



BUZZ POINTS

TDP-YSRCP Clash in Vijayawada During DSC-2025 Protest



PAGE 3

YSRCP MPs Seek Amit Shah's Intervention Over Jagan Security Lapses



PAGE 3

Ravi Shastri's Predicted India Squad for 2027 World Cup Sparks Debate



PAGE 11

Naidu to Launch 'Nethanna Sevalo' Scheme

ARN Mahesh

Marking the 12th National Handloom Day, the state government will launch the 'Nethanna Sevalo' scheme, under which 71,536 handloom families across the state will receive Rs.25,000 each as direct financial assistance. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will formally inaugurate the scheme during his visit to Chirala on August 7. The government will release a total of Rs.179 crore under the scheme, reinforcing its commitment to strengthening the handloom sector and supporting traditional weaving families. According to the government, although the scheme was not part of the election manifesto, it has been introduced to protect the livelihood, welfare, and rich heritage of the state's weaving community. Under the initiative, every eligible handloom family will receive a one-time



financial assistance of Rs.25,000 to support their occupation and improve their economic stability. The government described the programme as another major welfare measure aimed at preserving Andhra Pradesh's centuries-old hand-

loom tradition. Apart from the newly launched scheme, the state government has implemented several measures for the welfare of handloom workers. It is providing 200 units of free electricity every month to hand-

loom households and 500 units to powerloom units, benefiting 62,541 handloom families and 10,032 powerloom units at an annual cost of nearly Rs.150 crore. The government is also extending a monthly pension of Rs.4,000 to nearly 85,000 handloom workers aged 50 years and above, spending around Rs.420 crore annually. In addition, 109 Primary Handloom Cooperative Societies have received Rs.79 crore through cash credit support to strengthen their financial position. Several infrastructure and industrial initiatives are also underway to boost the textile sector. These include a special infrastructure project at Uppada, a Handloom Park at Mangalagiri, and a Handloom and Handicrafts Museum at Sakhamuru in Amaravati. The government also announced that a sustainable textile recycling unit with an investment of Rs.4,200 crore will be established in Visakhapatnam, creating new employment opportunities and promoting eco-friendly textile manufacturing.

As part of the National Handloom Day celebrations, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu will begin his tour by leaving the Camp Office at 10.30 a.m. and reaching Kothapeta village in Vetapalem mandal at 10.50 a.m. He will participate in a public meeting at 11.05 a.m., where he is expected to launch the Nethanna Sevalo scheme and release the financial assistance to beneficiaries. Later, at 1.35 p.m., the Chief Minister will visit a handloom workshop at Jandrapeta, where he will interact with handloom weavers and beneficiaries to understand their concerns and discuss measures for the sector's development. He will conclude the visit with a review meeting with TDP leaders in Kothapeta before returning to the Camp Office in the evening. The government said the initiative reflects its long-term vision of ensuring sustainable livelihoods for handloom workers while preserving Andhra Pradesh's rich weaving tradition for future generations.

Pawan Kalyan Provides Free Spectacles to Crochet Lace Artisans

Amaravati, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

In a compassionate initiative aimed at improving the lives of traditional artisans, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has arranged free spectacles for 141 crochet lace artisans suffering from vision problems. The move follows his interaction with artisans during the Andhra Pradesh Handicrafts Festival held in Vijayawada last month, where several craftsmen and women highlighted the health challenges affecting their livelihoods. Among them was Mahalakshmi, a crochet lace artisan from Pasaladeevi village in the Narsapuram constituency, who explained that prolonged hours of working on intricate lace patterns had weakened her eyesight. Responding immediately, Pawan Kalyan directed officials to organize free medical camps for handicraft artisans across the state. Following his instructions, an eye screening camp was conducted in Narsapuram, where doctors identified 141 artisans in need of corrective eyewear. The Deputy Chief Minister ensured that spectacles were provided to all of them. The initiative has now been expanded to other artisan clusters. Eye camps have already been completed in Yelamanchili and Attili in the Palakollu region, where another 350 artisans were found to require spectacles. In addition, doctors



identified over 20 artisans suffering from cataracts, who will undergo surgery. Officials are also planning additional eye screening camps in Achanta and Narsapuram as part of the government's ongoing welfare efforts for crochet lace artisans. The initiative aims to protect the health of artisans, improve their productivity, and preserve Andhra Pradesh's rich handicraft heritage.

First-Of-Its-Kind QR Code System To Digitally Identify Andhra Handicrafts

Vijayawada, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

In a pioneering initiative aimed at blending technology with tradition, the Andhra Pradesh Handicrafts Development Corporation (Lepakshi) has launched India's first QR code-based digital identification system for traditional handicrafts. The initiative, inspired by the vision of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, seeks to enhance the authenticity, visibility and global recognition of the state's rich handicraft heritage. The QR code system was introduced following Pawan Kalyan's directions during the recent Andhra Pradesh Handicrafts Festival, where he called for technology-driven solutions to ensure artisans receive due recognition while protecting traditional crafts from counterfeit products. Acting on his instructions, Lepakshi developed and implemented the system within a month. By scanning the QR code attached to a handicraft, customers can instantly access detailed information about the product, including its history, cultural significance, artisan's name, craftsmanship, raw materials used, production time, dimensions, and whether it carries

Sl No.	Artwork & Artisan	Image	Description QR Code
06	The Hands Behind The Craft by Sri Marasa Vamsi Krishna		
07	Jatayu Saving Sita from Ravana by Sri Marasa Vamsi Krishna		
08	Savara Adhvai Painting by Sri Savara Raju		

a Geographical Indication (GI) tag or is recognised under the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative. In the first phase, QR code profiles have been created for eight iconic handicrafts, including the Bobbili Veena, Kalamkari paintings depicting the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Sri Krishna Leela and Matsyavata, as well as Savara Tribal Paintings. The initiative will be expanded to cover all handicraft products and artisan clusters across Andhra Pradesh. Lepakshi Managing Director Vishwa Manoharan said the initiative represents a significant milestone in integrating technology with traditional craftsmanship. He noted that every handcrafted product carries a unique story and cultural legacy, and the QR code system allows buyers to connect directly with the artisan behind each creation while strengthening trust, authenticity and market access. Officials believe the digital initiative will help eliminate counterfeit products, improve consumer confidence, increase domestic and international market visibility, and create better income opportunities for thousands of artisans across the state.



CM Orders Fast-Track Relief For AgriGold Victims

Amaravati, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to expedite measures to ensure speedy justice for victims of the AgriGold scam. Following a Cabinet meeting, he reviewed key issues with ministers and stressed the need to counter attempts by some individuals approaching courts to obstruct relief efforts. The Chief Minister instructed authorities to take a firm stand and proceed with auctioning AgriGold assets across various locations to facilitate compensation to victims at the earliest. Chandrababu also directed that Independence Day celebrations be organised on a grand scale, reflecting the 'Swarnandhra Vision-2047' in alignment with the Centre's 'Viksit Bharat 2047' goal. He emphasised effective utilisation of floodwaters from upstream regions to address drinking water shortages and called for measures to prevent cattle fodder scarcity. Announcing that Assembly sessions will be held from August 17 to 20, the Chief Minister criticised the previous YSRCP government over the 'Disha Act', alleging it failed to ensure women's safety beyond symbolic measures. He said comprehensive amendments to strengthen laws on women's safety will be introduced during the session. Chandrababu further announced that the Veligonda project will be inaugurated later this month, supplying water to Nallamala Sagar. He said operations at the state's Quantum Valley are expected to begin by December or January. The Chief Minister also lauded tribal communities for achieving a Guinness World Record with their traditional dance and noted growing public support for the Bhogapuram Airport project, highlighting its unique coastal landing experience.



AIIMS Mangalagiri Inaugurates Burns Block

Mangalagiri, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Mangalagiri, on Thursday inaugurated its dedicated Burns & Plastic Surgery Block, while announcing that the institute has now become a fully functional 970-bedded tertiary care hospital with 43 clinical and non-clinical

P3

Cabinet Nod For Rs.1,002.49 Crore Amaravati Quantum Valley Twin Towers Project

• Cabinet Clears 33 Key Proposals Spanning Multiple Departments

Amaravati, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

The state Cabinet has approved an allocation of Rs.1,002.49 crore for the prestigious Amaravati Quantum Valley Twin Towers project, marking a major step towards strengthening the state's technology and innovation ecosystem. The Cabinet also approved entrusting the construction of the Twin Towers to L&T, as part of the government's efforts to position Amaravati as a global hub for quantum computing and advanced technologies. The decision was taken during the Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu at the State Secretariat. A total of 34 agenda items were deliberated, covering key sectors including infrastructure development, ease of doing business, urban governance, education, welfare, and industrial growth. Briefing the media after the 1,391st (54th) Cabinet meeting, Minister for Information & Public Relations and Housing Kolu S Parthasarathy said the Cabinet cleared 33 key proposals spanning multiple departments. The Cabinet approved the draft AP PPP Policy-2026 and the Andhra Pradesh Omnibus (Ease of Doing Business) Act, 2026, aimed at promoting investments and creating a business-friendly environment in the state. It also approved amendments to the Textiles, Apparel & Garments Policy 2024-29 and a Rs.680.21 crore HUDCO loan for the AP Bulk Drug Infrastructure Corporation to support industrial infrastructure. In another significant decision, the Cabinet approved the withdrawal of the Andhra Pradesh Disha Bill, 2019, following the implementation of the



Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita by the Centre, which include several provisions relating to the protection of women and children. The Cabinet also approved the Andhra Pradesh Pedestrian Safety and Universal Accessibility Policy-2026, introducing measures such as a zero-tolerance approach towards pedestrian fatalities, removal of footpath encroachments, scientific road safety audits, GIS-based monitoring, and stricter penalties for infrastructure failures. As part of urban development initiatives, the Cabinet gave approval for the Velampeta slum redevelopment project in Visakhapatnam under the Visakhapatnam Economic Region initiative. The project will rehabilitate 177 economically weaker section families in a 12-storey residential complex under the PPP-DBFT model and will serve as a pilot project for similar redevelopment programmes across the state. The Cabinet extended the Rs.1.50 per unit electricity tariff subsidy for aquaculture farms from June 1, 2026, benefiting aqua farmers with an estimated subsidy burden of Rs.1,150 crore. It also reduced supervision charges for power infrastructure in industrial parks to encourage industrial investments. Several land-related proposals were approved, including those linked to PM-KUSUM solar projects, industrial infra-

structure, layout development, and water supply projects connected with Sri City. Compensation was also approved for farmers affected by the proposed Kuppam Greenfield Airport project. In the education sector, the Cabinet approved the creation of 15 new District Education Officer (DEO) posts, with 50 per cent of vacancies to be filled through direct recruitment under the upcoming APPSC Group-I notification. For Amaravati, besides the Quantum Valley Twin Towers project, the Cabinet approved the Amaravati Eye project under the PPP model, land allocations to various institutions, additional consultancy for the High Court and Assembly buildings, and Rs.300 crore towards annuity payments for farmers. It also cleared the re-tendering of the Amaravati Eye project. The Cabinet further sanctioned Rs.210.06 crore for the development of 238 bathing ghats ahead of Godavari Pushkaralu-2027 and approved free government land and concessional power supply for telecom towers. It also cleared land pooling proposals for a new railway line and Inner Ring Road connecting Amaravati. In the irrigation sector, administrative approval was granted for Rs.600.48 crore worth of pending works under Phase-II of the Handri-Neeva Sujala Sravanthi Project to improve irrigation infrastructure in Sri Sathya Sai district.

Medico Declared Brain-Dead After Alleged Hit-and-Run

• Purandeswari Condemns Attack



Rajahmundry, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

A 28-year-old postgraduate medical student, Dr. Priyanka, was declared brain-dead after sustaining critical injuries in a suspected hit-and-run incident in Rajahmundry, triggering widespread outrage. Dr. Priyanka, a second-year Dermatology PG student at GSL Medical College, had visited Prasadiya Mall on AV Apparao Road on August 3 to watch a movie. During parking, she reportedly had a minor altercation with two youths from Namavaram. Later, while returning home on her scooter, a car carrying the same individuals allegedly rammed into her vehicle from behind at high speed. The impact threw her onto the road, and preliminary findings indicate that the car ran over her head, causing severe injuries. Locals rushed her to a nearby hospital, and she was later shifted

P3

AP Proposes Rs.257 Crore Plan to Expand AYUSH Services



Vijayawada, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav on Thursday said the state government has submitted proposals seeking Rs.257 crore from the National AYUSH Mission for strengthening AYUSH medical services during 2026-27. Addressing a state-level conference of government Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Unani and Siddha doctors in Vijayawada, the Minister said the government was committed to promoting traditional healthcare systems. He said discussions would be held with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu to fill vacancies in AYUSH and Food Safety departments under a zero-vacancy policy. The Minister said proposals were being prepared to establish Ayurveda medical colleges at Dharmavaram and Pithapuram, and a Unani medical college at Proddatur with an estimated investment of Rs.210 crore. Integrated AYUSH specialty hospitals would also come up at Tirupati, Giddalur, Nandigama, Tenali, Tekkali and Rampachodavaram at a cost of Rs.90 crore. He said 15 acres near Guntur had been allotted for a Rs.100 crore Central Yoga and

P3

Free Bypass Surgeries at Vijayawada GGH Under New Initiative

Vijayawada, August 6 | TPN Bureau

The management of Dr. Ramesh Hospitals has announced an initiative to perform free cardiac bypass surgeries for needy patients at the Vijayawada Government General Hospital (GGH). The programme is being launched to mark the organisation's 38th anniversary.

