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Kishan Reddy Backs Singareni Expansion

Delhi, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy said the Centre was taking several measures to strengthen Singareni Collieries Company Limited by reducing wasteful expenditure, increasing coal production and securing new blocks for the company. Addressing a press conference in Delhi, Kishan Reddy said an agreement had been finalised to supply coal from the Naini block in Odisha to the Yadadri power plant. He said efforts were also made to secure the Tadicherla-2 and Manuguru PKOC dip-side blocks for Singareni. Steps were being taken to facilitate allocation of Koyagudem Block-3 in Bhadradi Kothagudem district to the company. Kishan Reddy said Koyagudem Block-3 could potentially yield 120 million tonnes of Grade-13 coal. He claimed Singareni was facing financial difficulties, with salaries being paid through overdrafts, and stressed that securing new coal blocks was essential for its future. He urged the Telangana government to release around Rs 55,000 crore in outstanding dues to Singareni, saying the revenue generated from coal

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Call for Fertiliser Price Rationalisation

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has urged the Centre to rationalise fertiliser prices, stating that the wide price gap between urea and other fertilisers is encouraging farmers to overuse nitrogen-based inputs and disturb the nutrient balance of crops. Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao said on Tuesday that urea consumption in the state had increased substantially, from around 14 lakh tonnes in 2015-16 to 20.7 lakh tonnes last year. He attributed the trend largely to the relatively low retail price of urea compared with other fertilisers.

A 45-kg bag of urea costs approximately Rs 240-Rs 266, while a 50-kg bag of DAP is priced at around Rs 1,350 and a bag of 19:9:19 complex fertiliser costs about Rs.1,750. According to the government, the substantial price difference has encouraged farmers to depend heavily on urea and DAP, sometimes without following recommended nutrient application levels. The government particularly expressed concern over excessive nitrogen and phosphorus use in paddy cultivation. In maize, farmers were reportedly applying five to 10 bags of urea per acre against the recommended three bags. Cotton cultivation was also witnessing nitrogen application around 10-15% above recommended levels, while potash usage was

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Musi Project Land Acquisition Fast-Trackd

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed officials to expedite land acquisition for the Musi Riverfront Development Project and formulate a clear policy for land pooling to support the process. The Chief Minister reviewed the project at a high-level meeting at the MCRHRD Bodhi Pavilion and instructed officials to invite tenders for Phase-II at the earliest. The Telangana government has previously announced that the second phase would cover the Musi stretch from Nagole to Gouraelli, following preparations for the first phase. Revanth Reddy stressed the need for transparent and clearly defined guidelines for acquiring lands falling under Full Tank Level (FTL), buffer zones and assigned-land categories. He directed officials to ensure that acquisition procedures were legally sound and



did not create complications for the project or affected landholders. The Chief Minister also asked municipal commissioners to explore low-interest loans for infrastructure works being undertaken under the Musi Riverfront initiative. He directed officials to conduct weekly reviews of Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) to accelerate

related processes. He ordered officials to immediately invite tenders for construction of the Sri Omkare shwara Swamy Temple near Gandipet-Manchirevula. The Chief Minister also called for extensive publicity for the Kotwalguda Bird Park to increase public awareness and visitor interest. The Musi Riverfront Development Corporation Limited

(MRDCL) is the government agency responsible for the project. Its official website describes the initiative as a programme aimed at sustainable urban development, environmental improvement and creation of a vibrant riverfront. The MRDCL's official records also show ongoing procurement and tender activity connected with the Omkareshwara Swamy Temple complex at Manchi revula. Senior officials from HMDA, GHMC and the Cyberabad Municipal Corporation attended the review along with the Collectors of Rangareddy and Medchal districts and the Managing Director and Joint Managing Director of MRDCL. The government has maintained that the Musi rejuvenation programme is intended to address pollution, improve the river environment and create better urban infrastructure along the river corridor.

Governor Promotes Farmers, Drug-Free Youth

Nizamabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla arrived at the IDOC helipad in Nizamabad on Tuesday as part of his district tour. He was received by Nizamabad MP Dharmapuri Arvind, MLAs P. Rakesh Reddy and P. Surya Narayana Gupta, District Collector Bhavesh Mishra and Police Commissioner P. Sai Chaitanya. The Governor later received a guard of honour at the R&B Guest House and interacted with district officials.

At the National Turmeric Board headquarters, Shukla addressed turmeric farmers and stressed that farmer welfare was central to the prosperity of the State and the nation. He called for wider adoption of modern technology, natural farming, processing, value addition and stronger market linkages to improve farm incomes. His remarks were reported by local and national media during the programme.



The Governor launched the 'Sunhari Mitti Abhiyan' and a market linkage programme and congratulated outstanding Farmer Producer Organisations. He emphasised soil health, residue-free turmeric cultivation and improved processing and marketing to strengthen Indian turmeric's presence in global markets. Shukla subsequently addressed an anti-drug awareness programme conducted under the Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyaan. He

urged young people to stay away from narcotic substances and channel their energy towards education, sports, skill development, innovation and nation-building. The Governor highlighted the importance of collective action involving youth, parents, teachers, educational institutions and communities in preventing drug abuse. He also appreciated Telangana's EAGLE initiative and police efforts against narcotics. During the programme, he unveiled an anti-drug aware-

ness flexi carrying one lakh signatures, administered the Nasha Mukti Bharat pledge and felicitated winners of essay-writing and elocution competitions. Shukla called upon youngsters to make "No to Drugs, Yes to Life" a personal commitment, stressing determination, discipline and mutual support. The Governor's visit combined two major themes-strengthening agricultural livelihoods and promoting a healthy, drug-free younger generation.



CM Hails Historic Badminton Medal

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy congratulated Indian badminton players Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly for their impressive bronze-medal-winning performance in the women's doubles category at the recently concluded BWF World Championships. The Chief Minister met the duo at his Jubilee Hills residence on Tuesday. Renowned badminton coach and former All England champion Pullela Gopichand accompanied the players during the meeting. Industries and IT Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu and badminton player PVV Lakshmi were also present. Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly produced a landmark performance at the World Championships in New Delhi, securing India's first women's doubles medal at the tournament since 2011. The unseeded Indian pair advanced to the semifinals after defeating China's fourth-seeded combination Jia Yi Fan and Zhang Shu

Xian in a three-game quarterfinal. Their campaign ended in the semifinals against the top-seeded Chinese pair Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning. After winning the opening game 21-18, the Indian duo lost the next two games 13-21 and 8-21, but their semifinal appearance secured the historic bronze medal. Revanth Reddy praised the players for bringing distinction to the country through their performance on the international stage. He congratulated Gayatri and Treasa for their determination, hard work and fighting spirit. The achievement has been widely hailed as an important milestone for Indian women's doubles badminton. Their success also adds to India's growing presence in the discipline at major international competitions. The Telangana government has highlighted sports achievements as an important source of inspiration for young athletes, while the Chief Minister's interaction with the medal-winning pair offered recognition for their contribution to Indian sport.

CS Reviews District Preparedness



Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju held a video conference with District Collectors across the State on Tuesday and reviewed preparedness for seasonal conditions, essential public services and the upcoming NEET-PG entrance examination. The Chief Secretary directed Collectors to adopt proactive measures in view of the prevailing weather conditions and remain prepared to respond quickly to emergencies. He stressed the need for effective arrangements to prevent inconvenience to people during heavy rains,

flooding or other weather-related situations. Jaju asked district administrations to closely monitor vulnerable areas and ensure that essential services remain available during emergencies. He emphasised advance planning and coordination among departments to facilitate a prompt response whenever required. A major part of the meeting focused on arrangements for the NEET-PG entrance examination. The Chief Secretary instructed Collectors to ensure that examination centres had adequate basic amenities and uninterrupted services. He directed officials to coordinate arrangements

relating to security, electricity, drinking water, sanitation and transportation at examination centres. The Collectors were advised to identify potential issues in advance and take corrective measures so that candidates could attend the examination without difficulties. Jaju stressed that inter-departmental coordination would be essential for conducting the examination smoothly and peacefully. He asked officials to personally monitor preparations and ensure that all arrangements were completed well ahead of the examination. The Chief Secretary also reviewed issues concerning essential public services and tourism sector development with the District Collectors. He sought updates on district-level measures and advised officials to maintain a proactive approach while addressing public needs. The video conference was aimed at strengthening coordination between the State administration and districts and ensuring timely responses to seasonal challenges, public-service requirements and major examinations.

Trade Push Gains Fresh Momentum

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor and U.S. Consul General Laura Williams convened senior Indian industry leaders at the Taj Falaknuma Palace in Hyderabad to strengthen bilateral trade, expand commercial partnerships and build resilient high-technology supply chains. The high-level business roundtable, held on Monday evening, brought together executives from key sectors including defence manufacturing, semiconductors, pharmaceuticals and technology. The event also marked the 250th anniversary of U.S. independence and focused on translating strategic cooperation between the two countries into concrete business and investment opportunities across South India. Ambassador Gor said the India-U.S. relationship had evolved beyond strategic alignment into practical cooperation spanning defence, technology, life sciences and space. He highlighted the importance of longstanding business-to-business partnerships in building the broader economic relationship. Gor encouraged companies in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha to explore emerging policy frameworks, including the TRUST Initiative, Pax Silica, U.S.-India COMPACT and the U.S.-India Strategic Mineral Recovery Initiative. These initiatives, he said, could provide avenues for investment, supply-chain cooperation and greater market access.



The discussions also focused on expanding market access and strengthening defence industrial cooperation, including opportunities for greater co-production. Senior industry representatives discussed potential areas where technology, manufacturing capabilities and cross-border partnerships could contribute to more secure supply chains. The U.S. Consul General highlighted South India's growing importance in the bilateral relationship, particularly in technology, data and critical-mineral partnerships. Hyderabad's established strengths in technology, pharmaceuticals and life sciences provide a strong base for further commercial engagement. The meeting comes amid continuing efforts by India and the United States to deepen cooperation in strategic technologies, defence, critical minerals and trade. The Hyderabad engagement provided a platform for government representatives and industry leaders to explore practical investment opportunities and strengthen business-to-business ties.

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Revanth Pays Tribute to Ramanuja Rao

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy paid rich tributes to Dr. Devulapalli Ramanuja Rao on his birth anniversary, remembering him as a distinguished journalist, literary figure and cultural personality who devoted his life to the literary and cultural awakening of Telangana. The Chief Minister recalled Ramanuja Rao's significant contribution to taking Telangana's rich culture, language and literary heritage to the people. He said his efforts had left a lasting impression on the region's cultural landscape and continued to inspire generations. Revanth Reddy lauded Ramanuja Rao for using his pen as a powerful instrument to create social awareness and promote progressive thought. He also highlighted his

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Army, T-Hub Join Hands on Defence Innovation

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Defence technology start-ups will receive an opportunity to work directly on real military requirements under a new partnership between T-Hub and the Indian Army's Central Command. The collaboration aims to connect emerging technology companies with operational users and create a structured pathway for developing solutions that can potentially be deployed by the armed forces. Under the partnership, T-Hub will receive active problem statements from the Central Command and identify suitable start-ups capable of addressing the identified requirements. Selected founders will work with Army stakeholders to develop, test and validate their technologies against actual operational and deployment conditions. A joint oversight committee will supervise the programme and coordinate interactions between start-ups and Army representatives. T-Hub will provide support for product development, validation and market readiness while incorporating feedback from military users throughout the process. T-Hub CEO Kavikrut said direct interaction with end-users was critical for entrepreneurs developing defence technologies. He said the partnership would give founders a practical route to understand operational requirements and ensure that their products are suitable for real-world



deployment. The initiative builds on T-Hub's existing engagement with the Army's Western Command. According to the organisation, its relationships at the Command level place it among a select group of institutions in the country with direct and continuing engagement with the Army. T-Hub is also among 28 organisations selected to implement the Ministry of Defence-led Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) programme. The organisation describes itself as the country's largest iDEX incubator. T-Hub said it has so far engaged with more than 100 defence start-ups and facilitated over 70 iDEX challenges. Start-ups supported through its iDEX programmes have secured commercial

defence orders worth more than Rs 250 crore, besides receiving grants exceeding Rs 4.2 crore and undertaking proof-of-concept projects valued at more than Rs 9 crore, according to the organisation. The latest partnership is expected to strengthen the connection between defence innovation and operational requirements. For participating start-ups, it could provide a clearer progression from identifying a specific military challenge to developing, testing and validating a technology for possible field deployment. The collaboration also reflects the growing emphasis on indigenous defence innovation and greater participation of start-ups in developing technologies for India's armed forces.

Seethakka Reviews Rural Works

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Seethakka has directed officials to complete the targets set under the Vana Mahotsav tree-plantation programme within the stipulated timeframe and ensure that planted saplings survive. Seethakka held a review meeting with Rural Development Department officials through video conference at the State Secretariat on Tuesday. Commissioner Divya, Special Commissioner Sri lakshmi, district CEOs, DRDOs, DPOs and Additional DRDOs participated. The Minister reviewed the progress of MGNREGS works, farm ponds, women's group buildings and sanctioning of new Cheyutha pensions. She said 5.32 crore saplings had been planted against the target of 6.18 crore, representing about 86 per cent progress. Seethakka instructed officials to upload details of newly planted saplings online immediately and ensure regular watering and protection. She called for the involvement of elected representatives, women's self-help



groups, students and youth in plantation and conservation activities. Protective

fencing was also ordered, with special emphasis on avenue plantations. The Minister directed officials to ensure employment for at least 60 workers every day in each Gram Panchayat. She stressed that every person willing to work under MGNREGS should be provided employment near their place of residence. Officials were instructed to maintain an adequate shelf of works in every Gram Panchayat and monitor NMMS attendance daily. Seethakka also ordered immediate commencement of sanctioned farm pond works. She called for greater focus on water conservation and the creation of durable rural assets alongside employment generation. Districts recording poor performance were asked to set clear targets and undertake continuous monitoring. The Minister directed officials to speed up check dam construction in tribal areas and expedite farm ponds and other water conservation works. She stressed that employment generation, water conservation and livelihood asset creation should progress simultaneously at the grassroots level.

Surekha Calls for Greener Future



Warangal, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Forest, Environment and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha has urged people to make tree plantation a community responsibility by not only planting saplings but also ensuring their survival and growth. Speaking at a Vanamahotsavam programme at Ranga Saipet Government Junior College on Tuesday, Surekha highlighted the importance of trees in maintaining ecological balance and supporting a healthy environment. She said increasing green cover could contribute to timely rainfall and help strengthen the ecological system.

The Minister planted saplings at the college and called upon residents to take up plantation activities at homes, educational institutions and government offices. She suggested that people make tree planting part of important occasions such as birthdays, weddings and other family celebrations. Surekha stressed that plantation drives would achieve their intended objective only when saplings were adequately protected and nurtured. She encouraged students and members of the public to actively participate in protecting the greenery created through Vanamahotsavam. During her visit, the Minister also inaugurated an open gym and inspected various departmental stalls set up at the venue. Officials explained the activities and initiatives being undertaken through the respective departments. Warangal District Collector Dr Satya Sarada said the district administration had set a target of planting 25 lakh saplings under the programme. Of these, approximately 13 lakh saplings had already been planted, she said. Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Bhima Naik explained the importance of forests in addressing environmental challenges and mitigating the impact of climate change. He emphasised the need for sustained efforts to expand and protect forest and urban green cover. The programme highlighted the importance of collective participation by government departments, educational institutions and local communities in building a greener and more sustainable environment.

Minister Highlights Welfare Push



Dharmaram, August 25 | TPN Bureau

SC and ST Welfare Minister Adhuri Laxman Kumar said the Telangana government is giving priority to education and healthcare and urged people to make greater use of government hospitals. The Minister, accompanied by Collector Koya Sri Harsha, inaugurated an Anganwadi centre and a Primary Health Centre (PHC) at the mandal headquarters on Tuesday. He later distributed smart ration cards to beneficiaries at the Agricultural Market Committee office. Addressing the gathering, Laxman Kumar said Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy was working to make quality education and healthcare comparable to corporate standards accessible to ordinary citizens. He urged people not to spend unnecessarily on private hospitals when comprehensive medical services are available through government facilities. The Minister said a 30-bed hospital and PHC had been established at Medaram to strengthen healthcare infrastructure.

He added that 18,106 smart ration cards had been distributed in the mandal. On infrastructure development, Laxman Kumar said funds had been sanctioned for widening the road between Jakkanaipalli and Erraguntapalli. He said the tender process would be completed shortly. He also announced that an Advanced Training Centre (ATC) would be established on five acres at Erraguntapalli. The centre is intended to provide skill-development opportunities to local youth and improve their prospects for employment. As part of the ongoing Vana Mahotsav programme, the Minister planted saplings at the PHC premises along with Forest Department officials. He called for collective efforts to protect the environment and ensure the survival of planted trees. DSO Srinath, RDO Gangayya, Tahsildar Dorishetti Srinivas, MPDO Sumalatha, Deputy Tahsildar Uday Kumar and several Congress leaders and activists participated in the programmes.

Tims Approves Service Expansion

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The Dr Marri Chenna Reddy Telangana Institute of Medical Sciences (Tims) at Sanathnagar is set to strengthen its healthcare infrastructure and administrative systems after its executive council approved several measures at its first meeting on Tuesday. The institute is currently receiving around 600 out-patients every day, highlighting the growing demand for its services. Tims Director Dr A. Narendra Kumar briefed Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha on the hospital's functioning and ongoing preparations. The executive council approved the adoption of service rules following by the Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) for the recruitment of doctors and other staff. It also approved the existing NIMS tariff structure for Tims, aiming to bring greater uniformity in charges and improve financial management. The council further cleared arrangements for banking operations through a Trust and Retention Account (TRA), allowing the hospital's financial transactions to be

managed under the trust mechanism. Tims is also preparing to commence surgical services. According to officials, sterilisation work involving intensive care units, operation theatres, diagnostic systems and other critical equipment is nearing completion. Surgeries will begin after the remaining sterilisation procedures are completed. Several infrastructure proposals were also approved to improve convenience for patients, attendants and staff. These include a multi-level car parking facility and an additional toilet complex for patient attendants. The council also approved the construction of hostels for postgraduate students following the government's decision to establish a PG college at Tims on the lines of NIMS. Senior officials, including Health Department Principal Secretary Dr Christina Z. Chongthu, TGM-SIDC MD Dr Gaurav Uppal, Medical Education Director Dr A. Vani, Public Health Director Dr Ravinder Nayak and NIMS Director Dr Rahul Devaraj, attended the meeting.

Ponnam Reviews Pappanna Tourism Project



Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Tuesday inspected the ongoing development works of the Sardar Sarvai Pappanna Goud Tourism Project at Sarvayipet in Saidapur mandal of Husnabad constituency. The inspection was conducted as part of the minister's "Palle Palaku Ponnam Anna - Praja Palana in Every Village" programme. During the visit, Ponnam reviewed the progress of the project and directed officials to accelerate the pending works while maintaining quality standards. He issued specific instructions regarding the installation of the statue of Sardar Sarvai Pappanna Goud and the development and beautification of the surrounding areas. Officials were asked to complete the works at a faster pace so that the tourism project could be inaugurated by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at the earliest. The Minister recalled that Revanth Reddy, during his tenure as TPCC president, had given an assurance at Sarvayipet to establish a tourism project dedicated to Sardar Sarvai Pappanna Goud. The present government is developing the project in accordance with that commitment, officials said. Ponnam also inspected the Sardar Sarvai Pappanna

Goud Museum, which is being constructed as part of the tourism project. He instructed officials to expedite the remaining construction and finishing works. Special attention was directed towards completing the flooring, gardening and landscaping works in front of the museum. The Minister said the surroundings should be developed in a manner that provides visitors with a pleasant environment and enhances the overall appeal of the site. He stressed the importance of completing every component of the tourism project meticulously, as the facility is intended to introduce younger generations to the life, history and fighting spirit of Sardar Sarvai Pappanna Goud. The Minister directed officials to coordinate effectively and resolve any issues affecting the pace of construction. He also emphasised that the project should become an important destination highlighting the historical contribution and legacy of Pappanna Goud. The inspection comes as the government seeks to promote historical and cultural tourism while developing facilities that preserve the memory of prominent figures associated with Telangana's social and political history.

