



BUZZ POINTS

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Talks Fail As APJUDA Intensifies Strike From August 12

Vijayawada, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Talks between the Andhra Pradesh Junior Doctors' Association (APJUDA) and government officials failed on Tuesday over the association's demand for a 30% stipend hike. APJUDA said the government offered only a 3% increase, which it rejected as unacceptable. Following the failure of negotiations, APJUDA decided to launch Phase II of its strike from August 12. Interns, Junior Residents, Super-Specialty Postgraduates, Postgraduates posted under the DRP and in peripheral postings, and Senior Residents across Government Medical Colleges and Teaching Hospitals in Andhra Pradesh will completely withdraw from all non-emergency services. The association said Emergency and ICU services would remain uninterrupted throughout the day, while demonstrations would be held from 9 am to 4 pm. APJUDA members will also observe a voluntary relay hunger strike daily from 9 am to 4 pm from August 12. The association urged the government to reconsider its position and arrive at an amicable solution to their stipend enhancement and other demands.

Roads to Connect 158 Remote Habitations Across AP

Amaravati, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Road connectivity is set to reach another 158 remote habitations across Andhra Pradesh, including villages and hamlets that have remained isolated from mainstream development. The initiative is being implemented as part of plans formulated by Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan to improve access to essential services and economic opportunities in remote areas. Administrative sanctions have been completed for the construction of 146 roads and 19 bridges covering a total length of 347 km. The works will benefit habitations identified in ASR, Parvathipuram Manyam, Anantapur, Sri Sathya Sai, Kurnool, Kadapa, Tirupati, Sri Potti Srimamulu Nellore, Prakasam, Palnadu, NTR, Eluru, Polavaram, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam districts. Funds of Rs.422.10 crore have been sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) for the road works, while another Rs.24.47 crore has been released for maintenance of the roads for five years. The Panchayat Raj Engineering Department will execute the projects. The initiative builds on the 'Adivitali Bata' programme, under which road connectivity was provided to several hilltop tribal villages in Alluri Sitarama Raju and Parvathipuram Manyam districts. Pawan Kalyan said the connectivity was being



facilitated under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and with the cooperation of Union Minister for Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chouhan. "It gives me great pleasure to facilitate road connectivity for the first time to 158 habitations," he said, directing officials to maintain the highest standards of quality in construction. The Deputy Chief Minister said the roads and bridges should serve people for a long time and connect previously isolated villages with the outside world. Improved connectivity, he said, would provide better access to education, healthcare and markets while strengthening the integration of remote communities with broader development.

AP Sets Example in AI-Driven Tax Administration



Vijayawada, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

The state is emerging as a frontrunner in AI-driven tax administration, with the state's use of artificial intelligence and data analytics drawing appreciation from officials of the GST Council during their visit to the Commercial Taxes Department on Monday. A team comprising Pankaj Kumar Singh, Additional Secretary, GST Council Secretariat, and D.P. Mishra, Joint Secretary, visited the department to study the state's application of AI in tax administration. Chief Commissioner of State Commercial Taxes Babu A. and other officials explained the systems and processes

through a presentation and demonstrations. Officials showcased AI-powered dashboards covering registrations, returns, income tax, professional tax, tax arrears, audits, inspections and scrutiny. The revenue and e-way bill dashboards particularly attracted the delegation's attention. Officials explained that e-way bill data is used to estimate SGST cash payments and IGST settlements, helping monitor revenue more effectively. The delegation was also briefed on the use of GST data as a key indicator for estimating Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and generating immediate estimates. AI agents are being used to create reports and dashboards, while a 'knowledge hub' has been established to compile data and undertake sector-wise analysis. Babu A. said AI is now being deployed across the tax-related workflow, from audit and case selection to identifying irregularities, issuing notices, reviewing taxpayer responses and final decision-making. The department is also using AI engines from Microsoft and Google. The team examined the 'Legal AI' module integrated with the state's online legal case management system. It assists



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AP Adopts Dharavi Model For Slum Redevelopment

K Kalyan Krishna Kumar

Amaravati: The state government has cleared a new model for slum redevelopment, beginning with the Velampeta slum in Visakhapatnam, with the initiative aimed at providing modern housing to existing residents while minimising direct expenditure from the government. The Government has permitted the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) to redevelop the Velampeta Slum in Zone-IV, Ward No. 35 under the Visakhapatnam Economic Region (VER) Programme on a Design, Build, Finance and Transfer (DBFT) basis. The project will accommodate 177 families in a high-rise residential complex to be constructed on a compact site measuring 1,986.45 square metres. The building can have a maximum height of 45 metres, enabling vertical redevelopment in the densely populated area.



TDR-Based Development
A key feature of the model is the use of Transferable Development Rights (TDR) instead of conventional government funding. The successful private bidder will undertake the redevelopment in return for TDR, with the Government permitting a maximum TDR ratio of 1:4. The project will be awarded through a competitive tender process, with bidders required to quote the TDR requirement against the construction cost. The model is intended to leverage urban land value and private investment while ensuring existing residents receive improved housing. To make the project financially viable, the Government has approved special relaxations under the Andhra Pradesh Building Rules. These include permission for a high-rise structure in the congested locality, reduced setbacks and parking provision of around 10% of the total built-up area against the normally prescribed 22%. Specified fees payable to GVMC, urban development authorities and other agencies have also been waived.

Pilot For Visakhapatnam
The Government has directed GVMC to complete the Velampeta project in a time-bound manner and use it as a pilot for redeveloping other slum pockets under the Visakhapatnam Economic Region Programme. The model is expected to facilitate in-situ redevelopment, allowing residents to obtain modern housing without being permanently displaced from their existing neighbourhoods. The Government has also mandated a post-allotment management framework covering maintenance of common areas, utilities and building upkeep before possession is handed over to beneficiaries. Fire safety, energy conservation and other statutory requirements will have to be complied with fully.

Statewide Policy Planned
Beyond the Velampeta project, the Government has directed the Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration Dr P sampath Kumar to prepare a draft statewide policy on slum redevelopment and middle-class housing in consultation with all stakeholder departments. The initiative marks a shift towards using urban land value, private investment and redevelopment incentives to address housing requirements in congested settlements. If implemented successfully, the Visakhapatnam model could serve as a scalable framework for rejuvenating ageing slums across Andhra Pradesh while creating better living conditions and unlocking the economic potential of urban land.



Women Drivers Planned For Thalli-Bidda Express Services

ARN Mahesh

Narasaraopet: Health and Family Welfare Minister Satya Kumar Yadav said the government was favourably considering appointing women drivers for the '102 Thalli-Bidda Express' vehicles to promote women's employment and financial independence. He said women had demonstrated their capabilities across sectors and were equally capable of driving ambulances. Launching the modern '102' ambulance services at the Area Hospital in Narasaraopet on Tuesday, Satya Kumar said the consortium of

Vidya Veda Foundation and Srinivasa Tours and Travels had proposed employing women drivers and the government was considering it positively. The Minister said 500 new '102' vehicles were being introduced across Andhra Pradesh, with 300 launched in the first phase and another 200 scheduled within two months. The vehicles have air-conditioning, six airbags, footrests, GPS tracking and emergency SVS buttons. He said '102' service was being expanded beyond post-delivery transportation to cover the entire

ANDHRA PRADESH ECONOMY JULY 2026		
Key Indicator	Growth / Figure	
Real GSDP Growth	9.9%	
Agriculture Sector	13.5%	
Industrial Sector	10.6%	
Services Sector	9.9%	
GST Collections	₹13,282 crore (+21%)	
Mega Project Investments	₹2.88 lakh crore	
MSME Investments	+73.6%	
General Exports	₹16,322 crore (+10.5%)	

AP Economy Sustains Strong Growth Momentum

K Kalyan Krishna Kumar

Amaravati : The state is sustaining strong economic momentum, with growth accelerating across agriculture, industry and services while investment, exports and tax revenues continue to show significant improvement, according to the Monthly Economic Report for July 2026 submitted by the Planning Department to Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. Officials from the Planning Department presented

the report to the Chief Minister at his camp office, highlighting that Andhra Pradesh has outperformed the national growth rate for the past two years. The State's real Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) growth rose from 6.5% in 2023-24 to 9.9% in 2025-26. The report showed broad-based sectoral expansion. The agricultural sector recorded 13.5% growth in the second quarter of 2025-26, while industry grew 10.6% and services 9.9%, emerging

President Murmu Gives Assent to Bill Protecting Vande Mataram

New Delhi, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday gave her assent to the Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026, making it law and extending legal protection to the national song Vande Mataram.

The amended legislation criminalises intentionally preventing the singing of Vande Mataram or disrupting an assembly engaged in its singing, giving it legal protection similar to the national anthem, Jana Gana Mana. The Lok Sabha passed the Bill on July 30, while the Rajya Sabha approved it a day earlier. The existing law prescribes imprisonment of up to three years, a fine, or both for intentionally preventing the singing of the national anthem. The government said there had previously been no specific legal provision against disrupting Vande Mataram. The amendment brings the national song within the law's scope.



The Bill noted that Constituent Assembly president Dr Rajendra Prasad had stated on January 24, 1950, that Vande Mataram, composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and associated with India's freedom struggle, should be honoured equally with Jana Gana Mana.(The Union Home Ministry has issued protocols stating that Vande Mataram will be sung first when performed with the national anthem and that all six stanzas will be used at specified official functions. It will also be sung from the Red Fort during the Independence Day function for the first time.

India-Bangladesh Ties Under Diplomatic Strain

New Delhi, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Dinesh Trivedi, returned to New Delhi a day after meeting Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in Dhaka and is learnt to have briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the discussions, including Dhaka's demand for the extradition of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. During Monday's meeting, Rahman raised the extradition issue and sought the return of suspects accused in the murder of Osman Hadi. He also stressed the need to create a conducive environment for strengthening bilateral relations. The Bangladesh Prime Minister's Press Wing said Bangladesh hoped India would expedite Hasina's extradition. Hasina has remained in India since leaving Bangladesh amid the political upheaval that led to the fall of her government. Dhaka has repeatedly sought her return, making the issue a major point of contention in bilateral ties. Meanwhile, Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) chief Parag Jain is in Dhaka on



an official visit. Jain met Bangladesh's Defence Affairs Adviser, Brigadier General (ret'd) Dr AKM Shamsul Islam, on Monday. Their discussions are expected to have covered security matters and developments of mutual concern. India and Bangladesh have traditionally cooperated in trade, connectivity, energy, border management and security. However, recent political developments have introduced new sensitivities. New Delhi is expected to raise concerns over growing anti-India activities and their possible regional security implications, while extradition and security issues are likely to remain central to upcoming diplomatic engagements.

AP Records 10.7% Growth Despite El Niño, Naidu Sets 15% Target



Amaravati, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh recorded a real Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) growth rate of 10.7% during the second quarter of 2025-26 despite the impact of El Niño, with agriculture registering the highest growth of 13.5%, followed by industry at 10.6% and services at 9.9%. The figures were presented to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu by Planning Department officials during a review of the July 2026 monthly economic report at the Camp Office on Tuesday. The report stated that the State's real GSDP growth increased from 6.5% in 2023-24 to 9.9% in 2025-26 and remained above the national growth rate for the past two years. The agriculture sector performed strongly despite weather challenges. Meat production grew 9.6%, while egg production increased 5.1%. Services witnessed significant activity in IT, transport and trade. General exports grew 10.5% to Rs.16,322 crore, while STPI exports increased 32.2%. Commercial vehicle registrations rose 51.6%. Technology integration across government departments contributed to a 21% increase in GST collections to Rs.13,282 crore. Investment inflows remained

encouraging, with mega projects worth Rs.2.88 lakh crore grounded, recording 75.4% growth. MSME investments of around Rs.60,000 crore registered 73.6% growth.

Naidu Seeks 15% Growth

Naidu directed Planning Department officials to formulate comprehensive plans to achieve the State's 15% growth target despite El Niño conditions. He stressed technology integration across departments and an approach covering State-level planning to field-level implementation. The Chief Minister noted deficient rainfall and inadequate Krishna River inflows, leaving Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar below full reservoir levels. He said Godavari floodwaters had been diverted to provide water to the Krishna Delta. With groundwater levels declining, Naidu directed departments to coordinate and prevent any fall in economic output. He called for data-based analysis and corrective action wherever gaps were identified. He instructed departments to undertake effective resource management, set measurable standards and ensure tangible results. Every government plan, he said, should contribute to

Commodore Sarvdeep Singh Dhody Takes Charge of INS Kalinga

Visakhapatnam, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau:

Commodore Sarvdeep Singh Dhody assumed command of INS Kalinga and took over as Station Commander, Naval Station Bheemunipatnam, from Commodore Anirudha Roy at a formal change of command ceremony held at INS Kalinga on Monday. Commissioned into the Indian Navy's Electrical Branch on July 1, 1998, Commodore Dhody has held several operational, technical and training appointments during his distinguished career. His afloat appointments include serving aboard INS Kirch and INS Brahmaputra. He has also served at the Naval Dockyards in Mumbai and Visakhapatnam, gaining extensive experience in technical and operational roles within the Navy. Commodore Dhody has held instructor appointments on four occasions. His training assignments include serving as Training Captain at INS Valsura, Flotilla Captain at the Indian Naval Academy, and as a Directing Staff member at the College of



Defence Management (CDM), Secunderabad. The formal change of command ceremony marked the assumption of responsibility by Commodore Dhody for INS Kalinga and Naval Station Bheemunipatnam. INS Kalinga is an important naval establishment on the Visakhapatnam coast and plays a significant role in supporting naval operations and training activities. The appointment comes as part of the Indian Navy's routine command transitions, with Commodore Dhody bringing extensive operational, technical and training experience to his new responsibilities.

Naidu Calls for Public Participation in Nation Building



Amaravati, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has called for active participation of officials, employees and the public in the government's proposed "Partners in Nation Building" programme, stressing that efficient delivery of government services

would contribute to the goals of Viksit Bharat and Swamandhra.

Naidu made the call while reviewing the functioning and monthly progress of various departments through the Real Time Governance Society (RTGS) facility at the Secretariat on Tuesday. Chief Secretary Sai Prasad and senior officials from various departments participated in the review.

Naidu said every employee and official should take responsibility for the "Partners in Nation Building" initiative and promote it among the public. He said people would actively support government programmes when their objectives and benefits were clearly explained. Referring to the response to the inauguration of Bhogapuram Airport, he said public participation was evident when the government undertook projects that benefited society. He also cited the initiative taken by DSC-2025 teachers in Kurnool as a direct example of public participation. The Chief Minister also directed officials to launch a statewide "Zero Pothole Mission" under the banner of "Road Doctor" to ensure immediate repairs to damaged roads. He said the initiative, currently being implemented on a pilot basis in some areas, should be expanded across the State. During the review, officials presented the monthly financial progress report. Naidu said the State recorded a growth rate of 10.70% in July. However, he cautioned that the impact of El Niño was expected to intensify, creating potential challenges that needed to be addressed through timely measures.

Minister Launches Rs.55 Lakh Development Works

Banaganapalle, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Roads and Buildings Minister BC Janardhan Reddy on Tuesday inaugurated development works worth Rs.55 lakh in Soudaradinne and Amadala villages of Kovelakuntla mandal in Nandyal district.

In Soudaradinne, he inaugurated Rs.10 lakh worth of internal cement concrete (CC) roads and side drains in the SC colony. In Amadala, he inaugurated Rs.10 lakh worth of CC roads and side drains in the BC colony, besides a Rs.25 lakh CC road and drainage project connecting the RO plant to the SC colony. Another Rs.10 lakh project covering CC roads and culverts in SC and BC colonies was also inaugurated. Participating in the "Intintiki Telugu Desam" programme, Janardhan Reddy interacted with residents and highlighted the coalition government's two-year welfare initiatives.

Addressing a public meeting, he said the government was implementing around 90% of its election promises despite financial challenges. He highlighted Thalliki Vandanam, pensions, Deepam, Stree Shakti and Rs.25,000 assistance under Netaanna Seva. He said Rs.45 lakh worth of works had been taken up in Amadala, while Rs.4.5 crore worth of road works were being implemented through the Roads and Buildings Department. Janardhan Reddy alleged that the previous YSRCP government neglected village

Home Minister Consoles DCP Shireen Begum's Family

Vijayawada, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha on Tuesday visited the residence of Vijayawada Traffic DCP Shireen Begum and consoled her family following the tragic death of her 24-year-old daughter Afifa in a road accident. Afifa died in an accident near the Etukuru Bypass in Guntur district while reportedly travelling towards Chirala Beach. Expressing grief over the incident, Anitha said the untimely death of a young woman was extremely painful. The Home Minister met Shireen Begum and family members and offered emotional support. She said losing a child was unbearable for any parent and conveyed her condolences to the bereaved family. Anitha enquired about the circumstances surrounding the accident and the condition of those injured. She assured the family of her support and urged them to remain strong. The Minister prayed for strength and courage for the family to overcome their grief and wished for the speedy recovery of those injured in the accident.

