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Centre Plans Tough Law with Up to 10-Year Jail and ₹10 Crore Fine for Paper Leaks

New Delhi, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Centre is set to introduce stricter penalties for question paper leaks, with the Union Cabinet approving a draft bill proposing up to 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of up to 10 crore for offenders. The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, though an official announcement is awaited.

The proposed amendments to the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 aim to significantly enhance existing punishments. Currently, the law prescribes 3-5 years' imprisonment and a fine up to 10 lakh, while organised crimes attract 5-10 years'



jail and fines up to 1 crore. The Centre is also planning fast-track courts to ensure swift justice. One such court has already been set up in Delhi, with four more expected soon. The proposed law man-

dates completion of trials within three months. The bill is likely to be introduced in the Lok Sabha next week. The move comes amid protests over the NEET paper leak, including those by the

Cockroach Janata Party. Union Ministers JP Nadda and Jitendra Singh held talks with BJP representatives Sourav Das and Ashutosh Ranka, who demanded Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation, 1 crore compensation to victims' families and withdrawal of cases against students.

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi criticised the government over alleged police action during protests, citing injuries to a student.

The Supreme Court, hearing petitions on the issue, directed the Centre and NTA to file affidavits on reforms by July 27. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta assured the court of strict action to safeguard students' interests.

Tribal Students Are 'Hidden Gems', Says CM Naidu

Rampachodavaram, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Describing tribal children as "hidden gems," Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said they could achieve great success when provided with proper opportunities. He said education is the greatest asset parents can give their children and urged mothers and fathers to take equal responsibility for their education.

Participating in the fourth Parent-Teacher Meeting at a government upper primary school along with Minister for Education Nara Lokesh, the Chief Minister said teachers and parents together should shape students' future. He advised teachers to adopt modern teaching methods and assured transparent teacher transfers through counselling.

Addressing the gathering, Naidu said quality education in government schools remains a top priority. He high-



lighted the reverse trend in enrollments, with 1.10 lakh students shifting from private schools to government institutions, reflecting increased public confidence. He appreciated Nara Lokesh for effectively handling the Education portfolio.

The Chief Minister said the government was implementing welfare schemes despite financial challenges. He mentioned Talliki Vandanam, NTR

Bharosa pensions, free bus travel for women, Deepam 2.0 LPG scheme and the upcoming Sanjeevani Health Project. He alleged that the previous YSRC government left behind nearly Rs 10 lakh crore debt and said steps were being taken to stabilise finances. Highlighting education initiatives, he said IIT coaching was being provided to SC and ST students, residential schools in tribal areas would be expanded

and hostel diet charges increased. He also referred to the Mega DSC recruitment programme as a commitment towards strengthening education. Speaking on the occasion, HRD Minister Nara Lokesh said, "My future is in the hands of the students. Their success is my responsibility and my greatest motivation. We are committed to strengthening government education, improving infrastructure, and ensuring every child gets quality learning opportunities. Together, with the support of teachers and parents, we will build a brighter future for the state." Naidu Turns Teacher During Parent-Teacher Meeting During the interaction, Chandrababu Naidu reviewed students' report cards and discussed academic performance, attendance and health details with parents. He directed the District Collector to ensure that report cards of residential ashram school students reach



Centre Boosts Rail Projects In AP, Clears ₹1,264 Cr Line Expansion

New Delhi, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister for Railways and Information & Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw in-

formed Parliament that the Centre is prioritising railway infrastructure development in Andhra Pradesh, with allocation rising to 10,134 crore for 2026-27. Replying to

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Quantum Computing, AI To Drive Development: CM Naidu

Amaravati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said Quantum Computing and Artificial Intelligence would play a crucial role in driving future development and announced that Andhra Pradesh is building the Amaravati Quantum Valley as a glob-

al centre for innovation and advanced research. A delegation from Quantinuum, a global full-stack quantum computing company led by CEO Rajeeb Hazra, met Chandrababu Naidu at the Secretariat on Thursday and discussed strategic partnerships to develop Amaravati Quantum Valley into

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Krishna Delta Faces Water Shortage Amid Rainfall Deficit: Irrigation ENC

Amaravati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Water availability in the Krishna River has declined significantly due to a severe rainfall deficit across Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, Irrigation Department Engineer-in-Chief (ENC) K. Narasimha Murthy said on Friday. Addressing a media conference along with Chief Engineer B. Rambabu and Superintending Engineer J. Gunakar at the Irrigation Department complex, the ENC said Andhra Pradesh recorded a 51% rainfall deficit, while the

Krishna Delta region faced a 49% shortfall. He said upstream reservoirs, including Almati, Narayanpur and Jurala, have a combined storage deficit of around 50 TMC, while the Tungabhadra project has a deficit of nearly 70 TMC. Water will reach Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar only after filling these shortages, he added.

Narasimha Murthy said the government is prioritising drinking water requirements of nearly 60 lakh people in Eluru, Krishna, NTR, Guntur and Bapatla districts. Usable water in the Pulichintala project has been reserved

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Lokesh Assures Support To Godavari Boat Tragedy Victims' Families

Rampachodavaram, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh on Friday assured all possible support to the families of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) workers who recently died while fishing in the Godavari River and reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening public education in tribal areas.

During his visit to Rampachodavaram, Lokesh met the bereaved families at Gollagudem, shared breakfast with them and enquired about their welfare. He assured them of personal and government support, stating that the party had already provided financial assistance of 5 lakh to each affected family. He said the TDP would continue to stand by its cadre during difficult times.

Later, addressing the Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting at Government High School, Lokesh said the government was taking steps to improve education facilities in tribal regions. He announced that all schools in tribal areas would have permanent buildings by next year and that dilapidated



structures would be renovated.

The Minister said around 1.10 lakh students had shifted from private schools to government schools this year, attributing the change to the collective efforts of teachers, parents and students. He said the Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting initiative was aimed at strengthening coordination among parents, teachers and students while promoting quality education and values. Lokesh urged students to respect parents and teachers, describing them as the foundation behind every successful person. During his visit, Lokesh also conducted a Praja Darbar at Jagarampalli, where he interacted with party workers, employees and members of the public. He received petitions on various issues and assured that necessary action would be taken to resolve public grievances.

Pawan Kalyan Flags Off Kumki Elephants' Journey To Manyam

Mangalagiri, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Forests and Environment Pawan Kalyan on Thursday welcomed trained kumki elephants Jayanth and Abhimanyu at his camp office in Mangalagiri and flagged off their journey to the Guchimi camp in Parvathipuram Manyam district. The elephants were being shifted from the Palamaner-Musalamadugu camp to strengthen measures aimed at reducing human-elephant conflicts in the region. Pawan Kalyan welcomed the elephants by showering flowers and personally fed them before launching the second phase of their transit.

The Deputy Chief Minister



directed Forest Department officials to ensure all necessary safety arrangements during

the transportation of the elephants. He also instructed officials to help the

P3

Tomato Glut Floods Rayalaseema Markets as Prices Swing on Quality and Demand

K Kalyan Krishna Kumar

A massive surge in tomato arrivals across Rayalaseema markets has triggered price fluctuations, highlighting the fragile balance between supply, quality and demand as the season nears its end. With over 12,215 metric tonnes reaching market yards in a single day, farmers and traders are navigating a volatile phase shaped by weather disruptions and inconsistent produce quality.

According to Ravi Pattan Shetty, Director of the State Agricultural Marketing Department, "price fluctuations corresponding to demand have



been observed in the tomato markets of the Rayalaseema region." Of the total arrivals, 5,564 metric tonnes were Grade-I tomatoes, while 6,650 metric tonnes were categorized as Grade-II, indicating a significant share of lower-

quality produce entering the markets. Markets such as Palamaner, V. Kota, Punganur and Madanapalle reported relatively stable prices due to the availability of better-quality tomatoes. However, elsewhere,

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Bhogapuram Airport Event to Witness Historic Dhimsa Dance Performance

Bhogapuram (Vizianagaram District), July 24 | TPN Bureau

Minister for HRD, IT and Electronics Nara Lokesh on Friday reviewed arrangements for the inauguration of Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport at Bhogapuram, directing officials and alliance leaders to ensure a grand event during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit on August 1. Inspecting the airport site,

Lokesh said around 3 lakh people from Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam, Anakapalli and Parvathipuram Manyam districts are expected to attend the inauguration and public meeting. He instructed leaders and officials to work in coordination to make the event a memorable success.

Lokesh directed officials to organise a massive Dhimsa dance performance involving around 13,000

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Sanjeevani Brings Digital Transformation to State Healthcare

Sreeja Rachabathuni

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu will launch 'Sanjeevani', a digital healthcare initiative, at Aspari in Kurnool district on Saturday, Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav said on Friday. The programme aims to create a seamless healthcare system where patients' medical history, test reports, treatment details and follow-up records are instantly accessible to doctors across health facilities.

The initiative, launched as a pilot project in Kuppam, has so far created comprehensive digital health accounts for 10.51



lakh people and linked 10.06 lakh Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts (ABHA). The system integrates consultations, laboratory tests, medicines, referrals and follow-up care under a single platform.

Satya Kumar Yadav

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Pawan Kalyan Alleges NEET Protests Diverted From Students' Concerns

Amaravati, July 23: TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Thursday alleged that the protests over the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) had moved away from students' genuine concerns and were being influenced by forces with a broader

political agenda. In a statement on social media, Pawan Kalyan said the protests initially focused on issues related to the education system and examination process but later shifted towards unrelated political demands and controversial slogans. He alleged that some elements were using the platform to raise issues

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AP Targets Top Spot in Climate Action

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The state has set its sights on becoming India's No.1 state in climate action and energy conservation by adopting sustainable development measures and advanced technologies. Chief Secretary G. Sai Prasad said the Centre-State partnership between Andhra Pradesh and the Government of India will create a national success story in energy efficiency and climate initiatives.

Unveiling a report prepared by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), under the Ministry of Power, in coordination with Andhra Pradesh State Energy Conservation Mission (APSECM), the Chief Secretary said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has a vision to make the state a leader in climate action.



He said energy efficiency could contribute nearly 40 per cent towards combating climate change. Andhra Pradesh aims to increase green cover from the present 30 per cent to 37 per cent by 2030 and promote renewable energy, water conservation and fuel management. He recalled that Visakhapatnam pioneered LED street lighting technology through its collaboration with EESL, becoming a model for several cities across India.

Vijayawada Passport Office Wins Best Rajbhasha Award

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Regional Passport Office (RPO), Vijayawada, received the Best Rajbhasha Award at the Town Official Language Implementation Committee (NARAKAS) meeting for its outstanding promotion of Hindi in official work. The Divisional Railway Manager presented the award to Regional Passport Officer Nandulal Bhukya and Junior Translation Officer Sushmita Rajak in recognition of the office's effective implementation of the Official Language Policy. The office's in-house Hindi



magazine 'Sanchay' also secured first prize in the Hindi Magazine Competition organised by TOLIC. Officials said the twin honours reflect the office's commitment to encouraging the use of Hindi in official correspondence and administrative activities while promoting excellence in Rajbhasha implementation.

PIN POINT

Health Minister Mourns Death of PG Medical Student

Amaravati: Minister for Health Satya Kumar Yadav expressed grief over the death of Kasilamalla Tagore Nath (31), a postgraduate medical student at Andhra Medical College, Visakhapatnam, who died by suicide at the AMC PG hostel. The Minister spoke to the student's father, Srinivasa Rao, over the phone and conveyed condolences. He expressed deep sorrow over the loss of a young medical student with a promising future and offered support to the bereaved family.

Tax the Wealthy to Strengthen Welfare: Yanamala

Amaravati: Former Finance Minister Yanamala Ramakrishnu suggested that governments should raise resources for welfare schemes by increasing taxes on the wealthy instead of reducing free welfare programmes. In a statement on Friday, he said those who accumulated wealth through natural resources and contributed significantly to GDP or GSDP should pay higher taxes. He also proposed using CSR funds for education, healthcare and social infrastructure, stressing that welfare schemes are vital for weaker sections.

Two New COVID-19 Cases Reported in AP

Amaravati: The state has reported two new COVID-19 cases on Thursday, with one infection each detected in Eluru and Guntur districts. The state's active cases have increased to 34. Health authorities are continuing surveillance and monitoring measures while advising people to follow hygiene practices and seek medical attention if symptoms appear.

MP Vijay Appointed to Parliamentary Industry Panel

Amaravati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Rajya Sabha Member Chintakayala Vijay has been appointed as a member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry. The Rajya Sabha Secretariat issued official orders stating that the appointment was made by the Rajya Sabha Chairman under Rule 269(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Rajya Sabha. The appointment came into effect from July 23, 2026. Vijay will serve on the committee responsible for reviewing industrial sector policies and related issues. Rajya Sabha Director Niyang Khanem Guite forwarded the committee details to the MP.

Government Schools See Surge in Demand, Says Nara Lokesh

Rampachodavaram, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Government schools in Andhra Pradesh are witnessing a renewed wave of public trust, with rising admissions and visible improvements in infrastructure, said Education, IT, and Electronics Minister Nara Lokesh during a Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting held at Rampachodavaram Government High School. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu was also present.

Highlighting key achievements, Lokesh said nearly 1.10 lakh students have shifted from private to government schools this year. "The collective effort of the past two years has borne fruit. Teachers, students, and parents have become brand ambassadors for government schools," he said. He added that for the first time, "No Admission" boards are being seen at government schools, reflecting



growing demand. The Minister announced that all government schools in tribal areas without proper buildings would be provided dedicated infrastructure by next year, with dilapidated structures set for renovation. He credited improved facilities, quality education, and targeted initiatives for restoring confidence in public education. Calling the Mega PTM a platform that transforms parents' hopes into confidence, Lokesh said the large participation across the state made the program feel like a "family celebration" rather than a government initiative. He reiterated his commitment to reviving the past glory of government schools.

Mega PTM 4.0 Draws Over 71 Lakh Participants Across AP Schools

Amaravati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting (Mega PTM) 4.0 was conducted across government, aided and model schools in Andhra Pradesh with large participation from students, parents, teachers and community members.

State Project Director, Samagra Shiksha, B. Srinivasa Rao

said the programme was organised as part of the government's vision of Swarna Andhra @2047 and Viksit Bharat. According to official data compiled till 6 PM on Friday, a total of 71,13,536 participants, including students, parents, teachers, donors, public representatives, alumni and other stakeholders, attended the meetings. Out of 44,076 schools across

the state, 43,410 schools, accounting for 98.42 per cent, successfully conducted the programme, while reports from the remaining 666 schools are awaited. B. Srinivasa Rao expressed gratitude to officials, students, parents, teachers, public representatives, donors and alumni for their contribution to the successful conduct of Mega PTM 4.0.

AP Medical Colleges Gain Global Recognition

Amaravati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

AP Govt medical colleges have earned international recognition after a major polio vaccine study involving Andhra Medical College-KGH, Visakhapatnam, and Kurnool Medical College was published in the prestigious medical journal The Lancet Infectious Diseases. The Phase-2/3, double-blind, randomized clinical trial,

conducted on 643 infants across nine leading medical institutions in India, evaluated a dose-sparing inactivated polio vaccine that uses one-fourth of the antigen while providing immunity comparable to the standard vaccine. The research found the vaccine to be safe and effective, with the potential to increase vaccine availability and reduce costs globally. Dr. B.S. Chakravarthy of Andhra Medical College and Dr.

Vijaya Anand of Kurnool Medical College were part of the international research team. Health and Medical Education Minister Satya Kumar Yadav congratulated the researchers, saying the achievement reflects the state's growing strength in medical education and clinical research and expressed hope that more government medical colleges would undertake world-class research initiatives.

SIR Enumeration Deadline Ends Today in AP

Amaravati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The deadline for submitting enumeration forms under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Andhra Pradesh will end on Friday. The final report of the SIR process is expected to be announced today. According to officials, Andhra

Pradesh has around 4.16 crore registered voters, of whom 3.71 crore enumeration forms had been digitised till Thursday. The ongoing process aims to verify and update voter details to ensure accuracy in the electoral rolls. Officials have advised voters who have not completed the enumeration process to submit the required details within the deadline.

Failure to complete the enumeration may result in names being excluded from the voter list. The SIR exercise is being carried out to maintain a transparent and updated electoral database across the state. Voters have been urged to verify their status and ensure their details are properly recorded in the electoral rolls.

Pawan Kalyan Alleges NEET Protests Diverted From Students' Concerns

continued

such as the restoration of Article 370, make remarks against religious beliefs and target communities.

He also referred to incidents of violence, including attacks on security personnel, and said such actions showed how public concerns could be misused by disruptive groups.

However, Pawan Kalyan acknowledged that youth concerns extended beyond examinations, with unemployment and uncertainty over career opportunities adding to their frustration. He highlighted the government's focus on economic growth, infrastructure development and investment promotion to create employment opportunities. Describing the National Education Policy (NEP) as a major reform, he said it aims to move away from the colonial-era education approach by encouraging critical thinking, skills, research and innovation.



Meanwhile, the CPI(M) Andhra Pradesh State Committee criticised Pawan Kalyan's remarks and demanded an unconditional apology, alleging that he ignored concerns over examination irregularities and student distress.

Modi's Vision is to Create More 'Lakhpatis Didis'

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Twenty Points Programme Implementation (Viksit Bharat-Swarna Andhra Pradesh) Chairman Lanka Dinakar on Friday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 places women's economic empowerment at its core through the creation of "Lakhpatis Didis." Speaking after visiting the DW-CRA Bazaar at Babu Museum on M.G. Road, Vijayawada, he inter-



acted with women entrepreneurs displaying products at nearly 100 stalls representing Andhra Pradesh and 16 other states. Dinakar said more than 3 crore Lakhpatis Didis have emerged across the country, including 21.15 lakh in Andhra Pradesh,

and the Centre aims to increase the number to 6 crore by 2029. He urged Andhra Pradesh to contribute at least 45 lakh Lakhpatis Didis to the national mission.

He highlighted Central schemes such as PM Mudra Yojana, PMEGP and MSME credit support for promoting women's entrepreneurship. Dinakar also praised Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for pioneering the Self-Help Group movement and strengthening women's economic empowerment.

