

Green Steel Plant in Kadapa a Milestone in AP's Industrial Growth

Amaravati, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar on Friday said the commencement of construction works for the Green Steel Plant in Kadapa by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu marks a major milestone in Andhra Pradesh's industrial development.

Describing it as the country's first steel manufacturing facility focused on green energy, the minister said the project will be developed with an investment of Rs.2,000



crore and a power generation capacity of 400 MW. He noted that the venture is expected to create direct and indirect employment opportunities for nearly 1,000 people.

Ravi Kumar said the state government is pursuing a comprehensive strategy to position Andhra Pradesh as a leading hub for renewable energy and green industries. Referring to the Centre's goal of achieving 500 GW of renewable energy capacity, he said Andhra Pradesh has set a target of developing 160 GW of green energy capacity.

The minister said the government is promoting investments in solar power, wind energy, Battery Energy Storage Systems, Pumped Storage Projects, green hydrogen and Compressed Biogas. He added that investor-friendly policies are helping attract industries, generate employment and ensure sustainable industrial growth in the state.

Manginapudi Beach Set for 63-Foot Vijaya Ganapati Idol

Machilipatnam, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Mines, Geology and Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra on Thursday performed the groundbreaking ceremony for a 63-foot Vijaya Ganapati clay idol at Manginapudi Beach, aiming to develop the coastal site into a major tourism hub.

The project, led by the Mahaganapati Seva Samithi, seeks to give Manginapudi a unique identity on the lines of the Khairatabad Ganesh idol. Foundation stones were also laid for model temples inspired by Kanipakam, Tirumala Venkateswara Swamy Temple, Srisaillam Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple, Vijayawada Kanaka Durga Temple and the Ayodhya Ram Temple.

Ravindra said the government plans to develop 250 acres



around the beach to promote tourism. He added that the upcoming Machilipatnam Port and proposed industries would accelerate regional growth and position the town as a gateway to Amaravati.

RTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana, leader Gorrepati Gopichand, TDP district general secretary Gopu Satyanarayana, former municipal chairman Babaprasad, officials and party leaders attended the programme.

DyCM Reviews Efforts to Combat Narcotics and Cybercrime

Mangalagiri, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Friday reviewed the state's efforts to combat narcotics and cybercrime during a meeting with Eagle Wing Chief and Cyber Crime Inspector General A.K. Ravikrishna at the camp office in Mangalagiri.

Ravikrishna presented the Eagle Wing's annual report to the Deputy Chief Minister, detailing the initiatives being undertaken to curb ganja cultivation, drug trafficking and substance abuse across Andhra Pradesh. The report also highlighted the department's achievements and the outcomes of its enforcement



activities carried out over the past year.

The Cyber Crime Inspector General briefed Pawan Kalyan on the stringent measures being taken against social media

harassment, online trolling and individuals posting obscene and offensive content targeting women on digital platforms. He explained the steps initiated by the Cyber Crime wing to identify offenders, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and take legal action against those involved in cyber offences.

The annual report outlined the Eagle wing's continuing efforts to intensify action against narcotics-related crimes while enhancing cyber surveillance and response systems. Officials said the initiatives are aimed at ensuring a safer society, protecting vulnerable groups and creating a secure digital environment for citizens across the state.

JSW Steel Project Restart a Positive Step, Says YS Jagan; Shares Old Photo

Tadepalli, July 3 | TPN Bureau

YS Jagan noted that several key groundwork initiatives for the JSW Steel plant project were undertaken during his government, including finalisation of JSW as the project developer, facilitation of environmental clearances, allocation of water resources, land allotment, and development of road connectivity and supporting infrastructure. He said these measures created the necessary foundation for the project to progress at a faster pace.

In a post on X on Friday, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, YSRCP President and former Chief



Minister, welcomed the inauguration of the JSW Steel plant project in Kadapa, sharing an old photograph from the Bhoomi Puja. He stated that the restart of the plant marks a major step for Rayalaseema's industrial growth and employment generation.

He said the revival brings hope to youth and families

awaiting economic opportunities and expressed happiness over progress on the long-pending project in his home district.

Jagan congratulated JSW Steel Chairman Sajjan Jindal and the team, stressing that industrial development must continue irrespective of political changes. He said delays in such projects directly impact employment and regional progress.

He added that Kadapa and the Rayalaseema region require sustained industrial growth for inclusive development and long-term job creation, and wished the project timely completion.

AP to Overhaul Drug Procurement System in Government Hospitals

Amaravati, July 3 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to revamp the drug procurement and distribution system in government hospitals and constituted a special committee to recommend reforms within two weeks, Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav said on Friday.

During a four-hour review meeting at the Secretariat with senior officials, the minister directed the committee, headed by Director of Medical Education Vishnuvardhan, to examine gaps in the existing



system and suggest measures to ensure uninterrupted availability of medicines to patients. The panel includes officials from the Public Health Department, Directorate of Secondary Health, APMSIDC, hospital superintendents and

pharmacists.

Satya Kumar Yadav also called for a fixed calendar for procurement and supply of medical equipment and machinery to streamline tendering and reduce costs. He reviewed progress of hospital infrastructure projects, including critical care blocks, integrated public health laboratories, Ayush dispensaries and medical colleges. Officials were instructed to expedite construction works and secure NABL accreditation for food safety laboratories in Visakhapatnam and Tirupati within three months.

South Coast Railway Replaces 500 Hanger Cables on Godavari Arch Bridge

Rajahmundry, July 3 | TPN Bureau

South Coast Railway has replaced 500 of the 672 corroded hanger cables on the historic Godavari Bow String Arch Railway Bridge at Rajahmundry, achieving 74.4 per cent progress in its rehabilitation.

The work on Bridge No. 248 on the Vijayawada-Visakhapatnam section is being carried out without disrupting train services. Officials said 20 of the 28 spans have been completed, marking 71.4 per cent



overall progress.

Old DINA hanger cables are being replaced with corrosion-resistant cables meeting international standards. The upgrade includes high-strength PSC strands, advanced protection systems and modern engineering techniques with inputs from global experts and IIT Mumbai.

APCRDA Orders Immediate Measures to Curb Road Accidents

Amaravati, July 3 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) has initiated immediate measures to prevent road accidents in Amaravati, with Commissioner V. Vijaya Ramaraju issuing directives on Thursday.

At a review meeting in Rayapudi with traffic police and

officials, he called for swift implementation of safety steps. Traffic personnel were asked to procure barricades and speed guns through the Guntur Collector to regulate heavy vehicle movement.

Police were directed to deploy adequate staff at key junctions, while RTO officials were told to introduce systems limiting construction vehicles to 40 kmph. A

QR code-based application will be developed to track vehicles and identify contractors in case of incidents.

Contractors were asked to submit route maps, with plans to divert heavy vehicles to the E8 road instead of the E3 Seed Axis Road. Movement will be restricted between 8 am and 11 am and from 4 pm to 7 pm to ensure commuter safety.

Rs 15.33 Cr Revival of Vedadri-Kanchala Lift Scheme Launched

Jaggayyapeta, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Water Resources Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu on Thursday launched restoration works of the Vedadri-Kanchala Lift Irrigation Scheme in Jaggayyapeta constituency of NTR district at an estimated cost of Rs 15.33 crore.

MP Kesineni Chinni, MLAs Sriram Tatayya and Tangirala Soumya, Irrigation Advisor Venkateswara Rao and IDC Managing Director Tirumala Rao at-



tended the programme.

The minister said the scheme will provide irrigation to 17,366 acres in Jaggayyapeta and Nandigama constituencies. He noted that the previous TDP govern-

ment spent Rs 5.36 crore on maintenance between 2014 and 2019, while alleging that the YSRCP regime neglected upkeep, rendering the scheme defunct from 2021.

He said restoration works are targeted for completion by the 2027 kharif season. Alleging that only 166 of 1,023 lift schemes are functional, he announced tenders worth Rs 4,500 crore for repairs and long-term maintenance, adding that Rs 1,200 crore has been spent in two years to revive irrigation and ensure water supply to farmers.



AP Seeks Centre's Backing for Ports and Maritime Infrastructure Expansion

Amaravati, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Roads and Buildings, Infrastructure and Investments B.C. Janardhan Reddy met Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal in New Delhi on Thursday and sought greater central support for strengthening maritime infrastructure in the state. Union Civil Aviation Minister K. Ram Mohan Naidu also participated in the meeting.

The discussions focused on coastal infrastructure development and measures to accelerate port-led economic growth in Andhra Pradesh. Janardhan

Reddy requested the Centre to facilitate Visakhapatnam Port Authority's participation in the development of Mulapeta Port and sought assistance in allocating salt lands for port projects.

He also appealed for sanction of connectivity roads to Gangavaram Port and the ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AMNS) port in Anapalli under the Sagarmala scheme. The minister sought financial support under Sagarmala 2.0 for fishing harbour projects and central assistance for the proposed Dugarajapatnam Mega Ship Building Cluster. Senior officials also attended the meeting.

Infant Kidnap Case Solved in 24 Hours, Four Held

Bapatla, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Police solved the kidnapping of a male infant in Chirala within 24 hours, arrested four accused involved in the crime and safely reunited the child with his parents, Bapatla Superintendent of Police Umamaheshwar said on Friday.

According to the SP, unidentified persons abducted the infant on July 1 while he was sleeping beside his mother at Kothapeta in Chirala. Following the complaint, police launched an intensive investigation and constituted seven special teams to trace the kidnappers.

Search operations were carried out across Bapatla, Prakasam and Guntur districts. Investigators relied on CCTV footage, technical surveillance and other advanced technological tools to track the movements of the accused. The suspects were eventually



traced and apprehended near Tanguturu in Prakasam district.

Umamaheshwar said the abductors had allegedly kidnapped the child after accepting a contract from an individual who sought custody of the infant. He noted that police utilised the 360 Cams application along with other technological resources to identify and track the accused.

The SP commended the efforts of the investigation teams, stating that the prompt action and effective use of technology enabled police to crack the case within a day and rescue the infant unharmed.

Govt Warns Tobacco Firms Against Cartels to Protect Farmers' Interests

Amaravati, July 3 | TPN Bureau

The Centre has constituted a high-level expert committee under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to examine issues faced by Totapuri mango farmers, particularly the sharp fall in prices, Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu said on Friday.

The minister said the state government had taken the issue seriously and that the Centre acted promptly following a request made by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. He noted that Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shwraj Singh Chouhan interacted directly with Totapuri mango growers during his recent visit to Andhra Pradesh and assessed their concerns.

According to Atchannaidu, the committee comprises senior ICAR scientists, experts



from Andhra Pradesh Horticultural University and officials from the state horticulture department. It will visit mango-growing regions and consult farmers, pulp industries, exporters, farmer producer organisations and government officials before submitting recommendations.

The minister said the state government would extend full cooperation to the panel and expressed confidence that co-ordinated efforts by the Centre and the state would help find a lasting solution to the problems confronting Totapuri mango farmers.

Jai Amaravati Slogans Echo at Kadapa Event

Kadapa, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Slogans of "Jai Amaravati" reverberated at a public meeting in Kadapa on Friday during the launch of works for the Rayalaseema Steel Plant, with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu joining the chants.

Addressing the gathering, he said the government is committed to developing Amaravati as a capital that all citizens of Andhra Pradesh can take pride in. He alleged that the previous administration followed a policy of destruction and lacked credibility.

Naidu accused the YSRCP of initially supporting Amaravati before shifting to a three-capital proposal after coming to power. He criticised leaders for



frequently changing their stand on the capital issue.

The Chief Minister said investor confidence is returning due to stable governance and urged political leaders not to undermine people's self-respect. He alleged that the three-capital proposal caused significant damage to the state's development prospects.

Jana Sena Targets YSRCP Fortress Araku as Political Contest Heats Up

Ravi Podili

Araku constituency in Andhra Pradesh is emerging as a renewed focal point of political activity ahead of the next electoral cycle, with both the ruling alliance and the opposition intensifying their outreach strategies in the tribal-dominated region. Once considered a stronghold of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), Araku is now witnessing increased attention from Jana Sena Party as part of its broader expansion plan across the state.

Jana Sena expands organisational reach in Araku

Political observers note that YSRCP has historically maintained a strong support base in Araku, particularly among tribal communities, due to welfare schemes and sustained



grassroots engagement. However, recent developments indicate that Jana Sena Party is making concerted efforts to expand its presence in the constituency by strengthening its organisational structure at the

village level and encouraging new leadership from within local communities.

The party, led by Pawan Kalyan, is reportedly focusing on building a disciplined cadre network and addressing re-

gion-specific issues such as tribal welfare, road connectivity, healthcare access, education facilities and employment opportunities. Party leaders believe that sustained grassroots engagement will be key to improving their electoral prospects in the region. YSRCP, on the other hand, is also stepping up its outreach efforts to retain its strong voter base. Party functionaries are actively engaging with local communities and highlighting welfare schemes and development programmes implemented during their tenure. They are working to reinforce public support through continued interaction and organisational mobilisation.

Political competition intensifies

With elections approaching, political activity in Araku is ex-

pected to intensify further. Analysts say the constituency is likely to witness a closely contested battle, with both parties attempting to consolidate their positions. The effectiveness of candidate selection, local alliances, and voter sentiment will play a decisive role in shaping the outcome. Sources in political circles suggest that alliance dynamics will also influence the contest, making Araku a strategically significant region in the broader state political landscape. Both parties are currently fine-tuning their strategies to secure a strong foothold among tribal voters. As campaigning momentum builds, Araku is expected to become one of the most closely watched constituencies in Andhra Pradesh politics, with its results potentially reflecting broader electoral trends across the state.

Kuppam Emerges as Investment Hub

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The Chief Minister also inaugurated the APIIC-developed MSME Park spread across 44.58 acres and directed officials to begin allotment of 167 industrial plots from July. The park is designed to promote micro, small and medium enterprises and accelerate local employment generation.

In addition, Naidu launched a Rs 28-crore rooftop solar project benefiting 7,489 SC and ST families and dedicated five RESCO power substations built for Rs 25 crore in Kanamanapalli, Gangapuram, T Samudram, Krishnanagar and Balla villages.

Reaffirming his commitment to Kuppam's transformation, the Chief Minister said industries would drive growth in agriculture and services. He urged youth to move beyond job-seeking and focus on becoming job creators through innovation and skill development.

Addressing the Swarna Kuppam – Investment platform public meeting at Pogurupalle, Naidu virtually inaugurated and laid foundation stones for multiple industrial and development projects. The Kuppam Area Development Authority signed MoUs with several companies, enabling large-scale investments and employment opportunities.

He announced that 30 indus-

tries with a total investment of Rs 9,321 crore will be established in Kuppam, generating thousands of direct and indirect jobs. He described the initiative as a landmark development, stating that attracting such investments in a single constituency is unprecedented.

Naidu said Kuppam, once considered remote, is now attracting global companies across sectors such as footwear, aircraft training, battery technology and biotechnology. He stressed the need to align skill development with industry requirements and encouraged entrepreneurship in every family.

Highlighting progress indicators, he said Kuppam's GSDP has grown by 38 percent and per capita income reached Rs 2.11 lakh, driven by irrigation projects, horticulture and dairy expansion. He assured adequate water supply for drinking and industrial use while maintaining 70 % green cover.

The Chief Minister also said 8,000 families have been adopted under the P4 programme and announced plans to develop Pogurupalle into a world-class industrial township. Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy, public representatives and district officials participated



Atchannaidu Counters YSRCP on e-Crop Claims

Amaravati, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu on Friday rejected allegations made by YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy regarding e-crop registration, asserting that the Alliance government has significantly improved the digital crop survey system and ensured greater transparency for farmers. Addressing the media in Amaravati, the Minister accused Jagan of spreading misinformation and claimed that statistical data disproves the allegations. He said that while 96.78 lakh acres belonging to 41.87 lakh farmers were registered during Kharif 2024 under the previous government, the Alliance government registered 117.39 lakh acres covering 53.32 lakh farmers during Kharif 2025. He added that land parcel registrations increased from 106.38 lakh to 198.93 lakh, while 99.7% of e-crop registration for the 2025-26 Rabi season had been

completed.

Atchannaidu said the government has introduced APA-IMS 2.0, integrating geo-referencing, Artificial Intelligence, satellite technology, SMS alerts, self-registration facilities, and grievance redressal mechanisms to improve crop surveys and ensure that subsidies, crop insurance, and investment support reach eligible farmers without delay.

The Minister also dismissed reports of a coconut price crisis, stating that farmers had received remunerative prices over the past two years. He alleged that false reports on coconut prices were aimed at creating panic in the market and harming farmers' interests.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to farmer welfare, Atchannaidu urged the opposition to refrain from spreading misinformation and said the Alliance government would continue implementing transparent, technology-driven agricultural reforms.



