



BUZZ POINTS



Assembly Election Results 2026, Counting Underway Across Five States

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D-Day for Democracy: Counting to Seal Fate of 823 Seats

Amaravati, May 03|TPN Bureau

The stage is fully set for the counting of votes in the recently concluded Assembly elections across four states—Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala—and the Union Territory of Puducherry.

A total of 823 Assembly constituencies went to the polls during this period. While Kerala, Assam, and Puducherry completed voting in a single phase on April 9, Tamil Nadu and the first phase of West Bengal elections were held on April 23, followed by the second phase in Bengal on April 29.

West Bengal witnessed the most dramatic contest, with fierce political rivalry between the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Allegations and counter-allegations dominated the



campaign, culminating in re-polling being ordered in select constituencies, including Falta, Diamond Harbour, and Magrahat Paschim.

As counting approaches, attention is focused on whether Mamata Banerjee can secure another term. In Tamil Nadu, M. K. Stalin is aiming to retain power for the DMK-led alliance, while in Assam and Kerala, incumbents Himanta Biswa Sarma and Pinarayi Vijayan respectively seek continued mandates.

NDA government. Tamil Nadu presents a more complex picture, with projections suggesting a tight race, and some even indicating a surprising rise of actor Vijay's political outfit. In Puducherry, the NDA is expected to retain control.

The elections also highlighted significant developments beyond electoral arithmetic. West Bengal saw heightened tensions, including allegations of EVM tampering and protests outside strongroom centers. Meanwhile, in Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan updated his social media profile ahead of counting, signaling confidence as he eyes a historic third term.

With preparations for counting nearly complete, the nation now awaits the final verdict that will shape the political landscape of these key regions.



No Proof of 'Early Exit': Viral Claims on Mamata Banerjee, Pinarayi Vijayan Misleading

Amaravati, May03|TPN Bureau

Social media is abuzz with viral claims suggesting that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee vacated her official residence and that Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan removed his "Chief Minister" tag and retaining only his party designation. However, such profile updates are not uncommon among political leaders and do not necessarily indicate electoral outcomes or internal assessments.

The Kerala Chief Minister did update his social media bio shortly before counting day, removing the "Chief Minister" tag and retaining only his party designation. However, such profile updates are not uncommon among political leaders and do not necessarily indicate electoral outcomes or internal assessments.

Nellore-Badvel NH Project Gets 3,653 Cr Boost; Mahanadu Shifted Amid Mega Industrial Events in North Andhra

Nellore, May 03 |TPN Bureau

Major infrastructure and development initiatives are gaining momentum in Andhra Pradesh, with the State Government announcing key projects and strategic decisions. State Endowments Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy revealed that administrative approvals and funds amounting to 3,653 crore have been sanctioned for the construction of a four-lane National Highway connecting Badvel and Nellore.



Addressing a press conference at the Vivekananda Conference Hall on Sunday, the Minister stated that the proposed highway will span approximately 108.73 kilometers. The route will begin at Gopavaram in Badvel mandal of Kadapa district and pass

Oil Palm Prices Hit Record High, Boosting Farmer Incomes

Amaravati, May 03 |TPN Bureau

In a major boost to oil palm cultivators, the Andhra Pradesh government has fixed the price of fresh fruit bunches at 23,656 per tonne for April, marking the highest rate ever recorded in the state.



driven by higher profitability and sustained government support. Data from the Department of Horticulture indicate a sharp expansion in cultivation. While 55,645 acres were brought under oil palm in 2024-25, the figure rose to 75,360 acres in 2025-26, the highest in the past decade.



Tension Marks Foundation Stone Laying of Rama Temple in Akividu

Akividu, May03|TPN Bureau

Tension prevailed in Pedapeta village of Akividu in Undi constituency on Sunday as the foundation stone laying ceremony for the reconstruction of a Rama temple was conducted amid tight police security.

Akividu" protest to halt the ceremony.

In response, police deployed heavy security across the area and remained on high alert. BSP leaders and activists attempting to march towards the site were intercepted at the Old Bus Stand Centre, leading to heated arguments and minor scuffles. Police later detained the protesters and shifted them to a local police station to restore order.

Mr. Raju alleged that individuals from other faiths, posing as BSP activists, were behind attempts to obstruct the ceremony. He maintained that official records confirm the existence of a Rama temple at the site and dismissed claims regarding the Gontenamma temple as invalid. Emphasising his commitment, he said he would ensure the reconstruction proceeds, representing what he described as the majority Hindu population.

He further alleged that misinformation was being spread about the issue, including to leaders such as Manda Krishna Madiga, and claimed that the agitation was being orchestrated by vested interests.

Rain-Hit Farmers Get Relief as Govt Allows 25% Moisture Procurement

Amaravati, May 03 |TPN Bureau

In a significant relief measure for farmers affected by untimely rains across Andhra Pradesh, State Minister Kandula Durgesh has issued key directives to safeguard their produce and livelihoods.

Responding to widespread crop damage caused by sudden showers, the Minister directed rice millers to procure paddy even if the moisture content is as high as 25 percent. The move is expected to ease the anxiety of farmers struggling with rain-soaked grain and uncertain market conditions.

During his visit to Kanuru village in Peravali Mandal of the Nidadavolu constituency in East Godavari district, the Minister personally interacted with distressed farmers. He halted his convoy to speak with them as they dried damaged grain along the roadside. Farmers shared their concerns over crop losses and rising moisture levels, which threatened procurement prospects. Assuring full government support, Kandula Durgesh made it clear that procurement



would continue despite moisture issues. He emphasized that "every grain produced by farmers will be purchased," reaffirming the administration's commitment to stand by the farming community during the crisis. Meanwhile, several parts of the state witnessed heavy rainfall on Sunday, accompanied by strong winds, providing temporary relief from intense heat. However, the rains have raised fresh concerns in Ambedkar Konaseema district, where standing

paddy crops in regions such as Mummdivaram, Ambajipeta, Mamidikuru, and Amalapuram are at risk of damage. Farmers in these areas are taking precautionary measures, including heaping harvested grain into mounds and covering them with tarpaulin sheets to prevent further moisture exposure. Despite these efforts, concerns persist as the crop nears harvest stage, making it highly vulnerable to weather fluctuations.

AP Shifts Gear on Population Policy, Offers Free IVF to 50,000 Couples Annually

Amaravati, May 03 |TPN Bureau

In a significant policy shift, the Andhra Pradesh government is moving away from decades-old family planning measures and pivoting towards boosting fertility, amid concerns over a steadily declining birth rate. The new 'Arogya Andhra Population Management Policy,' slated for rollout on August 15, aims to balance demographic trends while enhancing public health and living standards. With the state's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) falling to 1.5—well below the replacement level of 2.1—the government has sounded the alarm over a potential future workforce shortage. To address this, it plans to encourage childbirth through a mix of financial, medical, and social support initiatives. A key highlight of the policy is the provision of free IVF treatment to 50,000 underprivileged couples every year, offering hope to those facing infertility challenges.



In a parallel move to support working women, the government will pilot a 12-month maternity leave scheme for female employees, alongside expanding childcare infrastructure such as creches and hostels. The policy also focuses on changing social perceptions around parenting. Monthly Gram Sabhas, to be held on the fourth Saturday under the theme "Children are Wealth," will aim to promote the idea of family growth, particularly among communities that view child-rearing as a financial strain. Officials estimate that over 53 percent of families currently fall into this category. Looking ahead, the government is preparing for a

demographic shift, with the elderly projected to comprise 19 percent of the population by 2036. Plans are underway to establish modern elder care centres in all districts, alongside skilling 10,000 individuals for jobs in the emerging care economy. To ensure effective implementation, a high-level Screening Committee headed by the Chief Minister and a Task Force led by the Chief Secretary will monitor the programme. The initiative will also leverage the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission to deliver fully digital health services to nearly 5.2 crore people across the state. In a bid to incentivise grassroots governance, the state will introduce 'Arogya Andhra Awards' for top-performing village and ward secretariats. The policy marks a notable transition in Andhra Pradesh's demographic strategy—one that seeks not just to manage population numbers, but to actively shape the state's future workforce and social fabric.

Pawan Kalyan Orders Immediate Rescue of Distressed Telugu Woman in Muscat

Amaravati, May 03 |TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan responded swiftly to a distress call from a Telugu woman working in Muscat, directing officials to ensure her immediate repatriation to India. The woman, identified as Dudekula Shehnaaz from Valmikipuram village in Annamayya district, had recorded an emotional video message pleading for help. In the video, she alleged severe harassment at the hands of her employers, claiming she was physically abused and denied



basic necessities such as food and water. She expressed fear for her life and appealed directly to the Deputy Chief Minister for rescue. Deeply moved by the video, Pawan Kalyan promptly instructed his office to take urgent action. Officials

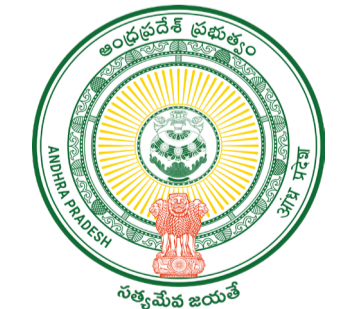
Venue Shift for AP Collectors' Conference on May 7-8

Amaravati, May 03 |TPN Bureau

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has announced a change in venue for the upcoming Collectors' Conference scheduled to be held on May 7 and 8. According to an official memo issued by the Revenue (Budget & General) Department on May 2, the meeting will now take place at the Conference Hall on the first floor of the 5th Block in the A.P. Secretariat at Amaravati.

Earlier, the conference was planned to be conducted at the APCRDA office in Amaravati. However, the government has revised its orders and shifted the venue to the Secretariat for administrative convenience.

All District Collectors, Joint Collectors, Heads of Departments, and senior officials have been directed to take note of the change and make necessary



arrangements accordingly. The Chief Commissioner of Land Administration (CLA) and Special Chief Secretary have also been instructed to ensure smooth coordination for the event.

The two-day conference is expected to focus on key administrative issues, governance priorities, and development initiatives across the state.

Pawan Kalyan Orders Immediate Rescue of Distressed Telugu Woman in Muscat

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immediately contacted the recruiting agent through Shehnaaz's husband and initiated coordination with the Indian Embassy in Muscat as well as the Ministry of External Affairs to expedite her safe return. Sources said the Deputy Chief minister is personally monitoring the situation to en-

sure that Shehnaaz is brought back home at the earliest. Efforts are currently underway to complete the necessary procedures for her repatriation.

The incident has once again highlighted the vulnerabilities faced by migrant workers abroad and the importance of swift governmental intervention in such distress situations.

Nellore-Badvel NH Project Gets 3,653 Cr Boost; Mahanadu Shifted Amid Mega Industrial Events in North Andhra

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through Marripadu, Anantasharam, Kaluvaya, and Chejerla mandals in Atmakur constituency, before extending through Manubolu, Podalakur, and Venkatachalam mandals in Nellore constituency. He confirmed that tenders will be invited soon and construction will commence shortly.

The Minister also highlighted that a National Highway project linking Krishnaapatnam Port to the Mumbai-Kandla corridor has been sanctioned, with land acquisition already completed. This project is expected to significantly benefit regions in Atmakur and Sarvepalli constituencies.

In addition, a proposal has been submitted to upgrade the Nelloreapalem-Somasila road into a State Highway, for which surveys are currently underway. He further noted that efforts are going to complete the Nadikudi-Srikalahasti railway line, a project initiated during the tenure of former Chief Minister Kiran Kumar Reddy with an allocation of 400 crore for land acquisition.

Recalling earlier developments, the Minister said that during former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's tenure,

with Chandrababu Naidu as Chief Minister, major expansions of National Highways were undertaken, including key corridors such as Chennai-Kolkata, Chennai-New Delhi, and the four-lane Chennai-Nellore highway. Meanwhile, significant industrial developments in North Andhra have led to a change in venue for the upcoming Mahanadu. With foundation-laying ceremonies for global industries, including a major Google facility, and the inauguration of Bhogapuram Airport expected to be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Ministers, and other dignitaries, the event has been shifted from Srikakulam to Nellore. The Minister explained that the large-scale participation of national leaders and the concentration of high-profile events in Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, and Srikakulam districts made it difficult to organize Mahanadu there. Due to time constraints, preparations in Nellore have been expedited, with committees being formed at state, district, and mandal levels. Four potential venues have been identified, and the final decision will be made based on committee recommendations.

Oil Palm Prices Hit Record High, Boosting Farmer Incomes

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The growth has been attributed to targeted incentives, extension services, and awareness programmes at the grassroots level. Farmers cite relatively lower water requirements and assured returns as key factors behind the shift. Despite rising input costs, the current price is expected to im-

prove net incomes and encourage further adoption of the crop.

Agriculture experts note that with continued policy support, including subsidies and improved processing infrastructure, Andhra Pradesh has the potential to emerge as a leading hub for oil palm cultivation in the country.

Heatwave Intensifies Across Andhra Pradesh; Rainfall and Lightning Likely in Coastal Areas

Amaravati, May 03|TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA) has stated that contrasting weather conditions are currently prevailing across the state, with severe heat affecting several regions while others are experiencing rainfall accompanied by lightning. APSDMA Managing Director Prakhar Jain said that the highest temperature of the season, 46.2 degrees Celsius, was recorded in Gudur of Nellore district on Sunday, followed closely by 46.1 degrees in Kopperapadu of Prakasam district. He noted that intense heat has impacted 286 mandals across 16 districts, with temperatures exceeding 41 degrees Celsius in many areas, including 33 mandals each in Kadapa and Nellore districts, 31 in Tirupati, 28 in Prakasam, 25 in Palnadu, 21 in Markapuram, 20 each in Nandyal and Chittoor, 18 in Kurnool, and 16 in Bapatla. He further stated that heatwave conditions are expected to affect 27 mandals on Monday (May 4), including areas such as Bobbili and Vangara in Vizianagaram district; several mandals in Parvathipuram Manyam district including Kurupam and Parvathipuram; Chinturu and Kunavaram in the Polavaram region; Velerupadu in Eluru district; Ibrahimpatnam and Kanchikacherla in NTR district; Mangalagiri, Tadepalli, and Thullur in Guntur district; Amaravati and Pedakurapadu

in Palnadu district; and Manubolu and Gudur in Nellore district. On Sunday, several locations recorded extremely high temperatures, including 45.7 degrees in Cumbum of Markapuram district, 45.6 degrees in Bonupalle of Tirupati district, 44.2 degrees in Nadi-gadda of Palnadu district, 44 degrees in Karamchedu of Bapatla district, 43.9 degrees in Thovi of Kurnool district, 43.8 degrees in Thavanampalle of Chittoor district, and 43.4 degrees in Therannapalli of Anantapur district and Veeralabadi of Kadapa district, while 43.1 degrees was recorded in Banaganapalle of Nandyal district and Chilakallu of NTR district. Meanwhile, Prakhar Jain explained that a trough extending from South Chhattisgarh across Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu up to the Comorin region is influencing the current weather conditions. Due to this system, there is a possibility of light to moderate rainfall accompanied by lightning at isolated places in Anakapalli, Kakinada, and Konaseema districts on Monday, while light rainfall with lightning is also likely in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Manyam, Alluri, Polavaram, Visakhapatnam, Chittoor, and Tirupati districts. He advised farmers to remain cautious while undertaking agricultural activities and warned farmers, laborers, and herdsmen not to take shelter under trees during thunderstorms due to the risk of lightning.

Doors Closed to Vijayasai in All Parties, Says Budda Venkanna

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau



Budda Venkanna, national vice-president of the Telugu Desam Party, on Sunday launched a scathing attack on Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and the YSR Congress Party, accusing the previous regime of "ruining" Andhra Pradesh during its five-year tenure.

Addressing the media here, he alleged that public funds were misused and people were deceived under the YSRCP government, which he said was reflected in the party being reduced to just 11 seats in the recent elections. He credited the victory of the ruling alliance to public confidence in Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Minister Nara Lokesh, and thanked them for appointing him as TDP national vice-president.

Venkanna said that Amaratvi is witnessing rapid development under the present government and described it as a "valuable asset" for the entire state. He alleged that YSRCP leaders were unable to accept this progress and were resorting to "venomous rhetoric".

The TDP leader further claimed that investor confidence had returned under Mr Naidu's leadership, while al-

leging that industries such as Kia and Amara Raja had been driven out during Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy's tenure. He dismissed YSRCP's claims that recent investments were based on agreements made during its rule.

In a sharp remark aimed at former MP Vijayasai Reddy, Venkanna said that "doors are closed to him in all political parties" and questioned his political relevance. He challenged Vijayasai Reddy, who has spoken about forming a new party, to win even a single sarpanch seat, vowing to quit politics if he succeeds.

He also warned YSRCP lead-

ers against making "baseless allegations" against Mr Naidu and Amaratvi, stating that the TDP cadre would respond strongly if such criticism continued. While asserting that party leadership had advised restraint, he accused YSRCP figures, including Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy, Jogi Ramesh and Vidadala Rajini, of engaging in motivated attacks.

Venkanna urged the opposition to "change its attitude" and cooperate with the government for the state's development, warning that failure to do so could further erode its electoral prospects.

Government School Students Shine in SSC Exams, Credits Reforms by Nara Lokesh

Addanki, May03|TPN Bureau



Andhra Pradesh Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar on Sunday attributed the record performance of government school students in the Class 10 (SSC) examinations to the reforms introduced by Education Minister Nara Lokesh following the formation of the coalition government.

Addressing a gathering during his visit to the Addanki constituency, the minister said that students from government schools are now achieving outstanding results and competing effectively with their counterparts from private institutions. He noted that while private schools once dominated publicity with student ranks, the government is now showcasing the achievements of public school students. Highlighting the government's focus on strengthening public education, Mr. Ravi Kumar said infrastructure development in government schools is being carried out at a rapid pace across the State.

During the programme, the minister distributed free bicycles to 23 students at Uppalpadu Government School and 32 students at Vemparala Government School. He also inaugurated a memorial cultural

stage constructed with donor support at Vemparala Government School. SSC topper Jhansi Naga Venkata Sai Sri, who secured the highest marks in the constituency, was felicitated on the occasion.

