

BUZZ POINTS



Pilgrimage Politics Gains Momentum Ahead of Punjab Assembly Polls

PAGE 07



Court Permits CBI to Question Key Accused in NEET-UG 2026 Paper Leak Case

PAGE 07



Guarantee Schemes to Continue, Says Karnataka Government

PAGE 07



TPCC Chief Slams Pawan Kalyan Over Telangana Remarks

PAGE 07

Modi Conferred Slovakia's Highest Honour, Strengthens Bilateral Ties

Bratislava, June 16 | TPN Bureau

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred Slovakia's highest civilian honour, the Order of the White Double Cross (First Class), by President Peter Pellegrini during his landmark visit to Bratislava.

The visit is historically significant as it is the first-ever official visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Slovakia, marking a new phase in bilateral relations spanning over three decades.

Prime Minister Modi expressed gratitude to the people and government of Slovakia, dedicating the honour to the citizens of India and the enduring



friendship between the two nations.

Modi also met Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico, thanking him for the warm welcome at Bratislava Castle.

During bilateral talks, Modi and President Pellegrini discussed expanding cooperation across sectors such as manufacturing, transport, innovation, energy, biofuels, and investment.

also a key highlight. Modi and Fico viewed artworks created by Slovak children inspired by Indian classics such as the Panchatantra and Jataka tales, reflecting the global influence of Indian culture.

The discussions also covered strategic areas including nuclear energy, space cooperation, and advanced technologies. Both nations aim to transform their long-standing diplomatic ties into a practical and result-oriented partnership that delivers mutual benefits.

Prime Minister Modi said he was honoured to receive the award and expressed gratitude to Slovakia, dedicating it to 140 crore Indians. He noted the traditional welcome reflected Slovakia's cultural heritage.

Cultural engagement was



Minister Launches Breakfast & Milk Scheme for Government School Students

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

In a major initiative aimed at improving nutrition and strengthening government education, Hyderabad in-charge Minister Ponnab Prabhakar on Monday launched the government's prestigious Breakfast & Milk Scheme at Raj Bhavan Government High School in Khairatabad.

As part of the programme, the minister also distributed textbooks and notebooks to students. The event was attended by MLAs Danam Nagender and Yasaswini Reddy, Hyderabad Collector Priyanka Ala, DEO Yadayya, Manna Trust CEO Leena Joseph, and other senior officials.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Ponnab Prabhakar said the government is introducing the breakfast and milk programme for nearly 29 lakh students studying in government schools across the state.

He added that the programme is part of the state-wide "Badi Bata" initiative to bring dropouts back to schools and encourage enrollment in government institutions.

The minister said the scheme is applicable for students from pre-primary to Class 12, with breakfast and milk/ragi-based drinks being provided on alternate days. He also said the government aims to improve government schools and increase student strength through better facilities and welfare measures.

He encouraged students to focus on their studies and work hard to bring recognition to their families and schools. Teachers, he said, should also actively contribute to increasing enrollment in government schools.

The breakfast menu includes items such as dosa, idli, puri, upma, pongal, and bondas, along with milk or ragi malt served on alternate days. The government estimates an annual expenditure of 540 crore for breakfast and 180 crore for milk supply.

He added that the programme is part of the state-wide "Badi Bata" initiative to bring dropouts back to schools and encourage enrollment in government institutions.

CM Reviews 99-Day Praja Palana Programme, Seeks Report on Poll Promises

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday said the Praja Palana - Pragati Pranalika programme implemented across Telangana from March 16 to June 12 had strengthened the connection between the government and people, making governance more accessible at the grassroots level.

The Chief Minister made the remarks while chairing a high-level review meeting at the Dr B.R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat to assess the progress and outcomes of the 99-day programme undertaken across the state.



MP Vem Narender Reddy, Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao, DGP C.V. Anand and senior

bureaucrats, participated in the meeting and submitted reports detailing activities carried out from district headquarters to village level.

During the review, Revanth Reddy inquired into department-wise programmes, implementation status and the impact of welfare and development initiatives introduced during the 99-day action plan.

He appreciated departments that actively participated and effectively implemented programmes aimed at taking governance closer to the people. The Chief Minister also recalled his earlier directive mandating monthly field visits by senior officials, from Principal Secretaries to District Collectors, and expressed concern over reports that some officers had failed to conduct inspections. He instructed the C

Secretary to prepare a list of officials and district collectors who skipped field visits and seek explanations from them for what he described as discipline in duty. He warned that negligence in implementing government directives would not be tolerated. Revanth Reddy directed all departments to maintain records of feedback received from public representatives and citizens during various government programmes and ensure village-level grievances are resolved promptly. He further instructed officials to document all development works undertaken, foundation stones laid and public assets created over the past three months. Emphasising rural P3



Hyderabad Wins National Culinary Destination Award

Goa, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Hyderabad has earned national recognition for its rich food culture, winning the prestigious 'National Culinary Destination' award at the India Today Tourism Awards held in Goa on Monday. The award was received by Telangana Tourism Minister Jupally Krishna Rao from Union Tourism and Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat during the India Today Tourism Conclave. The event was attended by Pramod Sawant, senior tourism officials, policymakers and representatives from across the country. Speaking on the occasion, Jupally Krishna Rao said the honour reflected Hyderabad's rich culinary heritage and Telangana's growing prominence in tourism.

He highlighted that under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the state government has been actively promoting heritage tourism, eco-tourism circuits, spiritual tourism centres, adventure tourism and cultural attractions.

According to the minister, tourist arrivals in Telangana have increased significantly, with rising interest in heritage, eco, medical, spiritual and culinary tourism sectors. He added that the government is focused on strengthening tourism infrastructure, improving connectivity and enhancing visitor experiences across destinations. Jupally dedicated the award to the people of Telangana and stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sectors, saying the recognition would further strengthen efforts to position Telangana among India's leading tourism destinations.

The India Today Tourism Awards recognise states, institutions and tourism stakeholders for outstanding contributions towards tourism promotion. P3

CM Questions Delay in Metro Funds, Pushes for Hyderabad Expansion

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday questioned the delay in the release of funds by the Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) for the takeover of the Hyderabad Metro from L&T, despite all agreements being completed. He stressed that metro expansion is critical for Hyderabad's future growth and investment potential.

Addressing a media conference at the State Secretariat along with ministers, MPs, MLCs and MLAs, the Chief Minister said the state government had fulfilled all formalities required to acquire the first phase of the metro from L&T and begin the second phase of expansion. He stated that IRFC was expected to release funds for the deal but had not done so.

According to Revanth Reddy, the Telangana government signed an agreement with IRFC for nearly 13,600 crore to take over the metro network at a lower interest rate of around four percent. He said the state government had already provided its equity share and obtained a counter guarantee from the Reserve Bank of India. Funds from a Japanese fi



ncial institution had reportedly been transferred to the IRFC account, but the payment to L&T was still pending.

The Chief Minister emphasized that Hyderabad requires metro expansion to handle growing population pressures and improve urban transport. He said the city, once ranked second in metro rail development after Delhi, had now slipped to ninth position due to lack of expansion in the previous decade.

Revanth Reddy said the Centre had earlier advised the state to negotiate with L&T for metro expansion.

CM Revanth Greets Students as Schools Reopen

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday extended heartfelt wishes to students returning to schools after the summer vacation and encouraged them to begin the new academic year with enthusiasm and determination.

In a special message issued on the reopening of schools across Telangana, the Chief Minister congratulated students and teachers and highlighted the importance of education in shaping the future of individuals and the nation.

"Schools are not merely places for learning lessons but temples that shape personality and build the nation's future. Every book opens the door to a new world, and every lesson leads to a new opportunity. Education is the power that lights up our future," Revanth Reddy said.

The Chief Minister stated that classrooms hold the foundation of the country's future and reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening the education sector through reforms and improved facilities. He said the state government has introduced several measures to enhance educational standards, including nutritious food programmes such as breakfast and midday meals for students.

Encouraging students to remain focused on their goals, Revanth Reddy urged them to begin each day with positivity, learn P3

while expressing disappointment over the denial of permission. Calling Telangana a land that inspired him, the Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister said he held deep respect for the movement and the sacrifices made during the agitation for separate statehood. "Over 1,200 people sacrificed their lives for P3

Pawan Questions Delay in Honouring Telangana Martyrs

New Delhi, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Pawan Kalyan on Monday questioned whether 12 years were not enough to properly recognise Telangana martyrs, while alleging that the Telangana government denied permission for him to pay tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for statehood.

Addressing a meeting with party leaders in New Delhi, the Jana Sena chief said he had intended to pay homage to Telangana martyrs but was not granted permission by the state government. "Do we have to be born in Kashmir or Punjab to visit India Gate and pay respects to soldiers?" Pawan Kalyan asked, drawing a comparison

ment's commitment to strengthening the education sector through reforms and improved facilities. He said the state government has introduced several measures to enhance educational standards, including nutritious food programmes such as breakfast and midday meals for students. Encouraging students to remain focused on their goals, Revanth Reddy urged them to begin each day with positivity, learn P3

KTR Demands Apology from Revanth Over Metro Rail Delay

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

K. T. Rama Rao on Monday launched a sharp attack on Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy over the delay in Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-II, alleging that the Congress government's "poor governance" had stalled approvals and financial support from the Centre.

In a statement, the BRS working president claimed that the state government failed to secure the Centre's nod for Metro Rail Phase-II due to administrative inefficiency. He further alleged that Revanth Reddy was unable to strongly question the Centre

over the issue because of the pending cash-for-vote case.

KTR was responding to allegations made by the Chief Minister, who reportedly accused him of influencing Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy to halt the refinancing loan from the Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) meant for the state government's takeover of Metro Rail Phase-I.

Questioning the delay in metro expansion, KTR said the Chief Minister should apologise to the people of Hyderabad for what he termed as jeopardising the city's transport future. He argued that approvals and financial P3



## Minister Launches 'Amma Mata Anganwadi Bata' Programme

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Minister Seethakka on Monday participated in the 'Amma Mata Anganwadi Bata' programme organised at the MG Nagar Anganwadi Centre in Mallepally Centre under the Golconda Project limits of Hyderabad district, highlighting the importance of early childhood education and nutrition.

During the programme, the minister formally launched the child enrollment drive at the Anganwadi centre and distributed uniforms to pre-school students. She also handed over educational initiation certificates to children preparing to join primary schools.

Minister Seethakka participated in the traditional Aksharabhyasa ceremony along with children, encouraging parents to prioritise foundational education during early childhood.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said Anganwadi centres play a crucial role in laying a strong educational foundation during childhood and stressed that officials must take special measures to ensure that every child is enrolled in Anganwadi services.

She said the objective of the

'Amma Mata Anganwadi Bata' programme is to take Anganwadi services to every household and strengthen awareness among families regarding the benefits of early childhood care and education.

The minister highlighted that the government is providing integrated services including nutritional food, pre-school education, and healthcare support through Anganwadi centres to ensure the overall development of children.

"Anganwadi centres will be further strengthened as institutions that shape the future of children," Seethakka said, urging parents to develop greater awareness about the services available at these centres.

As part of the campaign, the minister flagged off a rally to spread awareness in the community and raised slogans promoting Anganwadi enrollment, including appeals encouraging parents to choose Anganwadi centres over private nursery schools.

She reiterated that the government is giving top priority to the holistic development of children and quality early childhood education to build a stronger future generation.



## Minister Alerts Officials as Heavy Rains Likely From June 19

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy on Monday directed officials to remain on high alert and take all precautionary measures in view of forecasts indicating widespread rainfall across the state from June 19 onwards. Recent weather forecasts indicate increased monsoon activity and rainfall alerts in Telangana over the coming days.

The minister instructed district authorities to ensure that people do not face inconvenience during the monsoon season and stressed that preventive action is more important than responding after disasters occur. Following directions from Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy said the disaster management and revenue machinery should remain fully prepared from the state level down to villages to effectively tackle emergencies. He said the southwest monsoon is rapidly advancing and is expected to spread across Telangana in the next three to four days. Keeping in view weather department estimates, the minister said rainfall activity may intensify across the state from June 19 and continue for nearly a week, requiring continuous

monitoring by district administrations.

During a review meeting held on Monday, the minister directed officials to closely monitor weather warnings issued by the Meteorological Department and maintain coordination with district collectors, revenue officials, and disaster response teams.

According to officials, the southwest monsoon entered southern Telangana on June 8 and has gradually expanded into several districts, including Hyderabad and Bhadrachalam. Rainfall data from June 1 to date indicates the state received 49.2 mm rainfall, slightly below the normal average of 54.9 mm, reflecting a rainfall deficit of around 10 percent. The minister instructed authorities to identify flood-prone and vulnerable areas in advance and ensure emergency measures are in place to protect lives and property. He emphasised that public safety remains the government's top priority and urged officials to maintain constant vigilance throughout the rainy season.

He added that the government under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is committed to ensuring public safety and directed all departments to work in coordination until the end of the monsoon period.

## Grand Birthday Celebrations for Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu celebrated his birthday in a grand manner at Praja Bhavan on Monday, with Governor, Chief Minister, ministers, political leaders, officials, and well-wishers extending greetings and wishing him good health and a long life.

Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla conveyed birthday wishes to the Deputy Chief Minister over the phone. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy also extended greetings through a message on X, describing Bhatti Vikramarka as a dear colleague and expressing hope for continued joint efforts in serving the people of Telangana.

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy also greeted the Deputy Chief Minister through social media, wishing him a long, healthy, and prosperous life.

From early morning, ministers, Congress leaders, elected representatives, senior officials, and supporters visited Praja Bhavan to greet Bhatti Vikramarka with bouquets and shawls. Among those who extended wishes were ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy, Sridhar Babu, Tummala Nageswara Rao, Ponnampet Prabhakar, Seethakka, Vakiti



Srihari, and several MLAs, party functionaries, and senior bureaucrats.

A major attraction of the celebrations was a specially designed 120-kg cake themed around the state government's Six Guarantees and welfare schemes. The cake also featured visuals representing Bhatti Vikramarka's "People's March Padayatra," drawing the attention of attendees. The massive cake was arranged by Youth Congress leader Kommineni Ramesh Babu from Bonakal mandal in Khammam district and was ceremonially cut by the Deputy Chief Minister at Praja Bhavan.

Another specially prepared 70-kg cake, arranged by Congress spokesperson and OU

JAC leader Lokesh Kumar Yadav, was also cut by Bhatti Vikramarka and shared among supporters and public representatives.

Meanwhile, Congress leaders and supporters celebrated the Deputy Chief Minister's birthday across Telangana by organising welfare and service activities. Blood donation camps, food distribution programmes, temple prayers, and distribution of fruits to hospital patients were conducted at several places as part of the celebrations.

Party workers and admirers described the occasion as a celebration of Bhatti Vikramarka's commitment to public service and leadership in Telangana's development.



## Gopalapuram Police Bust Bihar Gang, Seize 17 kg Ganja

Secunderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

In a major crackdown on drug trafficking, Gopalapuram police seized 17 kilograms of ganja and arrested two persons during a raid at a lodge in Secunderabad, officials said on Saturday.

Acting on credible information, police conducted a surprise raid on Devaki Lodge and recovered 13 packets of ganja from the suspects. The operation was carried out with the assistance of the CLUES team and panch witnesses.

Police identified the accused as Rishi Kumar (23) from Bihar and a 17-year-old juvenile in conflict with law (CCL). Officials said the main supplier involved in the racket is currently absconding.

According to police, the accused were transporting the contraband from Sambalpur in Odisha through Hyderabad to Pune in Maharashtra. During preliminary investigation,

they reportedly confessed that a man identified as Vijay alias Sambhav Kumar from Bihar had financed and arranged the illegal transport.

Two mobile phones used for coordinating the illegal activity were also seized during the operation.

The raid was conducted under the supervision of senior officers, including Malkajgiri Zone DCP C. Sridhar, ACP Yadagiri Reddy, Gopalapuram CI M. Madhukumar, and DI Srinivasulu.

Officials said a case has been registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, and a detailed investigation is underway to trace the absconding accused and dismantle the network.

Police praised the team involved in the operation for successfully intercepting the drug consignment and preventing its further distribution.

## TPCC Chief Slams Pawan Kalyan Over Telangana Remarks

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) chief Mahesh Kumar Goud on Monday strongly criticised Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan over his alleged remarks on Telangana, accusing him of repeatedly making statements that insult the state and its formation.

Addressing the media at Gandhi Bhavan, Mahesh Kumar Goud said Telangana was realised due to the efforts and sacrifices of many people and the decision taken by the Congress leadership under Sonia Gandhi. He alleged that Pawan Kalyan has repeatedly undermined Telangana's identity and sentiments.

The TPCC chief accused Pawan Kalyan of speaking in line with the BJP's political narrative and described him as acting in coordination with BJP leaders. He alleged that Telangana's statehood and its historical struggle should not be belittled for political purposes.

Mahesh Kumar Goud said politics requires responsibility and advised Pawan Kalyan to



focus on governance issues in Andhra Pradesh in his role as Deputy Chief Minister. He remarked that making provocative statements about Telangana could hurt public sentiment and lead to unnecessary tensions between the two Telugu-speaking states.