Jana Sena Drive Gets Strong Response Says Minister Durgesh

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh on Friday said the Jana Sena Party's "Membership to Leadership" programme has received an overwhelming response from aspirants across the Vijayawada Parliamentary constituency. Addressing the media, Durgesh said the initiative, launched under the guidance of Jana Sena chief and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, aims to identify and encourage committed grassroots leaders. He said applications have been pouring in from all seven Assembly constituencies, with the process being conducted transparently through a specially constituted 32-member scrutiny committee. The Minister said the programme reflects the party's commitment

to recognising dedicated workers who have consistently served the organisation. He noted that the enthusiastic participation of aspirants, including the large procession led by Central Andhra Convener Baditha Shankar, demonstrated the success of the initiative.

Commenting on the capital issue, Durgesh criticised YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy over his recent remarks, accusing him of creating confusion through repeated proposals on the capital. He asserted that Amaravati remains the people's capital and said the coalition government is committed to completing its development at a rapid pace. The Minister expressed confidence that Amaravati would soon emerge as a world-class capital city despite political criticism from the opposition.

Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar Reviews CBDC Pilot in Gujarat

Gandhinagar, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar on Friday visited Gujarat to study the implementation of the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) initiative, which is being piloted by the Gujarat Civil Supplies Department to improve transparency, accountability and efficiency in the public distribution system.

Accompanied by Civil Supplies Commissioner Kannababu, the minister inspected the project at various locations in Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad, where the Digital Rupee-based scheme is currently being implemented. He also held detailed discussions with senior Gujarat Civil Supplies officials to understand the project's execution, assess public feedback, identify operational challenges and evaluate its overall effectiveness.

Speaking after the review, Nadendla Manohar said technology-driven reforms are essential to modernise civil supplies services and ensure the efficient utilisation of public funds. He said the CBDC initiative enables beneficiaries to use the Digital Rupee to purchase commodities of their



choice in the quantities they actually require, rather than being restricted to the items available under the traditional Public Distribution System (PDS).

The minister noted that the scheme offers greater flexibility and convenience to beneficiaries while ensuring complete transparency in transactions. He said the Digital Rupee platform could significantly improve service delivery and strengthen accountability in the distribution of essential commodities.

Nadendla Manohar announced that the Andhra

Pradesh government plans to introduce the CBDC scheme as a pilot project in Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam later this year. He said the visit to Gujarat was aimed at studying best practices and adapting the model to suit the state's requirements.

The minister expressed confidence that the Digital Rupee initiative would transform the delivery of civil supplies services, enhance transparency in welfare programmes and provide beneficiaries with greater freedom and convenience while purchasing essential goods.

Amaravati Key to State's Growth: Minister

Amaravati, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Roads and Buildings Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy on Friday asserted that the construction of Amaravati is a landmark project for Andhra Pradesh and said its development would accelerate progress across all regions of the state.

Reacting to remarks made by YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on the capital issue, the Minister alleged that the previous government's "three capitals" proposal cre-

ated uncertainty and delayed the state's development. He claimed the proposal had proved impractical and was now being ridiculed in political circles.

Ramprasad Reddy said Amaravati is the state's designated capital and stressed that it should not become a subject of political disputes. He accused the opposition of attempting to create obstacles in the capital city's construction and said the public was closely observing such developments.

The Minister maintained that the coalition government

is committed to completing Amaravati at a rapid pace and transforming it into a world-class capital. He said the city's development would generate employment, improve infrastructure, attract investments, and provide equal opportunities for people from every region of Andhra Pradesh.

He reiterated that the government's priority is to complete Amaravati's construction without delay and ensure balanced development across the state through a strong and modern capital city.

YSRCP Alleges 'Credit Politics' Over Steel Plant

Visakhapatnam, July 03 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP leader and former Industries Minister Gudivada Amarnath on Friday accused the TDP-led coalition government of taking credit for industrial projects initiated during the previous YSRCP regime, alleging that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu was relaunching earlier projects instead of bringing in new investments.

Addressing the media in Visakhapatnam, Amarnath said the Kadapa Steel Plant project was conceptualised and facilitated during the tenure of former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. He claimed that the previous government had entrusted the project to JSW Group, secured environmental clearances, extended incentives, and developed road and rail connectivity.

He alleged that after the coalition government came to power, uncertainties were cre-



ated around the project, leading to diversion of potential investments to other states such as Telangana and Maharashtra, resulting in loss of employment opportunities for Andhra Pradesh youth.

Amarnath further alleged that the Chief Minister was repeatedly laying foundation stones for previously initiated

projects to claim political credit. He questioned the number of new industries brought in and jobs created in the last two years. He also said the coalition government had failed to fulfil key election promises despite completing nearly half its term, and demanded clarity on its industrial performance and investment achievements.

JSW to Set Up Sports Centre of Excellence in AP, Announces Lokesh

continued

established in collaboration with JSW.

He said the government is working on building a strong sports ecosystem, including district-level sports arenas and integration of modern training methods. He highlighted that Andhra Pradesh Cricket Association is also supporting multiple sports beyond cricket. Lokesh noted that a 3% reservation for sportspersons has already been introduced in DSC recruitment, along with initiatives like "No Bag Day" in government schools on Saturdays to encourage sports participation. He also mentioned special incentives for

women athletes and the naming of a stand at Visakhapatnam Cricket Stadium after Mithali Raj. Athletes such as PV Sindhu, Satwik Sairaj, Jyothika Sri, Bhavani Karthik, Venkatarami Reddy, R Swathi, Bhavani Yadav, Kusuma Ravada, Ganesh Maniratnam, Rashmi, Mallala Anusha, Sirisha, Kunja Rajitha, Yukthasri and Teerthu Samadev attended the meeting. The government has released Rs 2.23 crore for training 18 athletes preparing for international events. Lokesh assured additional support and urged athletes to bring medals and elevate Andhra Pradesh's global sporting presence.

PM Modi to Visit New Zealand Next Week, FTA in Focus

continued

in agriculture, food processing, renewable energy, tourism, education and digital technologies. Skilled workforce mobility and innovation partnerships are also likely to be discussed. Strategic issues will also be part of the agenda, including cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, maritime security, climate change, disaster resilience and people-to-people

exchanges.

Officials said the visit, though brief, will provide fresh momentum to India-New Zealand relations and reinforce commitments to a stronger economic and strategic partnership. With the FTA as the foundation, both countries aim to expand long-term cooperation and deepen engagement across multiple sectors.

Durgesh Warns Against Social Media Abuse

Vijayawada/Anakapalli | TPN Bureau:

Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh said strict legal action would be taken against those misusing social media to spread abusive or defamatory content. He alleged that coordinated campaigns were being run to target Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and said criticism in a democracy is acceptable only within legal

and ethical limits. He also called for stronger regulation of digital platforms to prevent misuse. In Anakapalli, Jana Sena leaders condemned alleged defamatory social media posts against Pawan Kalyan and warned of legal action against those spreading false propaganda. They accused the YSRCP of running coordinated online campaigns against the coalition government and urged the public not to believe misleading claims.



86 Petitions Received at Vijayawada East Grievance Meet

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

A total of 86 public petitions were received during the Special Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS) programme held in the Vijayawada East Assembly constituency on Friday as part of the Andhra Pradesh government's initiative to bring administration closer to the people.

NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha and Vijayawada East MLA Gadde Rammohan Rao participated in the programme, organised at the APIIC Colony Kalyana Mandapam under the "One Month-One Constituency-Four Visits" initiative. According to officials, the petitions included 49 related to Municipal Administration and Urban Development, 16 concerning Revenue, three each on Housing, Education and ICDS,

two each on APIIC and Civil Supplies, besides eight petitions from other departments.

The Collector directed officials to examine every petition carefully and ensure timely resolution within the stipulated period. He said constituency-level grievance programmes help people resolve issues locally, reducing travel time and expenses while making governance more accessible and accountable.

MLA Gadde Rammohan Rao announced that four special grievance programmes would be organised across the Vijayawada East constituency during July to address local issues through direct public interaction.

Vijayawada RDO Vennela Srinu, PGRS Coordinator G. Jyothi and officials from various departments attended the programme and interacted with the petitioners.



Defence Vendor Meet Boosts MSMEs

Amaravati, July 03 | TPN Bureau

A two-day Vendor Development Programme (VDP) aimed at strengthening Andhra Pradesh's defence and aerospace manufacturing ecosystem concluded successfully at the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub (RTIH), Amaravati, on Friday.

The programme was organised by RTIH in collaboration with the Andhra Pradesh Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Corporation (APMSMEDC) and the Andhra Pradesh Drone Corporation (APDC), with support from the World Bank. It brought together policymakers, defence experts, industry leaders, startups and MSMEs to explore opportunities in India's expanding defence supply chain.

Senior officials, including P. Dhatri Reddy, IAS, CEO of RTIH and APIS, Praveen Kumar Perecharla, Additional CEO of APDC, and Vishwa M, CEO of

APMSMEDC, addressed the inaugural session. Experts from DRDO, NRDC and KCIRI highlighted opportunities arising from the Centre's indigenisation and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives. Technical sessions covered defence procurement procedures, vendor registration, quality certifications, intellectual property, product commercialisation, technology partnerships and market access. Participants also received guidance on compliance requirements and strategies for supplying defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs), original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and private defence companies.

The programme concluded with interactive discussions and networking sessions, equipping startups and MSMEs with practical knowledge and industry connections to participate effectively in India's growing defence and aerospace manufacturing sector.



Special Ganapati Homam on Sankashtahara Chaturthi

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Special Sankashtahara Chaturthi rituals were performed with religious fervour at the sacred Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam atop Indrakeeladri on Friday.

Temple priests conducted Ganapati Homam, Abhishekam, and other Vedic rituals in the temple's Yagashala in the divine presence of Goddess Sri Kanaka Durga, praying for peace, prosperity, and the well-being of the world.

According to temple authorities, Sankashtahara Chaturthi is considered one of the most auspicious occasions dedicated to Lord Ganapati. As de-

scribed in the Puranas, worshipping Lord Ganapati on this day is believed to remove obstacles, resolve planetary and horoscope-related difficulties, and bless devotees with success in all their endeavours.

The rituals were performed strictly in accordance with Agama traditions and Vedic procedures. Devotees participated in the special prayers with deep devotion, seeking the blessings of Lord Ganapati for prosperity, good health, and relief from hardships.

Temple authorities said special arrangements were made to ensure the smooth conduct of the ceremonies and facilitate darshan for devotees visiting the shrine on the auspicious occasion.

Theatre Legends Honoured with Statues

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Statues of legendary Telugu theatre artistes Puvvula Surya Babu and P. Rajeswari were unveiled at Thummalapalli Kalakshetram in Vijayawada on Friday, marking a memorable occasion for theatre lovers and the cultural fraternity.

The statues were unveiled by Vijayawada Central MLA Bonda Umamaheswara Rao in the presence of noted music director Madhavapeddi Suresh, proprietor Nellikunta Balaswamy, senior writer-journalist Rentala Jayadeva, artistes and admirers.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Bonda Uma said the coalition government is committed to supporting artistes and preserving the rich cultural heritage of Andhra Pradesh.



He praised the immense contribution made by Surya Babu and Rajeswari to Telugu theatre and cinema.

The event was organised by P. Nagahari Prasad, grandson of the legendary couple, who thanked all guests for attending the ceremony.

P. Surya Babu, popularly known as "Kanchukantham Suribabu", was a renowned singer-actor who founded the Balakrishna Nataka Samajam and later led the Rajarajeswari

Natyamandali, staging several acclaimed mythological dramas. He also produced the National Award-winning film, Mahakavi Kalidasu.

P. Rajeswari earned recognition for portraying both male and female roles with equal brilliance and was among the earliest Telugu artistes to record songs with HMV. Their remarkable contribution continues to inspire generations of theatre enthusiasts across the state.

₹7.45 Lakh Aid for Muharram Shrines

Machilipatnam, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Mines, Geology and Excise Kollu Ravindra on Friday reaffirmed the State Government's commitment to the welfare of minority communities by distributing financial assistance to Muharram Aasthanas in Machilipatnam.

Addressing a programme at the Rajupeta Shadi Khana, the Minister distributed 7.45 lakh in financial assistance to 139 Aasthanas across the constituency for their maintenance and Muharram celebrations. He said the government also provides infrastructure support, including soil filling and lighting arrangements, wherever required.

Describing Machilipatnam as a symbol of communal harmony, Kollu Ravindra said people from



different faiths celebrate festivals together in the town. He added that the government is implementing several welfare initiatives for minorities, including educational support, Hajj assistance and infrastructure development.

The Minister said 250 students are receiving special coaching through the Minority Corporation, while the Wakf Board has allocated 6.25 crore for the education of 500 students. He also announced that land would be reallocated for

constructing a Shia community hall and that 30 lakh had been sanctioned for a compound wall at Meezan Meraj Juma Masjid.

APSRTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana Rao and District Cooperative Marketing Society Chairman Bandi Ramakrishna said the government remains committed to minority welfare and preserving communal harmony. Several public representatives, religious leaders and officials attended the programme.

Youth Urged to Embrace Entrepreneurship

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Young people should step into the business world and become job creators rather than job seekers, Efftronics Chairman Dasari Ramakrishna said while addressing a "Mentor Get-Together" organised by the Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST) at P.B. Siddhartha Arts and Science College in Vijayawada on Friday.

Ramakrishna observed that at least one member from every family should become an entrepreneur, but regretted that the number of young entrepreneurs in India remains low. He stressed that productivity and innovation are essential for national growth, pointing out that Japan's productivity is significantly higher than India's. He also said India should



strengthen domestic manufacturing instead of depending heavily on imports.

Highlighting the importance of ethics in business, he said successful enterprises are built on values and consumer trust rather than profits alone. Referring to global brands such as Apple, he noted that public confidence is the foundation of long-term business success. Sharing his entrepreneurial journey since establishing Efftronics in 1985, Ramakrishna encouraged youth to cultivate disci-

pline, skills and a strong work culture to compete globally. He also presented Best Mentor Awards to several mentors for their contribution to guiding young entrepreneurs.

Bank Manager Nandagopal said innovation and adaptability are vital for business growth, while College Dean Prof. Rajesh C. Jampala called for improving productivity among India's youth. The programme was coordinated by Dr. Rahman of the MBA Department.

BLOs, BLAs Asked to Speed Up SIR Process

Vijayawada, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Commissioner and Central Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) Dhyanaachandra H directed Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and Booth Level Agents (BLAs) to work in close coordination to complete the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls within the timeline prescribed by the Election Commission of India.

Chairing a coordination meeting at Kandukur Kalyana Mandapam in Gandhinagar on Fri-

day, the Commissioner instructed officials to expedite the distribution, collection, mapping, and digitization of enumeration forms. He asked BLOs to contact every eligible voter in their respective polling areas and immediately report field-level issues to Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) for prompt resolution.

Reviewing the progress, Dhyanaachandra said the SIR exercise was progressing satisfactorily across the city's Assembly constituencies. As of 4 p.m. on Friday, enumeration forms had been distributed to 2,70,678 vot-

ers (97.43%) out of 2,77,822 in Vijayawada Central, with 77,319 forms (27.83%) digitized. In Vijayawada East, forms were distributed to 2,63,926 voters (97.85%) out of 2,69,734, while 81,236 forms (30.12%) had been digitized.

The Commissioner instructed officials to complete the remaining distribution, collection, and digitization work within the stipulated deadline.

AERO and Chief City Planner Sanjay Ratnakumar, Estate Officer A. Sridhar, BLO supervisors, BLAs, and BLOs attended the meeting.



VMC Intensifies Scientific Waste Management Drive

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) Commissioner Dhyanaachandra H has directed officials to strengthen daily waste collection and scientific waste management across the city to ensure cleaner surroundings and improved public health.

During a field inspection on Friday, the Commissioner visited Suryaopet, Governorpet, Prakasam Road, Singh Nagar, Sundarayya Nagar, Visalandhra Colony and the Inner Ring Road to review sanitation services and waste collection operations. He instructed officials to closely monitor sanitation activities and ensure uninterrupted door-to-door garbage collection in every ward. The collected waste, he said, must be promptly shifted to garbage transfer stations and transported to the Jindal processing plant.

The Commissioner also stressed the safety of sanitation workers deployed on busy roads, directing officials to provide traffic cones and warning signs while cleaning operations are underway. He ordered immediate clearance of garbage from roads and internal streets to prevent waste accumulation.

Highlighting the importance of source-level segregation, Dhyanaachandra asked sanitary inspectors to conduct extensive public awareness campaigns encouraging residents to separate wet, dry and domestic hazardous waste before disposal.

Later, the Commissioner inspected the Anna Canteen at Singh Nagar and instructed officials to maintain hygiene, ensure uninterrupted drinking water supply and carry out necessary repairs to provide better facilities for beneficiaries. Senior health and sanitation officials accompanied him during the inspection.



AP Film Chamber Backs Single-Screen Theatres

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

The AP Film Chamber of Commerce has announced a series of initiatives to support single-screen theatres in Andhra Pradesh, including assistance for installing solar power systems to reduce operational costs and measures to strengthen the state's film industry.