The minister stated that government schools had earlier faced a shortage of teachers, but the situation has improved significantly after the government conducted a Mega DSC recruitment drive, filling over 16,000 teacher posts under the leadership of Mr. Lokesh.

He further said that the government is working towards depoliticising the education system by ensuring that items distributed to students, including shoes, belts, and uniforms, do not carry political symbols

or party colours. Bicycles distributed in the constituency, he added, were provided with donor support and carried no political branding.

As part of his tour, Mr. Ravi Kumar also inaugurated several development works, including a BT road constructed at a cost of 5.10 crore from Shantinagar to Eleswaravari-palem, and CC roads worth 1.15 crore in Uppalpadu, Mailavaram, and Vemparala villages. He said that under the RDSS scheme, new electric poles are being installed across the constituency and reiterated that the government is fulfilling its election promises through the development of rural infrastructure, including roads and drainage systems.

Rayachoti Housing Project Picks Pace; Infra Works Underway

Rayachoti, May 03|TPN Bureau



The Andhra Pradesh government has stepped up efforts to fast-track housing construction for the underprivileged, with senior ministers reviewing progress and interacting with beneficiaries at the NTR Housing Layout in Diguva Abavaram of Rayachoti Rural mandal on Sunday.

State Housing and Information & Public Relations Minister Kolu Parthasarathy, along with Transport, Youth & Sports Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy, conducted an on-ground assessment of the layout, examining land extent, number of plots, sanctioned houses, completed units and the status of ongoing construction. They also reviewed infrastructure facilities including roads, drinking water, street lighting and drainage.

Officials informed the ministers that the layout spans 2.20 acres with 120 plots of 1.50 cents each. In the first phase, 93 houses were sanctioned, with construction initiated in all units. So far, 51 houses have been completed, while the remaining are at various stages — including basement, plinth, roof level and roof casting. Out of the 167.40 lakh sanc-

tioned for layout development, 117.39 lakh has already been utilised. Additionally, 12.29 lakh has been spent on roads and water facilities.

During the interaction, beneficiaries raised concerns related to construction delays, payments and basic amenities. Addressing them, Parthasarathy said the government is committed to ensuring housing for every eligible poor family. He urged beneficiaries to complete construction at the

earliest, warning that delays could impact eligibility for financial assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), which is set to conclude in September 2026.

He also assured that pending bills would be cleared within 10-15 days and asked beneficiaries facing issues to approach officials. Those unwilling to proceed with construction were advised to inform authorities so that the benefit could be extended to



Press Freedom is the Lifeblood of Democracy: Minister Kandula Durgesh

Extends Greetings on World Press Freedom Day Amaravati, May03|TPN Bureau

Marking World Press Freedom Day, Minister for Tourism, Culture, and Cinematography Kandula Durgesh emphasized that press freedom is the very lifeblood of a healthy democracy and described journalists as "social warriors".

In a statement issued on Sunday, the Minister extended his greetings to journalists and the entire press fraternity, acknowledging the media as the "Fourth Pillar" of democracy. He praised the role of journalists in fearlessly bringing societal realities to light and safeguarding citizens' rights, while also acting as a crucial bridge between the government and the public.

Durgesh stated that the Coalition Government is committed to the welfare of journalists and will continue to address the challenges faced by them while respecting their professional independence. Highlighting the importance

of responsible journalism in the digital age, he noted that credibility must take precedence over speed and urged media professionals across print, electronic, and digital platforms to remain vigilant against fake news and uphold ethical values.

He further called upon journalists to promote social awareness and contribute to public understanding of development initiatives undertaken across the state, including major projects such as Amaravati and Polavaram, as well as various welfare schemes.

The Minister also appealed to media organizations to give wide publicity to the state's tourism destinations and the transformative initiatives in the tourism, culture, and cinematography sectors, thereby supporting overall development.

Describing the day as an inspiration for journalists committed to truth despite challenges, Durgesh reiterated that their role in protecting democratic values remains invaluable.

Sindhu Applauds 'Magic Drains' Initiative by Pawan Kalyan

Amaravati, May 03|TPN Bureau

Indian badminton star P. V. Sindhu has praised Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan for launching the innovative 'Magic Drains' initiative aimed at improving sanitation in rural areas. In a video message shared on social media, Sindhu highlighted the persistent challenges faced by villagers due to poor drainage infrastructure. She appreciated the Deputy CM's efforts to address the issue through a practical and sustainable solution.

Sindhu explained that the 'Magic Drainage' system enables filtration of wastewater, allowing it to seep into the

ground and contribute to groundwater recharge. She noted that the initiative helps prevent sewage overflow onto roads and eliminates foul odors, thereby ensuring cleaner and healthier surroundings in villages. Calling the initiative a commendable step, Sindhu offered a "hats off" to Pawan Kalyan for implementing such an innovative program. She also expressed hope that similar forward-thinking initiatives would be expanded across the state. Responding to her message, the Deputy Chief Minister's office thanked Sindhu for her support and for highlighting the importance of sustainable sanitation solutions in Andhra Pradesh.

said the NTR Housing Colony would be developed into a model residential area. He noted that infrastructure such as CC roads, underground drainage and water pipelines has already been created at a cost of 2 crore, with remaining works to be completed within two years.

Addressing water scarcity concerns in the region, he said steps are underway to provide a permanent solution through the Veligallu project. A 450-crore drinking water scheme under the Jal Jeevan Mission is currently in progress to ensure tap water connections to every household by next year. The minister added that beneficiaries are being supported with financial aid of 1.80 lakh, free sand, and convergence with employment guarantee schemes, along with additional subsidies for SC, ST and minority communities.

He assured that all eligible applicants would receive house sites and construction support through the village and ward secretariats, adding that future housing layouts would also be developed in and around Rayachoti. Joint Collector Shiv Narayana Sharma, RDO Srinivas, housing department officials, local representatives and beneficiaries were present.



World-Class Corruption in Amaravati

Nellore, May 03 | TPN Bureau

Nellore District President and former minister Kakani Govardhan Reddy has launched a sharp attack on the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leadership, alleging large-scale irregularities and inflated project costs in the ongoing construction works of Amaravati, the state capital region.

Addressing the media, Kakani Govardhan Reddy alleged that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has turned Amaravati into what he described as a "hub of large-scale corruption" under the guise of constructing key government infrastructure, including the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), Heads of Departments (HoD) buildings, and the State Secretariat.

He claimed that construction costs have escalated abnormally, citing figures of over 20,000 per square foot, which he said is "unprecedented anywhere in the world." According to him, contracts originally awarded between 2017 and 2018 for approximately 2,271 crore for major administrative buildings have now been re-awarded to the same companies at significantly higher valuations, pushing the total to over 4,354 crore. He further alleged that additional tenders worth 2,540 crore have been called for glass facade works, 2,316 crore for internal systems such as plumbing, fire safety, and electrical works, and another 1,057 crore for roads and drainage infrastructure, claiming these

reflect "massive escalation of project costs."

Kakani also alleged that similar infrastructure projects awarded earlier to reputed firms were being re-tendered at inflated rates, leading to what he described as unnecessary financial burden on the state exchequer. He questioned the rationale behind revisiting earlier contracts and increasing project estimates, terming it "policy-driven financial mismanagement."

In a politically charged remark, he accused the TDP of misleading the public with electoral promises while allegedly engaging in financial irregularities once in power. He also used strong political rhetoric, suggesting that the party should be "symbolically associated with corruption practices," a statement likely to intensify political tensions in the state.

He further alleged that major projects such as Polavaram and Amaravati have been misused as "financial sources" by successive governments, while criticizing the ruling dispensation for not adequately addressing farmer and landowner concerns related to Amaravati development.

The TDP leadership is yet to issue an official response to these allegations. However, political observers expect a strong rebuttal in the coming days as the war of words between the ruling coalition and the opposition intensifies over Amaravati development works and financial allocations.



YSRCP Alleges Rising Political Violence, Terms Attack on Cadre 'Barbaric' Rule

Annamayya District, May 03 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party State General Secretary Gadikota Srikanth Reddy has strongly condemned the alleged attack on former Municipal Vice-Chairman Dasharatharam Reddy, claiming that the assault was carried out using lethal weapons by supporters of a minister. Terming the incident "heinous and against democratic values," he said such acts reflect a deteriorating law-and-order situation in the state.

Srikanth Reddy alleged that since the coalition government came to power, there has been a steady increase in attacks targeting YSRCP leaders and activists. He accused the ruling establishment of abandoning governance priorities and instead engaging in what he described as "vindictive politics" against the opposition.

He further remarked that democratic principles were being undermined and alleged that a "Red Book Constitution" was effectively replacing constitutional governance in practice. He demanded immediate identification and arrest of those involved in the attack and called for stringent action

against all perpetrators without exception.

The YSRCP leader also stated that he would bring the incident to the attention of senior state officials, seeking intervention at the highest levels. He alleged that criminal elements involved in illegal activities such as matka betting and ganja trafficking were being emboldened, leading to a rise in violent incidents targeting opposition leaders, activists, marginalized communities, and individuals critical of the government on social media.

Attributing the alleged surge in violence to what he called police inaction, Srikanth Reddy warned that continued failure to maintain law and order would amount to accountability on the part of the police administration. He reiterated that maintaining peace and public safety remains the government's primary responsibility.

Reassuring party cadres, he said YSRCP stands firmly with its leaders and activists. He also cautioned that those responsible for unlawful attacks would face consequences in the future, asserting that strict legal action would be taken when the party returns to power.

Chandrababu Government's Amaravati Decisions Draw Sharp Criticism

Tirupati, May 03 | TPN Bureau

The decisions of the coalition government regarding Amaravati have come under strong criticism from M. Purushottam Reddy, Coordinator of the Rayalaseema Intellectuals Forum, who alleged that the recent Cabinet approvals do not serve the interests of the capital city or the broader public. He argued that the government's approach reflects financial imprudence and a lack of alignment with socio-economic realities across Andhra Pradesh.

Purushottam Reddy pointed out that the Cabinet recently approved three key decisions: large-scale expenditure for the Integrated Secretariat complex, additional land acquisition in Amaravati, and cancellation of previously allotted 50,000 housing plots meant for the poor. According to him, none of these measures directly benefit the people or contribute to balanced development. He specifically questioned the decision to spend 2,540 crore on Secretariat construction and architectural enhancements, along with reports of an additional 4,000 crore being planned under "additional expenditure."

He also raised concerns over conflicting claims regarding construction costs. While official figures suggest lower per-square-foot expenditure, opposition voices have alleged significantly higher costs, claiming irregularities in how project expenses are split across multiple Government Orders. He accused the government of structuring approvals



in a way that obscures the true financial burden on the state exchequer.

The forum coordinator further criticised the diversion of approximately 57,000 crore, which he said could have been used for welfare-oriented land development and infrastructure for housing the poor. He argued that cancelling housing plots previously allotted to underprivileged families undermines social justice and weakens the vision of inclusive urban development in Amaravati.

Highlighting fiscal constraints in other sectors, he noted that farmers in regions like Chittoor district are still awaiting payments from agro-processing companies, while the government cites lack of funds for welfare needs. In contrast, he said, large-scale borrowing and expenditure are being justified for capital construction, raising questions about financial priorities.

Purushottam Reddy also referred to the government's plan to generate revenue through land monetisation in Amaravati, questioning whether sufficient infrastructure investment is being made to ensure long-term wealth creation. He warned that delayed development obligations, including lease payments and loan interest commitments, could further strain the state's finances. Drawing comparisons with historical cities like Agra, he argued that grand infrastructure alone does not ensure inclusive growth. He cautioned that developing a capital city without considering regional balance and the needs of all sections of society could lead to long-term socio-economic imbalance. He urged the government to reconsider its strategy and adopt a more pragmatic and inclusive approach to capital development, warning that ignoring ground realities could impose a heavy burden on the state in the future.



"Single-Member Commission Turned Into a One-Sided Commission"

Tirupati, May 03 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP official spokesperson and former TTD Chairman Bhumana Karunakar Reddy has launched a sharp attack on the Dinesh Kumar single-member commission appointed to probe alleged adulteration in Tirumala laddus, calling it a "biased and politically motivated exercise" designed to defame his party and divert public attention. Speaking to the media in Tirupati, Bhumana alleged that the commission's findings were "pre-scripted" and aligned with the views of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. He further claimed that the report had reached select media houses even before being officially submitted, raising serious questions about the integrity of the process.

He questioned the fairness of the inquiry, alleging that individuals named in media reports were selectively targeted without proper summons or detailed questioning. "How can a report be prepared without even issuing notices to key stakeholders? This is not an investigation but a predetermined narrative," he said.

Bhumana also referred to the earlier CBI-SIT probe ordered under Supreme Court supervision, stating that it had already concluded after an extensive 18-month investigation across multiple states and found no political involvement in the alleged adulteration issue. He accused the present government of disregarding that clean chit and reopening the issue for political mileage.

He alleged that the one-man commission was constituted with a "pre-decided agenda" and questioned the credentials of retired IAS officer Dinesh Kumar, claiming he had previously served in key positions during the tenure of the present Chief Minister. He alleged that the commission's formation was linked to promises of post-retirement benefits and was therefore not independent. Bhumana further raised concerns over what he termed as irregularities in dairy procurement and pricing, pointing to

alleged discrepancies between procurement rates during different governments. He demanded clarity on the relationship between various dairy firms and questioned why certain companies were repeatedly allowed to participate in tenders despite prior allegations.

He also accused the ruling party of using media outlets to build a false narrative, stating that contradictory reports appearing in newspapers were part of a coordinated attempt to malign YSRCP leaders. Challenging the ruling administration, Bhumana said that if they were confident in their allegations, they should proceed with legal action. "We are ready to face any inquiry, but let it be fair and not politically driven," he asserted.

He concluded by alleging that the entire episode was a diversionary tactic aimed at shifting attention from alleged irregularities in dairy procurement and temple administration, reiterating that the truth would eventually come out.

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'Red Book turned into a Blood Book', alleges Vidadala Rajini

Palnadu District, May 03 | TPN Bureau

Former minister and YSR Congress Party leader Vidadala Rajini on Monday launched a sharp attack on the coalition government, alleging that governance in the state has drifted away from the Constitution framed by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and is instead being driven by what she termed the "Red Book Constitution." She further claimed that the situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the so-called "Red Book" has now transformed into a "Blood Book" within two years of the coalition coming to power.

Speaking to media persons after appearing at the Chilakaluripet Police Station in compliance with High Court directions, Rajini said she had attended the station only as per legal instructions in a case registered against her under the SC/ST Atrocities Act. She alleged that the case was part of a larger pattern of "politically motivated harassment" targeting opposition voices.

"The system introduced in the name of the 'Red Book' has now become a 'Blood Book'. False cases are being filed indiscriminately against common citizens, activists, and political leaders," she alleged, adding that law enforcement agencies were being "misused as a tool" to suppress dissent.

Rajini further claimed that incidents of violence, including murders and attempted murders, had increased across

the state. She alleged that more than 70 journalists had been booked in various cases and accused the government of targeting opposition party workers while ignoring crimes against them. Citing the murders of YSRCP members Rashid and Manda Solomon, she questioned the handling of such cases and alleged bias in police investigations, stating that the credibility of the police force had been affected.

She also alleged that her own political activities in Chilakaluripet were being obstructed. Referring to local MLA Prathipati Pulla Rao, she said objections were being raised merely because she was active in the constituency. "Am I not entitled to fight for the people?" she asked, alleging that cases were being filed even against protest programmes she had organised against electricity tariff hikes.

Rajini maintained that attempts to silence her would not deter her political activities. "We will continue our protests until promises made to the people are fulfilled. We are not afraid of false cases or intimidation tactics," she said, warning that actions taken in power could have long-term consequences.

She concluded by invoking the principle of "Satyameva Jayate," asserting that truth would ultimately prevail despite what she described as politically motivated actions against her party.

Democracy Triumphs in Doddigunta Elections, Says MLA Nallamilli Ramakrishna Reddy

Anaparthi, May 03 | TPN Bureau

The election to the Doddigunta Fishermen Society has turned into a significant political talking point in the Anaparthi constituency, with the alliance-backed panel securing a decisive win and claiming that the verdict reflects a clear endorsement of democratic and collective leadership.

Addressing the media after the results, Anaparthi MLA Nallamilli Ramakrishna Reddy stated that the outcome marked a "victory for democracy" and a rejection of what he described as "authoritarian tendencies" associated with the previous YSRCP-backed leadership in the society. He asserted that the electorate had firmly chosen development-oriented leadership over divisive politics, adding that the alliance candidates had achieved victory despite initially starting with a limited support base within the society.

The MLA further alleged that the opposition YSRCP attempted to influence the electoral process, including moving the High Court seeking a re-poll after initial setbacks. However, he claimed that even in the re-conducted polling, the opposition faced a "clear and decisive rejection" from voters, reinforcing the mandate in favour of the alliance panel.

Ramakrishna Reddy also accused YSRCP leaders of resorting to undemocratic practices in the past, including intimidation of voters, and went to the extent of alleging involvement in serious misconduct. He, however, maintained that the recent verdict had exposed such tactics and strengthened

public confidence in the alliance leadership.

"Collective leadership has prevailed over individual dominance," he remarked, adding that governance focused on welfare and development had resonated strongly with fishermen families. He also said that attempts to project caste-based narratives against him had been politically motivated and rejected by the electorate.

The MLA likened the opposition's post-poll reactions to "searching for excuses after defeat," stating that repeated electoral setbacks had led to frustration among YSRCP ranks. He cautioned that any alleged unlawful activities, including reported incidents linked to voter intimidation, would face strict legal scrutiny.

Following the announcement of results, Doddigunta Fishermen Society president Guthula Rambabu expressed gratitude to the alliance leadership and credited coordinated efforts among alliance partners for the victory. He described the result as a "festival of democracy" for the fishing community.

