



Praggnanandhaa Wins Grand Chess Tour

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy congratulated Indian chess Grandmaster Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa on his historic triumph in the 2026 Grand Chess Tour in St. Louis, USA.

The Chief Minister praised Praggnanandhaa for achieving a landmark victory on the international stage and bringing pride to India. He said the young grandmaster's accomplishment reflected the growing strength of Indian chess and demonstrated the country's ability to compete successfully at the highest level. Praggnanandhaa created history by becoming the first Indian player to win the Grand Chess Tour title. In the final held in the United States, he defeated Fabiano Caruana 15-13 to secure the championship.

Revanth Reddy described the achievement as a proud moment for Indians and appreciated Praggnanandhaa's determination, skill and competitive spirit. He said the victory would inspire a new generation of athletes and young people who aspire to excel in sports and represent the country internationally.

The Chief Minister noted that achievements by Indian sportspersons on global platforms provide encouragement to youngsters to pursue their ambitions with confidence and dedication. He wished Praggnanandhaa continued success in his career and expressed hope that the chess star would secure many more major victories for the country. Praggnanandhaa's latest achievement adds another significant chapter to his rapidly developing international career. His success has also highlighted India's growing prominence in world chess, with a new generation of players making their presence felt in major global competitions.

The Chief Minister conveyed his best wishes to Praggnanandhaa and his family and said the grandmaster's historic performance would remain an inspiration for aspiring chess players and sports enthusiasts across the country.

The victory in St. Louis marks a significant milestone for Indian chess and further strengthens Praggnanandhaa's standing among the world's leading young players.

India, US Seal Javelin Missile Deal

New Delhi, August 28 | TPN Bureau

India and the United States have taken another significant step in defence cooperation with the Indian Army signing a Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) for the procurement of Javelin anti-tank guided missile systems through the US Foreign Military Sales (FMS) route. The agreement strengthens the growing strategic defence partnership between the two countries.

The development was welcomed by US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor, who said the agreement reflected a defence relationship that was becoming deeper and more capable. He also indicated that the deal could create opportunities for greater cooperation between the defence industries of India and the US, including possible co-production of the Javelin system in India.

The Javelin is a modern, medium-range, man-portable fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile designed to engage armoured vehicles and fortified positions. Its fire-and-forget capability allows the operator to move after launch without having to continuously guide the missile towards its target.

The agreement follows a long-standing Indian requirement for advanced anti-armour weapons. Reports said the Indian Army had been pursuing the Javelin system for several years, and the latest agreement represents a move towards strengthening its anti-tank capabilities. The exact number of systems and the

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Women Leaders Tie Rakhi to CM Revanth Reddy



Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Raksha Bandhan celebrations were held at Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's Jubilee Hills residence on Friday, with women leaders and representatives from various organisations tying Rakhis to the Chief Minister and conveying their greetings. Ministers Danasari Anasuya (Seethakka) and Konda Surekha,

Telangana State Women's Commission Chairperson Gadwal Vijayalakshmi, members of the Commission, chairpersons of various corporations, representatives of the Brahma Kumaris and Women's Congress leaders participated in the celebrations. The women leaders tied Rakhis to Revanth Reddy and extended their best wishes on the occasion of Rakhi Purnima. The gathering highlighted the

traditional values associated with Raksha Bandhan, including affection, mutual respect, trust and the spirit of togetherness.

The celebrations also included a special interaction with students from the Malakpet Government High School for Blind Girls. The students visited the Chief Minister and tied Rakhis to him, conveying their warm Raksha Bandhan greetings.

The Chief Minister received the Rakhis and greeted the students and other participants on the festive occasion. The participation of the schoolgirls added a special and inclusive dimension to the celebrations.

Raksha Bandhan is traditionally observed as a celebration of the bond between brothers and sisters, with the tying of the Rakhi symbolising affection, protection and mutual support. Public celebrations involving women representatives and students also provide an opportunity to reinforce the values of care, respect and social harmony. The programme at the Chief Minister's residence brought together elected representatives, women's organisations, social groups and students to mark the festival in a spirit of warmth and camaraderie.

Leaders Visit Governor, Enquire About Health



Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Several prominent leaders visited Telangana Governor Shri Shiv Pratap Shukla at Lok Bhavan on Friday and enquired about his health. They conveyed their wishes for his speedy recovery and well-being. Union Minister Shri G. Kishan Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, Minister Shri Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Chief Secretary Shri Sanjay Jaju and Telangana BJP president N. Ramchander Rao were among those who called on the Governor. During their meeting, the leaders interacted with Shiv Pratap Shukla and enquired about his health and current condition. They wished him a quick and complete recovery and expressed their hopes that he would regain his normal routine soon. The visit brought together representatives from the Union govern-

ment, State government, civil administration and the BJP, reflecting the goodwill extended towards the Governor during his recovery. The leaders conveyed their personal greetings and assured the Governor of their best wishes. The interaction at Lok Bhavan was cordial, with the visitors expressing concern and extending their support. The Governor has continued to discharge his constitutional responsibilities in Telangana, while his health remains a matter of public interest. The visit by senior leaders and officials underscored the importance attached to his well-being. The meeting concluded with the visiting leaders once again wishing Shiv Pratap Shukla a speedy recovery and good health. Their visit also highlighted the spirit of mutual respect and cooperation among constitutional authorities, elected representatives and senior officials in the State.

Governor Congratulates Praggnanandhaa



Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Governor Shri Shiv Pratap Shukla congratulated Indian chess Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa on his historic victory in the Grand Chess Tour in St. Louis, USA.

In his message, the Governor described Praggnanandhaa's achievement as a proud moment for India and praised the young chess star for bringing recognition and glory to the country through his outstanding performance.

Shiv Pratap Shukla said the victory reflected Praggnanandhaa's exceptional talent, determination and commitment to the sport. He noted that achievements of this magnitude demonstrate the growing strength of Indian chess on the international stage. The Governor said Praggnanandhaa's success would serve as an inspiration to young sportspersons across the country. He encouraged emerging athletes and players to pursue their goals with dedication, discipline and confidence.

The Governor extended his best wishes to the Grandmaster for continued success and expressed hope that Praggnanandhaa would achieve many more victories and bring further laurels to India in international competitions.

Praggnanandhaa has emerged as one of India's prominent young chess talents, earning international recognition through strong performances at the highest level. The Governor's message highlighted the significance of sporting achievements in inspiring the younger generation and strengthening India's presence in global competitions. He wished Praggnanandhaa continued success in his future tournaments and hoped his accomplishments would motivate more youngsters to take up chess and pursue excellence in sport.

Joint Gold Venture Explored



Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka has directed officials to examine the possibility of a joint venture between Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) and Karnataka's Hutti Gold Mines to strengthen domestic gold production.

On the second day of his visit to Karnataka's gold-mining region, Vikramarka toured the Hutti and Uti mines in Raichur district and reviewed operations ranging from ore extraction to processing and refining. He also inspected the production unit, ore processing plant and electrowinning facility at Hutti Gold Mines.

Officials informed the Deputy Chief Minister that Hutti's operations produce an average of two to four kilograms of gold per day. Vikramarka also visited the Uti open-cast mine, observed the extraction of gold-bearing ore and later inspected underground mining operations.

He said Hutti Gold Mines possesses extensive expertise in gold exploration, mining, processing and refining, while SCCL has significant capabilities in mineral exploration and mining. Combining the strengths of both organisations, he said, could help expand India's domestic gold output.

Vikramarka instructed SCCL officials to prepare a detailed action plan covering cooperation in exploration, extraction, processing and refining. The proposed collaboration would also examine modern mining technologies, deployment of technical specialists and human-resource training.

He stressed the importance of scientifically exploring India's mineral resources and reducing the country's dependence on imported gold. A partnership between SCCL and Hutti, he said, could improve production, introduce advanced technologies, generate employment and contribute to economic growth.

The Deputy Chief Minister also reviewed the

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Metro Rail Projects Reviewed



HYDERABAD, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju on Friday chaired a review meeting on Hyderabad Metro Rail projects at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat, focusing on the progress of ongoing works and key issues requiring attention.

The meeting examined various aspects of Metro Rail development and the steps needed to ensure that projects are implemented efficiently and within the targeted timelines. Officials briefed the Chief Secretary on the status of ongoing initiatives and matters connected with the expansion and strengthening of the city's urban transport network.

The review comes amid growing demands for reliable and efficient public transportation in Hyderabad, where increasing traffic volumes and rapid urban development have placed greater pressure on existing road infrastructure. Metro Rail is regarded as an important component of the city's long-term mobility strategy, offering mass transit connectivity while helping reduce dependence on private vehicles.

Jaju stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among the departments and

agencies involved in Metro Rail development. Timely resolution of administrative and implementation-related issues was highlighted as essential for maintaining the pace of infrastructure works. The meeting also focused on preparing Hyderabad's public transport system to meet future mobility requirements as the metropolitan region continues to expand. Strengthening mass transit infrastructure is expected to play a significant role in improving connectivity between residential, commercial and employment centres.

Officials discussed measures to monitor project progress closely and address bottlenecks that could affect implementation. The Chief Secretary directed the concerned authorities to maintain coordination and ensure that decisions taken during the review are followed up effectively. The government is seeking to develop an integrated and dependable urban transport system capable of serving Hyderabad's growing population. The Metro Rail network is expected to remain a crucial element of these efforts. The review meeting forms part of the government's continuing assessment of major urban infrastructure projects and its efforts to improve public transportation facilities in Hyderabad.

Mostly Dry Weather Expected



Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana is likely to experience predominantly dry weather on Friday, with isolated passing showers possible in a few parts of the state. Weather conditions are expected to remain hot and humid, particularly across eastern districts.

Nalgonda, Suryapet, Khammam, Bhadrachalam, Kothagudem and Mahabubabad are likely to record maximum temperatures between 35°C and 37°C, making these among the warmer parts of the state. Residents in these districts may experience increased discomfort due to the combination of high temperatures and humidity.

Northern Telangana is expected to see temperatures in the range of 34°C to 36°C. Meanwhile, central, western and southern districts are likely to remain comparatively moderate, with daytime temperatures projected to stay between 32°C and 34°C. In Hyderabad, the mercury is expected to hover around 31°C to 33°C during the day. Although the capital may avoid the higher temperatures forecast for some interior districts,

humid conditions could continue to make the weather feel warmer. The night-time weather is also expected to remain warm and humid across Telangana. The possibility of brief showers in isolated locations means that weather conditions could vary locally, even though widespread rainfall is not anticipated.

Residents, particularly those in the hotter eastern districts, have been advised to remain cautious during peak daytime hours and maintain adequate hydration. People travelling or working outdoors may experience discomfort because of the prevailing heat and humidity. The weather outlook indicates that Telangana will continue to see a mix of warm conditions and limited rainfall activity. While isolated showers could provide temporary relief in some locations, they are unlikely to bring a significant change in overall weather conditions across the state. Authorities and residents will continue to monitor local weather developments, particularly in areas where temperatures are expected to remain relatively high.

Revanth Pushes for 600 TMC Krishna Share

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed officials and legal representatives to present a strong case before the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal-II (KWDT-II) to secure what the state considers its rightful share of Krishna river water.

The Chief Minister held a review meeting on Friday to assess preparations for Telangana's rejoinder arguments before the tribunal. Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, senior Supreme Court counsel C.S. Vaidhyanathan and senior officials of the Irrigation Department attended the meeting.

Revanth Reddy said Telangana should effectively argue that it is entitled to 511

TMC ft out of the 811 TMC ft of Krishna water originally allocated to the erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh by the Bachawat Tribunal. He stressed that the state's legal submissions should protect its interests and prevent any reduction in its water entitlement.

The Chief Minister also raised the issue of Andhra Pradesh's proposed diversion of 80 TMC ft of Krishna water to the Polavaram project. He said Telangana should seek an additional 45 TMC ft, citing its position as an upper-riparian state. With this claim, Telangana's overall demand would amount to 600 TMC ft of Krishna water. Revanth Reddy said the state government was planning and executing irrigation projects based on the utilisation of 600



TMC ft from the Krishna basin. He instructed officials and the legal team to ensure that Telangana's position was presented comprehensively before KWDT-II. During the meeting, legal representatives informed the Chief Minister that the Supreme Court is currently considering issues related to the Brijesh Kumar Tribunal award, with the next hearing expected in September.

Revanth Reddy directed the legal team to carefully frame Telangana's arguments in view of the ongoing proceedings and ensure that the state does not suffer any injustice in the final determination of its Krishna water share. The government is expected to intensify its preparations ahead of the forthcoming tribunal proceedings.

Noolu Pournami Celebrated

Sircilla, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Noolu Pournami celebrations were held on a grand scale in Sircilla with devotion and traditional fervour, with State Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar and Government Whip Adi Srinivas participating in the festivities organised by Padmashali associations. The celebrations were dedicated to Bhakta Markandeya Swamy and highlighted the deep spiritual and cultural connection between the Padmashali community and the handloom tradition. Addressing the gathering, Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar described Noolu Pournami as an important festival for the community, particularly for handloom weavers and their families. He said the festival has been traditionally observed every year with reverence and the blessings

of Bhakta Markandeya Swamy. The Minister highlighted the custom of wearing the sacred thread, or Jandhyam, and performing the Upakarma ritual with the chanting of mantras. He explained that yarn represents purity, unity and auspiciousness. Women and members of weaving families traditionally wear sacred yarn bracelets, known as kankanas, during the festival. Prabhakar said special efforts were being made to encourage the use of handloom fabrics and give greater preference to handloom products in government programmes. He reiterated the government's commitment to supporting Sircilla's handloom sector and improving the welfare of weaving families. The Minister noted that Noolu Pournami has special significance in Sircilla, which is widely



recognised for its handloom industry. He appreciated the Padmashali associations and weavers for organising the celebrations on a large scale while preserving customs passed down through generations.

He stressed that protecting the handloom heritage is a collective responsibility and called for its transmission to future generations. Prabhakar extended Noolu Pournami greetings to Padmashali community members and handloom workers' families in Sircilla. He expressed the hope that the blessings of Bhakta Markandeya Swamy would bring prosperity and well-being to people across Telangana. The celebrations brought together spirituality, community traditions and the rich handloom heritage for which Sircilla is known.

Cheyutha Pensions Set for September Rollout

Mancherial, August 28 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government is preparing to implement its election promise of enhanced pensions under the Cheyutha scheme, with disbursement of the revised benefits likely to begin from September 1. Women and Child Welfare and Tribal Welfare Minister Danasari Anasuya (Seethakka) directed officials to complete the necessary arrangements and identify eligible beneficiaries. The Minister recently reviewed the progress with officials from the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) and the Women and Child Welfare Department. Following her directions, officials completed the process of preparing the beneficiary list, based on applications submitted during the Praja Palana programme and pending applications from the previous administration. Under the earlier Aasara pension scheme, eligible beneficiaries in several categories received Rs 2,016 per month, while persons with disabilities received Rs 3,016. Under the proposed Cheyutha scheme, the Congress government plans to provide Rs 4,000 per month to most eligible categories and Rs 6,000 to persons with disabilities. The pension categories include senior citizens, widows, single women, persons with disabilities, handloom workers, filariasis patients, AIDS patients,



toddy tappers and beedi workers. Officials have completed the online process for finalising applications and uploaded the eligible lists. The move has generated optimism among applicants, particularly those who have been waiting for new pensions to be sanctioned. In Mancherial district, 10,84,479 applications were approved across various welfare programmes covered by the government's Six Guarantees. Of these, 6,591 applications were approved for new disability pensions, while 50,467 applications were found eligible under other pension categories. Among the approved applications were 2,10,614 beneficiaries under the Rs 2,500 assistance scheme for homemakers, 2,13,023 under the cooking gas scheme and 93,632 under the Rs 15,000 farmer assistance programme. The government is expected to begin releasing the benefits from September, subject to final administrative and financial arrangements.

Governor Extends Raksha Bandhan Greetings

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Governor Shri Shiv Pratap Shukla extended warm greetings to the people of the State on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, wishing families happiness, peace and prosperity. In his message, the Governor described Raksha Bandhan as a joyous festival that celebrates the sacred bond of love, affection, trust and togetherness between brothers and sisters. He said the festival reflects the deep emotional connection shared by siblings and highlights the importance of standing by one another through different stages of life. Shiv Pratap Shukla said the Rakhi symbolises more than protection. It represents mutual respect, care, affection and unwavering support between brothers and sisters. He noted that these values give the festival its enduring significance and strengthen family relationships. The Governor expressed his hope that the celebrations would bring happiness and harmony to every household across



Telangana. He also wished that the occasion would inspire people to strengthen bonds of affection, understanding and mutual support in society. He said festivals such as Raksha Bandhan play an important role in promoting togetherness and reinforcing social harmony. The Governor conveyed his best wishes to all families celebrating the festival and prayed for their continued well-being. Raksha Bandhan is celebrated annually across the country, with sisters traditionally tying a sacred thread, or Rakhi, around their brothers' wrists as a symbol of affection and trust. The occasion also serves as a reminder of the responsibilities and support that siblings share with each other.

Farm Mechanisation Plan Finalised

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Agriculture Minister Tummalapalli Nageswara Rao said the list of farm implements to be covered under the agricultural mechanisation scheme has been finalised, with subsidy amounts to be transferred directly to the bank accounts of eligible farmers. The Minister held a review meeting with senior Agriculture Department officials at the State Secretariat on Friday and issued directions on several issues concerning

farmers and agricultural development. He said officials of the Hyderabad Agricultural Cooperative Association (HACA) were examining the list of empanelled companies. Nageswara Rao said there were no major issues with the availability of urea and instructed officials to immediately address any problems associated with the fertiliser application. He called for extensive awareness campaigns among farmers about the Central Government's fertiliser app so that they could access relevant information and services

more easily. The Minister also urged the Centre to extend subsidy support to complex fertilisers and stressed the need to reduce excessive dependence on urea among farmers. Reviewing oil palm cultivation, he directed officials to accelerate the expansion programme and ensure that saplings reach farmers within two to three days. He said priority should be given to districts reporting higher demand. The Minister suggested that nurseries prepare twice the targeted number of oil palm saplings to

meet future requirements. He also instructed officials to speed up the installation of drip irrigation systems to support efficient water management. During the meeting, officials proposed installing solar panels at 2,600 Rythu Vedikas across the State. Nageswara Rao directed that the solarisation works be completed within two to three months. The measures, he said, should strengthen agricultural infrastructure while ensuring that government support reaches farmers efficiently and on time.