The announcements were made during a programme held at Hotel Pride Madhava in Vijayawada on Friday, where renowned scientist Dr. Mikkili Prasanna Kumar was appointed Vice President of the AP Film Chamber of Commerce.

Speaking at the event, Chamber President Srinivas Mantha and General Secretary Chaitanya Janga said the number of single-screen theatres has drastically declined over the years, making their survival a major concern. They said the Chamber would

work with the government and the film industry to provide support to theatre owners and protect thousands of jobs linked to the sector.

The Chamber also unveiled an action plan focusing on modern technology adoption, infrastructure development and revitalising film production in Andhra Pradesh. The leaders expressed confidence that the state government's initiatives to promote film shootings would boost the industry.

New Vice President Dr. Mikkili Prasanna Kumar pledged to work for the growth of the Telugu film industry, while Sakhi Shakti Welfare Foundation President Jaya Pateria announced collaboration with the Chamber to encourage quality cinema and expand opportunities for women in the industry. Several film personalities and industry representatives attended the event.

Call Money Victim Seeks Justice, Alleges Land Grab

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

A woman identifying herself as a victim of the alleged Call Money racket has accused financiers of attempting to illegally seize her 11 acres of agricultural land and appealed to the state government to cancel what she described as a fraudulent land registration.

Addressing a press conference in Vijayawada on Friday, Chagarla Gayatri alleged that she had borrowed around 5 crore but was forced to repay nearly 21 crore. She claimed that although the land was registered as security with an assurance that the deed would be cancelled after repayment, the financiers failed to honour their commitment and instead intensified harassment.

Gayatri said she lodged a complaint at Machavaram Police Station on May 27, alleging that the accused later used political influence and financial clout to get the land mutated in another person's name. She also accused several individuals of supporting attempts to grab the property and alleged that local revenue officials acted under pressure.

Claiming that labourers work-



ing on her farmland were threatened and her family faced repeated intimidation, Gayatri produced videos that she said showed death threats issued against them. She further alleged that her original property documents, promissory notes and blank cheques remain with the financiers.

Appealing to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and other political leaders, Gayatri sought immediate intervention, protection and a fair investigation into her allegations.



MP Putta Mahesh Assures Road Access for BC Hostel Students

Eluru, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar has assured BC hostel students in Jangareddygudem that steps will be taken to provide better road connectivity to their school after they highlighted their difficulties through a video message. Students studying at a government school and residing in a nearby BC hostel informed the MP that the lack of a proper road between the hostel and the school was causing severe inconvenience, especially during the rainy season. Responding immediately, Putta Mahesh Kumar directed Jangareddygudem TDP town president Kondreddy Kishore to visit

the hostel and assess the issue. Kishore, accompanied by party town general secretary Koneti Chanti, Municipal Commissioner K. Venkata Ramana, MRO Joji and other officials, inspected the route on Friday and interacted with the students. Officials observed that the mud road becomes slushy and difficult to navigate during rains. After being briefed on the situation, the MP assured students that a temporary gravel road would be laid as soon as weather conditions permit, ensuring uninterrupted access to their school. The students and hostel authorities thanked the MP and local leaders for their prompt response.

Collector Calls for Speedy Completion of Voter List Revision

Repalle, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Bapatla District Collector V. Vinod Kumar on Friday directed officials to expedite the Special Summary Revision of electoral rolls, stating that the exercise would conclude on July 14 and warning against delays in its implementation.

Addressing a review meeting at the Repalle Revenue Divisional Office, the Collector assessed progress in voter list revision, the National Grievance Service Portal and grievance redressal mechanisms with district officials, RDOs, tahsildars, municipal commissioners, MPDOs, EROs, AROs, supervisors and BLOs. Vinod Kumar expressed concern over the slow pace of mapping in some mandals, noting that BLOs were expected to complete 75 mappings per day. He directed officials to closely monitor field-level performance and initiate action against underper-



forming BLOs. Areas where work has been completed should provide personnel support to lagging regions, he said. The Collector also stressed prompt disposal of complaints received through the National Grievance Service Portal and instructed officials to maintain transparency, interact courteously with complainants and ensure timely resolution of public grievances. Later, he inspected the Roads and Buildings Department office in Repalle and instructed officials to maintain cleanliness and improve the premises.



Pumping Scheme Revives Irrigation for 20,000 Acres

Korukonda, July 3 | TPN Bureau

In a major boost to agriculture in Rajanagar constituency, irrigation water was released through the Purushottapatnam Thorrigadda Pumping Scheme, benefiting nearly 20,000 acres in Korukonda and Seethanagar mandals. MLA Battula Balamakrishna and RUDA Chairman Boddu Venkataramana Chowdary participated in the programme, performed special prayers and formally released water by switching on the motors. Addressing the gathering, Balamakrishna said the coalition government is committed to ensuring timely irrigation for farmers and preventing water scarcity in agricultural lands.

He stated that bringing happiness to farmers and supporting them in achieving better yields remains the government's priority. The MLA said the release of water would provide adequate irrigation to vast stretches of farmland in the two mandals, helping farmers cultivate crops without disruption. He urged farmers to make effective use of the available water and expressed confidence that the government would continue to prioritise irrigation infrastructure and agricultural development. Farmers from beneficiary villages welcomed the initiative and thanked public representatives and the coalition government for ensuring timely water supply.

SAAP Holds 89th Board Meeting

Vijayawada, July 03 | TPN Bureau

The 89th board meeting of the Andhra Pradesh Sports Authority (SAAP) was held at its headquarters under the chairmanship of SAAP Chairman Ravi Naidu, focusing on strengthening sports infrastructure and overall sports development in the state. The meeting discussed key initiatives to improve facilities for athletes, expand training centres, and enhance performance at national and international levels.

Members reviewed plans for organising the prestigious Amaravati Champions Cup, which will be conducted as part of the National Sports Day celebrations. Discussions also covered event planning, athlete participation, and strategies to promote sports culture across rural and urban areas of Andhra Pradesh.

Chairman Ravi Naidu stated that the state government is giving top priority to sports development with a long-term vision to nurture talent from the grassroots level. He emphasised that SAAP is working to create a structured system that supports athletes through modern training methods, upgraded facilities, and welfare-oriented initiatives. SAAP Managing Director Bharani, IPS officers, and board members participated in the meeting. The board also resolved to strengthen coaching programs, expand sports academies, and introduce advanced scientific training methods to improve performance outcomes. The initiative aims to help Andhra Pradesh athletes secure more medals in upcoming national and international competitions through sustained support and systematic development efforts.

Shakti Team Sensitises Students on Women's Safety

Chirala, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Women's safety and eradication of drug abuse remain key priorities, said Chirala Sub-Division Shakti Team In-Charge SI A. Haribabu during a special awareness programme conducted at St. Mark's Lutheran Junior College in Chirala on Friday.

The programme was organised by the Shakti Team under the directions of Bapatla District SP Uma Maheshwar and the supervision of Chirala DSP Moin. Presided over by college In-Charge Principal Dr. Garapati Manjula, the session educated students on good touch and bad touch, cybercrime prevention, women's safety, use of the Shakti



App and the anti-drug initiative 'Operation Dandayan'.

Haribabu urged students, particularly girls, not to tolerate eve-teasing, stalking, abusive comments or harassment in educational institutions, public places or social media platforms. He advised victims to immedi-

ately use the SOS feature in the Shakti App or contact the emergency helpline 112. He also called upon students to stay away from narcotics and report suspicious activities to police. Constable K. Subbarao, faculty members and students participated in the programme.

Tearful Tributes Mark 108th Birth Anniversary of S.V. Ranga Rao

Eluru, July 3 | TPN Bureau

The 108th birth anniversary of legendary actor S.V. Ranga Rao was observed with solemnity and reverence on Friday, with political leaders, family members and admirers paying floral tributes to the iconic artist.

Eluru MLA Badeti Radhakrishnayya (Chanti), a relative of the veteran actor, offered tributes to S.V. Ranga Rao's portrait at the TDP camp office in Powerpet and observed a two-minute silence in his memory. Recalling his uncle's legacy, the MLA became emotional while speaking about the actor's contribution to Telugu cinema.

S.L.V.S. Ranga Rao, grandson of the late actor, said his grandfather brought global recogni-



tion to Telugu cinema and expressed gratitude to the people for their continued affection towards the family.

Badeti Chanti described S.V. Ranga Rao as a performer who immortalised roles such as Ravana Brahma, Ghatotkacha and Keechaka, noting that his portrayal of Ghatotkacha in Maya-bazar remains unparalleled. He said it was a matter of pride to belong to the family of an actor

who remained humble despite receiving national honours and accolades.

Chairman Peddiboyina Siva Prasad, Malas Finance Corporation Director Dasari Anjaneyulu, TDP city president Chode Venkataratnam, secretary Reddy Nagaraju, BSNL Director Lankapalli Manikyala Rao and several party leaders, workers and admirers attended the programme.

Collector Vetri Selvi Reviews Public Grievances

Eluru, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Eluru District Collector K. Vetri Selvi on Friday directed officials to thoroughly examine public petitions and ensure permanent solutions so that grievances do not recur.

Presiding over a Gram Sabha held at the Denduluru Mandal Parishad office under the first phase of the "One Month-One Constituency-Four Visits" programme, she, along with Denduluru MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar and Joint Collector M.J. Abhishek Gowda, received 103 petitions from the public. She instructed officials to attend PGRS meetings regularly, conduct field inspections wherever necessary, and submit detailed reports with photographic evidence of resolved grievances before review meetings.

During the programme, Collector Vetri Selvi personally interacted with persons with disabilities, listening to their concerns



and receiving petitions seeking enhanced welfare support. Beneficiaries from Kovvali village requested an increase in disability pensions based on eligibility. Responding positively, she directed officials to approach differently-abled persons with empathy, assess their requirements on the spot, and ensure timely sanction of pensions, welfare benefits, and assistive devices. She reaffirmed that the government is giving top priority to their welfare and assured full administrative support.

MLA Prabhakar stated that the

coalition government was prioritising grievance redressal and urged officials to ensure quality disposal of petitions. He also called for a dedicated day to resolve pending 22(A) land disputes and identification of eligible beneficiaries for new pensions.

The Collector further stressed that officials should avoid delays, conduct necessary field visits, and provide transparent, lasting solutions to public issues. District officials, public representatives, coalition leaders, and residents participated in the programme.

Farmers Rally to Mark AP Rythu Sangham State Conference

Eluru, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Thousands of farmers from across the state participated in a massive rally in Eluru on Friday as part of the 23rd State Conference of the Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangham, organised under the banner of the "Hello Raithanna - Chalo Eluru" programme.

Addressing a public meeting at the Indoor Stadium, All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) National General Secretary Vijoo Krishnan alleged that successive government policies were responsible for the growing number of farmer suicides in the country. He criticised the Centre's agricultural policies as corporate-driven and claimed that proposed trade agreements with the United States would severely impact India's farming sector.

Krishnan said farmers in developed countries receive substantial subsidies, while Indian farmers continue to face mounting challenges, including rising input costs and inadequate support. He also raised concerns over tenant farmers



not receiving benefits and demanded greater investment in irrigation projects, including the Chintalapudi Lift Irrigation Scheme.

The rally, marked by slogans, cultural performances and red flags, commenced from the Al-luri Sitarama Raju statue at

Jute Mill Centre and culminated at the Indoor Stadium. Leaders of farmers' organisations and representatives from across the state participated in the event, while the conference will continue on July 4 and 5 at the DCMS Conference Hall in Eluru.



Mechanics Urged to Embrace EV Skills

Ongole, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Two-wheeler mechanics organised a massive motorcycle rally in Ongole city of Prakasam district on the occasion of Mechanic Day, highlighting the importance of the profession and its contribution to society.

Participating in the event, Ongole MP Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy said two-wheeler mechanics render vital services to the public and play a key role in everyday mobility. He observed that mechanics across Prakasam district, the state and the country continue to face several livelihood-related challenges.

The MP noted that the use of two-wheelers has increased significantly in the post-pandemic period, enhancing the impor-

ance of mechanics' services. He appreciated the mobile repair service model, under which mechanics reach stranded motorists with a single phone call and carry out repairs on the spot, and suggested that such services should be expanded to all regions.

Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy also stressed the need for mechanics to undergo specialised training in electric vehicle repairs, as EV adoption is expected to grow rapidly in the coming years. He assured that efforts would be made to bring the issues faced by mechanics to the attention of the government and place their welfare concerns before Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Minister Nara Lokesh.



MLA Chanti Promises Swift Grievance Redressal

Eluru, July 3 | TPN Bureau

Eluru MLA and district TDP president Badeti Chanti on Friday said sustained efforts were being made to transform the constituency into a problem-free region by addressing public grievances on a priority basis.

Speaking at the weekly Praja Darbar programme held at his camp office in Eluru, the MLA received petitions from residents and assured them of prompt action. He interacted with people, examined their issues in detail and directed officials concerned to take immediate measures for their resolution.

Badeti Chanti said the coalition government was committed to uninterrupted public service and had introduced innovative initiatives to strengthen confidence among citizens. He noted that the weekly grievance redressal programme, conducted every Friday, was enabling elected representatives to directly engage with people and provide effective solutions.

The MLA also stated that the process of refunding deposits paid by beneficiaries for TIDCO houses was being carried out efficiently. Several public representatives and TDP leaders attended the programme.

Visakhapatnam-Mumbai LTT Express Gets Nidadavole Halt

Nidadavole, July 3 | TPN Bureau

The long-pending demand of passengers from Nidadavole and the Godavari districts has been fulfilled with the sanctioning of a halt for the Visakhapatnam-Mumbai Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Express (18519/18520) at Nidadavole Railway Station.

The development comes following sustained efforts by MP Daggubati Purandeswari, who pursued the matter with the Union Railway Ministry, highlighting the travel needs of people in the region. Residents of Nidadavole constituency expressed gratitude to the MP for securing the halt, which is expected to benefit a large number of passengers.

Purandeswari thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Rail-



way Minister Ashwini Vaishnav and Railway Board officials for approving the stoppage. She said the new halt would strengthen rail connectivity between the Godavari districts and Mumbai, the country's financial capital.

The MP noted that the facility would be particularly useful for traders, students, employees and other travellers, while also reducing travel time and expenses for people from surrounding villages dependent on Nidadavole Junction.

Workers Stage Protest Over Vizag Steel Compensation Demand

Eluru, July 03 | TPN Bureau

Workers' unions affiliated with IFTU, AITUC, and CITU staged a massive dharna at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar statue near the Old Bus Stand in Eluru on Friday, demanding compensation for families of deceased workers of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant.

Union leaders demanded 1 crore ex gratia and employment for one family member of each deceased worker. They alleged that both the Central and State governments failed to prevent industrial accidents and ensure workplace safety. Speaking at the protest, leaders Badda Venkatray (IFTU), Srinivas Dange (AITUC), and Pampana Ravi (CITU) criti-

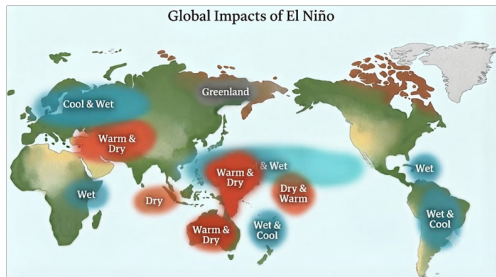


cized the implementation of labour codes and lack of proper factory inspections. They called for a high-level investigation and allocation of captive mines to the steel plant.

They further stated that repeated industrial explosions reflect systemic negligence. Several union leaders participated. They urged immediate policy reforms to strengthen industrial safety standards across the country, India-wide.

Editorial

El Niño Is a Wake-Up Call for India's Climate Resilience



El Niño, the periodic warming of the central and eastern Pacific Ocean, has re-emerged as a powerful disruptor of global climate systems. Though it originates in distant waters, its consequences are deeply felt across continents. In India, where agriculture and water security depend heavily on the monsoon, El Niño often results in weak rainfall, prolonged dry spells, and rising temperatures.

Recent patterns indicate growing concern. A below-normal monsoon has affected sowing cycles, especially in rain-fed regions. The Telugu states—Andhra Pradesh and Telangana—are particularly vulnerable. Telangana has witnessed delayed kharif sowing and declining reservoir levels, while parts of Andhra Pradesh, especially Rayalaseema, face recurring drought-like conditions. Reduced rainfall not only impacts crop yields but also threatens drinking water availability and rural livelihoods.

Globally, El Niño produces contrasting climatic extremes. While India, Australia, and parts of Africa endure droughts and heatwaves, countries in South America, such as Peru and Ecuador, often experience intense rainfall and devastating floods. Indonesia and Southeast Asia frequently face dry conditions and forest fires. This imbalance underscores the widespread and uneven consequences of a single climatic phenomenon.