Minister Swamy Distributes Transponders to Fishermen

Ongole, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Social Welfare Minister Dola Sribala Veeranjanyaswamy distributed transponders to fishermen at Singarayakonda in Prakasam district on Tuesday to enhance safety while fishing at sea. The Minister said the devices would enable authorities to track fishing boats, provide cyclone and weather warnings and allow fishermen to send SOS messages during emergencies.

He said the coalition government, under Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, was committed to fishermen's welfare and safety. The government was providing pensions to fishermen from the age of 50, besides subsidised fishing nets and boats, he said. Veeranjanyaswamy said fishermen were being provided Rs.20,000 financial assistance during the annual fishing ban period. Assistance was also being extended to fishermen whose boats were damaged in accidents. He said steps were being taken to provide life jackets to fishermen venturing into the sea and strengthen safety measures further. The Minister said the Telugu Desam Party had always stood by the fishing community and assured that the government would continue measures to improve their livelihoods and safety.

CBI Arrests CGST Superintendent In Rs.1.5 Lakh Bribery Case

Vijayawada, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested Banothu Mangamma, Superintendent, CGST, Ibrahimpa tnam, Vijayawada, for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe in a tax-related matter. According to the CBI, a case was registered on August 10, 2026, following a complaint alleging that Mangamma demanded Rs.1.50 lakh from a private company owner for not issuing a demand notice towards tax liability and closing the matter. The CBI laid a trap on August 10 and allegedly caught Mangamma red-handed while accepting Rs.50,000 as part of the demanded bribe. The entire amount was recovered during the trap operation. Following the arrest, CBI officials conducted searches at premises linked to the accused public servant in Vijayawada to gather further evidence. Mangamma was taken into custody and is scheduled to be produced before the competent court in Vijayawada on August 11. The CBI is investigating the alleged demand and acceptance of the bribe and examining the related tax matter. Further details are expected as the investigation progresses.

Seed Access Road Gets Green Makeover Ahead Of Inauguration



ARN Mahesh

Amaravati: The Seed Access Road, one of the key arterial routes of Amaravati, is getting a striking green makeover ahead of its formal inauguration by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on August 13. The transformation is already visible along the corridor, with ornamental plants, shade-giving trees and landscaped stretches being added to enhance the appearance of the capital region. The Amaravati

Development Corporation (ADC) has taken up the extensive beautification works under the directions of ADC Managing Director D. Lakshmi Parthasarathi. Officials of the corporation's greenery division are overseeing the plantation and landscaping works, with special attention being given to the central median, canal-side areas and rotaries.

Around 26 varieties of plants and trees are being introduced along the road. Golden Neem and Plumeria

rubra, sourced from specialised nurseries in Kadiyam, are among the major attractions. They are being planted along the stretch between the steel bridge near Undavalli, the Guntur Channel and the major steel bridge being constructed across the Kondaveeti Vagu. Lakshmi Parthasarathi has directed officials to ensure that the greenery and landscaping complement the road infrastructure and create an attractive corridor. The ADC team has been inspecting the ongoing

works and coordinating plantation, landscaping and shifting of mature trees to complete the beautification ahead of the inauguration. The rotaries on both sides of the Buckingham Canal near Undavalli are also being developed with 21 varieties of ornamental plants, including Sterculia alata, Spider Lily, Zephyranthes, Syngonium, Black Fountain Grass, Leucophyllum, Song of India, Crossandra, Russelia, ferns, Alpinia, Calathea, Dwarf Bottlebrush, China Doll, Clusia

rosea, Jatropha, Heliconia, Ylang-ylang, Florida Fiddlewood and Black Locust. Canal-side stretches are being covered with green lawns and carefully arranged plantations. Several mature trees preserved at the ADC Translocation Centre in Ananthavaram are also being shifted to the corridor using heavy cranes. The combined greenery and landscaping are expected to give the Seed Access Road a distinctive appearance as Amaravati prepares for the inauguration.

Face-Based Attendance for Hospital Sanitation Staff Soon

Amaravati, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau:

Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav has directed officials to make face-based attendance mandatory for sanitation agency staff working in government hospitals across the state by the end of August. The Minister reviewed sanitation, security and other services at teaching, district, regional and community hospitals during a three-hour meeting held at the Health Department office in Mangalagiri on Tuesday. Hospital superintendents, senior officials and representatives of sanitation agencies attended the meeting.

Satya Kumar Yadav stressed the need for better coordination between hospital superintendents and sanitation agencies to improve cleanliness and overall patient satisfaction. He said that just as public satisfaction with doctors' attendance, medical services and availability of medicines is being monitored, cleanliness standards in government hospitals should also show measurable improvement. The Minister reviewed sanitation performance between April and July and sought explanations from officials and agencies over lower-than-expected public satisfaction levels in secondary hospitals. He also examined the sanctioned manpower, actual attendance and gaps in sanitation, security and pest-control services.



Agency representatives said that although the required number of personnel had been deployed, attendance was not being fully recorded through the Face Recognition System (FRS) due to technical and other reasons. The Minister instructed them to ensure complete FRS enrolment and attendance recording for all staff by month-end. Health Department Secretary Veerapandian directed officials to conduct weekly reviews of sanitation and security services and submit reports on decisions and follow-up action. Supervisory officers were also asked to monitor key areas within hospital premises. The meeting was attended by senior health officials, including DSH Chakradhar Babu and DME Dr Vishnuvardhan, along with representatives of service agencies.

Lepakshi Delhi Showroom Targeted For 10-Fold Growth

New Delhi, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Handicrafts Development Corporation Chairman Dr. Pasupuleti Hariprasad has called for a comprehensive marketing strategy to increase business at the Lepakshi showroom in New Delhi by at least ten times and develop it as a national-level promotion centre for Andhra Pradesh handicrafts.

Hariprasad, also a Jana Sena Party PAC member, State Joining Committee member and joint Chittoor district president, visited the showroom, reopened on July 17, and reviewed sales, product displays, marketing activities and business opportunities. He directed officials to transform the Delhi outlet into a national exhibition and promotion centre and target government and private institutions, corporates, international organisations, conferences and official events for bulk orders and gifting. He called for a dedicated bulk-order and quality packaging system and greater promotion of Lepakshi products at Central government institutions and



national events.

Hariprasad recommended appointing a marketing expert, preferably with IIM expertise, to prepare a business-development strategy, besides strengthening digital advertising, social media, e-commerce and online ordering.

He directed officials to target monthly revenue of Rs.1 crore or more, comparable to major Lepakshi outlets in Vijayawada, Hyderabad and Tirumala, and reviewed customer response and marketing challenges with staff.

AP Postal Department Makes Special Arrangements For Rakhi

Vijayawada, August 11 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Postal Department has made special arrangements for people wishing to send rakhis and gifts to brothers and sisters living abroad ahead of Rakhi Purnima on August 28.

International Parcel and Speed Post services are available through post offices and branch post offices across the State, enabling customers to send permitted festive items safely to overseas destinations. The department urged people to book consignments well in advance to ensure timely delivery and particularly appealed to those in rural areas to make use of international postal facilities available through their nearest post offices. Customers have been advised to contact post offices at the earliest for details on booking procedures, applicable charges, permitted items and delivery timelines.

M. Narasimha Swamy, Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Vijayawada Division, urged the public to make advance arrangements for international consignments.

The department said the services would help families maintain festive bonds with loved ones abroad by facilitating the timely delivery of rakhis and gifts.

APCRDA Holds Village Sabhas on Amaravati Master Plan

Amaravati, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) conducted Village Sabha meetings at Undavalli (North



East) and Uddandarayunipalem (North East Central-I) on Tuesday as part of Amaravati's ongoing planning process. The meetings focused on the Village Circulation Plan and Village Integration Plan. Officials explained the Amaravati Master Plan, proposed road networks and infrastructure development measures. Special Deputy Collectors A.G. Chinni Krishna and B. Sai Srinivas Nayak explained the integration of existing village roads with networks proposed under Land Pooling Scheme (LPS) zones, considering future connectivity requirements. APCRDA is conducting detailed surveys to map existing roads and assess connectivity. Villagers submitted suggestions and feedback, which officials assured would be considered while finalising the plans. Officials from the Planning, Development Promotion, Social Development and Estates departments, Special Deputy Collector M. Seshi Reddy and technical experts from The Urbanizer attended. The next Village Sabhas will be held at Venkatapalem at 11 am and Krishnayapalem at 2.30 pm on August 12.

Atchannaidu Announces Rs.150 Power Subsidy for Aqua Farmers



Palakollu, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

The state government will implement a power subsidy of Rs.1.50 per unit for eligible aqua farmers, irrespective of whether their farms are located in aqua or non-aqua zones, Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu said on Tuesday. Addressing an aqua farmers' gratitude meeting at Palakollu, Atchannaidu said the subsidy would be extended to eligible aqua farmers with holdings of more than 10 acres, in line with the coalition government's election promise. He said the necessary government order had already been issued and assured that all eligible farmers would receive the benefit. Water Resources Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu, who presided over the meeting, said the subsidy would help aqua farmers save around Rs.84,000 per acre. The government would bear an estimated financial burden of Rs.1,100 crore

towards the subsidy, he said. Electricity Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar said the government was spending nearly Rs.500 crore on modernising power infrastructure in the region to address low-voltage problems faced by aqua and other farmers. He announced plans for a new sub-station at Narsapur and said land acquisition for a substation at Palakollu had been completed. He said the government was providing free electricity to nearly 22 lakh farmers across Andhra Pradesh and had not increased power tariffs during the past two years. Assembly Deputy Speaker Kanumuru Raghu Rama Krishna Raju stressed the need to introduce modern technology in the aqua sector to overcome labour shortages and improve productivity. West Godavari District Collector Chadalavada Nagarani said the subsidy under GO 57 would benefit around 13,000 existing beneficiaries and another 3,500 aqua farmers in the district.

JSP MPs Seek JNVs In Every AP District

New Delhi, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Rajya Sabha member L. Ramesh and Kakinada MP Tangella Uday Srinivas urged Union Education Minister Pralhad Joshi to sanction Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) in every Andhra Pradesh district, including newly formed districts.

The MPs met Joshi in New Delhi on Tuesday and submitted a representation seeking phased commencement of admissions and academic activities from 2027-28.

They said district reorganisation had left several areas without Navodaya schools, limiting quality education opportunities for talented rural students. They noted that Education Minister Nara Lokesh had already submitted proposals to the Centre for establishing JNVs across the State.

The MPs said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan were committed to improving rural education. They also



informed Joshi that the State government was ready to provide free land, temporary buildings and basic infrastructure as required under Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti norms.

They sought a joint review meeting involving the Union Education Ministry, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, the State government and MPs during the ongoing Parliament monsoon session.

They said JNVs in every district would strengthen rural education and support NEP 2020 and Viksit Bharat 2047.

Air India Vijayawada-Delhi Flight Cancelled

Vijayawada : Air India flight AI-2904 from Vijayawada to New Delhi, scheduled to depart at 8.45 pm on Tuesday, was cancelled following a technical snag, according to Vijayawada Airport authorities. The flight had initially been delayed to 9.45 pm as efforts were made to rectify the problem, but was subsequently cancelled. Reports said the aircraft had encountered the technical issue during its inbound Delhi-Vijayawada journey and landed safely at Gannavaram Airport. Around 132 passengers were affected, with Air India making alternative travel arrangements.

Government Whip Pidugu Hariprasad Hospitalised

Vijayawada : Government Whip Pidugu Hariprasad was admitted to the AYUSH Hospital in Vijayawada after falling unwell. Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan visited the hospital, spoke to Hariprasad and wished him a speedy recovery. He also spoke to the treating doctors about his health condition. Civil Supplies Minister Nandendla Manohar accompanied the Deputy Chief Minister.

Minister Kollu Ravindra Challenges YSRCP Over DSC Controversy

Amaravati, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Mines, Geology and Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra on Tuesday challenged YSRCP leaders to come to the Assembly and debate the ongoing DSC recruitment issue instead of creating what he termed unnecessary controversy. Ravindra accused former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and YSRCP leaders of politicising the DSC recruit-

ment process despite having failed to fill a single teacher post during their five-year tenure. He said the coalition government was fulfilling its election promise by conducting a Mega DSC to provide employment to 16,300 candidates. The Minister alleged that YSRCP leaders were now making baseless accusations despite having previously kept unemployed youth waiting in the name of DSC recruitment. Ravindra claimed that



people were observing the protests and demonstrations organised by the

opposition and alleged that genuine DSC aspirants were absent from

several such programmes. He also criticised YSRCP leaders for organising bike rallies and hunger strikes, calling them political dramas. The Minister said the coalition government had implemented its election promises, including pensions, Thalliki Vandanam, Annadata Sukhibhava, free LPG cylinders and free bus travel for eligible beneficiaries. He alleged that the DSC recruitment process had faced around 350 legal

cases and claimed that courts had dismissed the cases filed against the process. Despite this, he accused YSRCP leaders of continuing their protests. Ravindra said the government was committed to creating employment opportunities for youth and warned opposition leaders against misleading job aspirants. He challenged YSRCP leaders to raise the DSC issue in the Assembly if they had genuine concerns and participate in a detailed debate.

AP Records 10.7% Growth Despite El Niño, Naidu Sets 15% Target

Continue

increasing the State's growth rate.

Focus On Prices And Exports

Naidu suggested forming a committee to ensure that the common man does not face any additional price burden. He also called for a contingency plan covering water availability, agricultural value addition and other critical areas. He stressed protecting international exports and directed officials to monitor progress through reports at district, constituency and mandal levels. He asked officials to take all necessary measures to achieve the 15% growth target while maintaining financial discipline and implementing welfare programmes. Principal Secretary, Finance and Planning Piyush Kumar, Executive Director, Planning Department V.R. Alaparthi, CMO officials Rajamouli and Pradyumna, Dr. Shanthi Priya Pandey, Special Secretary to Government, Planning Department, and B. Gopal, Director, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, attended.

Women Drivers Planned For Thalli-Bidda Express Services

Continue

pregnancy period, including antenatal check-ups, anaemia treatment support and transportation of high-risk pregnancy cases to hospitals. The government was integrating 102, 108 and 104 services into a comprehensive healthcare system. While 102 focuses on maternal and child care, 108 provides emergency services and 104 mobile medical units conduct 41 types of medical tests free in villages. A 'Sanjeevani' platform is also being developed for follow-up care. Satya Kumar said 108 ambulances had increased from 602 to 733, including around 170 advanced life-support vehicles, while response times had improved in urban, rural and tribal areas.

Refuting YSRCP criticism over 102 service costs, he said the new vehicles offered better facilities and monitoring. He alleged that during the previous government, payments were made for 500 vehicles despite fewer than 300 being available. GPS systems would now track each vehicle's location, departure time and destination. He rejected allegations that NTR Vaidya Seva had been stopped, saying it had only been renamed from Aarogya Sri. He said Rs.9,000 crore was spent between 2019 and 2024, while the Alliance government spent about Rs.7,000 crore in two years. Satya Kumar also challenged YSRCP over DSC recruitment allegations, calling for an open debate based on evidence. He said around 12,000 appointments had been made in medical, nursing and paramedical departments since the Alliance government assumed office. Health and Family Welfare Commissioner Chakradhar Babu, District Collector Kruthika Shukla, MLA Arvind Babu, National Health Mission State Project Manager J. Vijayalakshmi, operating agency representative Ranganadha Babu, officials and public representatives attended.

AP Economy Sustains Strong Growth Momentum

Continue

as key pillars of the State economy. Industrial activity also strengthened, with industrial production increasing 8.2% compared to June 2026. Mineral output rose 17.9%, while electricity consumption increased 22.2%. Spice production surged 304% to 89,383 metric tonnes during April-June, while vegetable production grew 44.8%. The allied sectors also registered gains, with meat production increasing 9.6%, egg production 5.1% and marine shrimp production 17%. The services sector continued to witness strong activity in information technology, transport and commerce. General exports grew 10.5% to Rs.16,322 crore, while Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) exports increased 32.2%. Commercial vehicle purchases rose 51.6%, indicating stronger movement in commercial and logistics activity. Tax mobilisation also remained robust. GST collections increased 21% to Rs.13,282 crore, with the report attributing the improvement partly to technology integration in tax administration. Both tax and non-tax revenues recorded significant growth, supporting the government's efforts to maintain fiscal discipline while implementing welfare programmes. Investment activity remained particularly encouraging. Mega-project investments worth Rs.2.88 lakh crore recorded a 75.4% increase in projects reaching the ground-breaking stage, while investments in the MSME sector grew 73.6%. Tourism also contributed to the expanding services economy. During July, the State recorded 3.10 crore domestic tourist visits and 35,951 foreign tourist visits. The report indicates that the coalition government is combining strong economic growth with fiscal discipline and continued implementation of public welfare programmes. The broad-based expansion across productive sectors, rising investment and stronger revenue mobilisation point to sustained economic activity in Andhra Pradesh during 2026-27.