₹104.29 Crore Boost for AP Court Facilities

Delhi, July 24 | TPN Bureau



Nellore MP Vemireddy Prabhakar Reddy raised questions in Parliament on the infrastructure, judicial vacancies and pending projects in district and subordinate courts across Andhra Pradesh. In a written reply on Friday, Union Minister of State for Law and Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal said the Centre released 104.29 crore under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for court infrastructure over the past five years and approved 8.79 crore for the state in 2026-27.

The Minister informed Parliament that 137 of the 875 sanctioned judicial posts in Andhra Pradesh district courts are vacant, with Chittoor reporting the

highest vacancies at 24, followed by Kurnool (19) and Anantapur (15).

He said 10 court infrastructure projects have been completed and 24 are under various stages of construction across the state. Only two projects initiated before 2021 remain pending, and their progress is being monitored through the Nyaya Vikas Portal to ensure timely completion.

NEET Issue Should Not Be Used for Politics: BJP

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Valluru Jayaprakash Narayan alleged that some political parties and organisations were trying to create unrest in the name of student protests over the NEET issue. He said the NDA government was fully committed to safeguarding the interests and future of students.

Addressing a press conference in Vijayawada, Jayaprakash Narayan said the Centre had taken serious note of the NEET question paper leak and initiated measures to rectify

the issue. He said Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan had expressed regret over the lapse and assured that a re-examination would be conducted if necessary.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government was introducing reforms to bring greater transparency in examination systems and would not spare anyone involved in irregularities. He criticised opposition parties for politicising the issue instead of working towards solutions. BJP state media in-charge Kilari Dilip was also present.

L&T Gets LOA for Amaravati NGO Towers Works

Amaravati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Amaravati Growth and Infrastructure Corporation Limited (AGICL) Managing Director Abhishek Kumar handed over the Letter of Award (LOA) to Larsen & Toubro (L&T) representatives for the final phase works of Non-Gazetted Officers (NGO) Towers in the Amaravati Government Complex.

The LOA was issued at the CRDA office in Rayapudi on Friday for works worth 83.99 crore. L&T emerged as the lowest bidder (L1) for the construction-related works, including Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), compound walls and other finishing works for the NGO residential towers developed in Amaravati. AGICL officials said the project is part of the ongoing infrastructure development initiatives in the people's capital Amaravati. Engineering department officials participated in the programme along with AGICL Managing Director Abhishek Kumar. The awarded works are expected to further accelerate the completion of residential infrastructure facilities in the Amaravati Government Complex.



Ministers Highlight Education Reforms and Infrastructure Development

Kotavuratla/Addanki, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha on Friday inaugurated a new Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) building at Kotavuratla mandal, constructed at a cost of 168.03 lakh under Samagra Shiksha. She also inaugurated a new Treasury office building built at a cost of 75 lakh.

Later, Anitha participated in the Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting at Kotavuratla Government High School, where she interacted with students, parents and teachers and shared a midday meal with students. Addressing the gathering, the Minister said Mega Parent-Teacher Meetings are strengthening the education system and appreciated Education Minister Nara Lokesh for introducing reforms. She said the government was improving infrastructure in government schools and filling teacher vacancies, with 16,000 posts already filled.

Anitha assured that a bus stop would be arranged near the school and steps would be taken to operate buses from Addu Road junction to Narsipatnam. She urged parents to monitor their children's behaviour, advised students to stay away from addictions and cybercrime, and stressed compliance with traffic rules by auto-rickshaw drivers.

Ravikumar Highlights Teacher Recruitment

Minister Gottipati Ravikumar said the Alliance government led



by Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu was taking steps to strengthen education through infrastructure development and recruitment of teachers.

Addressing the Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting at Reningavaram High School in J. Pangaluru mandal, he distributed 88 bicycles to students with donor support. He said around 11,300 bicycles worth over 6 crore had been distributed across the Addanki constituency.

Ravikumar said more than 16,000 teacher posts were filled through Mega DSC and annual DSC recruitments would continue to address vacancies. He assured that additional classrooms, Headmaster and PET posts would be sanctioned wherever required.

He also said a special grievance mechanism would ensure that all eligible beneficiaries receive Thaliki Vandanam benefits. Criticising YSRCP leaders for allegedly spreading misinformation about Mega DSC, he said such campaigns could harm the education system. He announced that recruitment for over 630 Energy Department posts would begin soon and cautioned job aspirants against fraudulent middlemen.

Gateways to Global Markets: The Maritime Economy of South Coastal Andhra



If the Krishna-Godavari Delta provides South Coastal Andhra with food security, its 470-kilometre coastline opens the region to global markets. Over the years, this coastline has evolved into a natural economic corridor connecting agriculture, aquaculture, energy and industrial production with international trade. Three ports form the backbone of this maritime economy—Kakinada, Krishnapatnam and Machilipatnam.

The Kakinada Deep Water Port, handling about 24–25 million tonnes of cargo annually, is one of the major commercial ports on India's east coast. Besides exporting rice, marine products, fertilizers and petroleum products, it serves as a key logistics hub for offshore oil and natural gas operations in the Krishna-Godavari (KG) Basin. Krishnapatnam Port, among India's fastest-growing private deep-water ports, has an annual cargo handling capacity exceeding 75 million tonnes. It has emerged as a strategic logistics gateway for southern India, supporting industrial growth and international trade.

Meanwhile, Machilipatnam Port, along with the proposed Ramayapatnam Port, represents the next phase of maritime expansion. Once fully de-

veloped, these ports could strengthen the export potential of agriculture, aquaculture and manufacturing while transforming South Coastal Andhra's coastline into an integrated maritime economic corridor. However, the true value of ports lies far beyond cargo statistics. Their economic impact comes from the highways, railways, warehouses, cold-chain infrastructure, industrial parks and export-oriented industries that develop around them. More importantly, they reduce the time and cost of moving farm produce, seafood and manufactured goods to global markets. That is why the ports of South Coastal Andhra are not merely maritime facilities; they are powerful engines of regional economic growth.

Energy Corridors Driving Industrial Growth

Agriculture has ensured food security. Aquaculture has generated valuable foreign exchange. Ports have connected the region to international markets. The infrastructure now linking these strengths into a unified economic system is the energy sector. The region's greatest strategic asset is the Krishna-Godavari Basin, one of India's most significant offshore natural gas reserves. With Kakinada emerging as a centre for gas production, processing and pipeline connectivity, South Coastal Andhra is steadily developing into an important energy hub. Natural gas from the KG Basin, integra-



tion with the national gas grid through organizations such as GAIL, and expanding gas infrastructure are providing reliable energy for fertilizer plants, power generation, ceramics, food processing and other manufacturing industries.

The Krishnapatnam region has also become a major power-generation centre. Its thermal power plants, port-based coal supply network and industrial power infrastructure are strengthening industrial development across southern Andhra Pradesh. Energy today is far more than electricity generation. When gas supply, power infrastructure, ports, highways and industrial parks converge, they create an attractive environment for investment. This indicates that South Coastal Andhra is gradually moving beyond an agriculture-based economy toward an energy-supported industrial economy. The real challenge, however, is ensuring that this transition benefits not only large industries but also local employment, value-added manufacturing and Micro, Small

and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Only then can infrastructure investment translate into tangible improvements in people's lives.

Prakasam: The Missing Link in South Coastal Development

The development story of South Coastal Andhra presents an interesting contrast.

The Godavari and Krishna Delta irrigation systems, the economic influence of Kakinada and Krishnapatnam ports, Amaravati's emergence as an administrative centre and expanding industrial opportunities together have created a distinctive regional development model. Yet the erstwhile Prakasam district stands apart. Despite possessing a long coastline, vast land resources, rich granite deposits, tobacco cultivation, livestock wealth and considerable agricultural potential, Prakasam has not experienced development on the same scale as districts stretching from East Godavari to Nellore. There is no single explanation. Development studies point to several contributing factors:

Centre Boosts Rail Projects In AP, Clears ₹1,264 Cr Line Expansion

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Rajya Sabha member Bhashyam Rama Krishna, he said the State's average allocation of 886 crore during 2009–14 has increased more than elevenfold. Railway construction pace has also doubled from 73 km annually to 147 km between 2014 and 2026. As of April 1, 2026, 42 projects covering 4,768 km have been sanctioned at a cost of 77,855 crore, with 1,465 km completed so far.

Vaishnav said 838 ROBs and RUBs have been constructed since 2014, while 301 works

worth 11,686 crore are under progress. Under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, 74 stations have been identified, with redevelopment completed at eight. Meanwhile, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a 1,264 crore project for the 3rd and 4th lines between Ballari and Guntakal. The project will add 46 km, improve freight movement and benefit nearly seven lakh people, enhancing connectivity and reducing logistics costs.

Quantum Computing, AI To Drive Development: CM Naidu

continued

a global hub for quantum technologies.

The Chief Minister said the Amaravati Quantum Computing Centre is expected to become operational by December this year and added that quantum testing facilities have already started functioning in the state. He said Amaravati offers an ideal environment for quantum research and innovation.

During the meeting, Rajeeb Hazra expressed Quantum's interest in partnering with Andhra Pradesh to create a world-class quantum ecosys-

tem aligned with India's National Quantum Mission. Discussions focused on quantum skill development, AI-enabled quantum applications, advanced computing research, startup incubation and emerging technologies.

Quantinum representatives said the company is ready to collaborate across the entire quantum value chain, including quantum computer hardware manufacturing, quantum algorithms and software development. Quantum Vice President Sitaramakrishna and Amaravati Quantum Mission Director C.V. Sridhar participated in the meeting.

Krishna Delta Faces Water Shortage Amid Rainfall Deficit: Irrigation ENC

continued

for drinking purposes. He warned farmers against unauthorised pumping from the RMC canal and advised them to avoid paddy cultivation due to uncertainty over water availability. Farmers were encouraged to take up irrigated dry crops instead.

The ENC said Godavari flows are also expected to reduce due to poor rainfall, with the usual flow period likely to decline from 100–125 days to 60–70 days this season. He urged farmers to cooperate with the government and use water resources judiciously.

Lokesh Holds Praja Darbar, Receives Public Grievances

Rampachodavaram, July 24 | TPN Bureau

HRD and IT Minister Nara Lokesh on Friday conducted a Praja Darbar at Jagarampalli in I. Polavaram panchayat, where he was staying during his visit to Rampachodavaram to participate in the Mega Parent-Teachers Meeting (PTM).

A large number of party leaders, activists, government employees and members of the public attended the programme to submit representations on various issues affecting their areas. Minister Lokesh interacted with the visitors, listened to their grievances and accepted petitions seeking solutions to local and personal concerns.

Assuring the gathering that every representation would be examined, Lokesh said efforts



would be made to address the issues through the appropriate departments. He also spent time interacting with party workers and local residents in a cordial atmosphere. Following the grievance meeting, the Minister posed for photographs with those who attended the Praja Darbar before proceeding to his scheduled official programmes in the constituency.

Jana Sena Eyes Local Body Polls with Grassroots Focus

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Jana Sena Party leaders on Friday called for strengthening the organisation at the grassroots level and maintaining alliance unity to secure victory in the upcoming local body elections during a city-level review meeting held at Sujana Convention Hall in Vijayawada.

Tourism Minister Kandula Durgesh said the alliance would achieve success if leaders and cadre remained closely connected with the public and addressed local issues. He urged party workers to work to realise Jana Sena president Pawan Kalyan's vision and expressed confidence that dedicated activists would receive due recognition for their efforts. He stressed the need to build the party from the booth level while taking the government's development and welfare initiatives to the people.

Jana Sena Political Affairs Committee Chairman and Food and Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar said the review meetings were being conducted to strengthen the party organisation, hear the views of cadre and prepare for future elections. He recalled the role played by Jana Sena workers during the 2021 local



body elections and urged them to display the same commitment in the upcoming polls.

Government Whip Pidugu Hariprasad said victory would be easier if the achievements of the alliance government over the past two years were effectively communicated to the public. Assembly Whip Boliseti Srinivas called upon aspiring candidates to remain active among the people, while Visakhapatnam South MLA Vamsikrishna Srinivas urged workers to work unitedly for the alliance's success.

Several party leaders and activists attended the meeting and discussed organisational strengthening, grassroots outreach and election preparedness.

TDP Cadre Is Party's Backbone, Says MLA Vasantha Krishna Prasad

Vijayawada Rural, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Mylavaram MLA and Telugu Desam Party State Official Spokesperson Vasantha Venkata Krishna Prasad called upon party leaders and workers to work in unity and strengthen the organisation from the grassroots during a TDP family members' meeting held at the party office in Golapudi, Vijayawada Rural, on Friday.

Addressing party representatives, the MLA said the TDP cadre is the party's greatest strength and backbone. He urged leaders to coordinate at every level and actively participate in all upcoming party programmes to ensure their success. He stressed the need to strengthen the party from the



village level to the booth level through dedicated organisational efforts.

Vasantha Krishna Prasad also asked party workers to take the alliance government's welfare and development initiatives to every household and create greater public awareness about the benefits being extended through various government schemes. He said public confidence in the govern-

ment could be further enhanced through continuous interaction with people and effective communication of its achievements.

The MLA emphasised that every party worker should remain accessible to the public, understand local issues, and work towards resolving them in coordination with elected representatives and officials. He expressed confidence that the party would continue to grow stronger through unity, discipline, and public service.

A large number of public representatives, Mandal-level leaders, representatives of affiliated wings, and party workers attended the meeting and discussed organisational strengthening and future action plans.

Tomato Glut Floods Rayalaseema Markets as Prices Swing on Quality and Demand

continued

the story was markedly different. At Mulakalacheruvu, where the marketing season has reached its peak, heavy arrivals pushed prices to be dictated purely by supply-demand dynamics. Meanwhile, Kalikiri market witnessed improved prices compared to last week, driven by rising demand from other districts and states, though a slight dip was seen compared to the previous day.

The Raptadu private market recorded a staggering 6,750 metric tonnes—the highest among all centres—reflecting

the scale of the current influx. However, this glut has also contributed to price softening. "Prices dipped slightly due to increased market availability resulting from high production and inflows from Karnataka, Chittoor and Himachal Pradesh," Shetty noted.

Adding to the complexity, unseasonal weather has adversely impacted crop quality. As the season draws to a close, many tomatoes are arriving with black spots, reducing their market value. Traders, wary of compromised quality, are reluctant to offer competitive prices. "Demand for high-quality

tomatoes remains strong, but traders are unwilling to pay high prices for damaged or average-quality produce," Shetty explained.

With no arrivals reported in Patikonda and Peapully markets, the disparity across regions is evident. Officials advise farmers to grade their produce carefully before entering markets to secure better returns.

The State Agricultural Marketing Department continues to closely monitor market trends, aiming to provide timely insights to farmers amid these fluctuating conditions.

Pawan Kalyan Flags Off Kumki Elephants' Journey To Manyam

continued

elephants acclimatise to the local environment under expert supervision after reaching the Guichimi camp. Pawan Kalyan said the services of Jayanth and Abhimanyu would play an important role in managing human-elephant conflicts in areas surrounding Parvathipuram. He said the relocation of kumki elephants was part of the coalition government's sci-

entific and humane approach to protect public safety, safeguard farmers' crops and conserve wildlife. Elephant herds frequently enter Parvathipuram Manyam district from Odisha border areas, causing damage to agricultural fields and property. To address the issue, the government has taken measures to deploy trained kumki elephants for conflict mitigation. Jayanth and Abhimanyu

had earlier contributed to several operations in Palamaner and Chittoor regions, where they helped forest officials safely drive wild elephant herds back into forest areas. The Forest Department is now preparing to utilise their experience in managing elephant movements and preventing conflicts between wildlife and local communities in Parvathipuram Manyam district.

Sanjeevani Brings Digital Transformation to State Healthcare

continued

said Sanjeevani ensures continuity of treatment when patients move from village-level screening centres to PHCs, district hospitals or teaching hospitals. Doctors can access previous medical records without requiring patients to carry physical reports, helping avoid delays in diagnosis and treatment. Under the programme, doctor appointments were facilitated for 3.62 lakh people, while 2.48 lakh patients consulted doctors. Around 14.66 lakh medicine doses were provided, 31,555 laboratory tests were conducted and 1.60 lakh patients were contacted for follow-up care. Doctors and specialists at the Digital Nerve Centre provided services to

7,000 patients.

The Minister said health records of 2.72 crore individuals collected under the Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) Screening Programme 4.0 are being integrated with Sanjeevani. The platform will also include data from the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), pregnancy registrations, prenatal check-ups and high-risk pregnancies.

The Aspari PHC network will bring nearly 35,000 people under Sanjeevani services. Satya Kumar Yadav said the objective was to ensure that healthcare responsibility continues beyond referrals, with disease detection, treatment and monitoring carried out through an integrated digital system.

Domestic Violence Case Registered Against Jogi Ramesh's Family

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

A domestic violence and dowry harassment case has been registered against YSRCP leader and former minister Jogi Ramesh and several members of his family at Ibrahimpatnam Police Station in Vijayawada. The complaint was lodged by Meghana, wife of Jogi Ramesh's son Rajiv, alleging fraud, attempted mur-

der, domestic violence and dowry harassment. Based on her complaint, police registered a case against 11 individuals, including Jogi Ramesh, his wife Shakuntala, son Rajiv and Priyanka, under various sections of law. Police confirmed that the case has been taken up for investigation and that further action will be initiated based on the evidence gathered during the probe.

Alliance Govt Focuses on Value-Based Education: Kollu Ravindra



Machilipatnam, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Mines, Geology and Excise Kollu Ravindra on Friday said the Alliance government is committed to providing value-based education alongside academic excellence through Mega Parent-Teacher Meetings being held across Andhra Pradesh.

Participating in the Mega PTM at the Zilla Parishad High School in Tallapalem, the Minister inspected student exhibitions, felicitated meritorious students, witnessed a Pada Puja performed by students for their parents, and shared the mid-day meal with students.

Addressing the gathering, Ravindra said the Mega PTM initiative has grown from 46,000 schools last year to nearly 62,000 schools this year, reflecting increased public participation. He appreciated the support of alumni, noting that around 22,000 schools have reportedly been

adopted following last year's programme.

The Minister congratulated Krishna district officials for achieving an 85 per cent pass rate in the Class 10 examinations and urged them to secure a top-three position in the state next year. He said the government has allocated 32,000 crore for education, filled 16,300 teacher vacancies, implemented the Thalliki Vandanam scheme benefiting 67 lakh students, and is providing advanced training to teachers, including programmes in Singapore.

