

BUZZ POINTS



ED Cracks Down on Drug Syndicate Linked to Dawood Aide

PAGE 07



Ladakh Tightens Security Around Leh Airport After IAF Concerns

PAGE 07



Kerala HC Orders Fresh Oath for 20 BJP Councillors

PAGE 07



Thousands Participate in Srinagar's 8th Muharram Procession

PAGE 07

Cop Nagaraju Arrested in Custodial Death Case

SIT Flags Custodial Death, Evidence Tampering in Sai Krishna Case; Circle Inspector Remanded

Vijayawada, June 24 | TPN Bureau

The High Court on Wednesday adjourned to July 6 the hearing on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking a CBI investigation into the alleged custodial death and disappearance of 25-year-old Gade Sai Krishna, even as the state informed the court that the main accused, suspended Circle Inspector SSVV Nagaraju, has been arrested.

Sai Krishna's mother, Gade Vijayalakshmi, had earlier approached the High Court alleging that her son was picked up near Markapuram in the first week of May and brought to Krishnalanka Police Station in Vijayawada. She alleged she was denied information when she visited the station and was threatened by police personnel.

According to the SIT, preliminary findings suggest Sai



Krishna was illegally detained, tortured in custody, and may have died between May 6 and May 8. Investigators suspect the body was subsequently disposed of and key evidence destroyed to conceal the crime.

The case gained momentum after the family met Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, following which the state government constituted the SIT. The remand report of the arrested Circle Inspector states that Sai Krishna was not produced before a magistrate within the mandatory 24-hour custody period and refers to witness accounts placing him inside the police station during the relevant period.

In a major development, forensic examination reportedly revealed the absence of CCTV

footage in the station's DVR system between May 1 and June 1, raising suspicion of deliberate evidence destruction. The SIT also noted attempts to mislead the investigation and said further custodial interrogation of Nagaraju was necessary.

In a related development, the court remanded Circle Inspector Nagaraju to 14 days of judicial custody till July 8 after he was produced before the magistrate following medical examination at the Government General Hospital. Later, he was shifted under tight security to Rajahmundry Central Jail after being produced before a Vijayawada court.

The SIT continues its search for Sai Krishna's body and is examining allegations under

High Court Hears PIL Seeking CBI Probe

A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking a CBI investigation into the alleged custodial death of Gade Sai Krishna, involving suspended Circle Inspector S.S.V.V. Nagaraju, came up for hearing before the Andhra Pradesh High Court. The petitioner, Veerababu, urged an independent probe alleging lapses in the ongoing Special Investigation Team (SIT) inquiry.

provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita relating to wrongful confinement, murder, and destruction of evidence. A Sub-Inspector has reportedly confirmed seeing the victim's body inside the police station, further strengthening the suspicion of custodial death and cover-up.



CM Naidu Inaugurates Jonnagiri Gold Project, Calls It Start of Golden Era in AP

Jonnagiri, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday inaugurated the Jonnagiri Gold Mining Project in Kurnool district, describing it as the beginning of a "golden era" in Andhra Pradesh. He said gold extraction from Jonnagiri would restore the historical glory of Rayalaseema and urged that the region be renamed "Swarnagiri."

The project, developed by Geo Mysore Services and Decan Gold Mines, was formally launched by the Chief Minister, who also laid the foundation stone for its second expansion unit and flagged off heavy vehicles transporting gold-bearing ore for processing. He inspected the mining site and training centre, where women and youth are being trained to operate heavy mining equip-

ment using simulators. Geo Mysore Chairman Prabhakaran and Managing Director Naveen Lal Chandra briefed the Chief Minister on the mining and production process, including refining into gold bars. The companies are investing around 405 crore in the project, which is expected to produce 400 kilograms of gold annually in the initial phase, scaling up to 900 kilograms and eventually two tonnes per year.

Addressing a public meeting, Chandrababu Naidu said the project marks a historic milestone and will revive Rayalaseema's identity as a mineral-rich region. He said the area was historically known as Swarnagiri during the Ashokan era and was also associated with trade in precious stones during the reign of Sri Krishnadevaraya.

AP Notifies 629 AEE Posts in Power Sector

Vijayawada, June 24 | TPN Bureau

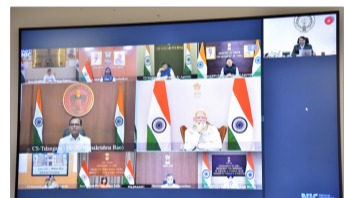
The Andhra Pradesh government, led by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, has initiated recruitment for 629 Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs) across power sector utilities, marking a major step towards strengthening infrastructure and fulfilling commitments under the Job Calendar. Speaking on the occasion, Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar said notifications were issued on Wednesday to fill critical vacancies and enhance efficiency in power generation, transmission and distribution organisations. He said the move reflects the government's commitment to transparent recruitment and job

creation. The posts include 200 in APTRANSCO, 100 in APGENCO, 134 in APSPDCL, 60 in APCPDCL and 135 in APEPDCL. APSPDCL will recruit 125 AEEs (Electrical), six (Civil) and four (Telecom), with applications open from June 30 to July 27. APCPDCL will fill 56 (Electrical), three (Civil) and one (Telecom) posts. APGENCO will recruit 80 AEEs in Electrical, Mechanical and Electronics, and 20 in Civil. APTRANSCO will fill 167 (Electrical), 23 (Civil) and 10 (Telecom) posts, while APEPDCL will recruit 128 (Electrical), four (Civil) and three (Telecom). Gottipati Ravi Kumar said filling these posts will improve service delivery and urged engineering graduates to apply.

PM Modi Calls for Stringent Action Against Cybercrime, Digital Arrest Scams

Amaravati, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has directed all State governments and Union Territories to take stringent and coordinated measures to curb the rising menace of cybercrimes, particularly "digital arrest" scams, and to intensify public awareness campaigns to protect citizens from falling victim to such frauds. Chairing a video conference from New Delhi with Chief Secretaries of States and Administrators of Union Territories, the Prime Minister reviewed the progress of key national initiatives, including railway and highway projects, metro rail systems, industrial corridors, renewable energy integration, and the "TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyan". During the meeting, the Prime Minister expressed concern over the increasing cases of cyber fraud and instructed States to adopt technology-driven solutions for swift detection and prevention of such crimes. He stressed the need for strict enforcement measures to immediately control digital arrest scams, which have been targeting vulnerable sections of society. Prime Minister Modi also called for large-scale awareness drives to educate citizens about emerging cyber threats and fraudulent tactics. He emphasized strengthening systems such as e-FIR and Zero FIR to ensure faster registration and ac-



tion on cyber complaints. He further underlined the importance of coordinated action between banks, police departments, the Reserve Bank of India, and the Ministry of Home Affairs to trace, freeze, and recover money siphoned through fraudulent transactions. The Prime Minister also suggested identifying and acting against "mule" accounts used in cybercrime networks.

Modi urged States to establish dedicated cybercrime units, enhance cyber police capabilities, and identify crime-prone hotspots for targeted intervention and awareness campaigns. On the "TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyan", the Prime Minister reviewed progress in tuberculosis control efforts and called for intensified screening, early diagnosis, nutritional support, and community participation. He noted that thousands of Gram Panchayats have already been certified TB-free and urged States to accelerate efforts toward eliminating the disease. Senior officials from Andhra Pradesh, including Chief Secretary G. Sai Prasad, participated in the meeting from Vijayawada.

Pawan Kalyan Undertakes Annual Deeksha

Mangalagiri, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena Chief Pawan Kalyan on Wednesday morning undertook his annual Deeksha at Mangalagiri after performing archana to Panakala Swamy. The spiritual vow, observed every year, begins in Jyeshtha and concludes in Karthika.

He follows the ritual based on mantra upadesha received from his spiritual guru, maintaining a disciplined lifestyle during the period. He consumes sattvic food and continues daily spiritual practices, including meditation and mantra chanting, while carrying out official duties in simple attire, often in sandalwood-coloured clothing.

Earlier in the day, Pawan Kalyan visited the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple in Mangalagiri, where he offered silk garments to the deity and performed special pujas along with Ashtottara chanting of the 108 names of the Lord. He



later proceeded to the hill temple of Sri Panakala Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy, where he offered panakam and silk garments as naivedyam and performed prayers. Temple priests offered Vedic blessings and presented teertha prasadam to him. On his arrival, he was received with mangala vadyam by temple officials and mem-

bers of the temple board. State Medical Infrastructure Development Corporation representative Chillapalli Srinivas and others accompanied Pawan Kalyan during the temple visit. The Deputy Chief Minister's annual observance drew attention from devotees gathered at the temple premises.

Nara Lokesh Begins Krishna District Tour with Mopidevi Temple Visit

Mopidevi, June 24 | TPN Bureau

HRD and IT Minister Nara Lokesh undertook a multi-programme tour in Krishna district on Wednesday, combining religious visits, party organisational outreach and direct interaction with fisherfolk communities. The day-long visit included temple worship at Mopidevi, a Telugu Desam Party workers' meeting at Avani-gadda and an extensive engagement with fisherfolk families at Puligadda, where he travelled by boat and reviewed livelihood conditions. The Minister also reiterated alliance stability, cadre strengthening and continued welfare and development initiatives of the coalition government.

Lokesh Visits Sri Subrahmanyeswara Swamy



Temple Nara Lokesh visited Sri Subrahmanyeswara Swamy Temple at Mopidevi in Avani-gadda constituency, where he was accorded a traditional Poorna Kumbham welcome by Vedic scholars and temple authorities. He offered milk to the Naga Putta and later performed special rituals to the presiding deity Sri Subrahmanyeswara Swamy along with consorts Valli and Devasena.



Temple priests conducted special pujas and presented Vedic blessings along with Teertha Prasadam. Temple Executive Officer and Deputy Commissioner Dasari Srirama Varaprasada Rao felicitated Lokesh and presented a portrait of the deity. Ministers Vasamshetti Subhash, MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry, Council Whip Panchumarthi Anuradha, MLAs Mandali Buddha Prasad, Bhashyam Praveen,



Star Shuttle Satwiksairaj Meets Nara Lokesh

Undavalli, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Renowned badminton player Satwiksairaj paid a courtesy visit to Minister for HRD and IT Nara Lokesh at his residence in Undavalli. Nara Lokesh congratulated Satwiksairaj for bringing pride to the nation and Andhra Pradesh through his international achievements. Hailing from Amalapuram in Ambedkar Konaseema district, Satwiksairaj is a recipient of the Arjuna Award and the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.

He has represented India at the highest level, securing multiple international medals. He currently holds the fourth position in world rankings in men's doubles and had achieved the world number one ranking on October 10, 2023. Lokesh also appreciated his recent gold medal win at the Thomas Cup and assured full government support for his future endeavours.

SAAP Chairman Animini Ravi Naidu and Managing Director S. Bharani were present at the meeting.

Cordelia Cruises MV Empress Arrives at Visakhapatnam Port

Visakhapatnam, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Cordelia Cruises' luxury cruise ship MV Empress arrived at Visakhapatnam Port on Wednesday as part of its scheduled east coast sailing operations, marking the continuation of the cruise tourism season along India's eastern coastline.

The vessel, operated by Cordelia Cruises, is conducting coastal voyages connecting major ports including Chennai, Visakhapatnam and Puducherry. The ship offers a floating resort experience with



premium hospitality, entertainment and leisure facilities for domestic

Ram Charan Unveils Trophy as APL Final Phase Matches Begin

Mangalagiri, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Cricket fever has gripped Amaravati as the final phase of the Andhra Premier League (APL) is underway at the ACA International Cricket Stadium in Mangalagiri. A match between Bhimavaram Bulls and Capital Amaravati Royals began on Wednesday evening, with Capital Amaravati Royals winning the toss and electing to bat. Popular actor Ram Charan



attended the inaugural ceremony of the final phase matches and unveiled the



Jagan Inaugurates Gattu Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple

Pulivendula, June 24 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP President and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy participated in the inauguration of the newly constructed Gattu Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple at Bhumayyagaripalle village in Vemula mandal on Tuesday as part of his second-day tour of Pulivendula constituency.

Jagan was accorded a traditional welcome by temple priests amid Vedic chants and took part in the temple consecration ceremonies. He offered special prayers and participated in religious rituals, including the Kalasha Shankusthapana and Sudarshana Homam. During the event, he prayed for the well-being, prosperity, and good health of the people of Andhra Pradesh.

The former Chief Minister also interacted with devotees

and residents who had gathered in large numbers at the temple premises. His visit drew a significant turnout of YSRCP leaders, party cadre, supporters, and villagers.

Following the temple programme, Jagan visited the residence of senior YSRCP leader Obulareddy Srirami Reddy and conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family following the leader's recent demise. He assured the family of the party's continued support and recalled Srirami Reddy's contributions to YSRCP.

Describing the veteran leader's passing as an irreparable loss to the party, Jagan expressed sympathy to the family members and paid tribute to his services. The visit formed part of Jagan's ongoing engagements in Pulivendula constituency, where he has been interacting with party workers, supporters, and residents.



Radha Gayatri Death Case: Father of Sricharan Calls for Fair Probe

Visakhapatnam, June 24 | TPN Bureau:

Durga Prasad, father of techie Sricharan, has said he has advised his son to fully cooperate with the police investigation into the death of Radha Gayatri, who died under suspicious circumstances in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand.

He said the family is unaware of how the incident occurred and stressed the need for a thorough probe. "Sricharan and Radha Gayatri used to be happy together. She was cheerful at home. The post-mortem report should establish the cause of death. Courts will decide responsibility," he said. Meanwhile, Radha Gayatri's post-death rituals (Dasha...

shadina Karma) were performed at Simhachalam in the presence of relatives and friends. Her friend Lakshmi Charitha said Radha Gayatri was mentally strong and her family deserves justice. She alleged that Radha had earlier expressed concern over her husband Sricharan's behaviour, including claims that he had placed a tracker in her bag, which made her feel insecure.

Police in Uttarakhand are continuing their investigation into the case, which has drawn attention due to conflicting statements from both sides of the family and allegations raised by friends of the deceased.

Parthasarathy Assures Swift Resolution of Public Grievances

Vijayawada, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Information, Public Relations and Housing Minister Kolu Parthasarathy, on Wednesday, interacted directly with residents of Nuzvid constituency through the 'Dial Your MLA' programme, assuring them that the coalition government remains committed to resolving public grievances and accelerating development works.

Speaking from his camp office at Tadigadapa in Vijayawada, the minister spent nearly two hours receiving calls from hundreds of citizens and addressing issues related to roads, drinking water, pensions, housing, land disputes and education. He directed officials to take immediate action on complaints

and ensured that each issue would be monitored for resolution.

Parthasarathy said the government had already completed construction of 4.51 lakh houses after assuming office and was targeting completion of another four lakh PMAY (Urban) houses by December this year. He added that 8 to 9 lakh eligible beneficiaries had been identified from nearly 10 lakh new housing applications.

The minister also announced that land acquisition funds for the proposed Nuzvid ring road had been released and works would commence soon. He reiterated the government's commitment to maintaining peace, curbing destructive politics and ensuring balanced development across the constituency.

Hajj Committee Urges Pilgrims to Apply Early For Hajj 2027

Amaravati, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Applications for Hajj 2027 (1448 Hijri) have commenced following the notification issued by the Haj Committee of India under the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India.

Andhra Pradesh State Haj Committee Chairman Shaik Hasan Basha on Tuesday urged Muslim devotees across

the state to apply within the stipulated time. He said the state government, under Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu with support from Minority Welfare Minister N. M. D. Farooq, is implementing welfare measures for minority communities and ensuring smooth pilgrimage arrangements.

Online applications will be accepted from June 22 to July 20, 2026, till 11.59 pm through

the Haj Suvidha App or the official portal. Applicants must submit a valid passport (valid up to December 31, 2027), photograph, bank details and address proof.

The draw of lots will be held in the last week of July. Selected pilgrims must pay 1.52 lakh by August 10, 2026. Shaik Hasan Basha advised applicants to complete preparations carefully before applying for the pilgrimage.

AP Moves Towards Comprehensive Rare Diseases Policy Framework

Sreeja Rachabathuni

Vijayawada: Health, Family Welfare and Medical Education Minister Satya Kumar Yadav said rare disease patients' welfare is a top priority and the government is committed to developing a comprehensive and effective policy framework. A Stakeholder Conference on Rare Diseases Care and Draft Policy Consultation was held at Dr NTR University of Health Sciences in Vijayawada on Wednesday, marking a key step in strengthening healthcare support for rare disease patients in Andhra Pradesh.

The conference brought together senior health officials, medical experts, patient advocacy groups, NGOs and representatives of rare disease organisations from across the country. The Minister partici-

pated virtually, while Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar, Director of Medical Education Dr Vishnuvardhan and Additional Director Dr Radhika Reddy attended in person.

Experts noted that nearly 80 percent of rare diseases are genetic in nature and only a small number have specific treatment options. They emphasised universal newborn screening, expanded genetic testing facilities and district-level diagnostic hubs for early detection and intervention.

Parents and patient groups urged the government to ensure affordable medicines and accessible treatment. Dr Ramadevi recommended newborn screening within three to four days of birth. Dr Mutyala Ramayya proposed a Centre of Excellence and training support for healthcare workers.

