, in response to a drone attack by the Houthis that had hit Tel Aviv. The attack reportedly caused losses worth millions, besides killing at least three and wounding over 80 others. On July 30, Israel carried out an air strike in Lebanon's capital Beirut, targeting Fuad Shukur aka al-Hajj Mohsen, a top commander of Hezbollah, three days after a rocket attack killed 12 young people at a football field in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. Israel had blamed Hezbollah for the attack and vowed retaliation. On the same day, Ismail Haniyeh, the political chief of Hamas, was killed at his residence in Tehran. Haniyeh, who was living in exile in Qatar, travelled to Iran to attend the inauguration of Masoud Pezeshkian, the Islamic Republic's new President. In Majlis, Iran's parliament, Haniyeh hugged Mr. Pezeshkian, while lawmakers chanted "Death to Israel". Before dawn, Haniyeh was killed. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the elite paramilitary force of Iran, and Hamas have blamed Israel for the killing of Haniyeh.

The common factor of all three groups — Yemen's Houthis, Lebanon's Hezbollah, and Palestine's Hamas — is that all of them are backed by Iran, Israel's chief rival in West Asia. By targeting all three in a matter of days, Israel has dealt a blow to Iran's influence and taken the region to the brink of an all-out war. Of these three strikes, the killing of Haniyeh, the most high-profile leader of Hamas outside Gaza, would be particularly seen as a victory by the Israelis. After the October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas in Israel, in which some 1,200 people were killed, the Israelis vowed that they would target all Hamas leaders who they hold responsible for the carnage. Haniyeh was safe while he was in Qatar, an American ally that was trying to mediate a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel. But when he went to Iran, his biggest backer, the Israelis went after him.

Haniyeh was arguably the most powerful leader of Hamas after Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi. The wheelchair-bound, half-blind Yassin, the spiritual and organisational founder of Hamas, was killed by an Israeli missile in March 2004. Rantisi, who was appointed his successor, was also killed by the Israelis within a month. Haniyeh, who was the head of the office of Sheikh Yassin, emerged to occupy the vacuum left by the departure of two of the movement's tallest leaders. He played a key role in mainstreaming Hamas, which was till then seen as a radical resistance militia, among the Palestinians. When Israel was forced to withdraw from Gaza in 2005, Hamas took credit for it. In 2006, Haniyeh led the group to victory in parliamentary elections in the West Bank and Gaza, ending the monopoly of Fatah, the party of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen). As the leader of the Hamas parliamentary party, Haniyeh was invited to form the government in the Palestinian Authorities. But he faced two challenges. One, the PA's international backers, mainly in the West,

were not ready to accept a government run by Hamas, which was designated as a terrorist group by Israel and some Western countries. Two, Mr. Abbas and Fatah were unhappy with a Hamas Prime Minister. The PA faced a major economic crisis as financial assistance from the West dried up. Tensions broke out between Fatah and Hamas. Mr. Abbas then dissolved the elected Hamas government, a move welcomed by Israel and the West; but rejected by Hamas and Haniyeh. This led to a civil war between the two Palestinian factions, with Fatah expelling Hamas from the West Bank and Hamas capturing Gaza and expelling Fatah from the enclave. Haniyeh would lead the Hamas government in Gaza before stepping aside in 2017 and elevating Yahya Sinwar, who, according to the Israelis, was the mastermind of the October 7 attack. In 2017, Haniyeh relocated to Doha, while Sinwar and Mohammed Deif, the military chief of Hamas, ran Gaza from within the enclave. Ever since, Haniyeh had been the face of Hamas's regional and international presence. He played a critical role in Hamas's consensus-driven decision-making model. By killing him, Israel has dealt a blow to both the militant group and the Gaza ceasefire talks. Will Hamas now accept a hostage deal with Israel which killed its top leader?

In April, when Israel bombed the Iranian embassy complex in Damascus, Tehran launched a massive missile and



drone attack towards Israel. A U.S.-led coalition shot down most of Iran's over 300 projectiles on April 14. Israel's response to Iran's attack was meek. Iran was sending a clear message to the Israelis — Israeli attacks on Iranian officers would not go unpunished. Ever since, Israel has not targeted Iranian officers or its missions. But Israel is slowly changing the rules again. By carrying out back-to-back attacks against three Iran-aligned militias, Israel is ramping up pressure on the Islamic Republic. And the killing of Haniyeh showed Israel's capabilities to strike even inside Iran's capital. Iran retaliated in April when

its embassy complex in Syria was attacked, setting new rules of engagement. Can Tehran afford not to retaliate this time, after Israel killed an ally in Iranian soil? Highly unlikely. The fact that the IRGC blamed Israel for the attack itself is indicative that Iran would retaliate. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has also vowed revenge. Tensions on Israel's northern border with Lebanon are already high with Hezbollah's rocket attacks. What is to be seen is what Iran and Hezbollah are going to do and what Israel would do in response. West Asia is dangerously close to an all-out war.

## Facebook parent Meta forecasts upbeat Q3 revenue after strong quarter

Meta Platforms beat market expectations for second-quarter revenue on Wednesday and issued a rosy sales forecast for the third quarter, signalling that robust digital-ad spending on its social media platforms can cover the cost of its artificial-intelligence investments. Shares of the company were up 4% after the bell.

The Facebook and Instagram parent said it anticipates third-quarter revenue in the range of \$38.5 billion to \$41 billion, the midpoint of which is slightly higher than analysts' estimates of \$39.1 billion, according to LSEG data. (Unravel the complexities of our digital world on The Interface podcast, where business leaders and scientists share insights that shape tomorrow's innovation. The Interface is also available on YouTube, Apple Podcasts and Spotify.) It said revenue rose 22% to \$39.1 billion for the April to June period, compared with analysts' expectations of \$38.3 billion. "Any apprehensions investors may have had about Meta's spending on AI and the metaverse are likely to be allayed by this quarter's results," said eMarketer analyst Max Willens. "With its margins as healthy as they are, Meta's investors should feel comfortable with the company's vigorous investments in its plans for the future," Willens added. Shares

of social media app Snap, which like Meta relies heavily on digital advertising, rose 3% after the Meta report. Although Meta's costs rose 7% in the second quarter, its revenue jump topped expense growth substantially and led to a 9-point rise in operating margin, to 38% from 29%.