Devadula Project Gets Fast-Track Push



Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has decided to fast-track the long-pending Devadula Lift Irrigation Scheme (DLIS), with the aim of completing the project within the next year. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed the Irrigation Department to give the project focused attention and remove all obstacles to its completion on priority. Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy announced the decision after a high-level review meeting on Tuesday. He said the Chief Minister had assured a special Rs 6,000-crore package for under-construction irrigation projects, including Devadula. Of this amount, Rs 2,500 crore has already been released, according to the government. Officials have been instructed to accelerate pending works and make maximum use of the available infrastructure. The government has also decided to utilise the Devadula system to facilitate maximum possible pumping of Godavari water, with pumping facilities to be oper-

ated efficiently to convey water to reservoirs and command areas. The Devadula scheme is designed to lift approximately 38 TMC of Godavari water and provide irrigation to nearly six lakh acres across Hanamkonda, Warangal, Karimnagar, Jangaon, Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri, Suryapet, Siddipet, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Mulugu and Jayashankar Bhupalpally districts. The review meeting focused on identifying technical, administrative and other impediments that have delayed the project and ensuring coordinated action for its completion. Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Danasari Seethakka, Chief Minister's Adviser Vem Narender Reddy, MP P. Balram Naik, MLAs including Kadiam Srihari and other public representatives from the project region attended the meeting along with senior Irrigation Department officials. The government said completing Devadula would strengthen irrigation infrastructure and improve water availability for agricultural areas across several districts.

Sewing Scheme Opens Self-Employment Opportunities

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has launched the "Intintiki Indiramma Kuttu Machine Pathakam", a welfare initiative aimed at creating self-employment opportunities for economically disadvantaged women across the state. The scheme is being implemented through the Telangana BC Finance Corporation under the BC Welfare Department. Eligible women can apply for assistance to establish or strengthen their livelihood through tailoring and related activities. According to the scheme guidelines, applicants must be between 18 and 55 years of age. Women seeking

benefits are required to submit documents including an Aadhaar card and either a ration card, income certificate or caste certificate, as applicable. The government has prescribed an annual family income ceiling of Rs 1.50 lakh for applicants in rural areas and Rs 2 lakh for those residing in urban areas. Eligible applicants have been advised to submit their applications online through the Telangana Government Online Beneficiary Management and Monitoring System (TGOBMS). The last date for submitting applications is September 15. Officials said the initiative is intended to support women from weaker economic backgrounds by

Special Plantation Drive Begins



Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government has launched a special Vanamahotsavam drive across the state from Tuesday to accelerate tree plantation and achieve the annual target of 16.06 crore saplings by the end of September. According to the Forest Department, approximately 9.06 crore saplings had been planted across Telangana as of August 23. The government has now directed officials to intensify plantation activities during the remaining period and ensure that the targeted number of saplings is planted within the stipulated deadline. The renewed campaign was discussed during a video conference chaired by Forest and Environment Minister Konda Surekha with senior forest officials. The Minister directed district-level officials to work in close coordination with their respective District Collectors to speed up plantation activities and monitor progress regularly. Officials were also instructed to focus not merely on meeting plantation numbers but on ensuring the survival and growth of the saplings after planting. Measures such as regular watering, protection from damage and continuous field-level moni-

toring are expected to form an important part of the campaign. The government stressed that successful implementation of Vanamahotsavam requires coordination between forest officials, district administrations, local bodies and communities. District Forest Officers have been asked to assess the gaps in their respective plantation targets and prepare action plans to complete the remaining work. The special drive is aimed at strengthening Telangana's green cover while encouraging greater public participation in environmental conservation. Officials have been urged to identify suitable locations and ensure that plantations are undertaken according to local environmental and ecological conditions. The Forest Department is expected to closely monitor district-wise progress during the extended campaign and take corrective measures wherever plantation targets or survival rates remain below expectations. The government has maintained that increasing green cover is essential for environmental protection, climate resilience and maintaining ecological balance. The special Vanamahotsavam drive is therefore being implemented with equal emphasis on planting saplings and protecting them until they mature.

Farmers Urged to Register Crops Online

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana Agriculture Department has urged farmers across the state to actively participate in the Digital Crop Survey and ensure that details of their cultivated crops are accurately registered. The department said crop registration would play an important role in the government's planning for agricultural procurement and other crop-related interventions. Farmers have therefore been advised to cooperate with the officials assigned to carry out the digital survey. As part of the programme, government-appointed crop registration personnel will visit villages and agricultural fields to record details of the crops being cultivated. The information collected will include the crop grown, survey number of the land and other relevant agricultural details.

The Agriculture Department appealed to farmers to remain available at their fields when the registration teams visit their respective villages. Farmers have been asked to provide accurate information about the crops under cultivation and verify that their details are correctly entered into the digital system. Officials said comprehensive and accu-

rate crop registration would help the government assess cultivation patterns and plan procurement requirements more effectively. The exercise is also expected to provide updated field-level information that can support agricultural administration and policy decisions. The department stressed that the cooperation of farmers was essential for the successful implementation of the digital survey. Farmers were encouraged not to miss visits by registration personnel and to ensure that their cultivated crops are properly recorded. The initiative is part of the government's efforts to strengthen the use of digital technology in agriculture and improve the availability of reliable crop-related data. Accurate field information can help authorities make better decisions regarding procurement, crop planning and other measures aimed at supporting the farming community. The Agriculture Department called upon farmers to treat the registration exercise as an important responsibility and extend full cooperation to the field staff. Farmers seeking additional information or clarification have been advised to approach the concerned local agriculture officials.

BRS Demands 22-A Land Probe

Quthbullapur, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Landowners in Quthbullapur facing restrictions under the '22-A' prohibited list have sought relief, with BRS leaders demanding an independent inquiry into the inclusion and removal of properties from the list. A meeting of affected landowners was held at M.J. Gardens in Shapurnagar on Tuesday under the chairmanship of MLA K.P. Vivekananda. Former Minister and BRS Deputy Floor Leader T. Harish Rao attended the meeting and demanded that eligible lands be immediately removed from the prohibited list. Harish Rao called for a comprehensive inquiry by a sitting judge to establish how survey numbers were added to or removed from the 22-A list in December 2023. He sought disclosure of the reasons for such changes and details of officials who approved the relevant files. He said the 22-A tag was creating difficulties for owners seeking to sell or



register their properties and was also affecting their ability to obtain bank loans against their land. He described land as an important financial security for families, particularly during education, medical emergencies, marriages, house construction and business needs. Harish Rao also raised allegations of

irregularities during the Bhu-Bharathi process and demanded an impartial examination of government records. He said those found responsible for wrongdoing should face strict action. Warning that the agitation would intensify, he said the BRS would mobilize lakhs of people for an Assembly siege by

September 7 if the grievances were not resolved. He said the party would continue raising the issue inside and outside the Assembly. MLCs Shambipur Raju and Goreti Venkanna, MLA Bandari Laxma Reddy and other BRS leaders attended the meeting.

Bandi Sanjay Demands Fee Dues



Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar has demanded the immediate release of pending fee reimbursement dues, alleging that the Congress government has failed students and private educational institutions across Telangana. In a statement issued in Hyderabad on Tuesday, Bandi Sanjay said fee reimbursement arrears had reached nearly ₹15,000 crore over the past five years. He alleged that thousands of Intermediate, degree, engineering and nursing colleges were facing financial difficulties because of delayed payments, with some institutions reportedly shutting down after accumulating debts. He said around 40 lakh higher-education students depend on the fee reimbursement scheme, with a large proportion belonging to Dalit, tribal and other economically weaker sections. He alleged

that students were facing difficulties when colleges withheld certificates over unpaid fees, affecting their employment opportunities and further studies. Bandi Sanjay questioned the government's claims about bringing world-class foreign educational institutions to Telangana when existing colleges were allegedly struggling to survive. He also criticised Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy over the delay in fulfilling the earlier promise of clearing fee reimbursement arrears through a One-Time Settlement (OTS). He alleged that the Congress government had failed to address the distress of students and college managements and accused it of making promises similar to those of the previous BRS government. The Union Minister expressed full support for the two-day "Fee Dues - BJP Fight" protest launched by BJP State President N. Ramachandra Rao. He said students across Telangana were extending support to the agitation. Bandi Sanjay urged the State government to release the pending dues immediately, keeping the future of students and the financial survival of educational institutions in mind. He warned that the BJP would intensify the agitation under Ramachandra Rao's leadership if the government failed to act. He said the State government would be responsible for any consequences arising from continued delay in resolving the issue.

Kishan Reddy Rejects Visit Allegations



New Delhi, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Tuesday dismissed allegations that the Central Government deliberately blocked Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's proposed visit to the United States, describing the claims as baseless and politically motivated. Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Kishan Reddy said foreign visits by Chief Ministers and Union Ministers require prior clearance from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). He alleged that the proposed itinerary had been finalized without obtaining the necessary approvals. The Union Minister said the MEA examines the purpose of official foreign visits, the meetings proposed with foreign dignitaries and the broader implications for India's national interests and foreign pol-

icy before granting permission. Kishan Reddy also referred to reports concerning a possible meeting with New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani. He questioned the appropriateness of such a meeting, citing Mamdani's reported political positions and criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He maintained that the decision not to grant permission was an administrative matter and should not be portrayed as discrimination against Telangana. Kishan Reddy recalled that foreign travel permissions had also been denied to political leaders during earlier Congress-led governments. He said officials could alternatively be deputed to pursue investment opportunities abroad, stressing that Chief Ministers should follow established procedures and maintain the dignity associated with their office. Kishan Reddy further criticized the Telangana government for politicizing the issue and urged the Chief Minister to provide clarity on the proposed itinerary and the reasons for seeking the foreign visit. The Union Minister reiterated that foreign travel clearances are assessed on multiple factors, including diplomatic considerations, national interest, investment opportunities and the nature of proposed engagements.

Surekha Keeps Silence on Controversy

Warangal, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Minister Konda Surekha on Tuesday declined to comment on the controversy surrounding remarks allegedly made by her daughter, Konda Sushmitha Patel, against Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy during her recent visit to Warangal. Media representatives sought Surekha's response while she was attending a Vanamahotsavam programme at RangaSaipet Government Junior College. However, the Minister repeatedly chose not to comment on the issue or on reports that the Congress disciplinary committee could consider action. Surekha participated in the plantation drive and planted a Nagalingam sapling on the college premises. She continued with the scheduled programme without responding to questions concerning the controversy. The issue has reportedly generated discussion within Congress circles, with some party leaders understood to have sought action over the remarks. Surekha is also reported to have met AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and explained her position on the matter. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has previously indicated that the final decision rests with the Congress high command, leaving the issue to the party's central leadership. Surekha's decision to remain silent during her Warangal visit has added to speculation over the possible course of action by the party leadership. The controversy comes at a time when the Congress government is focused on implementing its programmes across the state. Party sources are expected to closely watch developments and any decision from the high command regarding the matter. For now, Surekha has maintained that she would not publicly comment on the issue, while political circles continue to await further clarity from the Congress leadership.

BJP Hunger Strike Ends

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The 48-hour hunger strike led by BJP Telangana president N. Ramchander Rao demanding the release of RS.15,000 crore in pending fee reimbursement and scholarship dues concluded on Tuesday, with party leaders claiming widespread support from students, youth and various sections of society. The protest, titled "Fees Bakayi - BJP Ladayi", was organised by the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM). According to the BJP, police denied permission for the protest at Dharma Chowk, following which Rao began the fast at the BJP state office in Nampally. The party alleged that restrictions were imposed on the programme but said the protest continued as planned. Rao ended the fast by consuming lemon juice offered by senior BJP leaders, including Rajya Sabha MP K. Laxman, BJP leader Aleti Maheshwar Reddy, Malkajigiri MP Eatala Rajender and Adilabad MLA Payal Shanker. The BJP claimed that students from Osmania, Kakatiya, Palamuru, Telangana and Satavahana universities, besides students from engineering, medical, polytechnic, Ayurvedic, Unani and homeopathy institutions, participated in the programme. BJYM leaders also submitted documents containing five lakh



signatures reportedly collected from students across the State. Party leaders alleged that delayed fee reimbursements were causing difficulties for students and educational institutions. They demanded immediate clearance of the outstanding amount and criticised the Congress government over its handling of the issue. Rao said the BJP's agitation would continue until the entire RS.15,000 crore dues were released. He warned that the party would intensify its protest and consider laying siege to the Secretariat along with students if the government failed to respond. Several BJP MPs, MLAs, MLCs, former legislators, educational institution representatives, professors, lecturers, lawyers, doctors and other party functionaries attended the concluding programme. The BJP state leadership thanked students, youth, educational institutions, intellectuals and party workers for supporting the agitation.

Minister Targets BRS, BJP

Dharmaram, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Welfare Minister Adluri Laxman Kumar criticised the BRS and BJP during his visit to Dharmaram mandal headquarters in Peddapalli district on Tuesday, alleging that the two parties maintained political understandings despite publicly attacking each other. The Minister inaugurated a newly constructed Anganwadi building at a government primary school along with District Collector Koya Sriharsha. He later inaugurated a Primary Health Centre and participated in a Vana Mahotsavam plantation programme, planting a sapling at the premises. He also took part in the distribution of smart ration cards at the local market yard and handed over cards to beneficiaries. Addressing the media, Laxman Kumar responded to remarks by BRS General Secretary Jeevan Reddy that former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao continued to enjoy a place in the hearts of Telangana people. The Minister questioned the claim, asking why the BRS failed to secure the expected support in recent local elections if KCR remained so popular. He also criticised Jeevan Reddy for targeting the Congress after previously holding posi-



tions during Congress-led governments. Laxman Kumar alleged that the BRS and BJP maintained different positions in Telangana and Delhi, describing their relationship as based on political understanding. He also made allegations concerning KCR's stay at his farmhouse and claimed that the former Chief Minister was protecting wealth allegedly accumulated through corruption. These allegations could not be independently verified. The Minister challenged the BJP to demonstrate its commitment to transparency by seeking a CBI investigation into alleged irregularities surrounding the Kaleshwaram project. Congress Mandal President Tirupati Reddy, Dharmaram Sarpanch Dageti Rajeshwari, Peddapalli RDO Gangayya, DSO Srinath, Tahsildar D. Srinivas, MPDO Vemula Sumalatha, PHC doctors Anudeep and Susmitha, party workers and beneficiaries participated in the programmes.

Harish Rao Opposes Polytechnic Merger

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Senior BRS leader T. Harish Rao on Tuesday demanded that the Telangana government withdraw GO No. 97, which proposes changes involving government polytechnic colleges and the proposed Skills University. He warned that the BRS would intensify its agitation if the order was not withdrawn by September 7. Addressing protesting students at Government Polytechnic College, Masab Tank, Harish Rao said the proposed restructuring could affect the future of nearly one lakh polytechnic students across Telangana. He alleged that the government was seeking to bring government polytechnic colleges and ITIs under the Skills University framework. Harish Rao, who said he was a former student of the institution, termed the proposal unacceptable and argued that the issue extended beyond individual colleges to the interests of an entire generation of students. He claimed Telangana has 113 polytechnic colleges, including 59 government institutions, and expressed concern over the proposed involvement of a public-private partnership model in the Skills University. He questioned whether government institutions could eventually face private control under the proposed arrangement. The BRS leader also raised concerns about the land and infrastructure belong-

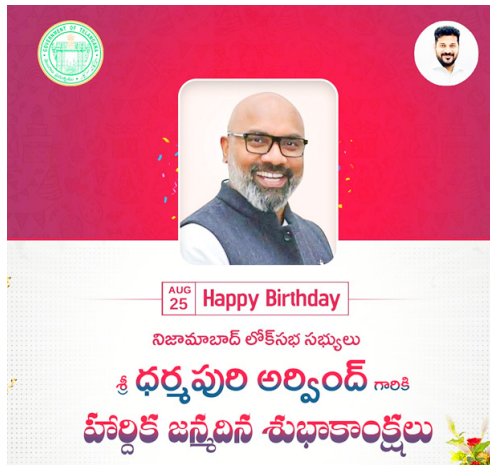


ing to government polytechnic colleges. He alleged that these assets, which he described as being worth thousands of crores of rupees, could be exposed to decisions involving their future use. He demanded that the government clarify its plans concerning these properties. Harish Rao said that if the government failed to withdraw GO No. 97 by September 7, the BRS would mobilise one lakh polytechnic students for a proposed siege of the Secretariat. He also responded to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's comments concerning foreign travel by BRS leaders. Harish Rao said that he and BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao is an MLAs and argued that elected legislators do not generally require Central government permission merely to travel abroad. He said special clearances apply in particular circumstances involving constitutional positions or official government delegations and urged the Chief Minister to focus on student and youth concerns rather than diverting attention to political issues.

Birthday Wishes for Arvind

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy extended warm birthday greetings to Nizamabad Lok Sabha Member Dharmapuri Arvind and wished him continued success in public service. In his message, the Chief Minister conveyed his best wishes to Arvind on the occasion of his birthday and prayed for his long and healthy life. He expressed hope that the parliamentarian would continue his public service with dedication and contribute to the development and welfare of Telangana. Revanth Reddy also wished Arvind strength and good health to carry forward his responsibilities as a public representative. The Chief Minister's message highlighted the importance of



public service and the contribution of elected representatives to the development of the state. Dharmapuri Arvind represents the Nizamabad parliamentary constituency in the Lok Sabha and has been actively involved in public and political affairs in Telangana. The birthday

wishes come amid continued political activity in the state, with leaders across parties engaging in public programmes and constituency-level initiatives. The Chief Minister's message was conveyed as a gesture of goodwill, wishing the Nizamabad MP a healthy and fulfilling year ahead.

Kishan Reddy Backs Singareni Expansion

Continue

belonged to the workers whose labour sustained the company. On Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's proposed US visit, Kishan Reddy rejected allegations that the Centre had politically blocked the trip. He said foreign visits by Chief Ministers and Union Ministers require clearances based on administrative, diplomatic and national-interest considerations. He maintained that such permissions were governed by procedures that predated the present government and said several leaders had previously faced similar restrictions. He cited earlier approvals for Revanth Reddy's visits to Harvard and London. Kishan Reddy also criticised the Telangana government over education, caste census and implementation of election promises. He questioned commitments relating to education spending, student benefits and international schools. He alleged that the government was focusing on publicity rather than development and said Revanth Reddy should explain his achievements as his government approaches 1,000 days in office. The Union Minister also criticised Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's statements on the caste census, claiming the Centre's census process would be conducted scientifically with caste enumeration.

Revanth Pays Tribute to Ramanuja Rao

Continue

commitment to maintaining high standards in journalism and literature while safeguarding the dignity and self-respect of Telangana's cultural identity. The Chief Minister said Dr. Ramanuja Rao's contribution extended beyond literature and journalism, as he played an important role in preserving the region's distinctive linguistic and cultural traditions. He noted that Ramanuja Rao's work in protecting Telangana's identity, self-respect and cultural uniqueness remained relevant even today. His dedication, values and intellectual contribution should serve as an inspiration to the younger generation, the Chief Minister said. Revanth Reddy emphasised that remembering personalities such as Ramanuja Rao was important for ensuring that Telangana's literary and cultural heritage continued to receive recognition and remained connected with future generations. The Chief Minister conveyed his respects to the eminent literary personality and journalist on his birth anniversary, recalling his enduring contribution to Telangana's cultural and intellectual life.

Call for Fertiliser Price Rationalisation

Continue

approximately 30% lower. Officials said such imbalances could affect soil health and crop productivity over the longer term. The government argued that a more balanced pricing structure could encourage farmers to adopt appropriate combinations of nitrogen, phosphorus and potash based on crop requirements. Minister Tummala said the state had repeatedly requested the Centre to address the disparity in fertiliser prices but had yet to see a visible response. He urged the Union government to take appropriate measures to rationalise prices and discourage excessive urea consumption. The state government maintained that promoting balanced fertilisation, soil health and efficient nutrient management would be essential for sustainable agriculture and improved farm incomes.