Alleging that the Opposition attempted to obstruct teacher recruitment through legal challenges, Ravindra said the government would continue implementing educational reforms and strengthening government schools despite such hurdles.

RTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana Rao and other public representatives attended the programme.

VMC Chief Reviews SIR-2026 Progress with Political Parties

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Commissioner Dhyanachandra H on Friday reviewed the progress of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR)-2026 of electoral rolls for the Vijayawada Central Assembly constituency during a meeting with representatives of various political parties.

The review meeting was held at the Command Control Centre at the VMC headquarters, where officials briefed political representatives on the status of voter data digitisation and the ongoing revision process.

The Commissioner said that by 10 a.m., details of 2,59,718 voters, accounting for 93.48 per cent of the total 2,77,822 electors in the constituency, had been digitised. Of the digitised records, 2,43,415 voters were successfully mapped with the 2002 electoral roll, while 16,303 entries were categorised



under the "No Mapping" segment.

He further informed that 18,104 voters were placed in the "Uncollectible" category due to reasons such as absence from their registered address, change of residence, death, or duplicate entries. Officials said the revision process is being carried out to ensure an accurate and updated electoral roll.

Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) K. Sanjay Ratnakumar, K. Prabhudas, P. Satya Kumari and K. Lakshmi, SDT (EPIC) S. Suresh Kumar, and representatives of the Congress, CPI, CPM, TDP and YSRCP attended the meeting and reviewed the progress of the exercise.

Rammohan Library Pays Tribute to Ayyanki Venkataramanayya

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Rammohan Library celebrated the 136th birth anniversary of Padma Shri Ayyanki Venkataramanayya, known as the Father of the Library Movement, on Friday with floral tributes and a special programme.

Ayyanki Murali Krishna, grandson of Ayyanki Venkataramanayya, attended the event as chief guest. Rammohan Library President Chintalapudi Koteswara Rao recalled the contributions of Ayyanki Venkataramanayya in promoting libraries and reading culture across the country. He urged students to utilise libraries to enhance knowledge and personality development.

Library Secretary Vemulapalli Kesava Rao highlighted the history and legacy of Rammohan Library, while Ayyanki Murali Krishna appreciated the in-



stitution's continued efforts in serving readers and preserving his grandfather's ideals.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Library Vice-President Dammala Ramachandra Rao.

Library Treasurer Kota Krishna Bhagavan, Executive Committee members Pavuluri Chidambareswara Rao and Jaji Padmaja, library members Sambasiva Rao and Naga Bhushanam, along with readers, students and well-wishers, participated in the programme. The event highlighted the role of libraries in promoting knowledge, learning and social awareness.

IJU Seeks Probe Into Assaults On Journalists During Protests

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Indian Journalists Union (IJU) has condemned the alleged assaults and intimidation of journalists covering student protests at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi and other parts of the country, demanding an impartial inquiry into the incidents.

In a statement, IJU President Balwinder Singh Jammu and Secretary General D. Somasundaram said attacks on journalists by protesters or security personnel were unacceptable and a serious threat to press freedom.

They expressed concern over visuals showing reporters and video journalists being targeted while performing their duties.

The IJU also criticised the alleged use of shock batons, pellet guns and excessive force by security personnel against students and journalists. It raised concerns over security personnel performing duties without name badges, calling it a violation of accountability norms.

The Union urged protesters not to target field journalists and called for action against those responsible for attacks on media personnel.

Student Protest Over Education Minister's Resignation Turns Tense

Vijayawada, July 23 | TPN Bureau

Student and youth organisations staged protests in Vijayawada on Thursday as part of a statewide bandh call, demanding the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the alleged NEET examination paper leak and issues concerning the education system.

Members of AISF, SFI, PDSU, DYFI and other Left-affiliated organisations participated in the demonstrations. The protesters marched towards Museum Road towards Lok Bhavan to submit a representation to the Governor. Police stopped them on MG Road and assured that a delegation would be allowed to meet the Governor.

Tension prevailed when protesters attempted to move forward despite restrictions, leading to a scuffle between police personnel and student leaders. Later, several protesters staged



a sit-in near Raghavaiah Park, raising slogans against the Union Government and demanding transparency in competitive examinations.

Addressing the gathering, AISF Andhra Pradesh State Vice President Sai Kumar alleged that the Union Education Minister was responsible for repeated failures in the education sector and demanded his immediate resignation. He also called for the dissolution of the National Testing Agency (NTA), stating

that the examination system had lost public confidence.

SFI State Secretary K. Prasanna Kumar, DYFI State Secretary G. Ramanna and AISF State President Valaraju criticised the Centre over the alleged irregularities and urged immediate reforms to ensure fairness and accountability in national-level examinations. They warned that student organisations would intensify protests if their demands were not addressed.

BNI MSME Expo Showcases Business Opportunities

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The BNI MSME Expo, organised in association with the Andhra Pradesh government, was inaugurated at SS Convention in Vijayawada on Friday, with District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha stating that such initiatives will strengthen the MSME sector and support Amaravati's emergence as a major business and investment hub.

The expo was inaugurated by Collector Lakshmisha and Vijayawada East MLA Gadde Rammohan Rao, who lit the ceremonial lamp. Featuring 128 exhibition stalls, the event has been organised in collaboration with the state's Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).

Addressing the gathering, the Collector said the expo would help



MSMEs expand markets, attract investments and build strategic business partnerships. He appreciated BNI for bringing entrepreneurs, innovators and business leaders from across the country onto a common platform.

MLA Gadde Rammohan Rao said business networking is essential for entrepreneurial growth and praised BNI for creating opportunities for local enterprises to reach national markets. He highlighted BNI's extensive network of members across the country, in-

cluding Andhra Pradesh and Vijayawada.

The three-day event will feature BNI Members Day on July 25, followed by the Andhra Pradesh Largest Networking Conclave 4.0 on July 26. More than 1,500 entrepreneurs, industrialists and start-up founders are expected to participate. Padma Bhushan awardee and renowned badminton coach Pullela Gopichand will deliver the keynote address on leadership, discipline, success and business networking.

ALC Holds Mega PTM, Stresses Parent-Teacher Partnership

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Loyola College (ALC), Vijayawada, organised Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting (PTM) 4.0 for Intermediate students on Friday, bringing together parents, teachers and students to strengthen academic cooperation and holistic development.

Former Head and Professor of Physics, Dr. T. Srikumar, attended as the chief guest and urged students to value time, remain disciplined and face challenges with confidence. Addressing parents, he emphasised the importance of

spending quality time with their children and making them aware of the family's struggles and sacrifices in supporting their education. Such awareness, he said, would help students become responsible, mature and appreciative.

ALC Staff Association Chairman Dr. G. Sahaya Baskaran highlighted the global legacy of Jesuit education and said the institution is equipped with highly qualified faculty, including several Ph.D. holders in the Intermediate section. He encouraged students to make the best use of the academic guidance available.

Principal Fr. Dr. S. Melchior called upon students to uphold the values and traditions of the institution through discipline and commitment, while Correspondent Fr. Dr. A. Francis Xavier stressed the importance of cooperation between parents and the college in shaping students' futures.

The programme also featured an oath on discipline and academic excellence administered by Dr. D.V. Satish, felicitation of meritorious students, cultural performances, and interaction sessions between parents and faculty on students' academic progress.

Devotees Throng Kanaka Durga Temple for Ashada Sare Offerings

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

A large number of devotees, particularly women, thronged the famous Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam atop Indrakeladri on Friday to offer turmeric, vermillion, bangles and sarees to Goddess Kanaka Durga during the ongoing Ashada Sare festival.

Temple authorities said the 10th day of the annual ritual witnessed a significant increase in the number of devotees visiting the shrine. By 5 p.m., 42 registered saree groups comprising 16,890 devotees had offered sa-



rees to the presiding deity, whom devotees worship as their family goddess and a beloved daughter of their household.

Temple Chairman Borra Radhakrishna (Gandhi) and Executive Officer V.K. Sheena Naik personally reviewed the arrangements and interacted with

devotees to assess their satisfaction with the facilities provided. The Executive Officer said that from July 15 to July 24, 1,94,030 women devotees had offered sarees to the Goddess. She expressed confidence that another three lakh devotees are expected to participate in the remaining 20 days of the festival.

She attributed the smooth conduct of the festival to the newly introduced group registration system, organised queue management and improved facilities at the Maha Mandapam, enabling devotees to complete saree offerings, receive free darshan, prasadam and annaprasad comfortably.

Experts Raise Concerns Over Judicial Accountability

Guntur, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Legal experts, academics and civil society representatives expressed concerns over recent remarks attributed to a Supreme Court judge during a media conference organised by Jana Chaitanya Vedika in Guntur on Friday. The discussion focused on judicial accountability, protection of fundamental rights and constitutional values. Legal expert Prof. N. Rangayya said courts should

function in the true spirit of the Constitution and raised concerns over the reported response of Justice Surya Kant regarding videos of police action against protesting students. He also highlighted the growing pendency of cases and shortage of judges, calling for reforms to strengthen the justice delivery system.

Former Minister Dokka Manikyavaraprasad urged the judiciary to actively protect human rights and civil liberties, suggesting that courts should take up matters suo motu in cases of alleged fundamental rights violations.

Former MLC K.S. Lakshmana Rao spoke on the Collegium system of judicial appointments, while Jana Chaitanya Vedika State President Valamreddy Lakshmana Reddy stressed the importance of maintaining public confidence in judicial institutions.

The speakers also demanded action against those allegedly

involved in misconduct during student protests, sought the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over education-related issues, and called for dia-

Passport Fee Revision After 14 Years, Centre Tells Parliament

New Delhi, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Central Government has informed Parliament that passport fees were revised from July 1, 2026, after a gap of nearly 14 years, citing increased operational costs and the rollout of e-passport services. The details were shared by the Union Ministry of External Affairs in response to a question raised in the Lok Sabha by Machilipatnam MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry.

According to the Ministry, the average time taken to issue a passport in Andhra Pradesh, excluding the police verification period, was 11 days in both 2023 and 2024, while it increased slightly to 13 days in 2025. The Centre stated that Passport Offices and Passport Seva Kendras across the country continue to provide services efficiently. The Ministry explained that the revised fee structure became effective through a gazette notification issued on July 1, 2026. The increase was attributed to higher expenditure on passport book-



let printing, service operations, police verification, postal services, technical infrastructure, staff salaries, and the implementation of the Passport Seva Programme 2.0 and e-passport project. The Centre clarified that passport services are not operated on a profit-making basis and that the entire amount collected as passport fees is deposited into the Consolidated Fund of India.

Under the revised structure, the fee for a standard 36-page passport has been fixed at 2,500, while a 60-page passport will cost 3,500. The government also confirmed that a 10% concession on fresh passport applications will continue for senior citizens above 60 years of age and children below eight years.

BIS Seizes Non-ISI Helmets in Vijayawada Raid

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Vijayawada Branch Office, conducted an enforcement raid in Vijayawada and seized 18 non-ISI marked helmets being stored and offered for sale, reinforcing its drive against the sale of uncertified safety products.

The raid was carried out at Sri Jagadamba Automotives in Governorpeta under the provisions of the BIS Act, 2016, after officials found helmets being sold without the mandatory ISI certification mark. The seized helmets belonged to the brands XINOR NEXO and AXXIS.

The enforcement team was led by Joint Director Shanmukha Siva Palli and Deputy Director Durgum Vivek Vardhan Reddy, along with other BIS officials. BIS stated that helmets for riders and pillion riders of two-wheelers must comply with Indian Stand-



ard IS 4151:2015 and carry the ISI mark before they can be manufactured, stored or sold in the market.

Officials said legal action has been initiated under Sections 17 and 29(3) of the BIS Act, which prescribe penalties, including imprisonment and fines, for violations.

BIS reiterated its commitment to protecting consumers from sub-standard products and urged manufacturers and retailers to comply with quality regulations. Consumers were advised to verify product certification through the BIS Care App and report any misuse of the ISI mark to BIS authorities.

VMC Holds Health Camps for Sanitation Workers

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) on Friday organised special medical camps for sanitation workers under the "Safai Apnao - Bimari Bhagao - 2026" campaign to promote their health and well-being.

The camps were conducted at the APIIC Colony Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC) on the directions of VMC Commissioner Dhyanachandra and under the supervision of In-charge Chief Medical Health Officer Dr. Gopala Naik.

Addressing the participants, VMC Additional Commissioner Dr. D. Chandrasekhar said the civic body gives top priority to the health of sanitation workers, who play a vital role in maintaining cleanliness across the city. He said healthy sanitation workers are essential for delivering efficient public sanitation services. The camp provided general health check-ups, blood pressure and blood sugar screening, doctor



consultations, and free medicines. Medical teams also created awareness on personal hygiene, disease prevention, occupational health, and healthy lifestyle practices to help workers protect themselves from health risks associated with their profession. Dr. Chandrasekhar said such initiatives reflect the corporation's commitment to ensuring the welfare of sanitation workers while strengthening public health services. He added that similar awareness and health programmes would continue to benefit frontline sanitation personnel.

Assistant Medical Health Officer Dr. Annapurna, doctors from the UPHC, public health staff, and sanitation workers participated in the programme.



involved in misconduct during student protests, sought the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over education-related issues, and called for dia-

logue with student representatives.

Academics, doctors and representatives of social organisations attended the programme.



Special Abhishekams at Kotappakonda Temple

Narasaraopet, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Special abhishekams will be conducted at the Kotappakonda Trikoteshwara Swamy Temple from July 25 to 27 on the occasion of Toli Ekadashi, temple Executive Officer Chandrasekhara Rao said on Thursday.

The rituals will be performed at the temple mandapam as part of the special celebrations.

The temple authorities have completed all arrangements in the premises to ensure that devotees visiting for darshan do not face any inconvenience.

Officials appealed to devotees to participate in large numbers and seek the blessings of Lord Trikoteshwara Swamy. Necessary facilities have been arranged to manage the expected rush during the three-day spiritual event.

Gottipati Launches Development Works

Addanki, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Minister Gottipati Ravikumar participated in various development programmes in J. Ponguluru mandal of Addanki constituency on Friday. He inaugurated the BT road constructed between Reningavaram and Alavalapadu for Rs. 2.30 crore and performed the foundation ceremony for a Purana Kalakshetra Mandapam in Reningavaram with an estimated cost of Rs. 90 lakh.

The Minister, along with Prakasam district Collector Rajababu, attended the Mega Parents-Teachers Meeting at Reningavaram High School and distributed free bicycles to 88 students with the support of donors. He said around 11,300 bicycles worth over Rs. 6 crore had been distributed to students across Addanki constituency.

Gottipati said the coalition government was focusing on



road development and had taken up tar road works worth around Rs. 100 crore in the constituency. He highlighted welfare initiatives like Talliki Vandanam and said over Rs. 8,500 crore was being spent to support poor students.

The Minister said more than 16,000 teacher posts had been filled to strengthen the education system and accused YSRCP leaders of spreading misinformation on Mega DSC recruitment. He added that 630 vacancies in the Energy Department would soon be filled and warned people against fraudsters promising government jobs.

Quality Education with Values is Government's Goal: Collector Nagarani

Bhimavaram/Undi, July 24 | TPN Bureau

West Godavari District Collector Chadalavada Nagarani said the government is committed to providing quality education with strong values in government schools while ensuring parents actively participate in their children's academic progress. She participated in the Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting (PTM 4.0) at ZP High School, Cherukuwada, in Undi mandal on Friday.

The Collector said government schools are being equipped with modern facilities such as computers, laboratories and libraries to match private institutions. She urged parents to monitor their children's education regularly and encouraged them to use the LEAP App to track attendance, homework, marks, midday meals and academic progress. She also appreciated teachers for conducting special classes to improve student performance. Nagarani advised students to focus on academics,



sports and vocational education while administering an anti-drug awareness pledge under the slogan "No to Drugs, Bro." She inspected classrooms and the school laboratory, appreciated students' Kalamkari exhibition, planted saplings and joined students and parents for a community lunch. As the programme coincided with her birthday, the Collector celebrated the occasion with students, parents and teachers. Later, at the Bhavitha Centre in Bhimavaram, she distributed medals, slates and books to children and assured continued support for their education and overall development. District Education Officer E. Narayana and other officials attended the programme.

AP State Ranking Carrom Tournament from July 31

Nellore, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra State Carrom Association, in association with the SPSR Nellore District Carrom Association, will organise the 1st Andhra Pradesh State Ranking Carrom Tournament from July 31 to August 2, 2026, at Nellore Club in SPSR Nellore district.

Andhra State Carrom Association President Dr. Neeraj Kumar Sampathy announced that the tournament aims to provide an opportunity for players across the state to improve their rankings and encourage

emerging talent in the sport. Eligible players have been asked to submit their entries by 5 PM on July 26, 2026. The prescribed entry fee can be paid through Google Pay or PhonePe to Andhra State Carrom Association General Secretary SK. Abdul Jaleel.

District Carrom Associations have been requested to ensure that players complete their registration process within the stipulated deadline. The tournament is expected to witness participation from talented carrom players across Andhra Pradesh.

Ayyannapatrudu Attends Mega Parents 4.0 Events

Narsipatnam, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Chintakayala Ayyannapatrudu participated in Mega Parents 4.0 programmes at educational institutions in Makavarapalem and Narsipatnam on Friday, emphasising quality education, parental involvement and improved school infrastructure.

At Government Junior College, Makavarapalem, the Assembly Speaker inaugurated the newly constructed "Kalabharati" stage and felicitated donors who contributed nearly 8 lakh for campus development. The funds were used for stage construction, campus renovation, water plant repairs, compound wall and main gate works, and development of a volleyball



court.

Ayyannapatrudu said major industries were expected in the region and informed that approvals had been given for a 500-crore Jal Jeevan Mission project to provide drinking water facilities to four mandals in Narsipatnam constituency.

Later, at Zilla Parishad High School, Turakabadi and Model Primary School, Shivapuram, he inaugurated a library, children's play equipment and distributed Hindi textbooks and identity

cards. He interacted with students and appreciated the efforts of teachers and parents.

The Speaker said the government was providing 15,000 per student under the Talliki Vandanam scheme, including 13,000 directly to mothers' accounts and 2,000 for school maintenance. He also noted that 45 students from the constituency secured admissions to IIITs this year.

Meanwhile, Chintakayala Padmavathi attended a Mega Parents-Teachers Meeting at MJP Boys' School, Narsipatnam, and stressed the role of parents and teachers in shaping children's future. She distributed tracksuits and shoes to students and highlighted the Talliki Vandanam scheme. Teachers, students and parents participated.

