

BUZZ POINTS

Minister Konda Surekha Calls for Vana Mahotsavam 2026 to Become a People's Movement

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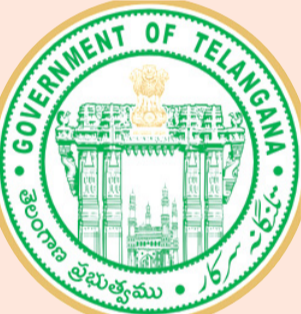
Bhatti Vikramarka Inspects Mahila Shakti Canteen at TGSPDCL Headquarters

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Telangana Offers Free RTC Travel for NEET Candidates



Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Telangana government has announced free travel in RTC buses for candidates appearing for the NEET examination...

Bengaluru Court Grants Interim Relief to Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan

Bengaluru/Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

A Bengaluru court has granted interim relief to Pawan Kalyan in a defamation case related to alleged land encroachment claims...

India-France Partnership Essential for Global Progress

Paris, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his official visit to France, said that the India-France partnership is vital for global progress and strengthening international cooperation.



Modi noted that his visit covered multiple engagements across Nice, Evian, and Paris, including participation in the G7 Summit-related discussions in Evian and the VivaTech 2026 event in Paris.



in technology, startups, and innovation. He emphasized that India is using technology to improve citizens' lives and reiterated that "access is key" in ensuring inclusive innovation.

CM Revanth Reddy Vows to Build Future City

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Thursday reaffirmed the Telangana government's commitment to developing the ambitious Future City project and rejuvenating the Musi River...



government would undertake the rejuvenation of the Musi River along a 55-kilometre stretch from Gandipet to Gowrelli. He stated that the project would be developed to international standards and would surpass several renowned riverfront developments in the country.

world-class urban ecosystem with modern facilities, sustainable development and employment opportunities. Taking a swipe at political opponents, Revanth Reddy said some leaders who lack a vision for the future are opposing the project and attempting to create hurdles.

we will build Future City and transform it into a globally recognised urban destination," he said. The Chief Minister maintained that both the Musi rejuvenation project and Future City initiative are crucial for Hyderabad's long-term growth, environmental sustainability and economic progress.

NTA Confirms NEET-UG Re-Test on June 21, Urges Students to Ignore Misinformation

New Delhi, June 18 | TPN Bureau

The National Testing Agency (NTA) has confirmed that the NEET-UG re-test will be conducted on June 21 as scheduled and said all necessary arrangements have been completed for its smooth conduct.

In a post on 'X', the agency urged students to remain calm, avoid rumours, and rely only on official updates. The NTA also advised candidates to focus on preparation and not be misled by unverified social media



claims regarding postponement. It added that strict multi-layered security arrangements have been put in place in coordination with various ministries, state govern-

CM A. Revanth Reddy Approves Telangana Digital Cabinet Initiative



Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

In a major step towards modernizing governance and promoting administrative efficiency, the Telangana government has decided to conduct Cabinet meetings in a completely paperless manner through the newly approved Telangana Digital Cabinet system.

Revanth Reddy personally reviewed the implementation and functioning of the Digital Cabinet platform during the meeting. He emphasized the importance of leveraging technology to strengthen governance and streamline administrative procedures.

Six MPs Skip Meet, Crisis Deepens in Shiv Sena (UBT)

New Delhi, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Shiv Sena (UBT) faced a major political crisis on Thursday after six of its nine Lok Sabha MPs skipped a key parliamentary party meeting, triggering speculation of a possible split.



fresh mandate, questioning their moral grounds. The meeting was attended by MPs Arvind Sawant, Anil Desai and Rajabhau Waje, along with Raut. The absence of Nagesh Aashitkar, Sanjay Deshmukh, Sanjay Jadhav, Sanjay Dina Patil, Omprakash Rajenimbalkar and Bhaushaheb Wakchaure intensified speculation of defection.

KTR Inspires Students with P.V. Narasimha Rao's Legacy

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K. T. Rama Rao on Thursday urged students to draw inspiration from the life and achievements of former Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao during a visit to the Swami Ramananda Tirtha Memorial School in Begumpet, Hyderabad.



mand over 16 languages. Students should follow his example, set high goals, and strive to achieve excellence in life," KTR said. The BRS leader also recalled the initiatives undertaken in the education sector during the previous government led by former Chief Minister K. Chandrababbarao, including the Chief Minister's

ern library at the school. "Every moment spent with children brings joy. It is our collective responsibility to provide students with quality education and proper nutrition, as they are the architects of society's future," he said. The programme was attended by Sanathnagar MLA and former minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav, MLC Surabhi Vani Devi, trust members, teachers, parents, and students. Speaking on the occasion, Talasani Srinivas Yadav said supporting students from economically weaker sections was a social responsibility. He announced that the Talasani Trust would voluntarily operate the midday meal programme for students and reiterated the importance of ensuring quality education for underprivileged children.

# Minister Konda Surekha Calls for Vana Mahotsavam 2026 to Become a People's Movement

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Forest, Environment and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha on Thursday urged citizens to actively participate in Vana Mahotsavam 2026 and help transform the annual plantation drive into a mass movement for environmental protection and sustainable development.

Addressing the inaugural programme of Vana Mahotsavam 2026, the minister said the initiative draws inspiration from the Vana Mahotsavam programme launched by the Congress-led Central government in 1950. She noted that the Telangana government has set an ambitious target of planting 16.06 crore saplings across the state this year to enhance green cover and combat climate change.

Highlighting the success of previous plantation efforts, Konda Surekha said that 94



percent of the saplings planted during last year's campaign have survived, demonstrating the commitment and efficiency of the Telangana Forest Department.

The minister praised Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for encouraging citizens to plant a sapling in the name of every newborn child, a campaign that has received an

overwhelming response across the state.

She announced that the government has prepared an action plan to develop the Gurranguda forest area, spread across 424 acres and 31 guntas, as a reserve forest. The recent restoration of 102 acres of forest land to the Gurranguda Reserve Forest following a Supreme Court judgment, she said, reflects the government's commitment to protecting public assets and forest resources. Konda Surekha said development works worth ₹35.5 crore have been initiated to strengthen the state's forest sector. To improve urban greenery and reduce pollution, 42 nurseries under the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority area are currently raising 4.60 crore saplings. The minister also highlighted the use of advanced technologies such as drone surveys and Geographic

Information System (GIS) mapping for the protection of forest lands and prevention of encroachments.

Stressing that tree plantation is one of the most effective tools to tackle climate change, she appealed to every student to plant a sapling and every family to take responsibility for nurturing at least one tree.

She thanked the Chief Minister for approving the implementation of the annual Vana Samraksha Awards to recognize outstanding contributions by forest personnel. The awards will be presented every year to employees who demonstrate exceptional dedication to forest conservation.

Calling for collective action, Konda Surekha urged all sections of society to contribute towards achieving the National Forest Policy target of 33 percent forest cover and help build a greener and healthier Telangana.

# Uttam Kumar Reddy Announces Key Cabinet Decisions

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana Cabinet has taken a series of key decisions aimed at strengthening farmer welfare, improving public infrastructure, and advancing digital governance. The decisions were announced following an informal Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy.

Briefing the media at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Secretariat, Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao, and Panchayat Raj Minister Seethakka announced that the state government will formally launch the Rythu Bharosa investment support scheme on June 30 at a massive farmers' convention in Madhira, Khammam district. Financial assistance under the scheme will be credited directly into farmers' bank accounts from the event venue.

The Cabinet also approved continuation of the bonus for seven fine rice varieties, including BPT-5204, RNR-15048, HMT Sona, Jai Sriram, KNM-1638, WGL-44, and KNM-7715. Ministers said these varieties account for nearly 83 percent of fine rice cultivation in Telangana and enjoy strong market demand. Expressing concern over fertilizer shortages, the government urged the Centre to increase urea allocations to Telangana and allocate a larger share of production from Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited to local farmers. The state also advised farmers not to rush sowing operations and to follow scientific guidance from Agriculture Department officials due to forecasts of below-normal rainfall and possible dry spells.

On infrastructure, the Cabinet resolved to seek



early approvals for Phase-II expansion of the Hyderabad Metro Rail and requested support from Union Ministers and Telangana BJP MPs for securing financial clearances.

The government also approved the introduction of a Digital Cabinet system. IT Minister D. Sridhar Babu distributed special tablets to ministers as part of the state's transition to paperless governance.

Additionally, free TGSRTC bus travel was announced for NEET candidates appearing for the examination, while a Cabinet sub-committee was formed to examine the Centre's proposed changes to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGN-REGS).

Highlighting achievements in agriculture, Uttam Kumar Reddy said Telangana procured a record 80 lakh metric tonnes of paddy during the recent Yasangi season and credited nearly ₹18,000 crore directly into farmers' bank accounts. The ministers also urged the Centre to strengthen crop procurement through agencies such as Food Corporation of India, Cotton Corporation of India, and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India to ensure adequate support for Telangana farmers.

# Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao Defends Rythu Bima Scheme

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao on Thursday said the state government has provided financial assistance of ₹3,301.90 crore to 66,038 farmer families under the Rythu Bima scheme during the last two-and-a-half years, reaffirming its commitment to farmer welfare.

The minister stated that the government has already paid the entire annual premium due to the Life Insurance Corporation of India, ensuring uninterrupted implementation of the farmer insurance scheme. He dismissed allegations by BRS leaders that the scheme had been discontinued, calling such claims completely false and politically motivated. Tummala said the Congress

government has not stopped a single welfare programme benefiting farmers since assuming office. On the contrary, he asserted, the government has continued existing schemes and revived several programmes that were discontinued during the previous administration.

Criticizing the former government, the minister alleged that it had halted important initiatives such as agricultural mechanization support, soil health testing and subsidized seed distribution. He also claimed that the previous regime failed to release the state's share for certain centrally sponsored schemes, depriving farmers of potential benefits. Providing details of the Rythu Bima scheme, Tummala said that since December 2023, a total of 66,038 bereaved farmer fami-



lies have received insurance assistance. Of the total amount disbursed, ₹1,004.50 crore was paid to 20,090 families between December 2023 and the end of that year, while ₹1,293.05 crore was distributed to 25,861 families during 2024. For the 2025-26

financial year, he said, 42.16 lakh farmers have been enrolled under the scheme. The government has fully paid the annual premium of ₹1,359.56 crore to LIC to ensure continued coverage for all registered beneficiaries. As a result, insurance

assistance amounting to ₹1,004.35 crore has already been provided to the families of 20,087 deceased farmers, offering crucial financial support during difficult times.

The minister urged political parties to refrain from spreading misinformation about farmer welfare programmes and said the government remains committed to supporting the agricultural community. He emphasized that Rythu Bima continues to serve as a vital safety net for farming families, helping them cope with financial hardship following the loss of a breadwinner. Tummala reiterated that farmer welfare remains a top priority for the Telangana government and assured that all eligible beneficiaries would continue to receive support under the scheme.

# Harish Rao Slams Cabinet Decisions on Crop Procurement, Rythu Bharosa

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

BRS Deputy Floor Leader and former minister T. Harish Rao on Thursday strongly criticised the Telangana Cabinet's recent decisions on agriculture, alleging that the Congress government was abandoning its responsibility towards farmers.

Reacting to the Cabinet meeting, Harish Rao said the government had first reduced the scope of crop bonuses and was now, under the banner of a "Digital Cabinet," backing away from its commitment to procure farmers' produce. He accused the Congress government of taking "confusing and anti-farmer decisions" that were pushing the agriculture sector into crisis. The former minister said the

Cabinet's decision to procure paddy only within quotas fixed by the Centre amounted to the state withdrawing from procurement operations. He questioned Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for allegedly taking a different stand from the one he held while in the opposition. Harish Rao argued that if the government refused to procure the entire crop produced by farmers, they would be left at the mercy of private traders and market fluctuations. He also criticised the government's decision to extend bonus payments only to select fine rice varieties, claiming it effectively imposed restrictions on farmers' cropping choices.

Highlighting difficulties faced by growers of maize, jowar, sunflower and Bengal gram, he alleged that inadequate procurement had



forced many farmers to sell their produce below the Minimum Support Price (MSP). According to him, restrictions on procurement

would further worsen the situation for paddy farmers during the current season. The BRS leader also accused the government of failing on

several fronts, including farm loan waivers, Rythu Bharosa assistance, crop insurance, power supply and irrigation management. He alleged that Telangana's water interests were being compromised and questioned the government's preparedness to tackle the anticipated impact of El Niño conditions. Harish Rao demanded that the government immediately withdraw what he described as anti-farmer decisions and ensure full procurement of crops. He further urged the government to release all pending Rythu Bharosa dues, along with assistance for the current Kharif season, directly into farmers' bank accounts. He warned that any attempt to evade procurement responsibilities would invite strong opposition from Telangana's farming community.

# Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Urges Vigilance on Voter Revision Process



Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Thursday called on Congress leaders and party workers to remain vigilant during the upcoming Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and ensure that no eligible voter is excluded from the voter list. Addressing a review meeting with Congress MLAs, constituency in-charges and party leaders from the Hyderabad and Secunderabad parliamentary constituencies at the Secretariat, the minister stressed the importance of protecting the voting rights of all eligible citizens. The meeting was also attended by Minister Mohammed Azharuddin, MPs Anil Kumar Yadav, Mallu Ravi and Raghuram Reddy, along with DCC presidents, MLAs and senior Congress leaders.

Ponnam Prabhakar said the SIR exercise, scheduled from June 25 to July 24, is crucial for maintaining an accurate and transparent voter list. He directed constituency in-charges to ensure that Booth Level Agents (BLA-2s) actively coordinate with Booth Level Officers (BLOs) so that voter enumeration forms reach every eligible voter. The minister instructed party functionaries to immediately submit BLA-2 lists to Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and create dedicated teams at the booth

and division levels to assist voters in completing the revision process. He warned that voters who fail to submit their enumeration forms could risk exclusion from the draft electoral rolls scheduled for publication on July 30.

Alleging attempts to remove anti-BJP votes in some states, Ponnam Prabhakar urged Congress workers to closely monitor the revision process and ensure that eligible voters are not deprived of their democratic rights. At the same time, he emphasized the need to remove names of deceased or ineligible voters to maintain the integrity of the electoral rolls.

The minister also called on party leaders to identify eligible citizens who are not yet registered and assist them with voter registration, corrections and online applications. He said regular booth-level reviews should be conducted to address voter-related issues promptly.

Apart from electoral matters, Ponnam Prabhakar asked Congress leaders to actively publicize the state government's welfare initiatives, including free bus travel for women, Indiramma housing, subsidized gas cylinders, free electricity and other social welfare schemes. He urged party workers to strengthen the organization at the grassroots level and work collectively to ensure a strong Congress performance in the upcoming GHMC elections.

# Bhatti Vikramarka Inspects Mahila Shakti Canteen at TGSPDCL Headquarters

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Thursday inspected the newly established Mahila Shakti Canteen at the headquarters of TGSPDCL in Mint Compound, Hyderabad. During his visit, Bhatti Vikramarka reviewed the facilities and infrastructure provided at the canteen, which has been set up for the convenience of employees and visitors. He sought details from TGSPDCL CMD Jitesh V. Patil regarding the expenditure incurred for

establishing the facility and the amenities made available.

The Deputy Chief Minister stated that the government is actively promoting Mahila Shakti Canteens to strengthen the economic empowerment of women self-help groups while ensuring access to hygienic and affordable food for employees. Interacting with the canteen management, he advised them to maintain high standards of quality and cleanliness and provide tasty, nutritious food at reasonable prices. He also carefully examined the menu board



and price list displayed at the canteen. Bhatti Vikramarka said such

initiatives not only create sustainable livelihood opportunities for women but also

improve workplace facilities for government employees. He stressed the importance of delivering consistent service and maintaining customer satisfaction.

The programme was attended by Jyothi Buddha Prakash, TGSPDCL directors Chakrapani, Shivaji and Narasimha, along with other senior officials. The Mahila Shakti Canteen initiative is part of the Telangana government's broader efforts to promote women-led enterprises and strengthen self-help groups through sustainable income-generating opportunities.