Referring to the Telangana movement, he questioned Pawan Kalyan's role during the statehood struggle and said the sacrifices made by Telangana martyrs should not be ignored or diminished.

He further stated that relations between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh should remain cordial like "brother

states," but warned against making statements that could create divisions or political unrest.

Mahesh Kumar Goud also criticised the silence of BRS leaders, including K. Chandrashekar Rao and K. T. Rama Rao, on the issue, alleging a political understanding between BRS, BJP, and Pawan Kalyan.

The TPCC chief reiterated that Congress has a historic role in Telangana's formation and said criticism of the party should be based on facts and political understanding rather than rhetoric.

## Tummala Questions Centre Over Crop Procurement in Telangana

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao on Monday criticised the Centre's approach towards crop procurement in Telangana, alleging discrimination against the state despite its significant contribution to agricultural production.

Addressing a press conference after reviewing crop procurement at the MARKFED office in Hyderabad, the minister said Telangana was the only state in the country purchasing all major crops from farmers on a large scale. He questioned why the Centre was reluctant to procure crops purchased by the state at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) announced by the Union government.

Tummala said Telangana, which has emerged as one of the leading states in paddy production, deserved better support from the Centre. He ar-



gued that shifting the burden of procurement entirely onto states was unfair and urged the Union government to fulfil its responsibility towards farmers. The minister appealed to the Centre to procure 15 lakh metric tonnes of maize and 2 lakh metric tonnes of sorghum (jowar) purchased by the state government. He also urged the Centre to lift restrictions on sunflower procurement and ensure purchases without limitations.

Highlighting the Centre's authority over exports and imports, Tummala said the Union government should procure

crops purchased by Telangana without imposing restrictions and avoid discrimination against the state. He further called for the construction of additional warehouse facilities and godowns to strengthen storage infrastructure.

On crop planning, the minister said the state government was prioritising crop diversification and advised farmers to consider alternative crops in view of the impact of El Nino conditions. He urged farmers to follow government guidance while planning cultivation for better returns and sustainability.



## Bhatti Vikramarka Chairs Meet on Export-Oriented Paddy Varieties

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu on Monday chaired a Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting at Praja Bhavan to review agricultural production, paddy procurement, storage facilities, and the upcoming Kharif cultivation season. Agricultural experts and scientists urged the government to create widespread awareness among farmers on cultivating export-oriented paddy varieties that offer better profits and strong international demand.

The meeting was attended by Ministers Tummala Nageswara Rao, Uttam Kumar Reddy, and Sridhar Babu, along with senior agriculture officials, scientists, and representatives from allied departments.

During the review, agricultural scientists recommended the promotion of eight premium paddy varieties — BPT 5204, Telangana Sona (RNR 15048), KNM-1638, Jai Sriram, HMT, WGL 962, WGL 44, and JGL 1798 — stating that these varieties enjoy strong demand in both domestic and international markets.

Experts informed the committee that these rice varieties are particularly popular in countries such as the United States, Australia, and several European nations, making them highly suitable for exports. Due to rising demand, farmers cultivating these varieties are expected to receive prices higher than the Minimum Support Price (MSP), thereby increasing profitability.

Scientists from the Agriculture University explained that

there is no shortage of seeds for these varieties and advised the government to organise awareness campaigns at the village level to encourage farmers to adopt them on a large scale. They said this strategy would not only improve farmers' incomes but also protect them from fluctuations in market demand and price risks.

Civil Supplies officials, however, pointed out that not all fine rice varieties cultivated in the state are receiving good market demand. Some varieties reportedly produce higher quantities of broken rice during milling, reducing their appeal among millers, traders, and consumers.

Officials suggested that the government gradually promote only those paddy varieties preferred by consumers and suitable for exports while reducing cultivation of low-demand varieties. This, they said, would encourage millers to directly procure paddy from farmers at competitive prices, benefiting both producers and consumers.

The Cabinet Sub-Committee was also informed that grain procurement in Telangana would continue in line with central government policies. Officials stressed the importance of promoting market demand-based crops to prevent future losses to farmers and ensure sustainable agricultural growth.

Senior officials, including Farmer Commission Chairman Kodanda Reddy, Seed Corporation Chairman Anvesh Reddy, and senior secretaries from finance, agriculture, and civil supplies departments, attended the meeting.

### Minister Launches Breakfast & Milk Scheme for Government School Students

totaling around 720 crore per year. Officials stated that in Hyderabad district, the scheme is initially implemented in 45 selected schools, benefiting over 12,437 students in the first phase under the supervision of

Manna Trust. The government said the initiative aims to reduce malnutrition, improve school attendance, and enhance overall learning outcomes by ensuring that students begin their day with a healthy meal.

### CM Questions Delay in Metro Funds, Pushes for Hyderabad Expansion

However, L&T reportedly expressed inability to proceed with the second phase due to annual financial losses. As a result, the state government decided to acquire the first phase and undertake expansion independently. He reiterated that the Telangana government is ready to proceed with Phase-2 expansion using 100 percent state equity if the Centre grants the necessary No Objection Cer-

tificate (NOC). He also questioned why Telangana was not receiving the same support for metro projects that other states receive from the Centre. The Chief Minister urged Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy to intervene and help resolve the issue, saying Hyderabad's metro expansion is essential for improving public transport, reducing pollution and supporting the city's transformation into a global investment hub.

### CM Reviews 99-Day Praja Palana Programme, Seeks Report on Poll Promises

infrastructure development, the Chief Minister ordered Panchayat Raj officials to prepare a list of villages without Gram Panchayat buildings and formulate an action plan to construct them. He also instructed officials to explore the installation of solar power plants on school buildings across the state to reduce energy costs and improve sustainability. The Chief Minister stressed the importance of technological integration in governance and directed officials to implement facial recognition attendance systems in schools, colleges, Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and major government hospitals, including Osmania and Gandhi Hospi-

als. To strengthen monitoring, Revanth Reddy ordered immediate district-level reviews of the Praja Palana programme and directed the appointment of senior IAS officers as Special Officers for each district. These officers, in coordination with District Collectors, will review government schemes, development works and public feedback while preparing district-wise progress reports. The Chief Minister also sought constituency-wise reports from the Planning Department on promises made during his district visits and government programmes since assuming office, stressing accountability and timely implementation of commitments made to the public.

### KTR Demands Apology from Revanth Over Metro Rail Delay

backing for metro projects were secured swiftly during the previous BRS government, while delays had surfaced under the current administration. He also questioned why cities in states such as Uttar Pradesh, along with Ahmedabad and Visakhapatnam, had received Metro Rail projects from the Centre while Hyderabad was allegedly being ignored. Responding to claims that L&T was unwilling to participate in Metro Phase-II expansion, KTR alleged that the

Congress government had created uncertainty for the company and intimidated it, leading to its reluctance to continue involvement in the project. He further accused the state government of attempting to take control of Metro assets allegedly worth 30,000 crore and valuable land parcels in key parts of Hyderabad. The Metro Rail issue has now emerged as a major political flashpoint between the ruling Congress government and the opposition BRS, with both sides trading allegations over delays in metro expansion and funding.

### Former Chairman Devi Prasad Demands Pending Benefits for Retired Anganwadi Staff

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau Former Beverage Corporation Chairman Devi Prasad has demanded the immediate release of pending retirement benefits for retired Anganwadi teachers and helpers in Telangana, expressing concern over delays in disbursing dues. In a press statement issued on Monday, Devi Prasad said the retirement benefits announced by the government for Anganwadi teachers and helpers have not yet been fully implemented, causing distress among retired personnel. According to him, out of 3,587 retired Anganwadi teachers and helpers across the state, retirement benefits amounting to nearly 21.39 crore are yet to be fully cleared. So far, only 1,310 beneficiaries have reportedly received payments amounting to 7.98 crore, while dues worth 13.41 crore remain pending for 2,277 retired staff members. He stated that Anganwadi workers, who spent decades serving children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers, should not be made to wait for

benefits after retirement. Many retired staff members, he said, are elderly and facing financial hardship due to delays in receiving their dues. Devi Prasad urged the state government to immediately release the pending retirement benefits and ensure that eligible Anganwadi teachers and helpers receive payments directly into their bank accounts without further delay. He also called for a clear action plan to ensure that future retirees receive benefits promptly after retirement. In addition, Devi Prasad alleged that despite assurances by the government to increase salaries of Anganwadi teachers and helpers, no revision has taken place even after nearly 30 months. He claimed that monthly salaries have been delayed for several months and that upgraded mini-Anganwadi teachers have allegedly not received salaries for the past 14 months. He further demanded that health cards be issued to Anganwadi teachers and helpers to support their medical needs and welfare.

## CM Revanth Greets Students as Schools Reopen

under the guidance of teachers and work hard to fulfil their dreams. "Today's students are tomorrow's nation-builders. You should strive to bring pride to your families, society, the state and the country by developing your talents and

achieving excellence," he said. Emphasizing the importance of education, the Chief Minister described it as the greatest wealth that cannot be taken away. He said education is the path to success and progress and wished students a joyful, productive and successful academic year. Revanth Reddy also advised children to attend school happily, remain curious to learn and aim for higher goals in life. He expressed hope that the new academic year would bring knowledge, happiness and success to every student across the state.



## Pawan Questions Delay in Honouring Telangana Martyrs

a separate Telangana. I was deeply moved by the idea of so many people sacrificing themselves for a cause. That is why I respect Telangana martyrs," he said. Pawan Kalyan also criticised political leaders, alleging that youth made sacrifices while leaders later assumed positions of power. He questioned why the state had allegedly failed to adequately honour the martyrs even after more than a decade since Telangana's formation. He said Jana Sena would contribute towards fulfilling the aspirations for which Telangana was created and assured party



leaders and workers that the organisation had a strong future in the state. The remarks come amid an ongoing political row in Telangana over Pawan Kalyan's recent comments and the controversy surrounding permission for programmes related to Telangana martyrs.

## Dasoju Sravan Accuses Revanth Govt Over Metro, Governance

At a press conference held at Telangana Bhavan on Monday, Dasoju Sravan launched a sharp attack on Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, alleging failures in governance and irregularities in the Hyderabad Metro Rail project. Addressing the media, Dasoju Sravan claimed that the Chief Minister was focused more on criticizing BRS leaders, including K. Chandrashekar Rao and K. T. Rama Rao, than addressing public issues. He alleged that Revanth Reddy lacked understanding of key development concepts and challenged him for a public discussion on governance and infrastructure.



The BRS MLC alleged that delays in the metro rail project dated back to the Congress government's inefficiency since 2009 and claimed that the BRS government completed Phase-1 while preserving heritage structures. He accused the present government of weakening the metro system and alleged attempts to undervalue metro assets. Criticizing the relationship between the Congress government and the Centre, Dasoju Sravan alleged that the state

government had failed to secure support for major infrastructure projects despite repeated visits to Delhi. He accused both Congress and BJP of maintaining a political understanding in the state. He also alleged that investors were hesitant to come to Hyderabad due to the current political environment and urged the Chief Minister to take a stronger stand with the Union government on metro expansion and state interests.

## TPCC Chief Mahesh Kumar Goud Announces Tribal Congress Bus Yatra

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau The TPCC Adivasi Congress on Monday announced a special statewide bus yatra to highlight the contribution of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in securing Scheduled Tribe (ST) reservations for tribal communities, marking 50 years since the implementation of reservations for tribals. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Adivasi Congress held at Indira Bhavan in Gandhi Bhavan on Monday. The meeting was chaired by Adivasi Congress State President and MLC Shankar Naik and attended by TPCC President and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud as the chief guest.

bada communities in 1976 and took steps aimed at their welfare and empowerment. Mahesh Kumar Goud stated that Indira Gandhi played a key role in identifying the backwardness of tribal communities and ensured ST reservations to pave the way for their educational, political, and social advancement. He said tribal progress witnessed today in multiple sectors is a result of those landmark decisions. He further asserted that the Congress party's core ideology has always focused on the welfare of SC, ST, and BC communities. Referring to the present government, he said Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is committed to the same principles and cited the caste survey in Telangana as an example of the government's focus on social justice and equal opportunities. Calling upon party leaders and cadre to make the proposed bus yatra a success, Mahesh Kumar Goud said the campaign would be organised across tribal regions in the state to inform people about Congress initiatives for tribal welfare and the historical significance of ST reservations. Recalling the efforts of Indira Gandhi, he said she personally studied the socio-economic conditions of tribal and Lam-

Speaking at the meeting, Mahesh Kumar Goud said the Congress party has historically remained committed to the welfare and upliftment of tribal communities. He said that growing up in a village where a majority of residents belonged to the Lambada community gave him an opportunity to closely understand their living conditions. Recalling the efforts of Indira Gandhi, he said she personally studied the socio-economic conditions of tribal and Lam-

## Etala Rajender Calls for Accurate Voter Enrollment at SIR Meeting

Secunderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau A large-scale awareness meeting on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was held in the Cantonment constituency on Monday to educate BLA-2 members about the voter list revision process. The meeting was attended by Etala Rajender as the chief guest. Addressing party functionaries, he explained the responsibilities of BLA-2 members, precautions to be taken during the voter list revision process and the party's action plan for effective implementation. Speaking on the occasion, Etala Rajender stressed that an accurate voter list plays a vital role in strengthening the democratic system. He urged party workers to ensure that every eligible citizen's name is included in the electoral rolls

with sincerity and commitment. "Every vote is valuable. We must work to ensure that every eligible citizen is enrolled in the voter list," he said. The MP also highlighted the importance of vigilance during the SIR process and called on party workers to actively assist eligible voters in updating or registering their details. Several BJP leaders and local representatives participated in the meeting, including Cantonment Board member Banuka Narmada Mallikarjun, Monda Market Corporator Deepika Naresh, Secunderabad Mahankali district president Bharat Gou, district SIR convener Rajasekhara Reddy, state election coordinator Marri Shashidhar Reddy, Cantonment convener Vijay Anand, SIR convener Thopi Shankar and other senior leaders and party activists.

## Rajya Sabha Row Raises Questions Over Institutional Balance

Ravi Podili Concerns over the functioning of constitutional institutions have resurfaced following a contentious Rajya Sabha election episode in Madhya Pradesh, where the rejection of Congress candidate Meenakshi Natarajan's nomination paved the way for an unexpected BJP gain. The Constitution envisages the independent functioning of institutions like the Election Commission, judiciary, legislature, and executive, with limited scope for intervention. However, this separation, intended to preserve autonomy, has also sparked debate when decisions appear to disproportionately favour ruling establishments during electoral processes. The controversy centres on the biennial Rajya Sabha elections, where the BJP, despite lacking sufficient numbers in the 230-member Madhya Pradesh Assembly, fielded three candidates. With 165 MLAs, the party required additional support to secure all seats. In contrast, the opposition INDIA bloc, with 64 members, was positioned to win at least one seat through its can-



didate Meenakshi Natarajan, barring cross-voting or unexpected developments. Events took a dramatic turn when Natarajan's nomination was rejected by the Returning Officer, citing incomplete disclosure in her Form 26 affidavit and pending case details. The decision came swiftly after objections were raised, leading to allegations of procedural irregularities. Congress leaders approached the Election Commission of India and the Supreme Court, seeking relief, but received no intervention. The judiciary's established convention of non-interference once the election process begins played a decisive role. Although courts have, in rare cases, intervened in ongoing elections, Natarajan's plea for acceptance of her nomination did not result in immediate judicial review. Critics argue that this strict adherence to convention denied a fair hearing in a matter that did not seek to halt the election itself. Meanwhile, logistical hurdles further complicated the opposition's strategy. A special

flight arranged by Congress to move its MLAs to Bengaluru reportedly faced delays due to a lack of clearance, raising concerns about possible external interference. In the interim, the nomination rejection altered the electoral arithmetic decisively. With no independent MLAs or additional support available, the BJP's third candidate faced uncertain prospects. However, the rejection of the Congress nomination ensured that all three BJP candidates were declared elected unop-

posed, eliminating the need for a contest. The Election Commission concluded the process swiftly, even as questions lingered over whether proper procedural steps—such as escalating doubts to higher authorities—were followed by the Returning Officer. Appeals by senior Congress leaders reportedly did not yield a response in time. Adding to the controversy, the complaint cited against Natarajan was reportedly returned by a local court shortly after her nomination was rejected, raising further doubts about the basis of disqualification. The episode has intensified political debate, with opposition parties alleging misuse of institutional processes, while the BJP has maintained silence on the rationale behind fielding a third candidate despite lacking clear numerical support. The incident underscores the delicate balance between institutional autonomy and accountability, reviving concerns about electoral fairness and the interpretation of constitutional boundaries in politically sensitive situations.



## Drainage Overflow Troubles Residents in Chintal Padma Nagar

**Quthbullapur, June 15 | TPN Bureau**

Quthbullapur: Residents of Chintal Padma Nagar Phase-2 in Chintal have raised serious concerns over a prolonged drainage overflow issue, alleging negligence by authorities in addressing basic civic problems.

