



Independence Day Greetings

Dear Readers and Esteemed Staff, On the occasion of India's 80th Independence Day, we extend our warm wishes to all our readers, contributors, correspondents and newspaper staff. May this Independence Day inspire us to honour the sacrifices of our freedom fighters and work towards a stronger, united and progressive India.

Holiday Announcement

Our newspaper office will remain closed today, August 15, on account of Independence Day. Therefore, there will be no print edition on August 16. Regular publication will resume thereafter as per schedule. Thank you for your continued trust and support. Wishing you and your families a very Happy 80th Independence Day!

- The Editorial Team, TPN

CM Directs Water Resources Department to Prioritise Drinking Water Supply



Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has directed the Water Resources Department to manage the State's water resources in accordance with the 'Water Movement Plan', with priority given to drinking water requirements in both urban and rural areas. He issued the directions during a review meeting with officials at the State Secretariat on Friday. The Chief Minister reviewed the progress of the Polavaram and Veligonda projects, 36 priority projects, reservoir storage levels, water releases, drinking water plans and the Jaladhara-Jalaharathi programmes. In view of deficient rainfall, he directed officials to prepare an action plan

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Governor, CM, Dy. CM, Extend Independence Day Greetings

Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Governor S. Abdul Nazeer, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan extended Independence Day greetings to the people of Andhra Pradesh and the nation, calling for unity, patriotism and collective efforts towards development. In his Independence Day message, Governor Abdul Nazeer conveyed his greetings to the people and called upon citizens to uphold the ideals of the Constitution, strengthen national unity and work towards building an inclusive and prosperous society. He said the sacrifices of freedom fighters should continue to inspire every generation. Naidu said India was steadily progressing towards becoming a global economic power and expressed confidence that the country would emerge as a major global force by 2047. He said the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 should go hand in hand with Swarnandhra-2047, urging citizens to contribute to the progress of both the State and the nation. Pawan Kalyan said the sacrifices of freedom fighters must motivate citizens to build a stronger

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India Shows Strong Economic Resilience

New Delhi, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday highlighted India's strong economic performance and said the country continues to remain the fastest-growing major economy despite growing instability and conflicts across the world. Addressing the nation on the eve of the 80th Independence Day, she said India's growth rate is expected to remain significantly above the global average. The President noted that geopolitical tensions and armed conflicts in different regions are affecting economies worldwide. Against this challenging backdrop, she said initiatives such as the



Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan have strengthened India's economic foundations while also supporting national security and self-reliance. Murmu stressed that India's development is being pursued alongside environmental protection. She said the country has made substantial progress on several Sustainable Development Goals targeted for 2030 and highlighted the rapid expansion of renewable

energy in recent years.

Speaking about India's digital transformation, the President said the country has created one of the world's most extensive digital ecosystems. Digital payments, she observed, have become common even among small businesses, street vendors and rural shops. India now accounts for more than half of global real-time digital payment transactions, she added.

Murmu also said technology has helped the government deliver welfare benefits directly to citizens with greater transparency and efficiency.

She highlighted major expansion in highways, railways, waterways and aviation infrastructure. According to the President, improved connectivity is opening new avenues for businesses, supporting employment generation and strengthening investor confidence.

She said India's economic progress, technological capabilities and infrastructure expansion demonstrate the country's resilience and its determination to pursue inclusive and sustainable growth despite global uncertainties.

PM Modi Recalls Partition Victims, Calls for Harmony and Brotherhood

New Delhi, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday observed Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, recalling the suffering and courage of people affected by the Partition of India and calling for renewed efforts to preserve harmony and brotherhood. In a message marking the day, Modi said Partition had torn apart countless lives, uprooted families and separated loved ones, while millions endured immense suffering. He said the experiences of those affected also reflected the strength of the human spirit, as many people rebuilt their lives from nothing and went on to contribute significantly to the country's progress. "Today we mark Partition Horrors Remembrance Day. We recall the courage of all those who were impacted by Partition," Modi said in a post on X. The Prime Minister said remembering



the tragedy should not only be an exercise in recalling the past but should strengthen the nation's commitment to social harmony. He urged citizens to draw lessons from the painful chapter of history and work collectively to prevent hatred, discrimination and discord.

"May this day deepen our resolve to preserve harmony and brotherhood in our nation and collectively work towards building a Viksit Bharat," he said. Partition Horrors Remembrance Day is observed annually on August 14 to remember those who suffered during the Partition, which resulted in unprecedented displacement, forced migration and loss of life. The Government of India began observing the day in 2021. Modi's message came a day before the country celebrates its 80th Independence Day, linking remembrance of the past with the responsibility of building a peaceful, united and developed India.



Russian Cosmonauts Extend Independence Day Greetings to India

Shivaranjani Cherukupally

Moscow : As India prepares to celebrate its 80th Independence Day, Russian cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov, Anna Kikina and Andrey Fedyaev extended greetings to the people of India from the International Space Station, highlighting the enduring friendship between India and Russia.(Recording a special video message from about 408 kilometres above Earth, the cosmonauts proudly displayed the Indian Tricolour and congratulated India on eight decades of independence. They recalled the long-standing

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Andhra Pradesh Assembly, Secretariat Illuminated in Tricolour Ahead of 80th Independence Day

CM Launches 58 Modern Firefighting Vehicles Worth Rs.40 Crore

Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday flagged off 58 state-of-the-art firefighting vehicles worth Rs.40 crore, strengthening the State Fire Department's capacity to respond rapidly to fires, accidents and other emergencies. The vehicles were procured using 15th Finance Commission funds.

Officials briefed the Chief Minister on the vehicles' capabilities and their deployment. The newly inducted fleet comprises 25 advanced firefighting vehicles, 20 water bowsters and 13 Quick Response Multipurpose Firefighting Vehicles.

The 25 advanced vehicles will be deployed for emergencies in rural and forest areas, while the 20 water bowsters, each with a capacity of 14,000 litres, will ensure uninterrupted water supply during major fire incidents. The 13 quick-response vehicles are designed to reach narrow streets, congested urban areas and locations inaccessible to conventional fire tenders.

Chandrababu Naidu said the government was modernising the Fire Department in phases at a total estimated cost of Rs.252.86 crore, using Central and State government funds. In the first phase, 65 fire tenders worth Rs.33 crore were deployed, while the latest phase adds 58 vehicles worth Rs.40 crore. Further fire-



fighting equipment would be introduced in the third phase, he said.

He said infrastructure at fire stations was also being strengthened, with 17 new fire station buildings being constructed at a cost of Rs.2.25 crore each. Six buildings had already been completed, while another 36 fire stations were being modernised. Rapid Response Key to Saving Lives Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha said every minute was crucial during a disaster and stressed that public safety remained the government's top priority. She said the objective was to ensure rapid arrival at incident sites, immediate relief operations and adequate equipment and water supply.

Fire Services DG Venkata Ramana and other senior officials participated in the programme. Officials explained the advanced equipment and operational capabilities of the new vehicles to the Chief Minister.

From Freedom to Global Leadership: India's Journey Towards 2047



India's journey since Independence is no longer merely a story of overcoming colonial rule; it is the story of a civilisation rebuilding its confidence and finding its place in a rapidly changing world. From food security and industrialisation to digital technology, space exploration and global diplomacy, the India of today is vastly different from the India of 1947. The transformation is visible in science and innovation. Chandrayaan-3's successful landing near the lunar south pole, the Aditya-L1 solar mission, the expansion of digital public infrastructure and the global adoption of India's digital payment capabilities reflect a country increasingly capable of developing solutions at scale. India's pharmaceutical sector has also emerged as a global strength. The country exports medicines to nearly 200 countries and has become one of the world's largest producers of vaccines. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated another dimension of India's capabilities. The development and manufacture of Made-in-India vaccines, particularly Covaxin, and the subsequent Vaccine Maitri initiative allowed India to supply vaccines to countries across the world. By 2023, India had supplied more than 298 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to

around 100 countries under the initiative. India's diplomatic footprint has expanded alongside its economic and technological capabilities. Its engagement with the United States, Russia, Japan, Europe, the Gulf, Africa and the Indo-Pacific reflects an increasingly confident foreign policy. India's G20 presidency and its advocacy for the Global South further strengthened its voice in international affairs. Yet achievement must never become complacency. India still faces formidable challenges-inequality, unemployment, educational gaps, environmental pressures, rural distress and the need to create opportunities for its enormous young population. The ambition before the nation is therefore much larger: Viksit Bharat @2047. The goal cannot simply be a larger economy. It must mean a country where prosperity is inclusive, technology serves ordinary citizens, institutions remain strong, women and youth participate equally, and every Indian has the opportunity to live with dignity. The next 21 years will define the India of the next century. The freedom won by our ancestors gave us the nation; the responsibility of our generation is to build its future.

- Editor

Stree Shakti Completes One Year, Empowering Women Through Free Travel

K Kalyan Krishna Kumar

Amaravati : The state government's 'Stree Shakti' free bus travel scheme for women completes one year on August 15, recording an average of 24 lakh women passengers every day and around 87 crore journeys since its launch. The government has spent approximately Rs.3,095 crore on the scheme, providing a subsidy of Rs.8.53 crore per day towards women's travel. The scheme, aimed at reducing daily travel expenses and promoting women's economic empowerment, is being implemented across five categories of APSRTC buses - Express, Ultra Pallevelugu, Pallevelugu, Metro Express and City Ordinary. Of the 9,978 APSRTC buses, 7,631 buses, or 76 per cent, are being utilised under the scheme. The facility has also

been extended to women travelling on special buses operated to temples.

Greater Access to Education and Employment

The impact of the scheme is particularly visible among women travelling for education and employment. Before its introduction, women accounted for around 40 per cent of APSRTC passengers, with 9.47 lakh women travelling daily. The share has now increased to 62 per cent, with daily women passengers reaching 24 lakh. Occupancy on buses covered under the scheme has risen to 93 per cent. Speaking to True Point, K Mahija of Nidamanuru said, "The free bus facility has reduced my daily travel expenses considerably. I can now travel to college regularly without depending on my



family for transport expenses." For women engaged in daily wage work, the scheme has also reduced the cost of commuting between villages and towns. A Venkateswaramma, a daily labourer, told True Point, "Earlier, travelling to the nearby town for my labour work was a financial burden. The Stree Shakti scheme has made regular travel much easier and helped me save money." The facility has also support-

ed women travelling for healthcare, small businesses and other essential needs. Women can travel anywhere within the State by producing their Aadhaar card.

Krishna Ramya, a private employee at a college from Punadipadu village, told True Point, "The scheme has been particularly useful for women in rural areas who need to travel for healthcare, education and other essential work. It has given

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AKNU Tender Cancellation Sparks Questions Over Procedure

CH Raju

Rajamahendravaram : Adikavi Nannaya University (AKNU) has come under renewed scrutiny over the handling of a tender for outsourcing manpower services, with employees, student groups and political representatives raising questions about the notification, its subsequent extension and the reported decision to cancel it. Allegations of irregularities have also surfaced, though these remain allegations and require independent verification. The university issued Tender No. 1/2026 dated August 1, 2026, inviting bids for the supply of manpower services. The original deadline for submis-

sion was August 11. An official amendment subsequently extended the deadline to September 11 at 4 p.m., stating that the extension was made in response to requests from prospective bidders and to provide eligible agencies adequate opportunity to participate. All other terms and conditions were stated to remain unchanged.

Employees Protest, ? MLA Intervenes

The tender triggered protests among outsourcing employees, who expressed concerns over their job security. As the issue gained momentum, Rajanagaram MLA Bathula Balaramakrishna held dis-



cussions with University Vice-Chancellor Prasannasree, officials and outsourcing employees. Following the talks, it was announced that the tender would be cancelled, reportedly keeping the employees' interests in view. The development has, however, raised questions over the formal

procedure followed for such a cancellation. Critics are seeking clarity on whether the required university authorities and statutory bodies approved the decision and whether the cancellation was formally documented. Senior BJP leader Neerukonda Veeranna Chowdary alleged that



the episode reflected political interference and irregularities in the university's administration. He said he would lodge a complaint, along with supporting evidence, with the State Governor, Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education (APSCHE) and the Education Minister. Questions have also been raised over alleged financial demands and possible attempts to influence the outsourcing process. These allegations have not been independently established.

Calls for Transparency

Attempts by True Point to contact Vice-Chancellor Prasannasree and

the Registrar for their responses to the allegations and the procedure surrounding the tender could not elicit a response. The controversy has also revived concerns over AKNU's academic performance. In the NIRF 2025 published rankings, AKNU appears in the participating institutions list but does not figure among the published top-ranked institutions. With questions now surrounding both academic performance and administrative transparency, stakeholders are demanding that the university place all relevant tender records and cancellation proceedings in the public domain and order an appropriate inquiry wherever necessary.

AP Assembly, Council Sessions to Begin on August 17



Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

The seventh session of the 16th Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly and the 50th session of the Legislative Council will commence on August 17, with Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu and Council Chairman Koyye Moshen Raju reviewing arrangements for the sessions. The Speaker and Council Chairman held separate high-level meetings with senior officials and police personnel on legislative proceedings, security and other arrangements. Discussions also covered pending questions relating to various government departments and unfulfilled assurances given by ministers, with officials directed to take necessary action. Deputy Speaker Raghu

Rama Krishna Raju, Legislature Secretary-General Prasanna Kumar Suryadevara, Special Chief Secretary Shamsheer Singh Rawat, Principal Secretary Shyamala Rao, Additional DG (Law and Order) Madhusudan Reddy and Guntur SP Vakul Jindal participated in the meetings. Ayyanna Patrudu directed police officials to ensure tight security and prevent inconvenience to legislators. He said digital visitor passes would be issued for the session, with visitors required to carry identity cards and scan their passes while entering and exiting the premises. After the session begins, the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) will meet to decide the duration of the session and finalise government business and other legislative matters.

PMFME-Stree Nidhi to Empower DWCRA Women Says Minister Srinivas



Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Minister for MSMEs, Rural Poverty Eradication and Non-Resident Andhra (NRA) Empowerment) Kondapalli Srinivas said the State government was working to make DWCRA women financially self-reliant by creating opportunities for them to become entrepreneurs and employment providers. The Minister announced that the government had decided to link the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme with the Stree Nidhi Credit Cooperative Federation Limited to promote food processing enterprises in rural areas. Under the initiative, eligible DWCRA women can establish food processing units with investments of up to ₹3 lakh by availing Stree Nidhi loans along with the credit-linked subsidy available under PMFME. Units can be

established to process fruits and vegetables, millets, pulses, spices, pickles, flour-based products and snacks, among other local food products. Srinivas said District Federations would function as District Resource Organisations (DROs) to identify interested and capable DWCRA women. Selected beneficiaries would receive support for raw material procurement, packaging, branding and marketing. He said government assistance would extend beyond loans and continue until the enterprises become successful. The initiative reflects Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu's objective of developing at least one entrepreneur in every family, he said. Srinivas urged eligible DWCRA women to utilise the opportunity and move from being wage earners to job creators, contributing to rural economic development and employment generation.

Andhra Students Excel in National Youth for Viksit Bharat Festival

Patna, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Several students from Andhra Pradesh have secured top positions in the national-level "Youth for Viksit Bharat @2047: Youth Vision for a Developed India" festival organised by the Federation of Indian Youth Association (FIYA), All India Students' Union (AISU), in collaboration with Aditya Institute of Technology and Management (AITAM), LegalSchool.in and ejusticeindia.com. The festival, organised to mark Independence Day, provided a national platform for students to present ideas on nation-building, innovation, education, technology, entrepreneurship and sustainable development. In the Online Quiz (Level-1), A. Sai Sri Jyoti hika of AP Model School, Vavila pallipeta, Srika

kulam, secured first place, while Yachchina Ruthwik Sai of Priyanka's Vidyaodaya High School, Visakhapatnam, stood second. Evani Venkata Sankara Naga Sai Aaradhya of Ravindra Bharathi Public School won the Level-1 Essay/Article Writing Competition, while Kandi Aaryan of Narayana Junior College, Srikakulam, secured second place. At Level-2, Group GQ14 from AITAM, Tekkali, won the Group Quiz. The team comprised Kolusu Sai Venkata Sannihith, Challa Sai Swarup, Chilaka Pravallika, Mogili Vinay and Gara Dileep. Pydisetty Jyotsna Sri of AITAM secured second place in the Level-2 Online Quiz, while Konchada Vinay was runner-up in the Vision Statement Competition. The results were declared by M. Sai Krishna, National Vice-President, AISU and Patron, YVB@2047.

AP Steps Up Waste Management, 70 Lakh Tonnes to Be Cleared

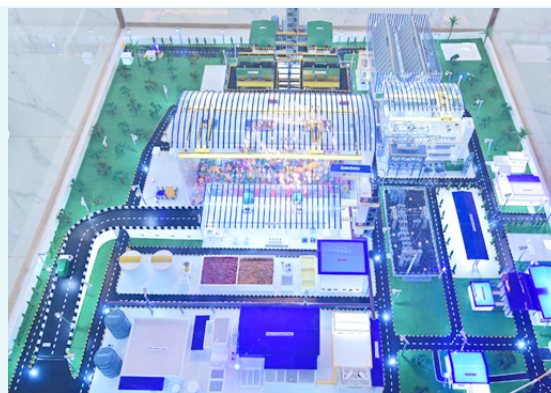
ARN Mahesh

Rajamahendravaram: Solid waste management remains a major challenge for Andhra Pradesh, with the State generating around 7,000 tonnes of waste every day. The accumulation of legacy waste in municipal areas has added to the burden, highlighting the need for sustained processing infrastructure and scientific disposal mechanisms. While the government has already cleared around 85 lakh tonnes of accumulated waste, another 70 lakh tonnes of legacy waste remains in municipalities. The authorities have set October as the target for completing its removal, according to the latest government plans.



The State is also moving towards decentralised processing of fresh municipal waste. Fresh Waste Plants are being established in 107 municipalities, with construction targeted for completion by the end of September. The

facilities are expected to strengthen waste processing while larger Waste-to-Energy plants are being developed at multiple locations. Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development Ponguru Narayana said the government was taking measures to establish a comprehensive solid waste management system across the State. He said Waste-to-Energy plants were being established at Kadapa, Kurnool, Tirupati,



Nellore, Vijayawada and Peddapuram. Narayana said plans to establish 10 Waste-to-Energy plants during 2014-19 were subsequently cancelled by the previous government, according to him. The Minister said

waste generated in Rajamahendravaram would be transported to the Peddapuram plant once it becomes operational. The Minister also said the government was considering holding municipal elections across the State simultaneously. A decision would be taken after the court delivers its verdict on the merger of villages with municipalities, he said. Narayana inspected the legacy waste processing plant in Rajamahendravaram along with MLAs Gorantla Butchiah Chowdary and Adireddy Vasu, reviewing ongoing waste-management measures and the proposed transition to fresh-waste processing facilities.