# Dasoju Sravan Targets Telangana Government Over State Finances

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

BRS senior leader and MLC Dasoju Sravan on Thursday launched a sharp attack on the Congress government, alleging that Telangana's financial position had deteriorated significantly under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. Citing the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report for May 2026, Sravan claimed that the govern-

ment's projections of a strong fiscal position were far removed from reality. He alleged that while the 2026-27 Budget projected a revenue surplus of ₹6,857.76 crore, the state had recorded a revenue deficit of ₹5,038.34 crore within the first two months of the financial year. The BRS leader further alleged that the government had already utilised a substantial portion of its annual borrowing limit. According to him, Telangana borrowed

₹10,595.98 crore during April and May, accounting for over 18 percent of the borrowing ceiling fixed for the entire financial year. Sravan also criticised the government's revenue mobilisation efforts, claiming that central grants, excise collections and non-tax revenues had fallen short of budget expectations. He questioned the effectiveness of the state's engagement with the Centre, pointing out that only a small fraction of the projected grants had been

received so far. The MLC alleged that the government was portraying an image of rapid economic growth while the state's finances were under stress. He claimed that unrealistic projections and increasing debt were placing a heavy burden on Telangana's future. Demanding greater transparency, Sravan urged the government to explain how it planned to fulfil its election promises and welfare commitments. He also

called on the Chief Minister to stop what he termed as "misleading publicity" regarding the state's economic performance. The BRS leader demanded that the government present a comprehensive White Paper on Telangana's financial condition in the Assembly and place all fiscal details before the public. The Congress government has not yet responded to the allegations made by the BRS leader.

# India-France Partnership Essential for Global Progress

continued

during the visit. He met Arthur Mensch of Mistral AI, where they discussed trusted artificial intelligence, innovation, and ensuring AI remains human-centric and inclusive. He also met Alstom CEO Martin Sion, noting the company's strong presence in India and its contribution to the "Make in India" initiative. Further, Modi interacted with Benoit Bazin of Saint-Gobain on India's infrastructure transformation and opportunities in the circular economy and construction innovation. He also met Rodolphe Saadé of CMA CGM to discuss maritime connectivity, shipbuilding, logistics, and digital maritime innovation. Modi also expressed condolences on the passing of Robert A. F. Thurman, describing him as an eminent scholar of Buddhism who strengthened cultural understanding between India and the world. He reiterated that India's cultural heritage is being preserved and strengthened through initiatives aligned with "Virasat Bhi, Vikas Bhi," including heritage restoration and pilgrimage infrastructure development. The Prime Minister said the visit marked significant progress in India-France relations and expressed gratitude to President Emmanuel Macron, the Government of France, and its people for their hospitality. He added that the friendship between India and France will continue to grow stronger in the years ahead.

## KTR Inspires Students with P.V. Narasimha Rao's Legacy

continued

MLC Surabhi Vani Devi stressed that proper nutrition is as important as education for a child's holistic development. She noted that students cannot fully concentrate on studies if they suffer from hunger and said balanced nutrition plays a key role in enhancing learning outcomes. Remembering her father, former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, she said education was the most powerful tool for eliminating poverty and transforming families. She also highlighted his contribution to the development of educational institutions such as Navodaya Vidyalayas and residential schools. The event witnessed participation from trust representatives, local public representatives, teachers, parents, BRS leaders, and party workers in large numbers.

# Former Corporation Chairman G. Devi Prasad Urges Action on El Niño Threat

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Former Corporation Chairman G. Devi Prasad has urged the Telangana government to immediately formulate a comprehensive action plan to address the potential impact of El Niño conditions expected during the current Kharif season. In a statement issued on Thursday, Devi Prasad expressed concern over recent warnings from the Centre and weather experts indicating that Telangana, along with several other states, could face significant climatic challenges due to the El Niño phenomenon. He

said the state government must act proactively to minimize the impact on agriculture, water resources, and rural livelihoods. According to Devi Prasad, uneven rainfall patterns are likely to be recorded across Telangana, with the possibility of deficient rainfall during the crucial months of August and September. Such conditions, he warned, could adversely affect crop cultivation and create challenges in both irrigation and drinking water supply sectors. He noted that southern and northern districts of Telangana may witness rainfall deficits and called upon the government to issue

timely advisories to farmers. He also stressed the need for awareness programmes on alternative crop cultivation and scientific planning for agricultural activities during the Kharif season. The former chairman advised the government to exercise caution regarding paddy cultivation, which requires substantial water resources. He suggested that farmers should be encouraged to take up alternative crops and that the government should assure procurement of such crops at remunerative support prices to protect farmers from potential losses. Devi Prasad further pointed out that continued rainfall

shortages in the catchment areas of major river systems could affect inflows into key reservoirs, including Srisailem Reservoir, Nagarjuna Sagar Dam, and Jurala Project. In view of this possibility, he urged the government to focus on efficient water management and conservation measures. He also demanded that repair works related to the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project be completed on a war footing. According to him, the full restoration and operational readiness of the project, along with connected reservoirs and tanks, would significantly strengthen the state's ability to tackle

drought-like conditions. The former chairman called for a special strategy covering farmer welfare measures such as Rythu Bandhu assistance, crop procurement, crop insurance, supply of agricultural inputs, and drinking water security. He emphasized that timely intervention and proper planning would help safeguard farmers and reduce the adverse effects of unpredictable weather conditions. "Farmer welfare is the foundation of Telangana's development, and protecting the farming community must remain the government's foremost responsibility," Devi Prasad said.

# Former Agriculture Minister Niranjan Reddy Slams Cabinet Decisions on Crop Procurement

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Former Agriculture Minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy has strongly criticized the Telangana Cabinet's recent decisions on crop procurement, alleging that the Congress government is abandoning its responsibilities towards farmers. In a statement issued on Thursday, Niranjan Reddy described the state Cabinet as a "faithless Cabinet," accusing it of lacking commitment and betraying the trust of the farming community. He expressed serious concern over what he

claimed was the government's decision to procure crops only in accordance with quotas fixed by the Centre. According to the former minister, such a stance amounts to the state government shirking its responsibility toward farmers. He questioned Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for allegedly citing the Centre as a reason for limiting procurement, recalling that the Congress leadership had previously criticized the BRS government over procurement issues while in opposition. Niranjan Reddy alleged that the Cabinet had effectively

admitted its inability to procure farmers' produce and demanded that the government apologize to the state's farming community. He argued that Telangana should ensure procurement of the entire crop produced by farmers rather than restricting purchases based on central allocations. The BRS leader also questioned the government's decision to launch the Rythu Bharosa scheme through large public meetings. He claimed that similar announcements made during the previous agricultural season did not result in benefits reaching all eligible

farmers and accused the government of focusing more on publicity than implementation. Referring to the BRS government's record, Niranjan Reddy said that under the leadership of former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, more than ₹72,000 crore had been directly transferred to farmers' accounts in multiple installments without organizing public events. He further alleged that farmers cultivating the fine rice varieties promoted by the government could suffer lower yields and accused the Congress government of attempting to avoid paying

the promised bonus on paddy procurement. The former minister also criticized the government's handling of power supply, farm loan waiver implementation, farmer welfare schemes and crop insurance, alleging that it lacked a clear strategy on key agricultural issues. Demanding an immediate review of the Cabinet's decision, Niranjan Reddy urged the government to withdraw what he described as restrictive procurement policies and ensure the purchase of 100 percent of farmers' produce to safeguard their livelihoods.

# Mettu Sai Kumar Slams KTR and Harish Rao

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Fisheries Corporation Chairman Mettu Sai Kumar launched a sharp attack on Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leaders K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) and T. Harish Rao during a press conference held at Gandhi Bhavan on Thursday. Defending the policies of the Congress government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Sai Kumar accused the opposition party of misleading the public and attempting to criticize welfare initiatives aimed at benefiting poor families. Speaking to reporters, Sai Kumar alleged that the BRS leadership was unable to accept the growing popularity of the Telangana Public School initiative launched by the state government. He said the programme was designed to provide corporate-level education to children from economically weaker sections and described it as a major step toward educational empowerment. The Fisheries Corporation

Chairman claimed that the previous BRS government had promised quality education from KG to PG but failed to deliver meaningful benefits to poor families. According to him, the Congress government is now taking concrete steps to ensure that students from underprivileged backgrounds have access to better educational opportunities. Sai Kumar stated that the Telangana Public School initiative would benefit nearly 2.7 million students and help bridge the gap between private and government education standards. He alleged that criticism from BRS leaders stemmed from political frustration and an inability to accept the government's welfare measures. During his remarks, he also targeted KTR and Harish Rao over their recent statements against the Congress government. He claimed that the people of Telangana had already rejected the BRS leadership and would continue to support policies that directly benefit poor and middle-class families.

# Nampally Court Sends Karumuri Sunil to 14-Day Judicial Remand

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

A court in Hyderabad on Thursday remanded Karumuri Sunil to 14 days of judicial custody in connection with the alleged liquor transportation scam that took place during the previous YSRCP government in Andhra Pradesh. The Enforcement Directorate (ED), which arrested

Sunil as part of its ongoing investigation, produced him before the Nampally court. After hearing arguments from both the prosecution and the defence, the court ordered his remand and directed authorities to shift him to Chanchalguda Central Prison. During the hearing, the ED's counsel informed the court that Sunil allegedly secured liquor transporta-

tion contracts by leveraging the influence of his father, Karumuri Nageswara Rao, who served in the previous YSRCP government. Investigators claimed to have gathered evidence indicating that Sunil received substantial financial benefits through these contracts. The agency further alleged that transactions worth nearly Rs. 7 crore took place among family

members and that liquor transportation contracts were awarded to individuals associated with Sudarshana Constructions. According to the ED, Sunil allegedly received around Rs. 28 crore in kickbacks for facilitating these contracts. The prosecution also stated that the alleged liquor transportation scam caused a loss of approximately Rs. 195 crore to the

state exchequer. The ED told the court that a detailed investigation is still underway and that additional evidence would be submitted at an appropriate stage. Following the arguments, the court ordered 14 days of judicial remand for Sunil, marking a significant development in the ongoing investigation into the alleged liquor transport irregularities.

# BJP State President Ramchander Rao Invites Nitin Nabin for Telangana Executive Meet

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

N. Ramchander Rao met Nitin Nabin in New Delhi on Thursday and formally invited him to attend the BJP Telangana State Executive Meeting scheduled to be held in Hyderabad later this month. The invitation assumes significance as Nitin Nabin's proposed three-day tour of Telangana from June 16 was cancelled at the last moment. During the meeting, Ramchander Rao briefed the party leader on organisational activities and preparations underway in the state. The BJP leadership recently completed an extensive train-

ing programme for senior party leaders across all districts in Telangana. The initiative was aimed at strengthening organisational efficiency, standardising communication strategies, improving grassroots outreach, and ensuring uniform implementation of party programmes throughout the state. According to party leaders, the training programme forms part of a broader effort to professionalise organisational work and prepare cadres for upcoming political challenges. Ramchander Rao also apprised Nitin Nabin about the success of the party's farmer outreach campaign, "Rythu Gosa - BJP Bharosa," which helped

expand the BJP's engagement with rural communities and highlight farmers' issues across Telangana. The state BJP president further outlined plans to intensify protests and campaigns concerning pending student fee reimbursement issues. Party leaders indicated that the BJP would continue to raise matters related to farmers, students, and public welfare while strengthening its organisational presence across the state. The upcoming State Executive Meeting is expected to review the party's organisational strategy, outreach programmes, and future political action plans in Telangana.

## TPCC Chief Mahesh Kumar Goud Stresses Key Role of DCC Presidents

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

A get-together of newly appointed District Congress Committee (DCC) presidents was held at the MP and MLA Cultural Centre in Hyderabad on Thursday. The meeting was attended by Mahesh Kumar Goud as the chief guest, along with Vem Narendar Reddy, Mallu Ravi, senior leader Rohin Reddy and other party functionaries. Addressing the gathering, Mahesh Kumar Goud said the post of DCC president holds immense importance in the organisational structure of the Congress party. He noted that the selection of DCC presidents was made

after extensive surveys conducted through the SSA process, with a focus on ensuring social justice and fair representation. The TPCC chief emphasized that DCC presidents have a crucial responsibility in strengthening the party at the grassroots level. He said those who work with dedication, sincerity and commitment for the party would certainly receive recognition. Mahesh Kumar Goud pointed out that several leaders who had previously served as DCC presidents later rose to become MLAs, MPs and even ministers, highlighting the significance of the position in nurturing future leadership.

## NTA Confirms NEET-UG Re-Test on June 21, Urges Students to Ignore Misinformation

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the agency said only three days remain for the exam and urged them to remain composed, get adequate rest, and perform confidently. Parents and teachers were also requested to support students and ensure they are not disturbed by misinformation. The NEET-UG exam held earlier on May 3 was cancelled following allegations of a paper leak, with a Central Bureau of Investigation inquiry currently underway. Meanwhile, the Centre has submitted an affidavit before the Delhi High Court describing messaging platform Telegram as being misused by cybercriminals, extremists, and fraud networks. It alleged that the platform's privacy features are being exploited for illegal activities and said the temporary restrictions on its use were imposed to prevent leaks, fraud, and misinformation ahead of the re-test.

# BRS Leader T. Jeevan Reddy Demands Probe Into Paddy Procurement Irregularities

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Former Minister and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) General Secretary T. Jeevan Reddy on Thursday alleged large-scale irregularities in paddy procurement across Telangana and demanded an immediate investigation into the issue. Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan in Hyderabad, Jeevan Reddy accused the state govern-

ment of making grand claims about paddy procurement while farmers were suffering significant financial losses. He alleged that farmers who cultivated crops with great effort were forced to sell their produce at reduced rates, resulting in losses ranging from ₹120 to ₹243 per quintal. The BRS leader claimed that rice millers had allegedly benefited at the expense of farmers, resulting in what he described as a procurement scam worth

nearly ₹1,000 crore. He asserted that the party would prove the alleged irregularities and demanded that the government order an independent inquiry immediately. Jeevan Reddy said that a detailed examination of weighbridge records and procurement data would reveal the actual extent of the losses suffered by farmers. He maintained that the truth would emerge if official procurement measurements were thoroughly scrutinized. Criticizing the

government's agricultural policies, he alleged that restrictions encouraging farmers to cultivate only seven crop varieties were not in the best interests of the farming community. According to him, some of the recommended crops may not provide adequate yields and could also face pest-related challenges. He further accused the government of attempting to avoid its responsibility for procurement by discouraging the

cultivation of certain crops. The former minister also claimed that the promised Rabi season bonus had not been provided to farmers and alleged that the Congress government had failed to fulfil its election promise of increasing financial support to cultivators. Jeevan Reddy demanded that the government provide ₹15,000 per acre under the Rythu Bharosa scheme during the current Kharif season. He also raised concerns over the introduc-

tion of a mobile application for urea distribution, arguing that many farmers could find it difficult to use. The BRS leader questioned why the state government was not exerting pressure on the Centre regarding procurement-related issues and sought clarity on the status of the farmer insurance programme. He alleged that if no investigation was ordered into the procurement complaints, it would raise suspicions about official compli-

ty. Calling for immediate corrective measures, Jeevan Reddy urged the government to assure farmers that all crops cultivated by them would be procured without discrimination. He also appealed to the authorities to ensure timely availability of urea and expedite settlement of pending farmer insurance claims, stating that affected families were facing hardships while seeking assistance from government offices.