Praveen Kumar Questions University Claims



Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

BRS General Secretary R.S. Praveen Kumar has questioned Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's claims about bringing globally renowned universities to Telangana's proposed Future City. Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan, Praveen Kumar said institutions with centuries-long histories generally do not establish campuses away from their traditional locations. He alleged that the Chief Minister was making unrealistic claims about attracting such universities to the State. Referring to Harvard University, he said the institution had a long history associated with Cambridge, Massachusetts, and questioned the feasibility of establishing another campus in Telangana. He also cited the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge and Oxford universities while arguing that their principal academic identities remain closely tied to their historic loca-

tions. Praveen Kumar also referred to Ivy League institutions, including Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Dartmouth, Brown, Columbia and Cornell, and questioned whether such universities would establish full-fledged campuses in Telangana. He said universities with histories spanning 200 to 300 years had developed strong academic ecosystems around their original locations. He criticised the government for allegedly promising to bring these institutions to the State without adequately explaining the practical arrangements involved. The BRS leader further questioned whether officials had provided the Chief Minister with complete information about the policies and expansion practices of the universities being mentioned. Praveen Kumar said Telangana should instead focus on strengthening its existing universities and educational institutions, improving infrastructure, faculty and research opportunities. He maintained that attracting quality education institutions required realistic planning rather than publicity-driven announcements. He described the proposal to bring centuries-old universities to the State as impractical and alleged that the government was creating expectations among students and the public without sufficient clarity on implementation. The remarks come amid an ongoing political debate over the State government's plans to attract international educational institutions and strengthen Telangana's higher education ecosystem.

AYUSH Doctors Step Up Protest

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The protest by students, house surgeons and postgraduate doctors from five government-run AYUSH institutions entered its 22nd day on Tuesday, with demonstrators demanding an official order granting stipends on par with those paid to allopathy doctors.

The protesters said they had maintained a peaceful agitation for three weeks without disrupting outpatient services or causing inconvenience to patients. They questioned the delay in addressing their demand despite the continued protest. Students and medical trainees from Dr BRKR Government Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Government Nizamia Tibbi Unani College and Hospital, JSPS Government Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Government Nature Cure Hospital in Hyderabad, and Government Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital in Warangal are participating in the agitation. The protesters are seeking immediate issuance of a Government Order (GO) providing stipends equal to those received



by their counterparts in allopathic medical institutions.

They argued that the demand was based on parity and fairness among medical

professionals undergoing comparable training and clinical responsibilities. The demonstrators said their continued peaceful protest should not be interpreted as a sign of weakness.

They warned that the agitation would be intensified if the government failed to respond within the week. As part of their next course of action, the protesters announced that they would begin an indefinite hunger strike from Friday if the government did not issue the GO within the next three days. They further warned that around 2,500 AYUSH students, house surgeons and postgraduate doctors from across Telangana could gather at the Secretariat to press for their demands. The protesters appealed to the government to resolve the issue immediately and issue the required order within the week. They said the Secretariat would become the next venue for their agitation if their demand for stipend parity remained unresolved.

The students maintained that they wanted a solution through dialogue but would continue their protest until the government addressed the issue.

Two Children Rescued in Four Hours

Gachibowli, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Gachibowli police rescued two young children within four hours of receiving a kidnapping complaint and arrested a 45-year-old man in connection with the incident, officials said on Tuesday. According to police, Sridevi Murmu, 46, a labourer residing at a labour camp in Kondapur, approached Gachibowli Police Station at around 2 a.m. on August 25. She reported that her four-year-old daughter, Pramila Murmu, and another labourer's three-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Sangeeta Hemram, had gone missing while playing at the camp around 4 p.m. on August 24. Police registered a case and immediately formed special teams to trace the children and suspect Chaku Soren, 45, who reportedly lived at the same camp. Details of the missing children and suspect were circulated to police stations and railway authorities. Teams monitored railway stations and possible routes towards Kolkata, with alerts issued to stations including Ghatkesar, Jangaon and Kazipet. The children were traced safely and brought to Gachibowli Police Station before being handed over to their parents and guardians after completing necessary



legal procedures. During interrogation, police said Soren disclosed information about his alleged involvement in previous criminal cases in West Bengal. Police are verifying his claims and investigating whether he was involved in other offences. Police also said the accused allegedly disclosed involvement in trafficking children for financial gain and exploiting them for begging. These allegations are being investigated further. In view of numerous labour camps and construction projects in the area, police urged builders, contractors and camp managers to maintain comprehensive records of workers and visitors. Security personnel were advised to verify identities, record entry and exit details and remain particularly alert during night and early morning hours.

Crackdown on Illegal Buildings



Hyderabad, Telangana, India
Gandhi Maidan, Hyderabad | Telangana 500043, India
Lin 17 595231, Long 91 8000000000
Twitter: @truepointnews 11:46 AM GMT+05:30
Note: Copyright by GPS Meta Camera

Town Planning officials have intensified action against unauthorized constructions in the Dundigal Circle, demolishing a G+4 structure built without permission on a 100-square-yard plot in Dommara Pochampally on Tuesday. The building, located in Survey No. 168, was reported-

ly constructed without obtaining the required approvals. Officials said the demolition was part of an ongoing drive to curb violations of building regulations and prevent unauthorized multi-storey structures. Dundigal Circle Deputy Commissioner Dr. S. Venkata Manikaran said special surveillance had been introduced to identify constructions that either lack permissions or deviate from sanctioned building plans. Officials are particularly monitoring cases where additional floors are being constructed without approval. Authorities stressed that the size of a plot would not be a reason to overlook violations. They said special attention was being given to unauthorized constructions on small plots, where builders attempt to put up structures beyond permissible limits. Dr. Manikaran warned that strict action would be taken against violations detected during inspections. He said demolition operations would continue against buildings constructed in breach of planning regulations. The Town Planning department has urged property owners and builders to obtain the necessary permissions and adhere to approved plans before undertaking construction. Assistant City Planner Srinivas and other Town Planning officials participated in the demolition operation. The department said surveillance and enforcement measures would continue to ensure compliance with building regulations across the circle.

Young Model Wins International Title



Tarnaka, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Sai Riyans Arcot, a young child model from Gautham Nagar in Malkajigiri, has brought recognition to Hyderabad and India by winning an international modeling title in Bangkok, Thailand. Sai Riyans emerged victorious in the Senior Todd (6-

8 years) category at the Junior Model International Season-10 competition held in Bangkok on August 22. Children from 33 countries participated in the prestigious event, with Sai Riyans representing India and securing the top position. Interested in modeling from an early age, Sai Riyans has already participated in several competitions and won multiple awards. His parents, Nandini and Rangarajan, both software professionals, identified his talent at a young age. His mother has played an important role in encouraging and supporting his modeling journey. Speaking about his achievement, Sai Riyans said he is passionate about modeling and credited his parents, mentors and trainers for their constant encouragement. He said his future ambition is to become a film actor. His parents expressed happiness over their son's international success and urged the Telangana government to recognize and encourage his achievement. Family members, mentors and local residents congratulated Sai Riyans for bringing laurels to India on the international stage.

Fire NOC Checks to Tighten

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Fire safety verification at private junior colleges in Hyderabad is set to become more stringent, with HYDRAA and the Telangana Board of Intermediate Education (TGBIE) planning an integrated system to authenticate fire no-object certificates (NOCs) from the next academic year.

The decision was taken during a meeting between HYDRAA Commissioner A.V. Ranganath, TGBIE Secretary Abhilasha Abhinav, officials and representatives of the Telangana Private Junior College Managements Association. Student safety, fire prevention measures and verification of mandatory NOCs were discussed in detail.

The move follows the detection of allegedly forged fire-safety certificates submitted by some junior colleges. During verification of 142 certificates from the Telangana Core Urban Region, HYDRAA reportedly found 90 to be genuine and 52 to be forged. The agency subsequently informed the Intermediate Board and sought action against the institutions concerned.

Police have also registered cases against eight private junior colleges over alleged submission of forged Fire NOCs during the affiliation process.

From the next academic year, the Fire Department and TGBIE are expected to introduce integrated software to facilitate quicker and more reliable verification of fire NOCs. The system is aimed at preventing the submission of fraudulent certificates and strengthening accountability during the affiliation process.

The meeting also discussed conducting workshops and establishing minimum safety standards for educational institutions. HYDRAA and TGBIE said they had prepared a joint action plan focused on student safety and effective implementation of fire-safety regulations.

Officials are expected to hold further meetings to review Fire NOC compliance and other safety concerns at educational institutions. The agencies said regular follow-up would be undertaken to ensure statutory safety requirements are followed and reduce the risk of untoward incidents.

Release Fee Arrears Immediately



Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

BJYM State General Secretary Malka Yashasvi has demanded the immediate release of pending fee reimbursement funds, stating that lakhs of students are facing serious difficulties due to the delay. Yashasvi said several colleges were withholding certificates from students over unpaid fees even after completion of their courses.

He noted that the situation was affecting higher education and employment prospects, with some students unable to join jobs despite receiving appointment letters because they lacked their certificates.

He said a statewide campaign had been launched under BJP State President N.

Ramchander Rao to press for release of the arrears. Around 3.5 lakh signatures have reportedly been collected so far, with a target of 20 lakh. Yashasvi said the number was expected to reach five lakh by the end of the week.

He claimed parents were being forced to borrow money or pledge gold to secure their children's certificates, while colleges were also struggling to pay faculty and staff salaries. Criticising both the previous BRS government and the present Congress government, Yashasvi alleged that promises to students had not been fulfilled. He appealed to students, youth and parents to support the two-day hunger strike led by Ramchander Rao and vowed to continue the agitation until the arrears are released.

Police Tighten Milad Security



Quthbullapur, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Police have intensified security arrangements along the route of the Milad-un-Nabi procession to ensure peaceful celebrations and prevent any untoward incidents. Quthbullapur DCP Koti Reddy, accompanied by Balanagar ACP Gangi Reddy, visited Jagadgirigutta Police Station and held discussions with procession organizers and elders from the Muslim community. Officials reviewed the procession route, security arrangements, traffic management and other precautionary measures. Following the meeting, DCP Koti Reddy personally inspected the proposed procession route and reviewed security arrangements at important locations and high-traffic areas. Police personnel were directed to main-

tain heightened vigilance and closely monitor sensitive points along the route. The DCP instructed officials to take all necessary steps to ensure that the procession passes off peacefully and smoothly. He also stressed the need for effective traffic regulation to prevent inconvenience to commuters and the general public during the procession. Police officials have been asked to remain alert throughout the programme and respond promptly to any situation requiring attention. Jagadgirigutta SHO Suresh, Sub-Inspectors and other police personnel participated in the inspection and security review. Authorities said preventive measures and route surveillance would continue to maintain law and order and ensure the safe conduct of the Milad-un-Nabi procession.

DCP Pushes Road Safety Measures



Quthbullapur, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Traffic-II DCP S. Seshadrini Reddy (IPS) has directed officials to adopt proactive measures to prevent road accidents and curb traffic violations in Jeedimetla. He issued the directions during his annual inspection of the Jeedimetla Traffic Police Station. The DCP reviewed traffic management, enforcement activities and road safety measures. He inspected station records, traffic equipment and enforcement details and interacted with officers and staff to understand challenges faced during field duties. He advised personnel to remain vigilant while carrying out their responsibilities. A major focus of the inspection was the identification of accident-prone locations. DCP Seshadrini Reddy instructed officials to identify areas witnessing frequent accidents and conduct a detailed analysis of the reasons behind them.

He directed them to coordinate with concerned departments and address engineering defects and other road-related issues through appropriate safety interventions. The DCP stressed that road safety should remain a primary priority and ordered officials to intensify enforcement against traffic violations.

He called for coordinated efforts among personnel to ensure smooth traffic movement and safer commuting for the public. He also inspected the police station premises and vehicles used by the traffic division. Officials were instructed to maintain vehicle cleanliness, ensure timely maintenance and use vehicles properly. The DCP further directed personnel to make effective use of traffic equipment while on duty. Jeedimetla Traffic Division ACP Y. Venkateswara Rao, CI Narasimha Rao, Sub-Inspectors and other traffic police personnel participated in the inspection.

Saplings Planted for Greener Future



Quthbullapur, August 25 | TPN Bureau

A tree-plantation programme was organised on Bowrampet Snake Park Road as part of Vanamahotsav celebrations, with a focus on promoting greenery and environmental conservation. Dundigal Circle Deputy Commissioner Venkata Manikaran attended the programme as chief guest and planted saplings along with students of Shikhara School. Addressing the students, he explained the importance of trees in maintaining a healthy environment and stressed that planting saplings alone was not enough.

Manikaran said people must take responsibility for nurturing and protecting planted trees to ensure their long-term growth. He emphasised that increasing green cover was essential for creating a clean and healthy environment and urged students and the public to actively participate in environmental protection. The programme also focused on reducing plastic usage. Officials created awareness among students and the public about the harmful impact of plastic bags and encouraged the use of eco-friendly jute bags as an alternative. The participation of students added an educational dimension to the programme, helping spread awareness about environmental conservation among the wider community. Officials called for coordinated efforts by government departments, students and citizens to promote greenery and work towards a cleaner and more sustainable environment. AE Surender Naik, Circle BJP President Peesari Krishna Reddy, former District Kisan Morcha President Gone Mallareddy, AE Ashok Kumar, Environmental Engineer Sathvik, teachers and students of Shikhara School, and others participated in the programme.

SIR Notice Distribution Reviewed

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

GHMC Commissioner R.V. Karnan on Tuesday inspected the ongoing distribution of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) notices at polling stations 94 and 95 in the Karwan Assembly Constituency. During the inspection, Karnan interacted with Booth Level Officers (BLOs), BLO Supervisors, the Assistant Electoral Registration Officer (AERO) and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) to review the progress of notice distribution. The Commissioner instructed election officials to ensure that SIR notices reach all eligible electors without delay. He also directed them to properly guide voters on the submission of required documents and forms within the prescribed timeframe. Karnan interacted with local residents during the inspection and explained the significance of the SIR exercise. He urged electors to carefully verify the details mentioned in the notices and provide the required information and documents within the stipulated deadline. The Commissioner emphasised the importance of coordination among election officials to ensure that the revision process is carried out smoothly and efficiently.



Officials were asked to remain accessible to voters and address their queries regarding the documentation and submission process. The inspection forms part of the ongoing efforts to ensure effective implementation of the SIR exercise across polling stations in the city. The administration has been focusing on timely distribution of notices and voter awareness to facilitate greater public participation in the electoral roll revision process. Karnan stressed that officials should maintain accuracy and transparency throughout the exercise while ensuring that voters do not face unnecessary difficulties in completing the required formalities.

11 Fake Doctors Arrested



Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Task Force police arrested 11 alleged fake doctors and a medical shop owner during a special operation conducted in Jubilee Hills and Secunderabad on Tuesday. According to police, the accused were allegedly practising medicine using forged degree certificates and fake doctor identification documents. During the operation, officers seized prescriptions, rubber stamps bearing doctors' names, fabricated medical certificates, medicines, glucose bottles and other medical equipment. Police said the accused were allegedly treating around 50 to 100 patients every day and charging between ₹50 and ₹200 for consultations. The operation was conducted following information about individuals allegedly providing medical services without possessing

the required qualifications. Cases have been registered against the accused at several police stations in Hyderabad. Two cases were registered at Mudranagar, while one case each was filed at Jubilee Hills, Film Nagar, Borabanda, Ramgopalpet and Domal guda police stations. Two cases each were also registered at Chilkalguda and in the Old City. Police are continuing their investigation to establish the full extent of the alleged activities and determine whether additional persons were involved. Officials warned the public to verify the qualifications and registration details of medical practitioners before seeking treatment, particularly at small clinics where credentials may not be prominently displayed. The seizure of large quantities of medicines and medical equipment has also prompted authorities to examine how the accused obtained and used the materials while allegedly operating without valid medical qualifications. Further details are expected as investigators examine the documents and other material recovered during the operation.

AISF Demands Student Promises

Karimnagar, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The All India Students' Federation (AISF) has demanded that the Telangana government immediately fulfil its election promises to students and clear pending fee reimbursement and scholarship dues. AISF State President Kasireddy Manikanta Reddy led a protest at Telangana Chowk in Karimnagar, where activists displayed scooters, laptops and empty wallets to highlight what they described as the government's failure to implement its commitments to students. Manikanta Reddy alleged that promises including scooters for female students, laptops and Rs 5 lakh Vidya Bharosa cards



under the Yuva Vikasam initiative remained unfulfilled. He questioned why the commitments had not been implemented despite the Congress government being in office for several months.

He said delayed fee reimbursement and scholarship payments were causing financial hardship to students and their families. According to him, parents were being forced to pay college fees from

their own resources to obtain certificates, leaving many families under financial strain. The AISF leader demanded that all pending fee reimbursement and scholarship arrears be released

in a single tranche. He also urged the government to allocate 15 per cent of the State budget to education and give greater priority to student welfare. Criticising Chief Minister A. Revanth

Reddy for retaining the Education portfolio, Manikanta Reddy alleged that the sector was being neglected and suggested that a dedicated Education Minister should be appointed if the government could not address students' concerns. He warned that continued inaction could trigger a statewide student movement and claimed the government could face electoral consequences if its promises remained unfulfilled. AISF District Secretary Macha Ramesh, City Secretary Mamidipalli Hemanth, State Council Member Nunavath Srinivas Naik, Girls' Wing leader Joshna and city leaders Sandeep Reddy, Boyini Vishnu, Arvind and Sai Krishna participated in the demonstration.

Four Students Join Joy Foundation



Nacharam, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Four college students-Sameera, Pavan, Irmiya and Joel-have joined the Joy Foundation as volunteers, inspired by its service activities supporting underprivileged students and needy people. Foundation Chairman Shyam Krupa formally announced their induction into the organization. Speaking on the occasion, he urged the new volunteers to work with dedication and follow the founda-

tion's guidelines while participating in its service programmes. Shyam Krupa also called upon more youngsters to come forward and contribute to initiatives aimed at helping underprivileged students and needy sections of society. Joy Foundation Advisor Dr. Paul Nagaiah, Treasurer Latha, Organizer Mangalapati Suman, Secretary Jeevan Goud, Joint Secretary John and others attended the programme and welcomed the new volunteers.

Cyber Fraudster Held

Warangal, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Hanamkonda police have arrested an inter-district cyber fraudster who allegedly cheated hostel owners by offering fake catering contracts, Warangal Commissioner of Police Swetha said on Tuesday. According to police, the accused posed as a representative of an information technology company and approached hostel owners with offers to sup-

ply food to employees. He allegedly convinced victims to enter into catering agreements and collected money towards registration, agreements and the purchase of equipment. Police said the accused switched off his mobile phone after receiving the payments, leaving the victims unable to contact him. The investigation reportedly revealed that he had targeted several people across different districts using the same

method. The accused was identified as Mohammed Shabbir alias Kiran Kumar. Police said he was allegedly involved in multiple cheating cases, including 10 cases registered under the Warangal Commissionerate. Investigators have identified 23 cases and six cybercrime complaints linked to the accused, involving an alleged total fraud of approximately Rs 36.99 lakh. Police said Rs 13.09 lakh held in a

bank account linked to the accused had been frozen as part of the investigation. During the operation, police recovered three mobile phones, SIM cards, bank passbooks, a cheque book and ATM cards from the accused. Commissioner Swetha said the arrest followed an investigation into complaints received from victims who had allegedly been deceived through the fake catering-contract scheme. Police are continuing efforts to establish the full extent of the alleged fraud and trace any additional victims.



Authorities advised hostel owners and other businesses to independently verify the identity and credentials of individuals

offering commercial contracts and to exercise caution before making payments for registrations, agreements or equipment.

Ganja Crackdown Intensified



Warangal, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Warangal police have intensified their crack-

down on ganja smuggling, with separate operations by Wardhannapet and Damer police resulting in the seizure of around 380

kg of the contraband and the arrest of three persons. Wardhannapet police seized approximately 129 kg of ganja during vehicle

checks and arrested two suspects. Police have formed special teams to trace two other persons allegedly linked to the smuggling network. In a separate operation conducted within a day, Damer police seized 251 kg of ganja and arrested an interstate smuggler. Police reportedly recovered ganja valued at around Rs 1.25 crore from his residence. The Warangal Police Commissionerate has stepped up surveillance on the transportation, storage and sale of narcotic substances across the district.

