

TRUE POINT

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BUZZ POINTS



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Nuvvu Naku Nacchav

Tiny Aspirant, Big Smile: Little Aarna Wins Hearts—and Even CM Naidu's

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

In a delightful break from routine political updates, Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu found himself smiling—thanks to a tiny "IAS aspirant" named Aarna, whose video has taken social media by storm.

The now-viral clip, shared by Aarna's father, features the little girl confidently delivering expressions and gestures in sync with a popular voice-over from the film Nuvvu Naaku Nachav, starring Daggubati Venkatesh. What makes the video irresistible is not just the nostalgia of the iconic dialogues, but Aarna's adorable seriousness while "performing" them like a seasoned actor—or perhaps, a future bureaucrat in rehearsal mode.

The video uses original dialogues of Venkatesh from the film, playing in the background, while Aarna's expressions are perfectly timed to



match each line. As the dialogue—"Meeru ila maatladi the ela untundo telusa..."—plays, her reactions align seamlessly with the pauses and emotions, leaving viewers amused and impressed.

Interestingly, the video is said to be an AI-generated creation using photos of Aarna, her father, and CM Naidu, adding a modern, tech-driven twist to the viral content. Despite that, the emotional connection

and charm of the clip remain intact, striking a chord with audiences across platforms.

The clip quickly gained traction online, with users widely sharing it and calling her "the youngest IAS aspirant with cinematic timing." The biggest endorsement, however, came from the Chief Minister himself.

Taking to his official Instagram, Naidu reposted the vid-

eo and reacted warmly, saying, "It's impossible to watch this video and not smile! I'm officially rooting for Aarna." The post drew widespread attention, with netizens appreciating the CM's lighthearted response. Social media was soon flooded with comments praising the child's expressions and confidence. Some joked that Aarna has already cleared the "interview round," while others admired the creative use of AI in crafting such an engaging video. Beyond the humour, the clip offered a refreshing break from the usual stream of serious content. In a time dominated by political debates and hard news, Aarna's video stood out as a moment of pure joy.

Whether she grows up to become an IAS officer or not, one thing is certain—Aarna has already become an internet sensation. And as the Chief Minister himself admitted, resisting a smile while watching her is simply not possible.



Singapore's Education Model Inspires Andhra Reforms, Says Teachers' Delegation

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Teachers who recently visited Singapore on a study tour shared key insights on the country's disciplined and merit-driven education system during a review meeting with Minister for Education, IT and Electronics Nara Lokesh in Amaravati. The delegation highlighted that Singapore's structured schooling, strong teacher mentoring systems, and accountability culture contribute significantly to student outcomes.

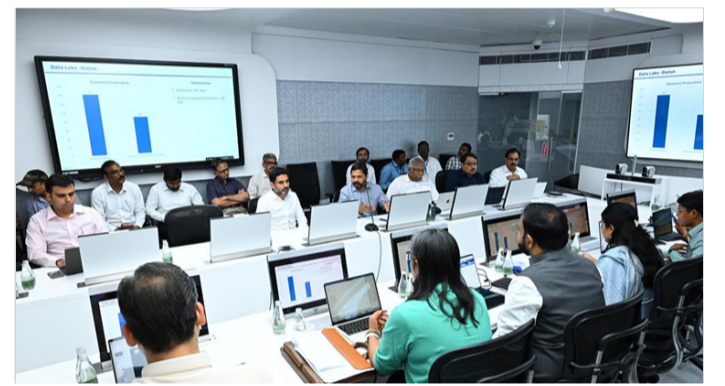
They observed that high school placements in Singa-

pore are largely merit-based, with academic performance determining admission to the next level. Senior teachers actively mentor junior colleagues, and weekly collaborative discussions are an integral part of the teaching process. Teachers also noted that the system places equal importance on academics, sports, and skill development.

Responding to their observations, Minister Lokesh said the state has already introduced a value-based education curriculum designed by Chaganti Koteswara Rao to instil moral values among s

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Lokesh Instructs Full Rollout of Mana Mitra Awareness Drive



Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Minister for HRD, IT, Electronics and RTGS Nara Lokesh directed officials to intensify public awareness on the "Mana Mitra" WhatsApp governance service and ensure faster, technology-driven delivery of government services across Andhra Pradesh.

He chaired a review meeting on RTGS at the RTGS Command Control Centre in the Secretariat on Friday. During the meeting, Department Secretary Katamneni Bhaskar presented a detailed PowerPoint briefing on RTGS objectives and ongoing project implementation.

Lokesh instructed officials to complete all works related to the "Data Lake" project by July, aimed at integrating data

from multiple government departments into a unified platform. He said delays in issuing caste and income certificates must be removed and processes related to ration card modifications, including splitting and adding or removing family members, should be simplified.

He also directed that the "Sanjeevani" healthcare programme be integrated with the Data Lake to enable real-time coordination of services. The Minister stressed the need to analyse school dropout trends using consolidated data and implement corrective measures to reduce dropouts across the state.

Lokesh emphasised that "Mana Mitra" should reach every household and said a month-long

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TG 'Local Status' Debate Reignites Amid Legal Interpretation

Ravi Podili

The debate over "local status" in Telangana has resurfaced, drawing attention from legal circles and political observers after recent remarks by MLC K. Kavitha and a Telangana High Court ruling in a recruitment-related case. The renewed discussion has sparked concern that a long-settled issue linked to employment eligibility and educational qualification criteria may once again become a political flashpoint in the state.

The controversy gained momentum after Kavitha, who has recently parted ways with the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) to float her own political outfit, highlighted the issue during a discussion in Hyderabad. She cited recent High Court observations while referring to the recruitment process of the Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC), particularly in a case involving Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) aspirant Palla



Nishanth.

The High Court reportedly rejected the TGPSC's argument that only candidates who studied from Class 1 to Class 7 in Telangana should be treated as locals. The court observed that a candidate who completed the qualifying degree (B.Tech) within Telangana could be considered a local. Kavitha's reference to this interpretation and her criticism of the ruling has triggered

fresh debate over eligibility norms in public employment.

Kavitha alleged that attempts were being made to deprive Telangana youth of job opportunities and argued that only those who studied from Class 1 to Class 7 in the state should qualify as locals. She also announced that her party would challenge the matter legally if necessary. She further referred to earlier protests during the Telangana movement

against court rulings on Hyderabad's zonal classification, stating that a similar struggle may be required again.

She also questioned the ongoing recruitment process for 563 Group-I posts, alleging that several non-local candidates were selected due to procedural lapses. She demanded that the state government file a review petition in the Supreme Court against the High Court verdict, warning that her party would approach the court if the government failed to act.

The issue of local status has deep historical roots in the erstwhile Hyderabad State. The Mulki Rules, introduced in 1919 under Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan, defined "locals" as those born in the region or residents for 15 consecutive years with the intent to settle. These rules were given statutory backing under the States Reorganisation framework in 1956 and later upheld by the Supreme Court in 1969.

However, under the 1972 Six-

Point Formula, the Mulki system was gradually phased out, leading to the introduction of Article 371-D in 1973, which established a zonal system for employment and education. Legal interpretations today largely rely on this constitutional provision and subsequent Presidential Orders, including those updated in 2018.

Recent judicial interpretations suggest that local status is linked more to where the qualifying education is completed rather than early schooling. Despite this clarity, political debate continues over interpretation and implementation.

Observers note that Kavitha's renewed focus on the issue comes at a politically sensitive time, as she distances herself from the BRS and positions her new political platform. Critics allege the move is aimed at reviving regional sentiment, while supporters argue it reflects genuine concerns over employment fairness.

Farmer Killed in Elephant Attack, Pawan Kalyan Seeks Report

Pakala/Hyderabad, June 26 | TPN Bureau

A 65-year-old farmer, B. Thimma Reddy, from Pallagutapalli village in Pakala mandal of Tirupati district, died in a tragic elephant attack on Thursday, triggering concern among forest officials and the state leadership.

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Forest & Environment Pawan Kalyan expressed deep concern over the incident after being informed by Forest Department officials. He sought a detailed report on the circumstances leading to the attack and the movement of the elephant herd in the region.

Pawan Kalyan said it was unfortunate that such incidents continue to occur despite ongoing monitoring of elephant movements and repeated alerts issued to residents in forest-fringe areas. He conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and directed officials to immediately visit the victim's household and ensure prompt disbursement of compensation as per government norms.

He also instructed the Forest Department and district administration to strengthen early warning systems, intensify field-level monitoring, and coordinate with local

communities to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

Forest officials informed that teams are tracking elephant movement patterns and issuing regular alerts to nearby habitations. They added that additional preventive measures will be implemented in coordination with village-level stakeholders.

In a separate review meeting, Pawan Kalyan also directed officials of the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Department to take proactive steps to prevent seasonal diseases during the monsoon. He held discussions with Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Principal Secretary Sandeep Kumar Sultania, Commissioner Krishna Teja, and senior officials on drinking water supply, sanitation, and mosquito control.

He stressed that Gram Panchayats must prioritise public health, ensure regular sanitation, availability of bleaching powder and chlorine tablets, strict implementation of the 'Friday-Dry Day' programme, fogging operations, scientific waste management, and continuous public awareness through social media and local communication systems.

He further directed monitoring of drinking water systems to prevent leaks and contamination.

Amit Shah Calls for Drug-Free India by 2047

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday called for a collective national effort to achieve a drug-free India by 2047, urging states to adopt a "zero-tolerance" approach against narcotics networks and strengthen surveillance using advanced technology.

Chairing a video conference from Delhi with Chief Secretaries, senior police officials, and representatives of the Narcotics Control Bureau and other



er agencies under the Narco-Coordination framework, Shah

stressed the need for coordinated action against drug trafficking. He directed states to identify drug hotspots, track supply chains, arrest key kingpins, and ensure swift prosecution. He also asked governments to prepare a clear roadmap and intensify community policing and public awareness campaigns on the dangers of drug abuse.

Speaking during the conference from the Chief Secretary's camp office in Vijayawada, Chief

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Rottela Panduga Begins with Grandeur at Bara Shaheed Dargah

Suman Babu Veerisetty

Nellore: The famous Rottela Panduga (Festival of Rotis) at the world-renowned Bara Shaheed Dargah began on a grand note on Thursday, drawing thousands of devotees from across India and abroad to the spiritually significant site in Nellore, known for its message of religious harmony beyond caste and creed.

The Swarnala Cheruvu (Golden Tank), a key ritual site of the festival, has transformed into a vibrant spiritual hub as devotees arrive to offer and exchange "wishing rotis," believing their prayers and desires will be fulfilled. The five-day annual festival will continue till June 30, featuring a series of religious and cultural rituals including the Sandhal procession on the 26th, Gandha Mahotsavam on



the 27th, Rottela Panduga rituals on the 28th, Tahlil Fatiha on the 29th, and the concluding ceremonies on the final day.

District Collector Himanshu Shukla, acting on the directions of Municipal Admin-

istration Minister Narayana, has overseen extensive arrangements to ensure smooth conduct of the festival. District Police Superintendent Ajitha Vejendra, Joint Collector Mogili Venkateswarlu, and municipal officials a

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Where Are Those Three Accused?

Kumar Chandu Pullagura

Vijayawada: Fresh details emerging from the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into the Sai Krishna lock-up death case have intensified the search for three key suspects who are currently absconding. Investigators have already established that Sai Krishna was killed at the Krishnalanka Police Station in Vijayawada, sending shockwaves across the state.

Circle Inspector Nagaraju has been arrested in connection with the case. The SIT has identified that two Head Constables—Ashok and Jangam Nani—along with Nagaraju's associate Suresh, played crucial roles in disposing of the victim's body.

According to officials, Head Constables Ashok and Nani have been on leave for the past few days and have since gone missing. Sai Krishna's mother had earlier alleged that more individuals were involved in her son's death, prompting the SIT to widen its probe. Investigators are now tracking the phone signals of the abscond-

ing personnel.

Ashok, who served as an assistant to CI Nagaraju, was not found at his residence when SIT teams conducted searches. Nani, who was recently posted to Krishnalanka, reportedly handled several private dealings using the CI's name. He had earlier been suspended during his tenure in Gannavaram, raising further suspicion about his role.

Suresh, a close associate of Nagaraju, is believed to have played a pivotal role in the disposal of the body. On May 29, he reportedly summoned Sai Krishna's maternal uncle, Navarang, for a settlement discussion. Suresh, along with Ashok and Nani, visited Navarang's residence in Vaddeswaram in a black vehicle—details later confirmed by Navarang to SIT officials.

The SIT has concluded that the trio actively assisted Nagaraju after the crime. Intensive efforts are underway to trace and apprehend the absconding suspects, as the investigation continues to uncover deeper layers in the case.



AP Intensifies Anti-Drug Drive, Calls for Public Support to Build Drug-Free State

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Government on Friday reaffirmed its commitment to building a drug-free state, urging collective efforts to protect the youth from narcotics and strengthen awareness against drug abuse.

Addressing the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking programme held at Tummalapalli Kalakshetram under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, speakers said the Centre and the State were jointly implementing a comprehensive anti-narcotics campaign to safeguard future generations. They stressed that peer pressure remained one of the leading causes of addiction among adolescents and called on parents, educational institutions and society to play an active role in prevention.

The programme highlighted the achievements of the Elite Anti-Narcotics Group for Law Enforcement (EAGLE), which has eradicated cannabis cultivation in agency areas, dismantled hash oil manufacturing units and strengthened enforcement through surveil-

lance and awareness initiatives. Officials warned that stringent provisions of the NDPS Act apply to the possession, consumption and trafficking of narcotics and urged citizens to report drug-related activities through the toll-free helpline 1972 or emergency number 112.

Officials also emphasised the importance of de-addiction, rehabilitation and community participation in tackling the drug menace. Students took a digital anti-drug pledge and participated in a signature campaign promoting the message "Say No to Drugs."

NTR District Collector G. Lakshmi Sha, Women Development, Child Welfare, Differently Aabled and Senior Citizens Welfare Secretary A. Suryakumari, Twenty-Point Programme Implementation Committee Chairman Lanka Dinakar, EAGLE Wing SP K. Nagesh Kumar, EAGLE Wing SP G. Swaroopa Rani, State-Level DSI Societies Chairperson Devi, State Nodal Officer Neelima, physician G. Samar, officials and a large number of students attended the programme.

APAIMS 2.0 Ensures Transparent Fertiliser Distribution, Says Minister

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu on Friday said the State Government's APAIMS 2.0 system has brought greater transparency to the distribution of subsidised fertilisers and effectively curbed diversion and misuse.

The minister said the system has been operational since June 8 across all districts except Krishna and Kakinada. So far, 2,97,733 farmers have received 48,588 metric tonnes of urea and 12,874 metric tonnes of DAP through the platform. He said fertilisers are being supplied based on crop, cultivated area and scientific recommendations of Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, ensuring that only eligible farmers, including tenant farmers, receive subsidised fertilisers.

Atchannaidu said APAIMS 2.0 enables real-time monitoring of fertiliser stocks and distribution while preventing illegal storage, diversion and sales to non-farmers. He added that farmers can report shortages, quality issues or overpricing through the toll-free helpline 155251 and also access their purchase history and eligibility details. The minister acknowledged that minor technical issues, including OTP and server-related problems, were encountered during the initial rollout but said most had been



resolved and the system was now functioning smoothly under round-the-clock technical monitoring.

Rejecting criticism of the new system, Atchannaidu alleged that vested interests affected by the crackdown on irregularities were spreading misinformation. He also dismissed reports claiming a sharp crash in tomato prices, stating that official market data reflected stable prices. Citing figures from Mulakalacheruvu and Gurrakonda markets, he said prevailing prices did not support claims of a market collapse.

The minister further clarified that operations at the Jain mango pulp unit in Gangadhara Nellore, Chittoor district, were continuing normally. While one processing line remained operational, another had resumed operations after a minor technical issue in the boiling section was rectified within two days. He urged farmers to rely only on official information and not be misled by unverified reports.

DGP Harish Kumar Gupta Inaugurates New DSP Office at Puttur

Tirupati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Director General of Police Harish Kumar Gupta on Friday inaugurated the newly constructed Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Office at Puttur Sub-Division in Tirupati district and directed officials to strengthen public-oriented policing through efficient and transparent services.

The inauguration was attended by Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Madhusudan Reddy, Tirupati District Superintendent of Police L. Subbarayudu, Puttur MLA Bhanu Prakash, Satyavedu MLA Adimulam, senior police officers and public representatives.

After inspecting the new office building, the DGP said the modern facility would help deliver faster, more efficient and transparent police services to people across the Puttur Sub-Division. He instructed officials to make optimal use of



the infrastructure to improve public service delivery.

Harish Kumar Gupta later chaired a review meeting with police officers, assessing law and order, crime prevention, the safety of women and children, the quality of police services and the use of technology in policing. He directed officers to respond promptly to every complaint and ensure lawful action in all cases.

The DGP emphasised that responsible policing and quick public response would strengthen people's confidence in the police department. He also appreciated the Tirupati District Police for its continued commitment to maintaining public safety and law and order.

CM Naidu to Inspect Veligonda Project

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will visit Markapuram district on Saturday and participate in a series of official programmes in Yerragondapalem and Giddalur constituencies, including a detailed inspection of the Veligonda Project and engagement with beneficiaries under the Sanjeevani health initiative.

During the tour, the Chief Minister will first inspect the ongoing Veligonda Project works, which are considered crucial for the development of Markapuram, Prakasam, Nellore, and Kadapa districts. The project, once completed, is expected to provide irrigation to 4.47 lakh acres and drinking water to 15.25 lakh people across 30 mandals.