# Deputy Commissioner U. Venkataramulu Trains BLOs for Voter List Revision

Quthbullapur, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Preparations are underway for the successful implementation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, with a training programme conducted for Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in the Gajulararam Circle on Thursday. The training session was held at Shubhamastu Banquet Hall in Mahadevpur, where master trainers provided detailed guidance on the Special Intensive Revision process scheduled to commence from June 25, 2026. The programme focused on equipping BLOs with the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out voter list revisions effectively and accurately. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Electoral Registration Officer (AERO) U. Venkataramulu stressed the importance of the role played by BLOs in maintaining the integrity of the electoral rolls. He urged officials to discharge their responsibilities with dedication and ensure that every eligible citizen is enrolled as a voter. Venkataramulu highlighted that voter lists must remain transparent, accurate, and up to date. He instructed



BLOs to take all necessary precautions while conducting field verification and processing applications related to voter registration, corrections, and deletions. The training programme was conducted under the supervision of AERO R. Sumitra. During the session, BLO supervisors and Booth Level Officers were given detailed explanations on both technical and administrative aspects of the revision process. Officials also shared practical guidelines on handling voter enrolment applications, updating voter details, and removing ineligible entries from the electoral rolls. The participants were informed about the procedures to be followed during the Special Intensive Revision and were encouraged to ensure maximum

# IG Rajeev Gandhi Hanumanthu Announces Temporary Suspension of Registration Services

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Registration services across Telangana will remain temporarily unavailable from June 26 to June 28 due to scheduled server maintenance works, according to Rajeev Gandhi Hanumanthu, Inspector General of the Stamps and Registration Department. In a statement issued on Thursday, Rajeev Gandhi Hanumanthu said that the department's website and all related online services would be suspended during the maintenance period. The upgrade is being undertaken after nearly five years to improve server performance, strengthen security meas-

ures and enhance the overall quality and reliability of public services. He explained that the maintenance schedule was carefully planned to minimize inconvenience to citizens. June 26 falls on the Muharram holiday and June 28 is a Sunday, leaving only June 27 as a working day when registration services will be affected. The IG noted that the temporary interruption is essential for modernizing the department's digital infrastructure and ensuring smoother service delivery in the future. The maintenance works are expected to improve system efficiency, reduce technical issues and provide a more secure online environment for users. Citizens planning

# NIMS, IISc Join Hands for AI-Based Disease Detection Research



Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

In a major step towards advancing healthcare technology, the Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have launched a joint research programme to develop Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based solutions for the early detection and management of major diseases. A team of IISc scientists visited NIMS in Hyderabad on Thursday and held extensive discussions with medical experts and faculty members from both institutions to chart out the roadmap for the collaborative project. The meeting was chaired by Dr P. Chandrasekhar, who highlighted the growing importance of AI in modern

healthcare. He said AI-powered tools have the potential to significantly improve the early detection of breast cancer, oral cancer, kidney diseases, cardiovascular disorders, and obesity-related conditions. Such technologies can also enable faster diagnosis, better risk assessment, and more effective treatment planning. Under the collaboration, researchers will develop advanced AI models capable of disease diagnosis, risk prediction, disease progression analysis, and personalized treatment recommendations. The initiative aims to create healthcare solutions tailored specifically to the needs of Indian patients while supporting doctors in making informed clinical decisions. Officials said the project is expected to enhance access to quality

# RTI Committee Demands Probe Into Telangana Health Department Irregularities

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

The Right to Information (RTI) Act Implementation Committee has demanded a high-level investigation into alleged corruption, administrative lapses, and violations of the RTI Act within Telangana's Health Department. The demand was made through a memorandum submitted under the leadership of Committee National Chairman Dr. Chanti Mudiraj and Telangana State President Sura Sravanthi. Addressing the media in Hyderabad, Dr. Chanti Mudiraj alleged that serious irregularities have surfaced in the functioning of District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO) offices across the state, as well as in the administration of both government and private hospitals. He said the allegations have raised concerns about transparency, accountability, and the effective use of public funds in a sector directly linked to public welfare. The committee expressed concern over reports of financial mismanagement, lack of transparency, and alleged irregularities in the handling of death-related cases in some private hospitals. According to the committee, such allegations have created anxiety among the public and warrant an impartial



and comprehensive inquiry. It also called for a detailed audit of government hospital development funds, procurement activities, maintenance expenditures, and the utilization of special grants. The committee stated that despite the allocation of funds, several hospitals continue to face infrastructure deficiencies, leading to questions about the quality of healthcare services being delivered to citizens. The RTI committee further alleged that the implementation of the Right to Information Act, 2005, remains inadequate in several government offices. It claimed that many departments fail to provide information within the legally prescribed time frame, often furnish incomplete responses, and do not publicly display details of Public Information Officers (PIOs) and First Appellate Authorities. Such practices, the committee said, undermine citizens' constitutional right to access information. Among its key demands, the committee sought a state-level inquiry into DMHO offices, an independent investigation into death-related cases in private hospitals, and a special audit of government hospital finances. It also called for fair investigations against officials facing allegations, a statewide review of RTI implementation, and mandatory public display of RTI-related information in all hospitals and government offices. Additionally, the committee urged the government to make details of tenders, procurement processes, and fund utilization available on official websites and establish a dedicated mechanism to receive and address corruption complaints. The committee emphasized that transparency, accountability, and the effective implementation of the RTI Act are essential pillars of democracy and urged the government to take immediate action to safeguard public health and public resources. State Assistant Secretaries Aravind Swamy and Srikanth Reddy, Joint Warangal District President Bogam Vishnu, Rangareddy District General Secretary Praveen, and other members were present during the programme.

# MLA K.P. Vivekanand Initiates Drainage Works in Siddharth Nagar

Quthbullapur, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Residents of Siddharth Nagar, popularly known as Marathi Basti in the 292 Saibaba Nagar Division, received long-awaited relief as works to address persistent drainage issues were finally launched on Thursday. The initiative follows repeated complaints from local residents who have been facing severe drainage-related problems for a prolonged period. Acting on concerns identified during his recent padayatra, Quthbullapur MLA K.P. Vivekanand directed officials to take immediate steps to resolve the issue and ensure a permanent solution for the affected locality. According to local residents, the drainage problem had remained unresolved despite several representations made to the concerned authorities. The issue had caused inconvenience to families in the area, particularly during periods of rainfall and water stagnation. The commencement of the works is being seen as the result of continuous follow-up efforts by local representative Varala Vinod Kumar,



who regularly coordinated with officials and pressed for early action on the pending development works. His persistent efforts helped bring the issue to the attention of the authorities and accelerate the implementation process. Speaking on the occasion, local leaders stated that the development demonstrates the importance of consistent follow-up and coordination between public representatives, officials, and residents. They noted that addressing civic issues requires sustained engagement and timely intervention from all stakeholders. Residents expressed satisfaction over the start of the works and hoped that the drainage improvements would provide a lasting solution to the long-standing problem. They thanked MLA K.P. Vivekanand and the concerned officials for responding to their grievances and taking steps toward resolving the issue. Officials from the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) were present to oversee the initial phase of the project. The works are expected to improve sanitation conditions and prevent

# World Monuments Fund Offers Support for Telangana State Museum

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

A delegation from the World Monuments Fund (WMF) on Thursday expressed its willingness to support the revival and strengthening of the Telangana State Museum and explore avenues for mobilising funds for its development. The WMF delegation, comprising Malini Tandon, Meghana Datta, Madhu Sree and Ipsita, visited the Telangana State Museum in Hyderabad and reviewed its collections and facilities. The team was accompanied by Heritage Department Director K. Arjun Rao, Deputy Directors Dr P. Nagaraju and Dr D. Ramulu Naik, along with Assistant Directors B. Mallu and D. Bujji. During the visit, Prof.



Arjun Rao briefed the delegation on the museum's history, cultural significance, valuable collections and ongoing activities. He also outlined efforts being made to preserve and promote Telangana's rich heritage through the institution. The WMF representatives appreciated the extensive collection of artefacts, antiquities and historical objects preserved at the museum. They expressed interest in supporting initiatives aimed at conservation, restoration and modernisation of the facility. According to officials, the delegation indicated its willingness to explore funding opportunities and technical support for strengthening the museum's infrastructure and enhancing visitor experience. The visit is expected to pave the way for future collaboration between the World Monuments Fund and the Telangana Heritage Department in preserving and showcasing the state's rich cultural and historical legacy.

# TRS Chief Kavitha Targets BJP, Pawan Kalyan

Karimnagar, June 18 | TPN Bureau

TRS Chief K. Kavitha on Thursday launched a sharp attack on the BJP and Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, alleging that attempts were being made to undermine Telangana's identity and political interests. Speaking at the conclusion of a round-table conference titled "Aspirations and Achievements of Telangana Activists" in Karimnagar, Kavitha claimed that the BJP was trying to expand its influence in southern India and was using regional leaders to strengthen its political presence in Telangana. She alleged that Pawan Kalyan was being projected as a political face to advance the BJP's agenda in the state and urged Telangana youth not to be influenced by film personalities in politics.

According to her, cinema actors should be viewed as entertainers rather than political role models. Kavitha also expressed concerns over what she described as threats to Telangana's cultural identity and traditions. She claimed that Telangana society should remain vigilant against forces seeking to alter the state's unique social and cultural fabric. Referring to local folk deities and traditions, she said Telangana's pluralistic culture must be protected. The TRS chief asserted that Telangana had achieved statehood after years of struggle and warned against any developments that could weaken the state's autonomy and interests. She said organizations committed to protecting Telangana's identity would continue to remain active and vigilant. During her address, Kavitha



also outlined her vision for the party's future. She promised greater accessibility to party workers, stating that the new TRS would function without internal power groups and would maintain direct communication with grassroots activists. Emphasizing social justice and inclusive politics, she announced that the party would reserve 33 percent of

its electoral tickets for women and work toward increasing women's representation further in the future. She also advocated reducing the cost of elections and creating greater opportunities for BC and SC candidates to contest from general constituencies. The meeting adopted six resolutions, including demands for support to the families of Telangana martyrs, protection of activists' rights, an apology from Pawan Kalyan for remarks allegedly hurting Telangana sentiments, allotment of land to activists in Karimnagar, and the installation of a Telangana Thalli statue in the city. Kavitha said the party would continue engaging with intellectuals, retired employees, activists, and various social groups to build a broader movement focused on Telangana's development and welfare.

# Indiramma House Inaugurated in Kurampally Village



Kurampally, June 18 | TPN Bureau

An Indiramma house constructed under the Telangana government's flagship Indiramma Housing Scheme was inaugurated in Kurampally village on Thursday. Beneficiaries Doti Saidulu and Chandrakala expressed their happiness after moving into their new home and thanked Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy for providing housing support to families without permanent homes. The house was formally inaugurated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony by village Sarpanch and Kanagallu Mandal Sarpanches Forum President Orsu Pentaiah. The beneficiaries said the scheme had fulfilled their long-cherished dream of owning a house and provided them with a sense of security and dignity. Speaking on the occasion, local representatives highlighted the government's commitment to improving the living conditions of economically weaker families through the Indiramma Housing Scheme. The event was attended by



Panchayat Secretary Sirisha, Deputy Sarpanch Sheelam Lakshmi Reddy, Bommakanti Narasimha Swamy, Doti Venkanna, Doti Ravi, Kavali Swamy, Somu Ramanna, Bonagiri Durga Prasad, Valiki Suresh, and several villagers. Residents welcomed the initiative and expressed hope that more deserving families would benefit from the housing programme in the coming phases.

# Congress Leaders Urge Against Politicising Farmer's Death

Adilabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Congress leaders in Adilabad district on Thursday appealed to farmers not to resort to suicide under any circumstances and urged political parties not to exploit a recent farmer's death for political gain. Addressing the media, party leaders said the deceased farmer had already received weight and lot number receipts at the jowar procurement centre. They explained that officials were prepared to transport the farmer's produce to designated warehouses and had reportedly informed him on multiple occasions. However, the farmer did not return to the procurement centre despite repeated communications, they claimed. The leaders stated that authorities had taken measures to purchase jowar and shift stocks to warehouses to prevent crop damage due to rainfall. They maintained that procurement operations were being carried out as per established procedures and



that efforts were made to protect farmers' produce from adverse weather conditions. Expressing grief over the incident, the Congress leaders said the farmer's death was unfortunate and deeply saddening. They added that officials were continuing their inquiry to determine the exact circumstances and reasons behind the death. The leaders urged farmers facing difficulties to seek

assistance and confront challenges with courage rather than taking extreme steps. They stressed the need for greater awareness and support mechanisms to help farmers overcome hardships. Criticising opposition parties, the Congress leaders alleged that some groups were attempting to portray the incident through a political lens and make baseless accusations against the gov-

ernment without knowing the full facts. They said such actions were inappropriate and called for restraint until the inquiry is completed. The leaders also assured that the government and the Congress Party would extend all possible assistance to the bereaved family. They reiterated that the Congress government remains committed to the welfare of farmers and economically weaker sections

and would continue to work for their development and well-being. Among those present were Sirikonda Mandal Congress President Kancham Laxman, District Congress Secretary Shaik Imam, Sarpanches Association President Boddur Dattatri, former ZPTC member Chandrakala Raghuram and several local Congress leaders and public representatives.

# BRS Leader R.S. Praveen Kumar Challenges CM Revanth Reddy Over GO 17



Nagarkurnool, June 18 | TPN Bureau

BRS General Secretary R. S. Praveen Kumar on Thursday launched a sharp attack on the Telangana government, alleging large-scale irregularities in the implementation of Government Order (GO) No. 17 and demanding a public debate with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. Addressing a press conference in Nagarkurnool, Praveen Kumar alleged that GO 17 was designed to benefit select private interests and claimed that the policy could lead to significant financial losses to the state exchequer. He accused the government of modifying procurement rules to favour specific companies and demanded that all related files and documents be made public. The BRS leader challenged the Chief Minister to an open discussion on the issue, stating that he was prepared to present documentary evidence regarding the alleged irregularities. He questioned the rationale behind the government order and alleged that procurement specifications and tender-related details were framed in a manner that benefited particular firms. Praveen Kumar further claimed that the government was ignoring the interests of local industries and workers while favouring outside busi-

ness groups. Referring to the state's handloom sector, he expressed concern over the condition of weavers and alleged that procurement decisions were not supporting local livelihoods. He also criticized ministers and Congress leaders for defending the government's stand and questioned whether all stakeholders had been adequately informed about the implications of GO 17. The BRS leader demanded greater transparency in the tendering process and called for the release of official records related to the policy decision. Accusing the government of failing to address public concerns, Praveen Kumar said the administration should focus on answering questions raised by the opposition rather than engaging in personal criticism. He maintained that the issue involved public funds and therefore required full disclosure and accountability. The BRS leader also alleged deficiencies in the implementation of certain welfare programmes and urged the government to prioritize the needs of students, workers, and economically weaker sections. The allegations made by Praveen Kumar have not been independently verified, and there was no immediate response from the state government to the claims at the time of reporting.

# Minister Seethakka Visits Khammam Assault Survivor at NIMS

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

State Minister Danasari Anasuya visited the NIMS hospital in Hyderabad on Thursday to inquire about the health condition of the minor girl undergoing treatment after a sexual assault incident in Khammam district. Doctors at the Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) successfully performed surgery on the girl and informed the visiting dignitaries that her condition is being closely monitored. The medical team assured that all necessary advanced healthcare services are being provided to support her recovery. Seethakka was accompanied by Justice Panchakshari, who reviewed the treatment being administered to the survivor and received updates on her post-surgery condition from hospital authorities. The minister met the

girl's parents and offered words of encouragement, assuring them that the State government would stand firmly with the family during this difficult time. She said the government would ensure the child receives the best possible medical care until she fully recovers and would extend all necessary support to the family. As part of the government's assistance, Seethakka and Justice Panchakshari jointly handed over a cheque of Rs. 5 lakh as financial aid to the survivor's family. They stated that special attention would also be given to the girl's rehabilitation and the family's welfare. The minister assured that the government would continue to provide medical, financial, and legal assistance and remain committed to supporting the family until the girl regains her health and resumes a normal life.

# High Court Stays Raidurg Land Auction

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana High Court has granted a three-week stay on the auction of valuable land conducted by the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TSIIC) at Raidurg in Hyderabad. The court issued notices to State Bank of India, TGIC, and Gaura Ventures, directing them to file their counters in the matter. The case relates to five acres of land in Survey No. 83/1 at Panmaktha, Raidurg. SBI approached the High Court claiming ownership rights over the property and chal-

lenged both the auction notification issued on May 6 and the subsequent land sale proceedings. The bank also contested the rejection of its representation by authorities on May 20. The disputed land recently attracted significant attention after it was auctioned at a record price of around Rs. 237 crore per acre. According to SBI, the then government had allotted five acres of land to the former State Bank of Hyderabad in 2010 for Rs. 13.33 crore. Following the merger of SBH with SBI, the latter became the successor entity and continues to operate two ATMs on the

site. The land allotment was cancelled by the previous state government in 2020, prompting SBI to move the High Court. The court later set aside the cancellation order and directed authorities to reconsider the bank's request. However, the present government again cancelled the allotment in 2024, leading SBI to file fresh petitions before the High Court. After hearing the matter, the High Court stayed the auction proceedings for three weeks and scheduled further consideration of the case after receiving responses from all parties concerned.

# Minister Seethakka Criticizes Centre Over Changes to Rural Employment Scheme

Hyderabad, June 18 | TPN Bureau

Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Minister Seethakka has accused the Central government of weakening the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) through proposed changes that could adversely affect rural workers and state governments. Addressing the media on

Thursday, Seethakka said the scheme, introduced by the UPA government in 2005 to guarantee 100 days of employment to rural households, was being diluted by the BJP-led Centre. She alleged that the new measures not only undermine the spirit of the programme but also impose additional financial and administrative burdens on states. The minister said the Telangana Assembly had

already passed a resolution opposing the proposed changes. Despite this, she claimed that the Centre was pressuring states to implement the new system from July 1. Seethakka announced that the state government has constituted a Cabinet Subcommittee comprising ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Tummala Nageswara Rao, Vivek Venkataswamy, and herself to examine the issue



and consult with other states before deciding on the future course of action. She expressed concern over new technical requirements, including mandatory online capture of workers' photo-

graphs twice a day, stating that such measures were creating difficulties for labourers and reducing participation in the scheme. According to her, several complaints have already

been received from districts regarding implementation challenges. The minister said Telangana remains committed to effectively implementing the employment guarantee programme and has been conducting regular reviews to increase work opportunities for labourers. She noted that while the state generated 7.5 crore person-days of employment during the entire previous year, it has already

achieved the same figure between April 1 and June this year. Seethakka said the state government would write to the Centre opposing the proposed changes and continue discussions with other states to formulate a collective response. She urged the Union government to ensure that any reforms do not weaken the employment guarantee programme or place additional burdens on states and rural workers.