Family daily active people (DAP), a metric used by the company to track how many unique users per day open any one of its apps, was likewise up 7% year-over-year to an average of 3.27 billion for June. Meta's earnings come after disappointing results posted by fellow tech industry powerhouses which suggested the payoff from hefty investments in AI technology may take longer than Wall Street had hoped. Microsoft said on Tuesday it would spend more money this fiscal year to build out AI infrastructure, while Google parent Alphabet warned last week that its capital spending would stay elevated for the rest of the year. Like both of those companies, Meta has been plowing billions of dollars into its data centers in an effort to capitalize on the generative AI boom. Its shares sank in April after it disclosed a higher-than-expected expense forecast, quickly knocking \$200 billion off its stock-market value. That ended a run of strong quarters for Meta, which has climbed back

from a share price meltdown in 2022 by slimming its workforce and leaning in to investor excitement about generative AI technologies.

Meta has picked up hiring over the last year, particularly of AI engineers, while continuing to quietly dissolve teams elsewhere. It said on Wednesday that its head count was down 1% year-over-year. The social media giant also signalled it would continue to spend big on AI infrastructure, anticipating 2024 capital expenditure would come in between \$37 billion and \$40 billion, up \$2 billion at the lower end from its previous forecast of \$35 billion to \$40 billion. It left its total expense forecast for the year unchanged at \$96 billion to \$99 billion, while cautioning that infrastructure costs would continue to be a "significant driver" of expense growth in 2025. Losses associated with the company's metaverse unit Reality Labs, which produces its virtual-reality headsets, smart glasses and upcoming augmented-reality glasses, would also continue to "increase meaningfully," it said. Meta has been updating its ad-buying products with AI tools and short video formats to boost revenue growth, while also introducing new AI features like chat assistants to drive engagement on its social media properties.

# Versuni India's Preethi Zodiac Reaches a New High: Recognized as "The Most Powerful Mixer Grinder to Grind the Toughest Items" by Asia Book of Records and India Book of Records

Preethi Kitchen Appliances, a leading mixer grinder brand from the house of Versuni India, today achieved a milestone in Asia Book of Records and India Book of Records for its flagship and power-packed mixer grinder, the Preethi Zodiac. This recognition, acknowledging it as The Most Powerful Mixer Grinder to Grind the Toughest Items, is a testament to Preethi's dedication to innovation, quality, and performance. To showcase the impressive prowess of the Preethi Zodiac, the brand enlisted 120 influencers from diverse backgrounds to put the appliance to the ultimate test across four major cities: Kochi, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad. These influencers took on the challenge of grinding various tough materials, from bricks and wood to spices and more. This rigorous demonstration of the Zodiac's capabilities not only highlighted its exceptional power and durability but also earned it widespread acclaim. The recognition underscores the product's unparalleled performance and reliability, setting it apart in the competitive market. The claim was verified by the Adjudicators from the India and Asia Book of Records, Mr. Vivek R Nair, and Mr. Sagayaraj, who announced the record.

Commenting on the achievement, Mr. Gulbahar Taurani, Managing Director, and Chief Executive Officer at Versuni India

Homes Solutions Ltd, said, "At Preethi, our commitment to consumers drives us to set benchmarks of perfection not only for ourselves but for the entire category. We are immensely proud to have the Preethi Zodiac recognized as The Most Powerful Mixer Grinder to Grind the Toughest Items by the Asia Book of Records and India Book of Records. This accolade is a testament to our relentless pursuit of excellence and innovation. When we created the Zodiac, our intent was to meet the consumer's need for a power-packed, reliable, and durable product that could make mixing, grinding, and blending easy and smooth. Over the years, Preethi has become a beloved choice for over a million consumers, known as a true kitchen powerhouse. Today's recognition not only affirms our claims but also reflects our dedication to maintaining the highest standards of quality and performance."

He further added "As a brand constantly innovating to meet evolving consumer demands and build stronger connections, we believe in continuously raising the bar for product innovation and consumer engagement. Today's achievement exemplifies this, showcasing the performance and efficiency of an everyday household appliance in an extraordinary way. The Preethi Zodiac effortlessly grinds the toughest ingredients to a fine powder,

whether it's unusual items like brick and wood or everyday items like cinnamon or large amounts of batter. The success of the Preethi Zodiac indicates that we are on the right path. We will continue to innovate, leading the market with cutting-edge technology and unparalleled user experience."

This Onam, Preethi is making celebrations extra special with a range of new products and enticing offers. To elevate the consumer's cooking experience, Preethi has introduced a new 1600W and two 2100W Induction Cooktops, featuring Triple MOV for 4KV surge protection, pre-set menus, and soft touch operations. These cooktops come with a 1-year product warranty and a 3-year coil warranty, starting at INR 2484. Additionally, Preethi has launched two new stainless steel gas stoves: the Glory (2 Burner) and Glory Plus (3 Burner). Starting at a price of INR 2500, the Glory stoves offer +68% thermal efficiency for faster cooking, anti-guard jet for a consistent blue flame, sturdy pan support to accommodate all vessel sizes without the fear of falling or tipping, and ergonomic knobs for hassle free rotation.

The Glory Plus also includes a removable drip tray for easy cleaning. Both models come with a 2-year product warranty and a 5-year body and burner warranty. Enhancing the festive spirit, Preethi is offering a free Laopala 15-piece

dinner set worth INR 1550 with its premium 2 and 3 burner gas stoves including Power Duo, Valentino, Mira, Stylo Steel and Glam Steel, and a 12-piece dinner set worth INR 1250 with its mid-range gas stoves including Jumbo, Jumbo Max, Blaze, Sparkle, Luxe Pro and Gleam.