Minister Orders Probe Into Hospital Lapses

Zaheerabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Health Minister Damodaram Rajanarsimha has ordered an inquiry into reports of serious lapses at the Zaheerabad Area Hospital, including the alleged absence of duty doctors and treatment being provided by a private doctor at the government facility. The Minister took note of media reports highlighting the shortage of doctors and the absence of designated medical personnel during duty hours. Expressing displeasure over the situation, he directed officials to immediately investigate the circumstances and identify those responsible for the alleged negligence.

Rajanarsimha discussed the matter with Sangareddy District Collector and Health Department Principal Secretary Dr. Christina Z. Chongthu. He instructed the officials to conduct a detailed inquiry and take strict action against anyone found responsible. The Minister stressed that government hospitals must provide uninterrupted medical services to patients and that the availability of doctors during scheduled duty hours cannot be compromised. He also directed the department to examine the circumstances under which a private doctor was reportedly involved in providing treatment at the government hospital. The incident has raised concerns among patients

and residents who depend on the Zaheerabad Area Hospital for affordable healthcare. Government hospitals, particularly those serving rural and semi-urban populations, play an important role in providing accessible medical services to economically weaker sections. Rajanarsimha ordered officials to strengthen monitoring mechanisms and ensure that similar incidents do not recur. He emphasised accountability among medical and administrative staff and called for immediate corrective measures. The Health Department is expected to submit findings of the inquiry and initiate action based on the outcome. Officials have also been directed to ensure adequate staffing



and proper functioning of medical services at the hospital. The Minister's intervention comes amid the government's stated

focus on improving healthcare delivery and strengthening services at public hospitals across Telangana. The inquiry is

expected to establish the reasons behind the reported shortage of doctors and determine responsibility for the lapses.

Land Auction Sets New Record

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Hyderabad's premium real estate market has touched another record, with a 5.38-acre land parcel at Raidurg Pan Maktha fetching Rs 269 crore per acre in an e-auction conducted by the Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIIC). The auction of Plot P2 generated approximately Rs 1,447.22 crore, according to reports. The latest sale surpassed the previous record of Rs 264 crore per acre achieved for a 5.25-acre parcel in the same Raidurg corridor earlier this month. The two auctions together generated about Rs 2,833.22 crore from 10.63 acres. The latest transaction highlights the continuing demand for premium land in Raidurg Pan Maktha, part of Hyderabad's Knowledge City corridor. The area has emerged as a major commercial and investment destination because of its proximity to IT companies, business districts, residential developments, entertainment facilities and transport infrastructure. The previous auction, conducted on August 21, saw a 5.25-acre parcel sold for Rs 264 crore per acre, generating around Rs 1,386 crore. The reserve price for that auction had been fixed at Rs 175 crore per acre, with the successful bid representing a substantial premium. The fresh Rs 269-crore-per-acre bid has further strengthened the perception of strong investor interest in Hyderabad's high-value commercial corridors. TGIIIC officials said the auction results reflected confidence among investors in Hyderabad and Telangana's long-term growth prospects. The consecutive record prices have also drawn attention from across the real estate sector, where limited availability of large parcels in strategically located areas is contributing to intense competition among developers. Raidurg has become one of the State's most valuable government land banks, with successive auctions generating substantial revenue for the Telangana exchequer. The latest sale is expected to further reinforce the area's position as one of Hyderabad's leading business and investment destinations.

Lucky Draw Brings Surprise in Housing Scheme

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government began a four-day lucky draw process on Friday to select beneficiaries for flats being constructed under the Indiramma housing towers initiative in Hyderabad. The exercise is being conducted across several Assembly constituencies, with officials expected to complete the process by August 31. The first day witnessed two unusual coincidences that drew attention during the beneficiary selection. At Lakshmiguda in Mailardevpally under the Rajendranagar constituency, a young boy invited to pick a lucky-draw token unexpectedly drew a token belonging to his own family. Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy shared details of the incident on X, describing it as both surprising and heartwarming. He said a similar occurrence took place in the Nampally constituency, where a child selected the first token and, after several subsequent draws, the same child's family was also chosen as a beneficiary. The minister said the lucky draw was conducted in the presence of local MLAs and that children were involved in picking the tokens. Selected families were congratulated during the programme. Ponguleti clarified that the names emerging from the lucky draw



would not constitute the final beneficiary list. Officials will conduct field-level verification to establish eligibility before issuing sanction letters. If any selected applicant is found ineligible, the opportunity will be passed on to another eligible applicant. He said construction of the housing towers would begin within three to four days after completion of the selection process. Beneficiaries will be allowed to visit the construction sites and inspect the progress and quality of the work. The minister assured that the allotment and construction processes would be carried out transparently and that safeguards would be put in place to prevent irregularities. According to the details provided, 600 beneficiaries are to be selected through the draw for 480 flats across 16 constituencies in Hyderabad, subject to field verification. The government plans to expedite construction and facilitate the shifting of eligible beneficiaries into their new homes after completion.

Kishan Reddy to Tour Two Districts

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy will undertake a two-day tour of the erstwhile Ranga Reddy and Mahabubnagar districts on August 30 and 31, with a schedule covering railway infrastructure, development programmes, religious activities and BJP organisational meetings. During the first day of the tour, Kishan Reddy will inspect the ongoing modernisation works at Vikarabad railway station. He will then attend the inauguration of the Telangana Ekalavya Rural Development Foundation at Jingerthi village in Vikarabad district. The Union Minister will subsequently participate in the 'Mann Ki Baat' programme along with local BJP workers. He is also scheduled to attend the programme marking the assumption of office by the newly appointed Vikarabad district BJP president at Veera Saiva

Kalyana Mandapam in Tandur, where he will be the chief guest. Later, Kishan Reddy will inaugurate a Light and Sound Show at the Jogulamba Temple in Alampur, Jogulamba-Gadwal district. On the second day, he will begin his schedule by offering prayers to Goddess Jogulamba at the historic Alampur temple. He will then review development and modernisation works at Jogulamba and Gadwal railway stations. The Union Minister will later travel to Narayanpet district headquarters to inaugurate Siri Multispecialty Hospital. His itinerary will also include an inspection of modernisation works at Mahabubnagar railway station. In Mahabubnagar town, he will participate as chief guest at a meeting of BJP district executive members and mandal presidents, where organisational matters are expected to be discussed. Kishan Reddy will con-



clude his two-day tour with an inspection of Jadcherla railway station

in Mahabubnagar district. The visit is expected to highlight ongoing railway

infrastructure projects and development initiatives across the region,

besides strengthening BJP's organisational activities in the districts.

Singareni Resolves 24 Worker Demands

Godavarikhani, August 28 | TPN Bureau

The management of Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has agreed to resolve 24 of the 31 demands raised by workers through a strike notice, according to leaders of the recognised AITUC union. AITUC President Vasireddy Sitaramaiah and General Secretary Korimi Rajkumar said discussions held in the presence of the Assistant Labour Commissioner had resulted in an agreement on several key issues. Addressing a press conference at the Godavarikhani Press Club on Friday, they said the

union had served the strike notice on June 8. Among the major decisions, the management reportedly agreed to bear income tax on employee perks and provide Rs 20 lakh to the family of a worker who dies of natural causes while in service. Monthly Medical Board meetings will also be conducted, they said. The union leaders stated that the actual profit for 2025-26 would be declared and the workers' profit share distributed before Dasara. The three-year restriction on transfers has also reportedly been removed. An agreement was reached to promote senior mining staff as Overmen and form a



committee to address alias-related issues. The management also agreed to work towards establishing a super-specialty Singareni hospital in Hyderabad and assured amendments to medical attendance rules. Retired

employees would receive one week of medical treatment, while Singareni educational institutions would introduce the CBSE syllabus, according to the union. Other commitments included timely supply of safety equip-

ment and payment of 9% House Rent Allowance to coal mine workers residing within Mandamarri and Kyathanapalli municipal limits. The union said pending cases involving dismissed workers, dependent employment

and cadre schemes would be addressed. ESI medical coverage would be extended to contract workers, while suitable employment opportunities for mining staff would also be considered. Employees would be permitted to attend evening colleges, and vacant posts would be filled, the leaders said. Discussions on the proposed own-house scheme would be held with the government. AITUC leaders said workers participating in a legally conducted strike would face the "no work, no pay" provision but would not be subjected to additional penalties. Several union leaders attended the press conference.

Kavitha Slams Congress and BRS



Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Rakshana Sena president Kalvakuntla Kavitha launched a sharp attack on both the ruling Congress and the opposition BRS, alleging that neither party was adequately protecting Telangana's interests. She questioned whether the BRS, which she accused of corruption and organised wrongdoing during its decade in power, should be given another opportunity to govern. Speaking to the media at the TRS office on Thursday, Kavitha said the BRS was projecting confidence about returning to power, but claimed that the situation on the ground did not support such assertions. She alleged that the party was failing to strongly question the Congress government on issues affecting Telangana because of its relationships with business interests from Andhra Pradesh. Kavitha also criticised the Congress government over river-water sharing issues. She alleged that while the ruling party had failed to adequately defend Telangana's interests, the BRS was not mounting the opposition expect-

ed of it. She appealed to voters to reject both Congress and BRS in the forthcoming elections, accusing the two parties of repeatedly misleading people. Kavitha said her party would prioritise Telangana's interests if given an opportunity to govern. She also levelled allegations against BRS leaders K.T. Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao, claiming that they had accumulated substantial wealth through business activities. These allegations were made by Kavitha and were not independently established in the material provided. Turning her attention to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, Kavitha alleged that his administration was giving excessive importance to individuals from Andhra Pradesh and claimed that several important positions and contracts were going to people from the neighbouring State. She cited appointments and positions involving the REDCO leadership, Chief Minister's Office, electricity and irrigation departments, and the Brahmin Parishad. She also questioned the reported appointment of an Andhra-based film personality's wife to the Yadagirigutta temple board. Kavitha argued that institutions and temples built with Telangana public resources should primarily reflect the interests of the State's people. She challenged the Chief Minister to appoint Telangana natives to key positions in the Brahmin Parishad if his government was genuinely committed to regional interests. Her remarks are part of a broader political campaign ahead of upcoming elections, with the TRS seeking to position itself as an alternative to both Congress and BRS.

Ramchander Rao Targets Congress, BRS

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

BJP Telangana president N. Ramchander Rao criticised successive BRS and Congress governments over what he described as the deteriorating civic infrastructure in Hyderabad. He said the city, which was projected as a "Global City", was instead facing serious problems affecting residents. Rao was speaking at an event in Tarnaka Division where several educated professionals, intellectuals and local residents joined the BJP under the leadership of Madala Radhakrishna. The BJP State president welcomed the new members into the party by presenting them with saffron scarves. Addressing the gathering, Rao alleged that both the previous BRS administration and the present Congress government had failed to ensure the required development of Hyderabad. He pointed to damaged roads, inadequate infrastructure and problems with the drainage system within Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits. He alleged that the city's development had slowed considerably because of administrative neglect and said residents were bearing the consequences of inadequate civic facilities. Rao maintained that Hyderabad needed sustained infrastructure development and effective urban management to meet the needs of its growing population. The BJP leader also claimed that public sentiment was increasingly favouring his party because of the development and welfare initiatives implemented by the Narendra Modi-led Central Government. He said educated sections and ordinary citizens were showing growing interest in the BJP. Rao expressed confidence that the party would perform strongly in the upcoming elections to three municipal corporations. He said a BJP victory would help ensure that Central Government welfare and development programmes reached beneficiaries more transparently and effectively. He urged party workers to strengthen their outreach among residents and communicate the benefits of Central schemes. Madala Radhakrishna and several local BJP leaders and activists attended the programme.

Minister Receives Notice Over Voter Details

Husnabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnampallam Prabhakar received a notice from officials conducting the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls after a discrepancy was identified in his father's name in the voter records. The notice was issued by the Booth Level Officer (BLO) on Friday as part of the ongoing verification process. Officials informed the minister that his father's name had been recorded incorrectly in the SIR form and sought supporting documents to facilitate the necessary correction in the electoral roll. Ponnampallam Prabhakar subsequently submitted the required documents to the authorities for verification and correction of the details. The minister, who represents the Husnabad Assembly constituency, is the son of Ponnampallam Sattaiah Goud, who was also known as Ponnampallam Sattaiah. The discrepancy in the spelling or recording of his father's name prompted officials to seek documentary proof during the voter-list revision exercise. The SIR process involves verification of electoral details and correction of discrepancies to ensure that voter rolls remain accurate and eligible electors are properly registered. Notices are issued to individuals where officials require additional information or documentary evidence to verify entries. Officials have been carrying out the exercise across Telangana as part of efforts to scrutinise voter records and address errors in names, addresses and other personal details. The issuance of the notice to a serving minister has drawn attention, but officials indicated that the action was part of the routine verification procedure under the revision exercise. The minister's submission of the required documents is expected to enable officials to process the correction. The incident also highlights the importance of voters checking their electoral information and responding promptly when verification authorities seek supporting documents during the revision process.

BJP Marks Raksha Bandhan With Women's Empowerment Message



Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana BJP Mahila Morcha organised a grand Raksha Bandhan celebration at the BJP State office on Friday, highlighting women's empowerment and political representation. State Mahila Morcha president Dr. Mekala Shilpa Reddy led the programme, which was attended by BJP Telangana president N. Ramchander Rao as chief guest. Addressing the gathering, Rao described Raksha Bandhan as a symbol of the sacred bond between brothers and sisters. Recalling the tradition of women tying Rakhis to soldiers, he said the festival conveys a broader message of mutual protection, responsibility, national unity and devotion to Dharma. Rao praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government for initiatives aimed at improving women's welfare. He cited the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, which provides LPG connections to eligible households, and the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, which provides maternity-related support. He also highlighted the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, which pro-

vides for 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies, subject to the constitutional process. The BJP leader criticised the Congress and INDIA bloc, alleging that they had opposed or delayed measures aimed at increasing women's political representation. He particularly accused Congress leaders of resisting steps connected with delimitation and expansion of legislative representation. Rao also criticised Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over remarks and conduct concerning women, including his references to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's interaction with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. He alleged that Congress leaders had previously made objectionable comments about women public figures. During the celebrations, BJP Mahila Morcha leaders tied Rakhis to former Governor Bandarupati Dattatreya, N. Ramchander Rao, BJP Legislature Party leader Eleti Maheshwar Reddy and MLA Paidi Rakesh Reddy. Several BJP office-bearers, Mahila Morcha leaders and party workers participated in the programme.

Etela Rajender Slams Congress Over Committees

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Malkajigiri MP Etela Rajender launched a strong attack on the Congress government in Telangana, alleging that the recently constituted 'Indiramma Committees' were being used to accommodate party leaders. He questioned the manner in which the positions were being distributed and said the State could not be treated as the private property of any political party. Rajender made the remarks after meeting Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju at the Telangana Secretariat on Friday. Speaking to the media later, he alleged that the functioning of the Revanth Reddy government resembled the administration of former Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao. He claimed that people were disappointed with the present government and felt they had moved from one difficult situation to another. The BJP MP also questioned the absence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's photograph on the five-kilogramme fine rice supplied through the Centre. He alleged that State leaders were instead promoting their own images and questioned the basis for such a practice. Rajender criticised Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his statements during foreign visits concerning religious tensions in India. He also referred to past bomb blasts in Hyderabad and questioned Congress leaders over the circumstances under which they occurred. On development, Rajender said the Centre had extended substantial assistance to Telangana for road and railway



projects. He claimed that the Centre had provided more funds than requested for the Indiramma housing scheme over the last three years and maintained that there was no discrimination in central assistance. He urged the State administration to speed up housing projects in Hyderabad and surrounding areas. Rajender also highlighted the shortage of Rail Over Bridges and Rail Under Bridges, saying commuters were facing serious inconvenience. He said he had discussed the issue with Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and sought cooperation for infrastructure projects. Rajender stated that Rs 22 crore would be allocated under the Amrit scheme for Medchal and Malkajigiri railway stations, besides ongoing station redevelopment and ROBRUB works in the Medchal and Secunderabad areas.

India, US Seal Javelin Missile Deal

Continue

final value of the latest procurement were not immediately disclosed in the official US readout. Earlier US notifications had covered a proposed package involving 100 Javelin missiles and 25 lightweight command launch units, with an estimated value of \$45.7 million. However, the current LOA should not automatically be assumed to represent the entire earlier notification package. The US Embassy said the signing makes India a customer of the Javelin system and opens the door to discussions on mutually beneficial co-production and stronger defence-industrial cooperation. The agreement is expected to contribute to India's efforts to modernise its armed forces while deepening defence-industrial ties with Washington.

Joint Gold Venture Explored

Continue

Devadurga gold and copper block in Karnataka, which was secured by Singareni through an auction. He directed officials to accelerate exploration using advanced technologies to determine the quantity and quality of mineral deposits. Vikramarka said the block's proximity to Hutti Gold Mines offered an opportunity to utilise the latter's technical expertise. He asked officials to examine ways to leverage this advantage for faster development of the project. Singareni CMD Buddha Prakash Jyoti and other senior officials accompanied the Deputy Chief Minister during the inspections. SCCL is jointly owned by the Telangana and Union governments, with the state holding a 51% stake and the Centre 49%.

Skills University Signs Global Education Pact



Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana government on Friday signed a preliminary agreement with the Hiroshima Institute of Technology (HIT) in Japan to strengthen technical education, skill development and employment opportunities for students of Young India Skills University (YISU). Labour Minister G. Vivek Venkatswamy, who is on a visit to Japan, held detailed discussions with the institute's leadership on developing industry-ready human resources and improving technical education in Telangana. Under the proposed partnership, Telangana students will have opportunities to participate in a student exchange programme and gain direct exposure to Japan's technical education model. The collaboration is expected to focus on laboratory-based learning, practical training and stronger links between educational institutions and industry. The two sides also explored cooperation in faculty development, Training of Trainers (TOT), short-term technical programmes, research initiatives and opportunities for students to gain direct industry experience. Discussions covered several emerging and strategically important fields, including advanced manufacturing, mobility and automobile technology, artificial

intelligence, electronics, automation, digital technologies and environmental technology. Officials said collaboration in these areas could help equip students with skills aligned with changing industrial requirements. Minister Vivek invited representatives of Hiroshima Institute of Technology to visit Hyderabad and tour the facilities of Young India Skills University. He proposed that further discussions during the visit could be used to prepare a detailed action plan for implementing the partnership. The minister also invited HIT representatives to participate in the Telangana Rising Global Summit 2026, providing an opportunity to explore wider cooperation in education, technology and industry. The agreement is aimed at creating stronger international exposure for students and developing a skilled workforce capable of meeting the requirements of modern industries. The proposed academic and industry-oriented initiatives are expected to strengthen Telangana's efforts to expand skill-based education and improve employment prospects for young people. The partnership with a Japanese technical institution marks another step towards connecting YISU students with global education and training practices.