# Why Did This Happen?

Who failed here—the system or a particular Inspector of Police? It is, for sure, a failure of the system. “When the fence starts eating the crop, who will protect the field?”

The police are responsible for maintaining law and order. If they fail, they are accountable to their higher officials, who, in turn, are accountable to the government. To avoid situations that could lead to criticism or disciplinary action, some officers may adopt a harsh approach and act with excessive force.

The politicisation of crime and criminals is one of the major problems in our society, and the same appears to have happened in the case of Gade Sai Krishna as well. On several occasions, Sai Krishna was allegedly protected by certain politicians, not out of affection for him but for their own political convenience. Such patronage may have made him more headstrong and emboldened his actions. Our judicial process often takes a long time, and the prison environment sometimes fails to reform offenders, instead making hardened criminals even more dangerous.

The first and foremost issue is the process of posting Inspectors of Police. On what basis are these postings made? Allegedly, many appointments are influenced by the recommendations of local MLAs and MPs. It is also alleged that some police personnel pay money to these public representatives to secure favourable postings. If this is the case, how can we expect an Inspector to act impartially and sin-

cerely? Naturally, he may feel compelled to act in the interests of the politician who supported his appointment.

At the same time, politicians may choose to be lenient towards criminals for electoral considerations. Caught between political pressures and professional responsibilities, police officers can become confused and conflicted. In such circumstances, some personnel may resort to sudden and excessive violence.

In this particular case, the Inspector is known for being strict in maintaining law and order and for taking action against ganja peddlers. He has allegedly earned a reputation for dealing with offenders firmly. However, in this instance, it appears that he may have crossed the line. If that is proven, he must be held accountable. At the same time, the incident has created political repercussions and provided an opportunity for the opposition to target the ruling Alliance.

If everyone adhered to the rule of law, such situations could be avoided. Political interference in policing should be minimised, and the practice of influencing or corrupting police personnel through political patronage must be prevented. If police officers are allowed to function independently, they are more likely to follow the law because the responsibility for their actions rests with them. However, when politics interferes with policing, accountability gets lost in the maze of political interests and power struggles.

— Editor

# A Silent Health Challenge in Tribal Communities

## Sickle Cell Anemia in Tribal India and the Fight for Early Care



**B.V.S. Kumar**  
State Coordinator AP Red Cross

Sickle Cell Anemia is one of the most common inherited blood disorders affecting millions of people worldwide. In India, the disease poses a significant public health challenge, particularly among tribal populations living in remote and underserved regions. Despite advances in medical science and increasing awareness, many affected individuals continue to suffer due to late diagnosis, inadequate treatment, and lack of community support.

Sickle Cell Anemia is a genetic disorder caused by an abnormal form of hemoglobin, the protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout the body. Instead of maintaining their normal round shape, red blood cells become rigid and crescent-shaped or “sickle” shaped. These abnormal cells can block blood vessels, reduce oxygen supply to tissues, and lead to severe pain, anemia, infections, organ damage, and even premature death.

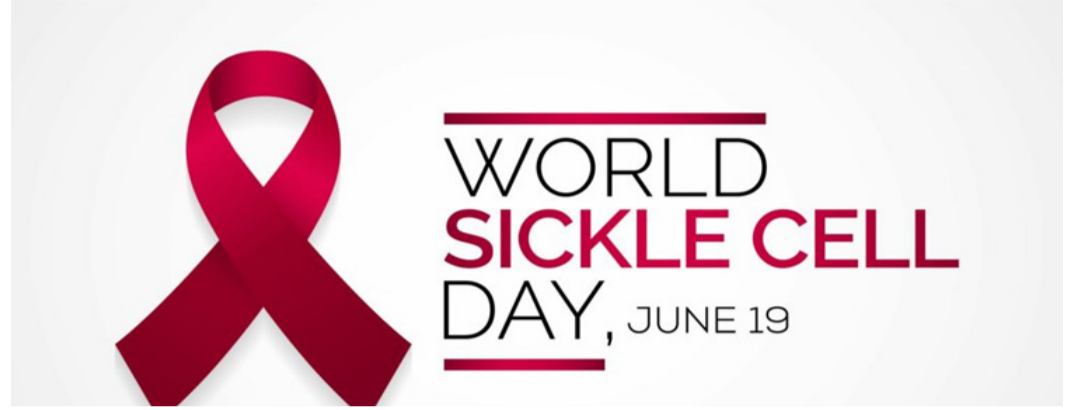
India is estimated to have one of the highest burdens of sickle cell disease in the world. The disorder is particularly prevalent among tribal populations in central and southern India, including the states of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh. Studies indicate that the sickle cell trait prevalence

among certain tribal groups ranges from 5 to 35 per cent, while the disease itself affects thousands of children and adults.

In Andhra Pradesh, sickle cell disease is predominantly found among tribal communities inhabiting the hilly and forested regions of Alluri Sitharama Raju District, Parvathipuram Manyam District, and parts of Anaparthi and Eluru districts. Communities such as the Konda Dora, Bagata, Valmiki, Gadaba, Savara, Jatapu, and other tribal groups are known to have a higher prevalence of the sickle cell trait. The geographical isolation of these communities often limits access to healthcare facilities, resulting in delayed diagnosis and poor disease management.

The impact of sickle cell disease extends beyond health. Children frequently miss school due to recurrent pain crises and hospital visits. Adults often struggle to maintain employment because of fatigue and chronic illness. Families face financial hardship due to medical expenses and loss of income. In many villages, the disease remains poorly understood, leading to stigma and social discrimination.

Fortunately, sickle cell disease can be effectively managed if detected early. One of



the most important preventive measures is screening. Testing individuals for the sickle cell trait before marriage or during adolescence helps identify carrier couples who may have a risk of giving birth to affected children. Newborn screening programs can detect the disease soon after birth, allowing timely treatment and regular medical follow-up.

Genetic counselling is another critical intervention. Families should be educated about inheritance patterns and reproductive choices. Community awareness campaigns can help people understand that sickle cell disease is inherited and not caused by infections, curses, or supernatural factors.

Regular medical care significantly improves the quality of life of affected individuals. Vaccination, nutritional support, folic acid supplementation, adequate hydration, prompt treatment of infections, and medicines can reduce complications and improve survival. Strengthening healthcare services in tribal areas through mobile medical

units, telemedicine, and trained community health workers can ensure that patients receive timely care.

Society also has a vital role to play in reducing the burden of sickle cell disease. Educational institutions can conduct awareness programs among students and parents. Voluntary organizations, including the Red Cross, Rotary, Lions Clubs, and tribal welfare organizations, can support screening camps, health education, and patient assistance programs. Blood donation remains critically important because many patients require blood transfusions during severe complications.

The lifelong free blood transfusion support being provided by the Andhra Pradesh Red Cross, a service that is rare and highly impactful for Sickle Cell Disease patients.

Community leaders, teachers, religious leaders, and local self-help groups can help dispel myths and encourage families to undergo screening and seek medical care. Media organizations can contribute by regularly highlighting the impor-

ance of early detection and treatment.

The Government of India has recognized the seriousness of the problem and launched the National Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission, aiming to screen millions of individuals, provide counselling, and reduce the burden of the disease by 2047. Success, however, will depend on active participation from healthcare institutions, civil society organizations, and communities themselves.

Sickle Cell Anemia may be a hereditary disease, but its devastating consequences can be minimized through awareness, early diagnosis, genetic counselling, and accessible healthcare. By working together, society can ensure that tribal communities and vulnerable populations receive the care, dignity, and opportunities they deserve. A future free from the suffering caused by sickle cell disease is achievable if collective action begins today.

The Theme for World Sickle Cell Day 2026 is “Closing the Survival Gap Equity in Sickle Cell Disease”.

# Urbanisation and the Erosion of Rural Culture

## Preserving Roots in an Age of Rapid Development



**Chitikena Kiran Kumar**

Poet, Writer and Noted Editorial Columnist  
Member, International Benevolent Research Forum IBRF

The history of human civilisation reveals that a village is not merely a place of residence; it is a way of life, a cultural identity, and a social institution. Rural culture has evolved through centuries of coexistence with nature, collective living, traditional knowledge, and strong community bonds. However, in the twenty-first century, rapid urbanisation is posing one of the greatest challenges to this cultural heritage. While the expansion of cities is often celebrated as a symbol of economic progress and modern development, it is simultaneously contributing to the gradual disappearance of rural traditions, local identities, and community-centred lifestyles. For generations, villages served as centres of agriculture, traditional occupations, folk arts, and social harmony. Every village possessed its own unique cultural characteristics, reflected in local dialects, customs, festivals, and community practices. These traditions not only strengthened social cohesion but also provided people with a sense of belonging. Today, however, the influence of urban lifestyles has reached even the remotest rural regions. In many places, villages continue to exist geographically, but their cultural identity is increasingly being replaced by urban patterns of living. India, like many other nations, is witnessing large-scale migration from villages to cities. Better educational opportunities, employment prospects, healthcare facilities, and improved living standards attract rural youth to urban centres. As a result,

many villages are gradually losing their younger population, leaving behind ageing communities and weakened social structures. The hands that once cultivated fields and sustained local economies are now engaged in urban occupations. Although migration often creates economic opportunities, it also alters the social fabric of rural life.

Urban expansion is affecting rural culture in another significant way. Villages located on the outskirts of growing cities are rapidly being transformed into urban settlements. Agricultural lands are increasingly converted into residential colonies, commercial complexes, and industrial zones. Fields that once produced food are now replaced by concrete structures. While rising land values may generate financial gains for some landowners, the long-term consequence is the irreversible loss of agricultural traditions and rural livelihoods. Technological advancement has further accelerated this transformation. The digital revolution has connected people across the globe, but it has also reduced engagement with local cultural practices. Younger generations are often more familiar with global entertainment trends than with their own folk traditions. Traditional songs, storytelling practices, local art forms, and indigenous knowledge systems are gradually fading from everyday life. The widespread influence of social media and digital content is creating a cultural environment where global trends often overshadow local identities.



The decline of rural culture is not merely a cultural concern; it also represents the loss of historical memory and collective wisdom. Rural communities have long preserved valuable knowledge related to sustainable agriculture, water conservation, traditional medicine, and harmonious coexistence with nature. In an era marked by environmental crises and social fragmentation, many of these traditional practices hold lessons that remain highly relevant. The growing challenges of loneliness, mental stress, and weakening social relationships in urban areas highlight the enduring value of the community-centred lifestyle that villages traditionally offered.

Across the world, policymakers and scholars are increasingly recognising that development cannot be meas-

ured solely by economic indicators, infrastructure projects, or industrial growth. Sustainable development requires a balance between modernisation and cultural preservation. Protecting rural heritage should not be viewed as resistance to progress; rather, it should be understood as an essential component of inclusive and sustainable growth. A society that neglects its cultural foundations risks losing an important part of its identity. In recent years, several countries have promoted rural tourism as a means of preserving local traditions while creating economic opportunities. Rural festivals, handicrafts, traditional cuisine, and agricultural experiences are being showcased to visitors from across the world. Such initiatives not only support local economies but also

encourage communities to preserve their cultural heritage. India possesses immense potential in this regard. Strengthening rural tourism, promoting local products, and supporting traditional artisans can contribute significantly to both economic development and cultural conservation. The education system also has a vital role to play. Students should be encouraged to learn about the history, traditions, and cultural practices of their local communities. Greater emphasis on regional heritage can foster appreciation for the diversity that characterises Indian society. Traditional ecological knowledge, sustainable resource management practices, and rural innovations deserve recognition within educational frameworks. Such efforts can help younger generations understand that

modernity and tradition need not be opposing forces. The contemporary world is moving rapidly towards artificial intelligence, digital economies, and advanced scientific innovation. Yet, progress should not come at the cost of cultural memory. Villages are not simply physical spaces; they are repositories of language, tradition, social values, and collective experience. If rural culture weakens, societies risk losing the diversity and uniqueness that enrich human civilisation. Urban centres will undoubtedly continue to expand as populations grow and economies evolve. However, development should not be defined by concrete structures alone. True progress lies in creating a future where technological advancement coexists with cultural continuity, where economic growth respects local tradi-

tions, and where modern aspirations remain connected to historical roots. Preserving rural culture is not about returning to the past; it is about ensuring that the wisdom, values, and identities shaped over generations continue to guide future development. The challenge before policymakers, educators, planners, and communities is not whether cities should grow, but how they can grow without erasing the cultural landscapes that have sustained societies for centuries. As nations pursue ambitious development goals, safeguarding rural culture must become an integral part of the broader vision of progress. Only then can future generations inherit not just modern infrastructure and economic opportunities, but also the rich cultural legacy that defines their collective identity.

# SIT Probes CCTV Tampering in Ayodhya Ram Mandir Donation Irregularities Case



A Special Investigation Team (SIT) is probing alleged irregularities involving donations and offerings at the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, with emerging evidence pointing to possible tampering of CCTV cameras within the temple premises to conceal theft.

According to investigators, nearly 10 crore was spent on security arrangements at the temple over the past 11 months. Despite this, incidents of theft involving cash and jewellery from donation boxes have raised serious concerns over

the effectiveness of the security system.

As part of the ongoing probe, SIT officials conducted a detailed examination of surveillance infrastructure, including CCTV footage, monitoring systems, and security protocols. During the review, they found indications that certain cameras may have been deliberately manipulated to avoid recording evidence. The investigation has since expanded to determine whether the lapses were due to negligence or involved internal

complicity.

Officials are also scrutinising service records and the roles of personnel responsible for surveillance and security management within the temple premises.

In addition, the SIT is examining the role of the bank involved in counting donations. Preliminary findings suggest that the number of Trust employees present during the counting process was relatively low compared to bank staff, prompting investigators to explore possible lapses or irregu-

larities during the handling of funds.

The SIT has prepared a list of around 200 individuals for questioning and has already examined over 125 persons in connection with the case. Among those questioned is Ramshankar, also known as Tinu Yadav, identified as a key accused, who was interrogated for several hours.

Officials said further action would be based on the findings as the investigation continues to uncover the extent of the alleged irregularities.

# Fuel Prices Cannot Be Cut Immediately, Says Centre

The Centre on Thursday clarified that fuel prices in India cannot be reduced immediately despite expectations of a decline in global crude oil prices following easing tensions in West Asia. The statement comes amid growing public demand for a rollback in recent fuel price hikes as international oil markets show signs of stabilization.

Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas and Tourism, Suresh Gopi, explained that a reduction in international crude oil prices does not instantly translate into lower fuel prices at domestic pumps. Speaking on the recent increase in fuel prices, he noted that the price of fuel had been raised by approximately Rs 3.94 per litre due to prevailing market conditions and supply concerns. According to the minister, the recent easing of geopolitical tensions in West Asia, including developments involving the United States and Iran,



may contribute to a decline in global crude oil prices. However, the benefits of cheaper crude are unlikely to reach Indian consumers immediately because of logistical and operational factors involved in the import and refining process. "The Strait of Hormuz remains open and shipping traffic has resumed. However, it will take time for lower-priced crude oil purchased in the international market to reach India and enter the supply chain," Gopi said. He emphasized that fuel pricing is influenced by sev-

eral factors, including transportation costs, inventory levels, refining expenses, exchange rates and taxation policies. The minister also highlighted the financial burden borne by public sector oil marketing companies during the period of heightened tensions in West Asia. According to him, Indian oil companies absorbed significant losses when global crude prices surged sharply, preventing a steeper increase in retail fuel prices.

Gopi further stated that the Centre had shouldered much

of the financial impact during the crisis. He claimed that while global energy prices were rising, no state government came forward to reduce taxes on fuel in order to provide relief to consumers. As a result, the central government faced a revenue loss of nearly Rs 12,000 crore while attempting to manage the impact of volatile crude oil markets. The remarks come at a time when consumers and industry groups are closely watching global oil trends in the hope of lower fuel costs. Experts note that although international crude prices have begun to soften, domestic fuel prices often reflect earlier purchases and existing inventories, resulting in a lag before any reductions can be passed on to consumers. For now, the Centre has indicated that any decision on reducing fuel prices will depend on sustained stability in global crude markets and the overall economic situation.

# AIIMS Bhubaneswar Junior Doctor Found Dead

A junior doctor working at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar, was found dead at her rented accommodation in Bhubaneswar, prompting police to launch an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident. The deceased has been identified as Divya V, a native of Karnataka who was serving as a Junior Resident doctor at AIIMS Bhubaneswar. According to police officials, she was found hanging in a rented house located in Dumuduma under the jurisdiction of Khandagiri Police Station.

The incident came to light on Wednesday evening when her male friend, with whom she was reportedly sharing the accommodation, returned home after completing his duty. Police said he found the house locked from the inside and received no response despite repeated attempts to contact her. Concerned about the situation, he allegedly broke open the door and discovered Divya hanging inside the room. Following the information, a police team rushed to the spot and recovered the body. Authorities subsequently registered an unnatural death case and initiated an investigation to determine the exact cause and circumstances of her death.