Minister Durgesh Demands Reinstatement of 70 Employees

Rajamahendravaram, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh on Wednesday extended support to the ongoing agitation of Andhra Paper Mill workers at Kadiyam in East Godavari district and warned the management against ignoring their demands.

Visiting the protest camp, he sat with the agitating employees and expressed solidarity with their 55-day strike seeking wage revision. He warned that he would join a direct protest if 70 workers removed from service were not reinstated

immediately.

He criticised the management for terminating 59 contract workers and 11 permanent employees who were demanding a wage hike, calling the decision unjust. He said the government would not tolerate the exclusion of eligible workers and insisted on reinstatement. Durgesh said workers are key to industrial growth and their welfare must be prioritised, noting that families are suffering due to the loss of income. He also referred to concerns over pollution from the mill affecting the Godavari River, citing remarks by Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan

Jonnagiri Set to Emerge as Major Gold Mining Hub Says Minister Kollu Ravindra

Kurnool, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Jonnagiri in Kurnool district is set to emerge as a major gold mining hub with the full-scale implementation of the Jonnagiri Gold Field project. Mines, Geology and Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra said on Wednesday. He spoke at the inauguration of the second unit of GeoMysore Services-Deccan Gold Mines, developed with an investment of 405 crore, along with Chief Minis-

ter N. Chandrababu Naidu.

The minister visited a training centre where women and youth are being trained on simulators to operate heavy mining vehicles and flagged off ore transportation vehicles at the site. He said the project is expected to produce 400 kg of gold annually in the first phase, rising to 900 kg and eventually two tonnes per year.

Kollu Ravindra said Andhra Pradesh is regaining its mining leadership due to coalition government reforms. He al-

CPSEA Urges Extension of Old Pension Scheme to Eligible TTD Staff

Amaravati, June 24 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh CPS Employees Association has welcomed the government's decision issued through Memo No. 57, calling it a historic step for employee welfare. Association State Associate President Cheerla Kiran said the move reflects the employee-friendly and humanitarian approach of Chief Min-

ister N. Chandrababu Naidu's government.

He appreciated the extension of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) to eligible employees who were affected due to administrative delays despite completing recruitment before the implementation of the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS). He said the decision brings long-awaited relief to several employees.

He also urged the govern-

High Court Seeks Report on Missing Tuni Toddler

Vijayawada, June 24 | TPN Bureau

The High Court has directed police to submit a comprehensive report on the disappearance of two-year-old Gnaneswari from Tuni, seeking details on whether Supreme Court-mandated procedures in missing children cases were followed.

Hearing a petition by advocate Srikanth, the court expressed concern over the progress of the investigation and stressed the need for urgent and sensitive handling. It asked po-

lice to detail all steps taken, including search operations, investigation measures and compliance with the Standard Operating Procedure.

Police informed the court that multiple teams are continuing the search, but the bench sought a written status report, noting the lack of progress.

Gnaneswari went missing on June 6 from CH Agraharam village. Police, NDRF, SDRF, Forest Department teams and volunteers have conducted extensive searches.

Healthcare at Your Doorstep: Mobile Medical Units Reach Tribal



Sravani Badugu

Access to healthcare in remote and underserved regions of Andhra Pradesh is set to improve significantly with the launch of the "Mee Intiki - Mee Doctor" (Your Doctor at Your Home) project under the REC Foundation's flagship "Doctor at Your Doorstep" programme. The initiative is being implemented by the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), Andhra Pradesh State Branch, to strengthen primary healthcare services for vulnerable communities.

Supported by a 100 % grant of 8.40 crore from the REC Foundation for three years, the project aims to benefit nearly five lakh poor and marginalized families across seven districts. The coverage includes tribal regions such as Parvathipuram Manyam, Alluri Sitharama Raju (Paderu), Palnadu, Tirupati and Nandyal, as well as coastal districts Dr. B.R.

Ambedkar Konaseema and West Godavari.

Seven Mobile Medical Units (MMUs), one in each district, will provide doorstep healthcare services. Equipped with diagnostic facilities, medicine-dispensing counters, vaccine storage systems, and emergency care support, the units will be staffed by a doctor, a nurse, and a pharmacist.

The programme will offer outpatient consultations, maternal and child healthcare, immunization, routine health check-ups and free medicines. Special attention will be given to pregnant women, newborns, young children, senior citizens and bedridden patients. Integrated with the State Government's Family Doctor Programme and the Arogyasri network, the initiative seeks to improve healthcare access, reduce medical expenses and lower maternal and infant mortality rates in remote communities.

Cancer Survivor Thanks Basavatarakam Hospital and Nara Lokesh

Kokkiligadda June 24 | TPN Bureau:

Kolli Damayanti, a 60-year-old resident of Kokkiligadda in Mopidevi mandal, met HRD and IT Minister Nara Lokesh during his tour to Mopidevi to express gratitude after recovering from cancer treatment. She said Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital in Hyderabad provided her high-

quality treatment at low cost, helping her return to a normal life. Damayanti said she underwent treatment two years ago and was fully cured, praising the care and support of doctors and staff. The meeting took place after Nara Lokesh inaugurated a Zilla Parishad school building in the village. Lokesh appreciated the hospital's services and said it continues to support many poor patients.

Temple Funds for Hindu Institutions Not Shirdi Sai Mandirs Says Minister

Amaravati, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Endowments Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy has clarified that funds belonging to Hindu temples will be utilized only for the protection and development of Hindu temples. Addressing a press conference on the achievements and reforms undertaken by the Endowments Department during the two years of the coalition government, the minister said there is no mention of Shirdi Sai in Hindu scriptures, Puranas, or Agama traditions.

Anam Ramanarayana Reddy stated that the Endowments Department is committed to safeguarding Hindu religious institutions in accordance with Vedic and Agama principles. He observed that devotees of Shirdi Sai come from various faiths and that many individuals and organizations are contributing to the development of Sai temples.

Highlighting the depart-

ment's achievements, the minister said the annual allocation under the Dhupadeepa Navivedya scheme for 6,137 temples has been increased to 73 crore. He added that 813 crore from Sarvashreya Nidhi funds has been sanctioned for the development of 692 ancient temples across the state.

The minister also announced that 5,000 Srivani Bhajan Mandirs are being established with the support of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. He said the government is digitizing 4.48 lakh acres of temple lands belonging to 22,672 temples using blockchain technology and has introduced digital governance initiatives through WhatsApp services and the Temple Management System.

Anam Ramanarayana Reddy further stated that trustees have been constituted for 970 temples, with representation provided to Brahmins and Nai Brahmins.

Govt Committed to Empowering BCs, Says Minister Savitha

Amaravati, June 24 | TPN Bureau

BC and EWS Welfare Minister S. Savitha on Wednesday said the coalition government is committed to advancing Backwards Classes (BCs) politically, economically and socially through welfare measures, educational opportunities and reservation policies.

Addressing a press conference at the State Secretariat in Amaravati, she said the government had allocated record funds for BC welfare, including 39,000 crore in its first budget, 47,000 crore in the second and 51,000 crore in the third. She announced the construction of permanent buildings for MJP residential schools with 500

core and the establishment of 10 new BC Gurukulams.

Savitha said free coaching is being provided for Civil Services, DSC, Group-1 and Group-2 examinations, while special BC Study Circles will be set up in Visakhapatnam, Anantapur and Tirupati. She also highlighted the proposed BC Protection Act-2026 and efforts to secure 34 percent reservations for BCs in local bodies.

The minister accused the previous YSRCP government of neglecting BC welfare and alleged attempts were made to create divisions among communities. She said action would be taken against those responsible for irregularities during the previous administration.

# Ram Charan Unveils Trophy as APL Final Phase Matches Begin

Continued

APL trophy and team jerseys. Speaking on the occasion, he said the APL provides a strong platform for young cricketers to showcase talent and helps in identifying and nurturing emerging players. He extended his wishes to all participating teams. Union Minister Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma, ACA President Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni), Secretary Sana Satish, and MLA Venigandla Ramu participated

in the event. The final phase matches will be held over four days from June 24 at the Mangalagiri stadium, with games scheduled in both afternoon and evening sessions. The league stage will conclude on June 27, followed by playoffs from June 28, while the final is scheduled for June 30. Seven teams are competing in the tournament. Bhimavaram Bulls currently lead the points table with 8 points from six matches, and the top four teams will qualify for the playoffs.

# Cordelia Cruises MV Empress Arrives at Visakhapatnam Port

continued

and international tourists. Officials at the Visakhapatnam Port Trust said the arrival of the Empress is expected to boost cruise tourism activity and strengthen the city's position as a key maritime tourism hub on the Bay of Bengal coast. The cruise operator has been expanding its east coast itinerary in recent seasons, attracting growing interest from travellers seeking short luxury sea vacations. The Visakhapatnam stopover includes shore excursion options covering coastal attractions and heritage sites in the region.

Tourism stakeholders in Andhra Pradesh have welcomed the continued deployment of Cordelia Cruises on the Vizag route, saying it will generate economic activity for hospitality, transport and allied sectors.

The ship is expected to continue its scheduled coastal sailing cycle before departing for its next destination as per the itinerary.

# Perni Nani Calls SIT Probe in Sai Krishna Custodial Death Case an Eyewash

Tadepalli, June 24 | TPN Bureau:

YSRCP has described the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into the Sai Krishna custodial death case as an "eyewash" and alleged that due procedures are not being followed in the investigation.

Addressing the media on Wednesday, former minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Perni Nani) said the SIT, despite comprising senior officers, was not conducting a comprehensive probe. He alleged that out of 17 persons questioned, five were family members and the rest police personnel, while key units such as the Task Force and senior officials were not examined.

Meanwhile, YSRCP leaders Kanna Babu, Thota Trimurthulu and Dadiseti Raja said separately that the custodial death in Krishna Lanka reflected a complete failure of law and order in the state. They alleged that the government was attempting to shield higher officials while placing responsibility on lower-level officers.

The leaders also criticised Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, alleging that his remarks were caste-based and inappropriate. They said gov-

ernance was functioning under what they described as a "Red Book Constitution" and accused the government of misusing the police to target opposition leaders.

They further objected to Naidu's comments on YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's temple visit during his Pulivendula tour, calling them politically motivated and uncharitable. They also rejected allegations that caste considerations were being linked to the Krishna Lanka case, saying such narratives were being deliberately created.

Perni Nani also referred to the remand report, stating that it unfairly placed sole responsibility on suspended Circle Inspector Nagaraju without examining wider involvement. He alleged that key evidence such as call data records, CCTV footage from surrounding areas and electronic devices were not properly collected or verified.

The leaders questioned why senior officials, including the Vijayawada Police Commissioner and deputy commissioner, were not interrogated. They also alleged inconsistencies in the investigation, including claims that Sai Krishna was still being searched for even after he had already been brought from Markapuram.

# Ambati Demands CBI Probe in Sai Krishna Custodial Death Case

Guntur, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Former Minister and YSRCP leader Ambati Rambabu on Wednesday alleged that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the custodial death of Gade Sai Krishna was attempting to shield accused Krishnalanka Circle Inspector Nagaraju rather than uncover the truth behind the case.

Addressing the media in Guntur, Rambabu claimed that crucial CCTV footage from Krishnalanka Police Station disappeared only after the SIT was constituted, raising serious doubts about the integrity of the investigation. He questioned how surveillance records could go missing despite Supreme Court guidelines requiring police stations to preserve CCTV footage for up to 18 months.

The YSRCP leader also expressed concern over the delay in the arrest of CI Nagaraju, noting that a case had been registered several days before action was taken. He alleged that the delay created suspicion and

weakened public confidence in the probe.

Rambabu maintained that only a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry could reveal the full facts surrounding Sai Krishna's death in custody. He asserted that an independent investigation would help determine the role of all individuals involved, including senior police officials.

He further criticized what he described as attempts to influence the investigation and alleged that efforts were being made to protect those responsible. Rambabu stated that YSRCP's demand for justice was not based on Sai Krishna's personal background but on the principle of accountability in cases involving custodial deaths.

# CM Naidu Inaugurates Jonnagiri Gold Project, Calls It Start of Golden Era in AP

Continued

He said Andhra Pradesh currently depends heavily on gold imports and stressed that domestic production would help reduce foreign exchange outflow. The Chief Minister said plans are underway to increase production to 50 metric tonnes annually in the long term and announced proposals for a Jewellery Park in Swarnagiri. Naidu said the government would adopt Jonnagiri as a model village and ensure local development through employment generation. He added that major investments were flowing into Rayalaseema in sectors such as space,

defence, electronics, automobiles and clean energy. He also highlighted ongoing projects, including Drone City in Kurnool, Orvakal Industrial Node, Kopparthi Industrial Node, and the upcoming High Court Bench for Kurnool.

He reiterated that irrigation projects such as Telugu Ganga, Handri-Neeva, Galeeru-Nagari and others had transformed the region, with 12,484 crore spent in the last two years. Under the Purvodaya initiative, 40,000 crore worth of projects are planned to develop Rayalaseema as a horticulture hub. On pensions, he said 10,800 employees were shifted from the

Contributory Pension Scheme to the Old Pension Scheme, benefiting them significantly despite the financial burden. Geo Mysore Services and Deccan Gold Mines presented the government with a gold-made map of Andhra Pradesh, which will be displayed at a proposed museum in Amaravati. The first batch of gold was also handed over to local jewellery firms, with companies committing to supply exclusively within the state.

Ministers Kollu Ravindra, Nimmala Ramanaidu and T. G. Bharat, along with senior officials, attended the programme.

# Naidu Slams Accuses YSRCP of Misinformation and Conspiracy Politics

Jonnagiri, June 24 | TPN Bureau:

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu responded strongly to recent political developments during the Jonnagiri Sabha, launching sharp criticism against the YSRCP, which he referred to as the Axe Party (Goddali Party), and accusing its leaders of spreading misinformation and divisive politics.

He alleged that YSRCP leaders were targeting Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan with false propaganda and attempting to incite caste tensions by giving a caste angle to incidents, including the Vijayawada case. He said the party was repeatedly misrepresenting facts and mislead-

ing the public.

Chandrababu Naidu also referred to allegations related to the Tirupati laddu prasadam issue, claiming adulteration had taken place in the past and stating that facts had now come to light. He said YSRCP leaders were trying to mislead people by visiting temples while ignoring earlier controversies. He further accused the previous YSRCP government of failing to fill teacher posts and spreading false narratives about DSC recruitment. He asserted that the current government had taken steps to fill vacancies transparently.

On pension reforms, he said 10,800 employees were moved from the Contributory

Pension Scheme to the Old Pension Scheme, with benefits of up to Rs 3 crore per employee, despite financial burden on the state.

The Chief Minister also accused YSRCP of promoting destructive politics and conspiracy theories while obstructing development initiatives. He said the coalition government was focused on industrial growth, welfare measures and restoring Rayalaseema's development.

He added that previous governance had caused damage to irrigation and infrastructure systems, while the present government was committed to correcting it and ensuring balanced development across the state.

# Nara Lokesh Begins Krishna District Tour with Mopidevi Temple Visit

continued

Venigandla Ramu, Kagita Krishna Prasad, Bode Prasad, RTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana and other TDP leaders were present.

TDP Activists Meeting at Mopidevi

Later, addressing the TDP activists' meeting, Nara Lokesh called upon cadres to strengthen the organisation and counter what he termed false propaganda being spread by the YSRCP, which he referred to as the Axe Party (Goddali Party). He alleged that the previous YSRCP government had indulged in abusive politics and targeted TDP leaders and workers. He urged cadres to expose such narratives at the village and mandal level and highlight what he described as misrule during the earlier regime.

Lokesh said the alliance government is now in the "TDP 3.0 phase" and stressed that party workers are the foundation of the organisation. He reiterated that the alliance between coalition partners must continue for the long term without differences or divisions.

He said the government is simultaneously focusing on welfare and development, including pensions, "Thalliki Vandanam," "Stree Shakti," "Deepam", and other schemes, along with Mega DSC recruitment and a structured job calendar to employ youth.



Party Strengthening and Welfare Measures

Nara Lokesh said the government has provided 4,000 pension support and filled 16,000 teacher posts through Mega DSC. He added that transparency in recruitment and governance reforms is being prioritised.

He criticised YSRCP for spreading misinformation on recruitment and governance issues and asked cadres to counter such narratives effectively. He announced a door-to-door campaign starting July 10 and instructed the completion of pending organisational committees in Avani-gadda on priority.

He also highlighted cadre welfare measures, including 5 lakh assistance to families of deceased party workers and health check-up programmes for party functionaries, including cluster and unit-level leaders.

Boat Ride at Puligadda

At Puligadda in Avani-gadda mandal, Nara Lokesh interacted with fisherfolk families and personally travelled by boat in Venipayya waters along with lo-

cal fishermen. He enquired about their livelihood conditions, fishing practices, income levels, subsidies and infrastructure requirements.

Fishermen informed him that small boats cost around 2.5 lakh and larger boats up to 7.5 lakh, with average monthly earnings of about 20,000. They also explained operational challenges, fishing timings, types of nets used and dependence on local markets.

They appealed for enhancement of diesel subsidy from 9 per litre to 25-30, along with support for boats, nets, engines, landing centres, storage facilities and housing for fishing families.

Lokesh assured them that the government would extend all possible support and work to improve their income levels. He recalled their support during his Yuva Galam padayatra and said fisherfolk welfare would remain a priority for the government.

