



Jagan Alleges 'Red Book Raj' in State

Kurnool, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party president and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday accused the Andhra Pradesh coalition government of using a "Red Book Constitution" to suppress the Opposition and intimidate those questioning its policies. Jagan made the allegations after visiting Alur MLA Virupakshi at Kurnool district jail. He said he had come to extend moral support to the legislator and alleged that the cases against him were politically motivated. Addressing the media near the jail, Jagan alleged that the government was misusing the police machinery to target Opposition leaders and workers. He claimed that three cases were registered against Virupakshi within a short period, with around 38 people sent to jail. Jagan alleged that an attack occurred while

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GoM Reviews Excise Policy Models Ahead of September Deadline

Mangalagiri, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Government's Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted to review and formulate Excise policies held a meeting at the office of the Commissioner of Prohibition and Excise in Mangalagiri on Thursday, under the chairmanship of Mines and Geology and Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra. MSME Minister Kondapalli Srinivas, Power Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar and Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav participated online. Principal Secretary, Revenue (Excise) Department, Mukesh Kumar Meena, Director

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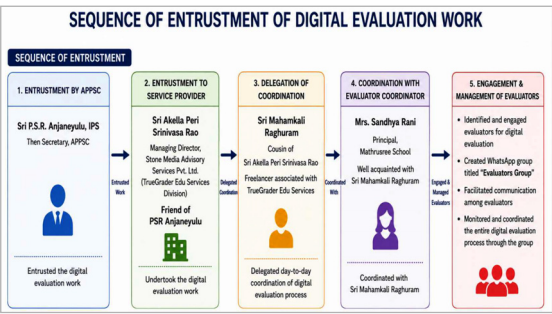
SIT Flags Serious Irregularities in APPSC Group-I Recruitment

K Kalyan Krishna Kumar

Amaravati : The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing alleged irregularities in the Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) Group-I recruitment has reported serious lapses in the evaluation process conducted during the previous YSRCP government led by then Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. The SIT submitted its report to the Andhra Pradesh High Court on August 10 after examining 736 candidate dossiers at seven Central Forensic Science Laboratories (CFSLS) and recording statements from 173 witnesses. Its findings point to irregularities across three rounds of evaluation of the Group-I Mains examination conducted in December 2020. The examination was initially digitally evaluated in 2021 by TrueGrader EduServices. Following challenges to the process, two rounds of manu-

al evaluation were subsequently conducted. The High Court, on March 13, 2024, held the second and third valuations illegal and irregular and ordered a fresh Group-I Mains examination.

According to the SIT, the original answer scripts were shifted from the APPSC Strong Room to Haailand Resort, where they remained for 84 days from December 5, 2021 to February 26, 2022. The team found no documented justification or approval from the APPSC Chairman for the transfer. The SIT also found that 452 university subject experts assembled by APPSC were not used. Instead, 66 data-entry operators, including electricians, security guards, clerks, private teachers and housewives, were deployed to transfer marks onto OMR valuation slips. The operators allegedly signed as Examiner-1, Examiner-2, Scrutiniser and Camp Officer, which the



SIT categorised as "Forgery and Impersonation." The report further flagged the award of the 2021 digital evaluation contract to TrueGrader EduServices without competitive tender. It noted that the company's managing director was recorded as a college friend and associate of then APPSC Secretary P.S.R. Anjaneyulu. Forensic examination revealed alterations or over-writing in 718 of the 736 dossiers examined, accounting for 97.55 per cent. The SIT also identified 159 signature mismatches and 153 Chief Examiner alterations. In one case, two fundamentally different handwritings were found in a candidate's answer scripts, while another candidate's Economics marks were reportedly reduced from 103 to 69 despite a second evaluation awarding 115 marks.

The 2022 fresh manual evaluation in Vijayawada also wit-

nessed alleged security and procedural lapses. The SIT reported that 48,442 duplicate OMR sheets carrying original barcode numbers were printed without High Court approval. A confidential list of 57 examiners was allegedly leaked, with 47 subsequently allowed to evaluate scripts. The Strong Room also lacked CCTV coverage for the first 17 days. The different evaluation exercises reportedly cost around Rs.2.53 crore. The SIT has examined the role of P.S.R. Anjaneyulu, who served as APPSC Secretary from October 2019 to March 2022 and approved the private contracts and shifting of scripts to Haailand. He has been named Accused No. 1 in Crime No. 56/2025 under Sections 409, 477-A, 420 and 120-B read with Section 34 of the IPC. The findings are now part of the High Court proceedings, placing the Group-I recruitment process under detailed judicial scrutiny.

Amaravati Takes a Giant Leap in Connectivity

Capital Becomes More Accessible as Naidu Inaugurates Seed Access Road

Amaravati, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday inaugurated the Amaravati Seed Access Road and its steel bridges connecting the capital region with the Vijayawada-Guntur old highway, marking a major step towards improving connectivity to Amaravati. Addressing a public meeting after the inauguration, Naidu said Amaravati would be developed as a world-class capital based on five principles - an electric pole-free city, a blue city with abundant water bodies, a green city with extensive greenery, a green-energy city and a deep-tech knowledge city centred around the emerging Quantum Valley. Recalling criticism that Amaravati was merely "graphics", Naidu said the plans were now becoming reality. "When the graphics are turning into reality, those who mocked them should bow their heads," he remarked. He said the Seed Access Road had become the "royal road" to Amaravati and its completion marked only the beginning of the capital's development. The third phase would connect the road to the national highway at Tadepalli. Amaravati would be developed as a pollution-free, AI and Quantum Computing capital, he said. Naidu said Amaravati, Mangalagiri, Tadepalli, Guntur and Vijayawada corporations would remain within the capital region. The Centre had sanctioned a 190-km Outer Ring Road and a 96-km Inner Ring Road. He said the fully developed Amaravati capital would be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2028. The Chief Minister recalled the farmers'



movement between 2019 and 2024 and said history would remember their struggle. He said water and soil brought from sacred rivers and important regions across the country had been mixed in Amaravati as a symbol of blessings for the capital. Calling Amaravati "unstoppable", Naidu urged people to contribute ideas and help develop it as the State's economic capital. He appealed to citizens to participate in Tiranga rallies and work towards making India a developed nation and Andhra Pradesh a Swarna Andhra by 2047. Later, Naidu inspected the completed residential complex for MLAs and MLCs at Rayapudi. The Capital Region Development Authority formally handed over the complex to the General Administration Department through the Chief Minister. The facility comprises 12 towers with 288 flats. Ministers P. Narayana and Nadendla Manohar accompanied the Chief Minister.

India Reaffirms Commitment to Elephant Conservation at Visakhapatnam



Visakhapatnam, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

India's commitment to elephant conservation was reaffirmed at the national World Elephant Day 2026 celebrations in Visakhapatnam on Thursday, with Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Kirti Vardhan Singh and Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister K. Pawan Kalyan stressing science, technology and community participation. Presiding over the celebrations, Kirti Vardhan Singh said elephant conservation reflected India's civilizational values

and ecological responsibility. India, he noted, is home to nearly 60 per cent of the world's wild Asian elephant population, with 33 Elephant Reserves and 150 scientifically identified elephant corridors. Pawan Kalyan said the State's approach to human-elephant conflict was based on the motto "Conflict to Coexistence." Recalling severe conflicts in Palamaner and Parvathipuram Manyam, he said four trained 'Kunki' elephants brought with Karnataka's assistance had participated in 15 operations against rogue elephants, contributing

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CM Naidu Directs Plans to Boost Power Generation Capacity



Amaravati, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to prepare comprehensive plans to increase power generation capacity in line with rising electricity demand and ensure reliable power supply at lower cost. Reviewing the functioning of the Energy Department at the Secretariat on Thursday, the Chief Minister asked officials to study the feasibility of establishing Pumped Storage Energy Projects at 130 reservoirs, including the proposed project at Polavaram. He stressed the need for detailed economic feasibility studies. Noting that electricity consumption in the State was expected to double every six years amid rapid industrialisation, Naidu called for planning to augment generation capacity and reduce distribution losses. He also directed officials to take measures to ensure uninterrupted generation despite the possibility of deficient rainfall. The Chief Minister asked officials to maximise solar power generation and install six lakh connections under PM Surya Ghar by September. Another three

lakh non-Surya Ghar connections should be installed at the earliest, while the State should seek approval from the Centre for another 10 lakh connections. He also called for completing the PM-KUSUM target and seeking an additional 2,000 MW capacity from the Centre. Naidu directed officials to integrate solar, wind and pumped storage resources and reduce average power purchase costs to Rs 4.60 per unit this year and Rs 4 by 2029. He suggested a performance-based rating system for the State's six power utilities, with clear targets to enable them to compete with leading corporate organisations. Officials informed him that power purchase optimisation had saved Rs 234 crore and prompt payment rebates another Rs 100 crore. Naidu directed continued efforts to reduce the utilities' debt burden and borrow only for asset creation and capital investments. He appreciated the implementation of Digital Twin and Asset Health Index systems and directed proactive monitoring of transformers and other equipment. Minister Gottipati Ravikumar and senior officials participated.

CEO Directs Expedited Disposal of Electoral Claims



Amaravati, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer Vivek Yadav on Thursday directed district election authorities to expedite hearings and dispose of claims and objections related to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Electoral Rolls, 2026, across the State. Vivek Yadav, along with Additional Chief Electoral Officer S. Dilli Rao, conducted a video conference from the AP Secretariat between 11 am and noon. District Collectors and District Election Officers, Additional DEOs and Deputy DEOs participated. The CEO reviewed the status of notices issued to electors whose details were unmapped or had discrepancies, delivery of notices, hearings, disposal of claims and objections, pending "Book a Call with BLO" requests and complaints received through the National Grievance Services Portal. He directed officials to expedite hearings and ensure timely disposal of claims and objections strictly in accordance with Election Commission of India guidelines. He stressed that electoral registration procedures must be conducted thoroughly, transparently and in accordance with statutory provisions. Special Campaign Days will be held on August 22, 23, 29 and 30 at all polling stations across Andhra Pradesh. BLOs and political party BLAs will assist voters with electoral roll verification, forms and related guidance. Vivek Yadav also directed officials to conduct awareness campaigns and enrolment camps in colleges and educational institutions to facilitate enrolment of young voters aged 18 to 19 years.



APSRTC to Launch 20 Electric Buses to Bhogapuram Airport

Visakhapatnam, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) will launch 20 air-conditioned electric buses connecting Visakhapatnam with Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport at Bhogapuram from August 16, a day before commercial flight operations begin. APSRTC Regional Manager T. Appala Naidu said the services would be formally inaugurated at the police barracks in Visakhapatnam on August 15. The minister attending as chief guest is yet to be finalised. One service will operate from Gajuwaka via NAD Junction to the airport at a fare of Rs.400, while another will connect the RTC Complex with the airport for Rs.300. Services will initially operate from 4 am to 10 am, with timings to be extended based on passenger demand. The 12-metre buses can accommodate 35-40 passengers and feature air conditioning, air suspension, wheelchair accessibility, automatic doors, CCTV cameras and public address systems. Charging facilities have been established at Gajuwaka depot, Dwaraka Bus Station and Bhogapuram Airport. APSRTC also plans to deploy another 80 electric buses in Visakhapatnam, aiming to reduce emissions and ease traffic congestion.

Kurnool Jail Clarifies Procedures During Jagan's Visit

Kurnool, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

District Jail, Kurnool Superintendent N. Venugopal Reddy clarified that all prescribed procedures were followed during former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's visit to the jail on Thursday to meet remand prisoners. Jagan Busine Virupakshi (RP No. 1534) and Busine Sriramulu (RP No. 1564). Venugopal Reddy said prison regulations require every visitor attending a mulakhat to be photographed before entering the jail. The photograph is taken at a designated window in a room adjacent to the interview room outside

the main gate. As Jagan Mohan Reddy met two prisoners, the e-Prisons software required separate photographs for each prisoner. He was therefore photographed twice, the Superintendent explained. Jagan entered the jail at 3:50 p.m. after completing visitor formalities, met both prisoners and left at 4:20 p.m. Venugopal Reddy said neither officials nor staff behaved disrespectfully towards Jagan during the meeting or photography. He also clarified that there was no government or senior Prisons Department interference and that procedures were followed without compromising his dignity.

Govt Clarifies S-Shaped Seed Access Road Alignment

Amaravati, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Municipal Administration Department has clarified that there is no basis for misconceptions regarding the 'S-shaped' curve on the main Seed Access Road connecting Amaravati with neighbouring regions. The department said the road was being constructed keeping future requirements in mind. In its third phase, the road is being developed to connect with the Vijayawada-Chennai National Highway near Manipal Hospital. Officials said the present alignment was designed to facilitate construction

of an elevated corridor in the future. The elevated corridor from Dondapadu to Tadepalli is being developed in accordance with the 2017 plan. The newly opened steel bridge and completed stretches of the Seed Access Road are expected to strengthen connectivity between Amaravati, Mangalagiri and Vijayawada and reduce traffic congestion on the Krishna River bund road. The department urged the public to consider the facts regarding the project and avoid misinformation or misconceptions about the road alignment and its future development plans.

Vijayawada Airport Adds Direct Links to Varanasi and Kolkata



ARN Mahesh

New Delhi/ Vijayawada : Vijayawada International Airport expanded its air connectivity with the launch of IndiGo's new Vijayawada-Varanasi-Kolkata flight service on Thursday. The inaugural ceremony was held at the airport at 5.30 pm. Union Minister of Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu and Machilipatnam MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry participated virtually, while Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath and Gannavaram MLA Yarlagaadda Venkata Rao attended the event in person and presented the first boarding passes to passengers. Naidu congratulated IndiGo and said the Ministry of Civil Aviation was working to strengthen Vijayawada's connectivity. He announced that flights to Pune, Ahmedabad and Cochin would be introduced soon. He also said Hub-and-Spoke operations would be launched, enabling passengers to complete customs and immigration formalities at Vijayawada before connecting through international hub airports. The Minister said efforts were also underway to complete the New Integrated Terminal Building at the earliest,

incorporating local art and culture. Future seaplane operations are planned for Prakasam Barrage, Srisailem, Hussain Sagar and Nagarjuna Sagar. Kesineni Sivanath said the Varanasi service fulfilled a long-standing demand and sought flights to Cochin, particularly to serve Sabarimala pilgrims. Vallabhaneni Balashowry and Yarlagaadda Venkata Rao urged the Centre to introduce Dubai flights to connect the region with global destinations through Emirates. The inaugural service recorded strong passenger movement, with 89 passengers arriving from Varanasi and 129 departing Vijayawada for Varanasi. The service will operate three days a week-Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Flight 6E 6501 departs Kolkata at 2.15 pm, reaches Varanasi at 3.25 pm and Vijayawada at 5.50 pm. Flight 6E 6502 departs Vijayawada at 6.20 pm, reaches Varanasi at 8.15 pm and Kolkata at 10.15 pm. Secretary (Civil Aviation) Samir Kumar Singh, Special Director R.K. Singh, AAI Executive Director (Engg.-Project) K. Ramachary, Airport Director M. Lakshmi Kantha Reddy and IndiGo Airport Manager Koushik Bisbol also participated.

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First Salary for Martyrs' Families



Rajya Sabha Member Chintakayala Vijay hands over Rs.3 lakh from his first salary to Rajnath Singh in New Delhi, saying, "It is our collective responsibility to stand by soldiers' families."

Durgesh Assures Comprehensive Development of Nidadavolu



Rajamahendravaram, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Tourism, Culture, and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh assured comprehensive development of Nidadavolu constituency while promising continued support to Kadiyam nursery farmers through measures covering tourism, agriculture and infrastructure.

Support for Nursery Farmers

Durgesh, along with Rajamahendravaram Rural MLA Gorantla Butchiah Chowdary, inaugurated pesticide and fertilizer shops, shade-net sales centres and a water plant at the Sir Arthur Cotton Nursery Farmers Association Hall in Kadiyapulanka village. He said the association had grown from 20 to 2,000 members and praised nursery farmers for taking Kadiyam's greenery to the global stage. He assured steps to reduce soil transportation costs and organise a special meeting with bankers to facilitate financial assistance. He urged farmers to adopt solar power under the PM Surya Ghar scheme and use groundwater judiciously. The KNA-branded bottled water plant was also highlighted.

Association president Ratnam Ayyappa and executive committee members Bodapati Gopi, Kondepudi Raghava, Nageswara Rao, Rattayya, Varalakshmi Naidu, Pilla Srinivas, Seshukumar, Satyanarayana, Ramesh, Sivannarayana, Gade Nageswara Rao and Praveen Vasu participated.

Nidadavolu Development

At the Undrajavaram Mandal general coordination meeting, Durgesh said Rs.20,000 crore in tourism investments had been attracted through agreements with 117 companies. Nidadavolu was included in the Akhanda Godavari Tourism Project, while Rs.3 crore was allocated for basic amenities at Kota Sattemma Thalli Temple. He assured that pending road works would be expedited after discussions with Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan.

Tiranga Rally

Durgesh participated in a Tiranga Rally at Undrajavaram, chanting "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and urging people to contribute to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat 2047 and Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu's Swarnandhra 2047 goals.