Investigators said preliminary inquiries suggest that the young doctor had been dealing with certain health-related issues over the past few days. However, officials have emphasized that no conclusions have been reached and that all possible angles are being thoroughly examined as part of the investigation.

"The exact circumstances leading to the death are yet to be established. We are investigating all aspects of the case, and no possibility has been ruled out at this stage," a police official said. The body has

been sent for post-mortem examination, which is expected to be conducted after the arrival of her family members from Karnataka. The autopsy report is likely to play a crucial role in determining the cause of death and helping investigators piece together the sequence of events.

Police officials stated that statements from people known to the deceased, including her friend and colleagues, are being recorded as part of the inquiry. Investigators are also examining available evidence from the residence to ascertain whether

there were any unusual circumstances preceding the incident. As news of the doctor's death spread, it sent shockwaves through the medical community at AIIMS Bhubaneswar, where colleagues and fellow residents expressed grief over the loss of a young medical professional.

Police have clarified that, based on the evidence available so far, no signs of foul play have been established. Further action will depend on the findings of the post-mortem report and the ongoing investigation.

# Pakistan Eyes Bay of Bengal with New Submarine Fleet

Pakistan's plans to expand its naval presence into the Bay of Bengal have drawn attention in strategic circles following remarks by a senior Pakistani naval officer that highlighted the country's growing underwater warfare capabilities. The development comes as Pakistan accelerates the induction of advanced Chinese-built submarines into its fleet, potentially extending its operational reach beyond the Arabian Sea.



According to reports, Pakistan has signed an agreement with China to acquire eight Hangor-class submarines, a key component of its naval modernization programme. One of these submarines was recently delivered, marking a significant step in Islamabad's efforts to strengthen its maritime capabilities.

Speaking during a naval deployment, Commodore Omar Farooqui reportedly stated that the induction of the new submarines would allow the Pakistan Navy to expand its operational footprint beyond the Arabian Sea and create opportunities for deployments in the Bay of Bengal. He described the Hangor-class vessels as "game changers" capable of enhancing Pakistan's strategic reach.

The comments have fuelled speculation that Pakistan may seek a more active presence in the Bay of Bengal, a region of immense geopolitical and military significance. While the Bay of Bengal is bordered by countries including India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, much of its waters beyond national maritime boundaries are considered international waters, where naval vessels from various countries are permitted to operate under international law.

For India, however, the Bay of Bengal holds exceptional strategic importance. The region is home to the Indian Navy's Eastern Naval Command, headquartered in Visakhapatnam. The city serves as a critical hub for India's maritime operations in the eastern sea-

tor and hosts important naval infrastructure, including facilities linked to the country's submarine fleet.

Strategic experts note that Visakhapatnam is central to India's underwater defence capabilities and is associated with the deployment and maintenance of key naval assets. The upcoming INS Varsha project is also expected to play a major role in supporting India's submarine operations.

The latest developments highlight the growing strategic competition in the Indian Ocean region. While Pakistan's potential deployment of submarines in the Bay of Bengal would be legally permissible in international waters, it is likely to be closely monitored by India given the region's importance to national security and maritime defence planning.

# Navy Trailblazers Honoured with Shaurya Chakra

In a landmark moment for the Indian armed forces and women's empowerment, Lieutenant Commanders Dilna K and Roopa A became the first women officers of the Indian Navy to be awarded the prestigious Shaurya Chakra. The gallantry medals were presented by Droupadi Murmu during a Defence Investiture Ceremony held in New Delhi on June 8, 2026.



The officers were officially announced as recipients of the award on the eve of the 77th Republic Day in recognition of their remarkable achievement in successfully completing a two-member circumnavigation of the globe under the Indian Navy's ambitious expedition, Navika Sagar Parikrama II.

past three major capes. They also ventured through the remote and treacherous Point Nemo, often described as the most isolated location on Earth. Relying solely on wind power, the duo demonstrated exceptional seamanship, endurance and courage before returning to Goa on May 29, 2025.

The historic voyage marked the second edition of the Navy's all-women global sailing initiative. While the first expedition in 2018 featured a six-member crew and covered more than 21,000 nautical miles, Dilna K and Roopa A pushed the limits further by sailing approximately 26,000 nautical miles across some of the world's most challenging waters.

During the eight-month journey, the officers navigated through three oceans, crossed the equator twice, and sailed

the voyage was undertaken aboard the indigenously built Indian Naval Sailing Vessel Tarini, which served as their home and operational base throughout the expedition. Along the route, the officers made port calls at Fremantle in Australia, Lyttelton in New Zealand, Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands, and Cape Town in South Africa. These stops facilitated maintenance work and enabled diplomatic outreach and cultural engagements.

In recognition of their extraordinary accomplishment, the officers were also honoured as special invitees at the Western Australian Parliament. Upon their return to India, they were welcomed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

Beyond its maritime significance, the mission contributed to marine, climate and wildlife research while showcasing India's growing self-reliance in shipbuilding under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. More importantly, the achievement shattered gender barriers in maritime operations and military service, inspiring countless young women to pursue careers in the armed forces.

The Shaurya Chakra award stands as a fitting recognition of the officers' courage, resilience and pioneering spirit, cementing their place in India's naval history.

# Aroop Biswas Grilled in Messi Event Irregularities Case



Former West Bengal sports minister Aroop Biswas was questioned for more than three hours by Bidhannagar Police on Thursday in connection with alleged irregularities surrounding a high-profile football event featuring Argentine superstar Lionel Messi in Kolkata last year. The probe relates to complaints of ticket black-marketing, extortion and mismanagement that allegedly led to widespread chaos at the stadium.

clear view of Messi despite purchasing expensive tickets. Frustrated fans reportedly vandalised parts of the stadium and created a ruckus, claiming that VIP guests and influential individuals monopolised access to the football icon on the field.

Biswas arrived at the Bidhannagar South Police Station at around 9.55 am after missing two earlier summonses and delaying compliance with a third notice. His appearance came after the Calcutta High Court granted him conditional protection from coercive police action while directing him to cooperate with the

An FIR was registered against Biswas on May 17 under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including charges of cheating, extortion and criminal intimidation. Dutta, who was arrested following the event on allegations of mismanagement and spent 37 days in jail, has claimed that nearly 22,000 tickets were sold through illegal channels.

While Biswas has denied all allegations and insisted he had no role in the event's financial dealings, Dutta recently alleged that Messi's communication team had written to Bidhannagar Police, blaming the former minister for the stadium unrest. Police officials, however, have neither confirmed nor denied receiving such communication.

The investigation continues as authorities seek to determine responsibility for one of Kolkata's most controversial sporting events in recent years.

investigation.

The senior leader of the All India Trinamool Congress left the police station around 1.15 pm in a vehicle with dark-tinted windows. Sources in the Bidhannagar Police Commissionerate said that investigators have asked him to appear again on June 22 with documents relevant to the case.

The investigation stems from a complaint filed by event organiser Shatadru Dutta, who accused Biswas of involvement in ticket black-marketing, cheating, extortion and criminal intimidation during the football spectacle held at Salt Lake Stadium on December 13, 2025. The event featured Messi alongside fellow Argentine football stars Luis Suarez and Rodrigo De Paul. The programme ended in turmoil as thousands of spectators allegedly failed to get a

# Indian Tourist Killed After Horse-Drawn Carriage Overturns in New York

A family vacation to the United States ended in heartbreak after an 18-year-old Indian tourist was killed in a tragic horse-drawn carriage accident at New York City's iconic Central Park on Wednesday afternoon. The victim, identified by police as Romanch Mahajan, was visiting New York with his parents and younger brother when the accident occurred near the popular Cherry Hill and Bethesda Fountain area, one of the park's most frequented tourist destinations.

Witnesses reported that the frightened horse accelerated rapidly along the roadway, causing the carriage to move uncontrollably. Within moments, the vehicle overturned, throwing its occupants and resulting in severe injuries. Emergency responders rushed to the scene and transported the injured teenager to a nearby hospital, where he was later pronounced dead. Police officials stated that the carriage driver was not seated on the carriage at the time of the incident. Investigators revealed that the driver had reportedly stepped away from the vehicle to take photographs of the family. Labour representatives and city officials noted that leaving a horse-drawn carriage unattended violates established safety regulations designed to prevent such accidents. The tragic incident has sparked renewed concerns

about the safety of horse-drawn carriage operations in Central Park, a long-debated issue among animal welfare advocates and public safety groups. Critics have repeatedly called for stricter oversight, arguing that horses can become unpredictable in crowded urban environments. Authorities have launched a comprehensive investigation to determine the exact circumstances that led to the accident. Investigators are examining whether safety protocols were followed and if any negligence contributed to the tragedy. The carriage operator may face scrutiny if violations of city regulations are confirmed.

Meanwhile, members of the Indian community in New York expressed shock and sorrow over the young tourist's death. Messages of condolence poured in on social media as friends, relatives, and community leaders mourned the loss of a life cut tragically short. The Indian Consulate is reportedly in contact with the bereaved family and local authorities, offering assistance during this difficult time. Further details are expected as the investigation progresses.

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# Meloni's G7 Arrival with Daughter Ginevra Captures Global Attention



Amid high-level discussions on global economic challenges, security concerns and international cooperation at the G7 Summit, a heartwarming personal moment involving Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni captured widespread attention and admiration. Meloni arrived at the summit venue in Evian-les-Bains, accompanied by her nine-year-old daughter, Ginevra, offering a rare glimpse into the personal side of one of Europe's most influential political leaders. As heads of state and government from the world's leading economies gathered for crucial talks, the presence of the young girl alongside her mother stood out and quickly became a talking point both at the summit and across social media platforms. Photographs and videos showing Meloni and Ginevra arriving together soon went viral online, drawing praise from users

around the world. Many described the moment as refreshing and relatable, highlighting the human side of political leadership often overshadowed by diplomatic meetings and policy discussions. Observers noted that the appearance of the mother-daughter duo brought a sense of warmth to the otherwise formal atmosphere of the summit. Social media users applauded Meloni for balancing the responsibilities of leading a major European nation while remaining actively involved in her daughter's life. The Italian Prime Minister has previously spoken about the challenges of combining public service with motherhood. Throughout her political career, she has occasionally emphasized the importance of family values and the need to support working parents, particularly women balancing professional and personal responsibilities.

Political commentators suggested that the images resonated with many people because they reflected a reality faced by millions of parents worldwide—managing demanding careers while maintaining strong family bonds. The moment also sparked conversations about the increasing visibility of family life among world leaders and the evolving perception of leadership in modern politics. While the spotlight briefly shifted to Meloni and her daughter, the summit itself remains focused on major international issues. Leaders of the Group of Seven nations are discussing economic growth, global trade, regional conflicts, climate action, energy security and sustainable development. The gathering is expected to produce joint commitments aimed at addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing the international community. Despite the weighty agenda, Meloni's arrival with Ginevra provided a memorable and uplifting moment that resonated far beyond the conference halls. For many observers, it served as a reminder that behind the responsibilities of global leadership are individuals balancing public duties with family life, making the scene one of the most widely shared moments of the summit.

# High-Stakes Challenges Confront US-Iran Peace Talks

The United States and Iran are preparing to begin a crucial new round of peace negotiations in Switzerland on Friday, but significant obstacles remain as both sides attempt to transform a fragile ceasefire into a comprehensive agreement after nearly four months of conflict. The talks follow a recently approved memorandum of understanding (MOU) endorsed by U.S. President Donald Trump and Iranian leaders. While the interim agreement has helped halt active hostilities, analysts caution that the most contentious issues have been postponed to the next phase of negotiations, making a final settlement far from certain. At the center of the discussions is Iran's nuclear program, which was one of the principal reasons cited by Washington for launching military action earlier this year. Although Iran has reiterated its commitment not to develop nuclear weapons, major disagreements persist over the fu-

ture of its stockpile of highly enriched uranium. The United States wants the material destroyed or transferred out of the country, while Iran has so far resisted both options. Another major sticking point concerns uranium enrichment. Washington has previously advocated a complete halt to enrichment activities, whereas Tehran insists it has the sovereign right to continue the process for peaceful purposes. Negotiators are also expected to debate the scope of international inspections of Iranian nuclear facilities. Economic issues are likely to prove equally challenging. Iran is demanding the rapid lifting of sanctions and the release of billions of dollars in frozen assets. The United States, however, favors a gradual approach linked to verified Iranian compliance with any future agreement. While the MOU allows Iran to resume certain oil exports, critics in Washington argue that the concession may weaken U.S. leverage. Regional security con-



cerns further complicate the negotiations. The reopening of the strategically important Strait of Hormuz, which carries a significant share of global oil supplies, remains a sensitive issue. Although maritime traffic is expected to resume, disagreements continue over Iran's role in managing the waterway. Observers are also closely watching Israel's position. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has indicated that Israel is not bound by any U.S.-Iran agreement regarding regional security matters, raising concerns that renewed tensions in Lebanon or else-

where could undermine diplomatic progress. Adding to the uncertainty is a deep lack of trust between the two sides. Iran remains suspicious of U.S. intentions following past military actions during negotiations, while Washington fears Tehran could delay talks without making meaningful concessions. With only 60 days allotted for negotiations, diplomats face immense pressure to secure a breakthrough before the risk of renewed conflict resurfaces.

# Massive Ukrainian Drone Strike Targets Moscow



Ukraine launched one of its largest drone attacks since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion more than four years ago, targeting key infrastructure in and around Moscow and temporarily disrupting air traffic in the Russian capital, according to Russian authorities. Russia's Defence Ministry reported that air defence systems intercepted and destroyed 555 Ukrainian drones overnight across several regions of the country. Nearly 200 of those drones were reportedly headed toward Moscow, making it one of the most extensive aerial assaults on the Russian capital since the conflict began. Officials said several drones struck the Moscow Oil Refinery, located on the southeastern outskirts of the city. The facility had also been targeted earlier this week, highlighting Ukraine's growing focus on strategic energy infrastructure that supports Rus-

sia's economy and military operations. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin confirmed that drones reached the refinery area despite Russia's extensive air defence network. Emergency services were deployed to assess damage and ensure public safety. Authorities did not immediately provide details on casualties or the extent of damage caused by the strikes. The attacks also disrupted civilian aviation. Russia's Transport Ministry announced the temporary suspension of operations at four major airports serving Moscow as a precautionary measure. Flight delays and cancellations affected hundreds of passengers before normal operations gradually resumed. The latest assault marks a significant escalation in Ukraine's long-range drone campaign, which has increasingly targeted facilities deep inside Russian territory. Kyiv has argued that such attacks are aimed at weakening

Russia's ability to sustain its military operations and demonstrating that the war carries consequences beyond the front lines. Commenting on the strikes, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he wanted Russian citizens to recognize who bears responsibility for the conflict and its impact on daily life. "The main thing is that the people of Russia begin to feel that it is one man, Putin, who is waging this war, while ordinary people pay the price for everything," Zelenskyy told reporters. His remarks reflected Kyiv's broader strategy of increasing pressure on Russia while seeking to influence public opinion within the country. Ukrainian officials maintain that Russia's continued military campaign has brought instability and hardship not only to Ukraine but also to Russian citizens. Meanwhile, the Kremlin has condemned the attacks as acts of terrorism and pledged to strengthen defensive measures around critical infrastructure. As the war enters its fifth year, both sides continue to intensify military operations, underscoring the absence of any immediate path toward a negotiated settlement and raising concerns about further escalation in the months ahead.

# US Media Intensify Criticism of Trump's Iran Deal



Major American news organizations have sharply criticized U.S. President Donald Trump's newly signed agreement with Iran, questioning whether the deal advances Washington's strategic objectives or instead strengthens Tehran's position following months of conflict. The memorandum of understanding (MOU), signed during a dinner meeting outside Paris on Wednesday, is intended to halt hostilities and create a framework for broader negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. However, the agreement has triggered criticism from across the political spectrum, with both supporters and oppo-

nents of the war expressing concerns about the concessions offered to Iran. Several prominent media outlets argued that the temporary accord fails to secure key U.S. goals while granting significant economic relief to Tehran. Critics contend that the agreement does not require Iran to dismantle its nuclear infrastructure and leaves unresolved many of the issues that initially led to the conflict. Traditionally conservative and Trump-friendly media outlets also raised concerns. Fox News highlighted criticism that the agreement provides Iran with substantial financial

benefits without obtaining firm guarantees regarding its nuclear activities. Commentators questioned whether Washington had surrendered valuable leverage in exchange for only limited commitments from Tehran. Liberal media organizations were equally critical. MS NOW described the agreement as falling short of the administration's pre-war objectives and argued that the White House was struggling to portray the deal as a diplomatic victory. Analysts suggested that Iran had successfully negotiated favourable terms while maintaining many of its strategic advantages. The debate has intensified because the MOU is only an interim arrangement. The document is designed to create a temporary ceasefire and open the door for more comprehensive negotiations on Iran's long-term nuclear activities. Under the framework, a final agreement could eventually unlock a \$300 billion reconstruction fund backed by regional nations, providing Iran with significant economic support. The criticism extended to leading news-

papers. The Wall Street Journal described the deal as one of the most consequential foreign-policy gambles of Trump's second term and predicted opposition from hardline Iran policy advocates. Meanwhile, the New York Times argued that Iran emerged from the conflict with considerable gains, noting that the agreement appeared far from a surrender by Tehran. Some analysts warned that Iran may now feel emboldened rather than weakened. Others suggested that the economic benefits included in the agreement could provide Tehran with resources to rebuild after weeks of military confrontation. As Trump returns to Washington, the agreement is expected to face intense scrutiny from lawmakers, foreign-policy experts and political commentators. The coming weeks are likely to determine whether the ceasefire evolves into a lasting diplomatic breakthrough or becomes another contentious chapter in the long and turbulent relationship between the United States and Iran.