Political observers note that the outcome of the society elections, though local in scale, has amplified political messaging in the region, with both sides projecting the result as indicative of broader public sentiment ahead of future electoral battles.

The verdict is now being seen as a reaffirmation of alliance strength in the constituency, while also setting the stage for heightened political competition in the coming months.



Lives of Clay, Cracking Under Pressure...

The "Poor Man's Refrigerator" Fades into Silence

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau

Under a blazing summer sky, when the heat presses down and even the air feels parched, relief takes different forms in different homes. For some, it comes from the quiet hum of a refrigerator. For many others, it still rests in a simple earthen pot—the "poor man's refrigerator." But today, this humble source of comfort, and the lives behind it, are slowly fading.

In scattered settlements, the Shalivahana community continues its age-old craft of pottery. Their hands, shaped by years of experience, still mold clay into vessels that naturally cool water. Yet, the certainty that once accompanied this work has disappeared. An elderly potter, seated beside rows of unsold pots, recalls a time when summers meant steady income and constant demand. Now, even in peak season, sales are uncertain, and hope is fragile.

The irony is hard to ignore. As temperatures continue to rise, the need for cooling solutions has only grown. However, modern appliances and materials have replaced traditional earthen pots in everyday life. Refrigerators, plastic containers, and steel vessels have taken over, pushing this once-essential craft to the margins. What was once a necessity has

become a fading choice, leaving behind stories of struggle in every unsold pot.

For Shalivahana families, summer was once a season of survival and dignity. Entire households worked together, shaping clay under the scorching sun and firing pots in traditional kilns. The income from these months sustained them through the rest of the year. Today, that lifeline is weakening. During off-seasons, many turn to daily wage labor, while the younger generation seeks opportunities elsewhere, unwilling to inherit a profession that no longer guarantees stability.

Beyond its economic value, the earthen pot holds deep cultural significance. From birth to the final journey of life, clay vessels remain an integral part of human rituals and traditions. They symbolize a timeless bond between humans and the earth. The decline of this craft is not just the loss of a livelihood, but the fading of a cultural legacy.

Now, the Shalivahana community looks to the government for support—seeking basic assistance to sustain their craft and lives. As another day ends, a potter quietly arranges his unsold wares, his silent wheel reflecting an uncertain future. As society embraces modern comforts, the slow disappearance of the "poor man's refrigerator" goes largely unnoticed, leaving behind a legacy that is beginning to crack beyond repair.

Fire Safety Norms Must Be Followed Strictly at Exhibition

Vijayawada, May 03|TPN Bureau

Fire safety measures must be strictly adhered to at ongoing exhibitions across the city, a senior fire official of the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation said on Sunday.

Station Fire Officer Naresh conducted inspections at exhibition venues in Sitara Center, Punnami Ghat, and Bhavanipuram, stressing the need for stringent safety protocols to prevent fire accidents.

During the inspection, Naresh directed organizers to implement preventive measures at every stall and ensure that emergency contact numbers are clearly displayed. He also emphasized the installation of proper signage for emergency exits and instructed that all exit routes be always kept free from obstructions.

Officials cautioned against the use of cooking equipment or open flames within individual stalls. Instead, they recommended setting up a designated common kitchen area equipped with adequate fire safety arrangements.



The fire department also ordered the immediate removal of unsafe and loose electrical wiring at the venues. Organizers were further instructed to conduct regular mock drills for stall personnel to enhance preparedness and ensure swift response in case of emergencies.

Kothapeta Station Fire Officer Srinivas was also present during the inspection.

Unsung Heroes Honoured at Art of Living Celebrations

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau

Celebrating 45 years of the Art of Living and the 70th birthday of its founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, an awards ceremony was held at Fun Time Club in Vijayawada on Sunday, recognising eight individuals for their contributions in social service, sports and community development. The event highlighted grassroots achievers from across Andhra Pradesh, from East Godavari to Prakasam district. Chigurupati Vimala of Sudhikshan

Foundation, international shooter Maddineni Uma Mahesh, Ayika Raju of Eluru for service to AIDS patients, and Dr. Karri Rama Reddy and Arji Balakrishna from Rajahmundry were among those honoured. Satyanarayana Murthy and Nishshankara Ravi Kumar from Guntur, along with Sure Venkateswarlu from Markapuram, were also felicitated.

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Assistant City Planner Mohan Babu Parasaram attended as chief guest and presented the awards. He also inaugurated proposed social

Manipal Hospitals Hosts CME on Integrated Paediatric Care

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau



Manipal Hospitals Vijayawada, in association with the Krishna District Chapter of the Indian Academy of Paediatrics, organised a Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme titled "From Blood to Heart," bringing together paediatricians and specialists to deliberate on integrated child healthcare.

The academic event, held at the hospital auditorium, featured case-based scientific sessions covering haematology, oncology, and paediatric cardiology. Experts discussed key topics including bleeding disorders, childhood anaemia, CAR-T therapy for leukaemia, hematopoietic stem cell transplantation, and interpretation of hemograms. Special emphasis was laid on cardiac emergencies and heart failure management in children, highlighting the need for early diagnosis and timely intervention. Panel discussions and real-life case presentations enabled participants to exchange clinical experiences and ex-

plore practical approaches such as inter-departmental coordination and evidence-based treatment protocols.

Dr. K. Vikram, Senior Consultant in Interventional Paediatric Cardiology, underscored the importance of a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach, noting that many paediatric conditions present with overlapping symptoms.

Hospital Director C.A. Rammanjeyana Reddy said the initiative reflects the institution's commitment to continuous professional development.

The programme witnessed participation from leading experts across specialties, reinforcing the importance of CME in enhancing paediatric healthcare delivery.

Indrakeeladri Temple Sees Heavy Devotee Rush; EO Issues Special Instructions

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau

Indrakeeladri witnessed a heavy influx of devotees on Sunday as pilgrims from various regions arrived in large numbers due to the weekend holiday and the ongoing summer season. All darshan queue lines were crowded from early morning, leading to intense footfall pressure across the temple premises.

In response, Executive Officer Sheena Naik issued special instructions to officials, staff, and volunteers deployed at key locations, including Durga Ghat, Tollgate, Om Turning, the Main Temple, sub-temples, annadanam and prasadam distribution centres, drinking water points, Maha Mandapam, Kanakadurga Nagar, prasadam counters, and queue line management areas. He directed them to remain alert and ensure proper coordination to avoid inconvenience to devotees. Supervisory officials overseeing sanitation, security, and basic amenities had already been briefed on crowd management protocols and op-

erational guidelines.

Special arrangements were made at the ticket scanning point behind the Main Temple to facilitate smooth access for mothers with infants, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities.

To mitigate the impact of the summer heat, the Devasthanam administration strengthened the distribution of drinking water, buttermilk, and biscuit packets through volunteers. Temporary shaded shelters and resting points were arranged near the temple area to provide relief to devotees.

Water kiosks (chalivendralu) were set up at multiple locations on both the hill and foothills to ensure uninterrupted supply of drinking water. Security personnel were also instructed to regulate crowd discipline, particularly regarding mobile phone usage in queue lines. Due to heavy traffic congestion on the national highway, vehicular movement towards the ghat road was restricted, with devotees being transported via temple buses and battery-operated vehicles.

Ayurveda College Sexual Harassment Case: Four Officials Face Action

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh government has taken stern action following allegations of sexual harassment involving female students at the Dr. Nori Ramasastri Government Ayurvedic Medical College in Vijayawada. The Department of Medical and Health has initiated disciplinary measures against four individuals based on preliminary findings and a report submitted by the AP Women's Commission.

Medical Officer and Assistant Professor Dr. D. Mouli Naik, along with Lab Technician K.V. Subrahmanyam, who are facing serious allegations of sexual harassment, have been suspended from service with immediate effect. In addition, College Principal Dr. K. Nirmala Jyothibai and Profes-

sor K. Vijaya Kumari of the PSP Department have been "surrendered" to the government citing negligence in the discharge of their official duties.

In-charge Commissioner of AYUSH Ronanki Gopalakrishna confirmed the action and stated that an internal inquiry is already underway within the institution. He further informed that a letter has been sent to NTR District Collector G. Lakshminsha, requesting the constitution of an independent committee to ensure a transparent and impartial investigation. Officials said the government is treating the matter with utmost seriousness and is committed to ensuring justice for the affected students while maintaining a safe academic environment in the institution.

Jaladhara-Jalaharati Works Gain Momentum

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau

Works under the prestigious 'Jaladhara-Jalaharati' program are progressing rapidly across NTR district, aimed at strengthening water security and enhancing groundwater resources. Out of 197 sanctioned works, 88 have already commenced and are in various stages of execution, while several more are set to begin shortly.

Implemented under a focused 100-day action plan, the initiative is being closely monitored by District Collector Dr. G. Lakshminsha. The program aligns with the State Government's vision to conserve water resources through scientific planning based on ten years of historical data.

Key activities include desilt-



ing of feeder channels and tanks, repair of sluices, and development of water channels. Special emphasis is being placed on constructing recharge pits and percolation tanks to improve rainwater storage and groundwater recharge. Restoration of existing water bodies is also underway to ensure sustainability.

Highlighting the importance of tanks in rural life, officials noted that they play a crucial role in irrigation, livestock

sustenance, and maintaining ecological balance. The district administration is working towards ensuring that all 439 tanks remain filled and functional throughout the year.

Collector Lakshminsha emphasized that public participation is vital for the program's success. He stated that the initiative is being implemented with the involvement of local communities, public representatives, and water user associations. The program also focuses on interlinking water bodies, promoting greenery, and achieving village-level water budgeting targets.

The 'Jaladhara' initiative is expected to create sustainable water resources for future generations, ensuring long-term environmental and agricultural benefits.

Janasena Leader Condemns Hanuman Junction Murder, Seeks Strict Action

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau

Chalamalasetti Ramesh Babu, Janasena Party Coordinator for the Gannavaram constituency, strongly condemned the murder of Vaddi Kranthi Kiran at Hanuman Junction in Bapulapadu Mandal. Addressing the media, he described the incident as brutal and unjust, stating that the victim, also known as Chinni, was an inno-

cent and soft-natured individual. He alleged that the accused, Rammeni Venkata Sivaramakrishna, deliberately waylaid and murdered Kranthi Kiran on April 28 due to longstanding personal and family-related disputes. Ramesh Babu further stated that the accused had a criminal background, with a rowdy sheet opened against him three years ago. He clarified that although the accused

had briefly associated with the Jana Sena Party after the rowdy sheet was removed, he has since been expelled from the party following the incident. The party high command has already initiated steps to revoke his membership. Emphasizing that the accused now has no connection with the party, Ramesh Babu urged the judiciary to ensure strict punishment for the crime.

Police Conduct Cordon and Search Operation in Tirupati

Tirupati, May 03|TPN Bureau

The district police carried out a pre-dawn "cordon and search" operation in STV Nagar and New Indira Nagar under Tirupati East Police Station limits to enhance public safety. A large contingent of personnel inspected houses, rental accommodations, vehicles and individuals. Several two-wheelers without valid documents were seized for ver-

ification, while suspicious persons were detained and their antecedents checked.

Superintendent of Police L. Subbarayudu said the exercise focused on monitoring rowdy-sheeters and drug users, noting that keeping such elements under control would improve the locality's reputation. Police teams used test kits to screen suspects for marijuana consumption. Those testing positive would be counselled and,

if necessary, sent for rehabilitation, he said, warning of strict action for repeat offences. The SP added that efforts were under way to trace the source of narcotics and dismantle supply networks. He urged citizens to share information by dialling 112 or 1972, assuring confidentiality. Personnel from police, 'Eagle' squads, Excise, Revenue and RTA departments participated in the coordinated drive.

Strict Warning to Rowdy-Sheeters

Vijayawada, May03|TPN Bureau

Satyanarayanapuram Circle Inspector Lakshmi Narayana issued a stern warning to rowdy-sheeters, stating that strict action will be taken against those who fail to maintain good conduct. On Sunday, police conducted counselling sessions for rowdy-sheeters at the CI's office, emphasizing the need for discipline and lawful behaviour.

The CI made it clear that any involvement in riots or activities disturbing public peace would invite immediate legal

action. He said the police would keep constant surveillance on individuals with a history of delinquent behaviour and would not tolerate any threat to law and order.

Rowdy-sheeters have been instructed to regularly report and sign at their respective police stations. Prior permission from the Station Officer is mandatory for travel outside jurisdiction. He warned that suspicious movements could lead to detention and 'bind-over' proceedings, urging them to reform and lead responsible lives.

Dubai Water Falls Steals the Show at Vijayawada Trade Fair, Draws Massive Crowds

VIJAYAWADA, May03|TPN Bureau

The Jeevan Sagar Trade Fair at Bobburi Grounds near Punnami Ghat has emerged as a major crowd-puller with its 'Dubai Water Falls' attraction drawing visitors in large numbers. Organisers said the highlight is a 50-foot-high, 200-foot-long artificial waterfall designed to recreate a cascading rock landscape experience, making it the centrepiece of the exhibition.

The fair, which began on May 1 and will continue till June 17, features over 100 commercial stalls from several states, offering jewellery, bangles, footwear and more. A range of amusement rides including water boats, giant wheel, Columbus and Tora Tora have been set up for families and children. Special food



courts serve popular snacks like mirchi bajji, gobi manchurian and chaat.

Organisers P Krishna, Mohan Rao and industrialist Bobburi Bhupal Chowdhary adequate safety measures, including five fire exits and firefighting equipment have been arranged in coordination with authorities. They urged the public to visit the exhibition in large numbers.

NEET Conducted Smoothly in Bapatla District; 96.7% Attendance in Chirala

Chirala, May03|TPN Bureau

The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), a key examination for admission into medical courses across the country, was conducted peacefully in Bapatla district on Sunday, with an impressive attendance rate of 96.7% recorded at centers in Chirala.

Out of 558 registered candidates in the district, 540 students appeared for the examination, reflecting strong participation among medical aspirants. District Collector Dr. V. Vinod Kumar personally inspected the examination centers to ensure smooth conduct and adherence to guidelines.

The test was held at two main centers in Chirala. At the Government Girls Junior College, 321 out of 336 registered candidates attended, while 15 remained absent. The examination was conducted across 14 rooms under strict supervision. At the N.R. & P.M. Municipal High School center, 219 students appeared out of 222 registered candidates, with only three absentees. The exam



at this center was managed across 10 rooms.

Considering the prevailing summer heat, the district administration implemented special arrangements to ensure the comfort of students and their parents. Facilities such as cool drinking water and ORS packets were provided at all centers to handle any emergencies.

Security arrangements were tightened, with police personnel deployed to maintain order and prevent any untoward incidents. During the inspection, officials including RDO Chandrasekhar Naidu, Municipal Commissioner Dale Joseph, Tahsildar Gopi Krishna, and college authorities accompanied the Collector to review security measures and examination procedures.

No Rift Between MP, MLA, Say Leaders; DWACRA Dispute Resolved

Chittoor, May 03|TPN Bureau

Amid reports of a rift between Chittoor MP Daggumalla Prasada Rao and MLA Gurajala Jagan Mohan, the two leaders on Sunday dismissed allegations of a physical altercation, stating that the issue stemmed from a minor financial disagreement within a DWACRA self-help group.

Addressing a joint press conference at the MLA's office here, the leaders said the incident had been "misrepresented" as a clash between them. They clarified that while a verbal dispute had arisen over financial transactions among members of a DWACRA group, it was wrongly projected as a confrontation between the MP and the MLA.

"There are no differences between us. We have been working in close coordination for the development of the constituency over the past two years," they said, attributing the confusion to a lack of clarity in initial reports.

Emphasising their focus on development, the leaders said they were committed to implementing the vision of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Minister N. Lokesh. They noted that several long-pending infrastructure works,



including road expansion projects, were currently under way in the constituency.

Mr. Jagan Mohan said that no officials had been transferred on political grounds and that efforts were being made to work in an inclusive manner. "Our priority is public service without controversy," he added.

The leaders also said that they had held discussions with the women concerned and Resource Persons (RPs) to address the issue, and that the matter had since been resolved amicably.

Calling for unity among party cadre, they urged workers not to be misled by "unfounded rumours". Party women leaders, RP Association representatives and local Telugu Desam Party functionaries were present at the press conference, expressing support for the leadership.

₹4-Crore Development Works Taken Up in Pudivada Village

Nagaram, May 03|TPN Bureau

State Minister for Revenue Anagani Satya Prasad on Sunday said that the government was committed to resolving long-pending land issues and ensuring transparency in revenue services, as part of its broader governance reforms.

Participating in a programme at the Village Secretariat in Pudivada village of Nagaram mandal, the Minister, along with District Collector Dr. V. Vinod Kumar and Joint Collector Bhavana Vashishta, distributed newly printed Paddar Passbooks to farmers following the completion of the land re-survey.

Mr. Satya Prasad said that "Gram Sabhas" had been conducted in every revenue village after the coalition government assumed office to understand land-related grievances at the grassroots level. He noted that petitions covering nearly 2,000 categories of issues had been examined and steps were being taken to resolve them systematically. Highlighting reforms in land administration, he said the re-survey process aimed to eliminate discrepancies in land records and prevent future disputes. Private lands were being removed from the '22-A' prohibitory list, and full ownership rights were being restored to eligible farmers, he



added. The Minister said the newly issued passbooks, embedded with QR codes, would enable farmers to access details of their land, including maps and boundaries, instantly. He added that five key revenue services were now available online at Village Secretariats and that, from July, updates to '1-B' and 'Adangal' records would be carried out automatically upon land registration. Referring to the role of the State leadership, Mr. Satya Prasad said Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu was leveraging technology to ensure a dispute-free land system, while Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan was focusing on rural development. IT Minister Nara Lokesh, he said, was working towards reforms in education and employment generation. Despite financial constraints, the government was implementing welfare schemes effectively, he said, adding that development works worth 4 crore had been undertaken in Pudivada village.