Ministers Vasamshetti Subhash, MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry and senior TDP leaders accompanied the Minister throughout the tour.



# Lokesh Urges Cadres to Counter YSRCP Propaganda

Mopidevi, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) National Working President Nara Lokesh on Wednesday called upon party workers to effectively counter what he termed as the "false propaganda" of the YSRCP and take the Alliance government's welfare and development initiatives directly to the people.

Addressing a party workers' meeting at Mopidevi in Avani-gadda constituency, Lokesh said the proposed door-to-door outreach programme has been postponed to July 10 due to the ongoing survey process. He emphasized that the TDP-led alliance would continue for the long term and urged cadres to remain united and active at the grassroots level.

Highlighting the party's commitment to its workers, Lokesh reiterated the slogan "Party Worker is the Leader" and said the TDP has spent significant resources on cadre welfare, including financial assistance to families of deceased workers and efforts to withdraw cases filed against

party activists.

He stated that the Alliance government had implemented several welfare schemes over the past two years, including enhanced social pensions, free bus travel for women, the Deepam LPG scheme, Annadatha Sukhibhava, Anna Canteens, and employment initiatives through Mega DSC recruitment and a job calendar.

Lokesh said Andhra Pradesh was progressing on both welfare and development fronts, with investments and industries being attracted to generate employment opportunities for youth. He urged party workers to use the MyTDP app to showcase their work and strengthen the organization.

Criticizing the YSRCP, Lokesh alleged that the opposition was spreading misinformation and attempting to create political unrest. He called on party cadres to actively communicate the government's achievements and ensure that welfare benefits and development initiatives reach every household.



# Minister Alleges Rs 1.29L Cr Loss to AP Power Sector During Jagan's Rule

Amaravati, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar on Wednesday alleged that the Andhra Pradesh power sector suffered a cumulative loss of Rs 1.29 lakh crore during the 2019-24 tenure of former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, citing policy failures, project delays and mounting debt.

According to TDP leaders, electricity tariffs were revised nine times during the YSRCP government, placing an additional burden of over Rs 32,000 crore on consumers. They claimed that debts of power utilities rose from Rs 72,826 crore to Rs 1,12,422 crore, while delays in the VTPS ex-

pansion unit, Krishnapatnam Thermal Plant and Polavaram Hydel Project resulted in substantial financial losses.

The party further alleged that Jagan Mohan Reddy's decision to review and cancel Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) signed during the tenure of former Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu discouraged domestic and international investors in the renewable energy sector. TDP leaders said Andhra Pradesh, which had emerged as a national leader in green energy between 2014 and 2019, lost investment opportunities, employment generation and industrial growth due to the policy decisions of the previous government.

# YSRCP Questions Women's Commission Silence

Mangalagiri, June 24 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP women leaders on Tuesday criticized the Andhra Pradesh State Women's Commission, alleging that it has failed to respond effectively to increasing incidents of attacks, harassment, and derogatory remarks against women across the state.

Addressing the media outside the Women's Commission office in Mangalagiri, YSRCP leaders Uppala Harika, Rayana Bhagyalakshmi, Bandi Punya-seela, and Are Shyamala said they submitted five separate representations highlighting

cases related to harassment of women public representatives, social media abuse, violence against women, and atrocities against Dalit women.

The leaders expressed disappointment over the absence of the Commission Chairperson and said the representations were submitted to Commission Secretary Anuradha. They questioned why the Commission had not taken suo motu action in several cases involving alleged attacks, public humiliation, online trolling, morphing, and violence against women.

Uppala Harika alleged that



incidents targeting women had increased under the present government and claimed that action had not been taken in several reported cases. Referring to an earlier attack on her and damage to her vehicle, she

said those responsible were yet to face consequences.

The YSRCP leaders also voiced concern over incidents involving custodial deaths, suicides, attacks on Dalit women, and what they described as de-

teriorating law and order. They alleged that despite complaints being lodged with police authorities and the Women's Commission, adequate action was lacking. Demanding immediate intervention, the leaders urged the Women's Commission to function impartially and take decisive steps to safeguard women's dignity, safety, and rights. They further accused the state government of failing to ensure adequate protection and welfare measures for women and called for stronger institutional accountability in addressing crimes against women.



## Honest Auto Driver Returns Gold and Cash Worth ₹9 Lakh

Chirala, June 24 | TPN Bureau

An auto-rickshaw driver in Chirala earned praise for his honesty after returning a bag containing gold ornaments and cash worth nearly 9 lakh to its rightful owners on Wednesday.

According to police, Dasari Padmavathi and her husband travelled in an auto from Kothapeta to the Chirala bus stand. In the rush of getting down from the vehicle, they accidentally left behind a bag containing eight sovereigns of gold ornaments valued at around 9 lakh and 7,000 in cash.

While the couple was lodging a complaint at the Chirala One Town Police Station, auto driver Mogili Shanthakumar



arrived at the station and handed over the bag to police. He said he noticed the bag after the passengers had left and searched for them at the bus stand, but could not locate them.

One Town SI Tulasi Srinivasa Rao returned the valuables to the owners and appreciated Shanthakumar for his exemplary honesty and sense of responsibility.

## MP Assures Support as Tobacco Farmers Seek Remunerative Prices

Eluru, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Tobacco farmers from Chintalapudi, Polavaram and other constituencies in Eluru district on Wednesday met Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar and urged him to intervene in resolving issues affecting growers following a sharp decline in market prices.

During a meeting at the MP's camp office, farmer representatives expressed concern that tobacco prices had fallen to around Rs.200 per kg, causing heavy financial losses. They said farmers would face severe hardship unless prices improve to at least Rs.300 per kg.

Tobacco Farmers Association president Parimi Rambabu recalled that the MP's intervention last year had helped secure better prices and the removal of an additional cess on tobacco. He urged authorities to curb companies encouraging unauthorized cultivation and ensure remunerative prices for tobacco grown with prior approval from the Tobacco Board.



Farmers also requested the MP to persuade the Tobacco Board to allow a quota of 40 quintals per barn and protect the interests of NSL tobacco growers in the state.

After hearing their concerns, Putta Mahesh Kumar assured the delegation that he would raise the issue at the Tobacco Board meeting scheduled for Thursday and strive to secure justice for tobacco farmers.

## TDP Leaders Call for Stronger Grassroots Network

Ongole, June 24 | TPN Bureau

A wide-ranging Telugu Desam Party (TDP) meeting was held at the Magunta office in Ram Nagar, bringing together party leaders and functionaries from across the Ongole Parliamentary constituency to discuss organisational strengthening and future political strategies.

The meeting was chaired by Ongole Parliament TDP president and Kanigiri MLA Dr. Mukku Ugra Narasimha Reddy. Government Chief Whip and MLC Kancherla Srikanth, Ongole MLA Damacharla Janardhan, and Darshi TDP in charge Dr. Gottipati Lakshmi attended as chief guests. Ongole Parliament General Secretary Kothari Nageswara Rao, parliament committee members, mandal presidents, and general secretaries from all Assembly segments were also present.



Leaders held detailed discussions on party strengthening, organisational restructuring, membership expansion, and improving grassroots engagement on public issues. They stressed the need for coordinated efforts by leaders and cadres to further strengthen the party at all levels.

Several office-bearers, including vice-presidents, spokespersons, secretaries, coordinators, and mandal-level leaders from across the Parliament constituency, participated in the meeting and shared suggestions on expanding the party's reach and enhancing organisational effectiveness.

## Vijay Sai Reddy Visits Hospital to Enquire About Mudragada's Health

Hyderabad, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Former Rajya Sabha member V. Vijaya Sai Reddy visited Sindhu Hospital in Hyderabad on Wednesday to enquire about the health condition of senior Kapu leader and former minister Mudragada Padmanabham, who is currently undergoing treatment.

Mudragada Padmanabham has been admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) following health complications. As he remains under intensive medical care, Vijaya Sai Reddy was unable to meet him directly.

During his visit, the former MP interacted with Mudragada's son Giri, family members, and the treating doctors to gather details about his condition. He enquired about the progress of the treatment and the patient's response to medical care.

Speaking later, Vijaya Sai



Reddy described Mudragada Padmanabham as a leader known for his political values and public service. He expressed hope that the veteran leader would recover quickly and return to good health soon.

He also wished him a long and healthy life and said he was praying for his speedy recovery. Family members briefed him on the ongoing treatment and the medical team's efforts to ensure the senior leader's recovery.

## 106 Youth Selected at Eluru Job Mela, Says MLA Badeti Chanti

Eluru, June 24 | TPN Bureau

District Telugu Desam Party President and Eluru MLA Badeti Chanti on Wednesday advised unemployed youth to gain practical experience and develop professional skills to improve their career prospects. He said even a small job can provide valuable experience that helps individuals secure better opportunities and higher salaries in the future.

Speaking at a job mela organised by the Andhra Pradesh Skill Development Corporation at Sir C.R. Reddy College Auditorium in Eluru, the MLA inspected the inter-view process and interacted with participants. Represent-



atives from 14 companies conducted interviews for job seekers from Eluru and surrounding areas. Badeti Chanti said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Minister Nara Lokesh are committed to creating employment opportunities and securing the future of the state's youth. He noted that job melas are being conducted regularly through the AP Skill Development Corporation to connect unem-

ployed youth with recruiters.

A total of 223 job seekers attended the event, of whom 106 were selected for various positions. The MLA urged youth to make use of such opportunities and work towards achieving financial independence and career growth.

The programme was attended by TDP city president Chode Venkatarajam, secretary Reddy Nagaraju and other party leaders.

## AR Police Extend Financial Aid to Deceased Outsourcing Employee's Family

Bapatla, June 24 | TPN Bureau

In a gesture of solidarity and compassion, personnel of the Armed Reserve (AR) wing of Bapatla district police extended financial assistance of Rs.1.10 lakh to the family of outsourcing employee Kandukuri Koteswara Rao, who recently passed away due to illness.

Koteswara Rao had been serving in the police band unit since the formation of Bapatla district and was known for his dedicated service to the department. Following his demise on June 2, AR police personnel

and officers collectively contributed the amount to support his bereaved family.



The financial assistance was handed over to the family by Bapatla Superintendent of Police B. Umamaheshwar at the District Police Office on Wednesday. The SP

interacted with the family members, enquired about their welfare and assured them of continued support from the police department. Appreciating the initiative, Umamaheshwar said the contribution reflected the unity and humanitarian values of the police force. He urged police personnel to continue supporting colleagues and their families during times of hardship.

AR DSP P. Krishnam Raju, Admin RI Shaik Mouluddin, RSIs Kalyana Rao, Sudhakar and Ramalingeswara Rao, along with other AR officials and staff, attended the programme.

## Reconstruction of Historic Veeraraghava Swamy Temple Begins

Chirala, June 24 | TPN Bureau

The reconstruction works of the historic Sri Vedavalli Kanakavalli Sametha Sri Veeraraghava Swamy Temple commenced on Wednesday with a grand bhoomi puja and foundation-laying ceremony conducted amid religious fervour and Vedic chanting.

The temple, known for its rich heritage and spiritual significance, witnessed the participation of devotees, temple committee members and Endowments Department officials. The rituals were performed in accordance with Vedic traditions under the guidance of temple chief

priest Vasudeva Sampath Kumar, accompanied by traditional musical performances.

Temple representatives said the reconstruction project would be undertaken under the supervision of senior Endowments Department officials to preserve the temple's legacy while providing improved facilities for devotees. The initiative is expected to enhance the temple's infrastructure and restore its architectural splendour.

Devotees welcomed the commencement of the long-pending project and expressed hope that the redevelopment would further strengthen the temple's prominence as a spiritual centre.

Temple Trust Board Chairman Mamidala Srinivasa Rao, Endowments Department Deputy Commissioner Kamineni Basaveswara Srinivasa Rao, Bapatla District Endowments Officer Nagayya, temple com



mittee members, local leaders and devotees attended the ceremony.

## BC Residential Schools Sanction Draws Appreciation from BC Leaders

Amaravati, June 24 | TPN Bureau

The decision of the Andhra Pradesh government to sanction 10 new BC residential schools has been welcomed by representatives of backward classes, who described it as a significant step towards strengthening educational opportunities for BC students across the State.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, Dr. Nookasani Balaji, National Vice President of the Telugu Desam Party and Chairman of the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC), expressed gratitude to Chief Min-

ister N. Chandrababu Naidu for the initiative. He said the establishment of new residential schools would help provide quality education, accommodation, and competitive examination training to students from backward-class communities.

Dr. Balaji noted that the move reflects the government's commitment to ensuring equal educational opportunities for students from rural and economically weaker backgrounds. He said education remains the most effective tool for social and economic empowerment and that the new institutions would play a crucial role in shaping the future of thousands of students.



He also appreciated the government's continued efforts to promote inclusive development through education and welfare initiatives and expressed hope that more programmes would be introduced for the advancement of BC communities in the future.

## Cyber Fraud Gang Busted for Duping Software Engineer of Rs 21 Lakh

Madanapalle, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Police have busted a cyber fraud gang that allegedly cheated a software engineer out of more than Rs 21 lakh by promising to release a large amount of foreign currency supposedly seized by customs officials.

According to Superintendent of Police Dheeraj, the victim, V. Mohan Kumar of Pappireddipalle village in Madanapalle mandal, received a phone call on April 4 from a

person identifying himself as Edwin. The caller claimed he had arrived in Delhi with 2.5 lakh US dollars that had been detained by customs authorities and sought money for clearance charges.

Believing the story, Mohan Kumar transferred Rs 21.37 lakh. The caller subsequently became unreachable, prompting the victim to lodge a complaint.

Under the supervision of DSP Pavani, a police team led by Rural CI Kala Venkatarajam, SI Ramakrishna Reddy

and cyber cell personnel investigated the case and identified Assam natives Surajit Chetia and Ahotlian Kaipeng as suspects. The duo was arrested near Thattivaripalle Cross.

Police seized Rs 2 lakh in cash, three mobile phones, 57 bank passbooks, 35 ATM cards and 49 cheque books. Investigators said the accused purchased bank accounts from unsuspecting individuals and used them for cyber crimes. A key accused remains absconding, and efforts are underway to apprehend him.

## Police Conduct Awareness Programme on Shakti App

Chirala, June 24 | TPN Bureau

As part of efforts to strengthen women's safety and security, the Bapatla Police conducted an awareness programme on the Shakti App in Chirala on Wednesday. The programme was organized under the direction of Bapatla Superintendent of Police Uma Maheshwar and the supervision of Chirala DSP Moin. The awareness session was held near Hai Restaurant in Kothapeta, where Shakti Team member C.H. Sumitha interacted with local women and explained the features and benefits of the Shakti App. She encouraged women to download the application on their mobile phones to seek immediate assistance during emergencies.



Sumitha also created awareness about emergency helpline numbers 112, 181, 1930 and 1972, urging women to utilize them whenever necessary. She cautioned participants against opening suspicious links and falling prey to cyber fraud. Parents were advised not to allow minor children to drive vehicles and were encouraged to educate children about "Good Touch" and "Bad Touch" to help ensure their safety and well-being.

## Coalition Leaders Chart Strategy for Local Body Elections

Eluru, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Leaders of the coalition parties on Wednesday held a key meeting in Eluru and resolved to intensify grassroots efforts with the objective of securing victory in all local body seats across the district.

The meeting, held at the Telugu Desam Party office in Aminapet, was attended by Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar, Denduluru MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar, APCOB Chairman Ganni Veeranjanyulu, Polavaram TDP in-charge and TRICOR Chairman Boragam Srinivasa Rao, Kaikaluru in-charge Veeramalla Narasimha Rao, Kodali Vinod, former MLC Kammula Vithal Babu and other senior leaders.

Participants discussed strategies for the upcoming local body elections and emphasized the need to strengthen coordination among coalition part-



ners at the grassroots level. Leaders also reviewed plans to take government welfare and development initiatives directly to the people.

The meeting decided to postpone the proposed 45-day door-to-door outreach programme by 10 days in view of the ongoing SIR process. Leaders said the campaign would be launched after the process is completed and would focus on highlighting the achievements of the coalition government during its two years in office.

## Officials Told to Improve Accountability in Public Service Delivery

Eluru, June 24 | TPN Bureau

Government officials and staff must demonstrate greater accountability in addressing public grievances and implementing welfare programmes, Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar said while chairing the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meeting held at the Collectorate on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by Zilla Parishad Chairperson Ghanta Padmasri, District Collector K. Vetri Selvi, Superintendent of Police K. Pratap Shiva Kishore, Joint Collector M.J. Abhishek Gowda and senior officials from various departments.

Reviewing the status of issues raised in previous meetings, the MP expressed concern over delays in responding to public representations and stressed the need for prompt action to strengthen public confidence in the administration. He said effective coordination between officials and public representatives would



help resolve issues more efficiently.

The MP also reviewed railway infrastructure projects and sought quality execution of Eluru Railway Station modernisation works. He directed officials to expedite pending railway overbridge projects, drinking water initiatives, underground drainage works and road development proposals linked to the upcoming Godavari Pushkaralu.

District Collector K. Vetri Selvi assured that public issues raised by elected representatives would be addressed with priority and that necessary measures would be taken to ensure improved civic services across the district.

## Highway Checkpoints Intensified to Strengthen Law and Order

Karanchedu, June 24 | TPN Bureau

As part of efforts to maintain law and order and curb criminal activities, police conducted a special naka bandi operation on National Highway 167A under the jurisdiction of Karanchedu Police Station in Bapatla district on Wednesday.