The problem has reportedly persisted for the last three days near Meher Sai High School on Road No. 14 in the colony, where overflowing drainage water has spread across the road, creating inconvenience for residents and commuters.

Locals say the stagnant sewage water has turned the road into an unhygienic stretch, forcing schoolchildren to walk through dirty water while travelling to and from school. Parents have expressed concern over the health and safety of students who are left with no alternative route.

Residents alleged that despite repeated complaints to officials of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB), no concrete action has been taken so far to resolve the issue.

According to colony residents, what may appear to be a minor drainage problem for officials has become a major public health concern for the people living in the area.

They said the foul smell from stagnant sewage and the increase in mosquito population have made daily life difficult.

With the onset of the monsoon season, locals fear that the poor sanitation conditions could lead to the spread of infectious diseases and pose serious health risks, especially to children and elderly residents.

Residents also questioned why departments that regularly collect taxes are unable to respond swiftly to public grievances and basic infrastructure failures. They alleged that the recurring issue every rainy season reflects poor maintenance and lack of preventive measures in drainage management.

Demanding immediate intervention, colony residents urged HMWSSB officials to take urgent and permanent measures to resolve the drainage issue. They warned that if authorities fail to respond, they would stage a large-scale protest in front of the concerned office.

The situation has sparked growing criticism over civic negligence, with residents seeking prompt action to restore sanitation and ensure safer conditions in the locality.



## DTO Srinivas: 39 School Buses Fined in Quthbullapur Safety Checks

**Quthbullapur, June 15 | TPN Bureau**

Quthbullapur: With schools reopening for the academic year, student safety has once again come under focus as Medchal Regional Transport Authority (RTA) officials conducted special inspections of school buses and identified several violations related to safety standards. The inspection drive was carried out in Kompally, NCL, Pipeline Road, Suchitra and areas surrounding the RTO office, where officials thoroughly checked school buses to ensure compliance with transport and safety regulations. During the inspections, authorities examined vehicle fitness certificates, driver qualifications, first-aid kits, fire extinguishers, emergency exit doors, and seating capacity to verify whether schools were following mandatory safety norms for student transport.

Officials expressed concern after finding that some school buses were being operated by drivers without valid heavy vehicle driving licences. Authorities warned that transporting children with drivers lacking proper qualifications poses a serious safety risk.

"Strict action will be taken against anyone endangering the lives of children," officials cautioned, stressing that negli-

gence in school transport safety would not be tolerated.

According to Medchal in-charge DTO Srinivas, a total of 39 school buses were fined for violating various transport and safety regulations within the Medchal RTO limits. He warned that authorities would not hesitate to seize vehicles if managements continue to violate norms. The inspections come in the backdrop of several school bus accidents reported across the country in recent times, prompting governments to issue stricter safety guidelines for educational institutions. However, criticism continues that some school managements are still failing to implement proper safety measures.

Parents have expressed concern over the transportation of children in buses that allegedly fail to meet mandatory standards, saying student safety cannot be compromised.

Locals opined that school buses are not merely transport vehicles but carry the responsibility of protecting children entrusted to schools by parents. They stressed that regular inspections, rather than one-time enforcement drives, are essential to ensure long-term safety and accountability in student transportation systems.

## School Reopening Celebrations Held at Sri Abhyas Kids World

**Ramanthapur, June 15 | TPN Bureau**

Ramanthapur: The reopening celebrations for the new academic year were held with enthusiasm at Sri Abhyas Kids World Pre-Primary School in Ramanthapur on Monday, creating a cheerful and vibrant atmosphere for young students returning to school after the break.

The school campus was beautifully decorated with flowers and colourful balloons to welcome children on the first day of the academic session. Teachers greeted the students warmly as they arrived at the campus, making the reopening a memorable experience for the little ones.

Students were seen entering the school with excitement and joy, happily meeting their friends and teachers after the holidays. The enthusiasm among children added a festive spirit to the occasion as they embraced the beginning of a new learning journey.

To make the reopening celebrations more enjoyable, the school organised a range of engaging activities, including songs, games, and cultural programmes specially designed for young children. The activities created an atmosphere of fun and learning, helping students feel comfortable and excited about returning to school.

Speaking on the occasion,



the school management said the institution remains committed to providing quality education while also focusing on nurturing discipline, moral values, and creativity among children. They stated that teaching methods would continue to encourage overall personality development and provide a strong foundation for students during their early years of education.

The cheerful smiles and energetic participation of children on the first day emerged as one of the highlights of the celebrations, reflecting the positive environment created by the school staff and management.

Parents who accompanied their children to school appreciated the arrangements made

by the institution and expressed happiness over the pleasant and child-friendly atmosphere created on campus. They praised the efforts taken to ensure that children felt welcomed and comfortable on the first day of school.

Several parents also hoped the school would continue maintaining the same encouraging and joyful environment throughout the academic year to support the learning and overall development of their children.

The reopening event marked the beginning of a new academic year filled with enthusiasm, learning, and memorable experiences for students at Sri Abhyas Kids World.

## Hyderabad CPVC Sajjanar Launches Road Safety Awareness Drive for Students

**Secunderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau**

Secunderabad: A road safety awareness programme titled 'Welcome Back to School' was organised at Vidyanagar Government High School (SVES School) on Monday to educate students about traffic rules and safe road practices.

The programme was conducted under the supervision of the Begumpet Traffic Training Institute (TTI) with the aim of creating awareness among students on road safety and encouraging responsible behaviour on roads from a young age.

The initiative was taken as per the directions of Hyderabad Police Commissioner V. C. Sajjanar and Traffic Joint Commissioner Joel Davis along with senior officials.

As part of the programme, students were warmly welcomed with chocolates and flowers, while placards carrying road safety messages were displayed across the school premises. Awareness sessions were conducted on traffic regulations, road signs, pedestrian safety, the importance of zebra crossings, footpaths, and the need to follow traffic signals.

Traffic Inspector Nagula Ashok explained road safety measures to students through presentations and demonstrations. He advised students to remain cautious while crossing roads, avoid distractions



caused by mobile phones, and always use zebra crossings for safety. He also encouraged students to motivate their family members to follow traffic regulations and contribute to safer roads.

Hyderabad Traffic Police stated that road safety is a shared responsibility of every citizen and expressed hope that students would become ambassadors of road safety in

society by spreading awareness among their peers and families. School Headmistress Rani, teachers, school staff, students, and TTI personnel Sai Kumar and Krishna participated in the event. The programme received an enthusiastic response from students, teachers, and staff members, highlighting the importance of road safety education at an early age.

## Begumpet PS Inspector Saidulu Promotes Quality Education in Government Schools

**Secunderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau**

Secunderabad: Students at the Zilla Parishad High School (ZPHS) in Old Customs Basti, Begumpet, received a warm welcome on Monday as schools reopened after the summer vacation, marking the beginning of the new academic year with enthusiasm.

The reopening event was attended by Begumpet Police Station Inspector Saidulu, Sub-Inspector Shafi, Headmaster Yadagiri, along with school teachers and staff.

As part of the programme, textbooks for the new academic year were distributed to students by the guests. In addition, nearly 300 steel plates and glasses, collected with the support of donors and voluntary



organisations, were handed over to students to support school facilities.

Students who performed exceptionally well in the previous academic year were also

felicitated and appreciated for their achievements.

Speaking on the occasion, Inspector Saidulu emphasised that government schools are capable of providing quality

## AE Nagaraj Announces Power Disruption in Nacharam on June 16

**Nacharam, June 15 | TPN Bureau**

Nacharam: Residents of several areas in Nacharam division will experience temporary power disruption on Tuesday as part of maintenance and safety works being undertaken ahead of the monsoon season, according to Assistant Engineer (AE) Nagaraj of TGSPDCL.

In a statement issued on Monday, AE Nagaraj informed that electricity supply will be interrupted in parts of Nacharam division from 10 am to 3 pm on June 16. The outage is being carried out to replace old electric poles and repair sections of power lines to ensure public safety during the rainy season.

The areas likely to be affected by the scheduled power interruption include Kakatiya Nagar, Annapurna Colony, Ravindra Nagar Colony, and Raghavendra Nagar in Nacharam division.

Officials said the maintenance work is essential to strengthen the electricity infrastructure and prevent disruptions or accidents during heavy rains and adverse weather conditions.



Appealing to the public for cooperation, AE Nagaraj requested residents to make necessary arrangements in advance and bear with the temporary inconvenience in the interest of safety and uninterrupted power supply in the future.

TGSPDCL officials also urged residents of the affected areas to remain cautious during the maintenance period and cooperate with electricity department staff carrying out the works.



## Zonal Commissioner Pinkesh Kumar Praises Clean Chandragiri Nagar

**Quthbullapur, June 15 | TPN Bureau**

Quthbullapur: Zonal Commissioner Pinkesh Kumar on Monday appreciated the efforts of residents in maintaining cleanliness at Chandragiri Nagar under Gajularamaram Circle after the successful and permanent removal of a Garbage Vulnerable Point (GVP) in the colony.

During a field visit, the Zonal Commissioner inspected the area that was once affected by garbage accumulation and had caused inconvenience to local residents. He praised the transformation of the location into a clean and hygienic environment, describing it as a model example of community participation in sanitation efforts.

Recognising the contribution of local residents, Pinkesh Kumar felicitated people who played an active role in removing the GVP and maintaining cleanliness in the colony. He stated that clean and healthy neighbourhoods can only be achieved through public participation and collective responsibility.

Later, the Zonal Commissioner inspected waterlogging-prone areas near Kailash Hills and Malla Reddy Hospital to assess preparedness for the monsoon season. He instructed officials to take preventive measures to ensure that residents do not face water stagnation issues during heavy rains.

He also directed officials to maintain constant coordination with Hydra staff to address emergency situations effectively. Stressing the need for preparedness, he advised authorities to keep additional motor pumps ready in advance to prevent inconvenience to the public during the rainy season. The Zonal Commissioner emphasised that proactive planning and swift coordination among departments are crucial in preventing urban flooding and ensuring smooth civic services.

The field inspection was attended by Deputy Commissioner Venkat Ramulu, officials from the Solid Waste Management and Engineering departments, along with staff from various civic wings.

ment through academic success.

The officials also expressed gratitude to donors who contributed to the welfare and educational development of students studying in government schools. They highlighted the importance of community support in strengthening educational opportunities for children. Inspector Saidulu appealed to more donors and well-wishers to come forward in the future and extend assistance to students, ensuring better facilities and opportunities for their overall development.

The programme concluded on a positive note, with students, teachers, and guests expressing optimism for a successful and productive academic year ahead.



## Nalgonda Collector B. Chandrasekhar Launches School Reopening Programme

Nalgonda, June 15 | TPN Bureau

District Collector B. Chandrasekhar said the government's primary objective is to provide quality education to students through government schools.

On the occasion of the reopening of schools after summer vacation, the Collector on Monday visited the Komati Reddy Prateek Government High School in Bottuguda, Nalgonda district headquarters, and formally inaugurated classroom activities for the new academic year.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said all government schools, residential schools, model schools, and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) across the district resumed classes on Monday in accordance with state government directives.

He stated that the Telangana government is giving special priority to education and is committed to ensuring quality learning for students studying in government institutions. As part of this initiative, students will be provided with textbooks, midday meals, and breakfast facilities to improve

nutrition and academic performance.

The Collector said arrangements are being made for the implementation of the break-fast programme and added that students would soon receive new uniforms.

He further stated that several village sarpanches have requested the reopening of some primary schools that were previously closed in the district. The administration is considering reopening those schools to ensure better access to education for children in rural areas.

Highlighting infrastructure improvements, B. Chandrasekhar said minor repair works have been undertaken in schools and hostels to make them more comfortable and student-friendly ahead of the new academic year.

District Educational Officer Sushinder Rao, school management representatives, local corporators, and other officials were present during the programme. The Collector reiterated that strengthening government schools and ensuring better educational facilities remain a priority for the district administration.



## Ramachander Rao Says Congress Allegations Against CEC Unfounded

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Telangana BJP president Ramachander Rao on Monday dismissed the Congress party's allegations against the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), calling them baseless and politically motivated. He said the Congress had no grounds to question the functioning of the Election Commission and accused the party of attempting to create unnecessary controversy around the ongoing voter list revision process.

Speaking to the media in Hyderabad, Ramachander Rao said the Congress party itself had, in the past, honoured former Chief Election Commissioners with Padma awards and Rajya Sabha positions. He questioned why the same party was now criticising the constitutional body and raising doubts over its impartiality.

Referring to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process of electoral rolls, the BJP leader said the exercise was not new and had already been conducted several times in the past. According to him, the SIR process has taken place nearly 12 times earlier and is a standard procedure aimed at ensuring clean and accurate voter lists. He explained that all political parties appoint Booth Level Agents (BLA-2s) during the voter list revision process to verify voter details and raise objections if necessary. "Every political party appoints BLA-2 representatives. If there are objections regarding voter en-

tries, they can immediately bring them to the notice of officials," he said.

Ramachander Rao asserted that the objective of the SIR process was to identify and remove duplicate and fake voter entries from electoral rolls. He clarified that genuine voters would not be affected and stressed that the revision process was being conducted transparently under the supervision of the Election Commission. "The process only removes fake and duplicate votes. It is intended to strengthen the credibility of elections and ensure fairness in the democratic system," he stated. Rejecting allegations of political interference, the Telangana BJP chief said the voter revision process had no connection with the BJP or the Central government. He maintained that the Election Commission works independently and according to established legal procedures. Ramachander Rao also accused the Congress of unnecessarily politicising an administrative process for political gains. He urged political parties to cooperate in maintaining transparent and error-free voter lists instead of spreading misinformation. His remarks come amid growing political exchanges between the Congress and BJP over the SIR process, with both parties trading accusations regarding electoral transparency ahead of upcoming political developments in the state.

## Warangal Raptors Win National Dance Championship Title

Warangal, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Warangal: The Warangal Raptors dance troupe has brought laurels to the region by securing the first prize in the Senior Group category at a prestigious national-level dance competition held recently, marking a significant achievement on the national cultural stage.

Competing against several top-tier dance groups from across the country, the team delivered a powerful and highly synchronized performance that impressed both judges and audience members. Their presentation stood out for its creativity, coordination, and energetic choreography, earning them the championship title.

The troupe Warangal Raptors showcased a performance that combined traditional expressions with modern dance elements, reflecting both artistic depth and technical excellence. Judges reportedly appreciated the group's stage presence and innovative choreography, which set them apart from other finalists.

A major highlight of the winning performance was the contribution of dancer Sreeksa, whose expressive movements, graceful execution, and



strong stage presence received special appreciation. Her performance played a key role in elevating the overall impact of the troupe's presentation.

The victory has been widely celebrated in Warangal, with congratulations pouring in from local residents, art enthusiasts, and members of the cultural community. Many have praised the team for representing the region at a national platform and bringing recognition to local talent.

Speaking after the win, members of the troupe expressed gratitude to their trainers, supporters, and fami-

lies for their constant encouragement. They said the achievement was the result of months of rigorous practice, discipline, and teamwork.

The success of Warangal Raptors is being seen as a proud moment for Telangana's cultural arts community, highlighting the growing talent and competitiveness of local dance groups on national stages.

With this landmark victory, the team has set a new benchmark for aspiring dancers in the region and is expected to receive further opportunities to perform at major cultural events in the future.



## Public Drinking on Roads Near Suraram Wine Shop Raises Concerns

Quthbullapur, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Quthbullapur: Residents of Suraram have raised serious concerns over alleged public drinking in front of Aryan Wines, where groups of people are reportedly consuming alcohol openly on the roadside every evening, turning the area into a nuisance zone.

According to locals, the stretch along the Balanagar-Narsapur main road witnesses heavy traffic throughout the day, but in the evenings it becomes crowded with groups of alcohol consumers sitting along the roadside. This has been causing inconvenience to commuters, pedestrians, and nearby residents.

Residents said the situation is particularly disturbing for school students, women, officegoers, and motorists who pass through the busy route. They alleged that the open consumption of alcohol not only creates discomfort but also increases the risk of accidents due to obstruction of traffic flow.

Locals further claimed that repeated complaints to wine shop management have not resulted in any improvement. They sarcastically remarked

that while the premises is designated as a permit room, the actual drinking activity appears to have shifted onto the road itself.

They also questioned the role of the Excise Department, alleging that inspections remain limited to records and paperwork, with little ground-level enforcement. Residents expressed concern over the lack of monitoring despite visible violations occurring daily.

"There seems to be no control at the site, and the road has effectively turned into an open bar in the evenings," locals said, urging authorities to take immediate action.

With increasing public dissatisfaction, residents have demanded that excise officials conduct regular inspections and ensure strict enforcement of rules to prevent roadside drinking and restore order in the area.

They also urged authorities to initiate action against the wine shop management if violations continue, stressing the need to safeguard public safety and ensure smooth traffic movement on the busy highway.