AP JAC Seeks Transparent Implementation of Presidential Orders-2025

Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

AP JAC Amaravati has urged the State government to implement the Presidential Orders-2025 transparently and without haste, safeguarding employee rights and ensuring seniority-based implementation of Para 4(2). At a State Secretariat meeting under the General Administration Department (GAD), employee associa-

tions discussed allocation of employees to local cadres. Bopparaju Venkateswarlu, State President, AP Revenue Services Association and Chairman, AP JAC Amaravati, said the Centre's 27-month timeframe should be utilised for lawful implementation. He demanded lifting the promotion ban and allowing promotions until August 31, besides resuming compassionate appointments. He also sought approval of municipal corpo-

ration service rules and amendment orders to GO No. 135. Bopparaju sought at least 15 days for objections before final seniority lists and urged reducing the disability threshold for preference lists from 70% to 40% under the RPwD Act, 2016. Paliseti Damodara Rao, State President, AP PTD Employees Union and Secretary General, AP JAC Amaravati, and other representatives attended.



AP Lorry Owners Association Seeks Resolution of AP-Telangana Permit Issue



Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Representatives of the Andhra Pradesh Lorry Owners Association (APLOA) met Transport, Roads and Buildings Department Secretary Kona Sasidhar at the State Secretariat on Friday and discussed key issues concerning the transport sector. APLOA General Secretary Y.V.

Eswara Rao said the delegation congratulated Sasidhar on assuming charge as Secretary and brought to his attention the long-pending issue of counter-signature permits between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The delegation urged the Secretary to give special attention to resolving the permit issue, which has been affecting transport operators in the two States. Sasidhar enquired about the pre-

vailing conditions in the transport industry, challenges faced by operators and other sector-related issues. He responded positively to the concerns raised by the delegation, Rao said. Krishna District Lorry Owners Association President Nagumothu Raja, General Secretary A.V.V. Satyanarayana and Secretary Ravi Sarath Babu accompanied Rao during the meeting.

Alliance Govt Driving Development in Srikakulam: Rammohan Naidu



Srikakulam, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister for Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu said Andhra Pradesh was back on the path of development under the alliance government, alleging that development works were neglected during the previous administration. He toured Gara mandal and Srikakulam Corporation areas on Friday along with State Minister Atchannaidu and MLA Gondu Shankar, participating in development programmes worth around ₹11 crore. Rammohan Naidu inaugurated the Kalingapatnam Lift Irrigation Scheme, constructed at ₹2.55 crore, and participated in a Tiranga Rally and Telugu Desam Party door-to-door campaign at Vamaravalli. In Srikakulam city, he laid the foundation for an electrical substa-

tion at Mahalakshmi Nagar at ₹2.60 crore. He also participated in the inauguration of several works, including a CC road at Medaraveddi, central lighting at Seven Roads Junction, a culvert near Krishna Park, a central divider at Day & Night Junction, the Irrigation Department EE office and CC drains and roads at Varam Colony. Rammohan Naidu said the government was committed to farmer welfare and highlighted the Super Six schemes, investments worth ₹11 lakh crore and development of the Bhogapuram airport, Mulapeta Port and Neradi project. Collector Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar, RDO Sai Pratyusha, Vamsadhara Project Committee Chairman Aravala Ravindra, officials, local leaders and the public participated.

APSTPIEA Seeks Transparency in AP EAPCET Seat Allotment

Mangalagiri, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

APSTPIEA President Dr M V Bramhananda Reddy urged the Higher Education Department and Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education (APSCHE) to publicly disclose college-wise and branch-wise seat allotment details for AP EAPCET 2026 Engineering Phase-I. In a representation to the Principal Secretary/Commissioner, Higher Education Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Reddy said Phase-I results were

released on August 9, but consolidated details on allotted seats, self-reported admissions and vacancies were not readily available publicly. APSTPIEA sought details of sanctioned intake, allotments, confirmed admissions and remaining vacancies, besides clarification on discrepancies and any verification or audit conducted. Reddy said the organisation was not alleging wrongdoing against any individual or institution, but sought transparency and verified data to strengthen confidence among students and parents.

APPSC Declares Lecturer Results, Schedules Certificate Verification

Vijayawada : The Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) has declared the provisional selection list for Lecturers in Government Degree Colleges under the A.P. Collegiate Education Service for three subjects-English, Mathematics and Microbiology-under Notification No.17/2023 dated December 30, 2023. APPSC also announced that candidates provisionally admitted for certificate verification for Computer Applications and Computer Science will undergo Original Certificate verification and the Computer Proficiency Test on August 18 at the APPSC office in Vijayawada. Results for the remaining six subjects will be declared in due course.

Congress Seeks Clarity From TDP, Jana Sena on FCRA Bill



Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) State Vice-President and Administration In-Charge Kolanukonda Shivaji demanded that regional political parties clarify their positions on the FCRA Bill and explain them to the public. Addressing a press conference at the Congress state office on Friday, Shivaji criticised the BJP-led government, alleging that it was undermining democratic institutions and people's rights. He questioned the Jana Sena Party over its reported support for the Bill and sought an explanation from its leadership. Shivaji also questioned Jana Sena Rajya Sabha member Lingamaneni Ramesh over his comments on religious issues

while the party had not publicly clarified its position on the FCRA Bill. He urged the TDP and Jana Sena to state their independent positions. He accused Hindutva organisations of promoting caste and religious divisions and sought action over an alleged incident in Haldwani, Uttarakhand, involving an AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge meeting venue. Shivaji questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi over alleged silence on caste-based remarks against Kharge and the reported lathi-charge on students at Jantar Mantar. He appealed to people to support Rahul Gandhi's efforts to protect democracy and the Constitution and said the Congress was prepared to contest upcoming local body elections in Andhra Pradesh.

BJP AP Appoints 103 Members to State Executive Committee



Amaravati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Andhra Pradesh State President P.V.N. Madhav on Friday announced the new State Executive Committee, appointing 103 members to strengthen the party organisation and address public issues across the State. The appointments comprise 68 State Executive Committee members, three permanent invitees and 32 special invitees. The committee includes representatives from all districts, with leaders such as Birlangi Uma Maheswara Rao, Battula Pavan Sai Kumar, P.V. Siva Reddy, K.C. Raghunatha Raju, Biram

Subba Reddy, Parigela Muralikrishna, Daghubati Purandeswari, Somu Veerraju, N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma, Satya Kumar Yadav, C.M. Ramesh, P. Vishnu Kumar Raju, Kamineni Srinivas, Nallimilli Ramakrishna Reddy, G.V.L. Narasimha Rao, Pothula Sunitha and Vasantha Sai Lokesh among those appointed. Madhav expressed confidence that the newly appointed leaders and party workers would work in coordination to resolve public issues and strengthen the BJP at the grassroots level across Andhra Pradesh.

CM Directs Water Resources Department to Prioritise Drinking Water Supply

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for optimal utilisation of reservoir, tank and groundwater resources and set monthly targets for completing priority projects. **Polavaram Works to be Completed by March 2027** Officials informed the Chief Minister that around 90% of Polavaram civil works and 94% of land acquisition had been completed, while overall project progress stood at 77%. Chandrababu Naidu directed officials to complete the project by March 2027 and ensure timely completion of rehabilitation, land acquisition and colony works. He also reviewed the Polavaram Left Main Canal and directed that the remaining works up to Visakhapatnam be completed by March. Officials were instructed to ensure that the canals accommodate a flow of 17,500 cusecs and to fill reservoirs and water bodies along the route up to Anakapalli. **Focus on Veligonda and Water Allocation** Water Resources Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu said the government was targeting completion of Veligonda works while addressing the concerns of displaced families. He said Rs.318 crore had been released towards rehabilitation and resettlement, with the remaining Rs.600 crore scheduled for disbursement. Chandrababu Naidu clarified that around 3 TMC of Godavari water would be sufficient for data centres in Visakhapatnam and directed officials to counter misinformation regarding water availability. The Chief Minister also called for continued implementation of Jaladhara and Jalaharathi, study of water supply to the Annamayya Project aya-cut, and development of inland water transport connectivity between Visakhapatnam and Amaravati. Special Chief Secretary Shashi Bhushan Kumar, Engineer-in-Chief (ENC) and Chief Engineers (CEs) attended the meeting.

Governor, CM, Dy. CM, Extend Independence Day Greetings

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India. Emphasising the principle of "Nation First," he called for greater patriotism, national consciousness and social responsibility, particularly among the youth. He urged people to remain alert against forces that threaten the country's unity, integrity and internal security, and said India could emerge as a global leader by positively harnessing its vast youth population. The leaders appealed to citizens to celebrate Independence Day by renewing their commitment to national unity, development, peace and prosperity.

Russian Cosmonauts Extend Independence Day Greetings to India?

Continue

cooperation between the two countries, particularly in space exploration, and remembered Soviet space pioneer Yuri Gagarin, whose historic 1961 visit to India strengthened bilateral ties. India-Russia space cooperation dates back to 1975, when Aryabhata, India's first satellite, was launched on a Soviet rocket. Another landmark came in 1984, when Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma became the first Indian to travel into space aboard Soyuz T-11. His famous response, "Saare Jahan Se Achha," remains etched in India's space history. Russia has continued supporting India's space programme through launch services and technological cooperation, including assistance with cryogenic propulsion. The partnership also continues through the Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme, with Indian astronaut-designates receiving training at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center. The cosmonauts also showcased winning entries from a joint Roscosmos-ISRO space-themed competition, encouraging young people to pursue space exploration. They concluded by wishing Indians peace and prosperity and reaffirming the enduring India-Russia friendship.

Stree Shakti Completes One Year, Empowering Women Through Free Travel

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us greater freedom to travel independently." Officials have also indicated that increased use of APSRTC buses may have contributed to a decline in rural road accidents, as some passengers shifted away from shared autos and private vehicles. Andhra Pradesh provides free travel across five categories of buses, compared with four categories covered by similar schemes in Telangana and Karnataka. **CM to Interact with Beneficiaries** To mark one year of the scheme, Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu will interact with women beneficiaries on Saturday under the theme 'One Year of Stree Shakti'. Following the Independence Day celebrations at the Capital Parade Ground, Chandrababu Naidu will travel by bus to the Chief Minister's Camp Office along with beneficiaries. He will later participate in a high tea and seek feedback on the scheme's implementation, benefits and experiences. The government said the initiative has strengthened women's mobility while improving access to education, employment, healthcare and livelihood opportunities.

TDP Begins Construction of NTR District Office



Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) on Friday performed the foundation stone ceremony for its new NTR district office at Auto Nagar in Vijayawada. The programme was organised under the leadership of Gadde Anuradha, NTR district TDP president. Sriram Rajagopal (Tatayya), Jaggayyapeta MLA and TDP Politburo member, participated in the ceremony along with MP Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni) and other party leaders. KDC Central Cooperative Bank chairman Nettem Raghuram, TDP state secretary Achantha Sunitha, district TDP secretary Appana Ramanaiah and several other leaders and legislators also attend-

ed the event. The leaders performed special prayers and formally laid the foundation stone at the proposed office site. They said the new office would serve as an accessible platform for party leaders and workers and help strengthen coordination among different levels of the organisation. Speaking on the occasion, the leaders emphasised the need to further strengthen the party at the grassroots level and work collectively to address public grievances. They expressed confidence that the new district office would facilitate better coordination between party workers, leaders and the public. The foundation ceremony was attended by a large number of TDP leaders and cadres.

Amaravati Has Become a 'Mega Loot Project': Ambati

Guntur, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party Guntur district president and former minister Ambati Rambabu alleged that Amaravati was being developed as a "mega loot project" involving inflated estimates, heavy borrowings and large-scale expenditure benefiting contractors. Addressing the media in Guntur, Rambabu questioned the costs of several infrastructure projects, particularly the Seed Access Road. He claimed that Rs.1,519 crore was being spent on the 21.77-km road and questioned why pending works initially estimated at around Rs.100 crore were later packaged at nearly Rs.465 crore. He compared the costs of Amaravati projects with road and flyover works elsewhere, alleging that construction costs in the capital region were disproportionately high. He also questioned the expenditure on a temporary steel bridge and the proposed costs of government buildings, including

the Secretariat and five towers. Rambabu said farmers who had surrendered nearly 33,000 acres for the capital were still awaiting fully developed returnable plots, while contractors were being awarded projects worth thousands of crores. He claimed that around Rs.57,000 crore had already been mobilised for Amaravati and another Rs.2 lakh crore could be spent in the future. He alleged that the actual expenditure was not being adequately discussed in public. The former minister also questioned Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan's absence from the Seed Access Road inauguration and sought an explanation. Rambabu challenged the coalition government to allow former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy Leader of Opposition status and debate the allegations in the Assembly. He alleged that Amaravati still had incomplete and temporary infrastructure despite years of political promises.

Bhumana Karunakar Reddy Slams Officials Over Civil Dispute

Tirupati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Former TTD chairman and former Tirupati MLA Bhumana Karunakar Reddy on Friday accused the district administration of interfering in a civil dispute and ordering a discreet Vigilance and Enforcement (V&E) inquiry against a private individual. Addressing the media in Tirupati, Reddy alleged that the District Collector ordered the inquiry over claims that he and his followers had laid a road to a mango orchard. He questioned the jurisdiction of the V&E department in conducting an inquiry involving private individuals. Reddy claimed that the inquiry report subsequently led to a case being registered at Tiruchanur police station. He said he approached the court and alleged that after proceedings went in his favour, the case details were removed from the online por-

tal, though he retained copies of the documents. Describing the matter as a civil dispute pending before the court, Reddy questioned the administration's decision to name him in the proceedings. He alleged that the action was politically motivated and linked it to his criticism of the government and his earlier allegations concerning irregularities in the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. Reddy also objected to the alleged use of derogatory language while referring to him and his supporters. He claimed that the Collector was acting under the influence of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Minister Nara Lokesh and Revenue Minister Anagani Satya Prasad. He further levelled corruption allegations against the Collector and warned that officials would face consequences for what he described as politically motivated actions.

YSRCP Opposes Sugar Factory Land Liquidation

Visakhapatnam, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leaders on Friday opposed the proposed liquidation of the Etikoppaka and Tandava sugar factories, alleging that the coalition government was targeting the valuable land assets of the cooperative units. Former minister Gudivada Amarnath and other YSRCP leaders, addressing the media, alleged that the move was aimed at transferring the factories' land holdings for real estate purposes. They termed the committee constituted to assess the land value a "mere eyewash." The leaders demanded withdrawal of the government order enabling transfer of the factory lands to the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC) and sought budgetary funds to revive the units. Amarnath alleged that closure of the factories would weaken the cooperative sector and adversely affect sugarcane farmers and workers. He recalled election promises to modernise and revive the factories and urged the government to reconsider its decision. Budi Mutyala Naidu, K. Dharmasiri and Suryanarayana Raju were among those who addressed the media.

Narayana Defends Pawan Kalyan Over Seed Road Inauguration Absence

Kakinada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development and Kakinada District In-charge Minister Ponguru Narayana said YSRCP's criticism over Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan's absence from the Amaravati Seed Access Road inauguration was inappropriate. Speaking at a District Review Committee (DRC) meeting at the Kakinada Collectorate on Friday, Narayana said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu had instructed him to invite Pawan Kalyan personally. However, Pawan Kalyan had to attend a World Elephant Day programme in Visakhapatnam in the presence of a Union Minister. Narayana said Pawan Kalyan had conveyed his wishes through social media. Narayana said the Seed Access Road would ease traffic difficulties on the Karakatta route and asserted that Amaravati's construction would be completed as directed by Chandrababu Naidu. He said MLA and MLC quarters were being prepared in phases and would be handed over by Chandrababu Naidu to the Speaker and Council Chairman on August 18, followed by allotment through lottery. Narayana also reviewed the DSC recruitment, crop insurance, Anna Canteens, power supply and PM Surya Ghar scheme. He said connections had been provided to 11,000 households under the scheme and directed officials to take precautionary measures against the impact of El Niño. MP Sana Satish, Collector Harehithira Prasad, MLAs, MLCs and officials attended the meeting.

Gurumoorthy Condemns Suspension of Three Teachers

Tirupati, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP MP M. Gurumoorthy strongly condemned the suspension of three government teachers for allegedly raising concerns over the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) exemption issue. The suspended teachers include STU District President Sangameswara Reddy and YSR Teachers Association representatives Venkatnath Reddy and Amarnath Reddy. Gurumoorthy questioned the basis for the action and asked what offence the teachers had committed by representing the concerns of the teaching community. He said the three teachers travelled to Delhi to highlight difficulties faced by in-service teachers regarding TET and attempted to meet Union Ministers. Gurumoorthy clarified that their visit was not connected with the DSC recruitment issue and that they neither raised the matter nor submitted any representation concerning it. The MP expressed surprise that the suspension orders allegedly cited involvement in the DSC issue and termed the action politically motivated. Gurumoorthy demanded immediate withdrawal of the suspension orders and reinstatement of the teachers. He urged the government to address teachers' grievances through dialogue and ensure they could raise genuine professional concerns without fear of victimisation.

Raja's Public Service Will Be Remembered Forever: Narayana

Prathipadu, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister and Kakinada district in-charge minister Ponguru Narayana said the services rendered by late TDP leader Varupula Raja to the people would be remembered forever. On Raja's birth anniversary, Narayana unveiled his statue at Prathipadu and paid floral tributes. He said Raja had dedicated his life to public service and undertaken several welfare and social initiatives. Narayana said carrying forward Raja's ideals would be the greatest tribute and urged his family, followers and elected representatives to continue his commitment to public service. He appreciated Prathipadu MLA Varupula Satya Prabha for working to fulfil Raja's vision and assured government support for initiatives continuing his legacy. MLAs Varupula Satya Prabha, Kondababu and Pantam Nanaji, Kakinada MP Sana Satish, former MLA Varma, TDP leaders, supporters and local representatives attended.