The inspections were carried out under the supervision of Sub-Inspector Khadar Basha, with police personnel strategically deployed along the highway to thoroughly examine vehicles passing through the area. The operation focused on identifying suspicious vehicles and preventing anti-social activities, particularly during night hours. Police closely scrutinised two-wheelers with improper or

missing number plates, suspicious cars and other vehicles lacking valid documentation. Officials said the checks were aimed at strengthening public safety and ensuring that vehicles moving on the highway comply with legal requirements.

Speaking on the occasion, SI Khadar Basha said such surveillance measures and naka bandi operations would continue regularly as per the directions of higher authorities to prevent disturbances to peace and security. He urged motorists to cooperate with police inspections and ensure they carry all necessary vehicle documents while travelling.

Police personnel and home guards participated in the operation.

Editorial

**BHARAT BHUSHAN TIWARI: A QUESTION FOR THE YOUTH**

Almost a week has passed, yet neither social media nor mainstream media seems able to forget Bharat Bhushan Tiwari. What began as a local issue in Bihar has now drawn the attention of the entire nation. People across India want to know who he was and why his story has touched so many hearts.

Bharat Bhushan Tiwari, a 28-year-old social activist from Bhojpur district, was killed by the police after a two-day protest. Authorities reportedly described him as mentally unstable. However, many people see a different picture. They believe he was a young man deeply disturbed by the suffering of flood victims and the failure of the system to provide relief and rehabilitation.

The Shahpur area of Bhojpur district witnessed severe floods during the monsoons of 2024 and 2025. Even after two years, many affected families continue to struggle for justice and rehabilitation. For Tiwari, this was not merely an administrative failure; it was a human tragedy. The sight of people battling for survival along the banks of the Sone and Ganga rivers reportedly pushed him into a state of frustration and anger against a system he believed was indifferent to their plight.

For the past two years, he had been raising his voice for the victims. As a social activist, he chose to stand with those who felt abandoned. According to his supporters, his confrontation with the administration was born out of despair over corruption and inaction. They argue that while the system failed to control corruption, it acted swiftly in the name of maintaining law and order.

The massive turnout at his funeral and cremation reflected the emotions of thousands who viewed him as a symbol of resistance. Whether one agrees with his methods or not, Bharat Bhushan Tiwari's story has sparked a larger debate about governance, accountability, and social justice.

More importantly, it raises a question before the youth of this country: What are we doing for society, and what should we be doing when people around us continue to suffer?

Editor

**Othello: The Play That Conquered the Human Mind**

Chitkena Kiran Kumar



Poet, Writer & Columnist, Member, International Benevolent Research Forum

When we look at the history of world literature, we find that some works transcend their own age and continue to influence generations. Kingdoms disappear, societies change, and languages evolve, but a few literary masterpieces remain relevant forever. One such immortal work is Othello, written by William Shakespeare. More than four centuries have passed since its creation, yet the play continues to captivate readers, audiences, scholars, and critics across the world. The reason for its enduring appeal lies not merely in its story but in the profound truths it reveals about human nature.

Literature has produced countless love stories, heroic tales, and tragic narratives. However, very few works have explored human emotions such as jealousy, suspicion, trust, betrayal, and manipulation with the depth and intensity found in Othello. For this reason, the play is not just a literary text; it is a timeless study of the human mind and its vulnerabilities.

To appreciate Othello, one must first understand its creator, William Shakespeare. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest writers in the history of world literature. Born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, Shakespeare rose from a modest background to become a literary figure whose influence extends far beyond his own era. Through his remarkable understanding of human behaviour and emotions, he earned a permanent place in the cultural history of the world.

Shakespeare began his career as an actor before establishing himself as a playwright. His association with the London theatre world provided him with opportunities to observe people from different walks of life. These experiences enriched his writing and enabled him to create characters that continue to feel real and relat-

able even today. His plays are filled with individuals who love, hate, dream, suffer, make mistakes, and struggle with moral dilemmas. This realism is one of the reasons why his works have remained relevant for centuries.

Among Shakespeare's most celebrated works are Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Julius Caesar, The Tempest, Twelfth Night, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, and Much Ado About Nothing. Collectively, these plays reveal his extraordinary ability to portray different dimensions of human life. While Romeo and Juliet explores love, Macbeth examines ambition, Hamlet delves into indecision and inner conflict, and King Lear reflects on ageing and power. In Othello, Shakespeare presents one of the most destructive human emotions—jealousy.

What makes Shakespeare truly remarkable is not merely his storytelling ability but his deep understanding of the human psyche. His characters are not distant figures from history; they resemble ordinary people whom we encounter in everyday life. Their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and struggles mirror our own experiences. As a result, readers from different cultures and generations continue to find meaning in his works.

At the centre of Othello stands a brave and accomplished military commander. Othello is respected for his courage, leadership, and achievements on the battlefield. He is a man who has conquered external enemies and earned honour through his abilities. Yet, despite all his strength, he fails to overcome a weakness that emerges within his own mind. This contrast between external success and internal vulnerability forms the heart of the tragedy.

The play demonstrates that even the strongest individuals can



be defeated by their own emotions. Shakespeare challenges the common belief that power and success guarantee stability and wisdom. Through Othello's downfall, he reveals that a person's greatest enemy may not always be outside but may arise from within.

One of the most fascinating characters in world literature is Iago, the principal antagonist of the play. Unlike traditional villains who rely on physical force, Iago uses words, deception, and psychological manipulation as his weapons. He understands human weaknesses and exploits them with extraordinary skill. By planting seeds of doubt in Othello's mind, he gradually transforms trust into suspicion and love into destruction.

The character of Iago remains relevant even in the modern world. In an age dominated by social media, misinformation, rumours, and manipulation, his methods appear surprisingly contemporary. Shakespeare, writing more than four hundred years ago, effectively warned society about the dangers of false narratives and unchecked suspicion.

Another significant character in the play is Desdemona. She represents love, loyalty, innocence, and devotion. Her affection for Othello is sincere and unwavering. However, despite her honesty

and goodness, she becomes a victim of circumstances beyond her control. Through Desdemona's tragic fate, Shakespeare highlights the painful reality that innocence is not always enough to protect an individual from injustice.

The play therefore extends beyond the boundaries of a domestic tragedy. It is a profound psychological exploration of how human thoughts can be influenced and distorted. Once suspicion enters the mind, it alters perception and reshapes reality. Every action, word, and event begins to appear through the lens of doubt. Modern psychology recognises many of these patterns, making Othello remarkably relevant even in contemporary discussions about human behaviour.

The global influence of Othello is immense. The play has been translated into numerous languages and staged in countries across the world. From Europe and America to Asia, Africa, and Australia, audiences have embraced the story and interpreted it within their own cultural contexts. Despite differences in language, geography, and tradition, the emotional core of the play remains universally understandable. The world of cinema has also been deeply influenced by Othello. Several film adaptations have been produced in different lan-

guages and cultural settings. Some have remained faithful to Shakespeare's original narrative, while others have adapted the story to suit local audiences. Yet the central themes of jealousy, manipulation, trust, and betrayal continue to resonate in every adaptation.

In India, Shakespeare's influence has been particularly significant. His plays have been translated into many Indian languages and have inspired generations of writers, dramatists, and scholars. Othello has received considerable attention in literary circles and academic institutions. Indian readers and theatre enthusiasts often view it not as a foreign text but as a universal story that reflects experiences found within their own society.

Even today, many social and personal conflicts arise from misunderstandings, mistrust, and suspicion. Family disputes, broken relationships, and emotional turmoil often have roots similar to those depicted in Othello. This is one of the primary reasons why the play continues to feel relevant. It does not belong solely to the past; it speaks directly to the present. World literature has produced countless works over the centuries. Many have faded into obscurity, while only a select few have achieved timeless status. Othello belongs to this rare category because it is not merely the story of one man's downfall. It is a reflection of the emotional conflicts that exist within every human being. It is not simply a tragic drama; it is a profound meditation on trust, doubt, love, and the fragile nature of human relationships. More than four hundred years after its creation, Othello continues to be read, performed, studied, and discussed across the globe. Times have changed, societies have evolved, and technologies have advanced, yet the human mind remains susceptible to the same emotions that Shakespeare explored centuries ago. By capturing these timeless truths with extraordinary insight, Shakespeare ensured that Othello would remain one of the greatest and most enduring masterpieces in the history of world literature.

**Fragility of Words Vs Utility of Deeds**



Pokkuluri Subbarao

Veteran Journalist



In an era dominated by instant communication and constant scrutiny, integrity stands as both a rare virtue and a vital currency. The timeless adage "doing what is said and saying what is done" still holds, yet the complexities of modern life demand a more nuanced approach. Premature promises often unravel amid changing circumstances, exposing leaders, organizations, and individuals to charges of inconsistency. The wiser course is to act first and speak later—ensuring that words are firmly grounded in deeds rather than conjecture.

**Integrity as the Bedrock of Trust**

Integrity transcends mere slogans; it embodies the harmony of values, words, and actions. When leaders or organizations consistently fulfil their commitments, they cultivate credibility that endures even through crises. Trust is built not on rhetoric but on reliability. Whether in workplaces, families, or politics, integrity is the adhesive that binds relationships.

**The Risk of Premature Promises**

Declaring intentions before execution can lead to misunderstandings. Circumstances evolve—policies

encounter resistance, projects face delays, and personal goals waver under pressure. When words outstrip actions, credibility diminishes. In politics, this often results in broken promises; in business, failed product launches; and in personal life, unmet commitments. The lesson is clear: integrity demands not only intention but also impeccable timing.

**Political Leadership Lessons**

History provides compelling examples of leaders who exemplified integrity by prioritizing action over speech.

Mahatma Gandhi showcased through marches and boycotts how non-violence could dismantle colonial rule. His credibility stemmed from lived practice rather than empty promises.

Nelson Mandela, after decades of imprisonment, refrained from immediate promises of reconciliation; instead, he enacted it by collaborating with former adversaries to forge a democratic South Africa.

Kiran Bedi, India's first woman IPS officer, demonstrated fearless integrity by ticketing illegally parked cars during the Asian Games—including one belonging to the Prime Minister. She acted

first, spoke later, earning respect for her fairness.

These examples underscore that political integrity is less about speeches and more about communication backed by action.

**Corporate Responsibility in Practice**

Businesses also prosper when they act before they speak. Apple's culture of secrecy ensures product launches are unveiled only after completion, maximizing impact and minimizing disappointment. A manufacturing firm facing pollution complaints earned respect by addressing the issue before issuing public statements. Similarly, startups that quietly remediate vulnerabilities after data breaches rebuild trust more effectively than those making premature promises. These instances illustrate that corporate integrity extends beyond mere compliance to genuine responsibility.

**Integrity in Daily Life**

On a personal level, integrity means aligning commitments with actions. Prematurely announcing lifestyle changes, such as fitness routines, often backfires. By acting first—building consistency—and then sharing results, individuals avoid embarrassment and inspire confidence. Here, integrity is not secrecy but reliability.

**Takeaway**

Integrity remains the cornerstone of trust, yet its practice requires discernment. Promises should be made only when delivery is assured, and communication should follow action. Leaders who act first and speak later inspire confidence; businesses that reveal achievements post-completion strengthen credibility; individuals who let results speak avoid misunderstandings. In an uncertain world, the most respected voices are those whose words resonate with their deeds.

**A Reader's Reflection on the Dignity of the Fourth Pillar**



GW Prabhakar

Veteran Journalist, An Embarrassment That Demands Urgent Attention

**(Response to True Point Article by Chennu Peddiraju)**

The article "Journalists' Pension Scheme - An embarrassment to the fourth pillar of democracy" by Chennu Peddiraju is not just a piece of writing—it is a painful reflection of a reality that many in the profession silently endure. It brings out the stark contrast between the respect journalists are publicly accorded and the neglect they face in their later years. As a reader, one cannot help but feel both disturbed and compelled to reflect on the issue.

**A Cry of Anguish, Not Just a Report**

This is more than a report—it is the voice of a journalist who has dedicated four decades of his life to the profession. After serving reputed institutions like Eenadu and ETV2, receiving a pension of less than ₹2,000 at the age of 65 is nothing short of distressing. Such an amount is insufficient even to meet basic medical expenses, let alone sustain a dignified life.

The irony highlighted through the accompanying cartoon is striking. While political leaders glorify journalism as the "fourth pillar of democracy," the very individuals who uphold this pillar are left to struggle for survival. The image of an elderly journalist burdened with "Service to Democracy - Unfulfilled Promises" captures this contradiction powerfully.

**Three Harsh Realities**

The article lays bare three uncomfortable truths. First, many journalists, especially at the district level, work for years with meagre salaries and no social security benefits like PF or gratuity. Their dedication often goes unrewarded after retirement.

Second, the pension offered to journalists in some cases is even lower than social welfare pensions. When states provide 3,000–4,000 for widows and the elderly, offering 500 to a journalist raises serious questions about dignity and fairness.

Third, the lack of meaningful implementation in Telugu states stands out. While states like Bihar, Haryana, Kerala, and Assam provide relatively substantial pensions, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana appear to have limited progress to announcements rather than action.

**Why It Is Truly an 'Embarrassment'**

The term "embarrassment" is justified on multiple counts. For governments, it reflects the contradiction between rhetoric and reality—praising journalism while failing to support journalists. For the profession, it is equally disheartening to see those who once questioned power forced to seek help for basic survival.

A journalist's role in holding the system accountable should not end in indignity. Those who dedicated their lives to public service deserve security and respect in return.

A Practical and Reasonable Demand  
The demand for a minimum



pension of 10,000 is both reasonable and necessary. Along with this, provisions such as inflation-linked revisions, family pensions, health insurance, and emergency medical support are essential to ensure basic dignity.

**A Question of Priorities, Not Resources**

This issue is less about financial constraints and more about intent. Governments allocate hundreds of crores annually for advertisements. A small reallocation from such budgets could easily fund a dignified pension system for senior journalists. The challenge, therefore, lies in prioritizing welfare over optics.

Concerns about independence are valid, but they should not be used as an excuse for inaction. A transparent system, possibly managed by an independent body led by a retired judge, could address such concerns effectively.

**The Larger Question Before Us**

Why should Telugu states lag behind when others have implemented better systems?

Despite repeated announcements, a structured and dignified pension framework has not materialized. This gap between promise and practice is what truly makes the situation embarrassing.

An economically vulnerable journalist weakens democracy; a compromised journalist weakens it even further. The need of the hour is a balanced approach—ensuring financial dignity while preserving independence.

It is not enough to celebrate journalism in speeches. True respect lies in ensuring that those who upheld the fourth pillar are not left to struggle in their final years. Until that happens, the concern raised in the article will remain valid—and the embarrassment, undeniable.

The author's argument is both timely and justified. If the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana take the initiative to implement a minimum pension of ₹10,000, it would not only support journalists but also strengthen public trust in governance. The ball is now firmly in their court.

# Ladakh Tightens Security Around Leh Airport After IAF Concerns



The Ladakh administration has initiated a series of measures to strengthen security and regulatory oversight around the strategically significant Leh airport following concerns raised by the Indian Air Force (IAF) over the circulation of sensitive images and videos on social media.

The issue was reviewed during a high-level interdepartmental meeting chaired by Nidhi Malik, Administrative Secretary of Ladakh's Civil Aviation Department. The meeting examined security, aviation safety, infrastructure and operational issues highlighted by Air Force Station Leh, which serves both military and civilian aviation

needs in the region. According to officials, the IAF expressed concern over the increasing number of photographs and videos showing operational areas, runway layouts, aircraft movements and other restricted zones being recorded and uploaded online by visitors and tourists. Authorities warned that such content could pose security risks, particularly given Leh's proximity to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and its importance in India's border defence network.

In response, the administration directed concerned agencies to strictly enforce existing restrictions on photography and videography around sensitive installations. Public aware-

ness campaigns will also be launched to educate visitors about prohibited areas, while standard operating procedures are being prepared to prevent unauthorized recording of defence-related facilities.

The concerns were initially communicated to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, prompting a coordinated review involving multiple departments and technical agencies. Officials emphasized that the objective is to balance tourism and civil aviation activities with national security requirements.

Apart from security issues, the meeting also reviewed several aviation-related matters, including the proposed second

runway at Leh airport, air-space safety, terrain challenges and obstacle limitation requirements. IAF representatives stressed the need for scientific assessments of physical obstructions around the airport to ensure compliance with aviation safety standards and future operational needs.

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO), Revenue Department and other technical agencies have been directed to conduct surveys of identified areas and submit detailed reports with recommendations. Discussions also covered land-use regulations, building permissions near airport zones and monitoring unauthorized constructions that could affect flight operations.

The installation of CCTV cameras and surveillance infrastructure overlooking sensitive defence establishments was another key topic. Officials stated that any such installations would require strict adherence to security protocols and prior approval from competent authorities.

Leh airport remains one of India's most strategically important airfields due to its altitude, location and role in supporting both civilian travel and military operations. Authorities said the latest measures are aimed at safeguarding national security while ensuring safe and efficient aviation operations in the region.

# ED Cracks Down on Drug Syndicate Linked to Dawood Aide



The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday conducted extensive searches across Maharashtra and Gujarat as part of a money laundering investigation linked to alleged international drug trafficker Salim Ismail Dola, a close associate of fugitive underworld don Dawood Ibrahim.