# Trump Signs Historic US-Iran Peace Deal

U.S. President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Thursday formally signed a landmark peace agreement aimed at ending months of conflict between the United States and Iran, raising hopes for stability in the Middle East and easing concerns over global energy supplies. The agreement, known as the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), was signed during a dinner hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron at the historic Palace of Versailles following

the G7 Summit. The signing marked a significant diplomatic milestone after months of military confrontation that had heightened tensions across the region and disrupted international markets. Moments before signing the document, Trump acknowledged the difficulty of the negotiations, telling assembled leaders, "This was not easy, that I can tell you." After signing the agreement, he displayed the document to guests, drawing applause from world leaders and senior officials present at

the event. The 14-point agreement provides for the immediate cessation of military operations between the two countries and includes commitments to pursue a comprehensive peace settlement within 60 days. It also calls for the reopening of the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz, the lifting of the U.S. naval blockade, phased sanctions relief, and the release of frozen Iranian assets. One of the agreement's most significant economic provisions is a U.S.-backed development and re-

construction programme for Iran valued at more than \$300 billion. The deal further records Iran's commitment not to develop or acquire nuclear weapons and outlines future discussions regarding enriched uranium stockpiles under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iranian officials welcomed the agreement. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei described the signing as the beginning of a new phase and said it was now "time to test" implementation.

Chief negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf stated that Iran entered the talks from a position of strength and emphasized the importance of converting battlefield developments into lasting political agreements. Despite the breakthrough, Trump issued a stern warning that any violation of the accord would trigger a strong U.S. response. "I want them to honour the agreement," he said, while expressing optimism that the deal would promote regional peace and help lower global energy prices.



World leaders broadly welcomed the development. Macron called the agreement "an important step in the right direction," while Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised both sides for choosing

diplomacy over continued conflict. As the agreement takes immediate effect, attention now shifts to implementation and the challenging negotiations required to secure a permanent peace settlement.

## NSE IPO Set to Create Massive Wealth for SBI



The much-awaited initial public offering (IPO) of the National Stock Exchange of India Limited is expected to generate extraordinary gains for some of its earliest investors, with State Bank of India poised to emerge as one of the biggest beneficiaries.

According to details disclosed in NSE's draft red herring prospectus (DRHP), SBI could transform an original investment of just 1.98 crore into shares worth nearly 4,950 crore if the exchange's IPO is priced at around 2,000 per share, a valuation close to prevailing prices in the unlisted market.

The filing provides a rare insight into the remarkable wealth creation achieved by NSE since its establishment in the 1990s. Over the years, the stock exchange has grown into India's largest trading platform and one of the world's

leading exchanges by volume, creating substantial value for its founding shareholders.

As part of the proposed offer for sale (OFS), SBI plans to divest approximately 2.475 crore NSE shares. The bank's weighted average acquisition cost is reported to be only 0.80 per share, reflecting decades of bonus issues, capital restructuring and share allotments. At an indicative IPO price of 2,000 per share, the stake being sold would be valued at nearly 4,950 crore.

The potential transaction would result in a notional gain of approximately 4,948 crore for SBI, making it one of the most profitable investments in the history of India's public sector financial institutions. Market analysts note that SBI is not the only investor set to benefit from the listing. Several early institutional shareholders, including banks, in-

surance companies and financial institutions that backed NSE during its formative years, are expected to realize significant returns when the exchange goes public.

The IPO is regarded as one of the most anticipated listings in India's capital market history. Investors and market participants have been awaiting NSE's public debut for several years amid regulatory and legal hurdles that delayed the process.

The listing is expected to deepen India's capital markets and provide investors with an opportunity to participate in the growth of a critical financial market infrastructure institution. Analysts believe the IPO could attract strong demand from both institutional and retail investors due to NSE's dominant market position, robust profitability and strategic importance to the Indian financial system.

If the proposed valuation is achieved, the IPO will not only mark a milestone for NSE but also stand as a powerful example of long-term value creation, turning modest early investments into multi-thousand-crore windfalls for some of India's largest financial institutions.

## JBM Ecolife Mobility Secures ₹750 Crore for Electric Bus Expansion

In a major boost to India's clean mobility sector, JBM Ecolife Mobility Private Limited, the electric bus platform of the JBM Group, has raised 750 crore through a funding transaction led by Motilal Oswal Alternates. The investment, announced on Wednesday, was provided through Motilal Oswal's private credit fund, with participation from other entities within the Motilal Oswal Group. The funding is expected to significantly strengthen JBM Ecolife Mobility's efforts to expand its electric public transportation operations across India.

According to the company, the capital infusion will be utilized for the acquisition, deployment and operation of advanced zero-emission electric bus fleets under long-term contracts with state transport authorities in major Indian cities. The initiative aligns with the country's broader objective of promoting sustainable urban mobility and reducing carbon emissions from public



transportation systems.

Industry observers described the transaction as a landmark development for India's electric mobility ecosystem. The company claimed that it represents the largest investment made by an Indian investor in the electric mobility sector to date, highlighting growing confidence among domestic financial institutions in the future of green transportation.

The funding comes at a time when several state governments are rapidly expanding electric bus networks to improve urban connectivity

while addressing environmental concerns. Electric buses are increasingly being viewed as a viable alternative to conventional diesel-powered public transport due to their lower operating costs and reduced environmental impact.

Following the announcement, shares of JBM Auto Limited, the listed flagship company of the JBM Group, gained approximately 1.5 per cent in market trading, reflecting positive investor sentiment toward the development.

The JBM Group has emerged as one of India's leading players in electric mobility, with a

growing presence in the manufacturing and operation of electric buses. The company has secured multiple government contracts in recent years and continues to expand its footprint in the public transportation sector.

Experts believe the latest funding will help accelerate fleet deployment and support the development of charging infrastructure and operational capabilities required for large-scale electric bus services. It also underscores the increasing role of private capital in financing India's transition toward cleaner and more sustainable transportation systems.

As cities across the country seek greener mobility solutions, the investment is expected to contribute significantly to the modernization of public transport while supporting India's long-term environmental and energy security goals.

## Accenture Shares Fall on Lower Growth Forecast

Global technology and consulting giant Accenture witnessed a sharp decline in its share price on Thursday after lowering the upper end of its annual revenue growth forecast, raising concerns about demand conditions across the information technology services sector.

The company announced that it now expects annual revenue growth of between 3 per cent and 4 per cent, compared with its previous guidance of 3 per cent to 5 per cent. Although the revision appears modest, investors reacted strongly, viewing it as a

sign of slowing momentum in the global technology spending environment.

Following the announcement, Accenture shares fell nearly 13 per cent in pre-market trading, dropping to around \$135 per share. The sell-off quickly spread across the broader technology services industry, affecting both European and Indian IT stocks. In Europe, shares of Capgemini declined more than 8 per cent in Paris trading, touching a fresh 52-week low during the session. Meanwhile, American Depository Receipts (ADRs) of Infosys

also fell around 5 per cent, reflecting investor concerns that weaker demand trends could impact the wider IT outsourcing sector.

Market analysts said Accenture's revised outlook may indicate that clients remain cautious about discretionary technology spending amid economic uncertainty and changing business priorities. Many large enterprises continue to focus on cost optimization and targeted investments rather than broad-based digital transformation initiatives. Despite the weaker forecast, Accenture

simultaneously unveiled a major strategic expansion in the cybersecurity sector. The company announced plans to acquire a majority stake in Dragos while fully acquiring cybersecurity firms runZero and NetRise. The combined transactions are valued at approximately \$4.18 billion.

The acquisitions are expected to strengthen Accenture's cybersecurity and digital infrastructure capabilities, an area that continues to experience strong demand despite broader uncertainty in technology spending. Cybersecurity re-



mains one of the fastest-growing segments within the IT industry as organizations worldwide face increasing cyber threats and regulatory requirements. Industry experts noted that while the acquisitions demonstrate Accenture's commitment to long-term growth, investors were

more focused on the company's reduced revenue outlook. The market reaction highlights the importance investors place on future earnings growth and demand visibility in the technology services sector.

As one of the world's largest consulting and IT services

providers, Accenture's performance is often viewed as a bellwether for the broader industry. Its revised forecast is therefore likely to remain closely watched by investors, clients and competitors seeking insights into the future direction of global technology spending.

## Oil Prices Slide as US-Iran Ceasefire Deal Eases Supply Concerns



Global oil prices fell sharply on Thursday, reaching their lowest levels since the outbreak of the Iran conflict, after the United States and Iran signed an interim agreement aimed at ending hostilities and restoring stability to global energy markets.

The decline came as traders welcomed signs of easing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, particularly the reopening of the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz and the prospect of increased Iranian oil exports following sanctions relief.

International benchmark Brent Crude fell by \$1.02, or 1.28 per cent, to \$78.53 per barrel during trading. Meanwhile, West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the benchmark for U.S.

crude oil, dropped \$1.48, or 1.93 per cent, to \$75.31 per barrel.

Brent crude touched its lowest level since March 2, the first trading session after the initial U.S.-Israeli military strikes on Iran, while WTI fell to its weakest level since March 4. The sharp decline reflects growing optimism that disruptions to global energy supplies may soon ease.

Market participants reacted positively to the memorandum of understanding signed by U.S. President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, which provides for a ceasefire, reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, phased sanctions relief and the resumption of commercial shipping through one of the world's most important energy

corridors.

The Strait of Hormuz is a critical route through which nearly one-fifth of the world's oil supply is transported. During the conflict, disruptions and security concerns in the waterway had pushed oil prices higher amid fears of supply shortages and increased transportation costs.

Analysts said the latest sell-off was driven by expectations that Iranian crude exports could return to international markets sooner than previously anticipated. Increased supplies from Iran would help ease pressure on global oil inventories and improve overall market balance.

Tony Scamore, a market analyst at IG, noted that energy markets were rapidly ad-

justing to the possibility of a faster-than-expected return of Iranian oil following the U.S.-Iran agreement. Traders are increasingly pricing in higher future supply and reduced geopolitical risk premiums.

The fall in oil prices could provide relief to consumers and businesses worldwide by reducing fuel and transportation costs. It may also help ease inflationary pressures that have affected many economies during the conflict.

While investors welcomed the agreement, analysts cautioned that sustained price stability will depend on the successful implementation of the ceasefire and progress toward a comprehensive long-term peace settlement between Washington and Tehran.

## Markets Rally; Nifty Near 24,200 as Banking, Pharma Stocks Lead Gains



Indian equity benchmarks extended their upward momentum on Thursday, with the Nifty closing near the 24,200 mark and the Sensex posting solid gains despite a volatile trading session. Improved investor sentiment, driven by falling crude oil prices and positive global cues, helped markets overcome concerns arising from the U.S. Federal Reserve's relatively hawkish policy outlook. The BSE Sensex ended the day higher by 254.36 points, or 0.33 per cent, at 77,409.98, while the Nifty 50 advanced 82.30 points, or 0.34 per cent, to close at 24,168.

Broader markets mirrored the positive trend, with both the Nifty Midcap 100 and Smallcap 100 indices gaining around 0.4 per cent. The rally reflected sustained investor interest across sectors beyond the benchmark heavyweights. Among the top performers on

the Nifty were Max Healthcare Institute, InterGlobe Aviation, Trent Limited, Bharat Electronics Limited, and Adani Enterprises Limited. On the other hand, technology stocks weighed on the market, with Infosys, Tech Mahindra, and Tata Consultancy Services among the major laggards. Automobile giant Maruti Suzuki India Limited and Tata Consumer Products also ended lower. Sectorally, most indices finished in positive territory. Banking, pharmaceutical, real estate and media stocks witnessed healthy buying interest. PSU Bank, Private Bank, Pharma, Realty and Media indices each gained around 0.5 per cent. However, the IT and Energy sectors underperformed amid profit booking and global uncertainty. Market breadth remained strong, with more than 150 stocks touching their 52-week highs on the BSE. No-

table names included Yes Bank, Federal Bank, Polycab India, and Bharat Forge, among several others.

Among individual stocks, JBM Auto Limited gained 2 per cent following a 750 crore long-term investment by Motilal Oswal Alternates. Anthem Biosciences rose nearly 4 per cent after its promoter group announced plans to sell a stake through block deals. Kirloskar Ferrous Industries surged 7 per cent after securing a \$13.51 million export order, while HFCL Limited climbed 5 per cent on receiving a 2,666 crore contract from Rail Vikas Nigam Limited. Analysts believe easing oil prices and resilient domestic fundamentals could continue supporting market sentiment in the near term, though global monetary policy developments remain a key factor for investors to monitor.

# 'Built a Company, Ran a Marathon... But Grandma Wants Me



A light-hearted yet relatable social media post by New York-based entrepreneur Hemakshi Motka has struck a chord with thousands online after she revealed that her grandmother in India remains disappointed about one thing — her unmarried status.

Motka, who runs a multi-million-dollar company in New York and has successfully completed a full marathon, shared a humorous video recounting a recent family incident. According to her, her grandmother attended a community event where traditional blankets were distributed exclusively to married daugh-

ters of the town. Since Motka is unmarried, her grandmother was unable to receive the ceremonial gift, leaving her visibly upset.

Recalling the incident, Motka joked that despite building a successful business and running a demanding 42-kilometre marathon, all those accomplishments seemed to pale in comparison to the importance placed on marriage in certain social settings.

Her witty remarks quickly resonated with social media users, many of whom shared similar experiences involving family expectations and traditional views about marriage. While the story generated laughter, Motka used the opportunity to convey a deeper message about self-worth and personal achievement.

In her accompanying caption, she reflected on how women are often encouraged to celebrate milestones that involve being chosen by others, such as engagements, weddings, or social approval. However, she argued that true confidence comes from choosing oneself, pursuing personal goals, building a career, taking risks, achieving financial independence, and creating a fulfilling life.

Motka emphasized that

while societal labels and public opinions can change over time, a person's relationship with themselves remains constant. She encouraged women to value their own accomplishments and identity rather than measuring success solely through traditional expectations.

The post sparked widespread discussion online, with many praising her for highlighting the contrast between modern achievements and long-standing cultural norms. Others appreciated the affectionate portrayal of her grandmother, noting that the incident reflected both generational differences and familial love.

The viral story has become a reminder of how perspectives on success can vary across generations. While older family members may continue to value traditional milestones such as marriage, younger generations are increasingly defining success through personal growth, professional accomplishments, independence, and self-confidence.

For many readers, Motka's experience was both humorous and thought-provoking, a reflection of the balancing act between respecting family traditions and embracing individual aspirations in a rapidly changing world.

# Apple Signals Possible Price Hike for iPhones

Apple CEO Tim Cook has indicated that price increases for iPhones and other Apple products may become unavoidable in the coming months due to rising memory chip costs and supply constraints driven by the rapid growth of artificial intelligence technologies.

According to Cook, the surge in demand for advanced memory and storage components used in AI servers and data centers has significantly affected the global semiconductor supply chain. Manufacturers are prioritizing the production of high-performance memory chips required for AI infrastructure, leading to shortages of the memory components commonly used in consumer electronics such as smartphones, tablets, and personal computers.

As a result, the cost of these components has increased substantially, putting pressure on device manufacturers. Cook stated that Apple has been trying to absorb these higher costs rather than passing them directly on to consumers. However, he acknowledged that maintaining this approach for a prolonged period may not be feasible.

The Apple chief suggested that price revisions for products including the iPhone, iPad and Mac could become necessary if current market conditions persist. He did not specify which models would be affected or how much prices might increase.



The comments come at a time when Apple is reportedly preparing to launch several major products later this year. Industry reports suggest the company is working on its first foldable smartphone, while the next-generation iPhone 18 Pro and iPhone 18 Pro Max are also expected to debut in the coming months. Any price adjustment could make these premium devices even more expensive for consumers.