Kakani Challenges Government to Order CBI Probe

Nellore, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Kakani Rejects Allegations, Seeks CBI Probe Nellore, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau Former minister Kakani Govardhan Reddy rejected allegations published by Eenadu against him and said he was prepared to counter them with documentary evidence, including statements recorded by farmers in 2016. Kakani claimed farmers Koteswara Rao and Veeraswamy had alleged threats of denial of compensation and deletion of land records if they refused to surrender land for Rs.6 lakh per acre. He said he had sought compensation of Rs.15 lakh per acre for nearly 100 acres. He alleged discrepancies involving compensation, blank papers and farmers' bank accounts and documents. Kakani questioned reliance on a 2004 Vigilance report and defended the land acquisition process. He asserted that no corruption had occurred and said farmers received government-fixed compensation. Kakani challenged the government to order a CBI inquiry and said he had approached the High Court seeking such a probe.



The NTR Collectorate building is illuminated with colourful lights ahead of the 80th Independence Day celebrations to be held at the Makineni Basava Punnaiah Stadium in Vijayawada.

Photography Contest Selects 27 Best Photographs

Vijayawada, August 14 | TPN Bureau

As part of World Photography Day, observed on August 19, the NTR district administration has selected 27 outstanding photographs from a district-level photography competition.

District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha released the list of winners at the Sri AVS Reddy Hall in the Collectorate on Friday. He said the photographs submitted by amateur photographers were not only visually appealing but also conveyed meaningful artistic messages and encouraged viewers to think.

The competition was conducted in three categories covering Andhra Pradesh culture, heritage and tourism; youth, P4, economic development and welfare; and best news pic-

ture. A total of 221 photographs were submitted, from which a jury selected 27 winning entries.

In the first category, Y.V.V. Satyanarayana won first prize, followed by N. Kishore and M. Prashanth. In the second category, G.N. Rao secured first prize, with C.H. Narayana Rao and S.S. Vijay Babu taking second and third places. In the Best News Picture category, K.V.S. Giri won first prize, followed by A. Rajendra Prasad and Durgaprasad. The winners will receive cash prizes, certificates and mementoes at the World Photography Day programme on August 19. Collector Lakshmisha congratulated all participants and said the administration would encourage photographers and amateur photographers to participate in future competitions.

City Civic Body Urges Residents to Observe Friday Dry Day

Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

The Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) has urged residents to observe every Friday as a Dry Day to prevent mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue, malaria and chikungunya.

VMC Biologist Suryakumar, acting on the directions of Commissioner Dhyana Chandra, led an awareness programme in Brindavan Colony and Labbipet on Friday. Officials visited households and advised residents to eliminate stagnant water in and around their homes.

Suryakumar said the civic body was taking several scientific measures to control mosquito breeding, including desilting major drains, removing weeds and waste with tractor-mounted machinery and boats, and

using drones to spray ML oil in inaccessible areas. Regular fogging and anti-larval spraying are also being carried out, while gambusia fish are being introduced into water bodies to naturally control mosquito larvae.

He appealed to residents to inspect buckets, tubs, drums, flowerpots, coconut shells, tyres, coolers, refrigerator trays and other containers every Friday and completely drain any stored water. Officials said mosquito larvae can develop rapidly in stagnant water left for several days, making weekly removal of breeding sources essential.

UPHC doctor K. Bhargavi, Health Supervisor Srinivas, sanitary inspectors, malaria staff, ANMs and ASHA workers participated in the awareness drive.

Goda Devi Tirunakshatra Celebrated at Vijayakeeladri

Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

The Goda Devi Tirunakshatra Mahotsavam was celebrated with religious fervour at the Vijayakeeladri Divya Kshe tram on Friday as part of the Shravan Masa Mahotsavams, being held from August 13 to September 11 under the blessings of Sri Sri Sri Tridandi Chinna Srimannarayana Ramanuja Jeeyar Swamiji. On the first Shravan Frida

y, special rituals for Godess Goda Devi began at 9 a.m. with an elaborate Abhisheka. Special Abhisheka and Sahasranamarchana with jasmine flower were performed for Sri Mahalakshmi and Veera Lakshmi. Sri Puraanam Venkatacharyulu and Shakuntala, along with devotees from Secta nagaram, offered Sare to the deities. Large numbers of devotees participated and received Theertha Prasadam.



CPM Seeks Clearance of VMC Contractors' Dues

Vijayawada: CPM State Secretariat member C.H. Baburao has urged the Andhra Pradesh government to clear pending bills of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) contractors, alleging that delays have stalled development works. Baburao said contractors had been on strike for five days, demanding nearly \$400 crore in dues, affecting development works, water supply and underground drainage services. He alleged that nearly \$1,000 crore in statutory grants due to VMC remained unpaid, worsening the civic body's financial position.

Questioning alleged advance payments to companies undertaking Amaravati works, Baburao said small and medium contractors in Vijayawada were awaiting payments for completed works. He urged the government to release VMC grants, clear dues and restore development works, seeking equal attention to Vijayawada, Guntur and other cities.

Minister Nara Lokesh to Attend NTR District Independence Day Celebrations

Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

All arrangements have been completed for the 80th Independence Day celebrations in NTR district, with State IT and Education Minister Nara Lokesh scheduled to hoist the national flag and address the gathering on August 15. District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha and Vijayawada Police Commissioner S.V. Rajasekhar Babu on Friday inspected the full-dress rehearsal held at the Makineni Basava Punnaiah Stadium in

Singh Nagar, Vijayawada, the venue for the main celebrations. The officials reviewed the flag-hoisting ceremony, police parade, motorcycle stunts, salute, departmental contingents and cultural performances. A drum performance by women students of Siddhartha College and various government department tableaux were among the highlights.

Collector Lakshmisha said the celebrations would be organised on a grand scale, reflecting the development and welfare initiatives being implemented across the district. The tableaux would showcase various government schemes and programmes, while cultural performances, police bike demonstrations and drum shows would add to the celebrations. She appealed to people and students to participate in large numbers and demonstrate patriotism, national unity and the spirit of Independence. Police Commissioner Rajasekhar Babu said elaborate security arrangements



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ments had been made to ensure peaceful celebrations. He urged visitors to follow police instructions concerning security, traffic regulation and parking.

VMC Commissioner H.M. Dhyana Chandra, DCP K.G.V. Saritha, Vijayawada RDO Vennela Seenu and other officials participated in the rehearsal.

Kesineni Chinni Inspects Indrakeeladri Development Works

Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Vijayawada MP Kesineni Chinni on Friday inspected ongoing development works at Indrakeeladri along with temple officials and reviewed arrangements for the convenience of devotees.

Modern Annaprasadam Facility at Indrakeeladri Kesineni Chinni said the Annaprasadam facility and prasadam potu (kitchen) at Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam would be

inaugurated on August 21 by Endowments Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy. He said devotee convenience remained the top priority and arrangements were being made to serve Annaprasadam within 30 minutes at the counters. The MP said a modern kitchen, modelled on the facility at Tirumala, was being developed using advanced technology and would have the capacity to prepare around 60 laddus per hour. He said development works were



being undertaken with a long-term vision, ensuring facilities remained useful for the next 20 to 30 years. He added that special attention

was being given to the upcoming Dasara celebrations, which would be organised on a grand scale with enhanced facilities for devotees.

Minister Kollu Ravindra Reviews Mahaganapati Festival Arrangements

Machilipatnam, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Mines, Geology and Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra directed officials to make elaborate arrangements for the upcoming Mahaganapati celebrations at Manginapudi Beach in Machilipatnam.

The festival will feature a 63-foot-tall Mahaganapati idol, which the organisers claim will be among the tallest such idols in the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. Ravindra held a review meeting with officials and festival committee members at the Roads and Buildings guest house on

Friday. The minister stressed that sanitation, drinking water, parking, security, uninterrupted power supply and fire safety arrangements should be made well in advance to ensure that devotees face no inconvenience. Krishna District In-charge Collector M. Naveen instructed officials

to treat the event not merely as a religious festival but also as a major tourism-related programme, given the expected large turnout. He directed municipal and panchayat authorities to deploy special sanitation teams and ensure continuous garbage collection throughout the seven-day festival period. Adequate dustbins, sanitation workers and vehicles should be arranged. Officials were also asked to obtain all necessary permis-

sions and ensure the structural stability of the 63-foot idol. Experts should assess soil capacity, wind speed and wind direction before installation. Police were directed to prepare a special traffic and route plan, identify parking areas and arrange barricades and diversions. Medical camps, emergency vehicles and fire engines will also be kept ready. Officials from various departments and festival committee



representatives attended the meeting.

Andhra Loyola College Concludes Spandana 2026

Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Loyola College's Intermediate Wing concluded its annual cultural festival, Spandana 2026, with a colourful valedictory celebration on Friday, showcasing students' creativity and talent.

The final day featured Creative Hairstyle and Mehendi competitions, a quiz conducted by Dayakar, Solo Dance and Fancy Dress performances, including classical and contemporary dances and portrayals of historical personalities and social themes.

During the valedictory ceremony, Vice-Principal Rev. Fr. S. Karunakar, S.J., reviewed the two-day festival and appreciated student participation. Principal Rev. Fr. S. Melchior, S.J., congratulated students and organisers, stressing the role of cultural activities in developing confidence, discipline, creativity and



responsibility. Guest of Honour Gopal Reddy and Chief Guest Samba Siva Rao praised the college and students for their enthusiasm and performances. The highlight was the prize distribution ceremony, with winners receiving trophies, medals and certificates. The event concluded with a group photograph and the National Anthem.

Aster Ramesh Hospitals Marks 38 Years of Healthcare Service

Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Aster Ramesh Hospitals celebrated its 38th anniversary on Thursday, marking nearly four decades of healthcare service, medical innovation and patient-centric care in Andhra Pradesh. Established on August 15, 1988, as a six-bed specialised cardiac hospital, the institution has grown into a multi-specialty healthcare network with centres in Vijayawada, Guntur, Ongole, Eluru, Bhimavaram and Tiruvuru.

The anniversary celebrations were held at a hotel in Vijayawada. Padma Shri awardee and renowned cardiologist Dr B. Soma Raju attended as Chief Guest, while Dr Kamineni Pattabhi Ramiah and Dr Samaram were Guests of Honour. Educator Dr M.C. Das launched the Ramesh Premium Health Card, offering special healthcare concessions. The hospital highlighted its cardiac-care services, including advanced interventional cardiology, minimally invasive and robotic procedures, ECMO and digital cath-lab facilities. Its 24-hour car-

diac reporting system provides expert guidance to patients in rural areas during emergencies. Managing Director Dr Pothineni Ramesh Babu said patient trust remained the institution's greatest achievement. He highlighted more than 5,000 free medical camps, BLS training for over one lakh students and more than 100 CME programmes. He said Aster Ramesh Hospitals had expanded into telemedicine, tele-ICU, remote patient monitoring and technology-enabled emergency care. The Guntur centre, which began

organ transplantation services in 2016, has completed more than 40 kidney, liver and heart transplant procedures. Reflecting on his 38-year journey, Dr Ramesh Babu expressed gratitude to everyone who supported the organisation's growth, from his uncle and mother to doctors, nurses and staff across its branches. The organisation currently employs around 3,000 people and plans to focus on technology, clinical excellence and patient-centred care in the coming years.



Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

KL University organised a free eye screening

camp and an organ donation awareness programme on campus on Friday to promote healthcare awareness and social responsibility

KBN College Holds Financial Awareness Programme

Vijayawada, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Students should develop an early understanding of income, savings, investments, banking services and digital finance to secure their financial future, said S Bank Retail Banking Assistant Vice-President C.H. Sivaram Pavan. He was addressing an awareness programme on "Financial Security" organised by the Management Department of KBN College on Friday on the occasion of National Financial Awareness Day.

Sivaram Pavan explained the importance of regular saving, appropriate investments and responsible use of banking services. He urged students to remain vigilant against cyber fraud as digital transactions increase, warning them never to share sensitive information such as OTPs, PINs or passwords. KBN College Principal Dr G. Krishnaveni said financial awareness was essential for avoiding difficulties and advised students to understand



basic financial concepts before making banking or investment decisions. She encouraged them to set realistic financial goals and develop disciplined money-management habits. PG Courses Director Dr S. Venkatesh, Department Head Ravikiran and faculty members participated. The programme provided students with practical guidance on financial planning, banking safety and responsible digital transactions.



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employs around 3,000 people and plans to focus on technology, clinical excellence and patient-centred care in the coming years.

KLU Hosts Free Eye Camp, Organ Donation Awareness Programme

among students and staff. The eye camp was organised by the National Service Scheme (NSS) and CSIT departments in collaboration with Pure Vision Hospital and inaugurated by Dr Habibullah Khan. Faculty, staff and students participated. Dr Khan advised regular eye examinations, while Dr K.R.S. Prasad stressed early detection of eye disorders. Dr Subhakar Raju and Pure Vision Hospital's Dr Anil Kumar also highlighted the importance of regular check-ups. Meanwhile, the NSS and MBA departments conducted an organ donation awareness pro-

gramme as part of Organ Donation Week. MBA Department Head Dr Padma Nanduri said organ donation could save multiple lives. Dr Srikanth, organ transplantation surgeon from Manipal Hospital, Tadepalli, explained that organs from brain-dead donors could help patients requiring transplants and highlighted the importance of tissue donation. Dr Raja Aravind Sai Gogeneni urged people to register through the Jeevadaan programme. Vice-Chancellor Dr G. Parthasarathi Varma, senior officials, doctors, faculty and NSS coordinators attended.

Narayana Inspects Waste Management and Waste-to-Energy Projects



Kakinada/ Rajamahendravaram, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister P. Narayana on Friday inspected the under-construction

Waste-to-Energy plant at Surampalem and reviewed solid waste management initiatives in Kakinada and Rajamahendravaram. Kakinada City MLA Vananadi Venkata Satyanarayana (Kondababu), former MLA Jyothula Venkata Apparao

(Varma), and Rajam ahendravaram MLAs Gorantla Butchiaiah Chowdary and Adireddy Vasu accompanied the minister during the visits.

Narayana said the state government, under Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, was according priority to scientific and sustainable solid waste management. He said Waste-to-Energy plants were successfully used in countries including Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and China. The minister said the previous TDP government had approved 10 Waste-to-Energy plants, but eight were subsequently cancelled. The coalition government has now initiated six new plants at Kadapa, Kurnool, Tirupati, Nellore, Vija yawada and Peddapuram. Waste generated within a 100-km radius would be transported to the respective

facilities for processing and conversion into electricity. **Clearing Legacy Waste, Expanding Processing Capacity** Narayana said Andhra Pradesh generates around 7,000 tonnes of municipal waste daily, while another 3,000 tonnes is generated by panchayats. He said around 85 lakh tonnes of legacy waste had already been cleared across the state, with the remaining 70 lakh tonnes in municipalities targeted for removal by October. Meanwhile, fresh waste-processing plants are being established in 107 municipalities, expected to be completed by September. He said the Peddapuram plant would eventually process waste from Rajamahendravaram as part of the state's broader effort to create a cleaner and more scientific waste-management system.

Lepakshi Chairman Visits Rajamahendravaram Showroom

Rajamahendravaram, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh State Handicrafts Development Corporation (Lepakshi) Chairman Dr Pasupuleti Hariprasad visited the Lepakshi showroom in Rajamahendravaram on Thursday and reviewed its functioning. Showroom Manager Mounika and the staff welcomed Dr Hariprasad during his visit. He inspected various handicraft products displayed

at the showroom and enquired about its day-to-day management, sales performance and services being provided to customers. Dr Hariprasad said Lepakshi was committed to creating better market opportunities for traditional handicraft products made by artisans across Andhra Pradesh. He said the corporation was also working to make quality handicraft products more accessible to consumers through its network of



showrooms.

The chairman directed the

staff to take steps to

increase sales of products made by local artisans and strengthen the functioning of Lepakshi showrooms. He stressed the need to improve customer services and ensure that the traditional craftsmanship of Andhra Pradesh receives greater market visibility. He also sought better promotion and presentation of handicraft products to attract more customers and support the livelihoods of artisans.

Narsipatnam Ward Gets Rs.58.20 Lakh Development Works

Narsipatnam, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Development works worth an estimated Rs.58.20 lakh were formally launched in Ward 17 of Narsipatnam Municipality on Friday. Chinthakayala Padmavathi, wife of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly

Speaker Chinthakayala Ayyanna Patrudu, inaugurated the works by breaking coconuts and unveiling foundation plaques. The works, funded through VMRDA and 15th Finance Commission grants, include CC roads, drainage systems and culverts. Padmavathi said development activi-

ties had intensified across Narsipatnam Municipality and 189 road and drainage works were being completed. She said nearly Rs.32 crore had been secured for municipal development works and Rs.189 crore sanctioned for a drinking water project, with the government aiming to

provide tap water to every household within one-and-a-half years. Padmavathi also said waste from the Balighat tam dumping yard had been transported to Jindal at a cost of Rs.2 crore, while a waste-management machine worth Rs.3.05 crore had been provided.



Former municipal chairperson Adilakshmi said Narsipatnam was witnessing major development

with the support of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Ayyanna Patrudu and Padmavathi.

Eswari Bhushanam Selected for International Training in Finland

Ongole, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Eswari Bhushanam, a recipient of the State Best Teacher Award, has been selected to participate in an international Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) training programme at the University of Turku, Finland, from August 16 to 26. The programme is aimed at strengthening teachers' understanding of Finland's education system, modern teaching methodologies and strategies to improve students' learning abilities. Finland's teacher-training model places strong emphasis on pedagogy and adapting

classroom instruction to the individual learning needs of students. Bhushanam will participate in the programme along with 29 other State Best Teachers under the guidance of Commissioner of School Education Tamim Ansariya. Following the training, she will submit a report to the state government and is expected to share the knowledge and teaching practices acquired in Finland with fellow teachers. Known for innovative classroom practices such as 'learning by doing' and the use of low-cost Tea Ching-Learning Materials, Bhushanam has helped 185 students secure admissions to Navodaya

and Gurukula schools. She has also promoted parental involvement, girls' education and school enrolment of children facing social challenges. Her efforts were recognised with the State Best Teacher Award in September 2025, presented by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Education Minister Nara Lokesh. District Educational Officer C.V. Renuka issued her relieving orders and congratulated her, while Markapuram DEO Sama Subbarao also extended his wishes. Bhushanam is additionally known for her literary work, including Mattipadam, and has received several literary and



teaching awards.