APJUDA Strike Enters Fourth Day as GDA AP Extends Solidarity

Guntur, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Junior Doctors Association (APJUDA) statewide strike entered its fourth day on Thursday, with junior doctors continuing their Phase II agitation demanding stipend enhancement. The voluntary relay hunger strike entered its second day. At Guntur Medical College, junior doctors continued their peaceful protest near the Superintendent's office of the Government General Hospital (GGH), Guntur. Government Doctors' Association, Andhra Pradesh (GDA AP) members visited the site and extended solidarity. Dr. Swareep Kanth, General Secretary, along with Dr. Katta Srinivasa Rao, Dr. Ch. Ramya, Dr. K. Maruthi Devi, Dr. Y. Ravindra Kumar, Dr. S. Aruna Devi, Dr. B. Sivagopal, Dr. P. Raja, Dr. Ajay, Dr. P. Sudharani, Dr. T. Venkata Siva Rama Krishna, Dr. P. Tabitha and Dr. Murali participated. GDA AP members termed the demands justified and sought timely stipend revision, citing rising expenses. They also raised concerns over MSc/PhD faculty appointments and retirement-age extensions. APJUDA said emergency services would continue uninterrupted, while non-emergency services remained withdrawn. The association thanked GDA AP for its support.



VIT-AP Welcomes 2026 Batch with Freshers Orientation

Amaravati, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

VIT-AP University organised a Freshers Student Orientation Programme to welcome the 2026-27 batch and familiarise students with the university's academic environment, opportunities and values. Richard King, Region Head - Academic Alliances, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Hyderabad, was the Chief Guest, while Dr. G. Viswanathan, Chancellor, VIT University, delivered the Presidential Address. Sandal Kotawala, Founder & CEO, Alfaleas Technology Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad, was the Guest of Honour. Richard King encouraged students to view university as an opportunity to discover their potential, build their identity



and shape their future. He urged them to acknowledge their parents' support and sacrifices, focus on their chosen domains and continuously deepen their expertise amid rapid technological changes. Dr. G. Viswanathan emphasised the enduring value of education, observing that it is a form of wealth that cannot be stolen or destroyed and grows when shared. He stressed the need for greater investment in education and wider access to quality

higher education in India. Sandal Kotawala, recalling his experience as a VIT Vellore student, encouraged freshers to use the freedom and support available on campus to transform ideas into meaningful innovations. He shared his journey of developing IVA, a compact device aimed at early detection of glaucoma. Dr. P. Arulmozhivarman, Vice Chancellor, VIT-AP University, said education should go beyond earning a degree and help students discover their potential, nurture talents and develop skills and confidence. Dr. Jagadish Chandra Mudiganti, Registrar, delivered the welcome address, while Dr. John Pradeep, Deputy Director - Admissions, also addressed the gathering.

AIIMS Mangalagiri Holds Walkathon on Organ Donation

Mangalagiri, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

AIIMS Mangalagiri organised a Walkathon and Flash Mob on World Organ Donation Day 2026 to raise awareness about organ donation among patients, attendants, healthcare professionals, students and the public. The programmes were jointly organised by the Office of the Medical Superintendent and Department of Hospital Administration. The Walkathon began at 6 am from the IPD-OPD Junction and concluded at the AIIMS auditorium. Prof. (Dr.) Ahanthem Santa Singh, Executive Director, AIIMS Mangalagiri, participated along with deans, faculty members, resident doctors, nursing officers, students and staff. Participants carried placards



highlighting the Jeevandan pledge, voluntary organ donation and common misconceptions, while raising awareness slogans. A Flash Mob was organised at noon at the IPD-OPD Junction by undergraduate students. Resident doctors followed it with an interactive session on voluntary organ donation, the Jeevandan pledge and common myths. A Continuing Medical Education (CME) pro-

gramme was also organised by the Departments of Medical Gastroenterology and Surgical Gastroenterology, with about 200 medical professionals attending sessions by two external experts and internal faculty on organ donation and transplantation. The initiatives sought to encourage informed conversations and promote compassion and social responsibility towards organ donation.

Transparent Fertilizer Distribution Ensured Across State

Amaravati, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Agriculture Department has ensured transparent and timely fertilizer distribution to farmers across Andhra Pradesh during the ongoing Kharif season through the APAIMS App-based system, Director of Agriculture Dr. Manazir Jeelani Samoon said.

A total of 15,25,319 farmers purchased 3,07,183 metric tonnes of fertilizers through the app. Of them, 3,00,177 tenant farmers procured 96,694 metric tonnes, accounting for 31 per cent of total purchases. Dr. Samoon said fertilizer



requirements were assessed crop-wise based on agricultural scientists' recommendations, cultivation data and fertilizer usage over the past three years. An end-to-end tracking mechanism from manufacturers to

farmers was enabling continuous monitoring and transparency. Strict action was taken against dealers selling fertilizers above prescribed prices or linking sales with other products. Since April 1, 2026, sale of 13,364 metric tonnes worth Rs.30.60 crore was suspended, while 2,331 metric tonnes worth Rs.5.11 crore was seized. Further, 215 dealer licences were suspended, 63 cases registered under Clause 6A, six FIRs filed and five licences cancelled. Dr. Samoon advised farmers to use urea only as recommended and said adequate stocks were available across the State.

AP JAC Amaravati to Decide Next Agitation Phase on August 16

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The AP JAC Amaravati will convene an emergency meeting of its Movement Action Committee and State Secretariat on August 16 to review the government's response to the long-pending demands of state employees. The meeting will be held at 10 a.m. at Revenue Bhavan, Vijayawada. The JAC had earlier sought clarity on 29 demands discussed at the Joint

Staff Council meeting on July 22 in the presence of the Cabinet Sub-Committee. Key demands include appointment of a Pay Revision Commission (PRC), interim relief, release of pending Dearness Allowance (DA), payment of arrears and restoration of the additional quantum of pension. The JAC is also seeking resolution of issues concerning village and ward secretariat employees, contract workers and outsourcing staff. At its August 2 meeting, the

JAC had warned that failure to receive clarity from the government by August 15 would lead to a decision on the next phase of agitation. Members of the State Secretariat, Women's Wing Secretariat, Movement Action Committee, four zonal in-charges and district representatives from 13 districts are expected to attend. JAC leaders Bopparaju and Palishetti said decisions taken at the meeting would be communicated to the media.

Kanna Lakshminarayana a Role Model for Youth in Politics: Ayyanna Patrudu

Guntur, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu described senior leader Kanna Lakshmi narayana as a role model for youth aspiring to enter politics. Ayyanna Patrudu attended the celebrations marking Kanna Lakshminarayana's political golden jubilee and 73rd birthday in Guntur on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, he said Kanna had achieved a rare distinction by winning as an MLA six times and serving as a Minister under five different Chief Ministers. Ayyanna Patrudu said discipline, determination and a fighting spirit were integral to Kanna's personality and that the younger generation had much to learn from his political journey. He recalled Kanna's association with former Chief Minister NTR, who gave him the opportunity to contest elections and enter pub-



lic life. The Speaker stressed that public representatives should work according to the aspirations of the people and urged youth to actively enter politics and strive to provide clean governance. He also highlighted Kanna's diverse talents, noting his achievements as an actor, body-builder and NCC cadet. Ayyanna Patrudu expressed happiness at speaking about a senior leader with extensive political experience and wished Kanna Lakshmi narayana a long and healthy life.

BJP Minority Morcha Holds Tiranga Yatra in Vijayawada



Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

A Tiranga Yatra organised by the BJP Minority Morcha was held in Vijaya wada on Thursday as part of Independence Day celebrations, with around 2,000 students from five educational institutions participating in the over three-kilometre rally. The procession in Krishnalanka resonated with patriotic slogans including "Vande Mataram" and "Bharat Mata Ki Jai", as students carried

the Tricolour. BJP State president PVN Madhav attended as chief guest, while BJP national secretary Anil Antony was the special guest. MLA Gadde Rammohan also participated. Addressing the gathering, Anil Antony said Tiranga programmes were being organised across Andhra Pradesh following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call, describing them as a major people's participation initiative promoting national unity. He urged citizens to join programmes from August 13 to 15 and hoist the national flag at home. PVN Madhav said respecting the national flag was every Indian's responsibility and called for greater participation in the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign. The rally was organised under the supervision of BJP Minority Morcha State president Syed Basha. BJP leaders Madhukar, Kilari Dileep, Valluru Jayaprakash and Uppalapati Srinivas Raju participated.

AP Plans Joint Task Force to Tackle Rising Obesity

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Obesity has emerged as a major public health challenge in Andhra Pradesh, with nearly one in two people reported to be overweight, Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav said on Thursday. Addressing a state-level conference on obesity and metabolic health organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Vijayawada, the minister announced plans to establish a Joint Task Force involving the Health, Education, Sports and Women & Child Welfare departments. Citing NFHS-6 data, Satya Kumar said 47.90 per cent of women and 44.40 per cent of men in Andhra Pradesh are overweight. He attributed the trend to changing lifestyles, reduced physical activity, excessive food consumption, ultra-processed foods, sugary drinks, work stress and prolonged screen time. He said obesity could affect public health, productivity and economic growth,



stressing prevention and early detection. Recommendations from the CII conference would be submitted to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. The minister said an NCD survey identified around 59 lakh people with hypertension and 48 lakh with diabetes. Under the Universal Health Screening programme, 41 medical tests are being provided free through mobile medical units. Health and Family Welfare Commissioner Chakra dhar Babu stressed healthier diets, reduced salt, sugar and oil consumption, and increased physical activity.

Hepsiba Assumes Charge as Housing Corporation In-charge MD

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Special Secretary of the Housing Department and In-charge Managing Director of the Andhra Pradesh State Housing Corporation Hepsiba Korlapati assumed charge on Thursday and urged employees to ensure timely completion of houses under construction across the State. She took charge at the Corporation's head office in Vijayawada, succeeding Arun Babu, who was transferred, and later reviewed the Corporation's functioning with officials and staff. Hepsiba said Chief Minister Nara

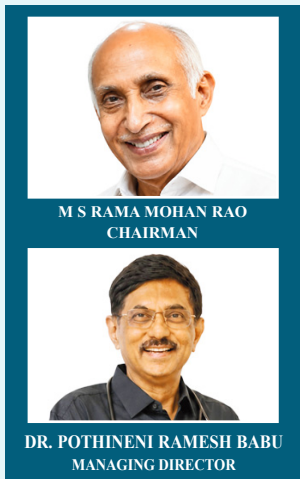
Chandrababu Naidu was committed to ensuring every poor family had a permanent house. She urged employees to work collectively towards the goal and asked officials to motivate beneficiaries to complete construction without delay. Engineering officials were directed to regularly inspect layouts and monitor construction progress. She also stressed punctuality and collective efforts to strengthen the Corporation. Superintending Engineer Krishnaiah, General Managers Govinda Rao and Leela Rani, and other officials and staff attended the meeting.

Heartbeat of Legacy Built on Trust and Compassion

K Kalyan Krishna Kumar

Vijayawada: Institutions are built on achievements; legacies are built on values. On August 15, 1988, a modest six-bed cardiac centre opened in Vijayawada with a simple purpose - to ensure people in Coastal Andhra Pradesh could access life-saving cardiac care close to home. Nearly four decades later, that vision has grown into Aster Ramesh Hospitals, a healthcare network with 10 hospitals, 22 Outreach Referral Centres and more than 1,000 beds. At the heart of this journey is Dr. Pothineni Ramesh Babu, who returned to Andhra Pradesh after advanced cardiology training at AIIMS, New Delhi, choosing service to his home region over opportunities abroad. Speaking to True Point, Chief Cardiologist and Managing

Director Dr. Ramesh Babu said, "I have always believed that medicine is more than just a profession. Money can never be the purpose of healthcare; it is only the by-product of honest, ethical and compassionate medical practice." What began as the City Cardiac Research Centre evolved through clinical excellence, technological innovation and a patient-first philosophy. Board Chairman M. S. Ramamohan Rao provided strategic leadership in transforming the centre into a trusted healthcare institution. Ramesh Hospitals introduced pioneering technologies in Andhra Pradesh, including the State's first Digital Cath Lab, 256-Slice CT, 3-Tesla MRI and ECMO facilities, besides 5G-enabled E-Ambulances and its Golden Hour emergency network. Its achievements include a



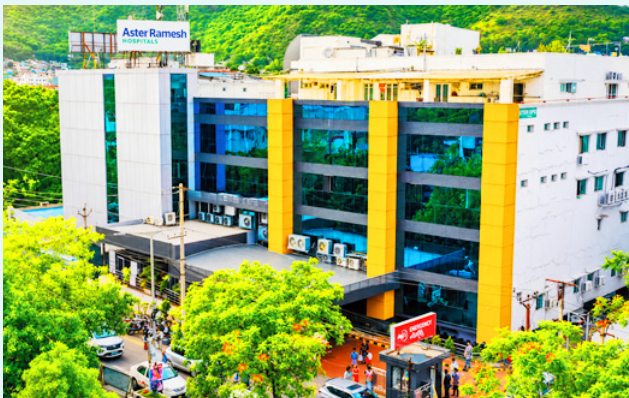
Guinness World Record for the largest gathering of cardiac surgery patients and the first JCI accreditation for a hospital in Andhra Pradesh at its Guntur facility. The institution has



CITY CARDIAC RESEARCH CENTRE, VIJAYAWADA The institution that later became Ramesh Hospitals

embraced robotic surgery and artificial intelligence, including the indigenous SSI Mantra robotic surgery system and AI-powered CT-FFR and Plaque Morphology technology. With over 20 lakh patients served,

3,000-plus team members, 200-plus consultants and 800-plus nurses, the network has 19 accredited DNB/DrNB programmes and a strong clinical research ecosystem. "Our journey is not merely about



the infrastructure we have created but the deep culture of trust, compassion and excellence we have cultivated together," said M. S. Ramamohan Rao. **Celebrating 38 Years** Aster Ramesh Hospitals will cel-

brate its 38-year healthcare journey today (August 14) at Vivanta, Vijayawada. The programme includes a commemorative booklet release, health card launch, patient testimonials and felicitation of distinguished guests.

Naidu Has Ruined Police System in AP: Perni Nani

Machilipatnam, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Former minister and YSRCP Krishna district president Perni Venkatramiah (Nani) on Thursday launched a sharp attack on Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, alleging that the police system in Andhra Pradesh had been weakened under the present government. Addressing the media in Machilipatnam, Nani criticised the Chief Minister for directly holding a video conference with nearly 1,100 SHOs, CIs and DSPs across the state, allegedly bypassing the Director General of Police. He claimed that the move was intended to establish direct control over lower-level police officials ahead of the forthcoming municipal and panchayat elections.

Nani alleged that law and order had deteriorated in the state and questioned the government's priorities. He asked why social media posts were being treated as serious offences while the death of a young woman doctor in Rajahmundry after being hit by a car was being treated as an accident case. He also referred to an alleged attack by a ganja gang on a police officer.

Questioning the silence of Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, Nani criticised Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan for limiting his response to social media posts. He also alleged that the Disha system introduced for women's safety had been weakened.

Nani further criticised the government's focus on Amaravati, alleging that Krishna Delta farmers were facing shortages of irrigation water and fertilisers, while agricultural lands were being acquired in the name of further capital development.

Responding to allegations by Bonda Uma that he and his family had paid Rs.50 crore, Nani challenged him to produce CCTV footage, photographs or other evidence. He said the government should order an ED probe if the allegation was true and prosecute both the payer and recipient.

YSRCP Seeks TET Exemption for Senior Teachers

New Delhi, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

A YSRCP delegation met Union Education Minister Prahlad Joshi in New Delhi on Thursday and urged the Centre to exempt senior in-service teachers from the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) and consider amendments to the Right to Education (RTE) Act. The delegation comprising MPs Golla Baburao and Maddila Gurumoorthy, and Teacher MLCs MV Ramachandra Reddy, Parvatha Reddy Chandrasekar Reddy and Kalpalatha Reddy, sought a review of the Supreme Court judgment making TET mandatory for teachers.

The leaders argued that teachers appointed before 2011, with 20-30 years of service and aged above 50, should not be compelled to take the examination. They claimed nearly one lakh teachers in Andhra Pradesh and several lakh across the country could be affected.

They questioned why the State government had not filed a review petition and urged amendments to Section 23 of the RTE Act. They also termed an online examination covering multiple subjects unfair for experienced teachers, suggesting an offline, subject-specific test if required. YSRCP said it would raise the issue in Parliament, seek an Assembly resolution and introduce a Private Member's Bill if necessary.

YSRCP Alleges Irregularities in Nethanna Seva Scheme

Chirala, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP leaders and handloom representatives staged a protest outside the Handlooms and Textiles Department office in Chirala, alleging irregularities in implementing the State Government's newly introduced 'Nethanna Seva' scheme. The protest was organised under the direction of Chirala YSRCP constituency in-charge Karanam Venkatesh Babu. Protesters alleged that ineligible persons were being included in the scheme after paying bribes, while genuine handloom workers were being denied assistance. They demanded action against officials responsible for alleged irregularities and questioned the replacement of the beneficiary database used under the previous YSRCP government's



'Nethanna Nestham' scheme, which provided Rs.24,000 annually to around 84,000 eligible handloom workers through geo-tagging. The protesters demanded that the promised Rs.25,000 assistance under Nethanna Seva be credited to every eligible handloom family within a week. They submitted a memorandum seeking corrective action. They warned of approaching courts and initiating legal proceedings if the alleged irregularities were not addressed. Former Devanga Corporation chairman Beeraka Surendra and several YSRCP leaders and handloom representatives participated.