Officials said raids were carried out at nearly 20 locations in Mumbai, Surat, Rajkot and Ankleshwar under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The searches targeted premises associated with chemical suppliers, traders, hawala operators and individuals suspected of holding assets allegedly acquired through proceeds generated from narcotics trafficking.

According to investigating agencies, the case revolves around the production, distribution and financial transactions linked to Mephedrone, popularly known as MD, a synthetic narcotic drug that has emerged as a major concern for law enforcement agencies in recent years. Authorities are examining financial records, digital devices, bank documents and other materials seized during the searches to establish the money trail connected to the alleged drug network.

The investigation gained significance following the return of Salim Ismail Dola to India from Türkiye. Dola is accused

of operating an international narcotics syndicate with links extending across multiple countries. Investigators believe the network used a complex system involving shell entities, hawala channels and benami properties to move and conceal funds generated through illegal drug trade.

ED officials are reportedly tracing investments, real estate holdings and business interests suspected to have been funded through proceeds of crime. The agency is also examining possible links between suppliers of precursor chemicals and the alleged narcotics manufacturing network.

Sources said the probe is focused not only on identifying the financial beneficiaries of the drug trade but also on dismantling the infrastructure that facilitated the movement of illicit funds. The searches are expected to provide crucial evidence regarding the syndicate's operations, financial transactions and asset holdings.

The latest action forms part of a broader crackdown on organized crime and drug trafficking networks with alleged international connections. Investigators are expected to question several individuals whose names have surfaced during the course of the inquiry.

Officials indicated that further searches, summons and asset-freezing actions may follow depending on the evidence recovered during the raids. The ED is coordinating with other central and state agencies as it seeks to uncover the full extent of the alleged narcotics and money laundering network.

The investigation remains ongoing, with authorities expecting fresh leads from the documents and digital evidence seized during Wednesday's operations.

# Kerala HC Orders Fresh Oath for 20 BJP Councillors

In a significant ruling, the Kerala High Court has declared invalid the oath taken by 20 BJP councillors of the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation and directed them to take a fresh oath within four weeks.

Justice P.V. Kunhikrishnan passed the order while hearing a petition filed by CPI(M) councillor S.P. Deepak, who challenged the manner in which the councillors had taken their oath of office. The petition argued that elected representatives are required to take the oath either in the name of God or in accordance with the Constitution, as prescribed by law. However, the BJP councillors had reportedly invoked specific deities and martyrs during the oath-taking ceremony, which the petitioner claimed was contrary to the prescribed format.



The court agreed that the oath was not administered in the legally mandated manner and therefore could not be considered valid. At the same time, the High Court clarified that the councillors would continue to enjoy legal protection for all actions performed so far in their official capacity under the Municipalities Act, ensuring that civic adminis-

tration remains unaffected. Reacting to the verdict, Thiruvananthapuram Mayor V.V. Rajesh said the Corporation would comply with the court's directions and make arrangements for the councillors to retake the oath within the stipulated period. He emphasized that the judgment does not disqualify the councillors from holding office.

The Mayor also stated that the functioning of the Corporation, including standing committee meetings and routine administrative activities, would continue without interruption. Regarding BJP councillor Sugathan, who is currently in jail, Rajesh said appropriate steps would be taken in accordance with the court's order. He further noted that preliminary information suggests a few other councillors may also have invoked specific deities while taking the oath. The Corporation will verify those instances and take necessary action if required.

The ruling highlights the importance of adhering to constitutional and statutory procedures in public office and reinforces the legal framework governing oath-taking by elected representatives.

# Thousands Participate in Srinagar's 8th Muharram Procession



Thousands of Shia mourners took part in the traditional 8th Muharram procession in Srinagar on Wednesday, marking the third consecutive year that authorities have permitted the historic route through the city's central areas after a gap of more than three decades.

The procession commenced from Guru Bazaar and proceeded through Jehangir Chowk, Budshah Chowk and Moulana Azad Road before moving toward Dal Gate, where it was scheduled to conclude with a mourning congregation. Extensive security, traffic and medical arrangements were put in place to facilitate the event, with officials and community volunteers coordinating crowd management and public services.

Men, women and children from various parts of the Kashmir Valley participated in the procession. Mourners recited elegies and nohas commemorating Imam Hussain and the martyrs of Karbala, while groups performed traditional matam as part of the observance.

The Guru Bazaar procession was among the major Muharram processions barred from Srinagar's traditional routes following the outbreak of mili-

tancy in 1989. Authorities had cited security concerns and the possibility of large gatherings being used for political mobilization. For decades, only smaller religious events and local Muharram observances were permitted in predominantly Shia areas such as Zaidibag and in towns including Budgam and Magam.

The historic route was reopened in 2024, ending a restriction that had lasted for more than 30 years. Since then, the administration has continued to allow the procession under closely monitored conditions.

This year's event was held amid heightened attention following previous controversies surrounding the display of certain political and religious symbols during Muharram processions. While Hezbollah flags and portraits of its leaders were absent this year, some

participants carried Iranian national flags and portraits of Iranian leaders and individuals killed in recent regional conflicts.

Police and paramilitary personnel were deployed along the route and in adjoining areas to ensure security and manage traffic diversions. Officials reported that the procession remained peaceful and orderly throughout the day.

As the procession moved toward Dal Gate for the concluding majlis, authorities expressed satisfaction with the arrangements and credited the smooth conduct of the event to coordination between security agencies, civil administration and community volunteers. The successful observance further reinforces the gradual restoration of traditional religious processions in Srinagar after decades of restrictions.

# India Faces Growth Headwinds as Trade Talks Advance

India's economic growth is expected to moderate in the current fiscal year as global uncertainties, energy market pressures, and concerns over monsoon performance weigh on economic activity, according to a latest assessment by S&P Global Ratings. At the same time, New Delhi is stepping up efforts to strengthen trade ties with major partners, including the United States and the United Kingdom, to support long-term growth and investment.



S&P Global Ratings has projected India's GDP growth at 6.6 percent for FY2026-27, down from 7.7 percent recorded in the previous fiscal year. The agency cited rising energy costs, expectations of a weaker monsoon, and slowing global economic activity as key factors behind the anticipated slowdown.

The report noted that India's heavy dependence on imported crude oil leaves the economy vulnerable to fluctuations in global energy prices. Higher fuel and fertilizer costs are expected to push up inflation and increase production expenses across sectors. Consumer inflation is projected to rise to around 5.1 percent during the fiscal year as businesses pass on increased costs to consumers.

Concerns over rainfall have also emerged, with a significant monsoon deficit reported in June. Lower rainfall could affect agricultural output and rural demand, prompting the government to prepare contingency plans, including alternative crop strategies in vulnerable regions.

Amid these challenges, India and the United States have moved closer to finalizing an interim trade agreement ahead of a key tariff deadline next month. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer recently held ministerial-level discussions focused on market access, digital trade, supply chain resilience, and reduction of non-tariff barriers.

Both sides expressed confidence that the proposed agreement would serve as a stepping stone toward a broader Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), strengthening economic cooperation and expanding commercial opportunities.

Meanwhile, Goyal is set to visit the United Kingdom to advance preparations for implementing the landmark India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), scheduled to come into effect on July 15. Discussions will focus on tariff reductions, customs coordination, professional mobility, and regulatory alignment.

The government believes the trade pact will boost exports, attract investment, and support the shared goal of expanding India-UK bilateral trade to \$120 billion by 2030.

While global challenges may temper short-term growth prospects, policymakers remain optimistic that stronger international partnerships, expanding investment flows, and structural reforms will help sustain India's long-term economic momentum.

# Odisha Mourns Gas Leak Victims as Bodies Return Home

A wave of grief swept through several villages in Odisha's Keonjhar district on Wednesday as the bodies of five women workers who died in the ammonia gas leak incident in Tamil Nadu were brought back to their native places for final rites.

Heart-rending scenes were witnessed in Kodipasa, Talachampe, Rangamatia and Tangiri villages, where family members, relatives and local residents gathered to bid farewell to the deceased. Two of the victims belonged to Tangiri village, while one each hailed from Kodipasa, Talachampe and Rangamatia.

The women were among the workers affected by an ammonia gas leak at a seafood processing unit in Periyapalayam, located in Tamil Nadu's Tiruvallur district, on June 19. The tragedy has deepened after two more workers succumbed to their injuries while undergoing treatment, taking the death toll among workers from Odisha's Keonjhar district to seven.

The incident has devastated several economically vulnerable

families, as many of the victims were the primary breadwinners of their households. Having migrated to Tamil Nadu in search of better employment opportunities, they had been supporting their families through their earnings.

As the bodies arrived in their native villages, scenes of anguish unfolded. Relatives struggled to come to terms with the sudden loss of their loved ones. Many family members said the victims had recently started contributing to household expenses and nurturing hopes of improving their families' financial conditions.

One grieving relative said the family had expected a better future after the victim began sending money home, but instead received the heartbreaking news of her death. The relative also expressed concern about the family's survival in the absence of its earning member.

The tragedy has sparked widespread demands for adequate compensation, accountability and long-term support for the affected families. Villagers pointed

out that all seven victims came from poor backgrounds and had travelled hundreds of kilometres away from home solely to earn a livelihood.

Responding to the tragedy, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi enhanced the ex-gratia compensation for the families of the deceased from 4 lakh to 10 lakh. The state government has also deployed officials to Tamil Nadu to coordinate with local authorities, assist the affected families and oversee support measures for injured workers.

Several workers injured in the gas leak continue to receive treatment in hospitals, with reports indicating that some remain in critical condition. Authorities are closely monitoring their health while investigations into the circumstances surrounding the ammonia leak continue.

The tragedy has once again highlighted concerns over workplace safety standards and the vulnerabilities faced by migrant workers who leave their homes in search of employment opportunities.

## Trump Rejected Proposal for Indian Peacekeepers in Ukraine

A new book on the administration of US President Donald Trump has revealed that India was considered as a potential contributor to a peacekeeping force in Ukraine, but the idea was quickly dismissed by Trump himself during internal White House discussions.

According to Regime Change: Inside the Imperial Presidency of Donald Trump, authored by New York Times journalists Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Swan, the proposal emerged during a high-level meeting in the Oval Office on January 30, shortly after Trump began his second term. The meeting focused on efforts to end the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, a key campaign promise of the US President.

The book states that retired Lieutenant General Keith Kellogg, Trump's special envoy for Russia and Ukraine, presented a peace plan that envisioned peacekeeping troops from countries such as the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands. However, US Vice



President JD Vance reportedly opposed deploying NATO-member forces, arguing that such a move could further antagonize Russia.

Seeking alternatives, Vance suggested the possibility of involving countries outside Europe and reportedly mentioned India as a potential contributor. Trump is said to have laughed off the proposal, remarking, "The Indians won't do that... won't pay for something like that," while also referring to his personal rapport with Prime Minister Narendra

Modi. India has consistently maintained a neutral stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, advocating dialogue and diplomacy rather than military solutions. New Delhi has repeatedly called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and a negotiated settlement. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington in February 2025, India reiterated its position that "this is not an era of war" and emphasized that conflicts cannot be resolved on the battlefield. While the question of send-

ing Indian peacekeepers was never formally discussed by the Indian government, the possibility has occasionally surfaced in public debate. In April 2025, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor suggested that India could consider contributing a limited peacekeeping contingent if a mutually accepted ceasefire were established.

India possesses extensive experience in international peacekeeping operations and has been one of the largest contributors to United Nations missions worldwide. Indian forces have served in conflict zones including South Sudan, Lebanon and Somalia, earning recognition for their role in maintaining stability and humanitarian support.

The revelation offers a rare glimpse into internal US deliberations on ending the Ukraine conflict and highlights how India's growing global profile has led policymakers to consider it in discussions involving international peace and security.

## PM Modi Invited to Ayatollah Khamenei's Funeral Ceremonies in Iran

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has reportedly invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attend the funeral and burial ceremonies of Iran's late Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, according to diplomatic sources. The ceremonies are scheduled to be held from July 5 to July 9 across several key Iranian cities.

While diplomatic sources have confirmed the invitation, there has been no official confirmation from the Indian government regarding Prime Minister Modi's participation in the events.

Ayatollah Khamenei, who served as Iran's Supreme Leader for nearly three decades and was one of the most influential figures in West Asian politics, was killed on February 28 during large-scale air strikes carried out by the United States and Israel on Tehran. His death marked a significant turning point in the region and triggered widespread political and diplomatic reactions across the world.

According to the reported schedule, the funeral ceremonies will begin in Tehran on July 5 and continue on July 6 and 7. Additional commemorative events are expected to take place in the holy city of Qom, an important religious



center for Shia Muslims. The final burial ceremony is scheduled for July 9 in Mashhad, another major religious city in northeastern Iran.

The invitation extended to Prime Minister Modi is being viewed as a reflection of the longstanding diplomatic ties between India and Iran. The two countries share cooperation in areas such as energy, trade, connectivity, and regional security. India has also maintained close engagement with Iran on strategic projects, including the development of the Chabahar Port, which is considered crucial for regional connectivity.

The possible participation of the Indian Prime Minister in the ceremonies would carry significant diplomatic importance, given the evolving

geopolitical situation in West Asia following recent military tensions and the leadership transition in Iran.

Several world leaders and senior officials from various countries are expected to attend the funeral events, which are likely to draw global attention. The ceremonies will not only honor Khamenei's legacy but also provide an opportunity for international diplomatic engagement amid changing regional dynamics.

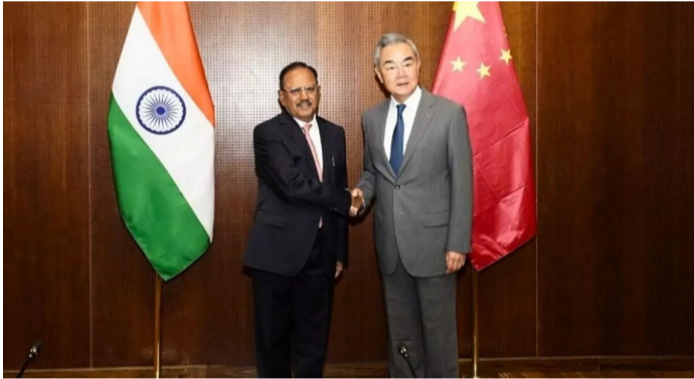
Observers note that New Delhi's decision regarding representation at the funeral will be closely watched, as India continues to balance its strategic relationships across the Middle East while maintaining its policy of constructive engagement with all major regional powers.

## Doval Stresses Mutual Sensitivity in India-China Relations

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval has emphasized the need for India and China to remain sensitive to each other's core concerns as both countries continue efforts to stabilize and improve bilateral relations after years of tension along the border.

Doval conveyed the message during talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of a BRICS security officials' meeting in New Delhi. The discussions focused on the overall state of India-China relations and developments along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which has remained a key point of contention between the two neighbours.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs, Doval stressed that stable, predictable and constructive bilateral ties are essential for building trust and enhancing mutual understanding. He also underlined the importance of con-



sistently respecting each other's core interests, reflecting India's broader approach of mutual sensitivity, mutual respect and mutual interests.

The meeting comes as New Delhi and Beijing seek to rebuild relations that were severely strained following the prolonged military standoff in eastern Ladakh. Both sides have been working through diplomatic and military channels to reduce tensions and

restore normal engagement.

Chinese officials echoed similar sentiments. Chinese Ambassador Xu Feihong said Wang emphasized the importance of viewing bilateral relations from a long-term and global perspective. He noted that cooperation between the world's two most populous nations could contribute significantly to economic development and the modernization of the Global South.

Wang reportedly stated that sensitive issues, including the boundary dispute, should be managed appropriately so they do not overshadow the broader relationship. He also highlighted the need to foster positive public perceptions and strengthen social foundations for improved ties.

The Chinese side expressed support for India's role as the current chair of BRICS and reaffirmed its willingness to work closely with New Delhi to strengthen the grouping's influence and cooperation agenda.

The discussions reflect ongoing efforts by both countries to maintain dialogue, manage differences, and explore avenues for cooperation despite lingering border-related challenges. Observers view the engagement as another step toward restoring stability in one of Asia's most significant bilateral relationships.

## Bangladesh's J-10 Fighter Jet Plan Draws India's Attention

Bangladesh's reported decision to acquire 24 Chinese-made J-10CE multirole fighter jets has emerged as a significant development in South Asia's evolving security landscape, prompting close attention from India and regional strategic observers.

According to reports, Bangladesh is expected to advance discussions on the fighter aircraft deal during Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's visit to China. If finalized, the purchase would make Bangladesh only the second foreign operator of the J-10CE after Pakistan. The aircraft is regarded as one of China's most advanced export fighter platforms, designed for air superiority, precision strikes, and multirole combat operations.

The proposed acquisition is part of Bangladesh's broader military modernization programme aimed at strengthening the operational capabilities of its air force. Reports indicate that the deal could involve aircraft valued at approximately \$40 million each, with negotia-



tions expected to continue in the coming months.

For India, the development carries strategic significance beyond the aircraft purchase itself. Defence analysts point to the possibility of a changing airpower equation in the region, particularly because Pakistan already operates the J-10CE fleet. The aircraft reportedly played a role in Pakistan's recent air operations, making its induction by another neighbouring country a matter of interest for Indian security

planners.