## Modi Government's 12-Year Rule Built Strong Foundation: BJP Leaders

Secunderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Secunderabad: Marking 12 years of the Central government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP leaders said the NDA regime has laid a strong foundation for India's development across economic, welfare, infrastructure, and national security sectors.

At a media conference held under the leadership of Secunderabad Mahankali district president Bharat Goud, BJP State General Secretary Goutham and State spokesperson Sangappa highlighted the achievements of the Modi government.

They said the trust placed by the people in Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014 had resulted in significant progress in governance and development. They credited flagship initiatives such as GST, Make in India, Startup India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat for strengthening the economy and creating employment opportunities.

The leaders also highlighted welfare schemes including Ayushman Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and Swachh Bharat Mission, stating that they



improved the living standards of millions of citizens.

On infrastructure development, they pointed to expansion of national highways, expressways, Vande Bharat trains, airports, metro rail systems, and modern railway stations as symbols of rapid progress. They also praised Digital India, UPI payments, Aadhaar services, and Direct Benefit Transfer for improving transparency and efficiency in governance. On national security, they referred to surgical strikes, the Balakot airstrike, abrogation of Article 370, Citizenship Amendment Act, and

the Ram Temple construction as key milestones.

They further stated that during the COVID-19 pandemic, India successfully carried out one of the world's largest vaccination drives and provided free food grains to millions of families. Calling for collective participation in the vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047," BJP leaders urged party workers to take the government's achievements to the public. The event was attended by district president Bharat Goud, district in-charge Nandanam Divakar, senior leader Venkataramani, and other party leaders.

## Telangana Govt Approves 140 More Vehicles for HYDRAA

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has approved the procurement of 140 additional vehicles and disaster response equipment for HYDRAA to strengthen emergency, rescue and monsoon-related operations across Hyderabad. The approval was granted through a government order issued by the Metropolitan Area and Urban Development (MA&UD) Department on Monday after HYDRAA informed the government that its existing fleet was inadequate to handle expanding operational responsibilities. Officials said HYDRAA's workload has significantly increased due to the expansion of its jurisdiction, a rise in the number of Disaster Response Force (DRF) teams, the creation of new asset protection zones and the need to undertake emergency monsoon operations across the city.

To address these growing requirements, the government has now cleared the purchase of additional vehicles and DRF equipment aimed at improving disaster response, rescue operations and field coordina-



tion. Under the approved proposal, HYDRAA will procure 21 DRF trucks, 54 multi-utility vehicles (MUVs) for field teams, 37 motorcycles, two high-end multi-purpose vehicles (MPVs), one additional MPV, two troop carrier vans, two buses and 21 sets of DRF equipment. The government had earlier permitted HYDRAA to procure 50 percent of the proposed vehicles and equipment during the first phase. HYDRAA officials informed the government that the procurement process for that phase had already been completed following prescribed procedures. Officials said the newly sanctioned vehi-

cles and equipment will enhance HYDRAA's capacity to respond quickly during emergencies such as floods, heavy rainfall, waterlogging and rescue operations, particularly during the monsoon season. The expanded fleet is also expected to improve coordination among field personnel, strengthen disaster preparedness and ensure faster mobilisation of teams during critical situations across Hyderabad.

Authorities believe the move will significantly improve HYDRAA's operational efficiency and readiness as the city prepares for increased rainfall activity during the monsoon period.



## Telangana Karate Team Wins 11 Medals at National Championship

Hyderabad, June 15 | TPN Bureau

Telangana karate players delivered an impressive performance at the National Karate Championship 2026, winning a total of 11 medals, including 2 gold, 4 silver, and 5 bronze medals, in a landmark achievement for the state.

The championship was organised under the aegis of KIO in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, from June 4 to 7, with participants from across the country competing in various categories.

According to State General Secretary Malyala Ramaswamy, students from Telangana were selected to represent the state and participated in the sub-junior, cadet, and junior categories, competing in multiple events. He stated that Telangana achieved a historic feat by securing 11 medals for the first time at the national-level karate championship, reflecting the growing talent and dedication of young karate athletes

in the state. The outstanding performance of the Telangana contingent has been widely appreciated, with coaches and players receiving praise for their hard work and disciplined preparation ahead of the championship.

On the occasion, Telangana Sports Karate Do Association President and TPCC President B. Mahesh Kumar Goud congratulated the medal-winning students and coaches for bringing recognition to Telangana at the national level.

He appreciated the commitment shown by the athletes and expressed confidence that such achievements would inspire more youngsters to take up karate and excel in sports.

The association also stated that efforts are being made to provide better training opportunities and support to budding karate players, aiming for stronger performances in upcoming national and international competitions.

# JOURNALISTS' PENSION SCHEME- AN EMBARRASSMENT TO THE FOURTH PILLAR OF DEMOCRACY

Every government proudly proclaims that journalism is the fourth pillar of democracy. Journalists are the ones who question the abuse of power, bring people's issues before those in authority, and risk their lives to deliver news—from wars and disasters to floods and crises. Yet, when one looks at the reality faced by journalists after retirement, it is impossible not to feel disturbed. Many senior journalists who have dedicated decades of service to the media industry are today struggling through an uncertain life without financial security. The fact that journalists who worked for twenty or thirty years receive pensions of merely 500, 1,000, or 2,000 per month is not only absurd but also deeply humiliating.

I have spent four decades in journalism. I worked alone for 24 years with Eenadu and ETV2 News Channel. Today, I am 65 years old, and the pension I receive is less than 2,000 per month. Health problems such as hypertension and diabetes are common among journalists due to the nature of the profession. Considering these realities and the current inflationary conditions, such a pension is insufficient even to cover medical expenses. This is not my problem alone. Thousands of veteran journalists across the Telugu-speaking states are silently enduring the same hardship.

Journalism is a profession, not an ordinary job. It is a responsibility marked by constant pressure and uncertainty. Many journalists work for small newspapers or as freelancers. They often do not have access to provident funds, gratuity, or retirement benefits. As a result, they enter old age without any financial security. This is not merely an individual problem—it is a warning sign for society. If journalists themselves are not secure, democracy and the free press that sustains it are also at risk of becoming weaker. Unfortunately, the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have shown little inclination to follow the example set by other states. Governments often claim to be committed to journalists' welfare, but the reality is quite different. Several states in India have recognized the need for social security for journalists and have implemented dedicated pension schemes.

The Bihar government's "Bihar Patrakar Samman Pension



Scheme" is among the most generous journalist pension schemes in the country. The pension, which initially stood at 6,000 per month, has gradually been increased to 15,000. While introducing the scheme, the Bihar government stated that journalists are the fourth pillar of democracy and deserve to live with dignity and respect. The Haryana government has increased the monthly pension for journalists to 15,000. The government of Kerala, under Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, demonstrated a welfare-oriented approach by increasing journalists' pensions from 11,500 to 13,000 during its final budget. The succeeding government has continued the scheme.

Even the relatively small state of Jharkhand has implemented a Journalist Pension Scheme with the objective of honouring senior journalists. It provides approximately 7,000 per month to eligible journal-

ists. The government has stated that journalists are symbols of public awareness and democratic consciousness. Similarly, the West Bengal government has introduced special welfare measures for journalists under its welfare scheme, including a pension of 7,500, emergency financial assistance, and medical support. Tamil Nadu also operates a special pension scheme for senior journalists. Assam provides 8,000 per month to journalists who have completed at least twenty years of service and reached the age of sixty. Even the Union Territory of Puducherry offers a pension of 6,000 per month, along with family pension benefits, to journalists who have completed twenty years of service.

### Why This Neglect in the Telugu States?

Although welfare measures for journalists are frequently announced in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, a dignified pen-

sion system has never truly taken shape. Many senior journalists spend their retirement years moving from office to office, appealing for the implementation of a proper pension scheme. During their careers, journalists freely interacted with chief ministers, ministers, IAS and IPS officers, and government officials while gathering news. Yet after retirement, many find themselves in a helpless position, unable even to approach officials for assistance. Some journalists feel humiliated by the very act of asking for a pension.

In several tragic cases, the families of deceased journalists have struggled even to arrange funeral expenses due to the lack of financial support. Such indifference toward individuals who played a crucial role in safeguarding democracy is deeply unfortunate. Journalists who spent decades exposing abuses of power should not have to spend their final years

pleading with governments for their own survival. **Lower Than Social Welfare Pensions—Is This Not an Insult?**

Another painful reality is that many journalists receive pensions that are lower than the social welfare pensions provided by state governments to widows, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and traditional workers. At a time when governments are providing several thousand rupees every month under various welfare schemes, granting pensions of merely 500, 1,000, or 2,000 to journalists who served democracy for decades reveals the low priority accorded to this profession.

Journalism is not a routine occupation. It is a demanding profession characterized by constant pressure and instability. Many journalists spend their careers in small organiza-

tions or freelance work without provident funds, gratuity, or retirement benefits. Consequently, they enter old age without financial security. This is not simply an individual hardship; it is a societal concern. A civilized society should never accept a situation where journalists who devoted their lives to public service are left to struggle financially in their later years.

On one occasion, Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy Shripad Naik stated that he would discuss the issue of pensions for senior journalists with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Speaking at the first National Committee Meeting of the Journalist Federation of India in Goa, he reportedly expressed the Central Government's commitment to ensuring social security for senior journalists across the country. Whether the pension scheme is implemented by the Central Government or by state governments is secondary.

What is important is that governments have a responsibility to implement such a scheme. At a time when some critics argue that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not particularly sympathetic toward journalists, implementing such a scheme would undoubtedly strengthen his reputation and public standing.

### A Minimum Pension of ₹10,000 Is Essential

Given that several states already provide journalist pensions ranging from 6,000 to 15,000 per month, the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana should immediately introduce a comprehensive pension scheme for journalists. A minimum pension of 10,000 per month should be mandatory. Journalists and their associations also demand periodic pension revisions linked to inflation, family pension benefits for surviving spouses, health insurance coverage, and emergency medical assistance.

Providing a dignified old age to journalists who dedicated their lives to democracy is a moral responsibility of governments. The hands that held the pen in service of the people should not be forced to beg for survival in their final years. Ensuring that senior journalists do not suffer financial insecurity in old age is not merely a welfare measure—it is a duty owed by society and the state.



CHENNU PEDDIRAJU  
Sr. Journalist

# "Democracy Today: Challenges in Representing the People's Will"

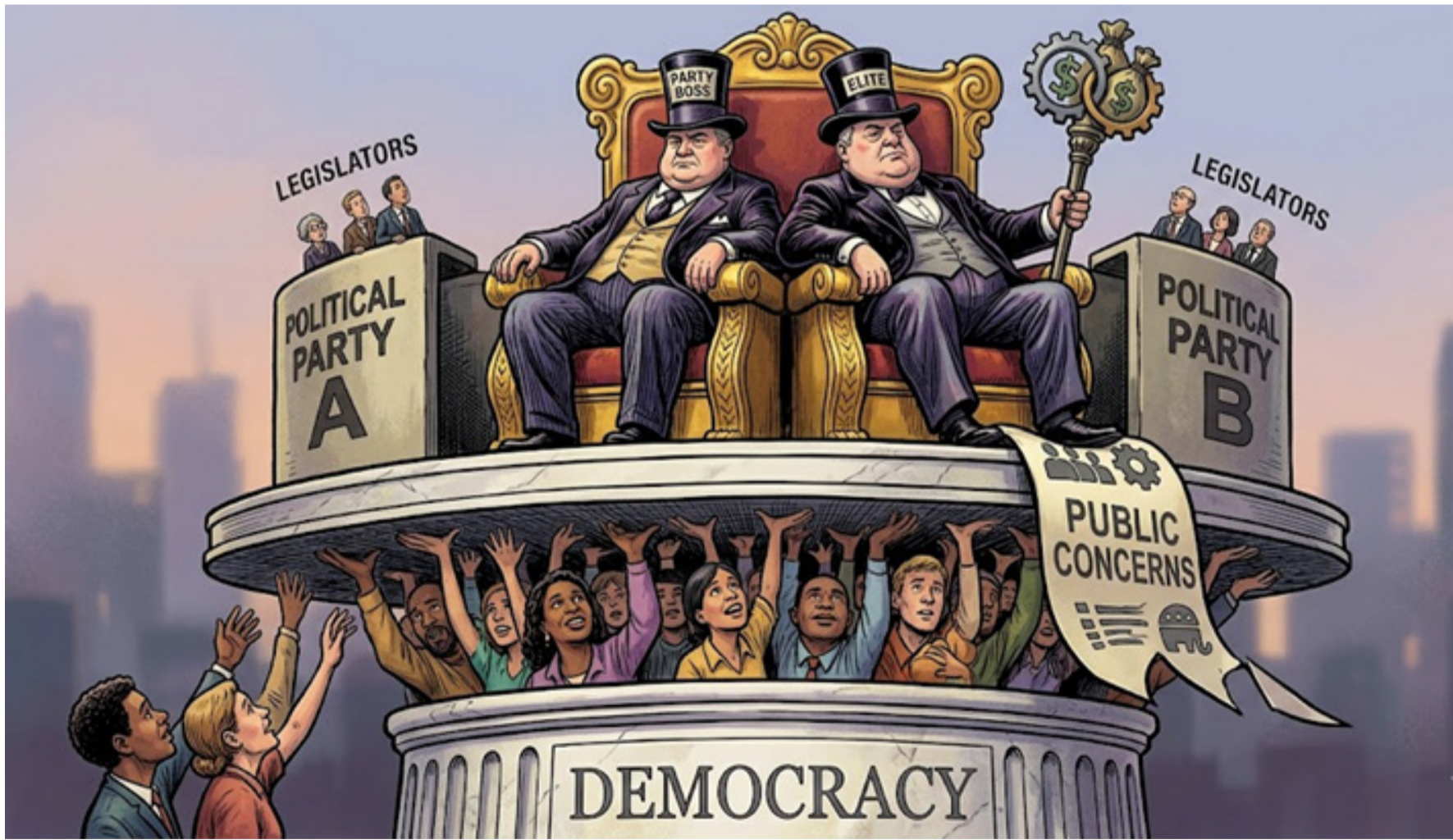
Human society has undergone a long and complex journey of transformation. From tribal systems and monarchies to feudalism and modern nation-states, each phase of social evolution has reflected humanity's quest for better governance, justice, and collective well-being. In this historical progression, democracy emerged as one of the most celebrated achievements, promising government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." Yet, in many parts of the world today, an uncomfortable question demands attention: Has democracy truly fulfilled its promise, or has it gradually transformed into a system controlled by political parties and a small ruling elite?

### Political parties as centres of power

The democratic ideal is founded on the principle that sovereignty belongs to the people. Citizens are expected to participate in governance through free elections, public debate, and civic engagement. Political leaders are meant to be representatives rather than rulers, accountable to the electorate and subject to constitutional limitations. In theory, democracy empowers ordinary citizens and safeguards individual freedoms.

However, the reality often appears quite different. In many contemporary democracies, political parties have become the primary centers of power. Elections, rather than being contests of ideas and public service, frequently revolve around party loyalty, political branding, and the influence of powerful leaders. As a result, democracy risks becoming what some critics describe as "partyocracy"—a system in which political parties dominate public institutions and decision-making processes.

Within such systems, power tends to become concentrated in the hands of a few individuals at the top of party hierarchies. Although millions of citizens cast their votes, the actual selection of candidates, formulation of policies, and alloca-



tion of resources are often controlled by a small inner circle. Political parties may claim to represent the people, but their internal structures frequently lack transparency and democratic accountability. Consequently, the voice of the ordinary citizen becomes increasingly distant from the centres of power.

### Public concerns taking a back seats

This concentration of authority creates several chal-

lenges. First, it weakens genuine representation. Elected officials may feel more accountable to party leadership than to the citizens who elected them. Their political survival often depends on pleasing party bosses rather than addressing public concerns. Second, it discourages independent thinking. Legislators who question party positions may face political isolation or exclusion, reducing meaningful debate and deliberation within democratic institutions.

Furthermore, excessive party control can encourage personality-driven politics. In many countries, democracy increasingly revolves around charismatic leaders whose influence overshadows institutions, policies, and collective decision-making. While elections continue to take place, political competition often becomes centred on individuals rather than ideas. This trend risks transforming democratic governance into a form of elected oligarchy, where a small elite

exercises disproportionate influence over public affairs. **Priorities of powerful stakeholders are uppermost**

Another concern is the growing influence of money and organised interests. Political parties require significant financial resources to contest elections and maintain their organisational machinery. This dependence can make them vulnerable to pressure from wealthy donors, corporate interests, or influential groups.

As a result, public policy may reflect the priorities of powerful stakeholders rather than the broader needs of society.