Additionally, a free 3-piece Milton casserole set worth INR 1525 is available with select 750w and 1000w Zodiac mixer grinders including Zodiac Cosmo, Zodiac 2.0, Zodiac Glitter, Zodiac Stardust, and Zodiac Black. Staying true to its commitment to consumers, Preethi continues to offer customers with lifelong free service across its entire product range to ensure a seamless and holistic brand experience. About Preethi Kitchen Appliances Founded in 1978, Preethi Kitchen Appliances revolutionised kitchen appliances with the introduction of several consumer-centric innovations like the powerful 750W Mixer-Grinder motor and the first Mixer-Grinder with food processing capabilities.

Preethi is present across 14 categories including Mixer-Grinders, Gas Stoves, Electric Cookers, and Tabletop Grinders. Built on three growth pillars of innovation, quality and service, the vision of the brand is to provide a seamless cooking experience. For more information on the brand and its products, please visit [www.preethi.in](http://www.preethi.in).

## JSW MG Motor India Christens India's First Crossover Utility Vehicle (CUV): WINDSOR

JSW MG Motor India has announced that the name of its upcoming model, India's first Crossover Utility Vehicle (CUV) is "Windsor". The Intelligent CUV is inspired by the iconic architectural masterpiece and emblem of royal heritage - Windsor Castle. Similar to the legendary castle, MG Windsor will exemplify meticulous craftsmanship and a commitment to excellence and royalty. With its imposing design, every aspect of the car is precisely crafted to reflect the same level of premium quality and luxury that Windsor Castle embodies. Immersed in centuries of royal history, this iconic Windsor Castle showcases the best of both worlds, representing the perfect amalgamation of historical grandeur and contemporary modifications. The MG Windsor too personifies classic elegance with advanced technological offerings. Just as Windsor Castle represents a lifestyle of comfort, elegance, and status, MG Windsor is positioned as a premium offering for discerning consumers who seek both value and class. This Intelligent CUV is designed to stand out as a modern marvel in the automotive industry, capturing the essence of comfort, style, and technology.

Commenting on the occasion Satinder Singh Bajwa, Chief Commercial Officer, JSW MG Motor India, said, "We are excited to reveal the name of our upcoming CUV:

MG Windsor. The Windsor Castle is renowned worldwide as a symbol of royalty and glory, which reflects in every detail of this CUV that exudes excellent craftsmanship, premiumness and spaciousness. The advanced tech offerings and the futuristic aerodynamic exterior further add to the appeal of the car. The MG Windsor caters to consumers who seek best of both worlds – comfort of a sedan and the expanse of an SUV." CUVs offer a perfect blend of aerodynamic design and spacious interiors, making them ideal for navigating bustling urban roads and tighter spaces in smaller towns. Due to their versatility and adaptability, CUVs ensure that families can always travel in style and comfort.

About JSW MG Motor India

SAIC Motor, a global Fortune 500 company with a presence in over 100 countries and JSW Group (India's leading conglomerate with interests across B2B and B2C sectors) formed a joint venture - JSW MG Motor India Pvt. Ltd. in 2023. The joint venture aims to build a smart and sustainable automotive ecosystem while continuing to stay focused on developing a diverse portfolio of vehicles to give car buyers better access to advanced technologies and futuristic products with attractive value propositions. JSW MG Motor India Pvt. Ltd.

is committed to introducing world-class technology, strengthening the manufacturing landscape, best of innovation across its business operations, and generating significant employment opportunities through extensive localisation.

About Morris Garages

Founded in the UK in 1924, Morris Garages vehicles were world-famous for their sports cars, roadsters, and cabriolet series. MG vehicles were much sought after by celebrities, including British Prime Ministers and even the British Royal Family, for their styling, elegance, and spirited performance. The MG Car Club, set up in 1930 at Abingdon in the UK, has thousands of loyal fans, making it one of the world's largest clubs for a car brand. MG has evolved into a modern, futuristic, and innovative brand over the last 100 years. Its state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Halol, Gujarat, has an annual production capacity of 1,00,000 plus vehicles and 6,000 direct and indirect employees. Driven by its vision of CASE (Connected, Autonomous, Shared, and Electric) mobility, the innovative automaker has augmented across-the-board 'experiences' within the automobile segment today. It has introduced several 'firsts' in India, including India's first Internet SUV – MG Hector, India's first Pure Electric Internet SUV – MG

ZS EV, India's first Autonomous (Level 1) Premium SUV – MG Gloster, the Astor India's first SUV with personal AI assistant and Autonomous (Level 2) technology, and MG Comet – The Street-Smart Car.

Website: [www.mgmotor.co.in](http://www.mgmotor.co.in)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MGMotorIN>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/MGMotorIN>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MGMotorIN/>

LinkedIn: <https://in.linkedin.com/company/mgmotorindia>

## OU reschedules Telangana SET

Hyderabad: Osmania University on Thursday rescheduled the Telangana State Eligibility Test (TG SET), which will now be conducted from September 10 to 13. Earlier, the test was scheduled from August 28 to 31. The exam dates have been rescheduled due to the UGC-NET schedule, the OU said. Candidates who applied can edit their application form on August 23 and 24, and download hall tickets from September 2.

# In Vinchurniche Gandhi, a look into the life of a climate visionary

This is a man-made forest. Babulal Gandhi, 96, and his younger brother Maganlal Gandhi, who is no more, created this green zone in one of Maharashtra's well-documented "rain shadow" zones — A rain shadow is a patch of land that has become a desert because mountain ranges have blocked all plant-friendly rainy weather. On one side of the mountain, wet weather systems drop rain and snow. On the other side of the mountain — the rain shadow side — all that precipitation is blocked. Gandhi was born and raised in this area before he joined Vinoba Bhave's 'Bhoodan Movement' or the land donation movement of the 1950s. The movement began in 1951 in the village of Gandhian Bhave in his village in Pochampally, Tamil Nadu. It soon became a nationwide movement. The Bhoodan movement made an effort to convince rich landowners to voluntarily donate a portion of their property to others who were without land. As a young man, Gandhi travelled to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and witnessed work and livelihood on donated land.