Another key concern is the future deployment location of the fighters. Attention has focused on Bangladesh's plans to revive the Lalmonirhat Airbase in northern Bangladesh. The airfield lies close to the Indian border and relatively near the strategically important Siliguri Corridor, often referred to as India's "Chicken's Neck," which connects the northeastern states with the rest of the country.

Reports have suggested possi-

ble Chinese assistance in upgrading the airbase, including infrastructure for fighter aircraft operations. While Bangladeshi authorities have previously stated that there are currently no plans to use the facility for military purposes, Indian officials have maintained that developments affecting national security are being closely monitored.

The potential fighter deal also reflects growing defence cooperation between Dhaka and Beijing. Alongside military ties, China and Bangladesh have expanded collaboration in trade, infrastructure development, and investment projects.

If completed, the acquisition would represent one of the most significant upgrades to the Bangladesh Air Force in recent years, while adding a new dimension to strategic calculations in the Bay of Bengal region. Defence experts believe the move will be watched closely by regional powers as South Asia's security environment continues to evolve.

## IAEA Set to Resume Iran Nuclear Inspections Amid Fragile Peace Deal

The United Nations nuclear watchdog is preparing to resume inspections in Iran following a recently signed interim peace agreement between the United States and Iran, marking a significant step toward easing tensions over Tehran's nuclear programme. However, uncertainty remains over the scope and timing of access to key nuclear facilities.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi said inspections would take place soon, with discussions underway regarding procedures, timelines and locations. The move follows a 14-point memorandum of understanding signed last week by Washington and Tehran, which outlines a framework for ending hostilities and initiating 60 days of negotiations on unresolved issues, including Iran's nuclear activities.

Despite the announcement, Iran signalled that access to sensitive sites remains conditional. Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi stated that there are currently no plans to allow inspections of facilities damaged in previous attacks or access to nuclear material stored at those locations. He said such matters would be addressed only as part of a final agreement and after concrete steps are taken toward lifting U.S. sanctions.

The IAEA has been unable to inspect Iran's most sensitive nuclear facilities since



military strikes by the United States and Israel last year. While some monitoring activities continued at other locations, broader inspections were suspended following the attacks. A major focus of upcoming negotiations is Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium. Before the conflict escalated, the IAEA estimated that Iran possessed 440.9 kilograms of uranium enriched to 60 percent purity, a level close to weapons-grade material. According to IAEA assessments, if enriched further, the stockpile could theoretically be sufficient for multiple nuclear weapons.

Grossi stressed that the interim agreement explicitly places future nuclear activities under IAEA supervision, making inspections essential to verifying compliance. He said the exact timing of inspections was less important

than ensuring they ultimately occur.

Iran, however, appeared cautious about the watchdog's expectations. Officials reiterated that inspection arrangements would depend on progress in broader negotiations, particularly regarding sanctions relief. The developments highlight both the opportunities and challenges facing diplomatic efforts to resolve long-standing disputes over Iran's nuclear programme. While the interim accord has reopened channels of communication, significant disagreements remain over transparency, verification mechanisms and the future of Iran's enriched uranium stockpiles. The outcome of the upcoming negotiations is expected to play a crucial role in determining regional stability and the future of international nuclear oversight.

## France Confirms First Ebola Case Amid Congo Outbreak

France has confirmed its first-ever case of Ebola detected on its territory after a doctor returning from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) tested positive for the virus, health authorities announced on Wednesday.

The patient, identified as a physician working with the humanitarian organization ALIMA (The Alliance for International Medical Action), had travelled from Kinshasa to Paris on a commercial flight. According to the French Health Ministry, the doctor displayed only mild symptoms, including headaches, before boarding the flight. However, the condition reportedly worsened slightly during the journey.

Upon arrival in Paris, medi-

cal teams isolated the patient as a precautionary measure and transferred them to a specialized treatment facility. Authorities later confirmed the Ebola diagnosis through laboratory testing. Officials stated that the patient remains in stable condition and has a low viral load, reducing the immediate risk of transmission.

Health authorities have launched contact-tracing operations to identify and monitor passengers and others who may have come into contact with the infected individual. The French government emphasized that the risk to the general public remains low.

The case is linked to the Democratic Republic of Congo's 17th Ebola outbreak, which was declared on May 15

in the conflict-affected Ituri province. Official figures indicate that more than 1,000 infections and 267 deaths have been recorded so far. Experts believe the actual number of cases may be higher because many affected communities are located in remote and insecure regions.

The current outbreak involves the Bundibugyo strain of the Ebola virus, for which no approved vaccine or treatment currently exists. Existing Ebola vaccines are designed to protect against the Zaire strain and are not considered effective against the Bundibugyo variant.

This marks the first time France has identified an Ebola infection within its borders. During the 2014 West African

Ebola crisis, France treated infected patients who had already been diagnosed abroad, but no domestic case was recorded.

Despite the latest development, international health experts continue to assess the risk of wider global spread as low. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has stated that the likelihood of infection for European residents remains low, while the risk to the broader population is considered very low.

French authorities said they will continue monitoring the situation closely while maintaining heightened surveillance measures at points of entry and healthcare facilities.



# Crude Price Fall Lifts HPCL, IndiGo Shares

Shares of oil-sensitive companies rallied sharply on Wednesday as international crude oil prices extended their decline, boosting investor sentiment across sectors that benefit from lower fuel costs. Among the top gainers were aviation and oil marketing companies, with shares of IndiGo and state-run fuel retailers posting strong gains. Investors cheered the drop in global crude prices, which is expected to improve profit margins and reduce operational expenses for several industries.



At around 2:50 p.m., shares of IndiGo rose 4.3 percent to 5,185.30 apiece, making it one of the best-performing stocks of the day. Public sector oil marketing companies also witnessed strong buying interest, with HPCL, BPCL and IOC advancing up to 4.5 percent during intraday trade.

The rally came as Brent crude futures fell below the crucial \$76-per-barrel mark. Brent was trading at \$75.71 per barrel, down \$1.37 or 1.8 percent, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude de-

clined \$1.08, or 1.5 percent, to \$72.13 per barrel.

Market participants attributed the decline in oil prices to improving confidence in shipping activity through the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical energy transit routes. Reports indicated that more oil tankers were openly crossing the strategic waterway with satellite tracking sys-

tems switched on, suggesting reduced concerns among shipowners regarding regional security risks.

Brent crude touched an intraday low of \$75.60 per barrel, its weakest level since late February, while WTI slipped to \$72.03, the lowest level seen since early March. The decline marks a significant reversal from the sharp gains witnessed

during periods of heightened tensions in the Middle East.

For aviation companies such as IndiGo, lower crude prices translate into reduced aviation turbine fuel (ATF) costs, one of the industry's largest operating expenses. Analysts believe sustained weakness in oil prices could improve airline profitability in the coming quarters.

Similarly, oil marketing companies including HPCL, BPCL and IOC benefit from lower crude prices as they reduce inventory losses and improve refining and marketing margins. Investors responded positively to expectations of stronger earnings if crude prices remain stable at lower levels.

The broader market also drew support from easing energy prices, as lower crude costs are viewed as beneficial for India's economy by helping contain inflation and reducing the country's import bill.

Market experts said continued stability in crude oil prices could provide additional support to equities, particularly in sectors heavily dependent on fuel and energy costs.

# Markets Rebound as Banks Lead Strong Rally



Indian benchmark equity indices staged a sharp recovery on Wednesday, with the Sensex surging nearly 900 points and the Nifty climbing above the 24,050 mark, driven by strong buying in heavy-weight banking stocks and improved global sentiment.

By afternoon trade, the BSE Sensex was up 837.06 points, or 1.10 percent, at 77,037.74, while the NSE Nifty gained 223.35 points, or 0.94 percent, to trade at 24,047.45. The rally came a day after markets witnessed a steep decline, with the Sensex falling 893 points and the Nifty dropping nearly 279 points.

Market participants attributed the rebound largely to easing crude oil prices and optimism surrounding ongoing peace negotiations between the United States and Iran. Lower oil prices are generally viewed as positive for India, which imports a significant portion of its energy requirements, as they help reduce inflationary pressures and improve the country's trade balance.

Banking stocks emerged as the biggest contributors to the rally. The Bank Nifty jumped around 1.5 percent to reclaim the crucial 58,000 level, reflecting renewed investor confidence in the financial sector. Major private lenders such as

HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank led the gains, attracting strong buying interest from institutional investors.

Information technology stocks also supported the market's upward momentum, helping benchmark indices recover a substantial portion of the previous session's losses. Investors appeared encouraged by improving risk appetite in global markets and expectations of stable earnings growth among large-cap companies. Sector-wise, most Nifty indices traded in positive territory. Banking, financial services, information technology, healthcare and realty stocks recorded notable gains. However, the automobile, metal and consumer durables sectors lagged behind and traded marginally lower during the session. Analysts noted that the sharp rebound reflects in-

vestors' willingness to accumulate quality stocks after recent corrections. The easing of geopolitical concerns and moderation in energy prices have helped improve overall market sentiment. Despite the strong recovery, market experts advised investors to remain cautious, citing continued global uncertainties and volatility linked to international developments. They believe sustained gains will depend on further clarity regarding geopolitical tensions, crude oil price movements and upcoming corporate earnings.

The day's rally nevertheless provided relief to investors after recent market turbulence, with banking and technology stocks once again demonstrating their pivotal role in driving Indian equity markets higher.

# Reliance Retains Top Spot Despite ₹11 Lakh Crore Value Erosion

India's 10 most valuable privately owned companies witnessed a sharp decline in market value during 2026, collectively losing nearly 11 lakh crore, according to the latest Burgundy Private Hurun India 500 report. Despite the downturn, Reliance Industries retained its position as the country's most valuable private enterprise for the fifth consecutive year.



The report, released by Axis Bank's Burgundy Private in partnership with Hurun India, revealed that the combined valuation of the top 10 non-state-run companies fell from 97 lakh crore in the previous year to 86 lakh crore. The decline reflects changing market dynamics, investor caution and pressure on corporate valuations across sectors.

Even after the correction, the economic significance of these companies remains substantial. Their combined value accounts for nearly one-fourth of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and represents about 27 percent of the total valuation of companies featured in the

2025 Burgundy Private Hurun India 500 list.

Reliance Industries emerged as the standout performer among the top-ranked companies. The conglomerate not only retained the number one position but also became the largest value creator in absolute terms, adding more than 1.8 lakh crore to its valuation during the year. The company's continued dominance reflects investor confidence in its diversified business portfolio spanning energy, telecommunications, retail and digital

services. The report noted that investors increasingly favored companies demonstrating strong cash generation, healthy return on equity (ROE), efficient capital allocation and robust balance sheets. Businesses with sustainable earnings growth and prudent financial management were better positioned to withstand market volatility.

While the overall value of India's corporate giants declined, analysts view the trend as part of a broader market recalibra-

tion rather than a sign of structural weakness. Fluctuations in global economic conditions, interest rate movements, geopolitical uncertainties and sector-specific challenges contributed to valuation pressures during the year.

The Hurun India 500 ranking is widely regarded as a key benchmark for measuring corporate wealth creation and business performance in the country. The latest findings highlight both the resilience and evolving priorities of India's corporate sector, where financial discipline and long-term value creation are increasingly rewarded by investors.

As market conditions stabilize, corporate leaders are expected to focus on profitability, innovation and balance-sheet strength to regain lost ground. The report underscores that while valuations may fluctuate, companies with strong fundamentals continue to command investor confidence and maintain their leadership positions in India's rapidly expanding economy.

# Waterways Leisure Tourism IPO Gains Momentum on Day 2



The initial public offering (IPO) of Waterways Leisure Tourism, the operator of Cordelia Cruises, witnessed improved investor participation on the second day of bidding, with the issue receiving 45 percent subscription by Wednesday afternoon.

According to data available on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), investors had placed bids for 18.66 lakh shares against the 41.84 lakh shares on offer as of 3 p.m. The response marks a significant improvement from the first day of the issue, reflecting growing interest among retail investors.

The retail investor category emerged as the strongest segment, receiving subscriptions of more than 2.09 times the shares reserved for individual investors. In contrast, the non-institutional investor (NII) category was subscribed 24 percent, indicating moderate participation from high-net-worth individuals and other non-retail investors.

Ahead of the public issue, the company had successfully

raised 263.25 crore from anchor investors, providing a strong foundation for the IPO. The anchor book attracted participation from institutional investors and helped boost confidence in the offering before the issue opened to the public.

Waterways Leisure Tourism is best known for operating Cordelia Cruises, India's leading premium cruise line. The company has been positioning itself to capitalize on the growing domestic cruise tourism market, which is witnessing increasing interest from Indian travelers seeking leisure and luxury experiences closer to home.

The IPO consists of a fresh issue aimed at raising funds for business expansion, debt reduction and general corporate purposes. Market observers believe the company stands to benefit from the long-term growth potential of India's tourism and hospitality sectors, particularly as cruise travel gains popularity among middle- and upper-income consumers.

Meanwhile, grey market ac-

tivity indicated cautious optimism. Market participants are closely tracking the Grey Market Premium (GMP), which serves as an unofficial indicator of investor sentiment ahead of listing. While GMP levels have remained modest compared to some recent public offerings, analysts note that subscription levels often strengthen during the final day of bidding.

Investors are now looking ahead to the next key milestones in the IPO process. The basis of allotment is expected to be finalized on June 29, while the allotment status will be available through the registrar, MUFG Intime India. Successful applicants can expect shares to be credited to their demat accounts shortly before the company's proposed market debut.

With retail participation already crossing the fully subscribed mark and institutional interest expected to pick up, market watchers will closely monitor the final-day subscription figures to gauge overall demand for the issue.

# Oberoi Realty Gains on Gurugram Project Approval

Shares of Oberoi Realty climbed nearly 3 percent on Wednesday after the company secured approval from the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) for its upcoming project in Gurugram, marking a significant milestone in its expansion strategy beyond Mumbai.

The stock gained positive momentum following the announcement, rising 3 percent to 1,756.20 apiece in afternoon trade. Investors welcomed the development as it clears a major regulatory hurdle and enables the company to proceed with the launch and marketing of the project in one of North India's most prominent real estate markets.

The RERA approval allows Oberoi Realty to officially commence sales bookings and begin generating revenue visibility from the project. Industry experts view the approval as an important step toward strengthening the company's presence in the National Capital Region (NCR), a market that continues to witness strong demand



for premium residential and mixed-use developments.

Oberoi Realty has traditionally been associated with luxury and premium real estate projects in Mumbai, where it has built a strong reputation through successful residential, commercial and hospitalty developments. The entry into Gurugram represents a strategic move aimed at reducing geographic concentration and broadening its growth opportunities across key urban markets.

Analysts believe the company's expansion into Gurugram aligns with its long-

term objective of diversifying revenue streams and tapping into high-growth regions. Gurugram remains one of India's most active real estate destinations, driven by strong corporate presence, infrastructure development and sustained demand from professionals and high-income homebuyers.

Market participants also view the approval as a positive signal for future earnings growth. With regulatory clearances now in place, the company can begin monetizing the project through advance sales and customer

bookings, which could contribute meaningfully to revenue in the coming years.

The development comes at a time when India's real estate sector is witnessing renewed momentum, supported by urbanization, rising income levels and increasing demand for quality housing. Developers with strong balance sheets, established brands and a proven execution track record have particularly benefited from the sector's recovery. Brokerages have noted that Oberoi Realty's disciplined project execution, premium positioning and healthy financial profile continue to make it one of the preferred players in the real estate sector. The Gurugram project is expected to enhance the company's growth pipeline and strengthen its footprint beyond Maharashtra.

Investor sentiment remained positive following the announcement, with market participants viewing the RERA approval as a catalyst for future growth and a key step in Oberoi Realty's broader expansion strategy.

# Unicommerce Gains on Swiggy Partnership

Shares of Unicommerce eSolutions rose up to 2.5 percent in Wednesday's trading session after the company announced a strategic partnership with Swiggy Networks Ltd, a subsidiary of Swiggy, aimed at streamlining business-to-business (B2B) order processing for brands operating within the Swiggy ecosystem.

The positive market response reflected investor optimism regarding the partnership's potential to strengthen Unicommerce's position in the rapidly expanding e-commerce and supply chain management sector. The stock witnessed steady buying in-

terest following the announcement, as investors assessed the long-term benefits of the collaboration.

In a regulatory filing, Unicommerce stated that the integration would allow brands to efficiently manage and fulfil bulk orders destined for Swiggy Networks' warehouses through its centralized technology platform. The solution is designed to simplify operations by bringing multiple processes under a single dashboard.

According to the company, the plug-and-play integration covers key aspects of the supply chain, including

purchase order verification, warehouse processing, shipping management, tracking capabilities and label generation. By consolidating these functions onto one platform, the system is expected to significantly reduce manual intervention and improve operational efficiency.

The company emphasized that the partnership will help brands replenish inventory across multiple warehouse locations more quickly, ensuring smoother supply chain operations. Faster restocking is expected to improve product availability and support growing demand from Swiggy

Networks' B2B customers.

Industry analysts noted that efficient inventory management and seamless order processing have become increasingly important as businesses seek to optimize logistics and reduce operational costs. Technology-driven solutions that automate supply chain processes are witnessing rising demand across sectors, particularly in e-commerce, quick commerce and digital retail.