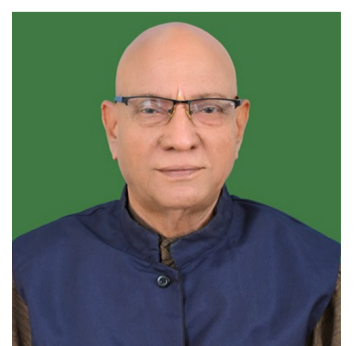
Yet, these shortcomings should not lead us to reject democracy itself. Democracy remains humanity's most effective framework for protecting freedom, ensuring peaceful transitions of power, and enabling public participation. The problem lies not in the democratic ideal but in its imperfect implementation. The challenge is to deepen democracy rather

than abandon it. **Democracy needs thorough overhaul**

True democratic renewal requires greater transparency within political parties, stronger civic institutions, informed citizen participation, and mechanisms that reduce excessive concentration of power. Citizens must move beyond being occasional voters and become active participants in public life. Political parties must serve as instruments of democratic representation, not as vehicles for personal ambition or elite control.

The evolution of society has indeed brought humanity to the democratic phase. But democracy must remain a living process rather than a mere electoral ritual. If it becomes dominated by parties, personalities, or privileged elites, its foundational purpose is compromised. The future of democracy depends on restoring its original spirit: ensuring that power genuinely flows from the people and remains accountable to them.

(This is based on the opinion of Practical Philosopher and Scientific Saint Sri Viswasphorathi in his writings)



Pokkuluri Subbarao  
Veteran Journalist

# Pilgrimage Politics Gains Momentum Ahead of Punjab Assembly Polls

Pilgrimage-based welfare and outreach programmes are emerging as a significant political strategy in Punjab, with both the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) using faith and heritage initiatives to strengthen voter engagement ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections.

The BJP has recently launched the "Panch Teerath Yatra," a pilgrimage programme centred on the legacy of B. R. Ambedkar. The initiative takes participants to key sites associated with Ambedkar's life, including Mhow, Nagpur and Mumbai. Political observers view the programme as an attempt to expand the BJP's influence among Punjab's sizeable Scheduled Caste population, which accounts for nearly 32 per cent of the state's population—the highest proportion in India.

Party leaders have projected the yatra as a tribute to Ambedkar's contributions while also highlighting the



Centre's efforts to preserve and promote his legacy through memorials and heritage projects. Analysts believe the initiative could help the BJP strengthen its presence beyond its traditional urban support base.

Meanwhile, the AAP government has expanded its own pilgrimage initiative, the "Mukhyamantri Teerath Yatra Scheme." Originally introduced for senior citizens, the programme now covers citizens above 50 years of age and

offers free travel to major religious destinations. Recently added circuits include Khatu Shyam, Salasar Balaji, Mathura-Vrindavan, and Haridwar-Rishikesh, broadening its appeal across different communities.

Political analysts note that both programmes represent a growing trend of "competitive pilgrimage politics," where parties seek to establish emotional connections with voters through faith, culture and heritage. While the BJP's cam-

paign focuses on Ambedkar's social justice legacy and Dalit empowerment, AAP's initiative emphasizes religious accessibility and welfare.

The development reflects a broader shift in Punjab's political landscape. Traditional election issues such as agriculture, unemployment, industrial growth and law and order continue to dominate public discourse. However, political parties increasingly recognize that cultural symbolism and welfare-oriented programmes can play a crucial role in shaping voter perceptions.

With nearly two years remaining before the Assembly elections, both parties appear determined to strengthen their social outreach through programmes that combine identity, heritage and public welfare. As political competition intensifies, pilgrimage routes are gradually becoming platforms for voter engagement, transforming faith-based initiatives into an important element of Punjab's evolving electoral strategy.

# Court Permits CBI to Question Key Accused in NEET-UG 2026 Paper Leak Case

A Delhi court on Monday permitted the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to interrogate three accused currently lodged in judicial custody in connection with the alleged NEET-UG 2026 paper leak case. The agency informed the court that the accused are believed to be among the principal conspirators involved in leaking and distributing examination questions before the national medical entrance test held on May 3.

The accused—Manisha Sanjay Waghmare, Dhanunjay Nivrutti Lokhande, and Shubham Madhukar Khairnar—were arrested in May and later remanded to judicial custody. According to the investigating agency, the trio allegedly played a crucial role in facilitating the leak of question papers and their circulation to candidates in exchange for money.

Seeking permission to conduct further questioning, the CBI told the court that additional interrogation was necessary to obtain clarifications and uncover the wider network involved in the examination malpractice. The court accepted the plea, paving the way for investigators to continue their probe from inside the jail premises. Sources indicated that the agency has prepared a schedule for the ques-



tioning process, with Waghmare likely to be interrogated on June 17, Lokhande on June 18, and Khairnar on June 19. Meanwhile, the court also extended the judicial custody of several other accused linked to the case. They were produced before the court through video conferencing and remain under custody as the investigation progresses.

The NEET-UG 2026 controversy erupted after allegations surfaced that examination papers had been leaked prior to the test. Following the allegations and subsequent investigation, the National Testing Agency (NTA) cancelled the examination conducted on May 3. The cancellation affected lakhs of aspiring medical students across the country.

Authorities have since announced a re-examination, which is scheduled to be held on June 21. The case has drawn nationwide attention due to its impact on medical admissions and concerns over the integrity of competitive examinations.

So far, the CBI has arrested 13 individuals in connection with the alleged paper leak. Investigators are examining financial transactions, communication records, and the possible involvement of additional individuals as part of efforts to identify the full extent of the conspiracy. The ongoing probe is expected to play a crucial role in ensuring accountability and restoring confidence in one of India's most important entrance examinations.

# Guarantee Schemes to Continue, Says Karnataka Government

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has firmly stated that the state government's flagship welfare programmes, Gruha Lakshmi and Gruha Jyoti, will continue without interruption, dismissing allegations that the schemes are being withdrawn or curtailed.

The clarification comes amid criticism from opposition parties following the government's decision to invite fresh applications and update beneficiary records under the two popular guarantee schemes. The Gruha Lakshmi programme provides financial assistance of 2,000 per month to eligible women heads of households, while the Gruha Jyoti scheme offers free electricity up to 200 units for domestic consumers.

Addressing the media, Shivakumar said the ongoing verification exercise is intended solely to ensure that benefits reach genuine beneficiaries. He explained that several irregularities had been detected, including instances in which incorrect phone numbers and bank account details led to funds being credited to unintended recipients.

According to the Deputy Chief Minister, the government has identified instances where welfare funds were diverted due to inaccurate beneficiary information. He emphasized that the administration is working to rectify such errors and ensure direct transfer of benefits to the rightful recipients.

Shivakumar accused opposition parties of spreading misinformation regarding the guarantee programmes and reiterated that the Congress government remains fully committed to implementing all its welfare promises. He stressed that the schemes were introduced to support families facing rising living costs and economic challenges.

The government is also taking steps to verify residency and eligibility criteria to ensure that only Karnataka residents receive the benefits. As part of broader welfare reforms, beneficiary identification measures are being strengthened across various schemes, including the Shakti programme that offers free bus travel for women.

Highlighting the significance of the guarantees, Shi-



vakumar said the initiatives have become a model for welfare governance and are being closely watched by other states. He asserted that there is no question of discontinuing the schemes and that they will continue to serve lakhs of families across Karnataka.

The Deputy Chief Minister also expressed concern about reports of welfare funds being misused through fraudulent investment and Ponzi schemes. He said officials have been directed to closely monitor such activities and create awareness among

beneficiaries to prevent exploitation.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to social welfare, Shivakumar said the guarantee schemes have played a crucial role in strengthening household finances, supporting women, and providing relief from inflationary pressures. He assured citizens that the administration would continue to improve implementation mechanisms while ensuring that deserving beneficiaries receive assistance without any disruption.

# Delhi Tribunal Awards ₹92.58 Lakh to Mother of Road Accident Victim

A Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) in Delhi has awarded compensation of ₹92.58 lakh to the mother of a young woman who lost her life in a road accident in Goa nearly a decade ago. The tribunal held that the victim died due to the rash and negligent driving of a mini-bus and directed the insurance company to pay the compensation along with interest.

The case relates to the death of 28-year-old Megha Sehrawat, who sustained fatal injuries after a mini-bus collided with the scooter she was riding on December 30, 2016. Following the tragedy, her mother, Kusum, approached the tribunal seeking compensation, stating that her daughter had been the family's primary support and was financially assisting her.

During the proceedings, the tribunal examined evidence including the First Information Report (FIR), charge sheet, post-mortem report, and other relevant records. It concluded that the accident occurred because of the reckless and negligent driving of

the mini-bus driver. The tribunal also noted that the driver did not appear before the court to challenge or rebut the allegations made against him.

The victim was a highly qualified professional, holding degrees in engineering and management. She was employed with a private company in Mumbai at the time of the accident. Although some employment documents could not be formally verified, the tribunal relied on her bank records, which showed regular salary deposits, to determine her earnings.

Based on the available evidence, the tribunal assessed her net monthly income at ₹64,342. Taking into account her age, educational qualifications, future earning prospects, and the financial dependency of her mother, the court calculated the compensation amount at ₹92.58 lakh.

In addition to the compensation, the tribunal awarded interest at the rate of 7.5 per cent per annum from April 19, 2017, until the final payment is made. The insurance company of the offending vehicle



has been directed to deposit the entire amount within 30 days.

The judgment highlights the importance of ensuring financial justice for families who lose loved ones in road accidents. It also underscores the responsibility of drivers to adhere to traffic rules and exercise caution on roads.

Road accidents continue to claim thousands of lives across the country every year, leaving families devastated both emotionally and financially. Legal experts say such compensation awards serve as an important mechanism to provide relief and support to the dependents of accident victims while reinforcing accountability for negligent driving.

# SC Stays High Court Proceedings on Transgender Rights

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed further proceedings in various High Courts across the country on petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Act, 2026. The move came after the Centre sought consolidation of all pending cases before the apex court to ensure uniform adjudication on the issue.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant agreed to examine the Union Government's plea seeking the transfer of multiple petitions from different High Courts. The Centre argued that allowing separate courts to hear identical constitutional challenges could result in conflicting judgments and legal uncertainty regarding the validity of the legislation.

While issuing notice on the transfer petition, the Supreme Court directed that all ongoing proceedings related to challenges against the Act in High Courts remain stayed until further orders.

The Amendment Act has sparked widespread debate and drawn criticism from transgender rights activists, human rights groups, and members of the LG-BTQ+ community. The central is-



sue revolves around the removal of provisions related to self-identification of gender, a principle that had earlier received judicial recognition through landmark Supreme Court rulings.

Petitioners have contended that the amended law introduces requirements for medical or administrative procedures for gender recognition, which they argue infringe upon fundamental rights such as dignity, privacy,

equality, and bodily autonomy. According to the challengers, the legislation departs from constitutional principles established by previous judicial decisions affirming the right of transgender persons to determine their own gender identity.

The Supreme Court had earlier sought responses from the Centre and other concerned parties on separate petitions questioning the validity of the Act. Several or-

ganizations and individuals have approached courts alleging that the amendments dilute protections previously available to transgender persons.

The law, passed by Parliament in March and subsequently receiving presidential assent, also introduces provisions for graded punishments based on the severity of offences committed against transgender persons. However, critics maintain that certain changes in the legislation undermine the broader rights framework envisioned for the community.

Legal experts believe the Supreme Court's decision to centralize all challenges will ensure a comprehensive examination of the constitutional questions involved and provide a uniform legal interpretation applicable nationwide.

The case is expected to have far-reaching implications for transgender rights, gender recognition policies, and the evolving jurisprudence surrounding equality and personal liberty in India. The Supreme Court is likely to hear the matter in detail after receiving responses from all stakeholders in the coming weeks.

# Congress Demands Resignation of Kerala Vice-Chancellors

A political controversy has erupted in Kerala after three university vice-chancellors attended an event addressed by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat during the organisation's centenary celebrations in Thiruvananthapuram.

Senior Congress leader and AICC General Secretary K.C. Venugopal strongly criticised the participation of the vice-chancellors of Kerala University, Mahatma Gandhi University, and Malayalam University, alleging that their presence reflected an attempt to align Kerala's higher education sector with the RSS.

In a strongly worded statement, Venugopal said that Kerala's universities have long been recognised for their academic excellence, secular outlook, and democratic values. He argued that those entrusted with leading such institutions should remain politically neutral and committed to constitutional principles rather than associating with ideological organisations. Demanding their immedi-



ate resignation, he stated that if the vice-chancellors wished to support the RSS, they should do so openly rather than continue in positions that require impartiality. He further warned that secular and democratic forces in the state would launch protests if they failed to step down.

Venugopal emphasised that the qualifications required to head prestigious universities

include academic integrity, commitment to secularism, democracy, and constitutional values—not allegiance to any political or ideological group.

The issue has triggered a wider debate in Kerala's academic and political circles regarding the role of university administrators and the importance of maintaining institutional neutrality in higher education.

# Iran Seeks Maritime Fees Clause in Strait of Hormuz Deal

Iran has reportedly secured the inclusion of a significant maritime provision in its framework agreement with the United States, requiring ships using the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz to pay fees for maritime services, according to reports published by Iran's Fars News Agency.

Quoting an informed source, the agency stated that Iranian negotiators introduced the clause during the final stages of discussions before the agreement was announced. The provision reportedly emphasizes the sovereignty of Iran and Oman over the Strait of Hormuz and acknowledges the payment of fees for services provided in the waterway.

According to the report, the revised memorandum of understanding explicitly refers to "maritime services," a term that Iranian officials interpret as recognition of their right to collect service charges from vessels passing through the strait.

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most strategically important maritime chokepoints. Located between Iran and Oman, it serves as a



critical gateway connecting the Persian Gulf with global shipping routes. A substantial portion of the world's crude oil and liquefied natural gas exports passes through the narrow waterway every day, making it essential to global energy security.

Iranian officials have long argued that maintaining navigation safety, maritime monitoring, and security operations in the region involves significant costs. The reported clause is being viewed in Tehran as a diplomatic achievement that strengthens recognition of regional sovereignty and maritime

responsibilities.

The Fars report stated that the inclusion of the phrase "maritime services" reflects an understanding by the United States that such services warrant compensation. However, neither Washington nor other parties involved in the negotiations have publicly confirmed the interpretation or provided details regarding how such fees would be calculated, collected, or enforced.

Analysts say the provision, if formally implemented, could have important implications for international shipping companies and energy markets. Any additional costs

associated with transit through the Strait of Hormuz may influence freight charges, insurance premiums, and transportation expenses for oil and gas exports.

Despite these concerns, observers note that the agreement appears aimed at ensuring stability and uninterrupted navigation through one of the world's busiest maritime corridors. Supporters argue that a structured framework for maritime services could help improve safety, coordination, and operational efficiency in the region.

The reported clause comes amid broader diplomatic efforts to ease tensions in the Middle East and secure long-term stability in key international trade routes. As details of the agreement continue to emerge, governments, shipping operators, and energy markets will be closely monitoring its implementation and potential economic impact.

The Strait of Hormuz remains a focal point of global strategic interest, with developments in the region carrying consequences far beyond the Middle East.

# Israel Signals Defiance Despite New Middle East Peace Initiative

Fresh divisions have emerged over a proposed Middle East peace agreement as Israeli leaders signaled that the country would continue its military operations and security presence in key conflict zones despite international optimism surrounding the deal.

The latest peace initiative received support from several world leaders, including Pedro Sánchez, who described it as the beginning of a "new chapter" for the Middle East. In a message posted on social media, Sánchez urged the international community to embrace diplomacy over conflict.

"Let us celebrate. But let us not forget. And let us learn, once and for all, that war is a failure. Dialogue and diplomacy are the only way forward," he said.

However, Israeli officials quickly moved to distance themselves from expectations that the agreement would lead to an immediate change in the country's security strategy.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz announced that Israeli forces would remain deployed in security zones across Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza for an indefinite period. He stated that the military presence was necessary to protect Israeli communities and borders from militant threats.

According to Katz, Israel



would continue maintaining security control in these areas and would respond with "full force" to any attacks or provocations from hostile groups or states. The minister stressed that the security of Israeli citizens remained the government's highest priority.

The statement underscores Israel's determination to preserve what it views as strategic defensive positions, even as diplomatic efforts seek to reduce tensions in the region.

Further criticism of the peace initiative came from far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir. In a strongly worded social media post, Ben-Gvir declared that any agreement brokered by U.S. President Donald Trump would not be binding on Israel.

"The people of Israel are an eternal people and do not fear a long road," Ben-Gvir wrote,

emphasizing national strength, sovereignty, and resistance to external pressure.

His remarks reflect ongoing divisions within Israel's political establishment regarding international peace efforts and the future of security arrangements in the region.

While diplomatic circles welcomed the prospect of reduced hostilities and greater stability, Israel's latest statements indicate that significant challenges remain before any lasting peace can be achieved. Analysts note that the success of the agreement will depend on whether regional actors can bridge deep political and security differences that have fueled decades of conflict.

The coming weeks are expected to be critical in determining whether the peace initiative can translate into meaningful progress on the ground.

# Israel Vows Indefinite Presence in Lebanon, Syria and Gaza

Israel has declared that it will not withdraw from territories it currently controls in southern Lebanon, Syria, and the Gaza Strip, signalling a firm security stance despite ongoing diplomatic developments involving Iran and the United States.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz on Monday stated that Israeli forces would remain in the areas under their control for an indefinite period, describing their presence as essential for protecting Israel's borders and citizens from potential threats. His remarks marked the first official response from the Israeli government following the announcement of a preliminary framework agreement between Iran and the United States.