AP Sets Example in AI-Driven Tax Administration

Continue

in identifying tax-related cases, preparing briefs for government counsel and monitoring cases before appellate authorities, GSTAT, the High Court and the Supreme Court. Pankaj Kumar Singh described Andhra Pradesh's initiative as an "exemplary model" for other states, saying AI and data analytics would further strengthen tax revenue and administration.

Appalaraju's Wife Seeks Reopening of Bhogayya Accident Case

Srikakulam, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau:

Sridevi, wife of former Andhra Pradesh Minister Seediri Appalaraju, has demanded that the Cheppala Bhogayya road accident case be reopened and investigated independently, asserting that the law must be applied equally to everyone irrespective of political affiliation. Addressing the media in Srikakulam on Tuesday, Sridevi said Bhogayya died in a road accident near Korasavada in Pathapatnam constituency on December 21, 2024. She said Bhogayya's family had alleged that the son of a TDP MLA was driving the vehicle involved in the accident, while the case was registered against another person. She demanded a probe into who was actually driving the vehicle and how the case was handled by the authorities. She also sought an inquiry into allegations of threatening calls received by Bhogayya's family. Sridevi said the financial assistance and other support reportedly promised to Bhogayya's family had not been provided. She claimed that the family was yet to receive the promised Rs 5 lakh assistance, pension and other benefits. She alleged that different standards of justice were being applied in cases involving her family. According to her, what she described as an ordinary road accident was being portrayed as a murder for political reasons, while her 18-year-old son was being targeted and her husband was arrested and sent to jail. "Fight my husband politically, but do not drag children into politics," she said. Recalling Appalaraju's work as a doctor and his tenure as a minister, Sridevi called for equal application of the law. She said she would continue to stand with Bhogayya's family until justice was delivered.

YSRCP Targets Government Over Aqua Policy, DSC Recruitment

Tadepalli, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Aqua Farmers Face Power Factor Burden YSRCP Tadepalligudem constituency coordinator and former APSADA Vice-Chairman Vaddi Raghuram accused the Chandrababu Naidu-led coalition government of burdening aqua farmers through the Power Factor condition under GO 57. Raghuram alleged that maintaining a Power Factor of 0.92 to 0.95 until March 2027 could force farmers to spend nearly Rs.50,000 per hectare on equipment, creating a collective burden of around Rs.1,000 crore across nearly two lakh hectares. He demanded withdrawal of the condition and implementation of the promised Rs.1.50 per unit power subsidy, including adjustment of dues from June for the remaining 12,000 connections. He recalled that the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy government brought 50,800 of 64,000 connections under the aqua zone and provided nearly Rs.3,640 crore in subsidies over five years. He said rising feed costs and declining shrimp prices were adding to farmers' difficulties.

Narendra Demands CBI Probe Into DSC

YSRCP State Spokesperson Vangaveeti Narendra demanded an immediate CBI inquiry into alleged irregularities in Mega DSC-2025 and sought Education Minister Nara Lokesh's resignation. Narendra cited concerns over centralised recruitment, outsourcing personnel handling confidential examination processes, Sports Quota exemptions and allegedly controversial certificates. "If nothing wrong happened, why is the government afraid of a CBI probe?" he asked. He alleged that restrictions were being imposed on protests following YSRCP's 74-day agitation and demanded clearance of nearly Rs.9,000 crore in Vidya Deevana and Vasathi Deevana dues besides the promised Rs.3,000 monthly unemployment allowance. Both leaders warned of sustained protests if their demands were not addressed.

Industrialists Facing Threats, Says Veera Sekhar Reddy

Tadepalli, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau:

YSRCP spokesperson Veera Sekhar Reddy accused the Chandrababu Naidu-led coalition government of creating fear and insecurity among industrialists through alleged extortion, threats and harassment, claiming that some business units were reconsidering operations in Andhra Pradesh. Addressing the media in Tadepalli on Tuesday, Reddy alleged that ruling party leaders were demanding money from industrialists and obstructing factory operations when demands were not met. He alleged that UltraTech Cement faced interference in Jammalamadugu, including disruption of raw-material supplies, cases and intimidation of workers. He claimed UltraTech, Zuari, L&T, Dalmia, Sagar, Chettinad Sri and Bhavyta had faced similar pressure. Reddy alleged that Bharathi Cements in Yerraguntla was also targeted, with workers allegedly threatened and vehicles carrying raw limestone stopped. He said the company had provided direct and indirect employment to nearly 15,000 people over 17 years. He criticised the police for allegedly failing to act against those responsible while arresting protesters. Reddy claimed investments worth around Rs.12,890 crore involving Coca-Cola, Ginfra, Jupiter Renewable Energy and Tata Power had left the State. He alleged that Rs.1.20 lakh crore investments came during YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's tenure, against around Rs.6,500 crore under the present government, and demanded an end to alleged threats and bribe demands.

YSRCP MPs Seeks Halt to Mining Near Panchadharla

pend alleged illegal and unauthorised gravel quarrying around Panchadharla in Visakhapatnam district. The delegation met Kishan Reddy in New Delhi and raised concerns over large-scale quarrying near the Dhanadibbalu Buddhist archaeological site, protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and the ancient Sri Dharmalingeswara Swamy Temple. The leaders said indiscriminate excavation and

quarrying threatened the archaeological landscape and could damage the area's historical and cultural significance. They said the Dhanadibbalu Buddhist site dates to the Satavahana period of the 1st Century CE, while the Sri Dharmalingeswara Swamy Temple is believed to date to the 10th Century CE. They alleged that quarrying had progressed dangerously close to the protected site and warned that blasting and deep

excavation could damage archaeological remains, the temple and Panchadharla Hill's geological stability, besides affecting groundwater and natural drainage. The delegation sought an expert team to inspect the area, verify the legality of mining operations and determine whether extraction exceeded sanctioned boundaries, permitted depths or authorised limits. They urged action if violations were established.

YSRCP Demands CBI Probe into Dr Priyanka's Death

Rajahmundry, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Former MP and YSRCP leader Margani Bharat alleged that the coalition government was attempting to suppress facts surrounding the death of Dr Priyanka in Rajahmundry and demanded a CBI inquiry into the case. Addressing the media at the YSRCP office on Tuesday, Bharat questioned the sequence of events between August 3, when the incident occurred, and August 6, when the accused were reportedly shown as arrested. He demanded details of those who allegedly sheltered the accused, their call records and CCTV footage tracking their movements after they left Prasad Aditya Mall. Bharat questioned why police initially treated the incident as a minor accident and registered relatively less serious sections. He also sought an explanation over the alleged declaration of the case as a hit-

and-run within 24 hours and questioned whether local police officials and political leaders had followed the same narrative. He alleged that the local MLA attempted to protect those involved and questioned why no action had been taken against the Prakash Nagar CI over his handling of the case. Bharat also raised concerns over alleged attempts to remove YSRCP social media posts relating to the incident and sought clarification from the government. Comparing the case with the Nirbhaya and Abhaya cases, he questioned the alleged silence of the Chief Minister and Home Minister until Priyanka's father publicly sought justice. Bharat demanded a CBI probe, a separate inquiry into the Prakash Nagar CI, a high-level committee and immediate intervention by the Women's Commission. He warned that the YSRCP would approach the High Court if necessary and continue its fight for justice.

YS Jagan to Meet YSRCP MLAs, MLCs on August 12

Tadepalli, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party president and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will hold a meeting with the party's MLAs and MLCs at the YSRCP Central Office in Tadepalli on Wednesday, August 12, at 10:30 a.m. The meeting is expected to focus on the latest political developments in Andhra Pradesh, key public issues and the party's upcoming programmes and political action plan. Jagan will review the prevailing political situation in the state and discuss issues affecting the people with the party's legislators. He is also expected to outline the

party's strategy and guide MLAs and MLCs on the course of action to be adopted in the coming days.

The meeting will also focus on strengthening the party's engagement with the public and ensuring that issues concerning people are effectively taken up at the appropriate forums.

Party sources said Jagan is likely to give directions to legislators on coordinating the party's programmes and highlighting public issues across their respective constituencies.

The meeting comes amid ongoing political activity in the state, with the YSRCP preparing its organisational and political programmes in the coming weeks.

PPP Policy Will Loot Public Assets: Kurasala Kannababu

Kakinada, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau:

Former Andhra Pradesh Minister Kurasala Kannababu on Tuesday alleged that the state government's PPP-2026 policy was aimed at handing over public assets and essential services to private companies while making people pay through user charges. Addressing the media in Kakinada, Kannababu said projects worth nearly Rs 1.23 lakh crore had been proposed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) infrastructure pipeline, with around Rs 1,500 crore earmarked for Viability Gap Funding (VGF) during 2026-27. He questioned the rationale behind providing land, financial assistance, loans and concessions to private companies and subsequently allowing them to recover investments by imposing charges on the public. According to Kannababu, the PPP model was being extended to sectors including roads, ports, education, healthcare, drink-

ing water, irrigation, sanitation, housing, markets, bus terminals and parks. He warned that the privatisation of essential services could place an additional financial burden on poor and middle-class families. The former minister demanded complete transparency in the implementation of the policy. He sought disclosure of details of every PPP project, including the land allotted and its market value, private investment, government contribution, VGF support, tax concessions and proposed user charges. He also demanded that Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), financial models, land valuations and concession agreements be made available to the public. Kannababu called upon the government to withdraw the PPP-2026 policy or conduct a public debate before proceeding with major projects. He warned that the YSR Congress Party would strongly oppose any move to transfer public assets and essential services to private interests.

Minister Savitha Says Jagan Afraid of Nara Lokesh



Guntakal, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

BC Welfare Minister Savitha said YSR Congress Party president and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy was afraid of Education Minister Nara Lokesh and was avoiding a debate on the Mega DSC recruitment. Speaking after inaugurating the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule BC Gurukula School building constructed at a cost of Rs.18 crore in Guntakal, Savitha said YSRCP leaders were making false allegations of irregularities in the Mega DSC recruitment despite the process having been completed. She challenged Jagan to attend the Assembly and produce evidence if he had any proof of wrongdoing in the recruitment process. "If there are any irregularities in the Mega DSC, let us come to the Assembly and debate them," she said. Savitha alleged that Jagan and YSRCP

leaders had no moral right to question Nara Lokesh and criticised the opposition for resorting to what she described as petty politics. The Minister said the coalition government was giving priority to education and had launched 10 new Mahatma Jyotiba Phule (MJP) BC Gurukula schools during the current academic year. Five of the new institutions were established in Rayalaseema and five in North Andhra, she said. The Guntakal school was established keeping in view the sizable BC population in the constituency, Savitha said. She also said the government was committed to improving educational opportunities for students from backward communities and providing them with better facilities through residential schools. Guntakal MLA Gummanur Jaya Ram participated in the inauguration programme along with local officials and other public representatives.

Balashowry Seeks Focus On Farm Incomes, Indebtedness

Machilipatnam, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Machilipatnam MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry stressed that reducing farm indebtedness and improving agricultural incomes should remain key priorities, as the Centre revealed that the average monthly income of agricultural households in Andhra Pradesh stood at Rs.10,480 in 2019.

The data was provided by Union Minister of State for Agriculture Ramnath Thakur in the Lok Sabha in response to a question raised by Balashowry. The figures are based on the latest Situation Assessment Survey conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO).The Centre said the proportion of indebted agricultural households in Andhra Pradesh increased marginally from 92.9% in 2012-13 to 93.2% in 2018-19. Updated data for 2024-25 and 2025-26 is not yet available.

Thakur said the Centre was extending policy and budgetary support through schemes covering agricultural productivity, cultivation costs, crop diversification, remunerative prices, income support, institution-



al credit, crop insurance, irrigation, infrastructure, marketing and mechanisation.

Under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme, farmers receive short-term agricultural loans through Kisan Credit Cards at 7% interest, with a 3% prompt repayment incentive reducing the effective rate to 4%. Institutional agricultural credit rose from Rs.8.5 lakh crore in 2014-15 to over Rs.28 lakh crore in 2025-26, while credit to small and marginal farmers reached Rs.14.77 lakh crore in 2024-25.

Under PM-KISAN, eligible farmer families receive Rs.6,000 annually through DBT, with more than Rs.4.47 lakh crore disbursed through 23 instalments. The Centre also cited crop insurance and MSP measures to strengthen farm incomes.

Server Slowness Disrupts Passport Services

Vijayawada, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Passport services were disrupted at the Passport Seva Kendra in Vijayawada on Tuesday due to a slow server, leaving applicants waiting for hours and causing considerable inconvenience. Applicants said the server was not functioning properly, resulting in delays in processing their applications. Several people who arrived at the centre in the morning were reportedly forced to wait for extended periods as officials struggled to process applications amid the technical issue.

Applicants also expressed frustration over being unable to enter the centre despite having confirmed appointment slots. Those who had travelled to Vijayawada from distant areas said they were particularly affected by the disruption, as they had made spe-

cial arrangements to attend their scheduled appointments. Some applicants with appointments scheduled close to one another were worried that the delay could cause them to miss their allotted slots.The prolonged waiting also created uncertainty among applicants who had planned their travel around their appointment timings.

Applicants urged the authorities to resolve the technical problem at the earliest and ensure that all those with scheduled appointments are provided passport-related services without losing their allotted slots.They also appealed to officials to make alternative arrangements or provide necessary assistance to applicants if the server issue continues, so that people who have travelled from other locations do not have to make repeated visits to the Passport Seva Kendra.

Small Newspaper Editors' Association Moves High Court Over Accreditation

Amaravati, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

The Editors' Association has approached the Andhra Pradesh High Court seeking protection of the rights and interests of small and regional newspapers, particularly over issues related to media accreditation.The association has raised concerns over alleged discrimination against small publications under the e-panelment process and questioned restrictions on accreditation facilities. It maintained that accreditation is a legitimate right of eligible media organisations and should not be denied based on the size or circulation of a publication.With the matter coming up for hearing in the High Court on Tuesday, the association said it would continue its legal battle to safeguard the interests of small newspapers and their editors.The editors questioned whether publishing a newspaper had become a reason for discrimination and sought equal treatment for regional publications. They also demanded transparency in the accreditation and e-panelment processes.The association said it would pursue the matter before the judiciary until appropriate relief is secured for small newspapers.

TDP Conducts Door-to-Door Welfare Campaign

Challapalli, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

The Challapalli mandal unit of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) organised the "Rendella Nammakam - Abhivrudhi, Sankkshema" (Two Years of Trust - Development and Welfare) programme at Narayana Rao Nagar, covering Booth No. 68.As part of the campaign, TDP leaders and workers went door-to-door and distributed pamphlets explaining the welfare schemes and development initiatives being implemented by the coalition government. The party leaders said the campaign was intended to inform people about the government's achievements during its first two years and strengthen awareness about welfare measures reaching beneficiaries.

Challapalli Mandal TDP president Morla Rambabu participated in the programme along with Corporation directors Paidi Pamula Krishna akumari and Paidi Pamula Swapna.Krishna district Telugu Yuvatha vice-president and cluster in-charge Morla Shiva, unit in-charge Patan Jilani, co-option member Shaik Nabi Gori, Medikondla Ravibabu, Shaik Bude, Paidi Pamula Rajendra, Bavisetty Kanakadurga and Kiluru Omkaram were among those who took part in the door-to-door campaign.Party representatives urged residents to make use of eligible welfare schemes and said the TDP-led coalition government would continue its focus on development and publicwelfare.

SP Vidya Sagar Urges Students to Stay Away From Drugs

Machilipatnam, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Krishna District Superintendent of Police V. Vidya Sagar Naidu urged students to exercise self-restraint and think carefully before getting into habits that could harm their health, families and future.Addressing a "Nasha Mukta Bharat Yuva" awareness programme at Andhra Jateeya Vidya Parishad in Machilipatnam, the SP said peer pressure and the desire to experiment with new experiences often push students towards harmful addictions. He advised them to stay away from friendships that encourage bad habits.Vidya Sagar warned that under the law, not only consumption

of narcotic substances but also possessing them or assisting in their transportation could lead to criminal action and severe punishment.He appealed to NCC cadets participating in the Nasha Mukta Bharat awareness rally to act as a barrier between good and harmful influences in society. Students should maintain discipline, pursue higher goals and make use of opportunities available for their social and economic development, he said. NCC 16th Battalion Commanding Officer Colonel Rupesh Awasthi said NCC cadets were setting an example through discipline and participation in national development initiatives. He highlighted their involvement in programmes such as Har Ghar

Tiranga, Nasha Mukta Bharat, TB Mukta Bharat and Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam.Central Bureau of Communication Assistant Director R. Ramesh Chandra said an active and healthy youth population was essential for building a developed India. Devadaya Department Assistant Commissioner Lalitha, Andhra Jateeya Vidya Parishad Correspondent P. Kutumba Rao and Eagle Wing officials participated. Inspector P. Rambabu explained the Eagle Wing's activities and helpline facilities. Students also took a pledge to stay away from narcotics and participated in a Har Ghar Tiranga rally, carrying placards and raising slogans against drug addiction.