As part of the initiative, representatives of Dr. Ramesh Hospitals, Dr. Sudarshan and Rajasekhar, handed over a letter of intent to Health and Medical Education Minister Satya Kumar Yadav in Vijayawada on Thursday. According to the proposal, the hospital management has committed to performing at least five bypass surgeries per month during the initial phase. The initiative aims to provide advanced cardiac care to economically disadvantaged patients who seek treatment at the government hospital. In addition to the surgeries, the hospital management has also assured that post-operative care will be supported through a Tele-ICU system, enabling continuous monitoring and expert consultation.

Welcoming the move, Satya Kumar Yadav appreciated the contribution of Dr. Ramesh Hospitals in extending support to the public healthcare system. He stated that such collaborations would significantly improve access to specialised medical services for the poor. The initiative is expected to benefit several patients requiring critical cardiac procedures while reducing the financial burden on families and strengthening public-private partnerships in healthcare delivery.

Lingamaneni Ramesh Seeks Two More AIIMS in AP

New Delhi, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Jana Sena Rajya Sabha MP Lingamaneni Ramesh has urged the Central Government to establish two more All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Andhra Pradesh and upgrade AIIMS Mangalagiri into a national centre of excellence for advanced healthcare. In a representation submitted to Union Health and Family Welfare Minister J.P. Nadda on Thursday, Ramesh said a single AIIMS is insufficient to meet the healthcare needs of nearly five crore people after the state's bifurcation. He sought one AIIMS each for Rayalaseema and North Andhra, citing the difficulties faced by patients travelling long distances for specialised treatments. He also requested expansion of AIIMS Mangalagiri with facilities such as a Comprehensive Cancer Centre, Organ Transplant Institute, Institute of Neurosciences, and Advanced Cardiac Care Centre. Ramesh said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan are committed to improving healthcare infrastructure and urged the Centre to consider the proposals under the next phase of the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).

Lanka Dinakar Submits Development Report to CM Naidu

Velagapudi, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Lanka Dinakar, Chairman of the Twenty Points Programme (Viksit Bharat-Swarna Andhra Pradesh) Implementation, met Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu at the State Secretariat on Thursday and submitted a report on the implementation of Central and State government schemes. Dinakar presented findings from district-level review meetings, state-level development reviews, and study visits to other states to assess governance models and welfare programme implementation. He highlighted issues faced by handloom weavers during visits to Kodumuru and Madanapalle. His recommendations included preventive healthcare for weavers, relaxation of housing eligibility norms, formation of weavers' groups on the lines of Self-Help Groups with revolving funds, and procurement priority for such groups in institutions like Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. Dinakar also stressed the need for a long-term water strategy and supported Chandrababu Naidu's proposal for an East-West transport corridor connecting Visakhapatnam and Mumbai to boost industry, logistics and employment.

AP to Celebrate Ponnamanda Varma Jayanti as State Festival

Amaravati, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh government will celebrate the birth anniversary of Ponnamanda Lakshmana Swamy Varma as an official State Festival on Friday, BC Welfare, EWS Welfare, Handlooms and Textiles Minister S. Savitha announced.

The state-level celebrations will be held at Korangi in Kakinada district. Savitha described Lakshmana Swamy Varma as a noted social reformer who worked for the welfare of the Agnikula Kshatriya community and the upliftment of underprivileged sections. She said he organised the first state-level conference of the Agnikula Kshatriya community at Korangi in 1890, creating a platform for unity and representation. She also highlighted his contributions to Ayurveda, including the development of around 120 medicinal formulations distributed in India and abroad. Savitha said Lakshmana Swamy Varma played a key role in securing official recognition for the Agnikula Kshatriya community through Government Order No. 271 in 1927. She thanked Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for declaring the occasion a State Festival and honouring leaders from backward communities.



Nandamuri Mohanakrishna Leads Assam Flood Relief Drive Through NTR Charitable Trust



Hyderabad, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

The Nandamuri Basava Rama Tarakam NTR Charitable Trust has sent essential relief materials to flood-affected families in Assam as part of its humanitarian service initiative. The Trust, established

to commemorate the birth centenary of Smt. Nandamuri Basava Rama Tarakam, wife of legendary actor and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N.T. Rama Rao (NTR), launched the relief programme following severe floods in Assam. A large-scale collection drive

was conducted across the Telugu states, with donors from Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Khammam, and other regions contributing food items, clothing, drinking water, and daily essentials. Members of the Indian diaspora also extended their support to the initiative. The collected



relief material was handed over to NGO The Embryos, which will distribute the supplies among affected families in Assam. Film producer and cinematographer Nandamuri Mohanakrishna said the initiative reflects NTR's philosophy that "society is the true temple

and people are its gods." He thanked volunteers and donors for their support and said the Trust would continue serving society by following the ideals of NTR and Basava Rama Tarakam. Nandamuri Mohan Roopa

appreciated the overwhelming response from the public and overseas Indians, stating that more consignments would be sent as additional relief materials are collected. Nandamuri Seemanthini said the Trust would continue undertaking humanitarian activities in the future.

Breast Milk Is Nature's Perfect Nutrition, Says AIIMS Neonatologist

Mangalagiri, August 6 | TPN Bureau

As part of World Breastfeeding Week observed from August 1 to 7 with the theme "Breastfeeding for a Sustainable Start in Life: Strengthen What Works," neonatologist Dr. Mandula Phani Priya, Assistant Professor at AIIMS

Mangalagiri, highlighted the importance of exclusive breastfeeding and called for increased awareness and support for mothers. Dr. Priya said breast milk is nature's ideal nutrition for infants, providing essential nutrients and immunity. However, misconceptions about inadequate milk supply, lack of confidence, and limited

practical support often prevent mothers from exclusively breastfeeding their babies. She noted that the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding with complementary foods up to two years or beyond. She said many mothers discontinue breastfeeding



early due to concerns about milk production, pressure to introduce formula feeding, and lack of family support. Highlighting the importance of the "Golden Hour" after birth, Dr. Priya said early

skin-to-skin contact and feeding colostrum, the first nutrient-rich milk, significantly improve infant immunity and health. Explaining that milk production follows a demand-and-supply mechanism, she said frequent suckling stimulates prolactin production and increases milk supply. She cautioned that unnecessary formula feeding may reduce breastfeeding frequency and increase the risk of infections. Dr. Priya stressed the need for timely guidance from healthcare professionals, lactation

counsellors, and trained nurses to address challenges such as poor latching and breast engorgement. She urged maternity hospitals to implement UNICEF's Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and encouraged families, especially husbands, to provide emotional and practical support to mothers. She added that lactation management centres and home-based newborn care services can help strengthen breastfeeding practices and ensure better health outcomes for children.

CITU, AITUC Extend Support to AP Govt Employees' Agitation

Vijayawada, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Joint Action Committee (AP JAC Amaravati) has thanked the state leadership of CITU and AITUC for extending support to its proposed agitation seeking resolution of long-pending issues of state government employees. A delegation led by AP JAC Amaravati State Chairman Bopparaju Venkateswarlu met AITUC and CITU leaders at their state offices in Vijayawada on Thursday and explained the concerns of employees, alleged delays

in addressing their demands, and the proposed second phase of agitation. AITUC State President Ravulapalli Ravindranath, General Secretary S. Venkatasubbayya, CITU State President C.H. Narasimha Rao and General Secretary A.V. Nageswara Rao urged the government to resolve employees' legitimate demands through discussions with their representatives. The union leaders assured complete support to democratic movements launched by government employees, teachers and workers. AP JAC Amaravati leaders, including

Secretary General Paliseti Damodara Rao, Agitation Committee Chairman T.V. Phani Perraju and Treasurer Thimmasarathi Nageswara Rao, thanked CITU and AITUC for their solidarity. CITU reiterated its support for the second



phase of the employees' agitation.

APCRDA Seeks Public Feedback on Amaravati Village Plans

Amaravati, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) conducted Village Sabha meetings at Sakamuru and Inavolu on Thursday as part of the Amaravati Master Plan to gather public feedback on village road connectivity and infrastructure development. The meetings, held under the West Central-1 Grid, focused on preparing Village Circulation Plans and



Village Integration Plans while creating awareness among residents about the proposed road network and future infrastructure projects in

the capital region. APCRDA officials explained the integration of existing village roads with the network planned under the Land Pooling Scheme (LPS). They said detailed surveys of current road connectivity are being conducted to prepare efficient circulation plans for each village. Residents actively participated and submitted suggestions on the proposed plans. Officials assured that the feedback would be considered before finalising the plans.

The meetings were attended by Special Deputy Collector K. Vijayalakshmi (Inavolu), Special Deputy Collector G. Muralidhar (Sakamuru), APCRDA officials from various departments and technical experts from The Urbanizer. APCRDA said similar Village Sabha meetings will be conducted across all villages in the capital region to ensure community participation in Amaravati's development planning.

Seven Arrested for Killing Tiger in Giddalur Forest

Amaravati, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

A tiger found dead in the Giddalur forest region of the Nallamala forest area was killed by poachers, according to Mallikarjuna Rao, Forest Department Advisor and Chairman of the high-level committee constituted by the state government. Addressing the media on Thursday, Mallikarjuna Rao said two tiger deaths were reported in the Nallamala forests recently. While one tiger died in the Atmakur region due to natural causes, the other in the Giddalur forest area

was killed by hunters. He said the Giddalur tiger was shot dead using a firearm and the poachers removed its claws after the animal died. Seven accused persons have been arrested in connection with the incident, and the tiger claws were recovered from them. Explaining the Atmakur tiger death, Mallikarjuna Rao said the animal died a natural death after attempting to prey on a porcupine. The quills of the porcupine reportedly pierced the tiger, leading to its death. The Forest Department is continuing investigations into wildlife crimes

Imaginary image



and taking strict action against those involved in illegal hunting activities, officials said. The incident has raised concerns over the

need for stronger protection measures for tigers and other wildlife in the Nallamala forest region.

South Coast Railway Records Major Progress in Two Months

Visakhapatnam, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

South Coast Railway (SCoR), which commenced operations on June 1, 2026, has achieved significant progress in infrastructure development, passenger services, safety and operational efficiency within two months of its formation. Addressing the media, SCoR General Manager Sandeep Mathur said the new railway zone has established its administrative structure while focusing on major infrastructure projects and passenger-centric initiatives. The zone comprises four divisions covering 3,532 route kilometres and 6,455 track kilometres, with an estimated annual originating revenue of \$15,500 crore and freight loading exceeding 100 million tonnes. Mathur said safety remains the top priority, with senior officials inspecting

nearly 1,700 route kilometres and 3,000 track kilometres since June. The zone is executing five new railway line projects and 24 multi-tracking works worth around \$54,479 crore, while projects valued at \$70,865 crore are in the pipeline. Over 300 Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges are also under construction. Major approvals include the \$300-crore Visakhapatnam Yard Remodeling Project, \$1,205-crore Guntakal-Ballari Quadrupling Project and \$20 crore for crowd management facilities at Tirupati. Passenger amenities have improved with redeveloped Amrit Bharat Stations at Rayanapadu, Manga lagiri and Cumbum, while 70 more stations are being upgraded. Sleeping pods at Vijayawada Railway Station and premium "Deccan Chai" services at Visakhapatnam sta-

tion were also introduced. The zone operated 76 special trains carrying nearly 86,000 passengers, added 408 extra coaches and upgraded Simhadri Express and Guntur-Vikarabad Express with safer LHB coaches. SCoR recorded \$2,493 crore in originating earnings, \$671 crore in passenger revenue and handled 29.4 million originating passengers, registering 3% annual growth. Mathur said the zone will continue efforts to enhance safety, infrastructure and passenger services.



Jagan Assures Support to BC Leaders Facing Cases



Rajamahendravaram, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party president and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday alleged that the coalition government was targeting Backward Classes (BCs) by filing false cases against their leaders and assured full support to those facing such action. Jagan made the remarks after meeting Peeta Ramakrishna, BC wing city president and supporter of former MP and YSRCP national spokesperson Margani Bharat Ram, who was recently released from prison after proceedings under the Preventive Detention (PD) Act were withdrawn. During the meeting, Bharat Ram briefed Jagan on the developments in Rajamahendravaram City and alleged that BC leaders were being subjected to politically motivated cases. He said YSRCP leaders had mobilised BC representatives from the erstwhile East and West Godavari districts, submitted representations to the District Collector and Superintendent of Police, and were prepared to pursue legal remedies. He added that following an inquiry, authorities concluded that the PD Act was not applicable, leading to Ramakrishna's release. Commending Bharat Ram for his efforts, Jagan said party leaders should continue to stand by workers facing difficulties and fight what he described as the government's illegal actions. The former Chief Minister expressed confidence that the YSRCP would return to power in the future and said the party would strongly oppose any alleged attacks on BC communities. Margani Nageswara Rao, Chairman of the BC JAC for the Telugu States and senior YSRCP leader, also met Jagan during the occasion.

