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Revanth Reddy Hails Minority Candidates

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy reaffirmed his government's commitment to equal opportunities and urged newly recruited employees to work with dedication for Telangana's progress. Addressing the 'Telangana Minorities Talent Meet' at Komaram Bheem Adivasi Bhavan in Banjara Hills, he said all communities should receive equal opportunities and support. The Chief Minister congratulated 782 minority candidates who secured government jobs in Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4. He also appreciated minority students who achieved notable results in competitive examinations, including NEET, IIT and NIT entrance tests. Ministers Ponnampallabharathi, Mohammad Azharuddin and Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, Advisor Mohammad Ali Shabbir, TGMREIS President Mohammad Faheemuddin Qureshi, public representa-



tives and senior officials attended the programme. Revanth Reddy stressed that education and skill development were crucial for improving employment prospects. He advised students to complete Class 12 before acquiring specialised, job-oriented skills. Such training, he said, could help young people secure opportunities both within India and in countries such as Germany and Japan. He said the government was upgrading Industrial Training Institutes into Advanced

Technology Centres and integrating polytechnic colleges with the Skills University to strengthen vocational education and industry-oriented training. On minority welfare, the Chief Minister said his government was implementing several welfare measures and giving minorities due priority. He referred to the free electricity scheme providing up to 200 units and maintained that efforts to remove the four per cent reservation for minorities had not succeeded.

Revanth Reddy also criticised the previous administration over recruitment delays and alleged irregularities linked to Group-1 examinations. He said the Telangana Public Service Commission had been comprehensively strengthened after consultations with experts and the Union Public Service Commission leadership. He explained that several legal and administrative challenges had delayed recruitment. The government, he said, engaged experienced legal experts and pursued the matters through various courts, including the Supreme Court, enabling the recruitment process to move forward. Congratulating the successful candidates, Revanth Reddy urged them to view government employment as a responsibility to society. He called upon them to discharge their duties honestly, uphold public service values and contribute meaningfully to the development of Telangana.



Kishan Reddy Highlights Mining Reforms

New Delhi, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy highlighted the Centre's reforms in the coal and mining sectors, saying the Narendra Modi government has focused on transparent mineral allocation, higher revenue transfers to states and strengthening cooperative federalism. Addressing a press conference, Kishan Reddy said the allocation of mines had become more transparent through e-auctions following the Supreme Court's directions and subsequent reforms introduced in 2015 and 2020. He said auctions for 141 coal mines had been completed, with production already commencing in 105 blocks. The Minister said the reforms had substantially improved the financial returns received by states from the mining sector. He claimed that state revenues from the broader coal sector had increased significantly compared with the period before 2014. He also said the states' share of revenue had risen from 65% to 88%, while the Centre's share had correspondingly declined. Kishan Reddy stated that coal-sector revenue received by states had increased from around Rs 12,000 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 58,592 crore. He maintained that the Centre transfers the entire auction premium and royalty collections to states and does not retain any portion of these revenues. He also highlighted the role of District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds in developing mining-affected regions. According to the Minister, the funds

are being used for infrastructure, education, healthcare and other essential facilities in districts impacted by mining operations. Emphasising coal's importance to the national power sector, Kishan Reddy said around 72% of India's electricity generation depends on coal. He added that Coal India has maintained coal prices without an increase since 2018, helping power producers access fuel at affordable rates. On legislation recently passed by Parliament, the Minister clarified that the measure applies only to major minerals and does not change the powers of state governments over minor minerals. He rejected allegations that the Centre was taking away states' authority, saying the reforms were intended to maintain stable prices for minerals essential to cement, steel, aluminium and infrastructure development. Kishan Reddy said the Centre has committed Rs 46,000 crore to coal gasification, aimed at encouraging domestic production and reducing dependence on imports. He also highlighted the Rs 34,000-crore National Critical Mineral Mission, noting that India has entered into agreements with 20 countries to strengthen access to critical mineral resources. The Minister reiterated that the Centre would consult state governments while framing further guidelines and stressed that national progress depends on financially strong states and constructive Centre-state cooperation.

Bhatti Receives Grand Welcome



Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

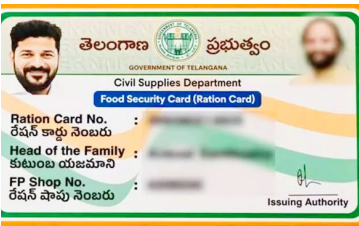
Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka returned to Hyderabad on Thursday night after successfully concluding his tour of the United States. Congress leaders, elected representatives and party workers gathered in large numbers at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Shamshabad to accord him a warm and enthusiastic welcome. Several prominent Congress leaders received the Deputy Chief Minister at the airport. Wyrva MLA Ramdas Naik, former MLC Potla Nageswara Rao, former corporation chairpersons Rayala Nageswara Rao, Challa Narasimha Reddy, Naidu Satyam and Anvesh Reddy, State Mahila Congress President Errabelli Swarna, PCC Vice President Nemindla Srinivas, Khammam DCC President Nuthi Satyanarayana, SUDA Chairman Puvvalla Durga Prasad and

PCC spokesperson and OU JAC President Lokesh Kumar Yadav were among those present. The leaders greeted Bhatti Vikramarka with bouquets and shawls, expressing their support and appreciation following his US tour. Ranga Reddy District Congress President Challa Narasimha Reddy also presented the Deputy Chief Minister with a massive garland as part of the reception. A large number of Congress leaders, public representatives, activists and supporters from the erstwhile Khammam district also arrived at the airport. The premises echoed with enthusiastic slogans raised by party workers. Responding to the reception, Bhatti Vikramarka acknowledged the gathering with folded hands and greeted the party cadres. The grand welcome reflected the enthusiasm of Congress supporters and their strong backing for the Deputy Chief Minister.

Smart Ration Cards to Roll Out on August 15

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government is preparing to launch the distribution of new smart ration cards on August 15, coinciding with Independence Day celebrations. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy is scheduled to formally inaugurate the programme in Sangareddy district, with distribution activities planned simultaneously across the state. The initiative is aimed at strengthening the public distribution system, eliminating bogus beneficiaries and ensuring that food security benefits reach only eligible households. The rollout will cover all 119 Assembly constituencies and 33 district headquarters. More than 1.04 crore smart ration cards are expected to benefit approximately 3.43 crore people. The newly designed cards incorporate several security measures intended to prevent duplication, forgery and unauthorised use. Officials said the manufacturing technology follows standards comparable to those used for sensitive documents such as passports and currency. The cards feature a hologram carrying the Telangana government emblem, watermarks, concealed images and a UV security mark that cannot be seen under normal conditions. An encrypted QR code has been incorporated to enable quick digital verification of beneficiary information. Additional safeguards include embossed lettering, micro-printed text and special images that reveal different patterns when viewed from varying angles. These features are intended to make the cards difficult to reproduce using conventional printing methods. The cards will display beneficiary information and the details



of the respective ration shop. Photographs of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Civil Supplies Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy will also appear on the cards. Officials said the technology-based system is expected to improve transparency and strengthen monitoring of ration distribution. It will also help authorities identify duplicate or ineligible beneficiaries and reduce the possibility of misuse of government benefits. Under the state's food security programme, eligible beneficiaries are entitled to six kilograms of fine-quality rice per person every month at no cost. The new cards are expected to make beneficiary verification more efficient and facilitate smoother delivery of essential commodities. Officials from the Revenue and Civil Supplies departments have completed preparations for the statewide launch. The government expects the smart cards to modernise the civil supplies network, improve accountability and safeguard the entitlements of economically vulnerable families. The programme is being positioned as a major technological upgrade of the ration distribution system, with the broader objective of ensuring that welfare reaches genuine beneficiaries without leakages or irregularities.

Revanth Assures Relief on 22-A Lands

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy assured genuine landowners that properties placed on the prohibited list under Section 22-A would not be lost. He said the government was working to resolve such issues by separating disputed plots and assigning sub-survey numbers to unaffected portions. The Chief Minister made the remarks at KPHB Colony in Kukatpally during the foundation ceremony for the construction of Indiramma Towers. Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, D. Sridhar Babu and Ponnampallabharathi, attended the event. Revanth Reddy explained that when a portion of a survey number was involved in litigation, the entire parcel had earlier been included in the prohibited list. The government was now identifying the plots under dispute and assigning by-numbers to the remaining land, allowing legitimate owners to deal with their properties without unnecessary difficulties. He also asked Minister Sridhar Babu to give priority to development works in Kukatpally, particularly roads, flyovers, lake restoration, educational institutions and measures to attract industries and create employment. Highlighting the government's welfare initiatives, Revanth Reddy said existing schemes had been continued while several new programmes were introduced. He cited the distribution of six kilograms of fine-quality rice per person to 3.28 crore beneficiaries, free electricity up to 200 units and LPG cylinders at Rs 500. The Chief Minister said one crore Indiramma sarees had been distributed



and women were benefiting from free travel on RTC buses. He said the government had provided Rs 12,000 crore to the RTC and facilitated bank linkages worth Rs 65,000 crore for self-help groups, besides paying Rs 2,500 crore in interest. He said 1,000 buses had been procured in the name of women's groups and leased to the RTC, while initiatives had also enabled 1,000 MW of solar power generation. Land at Shilpa ramam has been earmarked for Indira Mahila Bazaars, where women can market locally made products. Revanth Reddy said 70,000 government vacancies had been filled within two years. He described the Indira mma Towers project, being developed on an 11-acre site in Kukatpally, as a major step toward providing housing for the urban poor. He directed officials to waive registration charges for houses constructed for eligible poor beneficiaries and said housing sites would be provided free of cost. The first phase will focus on areas with large low-income populations, including Kukatpally, Quthbu llapur, Medchal, Cantonnement, LB Nagar and Uppal.



