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CM Pushes Metro Expansion

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed officials to accelerate the Hyderabad Metro Rail expansion in the Old City under Phase-2 and ensure that pending works are completed without delay. He issued the directions during a review meeting with senior officials of Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (HMRL) on Tuesday. The Chief Minister instructed officials to expedite the proposed 7.5-kilometre Metro corridor from MGBS to Chandrayangutta. He directed the authorities to initiate the tender process for the project and complete pending land acquisition activities at the earliest. With passenger traffic on the existing Metro network increasing steadily, Revanth Reddy also instructed officials to take steps to add more



coaches to the Hyderabad Metro system. He stressed the need to strengthen passenger capacity and improve services in line with growing demand. The Chief Minister further suggested that HMRL officials consult the Delhi Metro authorities regarding the latest technology and technical practices being used for the proposed MGBS-Chandrayangutta corridor. He advised officials to seek expert guidance

to ensure that modern and suitable technology is adopted for the Phase-2 expansion. The Old City Metro project is expected to improve connectivity between key parts of Hyderabad and provide better public transport access to densely populated areas. Faster execution of the corridor is also aimed at easing pressure on roads and supporting the city's growing mobility requirements. Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju, Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan, Advisors Ramakrishna Rao and NVS Reddy, Metro Rail Managing Director Sarfaraz Ahmed and Additional Managing Director Ajit Reddy attended the review meeting. The Chief Minister called for close coordination among departments to remove administrative hurdles and ensure timely progress on the Metro expansion works.



Governor Accepts Convocation Invitation

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU) Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ghanta Chakrapani and Registrar Dr. L. Vijaya Krishna Reddy met Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla at Lok Bhavan on Tuesday and extended an invitation to attend the university's 27th Convocation scheduled to be held in October. During the courtesy meeting, Prof. Chakrapani and Dr. Vijaya Krishna Reddy briefed the Governor about the preparations and arrangements being made for the convocation. They discussed the proposed programme and other aspects related to the conduct of the university's annual academic event. University officials said the Governor accepted the invitation and agreed to attend the 27th Convocation. His participation is expected to add significance to the event, which will bring together graduating students, university officials, faculty members and

distinguished guests. The Vice-Chancellor and Registrar also apprised the Governor of the university's academic activities and preparations for the upcoming convocation. The meeting was part of the university's efforts to coordinate with dignitaries ahead of the major academic programme. The 27th Convocation will provide an opportunity to formally confer degrees and recognise the academic achievements of students who have successfully completed their programmes through the open university system. BRAOU officials said preparations for the event were progressing as planned and that necessary arrangements would be made to ensure the convocation is conducted smoothly and in a dignified manner. The university expressed appreciation to Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla for accepting the invitation and said his presence would encourage the graduating students and contribute to the significance of the occasion.

CM Reviews Invest Summit

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed officials to make comprehensive arrangements for the 'Invest Telangana Global Summit' scheduled to be held in December, with the objective of attracting fresh investments and strengthening the state's industrial growth. He issued the directions during a review meeting with senior officials on preparations for the event. The Chief Minister instructed officials to ensure that all arrangements for the summit are made to international standards so that Telangana can effectively showcase its investment potential to global business leaders and investors. Revanth Reddy also suggested preparing a plan to honour prominent personalities from different business sectors during the summit in recognition



of their contributions to industry and economic development. The Chief Minister sought a detailed report on the investments attracted to Telangana through last year's global summit. He directed officials to provide information on the status and progress of those investments, including the implementation of projects announced during the event. He further advised the officials

to formulate a comprehensive strategy to attract additional investments and convert investment proposals into concrete projects. The government aims to use the upcoming summit as a platform to highlight Telangana's infrastructure, industrial ecosystem, skilled workforce and business opportunities. The Chief Minister stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among various departments to ensure the successful organisation of the summit and maximise its economic benefits for the state. Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju, Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan, Advisor Ramakrishna Rao and other senior officials participated in the review meeting. Officials discussed the proposed arrangements and measures required to make the December summit a major platform for investment promotion in Telangana.

Textile Park May Create 3 Lakh Jobs

Warangal, August 11 | TPN Bureau

The PM MITRA Mega Textile Park in Warangal has the potential to generate employment for nearly three lakh people once it reaches full capacity, the Centre informed the Lok Sabha on Tuesday. Union Minister of State for Textiles Pabitra Margherita provided the details in a written reply to a question raised by Warangal MP Dr Kadiyam Kavya. According to the Centre, the park could create around one lakh direct jobs and another two lakh indirect employment opportunities. Investments already committed to the project are expected to generate more than 24,400 direct jobs. The Warangal facility is among seven PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) parks approved by the Centre under a scheme being implemented



from 2021-22 to 2027-28, with an overall allocation of Rs 4,445 crore. Warangal was selected under the brownfield category. The Centre said approximately Rs 300 crore had already been spent on trunk infrastructure at the park. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the facility on May 10, 2026, and commercial production has already commenced at some units. Around 548 acres have so far been allotted to investors. The PM MITRA initiative aims to establish integrated, modern infrastructure for the textile

and apparel industry, bringing manufacturing and supporting facilities together at a single location. The government expects employment benefits to extend beyond textile production to transportation, logistics, supply chains, ancillary industries and various service sectors. Women are also expected to gain significantly from the employment opportunities, with women forming a substantial portion of the workforce in apparel units already operating at the park. The Centre said skill-development programmes are being

implemented to prepare workers for employment opportunities. Policies are also being pursued to encourage recruitment of local residents, particularly youth, women, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward communities. With land continuing to be allotted and production underway, the Warangal PM MITRA Park is expected to attract additional investments and textile units, strengthening the region's industrial ecosystem and creating a major employment hub in Telangana.

Cabinet to Review Welfare and Land Policy



Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana Cabinet, scheduled to meet on August 14, is expected to take several important decisions concerning welfare schemes, land pooling, infrastructure development and the proposed special session of the State Legislature. According to official sources, the Cabinet is likely to approve a new land pooling policy aimed at providing an alternative to conventional land acquisition for major infrastructure and development projects. Under the proposed framework, landowners who voluntarily pool their properties may receive 60 per cent of the fully developed plots, while government agencies such as HMDA and TGICC would retain the remaining 40 per cent. The government plans to use its share for resource mobilisation and development works. The Cabinet is also expected to finalize the schedule for a one-day special legislative session. The government may seek the

Legislature's approval for a resolution proposing a reduction in the minimum age for contesting Lok Sabha and Assembly elections from 25 to 21 years. Similar changes may be sought for Rajya Sabha and Legislative Council elections, reducing the minimum age from 30 to 25 years. The session could be held on August 17 or 18 ahead of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's proposed overseas visit from August 20 to September 10. On the welfare front, the Cabinet is likely to approve new social security pensions for around 2.25 lakh additional beneficiaries. The Gruha Jyothi scheme, which provides up to 200 units of free electricity, may also be extended to another three to four lakh families. Under the Mahalakshmi scheme, approximately five lakh additional families are expected to receive subsidized LPG cylinders at an effective price of Rs 500. The State currently provides monthly pensions to nearly 41 lakh beneficiaries. The Cabinet may further approve tenders for constructing Indiranagar Towers in the Hyderabad Core Urban Region to provide housing for lower-income groups. Key decisions are also expected on the proposed Musi River rejuvenation programme and the Gandhi Sarovar project. The meeting is likely to set the direction for several major policy and welfare initiatives in the coming months.

Developed Plots Distributed to Displaced Farmers

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has started handing over developed plots to farmers whose lands were acquired for the Hyderabad Pharma City project during the previous BRS regime. The initiative provides an additional benefit to eligible landowners beyond the compensation already paid for their surrendered properties. In the first phase, registration documents for developed plots measuring 121 square yards each were distributed to 387 farmers who had surrendered less than five acres. The Congress government has decided to use the acquired land for the proposed Bharat Future City. The previous government had planned to acquire 19,333 acres of assigned and patta land for Pharma City. More than 7,800 acres were acquired in Nakkarta Medipalli, Nanaknagar, Tadiparthi and Kurmida villages of Yacharam mandal in Rangareddy district. Farmers holding assigned land were paid Rs 8 lakh per acre, while those occupying government land received Rs 7.7 lakh per acre. Private patta landowners were compensated at more than Rs 35 lakh per acre, with payments initially beginning at Rs 12.5 lakh. Following opposition to the Pharma City project, authorities decided to allot a developed 121-square-yard plot for every acre surrendered by eligible farmers who had received compensation. A 620-acre township was subsequently developed at Panjaguda in Mirakhanpet revenue village limits. Plots were allotted through a lottery, and possession was shown to beneficiaries. Although the Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation had registered the plots at its own expense last year, the registration documents were not distributed during the previous government's tenure. More than 1,100 patta farmers from the four villages surrendered their lands. However, the distribution process for assigned-land farmers has faced fresh delays following allegations of irregularities in beneficiary records. Authorities issued certificates to 5,720 assigned and patta farmers and registered plots according to allotted numbers. Later, more than 250 beneficiaries were suspected of submitting fraudulent claims involving assigned land. The government has ordered an inquiry into the allegations. Lists of suspected beneficiaries were also submitted to Ibrahimpatnam MLA Malreddy Ranga Reddy and Collector C. Narayana Reddy. Distribution of documents to the suspected beneficiaries has been withheld until verification is completed.