The project is being executed in two phases. Stage I will provide irrigation to 1.19 lakh acres and drinking water to 4 lakh people, while Stage II will extend irrigation to 3.28 lakh acres and drinking water to 11.25 lakh people. The government has already spent over Rs 5,000 crore on Stage-I works. Key components such



as Tunnel-I (19 km), feeder canals, link canals, and main canal systems have been completed or are in the final stages. Rehabilitation and Re-settlement (R&R) works worth Rs 190 crore are also underway, covering displaced families from 11 villages.

Following the inspection, Chandrababu Naidu will interact with project beneficiaries and review progress with officials.

As part of the "Healthy Andhra Pradesh" vision, the Chief Minister will also participate in the Sanjeevani programme at Krishnamsettipalli Primary Health Centre in Giddalur constituency. The initiative aims to provide integrated, AI-enabled, and digital healthcare services through a unified platform connecting

primary health centres, district hospitals, and super-specialty services.

The Sanjeevani system is designed to ensure affordable, accessible, and timely healthcare with digital health records and AI-supported medical services.

According to the schedule, the Chief Minister will arrive at Ghantavanipalle in Dornala Mandal at 10.45 a.m. and inspect the Veligonda Project from 11 a.m. to 12.20 p.m. He will hold a review meeting and interact with beneficiaries at 12.35 p.m. Later, he will reach Krishnamsettipalli at 1.10 p.m. for the Sanjeevani programme, followed by a public meeting at 3.35 p.m. and a review meeting with TDP leaders and party workers at 6.15 p.m.

Minister Orders Immediate Road Safety Measures After Fatal Palnadu Accidents

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Palnadu District In-charge Minister and Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar on Friday directed officials to take immediate steps to prevent recurring road accidents in the district following a series of mishaps, including the fatal accident near Macharla Nagaravanam.

During an urgent review with the District Collector and the Superintendent of Police over the phone, the minister instructed officials to identify accident-prone stretches and install warning signboards, reflective road signage and other safety infrastructure to alert



motorists and reduce accidents.

Ravi Kumar also directed the police to ensure prompt safety arrangements whenever heavy vehicles break down or remain stranded on roads. He said warning systems should be installed immediately, particularly during night hours, and instructed officials to deploy

traffic personnel, cranes and emergency response teams wherever necessary.

Expressing grief over the death of four persons in the Macharla Nagaravanam accident, the minister conveyed his condolences to the bereaved families. He also reviewed the treatment being provided to the injured and directed officials to ensure they receive the best possible medical care without delay.

Reaffirming that public safety remains the government's top priority, Ravi Kumar called for coordinated efforts by all departments to strengthen road safety measures and reduce accidents through sustained long-term interventions.

DGP Harish Kumar Gupta Lays Foundation for Police Welfare Facilities

Tirupati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Director General of Police Harish Kumar Gupta on Friday laid the foundation stone for several police welfare infrastructure projects at the Tirupati District Police Office and reviewed law and order, crime control and technology-driven policing initiatives in the district.

Accompanied by Additional Director General of Police for Law and Order Madhusudan Reddy, the DGP performed the groundbreaking ceremony for a Police Welfare Canteen, the main entrance gate and a new compound wall. His spouse also attended the event.

Later, Harish Kumar Gupta chaired a high-level review

meeting with senior police officers. Tirupati District Superintendent of Police L. Subbarayudu presented a comprehensive overview of the district's policing, public safety measures and law and order management.

The DGP reviewed the functioning of the Command and Control Centre, CCTV surveillance, night beat policing, integrated policing, drone-based operations, cybercrime monitoring and anti-drug initiatives. Subbarayudu also briefed the DGP on road safety measures, including the recent road safety bus campaign conducted with the District Collector, identification of accident-prone black spots and awareness programmes.

The DGP appreciated the dis-



trict police for effectively using drone technology in crime prevention, crowd management and special operations. He also commended the Cyber and Social Media Monitoring System, anti-drug enforcement drives, Shakti Team initiatives for women's safety and other technology-based policing measures, urging officers to continue strengthening public safety and police welfare with the same commitment.

AP Braces for Rain, Thunderstorms as APSDMA Issues Weather Advisory

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

The AP State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA) has forecast scattered moderate to heavy rainfall across parts of the state over the weekend and urged people to remain cautious amid the possibility of thunderstorms and gusty winds.

APSDMA Managing Director Prakhari Jain said a trough extending from the Andhra Pradesh coast to central Maha-

rashtra across Telangana and adjoining areas, linked to an upper air cyclonic circulation, is likely to influence weather conditions.

On Saturday, light to moderate rain accompanied by thunderstorms is expected at isolated places in North Andhra, Kakinada, Konaseema, Markapuram, Prakasam and Nellore districts, while the remaining districts may receive light rainfall.

On Sunday, similar weather conditions are likely in Kakinada,

Konaseema, East Godavari, West Godavari, Eluru, Krishna, NTR, Guntur, Bapatla and Palnadu districts.

The authority advised people not to shelter under trees or near large hoardings during thunderstorms. It also urged residents to stay away from snapped power lines and asked farmers, agricultural labourers and cattle rearers to move to safe locations immediately if thunder is heard or the sky becomes heavily overcast.

Govt Assures Remunerative Prices for Tobacco

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

The state government has assured Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco farmers of remunerative prices and directed district authorities to closely monitor procurement to safeguard farmers' interests. Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu on Friday instructed district collectors to ensure that the average procurement price does not fall below Rs. 200 per kg, in line with the Chief Minister's directions.

During a teleconference with Agriculture Director G. Dilip Ku-

mar Jelani, district collectors and officials from tobacco-growing districts, the Minister reviewed tobacco procurement, farmers' concerns and fertiliser availability for the ensuing kharif season. He directed officials to ensure transparent procurement at tobacco purchase centres and prevent inconvenience to farmers. Atchannaidu also said adequate stocks of urea, DAP and complex fertilisers were available across the state and instructed officials to maintain strict vigil over storage, transportation and distribution while taking firm action against hoarding, ar-

tificial shortages and overpricing.

Referring to the 168th Tobacco Board meeting, the Minister said FCV tobacco production in Andhra Pradesh for the 2026-27 crop season had been fixed at around 81 million kg after considering market conditions, domestic and international demand, and farmers' interests. He also announced that a high-level committee comprising all stakeholders would be constituted to strengthen the FCV tobacco marketing system, improve transparency in procurement and introduce reforms to benefit farmers.

TTD Operationalises FSSAI-Backed Food and Water Testing Lab in Tirumala

Tirumala, June 26 | TPN Bureau

The Anna Prasadam (sanctified food offerings) and drinking water served to devotees of Lord Venkateswara have received a major quality upgrade with the full-scale operationalisation of a modern Food and Water Analysis Laboratory in Tirumala. The facility, jointly operated by the State Food Laboratory and the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) under the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), has begun delivering official test results.

TTD Additional Executive Officer Venkayya Chowdary reviewed and approved the first set of comprehensive test reports generated by the laboratory and expressed satisfaction over its smooth functioning. The lab, constructed at an estimated cost of 25 crore, has become fully operational within two and a half months, reflecting rapid implementation of safety systems in temple food management.



According to TTD sources and official updates, the facility is equipped to test food samples from Anna Prasadam, laddu prasadam units, and drinking water sources across Tirumala. It strengthens in-house quality control, reducing dependence on external laboratories and ensuring faster results.

The initiative follows enhanced focus on food safety at Tirumala after the establishment of advanced testing systems in recent years under FSSAI guidance. Officials said the lab will play a key role in maintaining hygiene standards and safeguarding the trust of millions of devotees visiting the hill shrine annually.

Bara Shaheed Dargah Emerging as Major Spiritual Tourism Hub

Nellore, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Municipal Administration Minister Dr. Ponguru Narayana on Friday said the Bara Shaheed Dargah Rottela Panduga was accorded the status of a State festival during the 2014-19 government led by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, and that extensive infrastructure has transformed the shrine into a major spiritual tourism destination.

Speaking to reporters after participating in the Rottela Panduga at Bara Shaheed Dargah, the minister said the 412-year-old shrine is expected to attract around 1.5 million devotees this year, compared to nearly four lakh visitors in 2014. He said facilities have been significantly expanded, with 6,315 municipal staff, 1,870 police personnel, life-guards, eight boats, free medical camps and enhanced sanitation arrangements deployed for the festival.

Ongole MP Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy praised the arrangements and said the Dar-



gah had witnessed rapid development since 2014. Waqf Board Chairman Abdul Aziz described the festival as a symbol of communal harmony, attracting devotees from across India and abroad.

Narayana said special attention had been given to maintaining water quality in Swarnala Cheruvu and ensuring cleanliness throughout the festival. He added that the annual Sandal Festival on June 27 is expected to draw large crowds. Nellore Mayor Sujatha, Municipal Commissioner Nandan, Deputy Mayor Roop Kumar Yadav, Rottela Panduga Chairman Munir Ahmed, minority leader Syed Shami and other dignitaries attended the programme.

Visakhapatnam techie death case father alleges premeditated murder

Visakhapatnam, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Sudhakar, father of techie Radha Gayatri, has alleged that his daughter's death in Mussoorie was a premeditated murder planned by her husband Sricharan. Speaking to media in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday, he demanded a detailed investigation and immediate action by the police.

He alleged that Sricharan misled the family about the circumstances surrounding her death. Sudhakar said that although Radha Gayatri died at 6:30 am, Sricharan called him at 8:10 am and later informed him about sending tickets, asking the family to travel despite her death.

He further claimed that Sricharan had consulted several individuals and even engaged a lawyer in Uttarakhnad before the inci-



dent. Questioning his conduct, he asked why Sricharan did not attend the tenth-day rituals and why he suddenly vacated the Simhachalam residence after the incident.

Sudhakar also alleged that Sricharan's mobile phone was switched off and that he was seen moving around in Visakhapatnam. He urged Mussoorie police to expedite the investigation and called for strict action based on evidence collected during the probe.

Police are yet to officially respond to the allegations. Investigation is underway.

Swift Medical Response Saves Toddler at Nellore Rottela Panduga

Nellore, June 26 | TPN Bureau

A two-year-old girl from Nagpur was rescued after she lost consciousness due to the scorching heat during the Rottela Panduga celebrations in Nellore on Friday, thanks to the swift response of medical and government personnel.

The child, Zainab, had arrived at the annual festival with her parents, Sarpraj Khan and Rukhsar. As the girl fainted amid the massive gathering of devotees, her parents struggled to secure immediate medical assistance.

Information and Public Relations Department staff quickly intervened, reassured the family and escorted the child to the Government medical camp set up at the festival venue. Doctors Jyothirmayi and Sai Vignan immediately administered first aid before shifting the



child in a dedicated ambulance to a nearby private hospital for advanced treatment.

The girl recovered after receiving timely medical care, prompting her relieved parents to thank the doctors and healthcare personnel for their prompt action.

The District Medical and Health Department has deployed special medical teams and emergency services at the Rottela Panduga to provide immediate healthcare assistance to devotees arriving from various parts of the country.



YSRCP Leaders Visit Mudragada, Wish Him Speedy Recovery

Hyderabad, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Senior leaders of the YSR Congress Party visited former minister and YSRCP PAC member Mudragada Padmanabham at Sindhu Hospital in Hyderabad on Friday and enquired about his health following a recent surgery.

The leaders met Mudragada while he was undergoing treatment and interacted with the doctors to assess his medical condition and progress. They expressed concern for his well-being and wished him a speedy recovery.

Among those who visited the hospital were former ministers Botla Satyanarayana and Dadiseti Raja, MLC Thota Trimurtulu, YSRCP leader Davuluri Dorababu, former MLA Jakkampudi Raja, and YSRCP youth wing leader Jakkampudi Ganesh. The delegation re-

viewed the treatment being provided and conveyed their support to the veteran leader.

The YSRCP leaders also met Mudragada Padmanabham's son, Giribabu, who is the party in-charge for the Prathipadu constituency. They spoke with family members and reassured them of the party's support during his recovery.

Describing Mudragada as a respected leader who has consistently stood for public causes, the visiting leaders expressed confidence that he would recover soon and return to active public life. They prayed for his good health and hoped he would continue serving the people with renewed strength in the days ahead.

Party leaders and supporters across the state have also conveyed their wishes for his speedy recovery.



Uma Alleges Jagan's Arrest in Liquor Scam is Inevitable

Amaravati, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Former Minister and TDP State General Secretary Devineni Umamaheswara Rao on Thursday alleged that the arrest of former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy in the alleged liquor scam is inevitable as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) intensifies its investigation into the case.

Addressing a press conference at the Telugu Desam Party central office in Mangalagiri, Devineni Uma described the alleged liquor scam as one of the biggest financial scandals in the country. He claimed that the ED probe has gathered pace and is now focusing on hawala transactions and the movement of funds linked to the case.

He alleged that more than 3,500 crore of public money was siphoned off and diverted to secret locations and over-

seas business ventures. Drawing a comparison with the film Pushpa, he said the case involved large-scale irregularities through liquor sales rather than smuggling activities depicted in the movie.

The TDP leader stated that the ED has named 52 individuals as accused and arrested 18 persons in connection with the case. He further alleged that around 30,000 people lost their lives due to the sale of sub-standard liquor during the previous YSRCP regime.

Uma also accused former minister Karumuri Nageswara Rao and others of involvement in irregularities related to liquor transportation. He said the alliance government has taken measures to curb spurious liquor sales, including the introduction of the "Excise Suraksha" app and mandatory quality testing of liquor batches before sale.

Varma Alleges Political Motive Behind Jagan's Actions in Sai Krishna Case

Kakinada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

TDP leader and former Pithapuram MLA SVSS Varma on Friday alleged that YSRCP president Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is willing to go to any extent to create trouble for the state and its people, citing what he claimed was an attempt to create divisions within the Kapu community.

Speaking at a press conference held at his residence in LB Nagar, Kakinada, Varma raised doubts over Jagan Mohan Reddy's "unusual reaction" to the Sai Krishna case in Krishnalanka, Vijayawada, and questioned his "hasty visit" from Bengaluru to the area. He said a Special Investigation Team (SIT) has already been constituted by the government to probe the case and asserted

that the facts would emerge through a transparent investigation.

Varma further alleged that there are suspicions of YSRCP leaders influencing police officials in the case, claiming that certain personnel continue to have political leanings. He, however, said the SIT inquiry would bring clarity on all such allegations.

He also criticised Jagan Mohan Reddy, stating that it was "ironic" for him to question Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, while allegedly not responding similarly in earlier cases, including the death of Dalit driver Subramanyam.

Varma maintained that the ongoing investigation would expose the truth and urged restraint until official findings are released.

Amit Shah Calls for Drug-Free India by 2047

Continued

Secretary G. Sai Prasad said Andhra Pradesh's Elite Anti-Narcotics Group for Law Enforcement (EAGLE) is functioning as a strong state-level enforcement mechanism. He noted that the state, once affected by cannabis cultivation along the Andhra-Odisha border, has now become a national model in drug control enforcement.

Sai Prasad said that large-scale anti-narcotics inspec-

tions are being conducted three times a week in all districts to curb inter-state trafficking through railway routes. These operations involve coordinated action by local police, Government Railway Police, Railway Protection Force, EAGLE units, and dog squads.

He added that EAGLE operates a dedicated secure data centre at its Mangalagiri headquarters, functioning as the central surveillance hub for narcotics monitoring across

the state.

Officials participating in the video conference included EAGLE Chief IGP Ake Ravi Krishna, EAGLE SP (Operations) K.M. Maheswara Raju, Visakhapatnam Narcotics Control Bureau SP J.D. Pankaj, and DSP Kiran, among others. The meeting underlined the need for stronger inter-agency coordination and technology-driven enforcement to dismantle drug networks nationwide.

Rottela Panduga Begins with Grandeur at Bara Shaheed Dargah

Continued

re continuously monitoring operations on the ground.

A major focus has been placed on sanitation, with nearly 6,000 sanitation workers deployed in three shifts to maintain cleanliness across the Dargah premises and surrounding areas. Drinking water kiosks, mobile toilets, bathing facilities, and rest areas have been arranged for devotees, with Municipal Commissioner Nandan personally supervising these services.

Security has been significantly tightened with the deployment of 1,600 police personnel, CCTV cameras, drone surveillance, and a dedicated control room have been set up to monitor the massive influx of devotees. Traffic regulation measures, including signboards and route diversions, have been implemented to manage movement into Nellore city. Power supply arrangements have also been strengthened with the installation of ten special transformers to ensure uninterrupted illumination of the Dargah and surrounding areas, according to SE Raghavendran. Shopkeep-



ers have been instructed to follow strict electrical safety norms. Safety measures at Swarnala Cheruvu have been intensified with 45 trained swimmers deployed in three shifts along with rescue boats to prevent any mishaps during ritual bathing, under the supervision of the Fisheries Department JD Chand Basha.

Fire safety teams led by District Fire Officer Srinivasa Rao have deployed 125 personnel along with fire tenders, rescue boats, and emergency equipment across the venue. Medical services are being provided

round-the-clock with government and private medical camps, ambulances, and health staff under DMHO Dr. Sujatha.

The Information and Public Relations Department, led by DPRO Venugopal Reddy, is ensuring real-time coverage of the festival through digital updates, photography, and media coordination. With elaborate arrangements in place, the Rottela Panduga has once again emerged as a symbol of unity, faith, and collective devotion, welcoming lakhs of devotees to the sacred shrine.