Infographic: Key Impact Areas of El Niño

Addressing the challenges of El Niño requires both immediate and long-term strategies. Governments must expand irrigation networks, promote drought-resistant crop varieties, and strengthen water conservation practices such as rainwater harvesting. In states like Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, better reservoir management and micro-irrigation systems can significantly reduce vulnerability. Equally important is improving weather forecasting and early warning systems to help farmers make informed decisions.

El Niño is not merely a seasonal disturbance but a recurring test of resilience. As climate variability increases, India must adopt sustainable and adaptive strategies to safeguard its agriculture, economy, and people from its far-reaching effects.

Editor

Time Bank for India: Investing Time to Build a Stronger Nation



India is home to the world's largest youth population. This demographic advantage can become the country's greatest strength if the energy, talent, and compassion of young people are channelled towards nation-building activities. One innovative approach that deserves serious consideration is the Time Bank concept, where individuals earn "Time Credits" for voluntary community service. These credits can later be recognized through educational, employment, healthcare, and social benefits. Rather than measuring wealth in money alone, a Time Bank values the time and service contributed by citizens to society. Every nation requires countless services beyond those provided by governments. Communities need volunteers during natural disasters, public health emergencies, blood donation campaigns, environmental conservation programs, literacy drives, care for senior citizens, and assistance to vulnerable sections of society. A Time Bank creates an organized mechanism to encourage citizens, especially the youth, to participate in such activities while receiving meaningful recognition for their contributions.

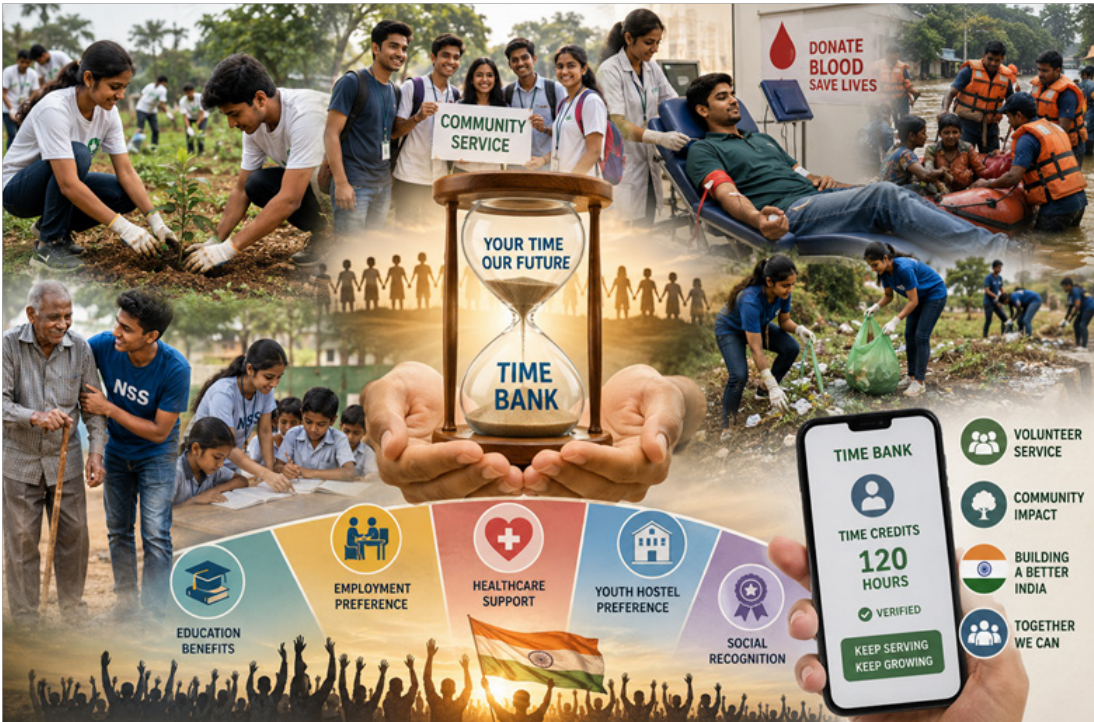
Introducing community service from the school and college level would nurture a strong sense of social responsibility. Students who volunteer in villages, hospitals, blood banks, disaster relief programs, environmental campaigns, and community welfare initiatives develop empathy, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. More importantly, they gain firsthand understanding of the challenges faced by their fellow citizens. Such experiences shape them into responsible, compassionate, and informed citizens who are better prepared to contribute to society throughout their lives.

Voluntary service also brings immense personal satisfaction. Numerous studies have shown that helping others enhances mental well-being, improves self-

confidence, and creates a lasting sense of purpose. Young volunteers learn that their time and effort can make a real difference in someone's life. This realization strengthens their commitment to civic responsibility and encourages lifelong participation in community service.

One of the most significant benefits of a national Time Bank could be the strengthening of voluntary blood donation. India requires millions of units of blood every year to meet the needs of accident victims, mothers during childbirth, children suffering from Thalassemia, patients undergoing cancer treatment, and those requiring emergency surgeries. Regular community service credits linked with voluntary blood donation awareness campaigns and donor mobilization can significantly improve the availability of safe blood across the country. While blood donation itself should always remain voluntary and non-remunerated, recognizing the time spent in organizing awareness drives, donor registration, and support services can motivate greater public participation and ultimately save thousands of lives. Climate change presents another area where youth participation is urgently needed. Volunteers can actively contribute to tree plantation, water conservation, waste management, plastic reduction campaigns, biodiversity protection, and awareness programs on sustainable living. Every hour spent protecting the environment becomes an investment in cleaner air, healthier ecosystems, and a better quality of life for future generations. A Time Bank would encourage sustained participation in such climate action initiatives instead of one-time events.

To make the system effective, structured community service should become an integral part of school and college education. Students could be required to complete a reasonable number of service hours each academic year without compromising their



studies. Educational institutions can allocate maximum service hours appropriate to each age group, ensuring a healthy balance between academics and social engagement.

The time credits earned through verified community service should receive formal recognition. These credits may provide tangible benefits such as:

- Eligibility or preference for scholarships for higher education.
- Priority consideration during admissions to colleges and universities.
- Additional weightage or preference marks during recruitment interviews for public service and other employment.
- Better access to selected preventive healthcare or medicare support programs.
- Preference in accommodation at youth hostels and similar public facilities while travelling for educational or cultural purposes.

Such incentives would not convert volunteering into a commercial activity; instead, they would acknowledge the value of selfless service and encourage wider participation. Successful implementation of a Time Bank requires the active involvement of experienced voluntary organizations. Institutions such as the Indian

Red Cross Society, Lions Clubs International, National Service Scheme (NSS), National Cadet Corps (NCC), Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), and other accredited non-governmental organizations can serve as implementing partners. These organizations already possess the infrastructure, expertise, and credibility to identify community needs, train volunteers, maintain service records, and verify completed hours. Modern digital technology can further strengthen the program through a secure national Time Bank portal where volunteers register, receive assignments, log service hours, and accumulate verified credits. Educational institutions, government departments, and participating organizations can access the platform to monitor participation and recognize achievements transparently.

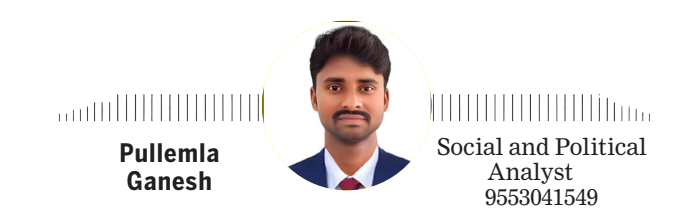
India's future depends not only on economic growth but also on the character and commitment of its citizens. A national Time Bank would transform voluntary service into a lifelong habit, fostering compassion, civic responsibility, and social cohesion. By investing time in serving others today, young Indians would help build a healthier, greener, and more inclusive nation tomorrow.

Time is one resource every citizen possesses, and when shared in the service of humanity, it becomes the most valuable investment a nation can make.

A noteworthy initiative has recently been undertaken by the District Collector of NTR District, Andhra Pradesh, who has successfully introduced the Time Bank concept by engaging National Service Scheme (NSS) and Youth Red Cross (YRC) volunteers. Over the past 100 days, hundreds of student volunteers have enthusiastically participated in a wide range of community service activities, demonstrating remarkable commitment, discipline, and social responsibility.

The overwhelming response from students clearly shows that the younger generation is eager to contribute to society when provided with a structured platform and meaningful recognition for their efforts. This successful pilot has proved that the Time Bank concept is both practical and impactful. It serves as an excellent model that deserves to be replicated across all districts of Andhra Pradesh and eventually adopted by other states in India as a national movement to promote volunteerism, civic responsibility, environmental stewardship, and humanitarian service among the youth.

Forgotten Legend Who Changed Indian Cricket
The Inspiring Journey of Palwankar Baloo Against Caste and Odds



Even before India attained independence, the great cricketer who made the world recognize India's talent in the field of cricket was Palwankar Baloo. He was born on 19 March 1876 in the Dharwad region of the then Bombay Presidency. His full name was Palwankar Baloo. He belonged to a Dalit family. At that time, caste discrimination was severe in Indian society. People belonging to lower castes faced numerous social, economic, and educational discriminations. Born under such circumstances, Baloo faced many hardships from his childhood.

At a young age, his family migrated to Pune. To earn a livelihood, Baloo worked at a cricket club as a groundsman and ball boy. During this period, he developed a keen interest in cricket. He closely observed the players during their practice sessions and practised on his own during his free time. Some people recognized his talent and allowed him to bowl.

Baloo displayed extraordinary skills as a left-arm spin bowler. The accuracy, pace, and turn in his bowling troubled opposing batsmen. Within a short period, he became famous in Pune and Bombay. Subsequently, he

was selected for the Hindu cricket team. However, even after earning a place in the team, caste discrimination against him did not diminish.

In those days, Baloo was not allowed to sit and dine with other players. He was given a separate teacup. He was also not permitted to use the utensils used by other players. Despite his outstanding performances on the field, he was treated as an untouchable in society. Nevertheless, Baloo never lost hope. He moved forward with the determination to change society through his talent.

In the Hindu-European matches held in 1906, Baloo delivered remarkable performances. Even English players praised his bowling. It was largely because of him that the Hindu team achieved many victories.

Palwankar Baloo was one of the first cricketers to bring special recognition to left-arm spin bowling in Indian cricket history. However, caste discrimination prevented him from becoming the captain of the team. Despite his talent, experience, and seniority, he was denied captaincy simply because he was a Dalit. This incident be-



came a topic of discussion across the country. Many social reformers and political leaders condemned it. The incident sparked a major debate on caste inequalities in Indian society.

Palwankar Baloo's life was not limited to cricket alone. He also worked for social equality. He participated in movements for Dalit rights and social justice. His life became an inspiration to millions of people from marginalized communities.

The architect of the Indian Constitution also praised the life of Palwankar Baloo. He described him as a person who fought against caste discrimination and proved that talent is not restricted by caste.

Palwankar Baloo passed away on 4 July 1955. However, the path he showed and the achievements he attained remain alive even today. He occupies a special place not

only in Indian cricket but also in India's social history. The life of Palwankar Baloo gives us a great message. He proved that with talent, hard work, and determination, one can overcome any form of discrimination and achieve success. The life of this great man, who fought against caste discrimination and stood for equality, is an inspiration to every Indian. His name will remain immortal in the history of Indian sports. It is noteworthy that even in modern India, Palwankar Baloo has not received the recognition he truly deserves from governments. At least now, there is a historical necessity for Indian governments to ensure that every Indian becomes aware of his life and contributions by introducing schemes in his name, naming cricket stadiums after him, conferring upon him the honour, and honouring



him through various other initiatives. In recognition of the prestige and glory that he brought to Indian cricket,

Historically accepted highlights of Baloo's cricketing career and legacy

Career Timeline

- Born: 19 March 1876 (Dharwad, Bombay Presidency)
- Cricket career start: Late 1890s (club cricket in Pune & Bombay)
- Peak years: 1900–1915 (Bombay Quadrangular era)
- Active top-level career span: ~20 years
- Passed away: 4 July 1955

■ Matches & Participation

- Played primarily in the Bombay Quadrangular/Pentangular tournaments (Hindus vs Europe-

ans, Muslims, Parsees, etc.)

- Exact match records are not fully documented due to the absence of official Test cricket for India during his era
- Estimated to have played dozens of first-class equivalent matches (though not all officially recorded as first-class today)

records

- Frequently top wicket-taker for the Hindu team in Quadrangular tournaments
- Instrumental in multiple Hindu team victories, especially vs Europeans (notably 1906 matches)



Major Milestones

- Among the earliest Indian cricketers to gain international praise, including from British players
- Recognized as a match-winner during a time when Indians rarely dominated Europeans in sport
- Became a symbol of excellence despite caste barriers

- Feathers in His Cap (Honours & Legacy)
- One of the pioneers of Indian cricket before Test status (1932)
 - Helped popularize spin bowling in India
 - Central figure in the Bombay Quadrangular's rise in popularity
 - His exclusion from captaincy sparked a nationwide debate on caste discrimination
 - Praised by B. R. Ambedkar for challenging caste barriers
 - Inspired future generations of cricketers from marginalized communities



BJP Adopts Cautious Approach on UCC in Uttar Pradesh

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is taking a cautious approach towards implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Uttar Pradesh, despite the issue being one of its long-standing ideological commitments. Party leaders believe that introducing such a major legal reform in India's most populous state requires careful planning, legal clarity and extensive preparation.

According to party sources, the BJP deliberately chose to implement the UCC first in Uttarakhand, a smaller state, to assess its legal, administrative and political impact. The party is also closely monitoring court proceedings related to the Uttarakhand law before deciding on a similar move in Uttar Pradesh.

The BJP has already initiated steps towards implementing the UCC in several other states, including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Assam. However, Uttar Pradesh presents unique challenges due to its large population, diverse com-

munities and complex social structure. Another factor influencing the party's strategy is that the UCC was not specifically promised in the BJP's 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly election manifesto. As a result, there is no immediate political pressure to introduce the legislation before the next state elections.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has consistently supported the concept of a Uniform Civil Code, calling it a step towards ensuring equal rights and justice for all citizens. However, the state government is currently focused on implementing the new criminal laws and strengthening governance while awaiting greater legal clarity on the UCC.

The BJP is also keeping open the possibility of a nationwide Uniform Civil Code through Parliament. Until then, the party appears determined to proceed gradually, studying the experience of other states before taking a final decision on implementing the law in Uttar Pradesh.



J&K Issues Strict Advisory for Amarnath Yatra Pilgrims

As the annual Amarnath Yatra commenced on Friday, the Jammu and Kashmir administration issued a detailed advisory urging pilgrims to strictly follow safety guidelines to ensure a smooth and secure pilgrimage. Authorities have asked devotees to travel only on the dates mentioned in their registration permits and avoid undertaking the journey without valid registration.

Pilgrims have been advised to travel only in designated convoys from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu and refrain from using private vehicles outside the approved schedule. Officials warned that only registered yatrīs with compulsory health certificates will be allowed to proceed towards the holy cave shrine.

The administration also urged devotees to follow all traffic regulations, cooperate with security personnel and remain updated on weather conditions before starting their journey. Pilgrims have been asked to avoid trekking during adverse weather and to immediately report any medical issues to health centres

set up along the route.

Authorities stressed that elderly people, pregnant women and individuals with serious heart, lung or other chronic illnesses should consult their doctors before undertaking the high-altitude pilgrimage. Devotees have also been advised to stay hydrated, carry essential medicines, wear warm clothing and avoid strenuous physical activity during the trek.

Security has been significantly enhanced along both the Pahalgam and Baltal routes, with thousands of personnel deployed to ensure the safety of pilgrims. Medical camps, emergency response teams and surveillance systems have also been put in place to handle any contingencies.

The Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, which began on July 3, will continue until August 28. The administration has appealed to all pilgrims to adhere to official instructions, avoid rumours and cooperate with authorities to ensure the safe and successful completion of one of India's most significant annual religious pilgrimages.

INDIA Bloc Urges CJI to Safeguard Electoral Process

The INDIA bloc has written to Chief Justice of India (CJI) Justice Surya Kant, expressing serious concerns over the functioning of the electoral process and alleging bias on the part of the Election Commission of India (ECI). In a joint letter signed by leaders of 23 Opposition parties and one Independent MP, the alliance appealed to the judiciary to intervene, saying public faith in democratic institutions must be protected.

The six-page letter stated that the Opposition would not normally approach the Chief Justice on such matters but argued that the current situation warranted judicial attention. According to the signatories, the electoral process is being manipulated in a manner that undermines free and fair elections, raising questions about whether election outcomes truly reflect the will of the people.

A key focus of the letter is the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The INDIA bloc alleged that the exercise is ill-timed, exclusionary and politically motivated, claiming that the documentation requirements could disenfranchise genuine voters. The Opposition also accused the Election Commission, particularly Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, of displaying partisan behaviour and failing to act im-

INDIAN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL INCLUSIVE A

8 June, 2026



partially during elections.