Officials are focusing on identifying supply networks and tracing the routes used to transport ganja into Telangana and onward to other States. The Drugs Control Team has registered multiple cases as part of the enforcement campaign and seized narcotic substances valued at several crores of rupees. Confiscated ganja has also been destroyed in accordance with established procedures. Police are investigating the alleged supply chain, particularly routes originating in Odisha and passing through Telangana to destinations in other States. Investigators are working to identify key

persons involved in the procurement, transportation and distribution of the contraband. Authorities said enforcement operations and surveillance would continue to curb the illegal narcotics trade. Police have also urged the public to remain alert and cooperate with law-enforcement agencies by reporting information relating to suspected drug trafficking activities. The latest seizures underline the intensified efforts by the Warangal Police Commissionerate to disrupt interstate ganja networks and prevent the movement of narcotic substances through the region.

Support Assured for Murder Victims' Family

Suryapet, August 25 | TPN Bureau

District Collector Tejas Nandlal Pawar and District Superintendent of Police Narasimha assured the family of Nagulu and Buba, who were brutally murdered at Bikya Thanda in Mothe mandal, that the administration would extend all necessary support. The officials visited the victims' residence on Tuesday and consoled their daughters, Jyothi and Sandhya. As part of the assistance under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, the first instalment of compensation amounting to Rs 4.20 lakh was deposited into the family's accounts. The officials also handed over the related proceedings to the family. Collector Pawar expressed grief over the incident and assured the family that the administration would stand by them. SP Narasimha said the suspects were identified and remanded within 24 hours of the



incident. He stressed that there would be no compromise on law and order. A DSP has been appointed as the investigating officer to ensure a detailed and transparent investigation. The police are also seeking expert legal advice to strengthen the case. The SP said the accused would be taken into police custody again for further interrogation to gather additional evidence and establish all aspects of the crime. DSPs Prasanna Kumar and Srinivas Reddy, RDO Venu Madhav, Tahsildar Venkanna, CI Ramakrishna Reddy, Special Branch Inspector Rama Rao, other officials and local villagers were present during the visit.

Young Innovators Enter Top 40

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Three young innovators from Hyderabad have secured places among the Top 40 teams in the fifth edition of Samsung Solve for Tomorrow 2026, with their technology-driven ideas addressing water scarcity and athlete safety. Nineteen-year-olds Thuregal Mohammed Ezaz Ali and Dokku Rithwik, who form Team Mistify, are developing Hydryft, a compact system designed to capture moisture from fog using mesh and purify it into usable water. The team is exploring potential applications in fog-prone communities, trekking camps and eco-stays. Another Hyderabad-based innovator, 19-year-old Homanshika Reddy Pullagurla, is part of Team Somatrace. The team is developing a wearable system equipped with sensors to monitor spinal movement in real time. Initially being explored for rifle shooters, the technology could help athletes and coaches analyse movement

patterns and identify indicators of possible injury risks during training. Their selection has placed three Hyderabad youngsters among the national Top 40 in the innovation programme, which is open to innovators aged 14 to 22. According to the organisers, more than half of the selected Top 40 teams come from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. The shortlisted teams will participate in a 10-day innovation bootcamp at FITT-IIT Delhi, where they will interact with start-up founders and industry experts and further develop their concepts. Following the bootcamp, teams will compete for a place among the Top 20. Four teams selected at the conclusion of the programme will collectively receive Rs 2 crore in incubation grants. They will also receive incubation support from FITT-IIT Delhi to refine their technologies and work towards market readiness, giving the young innovators an opportunity to transform their ideas into practical solutions.

Vijaya Ramana Calls for Sapling Care

Sabbitham, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Government Whip and MLA Chintakunta Vijaya Ramana Rao urged people to take responsibility for protecting saplings planted under the State government's Vana Mahotsavam programme. Participating in a plantation programme at Sabbitham on Tuesday, Vijaya Ramana Rao stressed the importance of increasing green cover and creating a healthier environment in rural areas. He called upon residents to actively participate in plantation activities and ensure that newly planted saplings receive regular care. The MLA encouraged households to cultivate more fruit-bearing and flowering plants around their homes, saying that greater community participation was essential for developing greener villages. He also directed officials to regularly inspect the planted saplings and take necessary measures to prevent them from drying up. He emphasised that merely planting trees would not achieve the desired environmental benefits unless the saplings were properly nurtured and protected. The programme was attended by District Rural Development Officer Kalindini, MPDO Koppula Srinivas, Sarpanch Nune Sarojana Ramesh, Sarpanches' Forum Mandal President Kanaparthi Sampath Rao, Rangapur Sarpanch Ganta Ramesh, APM Shanthi and Forest Department officials. Officials and local representatives discussed the need for continued monitoring of plantation sites and greater public involvement in protecting greenery. Vijaya Ramana Rao appealed to residents to treat the planted saplings as a shared responsibility and contribute to building a sustainable and greener environment for future generations.

Collector Speeds Up Housing Allotments

Peddapalli, August 25 | TPN Bureau

Peddapalli Collector Koya Sreeharsha directed officials to immediately allot completed double-bedroom houses in Odel, Kalva Srirampur, Ramagundam, Manthani and Peddapalli areas to eligible beneficiaries. The Collector reviewed the progress of Housing Department schemes at the Collectorate on Tuesday along with Additional Collector (Local Bodies) J. Arunasree. He instructed officials to identify eligible beneficiaries and accelerate field-level verification and validation so that completed houses do not remain vacant. Sreeharsha directed officials to upload beneficiary details required for securing central assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) on the MIS portal by September 5. He stressed that officials must exercise caution while entering data and ensure that there are no



errors in the records. The Collector also reviewed preparations for the second phase of the Indiramma Houses scheme. He instructed officials to complete the selection of eligible beneficiaries promptly and ensure that government benefits reach deserving families in a transparent manner. The Collector said effective implementation of housing schemes should remain a priority and that completed houses must be handed over to eligible families at the earliest. The review meeting focused on accelerating pending processes, improving data accuracy and ensuring that government housing initiatives deliver their intended benefits to eligible households.

CGST Busts Illegal Tobacco Unit

Hyderabad, August 25 | TPN Bureau

The Hyderabad Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Zone has busted a clandestine pan masala and tobacco manufacturing unit operating from a tin-shed facility in Medchal-Malkajgiri district, detecting estimated duty and cess evasion of around Rs 160 crore. Acting on specific intelligence, CGST officials conducted a search at the premises on August 20. They found 40 undeclared Form-Fill-Seal

(FFS) packing machines and around 56 workers engaged in manufacturing and packing activities. The facility was reportedly producing both branded and unbranded pan masala and scented jarda. Officials seized around 5,500 kg of finished pan masala and tobacco pouches, including consignments worth Rs 76 lakh that were allegedly ready for dispatch. The operation also resulted in the seizure of approximately 2,015 kg of pan masala mixture and 810 kg of tobacco. Two vehi-

cles allegedly used for transporting the products, along with packaging material and other documents, were also seized. According to CGST officials, the unit was operating without registration and finished products were allegedly being cleared without payment of applicable GST, Health Security and National Security (HSNS) Cess and Central Excise duty. The estimated evasion was calculated based on the quantity of stock, machinery and production capacity, workforce



and statements recorded during the investigation. The key person allegedly managing the clandestine manufacturing and clearance was arrested on August 21 and produced before the Special Judge for Economic Offences in Hyderabad. The court remanded him to 14 days of judicial custody.

The enforcement action comes amid the capacity-based taxation regime introduced for the pan masala and tobacco sector from February 1, 2026. Under the HSNS Cess Act, capacity-based monthly cess applies to pan masala based on the number, type and capacity of packing machines,

while central excise provisions apply to chewing tobacco, jarda and gutkha. The Hyderabad CGST Zone has said it is strengthening intelligence-led enforcement against clandestine manufacturers by combining data analysis with field operations.

Editorial

When People Lose Faith in the System

A victim committing suicide without approaching the Police, Court, or people's representatives reflects a serious failure of our systems. When a Government employee is unable to come forward because of alleged harassment by the accused, it raises a fundamental question: "Is this not our collective failure?"

The tragic suicide of the family of Government employee *Nukaraju* is a deeply disturbing episode that demands serious attention. The letter written by the victim reflects a growing sense of helplessness and shows how people are gradually losing confidence in the Police, Courts, and Government institutions.

When citizens stop believing that the system will protect them or provide justice, it becomes a dangerous warning for society. People are increasingly looking for alternative ways to resolve their problems because they feel that existing law-and-order mechanisms and legal processes are not delivering timely or effective justice. In the worst cases, some people see suicide as their only remaining option.

This situation is extremely dangerous and pathetic. If we cannot build confidence among citizens in our institutions, then decades of development and progress mean very little. True development is not limited to infrastructure, technology, or economic growth. A truly developed society is one where ordinary citizens feel safe, protected, and confident that they can approach the Police, Courts, and Government for justice.

The accused are often able to exploit loopholes created by weaknesses in the political and administrative systems. A corrupt or ineffective system can provide opportunities for offenders to commit further crimes and create more victims.

This incident should not be treated as an isolated tragedy. It must become a serious *wake-up call for the authorities and society*. Restoring public confidence, ensuring accountability, protecting victims, and closing systemic loopholes must become an urgent priority. Otherwise, the consequences of losing people's faith in our institutions could be far more dangerous than we realize.

- Editor

Kashmir's Second Spring : Paradise Can Become India's Global Tourism Powerhouse



Arja Srikanth



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Kashmir may be approaching a defining tourism inflection point. The August 19, 2026 visit of US Ambassador Sergio Gor to Srinagar, accompanied by his indication that Washington could review its Level 4 "Do Not Travel" advisory, represents more than a diplomatic gesture. It potentially signals a shift in the international risk perception surrounding Jammu and Kashmir from a destination predominantly viewed through the prism of security to one increasingly evaluated for its tourism, connectivity and economic potential. His acknowledgement of Jammu and Kashmir as an important part of India, alongside recognition of improvements in the security environment, carries considerable economic significance. Travel advisories influence insurance premiums, tour-operator decisions, airline planning, corporate travel policies and individual perceptions. If international confidence begins returning, Kashmir could move from being predominantly a domestic tourism giant to becoming a globally competitive destination.

The opportunity is extraordinary, but so is the asymmetry. Jammu and Kashmir has demonstrated enormous domestic tourism demand, recording more than 2.3 crore tourist visits in 2024. Yet international tourism remains disproportionately small, with only around 36,000 foreign tourists reported in 2025-26. This gap is not merely a statistic; it represents an enormous unrealised economic market. International visitors generally generate

higher foreign-exchange earnings and can support longer-stay, experience-oriented tourism. The strategic objective should therefore not simply be to increase arrivals, but to diversify the visitor base. North America, Europe, Southeast Asia and the Gulf offer distinct segments from adventure travellers and winter-sports enthusiasts to heritage tourists, luxury travellers, wellness seekers and cultural explorers. Kashmir already possesses the product. What it needs is sustained international confidence and a globally credible delivery ecosystem. Tourism's economic importance makes this transformation far larger than the hotel industry. The sector contributes an estimated 7% to Jammu and Kashmir's economy and supports the livelihoods of nearly five lakh people directly and indirectly. Its multiplier reaches taxi drivers, guides, restaurants, artisans, farmers, transport operators, retailers, houseboat owners, handicraft producers and thousands of small enterprises. Kashmir's carpets, shawls, papier-mâché, saffron, dry fruits and traditional crafts gain visibility and market access through tourism. Consequently, every additional visitor can generate a chain of economic transactions extending deep into local communities. The challenge is to maximise that multiplier rather than allow tourism revenue to concentrate in a few metropolitan or premium hospitality segments. A globally connected tourism economy should become an engine of distributed regional prosperity.

But Kashmir's tourism equation has one variable that cannot be negotiated: security. The April 22, 2025 Pahalgam terrorist attack, which killed 26 people, predominantly tourists, demonstrated the extraordinary vulnerability of destination confidence. A single high-profile incident can destroy years of branding, investment and visitor trust. The strategic objective therefore cannot be simply to persuade foreign governments that Kashmir is safe today. It must be to create an institutional security architecture resilient enough to prevent, detect and rapidly contain threats tomorrow. Security should become an invisible layer of tourism infrastructure-present everywhere, but experienced by visitors primarily through confidence rather than confrontation. The test of governance is whether a tourist can enjoy a valley, trek or market without constantly thinking about the security system protecting them. That requires moving from reactive security to predictive, integrated security governance. Parliamentary scrutiny has highlighted vulnerabilities involving integrated surveillance, periodic security audits, inter-agency coordination and unified command-and-control mechanisms. These weaknesses acquire special significance in mountainous terrain, where geography can magnify response times. Counter-drone systems, high-altitude surveillance, secure communications, real-time intelligence sharing, geospatial monitoring and rehearsed evacuation protocols

should therefore be integrated into tourism planning. Emergency preparedness must extend beyond Srinagar to major tourist circuits, trekking routes, ski destinations and remote rural attractions. Medical evacuation capacity, trauma care, emergency communications and rapid-response mechanisms should be designed around the geography of tourism rather than the geography of administrative boundaries.

Connectivity is another transformational variable. The USBRL railway connection, Vande Bharat services and the Z-Morh Tunnel have significantly strengthened Kashmir's integration with the national transport network. Expansion of Srinagar Airport, alongside hundreds of tourism-related projects, river tourism, ropeways and emerging circuits, is widening the region's tourism capacity. But infrastructure creates a paradox: successful connectivity can generate demand faster than destinations can absorb it. Roads, airports, accommodation, waste management, telecommunications, medical facilities, parking, ATMs and emergency services must therefore scale ahead of demand. Otherwise, the very tourism boom created by improved connectivity could produce congestion, ecological stress and declining visitor experience. Infrastructure planning must consequently shift from project completion to capacity management. Kashmir should also reject the temptation to measure tourism success purely through visitor numbers. Three crore visitors generating congestion, waste and environmental degradation may produce less sustainable value than a smaller number of visitors staying longer and spending more. The future should therefore belong to high-value, diversified and geographically distributed tourism. Adventure tourism, skiing, eco-tourism, rural homestays, wellness, heritage, film tourism, handicraft trails, religious tourism and river-based experiences can extend the tourism season and

disperse economic activity beyond Srinagar, Gulmarg and Pahalgam. International standards will increasingly matter: multilingual emergency information, trained tourist police, internationally credible medical evacuation, digital travel platforms, transparent weather and road updates, reliable telecommunications and professionally certified adventure operators should become components of the Kashmir tourism brand.

The deeper opportunity is to transform tourism from an industry into a community-owned development strategy. Local youth can become trained guides, hospitality professionals and adventure specialists. Women's Self-Help Groups can participate in homestays, local cuisine and handicraft enterprises. Farmers can integrate agricultural experiences and supply chains into tourism. Village tourism can create direct economic incentives for preserving landscapes, water bodies and cultural traditions. Kashmir can learn selectively from mountain destinations such as Switzerland, Austria, New Zealand and Bhutan-not by copying their models, but by adapting their principles of safety, rescue preparedness, environmental stewardship, high-value tourism and visitor management.

The strategic principle should be sequencing: strengthen security, emergency medicine, connectivity, hospitality and ecological safeguards first; accelerate global marketing thereafter. The US advisory review is therefore not simply about whether Americans can visit Kashmir.

It is a test of whether Kashmir can build an ecosystem worthy of global confidence. India already possesses the destination. The next challenge is to build the trust. If security, sustainability and service converge, Kashmir can move beyond being merely "Paradise on Earth" to becoming one of Asia's most sophisticated, resilient and valuable tourism economies.

Saving NSTR Means Saving the Nallamala

A Tiger Reserve That Protects Much More Than Tigers



The Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR) is an important wildlife landscape in the Nallamala Hills of the Eastern Ghats, characterized by extensive dry deciduous forests, rugged hills, valleys, gorges, plateaus and Krishna River ecosystems. It provides important habitat for Bengal tigers and diverse mammals, birds, reptiles and plants, while also supporting the cultural heritage of Srisailem and the livelihoods and traditional knowledge of the Chenchu community. NSTR extends across Andhra Pradesh and forms part of the wider Nallamala tiger landscape connected with Amrabad Tiger Reserve in Telangana, supporting tiger breeding, dispersal and population connectivity. The Krishna River, along with the Nagarjunasagar and Srisailem reservoirs, contributes to aquatic, ecological, economic, cultural and tourism importance. According to the source, the NTCA lists the Andhra Pradesh tiger reserve at 3,296.31 km², while the broader NSTR management landscape is approximately 3,728 km²; the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department assessment cited in the source reported approximately 87 tigers in the NSTR/Nallamala landscape in 2024, distinct from officially reported state-level AITE estimates. Overall, NSTR is more than a tiger habitat, representing an interconnected landscape where biodiversity conservation, watershed protection, tribal livelihoods, cultural heritage, tourism and ecological research are closely linked, making it highly valuable for maintaining wildlife populations and ecological

connectivity in the Eastern Ghats. Biodiversity of Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve: The NSTR landscape supports rich wildlife, including Bengal tigers, leopards, dhole, sloth bears, chital, sambar, wild boar, chinkara, four-horned antelope, mugger crocodiles, reptiles and diverse resident and migratory birds. Tiger distribution depends on prey availability, water, vegetation, forest cover, terrain, human disturbance and habitat connectivity. Its diverse dry deciduous forests, bamboo and grasslands, rocky terrain, valleys and riverine habitats, along with important plants such as Anogeissus latifolia, Tectona grandis, Terminalia spp., Pterocarpus marsupium, Hardwickia binata and Boswellia serrata, make NSTR highly valuable for biodiversity conservation. Project Tiger and Tiger Conservation: Project Tiger, launched by the Government of India in 1973, protects the Bengal tiger (Panthera tigris) and its forest ecosystems. NSTR was notified as a wildlife sanctuary in 1978 and brought under Project Tiger in 1983. As part of the Nallamala tiger landscape, it provides important habitat for tiger breeding, dispersal and movement, while connectivity with adjoining forests supports viable populations. Tiger conservation also protects prey, water sources, vegetation and wildlife corridors. The Nallamala forests are important watersheds that reduce soil erosion, support water systems, regulate climate and store carbon, while the Krishna River and reservoirs support agricul-



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ture, drinking water, irrigation and power generation. The Chenchu community's traditional ecological knowledge and participation in wildlife protection further strengthen biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods. Why Nagarjuna Sagar tiger reserve becomes the important tiger reserve in India when compared to other tiger reserves: NSTR covers about 3,296 km² in its notified extent and is the largest tiger reserve in India by area according to NTCA, while the broader management landscape is about 3,728 km². Located in the Nallamala Hills, its extensive forests, valleys, ridges and gorges support tigers and important prey species. Its connectivity with Amrabad Tiger Reserve and the wider forest landscape is vital for tiger movement, genetic diversity and long-term survival. The Krishna River and surrounding forests also support water security, soil conservation and ecosystem services. NSTR's rich biodiversity and association with the Chenchu community demonstrate the close relationship between wildlife conservation, tribal livelihoods and traditional ecological knowledge.

Major Threats Facing and Current Issues in the Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve: The Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR) faces threats from human activities, infrastructure, tourism and changes in the forest ecosystem, including dependence on forest resources, livestock grazing, human-wildlife conflict, habitat

fragmentation, loss of wildlife corridors, forest fires, bamboo degradation and illegal fishing. Recent concerns during 2025-2026 also include tiger mortality, suspected poaching, missing animals, illegal wildlife trade, snares, electrocution and increasing human pressure. Addressing these issues requires effective habitat management, protection of wildlife corridors, stronger anti-poaching measures, camera-trap and genetic monitoring, regular detection of snares, prevention of illegal electrocution, and cooperation among forest, police and local authorities. Community participation and livelihood programmes are equally important for reducing human pressure and ensuring the long-term conservation of tigers and their habitat. Andhra Pradesh Government Initiatives to Protect NSTR: The Andhra Pradesh Government has undertaken several initiatives to protect NSTR, including strengthening anti-poaching measures, deploying protection personnel, and using camera traps and M-STripes for scientific tiger monitoring. Cooperation with police, the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and other agencies helps address wildlife crime and illegal trafficking. Community participation, particularly involving the Chenchu tribal community, is also encouraged. Forest-fire management through fire lines, along with habitat improvement, water-resource protection and grassland management, supports healthy prey populations and secure habitats for tigers.