New Pensions to Begin from Medaram

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government is preparing to launch the distribution of newly sanctioned pensions for eligible beneficiaries, with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy scheduled to inaugurate the programme at Medaram on August 16. Minister Seethakka announced that the launch would take place at the Sammakka-Saralamma Gaddelu. According to the Minister, the Chief Minister is expected to reach Medaram by helicopter around noon along with other ministers. During the visit, he will formally begin the distribution of new pensions and inaugurate the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) roads project, estimated to

Four Industrial Parks Planned Around City

Shivani

The Central and Telangana governments are preparing to jointly accelerate industrial development around Hyderabad under the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana, with plans to establish four industrial parks in strategic locations surrounding the city. The initiative is part of the Centre's broader plan to develop 100 industrial parks across the country. The proposed parks are expected to attract major industries, multinational companies and entrepreneurs while creating new employment opportunities for Telangana's youth. The Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGILC) has identified four locations within roughly 30-40 km of Hyderabad: Thimmapur in Kandukur mandal of Ranga Reddy district, Eliminedu in Ibrahimpatnam mandal, Madaram in Ghatkesar mandal of Medchal district and Dandu Malkapur in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Each park will cover between 100 and 1,000 acres, depending on its requirements. Under the scheme, the Centre will provide equity support of Rs 1 crore per acre. The State government will use the funding to develop modern infrastructure



before making developed plots available to industrial investors. The four parks will have specialised industrial focuses. Thimmapur is proposed as a hub for semiconductor-related industries, while Dandu Malkapur will concentrate on engineering and machinery manufacturing. Eliminedu is planned for electronics and electrical industries, and Madaram will focus on information technology and hardware sectors. The locations have also been selected for their connectivity advantages. Thimmapur and Madaram are situated near the Outer Ring Road, while Eliminedu is close to the proposed Bharat Future City. Dandu Malkapur lies along the Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway, providing access to major transport routes. Officials are working on mechanisms to allot land quickly once applications are received from interested companies and industrial groups. Infrastructure development is also expected to be expedited to make the parks investment-ready. The joint

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Rs 14.20 Crore Sanctioned for Manjeera Barrage Repairs

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has sanctioned Rs 14.20 crore for repairing the damaged flexible apron at the downstream energy dissipater of the Manjeera Barrage. The decision follows recommendations from the State Dam Safety Organization (SDSO) after a Panel of Experts (PoE) inspected the structure and identified significant deficiencies. The expert panel advised immediate repairs to prevent further deterioration and safeguard the barrage. The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWS&SB) subsequently submitted a proposal seeking administrative approval for the restoration works. Built in 1965 with a storage capacity of 1.5 TMC, the Manjeera Barrage was developed to supplement Hyderabad's drinking water requirements under the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage (MWSS) Phase-I and

Phase-II projects. The structure has remained operational for more than six decades and has withstood several major flood events over the years. Official records indicate that the barrage experienced substantial flood discharges, including 162 tmc ft in 1970, 148 tmc ft in 1975, 206 tmc ft in 1988, 138 tmc ft in 1989, 158 tmc ft in 1990, 187 tmc ft in 1998, 86 tmc ft in 2010 and a significant 235 tmc ft in 2025. According to HMWS&SB, repeated high-intensity floods have caused considerable deterioration of the flexible apron. Several concrete blocks have either been displaced or washed away, while sections of the adjoining Coursed Rubble Stone (CRS) masonry have also suffered partial damage. The SDSO observed that the deterioration had affected the apron's functioning and warned that continued neglect could lead to further damage to the barrage. It therefore recommended that restoration works be taken up without delay. The water board proposed the repairs

Seethakka Reviews CM Visit Arrangements



Mulugu, August 13 | TPN Bureau

State Minister for Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, Rural Water Supply, and Women & Child Welfare Danasari Anasuya Seethakka on Thursday inspected ongoing arrangements for Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's scheduled visit to Mulugu on August 16 and directed officials to complete all works without delay. Accompanied by District Collector Borkhade Hemant Sahadevrao and Superintendent of Police Sudheer Ramnath Kekan, the Minister reviewed pylon construction works and inspected the new integrated Collectorate complex. Panchayat Raj Executive Engineer Ajay Kumar explained the progress and pending works. Seethakka instructed officials and contractors to coordinate closely, accelerate construction and maintain quality standards. At the Collectorate, she inspected office rooms, conference halls and surrounding infrastructure and directed officials to ensure adequate sanitation, electricity, drinking water, roads and parking facilities. Speaking to the media, Seethakka said the Chief Minister would first visit Medaram on August 16 and offer prayers and perform special rituals at the shrines of tribal deities Sammakka and Saralamma. From Medaram, he would launch a statewide programme to provide pensions to all eligible widows and single women. Applications submitted by August 31 would be scrutinised according to government guidelines. The Chief Minister would later visit the Mulugu district headquarters and unveil a pylon near Gattamma marking the development of HAM roads. The Panchayat Raj Department plans to undertake road works across the state in three phases at an estimated cost of Rs16,000 crore, aimed at improving connectivity to villages. Revanth Reddy will subsequently unveil the Telangana Thalli statue and inaugurate the new integrated district office complex before addressing a public meeting. Seethakka appealed to people, public representatives and leaders from the former Warangal district to participate in large numbers and make the visit successful. Additional Collectors Ch. Mahender and Sampath Rao, Library Organization Chairman Ravinder Chander and other officials attended.

Tummala Reviews Agriculture and Market Reforms

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau



Agriculture and Marketing Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao on Thursday reviewed the implementation of farmer welfare programmes and departmental activities with senior officials at the Secretariat. He directed officials to speed up schemes and ensure that benefits reach farmers without delays. The Minister instructed officials to coordinate with the Panchayat Raj Department to promote eco-ponds and bamboo cultivation under the VIB-G-RAM-G scheme. He also directed officials to create awareness through Rythu Vedikas and ensure that farmers cultivating nine government-approved paddy varieties register with Agricultural Extension Officers. Reviewing crop conditions and farm mechanisation, Tummala stressed that subsidised agricultural machinery should be distributed promptly. He said staff shortages must not affect farmer services and directed officials to utilise available personnel effectively. Tummala ordered strict action against manufacturers of spurious DAP. Officials informed him that cases had been registered against eight people and six arrests made. He directed authorities to determine the quantity sold and compensate affected farmers. He proposed a pilot project to construct Markfed warehouses with 65,000-metric-tonne capacity in major paddy-producing districts and instructed departments to submit details of their lands and assets. During a video conference with Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Tummala sought the release of Telangana's second RKVY fund tranche and urged full procurement of pulses, besides support for maize and other crops amid El Niño conditions. Representatives of Costa Rica-based ASD also met Tummala to discuss high-yielding oil palm seeds. He directed officials to study their suitability to Telangana's climate and consider local propagation if found suitable.

Ashada Bonalu Festivities Conclude

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Forest, Environment and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha announced that the grand Ashada Bonalu festivities concluded traditionally on Thursday with the Maha Kumbha Harathi offered to Goddess Jagadambika Mahankali. The month-long celebrations began on July 16 with the offering of the first Bonam at Golconda Fort. The festival showcased Telangana's rich cultural traditions through Bonalu offerings, Sivasathulu performances, Potharaju dances, folk arts, decorated Ambari elephant processions, the Rangam oracle ritual and Ghatotsavam processions. Minister Surekha said the celebrations were organized on a large scale across Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and Medchal-Malkajgiri districts following the directions of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. The government allocated ₹20 crore for the Bonalu festivities and made extensive arrangements to ensure devotees

faced no inconvenience. She appreciated the coordinated efforts of the police, GHMC, Water Board and departments responsible for sanitation, drinking water, electricity, healthcare and traffic management. The minister also acknowledged the contribution of voluntary organizations in ensuring the smooth conduct of the celebrations across thousands of temples. Surekha described Hyderabad Bonalu as a reflection of Telangana's unity in diversity and a symbol of Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb. She said the participation of people cutting across caste and religious boundaries conveyed a strong message of secularism, brotherhood and social harmony. The minister prayed for the prosperity and well-being of Telangana's farmers, women, youth, workers, poor and all sections of society. She also referred to the Varuna Yagam conducted by the Endowments Department and expressed hope that the state would continue to receive favourable rainfall and witness further development.

Sewing Machines to Empower BC Women

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnamb Prabhakar formally launched the 'Intinta Indiramma Sewing Machines' scheme at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Secretariat on Thursday, with the Telangana government aiming to promote self-employment and economic independence among women from Backward Classes (BCs). Under the initiative, 1.19 lakh automatic sewing machines will be distributed across 119 Assembly constituencies, with 1,000 machines allocated to each constituency. Each machine, valued at Rs12,000, will be provided with a 100 per cent government subsidy. Applications

from eligible BC women will be accepted from August 15 to September 15. Prabhakar said the Praja Palana government, led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, was focusing on creating sustainable livelihood opportunities rather than merely providing welfare benefits. He said the scheme would enable women interested in tailoring to establish home-based sources of income. Priority will be given according to government guidelines to extremely poor women, widows, single women, homeless persons, orphans, persons with disabilities and those with previous tailoring experience. Beneficiary selection will be conducted transparently, and



training in operating the machines will be mandatory. The minister said demand for the machines was expected to be high, but 1.19 lakh women would benefit in the first phase. He added that the government intended to expand the programme in future. Prabhakar also said the government was supporting women

through initiatives linked to RTC services, petrol bunk and other employment programmes. Funds would be provided for completing Atma Gourava Bhavans, while a special action plan for BC development would be taken forward following the caste census. Government BC Advisor V. Hanumantha Rao

welcomed the scheme, saying it would strengthen employment opportunities for women. He said priority for machines should benefit widows, single women, persons with disabilities and women with tailoring experience. The minister also announced that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy would unveil statues of

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule opposite HM DA Grounds at 4 p.m. on August 14. On August 18, the CM is scheduled to unveil the statue of Sardar Sarvai Papanna Goud at Tank Bund. Prabhakar appealed to BC representatives and community leaders to participate in both programmes in large numbers.