Krishi UDAN Boosts Agri Cargo Transport in AP

New Delhi, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Krishi UDAN scheme is helping farmers transport agricultural products through air cargo at lower costs, with cargo movement from Andhra Pradesh airports witnessing a steady rise over the past two years, MP Putta Mahesh Kumar said.

In response to a question raised by MP Putta Mahesh Kumar in the Lok Sabha, Union Civil Aviation Minister of State Muralidhar Mohol explained that the scheme aims to provide



affordable, time-bound air cargo and logistics facilities for agricultural, horticulture, fisheries, livestock and processed products. According to details shared by the Union Minister, cargo transportation increased significantly from airports in Andhra Pradesh. Cargo move-

ment from Vijayawada airport rose from 162 metric tonnes in 2023-24 to 349 metric tonnes in 2025-26, while Visakhapatnam airport recorded an increase from 1,694 metric tonnes to 1,877 metric tonnes during the same period.

Rajahmundry and Tirupati airports also witnessed growth in cargo operations. The scheme provides exemptions on various airport charges to encourage cargo services. The increase in cargo movement is expected to benefit farmers, producers and airports across the state.

Mini Bus Catches Fire

Ongole, July 24 | TPN Bureau



A major fire accident occurred in Ongole city of Prakasam district after a mini bus parked near the New Market area suddenly caught fire on Thursday. Preliminary information suggests that a short circuit may have caused the blaze.

The incident created panic among locals as flames and thick smoke spread from the vehicle. Two large buses were parked behind the mini bus, raising concerns that the fire could spread

to the other vehicles. Residents immediately alerted fire officials.

Firefighters rushed to the spot and worked to bring the flames under control. Their timely response prevented the fire from spreading to the nearby buses and averted a major accident.

Mega PTM 4.0 Highlights Education Reforms Across Districts

Kondapi/Chirala/Bapatla/Eluru, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Minister Dola Balaveeranjanya Swamy participated in Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting (Mega PTM 4.0) at Zilla Parishad High School in Petlur village of Kondapi mandal, Prakasam district. He inspected TLM stalls and digital displays prepared by students and teachers and appreciated their efforts.

Addressing the gathering, Swamy said strengthening government schools and providing quality education were top priorities of the state government. He urged parents to regularly monitor their children's education and school facilities. He highlighted the Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Kit, Dokka Seethamma mid-day meals, LEAF Schools, No Bag Day, safety awareness programmes, solar panels and NEET-IIT coaching centres. He later shared a meal with students to review the quality of food.



School in Vetapalem. Before the programme, he led a 500-metre awareness rally on Talliki Vandanam, education reforms and quality education.

During the meetings, he reviewed students' progress reports and interacted with parents and teachers. He said Talliki Vandanam was providing 13,000 assistance per student and that 10,120.78 crore had been deposited into the accounts of mothers in Bapatla constituency.

Eluru

Mega PTM 4.0 programmes were conducted across Eluru district. At Kovvali village of Denduluru mandal, Eluru Joint Collector interacted with parents and stressed their role in improving students' academic progress.

Eluru MLA Badeti Radhakrishnaiah (Chanti) participated in the PTM at Hanuman Nagar ZP High School and highlighted education reforms under Education Minister Nara Lokesh.

Earlier, Chanti visited Eluru Government Hospital following the death of a newborn and directed officials to conduct an inquiry into allegations of negligence. He also held a Praja Darbar and assured action on public grievances related to pensions and house sites.

Chirala

MLA Madduluri Malakondaiiah participated in Mega PTM 4.0 programmes at Jandrapeta High School, Desaipeta-Neelakanthapuram School and Gurukula

Siddha Raghavarao Donates Gold Bangles to Srisailam Temple

Srisailam, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Former minister Siddha Raghavarao and his wife donated gold bangles to Sri Bhramaramba Devi temple at Srisailam. The couple from Ongole offered 186 grams of gold bangles worth around 27 lakh to the Devasthanam.

Along with the gold orna-



ments, they also contributed 3 lakh towards the temple's Nitya Prasada Vitarana scheme, aimed at providing daily prasa-

dam services to devotees.

The offerings were received from the donors at the Ashirvachana Mandapam by Srisailam Devasthanam Executive Officer M. Srinivasa Rao.

Temple authorities appreciated the donation and stated that such contributions help strengthen various religious and welfare activities carried out by the shrine for devotees.

Minister Launches E-Bus Services to Bhogapuram Airport

Visakhapatnam, July 24 | TPN Bureau



Transport Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy and Revenue Minister Anagani Satya Prasad highlighted government initiatives in education, student welfare and infrastructure development while participating in Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting (PTM 4.0) programmes across the state on Friday.

In Visakhapatnam, Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy launched PM e-Bus Sewa services connecting the city with the upcoming Bhogapuram International Airport. The electric buses were flagged off at Visakha Steel City Depot in the presence of Gajuwaka MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao. Under the scheme, 20 electric buses have been allotted for airport connectivity from the 100 buses sanctioned to Visakhapatnam.

The Minister later attended the Mega PTM programme at Gajuwaka Zilla Parishad High School and said the initiative was strengthening coordination between parents, teachers and students. He praised Education Minister Nara Lokesh for education reforms and highlighted

schemes including Talliki Vandanam, free bus travel and free LPG cylinders. He said over 10,000 crore had been spent for the benefit of 67 lakh students through various education initiatives. In Repalle, Anagani Satya Prasad participated in the Mega PTM 4.0 programme at Sri Paruchuri Balaramaiah Memorial Zilla Parishad High School in Patteeru village along with district Collector Dr. Vinod Kumar V. He said education was the foundation for empowerment and development.

The Minister reviewed school performance and interacted with parents and students. He highlighted Talliki Vandanam, Shining Stars awards and student safety programmes. The Minister and Collector launched a donor app for school development, distributed assistance and honoured meritorious students. Teachers, officials, parents and students participated.

AP Unemployed JAC Leader Praises Government Schemes

Vijayawada, July 24 | TPN Bureau



AP Unemployed JAC member Hemanth Kumar organised a Palabhishekam ceremony on Friday, expressing appreciation for the coalition government, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Minister Nara Lokesh for implementing welfare initiatives.

Hemanth Kumar said the government extended the Talliki Vandanam scheme benefits to children of Anganwadi workers, mini teachers and ayahs, alleging that the previous YSRCP government had ignored their concerns. He also thanked the government for sanctioning Rs.1,000 crore under the NTR

Vaidya Seva programme.

Praising the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu and Nara Lokesh, he described their governance as a "double-engine train" driving Andhra Pradesh's development and expressed hope that Lokesh's efforts would create 20 lakh jobs.

Local leaders Mukka Kishore, Bheemarsetti Ramarao, Appalaraju, Nagamani, Usharani, Somayya and others participated.

Cauvery Farmers Demand Drought Relief

Eluru, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The AP Tenant Farmers Association has expressed concern over severe drought conditions affecting farmers across the state and demanded immediate drought relief measures. Association state general secretary P. JamalAiah said 591 out of 688 mandals in the state were facing severe rainfall deficit conditions.

Speaking at a joint meeting of farmers and tenant farmers' associations held in Eluru, JamalAiah said only 20 lakh acres were cultivated out of the expected 86 lakh acres during the Kharif season. He said rain-dependent crops such as paddy, cotton, groundnut and red gram were drying up due to lack of

rainfall.

The association demanded immediate drought assessment, declaration of drought-affected areas, compensation for damaged crops, release of pending crop insurance and input subsidy amounts, loan rescheduling, and arrangements for fodder, drinking water and medical camps. JamalAiah announced that statewide protests would be held at RDO offices on August 17 if the government failed to respond to farmers' issues.

CPI Eluru district secretary Mannava Krishna Chaitanya stressed the need to complete the Chintalapudi Lift Irrigation Scheme, saying it would benefit several districts including Eluru, East Godavari, NTR and Krishna.

Retired Home Guards Receive Rs.10 Lakh Aid



Eluru, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Eluru district police department extended financial support to retired home guards by providing cheques worth Rs. 10,38,730 towards their one-day wage benefit. The cheques were handed over by Eluru district SP K. Pratap Shiva Kishore at the District Police Headquarters on Thursday.

The SP presented a cheque of Rs. 5,19,010 to Home Guard 335 CH Moses and another cheque of Rs. 5,19,720 to Home Guard 464 N. Yesudas, who retired from the Eluru district Home

Guard unit on January 14, 2025.

Speaking on the occasion, Pratap Shiva Kishore said recognising the sacrifices and services of home guards who worked with dedication for the police department was the responsibility of the organisation. He assured that the police department would continue to support them even after retirement.

Additional SP Y. Prasad Rao, RI Pawan Kumar, RSI Venkatesh, police office staff member Syed Sunaina and Home Guard representatives participated in the programme.



Kotamreddy Inspects Ganesh Ghat Immersion Preparations

Nellore Rural, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Preparations for the immersion of Ganesh idols ahead of the Vinayaka Chavithi festival commenced on Friday at Ganesh Ghat in Nellore city. Nellore Rural MLA Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy inspected the ongoing arrangements along with NUDA Chairman Kotamreddy Srinivasulu Reddy, Janasena leaders, local public representatives and members of the Simhapuri Ganesh Utsava Committee.

Speaking to the media, Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy said the Ganesh immersion celebrations would be organised on a grand scale this year with elaborate safety measures to ensure the smooth and peaceful conduct of the festival. He said smaller Ganesh idols would be immersed

at Ganesh Ghat, while larger idols would be taken directly to the Penna River. The MLA said the arrangements are being co-ordinated with Ministers Ponguru Narayana and Anam Ramanaarayana Reddy, Nellore MP Vemireddy Prabhakar Reddy and NUDA Chairman Kotamreddy Srinivasulu Reddy to ensure all necessary facilities are in place.

Kotamreddy Srinivasulu Reddy assured complete financial support for the immersion arrangements and announced that NTR Necklace Road and Ganesh Ghat would be upgraded with improved infrastructure and amenities for devotees. Officials, committee members and local leaders participated in the inspection and reviewed the preparations for the upcoming festival.

Mega PTM Highlights Role of Parents in Student Success

Tirupati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting (MPTM 4.0) was held on a grand scale at Sri Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Municipal High School in Tirupati on Friday. District Collector Dr. S. Venkateswar, Tirupati MLA Arani Srinivasulu, Green and Beautification Chairperson Sugunamma, education officials, teachers and parents participated in the programme.

Addressing the gathering, the Collector said active cooperation between parents and teachers is essential for the holistic development of students and improving educational standards. MLA Arani Srinivasulu advised parents to encourage children instead of placing them under pressure and urged students to pursue ambitious goals.



The event also witnessed generous contributions towards school development through the government's Donor App. Dr. Venkateswar announced the donation of half of his monthly salary, while Arani Srinivasulu, Sugunamma and the District Educational Officer contributed 50,000, 50,000 and 20,000 respectively. The MLA also announced a mineral water plant for the school. Students presented cultural performances, and the dignitaries shared a midday meal with them.

Sunitha Assures Immediate Action on BC Hostel Issues

Raptadu, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Raptadu MLA Paritala Sunitha on Friday inspected the BC Boys' Hostel at Atmakur after attending the Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting and assured immediate resolution of sanitation and drinking water issues. Interacting with students and hostel staff, she inquired why students were sleeping on the floor despite the availability of cots. Officials explained that the double-decker cots had been removed due to safety concerns involving ceiling fans. Sunitha directed the MPDO, RWS Engi-



neer and Panchayat Secretary to resolve civic issues without delay, ensure daily cleaning of toilets and address water shortages promptly. She also ordered the removal of manure heaps near the hostel. The MLA said development works worth 23 lakh are underway, with an additional 9 lakh available for further improvements.

Collector Sumit Kumar Urges Parents to Support Children's Education

Chittoor District, Rompicherla, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Chittoor District Collector Sumit Kumar stressed the importance of parental involvement in shaping students' academic and personal development while addressing the Mega PTM 4.0 programme at the Zilla Parishad High School in Rompicherla mandal on Friday. During the event, he inaugurated a meeting platform constructed with personal funds by alumnus Surendrababu.

The Collector said parents and teachers must work to-

gether to help students become successful individuals. He noted that the government spends between 5,000 and 7,500 per month on every student studying in government schools. Advising students to stay away from drugs and other intoxicants, he urged parents to closely monitor their children's behaviour and mobile phone usage.

Punganur constituency in-charge Challa Ramachandra Reddy, DEO Lakshminarayana, BC Corporation Director, local public representatives, teachers and a large number of parents attended the programme.

Centre Expands CGHS Services Across Andhra Pradesh

Chittoor/Delhi, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Chittoor MP and TDP Politburo member Daggumalla Prasada Rao said the Centre has expanded healthcare access under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) by empanelling 46 hospitals across Andhra Pradesh. During the Monsoon Session of Parliament, he raised the issue in the Lok Sabha, and Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Prataprao Jadhav provided the details in a written reply.

According to the Minister, Vi-



sakhapatnam has the highest number of empanelled hospitals with 20, followed by 11 in NTR district, five in Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore district, three each in East Godavari and Guntur districts, and two each in Krishna and Tirupati districts.

The Minister also informed Parliament that CGHS expendi-

ture on medical reimbursement for pensioners and other retirement benefit beneficiaries increased from 2,741.17 crore in 2021-22 to 6,144.17 crore in 2025-26.

Beneficiaries can track Medical Reimbursement Claims through the CGHS web portal or the My CGHS 2.0 mobile application using their Claim ID. The Centre has also introduced digital dashboards and grievance redressal systems, including the CGHS Grievance Portal, CPGRAMS and a toll-free helpline, to ensure timely resolution of complaints.



Govt Schools to Be Upgraded to International Standards Says Narayana

Nellore, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development Dr. Ponguru Narayana said the Andhra Pradesh government is committed to transforming government schools into institutions of international standards while ensuring the holistic development of students. Addressing the Mega Parent-Teachers Meet 4.0 at DSR Government Girls' High School in Nellore on Friday, he interacted with students and parents, shared a midday meal, and felicitated DSR Constructions head Devireddy Sudhakar Reddy and representative Nagaraju for constructing the school building.

Narayana said the govern-

ment fulfilled its promise of rebuilding VR School after the 2024 elections and is developing 15 government schools in Nellore with donor support. He said Education Minister Nara Lokesh is focusing on strengthening the education system through specialised facilities and skill development. The Minister announced free IIT Foundation coaching for students of 23 government schools from next month and distribution of 7,000 bicycles purchased from his own funds. Mayor Devarakonda Sujatha, DEO Balaji Rao, MEO Thirupal, Principal Padmavathi, TDP leader Ananagi Prasad, BJP leader Mithala Ramesh, teachers and parents attended the programme.

Mission March-2027 to Achieve 100% Pass Rate Says MLA Vijayasree

Naidupeta, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Sullurpeta MLA Dr. Nelavala Vijayasree participated in the Mega Parents-Teachers Meeting (MPTM 4.0) held at the ZP Girls' High School in Naidupeta on Friday and interacted with students, parents and teachers. She said the government has launched Mission March-2027 to achieve a 100% pass rate in the Class 10 public examinations through coordinated efforts by teachers, students and parents.

The MLA highlighted key welfare initiatives being implemented for students, including Thalliki Vandanam, Sarvepalli Vidyarthi Mitra and the provision of nutritious mid-day meals. As part of the pro-



gramme, she shared a midday meal with students and inspected its quality to ensure proper standards were being maintained.

Dr. Vijayasree urged parents to monitor their children's education closely and appealed to teachers to work with dedication to achieve the Mission March-2027 target. Alliance leaders, education department officials, teachers, parents and local representatives participated in the programme.

Apollo University Holds Anti-Drug Rally

Chittoor, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Apollo University organised an Anti-Drug Awareness Programme and rally at Apollo Knowledge City on Friday under the Government of India's Nisha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, urging students to stay away from narcotics and build a healthy future.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nitin M. Nagarkar inaugurated the programme and flagged off the awareness rally. Addressing students, he said drug addiction destroys individuals, families and society, and appealed to youth to become ambassadors for a drug-free nation by spreading awareness against substance abuse.

Traffic Circle Inspector G. Nithya Babu, the chief guest, warned that drug abuse could lead young people into crime and threaten their future. He said anti-national elements target



youth through narcotics and urged students to report any information related to the sale or consumption of drugs to the police.

Students took a pledge to remain drug-free before participating in a rally across the campus. Registrar Anil Kumar S., Crime Inspector E. Uma Maheswara Rao, Cyber Crime Circle Inspector Pradeep Kumar, Traffic Taluk Sub-Inspector Ashok Kumar, Dr. Ramya Ramakrishnan, S. Balaraj, Dr. Ramaiah Itumalla, Dr. Jinto Mathew, faculty members, NSS Programme Officers and students attended the event.

Vadde Cement Polanna Highlights Student and Differently-Abled Welfare

Pattikonda, July 24 | TPN Bureau

A welfare distribution programme for hostel students and persons with disabilities was organised in Pattikonda under the directions of Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Education & IT Minister Nara Lokesh, led by Pattikonda MLA K.E. Shyam Babu. Supervised by TDP State Secretary Vadde Cement Polanna, the programme included the distribution of T-shirts, night pants, shoes and socks to hostel students, while persons with disabilities received welfare supplies suited to their needs.

The leaders also inspected hostel facilities and the quality of the mid-day meal. Addressing the gathering, Vadde Cement Polanna said the Alliance



government is committed to improving education and ensuring the welfare of every student and differently-abled person. He credited Nara Lokesh with introducing major reforms that have strengthened government schools through better infrastructure, modern classrooms, hygienic hostels and educational resources. Public representatives, TDP leaders, officials, hostel staff, students and persons with disabilities attended the programme.

Mega PTM Strengthens Education, Says Somireddy

Sarvepalli, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Sarvepalli MLA Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy said the Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting (PTM) is playing a key role in improving students' academic performance while strengthening coordination between teachers and parents. Participating in the Mega PTM held at Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Gurukula School in Golagamudi, Venkatachalam mandal, on Friday, he inaugurated a new junior college, shared a midday meal with students and distributed kits to Intermediate students.