Young India Schools to Shape the Future

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said the Telangana government is working to transform the education system by establishing Young India Integrated Residential Schools across the State, with the objective of providing high-quality education to children irrespective of their social or economic background. In a post on X on Tuesday, the Chief Minister said constructing buildings alone was not enough and that strong determination was needed to build a foundation for the aspirations of children. He said the government was pursuing that vision through the new residential schools being developed across constituencies. Revanth Reddy said the initiative was aimed at reducing economic and social disparities and ensuring that children were not disadvantaged because of caste, religion, region or family circumstances. The government's objective, he added, was to make world-class education accessible to every child. According to the Chief Minister, the Young India Integrated Residential Schools are being developed with modern infrastructure and facilities. He described the institutions as centres of learning that would help prepare students for future careers and responsibilities. He said the schools were envisioned to nurture children who could grow into scientists, administrators, entrepreneurs, industrialists and other professionals contributing to the development of the country. The Chief Minister stated that the residential schools would particularly serve as platforms for children from economically weaker sections to pursue their aspirations. He described the initiative as an important component of the Telangana model of development and education.



Revanth Reddy expressed confidence that the schools would create opportunities for generations of students and contribute to building a more equitable society. The government intends to use the programme to strengthen educational access while equipping students with the knowledge and skills required to meet future challenges.

India's Economy Ranked Sixth Globally

New Delhi, August 11 | TPN Bureau

India's nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) stood at \$3.92 trillion in 2025-26, making the country the sixth-largest economy in the world, the Centre informed the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said India's position in global rankings, based on nominal GDP, can fluctuate depending on economic growth, currency movements, price changes, revisions to national accounts and the performance of other major economies. Responding to questions in Parliament, the minister said the government has adopted a broad-based strategy to strengthen India's growth prospects. The approach includes improving agricultural productivity, expanding manufacturing through Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes, supporting micro, small and

medium enterprises, strengthening infrastructure and logistics, and promoting innovation, digitalisation and research. The government is also encouraging investment through sustained public capital expenditure and a liberalised foreign direct investment framework. Chaudhary said reforms in direct taxation and GST, along with continued efforts to improve the ease of doing business, were aimed at creating a more efficient economic environment. He added that India was working to strengthen its external competitiveness and trade resilience by expanding free trade agreements and comprehensive economic partnership and cooperation arrangements with other countries. According to the minister, maintaining macroeconomic stability through prudent fiscal management and price stability remains another key priority. In a separate response, Chaudhary highlighted improvements in the financial

health of public sector banks. Gross non-performing assets (GNPAs) of PSBs declined to Rs 2,45,634 crore as of March 31, 2026, compared with Rs 3,39,541 crore two years earlier. The GNPAs ratio of public sector banks also fell from 3.47 per cent in March 2024 to 1.93 per cent in March 2026, indicating a significant improvement in asset quality. The minister further said reported fraud cases in public sector banks had dropped sharply, from 54,850 cases in 2023-24 to 5,786 cases in 2025-26. Banks, he said, take appropriate action against borrowers involved in fraud and wilful defaults in accordance with Reserve Bank of India guidelines and their respective board-approved policies. The government maintained that the combination of structural reforms, investment, financial-sector improvements and macroeconomic stability would support India's continued economic expansion.



Ponguleti Reviews 22A Land Issues



Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Revenue, Housing and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy has assured people that legally eligible landowners need not worry about properties listed under the Prohibited Properties (22A/POB) category. He said the government would ensure justice for genuine applicants while taking firm steps to protect government land and assets. The Minister held a detailed meeting with Collectors and District Sub-Registrars of Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Medchal-Malkajgiri and Sangareddy districts at the Secretariat on Tuesday to review pending 22A applications. He directed officials to examine genuine applications on a daily basis and resolve them on a war footing. Ponguleti said the present government had not added any new properties to the prohibited list and was working to address legal and technical complications inherited from the previous administration. He ordered officials to upload all relevant land documents, including Government Orders, official proceedings, memos, acquisition records and layout approvals, online by August 14. He said digitisation would help prevent document manipulation and enable

Sub-Registrars to verify records before processing registrations. Steps are also being taken to provide Sub-Registrars access to Pahaniland records. The Minister directed Collectors to distinguish genuine applications from fraudulent claims and warned that no eligible person should suffer injustice in the name of Section 22A. He reiterated that Sub-Registrars should not exercise discretionary powers and must base decisions strictly on verified online data. Ponguleti said government assets would be protected without compromise and warned of strict action against officials responsible for deliberate or serious errors. Instead of immediately rejecting POB-related registrations, officials were instructed to examine cases for three days and provide specific reasons for rejection. He directed that POB applications be sent directly to District Collectors and that correspondence be handled between Collectors and District Registrars. Revenue Secretary D.S. Lokesh Kumar, Stamps and Registration IG Rajiv Gandhi Hanumanthu, District Collectors and District Registrars attended the meeting. The IG was directed to brief Sub-Registrars and ensure immediate implementation of the decisions.

New Social Security Pension Applications Open

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has initiated the process of accepting applications for new pensions under the Social Security Pension Scheme, aimed at extending financial support to eligible poor and vulnerable sections. Applications for new pensions will be accepted until August 31, 2026, with no changes made to the existing eligibility criteria. In the first phase, pensions will be considered for single women, widows, persons with disabilities, line workers, handloom workers, filariasis victims and individuals suffering from blood-related conditions such as thalassemia, sickle cell disease and haemophilia. Officials said eligibility will continue to be determined according to government orders issued between 2014 and 2018. Applications previously submitted through Praja Palana Weeks, the 99-Day Progress Plan Gram Sabhas and Prajavani will also be considered. Applicants who have already submitted all required documents need not apply again. Those who have incomplete documentation, as well as eligible persons who have not applied earlier, can submit fresh applications. Following scrutiny, designated officials will conduct field-level verification before forwarding eligible applications to the district authorities. Pension sanctions will subsequently be processed with the approval of the District Collector. Self-Help Group federations have also been assigned the responsibility of assisting eligible applicants, particularly widows and single women, in obtaining necessary documents and completing the application process. The government said application details would be entered into the manual portal immediately and directed officials to complete the process transparently and strictly according to existing rules. The initiative is intended to ensure that every eligible beneficiary receives social security support without altering the established eligibility norms.

Petrol Dealers Seek Margin Revision

Delhi, August 11 | TPN Bureau

A delegation of the United Petroleum Dealers Association met Sunil Dattatraya Tatkar, Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas, in Delhi on Tuesday and submitted a representation seeking action on their long-pending demands. The delegation was led by BRS Parliamentary Party Leader and committee member Vaddiraju Ravichandra and Telangana MLC Takallapalli Ravinder Rao. Telangana chapter president Amarendra Reddy, General Secretary Vinod and other representatives also participated in the meeting. During the hour-long discussion at Tatkar's residence, the dealers highlighted the challenges faced by petroleum retailers and sought an increase in dealer margins. They said the mar-

gins had remained unchanged for nearly eight years despite rising operational expenses and other costs associated with running fuel outlets. The delegation also presented a memorandum covering several other issues affecting petroleum dealers and urged the Parliamentary Standing Committee to examine their concerns and facilitate appropriate action. Representatives from Gujarat, West Bengal, Kerala, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Haryana were also part of the delegation, reflecting the concerns of dealers from multiple states. The representatives requested Tatkar to consider their demands and take up the matter with the concerned authorities. They expressed hope that the committee would examine the issues in detail and help secure a fair resolution for petroleum dealers across the country.

Tummala Sets Cotton Procurement Plan

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Agriculture, Marketing, Cooperation, Handlooms and Textiles Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao has directed officials to ensure smooth, transparent and farmer-friendly cotton procurement during the 2026-27 season. He held a review meeting with Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) officials in Hyderabad on Tuesday. The Minister stressed that farmers should not face difficulties and called for close coordination between the State and Central governments to ensure payment of the Minimum Support Price (MSP). He warned against middlemen and directed officials to ensure direct procure-

ment from farmers. Cotton cultivation is expected to cover 46.33 lakh acres this season, with production estimated at 25.85 lakh metric tonnes. The MSP for Long Staple Cotton has been fixed at Rs 8,667 per quintal, Rs 557 higher than last year. Tummala said no farmer should be forced to sell below MSP. He directed officials to notify 356 spinning mills and ensure mills across all districts become operational within 15 to 30 days. CCI procurement centres have increased from 122 last season to 131 this year, with additional centres to be opened wherever necessary. District monitoring committees headed by Collectors should include farmer representatives. Officials were told



to personally inspect procurement centres, regulate arrivals and resolve problems immediately. The Minister also order

ed simplification of slot booking on the 'Kapas Kisan' app, including multiple barcode facilities where required. He

called for adequate testing laboratories, quality-testing equipment for staple length, micronaire and moisture,

CCTV cameras and regular monitoring at procurement centres and ginning mills. Officials were instructed to widely publicise MSP rates, procurement centres, quality standards and slot procedures through Rythu Nestham, village programmes, posters and leaflets. Help desks at market yards should function effectively. A toll-free helpline, 1800 599 5779, and WhatsApp chatbot 88972 81111 have been established for farmer grievances. Tummala warned that negligence or violations causing losses to farmers would invite strict action and reiterated that ensuring MSP benefits to every eligible farmer remains the government's primary objective.

Konda Surekha Offers Maru Bonam

Secunderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

As part of the Ashada Bonalu festivities, Telangana Forest, Environment and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha offered the traditional 'Maru Bonam' to Goddess Ujjaini Mahankali in Secunderabad on Tuesday. The Minister was accorded a ceremonial welcome by Endowments Department Director Hanumantha Rao, Assistant Commissioner Manohar Reddy and temple priests amid the beats of Dappu drums and performances by Shiva Sathus. Minister Surekha visited the temple and offered special prayers to Goddess Ujjaini Mahankali before participating in the Maru Bonam ceremony. Under the guidance of the chief priest, she offered the Maru Bonam and performed special rituals seeking the blessings of the deity.