Centre Invited for Khelo India Event

New Delhi, August 13 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has invited the Central government to participate in the upcoming 'Khelo India' event, which is scheduled to be held in the state from December 11 to 22. State Minister for Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, Fisheries and Youth Services & Sports Vakiti Srihari, along with Government Special Representative A.P. Jitender Reddy, former Sports Authority chairman Shiva Sena Reddy and Sports Authority VC & MD Soni Bala Devi, met Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya in New Delhi on Thursday and invited him to attend the event. The delegation discussed preparations for hosting the sporting event on a prestigious scale and sought the Centre's cooperation for its successful



conduct. The state government is aiming to use the event to strengthen Telangana's sports

infrastructure and provide young athletes with greater opportunities to compete at the national

Ponnam Hails Minority Group-1 Selectees

Group-1 services and urged them to dedicate themselves to public service and the development of Telangana. Addressing the "Minorities Excellence Summit" at Komaram Bheem Adivasi Bhavan in Banjara Hills, Prabhakar said the completion of the Group-1 recruitment process after several years was a moment of great joy. He acknowledged the difficulties and legal challenges faced during the recruitment process and credited Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's leadership for ensuring that the process reached its conclusion. The Minister noted that several aspirants had waited for years for Group-1

opportunities, with some nearing the upper age limit. He said their selection was particularly significant and urged the newly appointed officials to view themselves not merely as government employees but as public servants responsible for shaping the state's future. Prabhakar called upon the selected candidates to become role models for youth, particularly those from minority communities. He urged them to use their positions for the wider benefit of society and uphold honesty, commitment and public service. He said the government remained committed to strengthening minority welfare and invited suggestions from the newly

Bonalu Procession From Indiramma Towers

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Revenue, Housing and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy announced that next year's Bonalu procession would begin from the newly planned Indiramma Towers. He made the announcement after Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy laid the foundation stone for the housing project in Kukatpally on Thursday. Addressing a gathering fol-

lowing the foundation-laying ceremony, Ponguleti said the government was committed to providing housing to economically weaker sections through a transparent process. He alleged that the previous government had neglected housing for the poor while concentrating on projects where corruption and commissions were involved. The minister said the present government had taken up the construction of one lakh houses in the first phase despite the high cost of land in

Hyderabad. According to him, around 51,000 applications have already been received, while the deadline for applications is due to expire in two days. Ponguleti assured that house allotments would be conducted transparently through a lucky-dip system, without political recommendations, secret arrangements or outside influence. He said the process would be conducted openly in the presence of ministers and other stakeholders. He further stated that beneficiaries would receive informa-

tion about their allotted houses in advance, enabling them to monitor construction and ensure that contractors maintain quality standards. The minister said housewarming ceremonies for nearly two lakh houses had already been completed across Telangana. He reiterated his commitment to constructing three times as many houses in two-and-a-half years as the previous government built in ten years, and said he would not contest the next Assembly elections if he failed to fulfil the promise. Ponguleti also criticized opposition leaders for allegedly making politically motivated



allegations against the housing initiative and accused them of undermining the dignity of poor families. Responding to concerns raised by legislators about cer-

tain lands being included on the prohibited list, he assured that restrictions would be removed within two days if the lands were found not to belong to the government.

14 Deep-Tech Startups Join Growth Programme

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Fourteen deep-tech startups have been selected for a 12-month programme designed to help them transition from early traction to sustainable growth and scale. The initiative will provide support in areas including capital, market access, intellectual property, talent acquisition and operational development. The first cohort, named Blueprint, includes Kritnam, ArtusAI, Litemed, Zodhya, Arkle Energy, Sensehealth, Vahn, Buildwright, Sanyark Space, Semex AI, Pavakah Energy, Vecoros, Portl and Storyvord. As part of the programme, founders will work closely

with T-Hub in a generalist CXO role, receiving guidance to strengthen their operational and commercial foundations. Each participating startup will be provided with a 12-month operating plan and assistance in preparing for its next fundraising round. The programme will also help founders develop investor-ready pitches and comprehensive data rooms containing financial information, ownership details, legal documents and business performance indicators. Participants will receive individual mentoring from experienced technical operators, access to talent networks and intellectual property resources, investor engagement opportunities, enterprise contract prospects and exposure to international markets. The programme was launched during HYD - Deep Tech: Next, which brought together startups and stakehold-

ers from the deep-tech ecosystem.

The event also featured discussions with officials from the Technology Development Board (TDB) under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. TDB Secretary Rajesh Kumar Pathak briefed participating startups on the Centre's Rs1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund. He explained the eligibility criteria, available funding mechanisms and procedures for accessing the fund. Pathak described the initiative as a potentially significant source of capital for Indian deep-tech companies with strong economic and strategic potential. The programme is expected to help participating startups strengthen their businesses, attract investment and expand their presence in domestic and international markets.

Ramayya Receives Sangeet Natak Akademi Award



Peddapalli, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Telangana's rich folk-art tradition has received national recognition with folk artist Durshti Ramayya being honoured with the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. A native of Garrepalli village in Sultanabad mandal of Peddapalli district, Ramayya was recognised for his contribution to folk music and his dedicated practice of the traditional Kaddi Tantri art form.

Ramayya received the award from President Droupadi Murmu at a ceremony held in New Delhi. He was also felicitated on the occasion for his longstanding contribution to preserving and promoting Telangana's folk heritage. For several years, Ramayya has worked to safeguard the distinctive Kaddi Tantri tradition and pass its artistic knowledge to younger generations. His efforts have helped keep the traditional form alive while bringing greater attention to Telangana's

folk music at the national level. The honour has brought considerable pride to Garrepalli village and the Peddapalli district. Villagers and well-wishers expressed happiness over Ramayya's achievement and congratulated him for bringing national recognition to their community. They said the award was not only a personal milestone for the artist but also an important acknowledgement of Telangana's diverse folk traditions. They expressed hope that the recognition would encourage more young people to learn and preserve traditional art forms. Ramayya's achievement has highlighted the cultural value of folk artists who continue to preserve indigenous traditions despite changing times. His recognition at the national level is expected to provide further encouragement for efforts to document, promote and transmit Telangana's traditional performing arts to future generations.

Depression Brings Widespread Rain

Amaravati/Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Rainfall is expected to continue across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana over the next three days as a low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal has intensified into a depression. Weather authorities have forecast rain, thunderstorms and strong winds in several parts of the two Telugu states. According to the Amaravati Meteorological Centre, the well-marked low-pressure area over the northwest Bay of Bengal, close to the West Bengal coast and Bangladesh, moved northwestwards and concentrated into a depression by 8.30 am on August 13. The system was centred over the West Bengal coast near 22.3°N latitude and 88.6°E longitude, around 40 km northwest of Canning and southeast of Kolkata. The depression is expected to move generally northwestwards across Gangetic West Bengal and Jharkhand during the next 24 hours. In North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, heavy rain is likely at one or two places on Thursday, accompanied by light to moderate showers at some locations. Thunderstorms with lightning and strong winds of 40-50 kmph are also possible. Similar rain and wind conditions are expected

on Friday and Saturday, though heavy rainfall is not specifically forecast for those days. In South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, light to moderate rain or thundershowers are expected at a few places on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Thunderstorms with lightning may occur at isolated locations, along with winds reaching 40-50 kmph. Rayalaseema is likely to receive light to moderate rain or thundershowers at one or two places on Thursday and Friday. Thunderstorms and lightning may accompany the showers, while strong winds of 40-50 kmph are expected. On Saturday, isolated light to moderate rain or showers are possible, with similar strong winds.

Rain Forecast for Telangana

Telangana is also expected to experience rainfall under the influence of the depression and the monsoon trough. The Hyderabad Meteorological Centre has forecast light to moderate rain at some places in a few districts on Thursday. Isolated parts of the state are likely to receive light to moderate rainfall on Friday and Saturday. Surface winds of around 30-40 kmph may prevail in some areas during the next two days. Meteorological conditions indicate continued instability over the region, with thunderstorms and gusty winds possible in isolated areas. Residents in vulnerable locations are advised to remain alert during periods of intense rainfall and strong winds.

Revanth Directs SIR Reviews



Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed Congress leaders to intensify their efforts to address concerns arising from the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, warning that the party could face the loss of nearly 21 per cent of votes if the process is not handled effectively.

Speaking at a TPCC Zoom meeting, Revanth Reddy attributed the situation to failures at multiple levels, from district in-charge ministers to booth-level func-

tionaries. He instructed the ministers responsible for districts to immediately convene review meetings with parliamentary and Assembly constituency in-charges.

The Chief Minister directed the leaders to visit the field and conduct detailed reviews across their respective districts over the next two days. District in-charge ministers were asked to prepare constituency-wise reports identifying problems and corrective measures.

Assembly constituency in-charges were instructed to remain in their constituencies for four days, identify issues related to the voter-list revision and ensure that they are resolved comprehensively.

Revanth warned that the party would not tolerate negligence or failure to implement a clear action plan.

He said the directions were in line with instructions from the All India Congress Committee (AICC) and cautioned that inadequate preparations could cause serious political damage in the future.

Revanth also called upon party leaders to highlight what he described as attempts by the BJP and BRS to facilitate deletion of votes and bring the issue before the public.

He urged all Congress leaders and workers to take responsibility and work collectively to protect voters' rights.

Srihari Rejects Project Allegations



New Delhi, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Youth Services and Sports Vakiti Srihari has rejected allegations by former BRS MLAs concerning alleged irregularities in land acquisition for the Kodangal Lift Irrigation Scheme. He challenged those making the allegations to present documentary evidence and said the government would take action if any wrongdoing was established.

Srihari said claims involving fake pass-books, fabricated land titles and improper compensation payments were serious and should be supported by official records. He maintained that the land acquisition process was being carried out according to established rules and procedures.

The Minister said the government would not protect anyone found responsible for irregularities. Officials or other individuals involved in wrongdoing would face strict action if the allegations were proved. He also said the complaint submitted to the Lokayukta should be allowed to follow its legal course instead of being turned into a platform for political accusations.

According to Srihari, protecting farmers and families affected by the irrigation project remains a key priority. He said all genuine beneficiaries would receive compensation as prescribed by law and

that appropriate checks were being implemented to ensure that public funds were not released to ineligible persons.

Responding to claims that the list of displaced families had been modified, Srihari asked the former legislators to release the relevant government records and provide evidence supporting their allegations. He also advised political leaders who had made personal accusations against the Chief Minister and his family to approach competent investigative agencies with specific evidence.

On criticism regarding the feasibility of the Kodangal Lift Irrigation Scheme, the Minister said such matters should be assessed through technical studies, engineering designs and statutory approvals. He dismissed the suggestion that politicians could determine the technical viability of an irrigation project and advised those with doubts to seek clarification from the concerned departments.

Srihari also rejected allegations of commissions involving Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, contractors and Congress leaders. He described the claims as irresponsible and said the government was willing to cooperate with any lawful investigation if credible evidence was produced.

The Minister urged political leaders to focus on the concerns of farmers and displaced families rather than making unverified allegations. He said the government would work to ensure fair compensation, transparency in land acquisition and quality execution of the project.

Srihari warned that repeated claims without evidence could create unnecessary confusion among affected communities and obstruct development. He reiterated that the government was prepared to act firmly wherever corruption or irregularities were established.

Raghunandan Rao Seeks Probe into Land Deals

New Delhi, August 13 | TPN Bureau

BJP MP Raghunandan Rao has accused the Congress and BRS of engaging in a political battle over alleged misuse of public resources in Telangana. He described the two parties as "two sides of the same coin" and alleged that the Congress government was following practices similar to those it had criticised during the previous BRS administration.