HM Anitha Slams Jagan Over Political Tensions



Amaravati, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha on Thursday alleged that while the NDA coalition government is focused on development, YSR Congress Party president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is creating political unrest through his public tours. Addressing the media at the State Secretariat, Anitha said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu is working tirelessly to attract investments, industries and employment to the state. She added that Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and Minister Nara Lokesh are also actively contributing to the government's development agenda. The Home Minister said the opposition has every democratic right to stage protests, but no one has the right to disturb law and order. She questioned why Jagan's visits in the name of expressing solidarity with farmers were repeatedly resulting in tensions and alleged incidents involving attacks on police personnel and disruption of public peace. Highlighting the government's anti-drug drive, Anitha said the EAGLE system has been established to curb ganja and narcotics while protecting the future of the state's youth. She also said the government is prioritising women's safety, cybercrime prevention and modern policing. Rejecting allegations of a "Red Book Constitution," the minister asserted that Andhra Pradesh is governed strictly under the Constitution framed by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, with the law applying equally to everyone. Anitha said the coalition government is concentrating on development, welfare, infrastructure, investments and employment while maintaining peace and security across the state. She urged people to compare the coalition government's performance with that of the previous administration and judge the difference for themselves.

MLA Arani Visits TDP Leader After Attack



Tirupati, August 6 | TPN Bureau

Tirupati MLA Arani Srinivasulu on Thursday visited TDP Tirupati constituency in-charge JB Srinivas and expressed solidarity with him following an alleged attack on his residence by YSRCP supporters. The MLA enquired about the incident and sought details from JB Srinivas regarding the circumstances surrounding the attack. Condemning the incident, Arani Srinivasulu alleged that the attack reflected the "faction mindset" of former minister Bhumana Karunakar Reddy and Bhumana Abhinay Reddy. He said attempts were being made to disturb the peaceful atmosphere of the pilgrim city of Tirupati and alleged that people had already rejected the leadership of Bhumana Karunakar Reddy and Abhinay Reddy. The MLA warned that people would give a political response to those allegedly trying to bring back what he described as "Kadapa culture" into Tirupati politics. He assured that the government would take steps to maintain peace and protect public order. The programme was attended by State Yadav Corporation Chairman Narasimha Yadav, TDP Cluster In-charge Sridhar Varma, Gangamma Temple Chairman Mahesh Yadav, Jana Sena leaders Raja Reddy, Hari Shankar, Subhashini, Amudala Venkatesh, Hari, and others.

YSRCP MPs Seek Amit Shah's Intervention Over Jagan Security Lapses



New Delhi, August 6 | TPN Bureau

A delegation of YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) Members of Parliament met Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday and sought the Centre's intervention over alleged security lapses involving former Chief Minister and YSRCP President Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, DSC-2025 recruitment irregularities, deteriorating law and order, and alleged obstruction of industrial activities in Andhra Pradesh. The delegation, comprising YSRCP Parliamentary Party Leader Y.V. Subba Reddy, Lok

Sabha Floor Leader P.V. Midhun Reddy, MPs Dr. Gumma Thanuja Rani, Dr. Maddila Gurumoorthy and Golla Babu Rao, submitted a detailed representation highlighting issues affecting democratic rights, public safety and the investment climate in the state. The MPs raised concerns over security arrangements during Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's visit to Devarapalli on August 5 to meet tobacco farmers. They alleged that despite his Z+ security status, adequate arrangements were not made, with lapses reported at the helipad, route and programme venue. They claimed similar security issues had occurred during

his earlier visits to Bhimavaram, Guntur Mirchi Yard and the Visakhapatnam-Srikakulam tour. The delegation also sought a fair investigation into alleged irregularities in the DSC-2025 recruitment process, particularly the misuse of the Sports Quota, stating that deserving candidates were deprived of opportunities. The MPs further alleged political misuse of police machinery against YSRCP leaders, workers and supporters, citing cases involving former Minister Dr. Seediri Appalaraju and Alur MLA Virupakshi. They also sought an impartial probe into reported custodial deaths. The delegation brought to Amit Shah's notice alleged obstruction of industrial operations involving Bharathi Cements and UltraTech Cement, warning that such incidents could affect investor confidence and employment opportunities. Amit Shah responded positively and assured that the issues raised by the delegation would be examined. The YSRCP MPs urged the Union Government to ensure adequate security for Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and take steps to safeguard rule of law and industrial growth in Andhra Pradesh.

TDP-YSRCP Clash in Vijayawada During DSC-2025 Protest

Vijayawada, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Tension gripped Vijayawada on Wednesday after workers of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) clashed during a relay hunger strike organised over alleged irregularities in the DSC-2025 teacher recruitment process. The protest, led by former MLA Malladi Vishnu, demanded a CBI inquiry into the recruitment exercise. TDP leaders, led by MLA Bonda Umamaheswara Rao, objected to the protest, alleging that the YSRCP had set up the hunger strike camp without obtaining official permission. They also accused YSRCP leaders of making objectionable remarks against Minister for Human Resources Development Nara Lokesh. The situation turned tense when TDP workers allegedly removed the protest tent, triggering a confrontation with YSRCP supporters. Police rushed to the spot in large numbers to prevent further escalation and later detained former MLA Malladi Vishnu, citing that the protest was being held without prior permission. Condemning the incident, Devineni Avinash, NTR District YSRCP President, alleged that TDP workers attacked a peaceful protest by hurling eggs and tomatoes and vandalising the protest camp. He accused the police of failing to prevent the violence despite prior intimation about the relay hunger strike. Several YSRCP leaders, including former MLA Vellampalli Srinivas, MLC Monditoka Arun, M.D. Ruhulla, former Deputy Mayor Avuthu Sailaja and State General Secretary Shaik Asif, joined a protest at Dharna Chowk, demanding strict action against those responsible and protection for peaceful democratic protests.



Bonda Umamaheswara Rao Challenges YSRCP to Open Debate on Mega DSC

Vijayawada, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Bonda Umamaheswara Rao, Vijayawada Central MLA and Government Whip, on Thursday rejected the YSRCP's allegations over the Mega DSC-2025 teacher recruitment drive, asserting that the appointments were carried out transparently and strictly on merit under the leadership of Nara Lokesh, Minister for Human Resource Development. Addressing the media, Bonda Uma accused the YSRCP of spreading false information to mislead the public and creating unnecessary controversy over the recruitment process. He challenged the opposition to produce evidence supporting its allegations and participate in an open debate. He said the discussion could take place at the YSRCP office in Tadepalli, the Assembly, a television studio, or even through an online platform, adding that Minister Nara Lokesh was also prepared for such a debate. The MLA criticised the YSRCP for staging protests in one of Vijayawada's busiest public locations without obtaining prior permission. He said while every political party has the democratic right to protest, demonstrations should be held only at designated venues such as Dharna Chowk to avoid causing inconvenience to the public and disrupting traffic. Bonda Uma also warned that the TDP would not remain silent if Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu or Minister Nara Lokesh were targeted with what he described as abusive remarks or false allegations. He further appealed to the police to take preventive action against unauthorised protests in crowded public areas and urged the YSRCP to substantiate its claims with evidence instead of resorting to politically motivated accusations.

Former YSRCP MLA Mustafa Gets 14-Day Remand in Kidnap Case

Nuzvid, August 6 | TPN Bureau

Former Guntur East MLA and YSRCP leader Mustafa has been remanded to judicial custody for 14 days in connection with the alleged kidnapping case of a tobacco trader. The Nuzvid court passed the remand orders after police produced him before the magistrate early Thursday morning. Following the court's directive, Mustafa was shifted to the Nellore Sub-Jail. Police had taken him into custody as part of the investigation into the alleged abduction case and presented him before the court after completing the preliminary inquiry. The case relates to the alleged kidnapping of a tobacco businessman, in which police have been investigating the involvement of several individuals. As part of the ongoing probe, authorities have been collecting details regarding the circumstances surrounding the incident and the role of the accused. Earlier, Mustafa's son Mubashir was also produced before the court in the same case and was granted 14-day judicial remand on Wednesday. Police officials are continuing their investigation and are expected to examine further details connected with the case. The developments have drawn political attention as Mustafa is a senior YSRCP leader and former legislator from Guntur East. Further action in the case will depend on the progress of the investigation and findings submitted by the police before the court.

YSRCP Demands Action Against TDP Minister Over NRI Woman's Complaint

Visakhapatnam, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP Women's Wing State President and MLC Varudu Kalyani on Thursday demanded the immediate dismissal and arrest of a TDP Minister over allegations of harassment made by Telugu NRI Dr. Talluri Shayla in Dallas. Addressing a press conference in Visakhapatnam, Kalyani called for the registration of a criminal case and a forensic examination of the chats, photographs and other digital evidence submitted by the complainant. She alleged that the Minister had pressured the woman to meet him alone after she approached him regarding service activities and had sent her inappropriate photographs. Kalyani criticised the coalition government for remaining silent despite the complainant tagging Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and Minister Nara Lokesh on social media. She alleged that instead of supporting the victim, TDP social media activists targeted and harassed her. The YSRCP leader further accused the government of failing to ensure women's safety and questioned why Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha and Ministers Savitha and Sandhya Rani had not demanded action against their Cabinet colleague. She sought protection for the complainant, an independent forensic investigation, public disclosure of the findings and the Minister's removal from the Cabinet. Kalyani alleged that the government's inaction in previous cases involving ruling alliance leaders had emboldened those accused of misconduct. She said the YSRCP would continue to raise the issue until justice was delivered and urged the government to act impartially to uphold public confidence in the rule of law.

Medico Declared Brain-Dead After Alleged Hit-and-Run

Continue

to Hyderabad for advanced treatment. However, her family said doctors declared her brain-dead during treatment. The Prakashnagar police have registered a case and taken the car involved, along with the two youths, into custody. Police are investigating whether the act was a deliberate attempt linked to the earlier dispute or an accident. Meanwhile, Rajamahendravaram MP Dagubati Purandeswari expressed deep shock and condemned the attack, terming it a heinous and inhuman act. She said it was distressing that a young medical student with a promising future had become a victim of such brutality and assured the family of full support. Purandeswari also condemned the murder of Chevveti Bujjibabu in Gorakshanapeta, urging police to conduct a thorough investigation and ensure strict legal action against all those responsible. The Andhra Pradesh Junior Doctors Association (APJU-DA) has demanded a fair, transparent, and speedy investigation into the incident involving Dr. Priyanka K., a postgraduate student of GSL Medical College, Rajamahendravaram. APJU-DA urged authorities to preserve evidence, examine witnesses, and take strict action against those responsible, while ensuring safety and justice for healthcare professionals.

AP Proposes Rs.257 Crore Plan to Expand AYUSH Services

Continue

Naturopathy research institute. The government has also approved 58 surgical procedures under Ayurveda after consultations with stakeholders. Meanwhile, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Phoenix Foundation and Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences in the presence of Minister Satya Kumar Yadav to provide financial assistance to underprivileged students pursuing MBBS in government medical colleges. The Minister said poverty should not prevent talented students from becoming doctors. Under the initiative, selected students will receive support towards tuition fees and hostel expenses along with mentorship. Ten students will receive scholarships in 2026-27, with the number being increased gradually to 50 students annually. Officials said AYUSH healthcare centres have been integrated with the digital health system, with around 60,000 patient details registered so far. The Minister clarified that AYUSH systems would complement modern medicine and not replace emergency or surgical care. Around 550 AYUSH doctors participated in the conference aimed at strengthening traditional healthcare services across Andhra Pradesh.

AIIMS Mangalagiri Inaugurates Burns Block

Continue

departments. The new block was inaugurated by Prof. (Dr.) Ahanthem Santa Singh, Executive Director and CEO of AIIMS Mangalagiri, in the presence of Medical Superintendent Prof. (Dr.) Rajashekar Mohan, Dean (Academics) Prof. (Dr.) Desu Rama Mohan, and Deputy Director (Administration) Col. Shashikanth Thumma. Speaking to the media, Prof. Singh said the institute has rapidly expanded its healthcare infrastructure, medical education and research facilities. He noted that AIIMS Mangalagiri now records an average daily outpatient attendance of nearly 4,500 patients, crossing 5,000 on weekdays. During 2025-26, the institute provided over 10 lakh outpatient consultations, a 25% increase over the previous year, while inpatient admissions exceeded 30,000, registering a 35% rise. The institute has also expanded its critical care capacity by operationalising 118 ICU beds, against the sanctioned 50, and doubled emergency bed capacity from 30 to 60, including 10 Emergency ICU beds. Diagnostic services have been strengthened with the number of X-ray units increasing from four to eleven and ultrasound machines from four to eight. An advanced 256-slice CT scanner is expected to become operational soon. Among other patient-centric initiatives, AIIMS has launched an automated dietary kitchen, outpatient dining facility, digital Scan & Pay services through the e-Paramarsh app, and will commission a modern pharmacy with 19 counters, including seven Jan Aushadhi counters, later this month. Prof. Singh said the institute is strengthening super-specialty services such as Cardiology, CTVS and Gastroenterology, while the recently inaugurated AYUSH Block and empanelment under the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) have further expanded healthcare access. With 1,050 doctors, including 124 interns, and 906 nursing staff, AIIMS Mangalagiri is now functioning as a comprehensive tertiary care centre, committed to delivering affordable, accessible and world-class healthcare to people across Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring states.