Appi Reddy Seeks Voter-Friendly Verification

Tadepalli, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP MLC and State General Secretary Lella Appi Reddy urged the Chief Electoral Officer, Andhra Pradesh, to simplify the verification process for voters placed under the unmapped or mismatched category during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR). In a representation to the CEO, Appi Reddy said several genuine voters could face difficulties in appearing personally for verification as they may be pursuing education, working in other cities, employed as migrant labourers or temporarily staying away from their native places. He requested the Election Commission to permit parents or blood relatives to submit required documents on behalf of such voters, subject to prop-

er authorisation and proof of relationship. Appi Reddy also pointed to discrepancies in notices issued to some voters, with the verification venue reportedly left blank in certain cases. He sought clear details of the venue, date, time and verification officer in every notice. He further sought greater involvement of Booth Level Officers (BLOs), suggesting they be allowed to receive documents and conduct preliminary verification locally, while the final statutory decision remains with the competent authority. Appi Reddy stressed that procedural difficulties should not result in deletion of genuine voters. He urged uniform instructions across Andhra Pradesh to ensure a simple, transparent and voter-friendly verification process.

'Jagan Go Back' Flexis Put Up Near Orvakal Airport

Kurnool | Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Several flexis opposing YSRCP president and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy appeared near Orvakal Airport on Thursday ahead of his visit to Kurnool district. One flexi carried the message "Jagan Go Back", while another ques-

tioned his proposed visit to meet an MLA facing allegations of assaulting members of the Scheduled Castes.

Other flexis urged Jagan to attend the assembly and participate in discussions on the DSC recruitment issue. Police removed the flexis from the airport premises soon after they were noticed. Meanwhile, a large number of

YSRCP leaders and party workers gathered near the airport to welcome Jagan. Police erected barricades and deployed personnel to prevent unauthorised entry and regulate the movement of supporters.

The YSRCP leadership has mobilised party workers in connection with Jagan's district tour. His visit comes amid height-

ened political activity and continuing exchanges between the YSRCP and the ruling coalition over the DSC recruitment process and allegations concerning attacks on Dalits. Authorities maintained security at key locations around the airport and monitored the gathering to ensure the situation remained peaceful.

APPSC Became a Haven for Wrongdoers Under YSRCP Regime: Durgesh



Nidadavolu, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Kandula Durgesh alleged that the Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) was turned into a "haven for wrongdoers" during the five-year YSRCP regime. Addressing a press conference at the Undrajavaram Mandal Parishad office on Thursday, he cited the 132-page Special Investigation Team (SIT) report on the Group-I recruitment irregularities as evidence of the previous government's alleged misconduct. Durgesh alleged that Group-I answer scripts underwent three re-evaluations in violation of rules and that correction fluid was used on around 95 per cent of the scripts. He further alleged that

answer sheets were evaluated by persons lacking the required qualifications, including security guards, electricians and data entry operators. He said the alliance government had filled 16,347 teacher posts transparently within 148 days through the Mega DSC and announced that another DSC notification was likely in October. He urged unemployed candidates to prepare for the recruitment and not be misled by YSRCP leaders. Durgesh challenged the opposition to debate the DSC issue in the Assembly and said the government was ready to provide answers. He also criticised demands for Education Minister Nara Lokesh's resignation and said Andhra Pradesh was progressing under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan.

TDP Hits Back at YSRCP Over Canal Land Proposal

Nellore, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

TDP corporators in the Nellore Municipal Corporation strongly rejected allegations raised by YSRCP members during the council's general body meeting, describing them as politically motivated and misleading. TDP corporators Kartham Pratap Reddy, Jameer, Karimulla, Malyadri, Ramakrishna and Deputy Mayor Tahseen Intiyaz criticised the opposition over the disturbance created during discussion on Agenda Item No. 116. They said the proposal relating to 0.40 cents of canal poramboke land was prepared strictly according to government rules and procedures. They alleged that YSRCP members were deliberately spreading misinformation. The TDP representatives said Narayana Educational Society had created an alternative canal route on its own 1.55-acre patta land, ensuring uninterrupted water flow and avoiding inconvenience to farmers.



They said the society had sought permission to obtain the unused canal poramboke land by paying the applicable market value under G.O. Ms. No. 571. The TDP corporators maintained that the council approved the proposal transparently and in accordance with prescribed regulations. They accused YSRCP members of politicising the issue and creating unnecessary controversy, asserting that all council decisions would be taken in accordance with government norms and public interest.

Ravibabu Seeks Better Tobacco Prices for Farmers

Ongole, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Ongole Assembly constituency YSRCP in-charge Chunduri Ravibabu alleged that farmers were facing severe hardships due to inadequate prices for agricultural produce, particularly tobacco. Addressing a press conference at the YSRCP office, Ravibabu said farmers had been staging protests, rallies and relay hunger strikes seeking government support, but their concerns remained unresolved. He alleged that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had failed to take effective measures despite appeals by former Chief Minister and YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. Ravibabu said farmers were seeking Rs.300 per kg for bright-grade tobacco and Rs.200 for low-grade produce, targeting an average price of Rs.250 per kg to cover cultivation costs. He claimed bright-grade tobacco was trading at around Rs.250 against the government's Rs.230 benchmark, while



medium-grade was fetching Rs.200-Rs.210 against Rs.190 and low-grade Rs.140-Rs.150 against Rs.110. He alleged trader syndicates were exploiting farmers and urged the government to increase buyer competition. He also questioned the proposed Rs.20-per-kg incentive, saying traders could offset it by reducing purchase prices. Several local YSRCP leaders and activists attended.

BJP's 'Caste Bias' Exposed by Khar-ge Site Cleaning: YS Sharmila

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president YS Sharmila Reddy on Thursday accused the BJP of promoting caste discrimination and undermining constitutional values, condemning the reported purification of a site in Haldwani where Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had addressed a rally. Sharmila alleged that BJP and Hindutva organisations used Ganga water to "purify" the venue after the Congress programme, claiming that the action reflected an attitude of untouchability and social inequality. She described the incident as a direct instance of discrimination against Dalits and said it amounted to an insult to Kharge, a senior Congress leader and prominent Dalit figure.

"The BJP's approach towards Dalits is discriminatory," Sharmila alleged, asserting that caste divisions and social polarisation were part of the party's political mindset. She said such incidents were an affront to equality, unity, social justice and the values enshrined in the Constitution. Strongly condemning the alleged incident, Sharmila said the

Congress would organise protests across the country against what she described as divisive and discriminatory tendencies. She called upon District Congress Committees (DCCs) across Andhra Pradesh to organise massive marches and Satyagraha programmes on August 14 evening. The marches are expected to culminate at the statues of Dr B.R. Ambedkar or Mahatma Gandhi, where party leaders and workers will hold Satyagraha in solidarity with Kharge. Sharmila urged DCCs, Block Congress Committees, party wings, cells, leaders and workers to participate in large numbers and send a strong message against caste discrimination. She asserted that the people of the country would not tolerate attempts to promote social division, discrimination and inequality.



India Reaffirms Commitment to Elephant Conservation at Visakhapatnam

Continue

to a 70 per cent reduction in human fatalities in forest-fringe areas. The State has also begun training its own Kunki elephants, with Jayanth stationed in Parvathipuram Manyam. Two Kunki elephants are planned to be trained annually. Pawan Kalyan also highlighted the HANUMAN initiative, launched in March 2026 for rapid response and mitigation of human-wildlife conflicts. It has deployed 93 response vehicles and seven wildlife ambulances, rescued over 200 wild animals and relocated more than 30. Kirti Vardhan Singh and Pawan Kalyan released Project Elephant: 30 Giant Steps and a Regional Action Plan for managing human-elephant conflict in Southern India, supported by Rs.500 crore from the Centre. The 23rd Steering Committee Meeting of Project Elephant, chaired by Kirti Vardhan Singh, and a national workshop were also held. Gaj Gaurav Awards 2026 were presented for exemplary conservation efforts. More than 20 lakh students across 21,450 schools participated in nationwide awareness activities. Tanmay Kumar, Sushil Kumar Awasthi, Kantilal Dande, Dr P.V. Chalapathi Rao, officials, scientists and environmentalists attended.

GoM Reviews Excise Policy Models Ahead of September Deadline

Continue

of Excise and Prohibition Chamakuri Sridhar, Director of Enforcement Rahul Dev Sharma and other senior officials of the Prohibition and Excise Department attended the meeting. The GoM was constituted through G.O.Rt.No.582 of the Revenue (Excise) Department dated August 29, 2024, and G.O.Rt.No.939 dated August 28, 2025. During the meeting, Excise Department officials made a detailed presentation on the performance and outcomes of the Retail Excise Policy 2024-26 up to July 2026. They also presented various proposed models for the Retail Excise Policy to be implemented after September 30, 2026, when the existing policy expires. Officials placed before the GoM suggestions and inputs received from different stakeholders for consideration while framing the new policy. The Ministers held detailed discussions on the proposed models, examining the available data and feedback. Following the deliberations, the GoM directed the Excise Department to revise the proposed policy models and resubmit them along with relevant supporting data for further examination. The meeting forms part of the State Government's ongoing exercise to finalise an effective Retail Excise Policy beyond September 30, 2026. The new policy is expected to take into account the performance of the existing framework, stakeholder feedback and relevant data before being finalised.

Jagan Alleges 'Red Book Raj' in State

Continue

Virupakshi was travelling with YSRCP worker Giri, and claimed that the MLA's brother Sriramulu suffered a fractured hand. He further alleged excessive force during Virupakshi's arrest, claiming that police personnel entered his residence after damaging doors and windows. He questioned why complaints from Giri and Sriramulu were allegedly not accepted while cases were registered against them. Jagan also raised allegations concerning an incident involving the tearing of a woman's clothes and an alleged vehicle-damage case involving Virupakshi. Accusing the government of creating fear through arrests and cases, Jagan said the Opposition had a constitutional right to question the government. "Governments do not remain in power forever," he said, alleging that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu was encouraging a "sadistic mentality" in governance. The allegations could not be independently verified, and the police version was awaited.



YV Subba Reddy Seeks Probe into Panchadarla Mining



New Delhi, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP Parliamentary Party Leader YV Subba Reddy on Thursday raised concerns in the Rajya Sabha over mining activities near the historic Panchadarla heritage area in Andhra Pradesh and sought immediate measures to protect its ancient monuments and natural water streams. Participating in the debate on the Minerals Amendment Bill, 2026, Subba Reddy drew the attention of the House to mining operations near a protected Buddhist site and the ancient Dharmalingeswara Swamy temple at Panchadarla. He said Panchadarla's identity and heritage were closely linked to the five natural water streams flowing through the temple complex. He expressed concern that mining activities were approaching the protected heritage zone and could threaten its ecological and cultural significance. Subba Reddy demanded an immedi-

ate inspection of the area, a comprehensive cumulative environmental impact assessment and a scientific hydrological study of the water channels. He also sought verification of all statutory and environmental clearances granted for mining activities. He urged authorities to suspend mining operations and related plans until the inspections and studies were completed. Speaking on the legislation, Subba Reddy said the country's mineral wealth belonged to the people and its management must ensure transparency and accountability. While supporting an effective mining framework for economic development, he stressed that it should protect State revenues, local livelihoods and the environment. He also cautioned that excessive centralisation of authority should not weaken enforcement against illegal and environmentally harmful mining activities at the ground level.

Kesineni Sivanath Raises AP Industrial Clusters in Lok Sabha

New Delhi, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni) has sought details from the Centre on the support being extended for the development of micro and small industries in Andhra Pradesh, prompting the Union Ministry of MSME to provide an update on industrial clusters and infrastructure projects in the State. Responding to Sivanath's question in the Lok Sabha, Union Minister of State for MSME Shobha Karandlaje detailed the Central assistance being provided under various programmes, including industrial clusters, Common Facility Centres and skill development initiatives. The response highlighted several projects in the Vijayawada-Krishna region. Gold Ornament Clusters in Vijayawada and Jaggay yapeta and an imitation jewellery cluster in Machilipa nam have been completed. The Auto Nagar Industrial Estate development project in Guntur was also listed among the completed projects. Several other cluster projects are under implementation, including a



Gold Ornaments Cluster at Mangalagiri, Furniture Manufacturing Cluster at Rajahmundry, Hosiery and Ready-made Garments Cluster at Nellore, Printing Cluster at Tirupati, Food Processing Cluster at Srikakulam and Coconut Cluster in West Godavari. The Minister also informed the Lok Sabha that 42,211 Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Program me (ESDP) training programmes were conducted across the country during the last five financial years, benefiting 19,54,701 participants, including 6,66,327 women. The information provided in Parliament is expected to help highlight the scope for strengthening industrial infrastructure, entrepreneurship, production and employment opportunities in Andhra Pradesh.

Mana Influencers AwarAds 2026 to Honour Digital Creators



Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Film and Television Promotion Council (FTPC) India has announced the Mana Influencers Awards - 2026, an initiative aimed at recognising excellence and creativity in India's rapidly growing digital content ecosystem. The awards ceremony is scheduled to be held in September 2026 at Hyatt Place, Vijayawada. The announcement was made at a press conference at the FTPC India office in Bharathi Nagar by FTPC India President Chaitanya Janga and Secretary Varma Pakalapati. The awards will recognise digital creators across several categories, including YouTube, Instagram, social media, food and travel, technology, education, fashion and beauty, fitness, lifestyle, comedy, film and music content and short videos. The organisers said the initiative seeks to encourage innovative, informative, entertaining and socially responsible digital content while providing a platform for talented creators from

Andhra Pradesh and across the country. The event is expected to bring together leading social media influencers and personalities from the film, television, politics, business, corporate and media sectors. Distinguished guests will present awards to the winners. A key focus of the initiative is the theme "Mana Amaravati - Glory to the World." FTPC India plans to use the reach of prominent influencers to showcase Amaravati's heritage, development and future potential to national and international audiences. As part of the initiative, influencers are expected to create digital content highlighting development and infrastructure initiatives in Andhra Pradesh under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Details regarding nominations, selection procedures, jury members, celebrity guests and participation guidelines will be announced shortly. Interested participants can contact 98663 33787 or 98486 69996 for further information.

Pastor Gets 20-Year Jail Term in POCSO Case

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

A POCSO court in Vijayawada has sentenced a 56-year-old church pastor to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs.30,000 for sexually abusing three minor girls. The judgment was pronounced on Thursday by POCSO Court Judge K. Jayalakshmi in a case registered at Machavaram Police Station in 2020. The accused had allegedly behaved inappropriately with three girls aged 10, 10 and 11 years while they attended Sunday school at a church near the Machavaram Police Station area. According to the police, the accused allegedly took the girls to an upper floor of the church and sexually abused them. He also allegedly threatened them with serious consequences if they disclosed the incidents to anyone. The matter came to light after one of

the girls told her family about the alleged abuse. Based on the complaint, police registered Crime No. 121/2020 under relevant sections of the IPC and the POCSO Act. The case was initially investigated by then Machavaram Inspector G.V. Vinay Mohan. The accused was arrested on March 19, 2020, and subsequently a chargesheet was filed by then Central ACP Y. Srinivasa Reddy. After examining 14 witnesses, the court found the accused guilty and awarded the 20-year rigorous imprisonment sentence along with the fine. The court also directed the District Legal Services Authority to provide Rs.1 lakh compensation to each of the three minor victims. Special Public Prosecutor Gaddam Rajeswara Rao, CMS Inspector Jagadeeswar Rao, Machavaram Inspector Chandra Sekhar and CMS staff assisted in the prosecution.

Vijayawada Marches with Pride in Har Ghar Tiranga Rally

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

A grand 'Har Ghar Tiranga' rally was organised in Vijayawada on Thursday as part of the Independence Day celebrations, with a strong display of patriotism and national unity. The rally, organised by the district administration on the directions of NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshminsha, began at the Collectorate and proceeded to Indira Gandhi Stadium. Students, youth, sports persons, government officials, police personnel and members

of the public participated in large numbers, carrying the national flag. The major roads of Vijayawada, particularly Bandar Road, came alive with the colours of the Tricolour as participants raised slogans such as "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Vande Mataram". Speaking on the occasion, Collector Dr. Lakshminsha extended Independence Day greetings to the people and recalled the sacrifices of the freedom fighters. He said every citizen had a responsibility to carry forward their ideals and contribute to nation-building.

Under the 'Partners in Nation Building' initiative, he urged citizens to set goals for the development of their villages, towns, state and country over the next 21 years and work collectively to achieve them. He also stressed the importance of constitutional values, responsible citizenship and national unity. Commissioner of Police S.V. Rajasekhara Babu said the rally would strengthen patriotic and national unity among people and called for collective effort towards achieving the goals of 'Swarna Andhra 2047'. VMC Commissioner H.M. Dhyan Chand said the spirit of



Har Ghar Tiranga should reach every household and urged people to educate children about the freedom struggle and the significance of the national flag. A large number

of officials, students, youth, sports persons and citizens participated in the rally.