The BJP MP demanded a detailed investigation into the proposed Unity Mall project and the agreements connected with its development. He said the Centre had sanctioned ₹202 crore for the project, while the Telangana government had earmarked more than six acres of land. He called for an impartial examination of the agreement and the allegations surrounding it.

Raghunandan Rao also referred to allegations raised by BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao regarding the project. He questioned why allegations against the present government should not be investigated if similar claims concerning the previous administration were being examined.

The MP further demanded an inquiry into the allocation of 10 acres of land to a private entity during the BRS government in 2018. He argued that land transactions involving both the previous and present administrations should be investigated without political bias.

Raghunandan Rao said he was submitting a complaint to the Central Vigilance

Commission seeking an investigation by central agencies into the Unity Mall agreement and the earlier land allocation. He also renewed his demand for a CBI inquiry into the entire Kaleshwaram project.

According to the BJP leader, the Kaleshwaram investigation should cover every stage, beginning with preparation of the Detailed Project Report and continuing through construction, contracts and final payments. He said an inquiry limited to the three barrages would not provide a complete picture of the project.

Raghunandan Rao urged Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to formally request the Centre to conduct a comprehensive investigation. He said he would also personally take up the issue with the Union Home Minister.

The MP criticised the Congress government over its positions on several major issues, including the Regional Ring Road, Formula-E race and Kaleshwaram project. He alleged that Congress and BRS leaders were exchanging accusations instead of addressing issues affecting the people.

Raghunandan Rao appealed to voters to support the BJP's vision of a "double-engine government" in Telangana. He stressed that public lands and other government assets belong to the people and should be protected for future generations.(He maintained that governments should act as custodians of public property rather than treating it as an asset available for indiscriminate disposal.

Panel Reviews Hate Speech Measures



Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

The second meeting of the Telangana Hate Speech Select Committee was held at the Assembly Committee Hall on Thursday under the chairmanship of Minister Ponnababbar. The committee reviewed measures required to curb hate speech while ensuring that legitimate freedom of expression remains protected.

Committee members Kavvampalli Satyanarayana, Kova Lakshmi, Manik Rao and Abdul Balala participated in the meeting, along with the Legislative Assembly Secretary, Home Secretary, Law Secretary and officials from various departments.

Ponnababbar said freedom of expression was a fundamental democratic right but should not come at the cost of another individual's dignity, security or social harmony. He observed that statements promoting hatred based on caste, religion, region, language, class or other identities could create social tensions and adversely affect public order.

The Minister called for a detailed assessment of existing legislation, regulations and enforcement mechanisms related to hate speech. He said the committee should identify practical difficulties faced by police and administrative authorities while handling complaints and taking action.

He also highlighted the growing influence of social media, noting that provocative or inflammatory content could spread rapidly through digital

platforms. According to him, authorities need clear and transparent procedures for receiving complaints, verifying allegations, examining evidence and determining responsibility before initiating legal proceedings.

Prabhakar stressed that any proposed framework should maintain a careful balance between protecting free expression and preventing speech that encourages hatred, hostility or violence.

He said legitimate criticism and democratic debate should not be unnecessarily restricted.

The Minister further directed the committee to approach the issue impartially and place the interests of society above political considerations. Equality before the law, he said, must apply regardless of a person's political affiliation, community, caste or social background.

He emphasized that the committee's work should ultimately contribute to a peaceful and inclusive society. Rather than curtailing constitutional freedoms, its recommendations should focus on strengthening social harmony, mutual respect and responsible public discourse.

The meeting is expected to contribute to the formulation of effective mechanisms for addressing hate speech and improving coordination among government departments and enforcement agencies. Prabhakar reiterated that safeguarding democratic freedoms while maintaining public peace would remain the central objective of the committee.

Calls Grow to Revive CCI Unit



Adilabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Leaders, academics and student representatives have intensified their demand for reopening the closed Adilabad unit of the Cement Corporation of India (CCI), urging the Central and State governments to provide financial support for its revival.

The CCI Sadhana Samiti organised a 'Vidyarthi Yuvatha Poru Garjana' meeting in Adilabad town on Wednesday, bringing together students, activists and supporters of the campaign. Participants said restarting the cement factory could create substantial employment opportunities for local youth while giving a fresh boost to the district's industrial economy.

Prof. C. Kasim, Principal of the Arts College at Osmania University, extended his support to the Samiti and the wider campaign for reopening the facility. He stressed the importance of restoring industrial activity in the district to create sustainable economic opportunities.

Former minister Jogu Ramanna and BRS student wing state president Gellu Srinivas Yadav also backed the demand. The speakers proposed a funding structure under which the State and Central governments would each contribute ₹250 crore, supplemented by a bank loan of ₹1,500 crore, to facilitate the factory's revival.

Ramanna criticised Adilabad MP Godam Nagesh and MLA Payal Shankar, alleging that they had not given sufficient attention to the issue. He also recalled a

promise attributed to Union Home Minister Amit Shah regarding revival of the factory if BJP candidates were elected from Adilabad in the 2018 elections. Campaigners argued that reopening the CCI unit would benefit the district far beyond the factory's direct workforce. They said renewed production would create opportunities for transport operators, suppliers, contractors, traders and other businesses connected to the cement industry.

The speakers maintained that the factory's revival could also help reduce unemployment among educated and skilled youth who are currently forced to seek opportunities outside the district. Increased industrial activity, they said, could strengthen local markets and improve the overall economic environment.

CCI Sadhana Samiti leaders Mallesh, Narayana and Ramesh, CPM leader Bandi Dattatri, SFI state secretary Nagaraju, state leader Kiran, Sachin and several others participated in the meeting.

The organisers urged both governments to undertake a detailed assessment of the factory's financial, technical and operational requirements. They called for a clear revival roadmap and adequate funding to restore the facility after years of closure. The Samiti said the campaign would continue until concrete steps were taken to restart the CCI unit and bring back industrial activity and employment opportunities to Adilabad.

New Pensions to Begin from Medaram

Continue

cost Rs 16,000 crore, besides opening the new Collectorate complex.

The first phase of pension sanctions will cover widows, single women, persons with disabilities, toddy tappers and handloom workers. People affected by filariasis, thalassemia, sickle cell anaemia and haemophilia will also be included. The government plans to extend the benefit in phases to around three lakh to 3.5 lakh eligible beneficiaries across Telangana, with special priority for women, persons with disabilities and those suffering from chronic ailments. Under the Cheyutha pension scheme, persons with disabilities receive Rs 4,016 per month, while beneficiaries in other eligible categories are provided Rs 2,016. Applications are being accepted through the Cheyutha portal. Applicants are required to submit documents including Aadhaar, age proof, ration or food security card, income certificate and the first page of their bank passbook. Category-specific documents may also be required.

The government has extended the application deadline to August 31. Officials have urged eligible individuals to submit their applications before the deadline and ensure that all required documents are attached. The Medaram launch is expected to mark a major expansion of the state's social security support, particularly for vulnerable women and economically disadvantaged sections.

Rs 14.20 Crore Sanctioned for Manjeera Barrage Repairs?

Continue

under the EAM Cell-I, Transmission Division-II, Patancheru. After examining the proposal and recommendations of the concerned authorities, the government accorded administrative sanction of Rs 14.20 crore under the budget head "Loans to HMWSSB for Developmental Works."

The repair project is expected to strengthen the barrage structure and ensure its continued role in supporting the region's water supply needs.

Four Industrial Parks Planned Around City

Continue

initiative is aimed at strengthening Hyderabad's industrial ecosystem, attracting fresh investments and generating large-scale direct and indirect employment. Authorities believe the development of these specialised industrial clusters could further enhance the city's position as a major business and manufacturing destination.

BJP Challenges FRC for Voter Registration

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao has questioned the use of Family Register Certificates (FRCs) for voter enrolment, alleging that the document could be misused to facilitate the entry of ineligible names into electoral rolls.



In a statement issued on Thursday, Ramchander Rao said the BJP had approached the Election Commission of India (ECI) after the Telangana government introduced FRCs as supporting documents for voter registration. He alleged that the move could potentially lead to duplicate registrations, bogus entries and enrolment of individuals without adequate identity documentation.

Ramchander Rao said the ECI subsequently issued clarification that an FRC could not be treated as valid identity proof for enrolling a person as a voter. He referred to the Commission's 2013 guidelines, under which an FRC was considered comparable to a ration card for specified purposes. The BJP leader said the certificate could help citizens access government welfare schemes and subsidised food but did not independently establish identity for electoral registration. He alleged that the state government had introduced the provision for political reasons, though the government has not accepted the allegation.

Ramchander Rao said the BJP had challenged the state government's decision in the Telangana High Court and was continuing its legal efforts against what it

described as an improper electoral procedure. He also appealed to eligible voters to closely monitor the electoral roll revision process. The draft electoral rolls are scheduled to be released on August 17. Citizens whose names are missing from the draft list will be able to submit claims within the period prescribed by election authorities.

He said voters could also file objections against names they believed belonged to ineligible or bogus voters. Such objections, he noted, would be considered by election officials after verification of the supporting documents and relevant records. Ramchander Rao stressed that eligible citizens who are not included in the draft rolls should not assume that they have permanently lost their opportunity to vote. They can still seek enrolment through the claims and objections procedure, subject to applicable rules.

He said the BJP would remain engaged in the electoral revision process and work to safeguard the voting rights of genuine citizens. The party, he added, would continue to press for transparency and accuracy in electoral rolls so that every eligible voter can exercise their democratic right without obstacles.

Harish Rao Seeks Halt to Land Auctions

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

BRS leader and former minister T. Harish Rao has criticised the Telangana government over proposed land auctions and urged Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to stop the scheduled sales until ownership and legal disputes are resolved.

In a letter to the Chief Minister, Harish Rao questioned the proposed disposal of valuable lands in areas including Gachibowli, Lagacherla, the Maulana Azad National Urdu University vicinity and Raidurg. He particularly objected to the Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation's (TGIIC) plan to auction 10.63 acres in Survey No. 83/1 of Raidurg Panmaktha village on August 17 and 21.

Harish Rao alleged that the property was involved in several disputes and recalled that Revanth Reddy had approached the courts in 2020 seeking protection for the same land. He questioned why the government was proceeding with another auction while legal issues concerning the property remained pending.

The former minister also referred to an earlier auction of 6.2 acres from the same survey number, which he said had fetched approximately ₹237 crore per acre. According to him, the State Bank of India subsequently approached the court and the matter remains before the High Court.

Harish Rao questioned the rationale

behind proposing the sale of another 10.63 acres from the disputed survey number. He argued that conducting an auction before determining ownership could expose prospective purchasers to prolonged litigation and create additional complications.