MLA Says Public Satisfaction Is Coalition's Measure

Eluru, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Eluru MLA and TDP district president Badeti Radhakrishnaiah (Chanti) said public satisfaction was the key measure of the coalition government's performance, claiming that people were living peacefully and comfortably during its two-year tenure. Chanti participated in the 'Two Years of Trust - Development and Welfare' door-to-door campaign in Ward 8 on Friday. He offered prayers at a local temple and paid floral tributes to former Chief Minister N.T. Rama Rao before visiting households and distributing pamphlets on

government initiatives. He interacted with residents, shopkeepers and workers and reviewed welfare scheme implementation. Residents sought speed breakers at several locations, and the MLA assured them of necessary action. Chanti criticised the YSRC's campaign against the Mega DSC teacher recruitment process and demanded that its leaders explain alleged irregularities in Group-I recruitment during the previous government. He expressed confidence that the coalition alliance would win the forthcoming local body elections and pledged continued focus on development and welfare.

Anna Konidela Offers Prayers at Pithapuram Shakti Peetha

Pithapuram, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Anna Konidela, wife of State Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, visited the Sri Pada Gaya Kshetram in Pithapuram on Friday and offered special prayers to Goddess Puruhitika, the presiding deity of one of the Ashtadasha Shakti Peethas. Temple priests and officials accorded her a traditional welcome. After darshan, Anna Konidela received Vedic blessings and Teertha-Prasadam. She later visited the shrine of Sri Pada Sri Vallabha Swamy and offered prayers. The visit was marked by traditional rituals, with temple authorities making arrangements for her darshan and providing the customary sacred offerings.



Prayers were offered by Anna Konidela, wife of State Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, at the Sri Pada Gaya Kshetram in Pithapuram.

Collector, MLA Launch Plantation Drive

Denduluru, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Eluru District Collector K. Vetrivel and Denduluru MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar planted saplings at Anna Canteen in SMR Nagar, Denduluru mandal, on Friday as part of the 80th Independence Day celebrations. Collector Vetrivel said protecting the environment and ensuring a healthy future was a collective responsibility. She said a district-wide plantation drive was being taken up as a movement to mark Independence Day and appealed to every citizen to plant at least two saplings and ensure their regular care. MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar stressed the need for large-scale plantation programmes to increase greenery in villages and



maintain ecological balance. He urged officials and residents to protect and nurture every sapling until it matured into a healthy tree. District Joint Collector Dr M.J. Abhishek Goud, ZP CEO P. Jagadamba, RDO K. Lakshmi Prasanna, District Panchayat

Officer G.V.K. Mallikarjuna Rao, DRDA PD T.V. Vijayalakshmi, Tahsildar B. Sumathi, Deputy MPDO M. Bheemaraju, AMC Chairman Garapati Ramasita, public representatives, alliance leaders, officials and residents participated.

Denduluru, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Denduluru MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar participated in a grand 'Har Ghar Tiranga' rally with around 1,000 students in Chataparru village of Eluru Rural mandal on Friday as part of the 80th Independence Day celebrations. Organised by Zilla Parishad High School, Chataparru, the rally saw students from ZP School, Mamatha School, Little Flower School and surrounding areas carrying Tricolour flags. After paying floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, Prabhakar launched the rally and walked alongside students carrying a 300-foot-long national flag.



Prabhakar said students were central to nation-building and urged them to uphold discipline and responsible citizenship. He said the government was accelerating the Polavaram and Amaravati projects and thanked Education Minister Nara Lokesh for extending 'Thaliki Vandanam' assistance to around 900 participating students. TDP leaders, teachers, parents, school staff and local alliance representatives attended.

Durgesh Leads Tiranga Yatra



Nidadavole, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh on Friday participated in a grand 400-foot Tiranga Yatra organised by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) in Nidadavole and later inspected development works at Samisragudem Lake and the Sri Parvatha Vardhini Ramalingeswara Swamy Temple. Calls for Patriotism and Viksit Bharat Participating as chief guest in the rally held to mark the 80th Independence Day and 150 years of Vande Mataram, Durgesh urged people to rededicate themselves to the goals of 'Viksit Bharat' and 'Swarna Andhra 2047'. He said the Tricolour represented India's self-respect, unity and national pride and recalled the sacrifices of freedom fighters. Durgesh urged citizens, particularly youth, to contribute to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat vision and the goals of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan. He also

stressed the need to educate younger generations about the national flag, national anthem and the country's achievements. Lake, Temple Works Reviewed Later, the minister inspected the Rs.50-lakh Samisragudem Lake development project and directed officials to maintain quality and complete the works within the stipulated time. Bund levelling has been completed, while a walking track, children's park and open gym are planned. Responding to residents, Durgesh said steps would be taken to construct a bridge connecting the bund with the Sir Arthur Cotton statue in the lake. He also assured efforts to secure an additional Rs.10 lakh for fencing and further modernisation. He subsequently inspected the Sri Parvatha Vardhini Ramalingeswara Swamy Temple, being constructed at a cost of Rs.1.25 crore with Godavari Pushkaras 2027 funds, and directed officials to ensure quality and timely completion.

Eluru SP Inspects Independence Day Arrangements



Eluru, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Eluru District Superintendent of Police K. Pratap Shiva Kishore inspected arrangements for the 80th Independence Day celebrations at the District Police Parade Ground on Friday. The SP reviewed venue preparations and rehearsals for the police parade and directed officials to ensure that the event was conducted smoothly and on a grand scale. He instructed authorities to make proper seating arrangements as per protocol for dignitaries and the public. He also ordered adequate traffic and parking arrangements, including design-

nated parking areas, to prevent disruption to vehicular and public movement. In view of the prevailing heat, he directed officials to ensure thorough cleaning of the parade ground and surrounding areas and provide adequate drinking water facilities. Pratap Shiva Kishore stressed close coordination among all departments to ensure peaceful and efficient conduct of the celebrations. Additional SP (Administration) Y. Prasad Rao, Eluru DSP D. Shravan Kumar, SB Inspector Malleswara Rao, AR RI Pawan Kumar, RSIs Satish and other police personnel participated in the inspection.

BSNL Announces Independence Day Offers

Gokavaram, Aug 14 | TPN Bureau

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) Principal General Manager Palivela Raju on Friday announced special Independence Day offers for customers, effective from August 12. Under the Freedom Plan, customers can obtain a BSNL SIM for Rs.1, with 24-day validity, 1GB daily data, 100 SMS per day and unlimited voice calls. The offer is available until September 12. Raju said the validity of the Rs.2,399 plan has been extended from 365 to 423 days, providing an additional 47 days.

Customers can also access live television channels, music and web series through the Tango app at no additional cost. Special Bharat Fibre offers include a Rs.100 discount on the Rs.499 plan, along with free installation and modem until October 30. The six-month Super Plus OTT plan is available for Rs.1,111, against Rs.1,199, until September 30. Raju said BSNL had increased its regional tower count from 400 to 828, targeting 900, with services now reaching around 1,500 of 1,665 villages. He urged customers to utilise the offers and extended Independence Day greetings.



Driver Sentenced to Eight Days in Jail

Eluru : Eluru One Town Police conducted drunk-driving checks at around 2.30 am on August 13 on the directions of DSP D. Shravan Kumar. Police intercepted Aggala Sai Kumar of Marutinarag, who allegedly tested positive for alcohol at 239/100 ml. A case was registered and he was produced before the Eluru SJSCM Court on Friday. Presiding Judge Ravuri Muralikrishna sentenced him to eight days' simple imprisonment. Inspector Koppiseti Ramakrishna warned that strict action would continue against drunk drivers and urged motorists to follow traffic rules.

CPI Holds Protest and Padayatra

Eluru : CPI Eluru district secretary Mannava Krishna Chaitanya said communism would remain relevant as long as social and economic inequalities persisted. The CPI organised a campaign protest and padayatra at Chataparru village on Friday. Chaitanya accused the Narendra Modi-led Central government of pursuing anti-people policies and failing to fulfil electoral promises. CPI district assistant secretary Bandi Venkateswara Rao demanded continuation of MGNREGS, revival of forest protection committees, three cents of house-site land and Rs.5 lakh house construction assistance. BKMYU mandal secretary Pottelu Pentayya and other CPI leaders participated.

ACB Catches VRO Taking Rs.20,000 Bribe

Markapuram : Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials conducted a raid at the Gangavaram village secretariat in Pullalacheruvu mandal and allegedly caught VRO Mahaboob Basha red-handed while accepting a Rs.20,000 bribe from a farmer. According to officials, the VRO had allegedly demanded the money in connection with an official matter. The ACB launched an investigation following the complaint and registered a case against the official. Further inquiry is underway, and officials are examining the circumstances surrounding the alleged bribery incident before initiating subsequent action.

Editorial

A Journey of Freedom and Responsibility

India's 80 years of independence are not merely a celebration of a historic date; they are a reflection of how far a nation can travel when freedom becomes a shared responsibility. From the struggles of our freedom fighters to the ambitions of today's youth, India's journey has been filled with sacrifice, challenges, achievements, and hope.

Independence gave us the right to shape our own destiny. Over eight decades, India has grown in science, technology, education, agriculture, infrastructure, and global influence. Yet, true progress cannot be measured only by economic growth or technological achievements. It must also be measured by how equally opportunities reach every citizen, how respectfully we treat one another, and how responsibly we protect our environment and democracy. The 80th year should therefore make us ask an important question: What kind of India do we want to build for the next 80 years? A developed nation is not created by governments alone. It is built through the everyday choices of its citizens-by students who learn with purpose, professionals who work with integrity, leaders who serve honestly, and communities that stand together beyond differences.

Our freedom fighters dreamed of an India that would be independent not only from foreign rule, but also from poverty, inequality, ignorance, and injustice. Their dream is still unfinished.

As we celebrate 80 years of independence, let us not merely look back with pride. Let us look forward with courage. Freedom is our inheritance, but the future is our responsibility. The strongest tribute to those who gave us independence is to use that freedom wisely and leave behind an India that is more united, educated, compassionate, sustainable, and powerful than the one we inherited.

Editor

Victim Compensation: The Missing Shield for Vulnerable Children



Laws in India dealing with child labor, bonded labor, human trafficking and sexual offences against children are stringent. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, laws against bonded labor and provisions dealing with trafficking of children provide a strong legal framework to protect victims and punish offenders. Yet, despite these stringent laws, convictions in many cases remain disappointingly low. The result is a dangerous message to society: the law may be strict on paper, but the fear of punishment is often weak in practice. One of the major reasons for the poor conviction rate is the withdrawal or change of testimony by victims and witnesses. Cases are sometimes weakened or dismissed when victims turn hostile or retract their statements. In some cases, the culprits are being acquitted because of technical reasons in framing the case. A child or a vulnerable woman, who has faced exploitation may be under enormous

psychological, social and economic pressure. Fear of the accused, threats to family members, social stigma, dependence on the perpetrator and financial inducements can all influence a victim's decision. In most of the cases, the victims are from weaker sections in the society and the age old local settlements by the village or community elders influence the victim's family. This is where victim compensation assumes enormous importance. Government of India and the States have created a Victim Compensation Fund to go to the rescue of the victim immediately, but is not being implemented properly.

For a poor family, justice cannot be separated from economic survival. A child rescued from labor may return to a family that has lost an important source of income. A bonded laborer may have no savings, land or employment. A girl rescued from trafficking may have nowhere safe to live and no means of supporting herself. If such victims are

expected to cooperate with a long and difficult criminal justice process without adequate financial and social support, they remain vulnerable to further exploitation.

The situation of trafficked girls is particularly disturbing. Rescue alone does not constitute rehabilitation. When a girl is rescued from prostitution or trafficking but is subsequently left without secure accommodation, education, vocational training, employment and financial assistance, she may once again become vulnerable to traffickers. Poverty and dependency can push survivors back into the same exploitative circumstances from which they were rescued.

Victim compensation should therefore not be treated merely as a payment made after a court verdict. It should be viewed as an instrument of protection, rehabilitation and justice. Compensation should reach eligible victims at the earliest possible stage, with interim finan-



B.V.S. Kumar

Former Chairman, Child Welfare Committee, Krishna District, AP

cial assistance available while the criminal case is still pending. There is also a need to simplify the process of claiming compensation. Victims and their families often do not know their rights or the procedures involved. Legal services authorities, police, Child Welfare Committees, Juvenile Justice Boards, District Child Protection Units and NGOs should proactively assist victims in applying for compensation. Children should not be expected to navigate complicated legal and administrative procedures on their own.

Financial assistance should also be linked with a comprehensive rehabilitation package. All eligible Government welfare schemes should be provided to the victim and victim's family. For child laborers, this could include education, bridge schooling, nutrition, counseling and skill development. For bonded laborers, compensation should be accompanied by livelihood support and assistance in rebuilding an independent life. For POCSO survivors, long-term psychological counseling, education, safe accommodation and family support are essential. Trafficking survivors require even stronger protection, including secure housing, vocational training, employment opportunities and sustained financial assistance. Most importantly, compensation should not become a substitute for prosecution. The victim deserves both rehabilitation and justice. The State must ensure that economic

assistance does not weaken the criminal case against the perpetrator. Investigation must be professional, evidence must be preserved, witnesses must be protected and trials involving children must be conducted in a sensitive and timely manner, preferably in designated Child Courts. The real test of a country's commitment to vulnerable people is not merely how severe its laws are, but how effectively those laws protect victims after exploitation has occurred. A law without enforcement creates little fear among offenders; compensation without rehabilitation creates little security for survivors. India needs a victim-centered approach in which compensation, protection, rehabilitation and prosecution work together. Every rescued child should have a pathway back to education and a safe family environment. Every bonded laborer should have the means to rebuild an independent livelihood. Every POCSO survivor should receive dignity, counseling and sustained support. Every trafficked girl should be protected from being pushed back into exploitation.

Justice should not end with rescue. It must continue until the victim is safe, financially secure, rehabilitated and able to live with dignity. That is when stringent laws will begin to create not only punishment for offenders, but genuine fear among perpetrators and real hope for survivors.

Let's hope for a Safe and Happy India on this 80th Independence Day.

How Can Gen-Z Build Constructive Democratic Movements?

From Agitation to Transformation

India's Gen-Z is not merely protesting; it is asking a deeper question: Can spontaneous anger become organised democratic power? From the NEET-UG 2026 controversy to historic struggles for social justice, regional dignity and public accountability, young citizens are rediscovering the power of collective action. Yet the real test begins after the protest: can a movement convert moral energy into lasting institutional reform? The NEET episode became a powerful symbol of this awakening. Allegations of paper leaks and other irregularities affected lakhs of aspirants and triggered protests at JNU, Delhi University and elsewhere. Student groups demanded a re-test, accountability, and even the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. However, it is important to correct a common misconception: the protests did not culminate in Pradhan's resignation. The Union government instead ordered a CBI investigation into alleged irregularities, while demands for reform of the National Testing Agency (NTA) intensified.

What made the contemporary youth response significant was its ability to cross traditional organisational boundaries. Protests involved students associated with

different ideological backgrounds, while autonomous voices emerged alongside organisations such as SFI, AISE, AISA, Muslim Student Union, Ambedkar Student Association, Dalit Student Union, Adivasi-Dalit-Bahujan student groups, BSF, PDSU and ABVP. This diversity demonstrates both the strength and complexity of Gen-Z mobilisation: a movement can become wider when it is not controlled by a single political identity. India's history offers several lessons. The Mandal movement advanced the demand for 27% reservation for Other Backward Classes in education and employment. The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) led a mass movement around Assam's identity and resource concerns. In Telangana, students became central to the separate-state movement, demanding jobs, dignity and socio-cultural self-respect. Their struggle drew support from poets, artists, intellectuals, journalists, lawyers, doctors, teachers and people from every section, with political parties joining at different stages. The Telangana experience is especially instructive. Professor Jayashankar, Biyyala Janardhan Rao, Keshavrao Jadhav, Lakshman, Burra Ramulu, Kodandaram, Ghanta Chakrapani, Erukonda



Thirumali, Simhadri, P.L. Visweshwara Rao, Mallepalli Laxmaiah, Pasham Yadagiri, Allam Narayana, Gaddar, Goreti Venkanna, Guda Anjanna, Jayaraj, Ande Sri, Vimalakka, Maraju Veeranna, Belli Lalitha and Professor Kasim represented a broad cultural-intellectual ecosystem. Singareni workers, employees and students participated in the Sakala Janula Samme, Vantavaru, Sagara Haram, Millennium March, Chalo Assembly, student Padayatra and Telangana Vidyarthi Garjana. These actions demonstrated that sustained mobilisation can cross caste, religion and party boundaries. But Telangana also exposes the

danger of unfinished transformation. Joint Action Committees (JACs) and other platforms faced political interference, internal divisions and the difficulty of translating movement aspirations into post-movement governance. The Telangana Students' JAC contributed significantly to the statehood struggle, but the broader promise of social justice remained contested. The lesson is clear: winning a demand is not the same as transforming a system. Gen-Z movements possess major strengths. Their autonomy can bring diverse citizens together without rigid party labels. Their command of technology enables rapid documentation, fact-sharing and mobilisation. Their prefer-



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ence for constitutional, non-violent action can also protect democratic legitimacy. Yet they face weaknesses: unstable leadership can make long-term pressure difficult, while total rejection of parliamentary politics can create a vacuum that established parties may occupy. The way forward is constructive struggle. First, temporary protests should evolve into autonomous, permanent platforms for public education, legal support, policy research and grassroots organisation. Second, young citizens should engage parliamentary democracy without surrendering their independence, developing ethical leaders from within their own ranks. Third, movements must demand structural reform rather than only individual resignations-strengthening examination systems, improving the NTA, protecting education and employment, and making healthcare and public institutions more accountable. The wider intellectual question echoes Karl Marx, Antonio

Gramsci and Zygmunt Bauman: political change requires confronting not only governments but also entrenched cultural and institutional hegemonies. Sonam Wangchuk's public mobilisation, and the solidarity shown by Chandrashekhhar Azad, Prakash Raj, Shabana Azmi, Jyothika, Sekhar Kammula and Pa. Ranjith, show how social causes can gain wider resonance. However, Wangchuk's 2024 hunger strike concerned Ladakh's statehood and Sixth Schedule demands, not NEET.

Gen-Z should therefore beware of both political co-option and political isolation. The future belongs to movements that can protest with courage, negotiate with wisdom, organise with discipline and legislate with responsibility. If today's youth can transform hashtags into institutions, outrage into policy, and protest into meaningful participation, India's democratic future will not merely be defended-it will be renewed.