The Opposition further claimed that the Commission has not acted evenly in enforcing the Model Code of Conduct, alleging that violations by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have often gone unchecked while Opposition parties have faced stricter scrutiny. The letter also raised broader concerns about the use of electronic voting machines (EVMs) and the overall transparency of the electoral process ahead of Assembly elections due in several states. Appealing directly to the judiciary, the INDIA bloc said that citizens continue to place their trust in the courts when other institutional mechanisms fail. The letter warned that if concerns about the electoral process remain unaddressed, it could weaken public confidence in India's democratic institutions. Among the promi-

nent signatories were Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, AAP's Sanjay Singh and representatives of several other Opposition parties. The inclusion of parties such as the Aam Aadmi Party and the DMK highlighted a broad show of unity on the issue.

The Election Commission has consistently maintained that the Special Intensive Revision is intended to ensure accurate electoral rolls by removing duplicate, shifted, deceased and otherwise ineligible entries. The issues raised by the Opposition are likely to remain part of the ongoing political and legal debate as several states prepare for upcoming Assembly elections.

RSS Demands Transparency in Ram Mandir Donation Case

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has called for a transparent investigation into the alleged theft of donations at the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, saying the incident has deeply hurt the sentiments of millions of devotees. The organisation stressed that those found responsible must face strict action to maintain public trust in the temple's administration.

RSS General Secretary Datatreya Hosabale said devotees expect the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust to deal with the matter seriously and ensure complete accountability. He urged the Trust to strengthen its administrative and financial systems to prevent similar incidents in the future and safeguard the sanctity of the temple.

The RSS said transparency is essential in handling the case, as the Ram Mandir receives donations from devotees across the country. It also appealed to



the public not to spread rumours or draw conclusions before the investigation is completed, adding that the issue should not be politicised or used to create divisions.

The controversy has generated widespread political attention, with Opposition parties demanding greater transparency in the management of temple funds. Former Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust General Secretary Champat Rai has come under scrutiny following the allegations, though no final conclusions have been reached and the in-

vestigation is still underway.

The RSS reiterated that preserving the faith of devotees and protecting the reputation of the Ram Mandir should remain the highest priority. It emphasised that any administrative lapses must be addressed through institutional reforms and strict accountability.

Authorities are continuing to examine financial records and other evidence related to the alleged theft. The findings of the investigation are expected to determine whether further legal or administrative action will be taken against those involved.

Monsoon Session to Begin with New Political Equations

The Monsoon Session of Parliament is likely to begin on July 20, with significant political changes expected to reshape the dynamics in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Since the last session ended in April, a series of defections, party splits and shifting alliances have altered the balance of power, giving the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) a stronger position ahead of key legislative debates.

One of the major developments is the split in the Trinamool Congress, with 20 rebel MPs seeking to merge with the Nationalist Congress Party of India (NCP). Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is expected to decide on the merger before the session begins. Similarly, six MPs from the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena faction have sought to join the Eknath Shin-



de-led Shiv Sena, a move that is also awaiting the Speaker's approval.

Another significant political shift has emerged in Tamil Nadu, where differences between the DMK and the Congress have weakened the Opposition's unity in Parliament. These developments are expected to reduce the strength of the INDIA bloc while increasing the NDA's numbers in the Lok Sabha, bringing the ruling alliance closer to the two-thirds majority required for constitutional

amendments.

The upcoming session is expected to witness intense debates on several important issues, including pending legislation, economic reforms and national security. The Opposition is likely to raise concerns over electoral reforms, governance and other political developments, while the government is expected to push key Bills and policy initiatives.

With the political landscape undergoing rapid changes in just three months, the Monsoon Session is set to be one of the most closely watched parliamentary sessions in recent years. The new numerical strength of the ruling alliance and the changing composition of the Opposition are expected to influence both legislative proceedings and the broader political narrative in the country.



E20 Petrol May Slightly Reduce Mileage, Says Centre

The Central government has clarified that vehicles using E20 petrol may witness a slight reduction in fuel efficiency, but stressed that the impact is minimal and outweighed by the long-term benefits of ethanol blending. Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said the decrease in mileage is only marginal and depends on several factors, including driving conditions, vehicle maintenance and engine performance.

Responding to concerns over the nationwide rollout of E20 fuel, Puri said ethanol-blended petrol is already used in many countries and even powers high-performance racing vehicles. He added that ethanol offers certain advantages, such as improved engine performance and reduced knocking, making it a viable alternative to conventional petrol.

The minister also dismissed speculation that using E20 petrol could affect vehicle insurance coverage. He said insurance companies have clarified that policies remain valid for vehicles running on E20 fuel, easing concerns among

motorists.

Puri noted that the government introduced E20 petrol only after extensive consultations with automobile manufacturers, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) and the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI). The policy, he said, is part of India's broader strategy to reduce dependence on imported crude oil, support farmers by increasing ethanol production and cut carbon emissions.

Experts explain that ethanol contains slightly less energy than petrol, which is why vehicles may experience a small drop in mileage. However, newer E20-compatible vehicles are designed to minimise this impact.

The government's clarification comes amid growing public debate over ethanol-blended fuel. While some motorists have reported lower fuel efficiency, the Centre maintains that the environmental and economic benefits of E20 petrol far outweigh the marginal reduction in mileage, making it an important step towards cleaner and more sustainable transportation.



DMK Slams Arrest of MLA as Political Tensions Rise

The arrest of DMK MLA and former Tamil Nadu minister Anitha R. Radhakrishnan has intensified the political confrontation between the ruling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) government and the opposition DMK. The Tiruchendur legislator was taken into custody on Friday, hours after the Madras High Court rejected his anticipatory bail plea in a case related to alleged derogatory remarks against Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay.

The case stems from a speech delivered by Radhakrishnan on June 20, in which he allegedly made offensive comments about the Chief Minister. Police registered an FIR on June 23 under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita dealing with intentional insult and promoting enmity. Authorities said the MLA failed to appear for questioning despite being served two summons, leading to his arrest after the court declined to grant him protection from arrest.

The DMK strongly criticised the action, describing it as politically motivated. Party president

M.K. Stalin accused the TVK government of using the police to target opposition leaders and alleged that the administration was functioning in an "authoritarian" manner. DMK MP Kanimozhi also condemned the arrest, claiming it was carried out while Radhakrishnan was inspecting development works in his constituency and calling it an attempt to intimidate the opposition. The TVK government has rejected the allegations, maintaining that the arrest followed due legal procedure after the High Court refused anticipatory bail. Officials have said the police acted in accordance with the law and that the investigation will continue.

The arrest is being seen as the first major action against a senior opposition leader since the TVK came to power and is expected to further sharpen the political rivalry between the two parties. With both sides trading allegations over governance and political vendetta, the episode has added fresh intensity to Tamil Nadu's evolving political landscape.

Aadhaar App Adds Free Email Update Feature

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has introduced a new feature that allows Aadhaar holders to add or update their email ID directly through the official Aadhaar App, eliminating the need to visit an Aadhaar enrolment or update centre. To encourage users to keep their contact details current, the service will be available free of cost for six months, from July 1 to December 31, 2026.

Earlier, users had to pay a fee of ₹75 to update their email address. Under the new initiative, this charge has been

waived for updates made through the Aadhaar App during the promotional period. The facility is part of the government's efforts to make Aadhaar services more accessible and promote digital governance.

The new feature enables users to securely add or modify their registered email address without visiting a physical centre. A registered email ID helps residents receive important notifications related to Aadhaar services, making it easier to stay updated on account activities and verifica-

tion requests.

The Aadhaar App also offers several other digital services, including downloading e-Aadhaar, updating mobile numbers and addresses, locking or unlocking biometrics, checking authentication history and accessing Virtual ID services. These features are designed to provide users with a seamless and secure digital experience.

The initiative has received a strong response, with more than 2.5 lakh users updating their email IDs through the Aadhaar App within the first

two days of the feature's launch. The government said the overwhelming response reflects growing adoption of digital public services and supports the Digital India initiative.

UIDAI has encouraged Aadhaar holders to take advantage of the free service before the six-month window ends. The authority believes that keeping email information updated will improve communication with users and ensure they receive timely alerts and important Aadhaar-related updates securely.



US Proposal to Allow Home Delivery of Guns Sparks Debate

A proposed change to firearm regulations in the United States has ignited a nationwide debate after the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) suggested allowing licensed gun dealers to deliver firearms directly to customers' homes within the same state. If approved, the move would mark one of the most significant changes to gun sales in recent years.

Under current federal rules, firearms purchased online must generally be shipped to a licensed dealer, where buyers complete identity verification, background checks and collect the weapon in person. The proposed regulation would instead permit licensed dealers to ship firearms directly to eligible in-state buyers after completing online identity verification, background checks and a mandatory seven-day waiting period.

Supporters argue that the proposal would modernise the firearm purchasing process and make it more convenient for law-abiding gun owners.



They believe technological advances now allow identity verification and compliance checks to be completed securely without requiring customers to visit a gun store.

The proposal is also expected to benefit online firearm retailers, particularly companies specialising in digital gun sales. Industry representatives say the change could expand customer access and streamline legal firearm purchases while maintaining existing background check requirements.

However, the proposal has drawn strong criticism from

gun control advocates and public safety groups. Opponents argue that home delivery could increase the risk of firearms falling into the wrong hands through package theft, fraudulent purchases or reduced oversight during the transfer process. Critics also fear the rule could make it easier for individuals to exploit loopholes in the system.

The issue has attracted additional attention because Donald Trump Jr. serves on the board of GrabAGun, a major online firearms retailer that could potentially benefit if the proposal is implemented.

While Trump Jr. has denied any involvement in developing the rule, critics have questioned whether the policy could create conflicts of interest.

The proposed regulation is currently open for public comments, with citizens, advocacy groups and industry stakeholders invited to submit feedback before the ATF decides whether to finalise the rule. Officials have indicated that the proposal may not be completed until late 2026 or early 2027, and it could still be modified or withdrawn after the consultation process.

The debate reflects the continuing divide in the United States over gun rights and public safety. Supporters see the proposal as a step towards reducing regulatory burdens for legal gun owners, while opponents warn that easier access to firearms could increase security risks. As the consultation period continues, the proposal is expected to remain one of the most closely watched firearm policy discussions in the country.

Iran Says US Once Helped Foil Israeli Assassination Plot



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has claimed that the United States once intervened to prevent an alleged Israeli plot to assassinate him and Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Ghalibaf during a visit to New York. The revelation was made during an interview in which Araghchi reflected on a period of heightened tensions between Iran, Israel and the United States.

According to Araghchi, the incident occurred when he and Ghalibaf travelled to New York to attend meetings at the United Nations. He alleged that Iranian authorities had received intelligence indicating an Israeli plan to target the two senior officials while they were in the United States.

Araghchi claimed that after being informed of the alleged threat, US authorities took the warning seriously and implemented extensive security measures to ensure the safety of the visiting Iranian delegation. He said the United States had a legal and diplomatic responsibility to protect foreign officials attending UN events, regardless of political differences between the countries.

The Iranian minister stated that the security arrangements helped prevent any possible attack, describing the incident as an example of the obligations host nations have under international law. He added that despite decades of strained relations between Tehran and Washington, there

are situations in which diplomatic responsibilities take precedence over political disagreements.

Neither the United States nor Israel has publicly confirmed Araghchi's account or acknowledged the existence of any assassination plot. Israeli officials have not responded to the allegations, while US authorities have also not commented on the claims.

The remarks come at a time when tensions between Iran and Israel remain high, following months of military confrontations, regional instability and exchanges of threats. Diplomatic relations between Iran and the United States also remain limited, with disagreements continuing over regional security, sanctions and Iran's nuclear programme.

Analysts note that under international agreements governing the United Nations headquarters, the United States is responsible for ensuring the security of foreign delegations visiting New York for

official UN meetings. Those obligations apply irrespective of the diplomatic relationship between Washington and the visiting country's government. Araghchi's comments have generated significant international attention because they portray a rare instance of co-operation between two long-standing adversaries. While the claims remain unverified, they have renewed discussion about the complex nature of diplomacy and security responsibilities even between nations with deeply strained ties.

The episode also highlights the continuing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, where rivalry between Iran and Israel has frequently extended beyond direct military confrontations into intelligence operations and covert activities. Whether further details emerge remains uncertain, but the statement has added another layer to the already complicated relationship between the three countries.

Why Khamenei's Funeral Was Delayed for Months

Iran's decision to hold the funeral of former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei more than four months after his death has drawn global attention, as such a long delay is highly unusual under Islamic tradition, which generally calls for burial within 24 hours.

According to Iranian officials, the postponement was caused by the extraordinary security situation following Khamenei's death during the conflict involving Iran, the United States and Israel. The government said the ongoing military operations, repeated airstrikes and fears of further attacks made it impossible to organise a large public funeral or safely transport his body for burial.

Rumours had circulated that Khamenei's body had been secretly buried during the conflict. However, Iranian authorities denied those claims, insisting that the remains had been kept in a secure, undisclosed



location under strict security until conditions became stable enough for state funeral ceremonies to be held.

Officials said the recent ceasefire created an opportunity to organise the elaborate funeral, which is expected to be one of the largest state ceremonies in Iran's history. Millions of mourners, senior Iranian leaders and foreign dignitaries are expected to attend the events, which will take place over several days.

Before his final burial, Khamenei's body has been placed in state at Tehran's

Grand Mosalla, allowing members of the public to pay their last respects. The casket will then be taken in processions through several important Shia religious centres, including Qom in Iran and the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala, before being brought back to Iran.

The final burial is scheduled to take place at the Imam Reza Shrine in Mashhad, Khamenei's birthplace and one of the holiest sites in Shia Islam. Authorities have deployed extensive security measures throughout the funeral period, citing concerns over potential

attacks and the enormous crowds expected to gather.

The funeral is also being viewed as a significant political event for Iran's leadership. Analysts believe the ceremonies are intended not only to honour Khamenei's legacy but also to demonstrate national unity and the resilience of the Islamic Republic following months of conflict and political uncertainty.

The delay has nevertheless sparked debate, as prolonged postponements are extremely rare in Islamic practice. Iranian officials maintain that the exceptional wartime conditions left them with no alternative and that preserving security had to take precedence over religious tradition.

With the funeral now underway, Iran hopes the ceremonies will mark the end of a turbulent chapter in the country's recent history while paying tribute to the leader who guided the nation for more than three decades.

Russian Strike on Kyiv Kills Dozens



Russia launched one of its deadliest aerial assaults on Ukraine's capital in 2026, unleashing a massive overnight barrage of drones and missiles that killed at least 27 people and injured dozens more. The attack caused widespread destruction across Kyiv, damaging residential buildings, hotels, schools and other civilian infrastructure.

According to Ukrainian officials, Russia fired nearly 500 drones along with more than 70 missiles in a coordinated strike that lasted for several hours. Air defence systems intercepted many of the incoming projectiles, but a significant number penetrated the city's defences, causing extensive damage across multiple districts.

One of the worst-hit locations was a nine-storey apartment building that partially collapsed after being struck. Rescue workers spent hours searching through the rubble for survivors, while emergency teams battled fires triggered by the explosions. Authorities warned that the death toll

could rise further as recovery operations continued.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy cut short an overseas visit and returned to Kyiv following the attack. Visiting the affected areas, he condemned Russia for targeting civilian neighbourhoods and renewed his appeal to Western allies for additional air defence systems. Zelenskyy argued that stronger air defences could help prevent similar tragedies in the future.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko described the assault as one of the worst attacks on the capital since the war began more than four years ago. Thousands of residents sought shelter in metro stations and underground bunkers as explosions echoed across the city throughout the night. Public transport services were disrupted, and emergency crews worked continuously to restore essential services.

The Russian Defence Ministry said the strikes were carried out in response to recent Ukrainian drone attacks on Russian territory and claimed

that military and strategic infrastructure had been targeted. Ukrainian authorities, however, insisted that the bombardment primarily affected civilian areas, including homes and public buildings.

The international community swiftly condemned the attack. Several European leaders expressed solidarity with Ukraine and called for increased pressure on Moscow, while fresh discussions emerged over expanding sanctions against Russia. The strike has once again highlighted the urgent need for enhanced air defence support as Ukraine continues to face increasingly large-scale aerial assaults.

Friday was declared a day of mourning in Kyiv as residents gathered to honour those who lost their lives. The latest attack underscores the continuing intensity of the war and the heavy toll it continues to inflict on civilians, with both sides showing little sign of easing hostilities despite repeated international calls for a ceasefire.

Tibetan Protester Dies After Self-Immolation Outside UN

A Tibetan activist died after setting himself on fire outside the United Nations headquarters in New York City, drawing global attention to the long-standing Tibet-China dispute and the plight of Tibetans living under Chinese rule. The dramatic protest took place near the UN complex in Manhattan and is being viewed as one of the most significant acts of protest by a Tibetan activist in recent years.

The protester was identified by friends and activists as Lobzang Rangzen, who had been living in the United States for nearly two decades and worked as an Uber driver. Witnesses said he carried a Tibetan flag, distributed pamphlets calling for a free Tibet and then set himself on fire in full public view. Emergency responders quickly extinguished the flames and rushed



him to Bellevue Hospital, but he later succumbed to his injuries.