He demanded that all relevant heritage, revenue, survey and Waqf records connected with Survey No. 83 be collected and subjected to a detailed examination. He said the government should establish the ownership status and resolve pending disputes before taking any decision on the property.

The BRS leader also recalled earlier statements attributed to Revanth Reddy and Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy opposing the sale of government lands. He alleged that the present government's actions were contrary to those earlier positions.

Harish Rao warned that selling disputed properties could create new third-party interests and complicate efforts to resolve existing cases. He called for an immediate suspension of the proposed TGIIC auctions and urged the government to protect valuable public and heritage assets. He further appealed to the Chief Minister to prioritise Telangana's long-term interests and ensure transparency in the management of government properties. According to Harish Rao, disputed lands should be preserved until legal and ownership questions are conclusively settled.

Massive Tiranga Rally Planned

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

The BJP Telangana unit will organise a massive Tiranga Yatra at Tank Bund on August 14 as part of the nationwide 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. BJP Telangana Mahila Morcha State President and Tiranga Yatra State Executive Convener Dr. Mekala Shilpa Reddy announced on Thursday. Speaking at a press conference at the BJP state office, she said the campaign was being observed from August 10 to 15 in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call. She described 'Har Ghar Tiranga' as a movement aimed at strengthening patriotism, national unity and respect for the Tricolour. Shilpa Reddy urged families to hoist the national flag at their homes with children and relatives under the slogan, "Har Ghar Tiranga, Ghar Ghar Tiranga, Har Man Tiranga." She said BJP units were conducting Tiranga Yatras across districts and mandal headquarters while reaching out to families of freedom fighters and martyrs. The Tank Bund rally will begin at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar statue near the Telugu Talli flyover and conclude at the Swami Vivekananda statue. BJP State President N. Ramchander Rao, Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of State Bandi Sanjay Kumar and Rajya Sabha member K. Laxman are expected to participate. Party MPs, MLAs, former public representatives, ex-servicemen, sportspersons, Padma awardees, film personalities and representatives of social organisations are also expected to attend. Shilpa Reddy appealed to citizens and BJP workers across Telangana to participate in large numbers and make the rally a grand demonstration of patriotism and unity.



Dating App Match Accused of Rs 15 Lakh Fraud

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

A 33-year-old deputy manager working with an insurance company in Vanasthali ĕpuram has alleged that a Tirupati-based man she met through a dating app cheated her of Rs 15 lakh and later subjected her to harassment and threats. According to the woman's complaint, she became acquainted with the man through the dating platform and the relationship subsequently progressed towards marriage. The two reportedly became engaged in April. The woman alleged that the man sought financial assistance from her, claiming that he planned to establish a software company in the United States. He allegedly told her that the proposed venture would focus on developing software and solutions related to breast cancer medicines. Trusting his claims, she reportedly gave him a total of Rs 15 lakh. However, she later became suspicious of his intentions and alleged that he began pressuring her to pay the entire dowry amount in advance. Following the alleged demand, the woman decided to call off the engagement. She further alleged that after the engagement was cancelled, the man continued to harass and threaten her. The allegations have brought renewed attention to the risks associated with relationships initiated through online dating platforms, particularly when financial transactions are involved. The woman has sought appropriate action against the accused and alleged that she was deceived after placing trust in him. The matter is expected to be examined by the police based on the complaint and supporting evidence. Authorities are likely to verify the financial transactions, communications between the two individuals and the circumstances surrounding the engagement and its subsequent cancellation. Police investigations, including verification of the allegations and the alleged transfer of Rs 15 lakh, will be crucial in determining whether a criminal offence was committed. The accused's response to the allegations, if formally recorded, would also be relevant to the investigation.

Man Held for Alleged Attempt to Kidnap Toddler



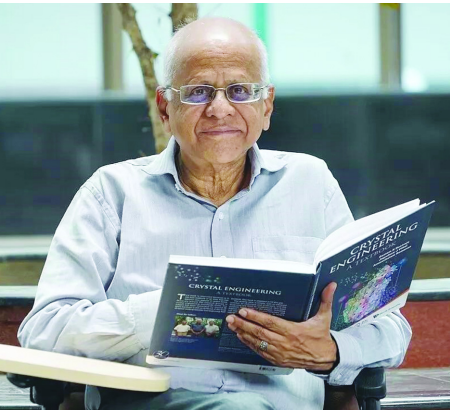
Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Rajendranagar police detained a man after he allegedly attempted to take away a two-year-old girl following a dispute over an unpaid loan. The incident reportedly occurred in Hyderabad on Wednesday. According to preliminary information, the girl's family had borrowed Rs 30,000 from an acquaintance while residing in Manikeshwari Nagar. The family has since shifted to a rented house in Hanuman Nagar. Police said the man visited the family's residence after the loan remained unpaid and demanded that the money be returned. An argument reportedly broke out between him and the family members during the confrontation. The man allegedly threatened to take the couple's young daughter until the outstanding amount was repaid. Alarmed by the situation, the family immediately approached the police and informed them about the alleged attempt to take the child. Acting on the complaint, Rajendranagar police reached the residence and gathered details from the family members. The accused was taken into custody for questioning. Police officials are currently investigating the circumstances surrounding the incident and verifying the allegations made by the family. Further action will be taken based on the findings of the inquiry. The incident has caused concern among local residents, particularly over the safety of children during disputes involving financial matters.

Gautam Desiraju Wins Ewald Prize

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Structural chemist Prof. Gautam R. Desiraju has been awarded the 14th Ewald Prize, one of the most prestigious honours in crystallography, for his pioneering contributions to crystal engineering and molecular interactions. The International Union of Crystallography (IUCr) honoured Desiraju for developing the supramolecular synthons concept and demonstrating the significance of weak hydrogen and halogen bonding in molecular crystals and biological systems. The award, presented once every three years, was conferred during the opening ceremony of the 27th IUCr Congress in Calgary on August 11. Prof. Desiraju is Professor Emeritus at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, and previously served as IUCr president from 2011 to 2014. He worked at the School of Chemistry, University of Hyderabad, from 1979 to 2009 before moving to IISc. He also has an association with the Cambridge Structural Database, where a structure entry bears the GAUTAM refcode in recognition of his contributions. His research has demonstrated how weak molecular interactions can significantly influence crystal formation and properties. His work has contributed to advances in structural and supramolecular chemistry, pharmaceutical research and the understanding of halogen bonding. Desiraju has authored more than 475 research papers and has received over 80,000 citations, with an h-index of around 105, according to the IUCr. He delivered the Ewald Prize Lecture during the Congress opening ceremony, marking recognition of his longstanding contributions to crystallography.



Tiranga Rallies Promote Nation-First Spirit



Hyderabad/Peddapalli, August 13 | TPN Bureau

BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao participated in grand Tiranga rallies held in Tarnaka and Peddapalli as part of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign and Independence Day celebrations, calling upon citizens and youth to uphold the spirit of "Nation First." In Tarnaka, a large number of residents, students, youth and BJP workers participated in the procession, cutting across political affiliations. A massive national flag measuring nearly 200 metres was carried during the rally, symbolising patriotism and national unity. Ramchander Rao said he was delighted to participate in the Tarnaka programme and appreciated the enthusiastic participation of people from different sections. He said

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign had received a strong response from youth and citizens across the country. At the Peddapalli district headquarters, Ramchander Rao attended another massive Tiranga Rally as chief guest. BJP cadres, students, youth and members of the public participated with national flags. MLC Malka Komuriah, senior leader Gomasa Srinivas, BJP district president Karre Sanjeeva Reddy and other leaders attended. Addressing the gathering, Ramchander Rao urged young people to contribute to the creation of a developed and powerful India. He said India's economic progress was continuing despite global conflicts and credited the leadership and policies of the Central government. He highlighted initiatives such as Make in

India, Startup India, Stand-Up India and Mudra loans, saying they had encouraged self-employment and helped create job opportunities. Ramchander Rao also highlighted developments in education, pointing to the expansion of IITs, NITs, AIIMS and central universities. He said reforms in education were creating greater opportunities for the country's youth. He urged people to protect national unity and integrity and actively contribute to building a 'Viksit Bharat'. He said the youth, as future nation-builders, must embrace the "Nation First" principle and work collectively for India's progress. He also announced another major Tiranga Yatra in Hyderabad from the Ambedkar statue to the Swami Vivekananda statue and appealed to citizens to participate in large numbers.



Shed Construction Raises Safety Questions

• Thulasi Naveen Kumar

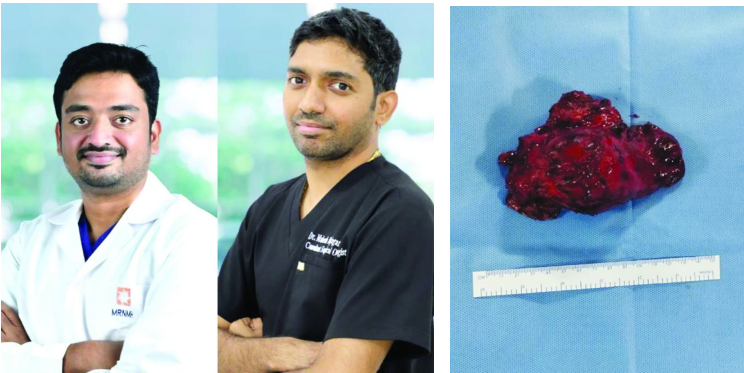
The continuation of shed construction work at Essar Environ Air Systems in Churchgallapur under Dundigal Circle, despite a recent accident at the site, has raised concerns among local residents over safety standards and regulatory supervision. On July 9, at around 5 p.m., 43-year-old Lanka Bhaskara Rao reportedly fell from the top of the shed while fabrication work was underway. Following the incident, questions were raised about safety measures at the site. However, residents now allege that construction and repair activities have resumed at the same location. Locals are questioning whether officials conducted a detailed inspection after the accident and verified whether the structure and ongoing work complied with prescribed safety standards. They are also seeking clarity on the permissions obtained for continuing construction following the inci-



dent. Residents have sought details about the approvals granted for the shed, including the department that issued them and whether the construction is being carried out according to an approved plan. They questioned how any unauthorised construction could continue without coming to the notice of the concerned authorities. The resumption of work has also triggered concerns over the possibility of another accident if safe-

ty deficiencies are not properly addressed. Residents said construction sites where accidents have already occurred require stricter monitoring and verification before work resumes. They have urged Dundigal Circle Town Planning officials to immediately inspect the premises and disclose details regarding construction permissions, sanctioned plans and the nature of the ongoing works. Locals further demanded that authorities take appropriate legal action if any violations are found. They said transparency over permissions and strict enforcement of safety regulations were essential to prevent further incidents. Residents are now expecting the authorities to clarify whether all required approvals were obtained and whether the ongoing construction meets applicable safety norms. They said the earlier accident should serve as a warning and called for effective supervision rather than allowing construction activities to continue without scrutiny.