Tinkling sound of cycle bells falling silent

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During my school days, I fell head over heels in love with cycles. It continued till the completion of my graduation and beyond. Later, my bond with cycles slowly and gradually got weakened with the arrival of petrol-run two-wheelers into the market. Whenever I see a school-going boy or girl trying to learn cycle riding under the supervision of either of their parents or someone elder in their family, in any school playground on Sundays or any holiday, I feel nostalgic, and those difficult cycle-learning days roll before my eyes.

In the 60s and 70s, cycles were few and far between. Cycle visibility was rare on the roads. In fact, many did not know the skill of cycle riding. And riders were looked upon with awe and admiration.

In those days of the bullock-cart era, owning a cycle was a luxury, and cycle owners were considered a privileged class. Such were the days that when someone rode a cycle, people, especially elderly ones, would watch, wondering as to why the two-wheeled cycle was not losing its balance and falling down. It used to arouse much curiosity among them. As owning a cycle was beyond the economic means of many, learning cycle riding was also out of the question. But when cycle taxis came up in my village, youngsters and school-going children began learning the skill of cycling by hiring cycles on an hourly rental basis. For children, learning cycle riding was a herculean task because cycles were designed for grown-up men only. Unlike now, kids' cycles were not known. Children had no option except learning cycling using 'big' cycles. When I was in Class Five, I made my first attempt to ride a cycle. But it was a disaster. The cycle fell on me as I lost balance, injuring my toe and hands.

Whenever someone came to my house on a cycle, stealthily I would unlock the stand and take it out for riding. I don't know the count

of how many times I had a fall. Yet, I endured all for the love of 'cycle riding'. As my legs were not tall enough to sit on a straddle, I began learning cycle riding by the Scissors method (known as Kainchi). This method is risky and prone to accidents. In this method, cycling is done by holding the handlebar with one hand and the crossbar with the other. One leg is kept on the pedal through the frame, and the other leg is placed on the ground for balancing. To gain initial momentum, pedalling is done back and forth with the right leg. Once it reaches critical speed, the other leg is lifted and placed on the other pedal for continuous cycling. With age, my legs became tall enough to ride a cycle comfortably, sitting on the straddle. Once we were confident enough of cycle riding, we would go around the village. And to attract attention and to inform the world that we had acquired the skill of cycling, we would roam the streets, tinkling the bell attached to the crossbar. Sound pollution was unheard of in those days. And the tinkling sound is still green in my memory. Now things have changed; a wide range of kids' cycles have flooded the market to pick and choose according to the needs. Later, cycle design was also made girl-friendly, which resulted in bringing about a kind of revolution in school education. It paved the way for increasing female literacy. The cycle around which society revolved has lost its utilitarian value post-liberalisation. Once a king of the road has fallen by the roadside for want of patronisers. What was once designed for men is now confined to school-going children who use it for learning cycling only and not for cycling. The majority go to school by buses or by other means.

The human-powered cycle that served mankind for decades is struggling to survive and facing an existential threat.

Will better days come for cycles?

Supreme Court Notice To 20 Rebel TMC MPs

The political battle within the Trinamool Congress has now reached the Supreme Court, with the apex court issuing notices to 20 rebel TMC Lok Sabha MPs over a plea seeking their disqualification. The petition was filed by TMC general secretary and Lok Sabha leader Abhishek Banerjee, who approached the Supreme Court seeking an early decision on disqualification petitions pending before Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. A bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, along with Justices Joydalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi, heard the matter and issued notices to the 20 MPs. The dispute began after the 20 lawmakers broke away from the TMC and announced their association with the National Citizens Party of India (NCPI). They have subsequently been treated as a separate group in Parliament and have participated in meetings of the NDA. The TMC has argued that the MPs were elected on the party's symbol and that their decision to join another political formation amounts to voluntarily giving up TMC membership. The party therefore wants them disqualified under the anti-defection law. The rebel MPs, however, maintain that their move constitutes a valid merger and have challenged the allegations made by the TMC. During the hearing, the court also focused on the delay in the proceedings. The Solicitor General, appearing for the Speaker, informed the bench that notices had already been issued to the MPs by the Speaker. The court made it clear that simply issuing notices was not enough and stressed the need to complete the proceedings within a specific time frame. The Supreme Court's intervention is being viewed as a significant development in the growing political confrontation within the TMC. For Abhishek Banerjee and the party leadership, an early decision could determine the parliamentary status of the rebel lawmakers. TMC leaders have described the development as a major legal and political boost. The rebel camp, meanwhile, is expected to defend its claim that the merger was legally valid. The case could have wider implications for the functioning of Parliament and the interpretation of the anti-defection law. With the Supreme Court stepping in, the battle between the TMC leadership and its 20 rebel MPs has entered a crucial legal phase.



Rajnath Clears DRDO Missile Tech Transfer



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the transfer of technology for conventional missile systems developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to Indian defence companies for domestic production. The decision marks a major step in India's push for Aatmanirbhar Bharat and aims to strengthen the country's defence manufacturing ecosystem. Eligible Indian companies will be able to produce DRDO-developed conventional missile systems, subject to technical qualifications, certifications and regulatory approvals. The move is expected to increase private-sector participation in defence manufacturing and create new opportunities for Indian companies to enter the advanced weapons production sector. The government has been encouraging domestic industries to play a larger role in defence production. The latest decision could help expand India's indigenous manufacturing capabilities while reducing dependence on foreign suppliers. For Indian defence companies, access to DRDO-developed technologies could open the door to large-scale production of advanced missile systems. Established manufacturers as well as other eligible domestic firms could benefit from the new opportunity. However, the transfer of technology does not mean that companies can immediately begin manufacturing the systems. Firms will have to meet prescribed technical standards and obtain the necessary certifications and regulatory clearances before production begins. DRDO has traditionally been responsible for developing advanced defence technologies for the Indian armed forces. The latest move seeks to take these technologies beyond research and development and facilitate wider industrial production. The decision could also help create a stronger domestic defence supply chain. Increased local manufacturing would reduce vulnerabilities associated with overseas procurement and improve the availability of critical military equipment. For the armed forces, greater domestic production could eventually provide stronger supply-chain resilience and faster access to locally manufactured systems. The move comes as India continues to increase its focus on indigenous defence production and reduce reliance on imported military equipment. It also supports the government's broader objective of developing India into a major defence manufacturing hub. By transferring DRDO-developed missile technologies to eligible Indian companies, the government is seeking to combine the organisation's technological expertise with the production capabilities of domestic industry. The decision could therefore become an important milestone in India's efforts to build a self-reliant defence ecosystem. With greater private-sector participation and access to indigenous technologies, India hopes to strengthen both its domestic defence industry and its long-term strategic capabilities.

Bengaluru Parking Fee Proposal Sparks Row

Bengaluru residents who park their vehicles on public roads outside their homes could soon face an annual parking fee under the proposed Greater Bengaluru Authority Parking Rules, 2026. The draft rules propose annual residential parking permits of up to ₹25,000, depending on the type of vehicle. Hatchback owners could be charged ₹15,000 per year, sedan owners ₹20,000 and SUV owners ₹25,000. The proposal has triggered opposition from within the Karnataka government itself. Congress minister Ramalinga Reddy has raised concerns over the financial burden the plan could place on ordinary and middle-class families. In a letter to Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, Reddy acknowledged that Bengaluru needs stronger measures to tackle illegal and prolonged roadside parking. However, he argued that charging residents for parking outside their homes could create additional financial pressure, particularly for families who have no adequate parking facilities within their buildings. Many older residential areas and apartment complexes in Bengaluru lack sufficient parking space. While residents of independent houses with larger properties may be able to park vehicles inside their premises, many middle-class families have no such option. Reddy pointed out that these families are already dealing with expenses such as home and vehicle loans, education, healthcare and daily household costs. An annual parking fee of up to ₹25,000 could therefore become a significant additional burden. He has suggested that the government consider exemptions for residents who genuinely do not have parking facilities within their homes or buildings. The minister has also called for wider consultations before the policy is finalised. He wants Bengaluru MLAs, resident welfare associations, citizens' groups and concerned officials to discuss the proposal. The parking controversy has also given the Opposition an opportunity to attack the Congress government. BJP leaders have described the proposed charges as an additional financial burden on Bengaluru residents and questioned the rationale behind making people pay to park outside their own homes. The government, however, faces a genuine challenge. Bengaluru has been struggling with severe traffic congestion, limited parking space and increasing roadside parking. The proposed policy is aimed at regulating the use of public road space, but the government will now have to balance traffic management with the financial concerns of residents. For now, the parking charges remain part of the draft rules and are not a final levy. The bigger question is whether Bengaluru can solve its parking crisis without placing another financial burden on ordinary residents.



Modi 3.0 Cabinet Reshuffle: 12 Berths Open

The Modi 3.0 government could soon witness a major Cabinet reshuffle following the BJP's recent organisational changes. With several ministers taking up important party responsibilities, speculation is growing over who could enter the Union Council of Ministers next. The Council currently has 69 members, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, against the constitutional maximum of 81. This leaves room for 12 new ministers, giving the government considerable flexibility to accommodate political and regional considerations. The BJP's principle of "one person, one post" could be an important factor behind the reshuffle. Several leaders holding ministerial positions have recently received key organisational responsibilities within the party. Some ministerial positions have also become vacant. The departure



of former Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, along with the exit of ministers whose Rajya Sabha terms have ended, has created additional scope for changes. The reshuffle could bring a greater focus on younger leaders and women, while also balancing representation from different states. Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal

Pradesh could receive particular attention because of their political importance and upcoming electoral battles. The BJP's alliance partners could also benefit. In Maharashtra, Shrikant Shinde, son of Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, has been discussed as a possible candidate for a ministerial berth. Other allies may also seek greater representation in the Union gov-

ernment. Another consideration could be workload. Several senior ministers currently handle multiple portfolios. New inductions could allow the government to distribute responsibilities more effectively and improve administrative efficiency. The reshuffle is therefore expected to be more than a routine exercise. Political equations, regional balance, youth representation, alliance management and organisational requirements could all influence the final choices. With the 2029 Lok Sabha elections increasingly becoming a long-term political focus, the next Cabinet reshuffle could provide an early indication of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strategy for the second half of his third term. With 12 berths potentially available, Modi 3.0 has significant room for a political and administrative reset.

Gadkari Remark Taken Out Of Context, Office Clarifies

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari's recent comments about being unable to work with the same intensity as before triggered speculation about his political future. However, his office has clarified that the remarks were not about politics and were instead made in the context of the Laxmanrao Mankar Trust. Gadkari made the comments while speaking at an event in Nagpur. Reflecting on his more than three decades in public life, he spoke about the responsibilities he had handled and the changes he had experienced over the years. During his speech, Gadkari said that it was becoming difficult for him to work with the same intensity as earlier. He also spoke about the importance of giving younger people greater opportunities and responsibilities. His remarks quickly led to speculation that he might be consider-



ing a reduced political role or even retirement from active politics. However, his office rejected such an interpretation. According to the clarification, Gadkari was specifically discussing the functioning and future leadership of the Laxmanrao Mankar Trust, an organisation associated with him that works through Ekal Vidyalayas in tribal

areas. His office said that his comments about not being able to take on as much work as before were related to the Trust and its future leadership. It also criticised the manner in which some media reports presented the remarks, arguing that they had been taken out of context. Gadkari also spoke about his personal lifestyle and his early years in politics. He recalled travelling extensively, working under difficult circumstances and maintaining a simple routine. He said that after the Covid period, he brought greater discipline into his lifestyle and began paying more attention to his health. He mentioned practising yoga regularly and stressed that health should be given greater importance than power, position or prestige. The Union Minister also empha-

sised the importance of giving opportunities to younger generations. His office therefore described the remarks as a reflection on organisational responsibilities and generational transition rather than a signal about his political career. The controversy highlights how comments by senior political leaders can quickly trigger speculation, particularly when they involve workload, health or the need for younger leadership. For now, Gadkari's office has made its position clear: The minister's remarks were connected to the future functioning of the Trust and should not be interpreted as an announcement about his retirement or withdrawal from active politics. The clarification is expected to put an end to speculation surrounding Gadkari's political future, at least for the time being.

Bihar Students Clash With Police Over BPSC Exam

Tension erupted in Patna on Tuesday as students protesting against the 70th Bihar Public Service Commission examination clashed with police during a march towards the Raj Bhavan. The protesters began their march from Gandhi Maidan, demanding cancellation of the 70th BPSC examination. The agitation intensified when students attempted to move beyond police barricades placed along the route. Police detained several protesters and used water cannons to disperse the crowd after some demonstrators broke through the barricades. There were also reports of clashes between students and police as the situation became increasingly tense. The students have been protesting over alleged irregularities in the BPSC examination process, including claims of question-paper leaks and concerns about the fairness and transparency of recruitment examinations. Their demands have now expanded beyond the 70th



BPSC examination. Protesters are also seeking changes to the proposed Teacher Recruitment Examination, known as TRE 4.0. They want the teacher recruitment test to be conducted in a single stage and have demanded the removal of negative marking. Students have also raised concerns over delays in various recruitment examinations conducted by the Bihar Staff Selection Commission and other

government recruitment bodies. They are demanding a transparent examination system, timely recruitment and a regular examination calendar. The agitation has received support from several student and youth organisations. Opposition leader Tejashwi Yadav has also backed the protesters and urged the Bihar government to hold talks with them. Meanwhile, the state government has announced a new initia-

tive called Vidyarthi Sahyog Shivir to address student grievances. These support camps will reportedly be organised at educational institutions every month, allowing students to raise their concerns directly with government officials. The government has also announced an online mechanism through which students can submit complaints and track their progress. The confrontation in Patna has nevertheless added fresh pressure on the Bihar government. Students have made it clear that they want concrete action rather than assurances. The controversy is now becoming a larger debate over recruitment transparency, examination integrity and employment opportunities for Bihar's youth. With protests intensifying and students continuing to demand cancellation of the 70th BPSC examination, the government faces growing pressure to open a direct dialogue and find a solution to the dispute.

J&K Power Hike Sparks Political Row

A fresh political controversy has erupted in Jammu and Kashmir over the increase in electricity tariffs, with opposition parties demanding an immediate rollback of the decision. The power tariff has been increased by around 6.83 percent and is scheduled to come into effect from September 1. The decision has triggered protests by opposition parties, including the Peoples Democratic Party, which has accused the Omar Abdullah government of going back on its election promises. Electricity was one of the major issues during the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections. The opposition has particularly targeted the National Conference government over its promise of providing 200 units of free electricity to eligible households. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, however, has defended the tariff increase, describing it as a compulsion rather than a political choice. He said rising electricity costs, inflation and financial pressures on the power sector made the increase necessary. Abdullah also hit back at his critics by pointing to previous tariff increases during the earlier PDP-BJP government. He argued that his government had increased electricity charges by only around six percent after a gap of four years, whereas previous administrations had implemented significantly higher hikes. The Chief Minister also clarified that his government had promised free electricity for the poorest households through a solar-based scheme, rather than a permanent freeze on electricity tariffs. The government believes that improving the financial condition of the power sector is essential to prevent larger problems in the future. Officials have also indicated that better financial management could reduce the need for repeated tariff increases. Opposition parties, however, argue that ordinary consumers should not be forced to bear the burden of the power sector's financial difficulties. They have demanded that the government reconsider the decision and provide relief to households already facing rising living costs. The issue is likely to become a major political point in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, with opposition parties planning to continue raising the matter. The tariff increase has therefore created a difficult situation for the Omar Abdullah government. While the administration says the hike is necessary to address structural problems in the electricity sector, the opposition is portraying it as a betrayal of electoral promises. For now, the government appears determined to defend the decision. The controversy highlights the difficult balance between providing affordable electricity to consumers and maintaining the financial sustainability of the power sector in Jammu and Kashmir.



Supreme Court Asks Tarun Tejpal To Surrender

The Supreme Court has directed former Tehelka editor-in-chief Tarun Tejpal to surrender within two weeks in connection with the 2013 Goa sexual assault case. A bench headed by Justice Alok Aradhe rejected Tejpal's request for exemption from surrender. The court directed him to submit a surrender certificate before his appeal challenging his conviction and sentence can be taken up. The case dates back to November 2013, when a junior colleague accused Tejpal of sexually assaulting her inside a hotel elevator at a resort in Goa during an event organised by Tehelka magazine. A Goa trial court acquitted Tejpal of all charges in 2021. However, the Bombay High Court later overturned the acquittal, convicted him and sentenced him to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment. Tejpal subsequently approached the Supreme Court challenging the High Court judgment and seeking relief from the sentence. His legal team had argued that he should not be required to surrender immediately. The lawyers pointed out that the High Court had earlier given him additional time to surrender and that he had remained on bail for most of the proceedings. The Goa government opposed the request and argued that Tejpal was required to surrender before his appeal could be considered by the Supreme Court. The apex court has now rejected the exemption plea and given Tejpal two weeks to comply with the surrender order. However, the legal battle is not over. His appeal against the conviction and 10-year sentence will continue before the Supreme Court after the required surrender certificate is submitted. The Goa government has also challenged the sentence separately and has sought a harsher punishment. The state has argued that the sentence awarded by the High Court is inadequate considering the seriousness of the case. The latest order is therefore a setback for Tejpal's immediate effort to remain out of custody while challenging his conviction. The Supreme Court's consideration of his main appeal will be crucial in determining whether the High Court conviction and sentence will stand. The case has continued for more than a decade and has involved proceedings before multiple courts. For now, the immediate requirement is clear: Tejpal must surrender within two weeks and comply with the Supreme Court's direction before his appeal can proceed. The next stage of the legal battle will determine the future course of the case and his challenge to the conviction and sentence.



Iran State TV Video Targets Trump's Son



Iranian state television has aired a controversial video appearing to target Barron Trump, the youngest son of US President Donald Trump, amid heightened tensions between Washington and Tehran. The nearly three-minute video reportedly focused on locations associated with Barron, including Trump Tower in New York and areas around his university. The broadcast was presented in a surveillance-style format and reportedly included a provocative question about where Barron could be targeted. The video also referred to a \$10 million reward allegedly linked to an attack against the president's son. However, the authenticity and details of the reported reward remain unclear, and there has been no independent confirmation that such a bounty actually exists. The broadcast has attracted significant attention in the United States because it appeared to move beyond criticism of Donald Trump and directly target a member of his family. The US Secret Service is aware of the video and has been assessing the situation. The agency routinely investigates material that could potentially represent a threat against people under its protection. However, officials have not disclosed specific details about Barron Trump's security arrangements. The incident comes at a time when relations between the United States and Iran remain extremely tense. Iranian state-linked media have previously carried strongly worded messages against President Trump and other senior US officials. The latest broadcast has raised additional concerns because it reportedly highlighted locations connected to Barron's movements and daily life. Such material can attract particular attention from security agencies even when it is presented as propaganda. At present, however, there is no public evidence of an actual attack being planned or attempted against Barron Trump. The video appears to be part of a broader propaganda campaign, and some of the claims presented in it have not been independently verified. The incident nevertheless adds another troubling dimension to the confrontation between Washington and Tehran. Directly targeting the president's family could further intensify political and diplomatic tensions. For the Secret Service, the key task will be determining whether the broadcast represents inflammatory propaganda or contains information suggesting a genuine security threat. The agency has not revealed whether Barron's existing protection measures have been changed following the broadcast. The controversy highlights how geopolitical conflicts can increasingly spill into personal threats against political leaders and their families. For now, the video has triggered fresh security concerns in the US, while the actual intent behind the broadcast remains unclear.