On the occasion, the Minister presented sarees and traditional 'Sare' offerings to women carrying the Bonam as part of the religious celebrations. Speaking to the gathering, Konda Surekha said she was delighted to participate in the Maru Bonam programme and described the tradition as an important part of Telangana's cultural heritage. She explained that preparing the Maru Bonam using rice offered to the Goddess represents a unique custom associated with the region's traditions. The Minister prayed for the happiness, prosperity and good health of the people of Telangana and said Ashada Bonalu reflected the state's rich cultural identity and devotion. She said it was a matter of pride for people to celebrate the festival with faith and enthusiasm. Surekha noted that this year's Bonalu celebra-



tions were being conducted on a grand scale, with extensive arrangements made by the government and active cooperation from the public. The celebrations at the historic temple wit-

nessed a festive atmosphere, with devotees participating in the rituals and traditional programmes with enthusiasm.

Amgen to Set Up Research Centre

India Managing Director Naveen Gullapalli and Telangana Special Secretary for Industries Krishna Aditya exchanged the MoU documents. Sridhar Babu said the proposed research centre would create employment opportunities for local talent and contribute to the state's growing innovation ecosystem. He recalled that Amgen had recently established a major Global Capability Centre in Telangana, creating employment for around 3,000 people. The Minister said the increasing presence of leading pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies reflected growing confidence in Telangana. He highlighted the state's skilled workforce, advanced infrastructure and established life sciences ecosystem, particularly Genome Valley, as key factors attracting global companies. Sridhar Babu urged Amgen to give priority to local youth while recruiting for the

new facility. He said the government would continue supporting investments that promote research, innovation, employment and industrial development. Amgen operates across nearly 100 countries and develops innovative therapies for serious medical conditions, including cancer, cardiovascular diseases, bone disorders, inflammation, respiratory illnesses and rare diseases. The MoU signing was attended by Special Secretary Industries Krishna Aditya, Industries Department Commissioner Nikhil Chakravarthy, Telangana Life Sciences CEO Sarvesh Singh, Amgen India Managing Director Naveen Gullapalli, Executive Director Srinu Kosaraju, Anumita and other senior officials and company representatives. The proposed centre is expected to further enhance Genome Valley's reputation as a global hub for life sciences research and innovation.



Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Global biotechnology major Amgen has announced plans to establish a state-of-the-art research and innovation centre at Genome Valley, further strengthening Telangana's position as a leading destination for the global life sciences industry. The company signed a

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Telangana government at the Secretariat on Tuesday in the presence of IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu. Earlier, Amgen India representatives met Sridhar Babu to discuss expanding the company's operations and developing Hyderabad as a key hub. Following the discussions, Amgen

CM to Launch Smart Ration Cards



Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will launch the statewide distribution of new smart ration cards at a major public programme in Sangareddy on August 15, Independence Day. Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy said on Tuesday. The initiative is

aimed at strengthening transparency and efficiency in Telangana's food-security network. Uttam Kumar Reddy reviewed arrangements for the launch with senior officials, including Civil Supplies Commissioner Stephen Ravindra and Civil Supplies Corporation Director Rohit Singh. He said the Chief Minister's programme in Sangareddy would be

followed by simultaneous smart ration card distribution programmes at all 33 district headquarters. The Minister said Telangana currently has 1,06,28,092 Food Security Cards covering approximately 3.43 crore beneficiaries. Each eligible beneficiary is entitled to six kilograms of fine rice free of cost every month. He direct-

Papanna Goud's Legacy to Reach New Generation

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar on Tuesday unveiled the trailer of the upcoming Telugu film Sardar Sarvai Papanna, which is scheduled for release on August 21 to coincide with the 376th birth anniversary of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud. The Minister also released a book and poster highlighting the historical figure's life and legacy. Speaking at the event held at his official residence, Ponnamp Prabhakar said Papanna Goud's life and struggle should be taken to future generations through films, books and other forms of public outreach. He described Papanna as a leader who fought with the vision of establishing a Bahujan state and promoting self-rule. The Minister said Papanna Goud made Golconda his base and fought against prevail-

ing power structures while seeking greater social equality and political autonomy. He noted that Papanna conquered several forts and expanded his influence up to Golconda Fort. Prabhakar said Papanna Goud's efforts for social equality, self-governance and the rights of marginalized communities had secured him an important place in history. He stressed that the younger generation should be made aware of his contribution and the historical circumstances in which he carried out his struggle. Welcoming the release of the film on Papanna Goud's birth anniversary, the Minister said cinema could play an important role in presenting historical personalities and their contributions to a wider audience. He appreciated the filmmakers for bringing Papanna Goud's story to the silver screen and conveyed his best wishes to the entire team. The film is expected to highlight important



aspects of Papanna Goud's life and his struggle for social and political change. Telangana Film Chamber President Pathani Ramakrishna,

director-producer Lingampalli Venkatesh Goud, distributor Paper Satyanarayana and others attended the trailer launch programme.

Ramchander Rao Challenges Rahul Gandhi on Student Issues

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao on Tuesday challenged Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi to attend Parliament and participate in a discussion on the NEET paper leak issue instead of holding protests outside the House.

Addressing a media conference in Hyderabad, Rao said Rahul Gandhi had demanded answers from Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the issue but questioned why he was reluctant to participate when the Centre was ready for a detailed discussion in Parliament. He urged the Congress leader to "face the debate and face the facts."

Rao also raised concerns over protests by students in Jharkhand against alleged recruitment examination paper leaks, including those involving the state Public Service Commission. He alleged that protesting students had faced police action and demanded that the cases be handed over to the CBI. The BJP leader condemned the alleged use of force



against the protesters and questioned why Congress and INDIA bloc leaders had not visited the agitating students. He contrasted the Jharkhand protests with

demonstrations held by Congress and INDIA bloc supporters in Delhi over the NEET issue, alleging that the Delhi gatherings included many people who were

not students. He questioned the opposition parties' selective approach to student-related concerns.

Rao further alleged that examination paper leak controversies had also affected Telangana and accused the Congress government of failing to adequately address the concerns of unemployed youth. He challenged Rahul Gandhi to visit Ashok Nagar in Hyderabad and respond to promises made during the elections regarding a job calendar, employment opportunities and fee reimbursement.

Rao said the BJP Yuva Morcha had collected four lakh signatures highlighting the concerns of unemployed youth and alleged that the Congress government had failed to fulfil its commitments.

The BJP leader called upon Rahul Gandhi to visit Jharkhand, support the protesting students and raise their concerns in Parliament. He reiterated that the BJP would support legitimate student demands and urged the Congress leadership to engage in parliamentary debate rather than political demonstrations outside the House.

Raghunandan Rao Alleges Rs 200-Crore Solar Scam

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BJP MP M. Raghunandan Rao on Tuesday alleged financial irregularities worth nearly Rs 200 crore in Telangana's implementation of the Centre's rooftop solar programme and sought a high-level investigation into the matter. Raghunandan Rao said he had submitted a complaint to Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi, requesting that the alleged discrepancies in the implementation of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana be examined.

According to the BJP MP, the Telangana government had identified around 40,000 households for installing 2-kilowatt rooftop solar systems under the scheme. He alleged that the state had linked the initiative to its promise of providing free electricity of up to 200 units to eligible households.

Raghunandan Rao claimed that the Centre provides a subsidy of Rs 30,000 per kilowatt, amounting to Rs 60,000 for a 2-kilowatt system. He alleged that the installation contract was awarded at Rs 1.36 lakh per household, while the work was subsequently subcontracted for approximately Rs 86,000.

Questioning the Rs 50,000 difference between the two amounts, he estimated that the gap across 40,000 households could amount to nearly Rs 200 crore. He alleged that the arrangement required investigation to determine



whether public funds had been improperly diverted.

The BJP leader accused the Telangana government of taking political credit for a programme substantially supported through Central funding. He questioned the manner in which the contracts were structured and demanded transparency in the implementation process.

Raghunandan Rao urged the Union government to conduct a detailed inquiry and establish whether any financial irregularities had occurred. He also demanded accountability from those responsible if wrongdoing was established. (The allegations are expected to intensify the political debate in Telangana over the implementation of Central welfare and renewable-energy programmes.

Ravichandra Backs Tribunal Reforms



New Delhi, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BRS Parliamentary Party Leader Vaviraju Ravichandra on Tuesday welcomed the objectives of the Tribunals Reforms-2026 Bill, while calling for stronger implementation measures to ensure speedy, transparent and accessible justice. He spoke during the debate on the Bill in the Rajya Sabha.

Ravichandra said tribunals play an important role in delivering specialised and speedy justice to citizens. He welcomed provisions proposing the establishment of a National Tribunals Commission, greater transparency in appointments and uniformity in service conditions.

However, he cautioned that the effectiveness of the reforms would depend on their implementation. "Delayed justice means no justice," he said, pointing out that vacancies and staff shortages in several tribunals were contributing to the growing pendency of cases. He urged the government to fill vacancies immediately and ensure that appointments are made through transparent and merit-based procedures. The BRS leader suggested that

the proposed National Tribunals Commission should function independently and professionally. He called for regular performance reviews of tribunals to improve efficiency and accountability. He also stressed the need to make full use of technology and ensure that case-related information is easily accessible to citizens through the proposed National Tribunals Data Grid.