VMC Turns Garbage Spots into Attractive Selfie Points

Vijayawada, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) has launched an initiative to transform frequently used garbage dumping spots into attractive selfie points as part of efforts to improve cleanliness and beautify the city.

VMC Commissioner Dhyana Chandra inspected several locations across the city on Tuesday, including MG Road, Tickle Road, Pinna-maneni Polyclinic Road, Shivaramakrishnaiah Street, K. Venkaiah Street, Gayatrinagar Main Road, NH Service Road, NTR Circle, Krishnaveni School Road, High School Road,

Pantakalava Road, Nirmala School Road and NH-Benz Circle.As part of the initiative, the Garbage Vulnerable Point (GVP) at Shivarama krishnaiah Street is being developed into a visually appealing selfie point. The project is being implemented with the support of the All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIILSG), which is serving as the knowledge partner for Swachha Andhra Corporation. Officials said the objective is to identify garbage-prone locations, beautify them and create public awareness about maintaining cleanliness while making neighbourhoods more attractive.During his inspection, Dhyana Chandra reviewed drain and outfall

drain works, sanitation arrangements, road conditions and surrounding areas. He directed officials to complete works quickly, maintain quality standards and ensure that residents face no inconvenience.The Commissioner also inspected the Anna Canteen at High School Road and instructed staff to immediately clean unclean fans and maintain hygiene. He stressed that food quality must be monitored regularly and that there should be no compromise in the quality of food served to the public.Zonal Commissioner K. Shammie, Dr Gopal Naik, DDH Chandrasekhar, Assistant City Planner Mohan Babu and AIILSG officials participated in the inspection.



Durga Temple Annadanam Staff Offer Ashada Sare to Kanaka Durga



Vijayawada, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

As part of the ongoing Ashada month festivities, officials and

staff of the Annadanam Department of the Sri Durga

Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam on Indrakiladri

offered Ashada Sare to Goddess Kanaka Durga on Tuesday with devotion and traditional rituals. Temple Trust Board Chairman Radhakrishna and Executive Officer Seena Naik attended the programme as chief guests. The offering ceremony was conducted under the supervision of Annadanam Department Assistant Executive Officer Tirumaleshwar Rao and Superintendent Hema. Annadanam clerks Ganta Ramesh and Praneeth, along with cooks, workers and helpers, participated in large numbers. Amid traditional mangala vadyams, the staff presented a saree, sare, bangles, turmeric and kumkum to the presiding deity and performed special prayers. Speaking on the occasion, the temple chairman and EO appreciated the Annadanam Department staff for coming together and organising the

traditional offering to Goddess Kanaka Durga. They said the department's employees were continuously serving devotees by providing annaprasadam and praised their collective efforts in arranging the Ashada Sare as a mark of devotion to the Goddess. The temple authorities expressed their wish that the blessings of Goddess Kanaka Durga would always remain upon the Annadanam staff and their families and bring prosperity and well-being to them. Following the rituals, the participating staff members were given theertha prasadam. The programme reflected the temple staff's devotion and commitment to preserving traditional practices during the Ashada month celebrations. The event was conducted in a spiritual atmosphere with the participation of Annadanam Department personnel and temple officials.

Joint Collector Launches New Thalli-Bidda Express 102 Vehicles

Machilipatnam, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Machilipatnam Joint Collector Mallarapu Naveen formally launched the newly introduced "Thalli-Bidda Express" (102) vehicles at the Collectorate on Tuesday, aimed at strengthening safe and timely transport services for pregnant women and lactating mothers.

The initiative is particularly focused on women living in rural and remote areas, providing them with reliable transportation for maternal and newborn healthcare services. The newly launched vehicles are expected to improve access to emergency healthcare and facilitate timely referrals of mothers and newborns to other hospitals whenever required. Officials said the service would help strengthen the existing maternal and child healthcare transport system by ensuring



that beneficiaries can reach healthcare facilities safely and without unnecessary delays. The programme was organised as part of efforts to make essential maternal and newborn healthcare services more accessible to people, particularly those residing in areas where transportation facilities are limited.Speaking during the launch, officials highlighted the importance of timely transportation in maternal and newborn healthcare, particularly during medical emergencies

and referral situations.DMHO Dr P.L. Dayakar, DCHS Dr Sheshu Kumar, NTR Vaidya Seva District Coordinator Dr Satish, other programme officers and healthcare staff participated in the launch event. The officials said the Thalli-Bidda Express vehicles would provide additional support to the healthcare system by facilitating transportation for pregnant women, new mothers and newborns and strengthening emergency referral services across the district.

APCLF Seeks JPC Review Of Proposed FCRA Amendments

Vijayawada, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Christian Leaders Forum (APCLF) State Chairman Oliver Roy urged the Centre to refer the proposed amendments to the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for detailed discussion before introducing the bill in Parliament. Addressing a press conference in Vijayawada on Tuesday, Roy said Christian organisations and NGOs in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were concerned about provisions in the proposed legislation, scheduled to be introduced on Wednesday. He said around 350 Christian organisations in Andhra Pradesh could be affected if the bill was



passed in its present form. Roy, who also represents the AP and Telangana NGOs federation, said views of NGOs from all states should be considered. He claimed 10 lakh to 20 lakh beneficiaries could be directly or indirectly affected. He expressed concern over provisions allegedly allowing cancellation of FCRA

certificates without adequate inquiry or due process and sought clarity on organisational assets. Former Andhra Pradesh RTI Commissioner Samuel Jonathan said Christian organisations had contributed to education, healthcare and social welfare for decades, including during the 1977 Diviseema cyclone and tsunami.



Organic FarmingAt Ponnavaaram, the Collector urged farmers to adopt organic farming, dryland crops and crop diversification to address possible water shortages. She inspected an organic farm, Bio-Resource Centre and PACS and

encouraged farmers to use organic manure and the APAHMS app for fertiliser supplies. Nandigama RDO Gaddipati Anil Kumar, Tahsildar Palaparthi Ravikumar and MPDO Shekhar participated in the visits.

Poor Planning Leaves Chirala Roads Choked for Five Years



Chandrasekhar Malla

Chirala: Residents of Chirala have expressed frustration over the municipality's failure to resolve the town's long-pending drainage problems, alleging that poorly planned works and temporary measures have worsened

the situation. Several key roads, including the route from Masjid Centre to Kothapeta and the road from Perala Sivalayam towards the high school, have been closed for drainage works. Routes connecting Chirala with Kothapeta have also been affected, causing severe inconven-



ience to commuters.

The Masjid Centre road is particularly important as it provides access to the government hospital, private hospitals, educational institutions and colleges. Patients, students and daily commuters are reportedly facing

difficulties reaching their destinations. Residents said drainage leakage had damaged the road for nearly five years, while earlier works failed to provide a permanent solution. They attributed the recurring problem to inadequate

planning, poor-quality works and delays in execution. Drainage clearance works near the Government Hospital road have been underway for the past 10 days following public complaints. However, residents alleged that progress remained slow despite the importance of the route. Similar delays were reported on the Perala High School road. Residents urged the local MLA to intervene, review the works with municipal officials and ensure their speedy completion. They also sought a comprehensive drainage plan to prevent recurring waterlogging and road damage and demanded that major roads be reopened at the earliest.

Ayyanna Patrudu Launches Thalli-Bidda Express' Service

Narsipatnam, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Legislative Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu said the relaunched 'Thalli-Bidda' transport service would provide safe and convenient transportation to pregnant women and new mothers, particularly in rural areas. The service was launched at NTR Government Hospital in Narsipatnam by Chintakayala Padmavathi, wife of Ayyanna Patrudu. The Speaker said seven vehicles had been allocated to

the Narsipatnam area, with one stationed at Nakkapalli for emergencies and six in Narsipatnam. Beneficiaries can call the 102 toll-free number to arrange transport. He urged ASHA workers to create awareness about the service and said a separate room was being arranged at the hospital for blood tests. Nathavaram-Tandava Road Opened Ayyanna Patrudu inaugurated a seven-kilometre Nathavaram-Tandava road constructed by the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department at a



cost of Rs.3.5 crore. He later released water from the Tandava Reservoir for the ayacut after performing special prayers and Ganga Harathi.

He directed police to seize tractors fitted with iron wheels using asphalt roads, saying they were damaging costly roads. He said the government

would provide three drones to each mandal for pesticide spraying and assured farmers that there would be no shortage of urea and other fertilisers.

The Speaker said Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan had sanctioned Rs.16 crore for 136 metal roads in Nathavaram mandal. Development works worth Rs.70.44 crore had been undertaken in the mandal, while Rs.48 lakh was distributed to 75 beneficiaries through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. DSP Srinivas, RDO V.V. Ramana, Market Committee Chairman Gavreddy Venkataratnam, TDP District General Secretary Lalam Kasi Naidu, Janasena Constituency In-charge Suryachandra and others attended.

MLA Takes Cycle to Doorsteps in 'Two Years of Trust' Campaign



Eluru, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Eluru MLA and TDP district president Badeti Chanti said people across Andhra Pradesh were living peacefully under the coalition government and accused YSRCP leaders of attempting to create unrest through disruptive activities. As part of the TDP's "Two Years of Trust - Development and

Welfare" campaign, Chanti conducted a door-to-door outreach programme at Shanivarapupeta in Eluru's 25th division. In a symbolic gesture, he rode a bicycle from Amaravati Circle to Shanivarapupeta and later offered prayers at the Siddhi Vinayaka temple. The MLA visited households, distributed pamphlets on government welfare and development programmes and enquired whether residents were receiving scheme benefits. He also visited a handloom unit, interacted with weavers and operated a loom. Chanti said around Rs.7

crore had been provided through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund and steps were being taken to sanction housing loans for 10 economically weaker families locally. Targeting the YSRCP, he alleged that its leaders were creating disturbances over the Mega DSC issue despite lacking knowledge about the examination. He also criticised an alleged unauthorised bike rally and claimed DSC aspirants were not participating in the party's protests. He said the coalition government was prioritising peace while pursuing development and welfare initiatives.

Future Kids Global School To Host 'Quantum Euphoria'

Rajamahendravaram, Aug 11 | TPN, Bureau

Future Kids Global School in Rajamahendravaram will organise a two-day science and educational fair, "Quantum Euphoria," on August 15 and 16, featuring more than 100 working models and over 300 science projects. School Managing Director Ravibabu announced the programme on Tuesday, saying the fair aims to move students beyond textbook learning and promote practical knowledge, scientific curiosity and

research-oriented thinking. The exhibition will feature emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), quantum computing, robotics, drones and radar vehicles. More than 300 projects have been developed around the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), connecting classroom learning with real-world challenges. Ravibabu said rapid technological and social changes expected between 2020 and 2050 made practical knowledge increasingly important.



Science fairs provide students opportunities to explore ideas and show-

case innovations, he said. Cultural programmes will include nine English

shows, eight Telugu plays featuring Burakatha and four to five Hindi plays.

Entry will be free for students and the public.

Constable Wins Gold, Bronze At National Police Games



Bapatla, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Bapatla district police constable V. Narendra brought recognition to the department by winning gold and bronze medals at the 11th All India Police and Fire Games in Australia in March 2027. Narendra won gold in Penchak Silat in the above-110 kg category and bronze in Wushu in the above-100 kg category at the national-level competition conducted by the Central Industrial Security Force at GMCB Indoor Stadium, Gachibowli,

Hyderabad, from July 23 to 30. His Wushu bronze is reportedly the first national-level medal in the discipline won by an Andhra Pradesh Police member. He has now secured seven national medals in two years. Bapatla Superintendent of Police B. Umamaheswar felicitated Narendra on Tuesday and praised his achievements. He encouraged police personnel to pursue sports for fitness and stress relief and assured continued support for sporting talent. AR DSP Krishnam Raju, Admin RI Mouluddin and other officials attended.

NDA Leaders Vow Stringent Action In Priyanka Death Case

Rajamahendravaram, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

NDA alliance leaders in Rajamahendravaram on Tuesday assured complete support to the family of young doctor Priyanka, who died in a car accident in the city, and vowed to pursue the case until the accused face stringent punishment. At a joint press conference, TDP, BJP and Jana Sena leaders said the government had announced Rs.20 lakh ex-gratia for Priyanka's family, while GSL Medical College management had announced another Rs.20 lakh. The government had also borne medical expenses exceeding Rs.10 lakh, they said. Rajamahendravaram City MLA Adireddy Vasu, Rural MLA Gorantla Butchaiah Chowdary, East Godavari TDP president and RUDA chairman Boddur Venkataramana Chowdary, Anaparthi MLA Nallamilli Ramakrishna Reddy and senior TDP leader Ganni Krishna



addressed the media. The leaders said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had directed authorities to pursue the case through a fast-track court and seek severe punishment, including life imprisonment or the maximum penalty permissible under law. They said there would be no political interference in the investigation. Police initially registered the case under Section 125(b) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and later invoked Section 105 BNS. Investigators were examining possible alcohol or intoxicant use and safety lapses near Prasad Aditya Mall. The leaders observed two minutes of silence in Priyanka's memory.

Mahesh Kumar Highlights Rise In Virginia Tobacco Exports

Delhi, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar raised issues concerning Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco production, prices and exports in the Lok Sabha, prompting the Centre to share data showing a significant rise in India's tobacco exports. Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasada said India exported 4,45,321 metric tonnes of Virginia tobacco worth Rs.21,286 crore during the past three years. FCV tobacco exports increased by 8.19% in volume and 31.20% in value during the period. In Andhra Pradesh, auctions for the 2025-26 crop season are underway. Prasada said prices are determined through transparent electronic auctions conducted by the Tobacco Board, with international demand and supply influencing price fluctuations. FCV tobacco production in Andhra Pradesh increased from 181.02 million



kg in 2023-24 to 240.64 million kg in 2025-26, while the average price rose from Rs.225 per kg to Rs.288.65 per kg. Despite geopolitical uncertainties, India remains among the leading FCV tobacco exporters, with tobacco products reaching more than 127 countries. India is the world's second-largest tobacco producer and exporter by volume, Prasada said. Over the past decade, Virginia tobacco and other tobacco product exports rose from Rs.6,450.66 crore to Rs.17,192.04 crore, while export volumes increased from 240.93 million kg to 368.85 million kg.

Police Raise Awareness on Cyber Fraud, Women's Safety

Eluru, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Eluru district police conducted an awareness programme at Paidipaka village in Polavaram mandal on Tuesday on cyber fraud, women's safety and provisions of the new criminal laws. The programme was organised on the directions of Eluru District Superintendent of Police K. Pratap Shiv Kishore and under the guidance of Polavaram Deputy Superintendent of Police K. Jayakrishna. Polavaram Circle Inspector B. Krishnakumar supervised it. Sub-Inspector P. Apparao warned residents against fraudsters impersonating police officers and government officials. He advised people not to share OTPs, bank details, passwords, PINs or other confidential information over phone calls. He said genuine officials would never seek banking credentials or OTPs. Cyber fraud victims should immediately



contact the national cybercrime helpline 1930 for prompt action and possible recovery of money. Residents were advised to contact 112 during emergencies. Apparao explained that lost or stolen phones could be blocked and traced through the CEIR system. Police also highlighted CCTV and 360-degree cameras for surveillance and sensitised youth about ganja, narcotics and illicit liquor. A large number of women and residents attended.

Dr Priyanka's Death Should Be an Eye-Opener: Bhanu Prasad

Chilakaluripet, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Social activist Madasu Bhanu Prasad said indifference towards minor crimes and traffic violations could create an environment conducive to serious offences and tragedies. He called for strict enforcement from the initial stage of violations. Referring to the recent murder of a Muslim student from Chilakaluripet, who was allegedly attacked with a knife in Karampudi and later set ablaze, Bhanu Prasad described the incident as deeply disturbing. He also expressed concern over the suspicious death of another woman from the town in Hyderabad. He cited the death of Dr Priyanka in Rajamahendravaram, allegedly following a road accident involving drunk driving, and said such



tragedies reflected failures in preventing violations. He urged authorities to act against driving without number plates, minors riding vehicles, triple riding and modified silencers. Continuous CCTV monitoring, surveillance of repeat offenders and strict action against drunk driving were essential, he said. Calling Priyanka's death an "eye-opener for society," Bhanu Prasad urged police and transport authorities to strengthen enforcement and prevent similar tragedies.