Sujana Chowdary Directs Speedy Construction of Soil Testing Lab

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Vijayawada West MLA Sujana Chowdary has directed officials to complete the construction of a district-level soil testing laboratory at Bhavanipuram at the earliest while strictly adhering to quality and technical standards. Officials, including Deputy Executive Engineer Venkanna, Assistant Engineer Sivaramakrishna and contractor Mandava Bhargava, met the MLA at his camp office in Tadigadapa on Thursday and briefed him on the proposed laboratory building, estimated cost and construction permissions. The officials informed Chowdary that the laboratory would be constructed at an estimated cost of around Rs.1 crore over an area of approxi-

mately 4,000 square feet. The facility is intended to provide soil testing and analysis services to farmers across NTR district. The laboratory will help determine the nutrient content and fertility of agricultural soils and provide farmers with scientific guidance on the nutrients required for different crops. Officials said the facility would make soil testing services more accessible and help farmers make informed decisions regarding crop cultivation and fertiliser application. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Sujana Chowdary stressed the importance of maintaining high construction standards. He instructed the officials to ensure that all works were carried out strictly in accordance with technical specifications and approved



guidelines. He also directed the concerned departments to avoid unnecessary delays and complete the

project in a timely manner without compromising on the strength or quality of the structure.

The proposed laboratory is expected to strengthen scientific soil management in NTR district and assist farmers in

improving soil health, crop productivity and efficient use of agricultural inputs.

ABVP Protests JSSC CGL Exam Irregularities



Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Vijayawada unit of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) staged a protest at Dharna Chowk in Gandhi Nagar on Thursday, condemning the alleged irregularities and paper leak in the Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC) CGL examination. ABVP activists burnt an effigy of Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren and raised slogans demanding justice for students and unemployed youth protesting against the alleged examination irregularities. Speaking on the occasion,

ABVP State Secretary Yaganti Venkata Gopi alleged that students and unemployed youth in Jharkhand had been protesting for the past 21 days over alleged corruption and leakage of examination papers. He criticised the police for allegedly resorting to a lathi charge against protesting students. The ABVP leader demanded immediate cancellation of the JSSC CGL examination and a CBI inquiry into the alleged irregularities. He also appealed to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to support the protesting students and help ensure justice for them. Venkata Gopi condemned the

police action against students who had called for a 'Chalo Vidhan Sabha' protest, describing it as a failure of the Jharkhand government to address their grievances. He further demanded that Chief Minister Hemant Soren take responsibility for the alleged examination paper leak and resign from his post. He warned that if the government failed to initiate action, the ABVP would intensify its agitation and raise the issue across the country. ABVP Vijayawada City Secretary Rishi, city vice-presidents Sai Sai and Pawan, along with activists Surya, Nithin and Nagaraju, participated in the protest.

Spandana 2026 Showcases Student Talent at Andhra Loyola College

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Intermediate Wing of Andhra Loyola College organised "Spandana 2026" on Thursday, providing students with a vibrant platform to showcase their creativity, confidence and diverse talents through cultural and literary activities. College Principal Rev. Fr. Dr. S. Melchior said such programmes help students discover and express their hidden

talents while developing confidence, communication skills, teamwork and leadership qualities. He encouraged students to actively participate in co-curricular activities alongside academics. College Correspondent Rev. Fr. Dr. A. Francis Xavier SJ said cultural and literary programmes play an important role in the holistic development of young minds. Such activities, he noted, contribute

to personality development, mental well-being and self-expression while providing students with a positive and enjoyable environment. The highlight of the programme was a special performance by chief guest Mr. Sylvester, who entertained the audience with mimicry and ventriloquism. His engaging presentation drew applause and laughter from students while also conveying messages on the

importance of family values, traditions and maintaining strong roots. The celebrations encouraged students to overcome stage fear and confidently display their abilities before an audience. The programme also highlighted the importance of creativity, cultural awareness and healthy participation in shaping confident and well-rounded individuals. Guest of Honour B. Prabhakara Rao, DCEO &



RIO, College Rector Rev. Fr. Dr. J. Sebastian SJ, Vice Principal Rev. Fr. S. Karunak

ar SJ, other vice principals, faculty members and students attended the event.

Indrakeeladri Tightens Security, Announces Varuna Yagam

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

The Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam atop Indrakeeladri has introduced new security measures to ensure safer and smoother darshan for devotees. Temple Executive Officer Seena Naik announced that carrying mobile phones into the temple premises has been completely prohibited. A new security gate has been installed at the main scanning point. Devotees will have to deposit their mobile phones at designated counters before entering the queue lines. Home Guards and Agile security personnel have been instructed to strictly monitor the scanning area and prevent mobile phones from being carried inside. To streamline the movement of devotees, the temple administration has also shifted darshan ticket counters and free laddu distribution counters to separate locations. The changes are aimed at ensuring devotees can proceed towards the sanctum without unnecessary congestion. Meanwhile, the temple will conduct special Varuna Yagams, Varuna Japams and Ghata Abhishekams from August 14 to 16, seeking timely and abundant rainfall and the welfare of farmers. Temple Chairman Borra Radhakrishna



(Gandhi) and EO Seena Naik said the three-day Vedic programme was being organised as per the directions of the Endowments Department. On August 14, rituals will begin with Varuna Anuvaka recitations at Durga Ghat, followed by special worship at the old Yagasala. On August 15, Varuna-related rituals and Rudra Homam will be performed along with other special homams. On August 16, sacred Krishna River water will be collected from Durga Ghat, followed by Maha Nyasa Parayanam and Ghata Abhishekam at the Malleswara Swamy temple. The programme will conclude with Maha Purnahuthi at the old Yagasala. Officials appealed to devotees to cooperate with the new security arrangements and follow temple guidelines.

Public Participation Vital for Park Maintenance : VMC Chief

Vijayawada, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) Commissioner H.M. Dhyan Chand has called upon citizens to actively participate in the maintenance and development of parks across the city. During his field visit on Thursday, the Commissioner inspected a park in the APIIC Colony, reviewing facilities, sanitation, greenery and other amenities available to visitors. Speaking on the occasion, Dhyan Chand said the municipal corporation was giving special attention to maintaining parks and providing residents with

a pleasant and healthy environment. He said parks were not only meant for recreation but also played an important role in promoting public health. The Commissioner noted that open gyms have been established in several parks to encourage residents to engage in regular physical activity and maintain healthier lifestyles. He urged citizens to consider public parks as their own assets and actively contribute towards keeping them clean, green and well-maintained. Residents, he said, could support the civic body not only by protecting park facilities but also by contributing their



time and cooperation to improve the surroundings. Dhyan Chand stressed that active participation from local communities would help transform parks into attractive and healthy spaces for people of all age groups. He appealed to citizens to avoid littering, protect greenery and public facilities and cooperate with municipal staff in maintaining cleanliness.

The Commissioner said the civic body would continue taking steps to improve park facilities and greenery, but sustained public cooperation was essential for ensuring their long-term maintenance. The VMC urged residents to work together with municipal authorities to create cleaner, greener and healthier public spaces throughout Vijayawada.

Teacher's Journey From State Award to Finland



Rolugunta, Anakapalli district, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

P.V.M. Nagajyothi, School Assistant (English) at the Zilla Parishad High School in Rolugunta, has achieved another milestone with her selection for an educational visit to Finland. She had earlier received the State Best Teacher Award in 2025 in recognition of her contribution to education. Nagajyothi has earned a reputation as a multi-talented teacher through her work in teaching, sports, student development and social service. Her selection for the Finland programme is expected to provide her with an opportunity to study international educational practices and

innovative approaches to classroom learning. In English teaching, she follows student-centred methods and uses creative teaching-learning materials such as puppets, 3D models, animations and digital content. She also makes effective use of digital platforms including Kahoot and Google Classroom to make lessons more interactive and engaging. Through programmes such as Spoken English, Phonetics and Calligraphy, Nagajyothi focuses on improving students' communication skills, confidence and overall personality development. She has also developed an innovative teaching methodology titled "Blooming English - A

Journey of Joyful Communication", aimed at making English learning enjoyable and encouraging students to communicate naturally. During her Finland visit, Nagajyothi plans to study student-centred education, experiential learning, creative teaching methods, joyful learning practices and the use of technology in classrooms. She intends to share the knowledge and experiences gained during the visit with teachers and students across Andhra Pradesh. Her journey from the State Best Teacher Award to international educational exposure highlights her commitment to continuous learning, innovation and improving classroom practices.

Rs.4.2 Crore Skill Centre Planned in Denduluru

Eluru, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Denduluru MLA Chintamani Prabhakar said the coalition government is taking comprehensive measures to enhance skills among youth and create better employment and livelihood opportunities for their future. He said a district-level skill development training centre is being established at an estimated cost of Rs.4.2 crore at the ITI college premises in Vatluuru of Pedapadu mandal. The

project is being taken up under the National Academy of Construction (NAC) and Andhra Pradesh Education and Welfare Infrastructure Development Corporation (APEWIDC). Prabhakar said the government, under the leadership of State Education and Human Resources Development Minister Nara Lokesh, is focusing on strengthening education, skill development and employment opportunities for young people. The proposed centre would provide training aimed at



improving employability and helping youth access better career opportunities. The MLA said skill development was essential for enabling young

people to meet the requirements of the changing job market. He expressed confidence that the new facility would benefit youth from

Denduluru and surrounding areas by providing access to structured training closer to their homes. Meanwhile, Prabhakar conducted his regular

Praja Darbar at his camp office in Duggirala on Thursday. Coalition leaders, public representatives, officials and residents met him and submitted requests and invitations. The MLA personally received grievances from people who had arrived from various villages and directed the concerned officials to examine the issues and take steps for their speedy resolution. Coalition leaders, officials and staff from various departments participated in the programme.

Vetriselvi Flags Off Har Ghar Tiranga Rally

Eluru, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

A grand 'Har Ghar Tiranga' cycle rally was organised in Eluru district on Thursday to promote patriotism, national unity and respect for the national flag. The rally was led by Eluru District Collector K. Vetriselvi, District SP K. Pratap Siva Kishore, Joint Collector M.J. Abhishek Gowda, and Eluru DSP D. Sravan Kumar.



A large national flag was carried during the rally as participants cycled through the streets of Eluru.

gh the streets of Eluru. Officials and staff from the Revenue and Police departments, employees of various government departments, students and members of the public participated in large numbers. Carrying the Tricolour and raising patriotic slogans, participants created an atmosphere of national pride across the city. Collector K. Vetriselvi said the main objective of the Har Ghar Tiranga initiative was to strengthen patriotic feelings among people and encourage every citizen to contribute to the development of the nation. She said the enthusiastic participation in the rally

reflected the strong spirit of patriotism among the people. SP K. Pratap Siva Kishore said the national flag symbolised the self-respect, unity and integrity of the country. He stressed that protecting national unity, peace and public order was the responsibility of every citizen. The officials appealed to people to hoist the national flag at their homes and remember the sacrifices of freedom fighters. They said the rally was aimed at strengthening national unity and patriotic spirit among the people while commemorating the sacrifices made during India's freedom struggle.

MLA Performs Special Puja for CM Naidu

Markapur, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Markapur MLA Kandula Narayana Reddy performed special prayers at the Muddasanamma Gandhi Ammavari Temple, seeking blessings for the early completion of the Velugonda Project and the release of Krishna waters to the Markapur region. The MLA offered prayers in the name of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, wishing him good health and a long life. He also prayed for the prosperity of the region and the welfare of its people.



Temple priests performed special pujas and Kumkumarchana in the

Chief Minister's name, Narayana Reddy expressed hope that the blessings of the deity

would remain with the people of the Markapur Assembly constituency. Speaking later, the MLA

said the Velugonda Project would provide a permanent solution to the irrigation and drinking water problems of the Markapur region. He expressed confidence that adequate water would reach farmers' fields and transform the area into a green and prosperous agricultural region. He said people would remain grateful to Chief Minister Chandra Babu Naidu for completing the project, which was once considered difficult to achieve. On the occasion of the project's completion and the expected arrival of

water, he appealed to people, party leaders and workers to organise special prayers at temples, mosques and churches across the Markapur constituency. TDP leaders appreciated Narayana Reddy's efforts towards securing district status for the region and completing the Velugonda Project with the support of the Chief Minister. They urged party workers to widely communicate the benefits of the project to the public. Local representatives, TDP leaders, workers and villagers attended the programme.

Naidu Working to Make AP a Development Brand: MLA Badeti Chanti



Eluru, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Eluru MLA and TDP district president Badeti Chanti said Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu was working tirelessly to establish Andhra Pradesh as a leading model of development. He called for collective public support to protect the State's image and ensure continued progress. Chanti participated in the "Two Years of Trust - Development and Welfare" door-to-door campaign at Patthabada in Eluru's 31st Division on Thursday. The programme was aimed at explaining the coalition government's development and welfare initiatives to residents and receiving feedback on local issues. Before beginning the campaign, Chanti offered special prayers at the Sri Chowdeswari Ramalingeswara Swamy Temple and Sri Vigneswara Temple. Local residents warmly welcomed him

with flower garlands and traditional Harathi. The MLA distributed pamphlets detailing the development and welfare programmes implemented during the coalition government's two-year tenure. He interacted with residents and personally enquired about their problems. Several people raised issues related to roads, and Chanti assured them that steps would be taken to provide a permanent solution. He said people were welcoming the campaign with enthusiasm and expressing satisfaction with the government's performance. He added that the coalition government had earned public confidence within two years and was preparing for the forthcoming local body elections with renewed determination. Local TDP leaders, representatives and party workers participated in the campaign.

AITUC Calls for Protest on August 18



Eluru, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

AITUC Eluru district leaders have called upon employees and workers to participate in large numbers in a protest scheduled for August 18 against what they described as anti-worker and privatisation policies of the Central and State governments. As part of the AITUC State Committee's call, a campaign programme was organised on Thursday near the R.R. Peta Service Reservoir under the banner of the Zonal Municipal Employees Municipal Union to mobilise workers for the proposed protest. AITUC Eluru district vice-president Bandi Venkateswara Rao and district general secretary Reddy Srinivas Dange alleged that the Central government had been pursuing policies detrimental to employees and workers for the past 12 years. They said hard-won

labour rights were being weakened and demanded protection of workers' interests. Their key demands included safeguarding labour rights, protecting public sector undertakings and industries, and regularising outsourcing, contract and MMR employees. They also demanded payment of pending 11th PRC benefits to State government employees, surrender leave benefits, constitution of the 12th PRC and declaration of 30 per cent Interim Relief (IR). He demanded equal pay for equal work for outsourcing, contract and MMR employees and sought a minimum monthly wage of Rs.26,000. He appealed to employees and staff working in the Eluru Municipal Corporation to participate in large numbers in the August 18 protest. Union leaders and workers attended the campaign programme.

DMF Funds for Education, Healthcare and Drinking Water

Delhi/Eluru, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds are being utilised for public welfare projects, including education, healthcare and drinking water facilities, across Andhra Pradesh, Union Minister of State for Coal and Mines Satish Chandra Dubey said in the Lok Sabha. The minister was responding to a question raised by Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar seeking details of DMF funds collected and utilised in Eluru district and across Andhra Pradesh. According to the minister, Eluru district collected Rs.38.37 crore under DMF during the last five years. Of this, Rs.20.86 crore was allocated for various development works, while only Rs.7.18 crore had been spent by the district administration so far. The funds have been used for 93 infrastructure projects, 32 drinking water schemes, 15 education-related works, 15 healthcare projects, 27 sanitation initiatives and 10 other works. These projects are expected to benefit around 93,900 people in the district.



The minister said the Centre had issued the Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) Guidelines, 2024, for collection and utilisation of DMF funds. The concerned DMF governing council, headed by the District Magistrate, has the authority to approve expenditure. He said up to 70 per cent of DMF funds can be utilised for priority sectors such as healthcare, education, drinking water, skill development and livelihood generation. The remaining 30 per cent can be used for infrastructure, irrigation, energy, watershed development and environmental improvement. To ensure transparency and accountability, DMF accounts are also being audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the minister added.

Speaker Ayyanna Patrudu Visits Valluramma Temple

Valluru, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Legislative Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu visited the famous Valluramma temple at Valluru village in Prakasam district and offered special prayers to the presiding village deity. AP Maritime Board Chairman Damacharla Satyanarayana and State Social Welfare Minister Dola Bala Veeranjaneey Swamy accompanied the Speaker during the visit. Temple Executive Officer and chief priests accorded a traditional welcome to the dignitaries with a Purna Kumbham amid devotional music. Ayyanna Patrudu later performed special pujas at the temple and sought the blessings of



Valluramma. Following the darshan, Vedic scholars blessed the dignitaries with traditional chants and presented them with a portrait of the deity and Theertha Prasadam. The temple visit was conducted in a devotional atmosphere, with temple authorities and devotees extending their greetings to the visiting leaders.

Chirala Hosts 300-Foot Tiranga Yatra



Chirala, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

Patriotic fervour filled the streets of Chirala as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), in association with Sri Medhavi College and Techno Bharathi Degree College, organised a grand 'Tiranga Yatra' ahead of Independence Day. The highlight of the rally was a 300-foot-long national flag, carried by students and youth through the main streets of the town. The spectacular display attracted considerable attention from local residents and reflected the spirit of patriotism among the participants.

Speaking on the occasion, BJP leaders recalled the sacrifices made by freedom fighters and said the freedom enjoyed by citizens today was the result of their selfless struggle and sacrifices. They called upon people, particularly the younger generation, to cultivate patriotism and uphold national unity. The leaders also alleged that certain anti-social elements were attempting to create divisions and disturbances in society and urged people to remain united in countering such efforts. Organisers said programmes such as the Tiranga Yatra help strengthen patriotic spirit among youth and encourage greater awareness of the nation's freedom struggle and the responsibilities of citizens.