NDA to Hold Two-Year Victory Celebration in Vijayawada West

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

A grand public meeting will be organized in the Vijayawada West Assembly constituency on June 28 to mark the completion of two years of the NDA alliance government in Andhra Pradesh. The event is being hosted by Vijayawada West MLA Yalamanchili Satyanarayana Chowdary (Sujana Chowdary) under the theme, "Two Years of Trust - Development and Welfare."

The meeting will be held at HO Convention, Urmila Nagar, beginning at 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch for partici-

pants. Organizers said the event will showcase the achievements of the Central Government over the past 12 years and the developmental and welfare initiatives implemented in Andhra Pradesh during the last two years under the alliance government.

The program is expected to be attended by several prominent leaders, including former Union Minister and MLA Sujana Chowdary, Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni), NTR District TDP President Gadde Anuradha, Jana Sena Party District President Samineni Udaya Bhanu, BJP District President Adduri

Sriram, NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshminisha, and the Joint Collector.

Speakers will highlight key welfare schemes, development projects, and state reconstruction efforts undertaken by the NDA government. The leaders will also interact directly with citizens and beneficiaries.

Alliance leaders, constituency in-charges, mandal presidents, observers, affiliated wing representatives, and party workers are expected to participate in large numbers. Organizers have invited representatives from print and electronic media to attend and cover the event.

Congress Demands Dharmendra Pradhan's Resignation Over Exam Paper Leaks

Ongole, June 26 | TPN Bureau

APCC Official Spokesperson and United Prakasam District Congress President Shaik Saida on Friday demanded the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, alleging that repeated examination paper leaks have jeopardized the future of millions of students across the country.

Addressing a press conference at the District Congress office in Ongole, Saida criticized the Central Government, claiming that question papers for various competitive and educational examinations had leaked numerous times during the past 12 years. He alleged that students preparing for examinations such as NEET, CBSE, UPSC, and other recruitment tests have suffered due to administrative failures and irregularities. Saida expressed concern over the uncertainty faced by lakhs of students and accused the government of failing to protect the integrity of the examination system. He also referred to the nationwide "Vidyaartha Garjana" campaign



launched under the leadership of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, stating that student concerns were gaining support across the country. Several Congress leaders also criticized the Centre during the meeting. Ongole City Congress President Devireddy Adinarayana Reddy said unemployed

youth and students were being unfairly affected by repeated examination controversies. Other party leaders called for accountability and reforms to ensure transparency in examinations and recruitment processes. District and state Congress leaders participated in the press conference.

Singapore's Education Model Inspires Andhra Reforms, Says Teachers' Delegation

Continued

tudents. Recalling his experience at Stanford University, he pointed out the absence of invigilators during examinations, where an "Honour Code" system ensures self-discipline. He stressed that true education reform must be rooted in ethics and responsibility.

H.M. Thirumala Sridevi from Bheemili said wellness ambassadors and mental health counsellors have strengthened teacher capacity building. She added that structured initiatives such as cluster meetings, stress management workshops, and recognition programmes have improved morale among teachers.

Johnson Devaraj, Principal of an AP Tribal Welfare School in NTR district, suggested introducing merit-based entry into high schools from Class 6, similar to Singapore's PSLE-based system. However, Lokesh noted that student stress levels must be carefully studied before implementing such reforms.

Mota Parvathi, Headmistress from Palnadu district, highlighted Singapore's "Future Focus Education" model, where students graduate with job-ready skills. Gummadi Sheila Madhuri from Guntur praised Singapore's emphasis on sports alongside academics and thanked the government for introducing a 3% sports quota in education recruitment.

Aruna, Principal of an AP Model School in Anantapur district, noted that teachers in Singapore undergo at least 100 hours of annual training, including exposure to emerging technologies like artificial in-

telligence. She also pointed out that teachers are given opportunities to work in industries for three months to gain practical experience.

Other teachers, including N. Subrahmanya Sarma from Srikalahasti and Bandi Srinivasulu from Gooty, highlighted Singapore's continuous assessment methods, creativity-focused learning, and stress-free teaching environment.

Addressing the teachers on the occasion, Minister for HRD, IT and Electronics Nara Lokesh said the Chandrababu Naidu-led government treats teachers as true leaders of social transformation and is committed to giving special recognition to those delivering outstanding results in government schools. "Teachers are not just educators; they are nation builders. We are working to ensure they get the respect, support and recognition they truly deserve," he said. "I personally went to the United States at a young age and studied at Stanford University, where I interacted with students from over 100 countries. That experience taught me the value of global exposure," he said.

Minister Lokesh said the suggestions of the visiting teachers would be studied in detail. He announced that a dedicated mechanism would be set up to evaluate the feasibility of implementing the recommendations. He also stressed that meaningful reform requires collective responsibility from teachers, parents, and the system, noting that only a small percentage of parents are currently using the government's LEAP education app.

Lokesh Instructs Full Rollout of Mana Mitra Awareness Drive

Continued

awareness campaign must be launched to educate citizens about accessing government services through WhatsApp-based governance.

He also proposed strengthening the "DG Verify" system by linking educational and sports certificates with Aadhaar authentication. He said the system should provide instant verification of certificate details, including issuing authority and date of issue, significantly reducing administrative workload.

On the agriculture and water front, Lokesh reviewed the impact of El Niño-induced rainfall deficit and instructed departments to coordinate effectively to address drought-like conditions. He called for measures to reduce water

wastage, promote low-water crops, and use real-time reservoir and groundwater data from the AWARE system for planning.

He also reviewed the power sector, noting that reduced hydroelectric generation could affect supply. He directed officials to ensure uninterrupted electricity by closely monitoring demand and resource availability through RTGS systems. Officials including CCLA Special Chief Secretary Jayalashmi, RTGS CEO Prakhraj Jain, Joint Secretary Malika Garg, RTIH CEO Dhatri Reddy, Fibernet MD Geetanjali Sharma, Civil Supplies Commissioner Kannababu, Higher Education Commissioner Narayana Bharat Gupta, School Education Director Tamim Ansari, and Agriculture Director Manjeer Jilani participated in the meeting.

Yarlagadda Set to Return to Gannavaram Today

Gannavaram, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Government Whip and Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkatrao is scheduled to arrive in Gannavaram on Saturday evening after completing a 20-day visit to the United States. Yarlagadda had travelled to the US along with his family on June 6 to personally oversee his business operations. According to party sources, he is expected to land at Gannavaram Airport, where Telugu Desam Party leaders and supporters are making arrangements to accord him a grand welcome.

The MLA, who owns and manages business ventures in the United States, had limited opportunities to travel abroad in recent years due to pending legal cases filed during the previous government's tenure. After obtaining court permission to visit the US and inspect his business activities, he undertook the trip earlier this month.

Party leaders stated that the visit was successful and that Yarlagadda is now returning to



resume his public engagements in the constituency. Since being elected as MLA, he has remained actively involved in addressing local issues, meeting residents, and pursuing development initiatives in Gannavaram.

Supporters noted that despite his business commitments abroad, Yarlagadda has maintained close contact with the people of the constituency over the past two years, focusing on public welfare and grievance redressal.

A large number of party workers and local leaders are expected to receive him at the airport and accompany him during his return to Gannavaram.



Doorless RTC Buses Raise Safety Concerns

Tiruvuru, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Growing concerns are being expressed over the operation of doorless Palle Velugu buses by the Tiruvuru RTC depot, with passengers and social activists demanding immediate safety measures to prevent accidents. The issue has gained attention following a recent fatal accident near A. Konduru, where a woman passenger reportedly fell from a crowded Palle Velugu bus after the driver applied sudden brakes. She sustained severe injuries and died shortly thereafter. Passengers allege that overcrowding on rural service buses often forces commuters to stand near the entrance due to a lack of space. Conductors are frequently occupied issuing tickets during peak hours, while some passengers remain

near the doorway in anticipation of getting down at upcoming stops. These factors, combined with the absence of bus doors, increase the risk of accidents. Residents also point out that sudden braking caused by heavy traffic conditions can endanger standing passengers. In some cases, allegations of negligent driving, including the use of mobile phones while driving, have further heightened public concern. While RTC authorities continue to promote bus travel as safe and reliable, commuters question why several Palle Velugu buses are still operating without doors. Social activists and civic organizations have urged transport officials to install doors on all such buses and strengthen passenger safety measures to prevent further tragedies and protect lives.



Holiday Rush at Kanaka Durga Temple

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

A large number of devotees thronged the revered Sri Durga Malleswari Devi Temple on Indrakeeladri Hill on Friday, taking advantage of the public holiday to seek the blessings of Goddess Kanaka Durga. Long queues were witnessed from the early hours as pilgrims arrived in large numbers from various parts of the state. In view of the heavy rush, temple authorities temporarily suspended Antaralaya (inner sanctum) darshan and VIP darshan from 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. to ensure smooth and faster movement of devotees

through the general darshan lines. To provide relief from the heat, officials arranged continuous distribution of chilled drinking water through mobile dispensers at queue complexes. Free prasadam and Nityannadanam were also provided to devotees visiting the temple. Temple authorities and staff closely monitored the arrangements throughout the day and took necessary measures to ensure a hassle-free darshan experience for all pilgrims. The festive atmosphere and devotional fervour marked the holiday rush at the Kanaka Durga Malleswari Devi temple.



Farmers Demand Withdrawal of Fertilizer App

Machilipatnam, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Farmer and tenant farmer organizations have demanded that the government withdraw the newly introduced fertilizer distribution app and restore the previous system of supplying fertilizers to cultivators. The demand was raised at a round-table meeting organized by the AP Farmers' Association and AP Tenant Farmers' Association at Jyoti-ba Phule Vignana Kendram in Machilipatnam on Friday. The meeting, presided over by District President K. Sivanagendram, resolved to launch protests at Rythu Seva Kendras (RSKs), village secretariats, and Mandal Agriculture Officer offices against the app-based fertilizer distribution system. Speaking at the meeting, senior AP Farmers' Association leader Y. Keshavarao alleged that fertilizer price hikes and proposed subsidy reductions were placing an additional burden on farmers.

He stated that the app-based system was creating difficulties due to errors in land records and restrictions on purchasing fertilizers for certain categories of land. Association leaders pointed out that tenant farmers face major hurdles in obtaining fertilizers because purchases require OTP verification linked to landowners' mobile numbers. They noted that many landowners live in distant places or abroad, making the process impractical. AP Rythu Sangham leaders said farmers are being forced to spend long hours at Rythu Seva Kendras and fertilizer outlets for registration and purchases. They expressed support for a statewide protest scheduled to be held in Vijayawada on June 30. Representatives of farmers, tenant farmers, agricultural labourers, and workers' organizations participated in the meeting and urged the government to adopt a farmer-friendly fertilizer distribution system.

Venkaiah Naidu Stresses Rural Healthcare and Value-Based Education

Atkurru, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Former Vice President of India Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu emphasized the importance of strengthening rural healthcare services and promoting value-based education during his visit to Atkuruvillage in Unguturu Mandal on Friday.



He also highlighted the need for health awareness programs among farmers, laborers, and other rural communities. The former Vice President observed that changing lifestyles have contributed to the rise of several health issues and urged people to adopt healthier habits. He called for environmental conservation, protection of water bodies, and preservation of trees, noting that earlier generations benefited from living closer to nature. Later, Venkaiah Naidu interacted with students undergoing vocational training at the Swarna Bharat Trust. He stated that education should contribute not only to employment but also to the overall development of society. Students, he said, must cultivate discipline, moral values, patriotism, and social responsibility alongside academic learning. He emphasized that vocational education enhances employability while also encouraging self-confidence and entrepreneurship among youth. Urging students to preserve Indian culture and traditions, he expressed hope that they would use their knowledge and skills for nation-building and community development. Officials, trust representatives, faculty members, medical staff, and residents participated in the programmes.

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Praja Darbar Ensures Quick Resolution of Public Issues

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Government Whip and Central Constituency MLA Bonda Uma Maheswara Rao on Friday reaffirmed his commitment to resolving public grievances promptly during the weekly Praja Darbar (Public Grievance Redressal System) held at his office in Singh Nagar.



The programme witnessed a large turnout, with residents from various divisions of the constituency submitting petitions related to personal, social, medical, pension, employment, housing, and welfare issues. The MLA reviewed each representation individually and directed concerned department officials to take immediate action for their resolution. Addressing the gathering, Bonda Uma said that solving public problems is the foremost responsibility of elected representatives. He stated that the Alliance government, under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, is committed to transparent governance, public welfare, and speedy delivery of services. He explained that the Praja Darbar initiative enables citizens to directly present their grievances without repeatedly visiting government offices. Every petition, he said, is closely monitored until a satisfactory solution is achieved. The MLA emphasized that special priority is being given to pensions, medical assistance through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, welfare schemes, housing projects, and employment opportunities. He assured the public that he would continue to treat every family's problem as his own and work tirelessly for quick solutions. Several public representatives, party leaders, activists, and officials participated in the programme.



56% Enumeration Forms Distributed in Vijayawada East

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

The distribution of enumeration forms under the Intensive Summary Revision (ISR) of the 2026 electoral roll is progressing steadily in the 81-Vijayawada East Assembly Constituency, according to Electoral Registration Officer and Revenue Divisional Officer Vennela Srinu. In a press release issued on Thursday, the official stated that the constituency has a total of 2,69,734 registered voters. Between June 15 and 4 p.m. on June 26, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) distributed 1,52,136 enumeration forms, achieving a distribution rate of 56.40%. The officer further informed that 14,290 forms have been digitized so far, accounting for 5.30 percent of the total voter population. Efforts are being intensified to speed up both distribution and digitization of the forms.

Instructions have been issued to all Booth Level Officers, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs), and BLO Supervisors to accelerate the process and ensure timely completion of the exercise. The Election Commission has directed that daily progress reports on the distribution of enumeration forms be released at 4 p.m. to keep the public informed about the ongoing revision process.

The selected candidates will be posted at Spark Minda units in Hosur and Bengaluru. Interested applicants have been instructed to register online through the APSSDC portal before attending the drive. Candidates should bring their resume or bio-data, Aadhaar card, Aadhaar-linked mobile number, PAN card, and photocopies of educational certificates for the interview process. Officials urged eligible youth to make use of the opportunity and secure employment through the recruitment drive. For additional information, candidates may contact the helpline number 7207534666.

Mega Job Drive to Fill 200 Vacancies

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC) will conduct a mega job drive in Vijayawada on June 29 to provide employment opportunities for unemployed youth, District Employment and Skill Officer C. Madhubhushan Rao and District Skill Development Officer S. Srinivasa Rao announced on Friday. The recruitment drive will be held from 9:00 a.m. at the Government Polytechnic College, located opposite Ramesh Hospitals on Government ITI College Road. More than 200 vacancies are expected to be filled through the drive, primarily for the post of Production Associate at the renowned international manufacturing company Spark Minda. Officials stated that candidates with qualifications ranging from 8th to 10th class, Intermediate, ITI, Polytechnic, Degree, B.Tech, and Post-Graduation are eligible to participate. Young men and women between 17 and 35 years of age can apply. Selected candidates will receive monthly salaries ranging from 17,000 to 23,000, depending on their qualifications. In addition to salary, employees will be provided with benefits such as subsidized food, attendance bonuses, overtime incentives, ESI, PF, and other facilities.

The selected candidates will be posted at Spark Minda units in Hosur and Bengaluru. Interested applicants have been instructed to register online through the APSSDC portal before attending the drive. Candidates should bring their resume or bio-data, Aadhaar card, Aadhaar-linked mobile number, PAN card, and photocopies of educational certificates for the interview process. Officials urged eligible youth to make use of the opportunity and secure employment through the recruitment drive. For additional information, candidates may contact the helpline number 7207534666.



Eagle AP Intensifies Anti-Drug Awareness Drive

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshminsha on Friday called for collective action against drug abuse, stating that narcotics destroy individuals, families, and society. He said the Andhra Pradesh government's "Eagle AP" initiative has emerged as a model for the nation in combating the drug menace. Speaking at an awareness rally and walkathon organized at the Old Government General Hospital in Vijayawada on the occasion of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the Collector urged youth to set high goals and stay away from intoxicants. The event was jointly organized by the State Department for the Welfare of Differently-Abled, Transgender and Senior Citizens, Eagle AP, and the NTR District Administration. Participants, including students, volunteers, and citizens, raised slogans against drug abuse and pledged support for a drug-free society. Dr. Lakshminsha emphasized that parents, educational institutions, and voluntary organizations must work together to prevent youth from falling into the trap of narcotics. Eagle AP IG Ravikrishna said more than 40,000 Eagle Clubs have been established across the state to spread awareness among students. He added that "Operation Chaitanya" has helped achieve the goal of zero cannabis cultivation and urged citizens to report drug-related activities through the Eagle helpline number 1972. Officials, NSS and NCC volunteers, and Red Cross representatives participated in the programme.

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Muharram Observances Promote Harmony and Sacrifice: Sufi Altaf Ali Raza

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Sufi saint and Andhra Pradesh Convener Sufi Mohammed Altaf Ali Raza said that the 'Yade Hussain' programmes conducted during Muharram symbolize devotion, sacrifice, justice, and humanitarian values. Addressing the media on Friday, he explained that the observances commemorate the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), along with 72 of his family members and companions who sacrificed their lives in the Battle of Karbala while upholding truth and righteousness. He said Muharram celebrations across the country include the installation and decoration of Peerla Panjas (Alams), distribution of sharbat and food, and various traditional rituals. People from different religions and communities participate in these events, reflecting communal harmony and mutual respect. Altaf Ali Raza noted that the tradition is known as Tazia in North India and as Peerla Panjas or Alams in South India, particularly in the Telugu states. He said the Panjas symbolize Imam Hussain's unwavering stand against injustice and serve as a reminder of his sacrifice. In Kondapalli, around 40 Panjas are being venerated during the ten-day observance. The ceremonies will culminate with a grand procession to the Karbala site near Shah Bukhari Asthana, followed by special prayers and annadanam.