Police Create Safety Awareness Among Vetapalem Students

Vetapalem, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

A police awareness programme was conducted at Desayipeta Zilla Parishad High School in Vetapalem mandal on Tuesday on the directions of Bapatla District SP B. Umamaheswar. Vetapalem Sub-Inspector Janardhan interacted with students and sensitised them on social and safety-related issues. He urged students to develop discipline and strong moral values from an early age and stay away from eve-teasing, harassment, cybercrime, drugs and other harmful activities. The SI explained helpline numbers and mobile applications available to students and the public to seek police assistance during emergencies. He encouraged students to immediately approach police if they faced threats or noticed suspicious activities. Later, Janardhan had lunch with



the students and inspected the implementation of the government's midday meal scheme. He interacted with students while sharing their meal and enquired about the quality and arrangements of the food being served. The programme aimed to strengthen awareness among schoolchildren about personal safety, responsible behaviour and the importance of seeking timely assistance from law-enforcement agencies.

Krishna Delta Farmers Block Road Over Irrigation Water Shortage

Eluru, Aug 11 | TPN Bureau

Krishna Delta farmers staged a road blockade on the Eluru-Kaikaluru road on Tuesday, protesting the alleged failure of the government and irrigation authorities to provide adequate water for cultivation. Carrying dried paddy seedlings, the farmers raised slogans demanding immediate release of irrigation water and diversion of Godavari water and transplanted fields were facing severe shortages. Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangham State Assistant Secretary K. Srinivas accused the government of neglecting Krishna Delta farmers. He demanded immediate release of irrigation water and diversion of Godavari water through the Ponangi Putha Canal, which, he said, could irrigate around 10,000 acres in Eluru Rural mandal. Srinivas alleged that nearly 500 TMC of Godavari water had flowed into the sea last month



and questioned the failure to supply tail-end areas despite diverting around 20 TMC from Pattiseema to the Krishna River. He also questioned the alleged non-release of water into the K.E. Canal despite substantial inflows into the Prakasham Barrage. Farmers warned of intensified agitation if the crisis was not addressed immediately.

Editorial

Vande Mataram and Jana Gana Mana Are Two Eyes of India

The decision to sing Vande Mataram, written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee from the ramparts of the Red Fort for the first time during the Independence Day ceremony, marks an important moment in India's national life. As the country commemorates 150 years of the National Song, the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chosen to give the composition a prominence that reflects its historic role in the freedom movement. The significance becomes clearer when viewed against history. Vande Mataram has six stanzas in its complete version. Since Independence, however, the two-stanza version has generally been used for public and official renditions. Akashvani followed this tradition for decades before beginning broadcasts of the complete six-stanza version from March 26, 2026. The change has inevitably triggered political debate. Opposition parties have questioned the government's renewed emphasis on Vande Mataram, with some arguing that excessive political projection of the National Song could undermine the established place of Jana Gana Mana. Recent comments attributed to public intellectual Parakala Prabhakar and former MP Undavalli Arun Kumar have added another layer to the discussion. Their concerns deserve democratic consideration, but the debate should not become an attempt to diminish either national symbol. Interestingly, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay's swearing-in ceremony on May 10 provided a recent example of the complete version being publicly rendered. Vande Mataram was played in full before Jana Gana Mana, demonstrating that recognising the National Song need not mean displacing the National Anthem. For the BJP-led NDA, the present initiative is an attempt to restore the complete historical and cultural significance of Vande Mataram. For the Opposition, questioning the manner of its promotion is legitimate. But political disagreement should not become a contest over patriotism. India does not need to choose between the two. Jana Gana Mana is the National Anthem, while Vande Mataram holds the honoured position of National Song. Their histories are distinct, but their emotional connection with the nation is profound. The mature position is simple: celebrating Vande Mataram need not diminish Jana Gana Mana. They are not rivals; they are two eyes through which a true Indian sees the nation's freedom struggle, unity, sacrifice and aspirations.

Editor

The Invisible World That Shapes Tomorrow's Humanity



The world is changing rapidly. Technology has entered our hands. Artificial intelligence is influencing decisions. Cities are expanding. Life is becoming faster. Yet, amid these changes, humanity is quietly losing a world that is not always visible but essential to our existence. It is not merely the world of forests. It is the living system created by water cycles, soil microorganisms, seed diversity, bird movement, seasonal rhythms, rural wisdom, and the relationship between human beings and nature. Every form of development achieved by humanity stands on a natural foundation. Food is produced in fields; fields depend on soil; soil depends on living organisms; those organisms depend on rainfall, forests, water flows, and climatic balance. If even one small link in this chain becomes weak, the impact eventually reaches the food on our plates.

Therefore, speaking about nature is not only an environmental discussion; it is a discussion about economy, health, culture, and the future. Modern society thinks increasingly about consumption and less about sustainability. Once, a village pond was considered the heart of the community. Today, it is often treated as a piece of land. Once, a tree was respected like a member of the family. Now, it is sometimes seen as an obstacle to construction. Once, a seed represented the heritage of generations. Now, it is frequently viewed as a market product. This change has not occurred only in lifestyle; it has occurred in our way of thinking. Agriculture clearly reflects this crisis. Pressure on the land is increasing in the pursuit of higher yields. As chemical use rises, the living strength of the soil declines. Local crops and traditional seeds are gradually disappearing. In the future, the

ability to withstand climate change may depend greatly on these local diversities. Protecting farmers therefore means protecting not only agriculture but also future food security. The water crisis is one of the greatest warnings of our time. Floods are increasing, and droughts are becoming more severe. This is not nature acting against humanity; it is the result of ecological imbalance. When forests decline, rainfall patterns change. When ponds disappear, groundwater levels fall. Cities consume water, but they often neglect the natural systems that create and store it. Saving water is important, but protecting the landscapes that generate water is even more important. Public health is also inseparable from nature. Polluted air, contaminated water, chemical-rich food, and rising temperatures are increasing health problems. The growth of hospi-



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tals is not the true indicator of health; the existence of a healthy environment is. A society that weakens nature ultimately places a heavier burden on its own health system. The changes taking place in the world of children are particularly concerning. The experience of touching soil is decreasing. A generation is growing up without knowing the names of birds. Life that once followed the rhythm of seasons is increasingly moving onto digital screens. Education must transform nature from a textbook topic into a lived experience. A small garden, a seed, a pond observation, or a bird-watching activity can create a sense of responsibility that textbooks alone cannot provide. Rejecting technology is not the solution. Satellites can monitor forests. Digital maps can identify water resources. Artificial intelligence can analyse environmental changes. However, without values that respect nature, technology may lose direction. The future belongs to societies in which science and culture move together. Rural knowledge still offers valuable lessons. Observing the rhythm of rainfall, sharing water, regulating grazing, and linking trees with seasonal cycles are all forms of scientific understanding expressed through community life. Modern development should not dismiss this knowledge; it should study it seriously and integrate it with contemporary approaches. In the discussion on climate change, the invisible world is again central. Forests absorb carbon. Grasslands retain soil moisture. Ponds reduce floods. Coastal ecosystems lessen the

impact of storms. Destroying these natural protective systems and then searching for expensive concrete solutions is one of the greatest contradictions of modern civilisation. Culture is also deeply connected with nature. Flowers, seeds, rain, crops, and birds live within our languages, songs, proverbs, and festivals. When natural diversity declines, some colours of culture fade as well. Protecting nature therefore means protecting memories, emotions, and language. At the individual level, change may appear small, but its impact can be significant. Planting native trees, reducing plastic use, harvesting rainwater, supporting local farmers, and telling nature stories to children are not minor actions; they are seeds that can change the direction of society. Human beings are not permanent owners of the Earth; they are temporary caretakers. Rivers must continue to flow after us. Birds must continue to fly. Soil fertility must remain. Seasons must continue their rhythm. Development does not mean conquering nature; it means building the capacity to live sustainably with it. Only when the invisible world is protected can the visible world remain secure. The life within the soil, the future contained in a seed, the water in a pond, the silence of a forest, and the love for nature in a child's mind are the real capital of tomorrow's civilisation. If we lose them, we do not lose only a few species; we lose possibilities for the future. Nature rarely shouts. It changes quietly. A society that can understand that silence is the society that is truly progressive.

When Gatekeepers Become Governance Risks

From Leaked Papers To Connected Start-ups



India's most disturbing governance failures rarely begin with spectacular corruption. More often, they begin with something deceptively ordinary: a missing frisking protocol, overlapping responsibilities, inadequate segregation of duties, an undisclosed relationship, privileged information, a weak audit trail, or a selection committee operating within a tightly connected ecosystem. The NEET-UG 2026 paper-leak investigation and the controversy surrounding the Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund appear to belong to completely different worlds—one concerns millions of students competing for scarce educational opportunities, while the other concerns ₹1 lakh crore of public support for India's deep-tech ambitions. Yet beneath the surface lies a common institutional pathology: the failure to maintain sufficient distance between those entrusted with public resources or information and those who can benefit from that access. The deeper crisis is therefore not merely corruption; it is governance architecture.

The NEET investigation is particularly disturbing

because the alleged breach reportedly penetrated the very sanctum in which examination questions were generated. The CBI investigation has identified P.V. Kulkarni, Manisha Mandhare and Manisha Havaldar as key actors and alleged that overlapping responsibilities in question-setting and translation created opportunities to access and reconstruct confidential questions. What makes the episode especially revealing is that the alleged mechanism was not necessarily technologically sophisticated. Handwritten notes, memory, textbooks and reconstructed questions were reportedly sufficient. This is the paradox of modern institutional failure: governments may invest heavily in digital infrastructure while overlooking elementary principles of physical and procedural security. The system did not merely fail to prevent sophisticated intrusion; it allegedly made privileged access itself the vulnerability.

The structural weaknesses are even more consequential. Individuals reportedly entrusted with sensitive question-setting responsibilities also possessed overlap-

ping access through translation functions, undermining the basic security principle of need-to-know. Allegations of inadequate frisking and limited CCTV retention further suggest that security was treated as a procedural formality rather than an adversarial risk-management exercise. Once confidential material was allegedly extracted, it could be monetised through clandestine coaching networks and intermediaries, with amounts reportedly ranging from tens of thousands to several lakhs of rupees and unconventional forms of security allegedly being collected from beneficiaries. The lesson is profound: a high-stakes examination is not merely an academic exercise; it is critical national infrastructure. When its security collapses, the damage extends far beyond the examination hall because every compromised question represents a potential assault on the principle of merit.

The scale of the CBI investigation, reportedly running into more than 20,000 pages, also illustrates how institutional vulnerabilities evolve into organised ecosystems. A leak rarely remains a single

transaction. It creates networks involving insiders, intermediaries, brokers, beneficiaries, communication channels and financial trails. Digital messages, physical movements, housing records, handwritten material and payment transactions can together reconstruct the architecture of a conspiracy. Yet the most important victim remains invisible in the charge sheet: the honest candidate. A student may spend years preparing, sacrificing family resources and postponing employment, only to discover that the competitive examination itself may have been compromised. When merit is made uncertain, aspiration becomes distrust.

reportedly received around ₹1,377 crore out of ₹2,192 crore distributed in the first round. This does not, by itself, establish wrongdoing. The government has maintained that interests were disclosed, conflicted members recused themselves and prescribed safeguards were followed. But public governance cannot be judged solely by the absence of proven criminality. It must also be judged by whether the architecture inspires reasonable confidence that decisions were independent, impartial and demonstrably fair. This is where the concept of institutional distance becomes critical. In a small and specialised deep-tech



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one case, privileged insiders allegedly possessed examination information unavailable to millions; in the other, questions have arisen about whether companies connected to decision-makers enjoyed informational or relational advantages. The common denominator is information asymmetry: knowledge or proximity becoming a potential competitive advantage in systems that are supposed to operate on equal rules. The two controversies

trust access; independent security audits; immutable digital logs; continuous surveillance; and rigorous personnel rotation. Public funding programmes require comprehensive beneficial-interest disclosures, independent technical evaluation, mandatory cooling-off periods, rotating committees, external audits and publication of appropriately redacted evaluation and allocation records. Recusal should not merely be declared; it should be independently verifiable. The larger lesson is uncomfortable: governance failure is rarely one dramatic decision. It is usually a chain of small permissions. Someone receives unnecessary access. A relationship is considered harmless. A camera records too little. A committee becomes too concentrated. An application becomes known to a connected network. An audit is delayed. Each decision appears manageable in isolation; together they create institutional vulnerability. NEET and the RDI controversy should therefore not be reduced to questions of individual guilt or administrative defence. They should become catalysts for redesigning the systems themselves. India is investing enormous public resources in human capital, innovation and opportunity. But examinations without credible security become theatre, while innovation funding without credible independence risks becoming patronage. The ultimate test of governance is not whether the gatekeeper promises to be fair; it is whether the gate is designed so that even a compromised gatekeeper cannot determine who gets through.



When distrust becomes widespread, institutional legitimacy begins to erode. The RDI Fund controversy presents a completely different factual setting but an eerily similar governance dilemma. The ₹1 lakh crore initiative is intended to provide patient capital for high-risk, high-potential innovation and strengthen India's deep-tech ecosystem. However, parliamentary disclosures and media reports have raised questions because 15 of the first 22 beneficiaries reportedly had investment links to seven members of the selection committee. These companies

ecosystem, government may reasonably argue that experts inevitably know, advise, invest in or collaborate with potential beneficiaries. That reality cannot simply be wished away. But precisely because the ecosystem is small, safeguards must become stronger, not weaker. A committee member with a financial relationship to an applicant may recuse himself, but recusal alone may not eliminate informational advantages, prior influence, network effects or perceptions of preferential access. The same principle applies to the alleged NEET ecosystem. In

therefore reveal a broader transition that India's governance systems must urgently make—from disclosure-based compliance to prevention-based institutional design. It is insufficient to say that a conflict was disclosed; the system must demonstrate that the conflict could not influence the decision. It is insufficient to say that an examination was conducted under security protocols; the system must be designed on the assumption that insiders will test those protocols. Examination systems require strict separation of question-setting, translation, custody and evaluation; zero-

Breaking the Chains of Colonial Governance to Forge a Developed Nation

(Part 1/5)

As India marks its 80th Independence Day on August 15, 2026, the nation stands at a critical juncture requiring both immense pride and profound introspection. Rooted in the journalistic principle of prioritizing facts over sectarianism, this five-part series examines the complex transitions in administration, education, health, finance, and nationalism. For readers of True Point, it is time to look inward. To emerge as a truly developed nation, India must confront uncomfortable truths about its administrative frameworks, bureaucratic culture, and systemic complacency. A pragmatic solution would be the creation of a "Simplicity Ministry" staffed by pragmatic thinkers to review, simplify, and close loopholes in the plans of all other ministries. **The Illusion of Industrial Dominance** There is no denying our monumental strides. India has cemented its position as a strategic global power in diplomacy, championed global peace, and maintained economic resilience. Yet, the vision of India as an unparalleled industrial powerhouse that commands world markets remains unfulfilled. Currently, the country still



serves primarily as a market for global products. The Burden of Antiquated Governance For eight decades, India's approach to governance has relied on patchwork amendments rather than audacious reinvention. While progress over the last decade has outpaced the preceding 70 years, it has occurred alongside very limited administrative reforms. My observations from four years within the government reveal a troubling trend. Initially, the Modi administration removed inefficient personnel and improved implementation through e-governance. However, this fluency has backtracked, becoming more rigid and complicated within the digital framework. Corrupt, top-

down forces continue to find shortcuts for personal gain. Most of the development stays in spreadsheets of reports generated by these systems without any ground realities. Life becomes a drama and a joke for citizens. **Key barriers impeding growth include:** 80 years are over, but we are still in a colonial hangover. Much of the penal code and bureaucratic framework remains rooted in the British era, originally designed to control subjects rather than empower citizens. Today, politicians have largely stepped into the exploitative roles once held by colonizers. Outdated and complicated procedures act as a massive deterrent to industrial growth, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Even

India @ 80



Ram Kamal

Social Engineer

heavily promoted "single window" procedures-particularly in states like Kerala-often lead straight back to rigid systems and bribery. We inherited a colonial culture of making Loopholes. India's labyrinthine legal system has birthed a culture where finding and exploiting loopholes is celebrated as a strategic skill rather than condemned as a civic failing. We still possess a ray of hope. The newly introduced Bharathia Naya Samhitha offers some optimism regarding the modernization of our penal codes. **The Bureaucratic and Judicial Surrender** Perhaps the most tragic barrier to social and industrial evolution is the systemic erosion of the administrative backbone. The top-level bureaucracy has surrendered its efficiency to politi-

cal rat races. Political subservience is very visible even to blind eyes. The hierarchical structure of government officers is increasingly used as a tool of subservience to the political elite. Career progression and desirable postings frequently rely on political patronage rather than merit or public service. When civil servants prioritize the whims of political masters over the rule of law, the machinery designed to protect the public instead becomes a gatekeeper for corrupt political interests. Honest officers often face politically motivated suspensions, and while they may later receive back pay, they often lose their administrative courage. Our judicial system frequently appears hesitant or lethargic when dealing with the politically connected.