During his speech, Ravichandra recalled the services of former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao and said the reorganisation of districts after the formation of Telangana had brought administration closer to the people. He added that the previous state government had also focused on judicial and administrative infrastructure.

Ravichandra urged the Centre to establish adequate tribunal benches across the country so that people would not have to travel hundreds of kilometres seeking justice.

He said the BRS supported the objectives of the Bill and expressed hope that the proposed reforms would be implemented effectively to create a faster, transparent and people-friendly justice system.

Social Activist Narayanaswamy Passes Away



Mulugu, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Prominent social activist from the Mulugu region, Podishetti Narayanaswamy, 95, passed away at around 9 p.m. on Friday following illness. His death was met with grief among residents, admirers and members of the social service community.

Upon learning of his demise, State Minister Seethakka visited Narayanaswamy's residence and consoled his bereaved family. She expressed her condolences and offered words of strength and support to the family members. Recalling her long association with Narayanaswamy, Seethakka said he had stitched school uniforms for her during her childhood. She also remembered the 'Sudhakar Children's Savings Scheme', an initiative launched by him to encourage children to develop the habit of saving from an early age. The Minister recalled that she had also been a member of the scheme.

Narayanaswamy was also the father of

Ramesh Kumar, editor of 'Amazing Telangana'. He was known in the Mulugu region for his long-standing involvement in various social service activities and his simple lifestyle.

Seethakka described Narayanaswamy as a great humanitarian whose contribution to society would remain memorable. Recalling her personal bond with him, she said his death had caused her deep sorrow and described his passing as an irreparable loss to the region.

Family members, including Mulugu Congress spokesperson Chintanipulla Bikshapathi and Narayanaswamy's sons Sudhakar, Prabhakar, Ravinder, Dileep Kumar and Ramesh Kumar, along with relatives and friends, were present. Local residents said Narayanaswamy had dedicated much of his life to serving people and had earned their respect through his social initiatives. They expressed their condolences to the family and said his contributions and personal relationships with the community would be remembered for years to come.

Kavitha Seeks Insurance for Private Hospital Nurses

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Rakshana Sena Chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha called for health insurance and better working conditions for nurses employed in private hospitals across the state. She made the remarks during a meeting with private hospital nurses at the Telangana Rakshana Sena office in Banjara Hills on Tuesday.

Kavitha interacted with the nurses and enquired about the challenges they face at their workplaces. She expressed concern that despite private hospitals collecting substantial amounts from patients, many employees continue to face difficulties and do not receive basic social security benefits such as health insurance.

She urged the Telangana government to immediately hold discussions with private hospital managements and take appropriate measures to ensure health insurance coverage for nurses and other healthcare staff.

Kavitha also raised concerns over complaints regarding working hours, salaries and overtime payments. She alleged that employees from Telangana were sometimes being subjected to difficulties while staff from other states were given preference. She called on the government to examine such complaints and issue clear guidelines to private hospitals to safeguard employees' rights. The Telangana Rakshana Sena chief stressed that nurses play an essential role in providing healthcare services and deserve adequate protection and support for their work. She said their welfare should not be overlooked by hospital managements or authorities.

Kavitha assured the nurses that the Telangana Rakshana Sena would stand by them in addressing their legitimate concerns. She called for coordinated efforts between the government and private hospital managements to create a fair and secure working environment for healthcare employees.

Niranjan Seeks OBC List Inclusion for 40 Castes

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Telangana State Backward Classes Commission Chairman G. Niranjan has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to expedite the inclusion of 40 Telangana castes in the Central Other Backward Classes (OBC) list, citing the long delay in resolving the issue.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Niranjan said the matter had been pending for several years and required urgent attention, particularly ahead of the proposed caste-based census in 2027. He had earlier raised the issue with the Prime Minister on April 13, 2026.

Following the earlier representation, the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment sought details of the 40 communities. The Telangana BC Commission subsequently submitted the required list to the Centre on July 18, 2026.

Niranjan said the Union Ministry later clarified that inclusion or deletion of communities in the Central OBC list is undertaken in accordance with Article 342A of the Constitution.

He pointed out that some of the concerned communities were included in the Telangana State BC list as early as 2008, while their inclusion in the Central OBC list remains pending. The National

Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) conducted hearings on the issue in New Delhi in December 2021 and again in September 2023, but a final decision has not yet been taken.

Niranjan said the delay was depriving members of the concerned communities of OBC-related opportunities in central government educational institutions and employment. He appealed to the Prime Minister to intervene and ensure an early resolution, stressing that inclusion in the Central OBC list would promote social justice and provide eligible communities access to their rightful opportunities.

and alleged that valuable Godavari water was lost. He demanded immediate release of Rs 329.18 crore for seed subsidies and Rs 452.80 crore for micro-irrigation assistance, along with comprehensive crop insurance for farmers. He further sought a white paper on water management, an independent inquiry into the alleged administrative lapses and an explanation for the delay in repairing Medigadda. Sravan said the government must accept responsibility for the difficulties faced by farmers and adopt practical measures to restore confidence in the agricultural sector.

El Nino Crisis Man-Made, Says Sravan

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BRS MLC Dr. Dasoju Sravan has accused the Telangana government of administrative negligence in handling the El Nino-related agricultural crisis, describing the situation as a "man-made disaster" rather than a natural calamity. In an open letter to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, Sravan cited the government's expert committee report on El Nino conditions and alleged that advance warnings were ignored for months. He questioned the delay in forming the committee and releasing finan-

cial assistance to farmers during the crucial sowing season. According to Sravan, cultivation had covered only 67.78 lakh acres by mid-July, representing a substantial decline from the previous year. He also alleged that reservoirs were left with inadequate storage despite surplus rainfall during 2025-26 because of poor water-management practices. Sravan criticized the government's reliance on Varuna Yagams, arguing that rituals cannot substitute for effective irrigation planning, timely funding and administrative action. He also raised concerns over the delayed repairs to the Medigadda Barrage

KTR Alleges Land Deal Involving CM's Kin



Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) on Tuesday alleged irregularities in the allocation of government land to a company allegedly headed by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's brother, Anumula Kondal Reddy. Addressing a press conference, KTR demanded a detailed investigation into the matter and questioned whether different standards were being applied in Telangana and Karnataka.

KTR alleged that around five acres of government land valued at nearly Rs 200 crore was allotted to Tesseract at a significantly lower price of about Rs 7 crore. He claimed that company records identify Kondal Reddy as its Chairman and alleged that the company had no employees and had a nominal capital of Rs 1 lakh at one stage.

He also questioned the company's reported business activities in the aerospace and defence sector and referred to its interactions with representatives of the US Embassy and the US-India

Strategic Development Forum.

KTR alleged that the issue was part of a wider pattern involving the Chief Minister's family. He referred to claims concerning Revanth Reddy's younger brother Anumula Jagadish Reddy and alleged that an MoU worth Rs 1,000 crore was signed with Swachh Bio during the Chief Minister's visit to the United States.

He further raised allegations involving Revanth Reddy's brother-in-law Srujan Reddy and an Amrut contract reportedly worth Rs 1,137 crore.

KTR questioned Minister D. Sridhar Babu's reported denial of any connection between Tesseract and Kondal Reddy, saying company records allegedly contradict the claim. He demanded transparency in the land allocation and warned that the BRS would continue pursuing the issue until the facts were established.

The allegations made by KTR are political claims and would require verification from official records and the concerned parties.

Fishermen Insurance Scheme to Be Implemented: Banda Prakash

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Legislative Council Deputy Chairman Dr. Banda Prakash has welcomed the State government's decision to restore group accident insurance coverage for fishermen and urged authorities to expedite ex-gratia payments to families of fishermen who died in accidents.

Dr. Banda Prakash said the insurance scheme had been renewed annually under the previous system with coordination between the Centre and State. However, the policy payment deadline of May 31, 2026, passed without renewal after the government decided to introduce the Indiramma Bharosa scheme.

He recalled that the government had announced a new group accident insurance programme from June 2 but said its implementation was delayed. Following his representation to the State government, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and Fisheries Minister Vakiti Srihari on

June 23, the Fisheries Department issued a circular on August 7 to reinstate the insurance scheme.

Dr. Banda Prakash thanked Minister Srihari for facilitating the decision and welcomed the allocation of Rs 1.34 crore from available IFDS funds to provide insurance coverage to 4,21,767 eligible registered fishermen through the Telangana State Fishermen Cooperative Societies Federation.

He urged officials to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are covered without delay and that pending insurance claims are examined and settled promptly. He also sought immediate sanction and release of ex-gratia assistance to families of deceased fishermen as per eligibility norms.

The Deputy Chairman further called for a special review meeting to examine long-pending claims and ensure coverage for affected beneficiaries from May 30, 2026. He stressed that district fisheries officials should collect complete details so that no affected family is excluded from government support.

Mechanic Dies at RTC Depot**Quthbullapur, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

A 40-year-old mechanic died tragically at the Jeedimetla RTC bus depot on Tuesday morning after a bus reportedly moved forward while he was carrying out repair work in a garage pit. The incident occurred within the limits of Jeedimetla Police Station and has raised concerns over safety measures at the depot.

According to a police complaint, mechanic Madana Santosh had reported for his first shift and was repairing RTC bus TS 09 Z 0129. At around 6:30 a.m., the bus allegedly moved forward while Santosh was working. Police said the bus bumper struck him on the head and chest, causing severe injuries and resulting in his



death at the spot. Santosh's colleague, mechanic Gopal, informed his wife, Dhanasree, about the incident. She rushed to the depot but found that her husband had already succumbed to his injuries.