Market analysts believe the trend is not limited to Apple alone. Rising component costs and increasing demand for AI-related hardware are expected to impact the broader consum-

er electronics industry. Several research firms have projected that smartphone and PC prices could rise significantly over the course of the year as manufacturers grapple with supply shortages and higher production expenses.

For consumers planning to upgrade their devices, the developments may signal a narrowing window before potential price increases take effect. While Apple has not announced any official revisions yet, Tim Cook's remarks suggest that higher prices for future Apple products could soon become a reality if memory chip costs continue to climb.

# Laid Off After 4.5 Years, Employee Doubles Salary with Remote Job

A professional who was recently laid off after nearly five years with the same company has gone viral online after revealing how the setback unexpectedly led to a major career breakthrough.

The employee, who shared the story on a social media platform, said they had spent four and a half years working for a product-based company, earning a monthly salary of around 70,000. Despite years of loyalty and consistent service, the individual was among those affected by a restructur-

ing exercise that resulted in layoffs.

According to the post, the termination came as a shock. The employee even found themselves in a disagreement with the human resources department regarding severance compensation while processing the sudden loss of employment.

However, what appeared to be a career setback quickly turned into a remarkable opportunity. On the very day they were leaving their previous organization, the employee re-

ceived an offer from another company. The new role, which involves working remotely for an international client, came with a dramatically higher compensation package.

The employee revealed that the new position would pay approximately 1.58 lakh per month—more than double their previous salary. Since the company pays in US dollars and the role is completely work-from-home, the professional also expects to save significantly on commuting and relocation expenses.

While many would celebrate such a substantial jump in income, the employee admitted feeling overwhelmed by the sudden change. Having spent years receiving modest salary increments, they found it difficult to accept that their market value was considerably higher than what they had been earning.

In the post, the individual reflected on how prolonged underpayment can affect self-confidence. They questioned whether being undervalued for years had conditioned them to

underestimate their own worth. Even after securing the new role, they said the opportunity felt almost unreal and described experiencing a sense of guilt over earning such a significant amount.

The story resonated with thousands of professionals online, particularly those who have experienced layoffs, stagnant salaries, or workplace undervaluation. Many users pointed out that employees often remain in organizations out of loyalty, only to discover their true market value when

they explore opportunities elsewhere.

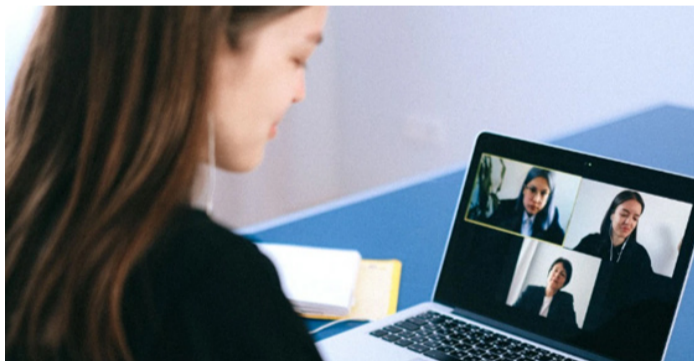
Others viewed the experience as a reminder that job losses, while painful, can sometimes open doors to better prospects and career growth. The viral post has sparked conversations about salary transparency, self-worth, and the importance of regularly assessing one's value in a competitive job market.

For this employee, what began as a difficult day ended with a life-changing opportunity—proving that an unex-

pected setback can sometimes become the catalyst for a much brighter future.



# Zoom Rejection Call Leaves Job Seeker Feeling Humiliated



A young job applicant has sparked discussion online after sharing her disappointment over being invited to a Zoom meeting that she believed would result in a job offer, only to be informed that she had been rejected.

The 24-year-old woman, who recently completed her master's degree, revealed in a social media post that she had successfully cleared three rounds of interviews over a two-month period with an unnamed company. When she received an email inviting her to

a Zoom meeting with the recruiter, assistant director and director, she assumed it was the final step before receiving an offer.

However, shortly after the meeting began, the panel informed her that the company had decided to hire another candidate. The unexpected rejection left her stunned.

According to her post, the recruiters thanked her for participating in the process and asked whether she had any questions. She admitted that the way the meeting had been

arranged led her to believe she had secured the position. The recruiters reportedly apologized, explaining that they wanted to deliver the news in a more personal manner rather than through an email.

Despite the explanation, the candidate said she felt embarrassed and humiliated by the experience. Her story quickly gained attention online, with many social media users criticizing the company's approach.

Several commenters argued that a phone call or email would have been more appropriate. Others described the incident as a classic case of a meeting that "could have been an email," while some said scheduling a video conference for a rejection unnecessarily raised the candidate's expectations.

The post has reignited debate about professional hiring practices and how companies communicate unsuccessful interview outcomes.

# British Tourist Surprised by Cleanliness of Marina Beach



A British tourist travelling across India has become an internet sensation after sharing a video praising the cleanliness of Chennai's iconic Marina Beach and challenging the negative perceptions often spread about the country on social media.

Digital content creator Jack Heaton posted a video on Instagram titled "Social Media Completely Lied to Me About India," in which he documented his visit to Marina Beach, one of Chennai's most famous landmarks and the world's second-largest urban beach. The video quickly gained attention, with thousands of viewers appreciating his candid observations.

In the clip, Heaton expressed surprise at how clean the beach appeared despite attracting massive crowds every day. Referring to the common stereotypes about India often seen online, he said his personal experience was very different from what he had expected before arriving in the country.

"We are at the second-largest beach in the entire world. Would you believe that it is in India?" Heaton said in the vid-

eo. He went on to point out that there was very little litter visible on the beach. "It actually looks really clean. There's barely any rubbish. There are a few little bits, but not a lot at all," he remarked.

The British traveller was particularly impressed by the sheer number of visitors present at the beach. According to him, nearly 10,000 people were gathered along the shoreline during his visit. Despite such a large crowd, he noted that the beach remained relatively clean, something he described as remarkable.

Heaton also commented on the quality of the seawater, comparing it favourably with beaches in the United Kingdom. While he clarified that the water was not crystal clear like that of the Maldives, he said it appeared cleaner than the water found along many

parts of England's coastline.

His video has struck a chord with social media users, many of whom welcomed the positive portrayal of India. Several users commented that international visitors often discover a side of India that is rarely highlighted online, where only negative incidents tend to receive widespread attention.

The viral post has once again sparked discussions about how social media can sometimes create misleading impressions of countries and cultures. For many viewers, Heaton's experience serves as a reminder that first-hand experiences often provide a more accurate picture than stereotypes or viral content. His observations have been widely praised for presenting a balanced and refreshing perspective on India's tourism destinations and public spaces.

# Australian Tourist's Kolkata Encounter Sparks Online Debate

A video shared by an Australian tourist documenting an uncomfortable encounter on the streets of Kolkata has gone viral on social media, triggering widespread discussion about tourist safety, public behaviour and cultural perceptions.

The video was posted on Instagram by travel content creator Marco Roams, who is currently exploring different parts of India. In the clip, the tourist is seen walking through a street in Kolkata when a young man sitting in a rickshaw approaches him and repeatedly asks for a kiss

while gesturing towards his cheek.

Visibly surprised by the request, Marco politely declined, saying, "No, sorry, I'm straight." However, the young man reportedly continued pursuing the conversation and at one point was seen holding the tourist's hand as he attempted to move away from the situation.

After leaving the area, the tourist expressed his discomfort in the video, describing the incident as an unpleasant experience. He later shared the footage online with a caption questioning why such in-

teractions had occurred during his travels in India.

The clip quickly attracted significant attention, garnering more than 850,000 views within a short period. Social media users reacted strongly, with many condemning the behaviour displayed in the video and expressing sympathy for the tourist.

Several users called for authorities to take note of the incident, arguing that such actions could negatively affect the country's image among international visitors. Others stressed that personal boundaries should always be respect-

ed, regardless of the circumstances. At the same time, some commenters argued that the tourist had ventured into areas that are not typically visited by tourists and suggested that the incident should not be viewed as representative of India as a whole. They pointed out that millions of domestic and international travellers visit the country every year without facing similar experiences.

The incident has once again highlighted the influence of social media in shaping perceptions about countries and cultures. While many users

viewed the encounter as an isolated case of inappropriate behaviour, others expressed concern that such viral videos can have a lasting impact on how international audiences perceive a destination.

As discussions continue online, the episode has renewed conversations about responsible tourism, public conduct and the importance of ensuring that visitors feel safe and respected while travelling. The viral clip serves as a reminder that a single incident can quickly become a global talking point in the age of social media.



# Qatar Government Offers Free World Cup Trip to 1,000 Football Fans Gill and Ishan Create Historic ODI Record



In a unique move to boost support for its national football team, the government of Qatar has announced a special initiative to send 1,000 fans to cheer for the team during its FIFA World Cup match against Canada. The selected supporters will travel to the United States on chartered flights, with all expenses reportedly covered by the Qatari government.

The match is scheduled to be played in Vancouver, and arrangements have already been made to transport the fans. The initiative reflects Qatar's determination to ensure strong backing for its team on the global

stage and create a vibrant atmosphere in the stadium. Despite entering the tournament with limited expectations, Qatar has managed to attract attention with a spirited start to its campaign. In its opening match against Switzerland, the team secured a hard-fought draw and earned its first-ever point in FIFA World Cup history.

Switzerland dominated possession for much of the game, controlling nearly 70 percent of the ball and creating several scoring opportunities. The Swiss side took the lead in the 17th minute through striker

Breel Embolo and appeared set for victory. However, Qatar continued to fight until the final moments. Deep into stoppage time, Swiss player Miro accidentally turned the ball into his own net, resulting in a dramatic equalizer and allowing Qatar to escape defeat. The draw was celebrated as a significant achievement for the Gulf nation, which is looking to make a mark on the world stage. Encouraged by that performance, Qatar now hopes to build momentum in its upcoming clash against Canada. The decision to sponsor travel for 1,000 supporters is aimed at creating a strong fan presence and motivating the players during a crucial match.

The initiative has generated considerable attention among football enthusiasts, with many viewing it as an innovative way to strengthen national support. As Qatar prepares for another important World Cup encounter, the presence of a large contingent of cheering fans could provide the extra motivation the team needs to continue its impressive journey in the tournament.

India registered a commanding victory over Afghanistan in the second One-Day International at Lucknow, thanks to sensational centuries from captain Shubman Gill and Ishan Kishan. Their remarkable performances not only powered India to a massive total but also helped them achieve a unique record in the history of Indian ODI cricket.

Gill smashed 154 runs while Ishan scored 125, with both batters reaching their centuries in fewer than 80 deliveries. Gill completed his hundred in 77 balls, while Ishan got there even faster in just 71 deliveries. This marked the first time in India's ODI history that two batters at the crease simultaneously scored centuries in under 80 balls in the same innings.

Despite the achievements of legendary partnerships involving players such as Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly, Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir, or Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, no Indian pair had previously accomplished this feat. Considering India has played over 1,000 ODI matches, the record highlights the extraordinary nature of their partnership.



The duo added a stunning 224 runs for the wicket before Ishan departed after his brilliant 125. Gill, however, continued his assault and looked set for a double century. Having already scored one ODI double hundred in his career, the young skipper appeared on course for another milestone with plenty of overs remaining.

However, his innings ended at 154 off just 110 balls, including 22 boundaries and two six-

es, when he attempted an ambitious reverse sweep and was caught. His dismissal denied fans the chance to witness another double century.

The match also produced several notable milestones. Gill became the fastest Indian batter to reach 3,000 ODI runs, achieving the feat in just 62 innings. He also moved level with Virat Kohli with nine Player of the Match awards in ODI series since January 2022. India posted a massive 402

runs before being bowled out in 49.5 overs, becoming the first team in ODI history to score more than 400 and still be dismissed before completing the full 50 overs. The total was India's eighth 400-plus score in ODIs, equalling the record held by South Africa.

For Afghanistan, the defeat by 170 runs became the second-heaviest loss in their ODI history, underlining India's complete dominance in the contest.

## BCCI Allows Vaibhav Suryavanshi's Parents to Accompany Him

The Board of Control for Cricket in India has decided to allow the parents of teenage cricket sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi to accompany him on India's upcoming white-ball tour of Ireland and England, recognizing the unique challenges faced by a player so young entering the senior international setup.

Explaining the decision, BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia said that the 15-year-old cricketer needs support while adapting to an environment filled with adult players and team officials. Suryavanshi,

who recently earned his maiden call-up to the Indian T20 squad, is set to feature in seven matches during the tour, including two games against Ireland and five against England, beginning on June 26 in Belfast.

Saikia noted that it is extremely rare for a player of Suryavanshi's age to be selected for a senior national team. He compared the youngster's rise to that of legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, who made his international debut as a teenager. According to Saikia, the

board felt it was important to create a comfortable environment for the young player as he begins his journey at the highest level.

The BCCI secretary explained that the decision was similar to schools assigning senior supervisors during student excursions. Since Suryavanshi is still in his school years, the board believed parental support would help him settle into the demands of international cricket more smoothly.

Saikia also praised the youngster's family for their

role in nurturing his talent and described him as a valuable asset for Indian cricket's future. He expressed confidence that Suryavanshi has the potential to serve Indian cricket for many years to come.

Meanwhile, Saikia dismissed speculation on social media suggesting that the BCCI might take disciplinary action against the teenager following a heated on-field exchange with Sri Lankan A player Vishen Halambage during a recent India A match. The incident report-



edly occurred after an exchange of words between the two players, leading to a brief confrontation. Despite the controversy, the board re-

mains focused on supporting the young cricketer's development. By allowing his parents to travel with him, the BCCI hopes to ensure that one of

India's brightest emerging talents can adapt comfortably to international cricket while maintaining his focus on the game.



The Board of Control for Cricket in India has made it clear that it will not interfere in the recent on-field altercation involving teenage batting sen-

sation Vaibhav Suryavanshi and Sri Lankan player Vishen Halambage during an India A versus Sri Lanka A match. The incident, which attracted

## BCCI Clarifies Stance on Vaibhav's On-Field Spat with Sri Lankan Player

significant attention on social media, saw a heated exchange between the two players. Following reports suggesting that the BCCI might take disciplinary action against the young cricketer, BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia clarified that such matters fall entirely within the jurisdiction of the match officials.

According to Saikia, decisions regarding on-field incidents are the responsibility of the match referee and umpires,

who are empowered under cricket regulations to assess the situation and determine any penalties if required. He emphasized that the BCCI has no authority to intervene in matters that are governed by the match referee's disciplinary framework. Addressing speculation surrounding the controversy, Saikia stated that many reports circulating on social media were baseless. He reiterated that the board would not play any role in deciding whether

er fines or other sanctions should be imposed, as a proper system already exists to deal with such incidents during matches. The BCCI secretary also spoke about Suryavanshi's rapid rise in Indian cricket. The 15-year-old prodigy has been selected for India's upcoming white-ball tour of Ireland and England later this month, marking another significant milestone in his promising career.

Recognizing his young age, the BCCI has granted permis-

sion for his parents to accompany him on the overseas tour. Saikia explained that it is rare for a player as young as Suryavanshi to be part of a senior national team setup and compared his emergence to that of legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, who made his international debut as a teenager. He noted that the youngster was first exposed to a senior cricket environment through the India A triangular series and that parental support would help him

adapt more comfortably to life with the national team. Saikia described Suryavanshi as a valuable asset for Indian cricket and expressed confidence that he could serve the country for the next two to three decades. With the BCCI distancing itself from the disciplinary issue and focusing instead on the youngster's development, the spotlight now shifts to Suryavanshi's much-anticipated performances on the upcoming international tour.

## Gurnoor Brar Credits Domestic Cricket for His Rise to International Success

Emerging Indian fast bowler Gurnoor Brar has attributed his rapid rise in international cricket to the strong foundation he built in domestic competitions and the valuable experience gained through the India A setup.

Brar, who recently made an impressive ODI debut against Afghanistan, has quickly established himself as one of India's most exciting pace prospects. Known for consistently bowling at speeds exceeding 145 kmph while maintaining disciplined line and length, the young pacer emerged as the leading wicket-taker in the series with six wickets from two matches.

Reflecting on his journey, Brar said that representing India A played a crucial role in preparing him for international cricket. Strong performances in prestigious domestic tournaments such as the Duleep Trophy, Irani Cup and Ranji Trophy earned him recognition and eventually a place in the India A squad.

According to Brar, the transition to higher levels became smoother because he continued to follow the same bowling methods that had brought him success in domestic cricket. He emphasized his ability to bowl hard lengths and generate movement off the pitch, qualities that have remained effective even after stepping onto the international stage.

Despite his successful start,



Brar believes there is still significant room for improvement. He revealed that the Indian team management has encouraged him to trust his natural strengths rather than overcomplicate his approach with new techniques. This confidence from the coaching staff has allowed him to focus on his strengths and continue developing as a bowler.