YSRCP Alleges Political Vendetta in SI Assault Case

Srikakulam, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

The YSRCP has accused the police of targeting its leaders following the registration of cases related to the alleged assault on Sub-Inspector Pravalika during party president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's recent visit to Srikakulam district. The party claimed that Chintada Ravikumara, YSRCP Amadalavalasa constituency in-charge and the prime accused in the case, has not absconded and has publicly stated that he remains within the district. Ravikumara reportedly declared that he would surrender only after the cases registered against his supporters are withdrawn. Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council Botsa Satyanarayana alleged that the police had included the names of several leaders who were not present during the incident and warned of a protest in front of the Superintendent of Police's office if YSRCP leaders were harassed through what he termed false cases. The party also questioned the evidence against Ravikumara, claiming available video footage does not show him misbehaving with SI Pravalika. According to party leaders, the police have intensified efforts to arrest Ravikumara, citing the seriousness of the allegations involving a woman police officer. Meanwhile, the YSRCP legal team believes obtaining bail may be difficult due to the legal provisions invoked in the case. The police have not officially responded to the allegations made by the party. The controversy has further intensified political tensions in Amadalavalasa, with both the YSRCP and the police maintaining firm stands. While the party has alleged political targeting and demanded withdrawal of cases against its workers, the police are continuing their investigation and efforts to apprehend the prime accused in accordance with the law.

YSRCP Raises Tobacco Farmers' Distress in Parliament

New Delhi, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP raised the issue of the plight of tobacco farmers in Parliament on Thursday, urging the Central Government to align procurement commitments with production estimates to ensure remunerative prices for growers. During a Special Mention, YSRCP MP Y.V. Subba Reddy said tobacco prices in Andhra Pradesh had dropped sharply from Rs.460 per kg to below Rs.260 per kg, causing severe financial hardship to farmers. He pointed out that companies had committed to procure only 142 million kg against an estimated production of 232 million kg, resulting in sluggish procurement and a steep decline in prices. The MP said auction prices fell from Rs.237.21 per kg on May 25 to Rs.227.78 per kg by June 15. He also alleged that nearly 40 per cent of tobacco bales were rejected during auctions, with each rejected bale costing farmers around Rs.2,000 in transportation expenses. Subba Reddy noted that while the government earns nearly Rs.1 lakh crore in revenue from the tobacco sector, farmers continue to suffer losses. He urged the Centre to review auction practices, prevent arbitrary rejection of produce based on quality grades, align procurement with production estimates and introduce market intervention measures to safeguard the interests of tobacco growers.

YS Jagan Pays Floral Tributes to Jakkampudi Ramamohan Rao

Tadepalli, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

YSR Congress Party President and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday paid floral tributes to former Minister Jakkampudi Ramamohan Rao on his birth anniversary at the YSRCP Central Office in Tadepalli. Garlanding the portrait of the late leader, Jagan recalled Jakkampudi Ramamohan Rao's commitment to public service and his dedication to resolving people's issues. He also remembered the long-standing association that Ramamohan Rao shared with the YSR family. Jagan said the former Minister earned a special place in public life by remaining closely connected with the people and consistently working for their welfare. He added that Ramamohan Rao's commitment to public service and contributions to society would always be remembered. YSRCP General Secretary and MLC Lella Appi Reddy, SC Cell President T.J.R. Sudhakar Babu and several senior party leaders and functionaries also paid floral tributes and remembered the late leader's contribution to public life. Party leaders observed that Jakkampudi Ramamohan Rao's simplicity, accessibility and commitment to public welfare earned him the affection and respect of people across the region. They said his ideals and dedicated service would continue to inspire future generations of public representatives and party workers.

Air Cmde Narsingh Sailani Offers Prayers at Kanaka Durga Temple

Vijayawada, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

Air Commodore Narsingh Sailani visited the revered Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam (Kanaka Durga Temple) in Vijayawada on Wednesday morning and offered special prayers to Goddess Kanaka Durga. He was accompanied by his wife Mrs. Rinu Sailani during the spiritual visit.

The couple arrived at the temple around 7:30 a.m., where temple authorities warmly welcomed them and made arrangements for a smooth and peaceful darshan. The visit was conducted in an organised manner, ensuring that the dignitaries could perform prayers without causing inconvenience to devotees.

Mr. Khasim of 8(A) Air Squadron NCC, Vijayawada, played a key role in coordinating the visit by working closely with temple officials and ensuring seamless arrangements throughout the pro-



gramme. Temple authorities extended their cooperation and hospitality, contributing to the successful completion of the visit in a calm atmosphere. The programme also highlighted the coordination between the temple administration and the NCC establishment in Vijayawada. Air Commodore Narsingh Sailani and Mrs. Rinu Sailani expressed their gratitude to the temple authorities and the NCC team for the warm reception and arrangements made during their visit.

Woman Home Guard Alleges Harassment by Senior Police Officials

Krishna District, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

A woman Home Guard attached to Penamaluru Police Station in Krishna district has alleged harassment by senior police officials, claiming that she was pressured to perform domestic duties at the residence of a senior officer and later faced action for refusing.

The Home Guard, identified as Roopakala, said she was asked to work at the officer's residence but declined due to health-related issues. She alleged that following her refusal, she was sent to the Superintendent of Police's office for a week as a form of punishment. Roopakala further claimed that during her posting at the SP office, she was assigned tasks such as removing grass and other non-official work. She said she approached the SP to explain her concerns but alleged that she was spoken to



harshly.

Questioning the treatment, she said she had received the job on compassionate grounds after her husband's death and that her health condition prevented her from undertaking strenuous work. She alleged that instead of addressing her concerns, authorities placed her under suspension.

The Krishna district police have not yet issued an official response to the allegations. The claims made by the Home Guard are yet to be independently verified.

Krishna Collector Urges Eligible Citizens to Enrol as Voters

Nandigama, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

Dr. G. Lakshmisha, Krishna District Collector, on Thursday called upon every eligible citizen to register as a voter, stressing that exercising the right to vote is both a constitutional right and a civic responsibility.

Reviewing the implementation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Nandigama, the Collector inspected the process of issuing notices for claims and objections. He directed Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to create awareness among the public, receive applications strictly as per Election Commission guidelines, and complete field verification in a transparent and timely manner. Dr. Lakshmisha said the district's draft electoral roll was published on July 31, 2026. Citizens whose names are missing from the voter list or have been deleted need not worry, he said, urging them to approach their respective BLOs and submit claims or objections with the required supporting documents. He informed that the last date for submitting claims and objections is August 30, 2026, while all applications will be verified and disposed of by September 28, 2026. Those previously enrolled but omitted from the draft list can apply using any of the 11 approved documents prescribed by the Election Commission. The Collector also encouraged all Indian citizens who have attained 18 years of age to register through Form-6 along with the required documents. Emphasising that the right to vote is the foundation of democracy, he urged eligible youth to make use of the opportunity and ensure their names are included in the electoral rolls.

Nandigama RDO A. Anil Kumar, Tahsildar Nuthakki Suresh Babu, Municipal Commissioner Lova Raju, MPDO Varaprasad, and Revenue Department officials participated in the inspection.

KL University Organises Blood Donation Camp to Promote Lifesaving Service

Vijayawada, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

KL University organised a blood donation camp on Thursday to promote voluntary blood donation and create awareness about its importance in saving lives. The programme was jointly conducted by the Youth Red Cross (YRC), Women Development Cell (WDC), and National Service Scheme (NSS).

Inaugurating the camp, Dr. K.R.S. Prasad, Dean of Student Affairs, urged students to actively participate in blood donation drives, stating that timely availability of blood plays a crucial role during medical emergencies. He described blood donation as a noble service and said a single unit of donated blood can save up to three lives.

Dr. Prasad encouraged students to spread awareness about voluntary donation and explained that healthy individuals aged between 18 and 60 years, weighing above 50 kg and meeting required health conditions, can donate blood. He added that regular blood donation helps maintain healthy blood circulation and supports the production of new blood cells.

The collected blood units were handed over to Vijayashree Blood Bank, Vijayawada. The event was attended by Dr. Habibullah Khan, Dr. P. Sai Vijay, Dr. K. Ruth Ramya, Dr. R. Supriya, and Dr. P. Sreekanth Reddy. KL University Vice-Chancellor Dr. G. Parthasarathi Varma and other senior officials appreciated the students for their humanitarian contribution.



MLA Announces CM Visit to Resolve Decades-Old Kaikaluru Land Issues

Kaikaluru, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

Decades-old land disputes in Andhra Pradesh's Kaikaluru Assembly constituency are set to receive a permanent resolution, with the state government launching a major initiative to grant land ownership rights to eligible beneficiaries. Speaking to the media, Kaikaluru MLA Kamineni Srinivas announced that the Chief Minister will visit Kalidindi on August 10 at 10 a.m. to distribute land ownership pattas and interact with local residents to discuss their concerns.

The MLA said the government is committed to ensuring that every eligible beneficiary, irrespective of political affiliation, receives land titles under the programme. He urged party leaders and officials to spread awareness among the public and work together to make the Chief Minister's visit a success.

Kamineni Srinivas stated that the government has given top priority to resolving land issues that have remained pending for decades, includ-



ing disputes dating back to the pre-Independence era. The initiative aims to provide legal ownership and permanent rights to landholders after a detailed review of long-standing cases. The programme will cover nearly 4,000 acres across six villages in the Kaikaluru constituency. It includes the settlement of 1,900 acres of military land, removal of 22A restrictions, resolution of 500 acres of Ranganayakulu-transferred lands, issues related to Guravayipalem and Bhaskara Rao Peta lands, 900 acres of D-Form patta lands, and 400 acres belonging to freedom fighters in Unikili. The government will also remove 22A restrictions from village common lands to ensure hassle-free ownership and land transactions for residents.

Phoenix Foundation, NTR Health University Launch Medical Scholarship Programme

Vijayawada, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

The Phoenix Foundation and Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch the Phoenix Foundation Medical Scholarship Programme, an initiative aimed at supporting academically meritorious medical students from economically weaker and underprivileged backgrounds in Andhra Pradesh.

Launched in memory of Late Sri Chukkappalli Sankara Rao, the scholarship programme seeks to ensure that financial hardship does not prevent deserving students from pursuing medical education. The initiative continues his vision of creating educational opportunities and contributing to society through meaningful support for talented youth. For the 2026-27 academic year, 10 stu-

dents from selected Government Medical Colleges in Andhra Pradesh will be chosen through a structured selection process. Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences will identify and recommend eligible candidates, while the Phoenix Foundation will make the final selection based on academic merit, financial need, leadership potential, and social responsibility. The scholarship will cover eligible educational expenses, including tuition-related costs and hostel accommodation fees, for the entire duration of the medical course. Financial assistance will be paid directly to the respective institutions. Selected students will also receive mentorship and career guidance as part of the programme. The Foundation plans to expand the initiative by increasing the number of new scholarships by 10 each year, reaching 50 scholarships annually from 2030-31 onwards.



Special consideration will be given to students from underprivileged backgrounds, women, and persons with disabilities, reinforcing the programme's commitment to promoting inclusive and equitable access to medical education.

Krishna Collector Assures Adequate Fertiliser Supply, Urges Farmers to Avoid Queues

Nandigama, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

Dr. G. Lakshmisha, Krishna District Collector, on Thursday assured farmers that there is no shortage of fertilisers in the district and said there is no need for them to stand in long queues to purchase agricultural inputs. During a surprise inspection at Sri Manikantha Seeds and Fertilisers in Nandigama, the Collector reviewed the fertiliser distribution system and verified whether government guidelines were being followed. He inspected the display of fertiliser price lists, helpline numbers, and examined whether farmers had completed crop registration before purchasing fertilisers.

The Collector also reviewed fertiliser allocation details through the APAIMS app, including farmers' land holdings, crop registration status, eligibility for urea and DAP, quantity already received, and the balance available under their quota.



Dr. Lakshmisha clarified that every registered farmer can collect fertilisers according to their allotted quota whenever required and need not purchase the entire allocation at one time. He advised farmers against

excessive use of chemical fertilisers, warning that overuse could adversely affect soil fertility, crop productivity, the environment, and public health. He encouraged farmers to adopt scientific nutrient management, green manure cultivation, crop rotation, and natural farming practices to improve soil health and ensure sustainable agriculture. Later, the Collector visited organic farms at Raghavapuram, where he interacted with farmers about cultivation methods, crop yields, market opportunities, and access to crop loans. He highlighted the health benefits of organically grown produce and urged consumers to support organic farmers by purchasing their products. He also encouraged farmers to gradually expand the area under organic cultivation. Nandigama RDO A. Anil Kumar, ahsildar Nuthakki Suresh Babu, MPDO Varaprasad, APO Sharath Babu, agriculture officials, and revenue personnel accompanied the Collector during the visit.

YSRCP Leader Lakshmi Parvathi Launches Relay Hunger Strike Over DSC

Vijayawada, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP State General Secretary Lakshmi Parvathi on Thursday inaugurated a relay hunger strike in Vijayawada, demanding a CBI inquiry into alleged irregularities in the DSC-2025 teacher recruitment, release of fee reimbursement funds, and resolution of issues concerning students and unemployed youth.

The protest, organised under the leadership of Devineni Avinash, NTR District YSRCP President, was part of the party's statewide agitation against the coalition government. Addressing the gathering, Lakshmi Parvathi alleged that the government had failed to fulfil its election promises and accused it of corruption. She claimed that irregularities occurred in the Mega DSC recruitment process and alleged that deserving candidates, including academic achievers, were denied



employment opportunities. She also criticised the government over women's safety and youth welfare issues.

Devineni Avinash said the relay hunger strikes were launched following the directions of YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. He alleged that the coalition government had failed to implement its promises and accused it of being involved in scams.