According to Tibetan advocacy groups, Rangzen was a committed supporter of the Free Tibet movement and had actively participated in campaigns highlighting human rights concerns in Tibet. His protest coincided with growing international criticism of China's newly enacted ethnic unity law, which critics say could further erode the cultural and religious identity of minority communities, includ-

ing Tibetans and Uyghurs.

The incident has reignited global discussion about Tibet, where activists and human rights organisations have long accused Chinese authorities of restricting religious freedom, suppressing cultural identity and limiting political expression. Beijing, however, maintains that Tibet has been an integral part of China for centuries and says its policies have improved economic development and social stability in the region. Self-immolation has become a rare but powerful form of protest among some Tibetans opposing Chinese rule. Since 2009, more than 150 Tibetans are reported to have carried out similar acts, making it one of the most tragic symbols of resistance against Beijing's policies in the Himalayan region.

The protest outside the UN

headquarters also highlighted calls for stronger international action on Tibet. Activists urged global leaders and the United Nations to increase pressure on China over alleged human rights violations and to support the preservation of Tibetan culture, language and religious traditions.

The New York Police Department is investigating the incident, while the United Nations confirmed that the protest occurred outside its premises after official meetings had concluded. The tragedy has once again brought international attention to one of the world's most enduring geopolitical and human rights issues, with Tibetan organisations hoping it will renew global focus on their demands for greater freedom and protection of their cultural identity.

UAE Tightens Rules on Children's Digital Content

The United Arab Emirates is preparing to introduce a comprehensive framework to regulate the media and digital content consumed by children, expanding its efforts to improve online safety following its recent decision to ban social media access for children under the age of 15.

The National Media Authority (NMA) announced that it is developing new standards aimed at ensuring children are exposed only to age-appropriate content across digital platforms and traditional media. The initiative is part of a broader strategy to create a safer online environment while encouraging healthier

digital habits among young users.

As part of the new framework, the UAE plans to introduce a national media content standards guide for children. The guide will classify content according to different age groups and serve as a mandatory reference for media organisations, digital platforms and content creators. Authorities also plan to implement a unified age-classification policy covering books, films, music, television programmes and content shared on social media platforms.

Officials say the objective is not simply to shield children from harmful material but also



to encourage the production and promotion of educational, creative and value-based content. The new regulations are

expected to help parents make informed decisions about what their children watch and engage with online.

The announcement follows the UAE Cabinet's recent decision to prohibit children under 15 from creating or operating

personal social media accounts. Under the new rules, parental consent cannot be used to bypass the restriction. Teenagers aged 15 and 16 will be allowed limited access, but their accounts must include enhanced safety features such as parental controls, age-appropriate content filters and restrictions on potentially harmful platform features.

Social media companies will be given up to 12 months to comply with the new regulations. Platforms will be required to introduce reliable age-verification systems, replacing the current practice of allowing users to simply enter their date of birth. The govern-

ment has indicated that advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence and biometric verification, may be used to confirm users' ages while protecting their privacy.

The move comes amid growing global concern over the impact of excessive social media use on children. Studies have linked prolonged screen time with anxiety, attention issues, academic challenges and other developmental concerns. The UAE joins a growing number of countries introducing stricter digital safety rules for minors as governments seek to balance children's access to technology with stronger safeguards against online risks.

Markets Extend Winning Streak as Nifty Ends Above 24,270

Indian benchmark equity indices extended their rally for a third consecutive trading session on Friday, with the Sensex gaining 262 points and the Nifty closing above the 24,270 mark, supported by strong buying in information technology, pharmaceutical, metal and realty stocks.

The BSE Sensex ended the session 261.79 points, or 0.34 per cent, higher at 77,763.91, while the NSE Nifty50 rose 95.15 points, or 0.39 per cent, to settle at 24,270.85. During the day, the Nifty touched an intra-day high of 24,378 before profit booking in the second half trimmed some of the gains. Despite the late selling, both indices finished firmly in positive territory.

The rally was led by IT stocks, which emerged as the top-performing sector. Pharma, metal and realty counters also witnessed healthy buying, reflecting improved investor sentiment across multiple segments. However, PSU banking



stocks remained under pressure, while the broader market showed a mixed trend. Midcap stocks ended slightly lower, and smallcap shares closed largely flat.

For the week, both the Sensex and the Nifty gained nearly one per cent, indicating sustained buying interest despite global uncertainties. Analysts attributed the positive momentum to supportive global cues, easing concerns over interest rates, a stronger rupee and improved sentiment in the technology sector.

Among individual stocks, HCL Technologies was the biggest gainer on the Nifty after posting strong gains, while Axis Bank emerged as the top loser. Several other IT majors also traded higher, helping lift the benchmark indices.

Market experts said the overall trend remains positive, although investors should be prepared for intermittent profit booking after the recent rally. They believe the Nifty has managed to maintain key support levels, which could keep the broader uptrend intact if

buying continues in heavy-weight sectors.

Investors will now closely monitor upcoming domestic and global economic data, corporate earnings announcements and foreign institutional investor activity for further market direction. Global developments, including movements in crude oil prices and central bank policy signals, are also expected to influence trading sentiment in the coming sessions.

With the benchmarks recording three successive days of gains, market participants remain optimistic about the near-term outlook. However, analysts advise investors to remain selective and focus on fundamentally strong stocks as volatility could increase amid changing global market conditions. The next few trading sessions are expected to determine whether the current rally can sustain its momentum and push the indices towards fresh resistance levels.



BEL, HAL Gain Ahead of Key Defence Procurement Meeting

Shares of leading defence public sector companies, including Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), traded higher on Friday as investors anticipated major procurement approvals from the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC). The council was expected to consider defence acquisition proposals worth more than Rs 1 lakh crore, boosting sentiment across the sector.

BEL emerged as one of the top gainers, rising nearly 2 per cent during intraday trade, while HAL also posted gains of around 2 per cent. Other defence-related stocks, including Bharat Dynamics (BDL) and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, traded in positive territory as investors looked forward to fresh order opportunities.

The DAC, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, is the government's highest decision-making body for defence procurement. The meeting is expected to review several high-value proposals aimed at strengthening the capabilities of the Army, Navy and Air Force, while continuing the

government's emphasis on indigenous manufacturing under the 'Make in India' initiative.

Among the key proposals likely to be discussed is the procurement of Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MP-ATGM) systems for the Indian Army. The proposal includes launchers, missiles and training simulators, with Bharat Dynamics expected to play a major role in manufacturing the systems.

The council is also expected to consider the acquisition of HAMMER precision-guided air-to-ground munitions for the Indian Air Force and Navy. Bharat Electronics is likely to benefit through its partnership for domestic manufacturing of these advanced weapon systems. Other proposals reportedly include drone detection systems, loitering munitions, advanced communication equipment, naval surveillance platforms and additional submarines.

Analysts believe that approvals from the DAC could significantly improve order visibility for defence compa-

nies. BEL and HAL, which already have strong order books, are expected to remain among the biggest beneficiaries of India's increasing defence expenditure and focus on self-reliance in military production.

The Indian defence sector has been one of the strongest-performing segments in the stock market over the past few years, supported by rising government spending, export opportunities and continued policy support for domestic manufacturers. Investors have increasingly viewed defence stocks as long-term growth plays due to their healthy order pipelines and improving execution capabilities.

Market participants will now closely watch the outcome of the DAC meeting for clarity on the size and timing of potential contracts. If major proposals receive approval, analysts expect fresh momentum in defence stocks, with companies such as BEL, HAL, Bharat Dynamics and Mazagon Dock likely to remain in focus as beneficiaries of India's ongoing military modernisation programme.

Government Plans Revamped Gold Monetisation Scheme

The Central government is likely to unveil a revamped Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) within the next two weeks as part of its efforts to reduce dependence on gold imports and bring idle household gold into the formal financial system. The proposed overhaul is expected to make the scheme more accessible by involving jewellers directly in the collection process.

According to sources, jewellers across the country may be designated as 'Collection Partners' under the revised framework. This would allow them to collect household gold deposits, a role that was previously restricted mainly to banks. The move is aimed at improving public participation and addressing the limited success of the earlier version of the scheme.

India is estimated to hold nearly 30,000 tonnes of gold in households and religious institutions, much of which remains unused. The government believes that even



mobilising a small portion of these holdings could significantly reduce the country's reliance on imported bullion, lower pressure on the current account deficit and strengthen foreign exchange reserves.

Industry estimates suggest the revamped scheme could help mobilise more than 1,000 tonnes of gold over time. Analysts say that if even five per cent of household gold is brought into the financial system, it could unlock liquidity worth nearly \$90 billion, benefiting both the economy and the jewellery sector.

The proposal follows extensive consultations between the

Finance Ministry, the Reserve Bank of India, banks and representatives of the gems and jewellery industry. Stakeholders have argued that involving jewellers would make the scheme more convenient for customers and increase trust, as consumers are more likely to approach familiar local jewellers than banks for depositing their gold.

The revamp also comes after Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged citizens to postpone gold purchases for a year in the national interest to help reduce the country's import bill. Rising gold prices and heavy dependence on imports

have prompted policymakers to explore long-term measures to utilise existing domestic gold reserves more effectively.

The original Gold Monetisation Scheme, launched in 2015, was designed to encourage individuals and institutions to deposit idle gold in exchange for interest. However, the programme achieved only limited success, mobilising a relatively small quantity of gold over the years. Parts of the scheme were discontinued in 2025 due to poor participation, prompting calls from the industry for a comprehensive overhaul.

If approved, the revamped scheme is expected to improve accessibility, increase public participation and create a more efficient system for recycling domestic gold. By leveraging jewellers' extensive retail networks, the government hopes to transform idle household gold into a productive financial asset while reducing the need for costly imports and supporting long-term economic stability.

Indian Hume Pipe Jumps 5% After Winning ₹739 Crore Rajasthan Project

Shares of Indian Hume Pipe Company climbed nearly 5 per cent on Friday after the company secured a major water infrastructure contract worth 738.61 crore from the Rajasthan government. The order has strengthened investor confidence and is expected to provide healthy revenue visibility over the next few years.

The company received a Letter of Acceptance (LoA) from the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Government of Rajasthan, for executing a large-scale drinking water supply project under the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)-funded Rajasthan Rural Water Supply and Fluorosis Mitigation Project Phase II. The announcement triggered strong buying interest in the stock during the trading session.

The project involves the design and construction of the

Narmada-based Water Supply Project covering 275 villages in the Dhorimanna and Chouhtan blocks of Barmer district. Besides building the infrastructure, Indian Hume Pipe will also be responsible for operating and maintaining the project for 10 years after its completion, ensuring a long-term revenue stream for the company.

According to the contract terms, the construction work is scheduled to be completed within 24 months, followed by a one-year defect notification period and a decade-long operation and maintenance phase. The project is expected to improve access to safe drinking water in rural Rajasthan while helping address fluorosis-related challenges in the region.

Market participants welcomed the development, as the new order significantly boosts Indian Hume Pipe's already strong order book. Analysts be-

lieve the contract reinforces the company's position as a leading player in India's water infrastructure sector, where government spending continues to increase under various rural and urban water supply initiatives. Indian Hume Pipe has decades of experience in executing large water supply, irrigation and pipeline projects across the country. The company has been a key participant in several state and central government infrastructure programmes, benefiting from India's growing focus on improving drinking water access and expanding water distribution networks.

The latest order also highlights the government's continued investment in water infrastructure, creating fresh opportunities for engineering and construction companies involved in pipeline manufacturing and turnkey execution. With rural water supply re-



maintaining a national priority, companies like Indian Hume Pipe are expected to benefit from a steady pipeline of projects.

Following the announcement, the company's shares emerged among the day's top gainers on Dalal Street. Investors remain optimistic that the strong order inflow, coupled with sustained government spending on infrastructure, will support the company's earnings growth and strengthen its long-term business outlook.

Gold Rally Lifts Muthoot Finance, Hindustan Zinc Shares

Shares of companies linked to gold and silver extended their gains on Friday as a sharp rally in precious metal prices boosted investor sentiment. Gold loan financiers Muthoot Finance and Manappuram Finance, along with silver producer Hindustan Zinc, were among the top performers on Dalal Street.

Muthoot Finance surged nearly 4 per cent during the session, while Manappuram Finance gained around 3 per cent. Hindustan Zinc also advanced over 3 per cent as rising silver prices improved the outlook for the mining company. Other stocks with exposure to precious metals, including IIFL Finance, also traded in positive territory.

The rally came after gold and silver prices climbed sharply in global markets following weaker-than-

expected US jobs data. The economic figures strengthened expectations that the US Federal Reserve could adopt a less aggressive approach towards interest rate hikes, boosting demand for safe-haven assets such as gold and silver. The weaker US dollar further supported the upward movement in bullion prices.

Higher gold prices are generally viewed as positive for gold loan companies because they increase the value of pledged jewellery used as collateral. This enables lenders to offer larger loans while maintaining comfortable loan-to-value ratios, improving business growth prospects and reducing credit risk.

For Hindustan Zinc, stronger silver prices translate into higher revenue potential, as the company is India's largest integrated producer

of zinc, lead and silver. The rise in silver prices, combined with the company's healthy operational performance, strengthened investor confidence and supported the stock's rally.

Market experts said precious metal-linked stocks are likely to remain sensitive to global economic developments, especially US inflation data, central bank policy decisions and geopolitical events. Any factors that increase demand for safe-haven assets could continue to support bullion prices and, in turn, benefit companies associated with gold financing and silver production. Investors are also keeping an eye on movements in the US dollar and bond yields, both of which play a significant role in determining the direction of precious metal prices. Sustained strength in gold



and silver could provide further momentum to stocks in the sector.

While analysts remain optimistic about the near-term outlook, they caution that commodity-linked stocks can be volatile, with prices reacting quickly to changes in global economic sentiment. Nevertheless, the latest rally has reinforced investor confidence in gold financiers and precious metal producers, making them among the strongest-performing sectors in the market.

Delhi HC's NSE Verdict May Bring More Market Bodies Under RTI

A recent Delhi High Court ruling declaring the National Stock Exchange (NSE) a "public authority" under the Right to Information (RTI) Act has triggered a wider legal debate over whether other stock exchanges and financial market institutions could also be brought under the transparency law.

The court upheld a 2010 single-judge verdict, ruling that despite being incorporated as a private company, the NSE performs public functions and operates under a statutory framework that makes it subject to the RTI Act. The judgment means the country's largest stock exchange will now be required to disclose information under the provisions of the RTI Act, subject to the exemptions provided by the law.

Legal experts believe the ruling could have implications far beyond the NSE. The reasoning adopted by the court may extend to other market infrastructure institutions, including stock exchanges, clearing corporations and depositories, all of which operate under licences or recognition granted by the Securities

and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

The judgment has also raised questions about whether entities regulated by other statutory bodies, such as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and various sectoral regulators, could eventually face similar arguments regarding RTI applicability. Experts, however, caution that each case would have to be examined individually based on the extent of statutory control and the public functions performed by the organisation.

The Delhi High Court observed that the NSE's identity as a stock exchange depends entirely on statutory recognition under the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act and continuous regulatory oversight by SEBI. The court concluded that these factors make it an authority performing public functions, despite its private corporate structure.

The ruling is expected to strengthen transparency and accountability in India's capital markets. Investors and market participants may now

have greater access to information regarding the functioning of the NSE through RTI applications, although commercially sensitive information and matters exempted under the Act will continue to remain protected.

The verdict also comes at a significant time for the NSE, as the exchange continues to work towards its long-awaited initial public offering (IPO). Market observers believe increased transparency requirements could influence governance practices and public disclosure standards in the run-up to the listing.

While the judgment currently applies to the NSE, its broader legal implications are likely to be closely watched by regulators, market institutions and policymakers. Any future extension of the RTI framework to other regulated entities would depend on further judicial interpretation and the specific legal status of each organisation. The ruling has nevertheless opened an important discussion on balancing transparency with operational confidentiality in India's financial markets.

US Woman Shocked by Huge India-US Medicine Price Gap

An American woman living in India has gone viral after highlighting the massive difference in medicine prices between the United States and India, sparking fresh debate over the affordability of healthcare.

The woman, identified as Liz, shared her observations in an Instagram video titled "Indian vs American Healthcare." In the clip, she claimed that Americans are paying extraordinarily high prices for essential medicines while the same drugs are available at a fraction of the cost in India.

Liz explained that her aunt is undergoing treatment for a type of blood cancer and requires a medicine called Revlimid. According to her, a single pill costs around \$900 (approximately Rs 85,000) in the United States. Curious about its price in India, she checked online and found that generic versions of the medicine are available for between Rs 35 and Rs 300 per tablet, depending on the manufacturer.

Calling the difference "unbelievable," Liz said the pricing gap reflects how affordable India's pharmaceutical indus-

try is compared to the American healthcare system. She remarked that while India provides access to low-cost medicines, patients in the US often struggle with extremely expensive prescription drugs.