The interim understanding between Washington and Tehran is expected to be formally signed during talks scheduled to take place in Geneva later this week. However, Katz made it clear that the agreement would not alter Israel's security policies in the region.

According to the Defence Minister, Israeli troops will continue operating in strategic locations in southern Lebanon,



parts of Syria, and the Gaza Strip to prevent attacks by hostile groups. He emphasized that Israel would retain the freedom to act against organizations it considers threats to national security.

Katz also issued a strong warning to Iran, stating that any direct or indirect attack against Israel in response to Israeli military operations in Lebanon would be met with a powerful response.

"If Iran chooses to target Israel because of our actions against Hezbollah or other hostile forces, Israel will re-

spond with great force," he said.

The comments come amid heightened regional tensions and ongoing military operations. Iran has reportedly linked broader discussions on regional stability to a reduction in Israeli military activity against Hezbollah in Lebanon, a group backed by Tehran.

Over the past two and a half years, Israel has expanded its military presence in several neighboring territories amid conflicts and security operations. Reports indicate that areas currently under Israeli

control across Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria amount to approximately 1,000 square kilometers, an area comparable in size to New York City.

Political analysts view Katz's remarks as a signal that Israel intends to prioritize security considerations over diplomatic developments involving other regional actors. The statement also reflects concerns within Israel about the long-term influence of Iran and Iran-backed groups operating near its borders.

The announcement is likely to draw criticism from several regional governments and international observers who have called for de-escalation and renewed diplomatic engagement. At the same time, Israeli officials maintain that continued military deployment is necessary to prevent future attacks and ensure stability along sensitive border areas.

As negotiations between Iran and the United States move forward, developments on the ground in Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza are expected to remain a key factor influencing the broader security situation across the Middle East.

# Russian Airstrikes Kill Nine, Damage Historic Kyiv Monastery

Russia launched one of its largest aerial assaults on Ukraine in recent weeks, killing at least nine people, injuring dozens, and causing extensive damage to civilian infrastructure, including the historic Kyiv Pechersk Lavra monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of Ukraine's most significant religious landmarks.

According to Ukrainian authorities, the overnight attack involved a massive barrage of missiles and drones targeting Kyiv and several other regions. The assault resulted in widespread destruction, damaged residential buildings, disrupted power supplies, and sparked fires across the capital.

The Kyiv Pechersk Lavra monastery, founded in 1051 and regarded as a symbol of Ukraine's spiritual and cultural heritage, was reportedly struck during the attack. Flames engulfed parts of the monastery complex, causing serious damage to the centuries-old site.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko condemned the strike, describing it as an attack not only on civilians but also on the nation's cultural heritage. Religious leaders and government officials accused Russia of deliberately targeting symbols of Ukrainian identity.

Kyiv military administration chief Tymur Tkachenko said four people were killed in the capital



alone, while about 30 others sustained injuries. Nearly 140,000 residents were temporarily left without electricity after power infrastructure was damaged.

Ukraine's Air Force reported that Russia launched 70 missiles and 611 drones overnight. Air defense systems intercepted 50 missiles and 582 drones, though several ballistic missiles penetrated defenses and struck their targets.

The attacks extended beyond Kyiv. In Kharkiv, five emergency service personnel were killed when a second strike hit rescue workers responding to an earlier attack. Additional casualties were reported in Sumy and other regions.

Meanwhile, neighboring Poland activated fighter jets and heightened air defense readiness amid concerns that Russian missiles or drones could stray into NATO airspace. Polish authorities later confirmed that no airspace violation had occurred.

Ukraine also carried out retaliatory drone strikes inside Russia. Russian officials reported that three people were killed and several others injured, including a child, in a drone attack on the city of Tula. Ukrainian forces additionally targeted transport infrastructure connecting Crimea with Russian-controlled territories.

The renewed escalation comes as diplomatic efforts to end the war continue. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy recently held talks with Donald Trump regarding possible pathways toward peace. However, prospects for a ceasefire remain uncertain after Russian President Vladimir Putin rejected proposals for direct negotiations involving European and American participation.

As the conflict enters its fifth year, both sides continue to exchange large-scale strikes, while hopes for a diplomatic breakthrough remain elusive.

# Pro-Palestinian Protesters Walk Out During Sundar Pichai's Address

A group of pro-Palestinian student activists staged a walk-out during the commencement ceremony at Stanford University on Sunday while Sundar Pichai was delivering the keynote address to graduating students.

The demonstration was organized by the university's chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), along with several allied student groups. Protest organizers had announced the action in advance, citing objections to Google's business ties and technological cooperation related to Israel.

As Pichai addressed graduates at Stanford Stadium, dozens of students reportedly stood up and left the ceremony carrying Palestinian flags and chanting slogans including "Free Palestine." Videos circulating on social media showed the protesters exiting the venue in an orderly manner while other attendees remained seated.

Before the event, organizers had criticized the selection of

Pichai as commencement speaker, arguing that technology companies should take a stronger stance regarding the ongoing conflict in Gaza. Student activists described the walkout as a symbolic protest against what they termed corporate involvement in surveillance and military-related technologies.

Despite the demonstration, the ceremony continued without major disruption. Pichai, who earned his master's degree from Stanford in 1995 and currently serves as CEO of Google and its parent company Alphabet, focused his speech on optimism, innovation, and leadership in challenging times.

Addressing the graduating class, Pichai acknowledged the uncertainty facing young people amid global conflicts, economic concerns, and rapid technological change. He encouraged students to remain hopeful and shape their futures through determination and creativity.



"We don't get to choose the world we graduate into, but we do get to choose how we frame our circumstances," he told graduates, urging them to pursue ambitious goals and embrace difficult challenges.

Pichai also reflected on his personal journey from India to Silicon Valley, highlighting the importance of resilience, adaptability, and lifelong learning. He advised students to focus on meaningful work that excites them and contributes positively to society. The commencement ceremony attracted more than 20,000 attendees,

including approximately 3,600 graduates, making it one of Stanford's largest graduating classes in recent years.

The protest reflects a broader trend seen across universities in the United States, where commencement ceremonies and campus events have increasingly become platforms for demonstrations related to the Israel-Gaza conflict. Student activism surrounding the issue has intensified since the outbreak of war following the October 2023 attacks and the subsequent military campaign in Gaza.

# Trump Claims US Could Become 'Guardian of the Middle East' Under Iran Deal

US President Donald Trump has made a series of striking remarks regarding the proposed US-Iran peace framework, claiming that the United States could become the "guardian of the Middle East" if Iran fails to comply with the terms of a final agreement.

In an interview with The New York Times, Trump said the recently announced framework agreement between the United States and Iran aims to permanently end military hostilities and establish a path toward resolving disputes over Iran's nuclear programme. The agreement is expected to be formally signed in Switzerland on June 19. Trump revealed that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had nearly jeopardized the diplomatic process through a recent Israeli airstrike in Beirut, Lebanon. According to Trump, the attack delayed negotiations and complicated efforts to secure a broader regional understanding.

Describing Netanyahu as "a very difficult guy," Trump asserted that Israel should appreciate Washington's efforts to prevent Iran

from obtaining nuclear weapons. He argued that a nuclear-armed Iran would pose a severe threat to Israel's security and regional stability.

The US President also outlined a tougher stance should Iran fail to meet the obligations of the proposed accord. He warned that Washington could resume military operations against Iran or pursue an arrangement under which the United States would act as a security guarantor for the Middle East in exchange for a share of regional revenues. Trump claimed that the memorandum of understanding negotiated with Tehran would ensure that commercial shipping through the strategically important Strait of Hormuz remains permanently toll-free. The waterway is one of the world's most critical energy transit routes, handling a significant portion of global oil shipments. When questioned about whether Gulf allies such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates had agreed to such a security arrangement, Trump said discussions were still at an early stage. He



indicated that any expanded American security role would only become necessary if Iran continued to pose a threat after the agreement.

Trump also offered a notably softer assessment of Iran's current leadership than he had during previous periods of heightened tension. He described Iran's leaders, including Mojtaba Khamenei, as pragmatic figures capable of reaching a workable settlement with Washington. The proposed agreement is being closely watched across the region, as its success or failure could significantly influence future relations among Iran, the United States, Israel, and key Gulf nations while reshaping security dynamics throughout the Middle East.

# Swiggy's Toing Gains Edge Over Rapido Rival, Says JP Morgan



Swiggy's budget-focused food delivery platform Toing has emerged as a stronger competitor than Rapido-backed Ownly, according to a recent analysis by global brokerage firm JP Morgan. The report highlights that Toing has achieved significantly better customer traction in recent months, particularly among price-sensitive consumers.

Launched to target students, young professionals, and budget-conscious users, Toing offers lower menu prices, no platform fees, and fixed or reduced delivery charges. Analysts believe these features have helped the platform attract customers looking for affordable food delivery options in an increasingly competitive market.

According to JP Morgan, Toing's growth appears to have been supported by aggressive marketing efforts. The brokerage observed a sharp increase in paid app downloads and customer acquisition campaigns, indicating substantial investment by Swiggy to strengthen the platform's visibility and market reach.

The report noted that Toing has been more successful than Rapido's Ownly in gaining customer attention during the last quarter. However, analysts cautioned that the platform's long-term sustainability remains uncertain. They warned that if Toing fails to generate additional demand and merely shifts existing Swiggy users to a lower-cost service, the company may eventually reconsider its strategy. JP Morgan stated that Toing currently does not introduce new restaurant supply into the market. Instead, it appears to be attracting price-sensitive consumers through discounts and reduced service charges, effectively countering the value proposition offered by Ownly.

The competition between the two platforms has intensified the battle for market share in India's rapidly expanding food delivery sector. Both companies are attempting to attract customers seeking affordable ordering options amid rising living costs and increased competition.

Interestingly, technology investment group Prosus has stakes in both rivals. Prosus owns approximately 21 percent of Swiggy and around 27 percent of Rapido, making it a significant investor in both competing businesses.

Industry observers believe the success of budget-focused delivery models could influence the future direction of the online food delivery market. While lower prices may help platforms attract new users, companies will need to balance growth with profitability in a sector already facing intense competitive pressures.

For now, Toing appears to have gained an early advantage, but analysts say its ability to sustain growth beyond promotional spending will determine whether it becomes a long-term success story in India's food delivery landscape.

duce new restaurant supply into the market. Instead, it appears to be attracting price-sensitive consumers through discounts and reduced service charges, effectively countering the value proposition offered by Ownly.

The competition between the two platforms has intensified the battle for market share in India's rapidly expanding food delivery sector. Both companies are attempting to attract customers seeking affordable ordering options amid rising living costs and increased competition.

Interestingly, technology investment group Prosus has stakes in both rivals. Prosus owns approximately 21 percent of Swiggy and around 27 percent of Rapido, making it a significant investor in both competing businesses.

Industry observers believe the success of budget-focused delivery models could influence the future direction of the online food delivery market. While lower prices may help platforms attract new users, companies will need to balance growth with profitability in a sector already facing intense competitive pressures.

For now, Toing appears to have gained an early advantage, but analysts say its ability to sustain growth beyond promotional spending will determine whether it becomes a long-term success story in India's food delivery landscape.

# Markets Rally as Peace Hopes Lift Investor Sentiment



Indian equity markets surged on Monday as easing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and a decline in crude oil prices boosted investor confidence, helping benchmark indices register strong gains.

The market rally followed reports of a peace agreement between the United States and Iran, which eased concerns over potential disruptions in global energy supplies. Lower crude oil prices provided relief to investors, particularly in an oil-importing nation like India, where rising fuel costs often fuel inflationary pressures.

The benchmark indices began the week on a strong note, with the Nifty 50 crossing the psychologically important 24,000-mark during early trade. Although some profit-taking emerged in the afternoon session after wholesale inflation accelerated to 9.68 percent in May from 8.26 percent in April, the overall market sentiment remained positive.

At the closing bell, the BSE Sensex jumped 736.38 points, or 0.97 percent, to settle at 76,264.33. The NSE Nifty 50 gained 231 points, or 0.98 percent, to end at 23,853.90.

The Indian rupee also strengthened against the US dollar, closing 40 paise higher at 94.71 compared with Friday's close of 95.11, reflecting improved investor confidence and easing global uncertainty.

Among the top gainers on the Nifty were Shriram Finance, Trent, HDFC Life Insurance, Eicher Motors and Bajaj Finserv. These stocks witnessed strong buying interest across sectors. However, NTPC, ONGC, Bajaj Auto, ICI-ICI Bank and Hindalco Industries ended in the red and were among the session's major laggards.

Sector-wise, realty stocks emerged as the biggest winners. The Nifty Realty index surged nearly 4 percent, supported by optimism over lower interest-rate expectations and

strong demand prospects. Auto, metal and consumer durable stocks also performed well, each gaining around 2 percent.

The rally was broad-based, with participation extending beyond frontline stocks. The Nifty Midcap 100 and Nifty Smallcap 100 indices advanced about 1 percent each, indicating strong investor appetite across market segments.

Market experts said the easing of geopolitical tensions, stable domestic fundamentals and expectations of continued economic growth helped support the upward momentum. However, they cautioned that inflation trends and global developments will continue to influence market direction in the coming sessions.

Investors will now closely monitor macroeconomic data, corporate earnings and international developments for further cues as the markets seek to maintain their positive trajectory.

# Vedanta Oil & Gas Plans \$5 Billion Expansion After Demerger



Vedanta Oil & Gas, the newly demerged energy business of the Vedanta Group, has announced an ambitious plan to invest \$5 billion over the next three years to expand its exploration and production activities. The company intends to fund the massive capital expenditure through a combination of internal accruals and fresh debt, according to Vedanta Group Chairman Anil Aggarwal.

Speaking on the sidelines of the stock market debut of Vedanta's demerged entities,

Aggarwal highlighted that Vedanta Oil & Gas is entering its next phase of growth as a debt-free company with strong financial fundamentals. He stated that the business currently generates an annual EBITDA of around \$1 billion, providing a solid base for future investments. The proposed investment programme will focus on both offshore and onshore drilling projects aimed at boosting oil and gas production. The move comes at a time when Vedanta's oil fields in Barmer, Rajasthan, are witnessing natural production declines, prompting the company to intensify exploration efforts and increase output over the next few years.

Aggarwal expressed confidence that raising funds for the expansion would not be difficult. He noted that the company's debt-free status and valuable energy assets make it attractive to lenders, technology providers, and equipment suppliers. According to him, the combination of internal resource genera-

tion and moderate borrowing will comfortably support the planned expenditure.

The comments came as four newly demerged Vedanta businesses—Vedanta Aluminium Metal, Vedanta Oil & Gas, Vedanta Power, and Vedanta Iron & Steel—began trading independently on stock exchanges. Aggarwal said he expects each of these entities to unlock significant shareholder value and eventually achieve a market capitalization of up to \$100 billion. He described Vedanta Oil & Gas as one of the few major energy companies globally operating without debt while holding substantial asset value. The chairman emphasized that the company's primary challenge is not funding but successfully executing its extensive drilling programme and expanding reserves.

Industry analysts view the investment plan as a major step toward strengthening India's domestic energy production and reducing dependence on imported hydrocarbons. The proposed drilling campaign is expected to enhance production capabilities, support long-term growth, and create new opportunities in the country's energy sector.

With a clear focus on exploration and expansion, Vedanta Oil & Gas is positioning itself as a key player in India's evolving energy landscape following its historic demerger and independent listing.

# Rupee Surges to Five-Week High as Oil Prices Tumble



The Indian rupee strengthened for the second consecutive trading session on Monday, climbing to a five-week high against the US dollar as global crude oil prices fell sharply following reports of a preliminary agreement between the United States and Iran to ease tensions and reopen the strategically important Strait of Hormuz.

The local currency closed at 94.71 per US dollar, gaining 40 paise from its previous close of 95.11. During intraday trading, the rupee touched 94.4625, its strongest level in nearly five weeks, reflecting improved investor confidence and easing concerns over global energy supplies.

Market analysts attributed the rupee's rally primarily to the decline in crude oil prices. Since India imports a significant portion of its oil requirements, lower crude prices reduce the country's import bill and support the domestic currency. The prospect of smoother oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for global energy trade, further boosted sentiment in currency markets.

The rupee also continued to benefit from measures announced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) earlier this month. On June 5, the central bank unveiled initiatives

aimed at attracting more dollar inflows into the economy while maintaining its "neutral" monetary policy stance. These steps have helped improve liquidity and strengthen confidence among foreign investors.

The latest appreciation has narrowed the rupee's year-to-date decline to 5.6 percent. The currency had come under significant pressure in recent months due to global uncertainties, elevated oil prices, and persistent demand for dollars. Last month, it had weakened to a record low of nearly 97 per US dollar, raising concerns about imported inflation and rising costs for businesses.