Enrolment Is Not Enough-Every Child Must Stay in School

Parents Association of Andhra Pradesh (PAAP) As India celebrates its 80th Independence Day, one uncomfortable question deserves urgent attention: Are the benefits of education reaching every child equally? Independence is meaningful only when every child has the opportunity to learn, remain in school and build a dignified future. For Andhra Pradesh, the challenge is no longer simply getting children into classrooms-it is ensuring that they remain there. UDISE+ 2024-25 data presents a worrying picture. Andhra Pradesh recorded a 15.5% secondary-school dropout rate, compared with 11.5% nationally. Its secondary Gross Enrolment Ratio

(GER) of 89.4% and higher-secondary GER of 67.8% are comparatively strong, yet the transition rate from secondary to higher secondary is only 76%. In other words, access to education does not automatically translate into educational continuity. The reasons are complex. The shortage of secondary and higher-secondary schools, particularly in rural areas, can increase travel distances. School rationalisation may unintentionally deepen this problem where safe transport is unavailable. For adolescent girls, concerns over safety, domestic responsibilities and mobility can become decisive barriers. Economic hardship also pushes many 15-18-year-olds towards employment or

household work. National data shows that supplementing household income and domestic chores are among the major reasons adolescents remain outside school. Quality is equally important. A child who reaches higher classes without strong foundational learning is more likely to lose confidence and eventually disengage. Parents moving towards private schools also signals a crisis of trust in public education. Financial assistance can reduce the burden on families, but cash support alone cannot guarantee retention or learning outcomes. Andhra Pradesh's schemes, including Thalliki Vandanam, along with Vidya Deevana and Vasathi



Deevana, can play an important supportive role. But gov-

ernment spending must be judged not merely by enroll-



Sikkharam Narahari

Parents Association of Andhra Pradesh

ment numbers, but by whether children actually complete their education with meaningful learning. The way forward requires a comprehensive approach: upgrade more schools to secondary and higher-secondary levels; strengthen foundational learning; improve teacher training and infrastructure; provide safe transport, especially for rural girls; empower School Management Committees and parent associations; and introduce vocational and skill-oriented pathways for

older students. India cannot claim educational progress while thousands of children disappear from the system before completing school. The true measure of educational freedom is not how many children enter Class 1, but how many are still standing in the classroom when they reach Class 12. On this Independence Day, Andhra Pradesh must turn enrolment into retention, schemes into outcomes, and education into genuine social opportunity.

THE TORCHBEARERS OF INDEPENDENT BHARAT

On this great occasion of the 80th Independence Day celebrations of Bharat, I extend my heartiest congratulations to each Bharatvasi. I also pay my respectful tributes to all freedom fighters who sacrificed themselves to secure independence for Bharat. Last week during my visit to the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, I had the honour of hoisting our National Flag as a part of the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign and paying homage and commemorating the first hoisting of the Tiranga by our great patriot Shri Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose ji. It was indeed a deeply moving experience for me to stand on that very sacred soil where Shri Netaji's Azad Hind Fauj first raised the Tiranga on Indian territory on 30th December 1943. This occasion also brought to my memory Shri Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose ji's visit to Madurai in September 1939 at the invitation of Pasumpun Muthura malinga Thevar ji. This historic moment had inspired countless patriots of the region.

Another deeply inspiring moment was my visit to the National Memorial Cellular Jail, where the great sons of Mother Bharat Shri Veer Savarkar ji, Shri Yogendra Shukla ji, Shri Batukeshwar Dutt ji, Shri Sachindra Nath Sanyal ji, and many others

were imprisoned and kept in solitary confinement by the colonial forces. Even today, the walls of the National Memorial echo the stories of courage, suffering, and supreme sacrifice of those who laid down their lives so that Bharat might live in freedom and dignity. The visit inspired me to pen down this article as a mark of paying my homage to all the torchbearers who ignited the flame of patriotism within millions of people, leading the nation towards independence. I was immensely pleased to launch the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign in the Andaman Islands on 9 August, as we commemorated the Quit India Movement. In 1942, Father of the Nation, Rashtrapita Mahatma Gandhiji launched the 'Quit India Movement', giving the Nation a stirring slogan, "Do or Die". As a result of this call, a fervent desire for independence spread across the country.

Today, thanks to the generation that stood against the colonial forces of their day, we are fortunate to breathe the air of freedom and live with constitutional rights under a democratic system. Millions of brave freedom fighters across the length and breadth of this Nation struggled with unwavering dedication and sacrifice, and many laid down their precious lives

to see our Mother Bharat free.

Tapestry of the freedom fighters

Freedom fighters, be they from Kashmir in the north or Tamil Nadu in the South; from Gujrat in the west or Assam in the east, people belonging to all regions, backgrounds, ages, and gender joined together for one common goal - the freedom of Mother Bharat.

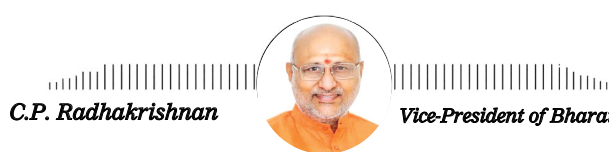
The valour of Rani Lakshmbai ji of Jhansi, the enduring symbol of resistance during the First War of Independence; the courage of Mangal Pandey ji, the fearless call of Bal Gangadhar Tilak ji, who awakened a nation with the declaration, "Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it" - every voice strengthened the march towards freedom. V.O. Chidambaram Pillai challenged colonial economic domination by launching India's first indigenous shipping enterprise, proving that the fight for independence was waged not only on the battlefield but also in commerce. The revolutionary zeal of Bhagat Singh ji, Rajguru ji and Sukhdev ji inspired generations to embrace sacrifice in the cause of liberty, while the indomitable spirit of Rani Gaidinliu ji kept the flame of resistance burning in the North-East against British



rule. In Assam, the young Kanaklata Barua ji, carrying the National Flag with unflinching courage, laid down her life while leading the Quit India Movement. Bhagwan Birsa Munda ji and many other tribal leaders led historic resistance against colonial rule. Many more are the stories of resilience, courage and determination that can be pulled out from the pages of history. Together, they form a rich tapestry of courage and sacrifice, reminding us that India's freedom was won through the collective resolve of countless heroes whose legacy continues to inspire generations.

Tiruppur in the freedom movement

As we celebrate this



C.P. Radhakrishnan

Vice-President of Bharat

the youth. Kumaran firmly believed that true freedom could be achieved only when people became conscious of the injustices of colonial rule and developed the courage and clarity to resist them. Committed to Gandhian principles of social reform, he actively championed the cause of prohibition, viewing it as an essential step towards social and national regeneration. As part of this, he participated in the picketing of toddy shops, encouraging people to shun alcohol and embrace self-discipline in the larger cause of India's freedom. Kumaran led a march on January 10, 1932, during the Civil Disobedience Movement. Holding the national flag in his hands and accompanied by a few brave souls, the powerful chants of 'Vande Mataram' echoed on the streets of Tiruppur. The colonial forces attacked the group, with 'Vande Mataram' on his lips and the flag held close to his body, Kumaran sustained head injuries and laid down his life for the Nation. He was only 27 years old at the time of his death.

As I pen down the age of

Tiruppur Kumaran, I am reminded of the several other youths who martyred their lives for Mother Bharat. Young souls, to name a few: Bhagat Singh (23), Sukhdev (23), Rajguru (22), Khudiram Bose (18), Kanaklata Barua (18), Anant Laxman Kanhere (19), Vanchinathan (25), and many others sacrificed their mortality, becoming immortal in the pages of the Indian Freedom Movement.

I commend the initiative of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shriman Narendra Modi ji, in bringing the unsung heroes of our National Movement to the centre stage. I pay my tributes to the known and the unknown freedom fighters. On this momentous occasion, let us reflect and renew our commitment to our Motherland. Let us dedicate ourselves to building a Viksit Bharat @ 2047 in this Amrit Kaal and work together for the progress and prosperity of our nation. That will be the most fitting tribute we can pay to the bravehearts who fought with unwavering courage and sacrificed their lives to win our freedom.

Jai Hind! Long Live Mother Bharat!

Grassroots Whistleblower Movement to Straight India's Economic Trajectory



Ram Kamal

Social Engineer

Part 4/5

India @80 is currently securing a bright economic future, but there is ambiguity regarding leadership after Prime Minister Modi and whether economic benefits are truly reaching the most marginalized citizens. This disparity necessitates a re-evaluation of India's economic model to suit present and future needs. We need to have a leader who is courageous enough to stop the counterfeit currencies and tax evasions. We are now at peak in collecting tax and spending too. But it is time to have an Economic policy for the nation that is flexible and forward looking. During the Constituent Assembly debates, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar opposed locking the Constitution into a rigid "socialist" framework, arguing that future generations should have the flexibility to choose their own economic governance. However, in 1976, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi inserted the terms "socialist" and "secular" into

the Preamble to support her "Garibi Hatao" poverty alleviation program. This one mini constitution has now become a major financial burden under the pretext of welfare and systemic leakage. Today, India spends approximately 960,207* Crores annually on welfare activities, yet nearly half of these funds end up in the wrong hands and Gharibi is still Gharibi, because they are not getting any welfare. Addressing this massive expenditure requires comprehensive audits. The government must ensure that only eligible citizens receive funds, while those who have escaped poverty should be integrated into the tax base to aid nation-building. It is high time India to implement 'Economic Reservations' rather than the caste-based ones.

Persistent Roots of Corruption While top-level political corruption has significantly decreased under the current administration, grassroots and individual bribery con-

India @ 80

tinue to flourish. A 2020 Transparency International study noted that 39% of Indians had recently paid bribes for public services, which is an improvement from 62% in 2005, but still highlights a pervasive issue. Even with digital initiatives like Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) removing traditional middlemen, corrupt officials and agents continue to find loopholes to demand bribes. The primary avenues for this ongoing corruption include:

Public Services and Extortion: Middlemen facilitate daily bribery within the bureaucracy, often acting on behalf of top-level bureaucrats who delay processes to manipulate tenders.

Highway Extortion: The trucking sector is heavily victimized, facing constant extortion at police and regulatory checkpoints despite reforms like GST. Truckers pay an estimated 7222 crore in bribes annually, and 60% of forced stoppages are designed solely for extortion, causing massive productivity delays.

Welfare Siphoning: High-profile schemes like the National Rural Health Mission and MGNREGA suffer from immense financial leakage. Corrupt officials frequently pocket wages assigned to fake rural workers, which degrades infrastructure quality and stalls poverty reduction. Furthermore, secondary extortion persists at local panchayat levels, where officials demand bribes simply to issue beneficiary cards.

Public Procurement: State-funded infrastructure projects are often hijacked by cabals of corrupt officials, politicians, and contractors. Their tactics include collusive bidding, price inflation, and routing funds through shell companies.

Resource Monopolies: Historically, opaque administration led to monumental losses, such as the 2012 Coal Allocation Scam, though such resource allocations are under stricter scrutiny today.

Corporate Favoritism: Political authority is



sometimes leveraged to favor specific corporate monopolies, a practice ironically criticized by opposition leaders who engaged in the same behavior when in power. Government should create a 'Grassroots Whistleblower Movement' To eradicate this developmental anarchy and protect national wealth, India needs robust checks

and balances. Rather than relying on foreign-instigated protests, audits and the government should implement a grassroots "Har Village Whistle Blowers" program, inspired by the Prime Minister's "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign. By selecting dedicated nationalists as village-level whistleblowers and empowering them through a

strong Whistleblowers Protection Act, India can effectively stop the erosion of its national funds. They can also whistle at the corrupt officials of the Anti-Corruption Bureau. Yes, not to forget that we also have a department in the name of the Anti-Corruption Bureau across the nation and it is inactive.

**Approximate study*

79 Years of Independence. But Are We Truly Free?

Political freedom was achieved in 1947. The unfinished task is to make liberty, equality, dignity and social justice a lived reality for every Indian. Every August 15, India enters a patriotic mood. Flags are hoisted, songs are played and freedom fighters are remembered. But when celebrations end, everyday realities return: unemployment, poverty, caste discrimination, agrarian distress, educational inequality, inadequate healthcare and rising living costs. This raises an uncomfortable question as India marks 79 years of Independence: Has political freedom truly become freedom in the lives of every Indian? August 15, 1947, was a historic turning point. The end of British rule was the result of decades of struggle and sacrifice. Yet Independence was not merely the departure of a foreign ruler. It was the beginning of a larger democratic project. **Ambedkar and the Unfinished Promise of Freedom+** Dr. B.R. Ambedkar under-

stood that political independence alone could not guarantee freedom. If political power changed hands while caste oppression, social exclusion and economic inequality continued, freedom would remain incomplete. For Ambedkar, democracy required liberty, equality and fraternity in everyday life. Political democracy could not survive without social democracy. What does freedom mean if social status is still influenced by birth? What does equality mean if caste continues to affect education, employment, marriage and political power? What does independence mean to a poor family that cannot afford quality education or healthcare? Ambedkar played a central role in framing the Constitution, which guaranteed equality, fundamental rights, abolition of untouchability and safeguards for social justice. But constitutional promises matter only when they become realities in people's lives. **A Nation That Has Progressed and a Nation Still**

Struggling

India has made significant progress in agriculture, industry, science, space technology, digital infrastructure and connectivity. Its global standing has also grown. But development cannot be measured only through highways, skyscrapers, metro systems, digital transactions or economic statistics. Its real test is whether benefits reach the people at the bottom. A country may send spacecraft into orbit, but a poor child must have quality education. A growing economy means little if a young graduate cannot find dignified employment. Agricultural progress means little if farmers cannot earn a secure livelihood. When young people struggle with uncertain recruitment, farmers struggle for fair returns, families fall into medical debt, or citizens face caste discrimination, the promise of freedom remains unfinished.

Students Are Asking Questions

India's students and young people are asking these questions. Student mobilisation



Basada Sampath Yadav

Education Expert
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at Delhi's Jantar Mantar has highlighted examination irregularities, paper leaks and accountability. In Jharkhand, students and job aspirants have also protested alleged recruitment irregularities. At their core is a simple demand: a fair examination, a transparent recruitment process and a secure future. For a student who has spent years studying and preparing for examinations, a paper leak is not merely an administrative failure. It can destroy years of effort and opportunity. A democracy must listen when its young citizens raise such questions. **When Politics Exploits Identity** When citizens demand education, employment, healthcare, agricultural security and social justice, political parties should offer credible solutions. Instead, caste, religion, region and identity are

often used for electoral mobilisation. When young people ask for jobs, they are sometimes shown caste. When citizens ask for development, they are sometimes shown religion. But hatred does not create jobs, polarisation does not increase farmers' incomes and caste conflict does not reduce poverty. The central questions should remain: Who has opportunity? Who controls political power? Who receives quality education? Who has economic security? Who is excluded? And who is accountable? **Freedom Must Include the Freedom to Question** Democracy is not simply the right to vote once every five years. It is also the right to question authority, criticise government policy and protest peacefully. The government is not the nation. A political party is not the nation. A political leader is



not the nation. The nation is its people. Criticising the government is not hating the country. Raising questions about injustice is not disloyalty. Democracy becomes stronger when citizens can question power without fear. **When Will Independence Become Complete?** India achieved political independence in 1947. Our challenge is to make that freedom meaningful in everyday life. A poor child must have quality education. A young person must have dignified employment. A farmer must receive

a fair return for labour. A woman must have freedom over her own life. No citizen's opportunities should be determined by caste, religion, birthplace or region. No citizen should fear questioning the government. On August 15, we should hoist the national flag, remember the freedom fighters and honour their sacrifices. But we must also look at the poor child, unemployed graduate, indebted farmer, woman fighting for autonomy and citizen facing discrimination. Patriotism is not merely saluting the national flag; it is protecting the dignity of every person who lives under it. In 1947, one generation won political freedom for India. Our responsibility is to transform that freedom into social justice, equality and dignity. That is the unfinished promise of Independence. After 79 years, the question remains: We became free from colonial rule in 1947. Have we succeeded in making freedom real for every Indian? **(On the occasion of the 80th Independence Day)**

India's 80th Independence: Gen G and Yuva Shakti Opening a New Horizon

As India prepares to celebrate its 80th Independence Day in 2027, the country stands at a remarkable historical threshold. Eight decades have passed since 15 August 1947, when India emerged from colonial rule and embarked upon the difficult journey of building a democratic, sovereign and modern nation. The India of 2027 will be very different from the India of 1947. It will be younger in aspiration, more digital in character, more confident globally and increasingly driven by a generation that sees opportunity not merely within national boundaries but across the world. At the centre of this transformation will be Gen G and India's Yuva Shakti-the immense energy, imagination and ambition of its young people. The 80th Independence anniversary therefore should not be regarded merely as a ceremonial milestone. It should become an occasion to ask what kind of India the next generation wants to inherit and what kind of India it is prepared to create. Independence was once about freedom from foreign domination. Today, freedom must also mean freedom from poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, social discrimination, technological backwardness and the limitations imposed by outdated thinking. India's youth constitute one of the country's greatest strengths. Their aspirations

are increasingly shaped by technology, entrepreneurship, global communication and a desire for meaningful participation in national development. Gen G, broadly understood as the generation growing up amid rapid digital transformation and global connectivity, is entering a world where artificial intelligence, robotics, biotechnology, renewable energy and digital platforms are changing the meaning of work and opportunity. Their India will not be defined only by traditional institutions; it will increasingly be shaped by innovation and knowledge. Yuva Shakti is more than a demographic advantage. It is a force of transformation. Young Indians today are not merely seeking employment; millions want to become entrepreneurs, creators, researchers, innovators, social leaders and problem-solvers. The digital revolution has fundamentally altered the relationship between young people and knowledge. A student in a small town can access lectures from the world's leading universities, learn sophisticated skills online, build a digital enterprise and communicate with audiences across continents. This democratisation of knowledge has enormous implications for India's future. The challenge is to ensure that digital access becomes universal and that rural and economically disadvantaged young people are



not left behind. India's 80th Independence should therefore place education at the heart of national priorities. The education system of the future must go beyond examinations and degrees. Critical thinking, creativity, scientific temper, communication skills, digital literacy, vocational competence and ethical responsibility must become integral to learning. A young person equipped with knowledge but lacking imagination will struggle in the new economy. The future of Yuva Shakti also depends upon employment. India's demographic strength can become a demographic dividend only when young people receive productive opportunities. The expansion of manufacturing,

infrastructure, tourism, agriculture-based industries, green technology, healthcare, artificial intelligence and the knowledge economy can generate new avenues. Skill development must be closely connected to the prosperity of India. Entrepreneurship can play a decisive role in this transformation. The young should be encouraged to take calculated risks, experiment with new ideas and accept failure as part of innovation. A society that treats failure as disgrace will discourage entrepreneurship. A society that treats failure as learning will produce innovators. India needs an ecosystem in which a young entrepreneur from a village receives almost as much encouragement to

experiment as a technology professional in a metropolitan city. At the same time, Yuva Shakti must remain connected with India's civilisational values. Modernity does not require cultural amnesia. The India of the future can be technologically advanced while remaining deeply conscious of its pluralistic heritage. Young Indians must understand that patriotism is not merely emotional celebration on Independence Day. The greatest strength of India's youth is its diversity. Young people from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from the Northeast to Gujarat bring different languages, cultures, traditions and experiences. This diversity should become a source of