Addressing the gathering, Somireddy said government schools are witnessing major transformation under the leadership of Education Minister Nara Lokesh through infrastructure development and academic reforms. He congratulated six



students from the Golagamudi Gurukula for securing IIIT seats this year and appreciated the efforts of teachers in achieving the milestone.

The MLA said proposals worth 6 crore have been prepared for constructing additional school buildings, while repair works and toilet construction costing 1.04 crore are currently

in progress. He announced that Muthukur ZP High School would be upgraded into a Model School with 7.50 crore under BPCL CSR funds. Somireddy added that educational infrastructure projects worth 18.50 crore have also been proposed across the constituency to improve facilities and provide a better learning environment for students.

Mega Job Mela on July 30; 861 Vacancies Up for Grabs

Srikalahasti, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Srikalahasti MLA Bojjala Venkata Sudheer Reddy on Friday unveiled the poster for a Mega Job Mela to be held on July 30 at SVA Government College. The event is being jointly organised by the Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC), the Employment Exchange and SEEDAP.

Addressing the media, the



MLA said interviews would be conducted for 861 vacancies across 12 multinational companies. He invited unemployed youth aged 18 to 35 with qualifications ranging from Class 10, Intermediate, ITI and Diploma

to Degree and Postgraduate levels to participate. Selected candidates will receive monthly salaries between 15,000 and 30,000.

The interviews will begin at 8 am on July 30. Online registration closes on July 29, while spot registration will also be available. Candidates must carry their admit cards. District Skill Development Officer R. Lokanatham, AMC Chairman Chenchiah Naidu, alliance leaders and officials attended the programme.

Ravi Naidu Inaugurates 'Ping Pong' Table Tennis Academy

Tirupati, July 24 | TPN Bureau

SAAP Chairman Ravi Naidu, accompanied by Tirupati MLA Arani Srinivasulu and Badi Sudha Yadav, inaugurated the "Ping Pong" Table Tennis Academy in Tirupati on Friday. Established with modern infrastructure, the academy features six international-standard table tennis tables to provide quality training for aspiring players.

Speaking on the occasion, Ravi Naidu said such world-



sportsmanship among the youth and nurture talented athletes. He appreciated the academy management for creating international-standard facilities in Tirupati and expressed confidence that the centre would produce players capable of excelling at the district, state,

national and international levels.

The SAAP Chairman said the state government is committed to strengthening sports infrastructure and providing talented youngsters with better training opportunities. He expressed hope that academies like Ping Pong would produce future champions who would bring laurels to the country. Kapu Corporation Director Thota Vasudeva, Academy Secretary Balasubrahmanyam, alliance leaders and sportspersons attended the programme.

Collector Siri Highlights Parent-Teacher Partnership Through Mega PTM

Kurnool, July 24 | TPN Bureau

District Collector Dr. A. Siri said the Mega Parent-Teacher Meeting 4.0 strengthens the bond between parents, teachers and schools, ensuring the holistic development of students. Addressing the programme at Indira Gandhi Memorial Municipal High School in Kurnool on Friday, she urged parents to stay actively involved in their children's education and regularly interact with teachers to monitor academic progress.

The Collector highlighted the LEAP app, which provides in-



formation on attendance, syllabus completion, student performance and school infrastructure while allowing parents to submit suggestions and complaints. She said the government is focusing on quality education, mental health, skill development and

infrastructure in government schools. Dr. Siri announced that 34 crore is being spent on 235 development works across 100 schools, while infrastructure improvements are underway in nearly 1,400 schools. She also said around 1,600 teacher vacancies in the district would be filled through the upcoming Mega DSC recruitment.

DEO Sudhakar, Headmistress Roja, parents, students, teachers and alumni participated. Cultural programmes, games for parents and the Dokka Seethamma special mid-day meal were organised during the event.

TTD to Undertake Pushkarini Repairs from August 1

Tirumala, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) will undertake annual repair and maintenance works at the sacred Swami Pushkarini, adjacent to the Srivari Temple, from Au-

gust 1 to August 31 in preparation for the annual Srivari Brahmotsavams beginning on September 15. The TTD Water Works Department will carry out the works and complete them before the festival. As a precaution against heavy rains and adverse weather, the

Pushkarini will remain closed from September 1 to 10. During these 40 days, Pushkarini Harati will not be performed and devotees will not be allowed to enter the Pushkarini. TTD appealed to devotees to cooperate with the arrangements.

Editorial

Expand Medical Education, Not the Crisis

The recurring controversies surrounding medical admissions raise an important question: are we addressing the real problem or merely responding to its consequences? Every year, lakhs of students dedicate years of hard work to securing an MBBS seat. Yet, the number of available seats remains disproportionately low compared to the number of deserving aspirants. This severe mismatch has intensified competition, leaving many talented students disappointed despite their capability and commitment.

Instead of focusing only on examinations and admission procedures, the Government must address the root cause by substantially increasing the number of medical colleges and MBBS seats across the country. If more seats are created, the pressure of cut-throat competition will naturally reduce. It will also diminish the temptation for students to seek unfair means or shortcuts to secure admission. Expanding opportunities is a more sustainable solution than merely tightening regulations.

Such a decision would benefit not only aspiring doctors but also the healthcare system as a whole. India continues to face a shortage of qualified doctors, particularly in rural and underserved regions. Increasing the number of medical graduates would strengthen public healthcare, improve doctor-patient ratios, and make quality medical services more accessible to millions.

Another significant concern is the growing number of Indian students pursuing medical education abroad. Many of them leave the country not because they prefer foreign universities, but because they cannot obtain an MBBS seat in India. If adequate opportunities are created within the country, these students would gladly pursue their education at home, saving valuable foreign exchange while contributing to India's medical ecosystem.

Equally important is the plight of deserving students who are unable to afford exorbitant management quota fees. For many middle-class and economically weaker families, becoming a doctor remains an unfulfilled dream despite years of dedication. By significantly increasing medical seats, the Government of India can offer hope to thousands of aspiring doctors, strengthen the nation's healthcare infrastructure, and provide a long-term solution to one of the country's most pressing educational challenges.

Editor

Afforestation: Restoring Nature's Balance for a Sustainable Future



The Earth is sending unmistakable warning signals. Rising temperatures, prolonged heat waves, irregular monsoons, severe floods, shrinking water resources, and declining biodiversity have become common across the globe. India too is experiencing these environmental challenges with increasing frequency. The root cause behind many of these problems is the growing imbalance in our ecology, largely resulting from indiscriminate destruction of forests and inadequate protection of our natural resources. Afforestation is, therefore, no longer an environmental slogan—it is a national necessity and a moral responsibility towards future generations.

Forests are the lungs of the Earth. They absorb carbon dioxide, release oxygen, regulate rainfall, recharge groundwater, prevent soil erosion, conserve biodiversity, and maintain ecological balance. Healthy forests also provide livelihoods to millions of people while supporting wildlife and preserving precious ecosystems. When forests disappear, nature loses its balance, and human life becomes increasingly vulnerable to climate-related disasters.

India has made encouraging progress in expanding its green cover. According to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023, the country's total forest and tree cover stands at 8,27,357 square kilometres, accounting for 25.17% of India's geographical area. Compared to the previous assessment, the country recorded an increase of 1,445 square kilometres in forest and tree cover. However, this is still far below the National Forest Policy goal of bringing 33% of the country's geographical area under forest or tree cover. The gap highlights the enormous task that still lies ahead.

The effects of ecological imbalance

are becoming increasingly visible. Rising global temperatures have intensified heat waves across India, affecting public health, agriculture, and water availability. Farmers face uncertain rainfall and frequent crop failures, while urban areas experience severe flooding because natural drainage systems and green spaces have disappeared. Wildlife habitats are shrinking, leading to increased human-animal conflicts. Air pollution, groundwater depletion, and declining soil fertility are all interconnected consequences of environmental degradation.

Afforestation offers one of the most effective and economical solutions to these challenges. Planting trees on degraded, barren, and deforested lands helps restore ecosystems, improve rainfall patterns, enrich soil fertility, increase groundwater recharge, and reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide. Trees also provide shade, reduce urban heat islands, and improve the overall quality of life in cities and villages alike.

However, planting trees alone is not enough. Protecting existing trees is equally, if not more, important. A mature tree that has grown over several decades provides environmental services far greater than a newly planted sapling. Every old tree stores substantial amounts of carbon, supports birds and wildlife, and contributes significantly to the local climate. Unfortunately, thousands of mature trees are cut every year for roads, buildings, industries, and urban expansion. Development is essential, but it must be planned responsibly, ensuring that existing trees are preserved wherever possible and unavoidable losses are compensated through scientific afforestation.

Another important issue is the survival rate of planted saplings. Every year, millions of saplings



are planted during Van Mahotsav and other plantation drives by governments, schools, NGOs, and corporate organizations. Yet, many of these saplings die within months because they receive little care after planting. Lack of watering, fencing, protection from grazing animals, and regular monitoring results in poor survival rates. Providing tree guards for roadside plants not only enhances their protection and survival rate but also adds to the beauty and aesthetic appeal of roads and towns.

The success of an afforestation program should not be judged by the number of saplings planted but by the number of trees that survive after five or ten years. Every plantation program must include maintenance plans, community participation, periodic monitoring, and accountability. Schools, village panchayats, resident welfare associations, youth clubs, and volunteers can "adopt" planted trees and ensure their healthy growth.

Environmental awareness must begin at the school level. Children should understand not only the importance of planting trees but also the serious consequences of ecological imbalance. Environmental education should move beyond textbooks and include practical activities such as school nurseries, tree adoption

programs, biodiversity clubs, nature walks, rainwater harvesting demonstrations, and waste management initiatives. Students who develop respect for nature at an early age are more likely to become environmentally responsible citizens.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), educational institutions, industries, and community organizations also have a crucial role to play. NGOs can mobilize volunteers, organize awareness campaigns, conduct plantation drives, monitor survival rates, and educate rural and urban communities on sustainable environmental practices. Corporate organizations can utilize their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds for scientifically planned afforestation projects, urban forests, and restoration of degraded lands.

Andhra Pradesh has also recognized the importance of increasing green cover. The State Government has launched large-scale plantation programs under the 'Vanam-Manam' initiative, with the long-term objective of significantly enhancing the state's green cover through active participation of government departments, educational institutions, voluntary organizations, and citizens. Such initiatives deserve wholehearted public support and continuous monitoring

to ensure that planted saplings survive and mature into healthy trees.

Ultimately, environmental conservation is not the responsibility of governments alone. Every citizen has a role to play. Protecting existing trees, planting native species, conserving water, reducing pollution, minimizing plastic use, and promoting sustainable lifestyles are small but meaningful steps that collectively make a significant difference.

Global warming poses one of the greatest threats to humanity. If immediate and sustained action is not taken, future generations will inherit a world with severe water shortages, declining agricultural productivity, increasing natural disasters, and deteriorating public health. Afforestation provides hope by restoring ecological balance and strengthening nature's resilience.

The message is simple but profound: Plant more trees, protect every existing tree, and ensure that every sapling survives. The future of humanity depends not merely on how many trees we plant today, but on how well we nurture and preserve them. A greener India is not just an environmental aspiration—it is the foundation of a healthier, safer, and more prosperous future for generations to come.

Back to My Khaki Knicker Days



Childhood and its memories were always sweet and cherishable moments.

If I recall my shorts-wearing days, I feel a ticklish sensation all over my body and it evokes nostalgia.

I reminisce about my tryst with shorts, with which I fell in love during my pre-schooling days and continued until I completed my school education.

My school life and shorts were not two different entities but two sides of the same coin. In fact, shorts are a signature of my childhood.

Shorts, popularly known as 'knickers' or half pants, a favourite lower outer garment worn by school-going children, were very comfortable to wear and portable to carry. Another advantage was that they required less cloth compared to

pants. Besides children, industrial workers, including miners, would love to wear this garment as it did not interfere with their work.

In the past, every dress was tailor-made and ready-made garments were unheard of.

At that time, people were not in shopping-spree mode like now. Cloth was purchased once a year or two. That too on important occasions like festivals and social events such as marriages. Unlike now, children of our generation were not fortunate enough to have multiple dresses of different brands.

Fifty years ago, my wardrobe was witness to only two shorts and two shirts. One set was for wearing and another for washing. Owning a third pair was a luxury for many.

Shorts were an all-season

garment that could be worn year-round, day and night. As usage was more, shorts would wear out quickly.

Such was the penury in those days that even if the rear side of shorts became thin, some students continued to wear them by patching them up with scrap fabric.

Once during my recess period, my knicker's waistband button came off and it began to slide down. Each time I pulled it up, it would go down again. Seeing my misery, my class teacher asked one of the students to help me with a safety pin. With that, I fastened the two sides together.

We were eager to grow taller so that we could quickly graduate from shorts to pants. Pants were a symbol of adulthood.

Many a time, I pestered my parents to buy me one pair of pants during my school-going days, but they postponed it on one ground or the other, mostly on account of economic hardships. Despite experiencing all these difficulties, shorts remained my all-time favourite garment.

Earlier, children used to wear shorts. Teenagers and elders wearing shorts were frowned upon.

Times have changed. Shorts have cut across age barriers. Leaving aside teenagers, even elderly people are showing interest in shorts in the name of comfort and also to be in tune with the latest trends.

Wearing shorts is like reliving second childhood days all over again!

Global Humanity in an “Inequality Emergency”



Today, the world is facing many crises. Many new ideas need to be sharpened to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Today's digital world is dealing with many serious problems like adverse climate change, stunted development, inequalities, poverty, hunger, unemployment, technological confusion, geopolitical instability, armed crises, and outbreaks of wars. Many studies have shown that the world's population is trapped in a vicious circle of inequalities.

According to the opinion of Nobel Prize winner in Economics, Joseph Stiglitz, today's digital world is in an "inequality emergency" or "inequality emergency". Recently, a report prepared by the "G20 Extraordinary Committee" formed by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa was released. Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz served as the chairman of this committee. In today's extreme circumstances, it was also suggested that an "International Panel on Inequality" be immediately established to guide the countries of the world in efforts to break the vicious circle of inequality.

A World in an Inequality Emergency:

many times over, and it is clear that the poor are struggling to find a living and livelihood conflicts continue. It said that 83% of the world's countries are home to 90% of the world's population, and when inequalities increase, the spirit of democracy is completely diluted and unrest is born.

It revealed sensational facts that while the average wealth increase of the richest 1% was \$1.3 million, the average income/wealth of the poorest 50% of the population increased by only \$585. It is reported that as income sources increase globally, inequality among people is decreasing somewhat. It has been concluded that income differences between the Global North and the Global South are increasing. According to the study, taxes should be increased ap-

propriately on the wealthy and multinational companies, countries should follow the path of development centered on local people, and the pens should be increased on the wealthy in their respective countries. It is believed that positive relations between different countries should be strengthened, international trade should increase, and environmentally friendly development should be paved continuously.

A completely new concept should be created: "If I want to be well, the people around me and the environment should also be well." We should observe and act on the urgent need to realize the goals of solidarity, equality, and sustainable development among people. We should build a world that has achieved equality.



Delhi's Streets... The Barometer of Indian Politics

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Governments in India are formed through elections. Yet, it is often the streets of Delhi that test their political resilience. India's political history shows that many major crises did not begin inside Parliament but outside it. Student movements, farmers' protests, anti-corruption campaigns and employment-related agitations have emerged at different times. Their causes and leadership have varied, but Delhi has remained the place where the nation's political temperature is measured. Recent developments during the Parliament session once again raise questions about the limits of constitutional protest, the point at which demonstrations become political battles, and when they turn into law-and-order challenges. To understand these issues, it is necessary to revisit Delhi's political history.

Delhi: The Capital of Political Movements

The movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan in 1974-75 shook the Indian political

system. What began as student unrest eventually contributed to the declaration of the Emergency, showing how public movements could influence the political order. Decades later, the 2011 anti-corruption movement made Delhi the centre of national politics. Jantar Mantar and Ramlila Maidan became symbols of public dissent, and the movement also contributed to the rise of a new political force.

The farmers' agitation of 2020-21 became another significant chapter. Triggered by opposition to the farm laws, the protest continued for months on Delhi's borders. After prolonged negotiations between the government and farmers' organisations, the laws were repealed, demonstrating the influence of sustained public movements on policy decisions.

The Changing Grammar of Protest

The nature of protests has changed significantly over the years. Earlier, rallies and public meetings were the main tools of mobilisation. Today, social media has become equally power-



ful. A single video, slogan or hashtag can trigger a nationwide debate within hours. Political parties, student groups, civil society organisations and citizens' movements often come together on common platforms. While such alliances strengthen public participation, they

also bring greater political colour to movements.

The Digital Age: A New Face of Public Movements

The JP Movement spread through posters and public

meetings, the Mandal agitation through universities, and the farmers' movement through prolonged physical mobilisation. Today's protests function in a different digital environment. Videos can reach millions instantly, hashtags can dominate discussions and live-

streaming can bring virtual participation.

However, the speed of digital communication also increases the risk of misinformation. Modern democracy requires not only the freedom to share information but also the responsibility to verify facts. The past five decades show that movements beginning with specific demands can influence governments, reshape policies and create new political forces. Delhi remains the place where Indian democracy continuously tests itself.

The Age of Allegations: The Need for Evidence

Recent developments have generated several narratives, allegations and conspiracy theories on social media, including claims of political strategies and external involvement. However, a basic democratic principle must be remembered: an allegation is not evidence. Only investigations, courts or official records can establish facts. Until then, every claim must be examined carefully. The media has a crucial responsibility not only to report claims but also to verify them.

Why Parliament Sessions Are Especially Sensitive

Every Parliament session carries political importance. With the Prime Minister, Union Ministers and hundreds of MPs present in Delhi, security agencies maintain high alert levels. Governments often view protests during sessions differently, while Opposition parties use the opportunity to put maximum pressure on the ruling side. Such political contestation is part of parliamentary democracy.

Delhi's political culture shows that movements do not emerge or disappear suddenly. They develop when public concerns, political strategies, collective emotions and media influence come together. Governments should not dismiss every protest as mere political opposition, while protesters should avoid turning every demonstration into confrontation. Parliament is not just a building; it represents Indian democracy. Protecting its dignity is a shared responsibility of both the ruling party and the Opposition.

CJP-Govt Talks End Without Breakthrough

The demand for the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan remains "non-negotiable", the CJP said after its second round of discussions with the central government over the ongoing protests linked to alleged irregularities in competitive examinations.