VMC Urges Weekly 'Friday Dry Day' to Curb Mosquitoes

Vijayawada, June 26 | TPN Bureau

The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) has appealed to residents to observe a weekly "Friday Dry Day" to help control the growing mosquito menace in the city. An awareness programme was conducted in the Krishnalanka area on Friday to educate citizens about preventive measures against mosquito breeding. Addressing the programme, VMC Biologist Suryakumar Naik said the corporation is undertaking extensive mosquito-control operations across the city. These include desilting canals, removing water hyacinths and waste using tractors and boats, and deploying drones to spray larvicidal oil in inaccessible areas. He said fogging, anti-larval spraying, and the release of Gambusia fish in water bodies are also being carried out to reduce mosquito populations. However, public participation remains crucial for achieving lasting results. Residents were advised to inspect their homes every Friday and ensure that no stagnant water is present in containers such as buckets, drums, flower pots, mugs, and other unused items. Officials demonstrated how regularly emptying water from such containers can eliminate mosquito larvae and prevent breeding. Awareness activities were also conducted in Ajit Singh Nagar, where officials visited households and educated residents on identifying potential mosquito breeding spots. Biologists, sanitary inspectors, malaria control staff, ANMs, and ASHA workers participated in the programme.

Gambusia fish in water bodies are also being carried out to reduce mosquito populations. However, public participation remains crucial for achieving lasting results. Residents were advised to inspect their homes every Friday and ensure that no stagnant water is present in containers such as buckets, drums, flower pots, mugs, and other unused items. Officials demonstrated how regularly emptying water from such containers can eliminate mosquito larvae and prevent breeding. Awareness activities were also conducted in Ajit Singh Nagar, where officials visited households and educated residents on identifying potential mosquito breeding spots. Biologists, sanitary inspectors, malaria control staff, ANMs, and ASHA workers participated in the programme.



Grand Consecration of 36 Temple Idols Begins at Shambala Nagaram

Shambala Nagaram, June 26 | TPN Bureau

The consecration and Maha Kumbhabhishekam of 36 newly built temples commenced with religious fervour at Om Shiva Shakti Peetham - Shambala Nagaram in Gadarada village of Korukonda mandal in East Godavari district. The ceremonies are being held under the leadership of Rajanagar MLA Battula Balaramakrishna, drawing large numbers of devotees.

On the second day of the celebrations, Vedic scholars and priests conducted a series of rituals, including Ganapati Puja, Punyahavachanam, Ganapati Homam, Sri Rudra Homam, Sri Sada Shiva Murti Homam, Sri Chandhi Homam, Raja Shyamala Homam and Lalitha Homam. Battula Balaramakrishna, accompanied by his wife Battula Venkata Lakshmi and family members, participated in the rituals and prayed for the well-being, prosperity and good health of the

people in the constituency.

A highlight of the event was the Kanyaka Puja, during which the MLA and his wife performed ceremonial worship of young girls, revered as embodiments of the Divine Mother, and presented them with new clothes, auspicious gifts and prasadam.

The spiritual complex features consecrations of deities, including Sri Varahi Devi, Sri Chandika Devi, Sri Sada Shiva Murti, Sri Raja Shyamala Devi, the Dasa Mahavidyas, Sapta Matrikas, Sri Manasa Devi, Sri Rajarajeshwari Devi, Sri Pratyangira Devi and Sri Radha Krishna. The site also houses towering 36-foot statues of Sri Subrahmanya Swamy and Sri Kalabhairava Swamy. Addressing devotees, Battula Balaramakrishna said the ceremonies were being conducted for the welfare of the people and invited devotees from across the constituency to participate in the Maha Kumbhabhishekam celebrations.

YSRCP Holds Awareness Meeting on Electoral Roll Revision

Rajamahendravaram, June 26 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP leaders on Friday urged party functionaries to remain vigilant during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and ensure that the names of party supporters are not removed from the voters' list.

An awareness meeting on the SIR programme was held at the party office under the leadership of YSRCP National Spokesperson and former Rajamahendravaram MP Margani Bharat Ram. Rajamahendravaram Parliamentary Observer Gurumurthy Reddy, Constituency Observer Addanki Mukteswara Rao and SIR Programme Coordinator Parameswara Rao attended the meeting as chief guests.

Addressing the gathering, Gurumurthy Reddy said ward in-charges and booth-level agents should closely monitor the voter list revision process to safeguard the voting rights of YSRCP supporters.

Parameswara Rao explained the voter registration process through the Election Commission portal, advising booth-level



agents to verify the submission of enumeration forms by Booth Level Officers and review corrections to addresses and other details. He also urged party members to actively coordinate through official WhatsApp groups.

Margani Bharat Ram called upon ward in-charges and booth-level agents to discharge their responsibilities diligently, report field-level issues to the party leadership and closely monitor alleged irregularities. He also alleged that YSRCP leaders and workers were being targeted through false cases and appealed to party cadres not to lose confidence. A large number of party workers attended the programme.

MLA Badeti Chanti Calls for Public Participation in Service Activities

Eluru, June 26 | TPN Bureau

MLA and Telugu Desam Party District President Badeti Chanti on Friday said yoga strengthens physical well-being while community service plays a vital role in the progress of society, urging people to actively participate in both.

He was speaking after inaugurating a series of programmes organised by Flash Foundation at the Junior College Grounds in Kotadibba, Eluru. After lighting the ceremonial lamp, the MLA felicitated 10 yoga instructors under the "Arogya Guruvulaku Abhinandanam" initiative and appreciated their efforts in promoting yoga. He encouraged them to inspire more people to adopt yoga as a part of their daily lives.

Badeti Chanti also flagged off a mobile donation campaign launched under the "Jai Ho Se-



vakuda" initiative to raise funds for purchasing a modern ambulance. He praised the organisation's goal of mobilising support from 5,000 families to procure a fully equipped ambulance costing Rs. 50 lakh and described the initiative as a model of community service.

He urged the organisers to continue undertaking similar welfare programmes for the benefit of society. Flash Foundation founder Yarramsetti Srinivas, Corporator Kalavakollu Samba and members of the Flash team participated in the programme.

Traffic Diversions Announced Ahead of CM's Visit

Markapuram, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Markapuram District Superintendent of Police V. Harshvardhan Raju announced traffic diversions and parking arrangements ahead of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's visit to Krishnamsettipalli village in Giddalur mandal on June 27. The CM is scheduled to inaugurate the Sanjeevini Digital Nerve Center at the Primary Health Centre.

The SP said the diversions have been planned to prevent traffic congestion and ensure smooth public transport during the event. Heavy vehicles, including lorries, buses and goods



carriers, will be diverted from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., while the restrictions for cars, buses and other light vehicles will be in force from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Heavy vehicles travelling

from Markapuram to Giddalur have been advised to take the Mottu-Porumamilla-Mydukur route, while those travelling from Nandyal towards Markapuram should use the Nandyal-Allagadda-Mydukur-Porumamilla-Taticherla Mottu route.

The SP also announced parking arrangements, directing vehicles from Markapuram towards Giddalur to halt at Pandillapalli Toll Gate if necessary, while vehicles from Nandyal towards Markapuram may be parked in the open area near Bhimeswaram Temple. He appealed to the public and motorists to cooperate with the police by following the notified traffic diversion routes.

AP Rythu Sangham Demands New Oil Fed Plant

Eluru, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangham State Assistant Secretary K. Srinivas has demanded the construction of a new Oil Fed processing plant at Pedavegi and called for immediate measures to prevent the exploitation of oil palm farmers by companies through the Oil Extraction Rate (OER) mechanism.

Addressing a meeting on oil palm farmers' issues at Uddaraju Ramam Bhavan in Eluru on Friday, Srinivas said the farmers' concerns would be discussed and a resolution adopted during the 23rd State Conference of the Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangham, scheduled to be held in Eluru from July 3 to 5. He criticised oil palm companies for approaching the court seeking to reduce the government-fixed OER from 20.5 per cent to 17.5 per cent, describing the move as anti-farmer. He urged the



Central and State governments to clearly state their stand, intervene legally in support of farmers and bear the litigation costs if farmers are impeached in the case.

Srinivas also demanded that governments approve a modern Oil Fed factory at Pedavegi and supply high-yielding oil palm saplings to farmers. He opposed any move to privatise the existing profitable Pedavegi Oil Fed plant and recalled

that farmers had earlier united to prevent its privatisation.

He appealed to oil palm farmers to participate in large numbers in the "Hello Raithanna - Chalo Eluru" programme on July 3. The meeting was attended by Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangham State Conference Reception Committee leaders R. Lingaraju, P. Ramakrishna, Pampana Ravikumar and M. Issaku, among others.

Congress Demands Union Education Minister's Resignation Over Exam Paper Leaks

Ongole, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Congress Party leaders on Friday demanded the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, alleging that repeated examination paper leaks under the Narendra Modi-led government have jeopardized the future of millions of students and job aspirants across the country.

Addressing a press conference at the District Congress Party office in Ongole, APCC official spokesperson and

Prakasam DCC president Shaik Saida alleged that nearly 98 examination paper leaks had occurred during the past 12 years, affecting around four crore candidates appearing for NEET, CBSE, UPSC, Group examinations and other competitive tests. He claimed that the recurring irregularities had pushed several students into distress and urged the Centre to take responsibility. Saida also alleged irregularities in the DSC recruitment process in Andhra Pradesh.

Ongole City Congress president Devi Reddy Adinarayana

Reddy, State KCC chairman Paipu Venkata Krishna Reddy and District SC Department chairman Manam Prasanna Raju also criticized the Centre over its handling of examination processes. State Minority Department vice-president Mohammed Rafi, State KCC general secretary Sudheer Varma, district vice-presidents Gorantla Koteswara Rao, Shaik Rasool and Kakarlapudi Venu Raj, district general secretaries Irigineni Venkata Narasayya, Paikam Madhu, Jacob and other party leaders attended the meeting.

Marine Police, Lifeguards Rescue Teen From Drowning



Bapatla, June 26 | TPN Bureau

A major tragedy was averted at the popular Suryalanka Beach in Bapatla district on Friday when Marine Police and local lifeguard swimmers rescued a 17-year-old boy who was swept away by strong sea waves.

According to police, Shaik Hethish Shamyuel (17), a resident of Old Guntur, had visited the beach with his fa-

ther, Mohammed Imtiaz, during the holiday. While bathing in the sea, the teenager unknowingly ventured into a dangerous deep-water zone and was caught in strong waves, crying for help as he struggled to stay afloat. Responding immediately, Marine SI Srinivasa Rao, police personnel Srinivas Reddy, Vasu, Mastan, Head Constable Srinivasa Rao, and lifeguards Vamsi and Chandu entered the sea wearing

life jackets and safely brought the teenager ashore. The Marine Police also administered first aid after he was found in a semi-conscious condition.

Bapatla SP Umamaheshwar commended the rescue team for their swift action and urged visitors to strictly follow warning boards and police instructions at beaches, cautioning people against entering dangerous deep-water areas.



Chintamaneni Prabhakar inaugurates Free Medical Camp

Eluru, June 26 | TPN Bureau

A free medical camp organised by Ashram Medical College at Pothunuru village in Denduluru mandal of Eluru district was inaugurated by Denduluru MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar, who attended the event as the chief guest on Friday.

The MLA was accorded a warm welcome by Ashram Medical College CEO Dr. K. Hanumanth Rao and local coalition leaders upon his arrival at the venue.

Speaking on the occasion,

Chintamaneni Prabhakar urged people to make the best use of the free healthcare services being offered through the camp. He said such initiatives play an important role in providing accessible medical care to the public, particularly in rural areas.

The MLA also lauded the management and organisers of Ashram Medical College for conducting the free medical camp and appreciated their efforts in extending quality healthcare services to the people through community outreach programmes.



Yashoda Hospital Crosses 381 Kidney Transplants

Rajamahendravaram, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Yashoda Hospital, Hitec City, Hyderabad, has achieved a major milestone in kidney transplantation by successfully performing more than 381 kidney transplants, offering a new lease of life to hundreds of patients suffering from renal failure.

Addressing a media interaction in Rajamahendravaram, nephrologist Dr. Rajasekhar Chakravarthi said the hospital's transplant team has achieved excellent outcomes even in complex cases involving incompatible blood groups. He noted that advanced medical technology and specialised expertise have enabled the team to perform successful

kidney transplants for elderly patients, including those above 60 years of age.

Dr. Rajasekhar Chakravarthi said dialysis provides only temporary relief for patients with kidney failure, while transplantation significantly improves both survival and quality of life. He added that the hospital's achievement represents hope for 381 families rather than just a numerical milestone. He also stressed the need to create greater public awareness about the possibility of successful transplants despite blood group incompatibility.

Marketing Team Leader S.V. Ramakrishna of the Hitec City branch and Marketing Representative V. Sai Kiran also attended the meeting.



Srikakulam Police Urge Youth to Stay Away from Narcotics

Srikakulam, June 26 | TPN Bureau

Srikakulam Police organised a large awareness rally in the city on Friday to mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, highlighting the harmful effects of narcotics and promoting a drug-free society.

Addressing the gathering, Srikakulam DSP Vivekananda said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the Nasha Mukta Bharat campaign with the objective of making India free from drug abuse. He added that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu was committed to transferring Andhra Pradesh into a drug-free state through sustained enforcement and awareness

initiatives.

The DSP said the police were conducting continuous awareness programmes to discourage youth from consuming narcotic substances. He stated that the State Government, through the Eagle Department, had taken effective measures to eliminate cannabis cultivation, particularly along the Andhra Pradesh-Odisha border.

Vivekananda said tribal youth had been educated about the harmful consequences of drug cultivation and abuse and encouraged to take up alternative crops, leading to significant progress in the eradication of cannabis cultivation. He urged young people to stay away from drugs and contribute to building a healthy and responsible society.

Editorial

Climate Change Awareness From Global Urgency to Local Responsibility

Climate change has moved from scientific debate to lived reality. Across the world, rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, heatwaves, floods, and shrinking biodiversity are no longer isolated warnings but recurring events. Global institutions like the IPCC and UN agencies stress that the crisis is accelerating faster than mitigation efforts, driven by fossil fuel dependence, deforestation, and unsustainable consumption patterns. 1.1°C warming reshapes climate; 57% Indian districts face heat risk; 90% Telangana farmers worry about water scarcity; India may lose 35M jobs; 45% mandal vulnerability.

India stands at a critical intersection of development and vulnerability. While contributing relatively less to historical emissions, it faces severe climate risks due to geography, dense population, and agrarian dependence. Heat stress in cities, unpredictable monsoons, and coastal erosion are already visible. India's climate commitments—net-zero by 2070 and renewable energy expansion—signal intent, but implementation and behavioural change remain key challenges. At the state level, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana face overlapping risks. Telangana shows ~1.5°C higher heat, repeated heatwave alerts, and rising agricultural stress, with 28-45% of mandals projected to be vulnerable. Andhra Pradesh remains a cyclone-prone coastal risk zone, driving resilience and adaptation planning. Groundwater depletion, urban flooding, and crop stress further intensify vulnerability. Yet, climate communication and awareness among professionals and the public remain uneven. Government departments are adopting climate-resilient planning, but awareness rarely translates into everyday behaviour or professional practice. The gap lies in communication design. Climate change is still presented as policy jargon rather than a daily survival issue. Infographics, dashboards, and regional climate maps can make the crisis tangible—showing rainfall shifts in Rayalaseema, heat islands in Hyderabad, and cyclone paths along the coast. Professional bodies—engineers, urban planners, journalists, educators, and healthcare workers—must act as climate communicators, not passive observers. Schools and universities in Telugu states should integrate localised climate infographics into learning to build early awareness. Ultimately, climate action depends on local understanding. Without clear, visual, and consistent communication, even strong policies risk remaining disconnected from public behaviour.

Editor

Half a Century On, Bonded Labour Still Haunts India



BVS Kumar

Former Chairman, Child Welfare Committee, Krishna district.

Bonded labour is an inherited social evil prevalent for centuries in India. Upper sections dominated our society until 1960, leaving the weaker sections in poverty. This poverty made it difficult for them to sustain their families with sufficient food and shelter. They were forced to depend on borrowings from the upper sections, who were relatively wealthy and exploited their situation and vulnerability. Lacking any property, weaker sections used to mortgage their services and meagre assets, if any, for loans at abnormal rates of interest and harsh conditions. These loans could not be repaid within their lifetime and were passed on to the next generations. Generations worked for their creditors under pitiable living conditions.

On representations made by social workers and NGOs, the Government of India enacted "The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976" on 9th February 1976, which was brought into force from 25th October 1975. The main aim of this Act was to abolish the bonded labour system to prevent economic and physical exploitation of weaker sections.

This Act extinguished all liabilities to repay bonded debts, nullified all suits pending in civil courts for recovery, and relieved bonded labourers from service obligations and mortgaged properties.

Any violation of the Act is pun-

ishable with imprisonment of up to three years and a fine under Section 9, Sub-section 2 of the Act. The Act also enabled state governments to establish Vigilance Committees from the village level to the state level to monitor and rescue bonded labourers. The government is also required to provide rehabilitation to rescued persons, including financial assistance of Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 20,000 for immediate relief.

Even after 50 years of enacting this Act, bonded labour still exists in states like Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, etc.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) reported around 1.17 crore bonded labourers in India in 2014. By December 2018, about 3.13 lakh persons had been rescued and rehabilitated by the government. This bonded labour system contributes to human trafficking, including for sexual exploitation and child labour in many cases.