The incident has raised questions about whether proper safety protocols were followed before the bus was moved during maintenance work. Questions have also been raised about communication between the driver and mechanics and whether adequate precautions were taken to prevent accidents in the repair area.

Police have registered a case based on the complaint and launched an investigation to determine the circumstances that led to the fatal incident and fix responsibility.

Bonalu Annadanam Held at Temple**Quthbullapur, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

A devotional Annadanam (food donation) programme was organised at the Nalla Pochamma Temple in Telugu Thalli Nagar, Saibaba Nagar division, on Tuesday as part of the Bonalu festival celebrations. The event witnessed the participation of a large number of devotees and local residents.

Senior BRS leader Varala Vinod Kumar attended the programme as the chief guest. He offered special prayers and performed rituals at the temple, seeking the blessings of the Goddess. Later, he served food to devotees and also partook in the Prasadam.

Speaking on the occasion, Vinod Kumar prayed for the well-being of people and expressed hope that the blessings of the Goddess would bring happiness, prosperity and good health to every family.

The temple premises remained crowded throughout the celebrations, with devotees arriving in large numbers to offer prayers. Women and residents from Telugu Thalli Nagar actively participated in the Annadanam programme, contributing to the festive and spiritual atmosphere.

Telugu Thalli Nagar President Tara Singh, Karate Seenu, Shyam, Niranjan Mudiraj and Radhakrishna were among those who attended the event. BRS leader Rajkumar Mudiraj and several other local leaders and residents also participated in the celebrations. The organisers said the Annadanam was conducted as part of the Bonalu festivities to serve devotees and promote community participation in the annual religious celebrations.

Transformer Capacity Upgraded**Habsiguda, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

The Telangana Power Distribution Company Limited (TGSPDCL) has upgraded the power transformer capacity at the Vasanthapuri 33/11 kV substation from 12.5 MVA to 16 MVA to strengthen the distribution network and meet growing electricity demand.

The substation is located in the Vasanthapuri Section of Malkajigiri Sub-division under the Sainikpuri Division of Habsiguda Circle. The upgrade was undertaken under the guidance of TGSPDCL Chairman and Managing Director Jitesh V. Patil, IAS, as part of efforts to modernise power infrastructure across the state.

TGSPDCL Director (Operations) Dr. N. Narasimulu inaugurated the upgraded 16 MVA transformer by cutting the ribbon and switching on the unit. He said the organisation was giving priority to strengthening substations, enhancing transformer capacities, develop-

ing new infrastructure and adopting modern technologies to improve power supply. The capacity enhancement is expected to benefit consumers in Vasanthapuri, Malkajigiri, Sainikpuri and surrounding areas by improving voltage levels and ensuring more reliable electricity supply. It will also help distribute the load more efficiently, reduce voltage fluctuations and minimise power interruptions.

Dr. Narasimulu said the upgraded capacity would help TGSPDCL meet future electricity requirements while ensuring consumers receive safe, reliable and uninterrupted power. He added that the organisation was continuously modernising its distribution system in response to increasing demand. Chief Engineer (Operations), Medchal Zone, Ramesh; Habsiguda Circle Superintending Engineer Venkanna; and officials, engineers and staff from the concerned divisions and sub-divisions participated in the inauguration programme.

AYUSH Students Step Up Stipend Protest**Uppal, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

The protest by AYUSH medical students demanding an increase in their stipends entered its eighth day on Monday at JSPS Homoeopathy Medical College in Ram anthapur. The agitation is being conducted under the banner of the AYUSH JAC, with students continuing their demand for a fair and regulated stipend. The Telangana Homoeopathy Doctors Association extended its support to

the protesting students. Association State President Dr. Shiva Prasad visited the protest camp and expressed solidarity with their demands. Dr. Shiva Prasad said AYUSH medical interns currently receive a monthly stipend of only Rs 13,000, while PG medical students receive between Rs 32,000 and Rs 36,000. He said the existing amount was inadequate considering rising prices and students' expenses. He also pointed out that regulations provide for a 15% increase in stipends

every two years, but the provision has not been implemented. Recalling a similar agitation in 2023, he said the government had increased the intern stipend from Rs 10,000 to only Rs 13,000. The Association leader urged the government to immediately intervene and revise the stipend in accordance with the prescribed regulations. He warned that if the students' demands were not addressed, they would intensify the agitation and consider launching an indefinite hunger strike.

**Fair Compensation Sought for Victims****Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao has demanded fair and adequate compensation for people whose lands, houses and commercial properties are being acquired for the expansion of Rajiv Rahadari. He made the demand while extending BJP support to a protest by project-affected residents in Kharkhana on Tuesday.

Ramchander Rao said the affected people were not opposed to the road expansion, recognizing its importance for public infrastructure and connectivity. However, he stressed that those surrender-

ing their properties for the project should receive compensation based on realistic market values.

He pointed out that compensation for land affected by the project had been enhanced in Tumkunta and argued that a similar revision should be extended to residents of Kharkhana. Since Kharkhana is a significantly more expensive urban locality, he said, it would be unfair to provide compensation at a lower rate.

The BJP state chief urged the Telangana government to assess the value of properties being acquired and increase compensation in line with the enhancement granted in Tumkunta. He said the gov-

ernment must acknowledge the sacrifices made by families giving up their homes, land and other assets for a public project.

Ramchander Rao emphasized that development should not come at the cost of injustice to affected citizens.

He called upon the government to hold discussions with the victims, address their concerns and ensure a transparent compensation process.

He reiterated that the BJP stands firmly with the legitimate demands of those affected by the Rajiv Rahadari expansion and would support their efforts to secure fair compensation.

Civic Issues Get Fresh Focus**Quthbullapur, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

Civic authorities have taken their efforts to the field to address long-pending public

issues in Suraram Ward 293 under the 'One Day-One Ward' initiative. Cyberabad Munic

ipal Corporation Commissioner Dr. G. Srujana, IAS, along with Quthbullapur

Zonal Commissioner Pinkesh Kumar, IAS, visited the ward on Tuesday and interacted with residents and Resident Welfare Association representatives at Ambedkar Bhavan. Residents highlighted several pressing concerns, including the condition of CC and BT roads, footpaths, parks, streetlights and storm water drains. Issues related to building permissions and encroachments were also brought to the officials' attention.

With the monsoon intensifying mosquito-related concerns, residents urged authorities to increase fogging and anti-larval operations.

They also sought regular sanitation activities across residential colonies to prevent unhygienic conditions and control the mosquito menace. Commissioner Dr. Srujana

assured residents that all representations would be examined and necessary action would be initiated to address the issues at the earliest. Her assurance has raised expectations among residents that several pending civic problems in Suraram may finally receive attention.

Gajulararamam Circle Deputy Commissioner U. Venkat Ramulu, AMC Pramil, Deputy Executive Engineer (SWM) Nikhil Reddy, ACP Sumitra, Deputy Executive Engineer (Engineering) Mahadev Anurag and Project Officer Mallikarjun were among the officials present. Representatives of various RWAs and residents from different colonies also participated in the interaction and explained their local concerns to the officials.

AIDS Awareness Rally Today**Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

The Telangana State AIDS Control Society will launch an extensive two-month awareness and outreach campaign on HIV, AIDS and syphilis from August 12. Project Director Vidyasagar said on Monday. The campaign will focus on prevention, awareness, early detection and access to appropriate medical treatment.

As part of the initiative, a massive awareness rally involving around 1,500 participants will be held on Wednesday, August 12. The rally will begin at 7 a.m. from the HMDA

Grounds near IMAX and proceed towards Necklace Road Railway Station. Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha and Transport Minister Ponnampallabhar, along with local MLAs and senior officials from various departments, are expected to participate in the programme. The ministers will flag off the rally and join the procession to spread awareness about HIV prevention and control.

Students from colleges across Hyderabad, including NCC and NSS units, nursing students, NGO volunteers and members of the public will participate in the rally. Vidyasagar urged people to actively support the two-month campaign as part of their social responsibility. He

said the initiative would focus on preventing new infections, reducing transmission and protecting vulnerable groups, particularly unborn children, from infection.

The Telangana State AIDS Control Society appealed to citizens to support the campaign under the slogan, "Be Positive to Stop HIV Positive." The organisation called upon the public to participate in awareness activities and help spread accurate information about HIV and AIDS.

Officials said collective community participation would be essential to strengthening prevention efforts and moving Telangana towards the goal of becoming an HIV-free state.

Calls for Permanent Solution to 22A Land Issues**Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

A round-table conference on the issues surrounding lands included under Section 22A of the prohibited properties list was held at the Somajiguda Press Club on Tuesday. The meeting was organised by 3TV Network and the Sakalam web portal to discuss the difficulties faced by landowners, farmers and the real estate sector.

The conference was presided over by K. Ramachandra Murthy, Chief Editor of 3TV and Sakalam. Representatives from the real estate industry, developers and property experts participated in the discussions and highlighted the challenges arising from the inclusion of private lands in the 22A list.

Participants said several eligible private properties were reportedly being classified as prohibited because of errors in land records and discrepan-



cies between data maintained by the Revenue and Registration departments. They said such issues were creating difficulties for landowners seeking registrations and affecting legitimate property transactions.

The participants urged the Telangana government to accelerate the process of identifying genuine private lands that have been wrongly included in the prohibited list and remove them after proper

verification. They stressed the need for a permanent solution by integrating and harmonising Revenue and Registration records, thereby reducing inconsistencies and preventing similar problems in the future. The meeting also called for simplifying the grievance-redressal process so that affected citizens can understand the procedures and approach the authorities without difficulty.