BRS Plans Week-Long Protest Campaign

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has directed party leaders and cadres to launch a week-long statewide agitation against the Congress government, marking its completion of 1,000 days in office. The campaign, scheduled from September 2 to 8, will focus on what the BRS alleges are unfulfilled election promises, administrative failures and public grievances. During a teleconference on Friday, KTR asked party leaders to take the alleged failures of the government to people across villages, mandals and constituencies. The BRS has decided to release a "chargesheet" on the government's performance at Telangana Bhavan on September 1, ahead of the protests. The campaign will begin on September 2 with constituency-level demonstrations over the alleged non-implementation of the Six Guarantees. Large banners highlighting what the BRS calls the "420 promises" and distribution of "Baaki Cards" listing pending commitments are also planned.



On September 3, farmers' meetings will focus on irrigation, electricity, urea supply, crop insurance and agricultural concerns, alongside protests over lands included in the 22-A prohibited list. September 4 will focus on women and persons with disabilities, including welfare commitments and schemes such as financial assistance, KCR Kits, Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak. Student and youth rallies addressing fee reimbursement, the job calendar and

the Youth Declaration are planned for September 5. An autorickshaw rally in Hyderabad and village-level protests over civic issues are scheduled for September 6. On September 7, BRS leaders will submit representations at Praja Vani centres, while September 8 will feature district-level press conferences and tributes to Dr B.R. Ambedkar. The party has also announced support for teachers' and employees' union protests on September 10.

Self-Ticketing for Non-Stop Buses

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) has introduced a new self-ticketing facility for passengers travelling on non-stop bus services, aimed at making boarding faster and more convenient. Under the new system, passengers can purchase their tickets themselves without waiting for the driver to issue one before boarding. A QR code displayed at the entrance of the bus can be scanned using a smartphone. Passengers then need to enter their boarding and destination points and complete the payment online. Once the transaction is completed, a digital ticket is generated, which can be shown to the driver for verification. The TSRTC has decided to initially introduce the facility on a trial basis on the Nalgonda-Hyderabad route. Around 45 deluxe non-stop buses are currently operating on the route. Based on

the response and performance of the system, officials are planning to extend the facility to other non-stop services across Telangana by the end of September. According to the RTC, the initiative is expected to reduce waiting time and eliminate difficulties faced by passengers in arranging exact change. It will also reduce the burden on drivers, allowing them to concentrate more on driving and passenger safety rather than ticket issuance. However, the corporation clarified that passengers who do not own smartphones or are not comfortable with online payments will not be affected by the new system. They can continue to obtain tickets directly from the driver as before. The RTC has entered into an agreement with 'Mee Ticket', associated with the Mee Seva initiative, to facilitate the digital self-ticketing service. The trial will help officials assess passenger response before wider implementation.

Pilgrim Missing After Flash Floods

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Suhasini Reddy Kandimalla, 44, an Australia-based IT professional from Vastu Colony in LB Nagar, Hyderabad, is among pilgrims whose whereabouts remain uncertain following devastating flash floods in the Nepal-Tibet border region. Her family has been anxiously awaiting information about her safety. Suhasini had reportedly arrived in Hyderabad on August 19 before travelling to Kathmandu for a Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage. According to reports, she was travelling with a group of pilgrims and had maintained contact with her family during the journey. Her family said she shared videos through WhatsApp on Tuesday while participating in prayers with fellow pilgrims. Communication was subsequently lost, with her phone becoming

unreachable. Her last known communication reportedly came as the group prepared to proceed towards the China border and the immigration centre. The flash floods and landslides that struck the Nepal-Tibet border on August 26 caused extensive destruction and disrupted communications and transport links. Several pilgrims and foreign tourists travelling towards or returning from Kailash Mansarovar have been reported missing or stranded. Reuters reported that hundreds of people, including many foreign pilgrims, remained unaccounted for following the disaster. Families of missing pilgrims are appealing for urgent information as authorities and rescue teams continue efforts to locate those affected. The disaster has triggered a wider emergency involving Indian and international pilgrims travelling through the region.

Jewellery Stolen From Bus Passenger

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

A theft of gold and diamond jewellery from a passenger's bag on an APSRTC Amaravati bus has been reported within the Gachibowli police limits, with police launching an investigation to identify the suspects. The incident was reported on August 28. C. Sridhar Babu, a mechanical engineer from Kondapur, was travelling with his wife from Allwyn X Roads to SVN Colony in Guntur on Amaravati bus No. 4219. According to his complaint, valuable jewellery kept inside a plastic box in their travel bag went missing during the journey. The stolen articles reportedly included an uncut diamond necklace, a gold bangle and a gold earring. The victim told police that the bag had not been visibly damaged, suggesting that the zipper may have been opened and closed during the journey without attracting attention. After reaching Guntur, Sridhar Babu discovered that the jewellery was missing and subsequently approached the Gachibowli police. He expressed suspicion about two passengers, identified as Wajid, 42, and Zabid, 28, who were seated behind the couple. Police have not established their involvement, and the investigation is continuing. Investigators are examining passenger booking information to trace the movements and identities of those who travelled on the bus. CCTV footage from locations along the route is also being reviewed to identify possible suspects. Police suspect that the theft may have been carried out by taking advantage of crowded conditions inside the bus. A case has been registered based on the complaint, and efforts are underway to trace the missing jewellery and establish the circumstances surrounding the theft.

SCR Collects Rs 1.28 Crore in Ticket Drive

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

The South Central Railway (SCR) collected Rs 1.28 crore in penalties and fares during a three-day special ticket-checking campaign conducted ahead of the long festival holiday period. According to SCR officials, the intensive drive, held from Monday, resulted in the detection of 13,964 passengers travelling either without valid tickets or with irregular tickets. The campaign was aimed at encouraging passengers to follow railway travel regulations and ensuring better compliance during the expected holiday rush. During the checks, railway staff also identified 1,189 passengers carrying unboiled luggage. Officials said the drive covered various trains and railway premises under the SCR jurisdiction. The campaign also focused on maintaining cleanliness and discipline at stations and on trains. Railway personnel detected 37 passengers littering railway premises and collected Rs 6,400 in penalties from them. Ticket-checking personnel used the opportunity to educate passengers about responsible travel practices. They cautioned travellers about the serious fire risks associated with smoking on trains and railway premises, particularly in crowded conditions. With the festival holiday period expected to bring increased passenger movement, railway authorities have urged travellers to purchase valid tickets, carry properly booked luggage and follow safety and cleanliness guidelines throughout their journey.

CPM Pays Tribute to Electricity Martyrs

Quthbullapur, August 28 | TPN Bureau

The CPM Quthbullapur Mandal Committee paid tribute to the martyrs of the Bashirbagh electricity struggle at the martyrs' memorial near IDPL Crossroads on Thursday, marking their 26th death anniversary. CPM District Secretary P. Satyam and Mandal Secretary Keelukani Lakshman addressed a meeting held after the tribute programme and recalled the sacrifices made during the movement against increased electricity charges and proposed privatisation of the power sector. The leaders said Left parties, the Congress and various peo-

ple's organisations had launched a major agitation in 2000. The campaign intensified through programmes including 'Bijli Bandh', public ballots, gherao of ministers and protests outside the residences of public representatives. They paid homage to Ramakrishna, Vishnuvardhan and Balaswamy, who were killed in police firing at Bashirbagh during the 'Chalo Assembly' programme on August 28. The CPM leaders claimed that the sacrifices of the three martyrs helped keep the power sector under government control and contributed to the continuation of welfare measures such as free electricity for



agriculture. They criticised recent measures taken by the Centre in the name of power-sector reforms and privatisation, alleging that such policies could increase the burden on consumers. The leaders called upon people to draw inspiration from the martyrs and oppose any attempt to hand over public electricity assets to private companies. CPM leaders Ailapuram Rajashekhar, Lingaswamy, Shankar, B. Satyam, TVS Ramana, Vijaya, Johnbi, Srisailem, Basha, Adi Nag araju, Gopal Reddy, Madhu, Krishna and Chandrakanth were among those who attended.

Ramchander Rao Voices Concern Over Floods

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Telangana BJP president N. Ramchander Rao expressed deep concern over the devastating flash floods in Nepal, saying the loss of lives and disappearance of hundreds of people was deeply distressing. In a statement, Rao said the disaster had caused widespread anguish, particularly among families awaiting information about relatives and loved ones caught in the floods. He expressed concern over reports that 288 Indian nationals remain uncontactable following the disaster. The figure was confirmed by India's Ministry of



ter. The figure was confirmed by India's Ministry of

External Affairs amid ongoing efforts to trace missing

citizens. Rao said the Union Ministry

of External Affairs was taking necessary steps to locate the missing Indians and coordinate with authorities concerned. The MEA has been maintaining contact with Nepalese authorities and monitoring the situation, while efforts continue to assist Indians affected by the floods. He said the Government of India stands firmly with the Government and people of Nepal during the crisis and would extend all possible assistance for relief and rescue operations. Rao also expressed solidarity with families affected by the disaster and hoped that miss-

ing persons would be traced safely. He said India was committed to extending humanitarian support to Nepal and helping those affected by the unprecedented floods. The disaster has affected several Indian pilgrims, tourists and workers. A large number of Indians travelling towards the Kailash Mansarovar region were also reported to be stranded, with around 200 seeking evacuation from the Chinese side of the border. Rao said the priority should remain the safe recovery of missing people, assistance to stranded citizens and support for Nepal's relief efforts.

Quality Engine Oil at Affordable Price

Nacharam, August 28 | TPN Bureau

TPCC Joint Convener Regulapati Ramya Rao said providing quality engine oil to motorists at an affordable price would benefit vehicle owners and help strengthen consumer confidence in the brand. Ramya Rao formally launched the 'Bolt It Express' engine oil at the office of EV Jazz Mobility Solutions Pvt. Ltd. in the Nacharam Industrial Area on Friday. Speaking at the launch, she said the quality of engine oil plays an important role in maintaining vehicle performance and extending engine life. She appreciated the initiative to make a quality product available to consumers at a competitive price without compromising on standards. Ramya Rao said companies that

focus on both product quality and affordability could earn greater recognition and build long-term trust among customers. She expressed hope that the newly launched product would receive a positive response from motorists. The organisers said the company has been working to address the changing requirements of users by introducing new products and services. They said the organisation's 'Bolt It Super App' has already gained recognition among users and that the latest product launch was part of efforts to expand its offerings. Chairman Uncle Aggarwal, Rupesh Shah, BRS state leader Saijan Shekhar and other representatives attended the launch programme. The organisers said the company would continue developing products aimed at meeting the practical needs



of vehicle users while maintaining affordability and quality.

The launch marks another step in expanding the company's presence

in the automotive products segment.

Nidhhi Agerwal Opens Colors 2.0

Quthbullapur, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Colors Healthcare inaugurated its new 'Colors 2.0' wellness centre at Kompally in Hyderabad on Friday, marking another milestone in the organisation's 23-year journey. Actress Nidhhi Agerwal attended the event as chief guest and formally inaugurated the facility. Speaking at the programme, Nidhhi Agerwal said awareness about fitness, health and beauty has increased significantly in recent years. She appreciated the new centre for incorporating modern technology, advanced equipment and professional expertise. She stressed the importance of consulting qualified experts for concerns related to weight management, skin health and hair care. Colors Healthcare Managing Director Dr. Vijay Krishna said the Kompally facility had been designed with state-of-the-art infrastructure to



address changing lifestyles and the evolving wellness requirements of people. He said the centre aims to provide specialised

services suited to the needs of the local community. Executive Director Venkata Shivaji Koonna said

the Kompally outlet is the organisation's 53rd branch. He said Colors Healthcare has completed 23 years in the wellness sector and is expanding its presence across Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The new facility is located on the third floor of the Zudio building opposite Chennai Shopping Mall at Suchitra X-Roads, Kompally. Officials said it will offer services covering weight management, skincare, skin aesthetics and hair care. Several customers who had previously used Colors Healthcare services shared their experiences at the event and expressed satisfaction with the services. The programme was organised by 5M Media under the supervision of Jayadeep. Wellness professionals, company representatives, local residents, youth and other invitees attended the inauguration.

SSR Process Gets Closer Oversight



Quthbullapur, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Officials have stepped up supervision of the Special Summary Revision (SSR) of electoral rolls in Quthbullapur to ensure that the process is carried out transparently and in strict accordance with election regulations.

As part of the exercise, Pinkesh Kumar, Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and Zonal Commissioner for Quthbullapur, inspected several polling stations in Gajulararamam Circle (Circle-57) under the 045-Quthbullapur Assembly constituency on Friday. He was accompanied by officials concerned.

During the inspection, Kumar reviewed the process of issuing notices at polling stations and interacted with Booth Level Officers (BLOs) regarding the procedures to be followed during subsequent inquiries. He sought details on how information from applicants and voters was being collected and verified. The ERO instructed BLOs to meticulously record details of every individual appearing for inquiry and ensure that the information entered in the records was accurate and complete. He stressed that every stage of the SSR exercise must be documented properly and conducted strictly as per prescribed rules. Kumar also directed officials to take all necessary measures to ensure that eligible voters do not face difficulties during the revision process. He emphasised accuracy, transparency and adherence to established procedures. Gajulararamam Circle AERO and Deputy Commissioner U. Venkat Ramulu, along with other officials and BLOs, participated in the inspection.

My Gift Celebrates Raksha Bandhan With Army

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Raksha Bandhan was celebrated with warmth, patriotism and a spirit of national unity at an Army campus in Hyderabad under the aegis of 'My Gift'. The programme sought to strengthen the emotional bond between soldiers and citizens through the traditional festival celebrating the relationship between brothers and sisters. Dr. Peruka Raju, noted national poet, multilingual writer and founder of 'My Gift', participated in the celebrations and tied rakhis to Indian Army personnel serving the nation. He also distributed sweets and conveyed his heartfelt Raksha Bandhan greetings to the jawans. Raksha Bandhan symbolises love, protection, responsibility and affection between siblings. By tying rakhis to soldiers who dedicate themselves to safeguarding the country, the programme conveyed a message of gratitude and solidarity from citizens to the armed forces. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Peruka Raju said such celebrations help deepen the emotional connection between the armed forces and the people. He said festivals provide an opportunity to promote national spirit, brotherhood



and unity while recognising the sacrifices and responsibilities of those who serve the nation. He observed that festivals are not merely traditional occasions but also cultural bridges that pass important social values from one generation to another. The rakhi-tying ceremony and distribution of sweets brought a festive atmosphere to the Army campus. The participating soldiers and organisers expressed happiness at sharing the occasion together. Jagan, Perumal, Hira, Ganesh, Pandi, Aman and others participated in the programme. The event concluded on a cheerful note, with organisers reiterating the importance of maintaining a strong bond between citizens and the armed forces.

Sisters Tie Rakhis to Speaker Prasad Kumar

Vikarabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Raksha Bandhan was celebrated with warmth in Vikarabad as women and sisters met Telangana Legislative Assembly Speaker and Vikarabad MLA Gaddam Prasad Kumar and tied Rakhi to him on the occasion of Rakhi Purnima. The sisters visited the Speaker and performed the traditional Raksha Bandhan ritual, symbolising the bond of affection, trust and mutual respect between brothers and sisters. They tied Rakhis on his wrist and conveyed their heartfelt greetings on the festive occasion. Following the ceremony, the women offered sweets to Prasad Kumar and exchanged Raksha Bandhan wishes. The gathering reflected the traditional spirit of the festival, which celebrates family relationships and the prom-



ise of care and protection. The sisters also sought the blessings of

the Speaker during their interaction. Prasad Kumar received their greetings

and extended his best wishes to them on the occasion.

Raksha Bandhan is traditionally observed on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Shravan. Sisters tie a sacred thread, or Rakhi, around their brothers' wrists as a symbol of affection and the enduring bond between siblings. Brothers, in turn, traditionally express their commitment to supporting and protecting their sisters. The interaction with the Assembly Speaker provided a festive and cordial setting for the celebrations in Vikarabad. The programme also highlighted the importance of maintaining strong family and social bonds during traditional festivals. Local participants conveyed their happiness over the occasion and extended their Raksha Bandhan wishes to the Speaker and his family.

Bandi Sanjay Celebrates Raksha Bandhan



Karimnagar, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar celebrated Raksha

Bandhan with his sister Shailaja in Karimnagar on Friday. On the auspicious occasion, Shailaja tied a Rakhi to her brother, marking the cherished bond of love, affection and protection between siblings. Bandi Sanjay Kumar received the Rakhi and exchanged greetings with his sister. The celebration reflected the traditional spirit of Raksha Bandhan, a festival that honours the enduring relationship between brothers and sisters. The occasion was observed in a warm and family-oriented atmosphere, with the siblings sharing festive wishes and expressing their affection for each other.

Collector Celebrates Rakhi With Orphanage Girls



Nalgonda, August 28 | TPN Bureau

District Collector B. Chandrasekhar extended Raksha Bandhan greetings to the people of Nalgonda and participated in celebrations with girls from the Charumathi Orphanage in Pangal on Friday. The girls from the orphanage, located at the Nalgonda district headquarters, visited the Collector's office on the occasion of Rakhi Purnima and tied Rakhis on his wrist. The Collector warmly received the girls, offered them sweets and conveyed his best wishes. Speaking on the occasion, Chandrasekhar described Rakhi Purnima, or Raksha Bandhan, as a significant festival that celebrates the affectionate bond between brothers and sisters. He said the festival reflects the values of love, trust, responsibility and protection that strengthen family relationships. He explained that the

Rakhi tied by a sister symbolises her trust in her brother, while the brother's commitment represents an assurance that he will stand by her as a protector and companion. He said these sentiments have made Raksha Bandhan an important cultural celebration observed every year. The Collector said the festival provides an opportunity for people to reaffirm their bonds of affection and mutual support. He wished the people of the district happiness and prosperity on the occasion. The interaction with the orphanage girls created a warm and cheerful atmosphere at the Collector's office. Chandrasekhar also expressed his good wishes to the children and appreciated their participation in the celebrations. The programme was organised as part of the Rakhi Purnima observances. The Nalgonda District Information Department issued the press release.

Traffic Police Turn Rakhi Into Safety Message



Kamareddy, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Traffic police in Kamareddy adopted a unique approach to promote road safety on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, choosing to tie Rakhis to motorists riding without helmets instead of simply issuing fines. The initiative was undertaken on the instructions of the Kamareddy Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) and under the supervision of Town Circle Inspector Narahari. As part of the Rakhi Purnima programme, traffic personnel stopped two-wheeler riders who were travelling without helmets and used the occasion to explain the importance of following road-safety rules. The police applied a bottu (vermilion mark) on the riders' foreheads and tied Rakhis to them as a gesture of affection and concern. They then urged the motorists to wear helmets every time they travelled on a two-wheeler. Officials explained that a helmet acts as an important protective shield against serious head injuries in the event of an accident.