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creativity rather than division. Yuva Shakti can build bridges where politics sometimes builds walls. Artificial intelligence will perhaps be one of the defining forces of this new horizon. It will transform education, medicine, administration, agriculture, industry and journalism. Yet young Indians must learn to use AI as an instrument rather than surrender human judgment to machines. Creativity, empathy, ethical reasoning and human relationships will remain indispensable. The journey ahead will not be easy. Inequality, unemployment, misinformation, social divisions, technological disruption and environmental crises pose serious challenges. But India's young population possesses an extraordinary reservoir of energy. If that energy is matched by quality education, opportunity, responsible leadership and democratic participation, the possibilities are immense. On the 80th Independence Day, the tricolour will once again rise above the nation. But its meaning for the young must go beyond ceremony. The saffron can inspire courage and sacrifice, white can remind them of peace and truth, and green

can symbolise hope, growth and harmony. The Ashoka Chakra can represent continuous movement-a reminder that a nation cannot remain static. India's next horizon belongs to its youth. Gen G and Yuva Shakti are not merely inheritors of the achievements of the past; they are the authors of the future. The 80th year of independence should therefore be a moment when India looks forward rather than merely backward. The real celebration of freedom will come when every young Indian feels empowered to dream, equipped to achieve and responsible enough to build a better nation. Indian Independence at 80th year can be more than an anniversary. It can be the opening chapter of a new national imagination-an India powered by knowledge, innovation, courage, compassion and the unstoppable energy of its youth. (International Tagore Award-winning writer and Poet Dr Ratan Bhattacharjee is a former Affiliate Faculty of English Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond and President of Kolkata Indian American Society. Email prof.ratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com)

UAE Blames Iran for Drone Attacks on Two Tankers in Strait of Hormuz

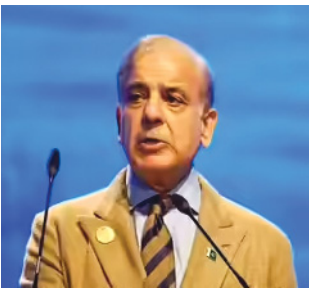
The United Arab Emirates has accused Iran of attacking two tankers operated by Abu Dhabi's state-owned ADNOC with drones in the Strait of Hormuz. No casualties were reported. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Center said two vessels suffered minor damage, while the UAE Foreign Ministry called the attacks a "flagrant violation" of freedom of navigation and accused Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps of threatening global energy security. Iran had not



immediately responded. Meanwhile, efforts to resolve the Gaza conflict are gaining momentum. President Donald Trump's son-in-law and negotiator Jared Kushner is scheduled to visit the Middle East with Board of Peace high representative Nickolay Mladenov and executive board member and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. The delegation is expected to meet a Palestinian technocratic group in Cairo amid efforts to advance a US-brokered ceasefire.

Shehbaz Sharif Warns India Over Indus Waters Treaty

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has warned of a "direct response" over water, calling India an "enemy of peace" for keeping the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance. Speaking ahead of Pakistan's Independence Day, Sharif described the treaty as a national "red line" and said Pakistan's water was non-negotiable. India suspended the treaty after the April 22, 2025, terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, which killed 26 people. New Delhi said the agreement would remain suspended until Pakistan "credibly and irrevocably" ends support for cross-border terrorism. Sharif's remarks come amid unrest in Balochistan, militant violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and protests in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Political tensions also persist over former Prime Minister Imran Khan's imprisonment, adding to pressure on Sharif's government.



US Names India Among 40 Hubs in China Tariff Evasion Network

The United States has identified India and more than 40 other trading partners as potential hubs in a "shadow trans-shipment network" allegedly used by Chinese companies to evade US tariffs. The report, titled "The Great Transshipment Scam", was prepared by Peter Navarro, the top trade advisor to President Donald Trump. It examines the practice of routing Chinese goods through third countries to avoid higher US duties by creating the appearance that products originated elsewhere. Countries named in the report include India, Canada, Taiwan, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam and the European Union. The report said some economies have transshipment risks embedded within legitimate trade flows, while others are considered attractive locations because of preferential US market access, lower labour costs or weaker customs oversight. Navarro said the practice became more widespread after 2018, when

the Trump administration imposed Section 301 tariffs on Chinese imports in response to what Washington described as unfair trade practices. "For years, the great transshipment scam has let Communist China launder its exports through more than 40 countries," Navarro told reporters. He said Chinese businesses had used third countries for minor processing, relabelling, repackaging, re-invoicing and routing changes to create the appearance of a different national origin while leaving much of the Chinese content unchanged. The report specifically highlighted India's Pune-Gujarat-Chennai production belt, claiming that Chinese pumps and compressors could be routed through the region and subsequently enter the US market as Indian products. Navarro argued that such practices could affect industrial manufacturing and jobs in Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus. The report estimated that the annual value of illegally trans-



shipped goods could range from about \$40 billion to \$303 billion, depending on the methodology and definition used. The White House is also working with US Customs and Border Protection on an artificial intelligence-powered system designed to identify suspicious shipments. The proposed system would analyse shipment information, routing histories and other trade data to detect potential tariff evasion.

Supply-chain diversions from China have been a longstanding concern since the US-China tariff conflict began during Trump's first presidency. Countries including Vietnam benefited as businesses sought alternative manufacturing and supply routes. Since returning to the White House, Trump has imposed sweeping tariffs on US trading partners while maintaining significant duties on Chinese imports.

USS Lincoln Faces Strain After More Than 260 Days at Sea



The USS Abraham Lincoln, supporting US military operations against Iran, has spent more than 260 consecutive days at sea, raising concerns over sailors' mental health, supplies and maintenance. The Pacific-based USS George Washington is moving towards the Middle East and is expected to replace the Lincoln. Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal called the prolonged deployment significant, while Arizona Senator Ruben Gallego, a Marine Corps veteran, is seeking a bipartisan Senate delegation visit to examine reported conditions. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth rejected reports of serious problems, saying the situation had been "completely misrepresented". Reports have cited food shortages, water contamination, plumbing problems and deck safety concerns. The Navy confirmed a sailor went overboard in August and was recovered, while US Central Command said the carrier strike group remained resilient after more than 260 days at sea.

Nepali Youths Demand Resumption of Indian Army Agniveer Recruitment

Nepali youths, former Gorkha soldiers and their family members have protested in Pokhara, demanding that Nepalese citizens be allowed to enlist as Agniveers under the Indian Army's Agnipath scheme. The protest came ahead of Indian Army Chief General Dhiraj Seth's scheduled visit to Nepal. The Indian Ex-Servicemen Gorkha Brigade Nepal organised the march, which was attended by former soldiers, their families and youths trained to join foreign armies. The protesters urged the Balendra (Balen) Shah government to resume recruitment, arguing that serving in the Indian Army offers a better opportunity than seeking employment in Gulf countries. They demanded the immediate reopening of the Agnipath recruitment process to protect employment opportunities and preserve the long-standing Gurkha tradition. Recruitment of Nepali youths into the Indian Army was paused in 2019, initially because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nepal later suspended the process after India introduced the Agnipath scheme in 2022. Under the scheme, up to 25 per cent of recruits can be retained for permanent service after four years. The remaining 75 per cent leave with a one-time payment without pensions or other long-term career benefits. The Nepali government had argued that the scheme was inconsistent with the 1947 Tripartite Agreement between India, Nepal and Britain. Protesters also demanded that registration of organisations representing former soldiers and using the term "ex-servicemen" should not be halted. They said such organisations were important for protecting the dignity, rights and interests of former soldiers. The rally began at Pokhara Stadium and proceeded to the District Administration Office, where organisers submitted a memorandum to the Chief District Officer of Kaski.



Punjab Youth Warns Against Illegal 'Donkey' Route After Mexico Ordeal

A video of a Punjabi Sikh youth claiming he is trapped in Mexico has gone viral, with the young man warning others against using the illegal "donkey" route to reach foreign countries. In the 33-second video, the youth is seen lying on a bed and speaking while visibly distressed. He alleges that he was assaulted after attempting to escape from an illegal migration network and says he suffered injuries that have made it difficult for him to walk. The youth repeatedly appeals to people not to make the same mistake. He claims he travelled to Mexico through the "donkey" route and later tried to flee. Pointing towards the person recording the video, he alleges



that the same individual had brought him there. "I made a mistake," the youth says, adding that he has already paid the price. The

video does not disclose his name or address. The video was reportedly uploaded on August 13 and was captioned "Disgusting treatment of an Indian Sikh in Mexico." Social media posts accompanying it claim that several youths who travelled through the route are stranded in Mexico. The "donkey" route refers to illegal migration networks involving multiple transit countries. Journeys can reportedly cost between Rs 20 lakh and Rs 70 lakh, with migrants facing risks including exploitation, violence, extortion and detention. Many people from Punjab have pursued such routes in search of opportunities abroad despite the dangers.

ZEEL Wins SAT Relief To Raise Rs 3,143 Crore From Promoters

Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) has secured relief from the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT), allowing the company to proceed with a Rs 3,143 crore fundraise from its promoter group. The tribunal's decision comes after questioning the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) over the basis for imposing a two-month restriction on the proposed fundraising exercise. SAT allowed ZEEL to proceed with the issue and gave the company one week to complete the transaction. The dispute centres on the timing of the proposed fundraise and the regulatory restrictions surrounding it. During the proceedings, the tribunal questioned what purpose would be served by delaying the fundraising if the company could proceed with the same exercise once the two-month period had ended. The order provides ZEEL with an opportunity to move ahead with the proposed issue without waiting for the full restriction period to expire. The development is significant for the company as it seeks to



strengthen its financial position through funds from its promoter group. The Rs 3,143 crore fundraising plan is expected to provide ZEEL with additional financial resources at a time when the company continues to focus on strengthening its business operations and financial flexibility. SAT's intervention also highlights the broader question of regulatory timelines and restrictions imposed on corporate fundraising.

While SEBI had sought to maintain the two-month bar, the tribunal's observations indicated that the regulator needed to explain the practical purpose of the delay. The tribunal's decision allows ZEEL to proceed with the warrant issue within the specified timeframe. The company has been given seven days to complete the issue following the relief granted by SAT. For investors, the development removes an immediate regu-

latory hurdle facing ZEEL's fundraising plans. The successful completion of the issue could improve the company's liquidity and provide greater flexibility for its future business requirements. The case also underscores the importance of clarity around regulatory restrictions governing capital raising. SAT's questioning of SEBI focused on whether a delay would have a meaningful purpose when the proposed transaction could ultimately proceed after the restriction period. ZEEL's shares and investor sentiment could remain sensitive to developments surrounding the fundraising exercise and the company's ability to deploy the proceeds effectively. With SAT granting relief, attention will now shift to the completion of the Rs 3,143 crore issue within the one-week deadline. The outcome could provide ZEEL with additional financial support while also setting an important precedent in the ongoing debate over regulatory restrictions on corporate fundraising.

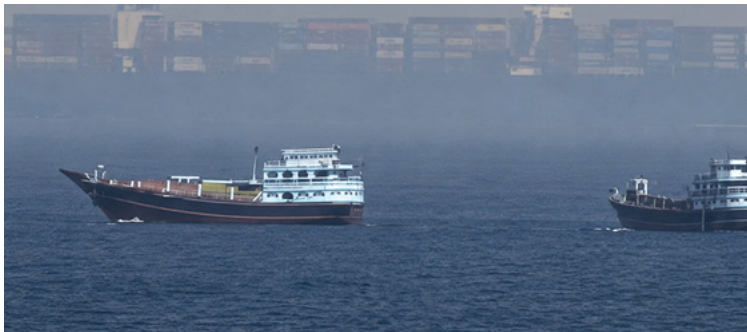
Nifty Extends Losing Streak As Media, Telecom Stocks Gain



Indian equity markets remained under pressure, with the Nifty extending its losing streak to the fourth consecutive session as selling across key sectors weighed on sentiment. The benchmark Nifty was around 24,360, while the Sensex declined by about 70 points during the session. The market faced pressure from selling in metal, auto and information technology stocks, which offset gains in selected sectors. Investors remained cautious as weakness spread across several major segments of the market. Among sectoral indices, auto, energy, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), metal, pharma and realty stocks declined between 0.3% and 1%. The weakness in these sectors contributed to the broader pressure on the benchmarks. On the other hand, consumer durables and media stocks emerged as notable gainers, with both sectors advancing nearly 1% each. Telecom stocks also witnessed buying interest, providing some support to the market amid the broader decline. The latest session marked another difficult outing for the benchmark indices, with the Nifty continuing its downward trend for a fourth session. Selling pressure in sectors such as metals, automobiles and IT remained a key factor behind the market's weak performance. The movement reflected a mixed trading environment, with investors shifting interest toward select defensive and consumption-linked segments while reducing exposure to sectors facing selling pressure. The Sensex's decline of around 70 points and the Nifty's position near 24,360 highlighted the cautious mood prevailing among market participants. Despite gains in media, telecom and consumer durables stocks, advances in these pockets were not sufficient to offset losses in several heavyweight sectors. Market participants will continue to monitor sectoral trends and broader sentiment for signs of whether the recent weakness could persist or whether buying interest may return to the broader market. The performance of metal, auto and IT stocks remains particularly important for the near-term direction of the indices, while strength in media, telecom and consumer durables could provide some support. With the Nifty now having recorded losses for four consecutive sessions, investors are likely to remain focused on developments across major sectors and the ability of the benchmarks to stabilise after the recent spell of selling.

Axis Securities Sees Up To Rs 1.9 Lakh Crore FPI Inflows If Hormuz Risk Eases

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) could invest as much as Rs 1.42 lakh crore to Rs 1.89 lakh crore in Indian equities over the next three to four months if the Strait of Hormuz reopens and geopolitical risks ease, Axis Securities said in its H1CY26 market outlook. The brokerage expects a possible improvement in foreign investor sentiment if tensions surrounding the strategically important waterway decline. The Strait of Hormuz is crucial to global energy supplies, and prolonged disruption or uncertainty around the route can affect crude oil prices, inflation expectations and financial markets. Axis Securities said easing geopolitical risks could support a recovery in India's equity markets and encourage FPIs to return to Indian stocks. The expected inflows would represent a significant boost to market liquidity and could provide support to benchmark indices. The outlook comes as investors continue to monitor developments



around the Strait of Hormuz and their potential impact on crude oil prices. India is highly sensitive to changes in global oil prices because of its dependence on imported crude. A sustained rise in oil prices can increase import costs and put pressure on inflation, corporate margins and the country's current account. If the Hormuz-related risks ease, lower concerns over energy supplies could improve the broader investment environment. This could also strengthen expectations of more stable economic condi-

tions and encourage overseas investors to increase allocations to emerging markets such as India. Axis Securities' projection suggests that the scale of potential FPI inflows could be substantial if geopolitical uncertainty recedes. The estimated Rs 1.42 lakh crore to Rs 1.89 lakh crore range over three to four months indicates the potential for a meaningful shift in foreign investor positioning. The brokerage also linked developments around the Strait of Hormuz to the recovery prospects of the Nifty 50. A reduction in

geopolitical stress could improve investor confidence and help the benchmark recover from recent volatility. However, the projected inflows remain dependent on external developments. Any renewed escalation in tensions or prolonged disruption around the Strait could keep crude prices elevated and delay the return of foreign capital. For Indian equities, the easing of geopolitical risks could therefore become an important catalyst in the coming months. Along with oil prices, investors are likely to track global interest rates, economic growth and corporate earnings while assessing the sustainability of any market recovery. Axis Securities' outlook highlights the potential impact that a change in geopolitical conditions could have on Indian markets. If the Strait of Hormuz reopens and risks ease, the expected FPI inflows could provide additional liquidity and strengthen the recovery prospects of Indian equities over the next three to four months.

India's 100-GWh Battery Pipeline May Not End EV Dependence On China

India is building a battery manufacturing pipeline of around 100 GWh, but the emerging capacity may not be enough to make the country's electric vehicle (EV) supply chains independent of China. While domestic cell manufacturing is expanding, major gaps remain across the upstream battery ecosystem, leaving Indian manufacturers dependent on Chinese technology and supply chains. The development of a domestic battery industry is considered critical for India's EV ambitions. Batteries account for a significant portion of an electric vehicle's cost, making local production important for reducing import dependence and strengthening the country's manufacturing capabilities. However, the current pipeline of planned and emerging battery capacity does not automatically translate into a fully domestic supply chain. India's upstream battery ecosystem remains largely underdeveloped, particularly in areas involving critical materials, components and manufacturing technologies. The dependence on Chinese tech-



nology remains a key challenge. China has established a strong position across several stages of the global battery value chain, including cell manufacturing, processing of battery materials and the production of important components. Indian companies may therefore continue to rely on Chinese suppliers even as domestic cell manufacturing capacity increases. The gap is particularly important because expanding cell production without developing supporting industries could leave manufacturers exposed to external supply disruptions, pricing pressures and technology dependence. A domes-

tic battery plant can assemble cells locally while still relying on imported materials, equipment or intellectual property. India's planned battery capacity could strengthen the country's position in the EV market, but domestic cell manufacturing may still fall short of creating complete self-reliance. Building a broader ecosystem will require investment in raw materials, processing facilities, component manufacturing and battery technology. The issue is also significant for India's efforts to expand electric mobility. Automakers and battery manufacturers need reliable access to competitively priced cells

and materials as EV adoption increases. Continued dependence on overseas suppliers could limit the benefits of local manufacturing and expose the industry to global supply-chain disruptions. The development of indigenous battery technology will therefore remain an important priority. Increasing domestic research, manufacturing capabilities and access to critical minerals could help reduce dependence on China over the longer term. For investors and policymakers, the 100-GWh pipeline represents progress but also highlights the scale of the challenge. Capacity expansion alone will not guarantee supply-chain independence unless India develops the upstream industries required to support battery production. India's EV transition is consequently entering a phase in which the focus is shifting from simply producing more battery cells to building an integrated ecosystem. Until that ecosystem develops, key parts of the country's EV supply chain could remain dependent on China despite rapid growth in domestic battery manufacturing capacity.