The land of his childhood wasn't very fertile. It was in a rain shadow. But he and his brother made a resolve and in over a decade, transformed Vinchurni into a green, fertile, water-rich oasis. One of the methods they employed was zero contours farming or terracing wherein at each level of graded land, water would flow with halts, allowing dirt to settle at the bottom and water to absorb well in every level of the land. When Pune-based sustainable food entrepreneur Seema Agarwal interacted with Vinchurni's residents and farmers — most of the cultivation in this farm is done by the daughters of the extended Gandhi family, who Gandhi trained and equipped for natural, toxin-free farming — to source produce for her business, she was surprised by the nonagenarian's infectious advocacy and practice of farming that supports the precedence of "jal, jameen and jungle" in any kind of life or livelihood. "The thing that struck me again and again about Babukaka is that he is always willing to give away what he has. He truly believes that the land and the forest and what it gives us can't be monopolised. It is a radical thought, one that resonates more with today's children than with us from another generation," Agarwal said.

Watch the film here: Agarwal approached Harish Tarun who runs Aproop Films, a filmmaker who has been interested in socially-engaged subjects for a long time before that, having written and directed two Marathi short films before Vinchurniche Gandhi. Both were set in rural Maharashtra; one was about a woman who doesn't have a toilet inside her home and another on the effects of chemical fertilisers on the human body.

"Over five days we shot this film, with just a 10-15 members crew. We depended a lot on serendipity and improvisation." Schools in Pune undertake regular trips to "Babukaka's farm" to learn about sustainable living and farming, and Tarun and his team decided to do the shoot during one of those trips when a bus full of city school-children was visiting the farm. The story unfolds through the viewpoints of a boy of

about 10. He marvels at what he sees and hears — from trees that are so big it takes him and his friends some effort to hug them, water bodies always in motion, birdsong and delicious food made with produce from the farm. The documentary has a voiceover narration by a child from Pune who cherishes his trip to this green oasis — and the narrator sounds almost like someone who is following in the footsteps of a climate warrior. The star of the film is Babulal Kaka himself: At 96, he is sharp, wrestling long-term and short-term memory with ease and a sense of humour, always up for a walk in the forest, always full of stories and practical tips to implement. It is a man completely attuned with the ways of nature — and that makes this biopic of him and the forest he built, not only inspirational but extremely relevant to the generation becoming adults in a few years. "Just as air, water and light belong to everyone, so does land. Our focus should be on water, land and forest," Gandhi said, taking his audience through his years of devotion to nature. His *ikigai* is



aspirational today in this wellness-obsessed world, and his longevity, effortless to him and those who have witnessed him live and work, is a potential subject of biological research. Short Stream is a monthly curated section, in which we present an

Indian film that hasn't been seen before or not widely seen before but is making the right buzz in the film industry and film festival circles. We stream the film for a month on HT Premium, the subscription-only section on hindustantimes.com.

## What is a breach of privilege notice?

Lok Sabha MP and former Punjab chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Wednesday moved a notice to bring a privilege motion against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the Lok Sabha for sharing the speech of BJP MP Anurag Thakur on his social media platform X even as some parts of it were expunged. According to rule 222 says, the Speaker must give his consent on Channi's breach of privilege notice before it can be processed.

What accounts for a lawmaker's privileges?

A lawmaker—be it MP or MLA—enjoys certain privileges such as no misinformation can be spread about him or her in the legislative House. A lawmaker's speech in the House cannot be challenged before any court or he has a right to reply if his or her name is mentioned by another lawmaker. When the legislative session is going on, lawmakers should be informed first about any change in government policy or law before others. That's the reason why the government doesn't publicise decisions of Union Cabinet when a Parliament session is on.

What is a breach of privilege?

If a member or a minister makes an unsubstantiated comment or if any person maligns the reputation of an MP or prohibits the lawmaker from his work, a Parliamentarian or an MLA can file a complaint to the Speaker (or the Chairman in case of Rajya Sabha) that his privileges has been breached.

Did any Prime Minister or former PM face any privileges notice before?

Yes. On November 22, 1978, a year after the Emergency was lifted, the Lok



Sabha's privileges panel concluded that former PM Indira Gandhi was guilty of contempt of the House. The panel, led by Janata Party MP Samar Guha, had looked into the breach of privileges complaint filed by CPI(M) MP Jyotirmoy Bosu that Gandhi's government create hurdles for government officials to collect information on Maruti for a question he put in 1975. She was also expelled from the House in 1978.

How did the PM's post on X (formerly Twitter) allegedly breach Charanjit Singh Channi's privileges?

According to Channi, PM posted the link of the entire speech of Anurag Thakur, but some words of that speech had been expunged. Tweeting or publicising expunged words amounts to breach of privileges, according to Channi. In general, expunged words or remarks can't be

publicised.

Does Parliament of India have proper rules on privileges?

There is a set of rules on moving privilege notices. Under Rule 222 of the House, "A member may, with the consent of the Speaker, raise a question involving a breach of privilege either of a member or of the House or of a Committee thereof." Rule 223 stipulates that "A member wishing to raise a question of privilege shall give notice in writing to the Secretary General by 10.00 AM on the day the question is proposed to be raised."

What happens now after Channi's breach of privileges notice?

According to rule 222 says, the Speaker must give his consent before it can be processed.

# Job calender to be released in Assembly on Friday

Hyderabad: The State government will be releasing a job calendar in the Assembly on Friday and has constituted a cabinet sub-committee for issue of new white ration cards under Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy's leadership. This was decided by the State Cabinet that met here on Thursday under the leadership of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. The cabinet discussed a few issues and the decisions taken during the meeting were shared by Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar to the media. The Revenue Minister said as promised to the unemployed youth before the elections, a job calendar would be released officially in the Assembly on Friday to provide legal sanctity to the calendar.