Unpunished fraudulent activities by the elite demoralise the public, proving the law applies differently based on one's proximity to power. Furthermore, the top echelons of the judiciary resemble family politics, with some Supreme Court judges making harmful, out-of-touch comments (such as the "Cockroaches" remark) that negatively impact common citizens as well as the ruling governments.

The Cost of the Silent Majority

India is paying the price for its silent majority. A system can only remain corrupt if the populace allows it to be. National growth is severely hampered by a vocal, powerful minority that skillfully defends wrongdoings, while the vast majority of honest citizens remain silent. This apathy, driven by a "play it safe" attitude and a fear of rubbing the wrong shoulders, often creates a vacuum of accountability. When the majority chooses convenience over courage, the corrupt minority is emboldened to manipulate national resources, stall industrial projects for personal kickbacks, and silence whistleblowers.

Can we rewrite the Future? To transition from a develop-

ing strategic power to a dominant industrial force, India cannot simply rely on the momentum of its past. We must demand a complete overhaul of our governance framework. We need transparent, simple laws that are unforgiving to those who exploit public trust, regardless of their political stature. We require a bureaucracy insulated from political retribution, empowering officers to stand tall for the nation's interests.

Above all, the silent majority must find its voice. We need to cut wrong sectoral narratives in social media and the mainstream media that spread lie, to be made responsible. The true measure of a developed nation is not just its GDP, but the uncompromising integrity of its institutions and the courage of its people.

Tailpiece: India currently benefits from a few brilliant and efficient political leaders, such as Narendra Modi, Chandra Babu Naidu, and Nitish Kumar. However, they are at the end of their political careers and lives, leaving a pressing question: **Who is next?**

Tomorrow: If education is the fuel for development, why is our education system not including all?

Sadhguru Calls For Renaming Tughlaq Lane, Says It Is About History



Spiritual leader Sadhguru on Tuesday called for the renaming of Delhi's Tughlaq Lane, arguing that the issue was about historical conduct rather than religion. Speaking at the Spiritual and Heritage Tourism Conclave 2026 at Akshardham, Sadhguru referred to the earlier renaming of Aurangzeb Road and questioned why roads should be named after rulers accused of oppression and destruction. "It's not about religion. There is Humayun Road, there is Akbar Road, that is fine," Sadhguru said. He questioned the practice of honouring people whom he alleged had conducted genocide, destroyed temples and acted cruelly. Comparing the issue with naming a place after Adolf Hitler, he said such naming would not be acceptable anywhere. Sadhguru suggested that culturally significant names should instead be used for roads and landmarks. Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, speaking at the conclave, said the government wanted to promote Delhi as a major spiritual and religious tourism destination. She highlighted sites including Jhandewalan Temple, Lotus Temple, temples, gurdwaras and mosques. Gupta said Delhi's four tourism circuits aim to encourage visitors from India and abroad to explore the capital's spiritual, historical and cultural heritage. She also urged tourists not to treat Delhi merely as a transit point but to stay longer and experience the city.

CJP To Launch Nationwide Campaign To Improve Rural Government Schools

Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke has announced a nationwide campaign to improve government schools in villages, with the initiative set to begin on August 15. He said the campaign will focus on basic facilities and encourage parents, citizens and sarpanches to participate.



Dipke said he would launch the campaign from his village Hingoli in Maharashtra by approaching the village head and seeking improvements in government schools. He highlighted problems faced by rural children, including long journeys to school and the lack of drinking water and functional toilets, particularly affecting girls. The CJP has appealed to sarpanches across the country to take up a "Sarpanch Challenge" and improve schools in their villages. Village heads who make improvements will be publicly recognised through before-and-after photographs shared on social media. The organisation will also conduct a citizen-led social audit. Parents have been asked to check schools for electricity, clean drinking water, functional washrooms and mid-day meals, and record evidence of deficiencies. The CJP said the campaign aims to ensure children of farmers and wage labourers receive facilities comparable to those available in urban schools. Dipke urged citizens to work together, saying, "Real India lives in villages."

LPST Rank Holders End Hunger Strike After Talks With Kerala Government

A group of Lower Primary School Teacher (LPST) rank holders in Kerala ended their hunger strike on Tuesday after holding discussions with Education Minister N Samsudheen over their recruitment demands. The aspirants had been protesting outside the Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram for 13 days as part of an agitation that has continued for 37 days. The hunger strike was called off following a meeting with Samsudheen. Valarmathi, one of the protesters on hunger strike, ended her fast by drinking water offered by the minister. Valarmathi, who is also a member of the protest committee, said the broader agitation would continue without protest programmes for now. She said the government had assured them



that their concerns would be addressed within one-and-a-half months. The protesters hope the issues will be resolved by September 24. The rank holders have alleged that recruitment from the Kerala Public Service Commission (PSC) rank list pub-

lished on May 31, 2025, has progressed slowly, with only a limited number of appointments made so far. Samsudheen said the government was willing to accept the protest committee's demands wherever possible. He said discussions would be held with the PSC regarding recruitment procedures and vacancy reporting. The minister also assured the protesters that the existing LPST rank list, which has a validity of one-and-a-half years, would be extended when it expires. The aspirants have also demanded that the teacher-student ratio be revised to 1:25. The government has sought 45 days to examine this and other demands, particularly their financial implications.

Jharkhand Student Protest Escalates as ED Launches Probe

The agitation by students over alleged irregularities in Jharkhand recruitment examinations intensified on Monday after police used water cannons, tear gas and lathi-charge to stop protesters from marching towards the state Assembly in Ranchi. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) also launched a money laundering investigation into the alleged anomalies. Thousands of job aspirants breached barricades during the march. Protesters alleged that several students, including women, were injured, while Ranchi SSP said 14 police personnel were hurt in stone-pelting. CCTV footage will be examined to identify those responsible, officials said. The Jharkhand CID meanwhile arrested former JPSC chairperson L Khiantge in connection with the case, taking the number of arrests to 20. The agency had earlier conducted searches at 18 locations across several districts. Students have been protesting since July 25,



demanding a CBI probe into alleged irregularities, particularly in the JSSC-CGL examination. They are also seeking reforms in the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) and Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC), along with cancellation of certain recruitment tests. Chief Minister Hemant Soren appealed to the students to resolve the issue through dialogue and assured

them that their demands would be examined seriously. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also criticised the police action and called for dialogue. The BJP announced a statewide bandh over the alleged use of force. The state government has agreed to cancel the 14th JPSC examination and certain backlog examinations, while proposing reforms to make the recruitment system more transparent and secure.

India Says Border Situation Will Shape China Ties

New Delhi: India on Tuesday reiterated that the situation along its border with China will have a direct bearing on the broader state of bilateral relations, stressing that peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) remain a top priority. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India has consistently conveyed to China that border-related issues are among the most serious matters between the two countries. He emphasised that maintaining peace and stability in the border areas is essential for the overall development of bilateral ties. "The maintenance of peace and tranquillity in these areas is of the utmost importance," Jaiswal said at a regular media briefing. He added that India has also made it clear that the state of border affairs "will



reflect on the state of our larger bilateral ties." Jaiswal said the position was reiterated during a recent meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC), held last week. The two sides held frank discussions and reviewed developments along the LAC, he said. According to the spokesperson, both countries agreed to continue using established diplomatic and military channels to

address outstanding issues and prevent misunderstandings or miscalculations along the disputed frontier. These mechanisms include the WMCC, local commander-level meetings and other agreed channels. The latest discussions come as India and China continue efforts to stabilise relations that deteriorated sharply following the deadly Galwan Valley clashes in 2020. The confrontation triggered a prolonged military standoff along the LAC, particularly in eastern Ladakh. In October 2024, the two countries reached an agreement on disengagement at Depsang and Demchok, the final two major friction points in eastern Ladakh. The development was followed by high-level diplomatic engagement aimed at gradually rebuilding bilateral ties.

Kashmiri Pandit Employees Sent On Leave After Terror Threat



Hundreds of Kashmiri Pandit employees have been sent on administrative leave until August 25 following a purported threat letter issued by a group linked to Pakistan-based terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). The threat letter reportedly named several employees and included their contact details, triggering concern among government staff appointed under the Prime Minister's special employment package. Officials said those named in the letter have been shifted to Jammu, while employees still living in the Valley have been advised to move to safer locations. Police said the measures were precautionary and that an investigation into the threats was underway. A senior police officer said security arrangements had also been strengthened to ensure the safety of the employees. Around 6,000 Kashmiri Pandits have received government jobs under the special employment package introduced in 2010 to facilitate the return and rehabilitation of those displaced from the Valley after the outbreak of the secessionist movement in 1990. Security concerns have increased following a July 22 attack in Anantnag in which a policeman was killed, followed by an attack on migrant workers in Kulgam. Authorities have intensified patrolling around areas inhabited by minorities and Kashmiri Pandit employees. In 2022, targeted terrorist attacks killed five Kashmiri Pandit employees, triggering protests by package employees seeking relocation to Jammu. A major security operation has been underway in the Valley since July 22, with more than 3,000 suspected overground workers detained, according to officials.

Rijiju Challenges RaGa To Face Amit Shah In Parliament



Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Tuesday challenged Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi to remain present in Parliament and face Home Minister Amit Shah, saying he should not "run away" now that Shah is ready to respond to his questions. Rijiju's remarks came amid a continuing confrontation between the government and the Opposition over recent student protests and police action against demonstrators. The issue has led to repeated disruptions in Parliament, with Opposition parties demanding answers from the government and Rahul Gandhi seeking a response from the Home Minister. The government has now offered to hold a debate on the matter, with Amit Shah expected to respond to the concerns raised by the Opposition. Rijiju said Rahul Gandhi had been demanding an explanation from Amit Shah for several days. He argued that since the Home Minister was now prepared to answer the questions in detail, the Leader of Opposition should stay in Parliament and participate in the discussion. The exchange comes as tensions remain high during the ongoing Monsoon Session, with the Opposition pressing the government over the handling of the student protests. The government, meanwhile, has maintained that the concerns can be addressed through parliamentary discussion. Rijiju's challenge has added another political flashpoint to the session, as both sides remain engaged in a heated debate over the issue.

US Water Systems Targeted in Cyberattacks, Iran Link Under Probe

Cyberattacks targeting water and wastewater systems across the United States have raised concerns over vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure, with federal investigators examining whether Iranian hackers could be involved. The incidents came to light in late July when Minnesota reported that at least 30 municipal water systems had been hit in what officials described as a coordinated cyberattack. Days later, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) warned that malicious cyber actors had gained access to water and wastewater systems in at least seven states, causing operational disruptions and exposing weaknesses in public utilities. States including Georgia, New Jersey and South Dakota have also reported similar incidents, although it remains unclear whether these attacks are part of the seven-state activity identified by the FBI. The United States has about 152,000 public drinking water systems and more than 16,000 wastewater treatment facilities. These systems rely heavily on digital technology to control pumps, pressure, chemical dosing and other



processes. According to a CNN report, hackers are targeting internet-facing programmable logic controllers (PLCs), which allow industrial equipment to communicate. Attackers can search internet addresses for exposed controllers, dashboards and remote-access services before exploiting default or stolen passwords, unpatched vulnerabilities or improperly con-

figured systems. William Akoto, Assistant Professor of Global Security at American University School of International Service, said attackers could gain access by exploiting these weaknesses and then change passwords, issue commands or attempt to modify controller software. US officials are investigating possible links to Iranian hackers, although no formal attribution has

been made. Iran has previously been accused of similar cyber operations targeting Israeli infrastructure. However, Donald Trump has questioned whether Iran was responsible for the Minnesota incident, saying Iran had bigger problems to deal with. Investigators are also examining whether another actor may have copied Iranian tactics to mislead authorities. So far, there is no indication that the attacks have made drinking water unsafe. Some incidents caused disruptions, manual overrides and precautionary boil-water advisories. Experts warn that the attacks could damage public confidence in essential services. Jake Braun, former acting White House Deputy National Cyber Director, said the attacks could undermine trust in government's ability to provide basic services. Cybersecurity officials have urged utilities to remove internet-facing controls, strengthen firewalls, use secure gateways or VPNs, enable multiple authentication measures, change default passwords, update equipment and separate operational networks from business systems.

Strait of Hormuz Ship Traffic Falls Sharply Amid US-Iran Deadlock

Shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has dropped sharply amid fading hopes of a peace agreement between the United States and Iran, with only six vessels crossing the strategic waterway on Monday. The figure compares with a 10-day average of about 11 vessels and is far below normal levels before the war, when around 130 to 140 ships typically transited the strait. According to Kpler data available on Tuesday at 0420 GMT, four commodity vessels entered the waterway. The vessels included two empty oil product tankers. Two other ships exited the Strait of Hormuz, including a small tanker carrying liquefied petroleum gas and another vessel transporting residual fuels. The sharp decline highlights the impact of continuing tensions between Washington and Tehran on one of the world's most impor-



tant shipping routes. The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and is a major route for global energy shipments. Shipping activity through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait in the Red Sea remained comparatively stable. Kpler data showed that 25 vessels transited the waterway on Monday, broadly in line with its 10-day average of nearly 24 ships.

The latest decline in Hormuz traffic comes as diplomatic efforts between the US and Iran appear to have stalled. US President Donald Trump responded on Monday to Iran's conditions for a peace agreement by presenting his own demands, including compensation from Tehran for people killed in wars, attacks and protests. The US proposal followed Iranian demands for compensation and an

end to sanctions. Tehran's demands were largely consistent with terms contained in a preliminary peace agreement signed in June, but that arrangement has since broken down. Since the war began in February, Trump has repeatedly shifted between threats of further escalation and statements suggesting that a peace agreement could be reached soon. The continued deadlock has increased uncertainty for shipping companies and energy markets. Any prolonged disruption in the Strait of Hormuz could have wider consequences because of the waterway's importance to global oil and fuel supplies. The latest vessel figures therefore provide another indication of how geopolitical tensions are affecting commercial shipping, with traffic through the key route remaining significantly below pre-war levels.

US Prosecutors Seek Continued Detention of Tate Brothers in Extradition Case

US prosecutors have urged a federal court to keep social media influencers Andrew Tate and Tristan Tate in custody while they fight extradition to the United Kingdom, where they face allegations including rape and sex trafficking. In a filing in Miami federal court, prosecutors argued that the brothers are a flight risk and pose a danger to the community. A detention hearing on Thursday is expected to determine whether they remain in custody during what could be a months-long extradition process. The brothers have repeatedly denied wrongdoing. They are being held at the Federal Detention Center in Miami in a special unit for their protection. The hearing is expected to be their first time leaving the facility since a brief court appearance two days after their July 18 arrest. The US Attorney's Office said the brothers face a heightened risk of flight because of the seriousness of the UK allegations, their financial resources, international influence and access to multiple passports and identities. Prosecutors also cited allegations from Romania that the brothers attempted to intimidate witnesses. The defense has acknowledged that extradition cases carry a strong presumption against bail but argued that special circumstances could justify their release. Their attorneys said the brothers' high profile makes it difficult for them to flee and noted that they regularly post their locations on social media. The defense also argued that Andrew and Tristan Tate complied with pretrial restrictions during legal proceedings in Romania, where they face separate allegations involving the exploitation of women. The UK has until mid-September to provide evidence to the US State Department supporting the extradition request. No date has been set for an extradition hearing, meaning the brothers could remain in custody for months. The latest allegations in Britain involve four additional accusers and reportedly cover incidents between 2010 and 2017. The charges include rape, assault, trafficking and offences involving indecent images of a child and extreme pornography. The brothers already face UK charges involving rape, bodily harm, human trafficking and controlling prostitution for gain concerning three other accusers between 2012 and 2015. Andrew Tate, 39, and Tristan Tate, 38, hold US and UK citizenship and have millions of social media followers. Andrew became known after appearing on the UK reality show "Big Brother" and later built a large online following through controversial views on wealth, gender and relationships. Tristan has worked with his brother on several businesses, including online webcam pornography.