CJP representatives held talks with Union ministers J.P. Nadda and Jitendra Singh in an attempt to find a solution to the issues raised by the protesters. After the meeting, the group said the government had sought time to respond to its key demand of seeking Pradhan's resignation.

The resignation demand has emerged as the main point of disagreement between the protesters and the government. CJP leaders have accused the Education Ministry of failing to address concerns related to examination management, alleged paper leaks, and other irregularities. They have argued that the minister should take responsibility for the situation.

According to CJP representatives, the government has shown a willingness to consider some of their other demands, including relief measures for affected individuals and withdrawal of cases against protesting students. However, the issue of



Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation continues to remain unresolved.

The discussions took place amid continued protests, with students and activists demanding greater accountability and reforms in the examination system. The government has maintained that it is open to dialogue and is working towards addressing concerns raised by students.

The issue has also gained political attention, with opposition parties questioning the government's handling of examination-related controversies. The Centre, however, has defended its approach and stressed the need for a comprehensive review of the concerns.

The government's response to the resignation demand is now being closely watched. Further talks between both sides could decide whether the dispute moves towards a resolution or whether protests continue in the coming days.

AP-Karnataka Railway Corridor to Expand

The Union Cabinet has approved new railway infrastructure projects aimed at improving connectivity between Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The move is expected to strengthen passenger services, enhance freight movement, and improve transportation efficiency across the region.



The approved project includes the development of additional railway lines between Ballari in Karnataka and Guntakal in Andhra Pradesh, an important railway corridor connecting the two states. The project has been cleared with an estimated investment of around 1,264 crore.

The expansion of the railway route is expected to increase capacity on the busy corridor by allowing smoother movement of both passenger and goods trains. The additional lines will help reduce delays caused by increasing traffic pressure on existing railway tracks.

The Karnataka-Andhra Pradesh railway link plays a crucial role in transporting agricultural products, industrial goods, and other essential commodities. Improved connectivity along this route is expected to benefit industries, businesses, and local economies in both states.

The government has been focusing on expanding railway infrastructure through multi-tracking projects and modernisation initiatives. These efforts are aimed at improving logistics networks, reducing transportation costs, and creating faster links between major economic centres. The project is

also expected to generate employment opportunities during the construction phase and support regional development. Better railway connectivity will help people in smaller towns and villages by improving access to markets, education, healthcare facilities, and business opportunities. Railway authorities believe that strengthening existing routes is essential as demand for freight transportation continues to grow. Additional tracks will provide more operational flexibility and help manage rising passenger and cargo traffic.

The approval of the railway project is being seen as a major boost for the southern railway network. Once completed, the upgraded corridor is expected to provide faster, smoother, and more reliable connectivity between Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, contributing to economic growth and regional development.

Paper Leak Row Sparks Parliament Standoff

The political battle over the alleged examination paper leak issue intensified as Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi said that the opposition would not participate in a discussion in the Lok Sabha until Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan resigns.



Rahul Gandhi's statement came amid growing protests by opposition parties and student groups demanding accountability over alleged irregularities in competitive examinations. He alleged that the Education Minister should take responsibility for the crisis and step down before any discussion is held in Parliament.

The opposition has been demanding a detailed debate on the issue, arguing that examination-related controversies have affected the future of millions of students. Leaders from various opposition parties have main-

tained that accountability should be established before moving ahead with parliamentary discussions.

The government, however, has said it is ready to discuss the matter in Parliament and has urged opposition parties to allow legislative proceedings to continue. Despite this, both sides have remained firm on their positions, resulting in continued disagreements and disruptions.

Rahul Gandhi has repeatedly criticised the government over the handling of competitive examinations and alleged that students have been facing difficulties

due to failures in the system. He has demanded strict action against those responsible and called for reforms to ensure transparency.

The issue has become a major political flashpoint between the ruling party and opposition, with education and examination reforms taking centre stage. Opposition leaders argue that repeated incidents of alleged paper leaks have damaged students' trust, while the government has defended its efforts to improve the examination process.

The ongoing dispute has created uncertainty over the functioning of Parliament, with both sides preparing to maintain their positions. The focus now remains on whether the government and opposition can reach an agreement to allow a debate or whether the deadlock will continue in the coming days.

Delhi Police Denies Passport Cancellation Claims

New Delhi, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Delhi Police has rejected viral claims on social media that passports of people associated with the CJP protests would be cancelled, terming the information misleading and false.

A message circulating online claimed that passports of protesters linked to the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) movement would be cancelled following alleged incidents during demonstrations. Clarifying the issue, Delhi Police said no such decision had been taken and advised people to avoid spreading unverified information.

The clarification came amid continued protests over demands related to examination reforms, accountability and alleged irregularities in competitive examinations. Police officials said action had been taken only against individuals involved in specific unlawful activities and there was no blanket order against protesters.

Authorities urged citizens to rely on official updates and verify information before sharing messages on social media. CJP representatives said their protest would continue peacefully while pursuing their demands.

Heavy Rains Disrupt Traffic In Gujarat, Rescue Operations Intensify

Ahmedabad, July 24 | TPN Bureau

Heavy rainfall in Gujarat has triggered flooding and waterlogging in several areas, leading to the closure of the Bavl-Sarkhej highway and disruption of traffic movement. Authorities have advised commuters to avoid the affected stretch and use alternative routes until conditions improve.

Rising water levels on major roads left several vehicles stranded, causing difficulties for commuters and residents. The Indian Army, police personnel and disaster response teams have joined rescue operations to evacuate people trapped in flood-affected areas.

Officials said teams are focus-

ing on low-lying regions where water accumulation has created hazardous conditions. Rescue personnel are shifting stranded residents to safer locations and providing emergency assistance.

Traffic diversions have been implemented in affected areas, while commuters have been advised to avoid unnecessary travel through flooded roads and follow safety instructions.

The Gujarat administration is closely monitoring rainfall intensity and water levels as flood-like conditions continue in parts of the state. Emergency teams remain deployed to manage relief operations and restore normalcy once affected routes are declared safe.

SC Restricts Sharing Of Court Recordings On Social Media

New Delhi, July 24 | TPN Bureau

The Supreme Court of India has restricted the uploading, sharing, editing and circulation of audio-video recordings of court proceedings on social media platforms without prior permission from authorised judicial authorities.

The decision follows concerns over the misuse of courtroom recordings, including the extraction of short clips from hearings, editing them and circulating them without proper context. The court observed that judicial proceedings should not be converted into entertainment content or used for sensational purposes.

A bench headed by the Chief Justice of India said court hearings are an integral part of the justice delivery



system and must be handled responsibly. It noted that selective clips could create misleading impressions and affect the dignity of judicial institutions. Under the new directions, recordings cannot be modified, reposted, uploaded or used for commercial purposes without approval. However, the court clarified that the order does not re-



strict genuine news reporting of judicial proceedings.

The move comes amid increased access to livestreamed hearings and growing concerns over viral courtroom clips distorting facts. The order aims to maintain transparency while protecting the seriousness and sanctity of judicial proceedings.

Wangchuk Ends Fast After 26 Days

Climate activist and education reform advocate Sonam Wangchuk ended his 26-day hunger strike and said that staying without food was not as difficult as many people might think. He described the fast as a peaceful way to highlight concerns related to transparency, accountability, and reforms.



Wangchuk ended his prolonged protest after discussions with the government and assurances on addressing some of the concerns raised by protesters. The decision came after days of attention surrounding the agitation and demands for action on issues related to examination systems.

Speaking after breaking his fast, Wangchuk said hunger itself was manageable, but ensuring that important issues reached the attention of authorities was the bigger challenge. He stressed that the protest was aimed at raising awareness about broader concerns affecting students and families.

The activist had launched the hunger strike to support demands for greater accountability and improvements in the examination process. The protest gained significant public attention, with supporters calling for reforms and stronger measures to prevent irregularities. During the final days of the fast, Wangchuk's health

condition was closely monitored as prolonged fasting can have serious effects on the body. Medical experts advised careful recovery after such an extended period without regular food intake. After ending the fast, Wangchuk appealed to supporters to continue their efforts peacefully. He said the conclusion of his hunger strike should be seen as the beginning of a wider discussion on reforms rather than the end of the movement.

The protest has sparked debate over the role of peaceful demonstrations in highlighting public concerns. Supporters believe such movements help bring attention to issues that affect large sections of society.

Although Wangchuk has ended his fast, discussions over the demands raised during the protest are expected to continue. The development has once again brought focus on the importance of accountability, transparency, and reforms in public systems.

Report Links Munir to Iran-Saudi Talks

Pakistan Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir reportedly played a role in facilitating an understanding between Iran and Saudi Arabia by using a private oil-related venture as a diplomatic channel, according to a report.

The report claims that Munir leveraged connections linked to an oil transport venture involving a senior Iranian military figure to help negotiate an arrangement aimed at reducing attacks targeting Saudi Arabia during a period of heightened regional tensions.

According to the report, discussions took place when relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia were strained, with concerns growing over security threats in the Gulf region. The alleged understanding was aimed at preventing further attacks and maintaining stability between the two countries.

The development has drawn attention because of the involvement of a private energy-related arrangement in a sensitive geopolitical issue. The report suggests that the oil venture became an indirect channel for communication between key regional players.

Pakistan has historically maintained close ties with Saudi Arabia while also sharing geographical and economic links with Iran. Islamabad has often attempted to balance its relationship with both countries due to their strategic importance in the region.

The reported involvement of



Pakistan's military leadership highlights the influence of the country's armed forces in foreign policy and regional diplomacy. The military has traditionally played a significant role in shaping Pakistan's relations with neighbouring countries and major global partners.

The alleged oil arrangement has also raised questions about the role of unofficial diplomatic channels in resolving conflicts and managing tensions between rival nations.

However, the claims are based on reports citing unnamed officials, and there has been no detailed public confirmation from Pakistan, Iran, or Saudi Arabia regarding the alleged deal or the role played by Asim Munir.

Pakistan has previously sought to position itself as a mediator in Middle East affairs, attempting to maintain strategic partnerships with Gulf nations while keeping diplomatic engagement open with Iran.

The latest report adds another dimension to the complex geopolitical landscape of the Middle East, where energy interests, military influence, and diplomatic negotiations continue to shape relations among regional powers.

Bangladesh President Set to Resign

Bangladesh President Mohamed Shahabuddin, a close associate of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, is reportedly set to step down from his post amid growing political pressure and major shifts in the country's political environment.

Shahabuddin, who took office in 2023, is expected to resign before completing his term. The development comes at a time when Bangladesh is witnessing intense political activity following the change in government and ongoing debates over the country's future political direction.

Although the role of the Bangladesh President is largely ceremonial, the position holds importance during periods of political transition. The President plays a key constitutional role in ensuring continuity of governance, especially during times of uncertainty.

Mohammed Shahabuddin has had a long association with the Awami League, the political party led by Sheikh Hasina. His close links with the former prime minister have reportedly drawn criticism from sections of the current political establishment.

The possible resignation comes amid continued political tensions following Sheikh Hasina's departure from power. The



country has been dealing with a complex transition involving political groups, administrative changes, and discussions over accountability and future elections.

The expected exit of Shahabuddin could lead to discussions over the appointment of a new President. Bangladesh's constitutional process will determine the steps required to fill the vacancy and maintain the smooth functioning of the state.

Political observers believe the development could further reshape Bangladesh's political equations. The move is being closely watched as the country attempts to navigate a period of significant transformation.

The coming days are expected to reveal more details about the reasons behind Shahabuddin's decision and the process for selecting his successor. The change at the top constitutional office could become another important turning point in Bangladesh's evolving political landscape.

California Court Halts Diwali Holiday

A California court has reportedly blocked the implementation of a decision related to recognising Diwali as a public holiday, creating uncertainty over whether the festival of lights will be observed as an official holiday in the US state.

The development came after legal challenges were raised against the holiday order, leading a court to temporarily prevent its enforcement. The decision has disappointed many members of the Indian-American community, who had welcomed the move as a significant recognition of their cultural heritage.

Diwali, one of the most widely celebrated festivals among Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and other communities, has gained increasing recognition across the United States in recent years. Several states and local governments have taken steps to acknowledge the festival's cultural importance.

The move to recognise Diwali in California was seen as a major milestone because the state has one of the largest Indian-origin populations in the country. Community leaders had said the holiday would allow thousands of families, students, and employees to celebrate the festival without workplace or academic difficulties.

However, the court's decision has put the implementation of the holiday on hold. The legal dispute has raised questions over the process of adding



new public holidays and the authority involved in making such decisions.

Supporters of the Diwali holiday recognition argue that the move represents inclusion and reflects California's diverse population. They believe recognising cultural festivals helps strengthen social harmony and provides equal respect to different communities.

Opponents of the decision have raised concerns related to the impact of adding additional holidays to government and institutional calendars. The legal challenge has focused on procedural and administrative issues rather than the cultural significance of Diwali.

The issue is expected to undergo further legal review, with community organisations closely monitoring the next steps. Indian-American groups have expressed hope that the recognition of Diwali as an official holiday will eventually move forward.

The controversy highlights the broader debate in the United States over cultural representation, public holidays, and balancing diverse community interests within government systems.

US Imposes New Tariffs on 60 Countries

The United States has imposed new tariffs on imports from 60 countries, citing concerns over the failure of these nations to effectively prevent goods linked to forced labour from entering global supply chains. The move is part of a broader trade action aimed at pressuring countries to strengthen labour protection measures.

The new tariffs range between 10% and 12.5%, depending on the country. The US government said the action targets economies that have not taken adequate steps to prevent products made using forced labour practices from reaching American markets.

India has been placed in the lower 10% tariff category along with several other nations. The tariff structure follows discussions between Washington and various trading partners over labour standards and trade practices.

The list of affected economies includes several major trading partners such as China, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Australia, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Brazil, Pakistan, and members of the European Union, apart from India.

The US administration has argued that goods produced



through forced labour create unfair competition by reducing manufacturing costs and affecting American workers and businesses. The tariffs are intended to encourage countries to improve labour laws, enforcement systems, and supply chain monitoring.

However, the decision has drawn criticism from several nations. Governments have questioned the basis of the action, stating that they already have mechanisms in place to prevent forced labour practices. Some countries have also warned that additional tariffs could disrupt global supply chains and increase costs for businesses and consumers.

For India, the new tariff structure could have an impact on exporters, particularly industries

that depend heavily on the US market. Sectors such as textiles, engineering goods, electronics, and manufacturing are expected to closely monitor the impact of the additional duties on their competitiveness. Trade experts believe the latest move could increase uncertainty in global commerce at a time when economies are already facing challenges from geopolitical tensions, supply chain disruptions, and changing trade policies.

The affected countries are expected to engage with the US administration to seek clarifications, exemptions, or possible adjustments to reduce the impact of the new tariff measures. The development could become another major issue shaping global trade relations in the coming months.

Saudi Arabia Bets Big on Nuclear Power



Saudi Arabia, one of the world's largest oil producers with enormous energy reserves, is now moving aggressively towards nuclear power as part of its long-term strategy to diversify its energy sector and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

The move may appear surprising for a country known for its vast oil wealth, but Riyadh believes nuclear energy will play a crucial role in meeting rising electricity demand and supporting its future economic ambitions.

For decades, Saudi Arabia has relied heavily on oil and natural gas to generate electricity. However, rapid population growth, expanding industries, and large-scale infrastructure projects under Vision 2030 have significantly increased domestic energy consumption.

One of the key reasons behind Saudi Arabia's nuclear ambitions is to reduce domestic oil consumption. A large share of the kingdom's oil production is used within the country for power generation. By shifting electricity

production towards nuclear energy, Saudi Arabia can preserve more crude oil for exports and increase revenue from global energy markets.

Nuclear power also provides a stable and continuous source of electricity compared with some renewable energy sources that depend on weather conditions. Saudi Arabia plans to combine nuclear energy with solar and other renewable projects to create a more balanced energy mix.

The nuclear programme is closely linked to the kingdom's broader economic transformation plans. Under Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia aims to reduce its dependence on oil income by developing new industries, attracting investments, and expanding into advanced technology sectors. Building a nuclear energy sector could create opportunities in areas such as engineering, research, construction, and energy services while helping the country develop domestic expertise in advanced technologies.

Saudi Arabia has been exploring cooperation with several global partners to develop a civilian nuclear programme. However, the move has attracted international attention due to concerns over nuclear safety, security measures, and the need to ensure that the programme remains focused on peaceful energy purposes.

Experts say uranium enrichment technology, while important for civilian nuclear energy, requires strict monitoring because of its potential military applications. Countries involved in nuclear cooperation with Saudi Arabia have emphasised the importance of transparency and international safeguards.

Saudi Arabia maintains that its nuclear ambitions are aimed at meeting future electricity needs, supporting economic growth, and preparing for changes in the global energy landscape.

The kingdom's decision reflects a broader shift among major oil-producing nations. Even countries with massive crude reserves are now investing in nuclear power, renewable energy, and advanced technologies to secure their economic future beyond oil.

Indian Worker Found Dead in Jerusalem

An Indian migrant worker was found dead under suspicious circumstances inside an apartment in Jerusalem's Katamon neighbourhood, prompting Israeli authorities to launch an investigation. A 31-year-old Israeli man has been arrested in connection with the case.

The victim, a 40-year-old Indian national working in Israel, was discovered inside the apartment with injuries and signs of blood around him. Police officials have started a detailed investigation to determine the exact cause of death and the events leading up to the incident.

Authorities suspect a possible criminal angle and have taken the arrested man into custody for questioning. Investigators are examining evidence collected from the location and are working to establish the sequence of events before the worker's death.

The identity of the deceased worker has not been publicly disclosed. Forensic teams have inspected the apartment and gathered evidence as part of



the ongoing investigation.

The incident has caused concern among the Indian community in Israel, where thousands of Indian workers are employed in sectors such as construction, caregiving, and other service industries. Indian workers have become an important part of Israel's workforce in recent years.

India and Israel have expanded cooperation on labour mobility, with agreements allowing Indian workers to seek employment opportunities in Israel across various sectors. Indian diplomatic officials

are expected to provide assistance and closely monitor the investigation to ensure necessary support for the victim's family and related procedures. Israeli police are continuing their probe to determine the motive behind the incident, the connection between the victim and the arrested suspect, and the exact circumstances that led to the worker's death.

The case has highlighted concerns regarding the safety of migrant workers abroad and the need for stronger protection mechanisms for overseas employees.