Spiritual Fervour Marks Annamayya Jayanthi; 50,000 Aid for Arts Institution

Rajamundry, May03|TPN Bureau

Annamayya Jayanthi celebrations in the city witnessed a blend of cultural fervour and spiritual commitment, as Kambala Srinivasa Rao, president of Vishwa Hindu Dharma Parirakshana Ramasena and a Bharatiya Janata Party leader, extended financial and moral support to the arts.

Participating as the chief guest at a programme organised by Bhavayami Institutions of Arts at Anam Kalakendram on Sunday, Mr. Srinivasa Rao donated 50,000 towards the development of the institution. The event featured performances by students of the Bhavayami Academy, who presented musical renditions, Kuchipudi, and Bharatanatyam pieces based on 108 Annamayya Keerthanas.

Impressed by the perfor-



mances, Mr. Srinivasa Rao personally congratulated the students and distributed certificates and mementos. Addressing the gathering, he emphasised that art forms play a vital role not only as entertainment but also as instruments for preserving cultural and spiritual values.

State Minister for Tourism and Cinematography Kandula Durgesh, who attended the event, praised Mr. Srinivasa Rao's contributions to spiritu-

al and social causes. He noted that such efforts help in nurturing cultural awareness and strengthening societal values.

The organisers felicitated Mr. Srinivasa Rao and presented him with a portrait of Lord Venkateswara. The programme saw participation from public representatives, members of Ramasena, and parents of the students, reflecting strong community engagement in promoting classical arts and heritage.

Narayana reviews civic works, pitches corporate-style education in Nellore

Nellore, May 03|TPN Bureau

Ponguru Narayana, Andhra Pradesh Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development, on Sunday inspected a range of infrastructure and education projects in Nellore and said efforts were under way to provide "corporate-level" facilities to students from economically weaker sections.

During his tour of the city constituency, the Minister reviewed the modernisation of the Gachu and Ramireddy canals, describing the works as critical for flood mitigation. He also inspected a cement concrete road being laid in Porlukatta at an estimated cost of 1.2 crore.

On the education front, Mr. Narayana visited a government school being upgraded with about 10 crore in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds by a private firm. He later inspected the site of a proposed school on Parameshwari Nagar Waqf Board land,



where facilities such as laboratories, digital classrooms and a swimming pool are planned as part of a project estimated at 20 crore.

Speaking to reporters, the Minister said the initiative draws on the model adopted at VRC institutions and that donors have come forward to support the modernisation of 15 government high schools in the city. He thanked contributors for assisting in improving access to quality education for students from low-income families.

Responding to criticism

from the Opposition, including leaders of the YSR Congress Party, Mr. Narayana said the "Green City" initiative was being funded by private contributions and not from government or municipal resources. He suggested that those seeking details could obtain them through the Right to Information Act.

Waqf Board Chairman Abdul Aziz and Telugu Desam Party leader Roop Kumar Yadav, who were present, supported the initiative. Other local representatives also attended the programme

PGRS Timings Revised; Sessions to Begin at 9:30 AM

Kurnool, May 03|TPN Bureau

Municipal Corporation Commissioner Challa Obulesu has announced a change in the schedule of the weekly Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS) programme, which is held every Monday at the Kurnool Municipal Corporation.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the Commissioner said

that, in view of the summer season, the PGRS sessions will henceforth commence at 9:30 a.m.

The programme will be conducted at the Municipal Corporation meeting hall located in SBI Employees Colony. Officials from all departments will be present to receive and address public grievances.

Citizens may submit complaints in writing on issues

such as infrastructure in residential colonies, roads, drainage, streetlighting and sanitation. The Commissioner stated that all petitions will be forwarded to the concerned departments immediately, with specific timelines fixed for their resolution.

He further added that complainants can track the status of their grievances online through the Meekosam portal

Halt Repression Against Dalits in Akividu, Order Judicial Probe: DSMM Leader

Vijayawada, May 03|TPN Bureau

A protest was staged near Ambedkar Smruti Vanam here on Sunday condemning the alleged illegal demolition of a temple at Pedapeta in Akividu of West Godavari district and the subsequent police action in a Dalit locality. Addressing the gathering, DSMM national leader V. Srinivasa Rao demanded a judicial inquiry into the incident, alleging that the Gonthenamma temple was demolished "illegally" at midnight without following due procedure, including the conduct of a panchanama. He contended that there were constitutional safeguards against interference in disputed places of worship and accused the authorities of violating them.

Mr. Rao further alleged that surveillance cameras had been installed in the Dalit locality and residents were being subjected to checks, including being asked to produce Aadhaar cards while entering or leaving the area. He described the situation as one of "intimidation" and urged the government to immediately halt what he termed as repression. He also called for reconstruction of the demolished temple in consulta-



tion with local residents.

The protestors criticised the alleged presence of members of organisations such as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in the area, claiming they had no local connection but were being allowed to move freely. They questioned the legitimacy of an unregistered temple committee and the permission granted to it.

KVPS State General Secretary Andra Malyadri alleged that the demolition was carried out at the instance of Deputy Speaker Raghuram Krishna Raju, calling the incident "undemocratic" and demand-

ing action against those responsible. He also sought an immediate end to the alleged harassment of Dalits in PedapetaMalapalli and warned of intensified agitation if demands were not met.

Speakers at the protest, including G. Kranthi Kumar of the Dappu Jagruthi Association and Dalit Jagruthi Sangham leader Ganesh Babu, echoed similar concerns and called for accountability.

Leaders of various organisations, including Sathibabu, Ganesh, Murahari, Kanakara, Sudheer, Rani, Satyavathi and Mallika, participated in the protest.

Fierce Factional Clash in Rayachoti

Rayachoti, May03 | TPN Bureau

Tension gripped Rayachoti town in Annamayya district on Sunday after a violent clash erupted between two rival factions over a disputed land issue, leaving three persons severely injured, including a prominent YSR Congress Party (YCP) leader.

According to reports, the confrontation took place at a site currently under court litigation, where leaders from the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) had allegedly been camping for the past two days, claiming efforts to mediate a settlement. The situation escalated when YCP leader and former Municipal Vice-Chairman P. Dasharatharami Reddy arrived at the location.

Eyewitnesses stated that a heated argument quickly turned violent, with rival groups attacking each other using sickles. Dasharatharami Reddy and several of his supporters sustained serious injuries in the assault. His condition is reported to be critical.

In the aftermath of the attack, miscreants allegedly vandalized a Kalyana Mandapam owned by Dasharatharami Reddy, smashing window panes and damaging his vehicle, further intensifying tensions in the area.

The injured were initially shifted to a local hospital. However, as their condition deteriorated, doctors advised immediate transfer to Tirupati for advanced medical care. Dasharatharami Reddy and two others are currently un-



dergoing treatment, with doctors monitoring their condition closely.

Dasharatharami Reddy accused TDP leaders of deliberately interfering in a land dispute despite a High Court stay order and alleged that the attack was carried out by followers of Minister Ramprasad Reddy.

Police rushed to the scene upon receiving information, brought the situation under control, and registered a case. An investigation is currently underway to ascertain the sequence of events and identify those responsible for the violence.

Meanwhile, Rajampet MP Mithun Reddy condemned the incident, terming it a failure of law enforcement. He alleged that despite prior knowledge of TDP leaders camping at the disputed site, the police failed to take preventive action. He warned that continued negligence could lead to serious consequences in the future.

The incident has sparked political tension in the region, with both parties trading allegations over the violent episode.

APSPDCL Introduces Monthly Video Grievance Meets, 'Dial Your CMD' Initiative

Tirupati, May03|TPN Bureau

In a significant step toward improving consumer grievance redressal, Andhra Pradesh Southern Power Distribution Company Limited Chairman and Managing Director Shivshankar Loteti announced the launch of new digital and direct outreach platforms on Sunday.

To better address issues faced by industrial consumers, APSPDCL will conduct a dedicated video conference on the first Wednesday of every month. This initiative will cover key concerns such as power supply interruptions, voltage fluctuations, billing disputes, solar net metering, and open access. Industrial consumers from districts including Tirupati, Nellore, and Chittoor can participate by registering their details—such as HT service number and issue description—via 89777 79471. Registrations will be accepted from seven days prior until 2:00 PM on the Tuesday preceding the meeting. The corporation has discontinued earlier in-person

grievance meetings at circle and corporate offices, shifting entirely to this digital format.

For general consumers, the "Dial Your CMD" programme will be held on Monday, May 4, from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM. Consumers can directly contact the CMD at 89777 16661 to report electricity-related issues. Officials advised callers to keep their service numbers ready to ensure faster resolution.

Additionally, APSPDCL is strengthening district-level response through the "Dial Your SE" programme, scheduled every Monday from 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM. Consumers can reach their respective Superintending Engineers through dedicated helplines, including Tirupati (87126 52679), Chittoor (79931 47979), and Nellore (08612 320427).

CMD Shivshankar Loteti urged consumers across all nine districts to actively utilize these platforms, emphasizing that public participation is key to building a more efficient and responsive power distribution system.

Adequate Water Stock Ensures Summer Supply in Kurnool

Kurnool, May 03|TPN Bureau

With summer intensifying, the Kurnool Municipal Corporation has initiated strict measures to avert any drinking water scarcity, Commissioner Challa Obulesu said on Sunday. He assured that adequate reserves have been secured to meet the city's needs until the end of July.

Mr. Obulesu, along with engineering officials, inspected key facilities including the Sunkesula reservoir, Munagalapadu water treatment plant and the summer storage tank. He directed officials to maintain close coordination with the Water Resources Department to ensure seamless water supply management across the city.

Emphasising uninterrupted purification processes, the Commissioner instructed that any technical issues at treatment plants be addressed immediately. He warned that negligence would not be tolerated and called for strict adherence to operational standards. Officials were also directed to maintain hygienic conditions at all water facilities, with engineering staff mandated to

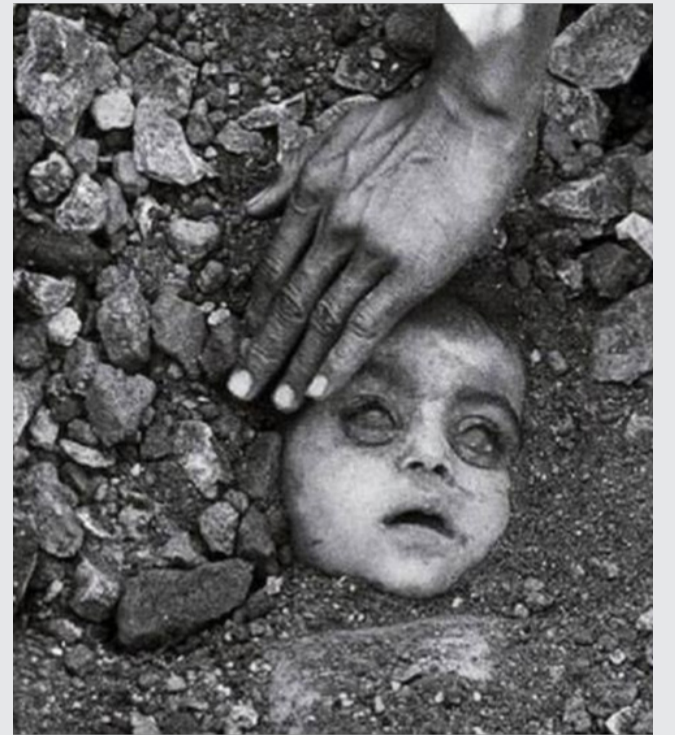
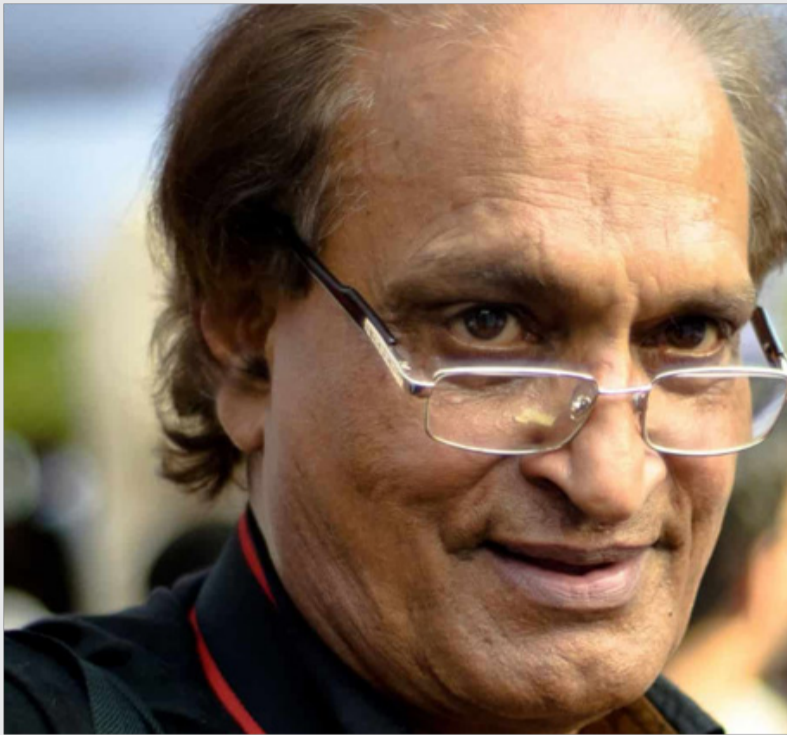


conduct daily inspections.

Detailing the availability of water, Mr. Obulesu said that a total of 3.64 TMC has been secured from multiple sources. The summer storage tank is filled to its full capacity of 0.16 TMC, while the Sunkesula reservoir currently holds 1.2 TMC. In addition, 2.28 TMC has been earmarked from the Gajuladinne project to supplement supply.

Reiterating that the reserves are sufficient for the coming months, he appealed to residents to use water judiciously and avoid waste.

Superintending Engineer Ramanamurthy, Municipal Engineers Manohar Reddy and Giriraj, Assistant Engineer Janardhan and other officials were present.



Torchbearer of Indian Photography – Raghu Rai

Photography is not merely a technical act of capturing images. It is a composite art where light, shadow, emotion, and time converge. What appears on the surface of a photograph may be just a visual, but what lies within it is a story, a feeling, a thought. The artistry of photography resides in the act of seeing. Many may witness the same scene, but only a few possess the vision to reveal it with meaning. When the balance of light and shade, the precision of timing, and the expressive framing come together, a photograph transforms from a mere image into a resonant poem one that speaks more profoundly than a thousand words.

India has been photographed by many, but only a rare few have been able to capture, within a single frame, the inner life of its people and the spirit of its times. Among those few stands Raghu Rai. Through his camera, he did not merely take pictures; he understood India, experienced it, and brought it alive before our eyes. A photograph, without uttering a single word, can express pain, share joy, and question society. That is why

Raghu Rai's images endure like history itself. They are not to be seen merely with the eyes, but felt with the heart. As he himself puts it, "A photograph is not just taken with a camera, it is created with the mind, the eye, and the heart." His images do not simply show scenes they narrate stories and echo human suffering.

Born in 1942 in what is now Pakistan, Raghu Rai's childhood was marked by the trauma of Partition. Those early experiences instilled in him a rare sensitivity. The haunting images carried by the winds of Partition settled deep within the mind of a young boy, teaching him that a human being is not just a smile, but also a wound. When that boy later picked up a camera, it did not remain a mere machine it became a heart.

Photography was not his first chosen profession. It was a path shown by his brother, S. Paul. In the 1960s, his work with The Statesman laid a strong foundation for his career. His photographs drew the attention of the legendary Henri Cartier-Bresson, who, impressed by his vision, invited him in 1977 to join Magnum Photos a rare honour



that marked his global recognition. Cartier-Bresson once remarked, "Raghu Rai does not take photographs; he experiences them."

A photograph is not merely about capturing a moment it is about preserving that moment in the viewer's soul, leaving it emotionally stirred.

This is precisely what Raghu Rai achieved. Beginning his career with The Statesman in the 1960s, he soon earned recognition for his distinctive vision. Later, as Picture Editor at India Today, he steered Indian visual journalism in a new direction. His work has appeared in leading interna-

tional publications such as Time, Life, and National Geographic.

Raghu Rai's camera has borne witness to some of India's most defining historical moments. Among them, the Bhopal Gas Tragedy stands out. On that fateful night in December 1984, a toxic gas

leak turned the air into poison, silently claiming thousands of lives in their sleep. The world saw the tragedy but Raghu Rai understood it. His photographs did not merely depict suffering; they gave suffering a face. One haunting image of a child half-buried in the earth was not just a photograph it was a question posed to the world: How did this happen? Those images were not just news, they shook the conscience of humanity.

To call Raghu Rai merely a photojournalist would be inadequate. His images often resemble poetry deep, evocative, and profoundly moving. His works and photo essays explore themes such as India's spiritual life, the transformation of its cities, environmental concerns, and the dignity of ordinary people. During his tenure at India Today, it is said that he even fought with editors to secure space for visual storytelling such was his commitment to the medium.

Raghu Rai has published several acclaimed photo books. These are not mere collections of images, but visual texts that interpret India itself. Notable among them

are Raghu Rai's India, Indira Gandhi: The Living Legend, Mother Teresa, Bihar: The JP Movement, Delhi, and Khajuraho.

In 1977, he was honored with the Padma Shri by the Government of India, along with numerous national and international accolades.

Raghu Rai is not just a photographer, he is a living vision that has shown India to the world. In today's digital age, when everyone takes photographs, he reminds us of an essential truth: "Seeing is not just looking, it is understanding." And more importantly, "Any work done without emotion remains empty." He said.



VARALA ANAND, Kendra Sahitya Academy Awardee

"The backgrounds of the stories are very personal"

SwathiKumari

The stories from Swathikumari's book 'Arasunna' open the doors of many questions, answers, and a world of hidden emotions, all at once, to finally stand them naked right in front of the readers. Here is a brief conversation with the author about her stories on the occasion of publication of this book in the recent past.