Avinash further alleged that police were obstructing democratic protests and assured that YSRCP would continue its fight for students and unemployed youth. He announced statewide rallies on August 10 to highlight DSC-related concerns. The ruling TDP has rejected the allegations, stating that the Mega DSC recruitment process was conducted transparently and strictly based on merit.

Retired Additional SP N.B.M. Murali Krishna Inaugurates Amaravati Cup Badminton Tournament

Vijayawada, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

Retired Additional Superintendent of Police N.B.M. Murali Krishna on Thursday emphasised that academics and sports are equally important for the overall development of children and urged parents to encourage youngsters to excel in both fields.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Amaravati Cup District-Level Under-17 Boys and Girls Shuttle Badminton Tournament-cum-Selection Trials held at the DSA Indoor Hall in Atkur village of Unguturu mandal. The event was inaugurated along with Gannavaram Market Committee Vice Chairman Kondeti Venkateswara Rao under the chairmanship of



school Headmistress Punnami Devi. Murali Krishna appreciated the Andhra Pradesh government's initiative of organising the Amaravati Cup, stating that such competitions would help identify and nurture talented players capable of representing the state and the country. He advised young

athletes to maintain discipline, practise regularly and work hard to achieve success. Kondeti Venkateswara Rao said rural areas have immense sporting talent and that proper support and opportunities can help village players reach national and international platforms. The programme was attended

by educationists and sports officials, including Gayatri, Satyanarayana, C.H. Chandrasekhar, G. Rambabu, and Tournament Organising Secretary Dhaniyala Nagaraju. The tournament witnessed enthusiastic participation from young badminton players across the district.

Elderly Woman Loses Rs.1 Crore in Cyber Fraud



Machilipatnam, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

An elderly woman from Parasupeta in Machilipatnam allegedly lost Rs.1 crore after falling victim to a sophisticated cyber fraud, triggering widespread concern over the rising incidence of online financial crimes.

According to preliminary information, the woman was reportedly deceived by cyber fraudsters into transferring a substantial amount of money through a series of fraudulent transactions. Shocked by the loss, she approached the Machilipatnam police seeking legal action against those responsible. The incident has become a major talking point in the town due to the large amount involved. The victim is said to be under severe emotional distress after losing her life savings in the alleged cyber scam. The case has also raised questions over the handling of the complaint. It has been alleged that police obtained the victim's signatures on documents while she remained seated in an autorickshaw, instead of taking her into the police station to complete the formalities. These allegations have not been officially confirmed. Residents have urged senior police officials to conduct a thorough investigation into the case, trace the fraudsters, and disclose details of the modus operandi to help prevent similar incidents. The incident has also highlighted the growing need for stronger public awareness campaigns on cyber safety. Authorities are expected to advise citizens, particularly senior citizens, to verify suspicious calls and messages, avoid sharing banking details, and immediately report suspected cyber frauds to the police or the national cybercrime helpline. Police are yet to issue an official statement on the incident.

India SME Forum Launches Andhra Pradesh State SME Awards 2026

Vijayawada, Aug 6 | TPN Bureau

The India SME Forum, in partnership with Axis Bank, has announced the launch of the Andhra Pradesh State SME Awards 2026 to recognise and promote outstanding Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across the state. Andhra Pradesh is the second state in a seven-state awards series covering Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana. The initiative aims to identify and honour the Top 50 MSMEs for their contributions in innovation, exports, employment generation, sustainability and economic growth. The selected enterprises will be felicitat-

ed at a special awards ceremony and nominated for the prestigious India SME 100 Awards.

The India SME Forum said Andhra Pradesh was selected due to its rapidly expanding industrial, manufacturing and services sectors, along with growing export opportunities. The programme will help strengthen the MSME ecosystem by recognising businesses adopting technology and innovative practices. India SME Forum President Vinod Kumar said the awards have been highlighting promising MSMEs for over a decade and providing growth opportunities through connections with investors, financial institutions and global partners. Vijay Shetty, Group Head - Commercial



Banking, Axis Bank, said MSMEs play a crucial role in employment generation, exports and regional development, adding that the bank is proud to support

initiatives promoting sustainable business growth.

Applications for the Andhra Pradesh State SME Awards 2026 are now open.

Rs.12.60 Crore Sanctioned for Eluru Degree College Building

Eluru, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Government has sanctioned Rs.12.60 crore for the construction of new buildings at the Government Degree College in Eluru, providing a permanent solution to the long-pending shortage of classrooms. The sanction follows the initiative of Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena President Pawan Kalyan. To mark the occasion, Jana Sena leaders performed Palabhishekam to a portrait of Pawan Kalyan at the college premises on Thursday. APSRTC Vijayawada Zonal Chairman and Jana Sena Eluru constituency in-charge Reddy Appalanaidu said the Deputy Chief Minister had fulfilled his promise to address the issue after it was brought to his attention during the Jana Sena Janavani and Varahi Yatra programmes in 2021. Appalanaidu said the college, sanctioned in 2008, had suffered from inadequate



infrastructure due to delays in construction, affecting students for several years. He thanked the government for sanctioning the required funds to complete the long-pending project. Senior leaders Nara Seshu and Shiripalli

Prasad expressed gratitude to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and Education Minister Nara Lokesh for approving the funds. Student leaders recalled Appalanaidu's support during

their 2021 hunger strike and appreciated the government's decision. College Principal Srinivasulu, former Deputy Mayor Shiripalli Sivaramakrishna Prasad, Donepudi Lovaraju, Kavuri Vanisri, Nimmala Jyothi Kumar, Veeranki Pandu, Polimera Dasu, Koya Sathibabu, students, Jana Sena leaders, Veera Mahilas and Janasainiks attended the programme. Speakers said the new academic buildings would significantly improve infrastructure at the Government Degree College and provide a better learning environment for students. They expressed confidence that the project would help strengthen higher education facilities in Eluru and benefit future generations of students. Jana Sena leaders Nara Seshu, Shiripalli ivaramakrishna Prasad, Illa Srinivas, Principal A. Raj Krishna, lecturers I. Vijaya Bhaskar, P. Bharathi, B. Rajesh and college staff were present.

Interstate Burglar Arrested, Jewellery Worth Rs.14.87 Lakh Recovered



Tirupati, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Tirupati district police have arrested an interstate burglar allegedly involved in more than 80 theft cases across Andhra Pradesh and recovered gold and silver

ornaments worth around Rs.14.87 lakh from his possession. Acting under the supervision of Tirupati District Superintendent of Police L. Subbarayudu, IPS, Venkatagiri police launched a special investigation into a series of

house burglaries reported in Venkatagiri and Dakkili areas. Using technical evidence, surveillance inputs and field-level intelligence, police traced and arrested the accused. The arrested accused was identified as Karaka Rajababu (47) from Anakapalli district. Police said he was addicted to vices and used to travel by trains to different parts of the state, targeting locked houses for thefts whenever he needed money. He had previously been involved in temple hundi thefts, house burglaries and thefts from railway passengers and had served jail terms in several cases. Police recovered around 64 grams of gold ornaments and 3.4 kilograms of silver articles from him. The recovery helped crack six theft cases in Venkatagiri and Dakkili areas and two

cases registered in Bapatla district. The operation was carried out under the guidance of Additional SP (Crime) A. Srinivasulu and Naidupeta DSP Chenchubabu, with the efforts of Venkatagiri CI M. Roshaiiah, SI T. Swaroop, Balayapalli SI D. Suresh Babu, Dakkili SI Brahmanayudu, and police personnel. SP L. Subbarayudu said no criminal could permanently escape the law and assured that the police department was using advanced technology and intelligence networks to control property crimes. He advised citizens to follow security measures, avoid keeping valuables at home unnecessarily, and use the Locked House Monitoring System (LHMS) service when leaving homes unattended for long periods.

Kurnool Collector Directs Officials to Ensure Grand Independence Day

Kurnool, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Kurnool District Collector Dr. A. Siri has directed district officials to make elaborate arrangements for the smooth and grand conduct of the 79th Independence Day celebrations. Chairing a video conference with district officials at the Collectorate on Thursday, the Collector reviewed the preparations and stressed that the event should be organised with meticulous planning despite it being an annual programme. Dr. Siri instructed the Kurnool Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) to oversee the erection of shamianas, printing of invita-

tion cards, and seating arrangements strictly as per protocol. She also directed officials to send invitations to families of freedom fighters and public representatives. The Kurnool Rural, Urban, and Kallur Tahsildars were asked to coordinate closely with the RDO to ensure seamless execution of the event. The Information Department was instructed to prepare the Collector's speech by compiling details of government welfare schemes and to ensure proper public address system arrangements. The Roads and Buildings Department was asked to prepare the Police Parade Grounds with barricading

and other infrastructure, while the Police Department was directed to organise the flag hoisting ceremony and ceremonial parade. The Municipal Commissioner was instructed to ensure drinking water facilities and sanitation at the venue, while the District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO) was directed to keep first-aid kits and medical personnel on standby. The APSPDCL Superintending Engineer was asked to ensure uninterrupted power supply throughout the event. The Collector also directed all departments to submit the names of dedicated employees for commendation certi-

icates. Various departments, including Agriculture, Health, Education, Irrigation, Revenue, Forest, Panchayat Raj, Industries, and Swarna Andhra-Swachh Andhra, were instructed to set up thematic tableaux and exhibition stalls showcasing the implementation of government welfare schemes and development initiatives. The meeting was attended by Additional SP Krishna Mohan, DRO C. Venkata Narayanamma, Kurnool RDO Sandeep Kumar, Additional Municipal Commissioner Krishna, and other district officials.

AIMSR Dean Encourages Organ Donation Awareness Through Student Competitions

Chittoor, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

As part of the observance of World Organ Donation Day on August 13, the Apollo Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (AIMSR), under the Department of Anatomy at The Apollo University, organised reel-making, poster design, and photography competitions on Thursday to promote awareness about organ donation among students. The competitions aimed to spread the message that organ donation can save multiple lives. Students and faculty members from AIMSR, The Apollo University (TAU), and The Apollo College of Nursing (ACON) enthusiastically participated, showcasing their creativity through reels, posters, and photographs highlighting the importance of organ donation.



AIMSR Dean Dr. Ramya Ramakrishnan reviewed the entries and appreciated the

participants for their creative efforts. Speaking on the occasion, she described

organ donation as a noble humanitarian act that has the power to give a new lease on life to many people. She said such initiatives help nurture social responsibility, creativity, and communication skills among students while creating greater public awareness about the life-saving impact of organ donation. A panel of faculty members from AIMSR, TAU, and ACON evaluated the entries and selected the winners. The prizes and certificates of appreciation will be presented during a special programme to be held at AIMSR on August 13, marking World Organ Donation Day. The event was organised under the leadership of Dr. S. Teresa Rani, Head of the Department of Anatomy, with active participation from faculty members and students of AIMSR, The Apollo University, and Apollo College of Nursing.

APSPDCL CMD: Sports Help Employees Stay Mentally Refreshed

Tirupati, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

APSPDCL Chairman and Managing Director Shivashankar Lotheti on Thursday said participation in sports helps employees relieve work-related stress and maintain mental well-being. He was speaking at the valedictory ceremony of the 48th All India Electricity Sports Control Board Athletics, Chess, Ball Badminton and Carrom Championship 2026-27, held at the APSPDCL Corporate Office in Tirupati. The three-day tournament, conducted from August 4 to 6, witnessed participation from 246 athletes representing electricity utilities from 12 states. Congratulating the participants, Lotheti praised employees for balancing their professional responsibilities with sporting activities and for excelling at the national level. He said such tournaments foster camaraderie among employees from different regions and encourage them to deliver better services to consumers with renewed energy and enthusiasm. He later presented trophies, medals, certificates, and mementoes to the winners. In the overall athletics championship, Tamil Nadu emerged as the champions,



followed by Karnataka in second place and Andhra Pradesh in third. Tamil Nadu also secured the top position in ball badminton, while Andhra Pradesh finished second and Karnataka third. In chess, Telangana claimed the championship, followed by Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. In carrom, Tamil Nadu again finished first, with Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka securing second and third places, respectively. The event was attended by Director (Technical & HRD) K. Guravaiah, Director (Finance-FAC) K. Rama Mohan Rao, senior APSPDCL officials, Sports Council members, and employees. Former APSPDCL Sports Council contributors M. Krishna Reddy and Purushotham were also felicitated for their distinguished services.

Development Picks Up Pace in Narsipatnam Wards 1 and 2

Narsipatnam, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Development works gained momentum in Wards 1 and 2 of Narsipatnam Municipality as CC roads and drains worth Rs.1.81 crore were inaugurated and new works were launched on Thursday. The projects cover Peenaripalem, Kalasi Colony, BC Colony and Chakali Colony. Chintakayala Padmavathi, wife of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu, inaugurated completed works worth Rs.84 lakh in Ward 1 and Rs.64 lakh in Ward 2. She also laid the foundation stone for additional development works worth Rs.33 lakh in Ward 2. Floral tributes were paid to late Chintakayala Varahalu Dora in BC Colony. Addressing the gathering, Padmavathi said development activities that had remained stalled over the past two years are now progressing rapidly. She stated that Rs.242 crore has been sanctioned for Narsipatnam Municipality, including Rs.185 crore for a drinking water proj-



ect, Rs.32 crore for the construction of 189 roads and drains, and Rs.2 crore for a waste processing unit to be set up by Jindal. She added that development works are being implemented across all 28 wards without discrimination. Ward in-charge Lalam Muralikrishna said Ayyanna Patrudu, who played a key role in establishing the BC, Kalasi and Chakali colonies decades ago, has now ensured the construction of quality roads and drains in the area. He appreciated Padmavathi for closely monitoring local issues and sanctioning works based on priority. Former Chairperson Adilakshmi, councillors Varahamma, Daba Srinu, Rajeshwara Rao, Lovu, Sekhar, Mohan, Peddappalanaidu, Pentesh and local residents participated in the programme.