Prakasam Police Hold Tiranga Cycle Rally

Prakasam, Aug 13 | TPN Bureau

As part of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign, Prakasam district police organised a grand Tiranga cycle rally from the District Police Parade Ground, with police personnel, officials and students participating enthusiastically. Participants carried the national flag and raised patriotic slogans, highlighting the spirit of national unity and pride ahead of Independence Day celebrations. Prakasam District Superintendent of Police V. Harshavardhan Raju, IPS, said the national flag was a symbol of the country's pride and that protecting national unity was the responsibility of every citizen. He appreciated the enthusiastic participation of police officers, personnel and students in the rally. The SP called upon people to strengthen patriotism and the spirit of national unity through the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign. Recalling the sacrifices of freedom fighters, he said their ideals and contribution should be passed on to future generations. He urged every citizen to contribute to the country's development and play a responsible role in protecting national integrity, unity and peace. The objective



of Har Ghar Tiranga, he said, was to promote patriotism, national integration and awareness of the sacrifices made during India's freedom struggle. Similar Tiranga rallies were organised by police officers and personnel across various police station jurisdictions in the district. Additional SP (Administration) N. Yugandhar Babu, AR Additional SP Nageswara Rao, Ongole DSP R. Srinivasa Rao, AR DSP K. Srinivasa Rao, Ongole Two Town CI Veera Naik, Ongole Rural CI Seshagiri Rao, Ongole Traffic CI Hazarathayya, Rls Seetharamireddy and Suresh Babu, along with RSIs, AR SIs and other police personnel, participated in the programme.

Editorial

When Merit Becomes a Question Mark

There are few things more damaging to a democracy than making young people lose faith in merit. The latest findings of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) into the Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) Group-I examination therefore deserve serious attention. This is not merely a political controversy; it is a question of whether government recruitment can command the confidence of those whose futures depend upon it. The SIT report has pointed to serious procedural irregularities in the evaluation of Group-I Mains answer scripts, including multiple evaluations, alterations in scripts, digital evaluation without required approval, and other breaches of procedure. The findings reportedly emerged after examination of hundreds of scripts and statements from witnesses. For thousands of aspirants, a Group-I examination represents years of preparation, financial sacrifices by families and the hope of entering public service through merit. If candidates begin to believe that evaluation procedures can be manipulated or rules bypassed, the damage goes far beyond one examination. It strikes at the credibility of the entire recruitment system. The response must therefore be institutional rather than political. Every allegation should be independently examined, responsibility fixed wherever wrongdoing is established, and genuine candidates protected from becoming permanent victims of administrative failures. More importantly, APPSC needs a credibility reset. Examination security, evaluator selection, digital access, custody of answer scripts and audit trails must be governed by transparent and tamper-proof systems. Candidates deserve clear answers rather than political accusations and counter-accusations. Andhra Pradesh seeks to build a knowledge-driven economy and provide greater opportunities for its educated youth. That ambition cannot be sustained if young people doubt whether hard work will be fairly rewarded. A competitive examination is ultimately a contract between the State and its citizens: prepare honestly, compete fairly and merit will prevail. If that contract breaks, the loss is not merely to a batch of candidates. It is a loss of public trust.

EDITOR

Ready for the World: How Life Skills Launch the Next Generation



Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has underlined that the "true purpose of education is to build good human beings with skill and expertise". He believed that talent is universal, and building core capabilities transforms dreams into reality through hard work and continuous learning. Considering the key principle of life skills, every human being must be prepared to face failures and adjust mindsets when unexpected changes occur. Academic and technical knowledge may teach us what to do in a certain situation, but life skills help human beings navigate relationships, manage complex emotions and apply strategies to overcome daily hurdles. The National Education Policy (NEP 2020) also emphasises the same for strengthening the Indian education ecosystem, which promotes the 21st-

century student. It envisages students acquiring skills and abilities in three major categories, including learning skills, literacy skills and life skills. Also, it is realised that these specific skills need to be integrated into the curriculum, considering the view of providing education beyond the curriculum and academic outcomes and nurturing students in holistic development with the 4 C's, which promote cognitive capabilities, critical thinking and development with a sense of teamwork, etc. Life skills education enables students to understand themselves and enhances their capacities to cope with any challenging situation. In fact, the family serves as the first school and foundation for nurturing children from childhood before they enter the classroom, which helps them navigate the com-

plexity of adulthood. But in the current situation, parents and families are not getting enough time to spend with their children and nurture them naturally. Life skills are needed at all stages of life; they become especially important for children and adolescents because this is a crucial stage on which the future of an individual depends.

Global Focus: The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines life skills as the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. These skills are essential for fostering mental well-being and competence among the younger generation as they face the realities of life. WHO has identified ten core life skills, including self-awareness to deal with individuals'

Malladi Sree Nagesh



Education Analyst

emotions, strengths, weaknesses and values; empathy towards building relationships to improve social interactions; critical thinking to analyse facts; creative thinking to find innovative and newer solutions; decision-making to choose the best course of action in life; problem-solving to understand complex issues; effective communication to express opinions confidently; interpersonal relationships for constructive conflict resolution; along with coping with stress and healthily managing emotions. These skills are very crucial for everyone in life for personal and professional development in this competitive world and to deal with a fast-paced environment.

School & College Education:

The NCERT has already introduced a life skills curriculum in school education as part of the NEP 2020 framework to ensure learners develop capabilities to manage everyday situations and adolescent challenges. Besides this, space is given to developing psychosocial abilities and socio-emotional competencies that empower students to manage emotional well-being, make informed decisions and cultivate a positive thought process among young students. These skills have been embedded directly into regular

academic subjects rather than being treated as a separate, text-heavy class. In fact, life skills are often learned indirectly through experience and practice. CBSE has introduced life skills education as an integral part of its curriculum to prepare students as constructive citizens.

Way Ahead

Students and the younger generation must learn these life skills to realise their potential productively. It helps in understanding diverse viewpoints, such as caring for marginalised groups, fostering collaborative learning and breaking down the barriers of cultural disconnect. In fact, 70% of graduates are facing joblessness due to a lack of human skills like communication, negotiation and teamwork, as per reports from different sources. These situations are heavily pushing youth into low-wage employment and failing to achieve upward economic mobility.

There are 60% of Indian youth who joined engineering jobs and are unable to cope with their professional domain due to inadequate communication and team-building skills. As per a study by CII, only 27% of engineering graduates are able to get jobs in their own field of education.

Further, 50% of youth are joining jobs in a different field irrespective of their

education, as per the Economic Survey 2024-25. Considering these challenges, it is alarming that the gap between academic knowledge and real-world applications, which creates holistic development of vulnerable children as guided by many Indian and global bodies like WHO. Many national and international NGOs are also making efforts in building the domain with different methodologies. Bal Raksha Bharat-Save the Children, an NGO, has designed its special module and is integrating these skills across its projects. More focus must be given to stress management, mental health and well-being, time and finance management, behavioural and adaptive skills, emotional resilience and career readiness, interacting with society and handling the challenges of the adult and complex world with modern and global standards. For this, it is essential to make age-appropriate and contextual learning content available even in regional languages to build life skills and teach children to overcome barriers to employment and societal challenges. Facilitating counselling sessions is also important as preparation for thorough real-world execution.

(Writer is an Education Analyst, views are personal, not related to his organisation)

THE INDIA WE MUST BUILD

From Freedom to Responsibility



Every Independence Day, the tricolour rises and millions of hearts rise with it. We remember the sacrifices that won us freedom, celebrate India's achievements and renew our pride in belonging to this extraordinary nation. Yet perhaps the most meaningful tribute we can offer our freedom fighters is not merely to remember the India they liberated, but to ask ourselves: What kind of India are we building with the freedom they gave us? India's journey since 1947 is remarkable. A nation once burdened by poverty, illiteracy and limited infrastructure has emerged as the world's largest democracy and a major economic and technological force. India sends missions into space, builds digi-

tal public infrastructure, produces world-class scientists, doctors, engineers and entrepreneurs, and plays an increasingly important role in global affairs. From agriculture to artificial intelligence, highways to high technology, our progress deserves both recognition and pride. But a nation's greatness cannot be measured by economic growth alone. Development is not merely about what we build; it is also about who we become. A country may have magnificent highways, but progress also means citizens respecting traffic rules. We may build beautiful cities, but progress requires people who refuse to litter them. We may create excellent public institutions, but their strength

depends upon people who serve with integrity. We may provide schools and universities, but education fulfils its purpose only when knowledge produces responsible human beings. Infrastructure can transform the landscape; character transforms the nation. This is where Independence must evolve into responsibility. Freedom is often understood as the right to choose, speak, move and live with dignity. But every right carries a responsibility. **Democracy gives us a voice;** responsibility asks us to use it wisely. The Constitution gives us rights; citizenship asks us to respect the rights of others. Freedom allows us to pursue our dreams; nation-building asks whether

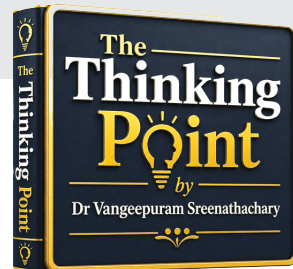
Dr Vangeepuram Sreenatha Chary

our dreams also contribute, in some measure, to the common good. India's future, therefore, cannot be the responsibility of governments alone. Governments can frame policies, construct roads, establish institutions and create opportunities. But no government can manufacture honesty inside a citizen, discipline on a road, compassion towards a neighbour or commitment inside a workplace.



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These are built within individuals. Nation-building happens in surprisingly ordinary places. It happens when a teacher enters a classroom prepared to give his or her best. It happens when a government employee treats a citizen with dignity rather than as an inconvenience. It happens when a doctor sees a patient as a human being, not merely a case. It happens when a businessperson refuses dishonest profit, when a



muter follows a traffic signal even without a police officer nearby, and when a young person chooses excellence instead of shortcuts. None of these actions will make tomorrow's headlines. Together, however, they make tomorrow's India. A nation is not built only in Parliament, laboratories, factories or boardrooms. It is built every morning in classrooms, offices, farms, hospitals, homes and streets-where millions of Indians decide whether to choose duty over convenience, integrity over shortcuts, and contribution over complaint. The character of a nation is ultimately the collective character of its citizens. This responsibility becomes even more important as India grows in global influence. The coming decades will bring extraordinary opportunities in technology, science, entrepreneurship and innovation. But technological advancement without

ing ethics, and individual success without forgetting social responsibility. It must be an India where women feel safe, children receive opportunity, elders live with dignity, public property is respected, diversity becomes strength and disagreement never destroys fraternity. And this India does not begin somewhere in the distant future. It begins with us. Perhaps Independence Day should therefore become not only a celebration, but also an annual moment of self-reflection. Along with asking what India has given us, we might ask: What have I given India? Have I performed my duties sincerely? Have I respected public spaces? Have I helped someone beyond my family? Have I rejected corruption rather than merely complained about it? Have my everyday choices strengthened the country I want my children to inherit? Patriotism need not always be dramatic. Sometimes it is simply doing the right thing when nobody is watching. The soldier guarding the border serves India. So does the farmer cultivating the land, the sanitation worker keeping a street clean, the scientist pursuing discovery, the teacher shaping a child and every citizen who performs an ordinary duty with extraordinary sincerity. As the tricolour rises this Independence Day, let it remind us of two generations-the generation that gave us freedom and the generation to whom we must eventually hand it. The first fulfilled its responsibility. The second is watching us fulfil ours. Our freedom fighters gave us an independent India; the India we give the next generation will reveal what we did with that freedom.

(The Author is a Consultant Psychologist, Rehabilitation Professional -RCI, Academic & Research Mentor, and Guinness, Asia, Limca & India Book Records Holder)

The Vision of a Healthy India Is Very Personal. Promote, You're the Cure

(Part 3/5)

India recently surpassed China to become the world's most populous country, now home to approximately 1.478 billion people. While the nation has established data and development programmes aiming to become a fully developed "Vikasit Bharat" by 2047, achieving this milestone requires a fundamentally healthy population. Based on current personal health data, there is a looming threat that the country will instead be overwhelmed by lifestyle diseases and sickness. To truly succeed, government policies must prioritise per capita wellness rather than just per capita income and industrial growth.

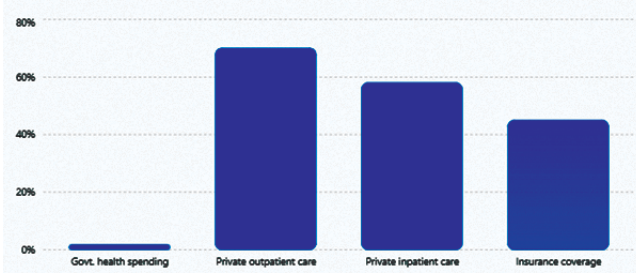
Healthcare Infrastructure and Economics

Furthermore, medical education in India has become a massive investment game. Parents often go bankrupt paying for coaching centres to secure admissions for their children, driven by the desire for them to become doctors or engineers regardless of economic standing. Consequently, young doctors frequently pursue high-earning specialisations to recoup these costs, losing sight of the Hippocratic Oath and the core value of service.

In one of my meetings for a project dedicated to prevention in 2018, top health officials expressed immense pride in India's development of new AIIMS, nationwide multispecialty hospitals designed to compete with private healthcare giants. However, this strategy relies

India's Healthcare System at a Glance

Key indicators highlighting the structural and financial challenges facing healthcare in India.



on allocating the national budget towards building facilities while anticipating that citizens will inevitably become sick enough to use them. A wiser government approach would actively focus on creating personal health and preventing illness in future generations rather than just treating diseases.

Modern Threats to National Wellness

Several systemic and lifestyle issues are actively undermining public health across the nation. Evident dietary shifts from traditional, healthy food habits have been overshadowed by a cultural invasion of fast food and harmful adulterations, dragging families into severe debt due to health crises. Our food safety departments frequently neglect their duties, with corruption and personal financial gains taking precedence over national safety. Departments tasked with enforcing policies against banned substances near educational institutions remain inactive, exposing young generations to addictions and leading to a deceased generation towards Vikasit Bharat. Remember,

50% of our population is under the age of 29 years. None of India's water bodies are currently pure or safe, as household, office and industrial drainages flow directly into them. With populations squeezed into 3 to 5-cent plots, conventional septic tanks discharge untreated water directly into the groundwater. Because 80% to 85% of rural domestic drinking water relies on groundwater, citizens are exposed to coliform bacteria and E. coli. This exposure causes dehydration, systemic infections, and, in rare cases, kidney failure, leading to a massive boom in nephrology and dialysis cases. To reverse these alarming trends, both national policy shifts and individual lifestyle changes are necessary.

Infrastructure and Policy Interventions

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed an environmentally safe anaerobic inoculum-utilising gut bacteria from animals like cows and Arctic bears that completely consumes human faeces. The government must

India @ 80

Ram Kamal



Social Engineer

introduce a national policy to replace conventional septic tanks with these Anaerobic Eco Septic Tanks through subsidies and mandates for new constructions. It is a one-time investment for any household. Once installed, there is never a need to open such tanks, and the water from these tanks is anaerobic and safe for groundwater. As per my experience, more and more houses in Kerala are now using Ecopot bio septic tanks.

India must revive its rich history of traditional medicine, which is rooted in prevention rather than just post-disease treatment. But currently, Ayurveda has come with a wellness culture and charges its clients exorbitantly. Additionally, the practice of Yoga should evolve from a mere national observance day into a daily global fitness dynamic.

Reinstating the practice of having a "Family Doctor" can help citizens avoid the exploitation of commercial clinics and prevent unnecessary, costly medical investigations and hospitalisations. When we approach a private hospital, the first question

asked is about health insurance. If you have insurance, you are guaranteed hospitalisation; if not, a plaster, a bandage or an injection, along with all unwanted pathology tests, will end that hospital visit. When we discuss national insurance programmes, the Ayushman Bharat scheme has registered over 370 million users and funded 43.4 million hospital admissions since 2018, it still struggles with under-utilised funds, urban concentration, and a severe lack of public awareness.

A Blueprint for Personal Health - "You're the Cure"

Currently, I am working on a "You're the Cure" Heart Vaccine project under the National Programme for Prevention and Eradication of Heart Attack. The proposed "You're the Cure" campaign advocates for a no-cost educational programme to teach citizens how to avoid non-communicable and communicable diseases and keep their hearts safe from lifestyle diseases and stress.

How can we achieve optimum heart health?

Physical Activity: Engage in regular movement for 15 to 30

minutes every day, complemented by basic strength training, mindful meditation and basic yoga.

Rest and Recovery: Prioritise consistent sleep for 7 to 9 hours nightly. Disconnect from digital devices at least one hour before bedtime to ensure sound sleep. A good sleep is the best you can give to your body, the costliest machine given to you free.

Diet Discipline: Consume lean proteins, leafy vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, while strictly avoiding processed foods. Limit the intake of sugar, sodium, and masala, and practise mindful portion control to prevent overeating and food waste. Avoiding any forms of oil in cooking will save your heart from triglycerides, the most dangerous chemical trigger of blockage.

Preventative Screening: Adults over 30 must undergo at least two routine check-ups annually to monitor physical fitness, blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, and specifically triglyceride levels. This is vital, as India records 7,800 deaths daily due to heart attacks, affecting individuals as young as 18.