Complex Cancer Surgery Gives Young Man New Hope



Quthbullapur, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Doctors at Malla Reddy Narayana Multispecialty Hospital in Suraram successfully performed a complex cancer surgery on a 27-year-old man from a remote tribal village in Anakapalli district, offering him renewed hope after a difficult diagnosis. The patient, from Konam village, was diagnosed with a mediastinal germ cell tumor and had already undergone chemotherapy. A subsequent PET-CT scan showed that the tumor had considerably reduced in size. However, the remaining mass was positioned close to vital organs and major blood vessels, making surgical removal challenging. After a detailed evaluation, the medical team performed a sternotomy and excised the mediastinal tumor. The surgery was successfully carried out on July 29 under the leadership of Senior Consultant Surgical Oncologist Dr. Harish Dara and Consultant Surgical Oncologist Dr. Mahesh Bejagam, with support from a multidisciplinary team. The patient recovered under close medical supervision and was discharged in stable condition on August 3. The doctors said the case highlights the importance of timely and specialised cancer care, particularly for patients from rural and tribal communities. They emphasised their commitment to making advanced cancer treatment accessible to people regardless of their location. According to the medical team, early diagnosis, appropriate chemotherapy and timely surgery can significantly improve outcomes, even in complex cancer cases involving tumors located near critical structures. The successful treatment has provided the young patient with an opportunity to return to normal life.

AIG Hospitals to Adopt Digital Surgery Platform

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

AIG Hospitals in Hyderabad is set to introduce a digital platform that will enable surgical procedures to be securely recorded, reviewed and used for medical training and case discussions. The initiative is being undertaken in collaboration with Johnson & Johnson. The hospital will implement J&J's Polyphonic Surgery platform, which integrates surgical videos, case reviews, educational resources and feedback into a single digital system. AIG Hospitals said it would be among the early healthcare institutions in India and the Asia-Pacific region to adopt the technology. The platform will allow surgical teams to revisit procedures after operations, analyse cases and use recorded surgeries for training and knowledge-sharing. It is also expected to strengthen coordination among surgeons, operating-room teams and medical residents. As part of the collaboration, AIG

Hospitals and Johnson & Johnson will assess the platform through its use by surgeons, operating-room personnel, residents, information technology teams and hospital administrators. The evaluation will focus on how connected digital technologies can contribute to improved clinical practices and greater efficiency in operating rooms. Dr. G.V. Rao, Director and Chief of Surgery at AIG Hospitals, said surgery extends beyond the actual procedure and involves careful planning, teamwork, post-operative review and continuous learning. He said the new technology could improve communication among surgical teams, support structured learning from completed procedures and strengthen the training of young doctors. According to the hospital, the broader objective is to use digital tools to promote more consistent surgical practices and enhance the quality and precision of patient care.

Auto Workers Demand Immediate Action



Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

BRTU Auto Union State President Vemula Marayya has urged the Telangana government to immediately address the long-pending grievances of auto, cab and school van drivers, warning that failure to act could lead to an indefinite strike. The issues were discussed at the Auto Union state conference held at Sundarayya Vignana Kendram under Marayya's leadership. He criticised the government for not fulfilling its assurances and said the livelihoods of auto drivers had been adversely affected following the implementation of the Mahalakshmi scheme. Marayya demanded an increase in auto meter fares and the creation of a dedicated welfare board for auto and cab workers. He also sought annual financial assistance of Rs 12,000 for auto drivers and called for a government-backed app to provide an alternative to private platforms such as Ola, Uber and Rapido. He urged authorities to curb illegal two-wheeler taxi services and provide greater protection to traditional auto workers. Marayya also demanded the immediate withdrawal of the proposal to introduce electric autos through the RTC. He warned that if the government failed to resolve the issues, auto, cab and school van drivers across Telangana would begin an indefinite strike from August 24. He appealed to the government to initiate talks and take prompt measures to prevent further disruption.

Tiranga Rally Draws 4,000



Quthbullapur, August 13 | TPN Bureau

A massive Tiranga Rally organised by the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) in the Quthbullapur constituency witnessed the participation of around 4,000 students and young people on Thursday. The rally began at IDPL X-Roads and proceeded towards the Quthbullapur Zonal Office, with participants carrying the national flag and raising patriotic slogans including "Jai Hind." The enthusiastic turnout created a vibrant atmosphere and highlighted the spirit of nationalism among the youth. Organisers said the rally was aimed at encouraging patriotic values and strengthening national pride among younger generations. Participants

marched in a disciplined manner, making the Tricolour the central attraction of the event. MP Etela Rajender, BJP Medchal Urban District President D. Giri Vardhan Reddy, district leaders, former corporators and party activists participated in the rally and encouraged the young participants. Several local BJP and BJYM leaders, volunteers and organisers also joined the programme. The organisers thanked the students, youth, party workers and volunteers for their active participation and contribution to the success of the event. They said the large turnout demonstrated the enthusiasm of Quthbullapur's youth and helped make the Tiranga Rally a prominent patriotic event in the constituency.

Ramchander Rao Assures Support to Lawyers

Peddapalli, August 13 | TPN Bureau

BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao assured lawyers in Peddapalli that the party would continue to support their welfare, safety and professional interests. During his visit to the district, he held a meeting with local advocates, heard their grievances and discussed measures to address their concerns.

Ramchander Rao described the legal profession as a noble and respected service and said lawyers play a crucial role as "social engineers" in upholding justice. Recalling his own experience as a practicing advocate and former Bar Council member, he said he regularly visits courts

whenever he travels to different places. Demand for Advocates' Protection Act Expressing concern over increasing attacks on lawyers, Ramchander Rao strongly condemned incidents of violence against advocates. Referring to the recent death of a lawyer, he said ensuring the safety of members of the legal profession was a responsibility of the government. He reiterated his commitment to pursuing an Advocates' Protection Act and said he had discussed the issue with the BJP legislative floor leader. He assured lawyers that their concerns and representations would be raised during the upcoming Assembly sessions and that pressure would be maintained until appropriate



action was taken.

Ramchander Rao also recalled earlier efforts concerning the construction of court buildings and increased financial support for district bar associations. He said welfare measures had been strengthened to provide greater financial security to advocates' families. He expressed hope that the concept of "Justice at Doorstep" would become

accessible to all sections of society. Calling upon people to respect the legal profession, he compared lawyers to doctors, saying that while doctors treat physical ailments, lawyers fight for justice while adhering to professional ethics. He assured bar associations that the BJP would remain at the forefront of efforts to protect lawyers and safeguard their professional interests.

Police Recover 20 Lost Mobile Phones

Chatrinka, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Chatrinka police have successfully traced and recovered 20 mobile phones that were reported missing by residents within the police station limits. The recovery was carried out using the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) portal, which enables authorities to block and trace lost or stolen mobile devices. Inspector Koteswara Rao handed over the recovered phones to their respective owners. The beneficiaries expressed appreciation for the prompt response and efforts of the police in locating their devices. The operation was conducted under the supervision of Inspector Koteswara Rao, with the active participation of Detective Inspector Krishnamurthy Naidu, Detective Sub-Inspector Mohammed Majeed Ali and crime staff members



Shivalingam and Venkatesh. Police officials urged citizens who lose their mobile phones to report the matter without delay at the nearest police station. They also advised victims to use the CEIR portal to block the device and assist authorities in tracing it. The police said timely reporting and proper use of the CEIR facility can significantly improve the chances of recovering missing mobile phones and help prevent their misuse.

Additional Collector Inspects Municipality

Amanagal, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Ranga Reddy District Additional Collector Kiranmayi conducted a surprise inspection of the Amanagal Municipality office on Thursday and reviewed the functioning of various departments. During her visit, she examined municipal records and sought details from officials regarding the municipality's income and expenditure. She later held discussions with Municipal Commissioner Raghavender Reddy and Chairman Pathya Naik on the progress of ongoing development works in Amanagal. The Additional Collector directed officials to maintain proper records and ensure that civic works were carried out efficiently. Kiranmayi subsequently visited the Bus Stand High School, where she participated in a programme to distribute uniforms to students. Accompanied by municipal officials and public representatives, she handed over uniforms to the students and interacted with them. Addressing the



gathering, she encouraged students to set ambitious goals and work diligently towards achieving them. She stressed the importance of education and urged the students to remain focused on their studies to build a bright and successful future. Later, the Additional Collector inspected the Surasamudram area and discussed local conditions with municipal officials. She sought information on civic facilities and issues requiring attention. Ice-Chairperson Talloju Geetha, Councillors Mahesh and Niranjan, Municipal Manager Anjaneyulu, officials and municipal staff were present during the inspection and programmes.

Students Protest for Bullet Train Route

Suryapet, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Students and student organisations staged widespread protests across Suryapet on Thursday, demanding that the proposed bullet train corridor be routed parallel to National Highway 65 through the district. The agitation followed reports of a possible change in the proposed alignment, which protesters said had earlier been planned along the NH-65 corridor. Large groups of students gathered at several major locations, including 60-Foot Road, the New Bus Stand, PSR Centre, Shankar Vilas Centre, Gandhi Statue Centre and Vanijya Bhavan Centre. The demonstrations briefly created tension at various points in the town as students raised slogans seeking justice for Suryapet. Student leaders alleged that the district was being denied a promised opportunity and accused authorities of ignoring the interests of local residents. They said the agitation would continue until a clear assurance was given regarding the bullet train route through Suryapet.



At Vanijya Bhavan Centre, student representatives appealed to people from all sections of society to join the campaign. They maintained that the movement would continue until the demand was addressed and warned that they would intensify the agitation if necessary. Local residents also expressed support for the students and criticised the alleged lack of attention to Suryapet's demand. United Student Union representatives, including Pulluri Simhadri, Dhaniyakula Srikanth Varma, Bhasha Pongu Sunil, Erra Akhil, Bommagani Vinay, Bhari Ashok, Poloju Mahesh, Ahmed Ali, Parala Sai, Poleboyina Kiran, Shaik Jahangir and Venkatesh Naik, participated along with representatives of private educational institutions.