ACB Traps Anakapalli Mines Surveyor D. Murali Krishna Ambedkar in Rs.5 Lakh Bribery Case

Vijayawada/Anakapalli, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Thursday arrested D. Murali Krishna Ambedkar, Surveyor (Grade-III), Mines and Geology Department, Anakapalli, for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs.5 lakh from a complainant in exchange for an official favour. According to the ACB, the case was registered in Crime No. 10/RCT-VSP/2026 under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018) based on a complaint lodged by S. Suneel Kumar of Thummapala village in Anakapalli district. The trap was laid at around 11 a.m. on Thursday at a vacant site behind the Office of the Assistant Director, Mines and Geology Department, Anakapalli. The accused officer was caught red-handed while allegedly demanding and accepting Rs.5 lakh, which was part of an alleged Rs.15 lakh bribe sought to process the complainant's application for surveying two hectares of land in Vooderu village and issuing proceedings for the grant of a mining lease. The ACB said Murali Krishna Ambedkar joined service as a Surveyor in 2008 and had previously served in Tekkali, Visakhapatnam, Eluru, Anakapalli, and Paderu before being posted in Anakapalli in July 2025.



Officials further revealed that the accused had earlier been trapped by the ACB in 2018 while allegedly accepting a Rs.50,000 bribe, and that case is currently pending before the court. He was also suspended in 2021 for alleged dereliction of duty and reinstated in 2023. The ACB urged citizens to report corruption through its toll-free helpline 1064, mobile number 9440440057, or by contacting the nearest ACB office, assuring that the identity of complainants will be kept confidential.

Complete LPG eKYC by August 15: Civil Supplies Officer

Rajamahendravaram, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

District Civil Supplies Officer V. Parvathi has urged all LPG consumers in East Godavari district to complete their mandatory eKYC (biometric verification) by August 15, 2026, to avoid any disruption in LPG supply. In a press release issued on Thursday, Parvathi said the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has made eKYC compulsory for LPG consumers nationwide to ensure accurate beneficiary records, prevent misuse of domestic LPG connections and provide uninterrupted supply to genuine consumers. She warned that LPG connections of consumers who fail to complete the verification may be temporarily suspended until the process is completed. Consumers can complete the eKYC process through the HP Pay, IndianOil ONE, and Hello BPCL mobile applications, by visiting their LPG distributor's office, or through delivery personnel during doorstep cylinder delivery. Parvathi directed officials to intensify Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns across villages and wards and coordinate with oil marketing companies and LPG distributors to ensure all consumers complete the process within the stipulated deadline. Parvathi appealed to consumers not to wait until the last date and to complete the eKYC process at the earliest to avoid inconvenience. She said timely verification would help ensure uninterrupted LPG services and enable the government to deliver benefits only to eligible consumers.



SP Reviews Security Ahead of Chief Minister's Bapatla Visit

Bapatla, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

Bapatla District Superintendent of Police B. Uma Maheswar on Thursday reviewed security arrangements and conducted a convoy trial run ahead of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's visit to Kothapeta village in Vetapalem mandal on August 7 for the launch of the Nethanna Sevalo programme on National Handloom Day. The SP inspected security arrangements from the helipad to the public meeting venue, beneficiaries' houses and the convoy route. He instructed police personnel to remain alert throughout the Chief Minister's visit, ensure smooth convoy movement and prevent any untoward incidents. Traffic, security and field personnel were directed to coordinate effectively and interact courteously with the public while discharging their duties. Uma Maheswar said elaborate security arrangements had been made with adequate police deployment. He stated that surveillance would be carried out using 125 CCTV cameras and 15 drones, with real-time monitoring from the command and control centre. The SP added that traffic diversions would be implemented wherever necessary to ensure smooth vehicular movement and minimise inconvenience to the public. He said all preventive measures had been taken at the helipad, public meeting venue and along the convoy route to ensure the Chief Minister's visit passes off peacefully and without disruption.



CPI Launches Campaign Rally Against Anti-People Policies



Eluru, Aug. 6 | TPN Bureau

CPI Eluru District Secretary Mannava Krishna Chaitanya on Thursday called upon the public to question and hold both the Central and State governments accountable for their alleged anti-people policies. He flagged off the CPI campaign rally organised by the Eluru Area Committee at Powerpet Railway Station. Krishna Chaitanya alleged that the gap between the rich and the poor had widened over the past 12 years and criticised discrimination in fund allocation to opposition-ruled states. He also accused the governments of neglecting public education, healthcare, irrigation and drinking water needs while failing to fulfil election promises. CPI District Assistant Secretary Bandi Venkateswara Rao expressed concern over vacancies in Central government

departments, rising contractual employment, inflation and unemployment, saying these issues had adversely affected the youth. Eluru Area Committee Secretary Uppuluri Hema Shankar criticised delays in recruitment, examination paper leaks and legal disputes, stating they had pushed educated youth into uncertainty. He said the CPI's padayatra aims to create public awareness and mobilise people to fight anti-people policies through democratic movements. AITUC District General Secretary Reddy Srinivas Dange, Kurella Varaprasad, Addagarla Lakshmi Indira, Mavuri Vijaya, Kondeti Baby, Kolluri Sudharani, Gorli Swathi, Sayana Abhilash Kumar and several CPI leaders and activists participated in the rally.

Editorial

Taxing Digital Convenience: A Step Back for India's UPI Revolution

India's digital payment revolution has been one of the country's greatest success stories. Over the past few years, the Union Government has consistently encouraged citizens to adopt cashless transactions, with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) emerging as the backbone of this transformation. Millions of people, from street vendors to salaried employees, embraced digital payments after repeated appeals from the Government, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who promoted UPI as a transparent, convenient, and secure mode of payment.

Against this backdrop, the decision to impose charges on certain UPI transactions has raised serious concerns. The Bill approved by the Lok Sabha on 6 August 2026 has sparked a debate over whether the Government is undermining the very system it worked so hard to popularize. If digital transactions become more expensive, many ordinary users may gradually return to cash payments, weakening the momentum built over the years.

The Government has undoubtedly benefited from the rapid expansion of digital payments. Cashless transactions have improved financial transparency, expanded the tax base, reduced tax evasion, and brought more economic activity within the formal financial system. These developments ultimately strengthen public finances and improve accountability. Introducing additional charges on everyday digital transactions risks discouraging the common citizen who adopted UPI in good faith.

If revenue generation is the objective, policymakers should consider measures that primarily affect high-value commercial transactions or large business entities rather than routine payments made by ordinary people. Burdening small consumers and daily wage earners with transaction charges could prove counterproductive and diminish public confidence in digital governance.

India's digital economy has flourished because digital payments were simple, affordable, and accessible. Preserving those qualities should remain the Government's priority. Any policy that discourages digital adoption may unintentionally reverse years of progress. The challenge before the Government is to balance revenue considerations with the larger national goal of building an inclusive, cashless economy that benefits every citizen.

- Editor

Reservations in India: Understanding History Before Demanding Abolition

Basada Sampath Yadav



Education Expert
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The nationwide protests by students against the recent NEET paper leak highlighted widespread concerns about transparency and fairness in the education system. Shortly thereafter, organisations affiliated with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched campaigns demanding the abolition of reservations. In this context, it has become essential to revisit the historical origins of reservations, the purpose they were intended to serve, and the many misconceptions that continue to surround them.

The Historical Evolution of Reservations in India

Reservations in India did not originate with the Constitution. Their roots date back to 1902, when Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj introduced a 50% reservation in government jobs for socially and educationally backward communities in Kolhapur. In 1921, the Madras Presidency's Communal G.O. extended representation in education and public employment to different social groups. The Poona Pact (1932) introduced reserved legislative seats for the Depressed Classes. Later, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar incorporated the principles of social justice, equal opportunity, and representation into the Constitution. Thus, reservations are not a post-Independence political measure but the result of a long struggle against historical social exclusion.

Why Were Reservations Introduced?

Reservations were introduced not because certain communities were merely poor, but because they had been historically excluded from education, public institutions, land ownership, and positions of power due to the caste system. For centuries, many were denied access to schools, temples, public wells, and equal dignity. Reservations are therefore not poverty alleviation programmes but constitutional measures to ensure representation and equal opportunity for historically marginalised communities. They seek to address the consequences of systemic discrimination and promote substantive equality. Any meaningful debate on reservations must begin with an understanding of the historical injustices that made them necessary.

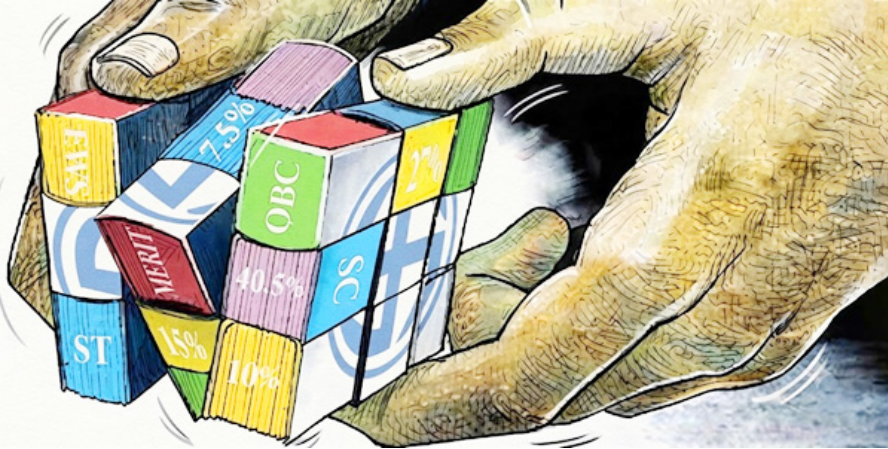
standing of the historical injustices that made them necessary.

Reservations Are Not the Cause of Unemployment

The claim that reservations cause unemployment is neither supported by evidence nor by economic reality. Unemployment in India is primarily the result of inadequate job creation, economic policy failures, and structural challenges, not reservations. Reservations are also criticised for undermining merit, yet merit is rarely questioned when wealth, land, businesses, or social privilege are inherited. A child with access to quality education, financial security, and supportive resources begins with clear advantages, while another may struggle against poverty, discrimination, and unequal educational opportunities. Merit is shaped not only by individual ability but also by the opportunities available. Fair competition is possible only when everyone has access to equal educational resources and opportunities. Therefore, reservations should not be blamed for unemployment or viewed as a substitute for addressing the deeper structural inequalities that exist in society.

Will Abolishing Reservations Eliminate Caste Discrimination?

A common argument against reservations is that they perpetuate caste divisions. However, caste discrimination existed long before reservations. For centuries, millions were denied education, access to temples and public wells, and equal dignity because of the caste system. Even today, caste-based discrimination and violence continue to exist. Reservations did not create caste discrimination; the caste system did. Therefore, abolishing reservations will not eliminate caste. The real solution is to eradicate caste-based discrimination by ensuring equal access to education, employment, opportunities, and dignity for all. Reservations should become unnecessary only when the inequalities they were designed to address no longer exist.



Abolishing Caste Requires the Abolition of Caste Privilege

Declaring that caste no longer exists does not erase the inequalities created by centuries of caste hierarchy. The caste system concentrated land, wealth, education, and social power in the hands of certain communities, and these advantages have been passed down through generations. Therefore, abolishing caste requires more than removing caste identities-it requires addressing the structural inequalities and inherited privileges created by the caste system. Equal access to education, resources, opportunities, and social dignity is essential for achieving substantive equality. Only when these inequalities are eliminated will the need for reservations naturally decline.

Representation and the Question of Reservation

According to estimates based on the 1931 Census, Other Backward Classes (OBCs) constitute more than half of India's population but receive 27 per cent reservation in central institutions. Similarly, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, who account for about 16.6 per cent and 8.6 per cent of the population respectively (2011 Census), receive 15 per cent and 7.5 per cent reservation. At the same time, the 10 per cent reservation for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) has raised questions about the basis of its allocation. These debates highlight the need for a nationwide caste census so that representation and reservation policies are based on reliable demographic data rather than assumptions.

Should Reservations Continue Indefinitely?

Reservations need not continue indefinitely, but any review of the policy should be based on objective evidence rather than political rhetoric. A nationwide caste census is essential to assess population, representation, and social inequality. At the same time, India must ensure equal access to quality education and opportunities for all. As caste-based inequalities decline and equitable representation is achieved, the need for reservations will naturally diminish. The goal should not be the premature abolition of reservations, but the creation of a society in which they are no longer necessary because equality has become a reality. Reservations should not be opposed without understanding the historical injustices that made them necessary. They are constitutional instruments designed to advance equality, representation, and social justice. If India truly seeks to build an equal society, the priority should not be the abolition of reservations, but the elimination of caste discrimination and the creation of equal opportunities for all. At the same time, the deep inequalities in the ownership and distribution of land, education, resources, and opportunities must also be addressed. Democratic and constitutional discussions on comprehensive land reforms, including the possibility of land nationalisation, should form part of the broader effort to achieve social and economic justice. The ultimate goal is an India where birth no longer determines one's future, but where equal opportunity, dignity, and justice are guaranteed to every citizen.