Hygiene and Immunisation: Stay current with seasonal and age-specific immunisations. Brush twice daily and visit a dentist every six months, as oral infections can spread to the heart and other vital organs.

Mental Well-being: Combat mental stress by practising daily deep breathing, meditation, or structured downtime. Maintain regular, meaning-

ful contact with friends, family, or community groups.

Compulsory Military Training: Let's follow the discipline route of compulsory military training for children in the 6th and 7th grades. We can build a healthy nation. Can I ask the Government of India and State Governments why we stopped fitness and sports in primary schools? That is the age to build fitness, healthy bones and muscles, and happy neurons in their brains.

Ultimately, if every Indian citizen is thoroughly educated in personal health and physical discipline, the heavy reliance on hospitals will naturally diminish. The nation requires empowered ASHA and Anganwadi workers, alongside block-level wellness advisors (not the costly wellness coaches), to lead this healthy change. It is not magnificent multispecialty hospitals that can bring national health; it needs to be planned personally.

Tail Piece: India is paying huge fees for consultants who teach our doctors to see their patients as clients, not patients. But we may pay very meagre salaries to sincere ASHA and Anganwadi workers, and that too, many States pay once in six months. They are the most respectable workers of our society, and we are very mean and negligent towards them. A State's complete Anganwadi salary may not cost as much as the purchase of cashew nuts in the Ministry Secretaries' office. Come on, India, be sincere. **#Modiji.**

Rahul Gandhi Alleges China Stopped Indian Troops From Patrolling Arunachal Areas

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday alleged that China has stopped Indian troops from patrolling certain areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh. There was no immediate reaction from the government, and no official confirmation of such a development.

Addressing the 'Rachnatmak Congress National Convention', Gandhi alleged that efforts were being made to hide the matter from the media. He also criticised

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Home Minister Amit Shah over the alleged situation. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had earlier said border matters with China were "most serious" and maintaining peace and tranquillity along the LAC was of "utmost importance". China on Wednesday said the situation along the Sino-India border was "generally stable". The Congress Foreign Affairs



department, headed by former external affairs minister Salman Khurshid, said it was concerned by reports that China had denied India access to historically used patrolling points in Taksing, Arunachal Pradesh. Khurshid demanded that Prime Minister Modi address the nation and send a multi-party delegation to assess the situation. He also urged Modi to raise the issue with President Xi Jinping during his proposed India visit.

Bengal STF Probes Fort William Photos Found With Pakistani National

The West Bengal Special Task Force (STF) is investigating how a suspected Pakistani national and his alleged associate obtained a map and photographs of Fort William, the Indian Army's Eastern Command headquarters. Rana Rauf Khalid alias Wahab Alam and Mohammad Ijaz were arrested by the STF from Habra in North 24 Parganas district while allegedly trying to reach the Bangladesh border through Jessore Road. Investigators are examining whether the recovered material

was connected to information-gathering activities. The STF is also analysing mobile phones allegedly containing social media chats and telephone numbers linked to Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Some chats and numbers were reportedly deleted.

Officials suspect Rana has links with Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI and are examining his contacts, movements and alleged activities in India. The probe is also looking into possible collection of information about military



movements and infrastructure near Petrapole and Ghojadanga along the India-Bangladesh border. The STF is examining whether a

larger operation was being planned ahead of Independence Day, though officials said the investigation is still at an early stage.

Rana, reportedly from Hafizabad in Faisalabad district, allegedly entered India through Nepal in 2012 and later lived in Kolkata's Topsia area. The STF is also investigating his alleged links with Hamim Mondal, Arpita Sarkar and Aditya Singh.

Both accused were produced before the Barasat court and remanded to 14-day police custody.

IndiGo Flight From Kolkata Makes Emergency Landing In Chennai

A Chennai-bound IndiGo flight from Kolkata, carrying 229 people, including 222 passengers, made an emergency landing at Chennai airport after developing an engine malfunction and oil leakage while approaching the airport.

The incident occurred around 11.30 pm when the aircraft was preparing to land at the domestic airport. The left-side engine reportedly developed a technical snag along with an oil leak, prompting the pilot to alert Chennai Air Traffic Control (ATC).

An emergency was declared on the runway following the pilot's communication. Fire tenders, medical teams and emergency security personnel were placed on standby as a precaution.

The aircraft reportedly remained airborne and circled the airport while emergency arrangements



were put in place. After safety measures were completed, the aircraft landed safely at around 11.37 pm. All 229 people on board, including passengers and crew, escaped unhurt. After disembarkation, aircraft engineers inspected the plane

and began efforts to rectify the technical problem. Preliminary checks indicated that the aircraft was not fit to resume operations immediately and required further repairs. Around midnight, it was declared unserviceable and moved

to the airport's remote parking area for inspection and repairs. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered a detailed investigation to determine the exact cause of the engine malfunction and oil leakage.

Delhi Metro To Start Services At 4 AM On Independence Day

Delhi Metro services will begin at 4 am on August 15 to facilitate the movement of special guests, invitees and the general public attending the Independence Day celebrations, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) said. Trains will operate at a frequency of 30 minutes on all lines from 4 am

until regular revenue services begin as per the day's scheduled timetable. The DMRC said 1.30 lakh special pre-vended QR tickets have been supplied to the Ministry of Defence for the travel of special guests and bona fide invitees attending the celebrations. Invitees carrying valid physical admit

cards issued by the Ministry of Defence will also receive special pre-vended QR tickets at designated metro stations. Lal Quila, Jama Masjid and Delhi Gate are the nearest metro stations to the venue of the Independence Day celebrations at the Red Fort. The DMRC said the Ministry of

Defence will reimburse the corporation for travel undertaken using the special QR tickets. The early services are aimed at ensuring smooth and timely transportation for those attending the national celebrations.



SEBI Proposes Wider Accredited Investor Pool

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed changes to its Accredited Investor framework aimed at expanding the pool of investors eligible to access investment products and opportunities meant for sophisticated market participants. Under the revised framework, SEBI has proposed broader eligibility criteria, manager-led accreditation and a new route based on an individual's securities assets. The proposed changes could significantly increase the number of investors qualifying as Accredited Investors. According to the proposal, individuals could qualify through a securities asset threshold of Rs 5 crore. The move is expected to make the framework more accessible to a larger section of financially capable investors who may not currently meet the existing requirements. SEBI has also proposed allowing investment managers to undertake the accreditation process. Manager-led accreditation could simplify the process for eligible investors and reduce procedural hurdles involved in obtaining



Accredited Investor status. The regulator's revised criteria could expand the eligible investor base to around 3.7 lakh investors, compared with approximately 96,000 existing Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) investors. The significant increase indicates SEBI's intention to broaden participation in products and investment structures designed for investors with greater financial capacity and market sophistication. The Accredited Investor framework is intended to distinguish

investors who have sufficient financial resources and investment experience to understand and assume the risks associated with more sophisticated financial products. Expanding the framework could provide a wider investor base for alternative investment opportunities while maintaining eligibility requirements. The proposed securities asset route is among the key changes under consideration. By focusing on the value of securities held by an individual, the framework

could recognise investors based on their financial market holdings rather than relying only on existing accreditation conditions. The proposals are part of SEBI's broader efforts to improve the functioning of India's capital markets and provide greater flexibility to sophisticated investors. The regulator is seeking to balance easier access to investment opportunities with appropriate safeguards for investors. If implemented, the revised criteria could substantially widen the Accredited Investor ecosystem and increase the number of individuals eligible to participate in specialised investment products. The proposed changes could also have implications for fund managers and other market intermediaries by creating a larger pool of potentially eligible clients. The proposals remain subject to SEBI's regulatory process and any further changes before final implementation. Market participants are expected to closely monitor the final framework and the detailed eligibility and accreditation requirements.

Indian Markets End Volatile Session With Nifty Near 24,400



Indian equity markets ended largely flat on August 13 after a volatile trading session, with the Nifty closing near the 24,400 mark while the Sensex declined by around 140 points. Weakness in metal and banking stocks weighed on the benchmark indices, although gains in broader markets provided some support. The Sensex slipped 0.15%, while the Nifty declined 0.16% during the session. Market movements remained volatile as investors assessed sectoral trends and broader economic signals. The Nifty Metal index was among the major drags, falling around 1%. The Nifty Private Bank index also declined 0.5%, adding pressure to the benchmark indices. Weakness in these key sectors limited the market's ability to sustain gains during the session. In contrast, some sectors performed positively. The Nifty Realty index gained around 1%, emerging as one of the better-performing sectors. The Consumer Durables index also advanced 0.45%, helping cushion the impact of declines in metals and private banking stocks. Broader markets outperformed the benchmark indices, indicating relatively stronger investor interest in mid-cap and small-cap stocks. The performance suggested that selling pressure remained concentrated in select large sectors rather than across the entire market. The rupee also weakened against the US dollar during the session, adding another factor for investors to monitor. Currency movements remain important for Indian equities, particularly amid concerns over crude oil prices, global market volatility and foreign investment flows. Overall, the session reflected a cautious mood among investors, with sector-specific selling keeping the benchmark indices under pressure. While gains in realty and consumer durables supported the market, declines in metal and private banking stocks prevented a stronger recovery. Investors are likely to continue tracking global cues, currency movements and sector-specific developments for further direction. The mixed performance across sectors also highlights the importance of stock-specific factors in determining market trends amid ongoing volatility.

Jubilant FoodWorks Shares Rise 4% as Q1 Profit Gains on Stronger Domino's Sales

Shares of Jubilant FoodWorks gained up to 4% after the company reported an improvement in net profit for the first quarter, supported by stronger sales growth at its Domino's business. The stock's rise reflects growing investor optimism that demand in the quick-service restaurant (QSR) sector is beginning to recover after a relatively weak start to the year. The recovery in demand has been supported by sporting events and increased consumer interest in value-focused food offerings. Restaurant operators have been using discounts, bundled meals and affordable pricing strategies to encourage customers to increase their frequency of orders amid cautious consumer spending. Jubilant FoodWorks operates Domino's in India and is one of the major players in the country's organised QSR market. The improvement in Domino's sales growth during the quarter provided support to the company's overall performance and helped improve investor sentiment toward the stock. The QSR sector had faced challenges earlier in the year as consumers remained cautious about discretionary spending. Higher operating costs also continued to pressure restaurant companies. Fuel expenses, employee wages and raw material prices remain elevated, limiting the extent to which stronger sales can translate into higher margins. Despite these challenges, the improvement in demand has provided some relief to restaurant operators. Sporting events have helped increase food ordering and consumption occasions, while value offerings have attracted customers looking for affordable meals. For Jubilant FoodWorks, the performance of Domino's remains a key factor for investors as the company works to strengthen sales growth and profitability. The latest quarterly performance indicates that the recovery in consumer demand could support revenue growth if the trend continues through the coming quarters. However, cost pressures remain an important concern. Rising fuel and wage expenses can increase delivery and operating costs, while higher prices for food ingredients can affect restaurant margins. Companies therefore need to balance competitive pricing with cost control to protect profitability. The Q1 results and subsequent movement in Jubilant FoodWorks shares suggest that investors are increasingly focused on signs of a sustained recovery in the QSR sector. Stronger same-store sales, improved customer traffic and better cost management could remain important factors for the company's future performance. The sector's recovery is also likely to depend on consumer spending conditions in the coming months. If demand continues to improve and companies successfully manage input costs, QSR operators could see better operating performance. For Jubilant FoodWorks, sustained growth in Domino's sales will remain central to maintaining investor confidence in the stock.



Tata Group Stocks Steady After N Chandrasekaran's Resignation

Tata group stocks remained largely steady a day after the announcement that N Chandrasekaran would step down as chairman of Tata Sons in 2027. The development initially weighed on several Tata group companies, but shares stabilised during trading as investors assessed the implications of the leadership transition. On August 13, two Tata stocks emerged among the top gainers on the Nifty. Tata Consumer Products and Tata Motors PV were among the strongest performers, helping support sentiment towards the group despite the leadership change at Tata Sons. The resignation decision comes after an impasse over the reappointment of N Chandrasekaran as chairman of Tata Sons. Chandrasekaran has been leading the holding company of the Tata group and has played a significant role in shaping the conglomerate's strategy across its major businesses. Tata group shares had initially declined following news of the leadership change, reflecting investor uncertainty over the future direction of the conglomerate. However, the stocks recovered and steadied as market partici-



pants considered the transition as a longer-term development rather than an immediate change to the operations of individual listed companies. Tata Consumer Products and Tata Motors PV were notable gainers during the session. Their performance indicated that investors continued to focus on company-specific factors, earnings expectations and business prospects despite developments at the group level. The Tata group has a broad presence across sectors including automobiles, consumer products, information technology, steel, power,

airlines and financial services. Its listed companies operate independently while remaining part of the wider Tata group ecosystem. Chandrasekaran's tenure as Tata Sons chairman has included major strategic initiatives across the conglomerate. Under his leadership, the group has pursued expansion in areas such as electric vehicles, semiconductor manufacturing, digital businesses and new-age technologies, while also strengthening several established businesses. The announcement of his planned departure in 2027 therefore attract-

ed significant attention from investors because of the importance of Tata Sons in the group's overall structure. Tata Sons serves as the principal holding company and promoter of several major Tata group businesses. Despite the initial market reaction, the stability in Tata group stocks suggested that investors were not expecting an immediate disruption to the operations or financial performance of listed companies. The strong performance of Tata Consumer Products and Tata Motors PV further reflected selective buying interest. Investors are likely to monitor developments surrounding the succession process at Tata Sons, including the identification of a future chairman and the direction of the group's strategy after Chandrasekaran's departure. For now, market movements indicate that investors are treating the leadership transition with caution while continuing to assess the fundamentals of individual Tata companies. The performance of Tata group stocks in the coming months could depend on further clarity regarding the succession plan and the broader business outlook for the conglomerate.

US to Sell 30-Year Bonds at Highest Yield in 25 Years

The US Treasury is preparing to auction \$25 billion of 30-year bonds at an expected yield of around 5.23%, marking the highest borrowing cost for such securities since 2001. The auction comes as the US Treasury market faces significant selling pressure, with investors demanding higher returns to hold long-term government debt. The projected yield of approximately 5.23% reflects growing concerns among investors about the outlook for US government finances, inflation and demand for longer-duration Treasury securities. Higher yields mean the US government will have to pay more to borrow money, adding to its financing costs at a time when fiscal deficits remain elevated. The planned auction is being closely watched by financial markets because demand for long-term US government bonds has weakened amid concerns about the increasing supply of debt. Investors have become more cautious about holding longer-maturity securities as they assess the potential impact of persistent inflation and rising government borrowing.

The 30-year Treasury bond is particularly sensitive to expectations surrounding inflation, interest rates and government finances. When investors sell these securities or demand higher compensation to purchase new debt, bond yields rise and prices fall. The projected yield of 5.23% would represent a major increase in borrowing costs compared with the historically low yields seen during the years of exceptionally accommodative monetary policy. The development also highlights the changing conditions in the world's largest sovereign bond market. The US government's fiscal position has become an increasingly important concern for investors. Large budget deficits require substantial Treasury borrowing, increasing the supply of government securities in the market. Investors are assessing whether demand will be strong enough to absorb the growing volume of debt without significantly higher yields. Inflation remains another key factor. Higher-than-expected inflation can reduce the real value of future fixed payments from long-term bonds, prompting investors to seek higher yields as



compensation for the additional risk. The auction will provide an important indication of investor appetite for long-term US debt. Strong demand could help limit further increases in yields, while a weak auction could reinforce concerns about the Treasury market and place additional upward pressure on borrowing costs. The rise in long-term Treasury yields could also have wider implications for global financial markets. US government bond yields

influence borrowing costs for companies, households and governments worldwide and are closely watched by investors when valuing stocks and other financial assets. The upcoming auction therefore represents more than a routine Treasury sale. Its outcome could offer fresh insight into investor confidence in US government debt and the ability of the market to absorb rising borrowing requirements amid persistent fiscal and inflation concerns.

Banking Grievances on CPGRAMS Cross 2.2 Lakh in FY26

Banking-related grievances registered on the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) crossed 2.2 lakh during 2025-26, with 2,911 complaints remaining pending at the end of the financial year. CPGRAMS received a total of 18.34 lakh grievances across different government departments and services during 2025-26. Of these, 18.13 lakh grievances were disposed of, indicating a high overall disposal rate. The banking sector accounted for a significant share of the complaints received through the government's public grievance platform.

The data highlights the continued importance of grievance redressal mechanisms for customers dealing with banks and financial services. As digital banking and financial transactions expand, complaints related to banking services have also become an important part of the public grievance system. Banking grievances were disposed of in an average of nine days during 2025-26, considerably faster than the government's target of 21 days. The relatively short resolution time indicates that banking-related complaints were generally addressed within the prescribed timeframe. The government has also been

using feedback mechanisms to assess the quality of grievance resolution. The Feedback Call Centre has been operational since July 2022 and is aimed at collecting responses from citizens regarding the handling of their complaints. The feedback mechanism allows authorities to assess whether grievances have been resolved satisfactorily and identify areas where the grievance redressal process may require improvement. Such monitoring has become increasingly important as the number of complaints received through CPGRAMS continues to grow. However, grievance resolution

times varied considerably across departments. Complaints relating to the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), for instance, took an average of 47 days to resolve during 2025-26. This was significantly longer than the 21-day target and substantially higher than the nine-day average recorded for banking grievances. The difference in resolution timelines reflects the varying complexity of complaints handled by different government departments. Banking grievances can cover a wide range of issues, including service-related complaints, account-related concerns and problems associated with financial



Clearing these pending cases will remain important to ensure that citizens receive timely responses and resolutions. The overall CPGRAMS figures show the scale of public complaints being handled by government authorities. With 18.34 lakh grievances received and 18.13 lakh disposed of during the financial year, the system recorded substantial grievance-handling activity. For the banking sector, the nine-day average resolution period compares favourably with the prescribed 21-day target. Continued monitoring, faster disposal of pending complaints and citizen feedback will remain important to maintain the efficiency of the grievance redressal system.