Vodafone Idea shares gained nearly 11% over three trading sessions till Friday as investors increased their bets on a possible tariff hike in the telecom sector. The sharp rise followed expectations that higher mobile tariffs could improve the company's average revenue per user (ARPU) and strengthen revenue growth. The renewed interest in Vodafone Idea came after Bharti Airtel's latest move to drive ARPU, which has raised expectations that other major telecom operators could also consider increasing tariffs. Investors are closely watching the sector for signs of a broader pricing reset that could improve the financial performance of telecom companies. Vodafone Idea has faced financial challenges in recent years, making improvements in ARPU and revenue particularly important for its business outlook. A tariff increase could potentially provide an additional boost to its average revenue per user, while also improving revenue generation from its subscriber base. An analyst said a tariff hike could provide an additional boost to Vodafone Idea's ARPU and revenue. Such a move could strengthen the company's financial position if higher tariffs translate into improved revenue without causing significant subscriber losses. The recent rally in the stock reflects growing optimism around this possibility. However, the gains also raise questions about whether the potential tariff hike has already been partly factored into the share price. For investors, the key issue is whether Vodafone Idea can sustain the momentum beyond the current speculation. The company's ability to improve ARPU, retain subscribers and strengthen its financial performance will remain important factors in determining the stock's longer-term trajectory. Bharti Airtel's strategy has also increased attention on pricing in India's competitive telecom market. If other operators follow with tariff increases, the sector could see improved revenue prospects. For Vodafone Idea, even a moderate increase in tariffs could have a meaningful impact given the importance of ARPU to its business. At the same time, investors need to consider the risks associated with buying the stock after a sharp short-term rally. The absence of a confirmed tariff announcement means that the current gains are partly driven by expectations rather than an immediate change in earnings. The stock's future direction is therefore likely to depend on developments in telecom pricing, Vodafone Idea's operating performance and its ability to convert higher ARPU into sustainable revenue growth. With the shares already gaining nearly 11% in three sessions, investors may need to weigh the potential benefits of a tariff hike against the risks of buying after a rapid rise. The stock could remain sensitive to any announcements from telecom operators regarding future tariff changes.

Gaja Capital IPO Puts Private Equity Model To Public-Market Test

Gaja Capital is preparing to take its private-equity business to the public markets, putting its investment model and financial performance under greater scrutiny from public investors. The proposed initial public offering (IPO) comes as India's alternative asset management industry continues to expand rapidly. Gaja Capital earns income across multiple funds and investment stages, giving it exposure to different parts of the private-equity investment cycle. Its funds have generated an average multiple on invested capital (MOIC) of 3.3 times, highlighting the returns produced across its investment portfolio. According to CRISIL, Fund 3 and Fund 4 of Gaja Capital are positioned in the first quartile of their respective categories. The performance of these funds could become an important factor for investors assessing the company's prospects as it enters the listed market. The IPO also comes against the

backdrop of strong growth in India's alternative asset management sector. The country's alternative asset industry is growing at an annual rate of around 29%, creating opportunities for investment managers with established fundraising capabilities and track records. Gaja Capital's public-market debut would give investors an opportunity to participate in the economics of an alternative asset manager rather than investing directly in individual private companies. The business model allows the firm to generate revenue from managing funds and benefiting from investment performance across different stages. The company's financial performance has also shown strong growth, while its fund pipeline provides visibility over future business opportunities. A continued ability to raise capital and deploy it effectively will be crucial to maintaining growth after the listing. However, the transition from a pri-



ate-equity business to a publicly listed company brings a different set of expectations. Public investors are likely to closely examine fund performance, fee income, fundraising momentum and the sustainability of returns. The valuation attached to the IPO could also determine how the market views Gaja Capital's business model. While a strong historical MOIC and the performance of Fund 3 and Fund 4 provide positive

indicators, future returns will remain dependent on investment conditions and the performance of portfolio companies. The listing could also offer a broader test of how India's growing alternative asset management industry is valued by public markets. As more capital moves into private equity and other alternative investments, established managers may increasingly look toward stock exchanges for access to capital and greater visibility. For Gaja Capital, the IPO represents more than a fundraising exercise. It will test whether a private-equity model built around fund management, investment performance and long-term capital creation can command sustained investor confidence in the public market. With India's alternative asset sector expanding at a strong pace, Gaja Capital's listing could become an important reference point for the valuation and future direction of publicly traded alternative asset managers.

AI Turns Independence Day Photos Into Patriotic Digital Art

As India prepares to celebrate Independence Day, artificial intelligence tools are giving users a new way to add a patriotic touch to their photographs and social media profiles. Platforms including ChatGPT, Gemini, Nano Banana, Canva and Adobe Express are increasingly being used to transform ordinary photographs into personalised Independence Day-themed artwork. With detailed prompts, users can create posters, profile pictures, greeting images and elaborate digital compositions without needing advanced editing skills. The trend is attracting students, professionals and content creators looking to create distinctive visuals for August 15. Users can upload a photograph, describe the desired setting and allow an AI editor to generate an image featuring elements such as the Indian tricolour, India Gate, the Red Fort, the Ashok Chakra and traditional Indian clothing. Popular ideas include cinematic portraits with the Red Fort in the background, India Gate scenes featuring fighter jets leaving saffron, white and green trails, and studio portraits with a glowing Ashok



Chakra. Other concepts place people in traditional attire while incorporating subtle national colours. Creative effects are also proving popular. Users can request tricolour light leaks, golden-hour lighting, neon-inspired city scenes and dramatic patriotic backgrounds. Artistic treatments such as watercolour, oil painting and pop-art effects can turn photographs into stylised Independence

Day artwork. For those seeking simpler designs, prompts can create layered paper-cut illustrations featuring the Indian flag, India Gate and flying doves. Minimalist vector portraits, glassmorphism layouts and banners carrying Independence Day messages offer options suitable for social media posts. Some prompts take a more dramatic approach. Double-exposure portraits can combine a person's pro-

file with India Gate and a waving flag, while falling saffron and green petals can add a softer visual effect. Other concepts feature an eagle flying across a tricolour sky or recreate old photographs with selective colour added to the Indian flag. Social media-focused prompts can produce profile pictures with subtle tricolour borders, wide banners carrying messages such as "August 15, 2026 - Happy Independence Day" and 3D animated characters holding miniature Indian flags. Using these tools generally involves uploading a suitable base photograph where supported and describing the desired lighting, background, colours and composition. More specific prompts can help users achieve a closer match to their preferred visual style. The growing popularity of these AI-generated images highlights how Independence Day celebrations are expanding beyond physical decorations and traditional greetings. For many users, artificial intelligence has become another creative tool for expressing patriotism in a personalised digital format.

Nagaland Minister Shares KYC Video Highlighting Facial Recognition Struggle

A humorous video shared by Nagaland minister Temjen Imna Along has sparked an online discussion about the limitations of facial recognition technology and the need for alternative methods of identity verification. The video, which has crossed 3.5 lakh views and received more than 10,000 likes, shows a man from the Northeast struggling to complete a KYC process because facial recognition technology repeatedly fails to capture his face properly. Along shared the clip with the caption, "Struggle is real." In the video, villagers can be seen holding the man's face and stretching his eyelids in an attempt to help him take a clearer photograph for the KYC verification process. The humour in the video revolves around a familiar stereotype that people from the Northeast look alike. However, the clip also prompted viewers to discuss whether biometric and facial recognition systems are sufficiently equipped to handle the wide range of natural facial features found among Indians. Several users focused on the technology rather than the joke, arguing that people should not face difficulties in completing essential



identity verification because of their natural physical characteristics. "The technology is the problem, not you. They didn't considered all possible cases for Indians," one user commented.

Another user tagged X's artificial intelligence chatbot Grok and asked about iris-scanning technology that could work for people with an epicanthic fold. The term refers to an eyelid structure in which the upper eyelid covers part of the inner corner of the eye and is commonly seen among people of several Asian populations. Other users suggested that identity verification systems should offer alternative biometric options when facial recognition does not work effectively. "We should create alternative methods if people are facing problems nobody should suffer due to their natural biological traits," one user wrote. Another suggested allowing fingerprint verification as an alternative to facial recognition. The discussion also extended to international technology. One user questioned whether countries such as China, Japan and other Southeast Asian nations had developed systems capable of dealing with similar challenges and asked why comparable solutions were not being adopted by the Indian government. While the original video was intended as light-hearted social

media content, the response highlighted a practical issue surrounding the growing use of automated identity verification. Facial recognition systems are increasingly used for digital services, banking and other verification processes, making accessibility and accuracy important concerns. Temjen Imna Along is an active social media user and frequently shares humorous videos and observations on X and other social media platforms. His posts often combine entertainment with broader messages about everyday life. Previously, Along shared a video featuring Indore's dancing cop, who attracted attention by managing traffic while performing Michael Jackson-style dance moves. Along accompanied that post with a message encouraging people to create their own platforms for self-expression and personal growth. The latest KYC video has similarly moved beyond simple entertainment, prompting users to question whether technology should offer more flexible options when automated systems struggle with naturally occurring differences in appearance.

25-Year-Old Reportedly Rejects Rs 1 Crore Job Over Toxic Work Culture

A reported decision by a 25-year-old professional to turn down a Rs 1 crore job offer has sparked a lively discussion online about whether a high salary is always worth accepting when the workplace environment is unhealthy. The story was shared by Muskan Atar, an IIM Lucknow alumna and Senior Product Manager, in a LinkedIn post. According to Atar, a friend of hers rejected the lucrative offer because he did not want to work in what he considered a toxic workplace. Atar said she had also declined similar opportunities in the past, but admitted that making such a choice at 25 would have been difficult for her. She pointed to factors such as family responsibilities, peer pressure and lifestyle aspirations that might have influenced her to accept the offer. Despite that, she praised her friend's ability to prioritise his long-term goals over an immediate financial benefit. According to Atar, the friend comes from a background similar to hers. She described his willingness to walk away from the sub-

stantial salary as a sign of strong personal conviction and clarity about what he wants from his career. Her post has prompted a wider conversation about changing attitudes towards employment, particularly among younger professionals. For decades, a large salary has often been viewed as one of the strongest indicators of career success. However, discussions around workplace stress, burnout and employee well-being have increasingly brought company culture into the spotlight. Atar argued that the next generation of workers may place greater importance on factors beyond compensation. She suggested that employers will need to adapt as employees increasingly consider purpose, well-being and meaningful growth when evaluating career opportunities. The post drew varied reactions from social media users. One person responded with a Ravi Kishan meme accompanied by the comment, "Money follows, my brother." Another user said awareness about mental health and work-



place conditions was growing. The person acknowledged that money remains important but argued that a toxic or unusual work environment could be a reason to reject an otherwise attractive opportunity. The user added that this perspective had developed after a decade of working in MNCs and PSUs and called the 25-year-old's decision commendable. Another commenter said the future of work would increasingly be shaped by people seeking pur-

pose, well-being and meaningful professional growth rather than compensation alone. The reported decision has therefore raised a simple but increasingly relevant question for modern workers: how much money is enough to compromise on workplace happiness? For the young professional at the centre of the discussion, the answer appears to have been clear. Rs 1 crore was not enough to make a toxic workplace worthwhile.

Developer Questions Work-From-Home Refusal After Knee Surgery

An Indian software developer has sparked an online discussion after claiming that his employer refused to let him work from home while he recovers from knee surgery, despite his job being capable of being performed remotely. The employee, who is currently serving his notice period, said he expects to face difficulty walking and commuting to the office for several weeks following the operation. He therefore requested a temporary work-from-home arrangement that would allow him to continue working while recovering. According to the developer, his role can be performed entirely from home and working remotely would not affect his productivity or responsibilities. However, he said the company's HR department rejected his request, telling him that there was no provision for work from home. The decision reportedly left the

employee questioning whether such a refusal was reasonable, particularly because he claimed other employees had previously been permitted to work remotely. He said some colleagues had received approval from their managers to use Azure Virtual Desktop access while working from home. In an attempt to remove any additional cost concerns, the developer even offered to pay for the required licence himself. Despite that offer, he said his request was not accepted. The situation has become particularly complicated because the employee is already serving his notice period. He reportedly fears that taking medical leave instead of continuing his work remotely could extend his final working date. The developer subsequently turned to Reddit to ask whether his employer was legally entitled



to refuse a temporary remote-working arrangement despite his medical condition and the nature of his job. The discussion has prompted questions about how companies handle temporary workplace accommodations for employees recovering from surgery or other medical procedures. While remote work has become common in many technology roles, individual companies can still have different policies regarding when and how employees may work outside the office. The case also highlights the difference between a job being techni-

cally suitable for remote work and an employee having an automatic right to work remotely. Whether an employer must provide such an arrangement can depend on company policy, employment terms and applicable labour laws. For the employee, however, the issue appears less complicated. He says he is willing to continue performing his duties and has even offered to cover the technology cost required for remote access. His concern is primarily the difficulty of physically travelling to the office while recovering from knee surgery. The online debate has therefore moved beyond one employee's request, raising a broader question about workplace flexibility: when an employee can perform the same job from home but temporarily cannot commute, should companies make exceptions for medical recovery?

A Husband Turns His Wife's Childhood Flower Memory Into A Giant Garden



A childhood memory about flowers inspired a Chinese man to transform an empty valley into an enormous garden dedicated to his wife, creating what is described as the world's largest and most varied hollyhock garden. Zhou Xiaolin and his wife, Yin Jie, have been married for 35 years and have no children. They now spend much of their time surrounded by colourful flowers and pets, choosing a life centred on nature and companionship rather than wealth or conventional family expectations. The unusual story began in 2013, when Yin spoke about her childhood memories of hollyhocks growing in Beijing. She recalled how much she loved the flowers. Zhou took the comment seriously and decided to create a garden where she could enjoy them every day. At the time, Zhou had no experience in gardening. Determined to fulfil his wife's wish, he sold his house, purchased land in Zhuanlong Town and began teaching himself how to cultivate hollyhocks. Over the next decade, he collected seeds from different parts of China and abroad. What started as a personal gesture gradually developed into an expansive flower garden covering about 80 hectares in Chengdu, Sichuan province. Zhou and Yin continue to look after the garden themselves. Their dedication eventually attracted national attention after the couple appeared on a China Central Television programme, where they were described as a "dream couple." The story has also sparked conversations on Chinese social media about happiness and what makes a fulfilling life. Many users praised the couple for choosing a simple lifestyle built around shared interests and affection. One social media user observed that life could be about more than earning money and raising children, while another praised the importance of finding a partner who understands, admires and cherishes you. For Zhou, a passing comment from his wife became a decade-long project. His garden now stands not only as a remarkable collection of flowers but also as an enduring expression of love, proving that sometimes the most unusual monuments can grow quietly from the smallest memories.

Cab Driver Uses ChatGPT To Learn English For His Baby Daughter



A late-night taxi ride turned into an unexpected lesson in ambition and parenthood when management consultant Tushar Jejani discovered why his driver was speaking fluent English into his phone. At around 5 am, Jejani was travelling to the airport on an almost empty road when he noticed the driver speaking confidently in English. The driver was discussing his morning routine and their current location, which initially made Jejani uncomfortable. He wondered whether the driver was sharing details of his journey with someone else. The driver soon noticed his passenger's uneasiness and began speaking with him. He asked whether Jejani was travelling for business or leisure. The two continued chatting for around ten minutes, with the driver speaking in English while Jejani responded in Hindi. Unable to contain his curiosity, Jejani eventually asked who the driver had been talking to on the phone. The answer surprised him. The driver had not been speaking to another person. He was using ChatGPT to practise his English pronunciation and fluency. The driver explained that he had recently become the father of a baby girl and wanted to improve his English so he could teach her as she grew up. His goal was to give his daughter a stronger foundation for the future. The revelation made a lasting impression on Jejani. What initially appeared to be an ordinary early-morning taxi ride suddenly became an example of how technology can be used for personal growth and family aspirations. The driver was using artificial intelligence not simply as a convenience, but as a learning partner. Without expensive coaching classes, formal training or traditional educational resources, he was using a smartphone and an AI tool to develop a skill he believed could benefit his daughter. The experience also prompted Jejani to reflect on the broader impact of technology. While artificial intelligence often raises concerns about automation and job losses, the driver's story offered a different perspective. For him, AI was not about replacing a human being. It was about helping him learn something new and prepare for his child's future. A simple conversation before sunrise therefore became a reminder that ambition can come from anywhere-and sometimes, the most meaningful lessons can emerge during an unexpected taxi ride.

VVS Laxman Set To Become BCCI Director Of Cricket

VVS Laxman is set to be appointed as the Director of Cricket by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), a newly created position that will place him higher in the cricket board's hierarchy than Team India head coach Gautam Gambhir and selection committee chairman Ajit Agarkar. Laxman, who currently heads the BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE), is expected to continue in his existing role while taking on additional responsibilities under the new designation. Sources said his contract at the CoE is likely to be extended for another two years. During his tenure at the CoE, Laxman has overseen several key areas of Indian cricket, including junior teams, player rehabilitation and development pathways for both men and women cricketers. Under the expanded role, he is also expected to take responsibility for



staff appointments. The creation of the Director of Cricket position is aimed at establishing a more structured connection between different levels of

Indian cricket. The role is expected to bring senior coaches, selectors, the Centre of Excellence and youth development pathways under a more unified approach to talent identification and player development. For Laxman, the appointment represents a significant expansion of his responsibilities. His existing involvement with players and teams across various stages of the development system has already placed him at the centre of India's cricketing structure. The development also comes at a time when questions have emerged over the future of Ajit Agarkar. His tenure as chairman of the national selection committee is scheduled to end in September. His role has attracted attention in recent months, particularly over decisions concerning the future of Rohit Sharma and

Virat Kohli in India's ODI team. Gambhir's coaching future has also been discussed amid India's position in the World Test Championship points table. The upcoming two-match Test series against Sri Lanka could have a bearing on his future in red-ball cricket. However, the proposed changes are not expected to immediately affect either Gambhir or Agarkar. Sources said both are set to retain their current positions until the 2027 World Cup. The new structure would therefore give Laxman a broader coordinating role while allowing Gambhir and Agarkar to continue handling their existing responsibilities. His appointment could mark a significant change in the way the BCCI manages the transition from junior cricket to the senior national teams.