They drew a symbolic comparison between the Rakhi, traditionally associated with protection and care, and the helmet, which provides physical protection to riders on the road. The unusual intervention reportedly surprised several motorists who expected to be stopped for enforcement action but instead received a safety message accompanied by a Rakhi. Traffic personnel advised riders to consider helmet use not merely as a legal requirement but as a responsibility towards their families and loved ones. They cautioned that riding without a helmet significantly increases the risk of severe injury during road accidents. The programme received appreciation from motorists and local residents, who welcomed the police department's effort to combine traffic awareness with the spirit of Raksha Bandhan. The initiative demonstrated how enforcement personnel can use community-oriented methods to encourage responsible driving and strengthen awareness of road safety.

BJP Leader Ties Rakhi to Arvind



Jagtial, August 28 | TPN Bureau

BJP Jagtial constituency in-charge Dr. Boga Sravani met Nizamabad MP Dharmapuri Arvind in Hyderabad on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and tied a Rakhi to him, conveying her festive greetings. Dr. Sravani visited the MP at his Hyderabad residence and participated in the traditional celebration. She said Raksha Bandhan represents the affection, trust and enduring bond shared between brothers and sisters. She wished Arvind good health, happiness and continued success in his public life.

The occasion was marked by a warm exchange of greetings and reflected the spirit of togetherness associated with the festival. Jagtial District BJP Mahila Morcha president Durishetti Mamata also participated

in the programme along with party leaders Singam Padma, Gaddala Lakshmi and Soma Lakshmi. The leaders extended their wishes to the MP and celebrated the festival in a cordial atmosphere. Raksha Bandhan is observed annually as a celebration of sibling affection, with sisters traditionally tying a sacred thread around their brothers' wrists and offering prayers for their well-being. The programme also highlighted the participation of women leaders in the BJP's local organisational activities in Jagtial. Party members said such cultural occasions help strengthen personal bonds and promote unity among people. The celebration concluded with greetings and best wishes for prosperity and well-being. If you want, I can also make this more newspaper-style and sharper for publication, while retaining the 200-word limit.

Rakhi Celebrations Bring Warmth and Belonging



Quthbullapur, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Raksha Bandhan was celebrated with warmth and compassion at the Nirman Mental Health Care Home in Chintal HMT, with the Viplava Jyothi Alluri Foundation organising a special programme for individuals with special needs. The event sought to highlight that Raksha Bandhan represents more than the traditional bond between brothers and sisters. Organisers said the festival also conveys affection, compassion, reassurance and a sense of belonging, particularly to people who may feel isolated from the wider community. Led by Foundation Vice-President Janga Tataji, women participating in the programme tied Rakhis to residents of the care home. Sweets were distributed and the participants joined the residents in celebrating the festival, creating a warm and cheerful atmosphere. Speaking on the occasion, the organisers emphasised the importance of extending

affection and social support to individuals in care homes. They said festivals provide an opportunity to strengthen community connections and remind people that every individual deserves dignity, respect and companionship. The initiative was appreciated by those present, as it sought to bring the spirit of Raksha Bandhan directly to residents who might otherwise have limited opportunities to participate in such celebrations. Foundation General Secretary Chintakindi Nagaraju, member Pappula Nagaraju, Anti-Corruption State Chairperson Padma and Nirman Mental Health Care Home administrator Saleha Begum were among those who participated. The programme concluded with greetings, distribution of sweets and interaction between the visitors and residents. Organisers said the celebration demonstrated how traditional festivals can be used to spread kindness, inclusion and human connection beyond conventional family relationships.

CPI(M) Seeks Action Over Village Land Encroachment



Vikarabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

CPI(M) Vikarabad district secretary R. Mahipal has urged the Telangana government to take legal action against individuals accused of encroaching on government-owned village land in Sarpanpalli village of Vikarabad mandal. Mahipal alleged that sections of dominant-caste residents had occupied portions of grama kantham land, causing difficulties for Dalits, economically weaker families and other villagers. He demanded that the authorities conduct an immediate inquiry into the alleged encroachments and take action against those found responsible. He also appealed to the Vikarabad District Collector to personally visit Sarpanpalli

and assess the situation. According to Mahipal, the government should recover the encroached land and distribute it among eligible poor families for construction of houses. The CPI(M) leader said access to residential plots was an important issue for disadvantaged families and urged the administration to resolve the matter without delay. He stressed that government land meant for community and public purposes should not be occupied by private individuals. Mahipal warned that failure to address the villagers' concerns would prompt the CPI(M) to launch a protest campaign. He called upon officials to ensure that eligible poor families receive their rightful benefits and that village lands are protected from further encroachment. The allegations and demands were made by the CPI(M) district leadership; the claims regarding encroachment would require verification by the concerned revenue authorities. The party urged the district administration to intervene promptly and take steps to restore the land for its intended public purpose.

Police Officer Helps With Last Rites



Quthbullapur, August 28 | TPN Bureau

A police officer in Petbasheerabad has won appreciation for extending humanitarian assistance to a financially distressed family that was unable to perform the funeral rites of a woman who died after a prolonged illness. Chinna, 30, originally from Nizamabad, had been living with his wife, Anitha, under a bridge under construction in Kompally. The couple depended on daily-wage labour for their livelihood. Anitha had reportedly been suffering from illness for some time, but financial difficulties prevented the family from arranging proper medical treatment.

Her condition worsened and she died on Friday morning. With no money to conduct the funeral, Chinna informed passersby about his wife's death. They alerted the emergency response service 112, following which police personnel from Petbasheerabad reached the spot. After assessing the situation, the police found that the family was facing severe financial hardship and had no means to arrange the last rites. On being informed about the circumstances, Inspector Vijayavardhan immediately intervened and decided to help the bereaved family. The Inspector arranged for Anitha's cremation at his own expense, providing much-needed support to the family during a deeply difficult moment. His gesture has been appreciated by local residents, who said the incident reflected the compassionate side of policing. The act demonstrated that police personnel can go beyond their law-and-order responsibilities to support vulnerable people and stand with them during times of extreme distress.

Discipline Key to Achieving Goals

Karimnagar, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Kashmir Central University Vice-Chancellor Professor Anisetty Ravindra nath said disciplined effort, concentration and determination are essential for achieving one's goals. He was speaking at a book launch programme organised by the Telugu Language Preservation Association, VNR Foundation, Satavahana Lions Club and Lead India Foundation at the Karimnagar District Central Library. Lion Captain Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy released the essay collection "Samakaleenam" and addressed the gathering as chief guest. Ravindranath said the digital era has created numerous opportunities, while education, financial literacy and technological knowledge have become increasingly important. He said society and nature offer valuable lessons to those willing to learn. He urged young people not to lose confidence after failures and said those who persevere until the end are more likely to succeed. Self-confidence, dedication, social awareness and subject knowledge, he added, can help youth reach their goals. Dr. V. Narendra Reddy, head of Allforce Educational Institution, who presided over the meeting, said poverty should not be considered a barrier to success, pointing to several individ-



uals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have risen to prominent positions. Dasyam Senadhipathi, president of the Telugu Language Preservation Association, praised the author for organising 130 essays on contemporary issues into different sections. He said the book would be useful for youth preparing for competitive examinations. District Library Chairman Sathu Malleshm advised students to practise consistently to excel in their chosen fields. Author Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy said the book covers contemporary issues related to youth, environment, science and technology, global affairs and challenges facing Indian society. As part of the programme, copies of the book were distributed free of cost to 150 competitive-exam aspirants at the library. Bommakanti Kishan, Nilagiri Anitha, Dr. Vadluri Srinivas, Dr. Sankoji Manohara Chari, Narla Venugopal, youth and library staff attended.

BJP Accuses Congress of Hurting Singareni

Hyderabad, August 28 | TPN Bureau

BJP SC Morcha national secretary S. Kumar accused the Telangana Congress government of weakening Singareni Collieries Company Limited and diverting funds belonging to the coal mining organisation. He alleged that the government's financial decisions were placing the public sector company under severe pressure. Addressing the media on Friday, Kumar said Singareni was a vital institution for Telangana and supported the livelihoods of thousands of workers and their families. He alleged that the previous BRS government had also mishandled the organisation and claimed that the Congress administration was now worsening its financial position. Kumar alleged that around ₹20,000 crore had previously been diverted from Singareni and claimed that the amount had risen to nearly ₹55,000 crore under the present government. He questioned whether the State administration was pushing the company towards greater debt and financial difficulties. He highlighted the risks faced by miners working underground and challenged

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to personally experience the hardships of mining workers. Kumar credited former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government with supporting Singareni during an earlier financial crisis through a revival package. He also praised the Narendra Modi-led Central Government for supporting the company's expansion. According to Kumar, Central assistance has helped generate business and revenue opportunities worth about ₹1.95 lakh crore for Singareni. He cited efforts related to the Naini coal block in Odisha, Tadicherla, Manuguru PKOC-2 and Koyagudem Block-3. He said Union Minister Kishan Reddy had personally intervened in resolving several clearances and other issues affecting the company. Kumar also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Kishan Reddy, Union Minister Bandi Sanjay, BJP State president N. Ramchander Rao and other party leaders for supporting Singareni. He warned that the BJP would continue raising workers' concerns and oppose measures that, according to the party, could weaken the public sector undertaking.

Nine Arrested in Drug Case



Karimnagar, August 28 | TPN Bureau

Karimnagar rural police arrested nine youths allegedly involved in the illegal procurement and sale of hash oil, ganja and drug tablets, and seized narcotics and related equipment worth an estimated ₹6.5 lakh, officials said. The operation was carried out on the directions of Karimnagar Police Commissioner Ghouse Alam and Rural ACP A. Vijay Kumar, under the supervision of Rural Inspector A. Niranjan Reddy. Acting on information about a suspicious gathering near Nature Cure Hospital at Bommakal, Inspector Niranjan Reddy, SI Lakshma Reddy and their team reached the location and detained nine persons. Police identified the accused as Morri Akash, Puttapaka Vishnu Sai, Bhainaveni Nitish, Kosini Balachander, Gundu Manohar, Viskumalli Vishal, Gundu Krishnagiri, Siricilla Prabhas and Makula Shivaprasad. They are aged between 20 and 25 and are from Karimnagar, Mancherial, Jagtial and Siricilla regions. According to police, the group had

allegedly been procuring narcotics from hilly areas bordering Alluri Sitarama Raju district and transporting them to Karimnagar by train for sale. Investigators said the youths had pooled around ₹7 lakh to purchase the substances, attracted by the profits involved. Police said the search resulted in the seizure of around 500 grams/millilitres of hash oil, 500 grams of ganja, 60 tablets, 14 syringes, drug-consumption equipment and eight mobile phones. The seizure was documented through video recording in the presence of witnesses. Investigators also examined allegations concerning the sale of prescription medicines by a medical shop near D-Mart in Karimnagar. Police submitted a report to the Drug Inspector seeking verification of the shop's records, and a case was registered against the operator over alleged violations, including dispensing medicines without prescriptions and inadequate record maintenance. Officials expressed concern over increasing drug abuse among young people, including those pursuing higher education, and urged them to stay away from narcotics. Police also appealed to the public to provide information about drug suppliers and sellers. Commissioner Ghouse Alam and ACP Vijay Kumar commended the police team for the operation.

Editorial

Government Employees
Deserve Fair Treatment,
Not Delayed Benefits

The concerns raised by Andhra Pradesh government employees at the Amaravati JAC meeting deserve attention. Their central question is simple and lawful: when Ministers, MLAs, IAS officers and IPS officers receive their entitled benefits and facilities without delays, why are the legitimate financial benefits of employees being postponed? Employee unions have strongly questioned the government over pending Dearness Allowance (DA) payments and other long-overdue benefits. The issue is not merely about money. It is about fairness, dignity and the confidence employees place in the administration. If financial constraints are cited as the reason for delaying employee benefits, the government must explain why similar constraints do not appear to affect the privileges and entitlements available to political leaders and senior officials. The government cannot expect efficiency, discipline and commitment from its workforce while simultaneously allowing legitimate dues to remain pending for extended periods. Employees have families, financial commitments and rising costs. Delaying their lawful benefits affects their household security and morale.

Another troubling issue is the treatment of outsourcing employees. In many departments, outsourcing personnel are carrying heavy workloads, yet concerns about excessive work, inadequate compensation and job insecurity continue to surface. A workforce that performs essential public functions should not be treated as a source of inexpensive labour. Governments may face genuine financial pressures, but fiscal difficulties cannot become a permanent justification for unequal treatment. Transparency about pending payments, a clear timetable for settlement and consistent application of benefits are essential.

Government employees are not a burden on the state. They are among its primary functionaries, responsible for translating policies into services for citizens. The government should therefore change its approach: respect employees, address their grievances promptly and ensure that those who keep the administration running are themselves treated fairly and responsibly.

- Editor

Dr. Janaki Ammal: The Scientist
who made sugarcane sweeter in India

At a time when higher education and scientific careers were largely considered the preserve of men, Dr. Edavaleth Kakkat Janaki Ammal emerged as one of India's most remarkable scientists. She is India's First Botanist, Cytogeneticist, Plant Breeder and Conservationist broke several barriers through scholarship, determination and scientific excellence. Her pioneering research on sugarcane chromosomes has revolutionized the sweetness of Indian Sugarcane. Today, India is the world's largest consumer and the second-largest producer of sugar, contributing approximately 19% to 20% of global sugar production and accounting for about 15% of global consumption. Because of its massive scale, trends in the Indian sugar industry directly dictate global market dynamics and international pricing. Her contribution reflects today with 541 operational sugar mills (out of over 700 installed factories) in India and the total extent of sugarcane cultivation covers approximately 58.31 lakh

hectares (5.83 million hectares) as of the August 2026 Kharif season. The industry supports approximately 50 million sugarcane farmers and provides direct employment to around 5 lakh mill workers. Because of Dr Janaki Ammal's inventions, sugarcane is now one of the important crops in states like Uttar Pradesh, Mah arashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Her genetic maps allowed breeders to precisely pick variants that boosted the sucrose content of local cane up to 16% to 20%. Born on 4 November 1897 at Tellicherry, present-day Thalassery in Kerala, Janaki Ammal grew up in a progressive family that encouraged education. In the early twentieth century, when opportunities for women in higher education were extremely limited, she chose science as her career. She studied at Queen Mary's College and Presidency College in Madras, earning an Honours degree in Botany. She later travelled to the United States and



studied at the University of Michigan, where she specialized in Plant Cytology and Genetics. She earned her doctorate in 1931, becoming the first woman of Indian descent to receive a PhD in Botany from the University of Michigan. She wanted science to solve practical problems and contribute to agriculture and society. **The scientist who made sugarcane sweeter** One of her most important contributions came through her work at the Sugarcane Breeding Institute in Coimbatore, where she worked from 1934 to 1939. At that time, India had indigenous sugarcane varieties that were hardy and well adapted to local conditions, but many had relatively low sugar content. Foreign varieties were often sweeter but did not necessarily perform well under Indian climatic conditions. Janaki Ammal applied the emerging science of Cytogenetics, the study of chromosomes and their relationship to heredity, to sugarcane breed-

BVS Kumar

An Alumnus of
Agriculture College
Bapatla

ing. She studied chromosome numbers and used hybridization to combine desirable characteristics from different varieties and related grasses. Her research included interspecific and intergeneric crosses involving sugarcane and related plants. Her work became an important part of the effort to develop sugarcane varieties that were both productive with more sucrose content and better suited to Indian conditions. Returning to serve India After years of research abroad, Janaki Ammal returned to India at a time when the country was building its scientific institutions. She was invited to help reorganize the Botanical Survey of India and served in important scientific positions, including as Head of the Central Botanical Laboratory, Howrah. She later worked in Jammu and Kashmir and at other research institutions. Her approach to Botany was broad. She studied not only agricultural and horticultural plants but also medicinal plants and species of economic importance. Her interest gradually extended from plant genetics to ethnobotany, the study of the relationship between people and plants and the conservation of India's biological wealth. **Recognition and legacy** The Government of India honored her with the Padma Shree in 1977, recognizing her outstanding contribution to science. Janaki Ammal passed away on 7 February 1984, but her scientific legacy continues. Her work connects several

areas that are extremely relevant today in food security, crop improvement, genetics, biodiversity, medicinal plants and environmental conservation. An inspiration for generations Dr. Janaki Ammal's life offers a powerful lesson: scientific progress is created not merely by sophisticated laboratories but by courage, curiosity and perseverance with commitment and dedication. She entered science when women had very few opportunities, succeeded on the international stage, returned to serve India and used her knowledge for agriculture and conservation. Today, when India is looking towards sustainable and profitable agriculture, climate-resilient crops, biodiversity conservation and greater participation of women in science, Janaki Ammal's work has renewed relevance. She was much more than India's pioneering woman Botanist. She was a Scientist who understood the intimate connection between plants, people, agriculture and the environment. Her story deserves to be told not merely as a chapter in the history of Indian Science, but as an inspiration to every young woman and man who dreams of using knowledge to make the world better. Dr. Janaki Ammal proved that a determined Scientist can transcend the boundaries of gender, geography and convention, leaving behind a remarkable legacy that continues to flourish. She should be remembered by our farmers alongside Sir Arthur Cotton or Mokshag undam Visvesvarayya.

World's Largest
Real-Time Payment System: UPI

Ten years ago, sending money digitally was still not a part of every Indian's life, but today, we are paying for a cup of tea, for vegetable vander street-side, for any purchase without hard cash in purse, paying in seconds using smart phone. UPI works by connecting multiple bank accounts to a single mobile app, letting people send money, pay to merchants, and manage banking tasks round the clock. Security is built in through two-factor authentication and encryption, which is part of why the system gained trust so quickly across the country, both in urban and rural areas.

Decade of Digital Payments
History

The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), launched on 25 August 2016 by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) under the regulatory oversight of the RBI completed 10 years of transforming digital payments in India. UPI has emerged as the backbone of India's digital payments ecosystem and a critical driver of financial inclusion. UPI had emerged as one of the most successful pillars of India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), providing an interoperable, real-time payments platform that enables seamless person-to-person and

person-to-merchant transactions

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through a single application. However, person-to-person transactions dominate in value, accounting for 71 percent, reflecting its utility in personal transactions.