Rare Mojtaba Khamenei Footage Raises Health Questions



Iranian media has released rare footage showing Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei in public, amid continued speculation about his health and whereabouts. The video has attracted significant attention because Khamenei has largely remained out of the public eye since assuming the position of Iran's Supreme Leader earlier this year. The newly released footage reportedly shows Mojtaba Khamenei attending a religious academic session. He can be seen listening to a student presenting a thesis and discussing aspects of Iran's "Islamic Security Model." During the interaction, Khamenei reportedly evaluated the student's work and awarded a score of 19.5 out of 20. The footage also captures him speaking, providing a rare opportunity to hear his voice and observe his appearance. The release is significant because his limited public presence has triggered questions about his physical condition and ability to perform his duties as Iran's highest political and religious authority. However, there is an important uncertainty surrounding the video. The recording is undated. Iranian media has not clearly revealed when or where it was filmed. As a result, while the footage confirms that Khamenei participated in the event shown, it does not independently establish his current health condition. Earlier, Iranian media had also released another short video showing Khamenei sitting with officials and advisers. That footage too was undated and emerged amid reports and speculation about his health. The repeated release of such footage has raised questions over why Iran has not provided a clearly dated and recent public appearance of the Supreme Leader. Khamenei's absence is particularly significant because of the enormous authority associated with his position. The Supreme Leader plays a central role in Iran's political, military and religious decision-making, making his health a matter of national and international interest. Iranian authorities have continued to portray him as active and engaged in official and religious affairs. The latest footage appears to reinforce that message by showing him participating in an academic discussion. The timing is also important as Iran continues to face major geopolitical and security challenges. Any uncertainty surrounding the Supreme Leader's health could have implications for political stability and decision-making within the country. For now, the newly released video offers a rare glimpse of Mojtaba Khamenei speaking and interacting with others. But without a confirmed recording date, it does not completely resolve the questions surrounding his present condition. Iran has shown its Supreme Leader on camera, but the mystery remains over when the footage was recorded and what it reveals about his current health.

US Military C-17 Lands In Moscow, Mystery Deepens



A US Air Force Boeing C-17 Globemaster III military transport aircraft landed at Moscow's Vnukovo Airport on Tuesday August 25, in an unusual development that has sparked widespread speculation about the purpose of the flight. The aircraft, carrying the US registration 07-7181, flew directly from Riga, Latvia, and arrived in Moscow at around 10 am local time. Flight-tracking data confirmed the unusual journey. The aircraft had reportedly reached Riga on August 23 after travelling from Camp Springs, Maryland, near Washington DC, where Joint Base Andrews is located. The base is closely associated with official US government air travel.

The most striking aspect of the incident is that neither Washington nor Moscow has publicly explained why the military aircraft travelled to Moscow. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said he had no information about the plane when questioned about its arrival. It also remains unclear whether

the C-17 was carrying passengers, military equipment or other cargo. There has been no official confirmation about the aircraft's mission or who may have been on board. The C-17 Globemaster III is a large strategic transport aircraft designed to carry troops, vehicles, equipment and other heavy cargo over long distances. It can also be used for humanitarian missions, evacuations and other specialised operations.

Because of its capabilities and the unusual destination, the flight has

triggered considerable speculation. Some theories suggest the aircraft could be linked to diplomatic activity, while others have raised the possibility of a prisoner exchange or another sensitive mission.

However, there is currently no confirmation of any of these theories. The timing of the flight has also attracted attention. Relations between the United States and Russia remain tense amid the ongoing Ukraine conflict, while efforts to advance peace negotia-

tions have faced significant obstacles.

The last known direct flight of a US-registered aircraft from Europe to Russia took place in January, when US officials Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner travelled to Moscow for discussions with Russian President Vladimir Putin regarding the Ukraine conflict.

The latest C-17 flight is therefore unusual, particularly because of the absence of any publicly announced US delegation or meeting.

For now, the aircraft's mission remains a mystery. The flight path is known, but its purpose, passengers and cargo have not been disclosed.

Until Washington or Moscow provides an official explanation, speculation surrounding the flight should be treated cautiously.

A US military transport aircraft landing in Moscow is highly unusual - but what brought the C-17 to the Russian capital remains unanswered.

Canada Plans Retaliatory Tariffs Against US



Canada is preparing to announce fresh retaliatory tariffs against the United States after trade negotiations between Ottawa and Washington collapsed. The move comes as President Donald Trump threatens to sharply increase tariffs on Canadian automobiles, auto parts and steel, escalating tensions between the two major trading partners.

Trump has threatened to raise tariffs on Canadian cars, trucks and automotive parts to 50% from January 1, 2027. The announcement followed the breakdown of recent trade negotiations between the two countries.

The automotive sector is particularly vulnerable because manufacturing supply chains between Canada and the United States are deeply interconnected. Vehicles and components frequently cross the border during different stages of production. Higher tariffs could therefore increase costs for manufacturers and potentially push up prices for consumers.

Canada has indicated that it is prepared to respond with its own measures. Canadian officials have said retaliatory tariffs could target selected American products, with the government seeking to protect

Canadian workers and businesses from the impact of US trade restrictions. Canadian Trade Minister Dominic LeBlanc has indicated that Ottawa could announce the new measures on Tuesday. He stressed that imposing tariffs was not Canada's preferred option but could become necessary to protect important sectors of the economy.

Prime Minister Mark Carney has also taken a firm position in the dispute. He has argued that Canada will defend its economic interests and will not accept trade negotiations conducted on the



turers, steel producers, exporters, workers and consumers in both countries.



American companies could also face consequences because many US manufacturers depend on Canadian raw materials, components and energy. Higher import costs could ultimately be passed on through supply chains.

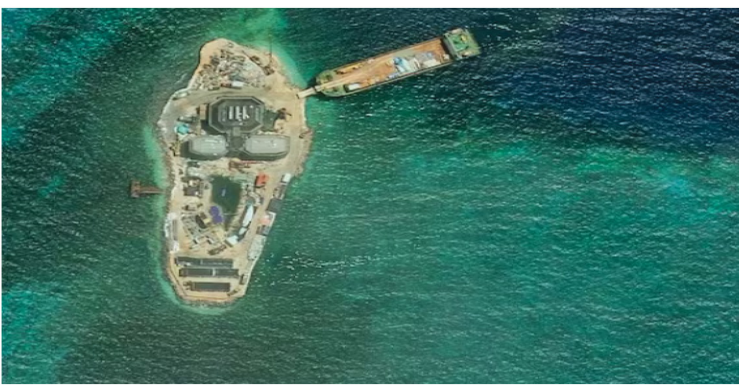


The conflict could create uncertainty for financial markets and businesses planning investments on either side of the border. Automotive companies are likely to be particularly sensitive because of their dependence on cross-border production networks. For now, both governments continue to signal that negotiations remain possible, but neither side appears willing to make major concessions without securing protection for its own economic interests. The latest developments suggest that the long-standing US-Canada trade relationship is entering another difficult phase. With Washington threatening

The dispute is particularly significant because the US and Canada have one of the world's most closely integrated trading relationships. Any prolonged tariff battle could affect automobile manufac-

With Washington threatening higher tariffs and Ottawa preparing retaliation, the two neighbours are moving closer to a wider trade confrontation that could affect industries and consumers on both sides of the border.

China Expands Military Presence In South China Sea



China appears to be expanding its military footprint in the disputed South China Sea, with new construction emerging on a small island near Antelope Reef in the Pracel Islands. Recent satellite imagery has revealed construction activity on Yagong Island, located around 14 kilometres northeast of Antelope Reef. The newly built structures have attracted the attention of security analysts, who believe they could eventually be used for radar, surveillance or early-warning purposes. Construction reportedly began around March or April 2026. More recent satellite images show several newly developed structures on the island. Analysts have noted that their design resembles radar and early-warning facilities seen at other Chinese installations in the South China Sea. The development comes as China continues a much larger project at Antelope Reef. Satellite images indicate that Beijing has completed the first phase of land reclamation there, creating a large artificial island stretching nearly 36 kilometres. The expanded area includes a long straight coastline, a harbour, a wharf and other infrastructure. The scale of the project has raised speculation that the facility could eventually support military operations, although China has not officially described it as a military base. Chinese authorities have said the Antelope Reef development is intended for purposes such as weather monitoring, fisheries protection and scientific research. Regional security experts, however, remain cautious about that explanation. They argue that the location, size and design of the infrastructure could give China greater surveillance and operational capabilities across the northern South China Sea. The role of Yagong Island remains less clear because of its relatively small size. Analysts say it is too early to determine whether the new facilities will become a dedicated radar station, communications site or another type of observation facility. The strategic importance of the area adds to concerns. The Pracel Islands sit along important maritime routes and are close to several areas of geopolitical importance in East Asia. China has controlled the Pracel Islands since 1974, but Vietnam also claims sovereignty over the islands. The broader South China Sea is disputed by several countries, including the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan. China's continuing construction activity has therefore increased concerns among regional countries and Western powers. The United States and its allies have repeatedly criticised Beijing's expansion of infrastructure in disputed waters. The latest development also highlights how China is gradually building a network of facilities across the South China Sea. Even when individual installations are described as civilian or dual-use projects, their combined capabilities could significantly strengthen Beijing's ability to monitor maritime activity. For now, the exact purpose of the new Yagong Island structures remains unclear. But their emergence alongside the huge Antelope Reef project indicates that China's presence in the region continues to expand. As Beijing adds new facilities to its growing network, the South China Sea is becoming an increasingly important centre of military competition and geopolitical rivalry.

Ukraine Gives UK Access To Battlefield AI Data



Ukraine has given the United Kingdom access to its "Avengers" AI Labs, a major battlefield database built from years of real-world combat data. The agreement marks a significant expansion of defence and technology cooperation between the two countries. The partnership was signed in Kyiv by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and British Prime Minister Andy Burnham. Britain has become the first international partner to receive access to the Avengers platform. The database contains millions of pieces of information collected from cameras, drones and sensors operating across Ukrainian battlefields. It includes data relating to tanks, artillery systems, air-defence equipment, soldiers and drones, including Shahed attack drones and reconnaissance UAVs. The data is used to train artificial intelligence systems capable of identifying military objects and potential threats. Ukrainian officials say AI models trained using the database are already being used to analyse large volumes of drone footage and identify enemy targets. For Britain, access to this information provides an opportunity to study how artificial intelligence performs in an actual war environment. Instead of relying primarily on simulations, British researchers and technology companies can learn from years of battlefield experience. The initial cooperation will focus on defence and national security. One of the first projects involves developing AI-powered sensors using fibre-optic technology to help protect military facilities. The technology could eventually have wider applications. Similar systems could potentially be used to protect airports, railway networks, prisons and energy infrastructure from hostile activity or security threats. Britain and Ukraine are also planning to cooperate on the development of low-power AI chips. Such chips could be useful for drones, robots and autonomous systems, allowing them to operate for longer while consuming less energy. The partnership is designed to work in both directions. While Britain gains access to Ukraine's battlefield data and operational experience, Ukraine will benefit from British universities, researchers, engineers and technology companies. The agreement comes as Ukraine continues to develop rapidly in the field of defence technology. Years of fighting with Russia have forced Ukrainian forces to experiment with drones, artificial intelligence, sensors and battlefield-management systems. The deal also has wider geopolitical significance. Britain remains one of Ukraine's strongest supporters, while Russia has repeatedly criticised Western military and technological assistance to Kyiv. The latest agreement demonstrates how the experience of the Ukraine war is increasingly shaping the development of future military technology. For Britain, the partnership provides access to valuable real-world battlefield information. For Ukraine, it creates another channel to strengthen its defence technology ecosystem. By combining Ukraine's frontline experience with Britain's AI expertise, the two countries are seeking to develop technologies that could influence the future of warfare and national security.

Delhi HC Orders RS.53 Crore Refund To Vodafone Idea



The Delhi High Court has strongly criticised the Income Tax Department over the prolonged delay in releasing a tax refund to Vodafone Idea, describing the situation as a "grim picture" of the department's functioning. The court has directed the authorities to pay the telecom company rs53.09 crore along with applicable interest. A Division Bench comprising Justice Dinesh Mehta and Justice Rajneesh Kumar Gupta issued the order on August 18. The court directed the Income Tax Department to release the refund by September 30, 2026. If the payment is not made within the deadline, the outstanding amount will attract an additional interest of 1% per month, over and above the statutory interest. The dispute relates to tax refunds for several assessment years, including 2003-04 and 2008-09 to 2013-14. Vodafone Idea had won a series of cases before the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal between April 2024 and February 2025. Following those rulings, the Assessing Officer determined that the company was entitled to a total refund of ₹53.09 crore. Despite the refund being quantified, the amount was not released for a considerable period. The High Court noted that Vodafone Idea had been involved in litigation relating to the matter for nearly a decade. Even after the Assessing Officer passed orders determining the refund, the company continued to wait for the payment. The Income Tax Department had insisted that Vodafone Idea submit Form 26B before the refund could be processed. The company eventually submitted the required forms for two assessment years. However, the applications were rejected because the department cited outstanding tax demands against Vodafone Idea's PAN and the TANs of its sister concerns. The department claimed that the total outstanding demands were around ₹924.57 crore. However, it acknowledged that approximately ₹913.66 crore of those demands had already been stayed by courts or other authorities. This left around rs10.91 crore without a stay. Vodafone Idea disputed even that figure and maintained that only about ₹27.63 lakh was actually outstanding. The High Court made it clear that the existence of an outstanding demand cannot automatically justify withholding a refund. The department must follow the appropriate legal procedure for adjusting or withholding the amount. The ruling is significant because it reinforces the principle that taxpayers who are legally entitled to refunds should not face indefinite delays because of unrelated or disputed outstanding demands. For Vodafone Idea, the ₹53.09 crore refund could provide some additional liquidity at a time when the telecom operator continues to manage substantial financial obligations. For the tax administration, meanwhile, the court's strong observations underline the need for faster and more transparent handling of legitimate refund claims. The order also sends a wider message to taxpayers: once a refund becomes legally payable following an assessment or appellate decision, administrative delays cannot continue indefinitely without proper legal justification.

Kotak Flags Oil, Inflation Risks For Markets



Indian equity markets could face heightened volatility in the coming weeks as several unresolved macroeconomic risks continue to weigh on the global financial environment. Kotak Institutional Equities has flagged four major concerns for investors: the ongoing Iran-US conflict, rising crude oil prices, persistent inflation and growing worries over government debt and fiscal deficits. According to Kotak, the continued uncertainty surrounding the Iran-US conflict and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz could create significant pressure on global markets. Oil markets have so far remained relatively resilient because of high inventories built up before the conflict. However, declining stock piles could change the situation if supply disruptions continue. Kotak warned that another few weeks of negligible oil supplies through the Strait of Hormuz could push crude prices to worrying levels. For India, this is particularly important because the country remains heavily dependent on imported crude oil. A sharp increase in energy prices could have a broader impact on inflation, the current account, the rupee and overall economic growth. Inflation is another major concern highlighted by the brokerage. Inflation in several developed and emerging economies has remained above central-bank targets for an extended period. At the same time, relatively low or negative real interest rates could make it difficult for policymakers to contain price pressures without affecting economic activity. The global bond market is also showing signs of stress. Kotak pointed to concerns surrounding high and rising public debt, along with governments continuing to run large fiscal deficits. Long-term US Treasury yields have remained volatile as investors assess the government's borrowing requirements and its interaction with the bond market. Higher bond yields could become an additional challenge for equity markets. Rising yields generally increase borrowing costs and can reduce the attractiveness of riskier assets such as equities. Emerging markets such as India could also face pressure if higher global yields encourage investors to shift money toward safer fixed-income assets. Kotak believes the next few weeks could prove particularly important for global stock markets. Equity valuations remain elevated in several segments, supported by expectations of strong corporate earnings growth. As a result, the brokerage believes markets have relatively little room for negative surprises from either crude oil prices or bond yields. The brokerage also highlighted the market's strong focus on artificial intelligence and AI-related capital expenditure. According to Kotak, this enthusiasm may have reduced investor attention toward broader macroeconomic concerns such as government debt, fiscal deficits and inflation. For Indian investors, the combination of expensive crude, persistent inflation and higher global bond yields could create a challenging environment. Recent market performance has already shown that elevated oil prices and rising yields can hurt investor sentiment. Overall, Kotak's assessment suggests that investors may need to remain cautious as geopolitical developments, energy prices, inflation and fiscal concerns interact. While strong earnings expectations continue to support equities, any significant deterioration in these macro factors could increase market volatility and trigger sharper corrections.

Sensex Jumps 287 Points, Nifty Reclaims 24,300

Indian equity markets staged a strong recovery on Tuesday, August 25, after witnessing a weak opening and volatile trading during the session. Buying in pharmaceutical, media and PSU banking stocks helped the benchmark indices erase their early losses and finish firmly in positive territory on the monthly expiry day. The Sensex gained 286.98 points, or 0.37 percent, to close at 77,656.09, while the Nifty 50 rose 115.50 points, or 0.48 percent, to settle at 24,334.55. The Nifty Bank index, however, remained almost flat, ending at 57,514.20.

The session began on a cautious note amid mixed global signals. The Nifty slipped to an intraday low of 24,115.45 before recovering sharply as investors stepped in at lower levels. Easing crude oil prices and a stronger Indian rupee also supported market sentiment. The recovery became particularly strong during the final hours of trading. According to market analysts, the indices found support near the 24,100 level on the Nifty and around 77,100 on the Sensex. The subsequent rebound helped both benchmarks close near the



day's stronger levels. Among sectors, pharmaceutical stocks emerged as major gainers, with the Nifty Pharma index rising 0.85 percent. Media and PSU banking stocks also attracted buying interest. Healthcare, digital and tourism-related segments were among the other areas that outperformed during the session. The broader market also witnessed significant activity. More than 140 stocks touched their 52-week highs, including Paytm, Bajaj Auto, AU Small Finance Bank, Ipca Laboratories, PVR

INOX, Siemens, HFCL, Aarti Industries and Welspun Corp. However, some individual stocks remained under pressure. Hindustan Copper fell around 7 percent after the government announced plans to sell up to a 6 percent stake through an offer for sale. Federal Bank and Jana Small Finance Bank also declined more than 2 percent amid reports related to a potential stake acquisition. PVR INOX, meanwhile, touched a fresh 52-week high as its board is scheduled to consider a share buy-back proposal on August 31.

Netweb Technologies India declined after completing a ₹1,200 crore qualified institutional placement.

The Indian rupee also strengthened during the session. It ended at rs.95.41 against the US dollar, gaining 33 paise compared with its previous close of ₹95.74.

Newly listed companies also attracted investor attention. Sunshine Pictures ended 2.3 percent higher at ₹368.50 after making its market debut, while Shankesh Jewellers gained 2.3 percent to close at ₹95.21.

Market experts believe the strong recovery from lower levels has improved the near-term technical outlook. The sharp rebound and positive daily candle suggest that bullish momentum could continue, although volatility may remain elevated after the expiry session. Overall, Tuesday's trading session highlighted strong buying interest at lower levels, with investors taking advantage of the decline to accumulate stocks across several sectors. The ability of the Nifty to reclaim and hold the 24,300 mark will remain an important factor for the market's next move.

Oriental Hotels Merger May Boost Indian Hotels' EPS

The proposed merger of Oriental Hotels with Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), the Tata Group hospitality company that operates the Taj brand, is being viewed positively by several brokerages. Analysts believe the all-stock transaction could simplify IHCL's corporate structure, improve operating efficiency and potentially boost earnings per share (EPS) over the longer term. Under the proposed arrangement, shareholders of Oriental Hotels will receive 25 shares of IHCL for every 117 shares they hold. IHCL currently owns around 37.1 percent of Oriental Hotels. To complete the transaction, IHCL will issue approximately 23.2 million new shares, resulting in around 1.6 percent dilution for existing IHCL shareholders.