Tanzid Tamim Makes History With Maiden Test Century In Australia



Tanzid Hasan created a historic moment for Bangladesh by becoming the first Bangladeshi batter to score a Test century in Australia. The 25-year-old achieved the feat in only his second Test, producing a composed innings against Australia. Tanzid reached his maiden Test hundred after facing 188 balls, hitting eight fours and one six. He brought up the milestone with a controlled shot through mid-off against Nathan Lyon, triggering celebrations in the Bangladesh camp. His century came during Bangladesh's first Test against Australia at the Marra Cricket Ground in Darwin. The landmark innings also came as Bangladesh pushed for a possible maiden Test victory on Australian soil. Tanzid had a crucial escape when he was on 62. He edged Nathan Lyon towards first slip, but Steve Smith was unable to hold on to the sharp chance. Tanzid made the most of the reprieve and continued to bat with confidence. He had started the day alongside Mominul Haque with Bangladesh on 96-1 after Australia had been bowled out for 198 on the opening day. The Australian bowlers improved their performance, but the Bangladesh batters showed patience, taking singles and waiting for opportunities to attack. Tanzid reached his half-century from 102 balls shortly before the drinks break. Mominul was also moving towards a fifty, but was dismissed for 49 after attempting to punch a Josh Hazlewood delivery through the off side. The thick edge was taken by wicketkeeper Alex Carey. The partnership between Tanzid and Mominul produced 102 runs and took Bangladesh to 138-2, leaving them 60 runs behind Australia's first-innings total. Najmul joined Tanzid after Mominul's dismissal and increased the scoring rate against an Australian attack that was beginning to tire. Tanzid eventually fell soon after reaching his century when he attempted to hit Lyon out of the ground but found Mitchell Starc at deep mid-off. Despite his dismissal, Tanzid's innings had already secured his place in Bangladesh cricket history. His achievement marked the first Test century by a Bangladeshi batter in Australia and came remarkably early in his international Test career. The Bangladesh team celebrated the milestone enthusiastically, with players and support staff acknowledging the significance of Tanzid's performance. His century also strengthened Bangladesh's position as they continued their pursuit of a historic Test victory over Australia.

Harbhajan Singh Says T20 Era Has Reduced Patience In Test Cricket

Former India spinner and World Cup winner Harbhajan Singh has expressed concern over the declining patience among the current generation of Test batters, saying the aggressive approach shaped by T20 cricket has reduced the frequency of marathon innings in the longest format. Harbhajan, who made his India debut in 1998, said modern batters often find it difficult to remain at the crease for long periods and build massive scores. He pointed to the rarity of 250s and 300s in contemporary Test cricket as evidence of the changing approach. "In this era of T20s, the current generation do not possess the requisite patience like batters of yesteryears," Harbhajan said in a podcast interview with PTI. He noted that playing a large number of attacking shots inevitably increases the chances of dismissal. Recalling the previous generation, Harbhajan highlighted players

such as Brian Lara, Chris Gayle, Virender Sehwag, Matthew Hayden, AB de Villiers and Jacques Kallis, who combined attacking strokeplay with the ability to bat for extended periods. Lara famously scored 400 in a Test innings, while several others recorded triple centuries and huge double centuries. The most recent Test triple-centurions include Pakistan's Azhar Ali in 2016, Australia's David Warner in 2019, England's Harry Brook in 2024 and South Africa's Wiaan Mulder in 2025. Harbhajan also recalled how Australia transformed Test batting in the early 2000s. He said that from around 2001, Australia regularly aimed to score at a faster rate than other teams and often targeted 350 runs in a day, while many other sides were satisfied with around 250. According to Harbhajan, the faster pace of Test cricket also forced



bowlers, particularly spinners, to change their methods. Bowlers had to develop different plans, build pressure through dot balls and encourage aggressive batters to attempt unfamiliar shots. He said Test cricket has undergone a complete transformation, citing England's Bazball approach as an example. While England may aim to score 500 in a day, Harbhajan

noted that such aggression can also result in a team being dismissed for 70 or 80. Despite recognising the evolution of the format, Harbhajan said he misses the uncertainty of earlier Test matches, when games could remain evenly poised until the fifth day. He also attributed part of the shift away from red-ball cricket to the Indian Premier League. Harbhajan said the IPL provides young players with rapid recognition, substantial financial rewards and opportunities to reach the Indian team. He recalled that earlier players such as Amol Mjumdar and Amarjeet Kaypee scored heavily in domestic cricket but never represented India because there was limited space in the senior team. With three international formats now available, he said players have more opportunities to break into the national side.

Ricky Ponting Slams Australia's Batting Against Bangladesh

Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting has criticised the team's batting performance in the first Test against Bangladesh, saying early-season rustiness cannot fully explain the technical flaws displayed by the top order. Australia were dismissed for 198 after choosing to bat first, with Bangladesh pacer Hasan Mahmud producing a superb spell of 6-55. Steve Smith was the only Australian batter to make a substantial contribution, scoring 71, as the hosts struggled against Bangladesh's bowling attack. Ponting said Australia appeared short of match practice but insisted the technical shortcomings were too significant to be ignored. "There was a lot of early-season rustiness, they haven't played for a long time, but you can't excuse some of the technical issues and flaws we saw from the top order in particular," Ponting said on SEN's Fireball. He also questioned Australia's decision to bat first, particularly after Bangladesh had been bowled out for just 54 in their warm-up game. Ponting felt Australia's seamers could have been extreme-

ly difficult to face on the opening morning and believed the team should have expected a substantially bigger total than 198 after winning the toss. Ponting also raised concerns about Australia's reluctance to introduce younger players. He noted that the current side is the oldest Australian Test team since 1928, with all-rounder Cameron Green, 27, the only player under 30. The former captain said selectors had missed opportunities to assess emerging Australian talent in recent matches. While acknowledging that the Sheffield Shield numbers of young batters have not been particularly strong, Ponting urged selectors to look beyond statistics and consider talent and potential. He suggested Australia may need to rely more on instinct when selecting players, arguing that the current batting group has not consistently reached the standard expected in Test cricket. Australia have 21 Tests scheduled until the end of the World Test Championship cycle, including home matches against New Zealand and away series against



South Africa and India. Ponting expects the demanding schedule to naturally lead to greater rotation, with Australia potentially using 16 to 18 players during the period. Ponting also suggested that a defeat against Bangladesh could accelerate discussions about changes within the team. He said the current group had remained together for a long period and questioned whether selectors had been reluctant to make difficult decisions. According to Ponting, Australia have had opportunities

to alter the batting combination for at least 12 months. However, he maintained that the team still has time to recover in the ongoing Test and should remain favourites. He pointed out that Australia will eventually bat again on a pitch expected to be at its best. Ponting said that second innings would provide an important test of whether the current batters remain capable of meeting the demands of Test cricket or whether selectors should consider other options.

Mitchell Starc Fumes At Mehidy Hasan During Heated Test Exchange

Australia pacer Mitchell Starc lost his cool during a heated exchange with Bangladesh batter Mehidy Hasan Miraz on the second day of the first Test, after the batter ran across the pitch during a quick single. The incident occurred when Mehidy nudged a delivery from Starc towards the off side and immediately set off for a run. As Starc's follow-through was also close to the same area, Mehidy altered his path and ended up running across the centre of the pitch. Umpire Kumar Dharmasena noticed the incident and warned Mehidy about running on the protected area of the wicket. The Bangladesh batter attempted to explain his actions, saying, "He is in the pathway." The explanation appeared to frustrate Starc, who responded sharply: "It's my follow-through,

not yours. Get off the wicket." The exchange quickly attracted attention and footage of the confrontation went viral on social media, adding an intense moment to an otherwise dominant day for Bangladesh. Bangladesh finished the second day on 351 for 6, establishing a 153-run lead over Australia with four wickets still in hand. Tanzid Hasan played a major role in putting the visitors in a commanding position, becoming the first Bangladeshi batter to score a Test century in Australia. Tanzid scored 101, while Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto contributed an entertaining 84. Mehidy remained unbeaten on 32 at stumps, with Hasan Mahmud on 13. The pair had put together a crucial unbeaten 40-run partnership to strengthen Bangladesh's position.



Tanzid, playing only his second Test, produced a composed innings in favourable conditions. The 25-year-old survived a significant chance on 62 when he edged Nathan Lyon towards first slip, but Steve Smith was unable to hold on

to the sharp opportunity. The opener eventually reached his century with a push through mid-off against Lyon. He took 188 balls to complete the milestone, hitting eight fours and a six during his innings. His stay at the crease ended soon afterwards when he attempted to attack Lyon and was caught by Mitchell Starc at deep mid-off. Bangladesh's strong batting display has put Australia under considerable pressure in the opening Test. The visitors are seeking their maiden Test victory in Australia at their third attempt, while Australia face the challenge of containing Bangladesh's growing lead. The heated exchange between Starc and Mehidy provided one of the most talked-about moments of the day as Bangladesh continued to control the contest.

Gautam Gambhir Faces Crucial Test As India Take On Sri Lanka

Gautam Gambhir's credentials as India's red-ball head coach will face a major test when India begin their two-Test series against Sri Lanka. A string of disappointing results and changes to the support staff have increased the pressure on Gambhir and the team to revive their Test fortunes. Under Gambhir, India have enjoyed an impressive run in white-ball cricket, winning the Champions Trophy, Asia Cup and T20 World Cup. However, their Test record has been far less convincing. Home series defeats against New Zealand and South Africa have damaged India's World Test Championship ambitions. The departure of two assistant coaches and a fielding coach has added to the need for a fresh approach. While Gambhir is not expected to be removed immediately if India fail to win in Sri Lanka, the team's red-ball direction is likely to come under greater discussion. India face a difficult challenge in Galle, where Sri Lanka have established a strong record. The hosts have won 27 of the 49 Tests played at the venue since 1998, with spin traditionally playing a major role. Sri Lanka no longer have legends such as Muttiah Muralitharan and Rangana Herath, but Prabath Jayasuriya and Ramesh Mendis remain important threats. Their ability to exploit the conditions could test India's batting line-up, which has recently struggled against quality spin.



India's current squad has similarities with the team that toured Sri Lanka in 2017. The Virat Kohli-led side completed a 3-0 series victory, including a win in Galle, and subsequently began a dominant period in Test cricket. The 2026 team, led by Shubman Gill, will hope for a similar spark. Rishabh Pant and Dhruv Jurel face an important series after recent underwhelming performances, while Sarfaraz Khan could also be in contention. India will rely heavily on KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Devdutt Padikkal and Gill for runs. Padikkal has an opportunity to strengthen his claim for the No. 3 position before Sai Sudharsan returns from injury. India are expected to field three spinners in Kuldeep Yadav, Manav Suthar and Ravindra Jadeja. Mohammed Siraj and Prasidh Krishna will lead the pace attack and will be expected to provide breakthroughs. Sri Lanka, led by Dhananjaya de Silva, will look to challenge India despite limited recent Test cricket. The hosts played their previous Test series in the West Indies in June-July after nearly a year without red-ball cricket. With both teams looking to rebuild, the series could become an important turning point for Gambhir and India's Test campaign.



Kajal Aggarwal Reveals Why She Never Allowed Navel-Focused Scenes

Actress Kajal Aggarwal has once again grabbed attention after an old interview resurfaced on social media, in which she spoke candidly about the long-discussed "navel obsession" in commercial cinema. Her comments have sparked fresh conversations among movie lovers and industry followers. Speaking in the interview, Kajal said she was always clear about her personal boundaries while signing films. She revealed that she never allowed filmmakers to deliberately focus the camera on her navel or shoot scenes that made her uncomfortable. The actress explained that while glamour is a part of mainstream cinema, every performer has the right to decide what they are comfortable doing on screen. According to Kajal, respecting an actor's boundaries is just as important as presenting a character effectively. She added that she never felt pressured to accept such shots simply because they had become a trend in certain commercial films. Instead, she preferred to let her performances and the strength of her characters speak for themselves. Kajal's remarks have received mixed reactions online. Many social media users praised her for standing by her principles and respecting her own comfort level, while others pointed out that filmmaking styles have evolved significantly over the years. The actress has enjoyed a successful career across Telugu, Tamil, and Hindi cinema, working with several leading stars. She has often been appreciated for balancing glamorous roles with performance-oriented characters, making her one of the most popular actresses in South Indian cinema.

AP Aims to Become a Film Hub Minister Durgesh



Visakhapatnam: Andhra Pradesh Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh said the state government is committed to developing Andhra Pradesh into a major hub for the film industry, with a focus on strengthening infrastructure and attracting investments. The minister was speaking at the grand success meet of Korean Kanakaraaju, held at the Gurajada Kalakshetram in Visakhapatnam. He congratulated the film's cast and crew and praised actor Varun Tej for what he described as one of the finest performances of his career. Durgesh said Varun Tej had displayed remarkable maturity by convincingly portraying two contrasting shades—a highly entertaining character and a powerful gangster. He said the actor had effectively brought out the differences between the two roles while showcasing the legacy of the Mega family. The minister also appreciated comedian Satya for his trademark humour and said his performance had entertained audiences in theatres. He praised heroine Reethika for her impressive performance and said the combination of Varun Tej, Satya and Reethika had worked well on screen. Durgesh said he and other public representatives, who regularly face political criticism and counter-criticism, thoroughly enjoyed the film as a source of entertainment. He particularly appreciated the decision to shoot the movie around Anantapur and retain the flavour, dialect and tempo of the Rayalaseema region. On developing the film industry in Andhra Pradesh, the minister invited producers and industrialists to invest in basic infrastructure such as dubbing theatres and re-recording studios. He assured investors that the government would provide suitable land and necessary support. Durgesh said Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu were working with a clear vision to establish a strong film ecosystem in the state. He congratulated director Merlapaka Gandhi for his engaging storytelling and settled screenplay, and producers Rajiv Reddy and S. S. J. (S. S. Jaga) for the film's success. He also expressed happiness over working with MLC Nagababu. The minister said he was grateful to Pawan Kalyan for his support and expressed pride in serving under his leadership and the guidance of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu.

Ram Charan-Sukumar's RC17 Gets Major Update; Shoot to Begin Soon

The much-awaited reunion of Ram Charan and ace filmmaker Sukumar is finally moving ahead, with a major update bringing excitement to fans eagerly waiting for RC17. After delivering the blockbuster Rangasthalam, the duo is all set to collaborate once again on what is expected to be one of the biggest pan-India projects in the coming years. According to the latest reports, Sukumar has completed most of the pre-production work and locked the final version of the script after spending several months developing the story. The filmmaker reportedly worked on multiple concepts before finalizing the one he believed would best suit Ram Charan's image and performance. The latest buzz suggests that the film is expected to be officially launched very soon, with principal photography likely to commence in the coming weeks. Both Ram Charan and Sukumar are said to be keen on beginning the project after ensuring every aspect of the script and pre-production is in place.

'Vadala' Movie Review: Jagapathi Babu's Performance Shines in an Underwhelming Emotional Drama

Veteran actor Jagapathi Babu returns to the big screen with Vadala, an emotional family drama directed by Akella V. Krishna. Co-starring Laya and Hrithika Srinivas, the film attempts to blend relationships, emotions, and suspense but falls short due to an inconsistent screenplay and predictable narration. The story revolves around a seemingly happy family whose peaceful life is disrupted by an unexpected turn of events. As hidden truths begin to surface, the characters are forced to confront emotional conflicts that test their relationships and personal values. The film explores themes of family bonds, trust, sacrifice, and redemption. Jagapathi Babu delivers a sincere and composed performance, carrying much of the emotional weight of the film. His screen presence and mature acting stand out, especially in the emotional scenes. Laya makes a decent comeback, portraying her role with grace, while Hrithika Srinivas performs her part convincingly. The supporting cast also delivers satisfactory performances. Director Akella V. Krishna chooses an emotional narrative but struggles to keep the audience engaged throughout the film. While the premise has potential, the screenplay progresses at a slow pace, and several scenes feel repetitive. The emotional moments work in parts, but the lack of gripping twists reduces the overall impact. On the technical front, veteran cinematographer Chota K. Naidu captures the visuals effectively, giving the film a polished look. The production values are decent, and the background score by Karthik B. Kodakandla complements the emotional tone of the story. However, tighter editing could have made the narrative more engaging. The film's biggest strength is Jagapathi Babu's performance and a few emotionally charged sequences. However, the predictable storyline, sluggish pacing, and lack of strong dramatic highs prevent it from becoming a memorable family entertainer. Overall, Vadala is a sincere emotional drama that benefits from Jagapathi Babu's acting but is let down by weak storytelling and an uneven screenplay. Audiences who enjoy slow-paced family dramas with emotional themes may find parts of the film engaging, while those looking for a gripping narrative may come away disappointed.



Priyanka Chopra's Stunning New Look From Varanasi Takes the Internet by Storm

Global star Priyanka Chopra has once again captured the spotlight after director S.S. Rajamouli unveiled a striking new look of the actress from his much-awaited pan-world film Varanasi on the occasion of her birthday. The newly released images have gone viral across social media, generating massive excitement among fans. In the latest stills, Priyanka appears in her character Mandakini, sporting a bold all-black outfit paired with curly hair and an intense expression. The powerful makeover presents a fierce yet graceful avatar, hinting at the strong role she plays in the epic action-adventure film. Rajamouli shared the new posters with a special birthday message for Priyanka, wishing her a wonderful year ahead while introducing fans to another glimpse of her character. The images quickly spread across social media platforms, with fans praising her transformation and calling it one of her most striking looks in recent years. Varanasi marks Priyanka Chopra's return to Indian cinema after a long gap and her first collaboration with acclaimed filmmaker S.S. Rajamouli. The film also stars Mahesh Babu in the lead role and Prithviraj Sukumaran in a pivotal character, making it one of the most anticipated Indian films currently in production. The film is being mounted on a massive international scale, with shooting taking place across multiple countries and featuring breathtaking action sequences. Priyanka is said to play a powerful and emotionally layered character, adding to the excitement surrounding the project. Fans flooded social media with compliments after the new posters were released. Many praised Priyanka's commanding screen presence and applauded Rajamouli's visual presentation. The hashtag related to Varanasi began trending soon after the first-look images were unveiled. With Mahesh Babu, Priyanka Chopra, and Prithviraj Sukumaran sharing screen space under Rajamouli's direction, expectations for Varanasi continue to soar. The latest glimpse has only heightened anticipation, with movie lovers eagerly waiting for more updates from what is expected to be one of Indian cinema's biggest releases.