UPI Transaction Volume and
Value:

Over a decade of operations, UPI has demonstrated extraordinary scale and momentum. Annual transaction volume expanded from just 1.78 crore transactions in FY 2016-17 to over 24,162 crore transactions in FY 2025-26, representing an almost 13,000-fold surge in transaction volume. Transaction value rose sharply from 0.07 lakh crore in FY 2017 to approximately 7314 lakh crore in FY 2026, translating into a more than 4,000-fold increase in transaction value, according to the ministry. Monthly transaction volumes crossed 2,300 crore for the first time in May 2026, reaching 2,320 crore transactions and rising to 2,366 crore transactions recorded in July 2026. Today, UPI is the most preferred mode of transac-

tion for millions of users, transforming the way India transacts through a single operation. By bridging the digital divide, advancing financial inclusion, and expanding access to digital financial services, UPI has empowered individuals and communities across the country while driving broad-based economic participation. The UPI payment system processes an average of over 66 crore transactions every single day. These digital transactions account for nearly 49 percent of the world's real-time transaction volume. The cross-border acceptance is active in 11 countries, including the UAE, France, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Qatar, Cambodia, and the Maldives. This step further strengthens bilateral digital financial connectivity between India and partner nations.

The unprecedented scale, reliability, and interoperability achieved by UPI have received global recognition, with the IMF acknowledging it as the world's largest real-time payment system by transaction volume, underscoring India's leadership in building scalable, inclusive, and innovative digital public infrastructure.

When Rain Was Our Playground



My childhood days in the rainy season were as beautiful and enjoyable as a rainbow. In fact, rains are a special attraction that nature offers as a counter to the harsh summer. Months of hot days would vanish like a magician's trick with the arrival of the monsoons. The first spell of rain would bring enormous joy and relief to parched throats and scorched lands. It would bring a dramatic change to the landscape, making it more colourful. All living beings would feel younger and more energetic.

The rains are many things to many people. But for farmers, it is time to shed their summer lethargy and get ready to produce gems from the soil. For children, it is time to play. Unlike now, there were no weather forecasts or rain predictions. If it rained incessantly for a few days, people were unaware of whether it was due to the monsoon or some cyclonic effect. Floods or famines, people took everything in their stride. They never complained against anyone or anything and simply moved on. During my school days, rain coming from the sky always puzzled me. Was there any reservoir up in the sky? Where did the clouds go to drink water? Who was sending down the rain? Later, these doubts were cleared while studying the 'Water Cycle' topic in Science class. Once dense clouds gathered in the sky and opened up, we siblings

and cousins would run into the front yard of our house to enjoy the rain. Only after much shouting and yelling would we retreat. Sometimes, we were literally dragged back into the house, completely soaked to the skin. Our elders feared that we would catch a cold or develop a fever. But we did not care. When we caught a cold or developed a fever, our par-

Doing such things was a joy forever. After the rain stopped, our next bout of water games would commence. We would immerse ourselves in making water channels across the street, making round basins with our feet, building sandcastles and so on. Watching rainbows with awe, observing wriggling earthworms and roaming armies of millipedes, hearing the croaking of frogs and watching dragonflies flying at jet speed were some of the favourite pastimes of our generation. We learnt

more from nature than from classrooms. Now, all parents want their children to learn everything from the classroom. Interaction with nature has been reduced to almost zero. Nothing deterred us, and nobody stopped us from playing in muddy waters. Even frolicking in floodwater was not a taboo. Such was the freedom we enjoyed in those halcyon days. Interference was minimal and monitoring was unknown. In fact, nobody had any expectations of anyone. Life used to move at its leisurely pace. No pressures and deadlines were imposed. We grew up naturally, retaining our childlike qualities intact. But the current generation of children is imprisoned in the name of education and deprived of the simple pleasures that nature offers aplenty, free of cost.

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Kharge Seeks Clarity On Special Parliament Session



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking clarity on reports that the Centre may convene a special session of Parliament to introduce legislation related to delimitation. Kharge has described delimitation as an issue of major national importance and urged the government to clearly state its intentions before taking any legislative step. The Congress has also reiterated its demand that the existing strength of the Lok Sabha should remain unchanged for the next 25 years. Delimitation involves redrawing parliamentary constituencies based on population figures. The issue has become politically sensitive because several states, particularly in southern India, fear that population-based delimitation could alter the current balance of representation in Parliament. The Congress argues that states which successfully implemented population-control measures should not be penalised through a reduction in their political representation. Party leaders have repeatedly raised concerns that states with larger populations could gain a greater share of Lok Sabha seats under a new delimitation exercise. Kharge has therefore called for broad consultations involving political parties and state governments before any decision is taken. The Congress wants the Centre to clarify whether a special session is actually being planned and whether new delimitation Bills could be introduced. The issue is also linked to the Census and the constitutional requirement for a fresh delimitation exercise after the first Census conducted following 2026. Any change in the distribution of parliamentary constituencies could have long-term political consequences. The debate has gained further significance because delimitation is closely connected with women's reservation in Parliament. The implementation of the reservation law is expected to be linked to the completion of the delimitation process. Opposition parties have been demanding greater transparency over the government's plans, arguing that such a major constitutional and political exercise should not be undertaken without consensus. With political parties already preparing for future elections, the delimitation issue is likely to become increasingly contentious. Kharge's letter has once again brought the subject into the national spotlight, with the Congress insisting that federal balance and the interests of all states must be protected before any new delimitation exercise is undertaken.

Tharoor Urges Media To Avoid Boasting

Congress MP and former diplomat Shashi Tharoor has welcomed India's swift response to the devastating flash floods in Nepal, while urging Indian media outlets to avoid excessive publicity or "boasting" about the assistance being provided. Speaking at the NDTV World Anviksha Summit in Kathmandu, Tharoor said India had done the right thing by responding quickly to Nepal's crisis. He described the immediate relief assistance as the natural responsibility of a close neighbour and said more help should be provided if required. At the same time, Tharoor recalled India's experience during Nepal's earthquake and warned that the way humanitarian assistance is presented can affect bilateral relations. He said India had provided substantial help at the time, but sections of the Indian media had highlighted the assistance in a manner that created resentment among Nepalis. According to Tharoor, people facing a disaster do not need to be repeatedly reminded that another country is helping them. He argued that the media should show the same sensitivity towards India-Nepal relations as the government does. His remarks come as India has begun sending emergency relief material to flood-hit Nepal. The assistance is aimed at supporting rescue and recovery efforts after devastating floods swept through parts of the Himalayan nation, destroying homes, bridges, roads and other infrastructure. The disaster has also affected a large number of Indian nationals, including pilgrims travelling towards the Kailash Mansarovar region. Families across India are seeking information about relatives who remain missing or stranded. Tharoor stressed that Nepal needs all the assistance it can receive at this critical moment. He also called for a broader change in India's approach towards its Himalayan neighbour, arguing that New Delhi should engage with Nepal as a sovereign and equal country. The former diplomat said strong bilateral relations require sensitivity and mutual respect, particularly during moments of crisis. Humanitarian assistance, he suggested, should strengthen the relationship rather than create a perception of superiority. With rescue operations still underway, India's support is expected to continue. Tharoor's message is that while helping a neighbour during a catastrophe is important, how that help is communicated can be equally significant for long-term India-Nepal ties.

Top Law School Cancels Convocation Amid Row

The National Law School of India University (NLSIU) in Bengaluru has cancelled its 34th annual convocation for the graduating batch of 2026, citing "unavoidable circumstances". The ceremony was earlier scheduled to take place on September 12. The cancellation comes amid growing opposition from students and alumni over the proposed participation of Bar Council of India Chairman Manan Kumar Mishra and Chief Justice of India Surya Kant at the convocation. According to the university, the degrees of graduating students will instead be conferred in absentia, subject to approval from the appropriate governing bodies. Students will be given the option of receiving their certificates by courier or collecting them directly from the campus. The controversy has its roots in a wider dispute involving the BCI and another premier law institution, NALSAR. Students at NLSIU described the BCI's earlier actions as an attack on free speech. They also criticised a directive seeking information about students and faculty members involved in the campaign against the proposed participation of the legal officials. Amid the growing tensions, CJI Surya Kant reportedly held an interaction with NLSIU students to understand their concerns. The cancellation of the convocation has now added another dimension to the controversy. Instead of celebrating their graduation together, the 2026 batch will receive their degrees through an alternative process. The development has sparked a wider debate over student dissent, institutional autonomy and the relationship between law students and regulatory bodies.



PM Modi Set For Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan Visit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to undertake a four-day visit to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan from August 29 to September 1, with the trip expected to strengthen India's engagement with Central Asia and deepen cooperation on regional and global issues. Modi will first visit Uzbekistan on August 29 and 30 for bilateral talks with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The visit comes as India seeks to expand its strategic partnership with Uzbekistan in areas including trade, connectivity, defence, technology, energy and regional security. From Uzbekistan, the Prime Minister will travel to Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan to participate in the 26th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit on August 31 and September 1. The summit will bring together leaders of major Eurasian countries to discuss regional security, economic cooperation and development. The SCO meeting is expected to focus on terrorism, connectivity,



trade, energy and broader regional stability. Discussions on strengthening economic cooperation within the grouping are also likely to receive attention, including the proposed SCO Development Bank. Modi's visit is also significant against the backdrop of evolving India-China relations. Recent diplomatic contacts between New

Delhi and Beijing have indicated efforts to stabilise bilateral ties and maintain dialogue on important issues. The SCO summit could provide an opportunity for Modi to engage with Chinese President Xi Jinping and other regional leaders. Russian President Vladimir Putin is also expected to meet Modi on the sidelines of the sum-

mit, adding importance to the gathering for India's engagement with Moscow. India has traditionally viewed Central Asia as strategically important because of its geographical location, natural resources and connectivity potential. However, geographical barriers and the lack of direct land access have complicated New Delhi's efforts to expand economic links with the region. The upcoming visit therefore carries significance beyond routine diplomacy. It reflects India's effort to strengthen its presence in Central Asia, maintain strategic partnerships with Russia and other regional powers, and pursue its broader multi-alignment policy. Modi's engagements in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are expected to give fresh momentum to India's Central Asia strategy while providing an important platform to discuss regional security, connectivity, trade and economic cooperation.

Nearly 300 Indians Missing In Nepal Floods

Nepal is facing a devastating humanitarian crisis after massive flash floods struck the Rasuwa region near the Nepal-Tibet border, leaving at least 160 people dead and thousands unaccounted for. Nepal Foreign Minister Shishir Khanal said nearly 300 Indian nationals, many of them pilgrims travelling for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, have been reported missing. Around 500 foreign nationals in total are currently out of contact. The disaster struck suddenly, sending huge volumes of muddy water, rocks and debris through settlements along the river system. Entire towns and villages were severely damaged within hours, with homes, roads, bridges and other infrastructure either washed away or buried under mud. Speaking about the situation, Khanal described the scale of the destruction as unprecedented. He said thousands of families had lost their homes and that authorities were still trying to determine the full extent of the disaster.



The large number of missing Indians has raised serious concerns in India, particularly because many were believed to be pilgrims travelling through the region. Families are anxiously waiting for information about their relatives as rescue teams struggle to reach affected areas. Nepal's security forces and emergency agencies have launched extensive search-and-rescue oper-

ations. However, the destruction of roads and bridges has made access to several locations extremely difficult. Communication networks have also been disrupted in some areas, complicating efforts to establish contact with people stranded in remote locations. Nepal's army has rescued more than 100 people from Timure in Rasuwa, while rescue teams continue operations in the worst-hit

areas. Authorities are also assessing the damage and providing emergency assistance to survivors. India is coordinating with Nepal to locate its citizens and assist those affected by the disaster. Indian authorities are closely monitoring the situation and working with Nepalese agencies on rescue and relief operations. The disaster has also affected areas on the Tibetan side of the border, with significant casualties and infrastructure damage reported there. For Nepal, the immediate priorities are rescuing survivors, locating missing people and providing shelter and medical assistance. For India, the focus remains on tracing missing nationals and ensuring the safe return of those stranded. With thousands of people still unaccounted for, the full scale of the tragedy remains unclear. Rescue teams are continuing their efforts amid extremely challenging conditions, while families on both sides of the border wait anxiously for news of their loved ones.

New Myanmar Drug Route Alarms Assam

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has raised serious concerns over the emergence of a new drug trafficking route from Myanmar through Arunachal Pradesh into Assam. Sarma said drug traffickers who previously relied on the Moreh-Manipur corridor are now attempting to use a different route through Changlang district in Arunachal Pradesh before reaching Tinsukia in Assam. The new corridor came to light during investigations into recent drug trafficking cases. Describing the development as a "very worrying signal" for Upper Assam, the Chief Minister said the changing routes showed that drug networks were attempting to evade intensified enforcement measures. He warned that authorities would continue to target traffickers regardless of which route they chose. Assam has significantly intensified its crackdown on narcotics in recent weeks. According to Sarma, authorities



recently seized drugs worth around ₹80 crore that were allegedly being transported towards Punjab. He said the scale of the seizure highlighted the growing challenge posed by organised drug networks operating across state and international borders. The emergence of the new route has also increased concerns because Arunachal Pradesh

shares a long and difficult-to-monitor border with Myanmar. The mountainous terrain and remote locations can make surveillance and enforcement particularly challenging. Officials said drug-producing networks in Myanmar have historically used India's Northeast as a transit corridor. The latest shift indicates that trafficking groups may be constantly chang-

ing their routes to avoid security agencies. Arunachal Pradesh has also stepped up its own anti-drug operations, with authorities arresting several people allegedly involved in narcotics trafficking. Sarma has made the fight against drugs a major priority for his government and has repeatedly called for stronger coordination between law-enforcement agencies across the Northeast. The latest development has therefore triggered concerns not only for Assam but for the wider region. Authorities fear that the new corridor could expand if traffickers are not stopped at an early stage. Sarma has made it clear that changing routes will not weaken the government's crackdown. With increased surveillance, seizures and arrests expected along the Myanmar-Arunachal-Assam corridor, security agencies are now focusing on preventing the emerging route from becoming an established drug-trafficking network.

MP School Education Department Tops Payment Probe

Madhya Pradesh's School Education Department has emerged as the department with the highest number of offices flagged in a statewide investigation into suspected irregularities in government payments. The probe is examining transactions worth around ₹648 crore made through the state's financial management system. The investigation is being conducted by the State Financial Intelligence Cell, which was established to identify suspicious payment patterns through the government treasury system. Officials said the investigation covers transactions suspected to be irregular, fraudulent, duplicated or excessive. Of the 187 Drawing and Disbursing Offices flagged across various government departments, 45 belong to the School Education Department. This is the highest number among all departments. The Revenue Department follows with 43 flagged offices, while the Tribal Affairs Department has 26. The investigation has identified around ₹349 crore in irregular



transfers and another ₹299 crore in payments categorised as suspicious, fraudulent, duplicate or excessive. However, officials have cautioned that these figures represent transactions that triggered alerts and do not automatically mean that the entire amount was misappropriated. Investigators have also identified nearly ₹305 crore across 199 suspicious transactions involving trans-

fers to private bank accounts linked to government officials, employees and their relatives. Another ₹293 crore meant to remain in Treasury Personal Deposit accounts was reportedly transferred to other bank accounts. The probe has uncovered several weaknesses in the government payment system. These include duplicate employee codes, changes

to registered mobile numbers, shared login credentials and mismatches between employee records and bank-account details. Such vulnerabilities could potentially facilitate unauthorised or duplicate payments. Authorities have already recovered around ₹56 crore and reversed irregular transfers worth nearly ₹164 crore, bringing the amount addressed so far to approximately ₹220 crore. Where investigations indicate criminal wrongdoing, cases have been referred for further action, with FIRs reportedly registered against more than 50 officials over the past three years. Following the findings, the Madhya Pradesh government has introduced additional safeguards, including stronger system validation, restrictions on changing registered mobile numbers, payment limits and mandatory two-factor authentication. The investigation is continuing, with officials examining the flagged transactions to determine which cases involve genuine errors and which may point to financial misconduct.

China Warns Of Fresh Risk To Nepal Rescue



China has warned of a fresh geological threat that could further complicate rescue operations following the devastating floods and landslides along the Nepal-China border. Authorities in Beijing have identified a barrier lake upstream from the affected Himalayan border area. The lake has already begun overflowing, raising concerns that a sudden release of water could trigger another surge and create additional danger for people in the region. According to Chinese authorities, the barrier lake is located near the meeting point of the Chhochen Khola and Purepu Tsangpo rivers, northeast of the disaster-hit area. China's Ministry of Water Resources has increased monitoring of the lake and is assessing the possibility of further geological hazards. The latest warning comes as rescue teams continue searching for hundreds of people missing after the catastrophic flash floods. The disaster caused extensive destruction in Nepal and Tibet, sweeping away homes, roads, bridges and power infrastructure. The barrier lake was estimated to contain around 2 million cubic metres of water on Thursday, while another 3 million cubic metres could flow into it over the next three days. Authorities are therefore keeping a close watch on water levels and surrounding geological conditions. The potential threat has added another challenge for rescue teams already working in extremely difficult terrain. Several roads and bridges have been damaged, leaving some areas difficult to access. Rescue workers must now balance the urgent search for survivors with the possibility of another flood or landslide. China has deployed additional fire and rescue personnel from Beijing and Chengdu to assist local police and emergency teams. Authorities have also evacuated residents from vulnerable areas on the Tibetan side of the border. The latest danger follows the massive flash flood that struck the region on August 26. A huge wall of mud and rock entered the Lhende River near the border, triggering a powerful surge that travelled downstream through the Bhote Kosi and Trishuli river systems in Nepal. The disaster has already caused a large number of deaths and left hundreds of people missing. Critical infrastructure has been destroyed, while rescue and relief operations remain underway on both sides of the border. The emergence of a new barrier lake highlights the continuing dangers facing the region even after the initial floodwaters have receded. With unstable slopes, blocked waterways and changing water levels posing additional risks, authorities are closely monitoring the situation. For rescuers, the priority remains finding survivors and providing emergency assistance, but the possibility of another sudden surge means operations must proceed with extreme caution.

Trump Team Defends Plan To Revoke 2 Lakh Visas

The Trump administration is preparing a major review of temporary US visas that could eventually lead to the cancellation of up to 2 lakh business and tourist visas. The move targets foreign nationals who entered the United States on temporary visas and later applied for asylum or sought to remain permanently.



US State Department spokesperson Tommy Pigott defended the proposed action, saying that a US visa is "a privilege, not a right." He said the administration was targeting what it considers fraud and abuse in the visa system. The review mainly concerns B1 and B2 visas. B1 visas are generally issued for business travel, while B2 visas are meant for tourism, family visits and certain medical purposes. According to US officials, authorities are examining cases in which people entered the country claiming they intended to stay temporarily but later applied for asylum. The key issue is whether applicants misrepresented their intentions when they originally applied for their visas. The administration argues that temporary visas are issued with the expectation that visitors will eventually return to their home countries. If authorities determine that an applicant deliberately concealed an intention to remain permanently, officials could consider that fraud and revoke the visa.