Currency traders believe that if crude oil prices remain subdued and geopolitical tensions continue to ease, the rupee could extend its gains in the coming weeks. However, they caution that global economic developments, US monetary policy decisions, and foreign investment flows will remain key factors influencing the currency's movement.

The strengthening rupee comes as a positive development for the Indian economy, helping reduce import costs and providing relief to sectors dependent on overseas purchases. It also reflects improving market sentiment after weeks of volatility driven by geopolitical uncertainties and fluctuations in global commodity prices.

With oil prices cooling and investor confidence returning, financial markets will closely watch whether the rupee can sustain its upward momentum in the days ahead.

aimed at attracting more dollar inflows into the economy while maintaining its "neutral" monetary policy stance. These steps have helped improve liquidity and strengthen confidence among foreign investors.

The latest appreciation has narrowed the rupee's year-to-date decline to 5.6 percent. The currency had come under significant pressure in recent months due to global uncertainties, elevated oil prices, and persistent demand for dollars. Last month, it had weakened to a record low of nearly 97 per US dollar, raising concerns about imported inflation and rising costs for businesses.

Currency traders believe that if crude oil prices remain subdued and geopolitical tensions continue to ease, the rupee could extend its gains in the coming weeks. However, they caution that global economic developments, US monetary policy decisions, and foreign investment flows will remain key factors influencing the currency's movement.

The strengthening rupee comes as a positive development for the Indian economy, helping reduce import costs and providing relief to sectors dependent on overseas purchases. It also reflects improving market sentiment after weeks of volatility driven by geopolitical uncertainties and fluctuations in global commodity prices.

With oil prices cooling and investor confidence returning, financial markets will closely watch whether the rupee can sustain its upward momentum in the days ahead.

# Relief Rally Not a Growth Signal, Says Bernstein on Indian Markets

Global brokerage firm Bernstein has maintained a cautious outlook on Indian equities despite the positive market sentiment generated by the recent US-Iran peace agreement. While the development is expected to support a short-term rally in stock markets, the firm believes it does not justify raising its outlook for the benchmark Nifty index.

Retaining its year-end target of 26,000 for the Nifty, Bernstein said the recent gains in Indian equities are primarily the result of reduced geopolitical risks rather than the emergence of fresh economic

growth drivers.

In a strategy note, Bernstein analysts Venugopal Garre and Nikhil Arela observed that the easing of tensions between the United States and Iran has removed a major source of uncertainty for global markets. However, they cautioned investors against interpreting the market rebound as a sign of stronger underlying fundamentals.

"It is more a case of dark clouds moving away than the light becoming brighter," the analysts noted, emphasizing that the rally reflects relief rather than renewed growth momentum.

The US-Iran agreement has eased concerns about potential disruptions to global oil supplies, particularly through the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important energy shipping routes. Lower geopolitical tensions have contributed to a sharp decline in crude oil prices, which is considered beneficial for India, a major oil-importing nation.

Market participants expect reduced oil prices to lower India's import bill, ease inflationary pressures, and support the rupee. These factors have boosted investor confidence and contributed to the recent

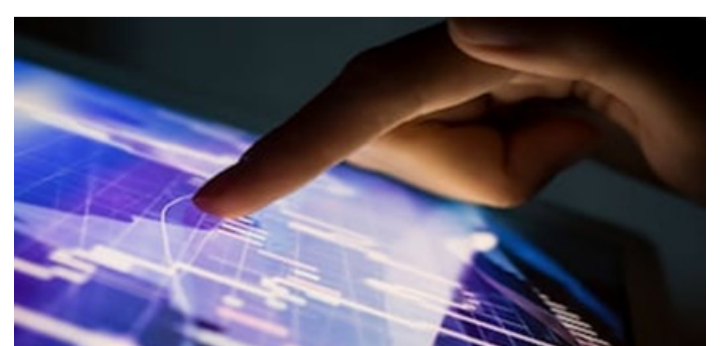
rise in equity markets.

Despite these positives, Bernstein remains neutral on Indian stocks. The brokerage believes that while the removal of geopolitical risks is encouraging, it does not automatically translate into higher corporate earnings growth or stronger economic expansion.

Analysts pointed out that investors should continue to focus on domestic economic indicators, corporate performance, government spending, and global growth trends rather than relying solely on geopolitical developments to drive market valuations.

Indian benchmark indices have witnessed strong gains in recent sessions, with investors welcoming the prospect of stable energy markets and improved global sentiment. However, Bernstein warned that markets may need stronger earnings growth and fresh investment triggers to sustain a prolonged upward trend.

The brokerage's unchanged Nifty target of 26,000 suggests that it still sees upside potential in the market but believes the current rally should be viewed as a recovery from risk rather than the beginning of a new phase of accelerated



growth.

For investors, Bernstein's message is clear: the easing of global tensions is a positive development,

but long-term market performance will depend on economic fundamentals rather than temporary relief from geopolitical uncertainty.

# Silent Innovator from Uttarakhand Builds Moving Machines from Scrap

In a remote corner of Uttarakhand, where resources are scarce, but determination runs deep, a 30-year-old man is quietly redefining innovation. Shamsheer Singh, a resident of Raya Gol village in Pithoragarh district, has turned his disability into a remarkable strength by building intricate working models of vehicles and aircraft—without ever hearing or speaking a word.



SAMSHER, ALONG WITH THE 'KAMMU PAHADI' YOUTUBER

Born deaf and mute, Shamsheer communicates not through speech, but through his creations. With a simple remote control in hand, his handmade machines spring to life—miniature aircraft glide into the air, trucks haul loads, bulldozers move debris, and ropeways operate with precision. His work has left even trained engineers astonished.

Family members recall that his fascination with machines began in childhood. Unlike other children who played with toys, Shamsheer would dismantle them to understand

their inner workings. This curiosity gradually evolved into a passion that shaped his life's path.

Despite having no formal training, Shamsheer taught himself by keen observation and, later, by watching videos on a mobile phone. Using basic materials such as cardboard, wood, discarded motors, and locally available items, he began building models. His first creation—a bus inspired by Uttarakhand Transport Corporation—was

followed by cars, trucks, and heavy machinery, each more advanced than the last.

His journey, however, has not been easy. After losing his father over a decade ago, the family depended on his elder brother, a mason, for survival. Shamsheer himself could only study up to Class 8 due to communication barriers. Yet, he never allowed these challenges to limit his potential.

Over time, his creations expanded beyond road vehicles. He built a tank that runs on

tracks, a working ropeway model, a floating house, and even a watercraft that operates in a nearby river. His models, often fitted with lights and functional features, also reflect the harsh realities of mountain transportation.

A failed aircraft experiment that ended in an explosion once left him heartbroken. But resilience defined his response—he simply began again.

With the help of a local YouTuber, Shamsheer's work has begun gaining recognition online. His creations started drawing wider attention about two years ago when the YouTube channel 'Kammu Pahadi' showcased them, helping his story reach a broader audience. Today, he dreams of scaling up his models and teaching these skills to other differently-abled individuals.

His mother sums it up best: despite his silence, Shamsheer's talent speaks volumes—and with the right support, it could reach far beyond the hills he calls home.

# Rs 60 Haircut vs Rs 350 App Service Sparks Debate



A social media post by Mumbai resident Anirudh Kejriwal has ignited a lively debate about the growing cost of convenience in India's app-driven economy. His comparison between a Rs 350 at-home haircut booked through an app and a Rs 60 haircut from a nearby local salon has prompted discussions on whether consumers are paying for better service or simply for convenience.

Kejriwal shared that after moving to a new neighbourhood, he searched online for a barber and found that the nearest salon listed on Google Maps was about 1.5 kilometres

away. To avoid the trip, he booked a home haircut service through an app. However, the assigned stylist informed him that his vehicle had broken down and that he would be delayed for several hours.

Unable to wait, Kejriwal stepped outside and soon discovered a small local salon located just a short walk from his residence. Within minutes, he received a satisfactory haircut and paid only Rs 60 for the service.

Reflecting on the experience, he noted that the Rs 300 difference represented the cost of convenience rather than a significant difference in quality. He argued that local service providers and app-based professionals often possess similar skills and deliver comparable results, with customers paying extra mainly for the ease of doorstep service.

The post quickly gained traction online and triggered discussions about the business models of platforms offering services ranging from food delivery to home grooming. Many users agreed that convenience is the primary value proposition offered by such platforms. They pointed out that consumers are willing to pay a premium to save time, avoid travel, and eliminate the hassle of searching for reliable service providers.

Others defended app-based services, arguing that they provide added benefits such as transparent pricing, standardized quality, better hygiene practices, trained professionals, and a more predictable customer experience.

Several users shared personal experiences, stating that the extra cost is justified because it saves valuable time and avoids long waiting periods at traditional establishments. The discussion ultimately highlighted a growing reality of modern urban life: consumers are increasingly paying not just for products and services, but for convenience, comfort, and time-saving solutions.

# FBI Builds Cyber Ghost Town to Train Investigators Against Digital Threats



In an innovative effort to strengthen cybercrime investigations and prepare law enforcement agencies for increasingly sophisticated digital threats, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has developed a fully functional mock town in Huntsville, Alabama. The facility, known as the Kinetic Cyber Range, is designed to simulate real-world cyberattacks and provide investigators with practical training in responding to digital emergencies.

Spread across 22,000 square feet on the FBI campus, the artificial town replicates a typical American community. It includes residential homes, a hotel, a gas station, a grocery store, a courthouse, a hospital, and even a power company. The site also features roads, traffic lights, and interconnected digital systems that operate much like those found in actual cities.

According to reports, the facility was created to move cyber training beyond classroom-based instruction. Ever-ready building and service in the mock town is equipped with

real devices and technologies commonly used in homes, businesses, and public infrastructure. This allows instructors to launch realistic cyberattacks in a controlled environment while trainees work to identify threats, contain damage, and restore essential services.

One training scenario may involve hackers shutting down a hospital's power supply or disrupting public infrastructure. Investigators are then required to respond under pressure, mirroring the challenges they would face

during a real cyber incident. Since the environment is isolated from the public internet, there is no risk of malicious software spreading outside the training facility.

The project comes at a time when cybercrime continues to rise globally. The FBI's latest Internet Crime Report estimates that cybercrime-related losses in the United States reached \$20.9 billion, reflecting a significant increase over the previous year. Ransomware attacks remain one of the most serious threats to critical infrastructure. The Kinetic Cyber Range also houses a major data center containing more than 200 physical servers. Officials intentionally designed the server rooms to resemble real-world corporate environments, helping investigators gain practical experience under authentic conditions. Since opening in February 2025, the facility has trained more than 1,400 investigators from the FBI and partner agencies worldwide. Officials believe the hands-on approach is proving invaluable in improving digital forensic skills and strengthening global efforts to combat cybercrime.

# Young Mumbai Professional Sparks Debate on Early Retirement Planning

A 22-year-old Mumbai-based professional has sparked a lively discussion on social media after seeking advice on how to build a retirement corpus while investing Rs 20,000 a month from the start of his career. His post on Reddit drew attention from financial enthusiasts and experienced investors who shared a wide range of opinions on wealth creation, career growth, and long-term financial planning.



The young man revealed that he is about to begin a new job in Mumbai with a monthly salary of approximately Rs 1 lakh. He outlined his expected expenses, stating that around Rs 30,000 would go toward rent, Rs 20,000 for food, transportation, and utilities, and another Rs 30,000 would be sent home to support his family. This would leave him with roughly Rs 20,000 each month for savings and investments.

Despite acknowledging that he is fortunate to be able to save at such an early stage of his career, he expressed concern about whether the amount would be sufficient to achieve financial independence in the future. He pointed out that rising living costs and inflation make retirement planning seem like a daunting challenge.

The professional also mentioned that he is debt-free, has no immediate plans for major purchases, and intends to increase his investments as his income grows over time. However, he sought guidance on how best to allocate his monthly savings between retirement-focused investments and

shorter-term financial goals. The post quickly attracted numerous responses. Several users advised him to first build an emergency fund before making aggressive investments. Others suggested starting systematic investment plans (SIPs) while maintaining adequate financial reserves for unforeseen situations.

Many commenters emphasized that career growth and increasing income should remain the primary focus during the early years of employment. Some also recommended purchasing a term insurance plan and personal accident coverage at a young age when premiums are relatively low. The discussion highlighted a growing trend among young professionals who are choosing to think about retirement and financial independence much earlier than previous generations, reflecting increasing awareness about long-term wealth creation and financial security.

# Indian Techie in Poland Says Work-Life Balance Beats India's Corporate Culture



An Indian software professional living in Poland has sparked a fresh debate on workplace culture after sharing his experience of working in Europe compared to India. Pradeep Pankaj Singh, who spent nearly a decade in the Indian technology sector before relocating to Poland four years

ago, highlighted significant differences in employee treatment, working hours, and work-life balance.

In a video that has gained attention on social media, Singh reflected on his years in India, describing a corporate environment where long working hours were often considered

normal. According to him, employees frequently faced subtle pressure to stay beyond office hours, and those leaving on time were sometimes viewed negatively by colleagues or management.

Singh said that in many Indian workplaces, an employee's physical presence in the office often mattered as much as productivity. He noted that workers were routinely monitored regarding when they arrived and left, creating an atmosphere where extended hours became an unwritten expectation.

In contrast, Singh described Poland's professional culture as one that strongly respects personal time and employee rights. He stated that during his four years in the country, he has never been compelled to work beyond his scheduled eight-hour shift. Managers, he said, generally avoid contacting employees outside office hours unless absolutely necessary. One of the most notable differences, according to Singh, is the treatment of overtime work. He explained that if employees are required to work beyond their regular

schedule, they are compensated generously. In some cases, overtime pay can be as much as double the regular rate, while employees may also receive additional leave as compensation. Singh further pointed out that workers are under no obligation to answer calls or messages outside working hours. If they choose to do so, their extra effort is acknowledged and rewarded. This approach, he said, contributes significantly to employee satisfaction, mental well-being, and overall quality of life.

The video has reignited discussions on social media about workplace expectations in India and the need for stronger work-life balance policies. While some users agreed with Singh's observations and praised European labour protections, others argued that work cultures vary across companies and industries.

The discussion once again highlights the growing focus on employee well-being, flexible work arrangements, and the importance of maintaining a healthy balance between professional responsibilities and personal life.

# Delhi Woman Says Civic Sense Crisis Stems From System That Rewards Rule-Breakers

A viral social media video by Delhi resident Mitali Sharma has sparked a nationwide discussion on the root causes of poor civic sense in India. Challenging common assumptions, Sharma argues that the issue is not primarily linked to a lack of education, wealth, or awareness, but rather to a widespread belief that the system rewards those who break rules while penalizing those who follow them.



In her video, Sharma reflected on her experiences after returning to India from a 20-day trip abroad. She observed that many people often blame civic problems such as queue-jumping, traffic violations, littering, and disregard for public rules on inadequate education or social awareness. However, she believes the problem runs much deeper.

According to Sharma, Indians grow up with a subconscious understanding that strict adherence to rules may place them at a disadvantage. She explained that individuals frequently witness others gaining benefits by bypassing regulations, whether in traffic, public services, competitive environments, or even everyday situations. As a result, many people feel compelled to adopt similar behaviour to avoid being left behind.

She argued that the constant fear of missing opportunities and the perception that dishonest shortcuts often produce faster results gradually weaken public commitment to civic discipline. In such an environment, people may begin to view rule-following as impractical rather than beneficial.

The video resonated with many social media users, who shared similar experiences from daily life. Several commenters agreed that inconsistent enforcement of laws and the lack of accountability contribute significantly to public behaviour. Others pointed out that civic sense improves when systems are transparent, fair, and capable of rewarding responsible conduct. At the same time, some users disagreed with Sharma's assessment, arguing that personal responsibility and social values also play a major role in shaping civic behaviour. They

maintained that individuals must choose to follow rules regardless of how others behave. The discussion has once again highlighted broader concerns about governance, accountability, and public behaviour in India. Many observers noted that improving civic sense requires not only awareness campaigns and education but also stronger institutions that consistently enforce rules and create an environment where honesty and discipline are rewarded rather than disadvantaged.

As the debate continues online, Sharma's observations have encouraged many people to reflect on the relationship between individual behaviour and the systems that influence it, raising important questions about how lasting civic change can be achieved.