Participants suggested that the functioning and procedures of the High-Level Committee constituted under GO Ms No. 98 should also be made clearer and more accessible to the public.

The conference concluded with an appeal for coordinated action by the concerned departments to protect legitimate property rights while ensuring that government lands and other protected assets remain secure.

KTR Visits Ailing BRS Leader**LB Nagar, August 11 | TPN Bureau**

BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) on Tuesday visited senior party leader Kyama Mallesham, who is recovering after undergoing medical treatment for an illness.

After learning that Mallesham had undergone surgery at Yashoda Hospital in Malakpet, KTR visited his residence in LB Nagar and met him and his family members. He enquired about Mallesham's health and reviewed his recovery following the treatment.

KTR wished the senior leader a speedy and complete recovery and expressed confidence that he would regain his health soon. He also interacted with Mallesham's family members, offering reassurance and support during the



recovery period. The visit reflected the BRS leadership's concern for the health and well-being of senior party members. KTR spent time with the family and conveyed his best wishes for Mallesham's early return to normal activities.

BRS MLA Sudheer Reddy, MLC Dasoju Sravan, Shambhaji Raju, former MLAs, MLCs and other senior party leaders accompanied KTR during the visit. They also conveyed their wishes for Mallesham's speedy recovery and expressed solidarity with his family.

BJP Plans Grand Tiranga Yatra

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao held a preparatory meeting on Tuesday for the grand 'Tiranga Yatra' scheduled to be held at Tank Bund in Hyderabad on August 14 as part of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. The Yatra will begin at 3 p.m. and proceed from the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar statue to the Swami Vivekananda statue at Tank Bund. The programme is expected to feature a large gathering



ering carrying the national flag, highlighting patriotism and national unity. Ramchander Rao reviewed arrangements with BJP district presidents, corporators and other senior leaders representing the eight districts within the GHMC limits. He discussed organizational responsibilities, public participation and other measures required to ensure the smooth conduct of the event. The BJP state president called upon party workers and leaders to mobilize people for the programme and

ensure strong public participation. He particularly appealed to youth and women to join the Yatra in large numbers while carrying the Tricolor. Ramchander Rao said the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative provides an opportunity for citizens to express their love for the nation and honour the values represented by the national flag. He urged the public to participate beyond political considerations and make the August 14 Yatra a memorable celebration of national unity and patriotic spirit.

KTR Raises SIR Voter Concerns

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has expressed concern over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Telangana and said the party would take all necessary steps to protect the rights of eligible voters. KTR reviewed the BRS SIR committee's field-level activities at Telangana Bhavan and discussed problems reported by voters. He said Telangana had around 3.39 crore voters before the revision began, while approximately 73-74 lakh votes were currently classified as "uncollectible", with no response received so

far. He also referred to reports of irregularities involving nearly 60 lakh votes and expressed concern that eligible voters could be affected during the revision. KTR stressed that not even a single genuine voter should lose their voting right because of errors in the process. He said election authorities were preparing to publish the draft electoral roll and that the BRS had decided to conduct district-wise meetings after its release. The party's legal cell has already consulted legal experts regarding possible legal remedies and measures to assist voters whose names may be deleted.



KTR said meetings are planned for August 13 and 14, with the detailed programme and further course of action to be finalised after consultations with BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao. He said local conditions would be assessed dur-

ing the district-level meetings and the party's grassroots machinery would be mobilised to help affected voters. KTR maintained that both legal and organisational measures would be pursued to safeguard every eligible voter's rights.

Sridhar Reddy Urges Support for Har Ghar Tiranga



Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Javvaji Sridhar Reddy, Co-convenor of the Uppal

Constituency Har Ghar Tiranga Rally Campaign,

called upon citizens to participate actively in the nationwide initiative and make it a success. As part of the campaign, he hoisted the national flag at his residence in Bhavani Nagar, Nacharam, on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, Sridhar Reddy appealed to people from all sections of society, including students, poets, artists, political leaders, activists and police personnel, to participate in the Har Ghar Tiranga rallies being organised from

August 10 to 14, rising above political differences. He also urged citizens to participate in the special Tiranga programme scheduled to be held at Tank Bund on August 14 under the leadership of BJP Telangana president N. Ramchander Rao and Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy. Sridhar Reddy said the Tiranga Yatra, with citizens carrying the national flag, represents patriotism, national unity and respect for the country. He encouraged people to hoist the tricolour at their homes as a demonstration of their commitment and love for the nation.

He particularly appealed to young people and students to participate in large numbers and remember the sacrifices made by freedom fighters in India's struggle for independence. Sridhar Reddy said the success of the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign would reflect citizens' sense of responsibility towards the nation and strengthen feelings of unity and patriotism. Campaign Convener Padam Venkatesh, Co-convenor Gandha Malla Gopi, Nacharam Division Mahila Morcha President Vangapalli Manjula Vani, Rakesh Reddy, Nagesh and others participated in the programme.

Sant Ravidas Kalash Presented to AP Leaders

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao, along with senior party leaders, presented the sacred Sri Sri Sant Ravidas Kalash to representatives from Andhra Pradesh on Tuesday. The programme was attended by BJP State General Secretary Vemula Ashok, BJP SC Morcha National Secretary S. Kumar, BJP SC Morcha State President Kanthi Kiran and former MLA Guvvala Balaraju. BJP State Secretaries Koppu Basha and Dr. O. Srinivas Reddy, Sant Ravidas Committee member Kanchana Krishna and other party leaders also participated in the event. The leaders high-

lighted the importance of Sant Ravidas's teachings and legacy, emphasizing their relevance to social harmony, equality and community welfare. The presentation of the Kalash was described as a gesture aimed at strengthening cultural and social bonds among communities across the Telugu states. The BJP leaders said the occasion reflected the party's respect for the contributions and ideals of Sant Ravidas and expressed their commitment to promoting his message of equality and social unity. The event concluded with the Kalash being formally handed over to the Andhra Pradesh representatives in the presence of the participating leaders.



CPI Leader Slams Centre, State Governments

Julurupadu, August 11 | TPN Bureau

CPI Telangana State Secretary Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao on Tuesday criticized the BJP-led Central Government and the Telangana government, alleging that both had failed to address key public concerns and fulfil their commitments. The CPI's 'Praja Chaitanya Yatra' reached Julurupadu, where party workers and supporters gave it a warm welcome before taking out a rally through the main road. Addressing a public meeting, Sambasiva Rao alleged that the Modi government had failed to deliver on promises relating to employment and economic welfare. He claimed that commitments

such as creating two crore jobs and providing financial benefits to citizens had not been fulfilled, while the government was allegedly diverting public attention through religious polarization. He also criticized the handling of the NEET controversy, alleging that irregularities had affected the future of students and triggered protests by youth. Sambasiva Rao further accused the Centre of favouring a small group of corporate interests and alleged that the country's resources were being concentrated in the hands of a few. Calling for broader political and social change, he said the CPI



was preparing to play a leading role in mobilizing people around public issues. The programme was attended by CPI district secretary SK Shabir Pasha, State Executive Committee members Muthyala Viswanatham, Kalluri Venkateswarlu and Pullareddy, Kothagudem Mayor Moodu Ganesh, district leaders and several party workers.

V. Dasu Takes Charge as Inspector

Tarnaka, August 11 | TPN Bureau

V. Dasu has assumed charge as the new Inspector of the Osmania University (OU) Police Station in Tarnaka. He succeeds M. Mahesh, who has been transferred to the Golconda Zone police. Following his appointment, Sub-Inspectors and other police personnel welcomed Dasu and extended their support. Speaking after taking charge, the new Inspector said maintaining law and order within the OU police station limits would be his primary priority. He emphasized



sized the need for effective policing and prompt response to public concerns. Dasu also assured residents that he would remain accessible and work closely with the public to address issues and ensure a peaceful environment across the university jurisdiction.

Congress Reviews Voter Data

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

A Zoom meeting was held on Tuesday covering the Zahirabad, Medak, Malkajgiri and Secunderabad parliamentary constituencies to review party activities and voter-related issues. TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, AICC In-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, AICC Secretary Sachin Sawant, Coordination Committee Chairman Gampa Venu and Election Committee Chairman Rajesh participated in the meeting. DCC presidents, MPs, MLCs, MLAs, constituency in-charges and coordinators also attended. Mahesh Kumar Goud expressed concern over the significant decline in the number of votes in the Hyderabad region and

urged party leaders to remain vigilant. He stressed the need to carefully scrutinize voter data and identify any discrepancies without delay. The TPCC president directed Booth Level Officers to examine every vote thoroughly and ensure that no eligible voter is affected by errors or irregularities. Meanwhile, AICC In-charge Sachin Sawant held individual meetings with TPCC vice presidents over the past two days as part of efforts to strengthen the party organization. Discussions focused on political activities undertaken by the leaders since their appointments. Face-to-face meetings with TPCC general secretaries are scheduled to begin at Gandhi Bhavan from Wednesday.