The Brain Science Of Happiness

Why Happiness Is a Skill, Not Luck

Dr Vangeepuram
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human connection.

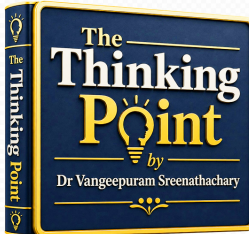
Training Your Brain for Lasting Happiness

The encouraging news is that happiness can be cultivated. Neuroscience suggests that small, consistent actions gradually reshape the brain's emotional pathways and enhance overall well-being. Firstly, practise gratitude every day. Gratitude shifts the brain's focus from what is lacking to what is already valuable. Spending a few minutes each day appreciating positive experiences, supportive people, or simple blessings strengthens neural pathways associated with optimism and contentment. Even a brief gratitude journal can make a lasting difference. Secondly, stay physically active. Exercise is one of the most effective natural mood enhancers. Walking, jogging, cycling, yoga, or dancing stimulate brain chemicals that elevate mood and reduce stress. The goal is not athletic excellence but consistent movement. Thirdly, invest in meaningful relationships. The brain thrives on genuine human connection. Spending quality time with family, friends, mentors, and

well-wishers fosters belonging, emotional security, and the release of oxytocin-the bonding hormone. Fourthly, keep learning. Reading, acquiring new skills, exploring hobbies, or engaging in creative pursuits stimulates the brain, promotes lifelong neural development, and creates a sense of accomplishment.. Fifthly, manage technology wisely. While digital tools enrich our lives, excessive screen time and social media can increase stress and unhealthy comparison. Regular breaks from screens allow the brain to recover and reconnect with real-life experiences. Sixthly, practise kindness. Helping others activates the brain's reward centres and promotes positive emotions. Even small acts of encouragement, appreciation, or service benefit both the giver and the receiver.

Seventhly, prioritise quality sleep. Sleep allows the brain to process experiences, regulate emotions, and restore mental energy. Consistent, adequate sleep is essential for resilience and emotional well-being. Eighthly, cultivate a sense of purpose. Whether through family, work, creativity, service, or personal growth, a meaningful purpose provides direction and strengthens resilience during difficult times.

Ninthly, practise mindfulness. Focusing on the present instead of dwelling on the



past or worrying about the future reduces stress and improves emotional balance. Even a few minutes of mindful breathing each day can make a meaningful difference. Finally, celebrate small victories. Happiness grows through steady progress, not only major achievements. Recognising everyday successes builds confidence, motivation, and lasting fulfilment.

Happiness Is a Habit

Perhaps the greatest lesson from neuroscience is that happiness is not the absence of problems. Every life includes challenges, disappointments, failures, and uncertainty. What matters is not what happens to us, but how our brain learns to respond. Every positive choice we make-every act of gratitude, kindness, learning, forgiveness, or resilience-strengthens the neural pathways that support emotional

well-being. The encouraging truth is that happiness is cumulative rather than instantaneous. It is built quietly through thousands of small decisions made every day. A few minutes of exercise, a heartfelt conversation, a word of appreciation, an act of generosity, a moment of mindfulness, or the satisfaction of completing a meaningful task may appear insignificant in isolation. Yet together, these seemingly ordinary actions gradually reshape the brain and transform the way we experience life. Importantly, happiness should never be confused with constant pleasure or endless excitement. No one can remain cheerful all the time, nor is that the goal of a healthy mind. True happiness is the ability to remain hopeful during uncertainty, calm amid pressure, grateful despite imperfections, and purposeful even in adversity. It is less about escaping life's storms than about developing the inner strength to navigate them with wisdom and confidence. The science is clear: happiness is neither luck nor a gift reserved for a fortunate few. It is a habit, a trainable skill, and one of the wisest investments we can make. Every thought we nurture and every habit we practise shapes the person we gradually become. Your brain is constantly changing. Train it wisely, and happiness will increasingly become not merely an emotion you occasionally experience, but a way of living.

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



Handlooms as a Strategic Pillar of Viksit Bharat



Building a developed nation cannot rely on technology alone; it requires transforming traditional strengths into engines of future growth. As India advances towards Viksit Bharat 2047, it is investing in innovation, manufacturing, and global competitiveness. Yet, the handloom sector—deeply rooted in India's cultural identity—remains equally significant. On the occasion of the 12th National Handloom Day, handlooms must be recognised not merely as heritage but as a strategic sector aligned with global demand for sustainability, authenticity, and resilient supply chains. Aligning Tradition with National Vision

The vision for Viksit Bharat 2047, articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is anchored in prosperity, self-reliance, inclusivity, and cultural confidence. The handloom sector reflects these ideals by blending tradition with innovation. It promotes women-led development, strengthens rural entrepreneurship, and supports sustainable livelihoods, while also enhancing India's competitiveness in global markets.

Cultural Values at the Core of Craftsmanship India's handloom tradition is not just an economic activity but a reflection of civilizational values. As described in the Ramcharitmanas, enduring success is built on courage, patience, truth, and wisdom. These values resonate with the spirit of handloom weaving, where every thread reflects dedication, skill, and inherited knowledge.

The resilience of this sector lies in its adherence to authenticity and ethical craftsmanship, making it a timeless strength of Indian society.

A Legacy of Global Textile Leadership India's leadership in textiles dates back to the Indus Valley Civilization, where cotton cultivation and weaving first

flourished. For centuries, Indian textiles dominated global trade, with products like Bengal muslin, Banarasi silk, Kanchipuram saris, and Pochampally Ikat earning worldwide acclaim. Today, as global consumers increasingly prefer sustainable and handcrafted products, India has a renewed opportunity to reclaim its position. The next phase of growth must position handloom products as ambassadors of 'Brand India,' representing not just textiles but culture and innovation.

Strengthening the Sector Through Policy Support

The handloom industry, India's largest cottage sector, supports over 3.5 million weavers and allied workers, with women comprising nearly 72 percent of the workforce. Over the past decade, government initiatives have strengthened the ecosystem through raw material support, development of 797 clusters, distribution of over 1.24 lakh modern looms, and skill training for approximately 97,000 artisans. Additional measures such as GI tagging, Handloom Mark certification, 'India Handmade' branding, Urban Haats, and Design Resource Centres have enhanced market visibility and credibility.

Institutional Framework for Growth

Institutional support has further reinforced the sector's transformation. Twenty-nine Weavers' Service Centres provide training, design development, and market linkages, while 11 Indian Institutes of Handloom Technology are equipping artisans with advanced skills. The upcoming national handloom and handicrafts programme aims to strengthen 1,800 clusters across more than 500 districts, benefiting 6.5 million artisans. These efforts signal a shift from welfare-oriented policies to positioning handlooms as a globally competitive



petitive creative industry. Innovation Driving the Next Phase

Innovation has always been integral to handloom development. From Mahatma Gandhi's Amber Charkha to modern advancements like the 'Maina' loom in Assam and the Chittaranjan handloom in Sivasagar, technological improvements have enhanced productivity. The establishment of the Centre of Excellence for Handloom Technology, in collaboration with Indian Institutes of Technology, marks a new milestone. Initiatives like 'Handloom 4.0' are leveraging digital tools and artificial intelligence to improve efficiency, quality, and scalability, with pilot projects already underway.

Technology as an Enabler, Not a Replacement

While technology plays a critical role, it must complement rather than replace the artisan. Platforms such as VizioNXT are helping forecast demand, identify design trends, ensure authenticity, and connect weavers directly with global markets. By integrating technology with traditional skills, the sector can achieve both efficiency and authenticity, ensuring sustainable growth. Expanding Markets and Enhancing Incomes

Diversification into premium silk, natural yarns, sustainable fibers, and innovative blends is opening new market opportunities. With improved branding,

value addition, and direct market access, the income potential for weavers is increasing. The long-term vision is to ensure that every weaver earns a dignified monthly income of ₹50,000, reflecting the true value of their craftsmanship.

Empowering Weavers as Entrepreneurs

The future of the handloom sector depends on changing perceptions. Weavers must be recognised not as labourers but as entrepreneurs, innovators, and creators of value. Empowering them to build brands, participate across the value chain, and access global markets will transform handlooms into one of India's most vibrant industries. This also presents an opportunity for India's youth to combine heritage with modern business practices.

A Collective Responsibility for the Future

On National Handloom Day, the nation must honour its weavers as both custodians of heritage and contributors to economic progress. Integrating handloom products into daily life can strengthen livelihoods and preserve tradition. Every purchase becomes a statement of support for sustainability and cultural pride. By embracing handlooms, India not only preserves its past but also weaves a stronger, more inclusive future.

(The views expressed herein are personal)

Lok Sabha Passes Bill Enabling Charges on UPI, Digital Payments

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, paving the way for the government to permit banks and payment service providers to levy charges on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and other notified electronic payment modes. The Bill, passed by voice vote without discussion, amends the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, by removing the legal restriction that prevented banks and payment service providers from imposing Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on specified digital payment modes. Currently, transactions through Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) attract service charges, while UPI payments have remained free of such charges.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman moved the Bill after the House reassembled following an adjournment. The amendment also includes changes to the Income Tax Act, 2025, and the Finance Act, 2026. The revised law authorises the Central Government to notify one or more electronic payment modes on which charges may be levied. According to the government, the move aims to create a sustainable revenue model for banks, payment service providers and digital payment infrastructure companies while ensuring the continued growth of India's digital payments ecosystem. Earlier, Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra said it was premature to comment on the introduction of MDR for digital payments but noted that maintaining payment infrastructure involves costs that must ultimately be borne either by taxpayers or through a "user pays" model. Industry experts believe that if MDR is introduced, it is likely to apply only to higher-value merchant transactions rather than peer-to-peer UPI payments. The government is expected to issue detailed notifications specifying the payment modes and conditions under the amended law.



India Successfully Test-Fires Agni-4 Ballistic Missile

India on Thursday successfully test-fired the Agni-4 medium-range ballistic missile from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur in Odisha, marking another milestone in the country's strategic defence capabilities. The test was conducted under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command, which is responsible for managing India's strategic missile arsenal. According to the Ministry of Defence, the launch successfully validated all operational and technical parameters of the missile. In an official statement, the ministry said, "Medium Range Ballistic Missile 'Agni-4' was successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur in Odisha on August 6." It added that the test confirmed the missile's performance and operational readiness. The Agni-4 is a medium-range ballistic missile developed as part of India's indigenous missile programme. It is designed to deliver strategic payloads over long distances and forms an important component of the country's credible minimum deterrence policy. Defence officials said the successful launch demonstrated the reliability and effectiveness of the missile system under operational conditions. The test further strengthens India's strategic defence preparedness and validates the performance of the missile in line with established technical standards.



The Ministry of Defence noted that the launch achieved all its planned objectives and reaffirmed the country's commitment to maintaining a robust and reliable strategic deterrent through regular testing and evaluation of its missile systems.

Tarun Tejpal Sentenced to 10 Years; Court Examines Apology Email in Rape Case



Former Tehelka editor Tarun Tejpal was sentenced to 10 years in prison after being convicted of raping a junior colleague in connection with incidents that took place during the ThinkFest event at a five-star hotel in Goa in November 2013. The case gained renewed attention after the Bombay High Court overturned a trial court's 2021 acquittal and convicted Tejpal. During the proceedings, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta relied on an email sent by Tejpal to the survivor on November 19, 2013, a day after she lodged a complaint with the magazine's Managing Editor. In the email, Tejpal apologised for what he described as a "shameful lapse of judgement" and admitted attempting a sexual liaison on two occasions despite

the woman's "clear reluctance." He also acknowledged telling the complainant, "That makes it simpler," after she reminded him that he was her boss, though he claimed he immediately withdrew the remark. The prosecution argued that the email amounted to an admission that the incidents had occurred, while Tejpal's counsel, Abad Ponda, contended that the references related only to consensual conversations. Following his sentencing, Tejpal maintained his innocence and alleged that the case was driven by political vendetta. He said he would continue to challenge the conviction, expressing confidence that the judiciary would ultimately vindicate him.

Congress Calls Nilekani Task Force a 'Damage Control' Exercise

The Congress on Thursday criticised the Centre over recurring examination paper leaks, alleging that the Nandan Nilekani-led High-Powered Task Force on examination reforms is merely a "damage control exercise" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi following criticism over repeated lapses in the examination system. Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said that after the NEET-UG paper leak in 2024, the Centre had constituted the K. Radhakrishnan-led High-Level Committee of Experts to recommend reforms. Following another NEET-UG paper leak in

2026, the government announced a six-member task force headed by Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani to suggest measures for making the examination system leakproof. Citing a newspaper analysis of the Nilekani Task Force's terms of reference, Ramesh claimed that seven of its nine mandates had already been fully addressed by the Radhakrishnan Committee, while the remaining two were partially covered. He further alleged that the government has not implemented 27 of the 101 recommendations made by the Radhakrishnan Committee. Ramesh also

claimed that the National Testing Agency (NTA) did not have a full-time Director General for the two years between the 2024 and 2026 NEET-UG paper leaks. According to Ramesh, the government's failure to implement earlier recommendations reflects a lack of political will and sincerity in addressing examination reforms. He asserted that the newly constituted Nilekani Task Force was intended to manage the political fallout rather than address the root causes of repeated paper leaks. Last month, Prime Minister



Narendra Modi announced the formation of the high-powered task force under Nandan Nilekani to recommend comprehensive reforms aimed at ensuring a secure, transparent and leakproof examination system.