However, applying for asylum after entering the US does not automatically mean that a person committed fraud. Authorities are specifically looking at whether the individual had already decided to remain permanently before obtaining the temporary visa and failed to disclose that intention during the visa process.

The State Department has not officially confirmed that exactly 2 lakh visas will be revoked. Officials have indicated that the figure could change as the review progresses and that the cancellations would take place in phases rather than all at once.

The review could affect nationals from several countries, including potentially Indians. However, US officials have not provided a specific figure for Indian nationals who could be affected and have not singled out India for special treatment.

The proposed action is part of President Donald Trump's broader immigration crackdown. His administration has increased scrutiny of visa applicants and taken several steps aimed at tightening both legal and illegal immigration.

Officials have also stressed that revoking a visa does not automatically mean immediate deportation for someone already in the United States with a pending asylum case. Their immigration status could instead be affected through separate legal procedures. The proposed mass cancellation could become one of the largest visa-revocation exercises in US history. It has already raised concerns among immigration advocates and could face legal challenges. For now, the administration says the focus is on preventing misuse of temporary visas. For foreign nationals holding US visitor visas, the latest policy sends a clear message that authorities are prepared to take action if they believe the original purpose of a visa was misrepresented.

China Denies Dam Link To Nepal Floods

China has rejected allegations that the devastating flash floods in Nepal were caused by the collapse of a "geological disaster dam" on the Chinese side of the border. Beijing has also dismissed claims that it failed to provide an early warning to Nepal before the disaster.

The flash floods struck areas around the Nepal-China border, causing widespread destruction and leaving hundreds of people dead or missing. Roads, bridges, power infrastructure and buildings were swept away by powerful torrents of water, mud and debris. Questions emerged in Nepal over whether a natural geological blockage or dam had formed upstream and later collapsed, sending a sudden surge of water into Nepal. There were also concerns about whether an earlier warning from Chinese authorities could have helped people living downstream move to safer locations.

China has rejected both allegations, calling them false. The Chinese Embassy in Nepal said



the disaster was triggered by an earthquake or earthquake-like event and a massive landslide, rather than the collapse of a geological dam on the Chinese side. However, preliminary geological and satellite assessments have pointed towards an ice-rock avalanche or glacial collapse as the likely trigger. The collapse sent huge quantities of ice, rock and debris into the Lhende Khola river,

generating a powerful downstream surge.

The event caused extensive destruction on both sides of the border. The floodwaters swept through settlements and damaged critical infrastructure, while rescue operations have been complicated by damaged roads, communication networks and difficult Himalayan terrain. Chinese authorities have launched

large-scale rescue and relief operations in the affected areas. Nepal and China are also coordinating their efforts to locate missing people and provide emergency assistance.

The disaster has renewed attention on the growing risks posed by unstable glaciers and mountain slopes in the Himalayas. Scientists have warned that rising temperatures, glacier melt and changing weather patterns could increase the likelihood of such extreme events.

The incident has also highlighted the importance of cross-border early-warning systems. Nepal and China have agreed to exchange meteorological information to improve preparedness for future disasters.

For now, China has firmly denied that a collapsed geological dam on its territory caused the Nepal floods. While investigations into the exact sequence of events continue, authorities on both sides are focusing on rescue, relief and preventing further disasters.

Putin Moves To Escalate Ukraine War As Talks Stall

Russia is preparing to intensify its military campaign in Ukraine after peace negotiations were reportedly pushed to a dead end, raising fresh concerns that the nearly four-year-old war could enter an even more dangerous phase.

People familiar with the Kremlin's thinking said Moscow is considering a new wave of powerful conventional ballistic missile strikes against Kyiv, including possible attacks on targets in the Ukrainian capital. Critical infrastructure in other Ukrainian cities could also come under increased pressure.

The development comes after months of diplomatic efforts aimed at finding a settlement. Negotiations involving the United States, Russia and Ukraine have so far failed to bridge major differences, particularly over territory and security guarantees. Recent discussions have produced little progress, leaving the two sides facing many of the same disagreements that have blocked a peace deal.

Russia's leadership reportedly



believes that economic pressure, Western sanctions and Ukrainian attacks on Russian infrastructure have not forced Moscow to change its position. Instead, the Kremlin appears increasingly prepared to rely on military pressure to achieve its objectives.

Ukraine, meanwhile, has stepped up attacks against Russian military and economic targets. Ukrainian drones have struck oil refineries, logistics facilities and other infrastructure inside Russia, adding to pressure on Moscow. The possibility of intensified Russian missile attacks has raised

concerns in Kyiv, particularly because Ukraine's air-defence systems are already under significant pressure. Western countries have been working to provide additional interceptor missiles and other air-defence equipment as Russian attacks continue. The latest developments also come amid growing concern over the future of US-led diplomatic efforts.

While Washington has continued to push for an end to the conflict, expectations of an immediate breakthrough have weakened considerably.

Russia has previously indicated

that it remains open to negotiations, but Moscow insists that any agreement must reflect what it describes as the "realities on the ground." Ukraine, on the other hand, has rejected demands that would require it to surrender territory.

The possibility of further escalation has also revived fears about how far Russia could go if conventional military pressure fails. However, there is currently no concrete indication that Moscow has decided to use nuclear weapons, and analysts continue to consider such a scenario highly unlikely.

For now, the biggest concern is a renewed intensification of conventional attacks. With diplomatic efforts struggling to produce results and both Russia and Ukraine continuing to target each other's military and strategic infrastructure, hopes for a quick end to the war appear increasingly distant. The latest situation suggests that instead of moving closer to a peace agreement, Moscow and Kyiv could once again be heading toward a more dangerous phase of the conflict.

Meta Agrees \$17 Billion Deal Over Teen Safety

Meta has agreed to pay up to \$17 billion to settle a major legal battle with US states over allegations that Facebook and Instagram were designed in ways that encouraged teenagers to spend excessive amounts of time on social media.

The settlement follows a closely watched legal dispute in which several US states accused Meta of deliberately creating features that could encourage addictive behaviour among young users. Authorities also alleged that the company failed to adequately protect children and teenagers from potential harms associated with its platforms.

Meta has denied wrongdoing. However, as part of the proposed settlement, the company has agreed to introduce several significant changes aimed at improving safety for users under the age of 18.

One of the most notable measures is a daily usage limit for teenage accounts. Under the proposed changes, teenagers would face restrictions on how long they can use Meta's social media platforms each day. Access would also be restricted during overnight hours, while notifications could be limited during school hours.

Meta is also expected to strengthen its age-verification systems. The company plans to improve its ability to identify underage users and prevent children from accessing features or content that may not be appropriate for their age. Parents could also receive greater control over their children's accounts. Enhanced parental controls are expected to give parents more information about their children's activity and allow them to manage certain aspects of their social media use. Some features that have faced criticism for encouraging excessive engagement could also be restricted for teenagers. These may include certain recommendation systems, personalised content and features designed to increase user interaction. The settlement comes amid growing concern in the United States about the impact of social media on children and teenagers. Parents, educators and lawmakers have increasingly questioned whether platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube are doing enough to protect young users.



Chinese Hackers Breach NASA, Senate In Major Attack

The United States has disrupted a major cyber-espionage operation allegedly linked to Chinese state-backed hackers that targeted several sensitive American government agencies and critical infrastructure networks.

US authorities said the hacking campaign involved a group known as QTFY and relied on two platforms, QScan and QTRouter. Law enforcement agencies seized internet domains associated with the platforms as part of an operation aimed at dismantling the hacking infrastructure. According to the US Justice Department, the hackers successfully breached or targeted several high-profile institutions, including NASA, the Federal Reserve, the US Senate, the Department of Justice, the Department of Energy and the National Institutes of Health. The campaign also allegedly targeted the Department of Health and Human Services and several organisations in the private sector. Hospitals, universities, telecommunications companies, power providers, financial institutions and defence contractors were among the sectors reportedly targeted. Investigators said QTFY was connected to Nanjing Xinjiuwei Network Technology Company, a China-based technology firm. Court documents allege that the hacking group provided services to customers including China's Ministry of State Security and the People's Liberation Army. The hackers reportedly used QScan to scan internet-connected devices for vulnerabilities and automatically infect them. Those compromised devices were then incorporated into QTRouter, creating a large network that could be used to conduct further cyberattacks. The infrastructure also relied on commercial proxy services and rented virtual private servers. This allowed the attackers to hide the true origin of their activities and make it more difficult for investigators to trace the operations back to China.

US officials said the hacking campaign had been active since at least 2018. Investigators found evidence of successful data theft from defence contractors, financial institutions and universities, while several attempts to penetrate other networks were unsuccessful.



Iran, US Tensions Escalate Over Strait Of Hormuz

Tensions between Iran and the United States remain high as the two countries continue to face off over the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Fresh developments have raised concerns about the security of one of the world's most important oil routes. Iran and Oman have reportedly agreed to share revenues from the Strait of Hormuz, amid continuing uncertainty over the waterway. The development comes as efforts continue to manage tensions surrounding shipping and energy supplies in the region. The Strait of Hormuz is a crucial global trade route through which a

significant share of the world's oil supplies passes. Any prolonged disruption could therefore have consequences far beyond the Middle East, potentially pushing up crude prices and increasing pressure on energy-importing countries. The latest developments follow a series of warnings and threats between Washington and Tehran. US President Donald Trump has repeatedly warned Iran against actions that could threaten shipping through the strait. The United States has also increased pressure on Iran through sanctions and military measures. Iran, mean-

while, has maintained a tough position and warned that it will respond to attempts to restrict its economic activity or challenge its control over the region. The situation became more tense after an unidentified projectile struck a tanker in the Strait of Hormuz, triggering a fire that was later brought under control. The incident added to concerns about the safety of commercial shipping in the strategically important waterway. The Strait of Hormuz has become a major centre of the wider US-Iran confrontation. Washington has sought to pressure



Tehran economically while keeping military options

open, whereas Iran has resisted US demands and warned against further escalation. The crisis is also being closely watched by countries that depend heavily on energy imports. Any major disruption to oil shipments could lead to higher crude prices, increased transportation costs and renewed inflationary pressures across global economies. For India, the situation is particularly important because the country is one of the world's largest energy importers and has significant trade and strategic interests in the Gulf region. Higher oil prices

could increase India's import bill and put additional pressure on domestic fuel prices and inflation. Diplomatic efforts remain crucial as both sides consider their next steps. Although there have been attempts at negotiations and mediation, deep disagreements between Washington and Tehran continue to make a lasting settlement difficult. For now, the Strait of Hormuz remains a major geopolitical flashpoint. Any military confrontation or prolonged disruption could have serious consequences for global energy markets, international trade and regional stability.

FDA Cancels Cipla Unit's Drug Licence

Mumbai: The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has cancelled the drug sale licences of Cipla Pharma & Life Sciences Ltd's Carry and Forwarding (C&F) unit in Pune, citing serious irregularities in the packaging, storage and recall of Reactin Plus Tablets. According to an FDA statement issued on Friday, the cancellation took effect on August 27 following inspections of the company's main warehouse at Wadki in Pune district. The regulator said its inspections uncovered several deficiencies in the unit's drug storage and distribution systems. Medicines were found stored directly on the floor, while arrangements involving pallets and racks were deemed inadequate. The FDA also identified shortcomings in procedures and record-keeping related to expired medicines. During an inspection conducted around June, officials found that the packaging of Reactin Plus Tablets, a Schedule H prescription medicine, carried an unauthorised claim describing the product as an "analgesic and antipyretic". The FDA said the claim violated provi-



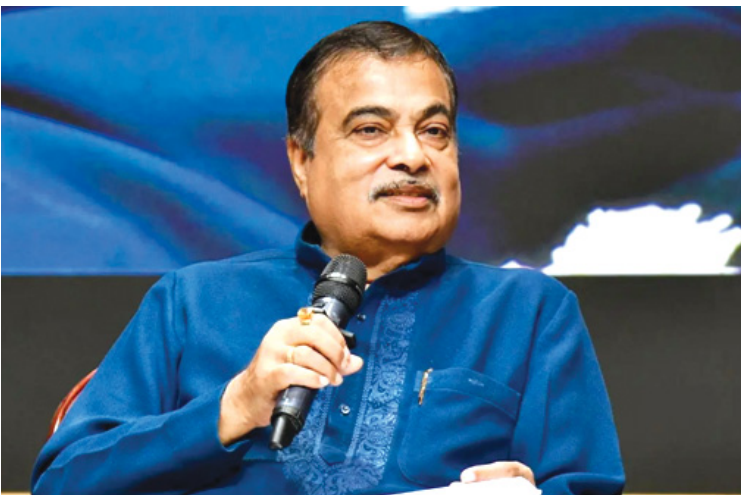
sions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and the Drugs Rules, 1945. Following the discovery, the regulator seized stock valued at Rs 11.19 lakh and directed the company to recall the misbranded tablets from the market. However, the FDA said Cipla Pharma & Life Sciences did not fully comply with the recall directions and other measures required

by the regulator. A subsequent inspection of the C&F unit's sale and distribution system revealed further irregularities. These included discrepancies between purchase and sale records and the actual computerised stock, as well as differences between physical inventory and computerised records. The FDA also flagged deficiencies in storage arrangements and the procedures

followed for handling expired medicines. The regulator subsequently issued a show-cause notice to the licence holder, seeking an explanation for the violations. After examining the company's response, the FDA concluded that the deficiencies had not been adequately addressed and that directions relating to the recall of Reactin Plus Tablets had not been properly complied with. FDA Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe said the department would take a strict approach to violations involving drug safety and public health. He particularly highlighted the importance of compliance in the advertising, sale, storage and distribution of Schedule H prescription medicines. Mundhe said any violation of rules by entities involved in the manufacture or distribution of medicines would invite action under the law. The cancellation represents a regulatory setback for Cipla's Pune distribution operations and underlines the increasing scrutiny of pharmaceutical companies over drug labelling, inventory management, storage standards and compliance with recall orders.

EV Market May Hit Rs.20 Lakh Crore by 2030

New Delhi: India's electric vehicle (EV) market could expand to around Rs.20 lakh crore by 2030 and generate nearly five crore jobs, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said. Speaking at a conference organised by the CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development, Gadkari said 5.7 million electric vehicles had been registered in the country so far, accounting for around 7 per cent of the overall vehicle market. He highlighted the growing potential of India's EV ecosystem and said the sector could become a major source of employment and economic growth over the coming years. Gadkari said leading two-wheeler manufacturers Bajaj Auto and Hero MotoCorp were already exporting more than half of the vehicles they produce, reflecting the increasing competitiveness of India's automobile industry in global markets. The minister also pointed to a significant gap between demand and production in the electric bus segment. India has annual demand



for around one lakh electric buses, but manufacturers currently have the capacity to produce only about 50,000-60,000 units, he said. The government, Gadkari added, aims to make India's automobile industry the world's leading vehicle manufacturing sector within the next five years. He attributed India's potential success to the combination of competitive pricing and improving quality of vehi-

cles manufactured domestically. Gadkari said the size of India's automobile industry had increased substantially since he took charge as the road transport minister. The industry's value, which stood at around Rs.14 lakh crore at the time, has now grown to approximately Rs.23 lakh crore. For comparison, he said the US automobile industry is valued at around Rs.78 lakh crore, while

China's is estimated at approximately Rs.47 lakh crore, indicating significant room for further expansion of India's automotive sector. The minister also stressed the importance of reducing India's dependence on imported fuel. The country currently imports fuel worth around Rs.22 lakh crore annually, he said, adding that bio-fuels are expected to play an increasingly important role in the transport sector in the future. Gadkari further said improvements in the country's road infrastructure had helped bring down logistics costs significantly. Logistics expenses have declined from around 16 per cent to 10 per cent, and the government's target is to reduce them further to 8 per cent. The expansion of EV manufacturing, increased exports, alternative fuels and lower logistics costs are expected to strengthen India's position as a global automobile manufacturing hub. The government is also banking on rising domestic demand and technological development to accelerate the transition towards cleaner mobility.

Subhash Chandra Says Claim Is Rs.3,992 Crore

New Delhi: Essel Group founder Subhash Chandra has clarified that the total claim against him in his personal insolvency proceedings is Rs.3,992 crore, and not Rs.22,006.57 crore as widely reported. He said he was only a personal guarantor for loans taken by companies and was not himself a borrower. Chandra's clarification comes amid widespread discussion over the National Company Law Tribunal's (NCLT) approval of a resolution plan under which only Rs.6.5 crore would be paid against claims of Rs.22,006.57 crore in his personal insolvency case. The approval had raised concerns among lenders over the extent of recovery. Responding to the reports on Thursday, Chandra said the total amount claimed against him was Rs.3,992 crore. Of this, claims amounting to Rs.620 crore have already been resolved, while companies that had borrowed the money have agreed to repay another



Rs.1,063 crore, he said. Chandra further claimed that companies that had borrowed funds against his personal guarantees had already repaid around Rs.43,000 crore. He said the concerned companies had also assured lenders that the remaining amounts would be settled. How the Case Began The insolvency proceedings originated with a Rs.170-crore loan taken by Vivek Infracon, which

subsequently turned into a non-performing asset. Chandra had provided a personal guarantee for the loan. After the lender approached the NCLT and insolvency proceedings were initiated, other entities with claims against Chandra joined the process. This eventually pushed the aggregate claims submitted in the proceedings to Rs.22,006 crore. The claims included loans taken by companies associated with the Essel and Zee Network groups for which Chandra had provided personal guarantees. Chandra, however, maintains that these figures should not be treated as loans personally borrowed by him. HDFC Bank to Appeal HDFC Bank has announced that it will challenge the approval of the resolution plan, joining lenders who had opposed it on the grounds that the recovery was too low. The lenders, led by LIC Housing Finance, had argued that the plan should not be approved because of the limited recovery. Their objec-

tions were rejected by the tribunal. HDFC Bank said its claim of around Rs.680 crore would result in a recovery of only about 3.2 per cent under the approved plan. The bank also said the loan had been sourced from its parent entity, HDFC. Vijay Mallya Reacts Fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya, who is currently in the UK, reacted sarcastically to the development. He congratulated Chandra if the reported resolution was accurate and drew a comparison with his own case. Mallya said the court-determined amount outstanding against him was Rs.6,203 crore, while banks and the government had acknowledged recovery of Rs.14,100 crore. He also pointed to other borrowers who, according to him, had settled their liabilities by paying substantially smaller amounts. Mallya described the situation as an example of what he called India's approach to debt-resolution law.