Unfortunately, the conviction rate in bonded labour cases remains very low due to delays in courts. Most rescued labourers are migrant workers who are sent back to their native districts, making it difficult for authorities to locate them for court proceedings. If offenders are not convicted, it encourages repetition of the crime and emboldens others.

To mitigate this social evil, the government should:

- Empower district and sub-di-



sional Vigilance Committees with adequate funds and mandatory training to systematically map and identify victims.

- Establish specialized fast-track courts to try perpetrators swiftly under the Act, ensuring higher conviction rates and strict penalties.

- Conduct surprise, periodic inspections in high-risk informal sectors like brick kilns, stone quarries, mining, and agriculture.

- Amend procedures to ensure criminal prosecution of employers begins immediately upon rescue of victims.

- Bridge administrative delays by providing immediate interim

financial assistance and linking survivors to welfare schemes like PDS, housing, and health insurance.

- Offer market-aligned vocational and technical training to safeguard individuals from exploitative contracts.

- Provide accessible, low-interest microfinance and banking options in rural areas to reduce dependence on exploitative moneylenders.

- Ensure strict implementation of rural employment schemes like MGNREGA to guarantee sustainable wages.

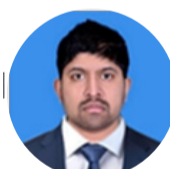
- Provide land titles to vulnerable landless communities, especially Dalits and Adivasis.

• Enforce mandatory school enrollment in high-risk areas to eliminate child labour and break generational poverty cycles.

Timely justice and higher conviction rates are essential to eradicate this social evil. Very recently, the Trump government threatened India with a 12.5% tariff on Indian goods due to India's failure to eradicate bonded labour, stating that the USA cannot import goods produced through bonded labour.

A country that has eliminated or minimized bonded labour—a primary form of forced labour and modern slavery—is rated highly across global human rights, legal, and economic indices.

Civilizational Compass: India's Timeless Role in the World's Geopolitical Architecture



Pranav Peyyala

Development Analyst

There is a particular kind of geography that does not merely house a civilization; it shapes one. India is that kind of geography. Cradled between the Himalayas and the Indian Ocean, flanked by the Arabian Sea to the west and the Bay of Bengal to the east, the subcontinent has never been peripheral to the world's story. It has, more often than not, been its quiet, enduring centre.

Understanding today's geopolitical currents requires us to look not at the last decade, but at the last five millennia.

A Civilization Built for Exchange

Around 3300 BCE, along the banks of the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra rivers, one of humanity's earliest urban experiments took shape, the Harappan civilization, also known as the Indus Valley Civilization. What makes it remarkable, beyond its standardized brick sizes and sophisticated drainage systems, is evidence of commerce. Harappan seals have been found in ancient Mesopotamia, in present-day Iraq, pointing to active trade networks that predate many geopolitical frameworks we now consider foundational.

This aligns with what scholars like Andre Gunder Frank argued in *ReOrient* (1998), that Asia, and the Indian Ocean world in particular, was the engine of global economic activity long before the Atlantic trade routes of the 15th century emerged. India sat at the very heart of that engine.

The Harappan example is not merely archaeological nostalgia. It establishes a pattern: India as a node of exchange, a civilization whose power flowed not from conquest alone but from connectivity.

Maritime Mastery and the Silk Road's Southern Cousin

By the time of the Mauryan Empire (322-185 BCE), India's geopolitical footprint had grown considerably. Chandragupta Maurya and his grandson Ashoka governed one of the most administratively sophisticated empires of the ancient world. Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to the Mauryan court, documented a society of remarkable organization and openness.

But it was India's maritime identity that deserves special attention. The Indian Ocean, what historian K.N. Chaudhuri called a "world-system" in his landmark 1985 work *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean*, was, for centuries, an Indian lake in all but name. Indian merchants, navigators, and priests sailed to Southeast Asia, East Africa, and Arabia, carrying with them cotton, spices, iron, and something more durable: culture. The Spice Route, often overshadowed by the more celebrated Silk Road, was equally transformative. Indian pepper, cardamom, and turmeric reached Roman dinner tables and Egyptian pharmacies. In return, gold, horses, and ideas flowed inward. This bidirectional exchange gave India a civilizational depth that no



purely military power could replicate. Nicholas Spykman's *Rimland Theory* (1944), which argued that the coastal peripheries of Eurasia are strategically decisive, inadvertently described what India had been practicing for millennia, a civilizational rimland, projecting influence across vast maritime distances through trade and culture rather than force. The Cultural Gravitational Pull (India's soft power), to borrow Joseph Nye's 1990 formulation, is perhaps the oldest recorded instance of that concept in practice. Buddhism, born in the foothills of the Himalayas, spread eastward through Central Asia, China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast

Asia. Hinduism and Indian artistic traditions shaped the temple architecture of Angkor Wat in Cambodia and Prambanan in Indonesia. The Sanskrit language and its literary traditions became the Latin of Asia, the tongue of courts, scriptures, and scholarship from Bali to Bukhara. This was not imperial imposition. It was civilizational gravity. People moved toward Indian ideas because those ideas offered meaning, aesthetic richness, and intellectual rigour. Geopolitical theorist Zbigniew Brzezinski, in *The Grand Chessboard* (1997), identified the Eurasian landmass as the arena of global power. India, positioned at the juncture of

South Asia, Central Asia, and the Indian Ocean world, occupies what might be called the subcontinental pivot, a position that gives it unique leverage across all of Brzezinski's identified strategic axes. The Present Inherits the Past. Today, India's geopolitical relevance is once again ascending, not as a novelty, but as a restoration. The ancient logic of Indian Ocean centrality has found modern expression in initiatives like India's SAGAR vision (Security and Growth for All in the Region), its leadership in the International Solar Alliance, and its role as one of the world's largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions. The Indo-

Pacific, a framework now central to 21st-century strategic discourse, is in many ways a rediscovery of the oceanic geography that Indian merchants and navigators understood intuitively two thousand years ago. Halford Mackinder's *Heartland Theory* (1904) privileged the landlocked interior of Eurasia. But history has repeatedly vindicated the maritime alternative, and India has always been its most eloquent advocate.

A Legacy Worth Carrying Forward

What India's long arc of history tells us is that durable geopolitical influence is built not on dominance, but on in-

dispensability. A civilization that makes itself useful, as a trade partner, as a cultural interlocutor, as a source of ideas, tends to outlast those that make themselves feared.

The Harappan merchant who once sealed a clay tablet with a unicorn motif and sent it across the Persian Gulf could not have imagined a world of satellites and supply chains. And yet the logic animating that transaction, connection, exchange, mutual benefit, is the same logic India brings to its contemporary relationships. Some geographies are accidental. India's is not. It was always meant to be where the world's conversations happen.

Tharoor Seeks Legal Recognition of Passport, Aadhaar as Citizenship Proof

Senior Congress leader and Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor has called for amendments to India's legal framework to make both passports and Aadhaar cards valid and conclusive proof of citizenship, unless explicitly cancelled by the government.



The demand comes amid a controversy sparked by recent remarks from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) that an Indian passport is primarily a travel document and not definitive proof of citizenship. Tharoor argued that the clarification has created confusion among citizens, as passports have long been regarded as the most reliable identity document after undergoing extensive verification procedures.

ment issued after rigorous citizenship checks could fail to serve as proof of nationality. He also noted that the Supreme Court has previously ruled that Aadhaar is only proof of identity and residence, not citizenship.

In a statement posted on social media, Tharoor described the situation as a "legal paradox," questioning how a docu-

He suggested that the Unique Identification Authority of India issue a visually distinct Aadhaar card for non-citizen residents, enabling clear differentiation between citizens and foreign residents.

To address the issue, Tharoor proposed a legislative overhaul that would formally recognize passports and Aadhaar as citizenship documents.

tionality. He said it would also help avoid controversies during electoral roll revisions and other administrative exercises. The debate intensified after government sources cited Section 20 of the Passports Act, 1967, which allows passports to be issued to non-citizens in exceptional cases deemed to be in the public interest. Officials emphasized that this legal position has existed for decades and is not a recent policy change.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission clarified that passports remain one of the accepted supporting documents for voter verification. The issue has triggered political exchanges between the ruling NDA and opposition parties, with critics alleging that the ambiguity could lead to disputes over citizenship and voter eligibility in the future.

Shah Announces NDPS Act Amendments to Target Drug Networks

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday announced that the Centre will amend the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act to eliminate loopholes allegedly exploited by drug trafficking syndicates and strengthen the country's fight against narcotics.



Addressing the 10th apex-level meeting of the Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) in New Delhi, Shah called for a tough and uncompromising approach against drug peddlers, suppliers, and organized narcotics networks. He urged state governments to submit suggestions on the proposed amendments being prepared by the Finance Ministry to make the law more effective in combating the drug trade.

evidence of the government's expanding crackdown, Shah said the country is steadily moving toward success in its campaign against drug trafficking. He emphasized that legal reforms under the NDPS Act would further strengthen the ability of agencies to dismantle drug networks and prevent traffickers from exploiting procedural gaps.

Highlighting the government's anti-drug efforts, Shah said enforcement agencies have significantly increased seizures of narcotic substances over the past decade. According to him, around 26 lakh kilograms of synthetic drugs were seized between 2004 and 2014, while the quantity seized from 2014 to 2026 rose to approximately 1.18 crore kilograms.

Shah also stressed the importance of real-time information sharing among states and central agencies. He said the Narcotics Control Bureau has developed several digital platforms for intelligence sharing and case monitoring. He urged Chief Secretaries and Directors General of Police across states to upload crime-related information promptly to facilitate coordinated action and better policy responses. The Home Minister further called for making NCORD meetings more result-oriented. While acknowledging the increase in the

The Home Minister also pointed to the value of seized drugs as an indicator of intensified enforcement. He noted that narcotics worth nearly 40,000 crore were seized during 2004-2014, compared to approximately 1.84 lakh crore worth of drugs confiscated between 2014 and 2026.

Describing these figures as

number of meetings being held, he stressed that the focus should be on effective implementation of decisions, regular reviews, and rigorous analysis of outcomes.

He said sustained cooperation between the Centre and states, coupled with stronger laws and coordinated enforcement, would be crucial in achieving the government's objective of creating a drug-free India and dismantling the operations of narcotics syndicates across the country.

Power to Reach Siachen, Key Ladakh Border Areas

Ladakh is set to witness a major transformation in its power infrastructure, with electricity soon reaching some of the country's most remote and strategically important regions, including the Siachen Base Camp and border areas adjoining Pakistan and China. The development is expected to enhance both civilian life and national security while reducing dependence on diesel-powered generators in high-altitude regions.



Officials said three flagship transmission projects being implemented under the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) are scheduled for completion by September. The projects aim to provide uninterrupted electricity to remote regions such as Zaskar and Nubra, extending reliable power supply to the Siachen Base Camp, often referred to as the world's highest battlefield.

to be integrated through a separate transmission network. The projects were recently reviewed by Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena, who emphasized timely completion and close coordination among all implementing agencies.

Once completed, six of Ladakh's seven districts will be connected to the power grid, leaving only Changthang

The key components include a 189-kilometre 220 KV transmission line from Drass to Padum and a 79-kilometre 220 KV line from Phyang to Disket. Together, these projects involve an investment of nearly

1,925 crore and are expected to significantly improve power connectivity in strategically sensitive regions.

In Zaskar, four substations are being established to ensure last-mile delivery of electricity across the valley. In the Nubra sector, substations at Siachen Base Camp and Partapur will anchor the distribution network. Plans are also underway to strengthen power infrastructure in Changthang through an extensive 66 KV

transmission system supported by eight substations at locations including Durbuk, Phobrang, Chushul, Nyoma, Korzok, Hanle, Koyul and Chumathang.

Officials noted that reliable electricity will improve education, healthcare, tourism, digital connectivity and livelihood opportunities in these remote areas. The shift from diesel-based generation is also expected to support the vision of a carbon-neutral Ladakh by reducing fuel consumption and emissions.

Describing the initiative as a milestone in Ladakh's development journey, the administration said the projects will not only strengthen strategic preparedness in border regions but also promote inclusive growth by improving living standards and creating new economic opportunities for local communities. The government has directed agencies to ensure that the benefits of round-the-clock electricity reach households and institutions without delay.

Japan PM Takaichi to Visit India for Annual Summit

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi will undertake a three-day official visit to India from July 1 to 3 to participate in the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit and hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



According to the Ministry of External Affairs, Takaichi's visit comes at the invitation of Prime Minister Modi and marks her first official visit to India since assuming office. The summit is expected to focus on strengthening bilateral cooperation across key sectors, including trade, investment, defence, technology, infrastructure, and people-to-people ties. The two leaders are also expected to exchange views on regional and global developments of mutual interest, reflecting the growing strategic

importance of the India-Japan partnership in the Indo-Pacific region.

The visit follows Prime Minister Modi's trip to Tokyo in August 2025 for the 15th India-

Japan Annual Summit. Officials said the upcoming meeting underscores the commitment of both nations to further deepen the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership.

India and Japan have steadily expanded cooperation in areas such as high-speed rail, manufacturing, defence exchanges, clean energy, and supply-chain resilience. The summit is expected to review the progress of ongoing projects and explore new avenues for collaboration.

Diplomatic sources view the visit as significant amid evolving regional security and economic challenges, with both countries seeking closer coordination on issues affecting the Indo-Pacific and global economy.

Fort Re-Enactment Conducted in Pune Murder Probe

Investigators on Friday carried out a dramatic crime scene reconstruction at Lohagarh Fort as part of the probe into the death of businessman Ketan Agarwal, who allegedly was thrown into a deep gorge by his fiancée and her alleged lover.



Police used a human-sized dummy and dropped it nearly 400 feet from the same location where Agarwal fell to his death on June 18. The exercise was conducted to determine the exact trajectory of the fall and establish the individual roles of the accused, Siya Goyal and Chetan Chaudhary.

gaged in February, while Goyal was allegedly continuing a relationship with Chaudhary.

According to investigators, the reconstruction was aimed at verifying whether Goyal physically pushed Agarwal or whether Chaudhary carried out the act after receiving a signal from her. Police believe the results of the simulation will help clarify the sequence of events and the degree of involvement of each accused.

Investigators have also recovered mobile phones belonging to the accused and sent them for forensic examination. Preliminary findings indicate that thousands of messages exchanged between the pair were deleted after the incident. Authorities are attempting to recover the data to establish motive and planning.

The case has drawn widespread attention after police alleged that Goyal and Chaudhary viewed Agarwal as an obstacle to their relationship. The two were reportedly en-

gaged in February, while Goyal was allegedly continuing a relationship with Chaudhary. Investigators have also recovered mobile phones belonging to the accused and sent them for forensic examination. Preliminary findings indicate that thousands of messages exchanged between the pair were deleted after the incident. Authorities are attempting to recover the data to establish motive and planning.

whether Chaudhary allegedly pressured Goyal by threatening to expose their relationship and private communications.

Forensic teams have spent the past two days collecting evidence from the fort area. Officials believe the crime scene recreation and digital evidence recovery will play a crucial role in determining how the murder was executed and who played the leading role in the alleged conspiracy.

The investigation remains ongoing, with police awaiting forensic reports and further evidence to strengthen the case.

India Approves First Hydrogen-Powered Train

Indian Railways has approved the operation of the country's first hydrogen fuel cell-powered train, marking a major milestone in India's transition toward cleaner and greener transportation. The train is set to operate on the Jind-Sonapat section of Northern Railway in Haryana and is being hailed as the world's longest and most powerful hydrogen-powered train running on a broad-gauge network.



With the project, India joins a select group of nations, including Germany, Japan, China and the United States, that are exploring hydrogen-based rail transport as a sustainable alternative to conventional fuel-powered trains.

Hydrogen fuel cell technology generates electricity through a chemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen. Unlike diesel engines, the process produces only water vapour and heat as by-products, making it a zero-emission transportation system. This significantly reduces environmental pollution and supports India's broader clean-energy goals.

The hydrogen train will consist of ten coaches and will be powered by a 1,200-kW hydrogen fuel cell propulsion system. It will operate at a commercial speed of up to 75 kmph, while trial runs are expected to be conducted at speeds reaching 120 kmph. The train features two Driving Power Cars, each generating 1,200 kW of power, giving the train a combined output of 2,400 kW.

Safety measures have been a key focus in the project. The train is equipped with 54 hydrogen cylinders, with 27 installed at each end. A dedicated hydrogen production, storage and refuelling facility has been established at Jind. The facility has received all necessary approvals from the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO).

The remaining eight coaches will be used for passenger travel. Specially designed compartments have been incorporated to accommodate hydrogen storage cylinders, fuel cell systems, batteries and control equipment. On a single refuelling, the train can travel approximately 250 kilometres.

Advanced safety mechanisms, including hydrogen leak detectors and flame detection systems, have been installed throughout the storage and refuelling infrastructure. Backup compressors and maintenance systems have also been provided to ensure un-

interrupted operations.

The train has been developed entirely in India under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The design was prepared by the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO) in Lucknow, while manufacturing was undertaken by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai.

Indian Railways selected the Jind-Sonapat route as a pilot corridor to test the technology. Since nearly the entire broad-gauge rail network has already been electrified, hydrogen trains are expected to be deployed primarily on routes where electrification is difficult, including remote and heritage sections.

The project, known as "Namo Green Rail," showcases India's growing capability in indigenous innovation and sustainable transportation technology. It is expected to pave the way for future hydrogen-based mobility solutions and strengthen the country's commitment to environmentally friendly public transport.