Brent Crude Crosses \$100

Global oil markets witnessed a sharp rise as Brent crude prices crossed the \$100 per barrel mark, driven by growing concerns over possible supply disruptions following renewed attacks on shipping routes in the Red Sea region.

The escalation of tensions involving Yemen's Houthi rebels and threats around the strategic Bab al-Mandab Strait have raised concerns among traders and governments about the safety of one of the world's most important maritime routes for energy transportation.

The Bab al-Mandab Strait, located between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, is a crucial passage connecting Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. A significant portion of global trade and energy shipments passes through this route, making any disruption a major concern for international markets.

Recent attacks on commercial vessels in the region have increased fears among shipping companies and energy traders. Many firms are considering alternative routes due to security risks, which could increase transportation costs and create further pressure on global oil supplies.

The rise in crude prices also comes amid broader geopolitical uncertainty, with investors closely monitoring developments across the Middle East. Any further escalation involving key oil-producing regions or major shipping routes could lead to additional volatility in energy markets.

Higher crude oil prices could have a wider economic impact,



especially for countries that depend heavily on oil imports. Rising fuel costs may increase inflationary pressure, affect transportation expenses, and put additional strain on government finances.

For oil-importing nations such as India, a sustained increase in crude prices could raise import costs and impact the domestic currency market. Fuel prices, inflation trends, and overall economic growth could face pressure if oil remains elevated for a longer period.

Energy companies and governments are closely tracking the situation as shipping risks increase in the Red Sea. Higher insurance premiums for vessels and longer alternative shipping routes could further add to global supply chain costs.

Market analysts believe crude oil prices will remain sensitive to geopolitical developments in the coming weeks. Any major disruption in critical energy corridors could push prices higher, while easing tensions may help reduce pressure on global markets.

The latest surge in oil prices highlights how geopolitical conflicts and instability in strategic maritime regions continue to influence the global energy landscape.

Saudi Prince's Death Ruled Accidental

A Saudi prince died at a luxury hotel in London after consuming a combination of alcohol, recreational drugs, and prescription medication, according to findings presented at an inquest. The investigation concluded that the death was caused by a fatal combination of substances and was not linked to foul play.

The deceased was identified as Prince Abdullah bin Fahad bin Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Jawahri Al Saud, a 29-year-old member of the Saudi royal family. He was found unresponsive inside his room at a hotel in Kensington, London, in November last year.

According to the inquest findings, the prince had consumed a combination of alcohol, cannabis, GHB, and Xanax (alprazolam) before his death. Toxicology tests revealed the presence of multiple substances, which contributed to a cardiac arrest.

The court heard that hotel staff discovered the prince lying unconscious inside the bathroom of his locked room. Emergency medical teams rushed to the location and attempted to revive him, but their efforts were unsuccessful.

Investigators found no evidence of suicide or involvement of any third person in the incident. CCTV footage and other evidence indicated that the prince was alone before his



death. The coroner concluded that the death was accidental and resulted from the effects of multiple substances taken together.

The inquest also revealed that Prince Abdullah had previously faced issues related to substance use and had received medical support and treatment. His case highlighted the serious health risks associated with mixing alcohol, prescription drugs, and recreational substances.

Experts have repeatedly warned that combining substances such as alcohol and sedative medications can have dangerous effects on the body, including respiratory problems, loss of consciousness, and heart-related complications.

The death of the young Saudi royal has brought renewed attention to issues surrounding addiction, mental health support, and the importance of seeking medical help for substance-related challenges.

The incident serves as a reminder that substance misuse can have severe consequences, affecting people across all backgrounds and social levels.

US National Among Five Held at Border

Security forces have arrested five people, including a US national allegedly linked to the pro-Khalistan outfit Waris Punjab De, while they were attempting to enter India illegally from Nepal through the India-Nepal border in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich district.

The arrests were carried out during a joint operation by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and the Uttar Pradesh Police at the Rupaidiha border area. Among those arrested were Vikramjit Singh, who is suspected to have links with Waris Punjab De and was wanted in connection with a case in Punjab, and Manveer Singh Dhillon, a US national originally from Punjab.

According to officials, the two men were allegedly trying to cross into India without valid travel documents. Investigators suspect that the route through Nepal may have been used to avoid regular security checks.

Three Indian nationals — Suresh Kumar Pathak, Dilip Upadhyay, and vehicle driver Rahul Kumar — were also arrested for allegedly helping the two men enter India illegally.

Police officials said Vikramjit Singh had been absconding and was wanted in connection with a previous case registered in Punjab. Authorities are now questioning all the accused to understand their



travel route, possible links, and the network that may have assisted them.

The arrests have raised concerns over cross-border movements and attempts by individuals allegedly connected to extremist networks to enter India through neighbouring countries.

The Waris Punjab De organisation has been under the scanner of security agencies due to cases involving some of its members. Investigators are examining whether the accused had any additional associates or support networks operating across borders.

Security agencies are continuing the probe to determine the exact role of each accused and whether there was any larger plan behind the attempted entry.

The incident has once again highlighted the challenges faced by security forces in monitoring international borders and preventing illegal movements. Further action will be taken based on the findings of the ongoing investigation.



Carnelian Drops Maruti, Bets on Tata

Carnelian Asset Management & Advisors has made significant changes to its flagship Compounder Strategy, exiting Maruti Suzuki while adding Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles (PV) and Tata Technologies to its portfolio as part of its latest portfolio reshuffle.

The changes come after another round of portfolio realignment carried out in June, reflecting the fund house's evolving investment strategy amid changing market dynamics. The latest portfolio disclosures indicate a shift in preference within the automobile sector, replacing the country's largest passenger car maker with Tata Motors' passenger vehicle business.

Maruti Suzuki's recent underperformance is believed to have influenced the decision. The stock has lagged behind several of its peers, prompting the fund manager to reallocate capital towards Tata Motors PV, which is expected to benefit from its stronger positioning in the evolving passenger vehicle market.

Another notable addition is Tata Technologies, which has shown renewed momentum following the expansion of its business partnership with global au-

tomotive supplier Tenneco. The company has also attracted investor interest amid improving sentiment in the technology sector.

As a result of these changes, the Compounder Strategy has increased its exposure to the information technology sector, raising its IT allocation from 5.6% in June to 7.5% in July. The inclusion of Tata Technologies has played a key role in this increase.

The latest reshuffle follows a series of portfolio exits made in June, when the strategy reduced exposure by selling holdings in Dr Lal PathLabs, Page Industries, Gland Pharma, GSK Pharma, Punjab National Bank, and United Spirits. Carnelian also revised its other investment strategies during the month. Its Shift Strategy added CarTrade Tech after exiting United Spirits, while the Contra Strategy exited Vedanta as part of its portfolio rebalancing.

The latest changes reflect Carnelian's focus on identifying companies with strong long-term growth potential while actively adjusting its portfolio to align with changing market trends and emerging investment opportunities.



Flipkart Food Plan Hits Eternal, Swiggy

Shares of food delivery companies Eternal Ltd and Swiggy came under pressure as investors reacted to reports of Flipkart's planned entry into the online food delivery market. The development raised concerns over increasing competition in an already crowded sector dominated by established players.

Shares of Eternal and Swiggy declined by up to 4% during trading as market participants assessed the potential impact of another major player entering the food delivery space. Investors fear that Flipkart's large customer base, technology ecosystem, and existing logistics network could intensify competition and put pressure on margins.

Flipkart is reportedly preparing to enter the food delivery business, with plans to initially test the service before expanding further. The move marks another step in the e-commerce giant's strategy to diversify beyond its core online retail business and strengthen its presence in digital consumer services.

India's food delivery market is currently led by major platforms such as Eternal's food delivery business and Swiggy. However, the sector has witnessed increasing competition in recent years, with companies focusing on faster delivery, better customer experience, restaurant partnerships, and cost efficiency.

Analysts believe Flipkart's entry could create additional challenges for existing players,

particularly in areas such as customer acquisition, discounts, restaurant commissions, and delivery economics. A new competitor backed by a large technology ecosystem could lead to higher spending across the industry as companies compete for market share.

For Swiggy, the development comes at a time when investors are closely tracking the company's growth strategy across food delivery and quick commerce. The company has been facing strong competition in the quick-commerce segment, where rivals are rapidly expanding their presence.

Eternal, which operates food delivery and quick-commerce businesses, is also focused on maintaining growth momentum amid rising competition. Investors are watching whether increasing competition will impact profitability and customer acquisition costs in the coming quarters.

Market experts said the long-term impact of Flipkart's entry will depend on its execution, pricing strategy, restaurant partnerships, and ability to attract users. While competition may create short-term pressure on existing companies, it could also accelerate innovation and improve services for customers.

With major players strengthening their positions in food delivery and quick commerce, the Indian digital consumer market is expected to witness an intense battle for market share in the coming years.

Indian Markets Fall for Fifth Straight Day

Indian equity markets remained under pressure on Friday, extending their losing streak to the fifth consecutive session as weak global cues, elevated crude oil prices, and sustained foreign institutional investor (FII) selling continued to dampen investor sentiment. The benchmark indices recovered from steep intraday losses but still ended the day in negative territory.

The BSE Sensex closed at 76,059.58, down 331.51 points (0.43%), while the NSE Nifty 50 settled at 23,763.20, losing 89.15 points (0.37%). During the session, the Sensex had plunged more than 900 points, while the Nifty slipped close to the 23,600 mark before recovering part of its losses in late trade.

The sell-off was largely triggered by escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, which pushed Brent crude oil above \$100 per barrel, raising concerns over inflation and India's import bill. Investors also remained cautious amid continued FII outflows, a weakening rupee, and expectations that the US Federal Reserve could maintain a tighter monetary policy for a longer



period.

Selling pressure was visible across most sectors, with information technology, banking, automobile, metal, and realty stocks witnessing significant declines. Broader markets also remained under stress as mid-cap and small-cap stocks underperformed the benchmark indices.

Market participants preferred to stay on the sidelines amid uncertainty surrounding global economic conditions and geopolitical developments. The ongoing corporate earnings season also kept traders cautious, with stock-specific movements driven by quarterly results and management

commentary.

Despite the weak close, the recovery from intraday lows indicated selective buying at lower levels. However, analysts believe market volatility is likely to persist in the coming sessions as investors continue to monitor crude oil prices, foreign fund flows, corporate earnings, and global central bank policy decisions.

Market experts have advised long-term investors to avoid panic selling and instead focus on fundamentally strong companies, as short-term volatility is expected to continue until there is greater clarity on global economic and geopolitical developments.

Hindustan Zinc Profit Jumps 145%



Hindustan Zinc Ltd reported an impressive performance for the first quarter of FY27, with its consolidated net profit surging 145% year-on-year to 5,469 crore, driven by higher metal prices, increased production, and a stronger US dollar. The company's earnings comfortably surpassed market expectations, although its shares remained under pressure during trading.

The company's revenue from operations jumped 76.9% to 13,747 crore, compared with 7,771 crore in the corresponding quarter last year. Revenue also exceeded analysts' estimates, reflecting strong demand and improved realizations across key business segments.

Hindustan Zinc's EBITDA nearly doubled to 8,050 crore

from 3,859 crore a year ago. The company's EBITDA margin improved to 58.56%, up from 49.7% in the year-ago period, highlighting stronger operational efficiency despite remaining slightly below market expectations.

The zinc and lead business continued to deliver solid growth during the quarter. Revenue from the segment rose sharply, supported by higher production volumes and improved commodity prices. The silver business also posted strong growth, although it witnessed a marginal sequential decline due to softer silver prices compared with the previous quarter. Alongside the quarterly results, the company announced a key leadership change. Amarendu Prakash, former Chair-

man and Managing Director of SAIL, has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer and Whole-Time Director. He will assume charge on August 1, succeeding Arun Misra, whose tenure concludes at the end of July.

Despite reporting record quarterly earnings and beating Street estimates on profit, revenue, and EBITDA, Hindustan Zinc's stock remained in the red as broader market weakness and profit booking weighed on investor sentiment.

Analysts believe the company's strong operational performance, higher production, and favourable metal price environment position it well for sustained growth in the coming quarters, even as global commodity markets continue to remain volatile.

Carnelian Boosts Pharma Exposure

Carnelian Asset Management & Advisors has significantly increased its exposure to the pharmaceutical sector across all three of its flagship equity strategies, reinforcing its bullish outlook on the industry's long-term growth prospects.

According to the latest portfolio disclosures, pharma has emerged as the largest sector allocation in both the Compounder and Shift strategies, while also becoming one of the top three sector holdings in the firm's Contra Strategy. The move marks a notable convergence across portfolios that otherwise follow different investment styles, including quality growth, structural themes, and value investing.

The Shift Strategy has seen the biggest allocation to the pharmaceutical sector, with exposure increasing from 20.2% in April 2025 to 26% in July 2026. The sector, now classified as Pharma & CDMO, has overtaken engineering and capital goods to



become the portfolio's largest investment theme.

The Compounder Strategy has also strengthened its pharma allocation. Already the portfolio's largest sector in June, the allocation has been increased further to 26% in July, underlining the fund manager's confidence in the industry's earnings outlook.

The most significant shift has taken place in the Contra Strategy. Pharma, which did not feature among the portfolio's major sector allocations in April 2025, now accounts for 11.1% of the portfolio, making it the strate-

gy's third-largest sector. The increased exposure has come alongside a reduction in power-sector holdings as the fund manager reshapes the portfolio.

Among Carnelian's preferred pharmaceutical investments, Laurus Labs has emerged as a key holding across both the Compounder and Shift strategies. The company has delivered a strong performance, supported by robust growth in its Contract Development and Manufacturing Organisation (CDMO) business, which has become an increasingly important contributor to its revenue.

The latest portfolio changes highlight Carnelian's growing conviction that the pharmaceutical sector offers attractive long-term opportunities. The asset manager believes improving global demand, expanding CDMO businesses, and stronger earnings potential make pharma one of the most promising sectors for sustained wealth creation over the coming years.



India May Get First Debt Long-Short Fund

Investment firm Platinum SIF has filed draft documents with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to launch what could become India's first Sectoral Debt Long-Short Fund, a new category of investment product aimed at generating returns from opportunities across different segments of the debt market.

The proposed fund will operate under SEBI's recently introduced Specialized Investment Fund (SIF) framework, which is designed for sophisticated investors seeking strategies that go beyond traditional mutual funds. The product intends to take both long positions in debt instruments expected to perform well and short positions in segments likely to underperform.

According to the draft papers, the fund will actively allocate capital across various fixed-income sectors such as government securities, corporate bonds, money-market instruments, and other debt categories, depending on prevailing interest-rate conditions and credit trends.

The launch is significant because most Indian debt mutual funds follow a largely long-only strategy, where fund managers invest in bonds they expect to appreciate or provide stable income. A long-short approach allows managers to potentially benefit from both rising and falling prices within different parts of the bond market.

Industry experts say the product could appeal to high-net-worth individuals and institutional investors looking for diversified fixed-income exposure with a more flexible investment mandate. The strategy may also help reduce sensitivity to broad interest-rate movements by hedging exposure between sectors.

SEBI introduced the SIF framework earlier this year to bridge the gap between conventional mutual funds and portfolio management or alternative investment products. SIFs are expected to offer more advanced investment strategies while remaining within a regulated structure.

The draft filing comes at a time when bond markets are experiencing increased volatility due to shifting expectations around inflation, central bank policy, and global interest rates. Fund managers have been seeking greater flexibility to exploit relative-value opportunities within the debt market rather than relying solely on directional interest-rate bets.

Platinum SIF will now await SEBI's observations on the draft documents. Once regulatory approval is received, the company can proceed with launching the fund and opening it to eligible investors.

If approved, the proposed scheme could mark an important development in India's fixed-income investment landscape by introducing a more sophisticated debt strategy to the regulated investment-fund space.



Indo-MIM IPO Sees Strong Demand

The initial public offering (IPO) of Indo-MIM Ltd continued to attract strong investor interest on the second day of bidding, with its shares commanding a healthy premium in the grey market, indicating positive sentiment ahead of the company's market debut.

The IPO's grey market premium (GMP) stood at around 165 per share, translating to a premium of nearly 34% over the upper price band of 486. Based on the prevailing grey market trend, the stock is expected to list at around 650 per share, though grey market activity remains unofficial and does not guarantee actual listing performance.

The company has fixed the IPO price band at 461-486 per share. The public issue includes a fresh issue of 500 crore and an Offer for Sale (OFS) worth 3,311.21 crore by existing shareholders and promoters. Retail investors can apply for a minimum lot of 30 shares, requiring an investment of 14,580 at the upper price band.

Ahead of the IPO launch, Indo-MIM raised 1,141 crore from anchor investors. The anchor book received participation from several institutional investors, reflecting strong interest from the investment community.

The Bengaluru-based com-

pany is a leading manufacturer of precision-engineered metal components using Metal Injection Moulding (MIM) technology. It caters to multiple sectors, including automotive, aerospace, healthcare, industrial engineering, and consumer products.

Indo-MIM has reported strong financial growth in recent years. For the financial year ended March 2026, the company recorded a 25.9% rise in net profit to 533.5 crore, while its revenue increased 25.9% to 4,193 crore, supported by expansion across key business segments. The company plans to use 400 crore from the fresh issue proceeds to repay outstanding borrowings, while the remaining funds will be utilized for general corporate purposes. The debt reduction plan is expected to strengthen the company's financial position.

With strong institutional participation, positive grey market sentiment, and healthy business fundamentals, Indo-MIM's IPO has emerged as one of the closely watched public offerings. However, investors are advised to consider the company's long-term growth potential, financial performance, and industry outlook rather than relying only on grey market trends.



Samson Calls CSK Move a Big Risk

India wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson has finally broken his silence on his high-profile move from Rajasthan Royals (RR) to Chennai Super Kings (CSK), describing it as one of the biggest and riskiest decisions of his cricketing career.

Speaking about the transition, Samson revealed that he had mentally prepared himself for a fresh start. After spending more than a decade with Rajasthan Royals, where he grew into one of the franchise's most influential players and captain, he felt it was the right time to embrace a new challenge.

Samson admitted that leaving RR was far from an easy decision. The franchise played a significant role in shaping his IPL career, and walking away from an environment he had called home for so many years involved considerable emotional and professional risk.