The cabinet sub-committee constituted for issue of new ration cards would submit its report in a month, besides recommending modalities. The idea was to issue to ration cards and Arogyasri cards separately at the earliest, he said. Regarding Dharani issues, the Minister said the committee constituted for the purpose had already submitted its report. A short discussion was scheduled in the Assembly on Friday and all aspects would be explained in detail, he said. The State government was committed in taking up the River Musi Front Development project. Accordingly diversion of 15 tmc River Godavari from Mallanna Sagar to Shamirpet Lake was approved by the Cabinet. Of the 15 tmcft water, five tmcft would be utilised to meet Hyderabad's drinking water requirements. The rest 10 tmcft would be diverted to ensure flow of fresh water in River Musi and other water bodies in and around Hyderabad, the Revenue Minister said. The Cabinet again recommended TJS president M Kodandaram and Amer Ali Khan's names to Governor Jishnu Dev Varma as MLCs under the Governor's quota. In the past, the then Governor had sent back the recommendations to the State government, he said.

The Revenue Minister said the State government was committed to revive the Nizam's Sugar Factory. Accordingly, a cabinet subcommittee was constituted under Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu and it had recommended release of funds in two phases. This apart, the committee would reexamine the possibilities of ethanol and power plant at the location, he said. The Telangana government had also decided to extend its support and cooperation for Kerala Government to take up relief measures in Wayanad district in which many people had lost lives in a natural calamity. "We will speak to the Kerala Chief Secretary and extend all support, including manpower, machinery, financial and health service etc.," Srinivas Reddy said. Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar thanked the Chief Minister and the cabinet for approving the Gourelli project distributory system work estimates of Rs. 437 crore. Former Chief Minister late YS Rajashekhara Reddy had laid foundation for the project in 2007 and till 2014 tunnel and head works were completed.



After BRS government came to power, the project works got delayed, citing technical permissions from NGT and land acquisition, he said, adding that once the project works would be completed, it would facilitate in providing water for Ghanpur con-

stituency as well.

The cabinet also approved allotment of 600 square yards house sites to shooter Isha Singh, cricketer Mohd Siraj and boxer Nikhat Zareen. This apart, Mohd Siraj and Nikhat Zareen would also be offered Group

I rank posting, the cabinet decided. Similarly, late DG Rajeev Ratan's son Hari Ratan would be offered a job as Municipal Commissioner while Additional DG, the late B Murali's son, would be offered a Deputy Tahsildar job.

## NSDC launches Women Entrepreneurship Programme

Hyderabad: The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) on Thursday launched the Women Entrepreneurship Programme, aimed at tackling challenges faced by women in entrepreneurship by offering crucial skills, knowledge, and networking opportunities.

Divided into two phases, NSDC, with support from the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD), will offer free online self-learning entrepreneurship courses through the Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) as part of the programme. These courses, available in multiple languages, will cover crucial topics such as entrepreneurial skills, enterprise setup, finance basics, digital skills, and market analysis.

In the next phase, NSDC extends incubation support to 10,000 shortlisted contestants across 100 business models. This support encompasses business model selection, entrepreneurship development programs, industrial workshops, business registration assistance, project report preparation, and guidance on funding



through various government entrepreneurship and startup schemes.

Upon completion of courses, participants will receive a co-branded certificate from NSDC, Britannia Industries and

NIESBUD. The initiative will culminate in a grand finale where the top 50 contestants will present their business ideas to a distinguished jury. Britannia Industries will award financial grants of Rs.10 lakh each to 10 of the most successful contestants.

# What is the Karnataka MUDA scam?

The story so far: The Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA), one of the State's first urban planning and development bodies established as City Improvement Trust Board (CITB) in 1904 during the rule of the Mysuru Maharajas, has come under intense public glare during the last few weeks after media reports alleged gross irregularities in the allotment of residential sites by MUDA to land losers as compensation. Amid the public uproar against allegations of misuse of provisions relating to compensatory allotment of residential sites to land losers, the name of Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife, Parvathi, surfaced. It was alleged that she had been allotted 14 sites in an up-market residential layout in lieu of her 3 acres and 16 guntas of land that had been acquired by MUDA to develop a layout.

Even though Mr. Siddaramaiah and the Congress leaders have clarified that the allotment of residential sites to Ms. Parvathi was within the legal framework of the 50:50 ratio scheme envisaged by the cash-strapped MUDA to compensate land losers, the Opposition comprising NDA allies BJP and JD (S) have been using the instance as a stick to beat the ruling Congress.

What necessitated the compensation scheme for land losers?

MUDA, which is expected to acquire land, develop residential layouts and allot sites to applicants at a reasonable price, had been facing a number of litigations for developing layouts in Mysuru city during the last few decades without completing the land acquisition formalities. As MUDA does not have financial capability to compensate land losers, many had moved the courts. In one case, the High Court directed MUDA in 2020 to return to the original owner more than two acres of land it had developed in Srirampura in Mysuru without completing the acquisition formalities.

Citing the High Court order and the ruling of a five-judge bench of the Supreme Court, also in 2020, to determine compensation to land owner under the provisions of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act of 2013 or by mutual consent, former Chairman of MUDA H.V. Rajeev said MUDA faced the prospect of paying almost three times the market value or the guidance value fixed by the Sub-Registrar. Under the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act of 2013, Mr. Rajeev said MUDA would have to pay not only the market value of the entire acquired property in terms of square feet or acres, but also 100% solatium (compensation) with 12% interest since the day of the acquisition, which in many cases was decades ago. Hence, the MUDA, at a meeting of its Board in September 2020, decided to approve the 50:50 ratio scheme for land losers to avoid the prospect of coughing up large sums of money as compensation.

What is the 50:50 ratio scheme?

The 50:50 ratio scheme envisages allotment of 50% of developed land to the land loser. While an acre of land comprises around 43,000 to 44,000 square feet, only about 23,000 square feet of developed land is available for residential sites as the remaining goes towards roads, parks, civic

amenities (CA) site and other amenities. Out of the 23,000 square feet of developed land for every acre, 50% or 11,500 square feet is allotted to the land loser and the remaining 11,500 is retained by the MUDA, according to officials familiar with the 50:50 ratio scheme. If MUDA had developed a layout on one acre of land without completing the acquisition formalities, the land owner was entitled to 11,500 square feet of developed land, which for example translates into nine sites of 30x40 dimension plus another site measuring 700 square feet.