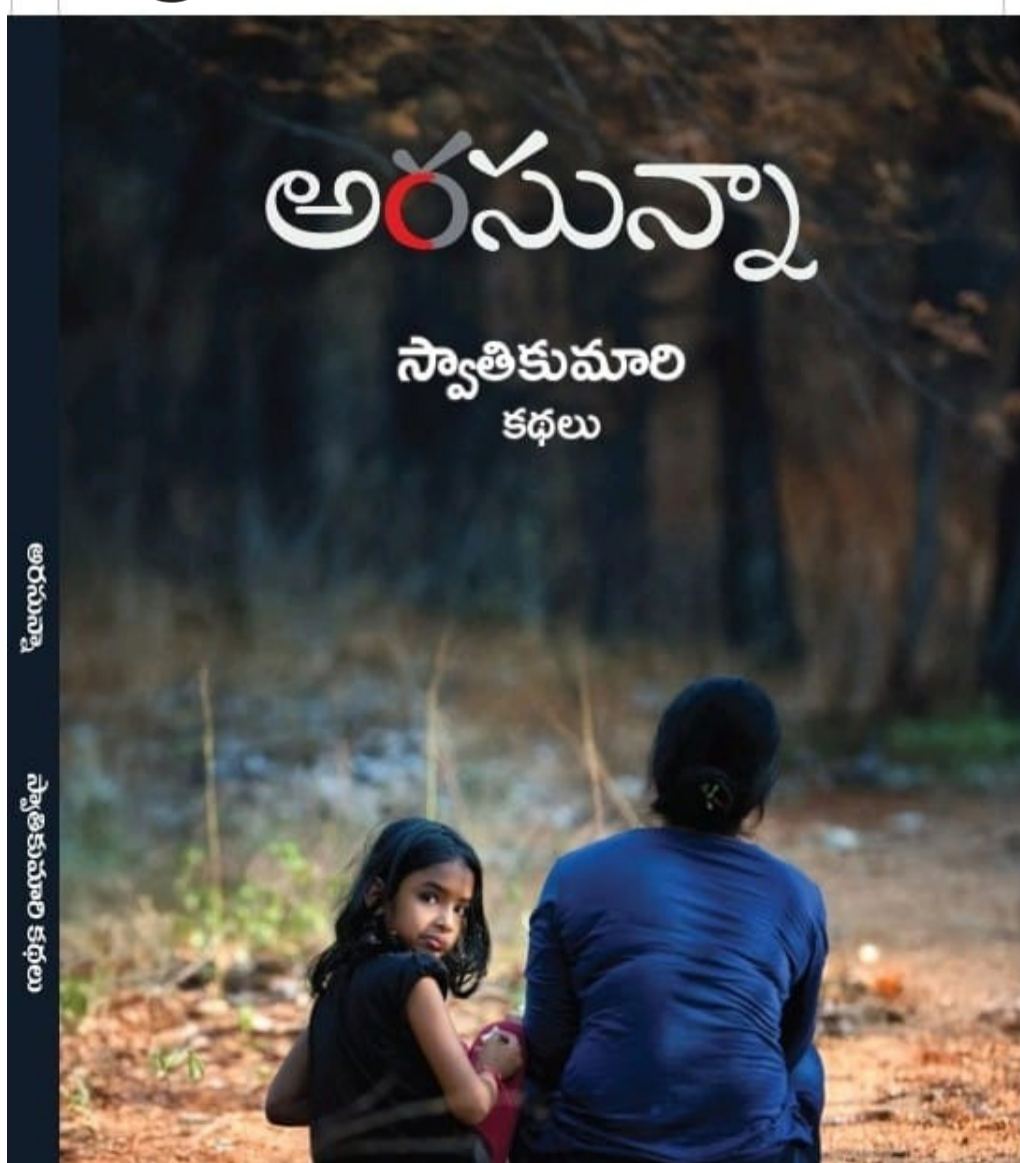
Existentialism (Asthitwavedana) is more evident in your writings. Could you detail about it in your words?

In Sanskrit and Pali, the word 'Vedana' means feeling and sensation. According to Buddhism, all three feelings, i.e. Happiness, Sorrow, and Neutrality are called 'Vedana'. I think you asked about the 'Pain of being alive' in your question. However, in my stories, I have tried to capture the depth of the three states mentioned above. Also I have mentioned sorrow a lot. However, this is not only caused by changes in circumstances and incidents. As we take birth as humans, we imbibe ourselves with certain 'Samskaras' (Impressions) and because we simply have no knowledge about its roots, we end up obtaining solutions that are quite peripheral in nature and get frustrated and finally giving it up but yet try hard repeatedly with unwavering yearning to learn about it. That is what probably seen in my stories.

Your writings are quite engaging for the reader.

But do you ever feel that you couldn't do justice to the subject of the story and the standard form that a story should have?

"There is no rule that a story

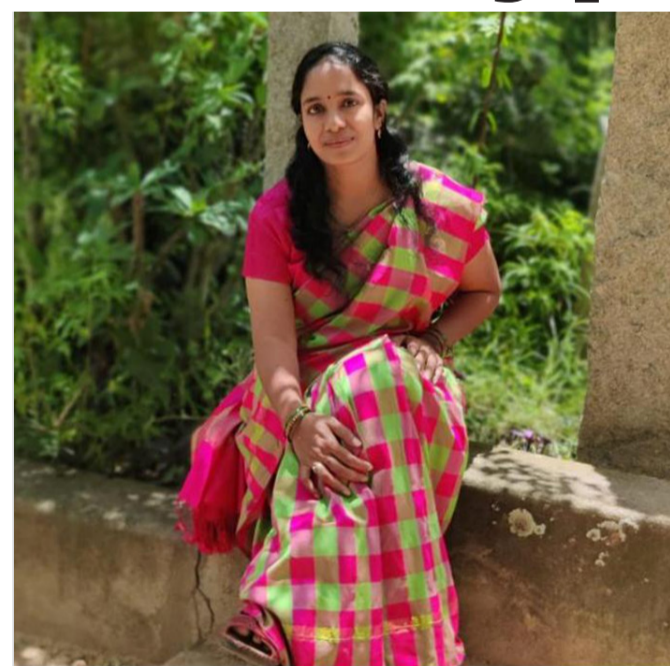


should have a standard form. Literary genres have undergone countless changes throughout history. In any given period, the social conditions of that time, the conflicts that

an individual experiences, and the changes in human relationships all combine together to create writers and those writers develop their own style. One can express the feeling

they want to evoke and the ideas they want to convey only in their own way.

In short, the essence itself chooses the form. What is your favorite



among all your stories? Could you brief its background.

218D is the one that leaves me with great satisfaction wherein the author, without a single word of his own, attempts to depict the scenario in the bus to explain the reader, by detailing the utmost intricacies, the difference among people from different backgrounds. In this story, I tried to convey the place where the story takes place, the introduction of the characters, their different mentalities, the author's moral comments on their behavior, and the depiction of the environment simply through dialogues without directly saying anything. But I don't think the readers like it that much. On the other hand, the story 'Vaangmulam' (Testimony) which I wrote in an instant emotion carried me on

some indefinite day is well received. The story 'Jeevana Sandhya', which is a favorite of many, took four years to complete. It took me that much time to travel with the old man's character which gradually got to be clearer. I think the backgrounds of the stories are very personal. Some come in dreams. Some are told symbolically, and there are times when we write our experiences as they are. Sometimes all of these things get mixed up. You can't point your finger at any one thing and say for sure that this is it.

Does the subject of the stories consist only real incidents happening in the surroundings or are there imaginations too?

Both are inseparable. Without imagination, there is no experience, and without expe-

rience, there is no imagination. The things we desire and that are not or that happens by quirk of fate, whichever case, ultimately all the things come together to constitute whether it is life or literature. In creation, there lies playful amusement. In the real scenario, it may not always be so.

What would you advise the budding writers?

Don't compromise your writing for the approval or appreciation of others. Anukampa (Empathy) is very important for a writer. We should honestly portray the lives and minds of our characters. If we don't know them, we should take time to get to know them closely. For a writer, there is no need to force his/her own beliefs and the values appreciated by society on the characters. If there is enough love for writing, then style, form etc. will be automatically formed on their own. It doesn't demand any special effort either.



Interview by

Yamini Krishna Bandlamudi

Assembly Election Results 2026, Counting Underway Across Five States

Counting of votes for the 2026 Assembly elections is underway across five states — Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Kerala, Assam, and the Union Territory of Puducherry — with early trends beginning to emerge.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has put in place extensive arrangements to ensure smooth counting, including multiple counting centres, tight security, and real-time result updates through official platforms.

These elections are being closely watched as they involve key political players and alliances across different regions. In Tamil Nadu, the ruling DMK is seeking to retain power, while the AIADMK and other parties aim to

make gains.

West Bengal continues to witness a fierce contest, with major parties battling for dominance in one of India's most politically significant states.

In Kerala, the Left Democratic Front (LDF) is looking to hold on to power, while the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the BJP are attempting to improve their performance.

Assam and Puducherry have also seen competitive contests, with regional and national parties vying for control.

The counting process began early in the morning under strict security protocols. Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) are being opened in

phases, with postal ballots counted first, followed by EVM votes.

Officials have ensured that counting centres are monitored closely to prevent any irregularities. Observers have been deployed to oversee the process and maintain transparency.

Initial trends are expected to provide an early indication of the likely outcome, though final results will become clear only after all rounds of counting are completed.

Political parties and candidates are closely tracking developments, with party workers gathering at counting centres and headquarters across the states.

The results are likely to have significant political im-

plications, shaping the balance of power in key states and influencing national political dynamics.

Analysts believe the outcome could impact future electoral strategies, alliances, and policy directions at both state and national levels.

The Election Commission is providing live updates through its official websites and apps, allowing citizens to follow constituency-wise results in real time.

As counting continues, all eyes remain on the evolving trends from across the five states. The results will not only determine state governments but also offer a broader insight into the current political mood of the country.



AAP vs Rebel MPs, Both Camps to Meet President Murmu Amid Escalating Political Row

The political battle between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and its rebel Members of Parliament has intensified, with both sides set to meet President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday to press their respective cases.

According to reports, Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha, along with six other MPs who recently broke away from AAP and aligned with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has been given an appointment with the President at 10:40 am. The meeting marks a significant escalation in the ongoing political confrontation.

The rebel MPs are expected to raise concerns about what they describe as "misuse of state machinery" by the Punjab government. They allege that administrative actions taken against them after their exit from AAP are politically motivated and part of a broader vendetta.

On the other side, the AAP leadership is preparing to present its own case before the President. The party has questioned the legitimacy of the rebels' move to merge with the BJP and is likely to seek action against them.

AAP has maintained that the defection violates constitutional norms and has been exploring legal and procedural routes, including approaching the Rajya Sabha Secretariat for



disqualification of the MPs.

The standoff comes after a major political shift in which seven AAP Rajya Sabha MPs defected and joined the BJP, significantly weakening AAP's presence in the Upper House. The move has triggered a full-blown political crisis, especially in Punjab where AAP is in power.

In response, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has also sought to intervene, planning to approach the President to raise concerns over the defections and their implications.

Tuesday's meetings are expected to turn into a high-stakes showdown, with both camps attempting to gain constitutional and political back-

ing for their positions.

While the rebel MPs aim to defend their actions and counter allegations, AAP will push for strict action, arguing that the defections undermine the mandate given by voters.

The outcome of these meetings may not lead to immediate decisions, but they are likely to shape the next phase of the political and legal battle. With both sides digging in, the confrontation could move into courts and parliamentary procedures in the coming weeks.

Overall, the episode underscores deepening political tensions within AAP and highlights how defections continue to trigger major constitutional and political debates in India.

37 'Bellwether' Seats Key to Decoding Bengal Poll Results Since 1977

As West Bengal awaits the 2026 Assembly election results, attention has turned to a unique set of constituencies known as "bellwether seats" — segments that have historically mirrored the final outcome of elections in the state.

West Bengal has a 294-member Assembly, and a party needs at least 148 seats to form the government. However, political analysts often focus on a smaller group of constituencies that act as reliable indicators of the overall verdict.

Bellwether seats are constituencies whose winning party has consistently matched the party that forms the government. In West Bengal, 37 such seats have accurately reflected election outcomes since 1977, making them crucial for early trend analysis.



These seats are spread across different regions, including urban, semi-urban, and rural areas, offering a broad representation of the state's voting patterns. Experts say tracking these constituencies provides an early clue to the final result. If a party leads in a majority of these seats during counting, it often signals a wider victory across the state.

Over the years, these seats have remained reliable despite major political shifts — from Left Front dominance to Trinamool Congress rule and the rise of new challengers.

Some of the most closely watched seats include Bhabanipur, Nandigram, Kolkata Port, and Diamond Harbour. These constituencies are often seen as politically significant and

tend to reflect broader voter sentiment.

Since 1977, these 37 constituencies have consistently aligned with the party that went on to form the government. This long-standing pattern has made them an important reference point for political observers.

As counting progresses, early trends in these bellwether seats will be closely tracked. While they do not guarantee the final outcome, they have historically served as a strong indicator of the likely winner.

In a closely contested election, these 37 bellwether seats offer valuable insight into the direction of the results. As always, they will play a key role in shaping early predictions and understanding voter sentiment across West Bengal.

Congress Slams Centre Over Great Nicobar Project, Flags Environmental and Tribal Concerns

The Congress has intensified its attack on the Centre over the proposed Great Nicobar Island Development Project, accusing the government of being in "damage control mode" without addressing key concerns related to the mega initiative.

The criticism comes after the government issued a clarification defending the project following recent political attention. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said the Centre's response fails to adequately answer serious questions raised by environmentalists, local communities, and experts.

The opposition has highlighted multiple issues, including the potential ecological impact of the project and its implications for indigenous communities. According to the Congress, the plan could harm the island's fragile ecosystem, which is home to rich biodiversity.

Particular concern has been raised about the proposed



transshipment port at Galathea Bay, an ecologically sensitive area known for coral habitats and as a nesting site for endangered species. The party also questioned the effectiveness of compensatory afforestation measures, arguing that replacing forests elsewhere cannot make up for the loss of unique island ecosystems.

The Congress has also raised doubts over the transparency of the project's approval process. It has called for greater clarity on environmental clearances, data related to tree felling, and the overall planning framework. The party has demanded a wider discussion on the project, suggesting that issues of environmental impact, tribal rights, and national security should be debated in

Parliament.

The Centre, however, has maintained that the Great Nicobar project is a strategic and economic priority. Officials have said the development plan aims to strengthen India's maritime presence and boost infrastructure in the region. The project includes proposals for a transshipment port, airport, township, and power infrastructure. The government has also stated that safeguards are in place to protect the environment and ensure that indigenous communities are not adversely affected. The issue has emerged as a major point of contention between the government and the opposition. While the Centre emphasises the long-term strategic benefits of the project, critics continue to question its environmental and social impact. With both sides standing firm, the Great Nicobar project is likely to remain a key topic of political and public debate in the coming weeks.

MK Stalin, From Marina Beach Beginnings to Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister

Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin, the current Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), remains a central figure in the state's political landscape as the 2026 Assembly elections draw attention.

Born on March 1, 1953, in Chennai (then Madras), Stalin's entry into the world was marked by a unique story. His father, former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, named him "Stalin" at a condolence meeting on Chennai's Marina Beach, inspired by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, who had passed away just days earlier. Stalin comes from one of Tamil Nadu's most influential political families. His father, Karunanidhi, was a towering figure in Dravidian politics, a movement rooted in social justice and regional identity. Growing up in this environment, Stalin was exposed early to political thought shaped by leaders like Periyar E.V. Ramasamy and C.N. Annadurai, who laid the foundation of the Dravidian movement.

Over the years, Stalin rose steadily through the ranks of the DMK, building his political career through grassroots engagement and organisational roles before eventually taking over the party leadership.

Stalin became the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in May 2021, leading the DMK to a decisive electoral victory. Since then, his government has fo-



cused on welfare schemes, economic growth, and infrastructure development, while also positioning himself strongly on issues of federalism and state rights. Under his leadership, Tamil Nadu has pursued policies aimed at social welfare and economic expansion, while maintaining the Dravidian model of governance that emphasises inclusivity and regional pride. In the ongoing 2026 Assembly elections, Stalin is once again contesting from Kolathur, a constituency he has represented for multiple terms. The election is seen as a crucial test of his leadership, with the DMK-led alliance facing strong competition from

rival parties and emerging political forces. The polls have taken on added significance with new entrants and shifting political dynamics, making Stalin's role even more pivotal in shaping the state's future direction. From a symbolic naming on Marina Beach to leading one of India's most politically active states, MK Stalin's journey reflects a blend of legacy and personal political evolution. As Tamil Nadu heads toward a decisive electoral outcome, Stalin remains at the centre of the state's political narrative—balancing tradition, governance, and the challenges of a changing political landscape.

Joram Aniya Becomes First Full-Time NITI Aayog Member from Arunachal Pradesh

In a significant development, Joram Aniya has been appointed as a full-time member of NITI Aayog, becoming the first person from Arunachal Pradesh to hold the position.

The appointment marks an important moment for representation from the Northeast in India's top policy think tank. NITI Aayog plays a key role in shaping the country's economic and developmental policies, making Aniya's inclusion a notable step toward broader regional participation.

Joram Aniya is a senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AG-MUT) cadre. Over the years, he has held several important administrative positions and is known for his experience in governance and public policy.

His appointment is expected to bring valuable insights, par-



ticularly on issues related to the Northeast, including infrastructure development, connectivity, and regional growth. The move is being seen as a boost for the Northeast, a region that has often sought greater representation in national decision-making bodies. Having a full-time member from Arunachal Pradesh is likely to strengthen the re-

gion's voice in policy discussions.

Experts believe that this could help address region-specific challenges more effectively and ensure that development strategies are more inclusive.

As a full-time member, Aniya will be involved in key policy formulation and strategic planning processes. NITI Aay-

og works closely with both the central and state governments to drive reforms, promote sustainable development, and implement national priorities.

His experience in administration is expected to contribute to policymaking across sectors, including governance, infrastructure, and economic planning.