Grand Tiranga Yatra Marks Patriotic Spirit



Habsiguda, August 13 | TPN Bureau

A grand 'Tiranga Yatra' was organised at the Habsiguda crossroads in Hyderabad on Wednesday, evoking a strong spirit of patriotism among participants. The event featured a vibrant rally and a display of the national flag, with students and youth turning out in large numbers. The programme was organised in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to citizens to hoist the nation-

al flag at their homes and express their patriotism. The rally was conducted under the leadership of BJP leader Raghupati Goud and the local OBC Morcha unit. Addressing the gathering, Raghupati Goud urged citizens to remember and honour those who fought for India's independence. He also stressed the importance of strengthening patriotic values among the younger generation and encouraging them to uphold the nation's unity and pride.

Veerababu Condemns Ravi's Remarks

Tarnaka, August 13 | TPN Bureau

BRS state leader Bandari Veerababu has strongly criticised Congress leader Pidamarthi Ravi over his recent remarks against Sathupalli MLA Sandra Venkata Veeriah, describing them as inappropriate and unwarranted.

Speaking at a press conference held at Osmania University Arts College on Thursday, Veerababu alleged that Ravi was making statements beyond his position and questioned his authority to comment on matters concerning the Sathupalli constituency.

Veerababu pointed out that Ravi has no political connection with Sathupalli and belongs to Mahabubabad district. He said it was inappropriate for a leader from another district to make what he termed reckless remarks against a political leader from Khammam district.



The BRS leader urged Ravi to immediately withdraw his comments and exercise restraint while making statements about other leaders. He warned that continued criticism could invite strong public opposition.

Veerababu said political differences should not be used as a reason to make personal or unwarranted allegations against elected representatives. He appealed to political leaders to maintain dignity and responsibility in their public statements.

Nagaraju Goud Named SGF Zonal Secretary

Quthbullapur, August 13 | TPN Bureau

P. Nagaraju Goud, Physical Director at Suraram Colony Government High School, has been appointed Zonal Secretary of the Quthbullapur Zonal School Games Federation (SGF). The appointment, made as per orders issued by the Medchal District Educational Officer, will be valid for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 academic years. In his new role, Nagaraju Goud will oversee the organisation of sports competitions from school to zonal levels, coordinate with educational institutions and identify promising sporting talent. He will also work to encourage greater participation in sports and provide talented students with opportunities to



progress. Nagaraju Goud said he would sincerely fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to him. He expressed his determination to identify talented athletes across schools in the Quthbullapur zone and support their progress to district and state-level competitions. He noted that sports play an important role in developing discipline, confidence and leadership skills among students. Teachers, physical education instructors and students of Suraram Colony Zilla Parishad High School congratulated him on his appointment.

Leaders Meet Inspector



Tarnaka, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Leaders from Manikeswar Nagar met V. Das, the newly appointed Inspector of the Osmania University Police Station, during a courtesy visit on Thursday. The delegation felicitated the Inspector by presenting him with a shawl and conveyed their best wishes on assuming his new responsibilities. During the meeting, the leaders urged Inspector V. Das to take firm measures to prevent crime and curb anti-social activities in Manikeswar Nagar. They also appealed to him to give priority to public safety and take effective

steps to maintain peace and law and order in the locality. The delegation expressed confidence that the new Inspector would work closely with residents and address issues affecting the community. They stressed the importance of regular policing and prompt action against activities that could disturb public order.

The meeting was attended by Seven Temples Chairman Gandikota Vijay Kumar and TRS leaders Alakunta Hari, Rosiah, Kalyan, Shivaratri Gopi and Bodasu Raviteja, among others. The leaders wished the Inspector success in his new assignment.

Dayakar Meets AICC Secretary

Hyderabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

TPCC General Secretary Chanagani Dayakar held a one-on-one meeting with AICC Secretary Sachin Sawant and discussed party affairs and organisational activities. During the meeting, Dayakar requested that young leaders be given opportunities in the upcoming Graduate MLC elections. Responding to his request, Sachin Sawant advised him to submit his biodata to three ministers for consideration. Sawant also enquired about Dayakar's previous work locations and the activities he had undertaken for the party. He advised him to continue working actively for the party's expansion and strengthening its organisational base.



Dayakar briefed the AICC secretary on his work related to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) programme, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and the appointment of party committees. The meeting focused on strengthening grassroots activities and providing greater opportunities to young leaders.

Realtors Seek Government Support

Tarnaka, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Realtors Association President Edla Prabhakar Reddy has urged the state government to take immediate measures to support real estate professionals, stating that the sector is facing a severe crisis and thousands of people are struggling financially. Speaking at a press conference at his office in Habsiguda on Thursday, Prabhakar Reddy said the real estate industry had been experiencing difficulties for nearly three years. He claimed that around 25 lakh professionals across Telangana depend on the sector for their livelihoods and that the prolonged slowdown has pushed many into financial distress. He explained that realtors often invest their own money and bor-

row from banks to construct apartments and houses. When properties remain unsold, however, developers face mounting debt and financial pressure. He expressed concern over reports of extreme distress among some professionals, including instances of suicide linked to financial difficulties. Prabhakar Reddy also said uncertainty had grown among the public regarding land and construction projects in Hyderabad following actions by HYDRRA. He alleged that realtors were incurring substantial losses despite undertaking construction after obtaining municipal permissions as required under existing regulations. He said the sector was approaching a critical stage and appealed to the government to acknowledge the problems faced by real



estate professionals. He called for clear and supportive policies to restore confidence among developers, protect livelihoods and revive activity in the industry. Prabhakar Reddy urged the government to take policy decisions that would help the real estate sector regain stability and ensure greater financial security for those dependent on it.

Brahma Kamala Blooms Mark Shravana Beginning

Quthbullapur, August 13 | TPN Bureau

A rare floral spectacle delighted residents of Vishwakarma Colony in Suraram as Brahma Kamala flowers bloomed at the home of S. Jeevan Reddy on the first day of the holy month of Shravana.

Jeevan Reddy, Chairman of the Vishwakarma Colony Temple Committee and BRS President of the colony, and his family were thrilled when the flowers opened around 3 a.m., during the auspicious Brahma Muhurtham. The family considered the unusual occurrence on the first day of Shravana spiritually significant and performed special prayers. They described the blooming of the rare flowers as an

auspicious sign and a blessing from God. The event attracted considerable interest from neighbours, who gathered to witness the flowers.

Brahma Kamala is known for blooming during the night and remaining open only for a short period. The coincidence of the flowers opening on the first day of Shravana made the occasion particularly special for residents of Vishwakarma Colony. Jeevan Reddy's family expressed their happiness, saying they regarded the blooming as a blessing and a moment of great spiritual significance.



Two Women Killed in Road Accident

Nizamabad, August 13 | TPN Bureau

Two women were killed in a fatal road accident on the Govindpet flyover in Armour of Nizamabad district on Thursday. The accident occurred when a container lorry crashed into the rear of a stationary private bus. According to preliminary information, the private bus had stopped on the flyover after suffering a tyre puncture. While the bus remained stationary, two women were reportedly sitting on the road divider in front of the vehicle.

At that time, a speeding container lorry collided with the rear of the bus with considerable force. The impact pushed the bus forward, causing it to run over the two women on the divider. Both vic-

tims died at the scene. On receiving information about the accident, police personnel immediately reached the spot and began relief and investigation procedures.

The bodies were recovered and shifted to a government hospital for post-mortem examination.

The identities of the deceased women had not been established at the time of reporting. Police registered a case and launched an investigation to determine the exact circumstances that led to the accident. Authorities are also examining the circumstances surrounding the bus being stopped on the flyover and the movement of the container lorry. Further details are expected after the investigation and identification process are completed.

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

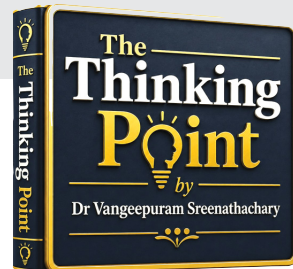
Dr Vangeepuram Sreenatha Chary

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.



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

Consultant Psychologist
Mobile: 9848023090



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.

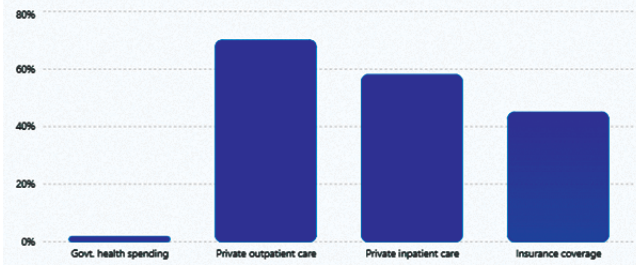
Healthcare Infrastructure and Economics

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-vented 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-vented 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.



US Ambassador Calls Settler Siege 'Horrific Act Of Terror'

US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee has condemned a siege by Israeli settlers targeting Palestinian homes in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, describing the incident as a "horrific act of terror". His remarks marked a sharp criticism from the Trump administration over a recent surge in settler violence. The siege began on Sunday in the village of Qusra, where settlers gathered around three homes, including one belonging to Palestinian American Loui Ridi. According to local officials, Ridi and his family, settlers at times numbering dozens, threw stones, tried to bring down a nearby stone wall and blocked residents from leaving their homes. Ridi's brother, Qusai Abu Rida, had remained inside one of the houses with his teenage son. Their supplies of food and water were reportedly running low. Abu Rida said Israeli forces later moved them to another home, though they remained unable to leave the area. The Israeli military said its troops had dismantled two "illegal outposts" near Qusra and a nearby village and detained one Israeli. It said additional troops were deployed to conduct defensive missions and patrols. Qusra Mayor Abdel Azim Wadi said Israeli forces had evacuated seven homes to establish positions in the village. Huckabee said the actions intended to intimidate and harass the family were "disgusting". He said the US embassy was coordinating with Israeli military and police authorities. The Israeli military had earlier described the siege as "illegal, reprehensible, and unacceptable" and declared the area a closed military zone. However, settlers reportedly returned and blocked roads with rocks. Loui Ridi, speaking from Ohio, said his brother and nephew had been without fresh food and water for several days. He alleged that settlers had targeted his home for months, cutting water and electricity supplies and throwing stones that damaged the property. Qusra is located in a violence-prone part of the northern West Bank and is surrounded by Israeli settlements. A mosque in the village was reportedly set on fire last month in another suspected settler attack. Palestinians and Israel's opposition have accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-line government of failing to adequately prevent settler attacks. Huckabee, a longtime supporter of Israel's settler movement, has previously backed Israeli control over the occupied West Bank while condemning settler violence. The West Bank was captured by Israel in the 1967 war and is claimed by Palestinians as part of a future independent state. Israeli settlers and their supporters argue that the territory should remain under Israeli control for historical, religious and security reasons.