What is the MUDA scam?

The 50:50 scheme, when approved, envisaged each case of allotment of sites under it to be brought before the MUDA board. However, there have been allegations that the sites have been sanctioned to ineligible persons based on forged and bogus documents through middlemen in connivance with MUDA officials without the knowledge of the board. The continued allotment of sites under the scheme even after the Congress government issued directions to MUDA, twice in 2023, to stop it has brought the role of the MUDA officials in the alleged irregularities under public glare and scrutiny. Apart from allotting sites under 50:50 ratio scheme, MUDA had been allotting sites as an incentive to land losers who had already been compensated. A land owner surrendering one acre of land to MUDA is entitled to one site as an incentive. It has been alleged that the MUDA was misusing this provision as well to allot sites to ineligible persons.

How are CM Siddaramaiah and his wife involved?

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah addressing the press conference on the alleged MUDA site allotting issue, in Bengaluru. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi had been gifted three acres and 16 guntas of land in Kesare on the outskirts of Mysuru by her brother Mallikarjuna Swamy in 2010. But, MUDA had developed the Devanur III Stage Layout without acquiring this piece of land. Based on Ms. Parvathi's application for compensation, the MUDA allotted 14 sites in Vijayangar III and IV Stage Layouts, measuring a total of 38,284 square feet under the 50:50 ratio scheme, in lieu of her land that was used for developing Devanur Layout. However, the Opposition has alleged irregularities even in the allotment of these sites to Ms. Parvathi by MUDA.

What has been the Opposition's allegations?

The BJP and JD(S) leaders are not only questioning the legality of the denotification of the piece of land in 1998 before Ms. Parvathi's brother Mallikarjunaswamy purchased it in 2004, but also the allotment of compensatory sites to her in the upmarket Vijaynagar Layout even though the land used for developing Devanur layout holds a comparatively less market value. Opposition party leaders protesting in the Assembly hall against the Congress government's involvement in MUDA site scam at the Legislators Assembly in Bengaluru. Opposition party leaders protesting in the Assembly hall against the Congress government's involvement in MUDA site scam at the Leg-



islators Assembly in Bengaluru. | Photo Credit: Special arrangement Mr. Siddaramaiah has argued that his wife had not preferred allotment of compensatory sites in Vijayangar Layout and also pointed out that the allotment was made during the BJP regime in October 2021. MUDA had similarly allotted 1,328 compensatory sites to others, he has said. However, the Opposition has sought a CBI probe to unravel the extent of alleged malpractices. After the Opposition was denied an opportunity to raise the issue in the recent Legislature session, the BJP and JD(S) jointly announced a seven-day-long Bengaluru to Mysuru padayatra from August 3 against the alleged scams by the Congress government in the State including the irregularities in the allotment of MUDA sites. However, the JD(S) has now withdrawn its support to the foot march questioning the timing in the middle of heavy rains that have been battering the State. Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy has also claimed that he was hurt by the manner in which BJP leaders have treated him, particularly targeting former BJP legislator of Hassan Preetham Gowda. JD(S) leader and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, with BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra, former CM B.S. Yediyurappa, and other leaders from both parties, during coordination meeting

between BJP and JD(S) to chalk out a strategy for the proposed padayatra to Mysuru from Bengaluru, over the alleged MUDA scam, in Bengaluru on July 28, 2024. JD(S) leader and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, with BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra, former CM B.S. Yediyurappa, and other leaders from both parties, during coordination meeting between BJP and JD(S) to chalk out a strategy for the proposed padayatra to Mysuru from Bengaluru, over the alleged MUDA scam, in Bengaluru on July 28, 2024. | Photo Credit: MURALI KUMAR K

How has the government responded?

Even as Congress leaders have been claiming that leaders of BJP and JD(S) too have been beneficiaries of MUDA site allotment, the State Government has announced a one-man judicial commission headed by retired judge of Karnataka High Court P.N. Desai to probe into the alleged irregularities and submit its report in six months. While JD(S) leader and former MUDA Chairman S.R. Mahesh said irregularities in the MUDA can never be brought to light by either the Government inquiry or the judicial probe, Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H D Kumaraswamy said the judicial commission announced by the Government is aimed at only safeguarding Mr. Siddaramaiah's interests.

## GHMC Commissioner Amrapali warns action against malls, multiplexes collecting parking fees

Hyderabad: The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner, Amrapali Kata on Thursday warned of stern action against malls and multiplexes found charging parking fees for vehicles.

The Commissioner in a press release said the issue of collecting parking fee by theatres, malls and multiplexes in violation of rules was brought to their notice. Special teams who carried out checks found that malls were collecting parking fees from customers although rules say that it should be free if customer provides a purchase receipt.

One theater which was registered as a single screen was also found to be playing movies on multiple screens in its premises. Moreover, food sold at these malls

was of poor quality. The GHMC said that notices were issued as per the Commissioner's orders to the malls and multiplexes found to be irregular during the inspections.

Meanwhile, Director of Public Health Ravindra Naik called upon the citizens to work on mosquito control. On Thursday, he participated in awareness sessions at schools in Banjara Hills where an art exhibition was held on the topic and urged the participants to ensure their surroundings are clean, and observe every Friday as a dry day in colonies. Later, he visited the homes of dengue victims to check on their health and the treatment provided to them. Naik also examined the records of daily fever cases and enquired the details from the concerned medical officer at primary health center in NBT Nagar.