The appointment reflects the Centre's focus on inclusive governance by bringing diverse regional perspectives into national policymaking institutions.

With Joram Aniya's entry, expectations are high that issues concerning the Northeast will receive greater attention at the highest levels of policy planning.

Overall, the development is being viewed as both a symbolic and practical step toward ensuring balanced regional representation in India's decision-making framework.

Trump-Iran Peace Proposal Faces Roadblocks as Hormuz Deadlock Deepens

Efforts to end the ongoing US-Iran conflict remain uncertain, with former US President Donald Trump expressing dissatisfaction over Tehran's latest peace proposal, even as tensions around the Strait of Hormuz continue to disrupt global trade and energy markets.

Iran recently submitted a fresh proposal—reportedly through Pakistan, which is acting as a mediator—aimed at ending hostilities and reopening the strategically crucial Strait of Hormuz. The plan focuses on de-escalation and suggests postponing contentious issues such as Iran's nuclear pro-

gramme for future negotiations.

However, Trump has shown little enthusiasm for the proposal, maintaining that it does not adequately address key US concerns, particularly Iran's nuclear ambitions. Washington has consistently demanded that Tehran halt uranium enrichment and give up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium—conditions Iran has repeatedly rejected.

At the heart of the conflict lies the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global oil shipping route. Since the outbreak of hostilities, Iran has effectively controlled access to the

strait, restricting ship movements and even imposing tolls on vessels. In response, the US imposed its own naval blockade targeting Iranian ports and shipping.

This dual blockade has created a deadlock: Iran refuses to lift restrictions unless the US ends its blockade, while Washington insists on free passage through the strait. The standoff has significantly disrupted oil flows and contributed to rising global crude prices.

Pakistan has emerged as a key intermediary, facilitating communication and negotiations between the two sides. Iranian

officials have routed proposals through Islamabad, while the US has also engaged in indirect talks via the same channel.

Despite these diplomatic efforts, progress has been limited. Differences over nuclear policy, sanctions, and control of the Strait of Hormuz remain major sticking points.

The prolonged standoff has had far-reaching consequences beyond the region. Oil prices have surged sharply since the conflict began, impacting economies worldwide and raising concerns about inflation and energy security.

Additionally, clearing naval mines in the

strait—laid during the conflict—poses a major logistical challenge, even if a ceasefire is eventually reached.

While both sides have exchanged multiple proposals, a lasting agreement appears elusive. Trump has maintained a hardline stance, while Iran continues to resist concessions on its nuclear programme and strategic control over Hormuz.

With geopolitical tensions persisting and key issues unresolved, the fragile ceasefire remains under strain—leaving the world's most critical oil chokepoint at the centre of a high-stakes diplomatic standoff.



China Blocks US Sanctions on Iranian Oil, Casts Shadow Over Trump-Xi Talks

China has moved to block fresh US sanctions targeting Iranian oil refineries, escalating tensions between Washington and Beijing and complicating efforts to stabilise global energy markets ahead of a potential summit between former US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The United States had proposed sanctions aimed at curbing Iran's oil trade by targeting refineries allegedly involved in processing Iranian crude. The move was part of Washington's broader strategy to pressure Tehran amid ongoing geopolitical tensions and disputes over its nuclear programme.

However, China opposed the sanctions, effectively preventing their implementation. Beijing has consistently resisted unilateral US measures, arguing that such actions undermine global trade norms and worsen geopolitical instability.

China's decision is widely seen as driven by its energy security concerns. As one of the world's largest importers of crude oil, China relies heavily on stable and affordable supplies, including shipments from Iran. Blocking sanctions helps ensure continued access to these resources while also reinforcing Beijing's independent foreign policy stance.

The move also highlights the growing divergence between the US and China on key global issues, particularly those involving energy and strategic alliances.

The development is a setback for Washington's efforts



to isolate Iran economically. Sanctions on oil exports and refining networks have been a central pillar of US policy aimed at limiting Tehran's revenue streams.

By opposing the sanctions, China has effectively weakened the impact of US pressure, allowing Iran to maintain a degree of resilience in its oil trade despite ongoing restrictions.

The issue is expected to feature prominently in upcoming discussions between Trump and Xi Jinping, with analysts warning that disagreements over Iran could further strain already delicate relations between the two powers.

Trade tensions, technology disputes, and geopolitical rivalries have already complicated US-China ties, and the latest development adds another layer of friction ahead of any high-level engagement.

The situation also has broad implications for global en-

ergy markets. Continued Chinese purchases of Iranian oil could help stabilise supply levels, even as geopolitical tensions threaten key transit routes such as the Strait of Hormuz.

At the same time, the lack of coordinated international action on sanctions may contribute to market uncertainty, with investors closely watching developments in US-China relations and Middle East geopolitics.

China's move underscores a broader shift in global power dynamics, where major economies are increasingly pursuing independent strategies rather than aligning with US-led initiatives.

As tensions over Iran, trade, and energy continue to evolve, the standoff highlights the challenges of achieving consensus in an increasingly multipolar world—one where economic interests and geopolitical priorities often collide.

US Approves \$8.6 Billion Arms Sales to Middle East Amid Iran War Stalemate

The United States has approved more than \$8.6 billion worth of emergency arms sales to key Middle Eastern allies, as tensions with Iran continue and peace negotiations remain deadlocked.

The decision was cleared by the US State Department under emergency provisions, allowing the administration to bypass the usual congressional approval process. The move is aimed at strengthening regional partners amid ongoing security threats linked to the Iran conflict.

Countries set to receive the military support include Israel, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Kuwait. The arms package features advanced defence systems designed to counter missile and drone attacks, which have become a growing concern in the region.

Among the major components of the deal are Patriot missile interceptors for Qatar, precision-guided weapon systems for multiple allies, and air defence equipment for Kuwait. These systems are intended to enhance the ability of US partners to respond to aerial threats, particularly from Iranian-backed forces.

The development comes at a time when diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict with Iran



have stalled. Despite attempts to negotiate a ceasefire, key disagreements—especially over Iran's nuclear programme—have prevented a breakthrough.

US officials have indicated that the arms sales are necessary to maintain stability and ensure the security of allied nations facing repeated attacks. However, the decision has drawn criticism from some lawmakers, who argue that bypassing Congress undermines oversight on major defence deals.

The situation in the Middle East remains highly volatile,

with tensions centred around strategic areas such as the Strait of Hormuz, a critical route for global oil shipments. Continued instability has already impacted energy markets and raised concerns about supply disruptions.

Analysts say the arms deal reflects Washington's strategy of balancing diplomacy with military preparedness. While negotiations with Iran continue, the US appears determined to reinforce its allies' defence capabilities in case of further escalation.

The move also signals a broader trend of increasing

militarisation in the region, as countries seek to strengthen their security infrastructure amid uncertain geopolitical conditions.

As the conflict remains unresolved, developments in the coming weeks—both on the diplomatic and military fronts—will be crucial in determining whether tensions ease or escalate further.

Overall, the approval of the arms package underscores the fragile state of the situation in the Middle East, where efforts for peace continue alongside preparations for potential conflict.

India-Linked LPG Tanker Makes Rare Strait of Hormuz Crossing Amid US Blockade

In a significant development amid escalating tensions in the Middle East, an India-linked liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker has successfully crossed the Strait of Hormuz—one of the world's most critical oil transit routes—despite an ongoing US naval blockade.

The vessel, identified as "Jag Viraat," is reportedly associated with India's state-run shipping sector. Its passage through the strait is being seen as a rare and notable event at a time when maritime traffic in the region has been severely restricted due to geopolitical conflict.

The Strait of Hormuz has become a flashpoint amid the ongoing standoff between the United States and Iran. With both sides imposing restrictions—Washington through a naval blockade and Tehran controlling access—commercial shipping has been significantly disrupted.

Against this backdrop, the successful transit of the LPG tanker highlights the challenges and risks faced by energy shipments navigating the region. It also underscores the continued importance of the strait, through which a substantial



portion of the world's oil and gas supplies pass.

For India, which relies heavily on imports to meet its energy needs, ensuring the safe passage of fuel shipments is critical. The movement of the tanker signals India's efforts to maintain supply lines despite geopolitical uncertainties.

The development also reflects the delicate balancing act India must perform—managing its energy security while navigating complex international tensions involving major global powers.

The restricted movement of vessels in the Strait of Hormuz has raised concerns about potential supply shortages and rising fuel prices worldwide. Even isolated successful crossings like that of the India-

linked tanker are being closely monitored by markets and policymakers.

Experts warn that prolonged disruption in the region could have far-reaching consequences for global energy stability, particularly for import-dependent nations. While the tanker's safe passage offers a positive signal, the broader situation remains volatile. Continued geopolitical tensions, coupled with military presence in the region, mean that shipping routes through Hormuz are likely to remain unpredictable in the near term.

As the standoff continues, developments in the region will be crucial not just for India but for the global economy, given the strait's pivotal role in international energy trade.

In a significant development amid the ongoing US-Iran conflict, an Iranian supertanker carrying crude oil worth approximately \$220 million has successfully evaded the US naval blockade and reached its destination, raising fresh questions over the effectiveness of the restrictions.

According to ship-tracking data, the vessel—operated by the National Iranian Tanker Company—was transporting over 1.9 million barrels of crude oil when it managed to bypass US enforcement efforts and sail towards the Asia-Pacific region.

The incident comes at a time when the United States has imposed a strict naval blockade targeting Iranian oil exports, aiming to curb Tehran's revenue amid escalating geopolitical tensions. The blockade has significantly reduced shipping traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, a key global oil transit route, with many vessels either intercepted or forced to turn back.

The successful journey of the supertanker is being viewed as a rare breach of the blockade, which US officials have previously described as highly effective. The development suggests that despite tight surveillance and enforcement, some shipments are still managing to slip through.

Reports indicate that several Iranian vessels have attempted to avoid detection by altering



routes or limiting tracking visibility, making it harder for enforcement agencies to monitor their movements. The US blockade, in place since April 2026, has drastically impacted Iran's oil exports, leaving millions of barrels stranded and creating storage challenges within the country. Analysts say the restrictions have cut export volumes sharply, putting pressure on Iran's economy.

At the same time, tensions in the region remain high, with both sides locked in a broader

conflict involving military actions, diplomatic deadlock, and disruptions to global shipping lanes. The ability of even a single tanker to bypass the blockade carries wider implications for global energy markets. It highlights the difficulty of fully controlling maritime trade routes and suggests that supply from Iran may not be entirely halted despite US efforts.

For global markets, such developments introduce uncertainty. While the blockade has tightened supply and support-

ed higher oil prices, occasional successful shipments could ease some pressure and stabilise flows. As the US-Iran standoff continues, the situation in the Strait of Hormuz remains volatile. The latest incident underscores both the risks and the resilience of oil trade in conflict zones.

With enforcement measures tightening and geopolitical tensions unresolved, further attempts by Iran to bypass restrictions are likely—keeping the region and global energy markets on edge.

Kotak MF Restricts Overseas Fund Inflows, Imposes Cap from April 30

Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund has introduced restrictions on fresh investments in four of its overseas schemes, placing a cap on inflows as part of measures to manage international exposure limits. The new rule, which came into effect on April 30, 2026, limits investments to 1 lakh per PAN per month.

The decision impacts new transactions across multiple investment modes, including lump sum investments, switch-ins, and fresh registrations for systematic investment plans (SIPs) and systematic transfer plans (STPs). Investors attempting to invest beyond the prescribed monthly limit will not be able to do so under the revised guidelines.

The four schemes affected

by the restriction are Kotak Global Emerging Market Overseas Equity Omni FoF, Kotak Global Innovation Overseas Equity Omni FoF, Kotak International REIT Overseas Equity Omni FoF, and Kotak Quality Overseas Equity Omni FoF. These funds primarily invest in international markets, offering Indian investors diversification through exposure to global equities and real estate investment trusts.

In some reports, the move has also been described as a temporary suspension or tightening of subscriptions in these international funds, reflecting the fund house's effort to regulate inflows.

Despite the restrictions on fresh investments, existing investors have some relief.

Systematic investment plans and transfer plans registered before the cut-off date will continue without interruption. This ensures that long-term investors are not adversely affected by the change.

The move is widely seen as a response to regulatory ceilings on overseas investments imposed on Indian mutual funds. Asset management companies are required to operate within these limits, and when thresholds are approached, they often introduce caps or temporarily halt subscriptions to remain compliant.

Overseas mutual funds have gained popularity among Indian investors in recent years, driven by the need for portfolio diversifica-

tion and access to global growth opportunities. However, regulatory constraints have led several fund houses to adopt similar measures to control inflows.

Kotak Mutual Fund's latest step reflects a broader trend within the industry, where fund managers are balancing investor demand with regulatory requirements. While the cap may limit large-scale investments, it still allows investors to participate in international markets in a controlled manner.

Overall, the development highlights both the growing interest in global investing and the structural limitations that fund houses must navigate while offering such opportunities.



Hormuz Tensions, Trade Risks and Fed Divide Set Stage for Volatile May

Global financial markets are heading into May on uncertain footing, as a combination of geopolitical tensions, trade concerns and monetary policy divisions create a challenging environment for investors, according to a recent market outlook report.

At the centre of the volatility is the ongoing deadlock in the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global oil transit route. The standoff between the US and Iran remains unresolved, keeping energy markets on edge and pushing crude oil prices higher. Analysts warn that continued disruptions in the region could sustain inflationary pressures and weigh on global growth.

Compounding these concerns are renewed trade tensions, which are adding another layer of uncertainty to the global economic outlook. With protectionist measures resurfacing in key economies, fears of slowing global trade and supply chain disruptions have resurfaced, further dampening investor sentiment.

Another major factor contributing to market instability is the lack of clarity within the US Federal Reserve. Policy-makers appear divided on the future path of interest rates, particularly as inflation remains persistent while growth signals show signs of weakening. This divergence has reduced expectations of near-

term rate cuts, adding to market nervousness.

The combination of these factors has led to a risk-off sentiment across asset classes, with markets showing signs of increased volatility. Experts suggest that the overall risk balance is tilted to the downside, as geopolitical and macro-economic uncertainties continue to dominate the outlook.

In commodities, gold is expected to remain range-bound despite heightened uncertainty, while oil prices are likely to stay elevated due to supply concerns linked to the Hormuz situation. Meanwhile, equity markets may experience choppy movements as investors react to evolving global cues.

Looking ahead, key triggers for the markets include upcoming US economic data, particularly the jobs report, and speeches by Federal Reserve officials, which could provide further clarity on the policy trajectory. Investors will also closely monitor developments in the Middle East and global trade dynamics for directional cues. Overall, the report suggests that May could be a turbulent month for global markets, with multiple risk factors converging at once. Until there is greater clarity on geopolitical tensions and monetary policy direction, investors may need to brace for continued volatility and cautious trading conditions.

India Tightens FDI Rules, Pakistan Investments Face Govt Approval, Sensitive Sectors Barred

India has strengthened its foreign direct investment (FDI) framework by introducing stricter rules for countries sharing land borders, with specific curbs targeting investments from Pakistan. The revised norms, notified by the Ministry of Finance, mandate government approval for such investments and restrict entry into sensitive sectors.

Under the new policy, any investment from Pakistan can only be made through the government approval route, effectively ending the automatic entry option. The rules also extend to all countries sharing land borders with India, requiring prior clearance for investments, including cases involving indirect ownership or beneficial stakes.

The government has also tightened oversight by bringing future ownership changes under scrutiny. This

means that even if an Indian company later sees a change in ownership that links it to entities from these countries, it will still require official approval.

For Pakistan specifically, the restrictions are more stringent. Investments are allowed only in non-sensitive sectors, with areas such as defence, space, and atomic energy completely off-limits. These sectors are considered critical to national security and remain closed to such foreign participation.

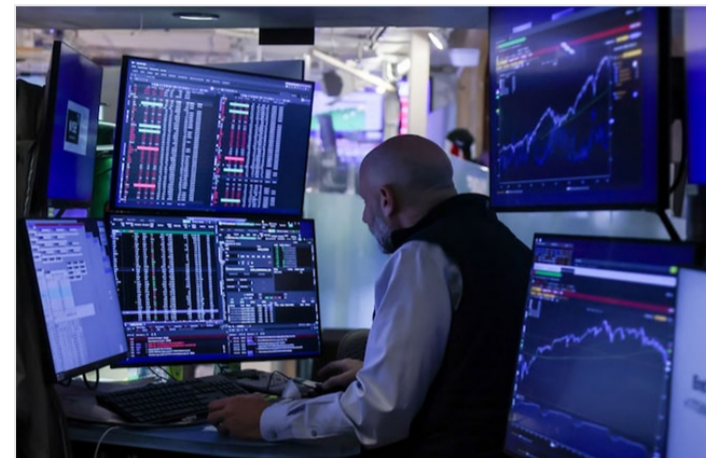
The move is being seen as a significant policy shift aimed at strengthening economic security while maintaining oversight on foreign capital flows. Officials have clarified that the framework ensures that investments from neighbouring countries are carefully vetted, particularly where strategic or security concerns may arise.

At the same time, the gov-

ernment has taken a liberal approach in other areas. Notably, it has allowed 100% foreign investment in the insurance sector under the automatic route, although the cap on foreign investment in Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) remains at 20%.

The updated FDI rules highlight India's dual strategy—tightening controls where national security is a concern while continuing to attract global capital in less sensitive sectors. Analysts suggest that such measures are intended to strike a balance between economic openness and strategic caution.

Overall, the new "FDI firewall" underscores India's intent to maintain stricter scrutiny over investments from neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan, while keeping its broader investment environment open and competitive.



Global Earnings Strength May Support Markets Despite Stagflation Fears

Global equity markets could remain resilient despite growing concerns over stagflation, supported by strong corporate earnings and improving profit outlooks, according to a recent report by JPMorgan.

The report challenges the prevailing bearish sentiment in financial markets, where investors have been increasingly worried about a potential stagflationary environment—characterised by slowing economic growth and rising inflation. It argues that these concerns may be overstated and not fully aligned with underlying economic fundamentals.