The collaboration is also expected to enhance Swiggy Networks' ability to manage large-scale procurement and inventory distribution. With de-

mand patterns becoming more dynamic, centralized order management systems can help improve visibility across the supply chain and enable faster decision-making.

Unicommerce, which provides software-as-a-service (SaaS) solutions for e-commerce enablement, has been expanding its partnerships with leading retail, logistics and marketplace players. The company's technology platform is designed to help businesses manage orders, inventory, warehousing and logistics through integrated digital solutions.

Market participants viewed the lat-



est partnership as another step in Unicommerce's efforts to strengthen its ecosystem and expand its client base. The collaboration with Swiggy Networks is expected to enhance the company's revenue opportunities while reinforcing its position as a key technology provider in India's growing

digital commerce landscape. Analysts believe that continued adoption of automated supply chain solutions and increasing demand for efficient B2B commerce infrastructure could provide further growth opportunities for Unicommerce in the coming years.

# Techie Triples Salary in a Year From Rs 3.3 LPA to Rs 24.8 Lakh

A software developer with around five years of experience has gone viral after sharing how he transformed his career earnings from Rs 3.3 lakh per annum to nearly Rs 25 lakh within just one year, highlighting how calculated job switches and skill growth can significantly impact salary progression in the IT industry.

The developer, a Java full-stack engineer, began his career at TCS through a "Ninja" profile with a modest package of Rs 3.3 LPA. He worked on a strong technology stack including Java, Spring Boot, AWS, Angular, and Python, and remained with the same project for nearly four years. Despite consistent performance ratings and internal exams, his salary progression remained limited, reaching only about Rs 7.8 LPA after several years.

Frustrated by the slow growth, he decided to explore external opportunities. In July 2025, he made his first job switch, securing an offer that nearly doubled his compensation. He relocated to Bengaluru and joined a new company, describing the move as a turning point in his career. The change not only improved his salary but also exposed him to



a more dynamic work environment and new professional networks.

However, the developer soon experienced uncertainty in his new role as project restructurings and cost-cutting measures led to multiple team members being released. Concerned about job stability, he began actively preparing for new interviews while still serving his notice period.

During this phase, he attended several interviews with companies including major international firms. While some offers did not meet his expectations, he eventually received a competitive offer from AMEX GBT, which provided a significant hike compared to his previous salary. After careful con-

sideration, he accepted the offer and joined the company, bringing his total compensation close to Rs 24.8 lakh per annum. The developer's story has resonated widely on social media, especially among young IT professionals, as it reflects both the opportunities and uncertainties in the tech industry. His journey highlights how strategic job changes, continuous skill development, and timely decisions can play a crucial role in accelerating career growth in a competitive market.

While the story showcases impressive financial progress, it also underscores the importance of adaptability in an evolving industry where job security can shift quickly.

# Germany Lake Swimming Rule Sparks Debate

A swimming facility in Halle, Germany has triggered widespread debate after introducing a controversial rule that restricts entry to visitors who do not have sufficient knowledge of the German language, citing safety concerns following a recent near-tragic incident.

The rule has been implemented at the Heidebad lake swimming area after the manager, who is also a trained lifeguard, rescued a toddler from dangerously deep water. Following the incident, the management decided that stronger measures were needed to ensure that all visitors can clearly understand safety instructions and respond appropriately in emergency situations.

Facility manager Mathias Nobel said the decision is driven entirely by safety considerations rather than any in-



tent to exclude people. He explained that clear communication is essential in a natural lake setting where water depths can reach up to 13 metres, making it crucial that swimmers understand warnings and lifeguard instructions.

Under the new system, staff assess visitors at the entrance on a case-by-case basis. If a group does not have anyone capable of communicating in German, entry may be denied.

Since the rule was introduced, a small number of visitors have already been turned away.

Supporters of the policy argue that safety must come first, especially in open water environments where conditions can change quickly. They point out that lifeguards must be able to communicate effectively during emergencies and that misunderstanding instructions could lead to serious accidents.

However, critics have raised concerns that the rule could be discriminatory and may exclude tourists or non-German speakers from public recreational spaces. They suggest that multilingual signage, translation tools, or visual safety systems could be better alternatives than restricting access based on language ability. The policy was introduced after a serious incident involving a toddler highlighted the risks associated with miscommunication and insufficient understanding of safety rules. Management maintains that preventing such situations in the future is the primary goal.

As discussions continue, the Halle lake swimming rule has become a topic of broader debate in Germany, raising questions about how public safety can be balanced with inclusivity and equal access in shared community spaces.

# Excited Even After 5 Years Microsoft Employee's Post Highlights Workplace Culture

A Bengaluru-based Microsoft employee has gone viral on social media after sharing a heartfelt video explaining why she still feels excited to walk into office every single day, even after more than five years with the company.

The employee, Deepika Koul, shared her experience on Instagram, where she often posts about corporate life and workplace experiences. In her video, she reflected on completing over half a decade at Microsoft and explained that her long-term enthusiasm is not driven by the brand name or corporate perks, but by the people and culture she experiences every day inside the workplace. She said it is uncommon for employees to feel the same level of excitement years into a job, but in her case, the environment continues to motivate her. According to her, the real strength of her workplace lies in everyday interactions, open discussions, and meaningful collaboration with colleagues.

Deepika emphasized that her office environment encourages honest brainstorming sessions and constructive conversations that help her grow professionally and personally. She also noted that instead of unhealthy competition, her peers push each other toward improvement and shared success.

One of the key points she highlighted was the emotional impact of the workplace environment on her mental wellbeing. She mentioned that on challenging days, stepping into the office helps clear her mind, and she often leaves work feeling more positive and balanced than when she arrived.

She further explained that even when she enters the office feeling mentally exhausted or stressed, the supportive atmosphere helps her regain clarity and motivation. This, she said, is one of the most valuable aspects of her professional life.

Concluding her message, she urged professionals to appreci-



ate and value positive work environments whenever they find them. She stressed that such workplaces are not just standard corporate features but meaningful cultural experiences that can significantly influence personal growth and

happiness. Her video has resonated widely online, with many users praising her perspective and sharing similar experiences about the importance of healthy workplace culture in long-term career satisfaction.

# Cute Animals Are More Fascinating Than You Think

Rabbits are often seen as adorable, gentle pets with long ears and a love for carrots, but their real biology and behavior are far more interesting and unique than most people realize. From their vision to their survival instincts, these small creatures have evolved several extraordinary traits.

One of the most surprising facts about rabbits is that their teeth never stop growing throughout their lives. Unlike humans, rabbits continuously grow teeth, which is why they need to constantly chew on grass, leaves, and fibrous plant material. This natural chewing helps keep their teeth at a healthy length. Without it, their teeth can overgrow and lead to serious health problems.

Another remarkable feature is their nearly 360-degree field of vision. The position of a rabbit's eyes on the sides of its head allows it to detect movement from almost every direction. This wide vision is a crucial survival adaptation, helping them quickly spot predators approaching from behind or the sides.

Rabbits also have a unique way of expressing happiness known as a "binky." When a rabbit feels joyful or excited, it may suddenly jump into the air, twist its body, and kick its legs. This playful movement is often observed by pet owners and is considered a clear sign



of a happy rabbit.

Contrary to popular belief, carrots are not a rabbit's primary food. While they may enjoy them occasionally, rabbits mainly feed on grass, leaves, and other green vegetation. Carrots contain natural sugars, so they should only be given in moderation to pet rabbits.

In the wild, mother rabbits behave differently than many might expect. They do not stay constantly with their babies. Instead, they visit the nest briefly a few times a day to feed them, helping reduce the risk of attracting predators. Be-

cause of this behavior, finding baby rabbits alone does not necessarily mean they have been abandoned. Rabbits are also incredibly fast runners. When threatened, they can sprint at high speeds and use quick zigzag movements to escape predators. Their strong hind legs give them the ability to change direction suddenly, making them difficult to catch.

These fascinating traits show that rabbits are not just cute animals but highly adapted survivors with unique biological and behavioral characteristics that help them thrive in the wild.

# Former OpenAI Researcher Shyamal Anadkat Returns to India Calls It a Global AI Opportunity Hub

Shyamal Anadkat, a former OpenAI researcher who led the Applied Evals team, has announced his move from the San Francisco Bay Area back to India, describing the country as a "once-in-a-generation opportunity hub" for artificial intelligence development.

Anadkat, who spent nearly four years at OpenAI working on evaluating and improving the safety and performance of advanced AI systems, shared his decision through a post on social media platform X. His move has drawn attention in global tech circles, especially given his role at one of the world's leading artificial intelligence companies.

He explained that the decision

to relocate was driven by a long-term vision of building globally significant AI institutions outside traditional tech centers like Silicon Valley. According to him, India and the broader Asia-Pacific region hold immense untapped potential for frontier technology development, provided there is enough confidence and ambition to pursue large-scale ideas.

During his time in India, Anadkat has reportedly been engaging with engineers, researchers, and innovators across the tech ecosystem. He noted that the region has no shortage of talent or capability, but what is often missing is the collective belief that world-class technology companies and re-

search institutions can be built locally at global scale.

While he has not revealed full details about his next professional venture, his comments suggest that he may be preparing to launch a new artificial intelligence project. He emphasized his continued focus on advancing safe and beneficial AI systems that can accelerate scientific progress and remain accessible to a wider audience.

Anadkat also highlighted his belief that the future of AI innovation will not be limited to a single geographic hub. Instead, he envisions a more distributed global ecosystem where breakthrough technologies emerge from multiple regions, including India.



In his closing remarks, he expressed openness to connecting with individuals who share his vision, hinting that more announcements regarding his next steps will be made in the near future.

# Man Buys Dream Porsche Using Inheritance From Hacker He Once Helped Jail

A remarkable story of friendship, redemption, and unexpected legacy has gone viral after a man revealed that he purchased his dream Porsche sports car using inheritance money left behind by a former hacker he once helped bring to justice.

Shawn Nunley, a technology professional, shared that he bought a Porsche 911 Carrera 4 GTS after receiving a financial gift from Kevin Mitnick, one of the world's most well-known former hackers. What makes the story unusual is the deep history between the two men, who once stood on opposite sides of a cybercrime investigation before eventually forming a long-lasting friendship.

Nunley first encountered Mitnick in the 1990s during his work as a network administrator. At the time, Mitnick was targeting major technology companies, including enterprise software firm Novell. Sus-

picious system activity, repeated phone line intrusions, and other unusual network behavior eventually led Nunley and his team to identify a persistent security breach. In the process, Nunley unknowingly became part of the chain of events that led to Mitnick's arrest and prosecution.

A key piece of evidence in the case came from a voicemail recording Nunley preserved after a late-night phone interaction involving Mitnick, who had posed under an alias while attempting to gain unauthorized access. That recording later played a significant role in the legal proceedings. Despite their adversarial beginnings, the two eventually connected after Mitnick's release. Following a period of legal resolution and reflection, they met in person at a technology conference in San Francisco. That meeting marked a turning point, as mutual respect replaced their ear-

lier conflict. Over time, their relationship evolved into a genuine friendship that lasted for decades. Nunley described Mitnick as someone who transformed significantly after his legal troubles, maturing into a thoughtful and influential figure in the cybersecurity world. Their bond continued until Mitnick's death in 2023 due to illness.

In his final gesture, Mitnick left Nunley a financial inheritance, which he chose to use to fulfill a long-held personal dream of owning a Porsche sports car. Nunley said the purchase is not just about luxury, but a tribute to a friendship shaped by unusual circumstances and shared history.

The story has resonated widely online, with many highlighting how relationships can evolve in unexpected ways and how even former adversaries can ultimately leave behind meaningful legacies.



# Gill Climbs to No. 2 Bumrah Shares Top Spot with Matt Henry in Latest ICC Rankings



The latest ICC rankings have brought encouraging news for Indian cricket, with several players making notable gains across formats. Young opener Shubman Gill has climbed to the second position in the ODI batting rankings, while Jasprit Bumrah continues to dominate Test cricket by sharing the No. 1 spot in bowling with New Zealand pacer Matt Henry.

Gill's rise reflects his consistent performances in recent ODI outings. His aggressive batting style and ability to anchor innings have helped him move up three places in the rankings. Currently, he is just behind the top-ranked batter, with a narrow rating gap separating him from the summit position, indicating a close race at the top of ODI batting charts.

Another positive development for India is the rise of Ishan Kishan, who has jumped significantly in the ODI rankings after strong performances in recent series. His improvement highlights the growing depth in India's batting lineup, especially among younger players who are increasingly making their mark on the international stage.

light is the shared top position between Jasprit Bumrah and New Zealand's Matt Henry. Henry's recent match-winning performance, including a remarkable 11-wicket haul against England, helped him join Bumrah at the summit. Bumrah, who has been holding the No. 1 position since late 2024, continues to demonstrate his dominance in the longest format of the game.

On the batting side of Test cricket, England's Joe Root has reclaimed the No. 1 position after a strong run of form. This marks another milestone in his decorated career, as he continues to remain one of the most consistent performers in the format. Elsewhere, the T20 rankings also saw movement following recent series results. Australian captain Mitchell Marsh has moved up into the top 10 among batters, while Nathan Ellis has climbed the bowling rankings. Bangladesh players also made progress despite series losses, with several individuals improving their positions significantly.

Overall, the latest ICC rankings reflect a competitive global cricket landscape, with emerging talents and established stars continuing to battle for supremacy across formats.

# NZ Cricket Legend Bob Blair Passes Away

Former New Zealand fast bowler Bob Blair, a figure etched permanently in cricket history for his extraordinary courage during personal tragedy, has passed away in England at the age of 94. His death marks the end of an era for one of New Zealand cricket's most respected and emotionally significant personalities.

Blair is best remembered for his remarkable act of bravery during the 1953 New Zealand tour of South Africa, an incident that became one of the most moving stories in the sport's history. During the second Test at Ellis Park, he received devastating news that his fiancée, Nerissa Love, had died in the Tangiwai train disaster on Christmas Eve. Despite the emotional shock, Blair chose to take the field when New Zealand was down to its last wicket, displaying exceptional mental strength and commitment to his team.

What followed became a defining moment in cricket folklore. Blair joined Bert Sutcliffe at the crease and contributed 33 runs in a crucial last-wicket partnership.

The duo also launched a remarkable counterattack, including a famous over that yielded 25 runs, which stood as a record at the time. The moment was later celebrated as a symbol of resilience and sportsmanship under unimaginable personal grief.

Blair's overall international career spanned from 1952 to 1964, during which he played 19 Test matches for New Zealand. He achieved notable success as a fast bowler, including his best Test figures of 7 for 142. After retiring from international cricket, he remained involved in the game, contributing as a coach in several countries and sharing his experience with younger players.

His legacy is closely associated with the "Tangiwai" story, which continues to be remembered as one of the most emotional chapters in cricket history. In recognition of this historic event, the New Zealand and South African cricket boards introduced the Tangiwai Shield in 2024 to honor the memory of



the players and the incident that shaped it. Tributes have poured in from across the cricketing world, highlighting Blair's courage, character, and lasting impact on the sport. New Zealand Cricket officials have also confirmed that players will wear black armbands during upcoming matches as a mark of respect.

Bob Blair's story remains a powerful reminder of human strength and dignity in the face of personal tragedy, ensuring his legacy will continue to inspire generations of cricketers and fans alike.

# IND W vs BAN W India Must Fix Middle Order and Fielding Issues

Team India's Women's World Cup campaign has reached a crucial stage where consistency in the middle order and sharper fielding could define their journey ahead. After starting the tournament with two strong wins, India suffered a setback against South Africa, exposing key areas of concern that need immediate correction before their next clash against Bangladesh on Thursday.

Placed in Group A alongside Australia, South Africa, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Netherlands, India currently sits second with four points from three matches. Australia leads the group with a perfect record, while India, South Africa, and Bangladesh are all tied on points, making the race for semi-final qualification highly

competitive. With two matches remaining, including a tough encounter against Australia, every run and every wicket now carries added significance.

India's qualification scenario is straightforward but demanding. Winning both remaining matches would secure a semi-final spot comfortably. However, even a single loss could push net run rate into a decisive role, making a dominant win against Bangladesh extremely important. The team is therefore under pressure not just to win, but to win convincingly.

A major concern for India has been the instability in the middle order. While openers like Shafali Verma and Smriti Mandhana have provided strong starts, the momentum

often fades once the top order is dismissed. Jemimah Rodrigues has struggled to convert starts into impactful innings, and captain Harmanpreet Kaur is yet to deliver a defining performance in the tournament. Richa Ghosh has provided aggressive finishing touches, but the lack of sustained partnerships in the middle overs has left India vulnerable.

Fielding has also emerged as a critical weakness. Missed chances in the match against South Africa proved costly and shifted the momentum away from India at key stages. The coaching staff has repeatedly emphasized that in high-pressure tournaments, fielding errors can decide outcomes, and India's dropped catches have already had an impact on their

campaign. On the positive side, India's spin attack continues to be a major strength. Young spinner Sricharan has been outstanding, emerging as one of the tournament's top wicket-takers with consistent match-winning spells. Deepti Sharma has also shown her ability with a five-wicket haul in one game, though her overall consistency has fluctuated. However, support from other bowlers, especially the pace attack, has been limited, with few breakthroughs coming from the seamers.