Explaining his decision, Samson said he wanted to "start from zero" and challenge himself in a completely new setup. Joining CSK offered him the opportunity to adapt to different conditions, especially the spin-friendly Chepauk pitch, while learning from one of the IPL's most successful franchises.

The Kerala batter also dismissed speculation surround-

ing his role at Chennai. He made it clear that he has no concerns about leadership discussions and is happy to play under Ruturaj Gaikwad's captaincy. Samson emphasized that his primary focus is contributing to the team's success rather than thinking about captaincy.

He also expressed excitement about sharing the dressing room with legendary players and being part of CSK's renowned team culture. According to Samson, the move represents a fresh chapter in his career and an opportunity to grow both as a cricketer and as an individual.

Fans have reacted positively to Samson's candid remarks, with many appreciating his honesty about the emotional difficulty of leaving Rajasthan Royals. Others believe his arrival could strengthen Chennai's batting lineup and bring valuable leadership experience to the squad.

With the IPL season underway, all eyes will now be on Sanju Samson as he begins his new journey in the yellow jersey. While leaving Rajasthan Royals was undoubtedly a huge risk, the star wicketkeeper-batter believes the challenge will help him evolve and write a new chapter in his already impressive IPL career.



Klopp to Help Rebuild German Football

Former Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has reportedly been entrusted with a major responsibility in helping revive the fortunes of German football. After stepping away from club management, Klopp is set to play a significant role in shaping the future of the sport in Germany.

According to reports, Klopp will work closely with football authorities and stakeholders to contribute to the long-term development of German football. His experience in building successful teams, nurturing young talent, and implementing high-intensity playing styles is expected to play a crucial role in the country's footballing plans.

Germany has endured a difficult period in recent years, with disappointing performances in major international tournaments leading to widespread calls for structural reforms. The country's football administrators are now looking to experienced figures like Klopp to help restore Germany's status among the world's elite football nations.

Klopp's remarkable achievements with Borussia Dortmund and Liverpool have earned him immense respect

across global football. He guided Dortmund to Bundesliga titles and later transformed Liverpool into Premier League and UEFA Champions League winners, establishing himself as one of the game's most influential managers.

Reports suggest that Klopp's new responsibilities will focus on providing strategic guidance, improving player development, and helping create a stronger football structure for the future. While he will not be directly involved in coaching the national team, his expertise is expected to influence long-term planning and development.

Football fans in Germany have welcomed the reports with optimism, believing Klopp's vision and leadership can inspire positive change. His reputation for developing young players and creating winning cultures makes him an ideal figure to contribute to the country's football revival.

Although the exact nature of his role is still being finalized, expectations are high that Klopp's involvement will help Germany rebuild after a challenging period and lay the foundation for sustained success in the years ahead.

Iyer's XI Choice Triggers Debate



India began the three-match T20I series against Zimbabwe with a convincing seven-wicket victory, but captain Shreyas Iyer found himself under scrutiny for one of his selection decisions despite the comfortable win. The debate quickly gained momentum among cricket experts and fans, with many questioning the composition of India's playing XI.

The major talking point was the decision to leave out a few experienced players in favour of youngsters. While India ultimately dominated the contest, several former cricketers felt the team management could have opted for a different combination to provide better balance and make fuller use of the available talent.

Despite the criticism, the young Indian side delivered an impressive all-round performance. The bowlers restricted Zimbabwe to a below-par total before the batters comfortably chased down the target. The victory handed Shreyas Iyer his first win as India's T20I captain, giving the visitors a 1-0 lead in the series.

One of the biggest positives for India was the performance of teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who produced a fearless knock and etched his name into the record books with a stunning half-century. His innings played a crucial role in India's successful chase and drew praise from fans and experts alike.

Speaking after the match, Iyer backed the team's selection strategy and praised his players for executing the game plan effectively. He expressed satisfaction with the way both the bowlers and batters responded under pressure and said the youngsters justified the faith shown in them.

Although the victory has put India in a strong position in the series, discussions over team selection are expected to continue ahead of the second T20I. With several talented players waiting for opportunities, the management will once again face tough decisions while finalising the playing XI.

For now, India will be pleased with the winning start, while Shreyas Iyer will hope his side can carry the momentum forward and seal the series in the upcoming matches.



Ashwin Calls for Specialist Players

Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has raised concerns over Team India's current approach under head coach Gautam Gambhir, drawing comparisons with the system followed during Rahul Dravid's tenure. His comments have sparked fresh debate as India begins preparations for the 2027 ODI World Cup.

Ashwin believes one of India's biggest challenges is the lack of a reliable backup for Hardik Pandya. With Hardik's recurring fitness issues, the team has been trying options such as Nitish Kumar Reddy and Shivam Dube. However, Ashwin feels relying on makeshift all-rounders is not a long-term solution and that the management needs to identify a specialist capable of filling the role consistently.

Explaining his viewpoint, Ashwin praised Rahul Dravid's handling of the Indian team during the 2023 ODI World Cup. He pointed out that after Hardik's injury, the team management did not panic or search for temporary replacements. Instead, they restructured the playing combination, continued with five specialist bowlers, and ensured that every player clearly understood his role.

According to Ashwin, that clarity and stability helped India reach the World Cup final despite losing a key all-rounder midway through the tournament. He believes a well-defined team culture and clearly assigned responsibilities are more important than constantly experimenting with players.

Ashwin also suggested that the current management has become overly focused on finding multi-skilled cricketers who can contribute in multiple departments. While such players are valuable, he argued that Test cricket and major ICC tournaments are usually won by specialists who excel in their primary roles rather than by part-time options.

His remarks come after India's recent ODI series defeat to England, which has intensified discussions over team selection, combinations, and long-term planning ahead of the next World Cup. With several key decisions still to be made, Ashwin believes the management should prioritize stability and specialist players instead of constantly searching for all-round alternatives.

The former spinner concluded that successful World Cup campaigns are built on a strong dressing-room environment, clearly defined roles, and trust in specialists. His observations have reignited the debate over India's team-building philosophy under Gautam Gambhir as preparations for the 2027 ODI World Cup gather pace.



Messi Puts Retirement on Hold

Football icon Lionel Messi has reportedly decided to delay his retirement, putting an end to speculation about his immediate future. According to the latest reports, the Argentine superstar intends to continue playing at least until the 2026 FIFA World Cup, provided he remains physically fit.

The 38-year-old has been carefully managing his workload while representing Inter Miami and the Argentina national team. Reports suggest that Messi wants to evaluate his fitness and form over the coming months before making any final decision about extending his international career beyond the next World Cup.

Having fulfilled his lifelong dream of winning the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, Messi has nothing left to prove. However, his passion for representing Argentina and his desire to defend the world title are believed to be the key reasons behind his decision to continue.

Sources close to the player indicate that Messi is taking a season-by-season approach and is avoiding long-term commitments. Instead of announcing retirement now, he plans to assess his physical

Joseph's Decision Jolts West Indies



West Indies have suffered a major setback ahead of their two-match Test series against Pakistan after fast bowler Alzarri Joseph declined selection for the squad. The development has surprised cricket fans, especially since Joseph had recently recovered from injury and was expected to lead the pace attack.

While Cricket West Indies initially stated that Joseph was unavailable due to personal reasons, head coach Darren Sammy later revealed that the pacer had actually declined the selection.

Speaking to the media before the opening Test, Sammy admitted that Joseph's absence was a significant blow to the team. "He was selected. He's now coming back from injury, and for reasons known to him, he declined the selection. That decision is way over my head," Sammy said.

The coach added that the matter was beyond his control and would now be handled by the cricket board and its administrators. Sammy emphasized that decisions regarding contracted players refusing selection fall under the board's jurisdiction rather than the coaching staff.

Joseph has been one of the West Indies' most experienced fast bowlers in recent years, having played 42 Test matches and claimed 130 wickets. His absence leaves a sizeable gap in the Caribbean side's bowling attack ahead of the home series against Pakistan.

Despite losing one of his key bowlers, Sammy expressed confidence in the players available for selection and backed the remaining pace attack to deliver against Pakistan. He said the team would focus on the players who are committed and ready to represent the West Indies.

The first Test of the two-match series is scheduled to begin in Tarouba, with the second Test to be played in Port of Spain. Joseph's unexpected decision has become one of the biggest talking points ahead of the series, and fans will now be waiting to see whether Cricket West Indies provides further clarity on the reasons behind his withdrawal.

World Cup Replay Petition Goes Viral



An online petition demanding a replay of the FIFA World Cup final has gone viral on social media, sparking widespread debate among football fans around the world. The petition, which has attracted thousands of signatures, questions certain refereeing decisions made during the high-profile clash and calls for the match to be replayed.

The growing campaign quickly gained attention across various social media platforms, with fans expressing contrasting opinions. While some supporters backed the petition, arguing that controversial decisions influenced the outcome, many others dismissed the demand as unrealistic and insisted that the result should stand.

The controversy eventually reached members of the Spanish national team, prompting one of Spain's star players to respond. The player brushed aside the online campaign, stating that such petitions would not change the official result and that football matches are decided on the field.

The Spanish international emphasized that controversial moments are part of the sport and that players must accept both victories and defeats. He also urged fans to focus on supporting their teams rather than engaging in campaigns that have no impact on official tournament outcomes.

The viral petition has reignited discussions about the use of technology, refereeing standards, and VAR decisions in major international tournaments. Football supporters continue to debate whether existing review systems are sufficient to eliminate controversial calls in high-pressure matches.

Despite the online attention, there has been no indication from FIFA that the governing body would consider revisiting the result. Under existing regulations, completed World Cup matches are not replayed solely because of disputed refereeing decisions unless extraordinary circumstances involving rule violations are established.

Although the petition has generated significant buzz online, it remains largely a social media movement with no official standing. For now, the World Cup final result remains unchanged, while the debate once again highlights how passionately football fans continue to discuss the game's biggest moments.

Chennai Love Story Review: A Heartfelt Romance

Chennai Love Story is a romantic drama starring Kiran Abbavaram and Sri Gouri Priya, directed by Ravi Namburi. The film revolves around two emotionally scarred individuals who find hope and healing through love. The film's biggest strengths are its emotional moments, Mani Sharma's soulful music, and the sincere performances of the lead pair, particularly Sri Gouri Priya. Kiran Abbavaram delivers a restrained performance that suits the character, while the chemistry between the leads adds warmth to the narrative. The first half is engaging, offering a refreshing blend of romance, emotions, and smooth



storytelling. The narrative builds the relationship between the lead characters naturally, making it easy for the audience to connect with their journey. However, the second half loses some of its momentum due

to a slower screenplay and a few predictable dramatic moments. While the emotional depth remains intact, the pacing occasionally affects the overall impact. The climax, however, attempts to end the story on an emotional and satisfying note. On the technical front, Mani Sharma's music complements the film beautifully, enhancing several key emotional scenes. The cinematography captures the romantic mood effectively, while the production values remain neat and appealing. Overall, Chennai Love Story is a decent emotional romantic drama that focuses more on relationships and feelings than commercial elements. It may not offer many surprises, but it succeeds in delivering a heartfelt love story with convincing performances and melodious music. Fans of emotional romance films are likely to enjoy this simple yet touching entertainer.



Srinivasa Mangapuram Gets U/A Certificate

The makers of Srinivasa Mangapuram have officially announced that the film has completed its censor formalities and has been awarded a U/A certificate, clearing the way for its theatrical release on July 30. The update has further raised anticipation among movie lovers ahead of the film's arrival in cinemas. Srinivasa Mangapuram marks the acting debut of Jaya Krishna Ghattamaneni while also introducing Rasha Thadani to Telugu cinema. The romantic drama is directed by Ajay Bhupathi, who is returning with his fourth directorial venture. The film has generated decent buzz through its teaser, trailer, and songs, all of which have received a positive response from audiences. The promotional content has created curiosity

around the film's emotional storyline and performances. Veteran actor Mohan Babu will be seen playing the antagonist, adding further weight to the narrative. His presence is expected to be one of the film's major highlights. The movie is produced by P. Kiran and presented by Ashwini Dutt. Acclaimed music composer G.V. Prakash Kumar has scored the soundtrack, which has already received encouraging feedback from listeners. With censor clearance now completed and a U/A certification in hand, the makers are gearing up for the final phase of promotions. Expectations are steadily building as the release date approaches, and the team is hoping the film will connect with audiences upon its theatrical debut.

Ramayana Trailer Release Postponed



The makers of Ramayana, one of the most anticipated Indian films in recent years, have postponed the global release of the movie's trailer. While the unexpected delay disappointed fans who were eagerly waiting for the launch, the production team has shared an exciting update that has kept the buzz surrounding the film alive. According to the latest announcement, although the trailer will not be released as originally planned, the makers have confirmed that it will be launched globally at a later date. Producer Namit Mal-

hotra assured fans that the team wants to unveil the trailer on the biggest possible scale, ensuring a grand cinematic experience. Directed by Nitesh Tiwari, the film boasts a star-studded cast featuring Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Rama, Sai Pallavi as Sita, and Yash as Ravana. Ever since the project was announced, it has generated tremendous excitement among audiences across the country. Despite the trailer delay, the makers continue to build anticipation by highlighting the film's grand vision and world-class production standards.

Spirit Resumes Shoot on July 27

Prabhas' highly anticipated pan-India action entertainer Spirit is all set to enter its next phase of production. According to the latest update, the film's new shooting schedule will commence on July 27, with Prabhas expected to join the team for key sequences. The film has been progressing steadily, and nearly 40% of the shoot has already been completed, making it one of the fastest-moving big-budget projects currently in production. After taking a short break in Europe, Prabhas is expected to return to India and resume work on the film. Directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga, Spirit has generated tremendous excitement ever since its announcement. The movie marks the first collaboration between the blockbuster director and the Rebel Star, making it one of the most eagerly awaited films in Indian cinema. Triptii Dimri plays the female lead, while a major por-

tion of the upcoming schedule is planned in Hyderabad, with the makers opting to shoot several important scenes at real locations to enhance the film's authenticity. Prabhas will be seen portraying a powerful police officer in the action-packed entertainer, a role that has already created significant curiosity among fans. With Sandeep Reddy Vanga known for presenting intense and emotionally charged characters, expectations from the film continue to soar. Backed by T-Series and Bhadrakali Pictures, Spirit is being mounted on a grand scale with high production values. As filming progresses, fans are eagerly waiting for more updates, including the first glimpse and teaser. With the next schedule ready to roll from July 27, the makers are expected to accelerate production in the coming months, bringing the much-awaited Prabhas starrer one step closer to its theatrical release.



Korean Kanakaraju Strikes Gold Pre-Release



Mega Prince Varun Tej's upcoming horror-comedy Korean Kanakaraju has achieved a major milestone even before its theatrical release. The film has reportedly secured 26 crore through non-theatrical rights, reflecting the strong confidence of distributors and digital platforms in the project. Directed by Merlapaka Gandhi, the film is slated for a grand worldwide release on August 7. The movie stars Ritika Nayak as the female lead and promises a unique blend of horror, comedy, and cross-cultural entertainment set against Indian and Korean backdrops. According to trade reports, the 26 crore non-theatrical deal includes digital streaming, sat-

ellite, and audio rights. With the film's reported budget estimated at around 38 crore, the makers have already recovered a significant portion of their investment before the movie reaches theatres. The impressive pre-release business has been driven by the positive response to the film's promotional content. The teaser, songs, and Varun Tej's fresh makeover have generated considerable buzz among audiences. The actor is said to be appearing in two distinct avatars, adding to the curiosity surrounding the film. Industry insiders believe the strong non-theatrical recovery gives the producers a comfortable position ahead of the theat-

rical release. With a major share of the investment already recouped, the focus now shifts to theatrical collections, where expectations are steadily rising. Produced by UV Creations in association with First Frame Entertainment, Korean Kanakaraju is one of Varun Tej's most ambitious projects. If the film receives a positive response from audiences after release, it could emerge as a profitable venture for everyone involved. With impressive pre-release business, growing audience interest, and a unique horror-comedy concept, Korean Kanakaraju has already struck gold before hitting the big screen.

Venky Atluri Ends Bilingual Rumours



There has been considerable speculation among fans about the language format of Suriya's upcoming film Vishwanath & Sons. Putting all rumours to rest, director Venky Atluri has confirmed that the film is not a bilingual project. According to the filmmaker, Vishwanath & Sons has been shot entirely in Tamil and will be dubbed into Telugu for its release. Unlike his earlier bilingual ventures, this film was not simultaneously filmed in both Tamil and Telugu. Venky Atluri explained that

the story has been conceived primarily for Tamil audiences, while the Telugu version will be a dubbed release. He expressed confidence that the film's emotional core and family-oriented narrative would connect equally well with audiences across both languages. The movie stars Suriya in the lead role, with Mamitha Baiju playing the female lead. Veteran actresses Radhika Sarathkumar and Raveena Tandon also play pivotal roles in the family drama. Produced by Sithara Enter-

tainments and Fortune Four Cinemas, the film features music composed by G.V. Prakash Kumar. The promotional material released so far has generated strong buzz, with fans eagerly awaiting more updates. With Venky Atluri's clarification, expectations are now firmly focused on the film's content rather than its language format. The director believes the emotional storytelling and strong performances will appeal to audiences irrespective of whether they watch it in Tamil or Telugu.

The India Story Awaits Regional Release

Kajal Aggarwal's upcoming social drama The India Story is set for its Hindi release, but the film is facing challenges in expanding to regional markets. According to the latest reports, the planned Telugu and Tamil releases have been put on hold due to a lack of sufficient buzz and distributor interest. Directed by Chetan DK, The India Story revolves around the harmful effects of pesticide farming and its impact on public health. Kajal Aggarwal plays the role of a determined advocate fighting for justice, while Shreyas Talpade appears in another important role. Despite its socially relevant subject, the film has struggled to generate strong pre-release excitement. The promotional campaign has not created the expected momentum, making distributors in the Telugu and Tamil markets cautious about



giving the film a wide theatrical release. As a result, the makers have reportedly decided to focus on the Hindi version for now. The dubbed Telugu and Tamil versions are expected to be released at a later stage, depending on the response received by the Hindi release. The film also underwent multiple modifications during the censor certification process before receiving clearance for release, drawing attention even before its theatrical debut. With Kajal Aggarwal headlining a content-driven courtroom drama, the makers are hoping positive word-of-mouth from Hindi audiences will help build interest in other language markets. Whether the film eventually secures theatrical releases in Telugu and Tamil will largely depend on its box-office performance and audience reception.