The young pacer also acknowledged the influence of his time with the Gujarat Titans in the IPL. Although he did not get an opportunity to play for the franchise last season, Brar said he learned a great deal by observing experienced bowlers such as Ashish Nehra, Kagiso Rabada, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna and Ishant Sharma.

Brar noted that raw pace alone is not enough to succeed at the highest level. He stressed the importance of adapting to conditions, understanding different batters, and modifying strategies when the pitch offers little assistance or the ball is not swinging.

Having entered the IPL with Punjab Kings in 2023 before being acquired by Gujarat Titans for 1.3 crore in the 2025 mega auction, Brar's patience and persistence now appear to be paying off. With a strong debut series behind him, the fast bowler looks set to become an important part of India's pace attack in the years ahead.

## Gill's Calm Authority, Kishan's Firepower Highlight India's Depth in Series Win



India's commanding 170-run victory over Afghanistan in Lucknow was more than just another bilateral triumph—it was a statement of depth, composure, and evolving leadership. With this win, Shubman Gill sealed his first ODI series as captain, guiding India to an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match contest.

While the scoreboard reflected dominance, the finer story lay in individual performances and emerging combinations. One of the most talked-about names was Gurnoor Brar, whose impressive debut series has quickly turned heads. Despite modest domestic numbers, the young pacer justified the faith shown by the selectors. His rhythm, accuracy, and ability to generate bounce

troubled Afghan batters, with his dismissal of Rahmanullah Gurbaz standing out. It was a moment that underlined not just skill, but intent—a quality India's think tank clearly spotted early.

Equally compelling was Ishan Kishan's return to the ODI setup. After time away, he responded in emphatic fashion, smashing a century that blended patience with explosive acceleration. His approach was calculated—steady early on, before shifting gears dramatically. The leap from fifty to a hundred in just 19 balls showcased not recklessness, but refined shot selection and growing maturity. His improved range, especially in previously vulnerable zones, signals a batter evolving with purpose.

For captain Gill, the series win also brings into focus the delicate balance between personal form and leadership instincts. As cricket often proves, confidence with the bat translates into sharper decisions on the field. A captain in form tends to trust intuition more freely—whether it's backing a bowler for an extra over or tweaking field placements at crucial moments.

Despite the convincing result, India's journey remains a work in progress. The spin department, though effective in patches, continues to search for consistency. Kuldeep Yadav's wicketless spells and Harsh Dube's slightly expensive outings highlight areas that demand refinement ahead of bigger challenges.

Perhaps India's greatest strength, however, lies beyond the playing XI. The intense competition fueled by a robust domestic structure ensures that every spot is fiercely contested. This internal pressure not only sharpens performances but also creates a culture where complacency finds no place.

As the team looks ahead, the blend of emerging talent and established stars places India in an enviable position. With a global tournament on the horizon, this series has offered a glimpse of a side that is not just winning—but building, adapting, and preparing for greater tests ahead.



## Rakesh Bedi Laughs Off PMO Script Rumours Surrounding 'Dhurandhar'

Veteran actor Rakesh Bedi has firmly dismissed rumours suggesting that the script of the blockbuster film Dhurandhar originated from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), calling the claims baseless and humorous. Speaking at the Amrit Ratna 2026 conference in Delhi, the actor addressed the controversy with his trademark wit, drawing laughter from the audience.

The speculation emerged after the phenomenal success of Dhurandhar, a spy thriller that captivated audiences and performed exceptionally well at the box office. While the film received widespread acclaim for its gripping storyline and powerful performances, a section of critics and social media users began circulating claims that the screenplay had been influenced or supplied by the PMO.

Reacting to these allegations, Bedi questioned the logic behind such assumptions. He pointed out that some of the film's most popular moments were his comedy dialogues, which became a major talking point among audiences. According to the actor, it was difficult to believe that officials sitting in government offices would come up with the kind of humorous lines featured in the movie.

Bedi also revealed interesting details about the film's creative process. He said that director Aditya initially envisioned Dhurandhar as a serious spy thriller and was

not keen on incorporating comedy sequences. However, after reading the script multiple times, Bedi felt that a few light-hearted moments would enhance the viewing experience.

The actor suggested adding comic relief at strategic points in the narrative to help audiences relax amid the film's intense and suspenseful storyline. Although the director was hesitant at first, he eventually agreed to the idea. As filming progressed, both Bedi and Aditya realized that the comedy scenes blended naturally with the story and added an extra layer of entertainment.

In Dhurandhar, Bedi portrayed Pakistani politician Jamil Jamali, a character that earned significant attention from viewers. His dialogue, "Bachcha Hai Tu Mera," quickly went viral on social media and became one of the film's most memorable catchphrases.

The first installment of Dhurandhar was released in December last year and became a major hit. Building on that momentum, the second part arrived in March this year and surpassed expectations, emerging as an even bigger success.

With his candid remarks, Rakesh Bedi has now put the PMO script controversy to rest, emphasizing that the film's success was the result of creative teamwork and storytelling rather than political influence.

## Anil Ravipudi's Multi-Starrer with Venkatesh and Kalyan Ram Officially Launched



A much-awaited Telugu multi-starrer bringing together Venkatesh and Nandamuri Kalyan Ram under the direction of Anil Ravipudi was formally launched with a grand pooja ceremony in Hyderabad on Thursday. Tentatively titled #VenkyAnil5 - #NKRAR2, the film marks another major collaboration for the successful filmmaker known for delivering family entertainers and festival blockbusters.

The launch ceremony was attended by several industry personalities, with noted producer Allu Aravind giving the first clap for the project. Production house Shine Screen Studios shared glimpses from the event

on social media, announcing the official commencement of the film and confirming that regular shooting will begin shortly.

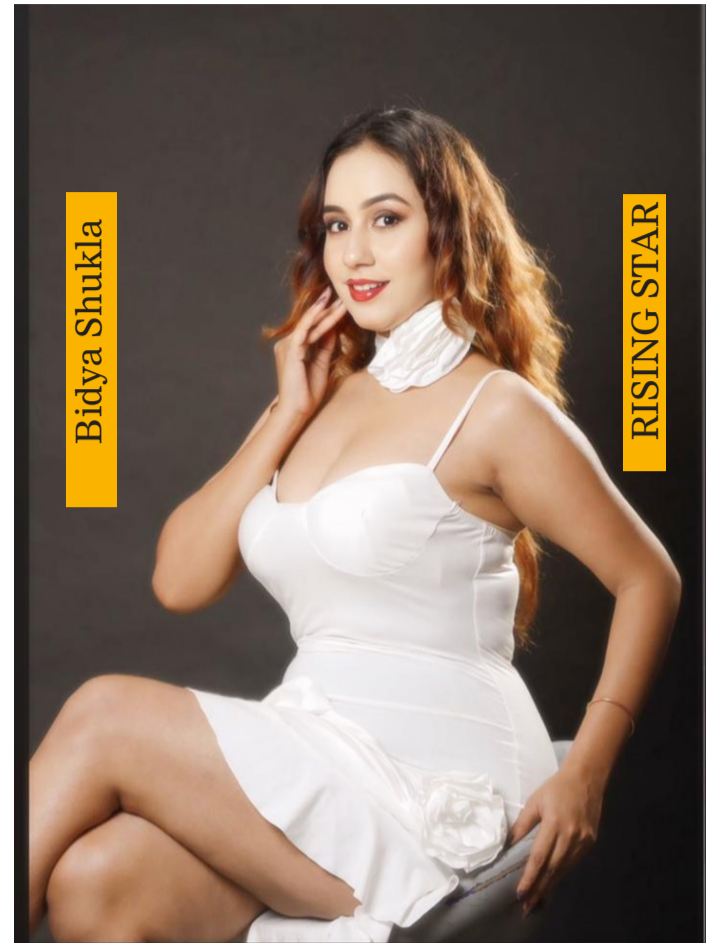
Adding to the excitement, the makers revealed that actresses Keerthy Suresh and Krithi Shetty have joined the cast. Their inclusion is expected to bring additional star power to what is already shaping up to be one of the most anticipated Telugu films of the coming year.

The project recently welcomed National Award-winning music composer G. V. Prakash Kumar on board. Director Anil Ravipudi had announced the collaboration through a humorous promotional video that paid

tribute to legendary filmmaker Jandhyala by recreating a memorable scene from the classic Telugu comedy Aha Naa Pellanta.

Industry sources indicate that the film is being planned as a grand Sankranti release in January next year. The project holds special significance as it marks Anil Ravipudi's fifth collaboration with Venkatesh after successful ventures such as F2: Fun and Frustration, F3: Fun and Frustration and Sankranti. It is also his second film with Kalyan Ram following the blockbuster Pataas.

The film is said to bring together members of the prestigious Daggubati and Nandamuri families in a clean, family-friendly entertainer. Designed as a festive treat for audiences of all age groups, the movie will reportedly blend comedy, emotions, and mass entertainment in Anil Ravipudi's trademark style. With a strong cast, successful creative team, and a Sankranti release target, expectations surrounding the project are already soaring among Telugu cinema fans.



## A Decent Crime Thriller with Romance and Mystery 'Thank You Subbarao'

Telugu crime thriller Thank You Subbarao has skipped a theatrical release and arrived directly on the OTT platform Aha. Directed by Chendu Muddu, who earlier earned recognition with O Pitta Katha, the film features Chandras and Lavanya Sahukara in the lead roles. Produced by Dinesh Kurra, the film began streaming on June 18.

The story revolves around Subbarao, a young man struggling to clear his father's debts. Hoping for a better future, he travels to Kerala at the invitation of his friend Pandu and starts working as a taxi driver. His life takes an interesting turn when Vaishnavi, an NRI businesswoman from the United States, hires him as her driver for a month. As they spend time together exploring Kerala, Subbarao develops feelings for her and begins to believe that she might feel the same way.

However, his dreams are shattered when Rohit arrives from America, and it becomes clear that he is Vaishnavi's fiancé. Just when the romantic angle seems settled, the story takes a dramatic turn. Vaishnavi accidentally records a disturbing incident on her phone, showing four young men harassing a girl on a moving train. Determined to uncover the truth and seek justice for the victim, she launches an investigation, drawing both Rohit and Subbarao into the mystery.

Director Chendu Muddu blends romance, comedy, and crime elements effectively. While the love triangle follows a somewhat pre-



dictable path, the mystery surrounding the train incident keeps the narrative engaging. The Kerala backdrop adds visual appeal, and the screenplay gradually builds suspense before culminating in an impactful climax twist.

Chandras delivers a sincere performance as the innocent and emotional Subbarao. Lavanya Sahukara performs convincingly as the determined Vaishnavi, while the supporting cast contributes adequately to the film's progression. The chemistry between the lead characters works well, particularly during the lighter moments.

Technically, the film benefits from impressive cinematography by Pankaj Thotada, which beautifully captures Kerala's scenic landscapes. The music composed by Prince Henry complements the mood of the film, while editor Venkat Prabhu keeps the narrative moving at a steady pace.

Overall, Thank You Subbarao may not offer a groundbreaking storyline, but its engaging treatment, blend of genres, and satisfying climax make it a worthwhile watch for OTT audiences looking for a light crime thriller with emotional undertones.

## 'Kannappa' Set for Grand Theatrical Re-Release on June 27

The makers of Kannappa, starring Vishnu Manchu, have officially announced the film's theatrical re-release on June 27, rekindling excitement among movie lovers and devotees alike. To mark the occasion, the team unveiled a striking new poster featuring Vishnu Manchu in an emotionally powerful pose, embracing a Shiva Lingam amid picturesque mountains and lush green landscapes. The visual beautifully captures the spiritual essence and devotional theme that made the film a memorable cinematic experience.

Produced by Mohan Babu under the banners of 24 Frames Factory and AVAA Entertainment, and directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh, Kannappa emerged as one of the most ambitious mythological films in recent years. Mounted on a grand scale, the movie combined breathtaking visuals, emotional storytelling, and powerful per-

formances to create an immersive cinematic journey.

The film featured an impressive ensemble cast, including Prabhas, Mohanlal, Akshay Kumar, Sarath Kumar, and Brahmanandam, alongside Vishnu Manchu and Mohan Babu. Their performances added depth and grandeur to the mythological epic, helping it resonate with audiences across different age groups and regions.

Following its release, Kannappa enjoyed a highly successful theatrical run and emerged as a major box-office blockbuster. The film continued its winning streak after its digital premiere, reaching a wider audience and receiving appreciation for its blend of devotion, action, emotion, and mythology.

The upcoming re-release offers fans another opportunity to witness the epic saga on the big screen, where its visual grandeur and emotional moments



can be experienced in their full glory. With a strong fan base and enduring popularity, the film is expected to attract significant attention during its return to theatres.

As anticipation builds ahead of June 27, Kannappa is poised to once again captivate audiences with its powerful storytelling and spiritual appeal, reaffirming its status as one of the most celebrated mythological blockbusters of recent times.

## Advance Bookings Open for 'Spider-Man: Brand New Day' Across India



Fans of the friendly neighborhood superhero have a reason to celebrate as advance bookings for Spider-Man: Brand New Day are now officially open across India. The highly anticipated blockbuster starring Tom Holland is set to hit theatres on July 30 in English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam.

To make the cinematic experience bigger and more immersive, the film will be released across several premium large-format screens, including P[XL], Big Pix, ScreenX, ICE, 4DX, and MX4D. Audiences can now secure their seats early and experience the latest Spider-Man adventure on some of the country's most advanced cinema screens.

According to Sony Pictures Entertainment India, the decision to open bookings well in advance reflects the massive anticipation surrounding the film. Company representatives noted that Spider-Man remains one of the most beloved superheroes among Indian audiences, with

every new installment attracting fans across generations.

Industry experts believe the film is poised to become one of the biggest theatrical releases of the year. Cinema exhibitors are also expecting a strong response, especially for premium large-format screenings that offer enhanced visuals, motion effects, and immersive sound experiences.

Directed by Destin Daniel Cretton, the film features an impressive cast that includes Zendaya, Jacob Batalon, Jon Bernthal, and Sadie Sink alongside Tom Holland.

The story follows Peter Parker as he continues fighting crime full-time as Spider-Man in a world that no longer remembers him. While struggling to watch his old friends move on without him, Peter undergoes a transformation that could either save or destroy everything he holds dear. At the same time, he faces a mysterious new villain capable of threatening the city in ways never seen before.

The emotional and action-packed storyline is expected to take the Spider-Man franchise in an exciting new direction while retaining the heart and humour that fans have come to love. With bookings already underway and excitement building rapidly, Spider-Man: Brand New Day is shaping up to be a major cinematic event. The film will be released nationwide on July 30 in both 2D and 3D formats, offering audiences a chance to witness Spider-Man's next chapter on the biggest screens possible.

## 'Deewana' Will Win Hearts with Its Emotional Love Story

Young actor Harshith Reddy is gearing up for the release of his new romantic entertainer Deewana, which is set to hit theatres worldwide on June 19. Produced by Vasudev Koppineni and Sridevi Karyampudi under the Arha Media and V Studios banners, the film marks the directorial debut of Sreekanth Sangishetty and introduces actress Smeha Manimegalai to Telugu cinema.

Speaking ahead of the release, Sreekanth Sangishetty shared his inspiring journey from a corporate employee to a filmmaker. He revealed that his passion for cinema never faded despite spending over a decade in the corporate world. After working as an assistant on the National Award-winning film Minugurulu, he continued nurturing his dream by making short films, demo videos, and writing scripts during his free time.

According to the director, the idea for Deewana originated from a simple observation. Watching a television anchor one day sparked a thought about what would happen if a stranger approached her. That single idea eventually evolved into a love story filled with emotion and entertainment.

Sreekanth disclosed that he spent years refining the script, writing nearly ten drafts before arriving at the final version. The story, which was initially conceived over a decade ago, underwent continuous improvements based on feedback from producers

and industry professionals. He believes the film's biggest strength is its emotional core rather than conventional commercial elements.

The director explained that Deewana revolves around one-sided love, friendship, and family relationships. While the first half showcases the hero's open pursuit of the heroine, the second half explores the same emotion through a more mature and heartfelt perspective. He expressed confidence that audiences of all age groups would connect with the film's relatable emotions.

Sreekanth also recalled how he finally got the opportunity to narrate the story to veteran producer Allu Aravind after years of struggle. The narration impressed Aravind, paving the way for the film's production. Despite budget limitations and a tight shooting schedule, the team completed the project with determination and creativity.

Praising Harshith Reddy's performance, the director said the actor was perfectly suited to the character and brought sincerity to the role. Featuring six songs and three action sequences, Deewana aims to offer a wholesome blend of romance, emotions, friendship, and entertainment.

With high confidence in the film's emotional appeal, Sreekanth Sangishetty believes Deewana will resonate strongly with audiences and establish him as a promising new voice in Telugu cinema.



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