With the tournament entering its decisive phase, India's path forward depends on addressing these weaknesses quickly. A strong performance against Bangladesh is essential



not only for points but also for restoring confidence ahead of tougher challenges. The team

now faces a situation where execution in all departments will determine whether they ad-

vance smoothly into the semi-finals or enter a complicated net run rate scenario.

# FIFA World Cup 2026 Colombia Reach Knockouts Ghana Hold England

Colombia have secured their place in the knockout stage of the FIFA World Cup 2026 after a hard-fought 1-0 victory over DR Congo, while Ghana delivered a major upset by holding title favourites England to a goalless draw in a tightly contested Group stage encounter.

Colombia's qualification was confirmed through a disciplined performance in Group K. The match against DR Congo remained evenly poised in the first half, with both sides struggling to convert chances. Colombia eventually broke the deadlock in the 76th minute when Daniel Muñoz found the net with a crucial strike. Despite registering multiple attempts on goal, Colombia managed to convert only once, but that proved enough to seal their progression to the next round. DR Congo showed moments of promise, including a couple of attempts that struck the post, but they were unable to capitalise on their chances.

In another key Group L fixture, Ghana frustrated England with a resilient defensive display to secure a 0-0 draw. England, who entered the match as favourites after a strong opening win, dominated possession and created several attacking opportunities. However, they failed to convert any of their four shots on target, as Ghana's defence held firm under pressure. A controversial moment in the match came in the 79th minute when Ghana players appealed for a penalty after a challenge involving England's goalkeeper and a



Ghana attacker. The referee, however, waved away the appeal, leading to frustration among Ghana players and coaching staff. The decision became a major talking point after the final whistle.

Despite the draw, Ghana's performance kept their qualification hopes alive, while England missed an opportunity to secure an early knockout berth. The result has made the group standings more competitive, with multiple teams still in contention for advancement. Meanwhile, Croatia kept their knockout hopes alive with a narrow 1-0 win over Panama. Ante Budimir scored the decisive goal

in the 54th minute, helping Croatia secure three vital points. Veteran midfielder Luka Modri also marked a special milestone by playing his 200th international match, adding significance to the victory.

With Panama eliminated following the defeat, the battle for qualification from Group L has intensified, with England, Ghana, and Croatia still competing for remaining spots in the knockout stage. Overall, the latest round of matches has tightened the race across groups, setting up an exciting final phase in the group stage of the tournament.

# Vaibhav Suryavanshi Set for International Debut

Young batting sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi is all set to make his much-anticipated entry into international cricket after being selected for India's T20I series against Ireland. The teenager has already been handed the No. 3 jersey, signaling the team management's confidence in his abilities as he prepares for his debut in the upcoming matches.

India will play the first T20 against Ireland within the next two days, and excitement around Suryavanshi's inclusion has already begun to build. Former India cricketer and ex-Ireland coach M. V. Narasimha Rao has made strong remarks about the significance of his potential debut, calling it a historic moment for Irish cricket.

He stated that if Suryavanshi takes the field in Ireland, it would attract massive attention, even beyond expectations. According to him, the small stadium capacity in Belfast could become a challenge, as fans from across Europe, including cities like Paris, are likely to travel just to witness the young cricketer in action. He added that such is the curiosity around the youngster that ticket demand could surge significantly.

The former coach also mentioned that while Ireland may not pose a major challenge for the youngster, the real test will come in England, where conditions are known to be far more demanding. The swinging ball, unpredictable weather, and different playing surfaces will



test his technique and temperament. He expressed hope that the series will serve as a strong learning experience for the young batter.

Praising Suryavanshi's talent, Narasimha Rao compared his batting style to legendary West Indies cricketer Gary Sobers, noting his elegant stroke play and ability to execute a wide range of shots at a young

age. However, he also advised caution, urging the youngster to remain grounded, disciplined, and focused on fitness and consistency.

He emphasized that early success brings attention and pressure, and maintaining humility will be key to a long and successful career. The former coach added that adapting to different playing conditions

and continuing to work hard will determine how far the young player can go in international cricket.

Vaibhav Suryavanshi's rise has already created significant buzz in Indian cricket circles, and all eyes will now be on his potential debut against Ireland, which could mark the beginning of a promising international journey.

# Chiranjeevi Expresses Pride in Ram Charan After Praise From PM Modi

Megastar Chiranjeevi shared an emotional message on social media after his son Ram Charan received high praise from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who referred to him as a New Age Megastar during a recent public program. The heartfelt reaction from Chiranjeevi quickly went viral, drawing attention from fans across the country.

The event, where Ram Charan was invited as a guest at a prestigious gathering organized by Republic TV, became a major highlight after the Prime Minister appreciated his contributions to Indian cinema. The recognition added to Ram Charan's growing national popularity following his recent successful film Peddhi, which has been receiving strong audience response.

Responding to the honour, Chiranjeevi expressed deep happiness and pride as a father. He shared that true joy for a parent comes not just from a child's success, but from the recognition they earn from society for their

hard work and achievements. His message reflected both emotional pride and gratitude for the appreciation shown towards his son on such a prestigious stage. In his social media post, Chiranjeevi also referenced a traditional Telugu poetic verse from Sumathi Satakam, highlighting the idea that a father feels fulfilled when his son is praised by the public for his greatness. This cultural reference added emotional depth to his message and resonated strongly with fans.

He further stated that Ram Charan's consistent dedication and hard work have helped him gain recognition beyond regional cinema, establishing a strong presence at the national level. Chiranjeevi expressed his happiness that Telugu cinema continues to gain wider appreciation through his son's achievements.

The megastar concluded his message by wishing Ram Charan continued success and hoping that he reaches greater heights in his career. He also expressed



pressed confidence that Ram Charan would continue to bring pride to Telugu cinema on a global stage. The emotional post has been

widely shared on social media, with fans celebrating both the father's pride and the son's growing stature in the Indian film industry.

# Karthi's 'Sardar 2' Locks September 10 Release

The much-anticipated sequel to the hit Tamil spy thriller Sardar 2 has finally received its official release date, bringing relief and excitement to fans who have been eagerly waiting for updates. The film, headlined by actor Karthi and directed by P. S. Mithran, is scheduled to hit theatres on September 10, marking one of the most awaited releases of the year in South Indian cinema.

The original Sardar earned strong appreciation for its gripping narrative, intelligent screenplay, and Karthi's powerful dual-role performance. Building on that success, the sequel has been designed to expand the franchise's universe with a bigger scale, deeper political intrigue, and more intense action sequences. According to early buzz, the makers have aimed to elevate every aspect of the film, from

storytelling to technical presentation, making it a pan-Indian entertainer.

Production of Sardar 2 was reportedly completed last year in June, but the team took additional time in post-production to refine visual effects and ensure a polished final output. This extended timeline had kept fans speculating about the release window, with social media frequently flooded by questions and theories about the sequel's progress. The announcement of the September 10 release has now officially ended that uncertainty. The film features Karthi reprising his role in a high-stakes espionage setting, where the storyline is expected to delve deeper into global conspiracies and internal threats. Joining him are Malavika Mohanan and Ashika Ranganath in key roles, adding both emotional depth and



strong character dynamics to the narrative. Their characters are said to play crucial parts in shaping the protagonist's journey and the unfolding mission.

One of the most talked-about aspects of Sardar 2 is the inclusion of S. J. Suryah as the antagonist. His character, reportedly named "Black Dagger," is expected to bring a menacing and unpredictable energy to the film. Known for his versatility and intense screen presence, Suryah's role is anticipated to be one of the highlights of the sequel.

With expectations running high, industry watchers believe Sardar 2 could replicate or even surpass the success of its predecessor if it delivers on both storytelling and execution. As the release date approaches, promotional activities are expected to ramp up, further increasing excitement among audiences.

For fans of action-packed espionage dramas, September 10 now marks a date to watch out for as Sardar 2 gears up for a grand theatrical release.

# Samantha Box Office Power Proved Again Raj Nidimoru Says She Was Underrated

Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu has once again made a strong mark at the box office with her latest film "Maa Inti Bangaaram", which reportedly collected around 50 crore within five days of its release. The film's impressive performance has sparked fresh discussions in the industry about her star power and the growing acceptance of women-centric cinema.

Filmmaker and her husband Raj Nidimoru recently shared his thoughts on the film's journey and the early perceptions surrounding it. He revealed that before the release, the team had met an industry insider to understand the possible public reaction. However, the feedback they received was not very encouraging. The insider reportedly said that

there was very little buzz around the film and added that women-led films are often not expected to open strongly at the box office, as audiences tend to judge them only after release.

Raj Nidimoru said those comments initially sounded harsh, but the team decided to focus on the film's content and audience response rather than pre-release opinions. Once the film hit theatres, the strong opening collections and audience turnout surprised many and changed the narrative around its prospects.

He emphasized that Samantha's ability to bring audiences to theatres should not be underestimated. According to him, the opening numbers clearly show her strong fan base and her consistent pull as

a leading performer. He added that she has been choosing performance-driven roles, which continue to connect well with viewers and strengthen her position in the industry.

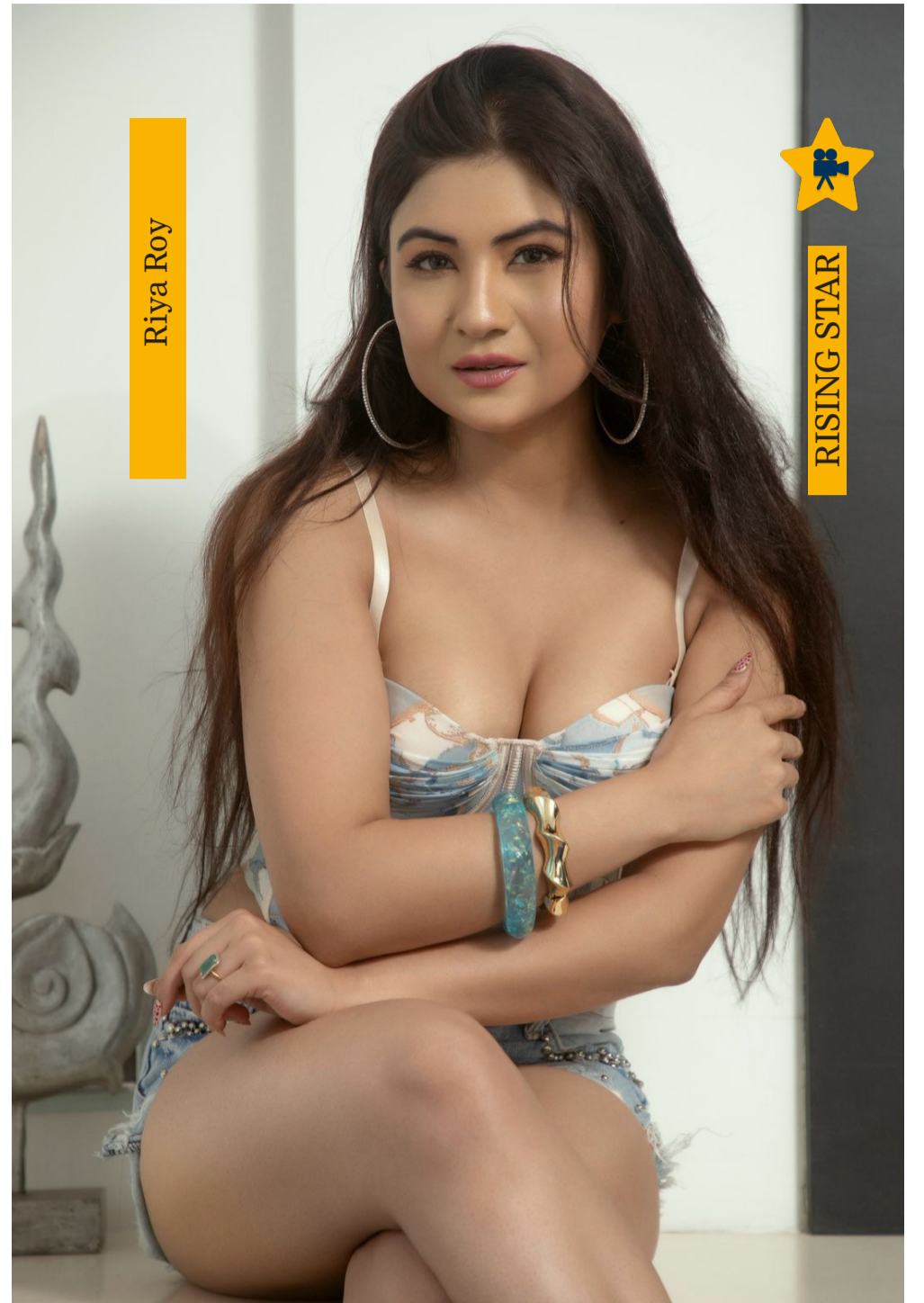
Samantha has been gradually shifting towards content-oriented cinema, focusing on characters with emotional depth and strong storytelling. This approach has helped her maintain relevance and earn appreciation from audiences who prefer meaningful and engaging films.

The success of "Maa Inti Bangaaram" is also being seen as part of a broader change in Indian cinema, where women-led films are slowly breaking old box office stereotypes. While challenges and biases still exist, audience response



is increasingly proving that strong content can succeed regardless of traditional expectations.

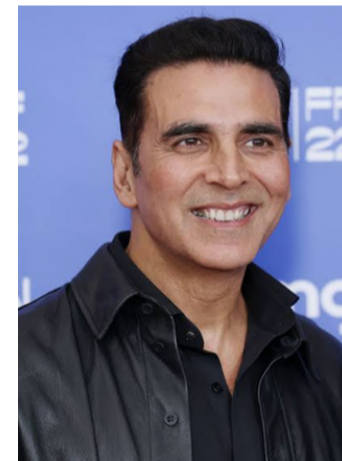
As the film continues its theatrical run, its overall performance will be closely watched. For now, its strong start has reinforced Samantha's image as a powerful box office draw and a respected performer in contemporary Indian cinema.



Riya Roy

RISING STAR

# Akshay Kumar Says Multi Starrer Culture Is Declining



Akshay Kumar has shared his views on how the new generation of actresses in the film industry is evolving, highlighting both strengths and concerns about current trends. Speaking during the promotional interviews for his upcoming film Welcome to the Jungle, the veteran actor discussed differences he observes between earlier and present-day heroines in Bollywood.

According to Akshay Kumar, today's actresses enter the industry with a much higher level of preparation compared to the past. He noted that modern training facilities, acting

schools, workshops and early exposure to cinema have helped newcomers become more polished and professional even before they officially step into films. He appreciated this change and said that in terms of talent and dedication there is no major difference between generations.

However, he also pointed out what he considers a limitation in the current generation. He said that many new actresses are less willing to take creative risks. In his view, they tend to choose safer and more predictable roles instead of experimenting with challenging or unconventional characters. He suggested that taking more risks could help actors grow and bring fresh energy to cinema.

He added that many actors today prefer not to share screen

space with others as individual stardom and personal branding have become more important. According to him, this mindset reduces opportunities for collaborative storytelling and limits the scope of large ensemble films.

The actor believes that bringing back multi starrer projects would benefit the industry as a whole. He explained that such films encourage teamwork among actors, provide diverse performances in a single story and create more engaging cinema for audiences. He also emphasized that collaboration helps the industry grow in a healthy direction.

His comments have sparked discussions among film enthusiasts and industry watchers about how Bollywood is changing with time. While some agree with his observations on collaboration and risk taking, others feel that the industry is simply adapting to modern audience expectations and market realities.

Overall, Akshay Kumar's views highlight the ongoing transition in Indian cinema where preparation and professionalism are rising, but traditional collaborative storytelling is becoming less common.

# Gossip, A Hard Hitting Story of Words and Consequences

A new Telugu film titled "Gossip" is set to hit theatres on June 26, bringing a strong social message about how casual conversations and rumours can dramatically affect people's lives. The film's team believes it will make audiences reflect on the power of words and the responsibility that comes with speaking about others.

Directed by Vaibhav Kaundinya, the film features Rashi Singh in the lead role, supported by actors Ravi Varma, Mahesh Yadlapalli, Prithvi, and others in key characters. The project is produced by Yati Remella and is positioned as an emotional and thought-provoking drama.

Speaking during the film's trailer launch event in Hyderabad, director Vaibhav Kaundinya said the story is rooted in real-life inspired incidents from his personal experiences and those of his close friends. He emphasized that the film explores how a single piece of gossip can either uplift or completely destroy someone's reputation and life. According to him, the intention is to deliver a strong message about the need for responsibility in everyday communication. The director explained that words carry significant power and can shape relationships, reputations, and futures. He added that the film

highlights how people often underestimate the consequences of seemingly harmless conversations. Through its narrative, "Gossip" aims to encourage audiences to think before speaking about others.

Lead actress Rashi Singh also described the project as a very special film in her career. She said it portrays how a small misunderstanding or rumour can spiral into a life-altering situation for an individual. She expressed hope that audiences will connect with the emotional depth of the story and support it in theatres.

The trailer launch event was attended by several cast and

crew members, who shared their experiences working on the film. The team collectively expressed confidence that the movie will resonate with viewers due to its relatable theme and emotional storytelling. With its focus on social behavior and human relationships, "Gossip" positions itself as more than just entertainment. It aims to deliver a message-driven cinematic experience that encourages self-reflection. As the release date approaches, the film is generating interest among audiences who appreciate meaningful and issue-based storytelling.