A key factor supporting this optimistic outlook is the continued strength in corporate earnings across major economies. The report highlights that aggregate earnings projections for 2026 are still being revised upward, not only in the United States but across multiple global markets. This broad-based improvement suggests that businesses are maintaining profitability despite macro-economic uncertainties.

While the energy sector has been a major contributor to earnings growth—benefiting from elevated crude oil prices—the report notes that gains are not limited to this segment alone. Several other sectors are also witnessing positive earnings revisions, indicating a more widespread recovery in corporate performance.

Oil prices remain a crucial variable in the outlook. JPMorgan stated that even if Brent crude averages around \$100 per barrel, it would still be compatible with further earnings growth. However, a significant escalation in geopolitical tensions could alter this trajectory and lead to downward revisions in earnings expectations.

In Europe, earnings growth projections for 2026 appear relatively strong at around 18 percent. However, the report cautions that this figure is influenced by base effects, particularly in the consumer discretionary sector. A more realistic estimate of around 8 percent still leaves room for potential upside if economic conditions remain stable.

The ongoing first-quarter earnings season is also expected to boost investor confidence. Strong business activity trends during the period are likely to translate into better-than-expected results across several markets. That said, companies may continue to issue cautious guidance due to persistent geopolitical risks and economic uncertainties.

Overall, the report suggests that while stagflation concerns continue to weigh on sentiment, robust earnings momentum could act as a key support for global equities, helping markets navigate near-term volatility.

UAE's OPEC Exit Reshapes Oil Dynamics, Could Tilt Advantage Towards India

The United Arab Emirates' (UAE) decision to exit the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) marks a significant shift in the global oil landscape, potentially transforming how crude markets function and offering strategic benefits for major importers like India.

For decades, OPEC has acted as a powerful cartel, coordinating production among member countries to influence global oil prices. However, the UAE's departure weakens this collective control, raising the possibility of a transition from a tightly managed supply system to a more competitive market environment.

The UAE, one of OPEC's largest producers, has long been constrained by production quotas set by the group. By

exiting, it gains the freedom to increase output and pursue its own market strategy. Analysts believe this move could lead to higher global oil supply over time, particularly once current geopolitical disruptions—such as tensions in the Strait of Hormuz—ease.

The shift signals a broader change in the oil market structure. With OPEC's influence potentially reduced, pricing power may become more dispersed among producers. This could result in increased competition, less coordinated supply cuts, and greater price volatility in the long run.

At the same time, the UAE's ambitions to ramp up production—targeting around 5 million barrels per day in the coming years—highlight its intent to capture a larger share of the

global market.

For India, which imports nearly 80% of its crude oil needs, the development could prove beneficial. Increased supply and competition among producers may help ease oil prices over time, reducing the country's import bill and supporting macroeconomic stability.

The UAE is already among India's top crude suppliers, with its share in India's import basket rising in recent years. A more flexible UAE—free from OPEC quotas—could strengthen bilateral energy ties and offer India more favourable pricing or supply agreements.

Additionally, closer India-UAE cooperation, including mechanisms like rupee-based oil trade, could gain momentum as both countries deepen

economic engagement in the energy sector.

While the immediate impact of the UAE's exit may be limited due to ongoing geopolitical tensions affecting oil flows, the long-term implications are significant. The move challenges OPEC's traditional dominance and introduces a more fragmented and competitive global oil order. For India, this evolving landscape presents both opportunities and risks—lower prices and diversified supply on one hand, but increased volatility on the other. Overall, the UAE's exit from OPEC marks a turning point in global energy politics, signalling a gradual shift from cartel-driven pricing to a more market-driven oil economy—one in which large consumers like India could stand to gain.



Woman Delivers Baby Mid-Air on Flight to Rome

In a rare and dramatic mid-air incident, a woman gave birth to a baby aboard a commercial flight travelling from Dakar, Senegal, to Rome, turning an ordinary journey into an unforgettable event. The incident occurred on an ITA Airways flight, marking a first for the airline.

According to reports, the woman was around seven months pregnant when she boarded the flight. About an hour after takeoff, she unexpectedly went into labour while the aircraft was cruising at high altitude. With no immediate access to hospital facilities, the situation quickly turned urgent, requiring swift action from

those onboard.

The cabin crew responded promptly and professionally, stepping in to assist the woman during childbirth. Fortunately, two passengers—a doctor and a nurse—were also on board and played a crucial role in ensuring a safe delivery. Working together, they managed the situation calmly and successfully delivered the baby mid-air.

Despite the challenging circumstances, both the mother and the newborn baby boy were reported to be in good health following the delivery. The airline later described the event as a “happy and unexpected” moment, highlighting the teamwork

and quick response of everyone involved.

The flight continued its journey to Rome, where medical personnel were ready to provide further care upon landing. The safe outcome brought relief not only to the mother but also to fellow passengers and crew members who witnessed the extraordinary event unfold.

This incident is particularly notable as it marks the first time a baby has been born on board an ITA Airways aircraft. While in-flight births are extremely rare, they are not unheard of. Similar cases have occurred on other airlines, often requiring emergency responses and sparking discussions

about aviation safety and preparedness.

Such occurrences also raise interesting questions about citizenship laws, as a baby’s nationality in these cases can depend on various factors, including the parents’ nationality and the location of the aircraft at the time of birth.

Though unexpected, the successful mid-air birth highlights the importance of preparedness, teamwork, and the presence of trained professionals in critical situations. For everyone on board, the flight became a once-in-a-lifetime experience—welcoming a new life thousands of feet above the ground.



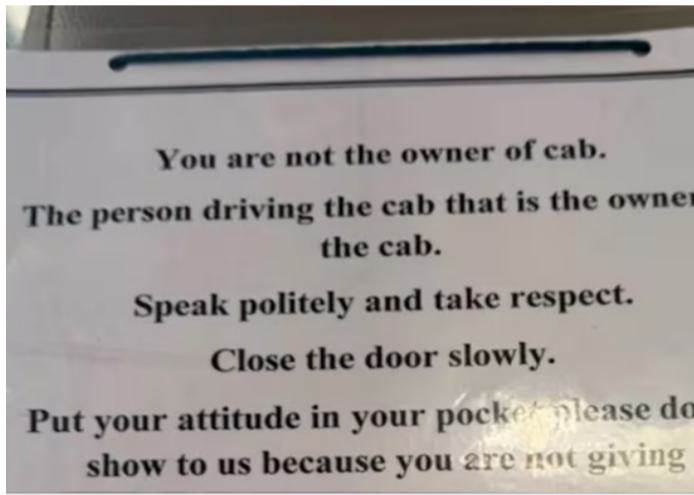
Hyderabad Cab Driver’s ‘Rule Book’ for Passengers Goes Viral, Sparks Online Debate

A Hyderabad cab driver has become the centre of attention on social media after a printed note inside his vehicle, listing a set of rules for passengers, went viral and triggered a wider debate about behaviour and respect in ride services.

The now-popular image, shared on X (formerly Twitter), shows a detailed list of instructions written by the driver, outlining how passengers should conduct themselves during the ride. While some users found the message reasonable and even necessary, others criticised it as overly strict.

At the heart of the note is a strong emphasis on mutual respect and basic etiquette. The driver clearly states that passengers should speak politely and treat both him and the cab with respect. He reminds riders that just because they are paying for the service, it does not give them the right to behave disrespectfully. The message bluntly adds that passengers should “keep their attitude in their pocket,” highlighting the driver’s frustration with rude behaviour.

The note also addresses common issues faced by cab drivers. It instructs passengers not to negotiate fares unnecessarily or act as if they are paying extra. Another striking point is the request not to address the driver as “bhaiya,” indicat-



ing a preference for more respectful or appropriate forms of address.

Safety and comfort are also key themes. The driver advises passengers not to ask him to drive fast, instead encouraging them to manage their time better. He also asks riders to close the car door gently and maintain proper behaviour throughout the journey. One of the more unusual rules that caught the internet’s attention was a warning against romantic behaviour inside the cab. The note clearly states that the vehicle is not a private space, asking passengers to maintain distance and “stay calm,” especially couples.

The viral post has led to

mixed reactions online. While some users supported the driver, arguing that such rules promote basic decency and reflect real challenges faced by drivers, others felt that the tone of the message was too harsh. Some pointed out that as paying customers, passengers also expect a certain level of service and courtesy.

Overall, the incident has sparked a broader conversation about the relationship between drivers and passengers in app-based cab services. It highlights the growing need for mutual understanding, respect, and clearly defined boundaries in everyday interactions, especially in the gig economy.

“Expected Danger, Got Dinner”, Austrian Tourist Praises Indian Railways Experience

An Austrian traveller’s heartfelt experience on Indian Railways has gone viral online, challenging common stereotypes and winning praise from social media users. The tourist, identified as Chiara, shared her journey through India, describing how her expectations of discomfort and danger were replaced by warmth, hospitality, and unexpected kindness.

In a video that has garnered widespread attention, Chiara documented her time travelling in India’s sleeper class trains. Like many first-time foreign visitors, she admitted to initially feeling apprehensive about train travel in the country. However, her concerns quickly faded as she encountered a completely different reality.

One of the most touching moments from her journey occurred when she was invited to sit with a group of Indian women during the train ride. The women welcomed her warmly, shared food with her, and even included her in their activities. In the video, Chiara is seen joining them as they chant the Hanuman Chalisa, reflecting a sense of cultural exchange and connection.

Describing her experience, she summed it up in a striking phrase: she had “expected danger” but instead “got dinner.” The comment resonated widely online, with many viewers appreciating her honest and positive portrayal of Indian



train travel. The video quickly crossed hundreds of thousands of views, sparking discussions about the hospitality often experienced by travellers in India. Chiara also revealed that she had taken around 17 train journeys across different classes during her stay in India and had not faced any negative incidents. Her account stands in contrast to the concerns often raised about safety and overcrowding in Indian trains, offering a more balanced perspective shaped by

personal experience.

Social media users reacted enthusiastically to her post. Many Indians expressed pride in the country’s culture of generosity, while others pointed out that such spontaneous acts of kindness are a common part of everyday life in India. Some commenters also noted how interactions like these help bridge cultural gaps and reshape global perceptions.

The viral story highlights how travel experiences can often defy expectations. While

challenges may exist, moments of human connection—like sharing food or participating in local traditions—can leave a lasting impression.

Ultimately, Chiara’s journey serves as a reminder that beyond infrastructure and logistics, it is the people and their warmth that often define a travel experience. Her story not only celebrates Indian Railways but also underscores the universal power of kindness in bringing strangers together.

“Don’t Overshare at Work”, Amazon Employee’s Viral Advice Sparks Debate

A Hyderabad-based Amazon employee has gone viral on social media after sharing a candid list of “10 things” people should avoid discussing in the workplace. Her advice, drawn from personal experience across different teams and corporate environments, has struck a chord with professionals navigating modern office culture.

In her post, the employee explained that oversharing at work can quietly damage one’s career, often in ways that are not immediately visible. She emphasised that maintaining boundaries is essential in competitive professional settings, where even casual conversations can shape how colleagues perceive you.

At the top of her list was salary information, which she advised keeping private. According to her, discussing pay can lead to unhealthy comparisons and workplace tension. Similarly, she warned against engaging in office gossip, noting

that even seemingly harmless chatter can harm one’s reputation over time.

She also highlighted the risks of sharing negative opinions about colleagues, as such remarks can spread quickly and backfire. Personal matters, including relationship issues, should also be kept out of the workplace, she said, as they can become a source of distraction or unwanted attention.

The employee further advised discretion when it comes to health details, suggesting that such information should only be shared when necessary, particularly if it affects work or requires support. She also recommended avoiding discussions around politics and religion, calling them “hot topics” that rarely lead to productive conversations.

Other key points included avoiding complaints about one’s boss, as venting may feel relieving but can have negative consequences. She also cautioned against sharing job

search updates prematurely, recommending that such information be kept confidential until official. Additionally, she stressed limiting excessive personal information, as it can blur professional boundaries.

Finally, she underscored the importance of protecting confidential company information, reminding professionals that safeguarding such details is crucial for maintaining trust and career stability.

The post has generated widespread discussion online, with many users agreeing that workplace boundaries are essential. While some supported the advice wholeheartedly, others pointed out that sharing certain personal details—when done thoughtfully—can help build trust.

Overall, the viral message highlights a simple but powerful idea: in the workplace, what you choose not to say can be just as important as what you do say.

“India Changed How I See Travel”, Foreigner’s Viral Video Redefines Meaning of Exploration

A foreign traveller’s recent visit to India has sparked widespread discussion online after he shared how the experience completely changed his understanding of travel. The man, identified as Geoff Josey, posted a viral Instagram video reflecting on his journey across the country, offering a perspective that resonated with many viewers.

Josey, who has travelled to 46 countries, revealed that India stood out unlike any other destination he had visited. For him, travel had long been associated with comfort, smooth logistics, and carefully planned experiences. However, his time in India challenged that idea and forced him to rethink what travel truly means.

In the video, he openly acknowledged that travelling in India is not always easy. He described the country as sometimes chaotic and uncomfortable, especially for first-time visitors. Yet, rather than seeing these aspects as drawbacks, he emphasised that they are precisely what make India so memorable. According to him, the unpredictability and intensity of the experience leave a lasting impression that typical tourist destinations often fail to provide.

During his journey, Josey explored several iconic locations across the country, including the Taj Mahal in Agra, the Golden Temple in Amritsar,



Image credit: Instagram/@the_globedigger

Hawa Mahal in Jaipur, the Gateway of India in Mumbai, and India Gate in New Delhi. These visits, combined with his everyday interactions, helped shape his evolving perspective on travel.

Summing up his experience, he said that India “forces you to slow down, adapt, and see the world differently.” This shift, he explained, made him realise that travel is not just about comfort or convenience, but about stepping out of one’s

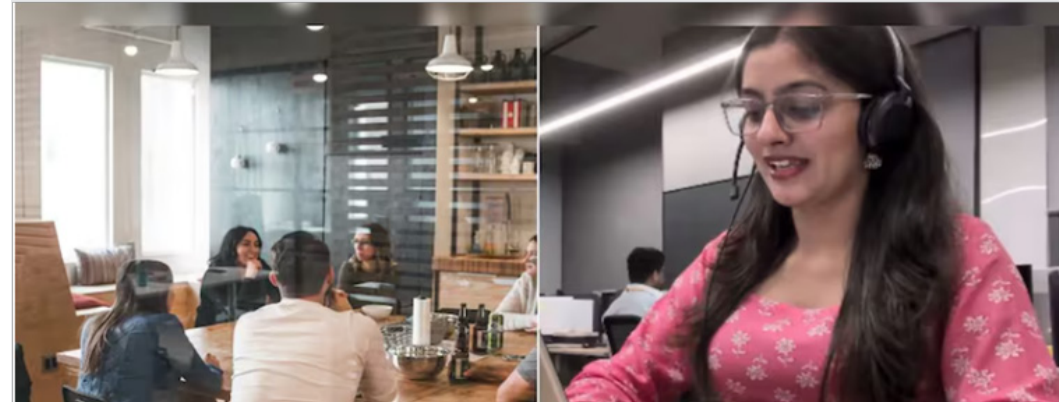
comfort zone and embracing new realities.

The video quickly gained traction on social media, amassing thousands of views and likes. Many users related to his sentiments, sharing their own stories of travelling in India. Some described their journeys as challenging but deeply rewarding, while others highlighted the country’s unique blend of culture, history, and human connection.

The viral post has sparked a

broader conversation about the true purpose of travel. While modern tourism often focuses on luxury and ease, Josey’s experience suggests that the most meaningful journeys are those that challenge perceptions and create lasting memories.

Ultimately, his story highlights a powerful idea: travel is not always about comfort—it is about transformation. And for this traveller, India proved to be a place that redefined that journey entirely.



Riyan Parag in Trouble, BCCI Set to Fine Star Cricketer Over Vaping Controversy

Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag has landed in controversy after being found guilty of breaching the IPL Code of Conduct following a vaping incident. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is now set to impose a heavy fine on the young cricketer, bringing unwanted attention during an already intense IPL 2026 season. The issue stems from visuals that surfaced online, showing Parag allegedly vaping in public. The incident quickly went viral, drawing criticism from fans and cricket observers. Given the high

standards expected from professional athletes, especially those in leadership roles, the act was viewed as inappropriate and against the spirit of the game. After reviewing the matter, the BCCI reportedly concluded that Parag's actions amounted to "bringing the game into disrepute," a serious charge under the IPL's disciplinary framework. While vaping itself is not illegal, the concern lies in the image it projects, particularly for a prominent player representing a major franchise. As a result, Parag is expected to face a significant financial

penalty, though there has been no confirmation of further disciplinary action such as suspension. The board appears to be treating the matter as a breach of conduct rather than a criminal violation, focusing on maintaining the league's reputation. This controversy comes at a time when Parag has been enjoying a strong run in the IPL, both as a player and a leader. His performances this season have been notable, and he has played a key role for Rajasthan Royals. However, the incident threatens to overshadow his on-field

contributions. The situation also highlights the growing scrutiny athletes face in the age of social media. Even off-field behavior can quickly become public and impact a player's image. For young stars like Parag, who are seen as role models, such incidents can carry wider implications. Fans have reacted with mixed opinions. While some have criticized the player for poor judgment, others believe the punishment should not be too harsh, arguing that it was a personal choice rather than a serious offense. Neverthe-

less, most agree that professional cricketers must be mindful of their public conduct. The BCCI's firm stance sends a clear message about discipline and accountability in the IPL. Maintaining the league's image is a top priority, and any behavior perceived as damaging to that image is likely to be dealt with strictly. For Riyan Parag, the focus will now shift to how he responds to the controversy. With the tournament still ongoing, he has an opportunity to move past the incident and let his performances on the field do the talking.



“Unprofessional” Remark on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Sparks Debate, RCB Star Clarifies

A controversy erupted during IPL 2026 after Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) wicketkeeper-batter Jitesh Sharma described Rajasthan Royals' young sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi as "unprofessional," triggering widespread debate among fans and cricket followers.