Gen Z Employee's Menstrual Leave Email Sparks Debate Over Workplace Openness

A straightforward leave request from a Gen Z employee has sparked discussion online about changing workplace communication and how younger workers are becoming more open about personal health issues. Jasveer Singh, co-founder and CEO of Knot Dating, shared a screenshot of an email sent by a female employee who informed him that she would be unable to come to the office because of severe menstrual pain, cramps and discomfort. The employee's email was direct and also assured the company that she would remain available by phone and email if anything urgent required her attention.

Sharing the email on X, Singh said Gen Z had removed much of the unnecessary awkwardness that traditionally surrounded conversations about personal matters at work. He described the generation as direct and straightforward in its communication. "Gen Z has killed a lot of unnecessary workplace awkwardness. They are direct and straightforward about almost anything," Singh wrote. He added that such an email would have been unusual around a decade ago, when employees might have avoided mentioning menstrual pain specifically while requesting leave.

“10 years ago, an email openly saying ‘severe menstrual pain’ would have been rare,” Singh said.

The email itself was brief. Under the subject line “O. Leave Today”, the employee explained that she could not come to the office because of severe menstrual pain, cramps and discomfort. She also said she would remain available on email and phone if the thought urgent came up.

They post quickly attracted reactions from social media users, with several people describing the incident as an example of changing workplace culture.

One user said such messages were becoming common, adding that employers may



simply have to accept the new reality. Another suggested that the change was not necessarily specific to Gen Z but reflected a broader transformation in workplace culture. One commenter pointed out that similar openness had existed for years in parts of Europe and said conversations about health and personal matters often happen through workplace communication platforms such as Teams or Slack. Another user compared the communication styles of different generations. The commenter suggested that millennials might have used phrases such as "health issues", "personal reasons"

or "not feeling well" instead of directly identifying the reason for their absence. The discussion highlights how workplace expectations around privacy, health and professional communication are evolving. For many younger employees, being transparent about genuine health concerns may be seen as a practical way to communicate rather than something that needs to be hidden behind vague explanations. Singh's post has therefore turned a simple leave email into a wider conversation about generational differences and the changing language of modern workplaces.

SpaceX AI Unveils Grok Bot Designed to Work Like a Team of AI Agents



Elon Musk's SpaceXAI has unveiled a new artificial intelligence product designed to operate like a team of AI agents, marking the company's latest effort to compete with leading AI firms such as Anthropic and OpenAI in the rapidly expanding market for AI-powered workplace tools.

The new product, called Grok Bot, is designed to handle a broad range of professional tasks with limited human intervention. According to SpaceXAI, the system can sign into different applications and websites, remember information from previous assignments and allow individual AI agents to share details and context with one another.

The product is part of Musk's broader effort to strengthen his company's position in the increasingly competitive AI sector, particularly as businesses move towards systems capable of independently completing complex assignments. SpaceXAI, previously known as xAI, has been working to expand its presence in the AI agent market. The company released its first coding agent in May as it sought to compete with products developed by Anthropic.

It later introduced Grok 4.5, built with Cursor. SpaceX reached a \$60 billion agreement in June to acquire Cursor, an AI coding start-up that became a prominent name during the rise of so-called "vibe coding", in which AI tools are used to write, modify and debug software.

The latest Grok Bot development reflects a broader industry shift towards coordinating multiple AI agents rather than relying on a single chatbot to perform an entire task.

OpenAI Chief Executive Sam Altman has also discussed the growing role of AI agents. Altman recently met with lawmakers in Washington and spoke about the evolution of agents capable of coordinating with one another to

complete workplace assignments. SpaceXAI said it has already been using Grok Bot internally across its engineering, growth and marketing teams. The company said the tool has assisted its sales operation by identifying potential new accounts and preparing emails overnight.

The AI system has also been used by the finance team to retrieve receipts from email, demonstrating how the company intends to apply the technology to routine business operations.

Grok Bot is designed to make it easier for companies to distribute assignments among groups, or swarms, of AI agents. Instead of manually directing each individual system, users can potentially assign broader tasks and allow the agents to divide and coordinate the work.

Musk's AI venture has also been seeking to persuade banks, investment firms and other businesses to adopt its Grok products. Expanding commercial use of its AI systems is expected to be important for increasing revenue and supporting Musk's broader plans for SpaceX.

Musk has previously indicated that artificial intelligence will play an increasingly important role in the future of SpaceX. During SpaceX's earnings call last week, he said the company was making progress in AI and indicated that the next model, Grok 4.6, could be released as soon as this week.

The launch of Grok Bot comes as AI companies race to develop increasingly autonomous systems capable of completing professional work with minimal supervision. With OpenAI, Anthropic and other technology companies investing heavily in AI agents, Musk's latest product represents another attempt to establish a stronger position in one of the fastest-growing areas of artificial intelligence.

Mountaineer Jost Kobusch Paraglides Down From Lenin Peak, Video Goes Viral

German mountaineer Jost Kobusch has stunned social media users after completing a daring paragliding descent from Kyrgyzstan's Lenin Peak, turning his return from a more than 7,000-metre summit into an extraordinary flight. Kobusch launched his paraglider from an altitude of 7,119 metres, just 15 vertical metres below the summit of Pik Lenin. The unusual descent came after years of effort and fulfilled a long-standing ambition for the mountaineer. Sharing the experience on Instagram under the title "How does it feel to fly from a 7000er?", Kobusch described the moment as one of the most memorable experiences of his mountaineering career. "A few days ago, I fulfilled a dream I'd carried for years. At around 1 pm, I launched my paraglider from 7,119 metres on Pik Lenin, just 15 vertical metres below the summit," Kobusch said. The German mountaineer revealed that climbing Lenin Peak



had been a personal goal for years. He had attempted the challenge in 2013 but was unsuccessful before finally achieving his objective. Kobusch said standing near the summit while preparing his paraglider was a surreal experience, with the mountains of Kyrgyzstan stretching across the horizon. "Standing there, preparing a wing at over 7,000 metres with the mountains of Kyrgyzstan stretching to the horizon, felt surreal," he said. The take-off required intense concentration because of the conditions at such a high altitude. Kobusch admitted that there were moments when his heart rate rose significantly, but once he became airborne, the experience transformed into an unforgettable adventure. "The conditions were spicy, the take-off demanded full concentration, and there were definitely a few moments where my heart rate wasn't in Zone 1 anymore," he said. "After years of climbing peaks

around the world, being able to leave a seven-thousander by air instead of descending on foot was something truly special," Kobusch added.

The video of the descent quickly attracted attention online, with users praising the mountaineer's courage and ability to combine high-altitude climbing with paragliding. One user described the descent as an ideal way to return from the summit, while another congratulated Kobusch and wished him success for his future Everest plans.

Kobusch is also preparing for an extremely demanding winter attempt on Mount Everest later this year. He plans to climb the world's highest mountain without supplemental oxygen and without a Sherpa guide.

His latest Lenin Peak adventure has added another remarkable chapter to his mountaineering journey, as he not only reached the high-altitude destination but also found a spectacular way to descend from it.

Manus AI to Resume Independent Operations After China Blocks Meta's \$2 Billion Deal



and ordered the parties to withdraw the acquisition. Beijing also reportedly restricted the travel of two Manus co-founders, preventing them from leaving China. Meta had previously told AFP that the transaction complied fully with applicable law. The dispute comes amid China's wider crackdown on what has been described as "Singapore-washing". The term refers to companies moving their operations or corporate structures to Singapore to benefit from comparatively flexible regulations, international customers or access to global funding. Wendy Chang of the Mercator Institute for China Studies said in April that Beijing had tolerated the practice for some time, but the Manus case represented a significant turning point as the United States and China compete for leadership in artificial intelligence. Chang said the crackdown was also a message to Chinese technology leaders that

attempts to bypass national regulations would not be tolerated. The unwinding of the Meta deal could potentially allow Manus to rebuild its ownership structure. According to the Financial Times, some of the startup's former investors are discussing taking stakes in the company again at a valuation of around \$2 billion. Tencent could reportedly become its largest shareholder. For Meta, the collapse of the acquisition comes at a challenging time as the company works to strengthen its position in the rapidly developing AI sector. Meta Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg recently published a lengthy essay on the future of artificial intelligence, arguing that the United States must compete with China in AI while preventing excessive government control over the technology. Zuckerberg also discussed "superintelligence", a theoretical stage at which artificial intelli-

gence could surpass human intelligence. He argued that such technology should be distributed widely rather than controlled by a small number of organisations. Meta has also introduced Glimmer, an open-weight AI model developed partly from Muse Spark, a closed-source model announced in April. Open-weight models allow users to download and modify the underlying parameters of an AI system.

Zuckerberg argued that open models could play an important role in building a global AI ecosystem, contrasting them with closed systems developed by companies such as OpenAI and Anthropic.

The wider AI industry is also facing increasing government scrutiny. OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, Nvidia, Microsoft and Meta have reportedly held discussions with the Trump administration. In June, President Donald Trump signed an executive order calling for major AI developers to submit new models for government review before public release.

The proposed review framework included a 30-day period before release and a 60-day deadline for the federal government to finalise a framework. Open models were reportedly expected to be exempt from the voluntary review process, although the deadline passed on August 1 without a public announcement.

US Couple Finds Stranger Inside Apartment After Security Alert During Vacation

A US couple returning from vacation were left shaken after discovering an unfamiliar woman inside their apartment, allegedly after she was mistakenly given a key by a building doorman. Bill and Yelim Kim were away on vacation on July 24 when their home security system sent an alert showing that someone was inside their apartment at the luxury Halo LIC building on Purves Street in Long Island City. The couple were spending the final night of their trip to Yellowstone National Park when they checked their security camera. The footage showed an unfamiliar woman walking around the apartment, helping herself to a drink and relaxing on the couple's couch while using her phone.

She appeared comfortable inside the home. The situation became even more alarming when the woman noticed the security camera. She reportedly removed it from the bookshelf, cutting off the couple's view of what was happening inside. "We start freaking out. We're in full panic mode," Bill Kim said. The couple immediately began contacting police and friends while they were still away from home. Their friends eventually went to the apartment before police arrived. One friend knocked on the door and confronted the woman, who left the apartment but returned minutes later using a set of keys. The couple's friend reportedly saw the woman carrying several keys before she used



one to unlock the apartment door again. Police later arrived and the woman was taken away in an ambulance. Building management subsequently informed residents that the woman had claimed to be the Kims' dog walker and had allegedly been given the apartment key by mistake at the front desk. The employee involved was fired, while the doorman was removed from the property. Management also said staff would be retrained on identity verification procedures and that additional security measures would be introduced.

The incident took another unsettling turn when the same woman reportedly returned to the building two days later. She claimed she was there to see someone and

attempted to enter, but security stopped her. The couple said they were frightened when they saw her return. The woman was reportedly wearing the same dress and heels as during the first incident and had a hospital bracelet. The woman has not been publicly identified or charged, while the NYPD is investigating the incident as a burglary. Despite the frightening experience, the couple said nothing was stolen from their apartment. However, the incident has left them deeply unsettled. Bill said he now feels that the apartment no longer provides the same sense of safety. The couple are reportedly looking for another home, saying they no longer feel comfortable remaining there.

Harbhajan Singh Warns T20 Leagues Could Push Bilateral Cricket Into Decline



Former India cricketer Harbhajan Singh has expressed concern over the growing dominance of T20 leagues, saying bilateral international cricket could eventually lose its place in the global cricket calendar. He also made it clear that Test cricket remains his preferred format, while he has little interest in watching One-Day Internationals. Speaking in a podcast interview with PTI, Harbhajan said the popularity of franchise leagues, led by the Indian Premier League (IPL), has already changed the way fans consume cricket. According to him, around 70 per cent of viewers are now choosing club cricket over international matches in several situations. "If India plays Australia then there is good viewership but if India is playing Sri Lanka or Afghanistan, the viewership is not there," Harbhajan said. He added that high-profile series involving India, Australia, South Africa or England continue to attract strong interest. Harbhajan, who played 236 ODIs and claimed 269 wickets, said he would prefer watching Test cricket over ODIs. "I would pay to watch Test cricket. I have no interest in ODIs. I have seen it, played it," he said. The former off-spinner from Punjab described Test cricket as the ultimate examination of a player's skills and character. He said all stakeholders should protect and promote the longest format because it tests cricketers in every possible way. "Test cricket is main cricket," Harbhajan said, adding that it should remain at the top level of the sport. He pointed to the popularity of franchise competitions such as the IPL, Australia's Big Bash League (BBL) and England's The Hundred as evidence of the changing preferences of fans. He noted that stadiums are regularly packed for major T20 competitions, while the IPL has developed into a two-month festival and carnival. Harbhajan believes international cricket may find it difficult to regain its former position because franchise leagues have become commercially powerful and offer fans a combination of competition and entertainment. He also highlighted the impact of T20 cricket on players. The West Indies Cricket Board has faced difficulties in retaining players for international duty, while New Zealand players such as Kane Williamson and Devon Conway have declined central contracts to pursue opportunities in global T20 leagues. Harbhajan said the emergence of T20 cricket has changed both the mindset of batters and public expectations, with audiences increasingly preferring shorter formats. He also revealed that his autobiography, which has been in the works for some time, is expected to be released later this year.

Hasan Mahmud Six-For Puts Bangladesh In Control Against Australia



Bangladesh produced a dominant bowling performance on the opening day of the first Test as Australia were bowled out for 198, with Hasan Mahmud claiming a career-best 6/55. Bangladesh then reached 96/1 at stumps, reducing the first-innings deficit to 102 runs. Hasan led the attack with disciplined bowling, striking in his sixth and seventh overs to remove Jake Weatherald for 23 and Travis Head for 22. Australia had started strongly after Pat Cummins won the toss and raced to 45 without loss on a green-tinged pitch.Taskin Ahmed and Ebadot Hossain provided strong support to Hasan. Taskin finished with 2/55, while Ebadot took 2/39 as Bangladesh's pace attack consistently troubled Australia's batting lineup.Steve Smith was Australia's main resistance. He scored 71, hitting seven boundaries and a six, and was the second-last Australian batter dismissed. Smith advanced at Hasan but top-edged the delivery, allowing wicketkeeper Litton Das to complete the catch.Australia had reunited its frontline attack for the Test, with Pat Cummins returning for only his second Test in 13 months alongside Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Starc and veteran off-spinner Nathan Lyon. However, the return of the experienced bowling unit could not prevent Bangladesh from taking control.Weatherald struggled to settle despite strong support from the crowd and was dismissed after needlessly attempting to attack Hasan. Head followed soon after, chopping a delivery onto his stumps as Australia slipped to 52/2.Ebadot then dismissed Marnus Labuschagne for one, with Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto taking the catch. The bowler also had a chance to remove Smith early, but the opportunity was dropped at third slip.Bangladesh reached the lunch interval with Australia at 74/4 after Cameron Green was dismissed for 13. Ebadot removed Alex Carey for 19 after the break, while Taskin bowled Beau Webster for 12. Hasan then dismissed Cummins for nine and Starc for one before completing Australia's innings by removing Smith and Lyon. Australia were bowled out in 53 overs. Bangladesh's reply began positively despite Starc dismissing Shadman Islam for 20. Shadman edged the left-arm paceman and was caught by Lyon at cover point with Bangladesh at 36/1. Mominal Haque and Tanzid Hasan then steadied the innings with an unbeaten 60-run partnership. Mominal scored 35, while Tanzid was unbeaten on 32 at stumps. Smith admitted Australia had looked rusty after going eight months without playing a Test. He said the pitch had been difficult, with limited pace and movement. The two-Test "Top End" series begins a demanding 12-month schedule for Australia, which includes 20 Test matches and tours to South Africa, India and England. Bangladesh, meanwhile, ended the opening day firmly in control after their bowlers outplayed Australia's much-anticipated Big Four.

Ashleigh Gardner Breaks Silence on Controversy Surrounding Separation

Australia women's cricket team vice-captain Ashleigh Gardner has broken her silence on the controversy surrounding her separation from estranged wife Monica Wright, saying the matter is personal while acknowledging that her relationship status needed to be addressed because of her leadership position. The controversy emerged after Wright alleged that Gardner had an affair with teammate Georgia Voll and claimed that the relationship ultimately led to their separation. Wright also criticised Cricket Australia (CA) for not taking action against Gardner and questioned why she continued to hold the vice-captaincy role. Gardner responded through an Instagram story, thanking the Cricket Australia Board for supporting her continued leadership of the Australian women's cricket team. She said that although her separation was a private matter, she understood why her current relationship status had to be addressed publicly given her position within the team. Gardner said she was grateful for the support provided by Cricket Australia and expressed her intention



to continue contributing to the team's leadership. She also referred to her time with Wright and expressed regret over the pain caused by the separation. "I am grateful for the time Monica and I shared and sorry for the pain this has caused. I wish her nothing but happiness and success in the future," Gardner said in her post. She also made it clear that she does not intend to provide further public comments on the controversy at this stage. Gardner asked that the privacy of everyone involved be respected.