Indian-Origin Teen Charged With Killing Mother And Brother In US

A 17-year-old Indian-origin teenager, Arjun Aravind, has been charged with killing his mother and younger brother at their family home in Acton, Massachusetts, following an overnight manhunt.



Aravind, a student at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, is accused of killing his 45-year-old mother, Sudha Venkatesan, and 14-year-old brother, Siddarth Aravind. He faces two counts of murder, two counts of assault and battery on a household or family member, two counts of assault and battery, use of a vehicle without authority and theft of a motor vehicle. Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan and Acton Police Chief Douglas Sturniolo said the deaths occurred at the family's Martha Lane home. The incident was discovered after a tutor arrived shortly after 6.30 pm for an appointment and could not enter the house. She contacted Aravind's father, who then asked police to conduct a welfare check. Officers found Sudha Venkatesan in the basement and Siddarth on the first floor. Both had visible trauma. The Chief Medical Examiner is yet to determine the exact cause and manner of death. Police said Aravind fled in his mother's Honda Accord. He was later found inside the vehicle in Wayland after officers responded to an unrelated alarm at a parking lot. He was taken into custody without incident. According to the Middlesex County District Attorney's Office, investigators found that Arjun had recently used the internet and ChatGPT to search for theoretical ideas or fantasies about killing his family. He had also used the chatbot to develop "Gothic novel-kind of stories", including questions and fictional characters. Authorities stressed that the investigation remains ongoing, including determining the weapon involved. Aravind was expected to face proceedings in Juvenile Court, while the murder and related assault charges were to be handled in Concord District Court.

Mark Zuckerberg Predicts More Jobs Despite AI Disruption

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg has said artificial intelligence (AI) will not necessarily lead to fewer jobs, arguing that businesses could become smaller while employment opportunities continue to grow.



Zuckerberg made the comments in a 6,500-word manifesto titled The Future is for Everyone: The Path to a Positive AI Future, published on the Meta website. He questioned the belief that AI would eliminate most jobs and reduce the relevance of human workers. "I do not understand why anyone who believes that AI will eliminate most jobs and much of humanity's relevance would rush to build that future," Zuckerberg wrote. The Meta CEO said company sizes could shrink as AI changes the way businesses operate, but this would not automatically mean fewer jobs. He compared the possible transition with the shift from large industrial companies to technology firms. Zuckerberg also predicted that AI agents could allow a small number of people to operate companies at a much larger scale. He said small businesses would remain an

important part of the economy but could have a greater impact with the help of advanced AI systems. "I expect we will start seeing small numbers of people with personal superintelligence agents able to run companies at significant scale," he said. His comments come amid growing concerns among technology leaders about AI-driven job losses. Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei has warned that AI could eliminate a large share of entry-level white-collar jobs within the next five

Russia Says India Among Key Partners For Arctic Cooperation

India is among the countries engaged in the "most productive" discussions with Russia on cooperation in the Arctic region, a senior Russian foreign ministry official said, highlighting growing interest in joint projects in the strategically important region. Speaking at the fourth Arctic - Regions Forum, Vladislav Maslennikov, Director of the Department of European Problems at the Russian Foreign Ministry, said the number of countries seeking engagement with Russia in the Arctic is steadily increasing. Maslennikov said the most productive dialogue was developing with China and India, which have shown interest in the Arctic agenda and possess substantial resources to implement joint projects and initiatives. His remarks came a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin said India, China and other countries were interested in working with Russia on Arctic cooperation and the Northern Sea Route.



Putin stressed the importance of the Northern Sea Route amid what he described as rising tensions in the Arctic and Asia-Pacific regions. He said Russia remained

ready to cooperate with interested countries within the framework of international maritime law. Putin said India and China were discussing the issue with Moscow

and expressed confidence that cooperation with participating countries could help expand global logistics. The Arctic, located above 66 degrees north latitude, contains significant natural resources and plays an important role in global climate and shipping. The region encompasses territories under the sovereignty of Arctic nations and is home to about four million people, around 10 per cent of whom are indigenous. India has also been strengthening its focus on polar affairs. In July, a parliamentary panel in New Delhi recommended considering the appointment of a "polar ambassador" to strengthen India's polar diplomacy and highlight the importance of Arctic and Antarctic regions in its foreign policy. The proposed role could support India's engagement with Arctic nations and promote cooperation in areas such as science, logistics, shipping and other strategic initiatives.

Iran Says It Controls Strait Of Hormuz

Iran has said that the strategically important Strait of Hormuz is under its "control and management", rejecting a claim by US President Donald Trump that the United States had "total control" of the key waterway. Hossein Taeb, head of Iran's Basij paramilitary unit, made the statement on Thursday, according to the semi-official Fars news agency. His remarks came a day after Trump posted on his Truth Social platform that the United States had gained total control of the Strait of Hormuz. Taeb said the United States had attempted to weaken what he described as the Islamic Republic's regional influence by launching another war in the Strait of Hormuz. He claimed that Washington had failed despite previously asserting that Iran had neither an air force nor a navy. "Today you see that the Strait of Hormuz is under the management and control of the Islamic



Republic," Taeb said, adding that Iran was continuing its course in complete security. The Strait of Hormuz is a vital global shipping route connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. A significant share of the world's oil and gas shipments passes through the narrow waterway, making any disruption there

a major concern for energy markets and international trade. The competing claims from Washington and Tehran come amid heightened tensions surrounding the strategic waterway. Iran has repeatedly stressed its ability to influence maritime activity in the region, while the United States has maintained a

strong military presence to protect shipping and safeguard freedom of navigation. Trump's statement about US control and Taeb's counterclaim underline the sharp disagreement between the two countries over the security situation around the Strait. Iran's leadership has continued to portray the country as capable of protecting its territory and strategic interests despite pressure from the United States. Taeb's comments similarly sought to project confidence in Iran's military and security capabilities. The Strait of Hormuz remains closely watched by governments, energy companies and shipping operators because any prolonged disruption could affect crude oil supplies, fuel prices and global trade. No independent confirmation was provided in the report regarding either side's claim of control over the waterway.

Indian-Origin Gautam Rangarajan Takes Key Role At No. 10

Indian-origin strategist and media executive Gautam Rangarajan has been appointed as expert adviser on structure and process by British Prime Minister Andy Burnham, taking up a newly created role at 10 Downing Street. The UK Prime Minister's Office said Rangarajan brings significant experience in corporate strategy and transformation. In his new position, he will advise the Prime Minister's office on its structure and working processes. Rangarajan has more than three decades of experience at the BBC. He studied Music at the University of Cambridge, where he completed a Bachelor of Arts degree with First Class honours. He also completed the FT Board Director Programme and received the Non-Executive Director Diploma in



2025. He joined the BBC in 1993 as a trainee producer with BBC Radio Classical Music. From 1995 to 2001, he worked as a producer in arts, music and features at BBC Wales. His work included programmes such as The Night of the October Revolution, Opera in Action and Artist of the Week for Radio 3. Rangarajan also worked as a

music producer on productions including Poppea, Curlow River, Cardiff Singer and Nabucco for BBC Two. He was also associated with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. Between 2001 and 2003, he served as executive producer, leading the Radio Music Department for BBC Wales and BBC Radio. He produced programmes for BBC Radios 1, 2, 3 and 4. He became Head of Strategy and Policy from 2005 to 2009 and later served as Controller, BBC Corporate Strategy, from 2009 to 2013. In the latter role, he led pan-BBC corporate strategy and was involved in the 2010 licence fee settlement. In 2013, Rangarajan became Group Director of Strategy and Performance, a position he held until April 2025. He

was responsible for pan-BBC strategy for 10 years. After leaving the BBC in 2025, Rangarajan worked as a freelance consultant. He has also been a Board Trustee at Glyndebourne since January 2025. Beyond corporate and media work, Rangarajan has a strong connection with music. He has sung with the Choir of the Temple Church and deputised with Polyphony and the choirs of Westminster Abbey, St Paul's Cathedral and St George's Chapel, Windsor. He has also worked as a recording producer, including on the 2012 CD A Festival of Psalms. His extensive experience across media, strategy, organisational transformation and music now forms the background to his new advisory role at the UK Prime Minister's Office.

Iran Warns Middle East War Could Continue Until Trump Leaves Office

Iran has warned that its conflict with the United States could be prolonged until US President Donald Trump's term ends in January 2029, as tensions remain high over the future of the war and stalled negotiations. Mohammad Reza Naqdi, a general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and close aide to Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, said Tehran could extend the conflict to build deterrence and make future attacks on Iran more costly. In an interview with US broadcaster PBS, Naqdi said Iran had gained valuable experience during the five-month conflict and was learning how to confront the United States. The war began on February 28 when US and Israeli forces launched joint strikes on Iran, killing several senior Iranian leaders, including then-Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Iranian forces responded with attacks on US and Israeli assets across the region. Asked whether Iran wanted to continue the war until Trump leaves office, Naqdi said the objective was to ensure that future opponents understood there would be a cost for attacking Iran. Naqdi also warned against any



possible US use of nuclear weapons, saying such an action could have serious consequences for American military bases worldwide. He rejected the need for Iran to develop a nuclear bomb, saying the country relied on popular support and faith instead. On the slogan "Death to America", Naqdi said Iran's dispute was with US leadership rather than the American people. Naqdi also claimed Iran was not dependent on missiles and drones for victory. He said Iran was producing more missiles daily than it was launching and claimed its missile capability could continue even if the conflict lasted for years. Meanwhile, Iran and the US

remain at odds over efforts to revive a temporary agreement reached in June. A senior Iranian source told Reuters that there had been no progress towards a permanent settlement. Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian had signed a 14-point agreement on June 17, calling for an immediate halt to military operations and negotiations towards a final agreement within 60 days. Trump later declared the deal "over", while Tehran suspended the memorandum of understanding, accusing Washington of violating its commitments. The two sides also remain divided over the Strait of Hormuz, sanctions and frozen Iranian assets.

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



transactions. Tax-related grievances can involve more complex regulatory and procedural matters, which may require additional verification and coordination. The 2,911 banking grievances pending at the end of 2025-26 also indicate that a small portion of complaints remained unresolved despite the high disposal rate.

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.

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.