Revanth Government Pushing Telangana Into Debt: Maheshwar Reddy

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

BJP Legislature Party leader Eleti Maheshwar Reddy on Tuesday accused the Telangana government of poor governance, rising debt and alleged corruption, claiming that employees, pensioners and small contractors were facing severe hardships. Addressing a media conference at the BJP state office, he alleged that retired employees were being forced to pay commissions to obtain their legitimate retirement benefits. He further claimed that contractors were being asked for commissions to clear pending bills and said several small contractors had been protesting over delayed payments. Maheshwar Reddy alleged that bills belonging to sarpanches and contractors had remained pending for years despite court orders. He urged senior officials to follow the law and resist political pressure while taking administrative deci-

sions. He also criticized the state's financial position, claiming that the government had accumulated around Rs 4 lakh crore in additional debt since assuming office and borrowed about Rs 35,000 crore in the last four months. He alleged that large dues remained pending under fee reimbursement, AarogyaSri, retirement benefits and payments to employees, local bodies and Singareni. The BJP leader said basic civic issues, including damaged roads, drinking water shortages and drainage problems, remained unresolved. He demanded immediate local body elections and urged affected employees and contractors to report alleged corruption to the appropriate authorities. Maheshwar Reddy said the BJP would support victims and claimed that evidence of alleged irregularities in the Revenue Department would soon be presented.

Folk Artists Preserve Cultural Heritage

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Telangana State Working Journalists Union (TUWJ) State President K. Virahat Ali said folk artists are the custodians of Telangana's rich cultural heritage and play a vital role in preserving its traditions for future generations. Addressing the Bonala Art Fair organised by "Kalalu, Galala Vedita" at Padmavati Convention in Gajularamam on Tuesday, Virahat Ali said Telangana represented a vibrant blend of games, songs, cultures and traditions. He described the rural soil and folk traditions as an inseparable part of the region's identity. Popular folk singer Daruvu Anjanna presided over the programme. Virahat Ali said folk artists had historically used songs and performances to educate society about events and experiences that were often absent from written records. Their works reflected the lives of ordinary people, the strug-

gles of farmers, the experiences of working women and the realities of rural communities. He said the drum in an artist's hands was more than a musical instrument, describing it as the "heartbeat of the people." Similarly, folk songs were not merely forms of entertainment but carried messages of social awareness and consciousness. Virahat Ali stressed that artists should be recognised not only as entertainers but also as historians, social workers and voices of the people. He said protecting art was essential for preserving culture and strengthening society. "If art survives, culture survives; if culture survives, society survives," he remarked, emphasising the importance of supporting folk traditions and artists. TUWJ Medchal-Malkajgiri district president G. Bal Raj Goud, along with several journalists and folk artists, attended the programme.

TGNPDCL Holds Sports Meet

Hanumakonda, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Sports and cultural activities can strengthen employee morale, reduce workplace stress and promote unity, TGNPDCL CMD Karnati Varun Reddy, IAS, said on Tuesday. He inaugurated a two-day sports meet organised by the Northern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Hanumakonda. Addressing employees, Varun Reddy said the victory of any circle team would ultimately be a victory for the entire organisation. He urged employees to consider themselves members of one family and participate in the competitions with healthy competition and true sportsmanship. The CMD said sports improve physical fitness, relieve mental stress and bring renewed enthusiasm among employees. He stressed that every employee should be encouraged to participate in sports and cultural activities. More than 150 players from differ-

ent circles are taking part in competitions including badminton, cricket, carroms, chess, table tennis and volleyball. The sports meet is being organised for the first time by the organisation since the formation of Telangana. Varun Reddy said stronger relationships among employees would improve their commitment to the organisation and ultimately help provide better-quality services to consumers. He announced that sports and cultural competitions would be conducted every year to promote employee welfare and enhance the organisation's reputation. Prizes will be presented to the winners on Independence Day. The CMD also played carroms with employees, adding enthusiasm to the event. Directors V. Mohan Rao, V. Tirupati Reddy, T. Madhusudan and C. Prabhakar, Chief Engineers, sports committee members Madhava Rao, Venu Babu and Hemanth Kumar, Sports Officer N. Jagannadh, and members Prem Kumar and Yakub Pasha, among others, participated in the programme.

Mallaiah Yadav Slams Govt on Water Issues

Hyderabad, August 11 | TPN Bureau

Former MLA Bollam Mallaiah Yadav on Tuesday criticised the Congress government over its handling of irrigation and Krishna river water issues at a press conference held at Telangana Bhavan. Mallaiah Yadav alleged that the Varuna Yagam performed at Nagarjuna Sagar was aimed at diverting public attention from the government's failures rather than addressing farmers' concerns. He claimed the government had failed to utilise Telangana's rightful share of Krishna waters and accused it of remaining silent on alleged water diversion by Andhra Pradesh. He alleged that water was being allowed to flow away in large quantities near Kannepalli while irrigation needs in Telangana remained unmet. He demand-

ed that the Kannepalli pumps be operated immediately and available Godavari and Krishna waters be diverted to irrigation tanks and agricultural fields. The former MLA also criticised Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy over their handling of irrigation projects and alleged that farmers were facing hardship due to administrative failures. He accused the Congress government of neglecting warnings regarding El Niño and failing to make adequate contingency arrangements. He urged the government to stop relying solely on rituals and instead take concrete measures to utilise every available drop of water. Ravi Naik and Fayaz also participated in the press conference.

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



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



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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.

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 Khiante 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 monthslong 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.

Net Direct Tax Collection Rises 23% to Rs 8.11 Lakh Crore

India's net direct tax collection increased 23 per cent to Rs 8.11 lakh crore as of August 10, reflecting continued growth in tax revenues during the current financial year. The rise in collections indicates stronger revenue mobilisation and improved tax compliance. Direct taxes, which primarily include personal income tax and corporate income tax, remain an important source of government revenue and help support public expenditure and development programmes. The latest figures come amid the government's continued efforts to strengthen tax administration, improve compliance and widen the taxpayer base. Increased use of technology and data-based monitoring has also supported efforts to identify discrepancies and improve tax collection. The growth in net direct tax receipts comes after adjusting for refunds issued to taxpayers. Gross collections are higher before accounting for such refunds, indi-



catating sustained activity in both corporate and individual tax payments. The government has been focusing on simplifying tax procedures and encouraging taxpayers to comply voluntarily. Digital filing systems and greater integration of finan-

cial information have helped authorities improve monitoring of tax payments and reduce instances of non-compliance. The increase in direct tax collection is also significant for the government's fiscal management. Higher revenue collections pro-

vide greater room for funding infrastructure, welfare programmes and other public spending while helping maintain fiscal discipline. The latest data will be closely watched as the financial year progresses, particularly amid expectations regarding economic growth, corporate earnings and household income. A sustained increase in direct tax receipts could strengthen government finances and provide additional support for planned expenditure. The government is expected to continue monitoring revenue trends and tax compliance measures in the coming months. The pace of direct tax collection will remain an important indicator of economic activity and the health of public finances. The 23 per cent increase to Rs 8.11 lakh crore as of August 10 marks a strong start to the tax collection cycle and highlights the continuing contribution of direct taxes to India's revenue position.

Government Approves Rs 10, Rs 20 Polymer Notes for Trials



The government has approved the introduction of one billion polymer banknotes each in Rs 10 and Rs 20 denominations for field trials, Parliament was informed on Tuesday. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), based on the recommendation of its central board, had submitted a proposal under Section 25 of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, seeking approval to introduce one billion pieces each of Rs 10 and Rs 20 polymer banknotes. The proposal also covers regular issuance of the notes in these denominations after successful completion of the field trials. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman informed the Rajya Sabha through a written reply that the government has approved the proposal. She said the RBI plans to issue the polymer banknotes alongside existing paper substrate-based banknotes. According to Sitharaman, the procurement process is currently at an initial stage. Therefore, the exact timeframe for introducing the polymer notes and the expenditure involved cannot be determined at present. Sitharaman also provided an update on inflation. Average retail inflation, measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), declined from 5.4 per cent in 2023-24 to 4.6 per cent in 2024-25 and further to 2.1 per cent in 2025-26. However, retail inflation increased to 3.9 per cent in the first quarter of 2026-27 due to commodity price shocks, elevated global energy prices linked to the West Asia crisis, seasonal increases in vegetable prices and expected unfavourable El Nino conditions. She noted that the figure remains below the RBI's 4 per cent inflation target. Sitharaman said the 56th Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council meeting introduced a two-rate structure with a standard rate of 18 per cent, a merit rate of 5 per cent and a special de-merit rate of 40 per cent for select goods and services. The government has also rationalised Basic Customs Duty on several goods, reduced duties on selected edible oils and masur, and cut central excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 10 per litre in March 2026. She said income tax exemptions for annual incomes up to Rs 12 lakh, or Rs 12.75 lakh for salaried individuals after the standard deduction, have increased disposable income and supported household consumption. The government, she added, continues to monitor prices and take measures to protect household purchasing power.

Sebi Proposes Greater FPI Access to Commodity Derivatives

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has proposed allowing Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) to participate in physically settled commodity derivatives, in a move aimed at widening foreign investor access to India's non-agricultural commodity derivatives market. The proposal seeks to expand the investment avenues available to FPIs and potentially increase participation in commodity markets. Physically settled derivatives involve the delivery of the underlying commodity when a contract expires, unlike cash-settled contracts where the difference in value is settled financially. Sebi's proposal focuses on non-agricultural commodities and is expected to provide foreign investors with greater flexibility in managing commodity-related exposure. The move could also contribute to improved liquidity and deeper participation in India's commodity derivatives market.