Baby at Climate Talks Highlights Sweden's Family-Friendly Policies

A routine meeting of European Union climate ministers turned into a memorable event when Swedish Climate Minister Romina Pourmokhtari arrived with her three-month-old son, Adam, at the EU Council meeting in Luxembourg. The move drew attention across Europe and sparked discussions about parental leave, workplace flexibility, and gender equality.



Pourmokhtari said she brought her infant son to demonstrate that parents, particularly women, should not be forced to choose between professional responsibilities and family life. She emphasized that supportive family policies and shared parenting responsibilities make it possible for parents to balance both roles successfully.

was the first known occasion on which a baby had attended a formal meeting of EU ministers. While the presence of the infant initially surprised delegates, participants described the situation as smooth and unproblematic.

The minister credited Sweden's generous parental leave system and the support of her husband for making the arrangement possible. Under Swedish law, parents receive approximately 16 months of paid parental leave, with a portion reserved exclusively for each parent. These non-transferable leave periods are designed to encourage fathers to take an active role in childcare.

Pourmokhtari, who became Sweden's youngest-ever cabinet minister when appointed in 2022, recently returned from parental leave. Her husband, currently on leave himself, accompanied the trip and cared for the child during the proceedings.

According to EU officials, it

The Swedish minister argued that family-friendly policies should go beyond extended leave benefits and include flexible arrangements and affordable childcare services. She said such measures not only support families but also

contribute to healthier workplaces and long-term economic productivity by reducing stress and burnout among working parents.

Support for the initiative came from fellow delegates, including Poland's Deputy Climate Minister Krzysztof Bolesla, who described the baby's presence as a natural part of life rather than an obstacle to official work.

The unusual scene at the climate talks has reignited debate across Europe about work-life balance and the importance of creating policies that enable parents to remain active in both family and professional life. The event also highlighted Sweden's reputation as a global leader in parental welfare and gender-equality initiatives.

Massive Rescue Effort After Twin Quakes Devastate Venezuela

Rescue teams raced against time across Venezuela on Thursday after two powerful earthquakes struck near the capital, leaving hundreds dead, trapping scores under collapsed buildings, and causing widespread destruction in several regions of the country.



According to the United States Geological Survey, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck about 160 kilometres west of Caracas on Wednesday evening, followed less than a minute later by a stronger 7.5-magnitude tremor. The second quake was reported to be the most powerful to hit the country in more than a century.

Authorities said at least 235 people had died, while hundreds remained trapped beneath rubble. More than 250 buildings were reported damaged or destroyed, including hospitals, government facilities, and diplomatic missions.

Thousands of families were displaced as rescue workers searched through collapsed structures amid continuing aftershocks. The coastal state of La Guaira, adjacent to the capital, emerged as one of the worst-affected regions. Entire neighborhoods suffered ex-

tensive damage, and power outages disrupted communication and emergency operations. The main airport serving Caracas was temporarily closed after sustaining structural damage.

Interim President Delcy Rodriguez described La Guaira as a "disaster zone" and said emergency resources were being mobilized to accelerate rescue operations. Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello stated that around 70,000 families had been affected in the state alone. In several locations, volunteers joined emergency crews in searching for

survivors, often using their bare hands to clear debris. Residents reported shortages of food, drinking water, medicines, and shelter as relief efforts struggled to keep pace with the scale of destruction.

A missing-persons database shared by opposition groups listed more than 46,000 individuals as unaccounted for, though officials have not independently verified the figure. Experts warned that the death toll could rise significantly as rescue operations continue.

The disaster triggered a global response, with several countries and international organizations offering assistance. The United Nations announced coordination of international rescue teams, while the United States pledged logistical and emergency support. Communications provider SpaceX also announced free Starlink services in affected areas to help restore connectivity. Despite the devastation, officials reported that Venezuela's key oil infrastructure had largely escaped major damage, allowing energy operations to continue uninterrupted.

Hezbollah Rejects Normalisation, Demands Full Israeli Withdrawal

Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem on Friday firmly rejected any possibility of normalising relations with Israel and insisted that Israeli forces must withdraw unconditionally from all Lebanese territory they occupy.



Addressing tens of thousands of supporters during Ashura commemorations in Lebanon, Qassem declared that Israel had "no option" other than a complete withdrawal from Lebanese land. He stressed that Hezbollah would not accept any arrangement that allows Israel to retain a presence in disputed areas or gain political concessions in exchange for withdrawal.

drawal from Lebanese territory without conditions.

The remarks come at a sensitive time as Lebanese and Israeli officials are engaged in diplomatic discussions in Washington aimed at reducing tensions and addressing unresolved border and security issues. While details of the talks remain limited, regional observers view them as part of broader efforts to prevent renewed conflict along the Israel-Lebanon frontier.

The Hezbollah chief also claimed that Israel would eventually be compelled to leave "humiliated and defeated," reflecting the movement's continued resistance-based approach toward its southern neighbour. His speech was met with chants and demonstrations of support from thousands gathered for the annual religious event.

Qassem reiterated Hezbollah's long-standing position that relations with Israel cannot be normalised under current circumstances. He stated that the group rejects any proposal involving recognition, normalization, or an end to the state of hostility between the two sides. According to him, any settlement must begin with a complete Israeli withdrawal from Lebanese territory

Tensions between Israel and Hezbollah have remained high since the escalation of regional conflicts in recent years. Cross-border exchanges of fire, military operations, and security concerns have repeatedly raised fears of a wider confrontation. International mediators, including the United States and several regional actors, have sought to encourage dialogue and prevent further escalation.

Qassem's comments underscore the significant challenges facing diplomatic efforts to improve relations between the two countries. With both sides holding deeply entrenched positions on territorial disputes and security concerns, prospects for normalization remain distant despite ongoing international mediation efforts.

Hezbollah, one of Lebanon's most influential political and

military groups, continues to view Israel as an occupying force and maintains that armed resistance remains necessary to defend Lebanese sovereignty. Israel, meanwhile, regards Hezbollah as a major security threat and has repeatedly called for the group's military capabilities to be curtailed.

The latest statement highlights the continued volatility of the Israel-Lebanon relationship and the complexities surrounding efforts to achieve lasting stability along their shared border.

Russia Tightens Internet Controls Amid Growing Public Resistance

Russia's expanding internet restrictions and media controls have drawn increasing criticism from activists, journalists, and ordinary citizens, who argue that the measures are limiting free expression and access to independent information.



At the center of the controversy is Roskomnadzor, Russia's communications watchdog, which oversees internet regulation and media censorship. Critics claim the agency has become a key instrument for enforcing government narratives and restricting dissent, particularly since the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Russian authorities have intensified efforts to promote domestic digital platforms, including the state-backed messaging application Max. The platform has reportedly been made mandatory on many newly sold devices, while some public-sector employees, teachers, and students have been encouraged or required to use it. Critics have raised concerns about privacy and potential surveillance, though Russian officials deny such allegations.

The restrictions have also affected access to several international platforms and media outlets. Services associated with [Meta Platforms] (https://about.meta.com?utm_source=chatgpt.

com), along with various foreign news organizations, have faced blocks or limitations in Russia. Independent media outlets have encountered mounting pressure, while several foreign journalists have been restricted from operating within the country.

Under wartime legislation, criticism of military operations can result in severe penalties. Human rights advocates argue that these laws have significantly narrowed the space for public debate and political opposition.

Despite the restrictions, many Russians continue to seek alternative ways to communicate. Sales of walkie-talkies, pagers, and printed maps

have reportedly increased as disruptions to mobile internet, GPS services, and messaging platforms become more frequent. Small businesses have also reported losses due to reduced online accessibility.

The growing restrictions have sparked public frustration. Some citizens have resorted to humor on social media, while others have voiced concerns about the impact on daily life, healthcare monitoring, education, and business operations. Technology professionals and entrepreneurs warn that further internet controls could encourage skilled workers to leave the country.

Reports have also emerged of small protests against the restrictions, with activists submitting petitions calling for the restoration of broader internet freedoms. However, many participants acknowledge the challenges of dissenting in an increasingly restrictive environment.

Observers note that the debate over internet freedom has become a broader struggle over access to information, privacy, and civil liberties in Russia. As authorities continue to tighten digital controls, questions remain over how citizens, businesses, and independent voices will adapt to the changing online landscape.

US Supreme Court Clears Way to End Protections for Haitian, Syrian Immigrants

The United States Supreme Court has allowed the administration of President Donald Trump to move forward with ending Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Haiti and Syria, a decision that could have far-reaching consequences for nearly 1.3 million migrants from multiple countries.

that the Department of Homeland Security has the authority to determine when TPS protections should end. The ruling could also influence ongoing legal challenges involving TPS beneficiaries from countries including Venezuela, Honduras, El Salvador, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Ethiopia, and several others.

Syria remain unstable. Haiti continues to struggle with widespread gang violence and humanitarian challenges, while Syria is recovering from years of civil conflict and political turmoil. Lawyers representing TPS holders contend that the government failed to adequately assess conditions on the ground before deciding to end protections.

Legal experts note that the ruling is not expected to take effect immediately. Supreme Court decisions generally become operative after a period of about 32 days, meaning affected individuals are likely to retain their work authorization until late July while lower courts implement the judgment.

The Trump administration has argued that TPS was significantly expanded during the presidency of Joe Biden and that many beneficiary countries are now safe enough for citizens to return. Officials have already moved to terminate protections for about one million people from 13 countries.

Immigration advocates strongly disagree, arguing that conditions in Haiti and

Advocacy groups warn that many TPS holders could face difficult choices in the

coming months. Some may seek alternative immigration pathways such as asylum claims or employment-based visas, while others could face deportation proceedings if no other legal protections apply.

Many TPS recipients have lived in the United States for years or even decades, raising families and building careers. Advocates fear that ending the program could separate families, disrupt communities, and create economic hardship for thousands of households.



The decision marks a significant development in U.S. immigration policy and is expected to intensify the ongoing national debate over humanitarian protections, border security, and the future of long-term immigrant residents in the country.

Volkswagen Plans Massive Job Cuts Amid Global Challenges

German automotive giant Volkswagen AG is reportedly preparing a sweeping restructuring plan that could eliminate up to 100,000 jobs and close several factories as it seeks to improve competitiveness in an increasingly challenging global market.

According to reports, Volkswagen Chief Executive Officer Oliver Blume presented the proposals during a recent management board meeting. The measures are aimed at addressing mounting pressures from US tariffs, weakening demand in China, and growing competition in the European automobile sector.

The company, which owns premium brands including Audi and Porsche AG, currently employs around 657,000 people worldwide. The reported plan would double previously announced workforce reduction targets, making it one of the largest restructuring exercises in the company's history.



Volkswagen intends to reduce general overhead costs by approximately 11 billion by the end of the decade. The company is also considering closing four German manufacturing facilities, including Audi's plant in Neckarsulm and Volkswagen factories in Hanover, Zwickau, and Emden.

The restructuring initiative is expected to be presented to the supervisory board next month. However, significant changes may still occur during

discussions, as employee representatives hold half the seats on the board and traditionally advocate strongly for job protection.

Reports also suggest that Volkswagen is exploring broader structural reforms, including the possible separation of certain component manufacturing operations and even organizational changes involving its core Volkswagen passenger vehicle brand. The company's flagship brand has struggled in

recent years with comparatively low profit margins despite its strong global presence.

The proposed overhaul reflects the growing challenges confronting major European automakers as the industry undergoes a transition toward electric vehicles, digital technologies, and more cost-efficient production models. Chinese manufacturers have expanded aggressively in global markets, while economic uncertainty and fluctuating demand have added further pressure on traditional automotive companies.

If implemented, the measures would mark a significant transformation for Volkswagen, which has long been regarded as one of Germany's largest employers and a cornerstone of Europe's automotive industry. The coming months are expected to be crucial as management, labour unions, and shareholders debate the future direction of the company.

RBI Proposes Wider Access to Money Markets

The Reserve Bank of India has proposed expanding participation in India's money markets by allowing a wider range of financial institutions and companies to access short-term funding, a move aimed at deepening financial markets and improving liquidity.

In draft guidelines released on Thursday, the RBI said non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), including housing finance companies and other shadow banking institutions, would be permitted to participate in the term money market as both borrowers and lenders. At present, participation in the term money market is largely restricted to banks and standalone primary dealers, subject to prudential regulations.

The proposal is part of the central bank's broader efforts to strengthen financial market efficiency and diversify sources of short-term funding. The RBI had first outlined the initiative in its monetary policy statement issued in April and has now invited public comments on the draft framework until July 17, 2026.

Under the proposed rules, companies will also be allowed to lend in the term money market, providing additional liquidity to the financial system. However, the central bank



has proposed excluding smaller non-banking finance companies from participation, citing regulatory and risk management considerations.

The term money market is a key segment of the financial system where institutions borrow and lend funds for periods extending beyond overnight transactions. Broader participation is expected to enhance market depth, improve price discovery, and provide greater flexibility for financial institutions in managing short-term funding requirements.

Market participants believe the move could help reduce reliance on traditional banking channels and create a more di-

versified funding ecosystem. It may also provide NBFCs with additional avenues to raise funds, supporting credit growth across sectors of the economy. The draft proposal reflects the RBI's ongoing efforts to modernize India's financial markets and align them with evolving market requirements. Following feedback from stakeholders, the central bank is expected to finalize the framework later this year.

Financial experts say the proposed reforms could contribute to a more resilient and efficient money market while improving liquidity management for a broader range of institutions operating within India's financial system.

Chinese AI, Chip Firms Fuel IPO Revival

China's technology sector is witnessing a strong revival in stock market listings, driven largely by artificial intelligence and semiconductor companies as Beijing intensifies efforts to achieve technological self-reliance amid growing competition with the United States.

According to market data, technology firms have raised approximately \$3.1 billion through initial public offerings (IPOs) on Chinese exchanges between January and June 18, 2026. The figure represents a more than fivefold increase compared to the same period last year, highlighting renewed investor interest in the country's high-tech industries.

The resurgence in technology listings comes as Chinese authorities continue to support domestic innovation in strategic sectors such as artificial intelligence, semiconductors, robotics, and advanced manufacturing. Policymakers view these industries as critical to reducing dependence on foreign technologies and



strengthening China's long-term economic competitiveness.

Nearly 50 companies, including robotics startups and semiconductor manufacturers, have submitted applications for IPOs on the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges. Collectively, these firms are seeking to raise at least 126.1 billion yuan (about \$18.7 billion), according to estimates based on regulatory filings.

Among the most closely watched listing candidates is ChangXin Memory Technologies (CXMT), one of China's leading memory-chip produc-

ers. The company is reportedly preparing a 29.5 billion yuan IPO in Shanghai, which would become the largest public offering in China this year. If completed, the deal could help push overall IPO fundraising to its highest level in three years.

Industry analysts say the growth in Chinese technology offerings reflects a broader global surge in artificial intelligence investments. China and the United States have emerged as the two dominant markets shaping the global AI landscape, with governments and investors pouring signifi-

cant resources into next-generation technologies.

The strong pipeline of upcoming IPOs also signals improving sentiment in China's capital markets after a period of slower fundraising activity. Investors are increasingly focusing on sectors aligned with national development priorities, particularly those linked to advanced computing, AI applications, and semiconductor manufacturing.

Experts believe the momentum could continue through the second half of the year if regulatory support remains stable and market conditions remain favorable. Successful listings by major technology firms would not only provide fresh capital for innovation but also reinforce China's strategy of building a robust domestic technology ecosystem capable of competing on the global stage.

The rebound in technology IPOs underscores the growing importance of AI and semiconductor industries as key drivers of China's economic and industrial transformation.

Oil Slides as Hormuz Supply Concerns Ease

Global crude oil prices fell nearly 2% on Friday and were set for significant weekly losses as fears of supply disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz eased amid growing optimism over a potential agreement between the United States and Iran.

Brent crude futures dropped \$1.47, or 1.95%, to \$73.79 per barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude declined \$1.44, or 2%, to \$70.48 per barrel during early trading. The decline reflects improving market confidence that oil supplies from the Middle East will remain stable in the coming weeks.

Market sentiment improved after indications emerged that negotiations between Washington and Tehran were progressing positively. Traders expect that any breakthrough in talks could pave the way for increased Iranian crude exports, boosting global supply and reducing pressure on oil markets.

The Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most strategically important maritime



routes, carries nearly one-fifth of global oil shipments. Concerns over possible disruptions in the waterway had previously driven crude prices sharply higher. However, recent developments have eased those fears, leading to a correction in prices.

Industry reports indicate that tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has increased steadily in recent days. Several vessels that were delayed due to security concerns have resumed normal operations, helping restore confidence among traders and

shipping companies.

In addition to improving conditions in the Gulf region, rising crude exports from major oil-producing regions such as the Middle East and West Africa have further eased supply concerns. Increased availability of crude in international markets has reduced the likelihood of shortages and helped stabilize global energy supplies.

Analysts noted that geopolitical tensions had added a substantial risk premium to oil prices earlier this year. As diplomatic efforts gain mo-

mentum and fears of supply interruptions recede, that premium is gradually being removed from the market.

The decline in crude prices is expected to benefit major oil-importing countries, including India. Lower international oil prices can help reduce import costs, ease inflationary pressures, and support economic growth by lowering fuel and transportation expenses.

Market participants will continue to closely monitor developments in US-Iran negotiations and shipping activity in the Strait of Hormuz. Any significant breakthrough in diplomatic talks could lead to further downward pressure on crude prices, while renewed tensions may once again trigger volatility in global energy markets.