Eclipse Chasers Flock to Spain for Rare Total Solar Eclipse

Eclipse enthusiasts from around the world are preparing to travel to northern Spain to witness a total solar eclipse on August 12, an event expected to plunge parts of the region into an eerie darkness and transform the daytime sky. During totality, the Moon will completely cover the Sun, causing temperatures to fall and creating unusual changes in light and shadows. Stars and planets may become visible, while birds and other animals can respond to the sudden darkness as though night has arrived. The eclipse will be the first total solar eclipse visible from mainland Europe this century, making it a major attraction for astronomy enthusiasts. For some, the event is worth travelling thousands of kilometres and spending large amounts of money. Elizabeth Warning, a 51-year-old TV researcher from Sydney, Australia, is among the self-described "eclipse chasers" planning to see the event. She said witnessing a total eclipse can feel like "the end of the world" and can leave people permanently changed. However, devastating wildfires in parts of Spain have raised concerns about whether she will make the trip. Ryan Milligan, a solar physicist at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland, has travelled to 12 eclipses, including events in Siberia, Chile and the Faroe Islands. He said a total eclipse is not merely something to see but an experience involving dramatic changes in temperature, colour, shadows and animal behaviour. For eclipse chasers, however, reaching the right location does not guarantee success. Clouds are a frequent obstacle. Lucie Green, a solar physicist at University College London, travelled to Antarctica in 2021 but missed an eclipse because of cloud cover. She estimates her success rate at about two-thirds. Warning recalled successfully watching the 2015 eclipse in the Faroe Islands after clouds parted at the last moment, while Milligan, who was nearby, saw only clouds. Jenny Winker, a 60-year-old retiree from St Paul, Minnesota, plans to travel to northern Spain with nine family members. She described a total eclipse as "breathtaking" for those who have never experienced one. Wildfire smoke could affect visibility because the eclipse will occur shortly before sunset. Experts said smoke particles could make the view hazier. Meanwhile, eclipse enthusiasts are already planning for next year's event in Luxor, Egypt, where totality will last six minutes and 22 seconds, the longest total eclipse visible until 2114.



Indian Techie From Andhra Pradesh Dies in US Road Accident

A 26-year-old software engineer from Andhra Pradesh, Dileep Kumar Bungatavula, died in Ohio, United States, after a pickup truck crossed the centre median and collided head-on with the sedan he was driving. Bungatavula was a native of Jettivaripalli village in Andhra Pradesh's Kadapa district. He had travelled to the United States for higher education and completed his Master of Science from Kent State University in 2025. According to his family, he

had recently completed his studies and started working for a software company in the US. The fatal accident occurred on Interstate 480 in the Macedonia area of Ohio. Police said Bungatavula was travelling in a sedan when a pickup truck moving in the opposite direction crossed the centre median and struck his vehicle. Emergency services reached the accident site and found Bungatavula dead. Three other people were injured in

the collision and were taken to a hospital for treatment. Police said the circumstances surrounding the crash remain under investigation. The Consulate General of India in New York confirmed Bungatavula's death and said it was providing assistance to his family. "We are deeply saddened to learn of the untimely demise of Dileep Kumar Bungatavula, an Indian national, who tragically lost his life in a car accident in



Ohio on August 7, 2026," the consulate said in a post on X. The consulate also said it was in contact with the family and extending all possible assistance during the difficult period. Meanwhile, the North America Telugu Society has launched a fundraiser to support Bungatavula's family. The organisation said his parents and brother in India were facing an unimaginable loss. It said Bungatavula's father, Sreehari Bungatavula, is a farmer and

that the family comes from modest financial circumstances. The society said Bungatavula's parents had made significant sacrifices to support his education and hoped to see him establish a successful career. His family is now making arrangements to bring his remains back to India for the final rites. The sudden death of the young software engineer has left his family and relatives in deep shock.

Syria's Ousted President Bashar al-Assad Sentenced to Death



A Syrian court on Tuesday sentenced ousted Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his younger brother Maher al-Assad to death in absentia for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed during Syria's 14-year conflict, which left about half a million people dead. Assad and Maher fled to Russia after insurgents marched into Damascus in December 2024, ending Assad's rule. Since then, Syrian authorities have pursued senior officials and figures associated with the former government over alleged abuses during the conflict. Assad's maternal cousin Atef Najib was also sentenced to death in the same case. Najib was accused of leading the crackdown in the southern province of Daraa in 2011, an operation that contributed to the uprising that eventually developed into a prolonged civil war. Najib, a former Syrian army brigadier general, served as head of the Political Security Branch in Daraa province under Assad in 2011. He was later detained and became one of the highest-ranking officials from the former government to face trial. During Tuesday's proceedings, tight security was maintained as Najib stood inside a cage wearing a prisoner's uniform while the judge read out the sentence. The court proceedings focused on alleged crimes committed during the conflict, including actions linked to the crackdown on opposition movements. The sentencing marks a significant legal development in Syria's efforts to hold senior figures from Assad's former government accountable. However, Assad and Maher were not present in court because they remain in Russia after fleeing Syria following the fall of the former government. Their sentences were therefore issued in absentia. The case is among the most significant trials involving senior figures from Assad's administration since the political transition in Syria.

Sri Lanka Eases Return of Refugees From India With New Immigration Rules



Sri Lanka's government has approved special immigration arrangements to facilitate the voluntary return of Sri Lankan refugees from India who left the island nation without valid travel documents during the country's decades-long civil war. The measures, approved by the Cabinet and announced in a note on Tuesday, are intended to remove legal difficulties faced by refugees who departed Sri Lanka through unauthorised routes. The arrangements will apply to those returning with the assistance of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Under the new provisions, Sri Lankan nationals who left the country before August 1, 2006 without passports will undergo screening by the State Intelligence Service. The screening will determine whether they have been accused of murder, treason or other specified offences. Those who clear the process will be permitted to enter Sri Lanka through an authorised airport or port using temporary passports. They will not face legal proceedings under the country's immigration law solely for leaving Sri Lanka without proper documentation. The same provisions will cover those who left Sri Lanka without valid documents between August 1, 2006 and May 19, 2009, when the civil war ended after nearly three decades of fighting between Sri Lankan government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). However, refugees accused of murder, treason or other specified offences will be detained at the port of entry and handed over to the relevant authorities for legal action. The decision follows longstanding concerns over difficulties faced by refugees returning from India. In May last year, a 75-year-old Sri Lankan Tamil refugee was arrested at Palaly airport in Jaffna after returning from India with official clearances and UNHCR assistance. He was later produced before a magistrate and remanded. Sri Lankan refugees began arriving in Tamil Nadu in large numbers following ethnic violence in 1983 and the escalation of the conflict with the LTTE. UNHCR has supported voluntary repatriation from India for more than two decades. Nearly 18,000 refugees returned with UNHCR assistance between 2002 and February 2022. Sri Lankan government figures show that more than 18,500 people returned from Tamil Nadu between January 2009 and June 2025. Despite these returns, about 89,000 Sri Lankan Tamils were estimated to be living in and outside refugee camps in Tamil Nadu in early 2026. Around 40 per cent were born in India, highlighting the challenges involving documentation, livelihoods and long-term legal status.

Diageo has identified India as its "consumer market of the decade" and has maintained that it complies with Indian laws.

Google to Launch Stephen Curry Edition of Pixel Watch 5

Google is set to launch a special Stephen Curry edition of the Pixel Watch 5, with leaked renders and pricing details emerging ahead of the smartwatch's expected release on August 20. The special edition is part of Google's long-standing partnership with NBA star Stephen Curry. According to GSM Arena, the Google Pixel Watch 5 is expected to be announced alongside the Pixel 11 series.

The smartwatch is reportedly scheduled to become available on August 20, based on the date shown in leaked promotional materials. Recent leaks have already revealed several details about the Pixel Watch 5, including its design and specifications. The latest leaked information provides details about the Stephen Curry edition, which will feature an exclusive woven loop band.

The special edition is essentially the regular 45mm Pixel Watch 5 paired with the new band. The band is available in stone gray and taupe, with prominent orange accents similar to those featured on the recently launched Fitbit Air in Stephen Curry colours, according to GSM Arena. Leaked images show the band carrying a Stephen Curry label along with the "#LockIn" branding. The



woven loop band is also water-repellent, making it suitable for workouts and other active use. Despite the special branding and exclusive accessory, Google is reportedly keeping the additional cost relatively limited. According to GSM Arena, the Stephen Curry edition of the Pixel Watch 5 will be priced at USD 669. The special edition is expected to be offered only while stocks last, making it a limit-

ed-release model. Google is also reportedly not planning to sell the Stephen Curry edition in all markets. The launch adds another product to Google's collaboration with Curry, combining the company's wearable technology with the NBA star's branding. More details about availability and supported markets are expected when Google officially unveils the Pixel 11 series and Pixel Watch 5.

WFH Affected Social Life, Woman's Viral Video Sparks Online Debate



Working from home has become a popular choice among professionals because of its flexibility and convenience. However, a woman's experience of remote work and its impact on her social life has sparked a debate online, with users sharing both agreement and disagreement. The video was shared by Tanya Singhal on Instagram. Tanya said she has been working from home for the last one-and-a-half years and feels that remote work has affected her social life. Tanya acknowledged several benefits of WFH, including avoiding daily commuting, working from different locations, flexible timings and having more personal time. However, she said people can also "quietly lose" some things while working remotely, particularly spontaneous human interactions. Tanya explained that she does not live in her hometown, while her college friends are spread across different cities. In her current city, she said, the workplace could have been one of the main places to naturally develop a social circle. She pointed out that office environments create opportunities for casual interactions without requiring people to make plans. Conversations can begin when a colleague walks past a desk, people meet while getting coffee or coworkers have lunch together. According to Tanya, working from home can mean spending an entire day without experiencing such unplanned interactions. She also highlighted the role workplaces can play in helping adults form friendships. After school and college, offices are among the few places where people regularly meet new people. Tanya ended her video by telling those working from home who feel that their social lives have suffered that they are "not alone" and that the feeling is "not in your head." The video received mixed reactions online. Some users agreed with Tanya and shared similar experiences, including one person who said they had been working from home for six years. Another user called her observations "straight up facts." Others argued that remote work provides enough flexibility to build a social life independently. Suggestions included joining fitness or sports clubs, maintaining routines, meeting new people and staying physically active. The discussion highlighted how remote work can offer greater flexibility while also reducing the spontaneous social interactions that naturally occur in an office environment.

Meta Releases Muse Glimmer AI Model for Consumer PCs



Meta has released the weights of Muse Glimmer, a 30-billion-parameter artificial intelligence model designed to run locally on compatible consumer computers. The release is part of Meta's broader push toward open-weight AI, with CEO Mark Zuckerberg advocating wider access to advanced artificial intelligence technology. Muse Glimmer is designed to operate directly on a user's computer instead of relying entirely on cloud-based data centres. Meta has reduced the model to 4-bit precision, bringing its size to below 20GB. This allows the model to run on high-end PCs and Macs with sufficient RAM. The model can reportedly operate using a single GPU on compatible hardware. Local processing could offer several advantages, particularly in areas such as privacy and data control. Developers can create applications that process files, code and other information directly on a user's device rather than repeatedly sending data to remote servers. This could give users greater control over sensitive information while also reducing dependence on cloud infrastructure. Meta has designed Muse Glimmer specifically for agentic artificial intelligence applications rather than limiting it to conventional chatbot functions. The model can handle multi-step tasks, use external tools, plan actions and recover from mistakes. It also supports image-related tasks and can write and debug computer code. The company expects the model's capabilities to allow developers to build AI agents capable of carrying out complex workflows. Such agents could potentially search and manage files, interact with software and complete tasks based on user instructions with less need for constant human intervention. The release also strengthens Meta's open-weight AI strategy. The company has previously pursued this approach through its Llama family of models, allowing developers and researchers greater access to AI technology. Meta has indicated that Muse Glimmer will not be its only new open-weight release. Muse Spark 1.2, described as the company's latest foundation model, is also expected to receive an open-weight release soon. Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg has continued to support broader access to advanced AI, arguing that powerful systems should not be controlled exclusively by governments or a small number of technology companies. Zuckerberg's position places Meta on a different path from companies that have generally kept their most advanced AI models and systems closed. Companies including OpenAI, Anthropic and Google have largely followed more restricted approaches to access, although their policies vary across products and models. With Muse Glimmer now available and Muse Spark 1.2 expected to follow, Meta is reinforcing its focus on locally processed, open-weight and developer-oriented artificial intelligence. The company's strategy could give individual developers and users more opportunities to experiment with advanced AI directly on consumer hardware.

Google DeepMind Warns Job Seekers About AI Screening Risks

Google DeepMind's AGI Safety and Alignment Team is encouraging job seekers to take an additional step when applying for its open positions, amid concerns that the company's internal artificial intelligence systems could incorrectly screen out qualified candidates. According to a document viewed by Bloomberg, the team has created a special form that applicants can complete alongside their job applications. The form is intended to ensure that applications reach a human member of the team instead of being delayed or rejected during automated screening. The document reportedly warned applicants that Google's application system has a "non-trivial probability" of incorrectly screening out CVs or taking too long to send them to the hiring team. It advised candidates to complete the additional form so that a real person would review their applications. The development is notable because Google promotes its artificial intelligence tools to businesses as a way to make recruitment more efficient. Google's



Workspace team markets AI features that can help companies draft job postings, evaluate resumes and forecast hiring requirements, potentially reducing the time HR teams spend on recruitment. However, the way AI is being used in hiring remains a concern. Some companies use AI models to rank candidates, while others rely on automated systems to search resumes for specific keywords and

qualifications. A Google DeepMind spokesperson said the company's goal is to recruit and hire the most qualified talent. The spokesperson denied that the company's systems incorrectly filter out applicants. They said the special form was established to bypass recruiter review and send resumes directly to members of the team, while stressing that there are no shortcuts to being hired.

Air India Pilot Fails Second Dope Test After Phuket-Delhi Flight



The pilot in command of an Air India flight from Phuket to Delhi has reportedly failed a second dope test following an incident in which the aircraft suddenly lost altitude and several passengers and crew members were injured. The pilot has been taken off flight duties pending an inquiry. Air India flight AI-2379, carrying 137 passengers and eight crew members, was travelling from Phuket to Delhi on August 4 when it encountered turbulence during its cruise. The aircraft reportedly experienced a sudden loss of altitude of around 300 feet, resulting in a negative-G situation. According to sources, the pilot had tested positive for psychoactive substances during post-flight screening conducted in Delhi. A second test was subsequently carried out and also returned a positive result. Sources said the tests indicated that the pilot had smoked marijuana, commonly referred to as weed. The circumstances surrounding the sudden altitude loss are still under investigation. Sources said the pilot was not in his seat at the time of the incident, with the co-pilot in command of the Airbus A320neo. The aircraft then dropped approximately 300 feet, although it remains unclear whether the

event was linked to pilot action, a technical problem or a possible hydraulic malfunction. The sudden movement created a negative-G environment inside the aircraft. The pilot and objects in the cockpit reportedly lifted from their positions, while passengers and crew members who were not strapped into their seats at the rear of the aircraft suffered injuries. Initial reports indicated that at least 13 passengers and four crew mem-

bers were injured, while a later assessment cited by authorities put the number of injured passengers at 20. Two crew members reportedly suffered spinal injuries around the tailbone and neck. Both pilots have been taken off the roster while the investigation continues. The Ministry of Civil Aviation said the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has begun a detailed investigation into the incident. The

ministry said investigators are collecting, preserving and examining technical, operational, medical and human-factor evidence. The investigation includes examination of the aircraft and its systems, recorded flight data, operational and maintenance records, medical information and interviews with people connected to the incident. The ministry stressed that no conclusions should be drawn from isolated information while the investigation remains underway. It said the objective is to determine the circumstances and contributing factors behind the incident and identify safety measures to prevent similar occurrences. Meanwhile, Air India's outgoing CEO Campbell Wilson met senior ministry officials on Tuesday to discuss the incident. Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said aviation safety remains the ministry's highest priority and stressed that there should be no compromise by regulators, airlines or any other stakeholders. The reported positive drug tests are therefore being examined alongside the aircraft's technical data, operational records and other evidence before investigators determine whether they had any connection to the turbulence-related incident.

Apple's Glass-Centric 20th Anniversary iPhone Still on Track for 2027



The original iPhone was launched in 2007, while the iPhone X was introduced in 2017 to commemorate the product's 10th anniversary. An Apple representative declined to comment. However, one person familiar with the company's plans said its product roadmap remains unchanged. The comments counter a report from Jefferies analyst Edison Lee, who said the all-glass iPhone had been cancelled based on supply-chain checks. Lee also downgraded Apple shares, arguing

that cancelling the design could affect the company's efforts to introduce higher-priced smartphones. Apple shares fell as much as 2.8% in New York on Monday following the report. New iPhone designs are generally finalised about a year before their annual autumn launch. As a result, the 2027 models are already undergoing advanced testing and are largely locked in, although unexpected manufacturing or technical problems could still affect the plans.

The iPhone remains Apple's biggest source of revenue, accounting for roughly half of the company's total sales. Its business has also recently outperformed other parts of the company, with iPhone sales increasing 22% in the latest quarter. Apple is also preparing several significant changes to its product lineup. Next month's iPhone launch is expected to include a new foldable model, marking the biggest design change in the product's history. The company is also expected to unveil the iPhone 18 Pro and Pro Max with major camera upgrades and introduce a dark red colour option. In spring, Apple is expected to launch the standard iPhone 18, an updated lower-cost iPhone 18e and a second-generation iPhone Air. The new Air is reportedly set to receive a second camera, a faster processor and improved battery life. Beyond smartphones, Apple is developing smart glasses, camera-equipped AirPods and other AI-focused wearable and home devices. The company's expanding product pipeline is expected to support incoming CEO John Ternus, who is scheduled to take over as chief executive on September 1.