# The civil services dream: how Delhi maintains a pull on UPSC aspirants

On July 27, three students died in a flooded basement, which was being used as a library by Rau's IAS Study Circle. Due to heavy rains, the basement of the building got filled with water, and many students who were in the library were trapped inside. This incident led to massive protests and strong public outrage. It drew attention to how building rules and safety measures in Delhi's coaching centres are flouted and ignored. Delhi, being a hub for UPSC coaching institutes, attracts and motivates many aspirants to prepare for the civil services. A study conducted by Lokniti-CSDS among 1,003 UPSC aspirants in Delhi just a week before this mishap indicates that the city's renowned coaching institutes and its competitive environment attracts students from all over the country to fulfil their dreams in the bustling capital. We summarise the reasons for the pull Delhi holds and the sometimes dreamy but often gory implications.

## Why Delhi?

Delhi has a well-established reputation as being the hub for UPSC coaching, and this was the main attraction for close to six of every 10 (58%) surveyed students who came to Delhi for coaching. This is not merely a perception — some of the most prestigious coaching institutes are based in Delhi. These include Chanakya IAS Academy, Rau's IAS Study Circle, and Vajiram and Ravi, to name a few. With their reputation and acclaimed facilities, such as a well-trained and experienced faculty, enriched study materials, and a systematic approach to preparing students, these institutes instil confidence in the students to succeed. Additionally, the competitive atmosphere in Delhi gives students the right ambience to prepare for the examinations with all seriousness. It is motivating to be surrounded by thousands of like-minded, ambitious, and focused people who share similar goals and aspirations. In the study, one seventh (14%) of the students stated that they came to Delhi because they wanted to be in the city's competitive environment for UPSC preparation. However, one in every 10 (11%) came to Delhi for preparation on the recommendation of friends, family, or teachers. Only a few based their choice on the coaching centres (Table 1).

Delhi coaching centres attract students not only from Delhi but also from other States like Uttar Pradesh (24%), Bihar (12%), Haryana (7%), and Rajasthan (7%). States like Madhya Pradesh (6%) and Maharashtra (4%) too account for a small but significant chunk of students (Table 2). Examining the residential backgrounds of these candidates, it was discovered that, in addition to the students from cities (50%), there are also students from small towns (25%) and villages (25%) who come to Delhi to prepare for UPSC. This indicates that civil services and the idea of training in Delhi are widely popular throughout various geographical areas. One of the significant challenges for these aspirants is living away from their families. While one in three surveyed aspirants stay with family (parents or siblings), nearly two in five (22%) live with their friends.

A large proportion of aspirants, close



to a half (45%), live alone (Table 3). This physical isolation often leads to homesickness, with varying degrees of frequency. Three in five (60%) aspirants coming from other States, feel homesick often or sometimes, compared to one in five who never feel homesick. To cope with this, students frequently meet their parents. While one in 10 (12%) meet their parents once a month, others do so less frequently. Three in 10 stated that they meet their parents quarterly, and nearly a similar proportion (27%) meet their parents only twice a year. A notable portion (9%) had not met their parents since coming to Delhi (Table 4). Living alone in an unknown city without the immediate support of family can increase feelings of stress and anxiety. However, the demanding nature of UPSC preparation makes it necessary to give more time to study than to recreational or leisure activities. Staunch dedication A UPSC aspirant's journey is often long and difficult. Students prepare and take exams multiple times due to limited seats and high numbers of applicants. For nearly three in five (58%) aspirants from the study, it is their first attempt, while one in five (20%) students are trying for the second time. The success rates are daunting, with a small percentage clearing the prelims, even fewer the mains, and a minuscule number, the interview (Table 5).

The motivations for opting for civil services are varied among aspirants. Serving the nation is the primary motivation for many aspirants, as stated by 26% of the students. Career stability and security are also important motivations for pursuing civil services, with 17% of the surveyed aspirants motivated by this factor. Other factors, such as personal interest (15%) and the prestige and respect (14%) associated with these jobs, have also motivated the youth towards civil services. Notably, one in 10 (10%) wanted to carry forward their family tradition as their family members were

employed in government jobs. Although a good salary is typically the primary motivation for getting any kind of job, only 7% say they want to get into administrative services due to the good salary (Table 6). Cracking the UPSC exam is seen as a milestone in an aspirant's life as it confers respect in society and improves their standard of living. Past studies by the CSDS- Lokniti have also indicated the strong preference for government jobs (Youth Studies 2016, 2022, 2023). The pursuit of civil services is also significantly influenced by factors such as career stability and security. In India, government employment is renowned for its retirement benefits, attractive perks, and job security. A reliable job is greatly desired in a nation where unemployment and economic instability are pervasive. Delhi is

a popular hub for UPSC preparation because of its prestigious coaching facilities and highly competitive atmosphere. The youth put in a lot of effort to pass the UPSC exam despite the challenges of living away from home and the psychological costs of homesickness. However, the recent incident at Rau's IAS Study Circle highlights how crucial it is to address infrastructure requirements and safety regulations in coaching centres. It emphasises the need for stronger support networks and safer surroundings to guarantee their well-being. Sanjay Kumar is professor and co-director Lokniti-CSDS, Sandeep Shastri is Director-Academics, NITTE Education Trust and the national coordinator of the Lokniti Network and Jyoti Mishra is researcher at Lokniti-CSDS.

## India becomes top market for Meta AI usage: Zuckerberg

New Delhi: Meta Founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg has said that India is now their largest market for artificial intelligence (AI) usage. In the Q2 earnings call with analysts, Zuckerberg said they are seeing particularly promising signs on WhatsApp in terms of retention and engagement, which has coincided with "India becoming our largest market for Meta AI usage". Meta AI now available in Hindi, unveils largest and most capable open-source model. The AI assistant Meta AI is now available in seven new languages including Hindi, and has become more creative and smarter. Besides Hindi and Hindi-romanised script, Meta AI is now available in other languages such as French, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. Users can interact with Meta AI across WhatsApp, Instagram, Messenger,

and Facebook in these new languages. The company said it will soon add more languages. After posting a revenue of \$39.1 billion for Q2, up 22 per cent (year-on-year), Meta CEO said that people can now use Meta AI in over 20 countries and eight languages and in the US, "we are rolling out new features like Imagine Edit, which allows people to edit images they generate with Meta AI". "Beyond Generative AI, the Threads community also continues to grow and deepen their engagement, as we ship new features and enhance our content recommendation systems," he added. Zuckerberg said that Meta AI is on track to become the most used AI assistant by the end of the year. "An important part of our vision is that we're not just creating a single AI, but enabling lots of people to create their own AIs.