For now, improving supply prospects and easing geopolitical concerns have shifted market sentiment, pushing oil prices lower and providing relief to consumers and economies dependent on imported energy.

Markets Shut for Muharram, Trading to Resume Monday



Trading activity across India's major stock exchanges remained suspended on Friday on account of Muharram, with the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) observing a market holiday.

According to exchange schedules, trading in equities, equity derivatives, securities lending and borrowing (SLB), currency derivatives, and interest rate derivatives remained closed for the day. However, commodity derivatives trading was suspended only during the morning session and resumed in the evening session from 5:00 PM onward.

Normal trading across all segments will resume on Monday, June 29.

The market holiday comes after benchmark indices extended gains for a second consecutive session on Thursday. The Sensex ended 109.25

points higher at 77,100.47, while the Nifty gained 34.35 points to close at 24,056.20. Investor sentiment was supported by easing global crude oil prices and buying interest in automobile, FMCG, and realty stocks.

Among the top gainers on the Nifty were InterGlobe Aviation, Mahindra & Mahindra, Max Healthcare, Maruti Suzuki, and Tata Consumer Products. On the losing side were ONGC, Power Grid Corporation, Hindalco Industries, Bharat Electronics, and Tech Mahindra.

Sector-wise, the auto index surged more than 2 percent, while FMCG and realty stocks also posted gains. However, weakness in IT, energy, media, metal, and oil & gas stocks limited the overall market advance. Market analysts noted that the Nifty faced resistance near the 24,200 level. HDFC Securities' Senior Technical Re-

search Analyst Nagaraj Shetti said the formation of a small negative candle with a long upper shadow on the daily chart indicates resistance at higher levels. He observed that while the near-term trend remains positive, the market may witness consolidation or a minor correction in the coming sessions.

Meanwhile, the Indian rupee strengthened by 25 paise to close at 94.10 against the US dollar on Thursday. Currency analysts attributed the gain to stable domestic equities, softer crude oil prices, and easing geopolitical concerns amid progress in US-Iran negotiations.

Experts expect the rupee to trade in the range of 94.10 to 94.80 in the near term, with global economic developments, monsoon progress, and US interest rate expectations likely to influence market sentiment.

Micron Surges on AI Boom, Challenges Tech Giants

A powerful rally in artificial intelligence-related stocks propelled memory chipmaker Micron Technology to briefly surpass tech giants Meta Platforms and Tesla in market capitalisation, highlighting the growing investor enthusiasm surrounding AI infrastructure and semiconductor demand.

Micron shares soared as much as 18.4 percent during trading on Thursday after the company issued a stronger-than-expected revenue forecast for the current quarter. The stock eventually closed 15.8 percent

higher, marking one of its strongest single-day performances in recent years.

The surge followed Micron's optimistic guidance for the fourth quarter ending in August. The company projected quarterly revenue of approximately \$50 billion, significantly above analysts' expectations of \$43.2 billion. The forecast underscored robust demand for high-bandwidth memory chips and advanced storage solutions used in artificial intelligence applications. At the height of trading, Micron's

market value briefly exceeded those of Meta and Tesla, reflecting investors' confidence that AI-driven demand will continue to fuel growth across the semiconductor industry. By the close of trading, Micron's market capitalisation stood at approximately \$1.37 trillion, compared with \$1.38 trillion for Meta and \$1.41 trillion for Tesla.

The development marks another milestone in the global AI investment boom, which has transformed semiconductor manufacturers into some of the most valuable compa-

nies in the world. Demand for AI infrastructure has surged as technology firms continue investing heavily in data centres, cloud computing facilities, and advanced computing systems capable of supporting generative AI applications.

Investors have increasingly focused on memory chip producers because modern AI models require vast amounts of high-speed memory to process and store data efficiently. As a result, companies supplying critical AI components have witnessed substantial growth in

revenue, profitability, and market valuation.

The latest rally also helped ease concerns that spending by major technology firms, often referred to as hyperscalers, could slow after years of aggressive investment in AI infrastructure. Micron's strong outlook suggests that demand remains healthy and that technology companies continue expanding their AI capabilities.

Market analysts believe the company's performance reflects a broader trend in global technology



markets, where semiconductor firms are becoming central beneficiaries of the AI revolution. The strong earnings outlook has reinforced expectations that memory chips will remain a critical component of future AI systems. With artificial intelligence con-

tinuing to reshape industries worldwide, investors are expected to closely monitor semiconductor companies such as Micron for further indications of the sector's growth trajectory and the sustainability of the ongoing AI-driven investment cycle.

First-Time Visitor Calls South India “Calm, Clean and Peaceful”

A recent travel experience shared by a 27-year-old man from North India has gone viral after he described South India as “calm, clean and less chaotic” during his first visit. The observations were reported after his trip to Chennai, where he highlighted the region’s public behaviour, cleanliness, and overall environment.

The traveler noted that the surroundings, especially around railway stations, were noticeably cleaner compared to what he had experienced in other major cities like Delhi and Bhopal. He particularly appreciated the sense of order and discipline in public spaces, mentioning that people appeared more relaxed and followed basic civic etiquette such as walking in lanes and avoiding unnecessary rush.

According to his account, the overall atmosphere in Chennai felt peaceful and well-organized. He described the city as less noisy and more structured, which contributed to a smoother travel experience. The calm nature of daily life and the cooperative behavior of people left a strong impression on him during his stay.

The comments quickly gained attention on social media, where users engaged in discussions about regional differences in cleanliness, urban planning, and public behavior across India. Many users agreed with his observations, while others pointed out that such experiences can vary depending on specific areas and conditions.

Travel-related posts like these often spark wider conversations about civic sense and infrastructure development in Indian cities. In this case, the traveler’s perspective highlighted how first-time experiences can significantly shape perceptions of a region.



American Traveller Shares Heartwarming Story of Stranger’s Kindness



A video shared by an American woman stranded in Delhi has gone viral on social media after she recounted an unexpectedly warm and compassionate experience with a local stranger who stepped in to help her during a stressful travel disruption.

The woman, identified on social media as Sierra Liliann, said her journey to Rishikesh took an unfortunate turn when a sleeper bus she had booked broke down twice on the way. Forced to abandon the trip, she arranged for a cab to continue her travel plan. However, her situation worsened when her phone battery died while she was waiting for the cab, leaving her alone in an unfamiliar location without access to communication or navigation.

Feeling anxious and unsure of what to do, she said she was approached by a local man who noticed her distress and offered assistance. He invited her into a nearby office space where she could sit safely and recharge her phone. He also provided her with tea, helping her regain composure during the uncertain moment.

Once her phone was powered on, the man further assisted her by helping coordinate with the cab driver to ensure she could continue her journey without confusion or delay. What began as a moment of panic gradually turned into an experience of relief and reassurance.

During the wait, she said the man went beyond basic assistance, engaging her in conversation and showing her parts of his surroundings. He took her to see a nearby cattle shed where a calf had been born just hours earlier. He also invited her to a small local temple dedicated to Lord Hanuman, and briefly showed her a plant nursery he maintained.

Before her departure, the man offered her homemade buttermilk and ensured she was comfortably set to leave once her cab arrived. In her reflection, the traveller described the experience as deeply moving and said it significantly changed her perception of India. She highlighted the kindness and willingness of strangers to help, noting that the interaction left a lasting emotional impact.

Bengaluru Cab Driver’s Suicide Confession Shocks Passenger



A Bengaluru cab ride turned into a deeply emotional and unsettling conversation when a passenger spoke to a 32-year-old driver who revealed the harsh realities of his life. The driver, who works long hours in the city to support his family, shared that he earns around 1,200 a day while being the sole breadwinner for his household of five, including his wife, three children, and his elderly mother.

has taken a heavy toll on his mental health.

What began as a routine trip gradually turned into a rare moment of honesty and vulnerability. The driver reportedly explained that before becoming a cab driver, he had worked multiple jobs in an attempt to make ends meet, but none provided enough stability to support his growing responsibilities. Driving, he said, became the only viable option left, even though it demands long hours and constant pressure on the road.

The passenger later described being stunned when the driver opened up about experiencing suicidal thoughts multiple times. He expressed that the burden of responsibilities, combined with low income and uncertainty about the future, often pushes him into moments of despair. However, he also said that he continues to hold on because of his family, who depend entirely on him.

During the conversation, he also shared that small joys keep him going, such as occasionally taking his family out for a simple meal, something he considers a luxury rather than a regular experience. Despite his continuous efforts and determination, he admitted that the financial strain

The conversation left a strong impact on the passenger, who reflected that his own problems felt comparatively small after hearing the driver’s story. The incident highlights the unseen struggles of daily wage earners in urban India, many of whom work tirelessly

behind the scenes to sustain their families while battling emotional and financial stress. The story has since sparked broader discussion on social media about mental health awareness, rising living costs, and the need for stronger support systems for workers in the gig economy. It also serves as a reminder that many individuals silently endure immense pressure while continuing to perform their duties without complaint.

In a fast-paced city environment where countless such stories go unheard, this encounter stands as a powerful example of human resilience, hidden suffering, and the urgent need for empathy and understanding toward those working in vulnerable economic conditions.

Rs 80,000 Holiday in India vs Cheaper Vietnam Trip



A social media post comparing the cost of domestic travel in India with an international holiday in Vietnam has gone viral, triggering a wider discussion on affordability and the competitiveness of India’s tourism sector.

The post, shared on X by user Pankaj Arora, claims that a colleague initially planned a short four-day holiday in a popular Indian hill station but eventually chose Vietnam after comparing overall expenses. The comparison has reignited debate on whether domestic tourism in India is becoming too expensive for middle-class travellers.

Added to this were estimated taxi costs of 3,000 to 5,000 per day, along with return flight tickets for a couple priced around 15,000 to 20,000. When all expenses were combined, the total cost for the short domestic holiday reportedly reached between 60,000 and 80,000.

Faced with these figures, the traveller is said to have reconsidered the plan and instead looked at international options. Vietnam emerged as a more budget-friendly alternative, with comparatively lower airfare and accommodation costs. The post noted that discounted return flights were available, while comfortable hotels near major tourist attractions were priced significantly lower than equivalent stays in Indian hill stations.

Beyond accommodation and travel, the post also highlighted the affordability of daily expenses in Vietnam, including food, local transport, and sightseeing, which collectively made the international trip more economical than the domestic option.

The comparison quickly gained traction online, with users expressing mixed reactions. Many agreed that certain Indian tourist destinations have become expensive in recent years, especially during peak seasons, while others argued that better planning and off-season travel could still make domestic holidays affordable.

The discussion also expanded into broader concerns about India’s tourism infrastructure. Some users pointed out issues such as inconsistent pricing, lack of regulation in hotel rates, and high transportation costs in popular destinations. Others suggested that improving cleanliness, connectivity, and service quality could help justify higher prices and attract more domestic travellers. At the same time, several commenters defended India’s tourism industry, noting that the country offers a wide range of budget-friendly options and that costs vary widely depending on location and travel choices.

They emphasized that luxury pricing in select destinations should not be seen as representative of the entire sector. The viral post has ultimately sparked a larger conversation about value for money in travel, with many agreeing that rising domestic tourism costs may be influencing travellers to explore more affordable international destinations.

Bengaluru-based musician Benny Prasad has captured global attention after achieving an extraordinary travel milestone by visiting 245 countries and territories across the world. His journey, completed over a span of 6 years, 6 months, and 22 days, is being widely discussed after a viral video showed him displaying his collection of 16 Indian passports filled with visas, stamps, and travel records from nearly every corner of the globe.

Prasad, who is also a professional guitarist and gospel musician, has long combined his passion for music with his love for travel. According to accounts of his journey, he has performed in numerous countries while simultaneously continuing his global exploration. His lifestyle reflects a rare blend of artistic pursuit and extreme travel ambition, making him a distinctive figure in the world of modern travel achievers.

Born in Bengaluru on August 6, 1975, Prasad’s life has not been without struggle. He has spoken publicly about severe health challenges during his childhood, including chronic asthma that required strong steroid treatments. These treatments reportedly led to complications such as rheumatoid arthritis and long-term lung damage. At one point, his health conditions severely affected his education and daily life, leaving him physically weak and emotionally distressed.

Over the years, Prasad has spoken about how faith, resilience, and creativity helped him overcome his struggles. Today, he continues to travel extensively, reportedly visiting around 40 to 50 countries each year, while performing and sharing his personal journey of survival and perseverance.

His story has inspired many on social media, with users praising his determination and extraordinary global reach. For many, Benny Prasad stands as an example of how personal hardship can be transformed into a life of achievement, purpose, and worldwide impact.



FIFA World Cup 2026 Breaks All-Time Records in Goals and Attendance



The FIFA World Cup 2026 has already entered the history books by setting unprecedented records in both goal scoring and fan attendance, even before the knockout stages begin. The tournament, co-hosted across multiple nations, has showcased an extraordinary level of attacking football and global fan engagement.

One of the biggest highlights of this edition is the record-breaking number of goals scored. With matches producing high-scoring encounters almost daily, the tournament has officially surpassed the previous record held by the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. The milestone was achieved during the 59th match itself, making it the fastest World Cup in history to reach such a scoring benchmark. As games continued, the total number of goals kept rising, reflecting the highly aggressive and attacking style

of play adopted by most teams. Football analysts believe that the expansion of the tournament format from 32 to 48 teams has played a major role in this scoring surge. With more matches added to the schedule, teams have had greater opportunities to compete, experiment, and push forward in attack. The increased number of fixtures has also contributed to a wider range of matchups, often leading to unpredictable and

entertaining results. In addition to goal-scoring records, the 2026 edition has also set a new benchmark for stadium attendance. Millions of fans have already filled stadiums across host cities, breaking the previous record set during the 1994 World Cup in the United States. On several match days, stadiums have witnessed packed crowds, creating a festival-like atmosphere across venues. The energy from fans has been described as one of the defining features of this tournament.

Gianni Infantino, the President of FIFA, expressed his delight over the historic achievements, stating that the tournament's success reflects the global passion for football. He highlighted how the expanded format has not only increased opportunities for teams but also enhanced entertainment value for fans worldwide. According to him, the record-breaking attendance demonstrates football's unique power to unite people across cultures and continents.

With several matches still left to be played, expectations are high that even more records could be shattered before the tournament concludes. Experts believe that the 2026 World Cup may ultimately be remembered as one of the most entertaining and statistically remarkable editions in football history.

BCCI Shares Vaibhav Suryavanshi Stuns in Nets Video



Young cricket sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi has once again grabbed attention after delivering an impressive batting display during Team India's net practice session ahead of the first T20I against Ireland in Belfast. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) shared a video of his practice, which quickly went viral among cricket fans.

The 15-year-old batter was seen training alongside senior Indian players, confidently facing top-quality bowling in the nets. Despite his age, Vaibhav showed remarkable composure and fearlessness, playing a range of aggressive shots. His ability to clear the boundaries with ease stood out, making him one of the most talked-about young names in the camp.

Team India is currently preparing intensively for the opening match of the series, and the practice sessions have been closely watched by fans and analysts. While Vaibhav's inclusion in the final playing XI has not been confirmed, his presence in the senior team environment itself is being seen as a major opportunity for development at such a young age.

The BCCI's shared footage highlights Vaibhav taking on experienced bowlers without hesitation, showcasing timing, power, and confidence beyond his years. His stroke play, particularly his big-hitting ability, has drawn praise from cricket followers on social media, with many calling him a future star in the making.

Coaches and team members reportedly observed his technique closely, focusing on his adaptability and shot selection. Training with the national squad at just 15 is considered a significant milestone, reflecting the selectors' interest in nurturing young talent for the future of Indian cricket.

Fans have also been excited about his fearless approach, especially his willingness to take on senior bowlers during practice. Such exposure is often seen as a crucial stepping stone for young cricketers aiming to transition into international cricket.

As India gears up for the T20I series, Vaibhav Suryavanshi's net session has added a fresh talking point to the squad's preparations. Whether or not he features in the match, his performance in the nets has already made a strong impression and positioned him as one of the most promising young prospects in Indian cricket.

AB de Villiers Flags Delhi Capitals Chaos Amid Rishabh Pant Trade Talk

Former South African star AB de Villiers has shared his candid views on the high-profile trade involving Indian wicket-keeper-batter Rishabh Pant, while also raising concerns over the frequent structural changes within the Delhi Capitals setup in the Indian Premier League.

Pant, who recently became one of the most expensive players in IPL history, has returned to his former franchise, Delhi Capitals, after a stint with Lucknow Super Giants. He was initially acquired by Lucknow for a record fee of 27 crore and even handed the captaincy. However, his performances reportedly did not meet expectations, leading to a major trade decision. As part of the revised agreement, Pant has also taken a significant reduction in salary, with Delhi Capitals reportedly paying him 15 crore.

Commenting on the situation, AB de Villiers said that Pant's move was not entirely surprising. He suggested that there were early signs of discomfort during Pant's time with Lucknow Super Giants, including indications of dissatisfaction with the team management and coaching structure. According to him, such factors often play a crucial role in high-pressure leagues like the IPL, where player comfort and communication with management are key to performance.

De Villiers also highlighted a broader issue within the Delhi Capitals franchise. He pointed out that constant changes in ownership influence, coaching staff, and team leadership can create instability. He noted that the return of key figures like Sourav Ganguly as director and the involvement of Yuvraj Singh as batting coach may bring fresh energy, but could also add

to transitional challenges if not managed smoothly. The former batter emphasized that successful IPL teams are not built solely on star players but on consistency in management and coaching structures. He suggested that frequent changes in leadership can disrupt team balance and make it harder for players to adapt, potentially affecting on-field performance.