Sandhya Devanathan to Join OpenAI

New Delhi: Sandhya Devanathan, Meta's Vice President and Head for India and Southeast Asia, is stepping down from the social media company after more than a decade to take up a leadership role at OpenAI. Devanathan announced her departure in a social media post on Friday, describing the decision as "bittersweet". She said she would take a short break before sharing details about her next chapter. Devanathan will join OpenAI in October 2026 to lead its operations across Southeast Asia and Australia. In her new role, she will oversee consumer growth, enterprise adoption, partnerships, engagement with authorities and regional operations for the ChatGPT maker. Her move comes at a time when OpenAI is expand-

ing its presence across international markets and focusing on increasing adoption among consumers, businesses and other organisations. Meta's Asia-Pacific leadership acknowledged Devanathan's contribution to the company. Benjamin Joe, Meta's Vice President for Asia Pacific, thanked her for her work and said Arun Srinivas, Meta's Managing Director and Country Head for India, would join his leadership team and help build on the company's existing foundation in the country. Devanathan joined Meta more than 10 years ago, beginning her journey when the company had around 300 employees in Singapore. During her tenure, she worked across multiple sectors



and markets, including e-commerce and gaming. She became Meta's Vice President for Asia-Pacific Gaming in 2020. In 2023, she was appointed Vice President and head of Meta India, before expanding her responsibilities to Southeast Asia in 2025. Reflecting on her tenure, Devanathan said she had the opportunity to work with startups, businesses, creators and ecosystem partners across India and Southeast Asia. She also

highlighted the evolving role of Meta's platforms in the region. According to Devanathan, WhatsApp has increasingly been used to support government citizen services in India, while Meta platforms have helped small businesses expand in markets such as Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand. She said that although Meta's products and teams had evolved considerably during her tenure, its commitment to clients remained consistent. Devanathan also expressed pride in the teams she worked with, particularly as the technology industry underwent rapid changes. She thanked employees, businesses, ecosystem partners, non-profit organisations and creators for their support and collaboration.

Sensex, Nifty Rise on IT Rally



Mumbai: Indian equity benchmarks ended higher on Friday, snapping a two-session losing streak as strong gains in technology stocks helped offset weakness across several key sectors. Investors drew confidence from the overnight rally in US technology shares, with renewed optimism over artificial intelligence spending providing a major boost to domestic IT stocks. The Sensex gained 330.92 points, or 0.43 per cent, to close at 77,264.51. The Nifty 50 advanced 84.80 points, or 0.35 per cent, ending the session at 24,175.65. The Nifty IT index was the standout performer, surging 3.5 per cent as investors returned to technology counters following the recent selloff. The sector tracked gains in global technology stocks after Nvidia reported strong second-quarter results and offered an upbeat revenue outlook, reinforcing expectations of continued spending on AI infrastructure and related technologies. Among individual stocks, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) rose 4.09 per cent, emerging as one of the biggest gainers on the Nifty. Infosys climbed 3.34 per cent, while Tech Mahindra advanced 3.18 per cent and HCL Technologies gained 2.68 per cent. The rally in IT stocks provided crucial support to the benchmark indices despite muted participation from financial stocks. The Bank Nifty ended almost unchanged, slipping 0.02 per cent to 57,496.30. Sector-wise, metal and pharmaceutical stocks also performed strongly, supported by selective buying interest. However, FMCG, energy and automobile stocks remained under pressure as investors booked profits. FMCG companies were particularly affected by concerns over rising raw material costs, which could put pressure on margins. The broader market remained relatively resilient. The Nifty Smallcap 100 gained 0.20 per cent and continued to trade close to its record-high levels. The Nifty Midcap 100 was largely flat, edging up 0.05 per cent, highlighting selective participation rather than a broad-based buying trend. Despite Friday's gains, investors remained cautious because Brent crude oil prices continued to trade above \$85 a barrel. Elevated crude prices remain a concern for India because the country relies heavily on imports to meet its energy requirements and higher oil prices can put pressure on inflation and the trade balance. Market participants will now closely monitor developments from the Jackson Hole symposium over the weekend. Comments from global central bankers, particularly on inflation, interest rates and the future direction of monetary policy, could influence market sentiment in the coming sessions. Overall, the week's final session reflected a recovery led primarily by technology stocks, while investors continued to remain watchful of global interest-rate signals, crude prices and domestic sector-specific trends.

NTPC Plans Rs.16.86 Lakh Crore Capex by 2037



New Delhi: State-run power giant NTPC plans to significantly expand its generation and energy infrastructure capacity, targeting 244 GW of operational capacity by 2037, Chairman and Managing Director Gurdeep Singh said. Addressing the company's 50th Annual General Meeting, Singh said NTPC expects strong growth over the coming decade as India's electricity demand rises alongside economic expansion and improvements in living standards. NTPC currently has an installed operational capacity of around 91 GW. The company has now set more ambitious long-term capacity targets, aiming to increase its capacity to 149 GW by 2032, including 60 GW from renewable energy sources. The target is expected to rise further to 244 GW by 2037, reflecting the company's strategy to expand beyond conventional thermal power and build a diversified energy portfolio. To support this expansion, NTPC plans to undertake capital expenditure of approximately Rs.16.86 lakh crore across multiple segments through the financial year 2036-37. The planned investments will cover thermal power, hydropower, pumped-storage projects, renewable energy, battery storage, mining and nuclear power. The company expects a growing share of renewable and storage capacity to complement its conventional generation portfolio as India's energy requirements increase and the country continues its transition towards cleaner sources of electricity. Singh said rising incomes, economic activity and improving living standards would drive higher electricity consumption in the years ahead. NTPC's long-term investment programme is therefore aimed at ensuring adequate generation capacity while supporting India's broader energy-security requirements. The expansion across thermal, hydro, renewable and storage projects is also expected to provide NTPC with greater flexibility in managing changing patterns of electricity demand. Investments in pumped storage and battery systems could help address the intermittency associated with renewable power generation. The company's plans to enter or expand its presence in areas such as nuclear energy and mining further underline its ambition to build an integrated energy portfolio. NTPC's proposed Rs.16.86 lakh crore investment programme represents one of the country's largest long-term power-sector expansion plans. The company is expected to play a key role in meeting India's rising electricity demand while balancing the need for energy security, capacity expansion and a gradual shift towards cleaner energy sources. With the 2032 and 2037 targets substantially higher than its current capacity, NTPC is preparing for a major expansion phase over the next decade as India seeks to strengthen its power infrastructure and support sustained economic growth.

Kashmiri Girls Tie Rakhi To Army Jawans

A heartwarming Raksha Bandhan gesture by Kashmiri girls towards Army personnel is winning appreciation online, with a video showing the emotional interaction between the local community and soldiers. The video captures local Kashmiri girls approaching Army jawans and tying rakhis around their wrists. The simple gesture reflects the spirit of Raksha Bandhan, a festival traditionally celebrating the bond of love, trust and protection between brothers and sisters. One Kashmiri local explained the emotional significance of the moment, saying she did not have a brother of her own but felt as though

she had one that day. "Due to circumstances, they (jawans) feel they won't be able to celebrate this day while away from family. But we are their sisters, too. We are their family," she said. Raksha Bandhan is being celebrated across India on Friday, August 28. On the festival, sisters traditionally tie a rakhi around their brothers' wrists and pray for their well-being, while brothers promise to protect and support their sisters. The interaction between the girls and Army personnel has drawn considerable attention on social media, where users praised the gesture as a touching example of affection and community



bonding. Several users described the video as a reflection of the emotional side of the festival.

One commenter called it "a beautiful example of love and trust," while another wrote, "This is the beauty of



India." "Raksha Bandhan is about protection and trust, and this captures both," another user

commented. The video has resonated with viewers largely because of its simplicity. Rather than being a formal celebration, the moment shows local girls stepping forward to make soldiers stationed away from their families feel included during the festival. For the jawans, who may be unable to celebrate Raksha Bandhan with their own sisters and families, the gesture offered a sense of warmth and belonging. As the video continues to circulate online, the Raksha Bandhan celebration has become a reminder that the festival's message of family, affection and mutual trust can extend beyond traditional relationships.

Meta Teen Safeguards Limited to US



Meta's latest safety measures for teenagers on Facebook and Instagram will initially apply only to users in the United States, raising questions about whether young people in other countries will receive the same level of protection.

The new safeguards are part of a series of major settlements aimed at resolving claims that Meta's social media platforms pose risks to children. The agreements could cost the company as much as \$18 billion and include new restrictions on how teenagers use the platforms.

Among the measures are limits on the amount of time younger users can spend on Facebook and Instagram, along with restrictions preventing teens from easily turning off certain safety settings. Meta said it will monitor the impact of the changes while continuing discussions with governments in other countries.

The decision to initially limit the safeguards to the US comes as governments around the world intensify scrutiny of social media's impact on children and teenagers. Regulators in more than two dozen countries have introduced or are considering restrictions on young users of platforms operated by Meta, TikTok and Snapchat.

The US settlement is therefore expected to attract close attention from policymakers overseas.

In the UK, officials have already been considering tougher measures for young people. The government has announced plans to prevent children under 16 from using social media platforms and has also proposed curfews for older teenagers.

UK Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Pat McFadden said the issue was a major concern for parents and governments. He questioned why children in the US should receive stronger protections than those in Britain.

The new Meta measures have also been welcomed by child-safety advocates, who argue that social media companies should be held responsible for the effects their platforms can have on young users.

Matthew Bergman, founder of the Social Media Victims Law Center, described the US settlement as a potential "bellwether" for other countries. He argued that protections should not stop at US borders and called for social media companies to be held accountable internationally. Meta, meanwhile, has maintained that it is committed to user safety and has highlighted various features introduced over the years to protect teenagers. However, the US-only rollout could intensify pressure on the company to extend the new safeguards globally. With governments increasingly examining how social media affects children, Meta may face growing demands to establish consistent protections across countries rather than adopting different standards for different markets.

Korean Creator's "Baseline" Joke Goes Viral

A South Korean content creator has turned an unusual pronunciation of Vaseline into an internet sensation, prompting the skincare brand itself to join the joke. Creator Min Day Lee went viral after repeatedly pronouncing Vaseline as "Baseline" in an Instagram video showcasing her collection of Vaseline products. The clip has crossed 38 million views, with viewers fascinated by the way she pronounced the brand name. The video, captioned "I just love Vaseline," quickly attracted thousands of comments. Some users asked why she pronounced the name as "Baseline," while others said it sounded closer to "Basrin" to non-Korean speakers. Rather than correcting the pronunciation, Vaseline embraced the unexpected publicity. The official Vaseline Instagram account responded by calling Lee "THE QUEEN," while Vaseline India joined the fun with a comment about adding "Vaseline for everything" to its personality. The brand later joked that Vaseline had "never sounded this iconic," turning the pronunciation into a playful unofficial rebranding moment. Vaseline even humorously appointed Lee as the "CEO of Baseline", adding that no interview was required for the position. The company clarified that despite the different pronunciation, the product itself remains exactly the same. The only thing changing is the way consumers say its name. The playful response has been widely appreciated online, with many users praising the brand for embracing an organic social media moment instead of treating the pronunciation as a mistake. Vaseline also pointed out that its name has been pronounced, adapted and localised in different ways around the world over nearly 150 years. According to the brand, these variations reflect its long global presence and the way different cultures interact with familiar products. What began as one creator's casual product showcase has therefore evolved into a clever social media moment for the brand. By playing along with the "Baseline" pronunciation, Vaseline has managed to turn an accidental linguistic twist into entertaining online marketing. For Lee, meanwhile, the viral clip has transformed her pronunciation into an unexpected internet catchphrase and earned her a tongue-in-cheek executive title along the way.



Hugging Face Unveils \$400 Singing Robot

Hugging Face has unveiled a tiny \$400 bipedal robot that can sing, skate and learn new tricks, offering consumers a playful introduction to artificial intelligence and robotics.

Named Microduck, the nearly 10-inch-tall robot takes inspiration from a duck, although it has a distinctive single-eye design. Hugging Face said the robot will go on sale later this year, marking its second consumer-focused robot.

Designed for both beginners and experienced developers, Microduck can be programmed to learn physical skills through reinforcement learning, simulation and open-source software. Users can create new behaviours using programming languages including Python and JavaScript.

The robot was developed partly with the help of Pollen Robotics, a Bordeaux-based company acquired by Hugging Face last year. The company said Microduck generated strong interest immediately after preorders opened Thursday. Hugging Face co-founder and Chief Science Officer



Thomas Wolf said the company was selling roughly one robot every four seconds, translating to around \$500,000 in sales.

The launch comes amid reports that Nvidia is nearing a deal to acquire Hugging Face for approximately \$13 billion. Wolf declined to comment on the reports, saying the company regularly receives acquisition and investment offers. Nvidia had not immediately com-

mented. Microduck is intended to make AI feel less intimidating and more accessible. It comes with built-in behaviours that allow users to interact with it without writing code. The robot can be guided around, while movements can also be triggered using a laser pointer or game controller. In a demonstration, Microduck was shown roller-skating, carrying small objects such as socks and

singing alongside other Microducks. Its hardware includes a camera, microphone, speaker, lidar, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi connectivity, as well as two NFC readers for interacting with accessories.

Hugging Face also plans an expansion pack aimed at advanced developers. The company sees Microduck as a new category of consumer robot that combines AI, entertainment and education.

Manufactured in China with Shenzhen-based open-source hardware company Seed Studio, Microduck weighs around 1.7 pounds. Hugging Face hopes to sell more than 20,000 units, with the first shipments expected before Christmas.

The robot builds on Hugging Face's earlier collaboration with Pollen Robotics. Their previous creation, the Reachy Mini, has reportedly sold around 10,000 units. With its playful design and relatively low price, Microduck could offer a glimpse of a future where experimenting with AI-powered robots becomes as accessible as programming a computer or building with electronics kits.

Foreigner Says Indian Food Changed His Taste

Indian cuisine has made such a strong impression on a foreign food enthusiast that he says it has completely changed the way he views food from other countries.

Ed Nathanson, who calls himself the "World's Greatest Snack Detective," shared a video on Instagram describing his love for Indian food. He said discovering Indian cuisine around five years ago transformed his palate and made it harder for him to get excited about many other cuisines.

Nathanson jokingly described Indian food as a "problem" because the experience had raised his expectations so much that food from other countries no longer seemed as extraordinary. Recalling his first experience with Indian cuisine, he said it was so delicious that it felt as though the "gates of heaven had opened" and God Himself had welcomed him. He went on to highlight some of his favourite Indian dishes, particularly pani puri. Nathanson



described the popular street food as "little flavour bombs" that burst in the mouth, praising its combination of textures and flavours. He also singled out Gobi Manchurian, joking that cauliflower simply should not taste that good. His comments reflected his appreciation for the bold combinations of spices, sauces and textures commonly found across

Indian cuisine. Nathanson compared the complexity and variety of Indian food with what he described as relatively simpler offerings in some other countries. For him, the sheer number of flavours and regional dishes available has made Indian cuisine particularly exciting. His food preferences have even changed as a result. Nathanson

described himself as a "hardcore carnivore," but said his love for Indian cuisine eventually led him to start ordering vegetarian dishes as well.

The video sparked a lively response online, with many Indian food lovers agreeing with his assessment. One user commented, "Yes, I totally agree." Another encouraged him to try preparing Indian dishes himself, writing, "Try cooking yourself, you'll love it more."

A third user highlighted the variety of Indian cuisine, saying, "You never get bored because you have so many options in Indian cuisine." Nathanson's enthusiastic reaction offers another example of how Indian food continues to attract international audiences, with its wide variety of regional flavours and vegetarian and non-vegetarian options leaving a lasting impression on food lovers around the world.

Daughter Surprises Dad On IndiGo Flight

A heartwarming father-daughter moment has gone viral after an IndiGo cabin crew member surprised her father on his birthday by welcoming him aboard his flight.

Flight attendant Shweta Pandey shared a video of the emotional encounter on Instagram. Her father had no idea that his daughter would be working as part of the cabin crew on the flight, making the surprise even more special. As he boarded the aircraft, Pandey greeted him with a smile before bending down to touch his feet. Her father appeared pleasantly surprised as he recognised his daughter in her IndiGo uniform.

The video captures his reaction as he realises that she is part of the crew. Pandey can be seen warmly welcoming him while her father looks visibly delighted by the unexpected meeting. Text displayed on the video read, "Decided to surprise my father on his birthday."

Pandey later revealed that her father had been completely unaware that she would be on his flight. She also shared another detail that made the moment particularly meaningful—this was the first time he had seen her wearing her professional uniform in person. "And he was unaware of the fact that I am in his flight. Also he saw me in uniform for the first time in



person," she wrote in the caption. The surprise therefore became more than just a birthday celebration. It gave Pandey an opportunity to welcome her father as a professional cabin crew member and allowed him to see her in her work uniform for the first time. The video quickly attracted affectionate reactions from social media users, many of whom were touched by the father's surprise and happiness.

"That was such a beautiful moment between a father and his daughter," one user commented. Another wrote that viewers could see how happy and surprised he was when he realised it was his daughter. "He must have felt incredibly proud seeing his daughter welcome him in uniform," another person said. Several users also praised the birthday surprise, calling it a memorable way to celebrate the special occasion. "What a memorable way to surprise your dad on his birthday," one viewer wrote. Another described it as a proud moment for the father, while another called it the kind of wholesome video that can instantly bring a smile to people's faces. The touching encounter has resonated with viewers as a simple yet memorable celebration of a daughter's achievement and a father's pride.

Amit Shah: India Aims to Become Global Sports Destination



India is stepping up preparations to establish itself as a major global sports destination, with the government focusing on hosting several major international sporting events over the coming decade. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi held a review meeting on Thursday to discuss preparations for the 2030 Commonwealth Games and India's proposed bid to host the 2036 Olympic Games. Sharing details of the meeting on social media, Shah said the Narendra Modi government was working with an ambitious objective of positioning India as an international sporting hub. "The Modi government is working with a big goal. Our target is to establish India as a global sports destination," Shah said, adding that all necessary steps would be taken to ensure the country is equipped to host major international events.

The meeting reviewed India's preparations for the 2030 Commonwealth Games, which are scheduled to be hosted in Ahmedabad. Discussions were also held on India's proposed bid for the 2036 Olympics, with Ahmedabad being projected as the potential host city. Shah also reviewed preparations for the 2029 World Police and Fire Games, which will be held in Ahmedabad. The event is expected to attract more than 10,000 athletes from around 70 countries, making security and logistical arrangements a key priority. The Home Ministry is closely monitoring the security preparations for the major events. Shah has been holding review meetings with the Sports Ministry as India works to strengthen its infrastructure and organisational capabilities.