The video quickly gained traction on social media, attracting more than 772,000 views within a short period. Thousands of users joined the discussion, with many expressing shock at the vast difference in medicine prices. Several commenters praised India's generic drug industry for making life-saving treat-

ments more affordable. Others argued that the US healthcare system needs significant reforms to reduce the financial burden on patients.

Some users also pointed out that government hospitals in India offer subsidised or free treatment for certain serious illnesses, making healthcare even more accessible for many citizens.

Liz's video follows a similar viral incident from last month involving another American woman named Victoria. She revealed that a medication priced at \$1,000 in the US cost

her only \$25, including international shipping, after sourcing it through an Indian manufacturer. Victoria criticised the American healthcare system, describing it as a "scam" and questioning why patients are charged such high prices for essential medicines.

The two viral stories have reignited global discussions about healthcare affordability, drug pricing and the role of generic medicines. While healthcare systems differ from country to country, the striking price comparisons shared by these women have



drawn widespread attention and prompted many people to question why identical medicines can cost hundreds of times more in one nation than another.

Entrepreneur Condemns Viral E-Rickshaw ‘Prank’ Student Opens Up on Tough Return From Canada

A Mumbai-based entrepreneur has strongly criticised a dangerous social media trend in which pranksters use a smartphone app to remotely stop e-rickshaws, saying the act unfairly targets people who depend on the vehicles for their livelihood.

The criticism comes amid growing concern over the misuse of the BAT-BMS app, a battery management application that can connect to certain Bluetooth-enabled e-rickshaw battery systems. Videos circulating on social media show people using the app to switch off e-rickshaws in the middle of roads, leaving drivers stranded and creating traffic disruptions. Authorities have also begun examining the issue due to its potential safety risks.

Entrepreneur Ritu Hathi shared an incident she witnessed while travelling on a busy road. According to her, an e-rickshaw suddenly came to a halt after someone allegedly used the app to disable it. The unexpected breakdown caused a traffic jam and forced the driver to pull the vehicle to the roadside.



Hathi said all the passengers got off, leaving the driver to push the e-rickshaw to a nearby mechanic. Besides losing an entire day's income, the driver also had to bear repair-related expenses despite not being at fault.

Expressing sympathy, Hathi said she could not understand why anyone would derive enjoyment from mak-

ing life harder for people who are simply trying to earn an honest living. She noted that even minor business losses affect her, making it easy to imagine the financial stress faced by drivers whose daily earnings depend entirely on their vehicles.

Her comments quickly gained attention online, with many users supporting her stand. Several social media users described the prank as irresponsible and dangerous, warning that stopping a moving vehicle without warning could lead to serious accidents involving drivers, passengers and other road users. Others argued that regardless of complaints about traffic violations by some e-rickshaw drivers, such acts of sabotage cannot be justified.

The controversy has also highlighted cybersecurity concerns surrounding some low-cost electric vehicles that use unsecured Bluetooth-enabled battery management systems. Experts say the vulnerability allows unauthorised users within close range to connect to compatible batteries and temporarily cut power if adequate security measures are not enabled.

As videos of the prank continue to circulate, authorities are investigating the app's misuse while many are calling for stronger safeguards to prevent such incidents and protect the livelihoods of thousands of e-rickshaw drivers.

A 26-year-old student has shared the emotional challenges of returning to India after spending five years in Canada, saying the biggest shock was not leaving the country but the way people treated them after coming home.

The student, who posted anonymously on Reddit, explained that they had moved to Canada with hopes of building a better future and eventually securing permanent residency. However, after failing to obtain permanent resident status, they returned to India, expecting comfort from family and friends. Instead, they encountered criticism, social pressure and a noticeable change in people's behaviour.

According to the student, life abroad was far from easy. They took an education loan to fund their studies and worked hard to manage expenses. Despite financial struggles, they regularly sent money home every month to support their family's household expenses and help with EMI payments. During that period, they felt appreciated and respected by relatives and acquaintances.

Things changed after return-

ing to India. The student said they were no longer earning, and the difference in how people treated them became painfully obvious. Instead of receiving encouragement, they were frequently questioned about why they had failed to secure permanent residency and why they had returned home.

The social pressure extended beyond career-related questions. The student revealed that relatives constantly asked when they planned to get married, adding to the emotional burden of adjusting to life back in India. They also complained about the lack of privacy, saying everyone seemed interested in their personal decisions rather than offering support.

Reflecting on the experience, the student wrote that the contrast between life abroad and life after returning was "heart-



breaking." They admitted that, during moments of frustration, they even wondered whether staying in Canada illegally would have been a better option, although they acknowledged that such a decision would have been wrong.

The post quickly gained attention online, with many social media users expressing sympathy and sharing similar experiences. Several people who had returned from countries such as the United States and Canada said they too had noticed a change in the way family members and society viewed them once they were no longer living overseas.

Others encouraged the student to ignore negative comments and focus on rebuilding their career. Some advised moving to another city for greater independence, while others reminded them that people's attitudes often change once someone secures a stable job again.

The viral post has sparked a wider discussion about the emotional struggles faced by returning migrants and the societal expectations that often accompany life after coming back home.

Viral Pothole Crash Sparks Road Safety Concerns

A shocking video from Gujarat's Junagadh has gone viral after capturing a couple suffering a serious motorcycle accident when their bike struck a massive rainwater-filled pothole. The incident has reignited concerns over poor road maintenance and road safety during the monsoon season.

The video shows the couple riding along a rain-soaked road when the motorcycle's front wheel suddenly plunges into a large pothole hidden beneath

accumulated rainwater. The impact causes the rider to lose control instantly, throwing both the man and the woman onto the road. According to reports, neither of them was wearing a helmet at the time of the accident, increasing the risk of serious injuries.

The male rider appears to suffer severe injuries as he struggles to get up after the crash. The woman, visibly shaken, rushes to his side and desperately tries to help him while

calling for assistance. Within moments, passersby gather at the scene and step in to support the injured couple before further help arrives.

The incident has sparked widespread outrage on social media, with many users blaming the poor condition of roads for putting motorists' lives at risk. Several people pointed out that heavy rainfall often conceals deep potholes, making them nearly impossible for riders and drivers to detect until it

is too late. Others demanded immediate repairs and stricter accountability from civic authorities responsible for maintaining public roads.

Adding to the controversy, some social media users alleged that a police PCR vehicle passed the accident site without stopping to assist the injured couple. The claim has triggered criticism online, with many questioning whether emergency responders should have acted more quickly. However, there

has been no official confirmation regarding the allegations.

The viral footage has also renewed calls for safer riding practices during the monsoon. Road safety experts frequently advise motorists to slow down on waterlogged roads, avoid sudden braking or sharp turns, and always wear protective helmets, as hidden potholes and slippery surfaces significantly increase the risk of accidents.

The Junagadh accident serves as another reminder of



the dangers posed by damaged roads during the rainy season. As the video continues to circulate online, many are urging authorities to repair hazardous stretches before they claim more lives, while also encouraging riders to exercise extra caution whenever visibility is reduced by rain.

Gym Refunds Member Over Body Odour Complaints Manager's Leave Reply Sparks Online Outrage

A gym in eastern China has refunded a member's long-term subscription and transferred him to another fitness centre after repeated complaints from other members about his strong body odour. The unusual case has sparked widespread debate online over personal hygiene, discrimination and the responsibilities of businesses in balancing the comfort of all customers.

The incident took place in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, and involved a man identified only by his surname, Shi. In May 2025, Shi purchased a three-year gym membership worth 6,388 yuan (around Rs 89,900) that was valid until April 2028. A fitness enthusiast, Shi said he had transformed his life by losing 45 kg nearly a decade ago and had since maintained a strict workout routine, exercising five days a week.

However, on June 20, the gym informed Shi that it was terminating his membership because numerous customers had complained about a persistent unpleasant smell that they claimed was linked to him. In a message, the gym explained that while it wanted to retain every customer, the repeated complaints left it with little choice but to end his membership and refund the unused



portion of the fee.

As part of the settlement, Shi received a refund of 3,888 yuan (around US\$570) for the remaining membership period. The gym also offered him a complimentary three-month membership at another fitness centre as a goodwill gesture.

According to the gym management, Shi perspired heavily during workouts, and other members frequently reported a strong odour around the equipment he used. Staff members reportedly tried several measures to resolve the issue, including assigning him ma-

chines in a quieter corner of the facility and suggesting he visit during off-peak hours. Despite these efforts, complaints continued.

Shi acknowledged that he sweats excessively but insisted he always tried to minimise the inconvenience. He said he carried multiple towels to wipe away sweat and covered gym equipment after use. Hoping to continue working out at the facility because of its convenient location near his home, he later approached a local television programme seeking help in resolving the dispute.

The incident has generated mixed reactions on social media. While some users felt the gym acted fairly by considering the comfort of the majority while offering compensation, others argued that excluding someone over body odour could amount to unfair treatment, particularly if the issue is linked to a medical condition rather than poor hygiene. The case has reignited discussions about inclusivity, customer rights and how businesses should handle sensitive situations involving personal health and public comfort.

A manager's alleged lack of empathy has triggered widespread criticism on social media after an employee shared a screenshot of a conversation showing his request for emergency leave being met with an insensitive response. The incident has reignited discussions about workplace culture and the importance of compassion during personal crises.

The employee, identified as Kavi Krishnan, posted on X (formerly Twitter) that his grandmother was in critical condition and he urgently needed three days of leave to be with his family. Instead of offering immediate support, his manager reportedly replied, "Suddenly u asking?", questioning the timing of the leave request.

Shortly afterwards, Krishnan shared a heart-breaking update, revealing that his grandmother had passed away. Along with the screenshot of the conversation, he wrote, "My grandma was in critical condition, so I asked for 3 days leave. My manager replied, 'Suddenly u asking?' And she passed away just now. Some people truly lack basic empathy." The emotional post quickly went viral, drawing thousands of reactions from social media users.

Many users criticised the manager's response, arguing



that family emergencies are, by nature, unexpected and should never be treated with suspicion. Several commenters said the message reflected a toxic work culture where employees are made to feel guilty for attending to personal crises instead of being offered understanding and support.

One user remarked that no one can schedule a loved one's final moments, making the manager's response particularly insensitive. Another advised employees never to stop looking for better job opportunities, saying they could unexpectedly find themselves working under managers who lack compassion. Others blamed an outdated corporate mindset that prioritises work over employees' well-being and personal lives.

The incident has also prompted a broader conversa-

tion about workplace empathy and leadership. Many users argued that managers should recognise that emergencies such as illness or bereavement cannot be planned in advance. They stressed that responding with understanding not only supports employees during difficult times but also builds trust and loyalty within organisations.

As the post continues to circulate online, it has become another example in the ongoing debate over toxic workplace behaviour and the need for more humane management practices. The viral discussion highlights growing expectations that employers and supervisors should prioritise empathy alongside productivity, especially when employees are coping with family emergencies and personal loss.

India Face Tough Questions Despite Series Lead

India may have taken a 1-0 lead in the five-match T20I series against England, but concerns over the form of Sanju Samson and Tilak Varma have come under the spotlight ahead of the second match. While the visitors secured victory in the series opener, the performances of the two batters have raised questions about India's middle-order stability. Sanju Samson's inconsistency continues to be a talking point. Despite showing flashes of brilliance in recent months, the

wicketkeeper-batter has struggled to convert starts into substantial scores on a regular basis. In the opening T20I against England, Samson failed to make a meaningful contribution, once again putting pressure on himself to deliver in the remaining matches of the series. With competition for places in India's T20 setup becoming increasingly intense, every innings has added significance for the experienced batter. Tilak Varma has also attracted attention, although for differ-

ent reasons. The left-hander has been criticised for adopting a cautious approach at crucial moments, with some observers suggesting that he needs to accelerate more consistently in the shortest format. While Tilak has earned praise for his temperament and ability to build innings, modern T20 cricket often demands greater urgency, particularly in the middle overs. Despite these concerns, India have plenty of positives to build on. The bowling attack impressed in the first T20I, with the

pacers and spinners combining effectively to restrict England's batting lineup. The top order also showed enough promise to give the team confidence heading into the second game, where another victory would strengthen India's grip on the series. The team management is expected to back both Samson and Tilak for now, believing they possess the talent to make match-winning contributions. However, with several young players waiting for opportunities and the T20 World Cup cycle

gathering momentum, consistent performances will be essential to retain their places in the squad. As India prepare for the second T20I, much of the focus will remain on whether Samson can overcome his inconsistency and whether Tilak can strike the right balance between stability and aggression. Their performances could play a crucial role in shaping not only the outcome of the England series but also their long-term futures in India's T20 setup. A convincing dis-



play from both batters would help silence critics and further strengthen India's bid for another series victory on English soil.

Gambhir Faces Selection Dilemma Over Samson and Sooryavanshi

India's team management, led by head coach Gautam Gambhir, has been urged to make a clear decision regarding the opening combination in the T20I format as the debate between experienced wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson and young sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi continues to gather momentum. Following India's recent performances, former cricketers and experts believe the selectors must identify a long-term opening pair instead of constantly rotating players. The discussion has intensified after teenage star Vaibhav Sooryavanshi impressed with his fearless batting, while Sanju Samson has struggled to produce consistent performances despite enjoying several opportunities at the international level. Samson remains one of India's most talented white-ball batters, capable of playing match-winning knocks. However, his inability to convert starts into big scores consistently has often drawn criticism. While he has delivered memorable innings over the years, the lack of regular contributions has kept his place under scrutiny whenever younger players emerge. On the other hand, Sooryavanshi has quickly become one of India's brightest prospects. His aggressive approach at the top of the order and ability to dominate bowlers



during the powerplay have impressed fans and experts alike. Many believe the youngster possesses the fearless mindset required for modern T20 cricket and should be given an extended run in the side. Former India batter Robin Uthappa weighed in on the debate, stating that the team management should avoid alternating between the two players. According to him, constant chopping and changing prevents both cricketers from settling into defined roles and ultimately affects the team's overall balance. He stressed that India should commit to one option and provide enough matches to build confidence. The discussion comes at a crucial time as India continues preparations for the next T20 World Cup. With several talented youngsters pushing for places, competition within the squad has become stronger than ever. The management

now faces the challenge of balancing experience with youth while ensuring the team develops a stable batting unit. Despite the debate, both players remain valuable assets. Samson brings international experience and versatility, while Sooryavanshi represents the future with his explosive batting style. Their contrasting strengths have made the selection decision increasingly difficult for Gambhir and the selectors. As India look to build a settled T20 squad, the performances of both batters in upcoming matches could prove decisive. Whether the team backs Samson's experience or invests in Sooryavanshi's potential, experts agree that clarity in selection will be essential to avoid uncertainty and help India establish a consistent opening partnership ahead of major ICC tournaments.

Deepti Sharma Compares Dhoni to Djokovic

India all-rounder Deepti Sharma has drawn an interesting comparison between former captain MS Dhoni and tennis legend Novak Djokovic, saying both sporting icons possess a rare ability to remain calm under pressure and consistently deliver when it matters the most. Speaking about the two champions, Deepti said Dhoni and Djokovic share several qualities that have helped them dominate their respective sports for years. According to her, both athletes display remarkable composure in high-pressure situations, inspire confidence among teammates and continue to perform at the highest level despite the immense expectations placed upon them. Deepti explained that one of the biggest similarities between the two is their mental toughness. Whether it is Dhoni finishing a tense cricket match or Djokovic battling through a marathon Grand Slam contest, both have repeatedly demonstrated the ability to stay focused and



make the right decisions in crucial moments. She also praised their exceptional fitness and discipline, noting that maintaining peak performance over such long careers requires extraordinary dedication. Dhoni, who remains one of the fittest cricketers despite retiring from international cricket, and Djokovic, who continues to compete at the top level of world tennis in his late 30s, have both set benchmarks for professionalism. The Indian spinner highlighted that another shared trait is their abil-

ity to constantly evolve. Dhoni reinvented his game several times during his international career and later adapted successfully to franchise cricket, while Djokovic has repeatedly refined his playing style and physical conditioning to stay ahead of younger rivals. According to Deepti, the influence of both legends extends far beyond their individual achievements. She said young athletes across different sports look up to Dhoni and Djokovic for their leadership, work ethic and ability to remain humble despite achiev-

ing extraordinary success. Their careers, she added, serve as valuable lessons in perseverance and consistency. Dhoni retired from international cricket in 2020 after leading India to the 2007 T20 World Cup, the 2011 ODI World Cup and the 2013 Champions Trophy, making him the only captain to win all three major ICC white-ball titles. Meanwhile, Djokovic has established himself as one of the greatest tennis players of all time, holding multiple Grand Slam titles and numerous records during his illustrious career. Deepti's comparison has resonated with sports fans, many of whom agreed that both legends have built their reputations not only through exceptional talent but also through their unmatched mental strength and longevity. Her remarks have once again highlighted the qualities that separate truly great athletes from the rest and why Dhoni and Djokovic continue to inspire millions around the world.