Earlier, Wright had called on authorities to remove Gardner from the vice-captaincy role. Speaking to Code Sports, Wright argued that players representing their country and serving as role models have a responsibility to maintain high standards. "I think if you're privileged enough to represent your country and be seen as a role model, there's a responsibility to hold yourself to a high moral standard," Wright said. Wright also questioned Cricket Australia's response to the allega-

tions and said she could not understand why the governing body had not made a public statement on the matter. Cricket Australia subsequently responded to the comments, describing the situation as "private and personal". The governing body said it ensures that relationships within its workforce comply with its Respect at Work policy. Cricket Australia also stated that appropriate conflict-of-interest management arrangements are put in place to support leadership responsibilities and maintain the integrity of team processes. The controversy has placed additional attention on Gardner's position within the Australian women's cricket team, but Cricket Australia's decision to support her continued leadership means she remains in the vice-captaincy role. Gardner has now indicated that she wants to focus on her responsibilities with the team while keeping the personal circumstances surrounding her separation private. Her comments also underline the distinction between her personal life and her professional responsibilities as a senior member of the Australian side.

India Face Spin Test In Sri Lanka As Injury-Hit Side Begins Test Series

Injury-hit India will face Sri Lanka in the first of a two-Test series, with the visitors entering the contest with an inexperienced squad and several key players unavailable. The opening Test will also be an important test for head coach Gautam Gambhir, who is under pressure following an inconsistent run. India will be without pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, spinner Washington Sundar and batter Sai Sudharsan due to injuries. Under Gambhir, India have won eight and lost 10 of their 20 Tests. The team also suffered a 2-0 home series defeat to South Africa in November and currently sits fifth in the World Test Championship (WTC) standings, one place above Sri Lanka. Captain Shubman Gill's team has handed maiden call-ups to spinner Saransh Jain and fast bowler Auqib Nabi. Auqib has impressed in domestic cricket, claiming 60 wickets during the season. India are expected to rely heavily on spin in Galle, with veteran Ravindra Jadeja leading an attack

that also includes Kuldeep Yadav and Manav Suthar. The conditions are traditionally favourable for spinners, making the visitors' ability to handle Sri Lanka's slow bowlers crucial. Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar warned that the series would be challenging, describing Sri Lanka as a formidable home side. He said winning both Tests would provide India with a strong start to the new Test season and improve their chances of qualifying for the WTC final. India have nine matches remaining in the current WTC cycle and may need to win at least six to maintain a realistic chance of reaching the final in London next June.With Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma retired from Test cricket, India's batting unit faces a major challenge against spin. Former Sri Lanka fast bowler Chaminda Vaas, however, believes India still possess enough talent to compete strongly. Sri Lanka have also strengthened their spin options, with left-arm orthodox bowler Prabath



Jayasuriya leading the attack. Jayasuriya has taken 125 wickets in 23 Tests, including 81 at Galle. The hosts will miss opening batter Pathum Nissanka and wicketkeeper Kusal Mendis because of injuries. Nishan Fernando is expected to replace Nissanka, while Niroshan Dickwella has been recalled after three years away from the team. Dickwella's career was interrupted after he

tested positive for cocaine in 2024. Uncapped off-spinner Keshara Nuwantha could make his Test debut. The match will also mark the 50th Test at Galle International Stadium. Sri Lanka have won 27 of the 49 Tests played there, with spin-friendly pitches contributing heavily to their success. The second Test will be played in Colombo from August 23.

Dhruv Jurel Faces Crucial Test Against Sri Lanka Spin Attack



Dhruv Jurel Faces Crucial Test Against Sri Lanka SpinnersDhruv Jurel faces an important Test of his batting credentials as India prepare to begin their series against Sri Lanka in Galle, with spin expected to play a major role. The wicketkeeper-batter has been working intensely in the nets and seeking guidance from senior batter KL Rahul ahead of the opening Test.Jurel was highly focused during India's practice session, comfortably handling deliveries from both pacers and spinners. He also impressed during fielding practice, taking several difficult catches at the cordon.However, his recent Test form remains a concern. After scoring a confident century against the West Indies at Ahmedabad last year, Jurel's next seven Test innings have produced scores of 44, 6, 14, 13, 0, 2 and 19. More worrying for the batter is that spinners have dismissed him five times during those outings.The presence of Sarfaraz Khan, who can bat at the same position, has increased the competition for a place in India's middle order. Sarfaraz possesses a wider range of attacking options against spin, including sweeps, reverse sweeps and movements down the track.Jurel generally follows a more cautious approach, waiting for spinners to make mistakes before attacking. While that method can work on flat pitches, it could be risky on a surface such as Galle, where turn and variable bounce can create problems.Jurel therefore spent time speaking with KL Rahul, the only Indian batter in the squad with Test experience in Sri Lanka. Rahul had prepared extensively for the tour on specially prepared pitches in Mumbai, making his experience particularly valuable.India bowling coach Morne Morkel highlighted Rahul's senior role and said his communication with younger players during preparation would be important.Jurel does have encouraging memories from Galle. He scored a hundred and a fifty for India A at the same venue against Sri Lanka A, demonstrating his ability to perform in these conditions.However, he also experienced disappointment after making a strong impression in a side game before the 2024-25 Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia, only to struggle in the subsequent Perth Test.With Rishabh Pant the first-choice wicketkeeper-batter, Jurel is currently being assessed primarily for his batting. He needs a strong performance against Sri Lanka to strengthen his position in India's Test plans.The upcoming series could therefore prove decisive for Jurel. Success against Sri Lanka's spinners, particularly Prabath Jayasuriya, could help establish his place, while another disappointing run could put his immediate Test future under pressure.

Harbhajan Singh Backs Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma For 2027 ODI World Cup



Harbhajan Singh has backed veteran batters Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma to play in the 2027 ODI World Cup, saying performance and fitness should matter more than age when India select their squad. The former India off-spinner said Kohli and Rohit could continue competing at the highest level if they retain the fitness, form and desire to contribute. He compared their situation with football great Lionel Messi, who continued to perform at the highest level despite his age. "Whoever the player is, I believe the marker should be performance, not age," Harbhajan said, arguing that Kohli and Rohit would bring greater experience to a World Cup campaign than an untested youngster such as Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.Rohit will turn 40 and Kohli will be 39 when the ODI World Cup is played in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Harbhajan said age should not become an issue if Kohli can still outperform younger players."Virat may be 39 but if he is still beating those 20-year-old guys on the field, it doesn't matter," he said, pointing to Messi as an example of an ageing athlete continuing to influence major matches through fitness and skill.Harbhajan also credited Kohli with transforming India's approach to fitness and creating a stronger winning mentality. He recalled how Kohli encouraged the team to chase difficult targets rather than settle for draws.According to Harbhajan, Kohli also played a major role in establishing a fitness culture within Indian cricket. He said around 90 per cent of the credit for India's fitness revolution should go to Kohli.Harbhajan urged head coach Gautam Gambhir to trust the experience of Kohli and Rohit if they continue producing strong performances."If I were the coach, my job would be to give them the platform as my expectations from Rohit and Virat would be much higher than what I expect from a Vaibhav Sooryavanshi," he said.He added that players with hundreds of international matches possess an understanding of pressure and match situations that cannot immediately be replicated by newcomers.Harbhajan, who took 416 Test wickets and 269 ODI wickets, also spoke about retirement and said players eventually know when their bodies are telling them to stop.He officially retired in December 2021 but played his final Test in 2015 at Galle, where Dinesh Chandimal's aggressive batting made him realise that his red-ball career was nearing its end. He also recalled the challenge posed by Ravichandran Ashwin's emergence.On India's 2027 ODI World Cup squad, Harbhajan said there was no need for immediate concern with a year still remaining. He suggested that the team management should identify the core group around six months before the tournament and ensure every player understands their role.



Jr NTR Discharged After Successful Right Shoulder Surgery

Actor Jr NTR has been discharged from KIMS Hospitals, Secunderabad, after undergoing successful surgery on his right shoulder. Doctors said his health is stable and advised him to continue his recovery with physiotherapy. A photograph of Jr NTR with the medical team following the surgery has surfaced online and quickly attracted attention from fans, who have been wishing the actor a speedy recovery. Jr NTR reportedly injured his shoulder while doing gym exercises. After consulting doctors, he was advised to undergo surgery and was admitted to KIMS Hospitals on Tuesday. The arthroscopic procedure was performed by a team of orthopaedic surgeons led by Dr RA Purnachandra Tejaswi, Dr Nithin Bejjanki, Dr Madhusudan Rao and Dr Srinivas Rao Surapaneni. Dr Bhaskar Rao, CMD of KIMS Group of Hospitals, was also seen with the actor and the medical team in the photograph that surfaced after the procedure. Following the successful surgery, doctors advised Jr NTR to undergo physiotherapy for a few days. The medical team indicated that he could require around two to three months for complete recovery. Jr NTR has also thanked fans, friends and well-wishers for their messages and prayers during his treatment. His recovery period is expected to have an impact on the schedules of his upcoming films, with production plans likely to depend on his medical progress and clearance from doctors. The actor is currently attached to an untitled film with KGF director Prashanth Neel. The project is popularly referred to as Jr NTR Neel or Dragon. Details of the revised shooting schedule are expected to depend on Jr NTR's recovery. Jr NTR is also expected to return for Devara: Part 2, the sequel to his 2024 film Devara: Part 1, directed by Koratala Siva. The shooting schedule for the sequel had not been officially announced before his injury. The actor was last seen in War 2, released in 2025, in which he played the antagonist opposite Hrithik Roshan. The Ayan Mukerji directorial was another major project in his career following Devara: Part 1. Before that, Jr NTR earned international recognition for his performance in RRR, released in 2022. The film, directed by S.S. Rajamouli, became a major global success and further expanded his popularity beyond Telugu cinema. For now, Jr NTR's priority remains recovery. With the surgery completed successfully and his health reported to be stable, fans will be watching for further updates on his rehabilitation and return to film sets.



Yash's Toxic Gets A Shockingly Long 3-Hour-14-Minute Runtime

Yash's much-awaited gangster action drama Toxic is set for a theatrical release on August 26 after facing multiple postponements. The film has generated renewed interest as its release approaches, with expectations building around its latest updates, cast and production scale. The Geetu Mohandas directorial has completed its censor formalities and received an "A" certificate, meaning it is restricted to adult audiences. The certification was largely expected because of the adult-oriented content shown in the film's promotional material. However, the biggest surprise is the film's approved runtime. Toxic has received a lengthy runtime of 194 minutes, equivalent to three hours and 14 minutes. This makes it one of the longer mainstream Indian releases in recent times. The extended duration is expected to become a major talking point before the film reaches theatres. A runtime of more than three hours gives filmmakers additional space for storytelling, character development and action sequences, but it also places greater responsibility on the screenplay to maintain momentum. Toxic stars Yash in the lead role and features an ensemble cast including Kiara Advani, Nayanthara, Tara Sutaria, Rukmini Vasanth and Huma Qureshi in pivotal roles. The film is co-written by Yash and directed by Geetu Mohandas. The project is produced by Venkat Narayana under KVN Productions. The film has been presented as a gangster action drama and has attracted considerable attention because of its scale, cast and production values. The "A" certificate also indicates that the makers are presenting a more mature action-oriented story. Audiences below the permitted age will not be allowed to watch the film in theatres. The combination of an adults-only certification and a 194-minute runtime has increased curiosity around the film's treatment and narrative. Promotional material has already suggested an intense world, while the gangster backdrop is expected to form an important part of the story. Toxic has also experienced a long production journey, with its release reportedly being postponed multiple times. These delays have contributed to the anticipation surrounding the project, particularly among Yash's fans. The film is scheduled for a simultaneous multilingual release, allowing it to reach audiences across different markets. Its release will also put the focus on Geetu Mohandas' direction and Yash's performance in a role positioned differently from some of his earlier commercial films. Long runtimes have become increasingly common in large-scale Indian productions, particularly when filmmakers attempt to combine action, drama, character arcs and elaborate sequences. However, the success of a lengthy film often depends on whether its screenplay keeps the audience engaged throughout. For Toxic, the 194-minute duration means the film will need to sustain its pace across more than three hours. Strong performances, effective editing, action sequences and narrative progression could help justify the extended runtime, while any slow portions could become more noticeable because of the film's length. With Kiara Advani, Nayanthara, Tara Sutaria, Rukmini Vasanth and Huma Qureshi joining Yash, the film has considerable attention surrounding its ensemble cast. The combination of the cast, gangster setting, mature certification and lengthy runtime has made Toxic one of the notable Indian releases to watch. After a prolonged wait and several postponements, Toxic is finally scheduled to arrive in theatres on August 26. Audiences will then get to see whether Yash and Geetu Mohandas' ambitious gangster action drama can successfully use its three-hour-14-minute runtime to deliver a compelling big-screen experience.

vi Biography

Priyanka Chopra has unveiled the cover of a new biography on legendary actress Sridevi, marking a special tribute to one of the most celebrated stars in Indian cinema.

Sridevi, who passed away in 2018, continues to be remembered for her remarkable performances and immense contribution to Indian cinema. Her work across multiple Indian film industries has earned her a lasting place among the country's most admired actresses, with her films continuing to be watched and appreciated by generations of audiences.

The new biography, titled Empress Sridevi: The Definitive Biography of Sridevi, has been written by Dhiraj U. Kumar. The book explores Sridevi's life, career and journey in Indian cinema, offering readers an opportunity to look back at the different stages of her celebrated career.

Priyanka Chopra's association with the cover launch has added further attention to the biography. Chopra is currently associated with several major projects and will be seen alongside Mahesh Babu in SS Rajamouli's upcoming film Varanasi.

The unveiling comes as Sridevi's legacy continues to receive attention from the film industry

Priyanka Chopra Unveils Cover Of New Sridevi Biography

and her fans. Known for her versatility, screen presence and ability to portray a wide range of characters, Sridevi became a prominent figure in Indian cinema during a career spanning several decades.

Her performances in films across Hindi, Telugu and other Indian languages established her as a pan-Indian star. She successfully transitioned between different genres and characters, earning appreciation from audiences and critics alike.

The biography is expected to provide a detailed account of her professional journey while also documenting the milestones that shaped her career and public image. The book's title, Empress Sridevi, reflects the stature she achieved during her years in the film industry. Sridevi's influence continues to be visible in Indian cinema, with actors, filmmakers and audiences frequently remembering her work. Her performances remain popular through television broadcasts and digital platforms, allowing newer generations to discover her films.

The cover launch by Priyanka Chopra has therefore brought renewed focus to Sridevi's enduring contribution to Indian cinema. The biography is positioned as a tribute to her career and as a record of the journey of an actress whose popularity has remained strong even years after her death.

For Sridevi's admirers, Empress Sridevi: The Definitive Biography of Sridevi offers another opportunity to revisit the life, achievements and cinematic legacy of an actress who continues to hold a special place in the hearts of Indian film audiences.

Sai Durgha Tej's Sambarala Yeti Gattu May Join Sankranthi 2027 Race

Sankranthi 2027 is already shaping up as a crowded season for Telugu cinema, and another film from the Mega family could reportedly enter the festival race.

Sai Durgha Tej's Sambarala Yeti Gattu, which was initially planned for release in 2025, is still under production. According to the latest reports, the makers are now considering a

Sankranthi 2027 release, with January 12, 2027 being discussed as a possible date.

The proposed date carries an interesting connection with Hanu-Man. Primeshow Entertainment's superhero film was released on January 12 during Sankranthi 2024 and went on to become a major blockbuster.

If Sambarala Yeti Gattu arrives on the same festival date in 2027, the film could become one of the major attractions during the Sankranthi holiday period. However, the release date has not yet been officially confirmed by the makers.

Another Mega family film, Mega Prince Varun Tej's Bhari, has already been confirmed for a Sankranthi 2027 release. If both films eventually arrive during the same festival window, Mega fans could have two major releases from the family competing for audience attention.

Directed by Rohith KP, Sambarala Yeti Gattu features Sai Durgha Tej in the lead role. The cast includes Aishwarya Lekshmi, Jagapathi Babu, Srikanth, Sai Kumar, Ananya Nagalla and Ravi Krishna in key roles, along with other actors.

The project has been in production for an extended period after its original release plans changed. The reported Sankranthi release would give the film an opportunity to make a strong theatrical comeback during one of the most important periods in the Telugu film calendar.

Sankranthi traditionally attracts several high-profile Telugu releases, with filmmakers competing to capitalise on the long holiday season and strong audience turnout. The 2027 festival is already expected to feature several prominent projects, making the addition of another Mega family film potentially significant.

For Sai Durgha Tej, the film is an important project as audiences have been waiting for its release following the changes to its original schedule.

The makers are expected to announce the final release date and other details officially in the coming days. Until then, January 12, 2027 remains a reported possibility for Sambarala Yeti Gattu, which could add another major title to the increasingly competitive Sankranthi 2027 lineup.