India last hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2010 in Delhi. Hosting the 2030 edition would therefore mark the country's return as the Games' host after two decades. The proposed 2036 Olympic bid represents an even larger ambition. The central government has been working towards bringing the world's biggest sporting event to India, with Ahmedabad emerging as the preferred venue. Gujarat officials have also held discussions with the International Olympic Committee regarding the proposal. The government's broader strategy includes developing infrastructure capable of handling large international competitions while improving India's reputation as a reliable destination for global sporting events. The 2029 World Police and Fire Games, followed by the 2030 Commonwealth Games, are expected to provide India with opportunities to demonstrate its organisational and logistical capabilities ahead of the proposed Olympic bid.

With preparations for multiple major events now underway, the government is seeking to combine sports infrastructure, security and event management capabilities to strengthen India's case for hosting the world's biggest sporting competitions.

Milan Draw Sunderland, Bournemouth



AC Milan will face two English opponents in the Europa League league phase after being drawn to host Sunderland and travel to Bournemouth, setting up an intriguing campaign for new coach Ruben Amorim. The Italian giants will also welcome Benfica to the San Siro in the eight-game league phase. The fixture carries historical significance, as Milan defeated the Portuguese club in the 1990 European Cup final.

For Amorim, the Europa League campaign will provide an opportunity to move forward from his difficult spell at Manchester United. The Portuguese coach lost the 2025 Europa League final during his largely disappointing 14-month tenure at the English club, which ended in January.

Milan's meeting with Sunderland will be particularly interesting given the contrasting histories and current trajectories of the two clubs, while the trip to Bournemouth will give the Italian side another test against Premier League opposition.

Juventus were handed a challenging draw of their own, with the Italian club set to face Spanish sides Real Sociedad and Celta Vigo. Juventus will also travel to a neutral venue to meet Hapoel Beer-Sheva of Israel. Hapoel Beer-Sheva face an especially demanding schedule, with trips to the Netherlands, Belgium, England and Turkey to take on AZ Alkmaar, Union Saint-Gilloise, Bournemouth and Besiktas.

Crystal Palace will finally make their Europa League appearance after their participation was blocked by UEFA last season because of shared ownership links with Lyon involving American businessman John Textor. Following Textor's departure from Lyon, Palace are now eligible to compete and will travel to France to face Lyon.

Celtic have been drawn against Marseille and will make two trips to Portugal. The Scottish champions will face Benfica and second-tier side Torrence. The Benfica fixture also carries historical significance, as Celtic famously defeated the Portuguese club in the 1967 European Cup final.

Bayer Leverkusen, who lost the 2024 Europa League final after going unbeaten in both their domestic league and Europa League campaign until that stage, will face French opposition in Marseille and Lyon.

The Europa League league phase will begin on September 16-17, with the eighth and final round scheduled for January 28. The competition's final will be played in May at the stadium of Eintracht Frankfurt.

A total of 36 teams will compete in the league phase, sharing a UEFA prize-money fund of 565 million (\$658 million).

With several high-profile clubs and intriguing matchups in the draw, the revamped league phase promises a demanding schedule for Milan, Juventus, Celtic, Crystal Palace and the rest of the field.

Asian Games Organisers Assure Accommodation for All

Tokyo: Asian Games organisers have assured that all registered participants will have accommodation during next month's event, despite the number of athletes and officials rising to more than 17,000 and concerns over a potential shortage of rooms.

The Asian Games will be held in Nagoya and across Japan's Aichi Prefecture from September 19 to October 4. Organisers had initially expected around 15,000 athletes and officials, already exceeding the number who attended the Olympics. However, the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) recently revised the figure to around 17,000, including approximately 11,000 athletes and 6,000 officials.

Unlike recent Olympic Games, the event will not have a dedicated athletes' village. Organisers are instead using a combination of hotels, temporary accommodation and a cruise ship to house participants.

The accommodation issue became a concern after the OCA added teqball and padel to the sporting programme in March. Earlier this week, organising committee president Hideaki Omura, who is also governor of Aichi Prefecture, said the committee did not have suffi-



cient manpower or budget to make arrangements for additional participants.

However, a joint statement issued by the organising committee and OCA on Friday said accommodation had been secured for all registered athletes and officials.

"All the 17,000+ athletes and officials that are registered for the Asian Games before the closing of Entry by Name in July have been provided with Games-appropriate accommodation," the statement

said. It added that, except in exceptional circumstances, no further registrations would be permitted. The organising committee separately said the exact number of participants was still fluctuating daily but acknowledged that the delegation size was expected to exceed 15,000.

To control costs, organisers have hired the Italian cruise ship Costa Serena as temporary accommodation. Between 4,000 and 5,000 athletes are expected to stay aboard

the ship, while another 2,000 athletes and officials will be housed in temporary wooden, shipping-container-style units.

The remaining participants will stay in hotels, including some in Tokyo, where swimming, diving and equestrian competitions will be held.

Organisers also rejected reports that they were attempting to reduce the number of participants. Instead, they said certain team officials would make their own accommodation arrangements.

There are also concerns about Japan's typhoon season, which is typically active during September and October. However, organisers expressed confidence that the weather would not disrupt the Games. "The final preparations are all on track and progressing smoothly," the joint statement said, describing the event as one that promises to be among the most spectacular Asian Games in generations. With less than a month remaining before the opening ceremony, organisers will now focus on ensuring that the unconventional accommodation arrangements operate smoothly throughout the competition.

Mamatha Madiwala Picked for India A

Hyderabad wicket-keeper Mamatha Madiwala has earned a place in the India 'A' women's squad for the upcoming Australia 'A' tour of India, marking another significant opportunity in her cricketing career.

Mamatha has been selected for the multi-day fixture against Australia 'A', scheduled to be played from September 29 to October at Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh. The Hyderabad player will join a strong India 'A' squad led by Yastika Bhatia.

The tour will feature three T20s, three One-Day matches and a multi-day game. The T20 fixtures are scheduled for September 12, 15 and 17 at New Chandigarh, while the three One-Day matches will be played on September 20, 23 and 25 at the PCA Stadium in Mohali, Punjab.

Mamatha's selection for the multi-day game is particularly notable as she will be one of the wicket-keeping options in the squad. Yastika



Bhatia has been named captain and wicket-keeper, while Mamatha has been included alongside the experienced India player.

The India 'A' multi-day squad includes Anushka Sharma as vice-captain, along with Shubha Satheesh, Priya Punia, Tanisha Singh, Tejal Hasabnis, Nikki Prasad, Sushree Dibyadarshini, Shuchi Upadhyay, Vaishnavi

Sharma, Sayali Satghare, Jintimani Kalita, Shabnam Shakeel and Akshita Bhagat.

The T20 squad will be led by Anushka Sharma, with Sayali Satghare serving as vice-captain. The squad also includes Vrinda Dinesh, Sujata Dey, Tejal Hasabnis, Nikki Prasad, Shipra Giri, Shweta Sehrawat, Uma Chetry, Tanuja Kanwer, Minnu

Mani, Vaishnavi Sharma, Jintimani Kalita, Shabnam Shakeel and Simran Dil Bahadur. For the One-Day matches, Yastika Bhatia will captain the side, with Anushka Sharma as vice-captain. The squad features several players from the multi-day team, including Vrinda Dinesh, Priya Punia, Tanisha Singh, Tejal Hasabnis, Nikki Prasad, Uma Chetry, Minnu Mani, Amandeep Kaur, Vaishnavi Sharma, Sayali Satghare, Jintimani Kalita, Shabnam Shakeel and Akshita Bhagat.

The Australia 'A' series will provide India's emerging players with valuable exposure against international opposition. For Mamatha, the multi-day fixture at Dharamshala represents an important chance to strengthen her credentials at the domestic and national pathway level. Her inclusion also brings recognition to Hyderabad's women's cricket setup, with the wicket-keeper now set to represent India 'A' on an international development tour.

Praggnanandhaa Makes History

Indian chess prodigy R Praggnanandhaa created history by becoming the first Indian player to win the Grand Chess Tour title, defeating defending champion Fabiano Caruana 15-13 in a thrilling finish.

Praggnanandhaa entered the final day six points behind Caruana and appeared to face a difficult challenge. However, the young Indian produced a stunning comeback, winning two consecutive rapid games to overturn the deficit and take the lead. His victory earned him his maiden Grand Chess Tour title along with prize money of nearly Rs 2 crore. The triumph also secured Praggnanandhaa direct qualification for next year's Grand Chess Tour. Reflecting on his remarkable comeback, Praggnanandhaa admitted that he had not expected to get a chance to win when the final day began. "I did not think I would get a chance to win today. I was six points behind. But I showed how to play in such situations. Against a play-

er like Fabi, winning even one game is difficult. I managed to win two rapid games," he said.

The 19-year-old also credited the changes he had made to his rapid and blitz preparation since last year for the breakthrough performance. "I made changes to my rapid and blitz games from last year. Now the results are visible. I think I have improved in this format," Praggnanandhaa said.

The historic triumph caps an impressive year for the Indian grandmaster. His campaign did not begin particularly well, with a disappointing performance at the Candidates Tournament. However, he quickly bounced back with a victory at Norway Chess.

His Norway Chess triumph was particularly notable as he defeated world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen twice during the event, underlining his ability to compete against the strongest players in the world.

Praggnanandhaa continued his impressive run by winning the St. Louis Rapid & Blitz and the



Sinquefield Cup. His consistency across different formats has strengthened his position among the leading young players in international chess. The Indian star had earlier expressed disappointment about not winning the Candidates Tournament, saying it would have made his year even more special. However, his performances since then have provided a strong response. The Grand Chess Tour victory now adds another major

achievement to his growing list of accomplishments. More importantly, the dramatic comeback against Caruana showcased Praggnanandhaa's composure, fighting spirit and growing mastery of rapid chess. With direct qualification for next year's Grand Chess Tour secured, the Indian youngster will now look to build on his breakthrough and establish himself further among the elite of world chess.

BCCI Raises Asian Games Facility Concerns

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has reportedly raised concerns over the facilities and arrangements being made for cricketers at the upcoming Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The BCCI and the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) are not satisfied with the conditions being provided for participating cricketers. The concerns reportedly include temporary dressing rooms being arranged in tents, while wash-room facilities are said to be located around 500 metres away from the playing area.

The Asian Games are scheduled to begin on September 19 in Aichi-Nagoya. Cricket will be among the sports at the continental multi-sport event, with the men's tournament scheduled from September 24 to October 3. The women's competition is scheduled from September 17 to 22.

The board is closely monitoring the situation and may send an observer to Japan to assess the facilities and arrangements in person.

The reported concerns could have implications for India's squad selection. If the facilities are ultimately deemed inadequate, the BCCI could consider sending a 'B' team to the competition instead of its strongest available squad.

India's participation in the Asian Games has attracted considerable attention because cricket has become an important part of the multi-sport event. The tournament provides players with an opportunity to represent the country on a major continental stage while also competing against teams from across Asia.

The BCCI is expected to assess the arrangements before making a final decision on the composition



of India's teams. The board's priority is likely to be ensuring that players have appropriate facilities for training, match preparation, recovery and general comfort during the competition.

The Asian Games cricket tournaments will be played in a condensed schedule, making proper logistical arrangements particu-

larly important. The women's event will conclude before the men's tournament gets underway, giving the cricket competitions a prominent place in the overall Games calendar.

While the reported concerns have not yet resulted in a formal decision to withdraw or alter India's participation, the possibility of sending a second-string squad highlights the seriousness with which the BCCI is viewing the situation.

An on-site assessment by a BCCI representative could provide clarity on whether the reported shortcomings can be addressed before the tournament begins.

With the Asian Games approaching, attention will now remain on the facilities in Japan and the BCCI's eventual decision regarding India's squads for the men's and women's cricket competitions.

Veteran Actor G.V. Narayana Rao Dies at 73

Veteran Telugu actor and producer Gullapalli Venkata Narayana Rao, popularly known as G.V. Narayana Rao, passed away at the age of 73 on Wednesday night. He had been suffering from health issues for some time and breathed his last at his residence in Hyderabad's Srinagar Colony.

Narayana Rao left a lasting mark on Telugu cinema with performances in more than 100 films and several television serials. As a producer, he backed successful films including Yamudiki Mogudu, Devantakudu, Intiko Rudramma and Pelli Neeku Shubham Naaku. Born in Kurumaddali in Krishna district, Narayana Rao grew up in Guntakal after his father, a film distributor, settled there. Growing up in a cinema-oriented environment sparked his interest in the



arts from an early age. He trained in Bharatanatyam under Gidugu Visalakshi, Kuchipudi under Nataraja Ramakrishna and acting

under A.R. Krishna.

He developed an association with theatre during his student years and earned recognition through plays such as Mohammed Bin Tughlaq, Prataparudreeya and Manchutera. Before entering films, he received formal acting training at the Madras Film Institute. Superstar Rajinikanth was reportedly his classmate there.

Narayana Rao made his screen debut with K. Balachander's Antuleni Katha. The film became a major success, opening the doors to several opportunities. He went on to play lead roles in around 50 films before transitioning to character and supporting roles.

His notable films include Muthyala Pallaki, Oka Oori Katha, Guppedu Manasu, Chilakamma

Cheppindi, Seetharamayyagari Manavaralu, Manchu Pallaki, Bahudoorapu Batasari, Chattaniki Kallu Levu, Raja Vikramarka, Gang Leader, Hitler, Sahasam, Tholubommalata and Skylab. His final film, Aalochana, is yet to be released.

Narayana Rao shared a close friendship with Chiranjeevi, who expressed grief over his death. Chiranjeevi recalled their long association and cherished memories. The Movie Artists Association and several film personalities also condoled his demise.

He is survived by his wife Anuradha, son Avinash and daughter Lalitha Yamini. His last rites will be performed at Mahaprasthanam in Jubilee Hills on Friday.

KING 100 Title Reveal on August 29

The much-awaited title of Nagarjuna's 100th film will be unveiled on August 29 at 9 AM, coinciding with the actor's birthday.

The makers have released a teaser announcing the title reveal time. The glimpse features a speeding car moving through a dense night, with a prominent cobra warning sign adding mystery to the visuals.

The cobra imagery has already sparked speculation among fans about a possible connection with the film's title. The mystery is expected to be cleared when the official title is revealed on August 29.

Produced by Nagarjuna and directed by Ra Karthik, the film features Tabu, Sushmita Bhatt and Vijayendra in key roles. Devi Sri Prasad is composing the music.

With Nagarjuna celebrating his birthday and marking the milestone of his 100th film, the title reveal is expected to be a special treat for his fans.



Raashii Khanna Misses Brother on Raksha Bandhan

Actress Raashii Khanna shared an emotional and adorable note for her brother Raunaq Khanna on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan on Friday, revealing that she missed him as he is currently away at sea. Taking to Instagram, Raashii wrote about the special bond she shares with her brother while playfully acknowledging their frequent fights. "Sometimes I love you, most times I love to fight with you," she wrote, adding that she was celebrating Raksha Bandhan alone this year. She concluded her message by wishing her brother and calling him "Captain."

On the work front, Raashii is gearing up for her upcoming Tamil film Dharman, in which she shares the screen with superstar Rajinikanth. Directed by Ashwath Marimuthu, the film has been generating considerable buzz and is among the highly anticipated releases.

Recently, Raashii also revealed a thoughtful gift she received from Rajinikanth while working on the film. The superstar gifted her the spiritual book Living with the Himalayan Masters after the two discussed spirituality during a conversation on the sets.

Raashii said she has been reading the book diligently and was particularly moved by its reflections on self-discovery and human relationships. She revealed that Rajinikanth even told her he would test her on the book, making the gift all the more memorable.

Sharing her key takeaway, the actress said many people feel disconnected because they spend years trying to become someone else rather than remaining connected to their true selves.

Meanwhile, Dharman continues to attract attention with its combination of Rajinikanth, Raashii Khanna and director Ashwath Marimuthu. The film's unique combination of talent has raised expectations among audiences ahead of its release.



Anand Deverakonda's Honest Take on Kingdom Goes Viral

Actor Anand Deverakonda has grabbed attention with his candid comments about his brother Vijay Deverakonda's film Kingdom. His straightforward assessment of the movie has now become a talking point among Telugu cinema fans on social media.

During a recent interaction, Anand revealed that he generally avoids listening to the stories of Vijay's films before their release. However, he watched the edited version of Kingdom and shared his genuine reaction to the movie.

According to Anand, the film became somewhat confusing when the protagonist's journey moved to Sri Lanka. His comments have drawn attention because a section of the audience had also raised similar concerns after watching the film.

Rather than offering unconditional praise for his brother's movie, Anand appeared to share his opinion from the perspective of an ordinary viewer. This honesty has been appreciated by several fans, who believe that his remarks demonstrate that he is willing to acknowledge both the strengths and weaknesses of Vijay's films.

Kingdom, which generated considerable expectations ahead of its release, features Vijay Deverakonda in the lead role. The film's narrative and setting attracted significant attention, while its second-half developments became a subject of discussion among audiences.

Anand's latest comments have once again brought the film into the spotlight. His observation about the Sri Lanka portion, in particular, has sparked conversations online, with fans debating whether the narrative became difficult to follow at that stage.

While Anand's remarks may be unexpected coming from a close family member, they have also added an interesting perspective to the ongoing discussion around the Kingdom. Whether audiences agree with his assessment or not, his candid take has certainly succeeded in generating fresh buzz around the film.

GV Prakash: 'Mandaadi' a Blockbuster

Music composer and actor G. V. Prakash Kumar has expressed strong confidence in the upcoming sports-action drama Mandaadi, calling it a "sure-shot blockbuster" during the film's audio launch event.

Speaking at the event, GV Prakash said 2026 has been an exceptionally successful year for him. He pointed to projects including Youth, Happy Raj, Vishwanath And Sons and Irumudi, which he described as successful outings. He expressed hope that Mandaadi would continue the winning streak and become another major success.

The composer also heaped praise on actor Soori, making a particularly bold prediction about the film. GV Prakash said he believes Mandaadi could turn out to be the best film of Soori's career.

His confident remarks have added to the anticipation surrounding the project, which is being positioned as a sports-action drama with a distinctive coastal setting. The film also features Telugu actor Suhas in a negative lead role, marking an interesting addition to the movie's cast.

The coastal backdrop and sports-oriented storyline are expected to give Mandaadi a different flavour from conventional commercial entertainers. Soori's involvement has also raised expectations, particularly following his growing reputation for taking on challenging and performance-driven roles.

GV Prakash's strong endorsement at the audio launch is likely to further increase curiosity among audiences. However, whether Mandaadi can live up to the "sure-shot blockbuster" prediction and emerge as the biggest film of Soori's career will ultimately be decided by its reception after release.