The merger is expected to bring Oriental Hotels' seven properties, comprising around 825 rooms, directly under IHCL's platform. The portfolio includes hotels operating under the Taj, Gateway and Vivanta brands. Brokerages believe IHCL's stronger scale and financial resources could help unlock growth opportunities at these properties. JM Financial said the transaction could be EPS-accretive from the



first year. The brokerage highlighted the benefits of simplifying the group structure, consolidating Oriental Hotels' operations and improving margins through asset upgrades and active management. It retained a positive view on IHCL and assigned a target price of ₹850. The merger could also provide IHCL with greater opportunities to expand its presence in South India. Oriental Hotels currently operates properties in key markets, including Chennai and Mangaluru, while IHCL could use its expertise and financial strength to improve existing hotels and expand their revenue poten-

tial. Several properties have already been identified as having expansion or renovation opportunities. The 149-room Taj Fisherman's Cove in Chennai, for example, could add villas and banquet facilities. The 63-room Gateway Madurai also offers scope for expansion, while the 220-room Taj Coromandel in Chennai and 96-room Vivanta in Mangaluru are planned for upgrades. The merger is also expected to improve IHCL's operating margins. The company has indicated that its EBITDA margin could rise to more than 30 percent, compared

with 26.8 percent in FY26. IHCL believes that bringing Oriental Hotels fully into its fold will allow the company to leverage its existing infrastructure, brands and management capabilities more effectively.

However, not every brokerage expects an immediate financial benefit. Elara Securities said the transaction could initially be broadly neutral after accounting for share dilution and potential synergies. It estimated that the deal could be around 3 percent EPS dilutive on FY26 pro forma numbers before considering synergy benefits. Elara maintained an Accumulate rating with a target price of ₹786.

The merger is expected to be completed by FY28, subject to regulatory and other required approvals. The companies have set April 1 as the appointed date for the combination.

Overall, brokerages see the transaction as strategically important for IHCL. While the immediate earnings impact may be limited, the combination could provide greater operational control, simplify the ownership structure and create opportunities to improve the performance of Oriental Hotels' properties.

Kotak Downgrades Infosys, TCS, Prefers TechM



Kotak Institutional Equities has turned more cautious on India's information technology sector, downgrading Infosys and TCS to 'Add' from 'Buy' following a sharp recovery in IT stocks. The brokerage said the sector's risk-reward profile has shifted from attractive to more balanced, while pricing pressure and artificial intelligence-led deflation could limit near-term growth. Kotak has also downgraded LTM Ltd (LTMindtree) to 'Sell' from 'Reduce', citing its valuation after a strong rally. In contrast, the brokerage continues to favour challengers and hybrid IT companies, naming Tech Mahindra, Coforge, Hexaware Technologies and Indegene among its preferred stocks. The reassessment comes after IT services stocks rebounded sharply from their recent lows. Several stocks have gained between 15 percent and 35 percent during the recovery, prompting Kotak to believe that much of the earlier upside has already been captured. The brokerage estimates only around 6 percent upside for Infosys and 7 percent for TCS from current levels to its fair-value estimates. Kotak has set a target price of ₹1,200 for Infosys and ₹2,450 for TCS. For LTMindtree, it has assigned a target of ₹4,150. The brokerage believes valuations have become less attractive after the recent rally, particularly for companies that continue to face challenges in generating strong organic growth. One of the biggest concerns highlighted by Kotak is pricing pressure. The brokerage believes that deal volumes remain insufficient to support the growth ambitions of all major IT companies. As competition intensifies, vendors may be forced to offer more aggressive pricing to win contracts, potentially putting pressure on margins. Artificial intelligence is another major factor reshaping the sector. Kotak believes the AI debate has moved beyond concerns about whether AI could replace IT services altogether. The bigger question now is which companies in the technology value chain will capture the economic benefits created by AI. The brokerage expects open-weight AI models to increase demand for services such as model selection, tuning, proprietary-data integration, security, monitoring and workflow redesign. However, greater access to AI tools could also reduce the price of traditional IT services. Kotak estimates that Indian IT services could face 3-3.5 percent annual revenue deflation through FY2029. Kotak believes challengers could be better positioned in this environment. Companies such as Tech Mahindra, Coforge, Hexaware and Indegene may be able to gain market share by passing AI-driven productivity benefits to clients and competing more aggressively for new business. The brokerage also expects enterprise AI adoption to eventually create a fresh demand cycle. However, it believes AI-related new-business demand may not fully offset the deflationary impact on traditional IT services until around 2029. Overall, Kotak's latest view suggests that the Indian IT sector is entering a period of significant transformation. Large incumbents such as Infosys and TCS continue to have strong businesses and established client relationships, but challengers may offer a more attractive risk-reward profile as AI reshapes technology spending and competitive dynamics.

Dixon EBITDA Margins May Rise, Says Kotak



Dixon Technologies could see a meaningful improvement in its operating profitability as higher exports, increased localisation and deeper manufacturing integration support growth, according to Kotak Institutional Equities. The brokerage expects the electronics manufacturing services (EMS) company to benefit from rising volumes from key customers and greater efficiency in its manufacturing operations. Kotak has retained its "Attractive" view on the EMS sector, highlighting the government's Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) as an important catalyst for increasing manufacturing scale and localisation in India. The scheme has a total incentive outlay of around ₹62,500 crore and follows a two-track framework aimed at expanding mobile-phone manufacturing and encouraging the growth of Indian smartphone brands. According to Kotak, exports will become increasingly important for companies seeking to meet the growth thresholds under the scheme. India's domestic smartphone market has expanded at a relatively modest pace in recent years, making it difficult for manufacturers to sustain the required growth through domestic demand alone. India's smartphone market recorded only around 1.8 percent volume CAGR and 14 percent value CAGR between CY2022 and CY2025. In contrast, mobile-phone production grew at approximately 24 percent CAGR between FY2021 and FY2026, primarily because of rapid growth in exports. Kotak therefore expects exports to remain a key growth driver for electronics manufacturers. For Dixon Technologies, the brokerage expects higher volumes from major anchor customers to provide a significant boost. Increased exports could improve capacity utilisation, while backward integration could provide additional benefits to operating margins. Kotak's scenario analysis indicates that Dixon could see an EBITDA margin improvement of around 14-22 basis points. Although the direct benefit from MPMS is expected to be limited, the broader impact of increased manufacturing scale, exports and localisation could strengthen the company's profitability. The brokerage also sees potential additional upside if Dixon's various joint ventures and partnerships experience stronger-than-expected volume growth. These include its joint ventures with Vivo and Longcheer, which is associated with brands such as OPPO and Realme, as well as its partnership with Compal, which is linked to Pixel manufacturing. A sharp increase in volumes from these businesses could provide further operating leverage. The broader electronics manufacturing industry is undergoing a significant transformation as global companies increasingly diversify their supply chains beyond China. India is attempting to position itself as a major manufacturing and export hub, with government incentives encouraging companies to establish larger production facilities and localise component manufacturing. For Dixon, this shift could create opportunities beyond traditional assembly operations. Greater backward integration and localisation could help the company capture more value across the manufacturing chain while reducing dependence on imported components.

Kotak, however, remains more cautious about the near-term impact of MPMS on Amber Enterprises. The brokerage does not expect a significant immediate benefit for Amber because OPPO-related volumes are still in the process of ramping up. It has retained its existing estimates and fair values for both Dixon and Amber. Overall, Kotak's assessment suggests that exports, localisation and manufacturing integration could become important drivers of Dixon's next phase of growth. While the immediate margin benefit may appear modest, sustained volume growth from major customers could provide additional operating leverage and strengthen the company's long-term earnings potential.

Passenger Shares Flight View With Family

A simple act of kindness during a flight has touched many people online. A woman recently shared how she was moved after watching a fellow passenger use a video call to share the view from an airplane window with his family.

The incident was shared by X user Amy Palan, who noticed the passenger sitting beside her during a flight. After the plane took off, he began showing his family the view outside the window through a video call. The family mem-

bers, who were not on the flight, appeared delighted as they watched the clouds and scenery from thousands of feet above the ground.

For the passenger, looking out of an airplane window may have been an ordinary part of his journey. But for his family, the experience seemed much more special. Through a simple video call, they were able to share a moment that they otherwise would not have experienced themselves.

The passenger's gesture also

left a strong impression on Palan. What caught her attention was not simply the beautiful view outside the aircraft, but the effort he made to include his family in the experience. Instead of enjoying the view alone, he chose to share it with the people who mattered to him. The incident has since resonated with social media users, with many saying that it is a reminder that ordinary moments can hold extraordinary meaning for someone else.



Image Credit: @markmyouze/X

Several users also shared similar experiences involving their families and first-time journeys. For some people, flying can be a routine part of life, while for others, even seeing an airplane from the ground can be a memorable experience. A view from an aircraft window can therefore represent excitement, achievement or even the fulfillment of a long-held dream.

The heartwarming moment highlights how technology can bring families closer,

even when they are miles apart. A short video call required only a few seconds, but it allowed an entire family to experience a small part of the journey together.

The story ultimately offers a simple message: something that may seem completely ordinary to one person can be incredibly meaningful to another. Sometimes, sharing a beautiful view with loved ones is all it takes to turn an everyday journey into a cherished memory.

Candidate Loses Job After Asking About Hybrid Work

A job candidate's offer was reportedly withdrawn after they asked their prospective employer for clarification about the company's work-from-home policy and sick leave rules. The incident has sparked discussion online about transparency during recruitment and the importance of carefully checking an offer letter before accepting a job.

According to a viral social media post highlighted by NDTV, the candidate had gone through three rounds of interviews over a period of five weeks before finally receiving an offer. The salary was reportedly acceptable, but the candidate noticed two clauses in the offer letter that raised concerns.

The letter stated that the standard schedule required employees to work in the office five days a week, with no exceptions. It also mentioned that sick days would remain unpaid during the first 90 days of employment.

The candidate found this surprising because the hiring manager had reportedly described the role during the interview process as having a "flexible hybrid" work arrangement. The candidate therefore sent a polite email to the recruiter asking whether the terms mentioned in the offer letter were correct and sought clarification about the sick leave policy as well. Instead of providing an explanation, the recruiter reportedly responded with a single sentence saying the company had decided to



move forward with another candidate. The offer was withdrawn on the same day.

The candidate later shared the experience online, saying they were relieved to discover the discrepancy before joining the company. They also claimed that the recruiter had earlier asked about their current salary and had expressed concern when the candidate mentioned needing two weeks' notice before joining.

The post quickly attracted attention, with many social media users supporting the candidate. Several commenters said the applicant had effectively "dodged a bullet" by discovering the company's working conditions before starting the job. Others argued that asking questions about employment terms is completely reasonable, particularly when the written offer contradicts what was dis-

cussed during interviews. They pointed out that candidates should always seek clarification before signing an agreement. The incident has also prompted broader conversations about job advertisements and recruitment practices.

A position described as hybrid during interviews may have very different expectations once the formal offer is issued. For job seekers, the episode serves as a reminder to carefully read every clause in an offer letter and compare it with the promises made during interviews. Working hours, office attendance, leave policies, salary, notice periods and other employment conditions should ideally be confirmed in writing before accepting an offer. While the candidate lost the opportunity, the experience may have helped them avoid a potentially uncomfortable situation after joining the organisation.

Why 2-to-10 Shift Beats 9-to-5 For Some

The traditional 9-to-5 work schedule may be the standard for millions of employees, but a viral social media post has sparked a debate over whether working from 2 pm to 10 pm could actually offer better productivity and work-life balance.

The discussion began after a remote worker in Spain shared their experience of working according to US time zones. The employee argued that the 2 pm to 10 pm shift was "way better" than the conventional daytime schedule.

According to the worker, one of the biggest advantages was being able to sleep soon after finishing work. Instead of returning home in the evening feeling exhausted and unable to do anything else, they could complete their work and go straight to bed. This, they claimed, helped them avoid the tiredness that often follows a traditional workday.

Another major advantage was having the entire morning available. The employee said that errands, appointments and household chores could be completed easily before work began. Since most businesses, grocery stores and other services operate during the daytime, there was less difficulty



finding time for essential tasks.

The employee also pointed out that mornings tend to be quieter. Gyms are less crowded, roads have less traffic and grocery stores can be more peaceful. Starting the day after a good night's sleep also made it easier to complete personal tasks before beginning work. However, the post received mixed reactions online. While some users agreed that late shifts could provide greater flexibility, others highlighted the social disadvantages.

Critics pointed out that employees working from 2 pm to 10 pm could

miss out on evening activities with friends and family. Most people following traditional schedules are free after 5 or 6 pm, meaning late-shift workers may be working precisely when others are available to socialise.

Some users also said the schedule could become difficult for married employees or parents, particularly if their work hours overlap with family dinner, children's activities or other evening commitments. Others, however, strongly supported the idea. People who dislike early mornings said later shifts allowed them to wake up naturally, complete personal tasks and still have several productive hours before starting work. The debate ultimately shows that there is no single work schedule that suits everyone. A 2-to-10 shift may offer significant advantages for night owls, remote workers and people who value quiet mornings. For others, especially those with family or social commitments in the evening, the traditional 9-to-5 schedule may remain preferable. The ideal working hours, therefore, may depend less on the clock and more on an individual's lifestyle, responsibilities and personal productivity patterns.

Weightlifting Robot Crashes Into Judges' Table

A humanoid robot attempting to prove its strength at the World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing ended up delivering an unexpected moment of chaos after losing its balance and crashing into the judges' table.

The incident took place during the weightlifting competition at the ongoing games, where humanoid robots are being tested across a range of athletic and practical challenges. The weightlifting event is designed to test important capabilities such as balance, joint torque and stability while robots handle heavy loads.

In a video of the incident, the humanoid robot can be seen preparing to lift a barbell. As it attempted to raise the weight, the machine appeared to struggle with maintaining its balance. Instead of completing the lift successfully, it began to lose stability and toppled forward.

The robot then crashed directly into the table where the judges were seated. The unexpected collision created a dramatic scene at the competition venue and quickly attracted attention online. Social media users were amused by the incident, with several comparing the robot's failed attempt to the struggles of humans at the gym. The mishap comes at a competition that is showcasing both the



Image credit: V/golammedia

impressive progress and current limitations of humanoid robotics. More than 2,000 robots from hundreds of teams are taking part in the 2026 World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing, competing in 51 events that include running, football, table tennis, weightlifting and other challenges.

The games have already produced some remarkable performances. Humanoid robots have reportedly surpassed human records in events such as the 100-metre sprint and high jump. One robot completed the 100 metres in 9.39 seconds, faster than Usain Bolt's human world record of 9.58 seconds.

However, spectacular failures such as the weightlifting crash highlight an important challenge fac-

ing robotics developers. Speed and strength alone are not enough for humanoid machines. They also need precise coordination, stability and the ability to recover when something goes wrong.

The contrast between record-breaking performances and amusing crashes has become one of the defining features of the event. While robots are demonstrating extraordinary physical capabilities, incidents like this show that mastering balance and control remains a major hurdle.

For spectators, however, the failed lift provided an entertaining reminder that even the most advanced machines can still have very human-like moments of struggle.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi 2026: History And Significance

Eid Milad-un-Nabi, also known as Eid-e-Milad or Mawlid, is observed by Muslims around the world to commemorate the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad. In India, the occasion will be observed on August 26, 2026, with celebrations beginning in several places a day earlier. The festival falls on the 12th day of Rabi' ul-awwal, the third month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

The word Mawlid is associated with birth or the act of giving birth. For Muslims who observe the occasion, Eid Milad-un-Nabi is an important day to remember the life, teachings and character of Prophet Muhammad. He was born in Rabi' ul-awwal around 570 AD and is regarded in Islam as the final prophet and messenger of God. His teachings, recorded through Islamic traditions including the Hadith, have had a profound influence on Muslim communities across the world.

The occasion also provides an opportunity for devotees to reflect on values associated with the Prophet's teachings, including compassion, forgiveness, humility and selflessness. Rather than being limited to a single form of celebration, the observance varies across communities and countries.

History Of Eid Milad-un-Nabi
Historical accounts suggest that gatherings commemorating the



Image credit: Unplash

Prophet's life developed over the early centuries of Islamic history. Such gatherings often featured religious recitations, poetry and verses praising Prophet Muhammad. The observance became more prominent during the Fatimid period in Egypt, according to historical accounts cited by NDTV.

Over time, Milad traditions spread across different parts of West Asia and South Asia and became part of the cultural and religious practices of many Muslim communities. Today, the occasion is observed in several countries, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, Russia and Germany.

How Is The Day Observed?

Celebrations can include the decoration of mosques, homes and streets with colourful lights. In several regions, communities organise processions to commemorate the Prophet's birth. Religious gatherings may feature lectures, readings and poetry focusing on his life, teachings and legacy.

The date of Eid Milad-un-Nabi changes each year because the Islamic calendar follows lunar cycles. In 2026, the observance in India falls on August 26.

For millions of Muslims, the day is therefore not only a commemoration of Prophet Muhammad's birth but also a time to remember the values and principles associated with his life and teachings.

Onam 2026: History, Significance And Ten-Day Celebrations

Onam is Kerala's biggest and most vibrant harvest festival, celebrated every year during the Malayalam month of Chingam, which generally falls between August and September. In 2026, the main celebration, Thiruvonam, falls on Wednesday, August 26. The festival is celebrated over ten days and represents prosperity, unity, cultural pride and the cherished traditions of Kerala.

The Legend Behind Onam
According to Hindu mythology, Onam commemorates the annual return of King Mahabali, a legendary ruler remembered for his generosity, wisdom and popularity among his people. His reign is traditionally described as a golden period when prosperity and happiness prevailed throughout his kingdom.

According to the legend, the Gods became concerned about Mahabali's growing influence and sought the help of Lord Vishnu. Vishnu appeared before the king in the form of Vamana, a dwarf Brahmin, and asked for three paces of land. Mahabali agreed to the request. Vamana then assumed a gigantic form. With his first step, he covered the Earth, and with the second, he covered the heavens. With nowhere left for the third step, Mahabali offered his own head. Vishnu then sent him to the underworld but, impressed by his devotion and generosity, granted him permission to return to his people once every year. Onam is traditionally associated with this annual homecoming.

Ten Days Of Onam Celebrations

The ten-day festival begins with Atham and concludes with Thiruvonam.

Day 1 - Atham: Festivities begin with prayers, processions and the creation of Pookalams, colourful floral designs placed outside homes.

Day 2 - Chithira: Families continue expanding their Pookalams and prepare for the celebrations ahead.

Day 3 - Chodhi: People traditionally shop for new clothes and gifts for family members.

Day 4 - Visakam: Preparations intensify, with households beginning arrangements for the main festivities.

Day 5 - Anizham: One of Kerala's most famous traditions, the Vallamkali or



Image credit: Pixels

snake boat race, takes centre stage.

Day 6 - Thriketa: Cultural programmes, traditional music and community gatherings become more prominent.

Day 7 - Moolam: Families create increasingly elaborate floral designs and participate in festive activities.

Day 8 - Pooradam: Clay figures representing Mahabali and Vamana, often called Thrikkakara Appan, are placed in the Pookalam.

Day 9 - Uthradam: Known as First Onam, this day is marked by final household preparations and festive shopping.

Day 10 - Thiruvonam: The most important day sees families visit temples, decorate

homes and prepare the traditional Onam Sadya. The elaborate vegetarian feast is served on banana leaves and traditionally features numerous dishes.

A Festival Of Unity And Tradition
Onam goes beyond religious observance and has become a powerful symbol of Kerala's cultural identity. Floral decorations, traditional games, boat races, music, dance and the grand Sadya bring families and communities together. The festival's message of prosperity, harmony and togetherness continues to make Onam one of India's most celebrated cultural festivals. In 2026, as Thiruvonam arrives on August 26, the ten-day festivities once again bring Kerala's traditions, colours and cultural spirit to life.

Harsha Bhogle On Sri Lanka's Umpiring Fury

Sri Lanka were left frustrated after losing nightwatchman Prabath Jayasuriya on the final ball of Day 2 in the second Test against India in Colombo. Umpire Ahsan Raza gave Jayasuriya out LBW against Manav Suthar in a tight decision. Replays later showed that the ball was marginally clipping the off-stump. Jayasuriya was visibly upset after the dismissal and reportedly threw his gloves in frustration while returning to the dressing room. The Sri Lankan players were also unhappy that the umpires allowed play to continue despite fading light. The match had resumed after a rain interruption, but only three overs were possible before the final wicket of the day. The umpires had checked the conditions with a light meter before deciding that another over could be played.