The remark quickly went viral, drawing mixed reactions across social media, especially given Sooryavanshi's rising stature as one of the most exciting young talents in the tournament.

Jitesh Sharma, however, later addressed the controversy and clarified his statement, insisting that his comment was taken out of context. While he did not retract his words, he explained that the term "unprofessional" was not meant as harsh criticism but rather referred to certain habits or behaviour that reflected the youngster's age and inexperience.

The clarification suggested that Sharma's remark was more light-hearted and observational than accusatory. He indicated that Sooryavanshi, being one of the youngest players in the league, still carries a sense of innocence and spontaneity that may come across differently in a high-pressure professional environment.

Despite the explanation, the incident has reignited conversations about how senior players publicly comment on



younger cricketers. Many fans defended Sooryavanshi, pointing out his exceptional performances in IPL 2026, where he has already made a significant impact with his aggressive batting and match-winning contributions.

At the same time, some observers backed Sharma, arguing that constructive criticism—even when phrased bluntly—is part of professional sport and can help young players grow and mature.

The episode also highlights the intense scrutiny surrounding emerging talents like Sooryavanshi. At just a teenage age, he has not only impressed with his skills but also found himself at the centre of

multiple discussions—ranging from on-field performances to off-field perceptions.

As the IPL season progresses, both players are expected to move past the controversy and focus on their performances. However, the incident serves as a reminder of how quickly remarks can escalate in the age of social media, and how context often plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion.

Overall, while the "unprofessional" comment sparked controversy, the subsequent clarification has helped tone down the issue—turning it into a broader conversation about expectations, maturity, and communication in modern-day cricket.

Mumbai Indians Criticised as Hardik Pandya Faces ‘Lack of Support’ in IPL 2026

Mumbai Indians' disappointing IPL 2026 campaign has come under sharp scrutiny, with former cricketers and experts raising concerns about the apparent lack of support for captain Hardik Pandya within the team.

The criticism follows yet another defeat for the five-time champions, marking their seventh loss of the season, which has pushed them towards the bottom of the points table and closer to elimination.

Former India cricketer Manoj Tiwary openly questioned the team environment, stating that Pandya is not receiving the backing he needs from teammates. "It feels like no one is standing with Hardik," Tiwary remarked, highlighting what he sees as a major issue in the squad's current struggles.

Pandya, who took over the captaincy from Rohit Sharma, has been under constant pressure throughout the season due to poor results and inconsistent performances. Mumbai Indians have struggled to find rhythm, with both their batting and bowling units failing to deliver consistently.

Despite the criticism, Pandya has often chosen to shield his teammates publicly, taking responsibility for defeats and avoiding direct blame on individual players. This leadership approach has drawn mixed re-



actions, with some praising his accountability while others believe stronger internal support is needed.

Experts have also pointed to dressing room dynamics as a possible concern. With several senior players and high-profile names in the squad, maintaining unity during a losing streak has proven difficult. Some observers believe the lack of visible backing for Pandya reflects deeper issues with-

in the team setup. Mumbai Indians' struggles are evident in their standings, with only a handful of wins in multiple matches, leaving their playoff hopes hanging by a thread.

As the tournament progresses, the team faces increasing pressure to turn things around quickly. However, with momentum against them and internal concerns surfacing, the challenge appears steep.

The ongoing criticism underscores a broader point: in high-pressure tournaments like the IPL, leadership alone is not enough—collective support and team cohesion are equally crucial.

For now, Hardik Pandya remains at the centre of attention, not just for his captaincy, but for the questions being raised about whether his team is truly standing behind him.

MI's Real Problem Is Team Failure, Not Individuals, Jayawardene on Bumrah, Surya, Tilak Struggles

Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene has addressed the poor form of key players like Jasprit Bumrah, Suryakumar Yadav, and Tilak Varma, stating that the team's struggles in IPL 2026 are due to collective issues rather than individual failures.

Mumbai Indians, despite boasting a star-studded lineup, have endured a disappointing campaign and currently find themselves near the bottom of the points table. The team's latest defeat further intensified scrutiny on its underperforming core players. Jayawardene pointed out that bowling has been one of the biggest concerns, but he rejected the idea of blaming Bumrah alone. Instead, he emphasised that the team has failed to take wickets consistently as a unit, which has hurt their ability to control matches. Bumrah, widely regarded as one of the world's top pacers, has managed only a handful of wickets this season, while Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma have also struggled with the bat. Suryakumar has scored at a modest average, and Tilak's contributions have been inconsistent, reflecting the broader issues within the side. The coach highlighted that lack of consistency across departments has been the primary reason behind the team's slump. According to him, Mumbai Indians have per-



formed well only in patches but failed to maintain momentum throughout matches.

Backing his players, Jayawardene stressed that even top performers go through lean phases. He described Bumrah and Suryakumar as "match winners" who are simply going through a difficult period, adding that such phases are part of the game and players need time to regain rhythm.

He also noted that external pressure should not be a major concern, insisting that the focus should instead be on improving team performance and

execution in key moments.

Despite the setbacks, Jayawardene maintained a positive outlook, urging patience and confidence in the squad's ability to bounce back. However, with the season nearing its final stages and playoff hopes fading, Mumbai Indians face an uphill task to turn things around. The situation underlines a key takeaway from the coach's remarks: Mumbai's struggles are not about one or two players failing, but about the team's inability to deliver collectively when it matters most.

Mittal Family, Adar Poonawalla Acquire Rajasthan Royals in \$1.65 Billion Deal

In a landmark development in the world of franchise cricket, the Rajasthan Royals have been acquired by a consortium led by the Mittal family and Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla in a deal valued at approximately \$1.65 billion. The acquisition marks one of the biggest ownership changes in Indian Premier League (IPL) history.

The deal signals growing investor interest in the IPL, which continues to attract high-profile business leaders and global capital due to its massive popularity and commercial potential. With this transaction, Rajasthan Royals joins the list of franchises backed by some of the most influential names in business.

The Mittal family, known for its global presence in the steel industry, has partnered with Adar Poonawalla, one of India's most prominent entrepreneurs, to take control of the franchise. The consortium is expected to bring both financial strength and strategic vision to the team.

Rajasthan Royals, one of the founding franchises of the IPL and the winner of the inaugural 2008 season, has seen fluctuating fortunes over the years. Despite having a reputation for nurturing young talent and



playing an exciting brand of cricket, the team has struggled with consistency in recent seasons.

The new ownership is likely to usher in changes aimed at strengthening the franchise both on and off the field. Industry experts believe that such a high-value deal reflects the IPL's evolution into a global sporting powerhouse, with franchise valuations rising significantly over the past decade.

While details regarding management changes and

long-term plans are yet to be fully disclosed, the acquisition is expected to enhance the team's competitiveness and brand value. Increased investment could translate into better infrastructure, player development programmes, and stronger support systems.

The deal also highlights the IPL's position as one of the most lucrative cricket leagues in the world, with franchises now valued at billions of dollars. The involvement of top-tier industrialists underscores the league's ability to blend

sport, entertainment, and business at a global scale.

For Rajasthan Royals fans, the ownership change brings renewed hope for a more successful future. With fresh backing and leadership, the franchise may look to rebuild and re-establish itself as a strong contender in upcoming seasons. Overall, the acquisition represents a significant moment for both the IPL and Indian sports business, reinforcing the league's growing stature and long-term investment appeal.

Latest Buzz on Ram Charan's Project with Naga Vamsi Remains Uncertain

Speculation continues around Ram Charan's upcoming collaboration with producer Naga Vamsi, but the project is still in its early stages with key details yet to be finalised.

According to recent reports, Naga Vamsi had earlier confirmed that Ram Charan would take up a quick project under Sithara Entertainments after completing his much-anticipated film Peddi. However, despite this confirmation, the story and director for the project have not been locked yet, keeping fans waiting for clarity.

Interestingly, even though the creative aspects are undecided, reports suggest that Ram Charan has already allotted dates for this film, indicating that the project is still very much on track and part of his



busy lineup.

At the same time, the actor's schedule is packed with other major commitments. His film Peddi is set to release in June 2026, generating significant buzz among fans. Following that, his next big venture with director Sukumar, tentatively

titled RC17, is expected to go on floors around the same time, with pre-production nearing completion.

Given these developments, the untitled project with Naga Vamsi is likely to be a short-term or quick film positioned between major commitments,

rather than a large-scale production. However, the absence of confirmed details about the script or director suggests that the project is still in a planning phase.

Overall, while the collaboration between Ram Charan and Naga Vamsi remains exciting, it is currently surrounded by uncertainty. With multiple projects lined up for the actor in 2026, fans can expect an official announcement only once the creative aspects of this film are finalised.

Kiara Advani's Bold Avatar in Toxic Likely to Be Major Highlight



Kiara Advani is set to showcase a striking new side of her on-screen persona in the upcoming film Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups, with reports suggesting that her bold and glamorous scenes could become one of the film's biggest highlights.

According to industry buzz, Kiara will be seen in a more intense and glamorous avatar, featuring romantic and visually striking sequences that are expected to stand out in the narrative. These scenes are being talked about as key elements that may elevate the film's appeal and create strong buzz among audiences.

Toxic, directed by Geetu Mohandas and headlined by Yash, is a high-profile pan-India project that blends action, drama, and mature themes. The film also features a strong ensemble cast including Nayanthara, Huma Qureshi, Tara Sutaria, and Rukmini Vasanth. (

Kiara's role is expected to be quite different from her previous performances, marking a bold shift in her career choices. The film itself has already generated significant anticipation due to its scale, unique storytelling approach, and Yash's presence in a powerful lead role.

However, the buzz around her "bold scenes" remains largely speculative at this stage, with no official confirmation from the makers regarding the extent or treatment of these sequences. Still, the talk has added to the growing curiosity surrounding the film.

Overall, Toxic is shaping up to be a visually rich and intense cinematic experience, and Kiara Advani's transformation into a bold, glamorous character is likely to be one of the most talked-about aspects once the film hits screens.

SS Rajamouli's 'Varanasi' Shoot Hit by Water Crisis in Hyderabad

SS Rajamouli's highly anticipated film Varanasi has reportedly run into a fresh hurdle, as its ongoing shoot in Hyderabad faces delays due to a water shortage.

According to reports, the film's team had requested around 150 water tankers for the current schedule. However, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board declined the request, citing peak summer demand and prioritising public water needs.

This unexpected setback has impacted the film's production schedule, which is currently underway in Hyderabad after earlier disruptions. It remains unclear how the makers will address the issue or whether adjustments to the shoot plan will be made.



Varanasi, directed by SS Rajamouli, is one of the most ambitious Indian films in produc-

tion. Starring Mahesh Babu, Priyanka Chopra, and Prithviraj Sukumaran, the film is be-

ing mounted on a grand scale and is slated for a global release on April 7, 2027. The project has already encountered disruptions earlier this year, including changes in shooting locations due to geopolitical issues abroad, forcing the team to shift schedules to Hyderabad. With the latest water crisis adding to production challenges, the team may need to explore alternative arrangements to keep the shoot on track. Despite these hurdles, anticipation for the film remains high, given Rajamouli's track record of delivering large-scale cinematic spectacles. For now, all eyes are on how the makers navigate this logistical issue while maintaining the film's ambitious timeline.

Gopichand's 34th Film Launched, Stunt Master V Venkat Turns Director

Tollywood actor Gopichand has officially launched his 34th film, marking an important milestone in his career. The project was inaugurated with a formal pooja ceremony in Hyderabad, generating excitement among fans and industry circles.

The film is particularly notable as it marks the directorial debut of popular stunt master V Venkat, who is widely known for choreographing high-octane action sequences in Telugu cinema. With this project, Venkat transitions from action direction to filmmaking, bringing expectations of a strong, action-driven narrative.

The launch event saw the presence of several industry personalities. Veteran producer Mallema Shyam Prasad Reddy gave the inaugural clap, while the script was handed over by producers Damodara Prasad and Ravi Shankar. Director Shiva Nirvana and action choreographers Ram-Lakshman also attended the ceremony, highlighting the film's strong backing.

The movie is being produced under the banner of 70MM Entertainments, known for backing commercial entertainers.



Actress Anarkali Nazar has been roped in as the female lead opposite Gopichand.

The technical team includes notable names such as Sam C. S. as music director, Sreekar Prasad as editor, and Shamdat as cinematographer, indicating a solid production setup.

Reports suggest that the film will be a high-budget action drama, with early visuals and promotional material hinting at an intense and possibly mythological tone. Pre-production is already underway, and the regular shoot is expected to begin soon.

Meanwhile, Gopichand is currently busy with his ongoing project Bharata Varsha: Saga of Shula, directed by Sankalp Reddy. Despite that commitment, the actor continues to line up multiple films, reflecting his packed schedule and focus on diverse projects.

Overall, the announcement of Gopichand's 34th film has generated significant buzz, especially with a seasoned stunt master stepping into the director's role. Fans are now keenly awaiting more details about the film's storyline and production timeline.

"Typecast Roles Hurt My Career", Payal Rajput Opens Up

Actress Payal Rajput has opened up about the challenges she has faced in her film career, revealing the emotional and professional struggles behind her glamorous on-screen image. In a recent interview, Payal shared that while audiences often see her bold performances and confident persona, her journey has been filled with uncertainty, loneliness, and constant struggle for opportunities. She admitted that there were times when she had to wait endlessly for the right roles, often dealing with rejection and self-doubt.

One of the biggest setbacks in her career, she said, was being typecast after the success of RX 100. The actress revealed that she was repeatedly offered similar roles, limiting her growth as a performer. "Actors don't have control over every-

thing," she noted, adding that getting stuck in a fixed image is a common issue in the industry. Payal also highlighted the uncertainty actors face daily. She explained that every day comes with questions like whether to accept current offers or wait for better ones—without any guarantee that better opportunities will arrive. This constant dilemma, she said, makes an actor's life mentally exhausting. On a personal front, the actress spoke emotionally about losing her father to cancer around eight months ago. She described it as one of the most painful phases of her life but said his final words—encouraging her to chase her dreams—gave her strength to move forward.

Despite setbacks, Payal has gradually made a comeback, with films like Manga-

lavaaram bringing her back into the spotlight. She also ventured into Tamil cinema with Leader, where she played a brief yet impactful role.

Now, the actress is looking to reinvent herself. She said she is ready to move beyond glamour roles and explore experimental and women-centric films, aiming to showcase her acting depth. Addressing fans who wonder why she isn't seen more often in Telugu films, Payal candidly stated that opportunities have been limited. However, she remains hopeful and is willing to wait for the right projects rather than settle for repetitive roles.

Overall, her story reflects the less-visible side of the film industry—where persistence, emotional resilience, and patience are just as important as talent.



NTR-Prashanth Neel's 'Dragon' to Be Released in Two Parts

The much-anticipated film Dragon, starring Jr NTR and directed by Prashanth Neel, is set to follow the two-part release trend, according to the latest industry buzz.

Reports suggest that the makers have decided to split the film into two installments, considering the scale and depth of the story. Prashanth Neel, known for delivering high-intensity action dramas like KGF, is said to have crafted a narrative that requires a larger canvas, making a single film insufficient to capture its full scope.

The decision comes at a time when multi-part storytelling has proven highly successful in Indian cinema. Franchises like Baahubali and KGF have set strong precedents, encouraging filmmakers to expand their sto-



Dragon is expected to be a high-octane action entertainer with a strong emotional core, featuring Jr NTR in a powerful and intense role. The collaboration between NTR and Prashanth Neel has already generated

massive excitement, given the director's reputation for stylised action and the actor's commanding screen presence.

Industry insiders believe that releasing the film in two parts will allow the makers to delve deeper into the storyline, characters, and world-building, while also building anticipation be-

tween installments.

The project is being mounted on a grand scale with significant investment, aiming for a pan-India and global audience. With Prashanth Neel's track record and Jr NTR's growing international appeal after RRR, expectations for Dragon are exceptionally high. While official confirmation regarding the two-part format is still awaited, the buzz has already heightened curiosity among fans. More details about the film's cast, shooting schedule, and release timeline are expected to be announced in the coming months. Overall, if the reports hold true, Dragon could join the league of major Indian film franchises, further strengthening the trend of large-scale, multi-part cinematic storytelling.

'Devara 2' Aims Big with 1000 Crore Target, Sequel Plans Gain Momentum

The buzz around Devara 2, the sequel to Jr NTR and director Koratala Siva's upcoming film Devara, is already gaining traction, with reports suggesting that the makers are eyeing a massive 1000 crore box office target. Even before the release of the first installment, industry insiders indicate that plans for the sequel are progressing steadily. The makers are reportedly confident about the film's scale and content, believing it has the potential to perform strongly not just in India but also in international markets.

Devara, starring Jr NTR in the lead role, is being made as a two-part action drama, with Koratala Siva crafting a story that spans across large-scale themes and intense character arcs. The decision to split the narrative into two parts is said to be driven by the film's expansive storyline. The first part of Devara has already generated significant hype due to its high production values, powerful visuals, and Jr NTR's star power. With expectations running



high, the team appears optimistic that the success of the first film will pave the way for an even bigger second installment. Reports suggest that the groundwork for Devara 2 is already underway, including early discussions on story progression and production planning. The makers are aiming to scale up the sequel further in terms of action, storytelling, and global reach. The 1000 crore target reflects the growing ambition of Telugu cinema, which has increasingly delivered pan-India and global blockbusters in recent years. Films like RRR and Baahubali have set new benchmarks, encouraging film-

makers to aim for larger box office milestones. For Jr NTR, Devara marks a crucial project following his global recognition after RRR. The success of the franchise could further cement his position as a pan-India superstar. While official announcements regarding the sequel's production timeline are yet to be made, the ongoing buzz suggests that Devara 2 is being positioned as a major cinematic event. Overall, with strong expectations, ambitious targets, and a proven director-actor combination, Devara 2 is already shaping up to be one of the most anticipated projects in Indian cinema.