The Delhi Capitals franchise, co-owned by major corporate groups, has undergone multiple shifts in decision-making structures over recent seasons. AB de Villiers noted that such transitions, while sometimes necessary, may lead to uncertainty within the squad if not handled with stability and long-term planning.

As the IPL continues to evolve with high-profile trades and strategic reshuffles, Pant's return to Delhi Capitals is being closely watched by fans and analysts alike. With expectations running high, the focus will now be on how the team manages its internal structure and whether it can translate talent and experience into consistent results on the field.

Iyer's B'day Story Goes Viral Ahead of T20 Captaincy Debut

Indian cricketer Shreyas Iyer has sparked widespread discussion after revealing a deeply emotional detail on social media just ahead of his first assignment as India's new T20 captain. The middle-order batter updated his Instagram bio with a surprising entry: "Second Birthday: 25.12.2025", leaving fans curious about the meaning behind it.



The update came just hours before India's T20 match against Ireland in Belfast, where Iyer is set to begin his journey as captain. While his official date of birth is 6 December 1994, the addition of a "second birthday" has drawn attention across the cricketing community, with many interpreting it as a personal milestone linked to his recovery from a serious injury.

According to reports and widespread speculation, the date 25 December 2025 represents the day Iyer considers his "rebirth" after surviving a life-threatening injury earlier in his career. He had suffered a severe abdominal injury during an international match in Australia, which required intensive medical care and a long recovery period. The injury not only kept him away from cricket for months but also had a significant physical impact on his fitness and weight. His eventual return to the sport is being seen as a powerful comeback story, and the symbolic "second birthday" appears to reflect that emotional journey.

Beyond this personal revelation, Iyer's appointment as India's T20 captain marks a major milestone in his career. Known for his calm leadership and dependable batting in the middle order, he has previously demonstrated strong captaincy credentials in franchise cricket, leading multiple IPL teams to significant achievements and finals appearances. His ability to guide teams under pressure has been widely appreciated by selectors and analysts.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is reportedly focusing on building a young and dynamic squad with an eye on future ICC tournaments, including the next T20 World Cup. Iyer's leadership is seen as part of this long-term strategy, aimed at blending experience with emerging talent. One of the notable inclusions in the squad is young batter Vaibhav Suryavanshi, a 15-year-old prodigy who has already begun attracting attention for his fearless batting in training sessions with the national team.

Yuto Nagatomo Makes World Cup History

Veteran Japanese defender Yuto Nagatomo has etched his name in football history by becoming the first Asian player ever to appear in five editions of the FIFA World Cup 2026.



The milestone came during Japan's Group F match against Sweden at the Dallas Stadium, where the 39-year-old featured once again on football's biggest stage. With this appearance, Nagatomo has now competed in the 2010, 2014, 2018, 2022, and 2026 World Cups, showcasing remarkable longevity and consistency at the highest level of international football.

This achievement places him among an elite group of global legends who have participated in five or more World Cup tournaments. The list includes icons such as Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Luka Modri, Luis Suárez, Manuel Neuer, Lothar Matthäus, Andrés Guardado, Rafael Márquez, and Antonio Carbajal. Nagatomo's inclusion in this prestigious group highlights his endurance and importance in modern football history.

The match itself ended in a 1-1 draw between Japan and Sweden, with both teams securing qualification to the knockout stage. Japan displayed strong control in midfield and took the lead through a well-worked team move in the second half, while Sweden quickly responded with an equaliser to level the contest.

Japan's growing influence in world football. Over the years, he has been a symbol of consistency, adaptability, and professionalism, representing his country across multiple generations of players and tactical eras. Despite the competitive nature of the game, Japan showed composure and tactical discipline throughout the match. They managed possession effectively and created several promising opportunities, while their defence remained organized under pressure. Sweden, on the other hand, capitalized on key moments to stay in the game and eventually secure the draw needed for progression.

Nagatomo's historic appearance adds another chapter to Japan's growing influence in world football. Over the years, he has been a symbol of consistency, adaptability, and professionalism, representing his country across multiple generations of players and tactical eras. As the tournament progresses, Japan's qualification to the Round of 32 keeps them in contention for a deep run, while Nagatomo's record-breaking achievement stands out as one of the defining personal milestones of the 2026 World Cup so far.



Akaisha Vats



RISING STAR

Lokesh Kanagaraj Launches Priyadarshi's Idupu Kayitham

The upcoming Telugu film *Idupu Kayitham*, starring Priyadarshi in the lead role, was launched with much fanfare through a traditional pooja ceremony. Backed by Sukumar Writings and Bunny Vas Works, the film is being produced by Bunny Vas and acclaimed filmmaker Sukumar. Directed by young filmmaker Vamsi Reddy Dondapati, the film is billed as an entertaining family drama deeply rooted in Telangana culture. Telangana folk artist Nagadurga makes her debut as the female lead.

The launch event turned into a star-studded affair with celebrated Tamil filmmaker Lokesh Kanagaraj gracing the occasion as the chief guest. He unveiled the first-look poster of the film, while veteran producer Allu Aravind gave the ceremonial clap for the muhurtham shot. Prominent personalities, including Dil Raju, Naveen Yerneni, KL Da-

modar Prasad, SKN, Bapineedu, Dheeraj Mogilineni, Meher Ramesh, Chandoo Mondeti, Sai Rajesh, Venu Udugula and Sai Marthand, attended the event and extended their best wishes to the team.

The film boasts an ensemble cast featuring Shivajyothi, Jordan Sujatha, Chandravva, Mounika Reddy, Racha Ravi, Bithiri Sathi, Abhai Bethiganti, Mime Madhu and several other talented actors. Speaking at the launch, members of the cast expressed confidence that the film's emotional storyline and strong family values would resonate with audiences. They described it as a heartfelt story that reflects the relationships, emotions and traditions found in every household.

Music director Suresh Bobbili said the story has the potential to touch audiences across regions and believes the film will become a memorable cinematic experience. Director Vamsi Reddy Dondapati

thanked producers Sukumar, Bunny Vas and Tabitha Sukumar for trusting his vision and supporting the project from the very beginning.

Producer Tabitha Sukumar revealed that the story instantly reminded her of her childhood and family values, convincing her that it deserved to be made under the Sukumar Writings banner. Producer Bunny Vas praised the universal appeal of the script, stating that despite being rooted in Telangana culture, its emotions would connect with audiences everywhere. He also expressed confidence in newcomer Nagadurga, saying her performance and a special song featuring her would become major highlights.

Making her debut as a heroine, Nagadurga thanked the makers for believing in her talent and allowing her to portray the emotionally significant role of Srilatha. Priyadarshi said he was proud to headline



a story that reflects the language, culture and traditions of Telangana while conveying emotions that are universal. He added that although the film is regionally rooted, its theme belongs to every family and every home.

With a strong emotional core, an impressive ensemble

cast and the backing of reputed production houses, *Idupu Kayitham* has generated considerable curiosity from its very launch. The makers are confident that the film will emerge as a memorable family entertainer celebrating relationships, culture and human emotions.

Mirzapur Teaser Promises an Explosive Big-Screen Spectacle

The much-awaited teaser of *Mirzapur* Movie has finally been unveiled, sending excitement soaring among fans of the blockbuster franchise. After becoming one of India's most celebrated crime dramas on OTT, *Mirzapur* is now set to make its grand debut on the big screen, promising an even bigger, bolder, and more intense cinematic experience.

The film continues the gripping timeline that began with the first season in 2018, taking the story into an untold chapter created exclusively for theatres. While preserving the raw intensity, power struggles, and gripping storytelling that made the series a massive success, the movie expands the universe with larger-than-life action, stunning visuals, and a grand cinematic scale.

The teaser marks the return of several iconic characters who have become synonymous with the *Mirzapur* legacy. All

Fazal reprises his role as Gudu Pandit, while Pankaj Tripathi returns in his unforgettable avatar, setting the stage for another fierce battle for power. One of the biggest highlights is the return of the beloved Bablu Pandit, now portrayed by Jitendra Kumar, bringing fresh intrigue to the story and adding an exciting new twist for fans.

Joining the franchise is Ravi Kishan, whose powerful presence introduces a new layer of intensity to the *Mirzapur* universe. The story also expands its canvas beyond the familiar streets of Purvanchal to the deserts of Rajasthan, promising a visually spectacular journey packed with action, drama, and unexpected turns.

The film boasts an impressive ensemble cast featuring Abhishek Banerjee, Rasika Dugal, Mohitt Maalik, Sheeba Chadha, Rajesh Tailang, Pramod Pathak, Shriya Pilgaonkar, Harshita Shekhar

Gaur, Shweta Tripathi, and Sonal S. Chauhan. Together, they bring to life an epic new chapter that builds upon the legacy of one of India's most loved crime franchises.

Presented by Amazon, MGM Studios and Excel Entertainment, the film is directed by Gurmeet Singh and written by Puneet Krishna. It is produced by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar under the Excel Entertainment banner, with Kassis Jagmagia and Vishal Ramchandani serving as co-producers. Scheduled for a grand theatrical release on September 4, 2026, *Mirzapur* will arrive in cinemas in both Hindi and Telugu, bringing its trademark "bhaukaal" to audiences across the country. With a powerful cast, gripping narrative, and an ambitious cinematic vision, the film is poised to be one of the biggest theatrical releases of the year, offering fans an unforgettable return to the world of *Mirzapur*.

Baahubali 3 Buzz Grows Stronger After Viral Hints in The Torchbearer Documentary

Speculation surrounding a possible third instalment in the blockbuster *Baahubali* franchise has resurfaced after a series of intriguing moments in the newly released documentary, *Baahubali: The Torchbearer*. Fans of the epic saga believe subtle hints dropped by Prabhas, Rana Daggubati and Anushka Shetty may be pointing towards the long-awaited *Baahubali 3*, although the makers have not made any official announcement.

The four-part documentary, which premiered on June 26, explores the making of the *Baahubali* films, their cultural impact and their phenomenal success across the globe. However, it was one particular sequence featuring the lead actors that has become the biggest talking point among fans.

In the documentary, Rana Daggubati says, "The world may not be ready yet, but *Baahubali*..." Before he completes the sentence, Prabhas

smiles and raises three fingers, a gesture that many interpreted as a playful indication of a third film. Standing beside him, Anushka Shetty also smiles, further fueling speculation among viewers. The documentary concludes with the message, "And the legacy continues," adding yet another layer of excitement for fans eager to revisit the fictional kingdom of Mahishmati.

The video clip quickly went viral on social media, with thousands of fans sharing screenshots and theories suggesting that *Baahubali 3* could already be in the planning stages. Many believe the gestures and closing message were carefully included to tease the possibility of continuing the franchise, while others feel the actors were simply having fun without revealing any concrete plans.

Despite the growing excitement, neither director S.S. Rajamouli nor the film's producers have confirmed the



development of a third instalment. There has been no official statement regarding a new film, leaving the speculation entirely based on the documentary's subtle moments and fan interpretations.

Released in 2015, *Baahubali: The Beginning* revolutionized Indian cinema with its grand visuals, compelling storytelling and record-breaking box office performance. The sequel, *Baahubali 2: The Conclusion*, released in 2017, became one of the biggest commercial successes in Indian film history and established Prabhas as a

pan-India superstar. The franchise also earned global recognition for raising the standards of Indian filmmaking.

With the documentary bringing the iconic saga back into the spotlight, anticipation among fans has reached new heights. Whether the recent hints truly signal the arrival of *Baahubali 3* or are simply a tribute to the franchise's enduring legacy remains to be seen. Until an official announcement is made, the mystery surrounding the future of *Baahubali* continues to keep audiences eagerly guessing.

Hrithik Roshan Completes Shoot for 'Jailer 2' Cameo



The much-awaited sequel to Superstar Rajinikanth's blockbuster *Jailer 2* has already begun making headlines, and the latest update has further amplified the buzz. Bollywood superstar Hrithik Roshan has reportedly completed shooting for his special appearance in the film, marking a high-profile crossover moment in Indian cinema.

Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar, *Jailer 2* is the sequel to the action entertainer that became a massive success across languages. Hrithik Roshan's involvement in the project has been kept under wraps for a long time, with reports now confirming that his portions have been successfully wrapped up. The actor is said to be appearing in a powerful guest role, designed to elevate key moments in the narrative.

The collaboration between Rajinikanth and Hrithik Roshan has generated significant excitement among fans, as it brings together two of India's most celebrated screen icons for the first time in a full-fledged cinematic universe. Interestingly, this is not the first time the two actors have been associated in cinema history. Decades ago, Hrithik appeared as a child artist in the 1986 film *Bhagwaan Dada*,



which featured Rajinikanth in an important role. That early connection adds a nostalgic layer to their present-day collaboration.

The makers are reportedly aiming for a grand theatrical release on September 11, and expectations are already sky-high given the success of the first instalment. With a larger scale, more intense action sequences, and expanded character arcs, *Jailer 2* is being positioned as a major pan-Indian event film.

Sources suggest that the sequel continues the style of high-energy storytelling that made the original film a box-office sensation. Rajinikanth's iconic screen presence, combined with Nelson Dilipkumar's commercial filmmaking approach, is expected to be one of the key attractions. Hrithik Roshan's cameo is believed to add a fresh dimension to the film's narrative and boost its appeal across northern markets.

As post-production work progresses, *Jailer 2* continues to dominate discussions in the entertainment industry. With its mix of star power, action spectacle, and cross-industry collaboration, the film is shaping up to be one of the most anticipated releases of the year.

Rajamouli Reveals 'Varanasi' Shoot Nears Completion



SS Rajamouli has shared an exciting update for fans eagerly awaiting his ambitious adventure film *Varanasi*, starring Mahesh Babu in the lead role. Speaking during an interaction with international media at the Ancey International Animation Festival in France, the celebrated filmmaker revealed that the film's shooting is entering its final phase and is expected to wrap up within the next four months.

According to Rajamouli, the production has already completed filming all of its large-scale action sequences, which are expected to be among the movie's biggest highlights. The team is now focusing on shooting smaller scenes that connect the narrative and ensure a

seamless flow of the story. If everything proceeds as planned, the entire shoot is likely to conclude by the end of September or the first week of October this year. The director also spoke about presenting *Varanasi* in the IMAX format. He clarified that the film's story was never altered to suit IMAX screens. Instead, the production team made technical adjustments to ensure the visuals would look spectacular in both IMAX and traditional CinemaScope formats. Rajamouli explained that the crew initially had to adapt to a new style of framing, but once they understood the technical requirements, the filming process became much smoother.

Known for pushing the

boundaries of cinematic storytelling, Rajamouli emphasized that the objective was to preserve the film's visual grandeur regardless of the screen format. By carefully planning every frame, the team has ensured that audiences will enjoy an immersive experience whether they watch the film in IMAX or conventional theatres. The highly anticipated project stars Mahesh Babu in a never-before-seen role, with Priyanka Chopra playing the female lead. The film has already generated massive buzz among movie lovers due to its scale, international locations, and Rajamouli's reputation for delivering visually spectacular blockbusters.

Adding to the excitement, actor Prithviraj Sukumaran, who plays the character Kumbha in the film, recently revealed that Rajamouli demanded extraordinary perfection while filming certain scenes, with some shots reportedly requiring nearly 90 takes before the director was satisfied. His comments further reinforced the filmmaker's meticulous approach to filmmaking.

Scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release on April 7 next year, *Varanasi* is widely expected to be one of Indian cinema's biggest releases. With filming now approaching its final stages and post-production set to begin soon, anticipation among fans continues to grow for what promises to be another cinematic spectacle from Rajamouli.

Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna and Venkatesh Reunite at Khushbu's Daughter's Grand Wedding



A star-studded celebration unfolded in Goa as veteran actress and politician Khushbu Sundar witnessed one of the most memorable moments of her life—the wedding of her elder daughter, Avantika Sundar. The lavish ceremony brought together some of the biggest names from the Indian film industry, creating a nostalgic and heartwarming atmosphere for fans and guests alike.

Avantika tied the knot with Chennai-based businessman Shriram Srinivasan in a grand ceremony held at a luxury resort in Goa. The wedding was attended by several prominent personalities from the worlds of cinema, business, and public life. Elegant décor, traditional rituals, and the presence of celebrated stars made the event one of the most talked-about celebrity weddings of the year.

One of the biggest highlights of the occasion was the presence of Telugu cinema legends Chiranjeevi, Akkineni Nagarjuna, and Daggubati Venkatesh. The three actors attended the wedding along with their spouses, adding glamour and warmth to the celebrations. Dressed in elegant traditional attire, the veteran stars were seen interacting with guests, posing for photographs, and blessing the newlyweds.

Photos and videos from the event quickly spread across social media platforms, delighting fans who were

thrilled to see the iconic trio together in a single frame. Their reunion sparked a wave of nostalgia among movie lovers who have followed their illustrious careers for decades. Many fans described the moment as a rare gathering of Telugu cinema royalty.

The wedding also attracted several notable personalities from other film industries. Veteran Bollywood actors Anil Kapoor and Jackie Shroff were among the distinguished guests, while actress Trisha Krishnan added further star power to the celebrations. The presence of artists from different generations and industries transformed the event into a grand reunion of Indian cinema.

Khushbu shares a long-standing friendship with Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna, and Venkatesh, built over decades of working together in the film industry. Her association with each of them extends beyond professional collaborations and has evolved into a strong personal bond. Their presence at her daughter's wedding reflected enduring friendship and mutual respect.

As images from the ceremony continue to captivate audiences online, the wedding has become a memorable celebration not only of a new beginning for the couple but also of lasting friendships that have stood the test of time in the entertainment industry.