Jayasuriya was dismissed during that over, immediately after which bad light brought play to an end. Commentator Harsha Bhogle acknowledged Sri Lanka's frustration but said the decision of the experienced international umpires had to be respected. Bhogle also added a humorous twist, saying he suspected there might be "a few objects flying around" in the Sri Lankan dressing room that evening. His remark quickly attracted attention among cricket fans. The controversy came at the end of a difficult day for Sri Lanka. India had declared their first innings at 503/9, with Dhruv Jurel scoring an unbeaten 115 and Devdutt Padikkal making 117. Sri Lanka then lost two wickets for just eight runs. Lahiru Udara was dismissed early before Jayasuriya came in as

the nightwatchman. His dismissal on the final delivery left Sri Lanka facing an enormous deficit at the end of the day. Only 56 overs were possible during the day because of rain interruptions. Despite the limited playing time, India strengthened their position considerably. For Sri Lanka, the controversial dismissal added to their frustration, but the bigger concern remains their massive deficit against a dominant Indian side. Bhogle's comments captured the mood perfectly - Sri Lanka's anger was understandable, but the players ultimately had to accept the umpires' judgement. With India holding a commanding advantage, Sri Lanka now face the difficult task of surviving the Indian bowling attack and attempting to stay in the contest.



Sarfaraz Khan's Cheeky Sledging Stuns Sri Lanka

India batter Sarfaraz Khan once again grabbed attention with his lively presence on the field during Day 3 of the second Test against Sri Lanka in Colombo. Sarfaraz, who was serving as a substitute fielder, was stationed close to the batter when Sri Lankan captain Dhananajaya De Silva pulled away just before Manav Suthar delivered the ball. De Silva appeared to be distracted and looked around the field before getting ready again. Sarfaraz immediately used the opportunity to engage the Sri Lankan skipper in some playful sledging. His comments were picked up clearly by the stump microphone. The Indian batter could be heard questioning why De Silva was looking towards different areas of the field. He then told the Sri Lankan captain that he was simply wasting time and urged him not to be afraid to face the delivery. Sarfaraz's cheeky exchange quickly became one of the talking



points of the day, with fans enjoying the lively banter between the two teams. The moment became even more interesting because De Silva was dismissed shortly afterwards. Manav Suthar got the better of the Sri Lankan captain, who managed only eight runs. Suthar produced a delivery that gripped and turned sharply, resulting in an edge.

Dhruv Jurel got a hand to the ball before Rahul completed the catch at slip. Sri Lanka were subsequently reduced to 137/5. Sarfaraz continued to remain energetic in his role as a substitute fielder. His constant chatter from the close-in fielding position added plenty of entertainment to the contest. Sri Lanka did manage to fight back

after the early setbacks. Pasindu Sooriyabandara played an impressive knock of 80 and helped rebuild the innings. However, Ravindra Jadeja eventually ended his resistance. India continued to pick up wickets at regular intervals, keeping Sri Lanka under considerable pressure. The hosts were still facing a huge deficit after India declared their first innings at 503/9. The exchange between Sarfaraz and De Silva highlighted the intensity and competitive spirit of Test cricket. While sledging has always been part of the game, moments caught on the stump microphone often provide fans with an entertaining glimpse into what happens between players during a match. For Sarfaraz, the incident was another reminder of his energetic personality on the cricket field. Even though he was not part of the playing XI, his presence as a substitute fielder ensured that he remained very much involved in the action.

India Dominate Sri Lanka As Rain Ends Day 3



India remained firmly in control of the second Test against Sri Lanka in Colombo after another eventful day of play. Rain once again interrupted proceedings, forcing an early end to Day 3. Sri Lanka finished the day at 265/8, still 238 runs behind India's first-innings total of 503/9 declared. India had posted a commanding total of 503/9 before declaring, with Dhruv Jurel and Devdutt Padikkal hitting impressive centuries. Jurel remained unbeaten on 115, while Padikkal scored 117. Captain Shubman Gill also contributed a crucial half-century as India built a massive first-innings total. Sri Lanka's reply began on a disastrous note. The hosts were reduced to just 8/2, giving India complete control in the early stages. However, Pasindu Sooriyabandara and Kamindu Mendis helped the home side recover with a valuable partnership. Sooriyabandara emerged as one of Sri Lanka's major positives. The young batter played a determined knock of 80 runs, recording his maiden Test half-century and frustrating the Indian bowling attack for a significant period. India continued to pick up wickets at regular intervals. Prasidh Krishna produced an impressive spell, while Manav Suthar and the other Indian bowlers kept the pressure firmly on the Sri Lankan batting lineup. Despite losing wickets, Sri Lanka's lower order showed some resistance. By the time rain forced an early conclusion to the day, the hosts had reached 265/8. The remaining batters now face the difficult task of reducing the massive deficit when play resumes. Weather has become one of the biggest factors in the Colombo Test. Rain interruptions have already resulted in valuable playing time being lost, and another shortened day could make it more difficult for India to force a result despite their dominant position. India entered the second Test with a 1-0 series lead, having won the opening match in Galle by 165 runs. Manav Suthar was one of the standout performers in that victory, taking 10 wickets on debut. With Sri Lanka eight wickets down and still trailing by 238 runs, India remain in a commanding position. Their immediate objective will be to take the remaining two wickets as quickly as possible. Sri Lanka, meanwhile, will hope their tailenders can extend the innings and reduce the deficit. However, with the weather continuing to threaten playing time, the hosts have a major challenge ahead. India have clearly held the upper hand so far, but the remaining days could prove crucial in determining whether they can convert their advantage into another series victory.

India's WTC Final Hopes Face Tough Road Ahead

India's hopes of reaching the World Test Championship final are still alive, but former India head coach Rahul Dravid believes the team has fallen slightly behind in the qualification race. India are currently fifth in the WTC points table and have eight Tests remaining in the current cycle. To remain in contention for the top two spots, the team may need around six wins from those eight matches. The road ahead is challenging. India will first travel to New Zealand for a two-Test series in October, before hosting Australia in a crucial five-Test series from January 2027. Dravid believes India still have the quality required to make the final, despite their current position. He said the team has "fallen behind a little bit", but stressed that India cannot be written off because of the talent in the squad. India have made a positive start against Sri Lanka, leading the two-match series 1-0 after winning the first Test in Galle by 165 runs. They have also taken control of the second Test in Colombo after posting a huge first-innings total. However, Dravid believes the upcoming New Zealand tour will be a major test for the young Indian side. Playing Test cricket in New Zealand conditions can be challenging, particularly for players with limited experience there. The former India coach also pointed to the absence of experienced campaigners. Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Ajinkya Rahane and Cheteshwar Pujara are no longer part of India's Test setup, and their experience in difficult overseas conditions will be missed. After New Zealand, India will face Australia in what could become a decisive series in the WTC qualification race. The Australians are expected to be highly motivated, especially because their current generation has yet to win a Test series in India. For India, therefore, the equation is straightforward but demanding. They need consistent performances and a series of victories over the next eight Tests. Dravid remains optimistic despite the difficult situation. According to him, India have fallen behind, but their quality means they remain capable of making a comeback. The WTC qualification race is far from over, but India now have very little margin for error. Strong performances in New Zealand and against Australia could revive their hopes, while further setbacks could make qualification extremely difficult.



Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Turns Bowler, Stuns Everyone

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi may have struggled with the bat on his Duleep Trophy debut, but the young sensation quickly made amends by producing a stunning performance with the ball for East Zone. The 15-year-old was expected to make headlines with his explosive batting during the quarter-final against North East Zone. However, his first innings ended disappointingly as he managed just 8 runs from six deliveries. He struck two boundaries before edging the final ball he faced to the gully fielder. But Sooryavanshi soon showed that there is more to his game than just aggressive batting. During North East Zone's second innings, the youngster turned to his left-arm orthodox spin and produced an impressive spell. He picked up two wickets in just four deliveries, dismissing Kishan Lyngdoh and Imliwati Lemtur in the same over. His first wicket came when Lyngdoh stepped out looking for a big shot but mistimed the delivery towards the point



region. The second wicket arrived just three balls later when Lemtur edged the quicker delivery through to wicketkeeper Ishan Kishan. Sooryavanshi's contribution did not stop there. He also took two catches during the match, giving him an all-round impact despite his disappointing batting performance. The Board of Control for Cricket in India also took notice of the youngster's perform-

ance. The BCCI praised Sooryavanshi for providing "double delight" after his two wickets and two catches. East Zone had already gained complete control of the match after posting 467 runs in their first innings. Sudip Kumar Gharami scored 146, while Shahbaz Ahmed produced a brilliant 167. North East Zone were then bowled out for just 111 before being forced to follow on.

Sooryavanshi's bowling burst further damaged North East Zone's second innings as they slipped to eight wickets down. The Duleep Trophy represents an important challenge for the teenage star, particularly because red-ball cricket demands a different approach from the fast-paced T20 format in which he has already made a name for himself. While his batting remains his biggest strength, his surprise contribution with the ball has given fans another reason to be excited about his potential. The youngster has already achieved remarkable milestones at just 15. His performance in Bengaluru showed that he can contribute in multiple departments when required. For Sooryavanshi, the Duleep Trophy debut may not have started perfectly with the bat, but his response with the ball was impressive. Two wickets, two catches and a glimpse of his all-round ability - Vaibhav Sooryavanshi once again showed why Indian cricket is watching his progress closely.

Anaya Bangar Set To Return To Cricket

Anaya Bangar, daughter of former India cricketer Sanjay Bangar, is set to return to competitive cricket after receiving clearance from Cricket Australia to play women's community cricket in the country. The development marks an important moment in Anaya's cricket journey. She had previously represented Mumbai at the age-group level and played alongside cricketers including Sarfaraz Khan and Musheer Khan. However, her cricketing career was later put on hold during her transition. Anaya has now received permission to begin playing women's community cricket in Australia. She described the clearance as a major moment in her life, saying there was a stage when she believed she might never be able to play cricket again. The Cricket Australia decision could also open the possibility of Anaya eventually competing at the elite level. However, participation in competitions such as the Women's Big Bash League will require her to meet Cricket Australia's eligibility requirements. Under Cricket Australia's policy for transgender and gender-diverse players in elite cricket, players seeking eligibility for elite women's competitions must satisfy specific requirements. Anaya's eligibility for elite cricket is expected to be considered from March 2027, subject to the required medical assessments and continued compliance with the relevant policy. The clearance followed an assessment of Anaya's medical records and other documentation by Cricket Australia. The organisation reportedly examined the relevant reports and testing before making its decision. For Anaya, the opportunity represents much more than simply returning to the cricket field. It gives her a chance to rebuild her sporting career after a period in which she feared that her transition might permanently end her competitive cricket ambitions. Her immediate focus will be on community cricket in Australia. The experience will allow her to regain match fitness, develop confidence and gain competitive experience before potentially pursuing opportunities at a higher level.



PR Sreejesh Questions India's Hockey Future

India's disappointing exit from the 2026 Hockey World Cup has once again raised serious questions about the state of Indian hockey. Legendary goalkeeper PR Sreejesh has now urged the authorities and stakeholders to stop hiding behind excuses and confront the problems affecting the sport. India's World Cup campaign ended in disappointment, leaving fans and former players frustrated. The team had entered the tournament with significant expectations, but failed to make the deep run that supporters were hoping for. Sreejesh, one of India's greatest goalkeepers and a key figure in the country's recent hockey success, questioned whether Indian hockey is genuinely moving in the right direction. According to Sreejesh, the repeated setbacks cannot simply be explained away by individual mistakes or isolated poor performances. He believes the sport needs a deeper assessment of its overall system, from grassroots development to the preparation of the senior national team. The former India goalkeeper stressed the need to identify the real reasons behind the team's struggles. Instead of trying to cover up weaknesses, he called for an honest discussion about what is going wrong and what needs to change. His comments come at a crucial time for Indian hockey. The country has invested heavily in infrastructure, domestic competitions and player development over the years. India has also enjoyed several memorable successes on the international stage, including an Olympic bronze medal at Tokyo 2020 and another bronze at Paris 2024. However, maintaining consistency at the highest level remains a challenge. Sreejesh's concerns also highlight the pressure surrounding the next generation of Indian hockey players. With several senior stars approaching the latter stages of their careers, India must develop enough quality players to maintain competitiveness in international tournaments. The former goalkeeper has been closely associated with Indian hockey for more than a decade and understands the pressures faced by players and coaches.



Ravi Teja's New Film Gets Sankranthi Release

Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja is gearing up for another exciting project, and his upcoming collaboration with producer Dil Raju and director Hasith Goli has now been officially announced. The makers have also locked the film's theatrical release date, creating fresh excitement among the actor's fans. The project was formally announced on August 25, with Dil Raju meeting Ravi Teja and congratulating him on the success of his latest film Irumudi. The upcoming movie is being produced by Dil Raju and directed by Hasith Goli, who previously impressed audiences with his distinctive storytelling style. The film, which is currently being referred to by its tentative title SVC64, is scheduled to hit theatres on January 14, 2027, during the Sankranthi festive season. The release date puts Ravi Teja's next outing directly in one of the biggest and most competitive theatrical windows for Telugu cinema. The combination of Ravi Teja and Hasith Goli has already generated considerable curiosity among movie lovers. Reports about their collaboration had been circulating for several months. In April, it was reported that Ravi Teja would team up with Hasith Goli for a film backed by Dil Raju. At the time, the makers were expected to announce the project officially at a later date. The latest announcement has now confirmed the collaboration. However, several important details about the movie are still being kept under wraps. The official title, complete cast and other technical details are expected to be revealed in the coming days. There had also been reports suggesting that the film could be a multistarrer featuring actor Sree Vishnu in another key lead role. However, his involvement has not yet been officially confirmed by the filmmakers. Until an announcement is made, his presence in the project remains speculative. For Ravi Teja, the new film comes at an interesting stage in his career. His latest release Irumudi, directed by Shiva Nirvana, arrived in theatres on August 21 and has been receiving positive attention. The film is being viewed as an important comeback for the actor following a series of underwhelming performances. With a proven production house like Dil Raju's backing the project and Hasith Goli at the helm, expectations are already building around this new combination. A Sankranthi release further adds to the anticipation. For now, fans will have to wait for more updates about the title, storyline and cast. But one thing is clear—the Ravi Teja, Dil Raju and Hasith Goli combination is officially set for a grand Sankranthi 2027 arrival.



Dhanush Praises Baby Nakshatra's Irumudi Performance

Ravi Teja's latest film Irumudi continues to receive appreciation from audiences, with the performances of Ravi Teja and child artist Baby Nakshatra emerging as some of the major highlights. Now, Nakshatra has received special praise from National Award-winning actor Dhanush, making the young actress's moment even more memorable. Following the success meet of Irumudi, director Shiva Nirvana arranged a special video call between Baby Nakshatra and Dhanush. During the interaction, Dhanush spoke to the young actress about her performance in the film and appreciated the way she handled her role. Dhanush reportedly told Nakshatra that he would like to learn acting from her whenever they meet in the future. His words left the young actress delighted and turned the interaction into a memorable moment for her. Nakshatra later shared the video of the conversation on Instagram. The clip quickly attracted attention on social media, with fans and movie lovers praising the heartwarming interaction between the two actors. In Irumudi, Nakshatra plays Ravi Teja's daughter. Her emotional performance has received considerable appreciation from viewers, particularly in the scenes involving the father-daughter relationship. Her chemistry with Ravi Teja has also been highlighted as one of the film's strengths. The appreciation from an actor like Dhanush is particularly significant for the young performer. Known for his versatile performances and regarded as one of the prominent actors in Indian cinema, Dhanush's words have added further attention to Nakshatra's work. Irumudi, directed by Shiva Nirvana, has been enjoying a strong theatrical run. The film has reportedly crossed the ₹100 crore gross mark, with its emotional storyline, performances and family-oriented moments connecting well with audiences. Ravi Teja's performance has also been receiving positive feedback. Produced by Mythri Movie Makers, the film has emerged as an important success for Ravi Teja. Alongside the lead actor, Nakshatra's performance has become one of the talking points among moviegoers. The viral video has now given the young actress another special moment to celebrate. While Irumudi continues its successful run in theatres, Dhanush's appreciation is likely to further boost interest in Nakshatra and her future projects. For the child artist, the interaction is more than just a viral social media moment.

The Paradise Makers Reveal Second Single Update

Natural Star Nani's much-awaited film The Paradise is generating fresh excitement with a key update about its second single. The film marks the second collaboration between Nani and director Srikanth Odela after their successful association in Dasara. The upcoming action drama is scheduled to release worldwide on September 24, 2026. The makers have now confirmed that the recording of the film's second single has been completed. The song is said to be a folk number penned by popular lyricist Kasarla Shyam, while music director Anirudh Ravichander has composed the track. The team has announced that the song will be released soon, with reports suggesting that it could arrive as early as this weekend. The announcement has increased curiosity among Nani's fans, particularly because Anirudh is composing the music for the film. Expectations are high for the second single following the response to the earlier musical promotions. The Paradise is being presented as a large-scale multilingual project. Director Srikanth Odela, who impressed audiences with Dasara, is once again teaming up with Nani for a story that promises a different and intense cinematic experience. Kayadu Lohar is playing the female lead in the movie. The film also features a strong ensemble cast, including veteran actor Mohan Babu, Tanikella Bharani, Raghav Juyal, Sonali Kulkarni, Babu Mohan and Sampooranesh Babu in important roles. Actress Keerthy Suresh will also be seen in a special song, adding another major attraction to the project. The movie is being produced by Sudhakar Cherukuri under the SLV Cinemas banner. The makers are mounting the project on a grand scale and are planning a multilingual release, aiming to take the film beyond the Telugu-speaking states. With the theatrical release now just a month away, the team is expected to accelerate promotional activities. The second single could become an important part of the upcoming campaign and is likely to provide audiences with another glimpse into the musical world created by Anirudh. The film has already generated considerable interest because of the Nani-Srikanth Odela combination. Their previous collaboration Dasara received significant attention for its raw storytelling, performances and music. Expectations are therefore naturally high for The Paradise. For now, the makers have confirmed that the second single is coming soon, while the exact release date has not been officially announced. If the current reports are accurate, fans could get to hear the new folk number later this week.

Bollywood actress Kiara Advani has opened up about her plans to make her debut in Tamil cinema. During the pre-release event of Yash's much-awaited film Toxic, held in Chennai, the actress was asked why she has appeared in Telugu and Kannada films but has not yet made her Tamil debut.

Responding to the question, Kiara explained that she has already had an association with the Tamil film industry through filmmaker Vishnuvardhan. She worked with him in the Hindi film Shershaah, which went on to become a major success. The actress pointed out that although the film was made in Hindi, her collaboration with a Tamil filmmaker gave her a connection to the industry.

However, Kiara made it clear that she would like to take that association a step further by acting in a Tamil-language film. She said that a Tamil project is definitely on her wish list and expressed hope that it will happen in the near future.

Kiara is currently enjoying considerable attention for her role in Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups. Directed by Geetu Mohandas, the film stars Kannada superstar Yash in the lead, with Kiara playing the character Nadia. The movie also features an ensemble cast including Nayanthara, Huma Qureshi, Tara Sutaria and Rukmini Vasantha.

The Chennai event provided an opportunity for Kiara to connect with the Tamil audience ahead of the film's release. Her comments about wanting to work in Tamil cinema have now generated interest among fans, particularly because the actress has already established herself across multiple Indian film industries.

Kiara has previously appeared in Telugu cinema opposite Ram Charan in Game Changer. She has also expanded her presence in South Indian cinema through Toxic, which is primarily a Kannada-language project. Her willingness to explore different industries has helped strengthen her position as a pan-India actress.

For Tamil cinema fans, her statement is likely to fuel curiosity about the kind of project she might choose for her debut. While Kiara has not revealed any specific film or filmmaker, her confirmation that a Tamil project is part of her future plans suggests that an announcement could eventually be on the cards. Meanwhile, Toxic is gearing up for its worldwide theatrical release on August 26, 2026. The film has generated significant buzz ahead of its release, with Yash and Kiara's combination being one of its major attractions.

For now, Kiara's Tamil debut remains a future possibility, but the actress has made her intention clear: she wants to enter Tamil cinema when the right opportunity comes her way.

Kiara Advani Reveals Plans For Tamil Debut