# AP Governor Hail Dhiraj's Twin Gold Triumph at Archery World Cup



**VIJAYAWADA ARCHER DHIRAJ WINS DOUBLE GOLD, INDIA STUNS KOREA AGAIN**

India's rising archery star Bommadevara Dhiraj, hailing from Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh, delivered a sensational performance on the world stage by clinching two gold medals at the Archery World Cup Stage 3 held in Antalya, Turkey. Dhiraj first created history by securing his maiden individual World Cup gold in the men's recurve category, before teaming up with teenager Kumkum Mohod to capture the mixed team gold in a thrilling final against powerhouse South Korea. The Indian duo stunned Olympic champions Kim Je-

deok and Oh Ye-jin 5-1 (37-36, 37-36, 39-39), displaying remarkable composure and precision under pressure. Facing one of the most dominant nations in archery, Dhiraj and Kumkum matched their opponents arrow for arrow before sealing the contest with clinical finishing. Dhiraj fittingly ended the match with a perfect 10 in the final arrow. The victory marks India's second consecutive triumph over South Korea in recent months, underlining the growing confidence and depth in the country's recurve setup ahead of major

international events. Dhiraj's individual gold further highlighted his exceptional form, as he overcame top-ranked opponents, including a decisive victory over South Korea's Lee Woo Seok in the final. The achievement is being hailed as a major milestone in his career and a breakthrough moment for Indian archery. His twin gold medal feat has brought immense pride to Andhra Pradesh. Governor S. Abdul Nazeeer and Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu congratulated Dhiraj for his outstanding accomplishment, describing

it as a moment of pride for both the State and the nation. The Governor praised his dedication and excellence, expressing confidence that he would continue to bring laurels to the country. The Chief Minister lauded Dhiraj's grit and skill, particularly highlighting his victory over a world-class Korean opponent. HRD and IT Minister Nara Lokesh also congratulated the archer, commending his achievement and stating that his success would inspire young sportspersons across the State.

Former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy congratulated Dhiraj, calling his two gold medals in a day a proud and historic achievement, and wished him continued success. The double gold triumph has been widely celebrated, with sports enthusiasts and officials recognising it as a strong indicator of India's rising stature in international archery. For Dhiraj, the Vijayawada archer who has steadily climbed the ranks, this achievement marks a defining moment and signals greater success ahead on the global stage.

## Curacao's Historic World Cup Moment Shines Despite Germany Defeat

Curacao may have suffered a heavy 7-1 defeat against Germany in their FIFA World Cup 2026 group-stage clash, but the Caribbean nation earned global admiration for a memorable moment that will forever remain part of World Cup history. Facing four-time world champions Germany at Houston Stadium, Curacao entered the match as clear underdogs. Germany quickly asserted their dominance when Felix Nmecha opened the scoring in the sixth minute, raising fears of a one-sided contest.



However, Curacao responded with determination and produced a historic breakthrough in the 21st minute. After Leandro Bacuna's effort was blocked inside the German penalty area, the loose ball fell kindly to Livano Comenencia. His strike took a deflection and found its way past veteran goalkeeper and German captain Manuel Neuer, sending Curacao supporters into wild celebrations. The goal was significant not only because it brought Curacao level at 1-1 but also because it marked the nation's first-ever goal at a FIFA World Cup. For 17 unforgettable minutes, Curacao stood toe-to-toe with one of football's biggest powers on the sport's grandest stage. Players and fans celebrated passionately as the equaliser became an instant landmark moment in the country's football history. The goal earned praise from football followers around the world and showcased the fighting spirit of a team refusing to be intimidated by its illustrious opponents. Germany eventually regained control when Nico Schlotterbeck restored the lead with a header in the 38th minute. The Germans went into halftime leading 3-1 before continuing their attacking dominance in the second half. Six different German players

found the scoresheet, with Kai Havertz netting twice as Germany cruised to a convincing 7-1 victory. Despite the final scoreline, Curacao's performance was widely appreciated for its resilience and commitment. The result also revived memories of Germany's famous 7-1 victory over Brazil in the 2014 World Cup semi-final. While Germany celebrated an emphatic win, the match will be remembered equally for Curacao's historic achievement. Livano Comenencia's goal and the 17 minutes during which Curacao stood level with Germany provided a remarkable underdog story and a moment of pride that will endure in World Cup folklore for years to come.

## Gaethje Stuns Topuria to Capture UFC Freedom 250 Lightweight Title

American fighter Justin Gaethje produced a remarkable comeback performance to defeat Ilia Topuria and claim the UFC lightweight championship in the headline bout of UFC Freedom 250, held on the lawns of the White House in Washington on Sunday. The highly anticipated contest lived up to expectations as Topuria dominated much of the opening exchanges, edging the first two rounds with his speed and technical superiority. However, Gaethje gradually turned the tide with his trademark toughness and relentless pressure. The decisive moment came when Gaethje landed a powerful right hand that rocked the Spanish fighter. Sensing an opportunity, he unleashed a barrage of punches that left Topuria badly bruised and struggling to recover. The punishment caused visible swelling and bleeding, forcing medical staff to examine Topuria before the fourth round continued. Although Topuria showed determination to fight on, his condition continued to worsen. Recognizing the severity of the



damage, his corner decided to stop the contest before the start of the fifth and final round, handing Gaethje a dramatic victory and the lightweight crown. An emotional Gaethje admitted he had expected a difficult start against his highly skilled opponent but believed his endurance and fighting spirit would eventually make the difference. The fight served as the main

event of UFC Freedom 250, the first professional sporting event ever staged at the White House. The event formed part of celebrations marking the 250th anniversary of the United States. In the co-main event, France's Cyrille Gane delivered an impressive performance against Brazil's Alex Pereira to capture the interim UFC heavyweight championship. Gane controlled the action before se-

curing a spectacular knockout victory in the second round. Pereira, a former UFC middleweight and light heavyweight champion, had been aiming to make history by becoming the first fighter to win UFC titles in three different weight divisions. However, Gane's dominant display ended that historic bid and established him as a leading contender in the heavyweight division.

## Sri Lanka A Edge India A in Dramatic Super Over Thriller



Sri Lanka A defeated India A in a thrilling Super Over finish in their tri-series clash at Dambulla on Monday after both teams ended regulation play tied at 265 runs. Batting first, India A were bowled out for 265 in 49.2 overs after recovering from a difficult position. The Indian top order failed to make significant contributions, leaving the side struggling at 125 for 6. However, a remarkable rescue act from Suryansh Shedge and Vipraj Nigam helped India post a competitive total.

Suryansh played a brilliant knock of 72 runs off 66 balls, while Vipraj contributed a valuable 51 from 49 deliveries. Earlier, opener Vaibhav Suryavanshi made a quick 21, while captain Tilak Varma scored 23 and vice-captain Ruturaj Gaikwad added 37. Sri Lankan bowlers Vijayakanth and Shiraz were the pick of the attack, claiming three wickets each. Chasing 266, Sri Lanka A got an unusual boost when the umpires awarded 10 penalty runs after India's Vipraj Nigam entered the danger

area on the pitch. The penalty proved crucial in a match decided by the narrowest of margins. Sri Lanka's innings was anchored by Sadeera Samarawickrama, who scored an impressive 83 off 102 balls. Niroshan Dickwella added 37, while Vanuja Sahan contributed 25. Despite losing wickets at regular intervals, Sri Lanka remained in contention throughout the chase. The match reached a dramatic climax in the final over. Needing five runs for victory, Sri Lanka managed only

three runs from the first five deliveries, while Arshad Khan also picked a wicket. With two runs required from the final ball, the batting side managed a leg-bye but Gunasekara was run out while attempting the second run, resulting in a tie at 265. In the Super Over, Sri Lanka A displayed greater composure and scored 16 runs. India A, under pressure, could manage only nine runs, handing Sri Lanka a memorable victory in one of the most exciting matches of the tournament.

## Iran Focuses on Football Amid Challenges Ahead of World Cup Opener

Iran head coach Amir Ghalenoei has acknowledged that political tensions and visa-related issues have disrupted the team's preparations for the FIFA World Cup 2026, but insisted that the players remain fully focused on football as they begin their campaign in the United States. Speaking after the team's arrival, Ghalenoei said the circumstances surrounding the tournament had made the experience less enjoyable than expected. Ongoing tensions between Iran and the United States, coupled with travel complications, have created additional challenges for the squad ahead of their opening match. One of the major concerns for the Iranian delegation has been visa restrictions that reportedly prevented several members of the team's support staff from travelling with the squad. The issue has com-

plicated preparations and logistics during one of the most important tournaments in world football. Despite these difficulties, the Iranian coach stressed that his players are determined not to be distracted by events outside the game. He emphasized that the team's focus remains firmly on delivering strong performances on the field and representing their nation with pride. Ghalenoei made it clear that football and politics should remain separate, stating that neither he nor his players wish to become involved in political debates. Instead, the squad is concentrating on training, tactical preparation, and the challenge of competing against some of the world's best teams. Iran enters the tournament with high expectations after consistently qualifying for recent World Cups and estab-

lishing itself as one of Asia's strongest football nations. The team hopes to make a significant impact on the global stage despite the obstacles faced during its preparations. The coach also expressed confidence in his players' professionalism and mental strength, noting that they have experience handling pressure and adversity. He believes the squad can channel its energy into positive performances and remain focused on achieving its sporting objectives. As the tournament gets underway, Iran will be eager to put off-field concerns behind them and allow their football to do the talking. With a talented squad and a determined mindset, the team hopes to give its supporters reasons to celebrate despite the challenging circumstances surrounding its World Cup campaign.





Hashi Megha

RISING STAR

ATIF ALI

## Anirudh Launches New Musical Journey With Aravindh



Music sensation Anirudh Ravichander has unveiled Aravindh, the first release under his exclusive partnership with Universal Music India through his independent label, Albuquerque Records. Released in both Tamil and Telugu, the song marks a significant new chapter in Anirudh's career as he expands beyond film music and explores original pop and hip-hop storytelling.

Anirudh first gained nationwide recognition with the viral hit 'Why This Kolaveri Di?' in 2012 and has since emerged as one of India's most celebrated music composers. His impressive filmography includes blockbuster films such as Jail-

er, Coolie, Vikram, Leo, Devara: Part 1, and the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer Jawan, which further cemented his popularity across the country.

With Aravindh, Anirudh turns the spotlight on the realities faced by independent musicians in today's rapidly evolving digital music landscape. The song follows the journey of Aravindh, an alter ego created by Anirudh, who represents a passionate artist striving to make a mark despite numerous challenges. While technology has made it easier than ever to release music, building a sustainable career as an independent artist remains a difficult task, par-

## Raghava Lawrence Denies Viral Misinterpretation

Renowned choreographer, actor, and filmmaker Raghava Lawrence has strongly responded to a social media controversy claiming that he insulted people by comparing them to dogs. He clarified that the circulating claims are completely false and that his words have been misinterpreted and taken out of context.

He considers equal to his mother in terms of affection and value. He firmly denied the allegation that he compared people to dogs, calling it a complete distortion of his words.

Explaining the context of his original statement, Lawrence said he was referring to the experience of moving into a new environment and how it takes time for anyone to adjust and understand unfamiliar surroundings. He clarified that his reference to dogs in the viral clip was unrelated to people and was instead used in a general, contextual manner while describing adaptation to new places. He emphasized that his intention was never to hurt or insult anyone.

The controversy began after a video clip from his recent public interaction went viral online. In the clip, some users alleged that Lawrence made derogatory remarks about people. This led to widespread criticism and confusion on social media platforms, especially as the actor had recently announced his interest in entering politics, making him a focal point of public discussion.

He further urged people to watch the full video instead of relying on short, edited clips circulating online. According to him, partial information is often misused to create unnecessary controversies and damage reputations. He also shared the original video to support his clarification and ensure

ticularly in the South Indian music industry.

Speaking about the track, Anirudh said that Aravindh represents everyone in some way and symbolizes the dreamers who continue to wait for an opportunity to showcase their talent. He described the song as a satirical reflection of the struggles independent artists face while trying to stand out in a crowded digital world filled with endless content.

The composer revealed that the track is deeply personal and draws inspiration from a period in his own life when he, too, was searching for recognition and opportunities. Through Aravindh, he aims to connect with artists and creatives navigating similar journeys while offering an honest reflection on ambition, perseverance, and success.

The launch of Albuquerque Records signals Anirudh's growing commitment to the independent music space. The label is expected to introduce a range of original music projects and creative concepts in the coming months, providing a platform for fresh ideas and new artistic voices.



transparency. Lawrence reiterated that his entry into politics is still under consideration and will depend on the support and approval of fans and the public. He said he remains committed to respecting people's sentiments and would never intentionally make statements that could hurt them.

The actor's clarification has brought attention back to the importance of verifying content before reacting, especially in the age of viral misinformation, where context is often lost in seconds.

# Vanda Devullu Celebrates the Emotional Journey of Motherhood

The makers of Vanda Devullu hosted a grand pre-release event on Monday ahead of the film's worldwide release on June 19. Presented by Fatima Vijay Antony under Vijay Antony Film Corporation and produced by Ramanjaneyulu Javvaji under the Sarvanth Ram Creations banner, the film stars Vijay Antony, Swasika, Ajay Dhishan, Lijomol Jose, Karunas, Shakti, and Kavya Anil in key roles. Directed by Sasi, who earlier collaborated with Vijay Antony on the blockbuster Bichagadu, the film has already generated significant interest with its teaser and trailer.

Mega producer Niharika Konidela and director Thrinadh Rao Nakkina attended the event as chief guests and showered praise on the film and its team.

Speaking at the event, Vijay Antony reflected on his long association with director Sasi, stating that the filmmaker had



introduced him as a music director two decades ago and later gave him a new identity as a hero through Bichagadu. He revealed that the story of Vanda Devullu moved him deeply and promised that audiences would see him in a completely different role. He expressed confidence that Telugu audiences would wholeheartedly support the film upon its release.

Niharika Konidela, who has already watched the movie, described Vanda Devullu as a touching and meaningful film that beautifully portrays the girl hidden within every mother. She praised Swasika, Vijay Antony, and the entire cast for their performances and said the film successfully balances emotion and entertainment while delivering a strong message. She added that everyone who has a mother should watch the film and wished it

greater success than Bichagadu.

Director Thrinadh Rao Nakkina commended Vijay Antony for consistently backing unique and content-driven cinema. Producer Fatima Vijay Antony thanked the guests for their support and appealed to audiences to watch the film in theatres.

Director Sasi explained that while Bichagadu portrays a mother as a goddess, Vanda Devullu presents her as an ordinary human being, making the story more relatable and emotionally impactful. He expressed gratitude to Telugu audiences for the love they showed Bichagadu and hoped they would extend the same affection to Vanda Devullu.

With a strong emotional core, impressive performances, and a compelling mother-son narrative, Vanda Devullu is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on June 19.

## Isakapatnam Trailer Promises a Gripping Crime Saga

Prime Video has unveiled the action-packed trailer of its upcoming Telugu Original series Isakapatnam at a special event held in Hyderabad. Directed by Garry BH and produced by Rahul Tamada and Saideep Reddy Borra under the banner of Tamada Media Productions, the seven-episode crime thriller is set to premiere exclusively on Prime Video on July 2.

Headlined by acclaimed actors Samuthirakani and Aishwarya Rajesh, the series also features Sunil, Naresh Agastya, Merin Philip, Sudhakar Komakula, Rajeev Kanakala, Mime Gopi, Rohini, Banerjee, Jwala Koti, Ravi Varma, and Raja Chembolu in pivotal roles. The series will stream in Telugu with dubbed versions in Tamil and Hindi, along with subtitles in 15 languages, reaching audiences in India and over 240 countries and territories worldwide.

Set in a fictional port town, Isakapatnam explores a dark

and gripping world where crime, politics, power struggles, and personal loyalties intersect. The trailer offers a glimpse into a high-stakes narrative filled with intense action, emotional drama, shocking twists, and fierce rivalries driven by greed, ambition, and revenge.

Director Garry BH described the series as a story rooted in authentic characters and universal emotions. He said the narrative explores themes such as greed, love, loss, ambition, and revenge while delivering a thrilling entertainment experience filled with unexpected twists and turns.

Samuthirakani, who plays Naidu, said the strength of the storytelling and the complexity of his character attracted him to the project. He noted that the series examines how ambition and revenge can influence life-changing decisions and expressed excitement about presenting a role unlike any he has



played before. Aishwarya Rajesh spoke about portraying Bharati, describing the character as resilient, complex, and courageous. She said Bharati's journey reflects a woman determined to define her own destiny despite the challenges around her.

Sunil, who essays the role of CI Varma, praised the layered storytelling and rich character development, while Naresh Agastya highlighted the evolu-

tion narrative and unexpected surprises awaiting viewers. Merin Philip also shared her experience of portraying Ammaji, a character whose journey is marked by strength, resilience, and transformation.

With its powerful performances, gripping storyline, and intense emotional drama, Isakapatnam is poised to be one of the most anticipated Telugu streaming releases of the year.



CAMBRIDGE MONTESSORI

(UNDER THE AEGIS OF JALSA VENTURES)

PRE SCHOOL | DAY CARE | MINDLAB

ADMISSIONS OPEN

ENROLL NOW



Our Facilities:

- Child Centric Curriculum
- CCTV Surveillance
- Wonderful Play Area
- Friendly Environment
- Well Trained Staff
- International Standard of Montessori Education

OUR PROGRAMS:

- Little Heart (1-2 yrs)
- Tender Heart (2-3 yrs)
- Nursery (3-4 yrs)
- L.K.G (4-5 yrs)
- U.K.G (5-6 yrs)
- Day Care

Call: 8340966888/8340966777 ; Email ID: cmps.tadepalli@gmail.com

Address: Plot no:7, Radiostation Venture, Near Axis bank, Tadepalli, 522501