UEFA Launches 'Clear Line' Platform to Tackle VAR Controversies

UEFA has introduced a new 'Clear Line' platform aimed at making the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system more consistent and understandable. The guide is designed to clarify when and how VAR officials should intervene and will be followed from the 2026-27 season.

According to a report by AS newspaper cited by Goal.com, the platform is already operational and brings together cases, procedures, plays and criteria that explain how VAR decisions should be handled. The initiative comes after years of controversy surrounding video technology and disagreements over when referees should review incidents.

Roberto Rosetti, head of UEFA's referees committee, said the key question surrounding VAR has always been when the video assistant referee should intervene. He said UEFA used its experience from around eight years of VAR cases and more than 100 clear video clips to create the platform.

Rosetti stressed that 'Clear Line' is not intended only for referees. It has been developed for players, coaches, fans and journalists so that everyone can understand the principles governing VAR interventions.

Another UEFA official, Velasco Carballo, said the platform was not created specifically for referees or referee organisations. Instead, it is intended to explain UEFA's basic principles to a wider football audience.

Carballo said the website could serve as a reference point following Champions League matches, allowing users to compare controversial



incidents with examples available in UEFA's video library. He added that the platform is designed for clubs, players and fans.

The guide deliberately uses some informal language rather than strictly following traditional refereeing terminology. Carballo said this was done to make the information easier for a wider audience to understand.

UEFA's new approach is expected to make VAR less interventionist from the 2026-27 season.

Rather than reviewing minor or marginal incidents, officials will focus on more obvious and serious errors that clearly affect decisions.

The initiative is aimed at creating greater transparency and consistency in the use of video technology. By making its principles publicly accessible, UEFA hopes players, coaches, supporters and officials will have a clearer understanding of why VAR interventions are made and when the technology should be used.



India women's hockey team captain Salima Tete has expressed strong confidence in the

Trump Backs Infantino, Warns Replacing FIFA President Would Be a "Terrible Mistake"



US President Donald Trump has strongly backed FIFA President Gianni Infantino amid growing criticism of the football governing body's leadership, saying replacing him would be a "terrible mistake."

Trump praised Infantino on Truth Social, calling him "fantastic" and crediting him with presiding over what he described as the most successful World Cup ever. Trump, who attended the World Cup final with Infantino last month, also warned that the tournament would not be as successful or profitable without him.

Infantino has faced renewed pressure after UEFA, CONCACAF and the AFC jointly criticised his leadership. The three confederations accused the FIFA president of breaking trust through what they described as deception and placing himself above the collective that entrusted him with authority.

The dispute followed Infantino's proposal to bring private investment into FIFA competitions, including World Cups. The plan was withdrawn after strong opposition, with UEFA threatening to boycott future World Cups if the proposal went ahead.

UEFA described the proposal as a "shabby, opaque, back-room deal" and criticised Infantino for what it called a failure of judgment.

Trump's support for Infantino contrasts with the position of US Soccer, which has joined the criticism directed at the FIFA president.

Infantino, a 56-year-old Swiss national who has led FIFA for 10 years, is expected to seek a fourth and final term at the FIFA Congress in March 2027. Candidates must be declared by November 18. He had appeared likely to face no opposition after overseeing the expanded World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada.

CONCACAF president Victor Montagliani is regarded as a possible challenger. Infantino has received backing from the Confederation of African Football (CAF), while South American governing body CONMEBOL is largely supportive.

FIFA defended Infantino against efforts it said were aimed at undermining the organisation. Senior FIFA directors also gave him full support at an emergency meeting in Morocco.

However, UEFA, CONCACAF and the AFC questioned the significance of that meeting, arguing that FIFA's recent conduct lacked accountability and openness.

The confederations stressed that football's growth over the past decade was a collective achievement involving FIFA, confederations, member associations and thousands of people.

They said football's strength has always been based on unity, signalling that tensions over Infantino's leadership could continue ahead of the 2027 FIFA presidential election.

team's chances of winning the FIH Hockey Women's World Cup 2026. The team enters the tournament with momentum after winning the FIH Nations Cup and is determined to compete for the gold medal.

Speaking to JioStar, Salima Tete said her responsibility as captain is to support every player, regardless of whether the team is winning or losing. She said India would focus on smart, attacking hockey and approach every match with equal importance.

"This time, the FIH Hockey World Cup will be ours," Salima said, adding that the team has the ability to win a medal. She also said the tournament is particularly exciting for her as it will be her second World Cup appearance.

The captain highlighted the contribution of young players, including Sakshi Rana, Ishika and Rutuja Dadaso Pisal. She said junior players bring energy and positivity to the team and are eager to perform on the biggest stage.

Salima said she encourages the youngsters to play freely and enjoy their hockey instead of carrying pressure. According to her, the senior players are responsible for handling pressure and helping younger teammates express themselves confidently.

She acknowledged that the World Cup will feature strong teams and said India's pool presents a challenging test. With the Asian Games also approaching, the team is preparing for demanding competition.

Salima admitted that nervousness is natural before major tournaments but said she uses that feeling to remind herself of her responsibility towards the team. She wants to remain positive, support

Salima Tete Confident India Can Win Hockey World Cup Gold

her teammates and help them recover from mistakes. The captain also praised India's goalkeepers for providing confidence to the team. Their assurance that they will protect the defence allows attacking players to move forward without fear.

Salima said the team is ready to fight for every ball and give its best in every match. She expressed complete faith in the squad and said the players are determined to make the country proud.

With confidence from their Nations Cup success and strong support among senior and junior players, India will aim to carry that momentum into the FIH Hockey Women's World Cup 2026 and challenge for the gold medal.

Argentine football icon Lionel Messi has reportedly taken an indefinite break from professional football following

Abhishek Porel Arrested in Rape Case Following Medical Student's Complaint

Bengal cricketer Abhishek Porel, who has represented Delhi Capitals in the Indian Premier League (IPL), has been arrested in Hooghly district following a complaint by a medical student alleging that he had sexual relations with her on the promise of marriage.

Hooghly (Rural) Superintendent of Police Kunwar Bhushan Singh said Porel was arrested by Mogra police late Monday night and was expected to be produced before a court in Chinsurah on Tuesday.

"There was a case lodged against him and a court order to arrest him. He was arrested late last night. He will be produced in court today," Kunwar Bhushan Singh told PTI.

The arrest followed an order by the Calcutta High Court on July 20 directing police to take Porel into custody in connection with the case. The court also directed authorities to seize his electronic devices to prevent the dissemination of photographs of the complainant.

Police have registered a case against Porel under Section 69 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), along with Sections 311 and 318 and other provisions of the BNS. Sections 66 and 72 of the Information Technology Act have also been invoked, according to police sources.

A medical student from Karnataka filed the complaint at Mogra police station on June 23. She alleged that she and Porel had been in a relationship for around three-and-a-half years and had planned to marry. According to her complaint, the two had also travelled abroad together.

The woman alleged that Porel later denied their relationship, prompting her to approach the police. She also stated that the couple had a dispute around one-and-a-half years ago that escalated to the police station, although no complaint was filed at that time.

Following the June complaint, police teams reportedly visited Porel's residence in Chandannagar several times but could not locate him. The complainant subsequently approached the Calcutta High Court, which ordered his arrest.

The court proceedings also involved allegations of criminal intimidation and other offences besides the rape allegation.

Porel had previously denied the allegations. Reactions from Porel and his family following his arrest were awaited. The case remains under investigation, and the allegations against Porel have not been established in court.



Lionel Messi Takes Indefinite Break After Father Jorge Messi's Death

Jorge was married to Celia Cuccittini, and the couple had four children: Lionel, Rodrigo, Matias and Maria Sol.

Jorge's involvement in Messi's career continued as his son rose from a young footballer in Argentina to one of the greatest players in the history of the sport. His guidance and support remained an important part of Messi's journey throughout his career.

The reported decision to step away from football highlights the personal impact of his father's death. Messi has continued to have a demanding professional career with Inter Miami, but his immediate priority is understood to be spending time with his loved ones.

No specific timeline has been announced for his return to football. The



break means Messi's professional commitments have temporarily taken a back seat as he and his family mourn Jorge Messi's death.

Rukmini Vasanth Makes Mollywood Debut With Nivin Pauly's NP51

Actress Rukmini Vasanth is set to make her debut in the Malayalam film industry with the upcoming project tentatively titled NP51. The actress, who is currently gearing up for the release of Yash's Toxic, officially announced her association with the film through a social media post.

Rukmini shared a picture of herself holding the film's clapboard, confirming that she has joined the project. The film marks her maiden venture into Mollywood and will feature her alongside popular Malayalam actor Nivin Pauly.

NP51 is being directed by debutant Nashid Mohamed Famy. The project is expected to bring together a fresh combination of talent, with the film marking an important milestone in Rukmini's career as she expands her presence across the South Indian film industries.

Sharing the clapboard picture, Rukmini described the Malayalam project as a "very special first" for her. She also expressed her gratitude for getting the opportunity to work in an industry that she has admired for a long time. Her announcement quickly attracted attention from fans, who are eager to see the actress make her Malayalam debut. The film's pooja ceremony was held last week, marking the beginning of the project. The makers are expected to announce additional details about the cast, storyline and other aspects of the production in the coming days.

Rukmini Vasanth has been steadily gaining recognition with her performances in South Indian cinema. Her upcoming appearance in Toxic alongside Yash has already generated considerable interest among audiences. The actress is now adding Malayalam cinema to her growing list of projects with NP51.

For Nivin Pauly, the film represents another project as he continues to explore varied roles and collaborations. His pairing with Rukmini Vasanth is also expected to be one of the interesting aspects of the upcoming movie.

Although the makers have kept most details about NP51 under wraps, the announcement of Rukmini's Malayalam debut has already created curiosity. With debutant director Nashid Mohamed Famy at the helm and Nivin Pauly and Rukmini Vasanth in the lead, expectations are building around the project.

More information about NP51, including its official title, release plans and other members of the cast and crew, is expected to be revealed soon. For Rukmini Vasanth, however, the project is already a significant milestone as she takes her first step into Mollywood.



Exclusive footage from the much-awaited film Ramayana is reportedly set to be screened at Big Cine Expo 2026, giving members of the cinema exhibition industry an early glimpse of the highly anticipated project. The footage is expected to be presented at the annual industry event on August 18. Big Cine Expo is an annual platform that brings together key stakeholders from the cinema exhibition sector, including theatre owners, design consultants, equipment manufacturers, system integrators and project management professionals. The event focuses on the latest developments in cinema technology and exhibition while also providing opportunities for industry members to preview exclusive content from upcoming films. According to a report by Bollywood Hungama, exclusive footage from Ramayana will be exhibited during the 2026 edition of the expo. The organizers are reportedly planning strict measures to ensure that the footage is not recorded or circulated. This is because the content scheduled to be shown has not yet been released publicly. The decision to screen previously unseen material at Big Cine Expo follows a practice seen during earlier editions of the event. In the past, attendees were given access to exclusive footage from films such as Baby

Ramayana Exclusive Footage Reportedly To Be Screened At Big Cine Expo 2026

John, Madaan and Brahmastra. These screenings have helped make the expo an important event for cinema exhibitors and industry professionals looking to get an early look at major upcoming releases. Ramayana is among the most eagerly awaited Indian films and has generated considerable attention because of its ambitious scale, subject and star cast. The film features Ranbir Kapoor, Yash and Sai Pallavi in the lead roles. The project is based on the epic Ramayana and is expected to bring the story to the screen on a large scale. Ranbir Kapoor is set to play the role of Lord Ram, while Sai Pallavi is associated with the role of Sita. Yash is part of the principal cast and is expected to play an important character in the film. The casting has been one of the major reasons for the strong interest surrounding the project. The reported Big Cine Expo screening could provide theatre owners and other exhibition professionals with an early understanding of the film's visual presentation, scale and technical aspects. However, details about the exact footage that will be shown have not been disclosed. The reported non-recording policy is also expected to limit unauthorized leaks ahead of the film's official promotional campaign. Since the footage has not been publicly released, preventing recordings would allow the makers to retain control over how and when the material reaches audiences. With Ramayana already being regarded as one of the major film projects to watch, the reported August 18 screening is likely to attract significant attention among cinema industry professionals. While general audiences may have to wait longer for an official look at the footage, Big Cine Expo attendees could become the first to see selected material from the film. If the report is confirmed, the exclusive presentation would add another major attraction to Big Cine Expo 2026 and further increase anticipation for Ramayana, which brings together Ranbir Kapoor, Yash and Sai Pallavi for one of the most ambitious upcoming Indian cinematic projects.

Fauzi, one of the most anticipated films featuring Prabhas in the lead role, has generated considerable curiosity among moviegoers. Directed by Hanu Raghavapudi, the film is being mounted on a massive scale and budget under the Mythri Movie Makers banner. With Independence Day approaching, Prabhas fans are eagerly waiting for a major update from the makers. The film is reportedly connected to themes of the nation and patriotism, making Independence Day a potentially significant occasion for a promotional reveal. There has been growing speculation that the makers could release a glimpse of Fauzi on Independence Day. However, no official confirmation has been made so far. Fans are therefore waiting to see whether the team will announce or release special footage from the film and meet the expectations surrounding the project. Fauzi has been attracting attention not only because of Prabhas but also because of its combination of Hanu Raghavapudi's direction, a large-scale production



Prabhas Fans Await Major Fauzi Update Ahead Of Independence Day

and an ensemble cast. The film is expected to present Prabhas in a different setting and explore a story with strong emotional and patriotic elements. The makers have already locked December 3, 2026, as the film's theatrical release date. With several months remaining before the release, promotional updates are expected to play an important role in building anticipation among audiences. Immanvi is the female lead in Fauzi, while the cast also includes veteran actors Mithun Chakraborty, Anupam Kher and Jaya Prada in key roles. The presence of such experienced performers has added further interest to the project. Vishal Chandrasekhar is composing the film's soundtrack, adding another important element to the production. His music is expected to complement the film's emotional and patriotic setting. For Prabhas fans, the immediate focus remains on the next promotional update. Independence Day could provide a fitting occasion for the makers to showcase the film, particularly given its reported connection with the nation and patriotism. However, until the production team makes an official announcement, the possibility of an Independence Day glimpse remains speculation. As Fauzi moves closer to its December 3 release, expectations are steadily rising. The combination of Prabhas, Hanu Raghavapudi, Mythri Movie Makers and a prominent supporting cast has made the film one of the major upcoming releases to watch. The makers' next update could offer audiences their first substantial look at what they have planned and potentially set the tone for the film's promotional campaign.



Bollywood actress Wamiqa Gabbi is reportedly being considered for an important role in Jai Hanuman, one of the most anticipated upcoming Telugu

films. The development

comes after the reported success of DC, which has apparently opened another opportunity for the actress in Telugu cinema. According to fresh reports, Wamiqa Gabbi has been approached for a key character in Jai Hanuman. The film is being led by Rishab Shetty and directed by Prasanth Varma, who is reportedly mounting the project on a large scale. If the reports are confirmed, the film will mark Wamiqa's entry into the Prasanth Varma Cinematic Universe (PVCU).

The reported casting has generated interest among moviegoers, as Jai Hanuman is positioned as an important project within Prasanth Varma's cinematic universe. The director has been developing the franchise with a focus on Indian mythology and superhero elements, and the sequel has already created considerable anticipation.

For Wamiqa, Jai Hanuman would also mark her third Telugu project. The actress has been steadily expanding her presence across Indian cinema by taking up roles in projects from different industries. Her possible association with the film could further strengthen her position in Telugu cinema. However, there is no official confirmation yet regarding Wamiqa Gabbi's involvement. Mythri Movie Makers, which is associated with the project, is yet to announce the actress as part of the cast. Therefore, her reported role and character details remain under wraps.

Meanwhile, another report has added further excitement to the casting discussions surrounding Jai Hanuman. Actor and producer Rana Daggubati is reportedly being consid-

Wamiqa Gabbi Reportedly In Talks For Jai Hanuman

ered to play the role of Ashwatthama in the film. If confirmed, his involvement would bring another prominent name to the highly anticipated project. Jai Hanuman is being produced on a large scale, with T-Series also serving as a co-producer. The combination of Rishab Shetty, Prasanth Varma and the reported involvement of actors such as Wamiqa Gabbi and Rana Daggubati has increased curiosity around the film. The makers are expected to reveal more information about the cast, characters and production in the coming days. Until an official announcement is made, Wamiqa Gabbi's reported inclusion remains unconfirmed. If the reports prove accurate, Jai Hanuman will not only expand the Prasanth Varma Cinematic Universe but also provide Wamiqa with another major opportunity to establish herself in Telugu cinema. With the project being developed on a massive scale, expectations are already high among fans awaiting further updates.