# Collapse of coal mining in Britain has lessons for India | Analysis

At the COP26 climate talks in Glasgow, countries around the world, including India, reached a historic decision to phase-down coal power. A less-famous decision they made was to support a just transition away from coal power. In some countries, this transition has already happened, and India could learn important lessons from them since its own future transition could easily turn sour. The coal industry in the U.K. shrunk steadily from the mid-1950s driven by the availability of cheaper energy alternatives like oil and the decline of heavy industries, later helped along by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. In just over a decade starting in the mid-1980s, the British government closed most coal mines and left more than 2 lakh miners — then almost 90% of the industry's workforce — without jobs.

According to a new paper published in the *Journal of Public Economics*, these workers incurred significant losses even many years after they were rendered jobless. Specifically, in the year after a mine was closed, miners' earnings fell by 40% and remained depressed by 20% up to 15 years later. This result was driven by lower wages. The depressive effect on their incomes ballooned to 90% when the authors included miners who couldn't find alternative employment within four years. Essentially, the paper shows that even in a country like the U.K. with geographical mobility, economic opportunity, and government support like severance packages and unemployment benefits, miners and their communities never fully recovered. And so, plans and support for workers in a country like India have to be "more ambitious," Juan Pablo Rud, lead author of the paper, told this reporter. Rud is a professor of economics at the University of London. Such ambitious plans ought to entail, he added, labour market policies like sectoral training programmes, public investment, and income support, which are standard recommendations that have had some success in different contexts. Socio-economic dynamics of coal transition in India

The demand for coal in India will likely peak between 2030 and 2035, according to the Ministry of Coal. And while coal production is increasing today with new mines also opening up, many old mines are also shutting down because of depletion of coal reserves and financial non-viability. Coal India, Ltd. alone has shut down 130 mines since 2009 and around 300 overall. Experts have previously pointed to a need to study what is happening with respect to mines that are already closing down and develop transition frameworks accordingly. "The paper provides valuable insights into the socio-economic consequences of phasing out coal in the U.K. India must prepare to mitigate similar financial impacts for its displaced workers," said Pradip Swarnakar, a professor at IIT-Kanpur and founder and coordinator of the Just Transition Research Centre. He added that the focus ought to be on informal workers and the local community since it is likely that formal workers will be taken care of by the



companies. The U.K. is a more formalised economy than India and most of its workers across sectors, including coal are formal workers. But in India, around 90% of workers across sectors, including coal are employed under informal arrangements and precarity. This makes the socio-economic impact of mine closures particularly severe. Many regions, especially in states like Odisha, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are heavily reliant on coal mining as the primary economic activity. Towns and villages often develop around coal mines, and the livelihoods of many families are tied directly or indirectly to coal mining like in the transport sector or even grocery and other retail stores in mining regions that comprise consumption multipliers of coal mining activities.

And therefore, targeted support like employment schemes for these specific demographics and regions is necessary. The study too underscores a need to understand socio-economic dynamics. It shows that older miners and those from less economically developed regions like Yorkshire, North of England and South Wales faced worse outcomes. On the other hand, workers with transferable skills like managers and technicians fared slightly better. Part of a larger problem however is that conducting such a study in India would be next to impossible. "The government does not collect such micro labour data; it's very difficult to track individuals or households over decades at scale," said Rohit Chandra, assistant professor at IIT-Delhi. The study was based on 50 year data from the U.K. New Earnings Panel Survey. It is one of the world's most comprehensive surveys that collects earnings information from a representative sample of individuals in the U.K. "The richness of the data allows us to construct a longitudi-

nal dataset tracking more than 2,000 displaced coal miners many years before and after job separation," the study notes. But even if such studies are not replicable in India, "its findings are quite obvious. Anyone who has been to coal-bearing areas in India understands that the transition will be catastrophic for local economies," Chandra added. Re-skilling and regional planning is a commonly cited measure to equip workers for the energy transition is re-skilling. It refers to training programmes for coal workers to enable them to find employment in sectors other than coal like manufacturing. But this is far easier said than done, especially in the context of poorer countries. "Re-skilling is always challenging and mostly discussed in the context of high-income countries and technological change," Rud said. In the case of coal miners in India, he explained, a good policy should look to work with local communities, trying to get a good understanding of sectors where the alternative jobs, current and future, may be and what are

the appropriate skills and the constraints to occupational mobility. Planning a transition also goes beyond planning for coal industry workers since entire regions and communities are dependent on coal mining. "Can you imagine Dhanbad or Korba or Asansol without coal? This is the problem," Chandra said, pointing to how nothing else exists in these regions that can provide the kind of employment and state revenue that coal currently does. These areas also do not attract private investment even from small and medium businesses. "Economic diversification for these regions requires planning and a business case post-coal which can attract private investment and lending from financial institutions," Chandra said. He also pointed to opportunities within the existing welfare schemes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee, government pension schemes and the Public Distribution System to support communities in coal regions in a more targeted way.

## Five simple steps to prevent data breaches and staying safe

Hyderabad: Data breaches have become order of the day, with hackers employing different tools to breach the servers, get hold of the data and offer it for monetary considerations on the dark web. In a recent incident, the data from the Ministry of Defense was allegedly compromised and was offered for sale on underground fora for \$3000.

According to a cybersecurity organisation, CyberPeace, the compromised data included sensitive information

like names, phone numbers, personnel codes, passwords, and more. Preliminary probe indicated that the breach occurred due to a vulnerability in the National Informatics Centre (NIC) systems, leading to an SQL security breach, CyberPeace said in a press release on Wednesday. The data breach incident raised serious concerns about the security measures in place to protect critical data and also emphasized the need for enhanced cybersecurity protocols and immediate remediation efforts.