Portugal Finds New Balance Around Ronaldo

Portugal's recent tactical changes have sparked fresh optimism ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, with coach Roberto Martinez successfully reshaping the team's attacking setup around Cristiano Ronaldo while giving younger players greater freedom to influence matches. A key feature of Portugal's new approach has been the emergence of Goncalo Ramos in a more prominent attacking role. Rather than relying solely on Ronaldo as the focal point, Martinez has introduced a system that allows Ramos to stretch opposition defences with his movement while creating more space for the veteran captain to operate in dangerous areas. The tactical adjustment has brought greater balance to Portugal's attack. Ronaldo continues to provide leadership, experience and his trademark goalscoring instincts, while Ramos adds energy, pressing and intelligent off-the-ball runs. Their contrasting styles have helped Portugal become more unpredictable in the final third. The new strategy was evident during Portugal's recent international fixtures, where the team displayed improved fluidity in attack. Instead of forcing every move through Ronaldo, the players shared responsibilities more effectively, making it harder for opponents to mark the five-time Ballon d'Or winner out of the game. Martinez believes Portugal possess one of the strongest squads in world football, blending experienced stars with a talented younger generation. Alongside Ronaldo and Ramos, players such as Bruno Fernandes, Bernardo Silva, Rafael Leao and Vitorino Pereira have played crucial roles in ensuring the team remains a serious contender for major honours. Despite approaching the final stages of his remarkable career, Ronaldo continues to demonstrate his importance to the national team. His leadership on and off the pitch remains invaluable, while his ability to score in decisive moments gives Portugal a significant advantage in high-pressure matches. Ramos, meanwhile, has em-

braced the opportunity to play alongside one of football's greatest-ever players. His willingness to work tirelessly for the team, press defenders and create space has complemented Ronaldo's strengths, allowing both forwards to thrive within the same system. With the 2026 FIFA World Cup drawing closer, Portugal appear determined to build a squad that is not dependent on a single player but instead combines Ronaldo's experience with the energy and talent of the next generation. The tactical evolution reflects Martinez's long-term vision of creating a balanced and versatile team capable of competing against the world's best. If Portugal continue to refine this approach, they could enter the World Cup as one of the tournament's strongest contenders. By successfully integrating Ronaldo's enduring quality with Ramos' youthful dynamism, the team has taken an important step towards building a balanced attack capable of challenging for football's biggest prize.

De Paul Wants Argentina to Enjoy Messi While They Can

Argentina midfielder Rodrigo De Paul has urged football fans to cherish every moment with Lionel Messi, saying the legendary forward continues to inspire the team as they prepare for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Speaking ahead of Argentina's upcoming international fixtures, De Paul said Messi remains the heart of the national team and that everyone should appreciate the opportunity to watch one of football's greatest players while he is still representing his country. He described the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner as a unique talent whose influence extends far beyond goals and assists. De Paul, who has developed a close understanding with Messi on and off the pitch, said the veteran captain continues to motivate the squad with his professionalism, leadership and passion for the game. According to him, Messi's presence gives Argentina an added sense of confidence every time they step onto the field. The midfielder noted that despite achieving almost everything in football, including the FIFA World Cup, Copa America and multiple individual honours, Messi remains hungry for success. His desire to

compete at the highest level continues to set an example for younger players in the squad. Argentina have enjoyed a golden period under coach Lionel Scaloni, winning the 2022 FIFA World Cup, two Copa America titles and the Finalissima. De Paul credited the team's success to unity, hard work and the winning mentality that Messi has helped cultivate within the dressing room. While speculation continues over whether the 2026 World Cup will be Messi's final major international tournament, De Paul said the squad is focused only on making the most of every opportunity to play alongside their captain. He stressed that discussions about retirement should take a back seat, as Messi is still performing at an elite level. The Atletico Madrid midfielder also highlighted the strong bond shared by Argentina's players, saying the team's togetherness has been a major factor behind its recent achievements. He believes maintaining that spirit will be crucial as the defending world champions aim to retain their title in 2026. Messi has continued to impress for both club and country, proving that age has not diminished his impact. His ex-



perience, vision and ability to deliver in decisive moments remain invaluable assets for Argentina as they begin preparations for another World Cup campaign. De Paul's heartfelt comments have resonated with football fans across the world. Many see the partnership between the midfielder and Mes-

si as one of the key reasons behind Argentina's recent dominance on the international stage. With the countdown to the 2026 World Cup underway, supporters will be hoping to witness more memorable moments from the iconic captain before he eventually brings his remarkable international career to a close.



While much of the spotlight has been on teenage sensation Lamine Yamal, forward Mikel Oyarzabal has quietly established himself as one of Spain's most dependable performers as the team builds towards the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Oyarzabal may not attract the same level of global attention as some of Spain's younger stars, but his consistency and ability to deliver in crucial moments have made him an indispensable part of coach Luis de la Fuente's plans.

Oyarzabal Quietly Emerges as Spain's Key Man

The Real Sociedad captain has repeatedly shown his value with important goals, intelligent movement and tireless work rate. One of Oyarzabal's greatest strengths is his versatility. Comfortable playing as a centre-forward, left winger or supporting attacker, he provides Spain with tactical flexibility and allows the coaching staff to adapt their approach depending on the opposition. His selfless style of play also creates space for teammates to flourish. The experienced forward has played a vital role in guiding Spain's new generation of players. With youngsters such as Lamine Yamal, Nico Williams and Pedri taking on bigger responsibilities, Oyarzabal's calm presence and leadership have brought balance to a squad undergoing a gradual transition. His composure in front of goal has also proved invaluable. Oyarzabal has consistently produced decisive performances in major tournaments, earning a reputation as a

player who thrives under pressure. Rather than seeking individual recognition, he has focused on contributing to the team's overall success. While Yamal's dazzling dribbling and creativity have captured headlines, Oyarzabal has quietly complemented the teenager's attacking brilliance through intelligent positioning and unselfish play. Their contrasting styles have helped Spain become a more complete and dangerous attacking unit. Coach Luis de la Fuente has re-

peatedly praised Oyarzabal for his professionalism and commitment, describing him as one of the team's most reliable performers. His experience, combined with his willingness to work hard both in and out of possession, has made him a trusted figure in the dressing room. As Spain continues preparations for the 2026 World Cup, Oyarzabal's role is expected to become even more significant. His blend of experience, versatility and consistency gives the team an important

edge as they aim to compete with the world's strongest football nations. Although younger stars may dominate the headlines, Oyarzabal's steady contributions have been equally important to Spain's recent progress. If the team enjoys another successful World Cup campaign, the Real Sociedad forward is likely to remain one of the unsung heroes behind its achievements, proving that leadership and consistency can be just as valuable as flair and individual brilliance.

Prithviraj Reveals Challenging Motion Capture Scene in Varanasi



Actor Prithviraj Sukumaran has shared new details about his experience working on SS Rajamouli's much-awaited action-adventure film Varanasi, revealing that one of the movie's most demanding sequences involved a 20-minute motion capture performance. The actor described the scene as one of the toughest and most technically challenging parts of the film.

Speaking about the ambitious project, Prithviraj said the motion capture sequence required him to perform continuously for nearly 20 minutes without interruption. Unlike conventional filming, the scene relied entirely on performance capture technology, where every movement and facial expression had to be executed with precision to help create the final visual effects.

The actor explained that motion capture is vastly different from regular acting because performers cannot rely on elaborate sets, costumes or visual references. Instead, they must imagine the surroundings while wearing specialised suits fitted with sensors that record every movement. According to Prithviraj, the sequence demanded intense concentration and physical stamina, making it one of the most memorable experiences of his career.

The challenging scene was filmed at Annapurna Studios' advanced motion capture facility in Hyderabad, where Rajamouli and his team have been using cutting-edge technology to bring the film's large-scale visual effects to life. Reports suggest that Varanasi features several ambitious sequences blending live action with extensive CGI, making it one of the biggest Indian productions currently in development.

Prithviraj praised director SS Rajamouli for pushing the boundaries of Indian filmmaking and said every department on the film is striving to achieve

international standards. He noted that the filmmaker's meticulous planning and vision made the technically demanding process smoother for the cast despite its complexity.

Varanasi stars Mahesh Babu in the lead role alongside Priyanka Chopra Jonas, with Prithviraj playing a pivotal character. The pan-Indian film has generated enormous buzz since production began, with audiences eagerly awaiting Rajamouli's next directorial venture after the global success of RRR.

The actor's comments have further heightened anticipation for the film, especially among fans curious about its large-scale action sequences and groundbreaking visual effects. With its blend of cutting-edge technology, international production standards and Rajamouli's signature storytelling, Varanasi is shaping up to be one of the most awaited Indian films in recent years.

Subhati Das

RISING STAR

Welcome to the Jungle Puts Akshay Kumar Back in the Box Office Game

Akshay Kumar appears to have regained his box office momentum, with his latest comedy entertainer Welcome to the Jungle closing in on the coveted Rs 100 crore mark in India. The film's strong theatrical performance has been hailed as a significant comeback for the Bollywood star after a series of underperforming releases.

Directed by Ahmed Khan, Welcome to the Jungle is the third installment in the popular Welcome franchise and features a massive ensemble cast led by Akshay Kumar. The film has attracted audiences with its trademark blend of slapstick comedy, action and family entertainment, helping it maintain a steady run at the box office since its release.

According to trade reports, the film has already collected over Rs 94 crore at the domestic box office and is expected to cross the Rs 100 crore milestone during its second weekend. Globally, the comedy has grossed well beyond Rs 137 crore, making it one of Akshay Kumar's biggest commercial successes in recent years.

The film's impressive run is particularly significant for Akshay, who had been facing criticism following a string of box office disappointments. Industry observers believe the success of Welcome to the Jungle

signals a revival in the actor's career and reinforces his enduring popularity in the comedy genre.

One of the biggest attractions of the film is its star-studded cast, which includes Suniel Shetty, Paresh Rawal, Jackie Shroff, Arshad Warsi, Raveena Tandon, Lara Dutta, Jacqueline Fernandez, Disha Patani, Rajpal Yadav, Johnny Lever, Tusshar Kapoor, Shreyas Talpade, Aftab Shivdasani and several other popular actors. The ensemble has been widely appreciated for delivering the franchise's signature humour and entertainment.

The movie has also benefited from nostalgia surrounding the Welcome franchise, which remains one of Bollywood's most loved comedy series. Positive word of mouth and family audiences have helped sustain collections even after the opening weekend, despite fresh competition at the box office.

With the Rs 100 crore milestone now within reach, Welcome to the Jungle is expected to further strengthen Akshay Kumar's comeback narrative. If the film continues its steady run, it could emerge as one of the actor's biggest commercial hits in recent years, reaffirming his status as one of Bollywood's most bankable entertainers.

Akhil Calls Samantha's Maa Inti Bangaaram a Unique Experience

Actor Akhil Akkineni has heaped praise on Samantha Ruth Prabhu's latest film Maa Inti Bangaaram, describing it as a "unique experience" and congratulating the actress and the entire team on the film's success. His appreciation has delighted fans, who welcomed the warm gesture from the young star.

Taking to social media after watching the film, Akhil applauded Samantha's performance and the makers' efforts in delivering an entertaining family drama. He said Maa Inti Bangaaram offered audiences a refreshing cinematic experience and appreciated the way the story blended emotion, humour and action into a whole-some package.

Akhil reserved special praise for Samantha, calling her performance one of the biggest strengths of the film. He lauded her commitment to the role and acknowledged the hard work she invested both as the lead actress and one of the producers of the project. His message also congratulated director Nandini Reddy and the cast and crew for bringing the film to life. Released on June 19, Maa Inti Bangaaram has emerged as a commercial suc-

cess and received a positive response from family audiences. Samantha's portrayal of Swarna, a woman with a mysterious past trying to win over her husband's traditional family, has earned widespread appreciation. Critics have particularly praised her screen presence, action sequences and emotional performance. Directed by Nandini Reddy, the film also stars Gulshan Devaiah, Diganth Manchale, Gautami, Sreemukhi and several others in key roles. The music has been composed by Santhosh Narayanan, while Samantha co-produced the project under the Tralala Moving Pictures banner alongside Raj Nidimoru and Himank Reddy Duvvuru.

The film has performed

strongly at the box office despite competition from other releases and continues to attract audiences in its theatrical run. Its success has also led to the announcement of a sequel, with the makers promising an even bigger and more entertaining follow-up.

Akhil's heartfelt message has since gone viral among movie lovers, with fans appreciating the camaraderie between Telugu film stars. Many praised his gracious gesture in supporting Samantha's film, saying such encouragement reflects the positive spirit within the Telugu film industry. His words have added to the growing appreciation surrounding Maa Inti Bangaaram, which continues to enjoy a successful run in cinemas.



Mythri Movie Makers Announces Fourth Tamil Film With Dhruv Vikram

Leading production house Mythri Movie Makers has officially announced its fourth Tamil venture, with actor Dhruv Vikram set to headline the ambitious commercial entertainer. Tentatively titled 'Mythri-Tamil04 (DV4)', the film marks the fourth lead role in Dhruv Vikram's career and further strengthens the banner's growing presence in Tamil cinema.

The project was formally launched with a traditional pooja ceremony at Mythri Movie Makers' office in MRC Nagar, Chennai. The launch event was attended by the film's cast, crew and several prominent filmmakers from the Tamil industry, making it a star-studded affair. Director Keerthiswaran sounded the clapboard for the muhurtham shot, while directors Adhik Ravichandran, Ravikumar, Antony Bhagyaraj, Raja, Sasi and Hi Nanna director Shouryuv graced the occasion.

The film will be directed by Karan Aravind Kumar, who has also co-written the screenplay with Saby. Billed as an out-and-out commercial entertainer, the project is expected to present Dhruv Vikram in a

completely new mass-oriented avatar. Known for choosing intense and performance-driven roles, the actor now appears ready to embrace a larger-than-life commercial role aimed at a wider audience.

Produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y. Ravi Shankar under the Mythri Movie Makers banner, the film boasts a strong technical team. Viki will handle cinematography, while Jayasuriya has been roped in as the editor. Praveen Raja will oversee costume design, G.M. Sekhar has been appointed production designer, and action choreography will be handled by Vikram Mor.

Although the makers have kept the plot and supporting cast under wraps, the announcement has generated considerable excitement

among movie lovers. Fans are eager to see Dhruv Vikram in a full-fledged commercial entertainer after his previous performances showcased his versatility as an actor. Industry observers believe the collaboration with Mythri Movie Makers could mark a significant milestone in his career.

Mythri Movie Makers has built a strong reputation by delivering several blockbuster Telugu films and has steadily expanded into Tamil cinema over the past few years. With DV4, the production house continues its strategy of backing promising talent and large-scale entertainers across multiple languages. More details regarding the cast, music and release schedule are expected to be announced in the coming months.



Jailer 2 Eyes Big Box Office Boost With Festive Release

Superstar Rajinikanth's much-awaited Jailer 2 has received a major boost ahead of its release, with industry reports indicating that the action entertainer is set to hit theatres on October 15, 2026, allowing it to take full advantage of the extended Dussehra holiday weekend. Trade experts believe the festive release window could significantly enhance the film's box office prospects.

Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar, Jailer 2 marks the return of Rajinikanth as the iconic Tiger Muthuvel Pandian following the massive success of the 2023 blockbuster Jailer. The original film emerged as one of the highest-grossing Tamil films of all time, raising expectations for the sequel to unprecedented levels.

A holiday release has traditionally worked in favour of big-ticket Indian films, giving them an extended opening weekend and attracting family audiences. With Dussehra being one of the biggest festive periods for cinema, Jailer 2 is expected to enjoy packed theatres across Tamil Nadu, Telugu states, Karnataka, Kerala and overseas markets.

The film has also revived discussions about whether it can become the first Tamil movie to cross the coveted Rs 1,000 crore mark at the worldwide

box office. While several Tamil blockbusters have achieved remarkable commercial success over the years, the four-figure milestone has remained out of reach. Given the franchise's popularity, Rajinikanth's massive fan base and Nelson's successful collaboration with the superstar, trade analysts believe Jailer 2 has a realistic chance if it receives positive word of mouth.

Adding to the excitement is the film's star-studded cast. Apart from Rajinikanth, the sequel features Shiva Rajkumar, Mohanlal, S. J. Suryah, Ramya Krishnan, Mirnaa Menon and Yogi Babu in key roles. Reports also suggest that Hrithik Roshan will make a special appearance, further increasing the film's pan-India appeal. Music is once again composed by Anirudh Ravichander, whose soundtrack played a major role in the original film's success.

The festive release, combined with strong advance buzz and a powerful ensemble cast, has made Jailer 2 one of the most anticipated Indian films of 2026. If the sequel lives up to expectations and repeats the success of its predecessor, it could not only dominate the box office during the holiday season but also rewrite Tamil cinema's commercial record books.