Foreign investors have traditionally faced restrictions on participating in certain commodity derivative contracts. By considering wider access, the market regulator is looking to align the commodity derivatives segment with evolving investment requirements and provide more opportunities for institutional investors. The proposal comes as India's commodity markets continue to develop, with investors and businesses increasingly using derivatives to manage exposure to fluctuations in prices of commodities such as metals and energy-related products. Greater participation by FPIs could potentially improve market depth and trading activity. It may also help bring additional global capital and institutional expertise into the domestic commodity derivatives ecosystem. However, the proposed framework is expected to include safeguards to ensure orderly market function-



ing and manage risks associated with foreign participation. Sebi's regulatory approach is likely to focus on transparency, risk management and compliance requirements for eligible investors. The proposal is part of Sebi's broader efforts to develop India's financial markets and expand investment opportunities while maintaining appropriate regulatory oversight. Any final decision on

the participation of FPIs in physically settled commodity derivatives will depend on the regulator's consultation process and subsequent framework. The move could mark an important step in opening India's commodity derivatives market further to international investors, while supporting greater liquidity and participation in non-agricultural commodity contracts.

European Shares Edge Higher as Energy Stocks Gain

European shares moved slightly higher as gains in energy stocks helped support regional markets amid continued uncertainty surrounding developments in the Middle East. Energy companies remained in focus as investors assessed the potential impact of geopolitical tensions on crude oil prices and global energy supplies. The sector's gains provided support to broader European markets, helping offset caution in other segments. Market participants continued to monitor developments in the Middle East for signs of possible disruptions to oil production, transportation and supply routes. Any prolonged escalation could push energy prices higher and increase concerns about inflation across major economies. The movement in European equities came against a backdrop of cautious global trading. Investors have been balancing geopolitical risks with expectations surrounding economic growth, corporate earnings and monetary policy. Higher energy prices can benefit oil and gas producers by improving revenue prospects, but they can also create challenges for industries and consumers by raising fuel and operating costs. Investors therefore remained selective, with energy stocks attracting buying interest while other sectors faced greater uncertainty. The broader European market remained sensitive to movements in global commodity prices and developments in international markets. Currency fluctuations and expectations about interest rates also continued to influence investor sentiment. The latest gains in European energy stocks highlighted the sector's role as a potential beneficiary during periods of geopolitical uncertainty. However, investors remain cautious about the broader economic consequences if tensions persist and energy prices rise sharply. Market participants are expected to closely track further developments in the Middle East, particularly any impact on crude oil supplies and shipping routes. Changes in energy prices could influence inflation expectations and monetary policy decisions in major economies. European equities could remain volatile in the near term as investors assess incoming economic data, corporate updates and geopolitical developments. The energy sector is likely to remain a key area of focus as markets attempt to gauge the potential impact of Middle East uncertainty on global growth and commodity prices. Overall, European shares recorded modest gains, with strength in energy stocks providing support as investors continued to navigate heightened geopolitical risks and an uncertain global economic environment.



Vodafone Idea Raises Rs 6,400 Crore to Step Up Network Spending

Vodafone Idea is accelerating its capital expenditure plans after raising Rs 6,400 crore, while discussions with lenders for additional funding continue. Vodafone Idea CEO Abhijit Kishore said the company remains hopeful of concluding discussions with the State Bank of India-led public sector bank consortium. The telecom operator is also pursuing other avenues to raise debt and strengthen its financial position. The fresh funding is expected to support Vodafone Idea's accelerated network rollout as the company works to expand and improve its services. The operator has already placed network-related orders worth Rs 9,000 crore, highlighting its focus on strengthening infrastructure. The company is also engaged in what it described as meaningful discussions with lenders for additional funding. Access to further capital is expected to help Vodafone Idea maintain the pace of its network expansion and support its operational requirements. The latest fund-raising efforts come as Vodafone Idea continues to compete in India's highly competitive telecom market, where operators are investing heavily in network infrastructure and services. The company's focus on capital expenditure is aimed at improving network capacity and coverage while supporting its efforts to retain and attract customers. Abhijit Kishore's comments indicate that Vodafone Idea is continuing to explore multiple funding options while negotiations with the SBI-led PSU bank consortium progress. The company's ability to secure additional financing will remain important for sustaining its network expansion plans and meeting future capital requirements.



Godrej Finance Targets Rs 1,200 Crore Gold Loan AUM in Andhra Pradesh by 2031

Godrej Finance Limited (GFL), a subsidiary of Godrej Capital, has announced plans to expand its Gold Loan business across South India following the acquisition of the Gold Loan business of Kanakadurga Finance Limited. The company aims to increase its Andhra Pradesh branch network from 54 to 100 within 24 months, while growing Gold Loan assets under management (AUM) from Rs 280 crore to Rs 600 crore and its customer base from 12,000 to 25,000. It plans to expand further into Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Godrej Finance aims to serve nearly one million customers with Gold Loan AUM of Rs 5,000 crore across India. Pankaj Gupta, MD & CEO, Godrej Finance Limited, said Gold Loans would become a key pillar of the company's consumer finance strategy. He said the company aims to double its Andhra Pradesh Gold Loan business in two years and quadruple it over five years, contributing Rs 1,200 crore towards its goal of building a Rs 3,500 crore Gold Loan franchise across South India. Jayaprakash Narayana and Sriman Narayana, Joint MDs, Kanakadurga Finance Limited, said the company's Gold Loan business had been built over 13 years on trust and strong customer relationships. They said the acquisition would preserve these relationships while providing customers with enhanced technology and wider capabilities. The company said Andhra Pradesh would serve as a key market for its South India expansion, with focus on transparency, fairness, technology-led innovation and customer-first services.



Indian equity markets closed lower on Tuesday, with the Sensex declining 388 points as selling pressure weighed on key financial stocks. The Nifty also slipped below the 24,500 mark as crude oil prices, geopolitical concerns and weakness in financial stocks affected investor sentiment. The Sensex fell 0.49 per cent, while the Nifty declined 0.46 per cent. Despite the weakness in the benchmark indices, mid-cap and small-cap stocks outperformed, limiting the broader market's losses. Financial stocks remained under pressure during the session, contributing significantly to the decline in the benchmark indices. Concerns surrounding global developments and movements in crude oil prices also influenced market sentiment. The Indian rupee weakened against the US dollar and ended at the day's low of Rs 95.44 per dollar. It declined 14 paise from the previous close of Rs 95.29. Market participants remained cautious amid continuing geopolitical uncertainties and their potential impact on global commodity prices. Higher crude oil prices can increase import costs for India and put additional pressure on the rupee, while also raising concerns over inflation and corporate profitability. The broader market, however, showed relative resilience, with mid-cap and small-cap stocks performing better than the major benchmarks. The divergence suggested that investors continued to find opportunities outside the large-cap segment despite the overall cautious mood. The decline in the Sensex and Nifty came after recent market movements that had kept investors focused on domestic economic conditions, global cues and currency movements. Financial stocks remained a key area of weakness during Tuesday's trading session. With the rupee reaching a fresh closing low of Rs 95.44 against the dollar, currency movements are expected to remain an important factor for investors. Market participants are likely to track crude oil prices, geopolitical developments and global market trends for further direction. Overall, Tuesday's session ended on a cautious note, with benchmark indices recording moderate losses while mid-cap and small-cap segments continued to show comparatively stronger performance.

Diageo Challenges India's Rum Ban, Cites Due Process Concerns

Diageo has challenged India's prohibition of its popular McDowell's No. 1 Celebration Matured XXX Rum, arguing that the action was taken without following proper legal procedures and while the country's food safety regulator was reviewing the labelling rules at the centre of the dispute. The action is part of one of India's biggest food safety crackdowns in recent years. The regulator has prohibited several whisky and rum

brands made by Diageo and Inbrow in some states over allegations of mislabelling and the improper use of artificial flavours. Diageo's India unit, United Spirits, has challenged restrictions imposed on McDowell's rum produced in Maharashtra. The company describes the product as one of its top-selling brands. In its court filing, United Spirits argued that the food safety officer who issued the prohibition order did not have the

legal authority to do so. The company also alleged that the officer bypassed the required adjudicatory process by relying on a food analyst's report to impose a stop-sale order. Diageo further argued that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) began consultations with the industry on flavour-labelling regulations only days after the prohibition order was issued. In its August 1 court filing, the

company said continuing the prohibition while the regulatory issues were under consideration was premature, disproportionate and commercially prejudicial. The FSSAI and Diageo did not immediately respond to requests for comment. However, a government source disputed Diageo's position, saying the regulator began discussions with the industry at the request of alcohol companies. Online court records showed

that Diageo's challenge was briefly heard on Monday in the Mumbai High Court. The judge did not grant immediate relief and directed the federal government to respond by August 19. The dispute centres on the ingredients listed on McDowell's bottles, which stated that they contained artificial flavour described as rum. According to the FSSAI's prohibition order, the flavour of rum should be characteristic of natural



ingredients, fermentation processes and maturation techniques. Separately, Indian inspectors last week seized around 18,000 boxes of Diageo liquor bottles allegedly lacking markings indicating that they were made using safe recycled plastic. 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 limited

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 has had 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 one of 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

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.



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.

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.



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.

the death of his father, Jorge Messi. The 68-year-old died at a clinic in Rosario after a prolonged illness, leaving Messi to step away from his professional commitments and spend time with his family.

According to reports in the Argentine press, cited by French website Foot Mercato and Goal.com, the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner has not set a date for his return to Inter Miami.

The development comes as Messi deals with the loss of a person who played a major role in both his personal life and football career.

Jorge Messi was not only Lionel Messi's father but also became his agent and strategic adviser after working for years as a supervisor at a steel factory.

He was closely involved in Lionel's early football journey at Newell's Old Boys.

When Messi was 13, Jorge helped facilitate his move to Spain to join Barcelona's youth academy.

The Catalan club also covered the cost of treatment for Messi's growth hormone deficiency, a condition that affected his physical development.

Messi underwent daily injections as part of the treatment, eventually reaching a height of 1.70 metres.

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 John, Maidaan 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.

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

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. Imanvi 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.