Rajya Sabha Passes Appropriation (No.3) Bill, 2026

The Rajya Sabha on Thursday passed the Appropriation (No.3) Bill, 2026, authorising excess expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India for the financial year 2022-23. The Bill provides for the appropriation of funds to meet expenditures incurred on certain services that exceeded the amounts originally sanctioned by Parliament during the financial year ending March 31, 2023. Replying to the debate in the Upper House, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman explained that the Bill seeks approval for

excess grants covering only two specific accounts. She said these demands were examined by the Public Accounts Committee and formed part of its 39th report presented to the Lok Sabha in April this year. Sitharaman said the first excess demand relates to a court order involving the Ministry of Railways, requiring an additional alloca-



tion of Rs 196.44 crore. The second and significantly larger demand concerns Rs 53,871 crore towards repayment of debt. Clarifying the nature of the second demand, the Finance Minister said the amount pertains to debt repayment against the issuance of government securities. She emphasized that the transaction does not have any fiscal impact, as it is an accounting requirement linked to debt management rather than fresh government spending. The minister noted that the Bill is intended to regularise expenditure already incurred in accordance with constitutional provisions governing public finances. Such excess grants require parliamentary approval after being scrutinised by the Public Accounts Committee before

they can be formally authorised. Following the discussion, the Rajya Sabha approved the Bill through a voice vote. As the legislation is a Money Bill, it was subsequently returned to the Lok Sabha, completing the parliamentary process required for its passage. The Appropriation (No.3) Bill, 2026, ensures that excess expenditure incurred during the 2022-23 financial year is formally authorised under the Constitution. With Parliament's approval, the government has completed the legal process for regularising the additional expenditure related to the Railway Ministry's court-ordered payment and debt repayment obligations, while reaffirming that the latter has no impact on the country's fiscal position.

Government Clarifies No US Ethanol Imports for Fuel Blending

The Centre has dismissed reports claiming that India is planning to import large quantities of ethanol from the United States for its fuel blending programme, stating that such reports are factually incorrect and misleading. The clarification comes amid speculation over ethanol imports following discussions on the India-US trade relationship. In an official statement issued on Thursday, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said there have been no concessions or commitments regarding the import of ethanol for fuel blending from the US. It also clarified that the issue has not been part of the ongoing India-US trade discussions. The ministry emphasized that India's Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme continues to be guided entirely by domestic policy and relies solely on ethanol produced within the country. According to the government, all ethanol used under the fuel blending programme is procured from domestic producers, ensuring continued support for India's agricultural and biofuel sectors.

Rejecting media reports suggesting a change in policy, the ministry said there is no proposal to allow large-scale imports of fuel ethanol from the US. It reiterated that the country's ethanol procurement strategy remains unchanged and is aligned with the objective of promoting self-reliance in energy production. The clarification is significant as ethanol blending has become a key component of India's energy security strategy. The programme aims to reduce dependence on imported crude oil, lower carbon emissions and provide additional income opportunities for sugarcane farmers and grain producers by expanding the domestic biofuel industry. The government stressed that any claims suggesting a shift towards imported ethanol for fuel blending are without basis. It reaffirmed that the existing framework prioritizes domestic ethanol production and procurement, in line with national policy objectives. The statement is expected to allay concerns among domestic ethanol producers and stakeholders, who feared



that imports could affect local industry and farmer incomes. With the latest clarification, the Centre has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening India's indigenous ethanol ecosystem while continuing to pursue its long-term clean energy and energy security goals.

Minister Denies Proposal to Blend Ethanol With Aviation Fuel



No Proposal to Blend Ethanol With Aviation Fuel, Says Naidu

Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu on Thursday clarified that the Centre has no proposal to blend ethanol with Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF), dismissing claims circulating on social media as false and misleading. His remarks came after former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal alleged in a post on X that the government was planning to mix ethanol with ATF,

claiming experts had warned such a move could compromise flight safety. Responding to the allegation, Naidu said there is no such proposal and urged people not to spread misinformation on aviation safety. He stressed that passenger safety remains the government's highest priority and warned that false claims create unnecessary anxiety among air travellers. The minister further clarified that ethanol and Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) are entirely different and should not be confused. He explained that SAF is an internationally certified aviation fuel recognised by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and is widely adopted across the world after undergoing rigorous testing and meeting stringent global safety standards. Naidu reiterated that the government remains committed to maintaining the highest aviation safety standards.

Hiroshima Marks 81st Anniversary of Atomic Bombing



Hiroshima commemorated the 81st anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing on Thursday with a solemn peace ceremony that drew around 50,000 participants, including representatives from nearly 120 countries and regions such as the United States and Iran. The observance served as a reminder of the devastating human cost of nuclear weapons while renewing calls for global nuclear disarmament amid rising international tensions.

Addressing the gathering at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui criticized major world powers for continuing

to justify nuclear weapons as a means of deterrence. In his peace declaration, he warned that minimizing the inhumanity of nuclear arms and accepting the use of force for national interests could trigger cycles of retaliation that may ultimately lead to another Hiroshima or Nagasaki. Matsui said many political leaders still consider nuclear deterrence a practical security strategy, a mindset that pushes the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons even further away. He urged governments and ordinary citizens alike to learn from history and work collectively toward eliminating nuclear weapons. A minute of silence was observed at 8:15

a.m., the exact time a U.S. B-29 bomber dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. The silence was accompanied by the ringing of the Peace Bell, honoring the victims of one of history's deadliest attacks.

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi attended the Hiroshima memorial for the first time since assuming office. In her address, she said Japan would pursue "a realistic approach" toward ensuring nuclear weapons are never used again, while working within the framework of the United Nations' Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

However, this year's ceremony took place amid speculation that Takaichi's government could review Japan's long-standing postwar three non-nuclear principles as part of new national security and defense policies expected later this year. Takaichi has previously supported reviewing the third principle, which prohibits the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan. Although she stated that Japan continues to uphold the three principles, she did not explicitly commit to maintaining them unchanged in the future.

Atomic bomb survivors, known as hibakusha, have expressed growing concern over increasing international acceptance of nuclear deterrence, including within Japan. They have repeatedly urged the Japanese government to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons or at least participate in its meetings as an observer. Successive governments have declined, citing Japan's reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for national security.

The atomic bombing of Hiroshima claimed approximately 140,000 lives by the end of 1945, while a second bomb dropped on Nagasaki three days later killed about 70,000 people. Japan surrendered on August 15, bringing World War II to an end.

The number of surviving hibakusha has now fallen to 91,105, with their average age exceeding 86 years. As the survivor population continues to decline, concerns are growing that firsthand memories of the bombings may gradually disappear, making efforts to preserve their testimony and promote peace more important than ever.

Hasina's Son Warns Bangladesh Becoming 'Another Pakistan', Raises Security Concerns



Sajeed Wazed Joy, son of former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and a senior Awami League leader, has alleged that Bangladesh is turning into "another Pakistan" and warned that the country's deteriorating security situation could pose a serious threat to India and the wider region. Speaking virtually from Maryland, United States, at the Foreign Correspondents' Club in New Delhi, Joy claimed Bangladesh had become a "failed state" and urged the international community to intervene.

Joy alleged that foreign intelligence agencies, particularly Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), were operating freely in Bangladesh. He further claimed that hundreds of convicted terrorists imprisoned during the Awami League government had been released and that banned organisations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir were openly holding marches. He also alleged that individuals linked to al-Qaeda had addressed public rallies. Describing the situation as a major security concern for India, Joy said Bangladesh had effectively become "another Pakistan" on India's eastern border. He warned that unless the current situation was addressed, Bangladesh could emerge as a future hub for global terrorism. He also appealed to the Indian media to continue highlighting developments in Bangladesh.

Joy's remarks came about six months after Bangladesh's parliamentary elections, in which the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), led by Tarique Rahman, formed the government following the end of

Muhammad Yunus's interim administration. The Awami League remained barred from participating in the elections after being prohibited from political activities under the caretaker government.

Questioning the credibility of the political process, Joy argued that the elections could not be considered fully representative without the participation of the Awami League. He also disputed the reported death toll from the July-August 2024 protests that led to Sheikh Hasina's removal from office, claiming there were discrepancies between United Nations estimates and official government figures. Joy criticised legislation passed during the Yunus administration, alleging it granted immunity to protesters while preventing accountability for attacks on police personnel, civilians and Awami League supporters.

Additionally, he claimed that thousands of Awami League leaders, workers and supporters had been detained without trial, with some allegedly dying in custody. He also accused authorities of targeting journalists perceived to be sympathetic to the Awami League and warned that Bangladesh's economy was at risk of further decline.

Joy's statements reflect the Awami League's perspective on developments since Sheikh Hasina's ouster in August 2024. The BNP-led government and Bangladeshi authorities have not responded to his specific allegations and have disputed the Awami League's broader assessment of the country's political situation.

Ukraine Strikes Russian Oil Facilities as Fighting Intensifies

Ukraine carried out overnight strikes on two oil facilities deep inside Russia, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Thursday, continuing Kyiv's campaign to disrupt Moscow's wartime economy and weaken its military capabilities. The attacks targeted an oil refinery in Russia's Bashkortostan region, more than 1,300 kilometres from the front line, and another refinery in the Yaroslavl region, nearly 700 kilometres from the Ukrainian border.

Zelenskyy also claimed that Ukrainian forces struck two Russian military patrol boats in the Black Sea and vessels belonging to Russia's so-called "shadow fleet," which Moscow allegedly uses to circumvent Western restrictions on its oil exports. He did not provide details on the extent of the damage or casualties. The repeated attacks on Russian energy infrastructure have reportedly caused fuel shortages and increased pressure on the Kremlin, while boosting morale in Ukraine as it continues to face relentless Russian missile and drone attacks.

Russia's Defence Ministry said its air defence systems intercepted 605 Ukrainian drones overnight across multiple regions, including the annexed Crimea peninsula and areas over the Black and Azov seas.



Meanwhile, Russian strikes across Ukraine killed at least three civilians and injured 22 others. Authorities said drone and glide bomb attacks caused widespread damage to homes and infrastructure in several regions.

Ukraine has also faced intensified ballistic missile attacks in recent weeks. Kyiv says only the U.S.-made Patriot air defence system is capable of intercepting such missiles, but shortages of interceptor missiles have left the country increasingly vulnerable. Zelenskyy said he had held discussions with NATO

Secretary General Mark Rutte and Finnish President Alexander Stubb to secure additional Patriot interceptor missiles from allied nations.

"We are working as hard as possible with all partners who can assist with the supply of interceptor missiles to protect against such insane Russian strikes targeting life, people and civilian facilities," Zelenskyy said.

Russian attacks hit several Ukrainian regions overnight. Three civilians were killed in Balakliia in the Kharkiv region after drone strikes hit residential areas.

In the Sumy region, glide bomb attacks injured 12 people and damaged apartment buildings and infrastructure. Six farmworkers were wounded when a Russian drone struck a bus in the Kherson region, while four others were injured in a drone attack on a residential neighbourhood in Zaporizhzhia.

As both sides intensify long-range attacks, the conflict continues to expand beyond the front lines, with energy infrastructure and civilian areas increasingly becoming targets in the prolonged war.

Imran Khan Supporters Stage Nationwide Protests, Over 100 Arrested

Supporters of jailed former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan staged protests across Pakistan on Wednesday to mark three years since his imprisonment, with police arresting more than 100 demonstrators during crackdowns in several cities. The protests, organized by Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party, witnessed clashes with security personnel, particularly in Punjab and Sindh provinces, where authorities used baton charges and tear gas to disperse protesters.

The largest rally was held in Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where PTI currently forms the provincial government. Thousands of party workers and supporters gathered to demand Khan's release and condemn what they described as politically motivated legal action against the former prime minister. In Punjab, police launched operations against demonstrators in Lahore, Mianwali and Rawalpindi. Protesters gathering on Lahore's Mall Road were dispersed after police used batons and detained several participants. Videos circulating on social media showed riot police confronting demonstrators, while reports also indicated that journalists covering the protests were assaulted, prompting criticism and protests from media organizations.

PTI Punjab General Secretary Chaudhry Bilal Ejaz said five party lawmakers and around 25 other workers were

arrested in Lahore. He accused the authorities of suppressing democratic rights but claimed the party's supporters remained determined to continue their campaign. "Despite this era of oppression, repression, and fascism, a large number of PTI workers and office-bearers in Punjab staged protest rallies and pledged to stand with Imran Khan," Ejaz said.

According to PTI, at least 50 workers were detained in Mianwali, Rawalpindi and other parts of Punjab during the police action.

In Karachi, police used tear gas to disperse PTI supporters protesting in the Saddar Town area and arrested more than 10 demonstrators. The party also alleged that six workers were arrested in Pano Aqil and another 15 in Kandhkot during similar demonstrations.

Aleema Khan, sister of Imran Khan, said the movement seeking her brother's release had already begun and announced that the next phase of the campaign would be revealed soon. PTI senior leader and former federal minister Moonis Elahi alleged that Khan had been denied family meetings, proper medical treatment and that his eyesight had deteriorated during his imprisonment. Another senior PTI leader, Sheryar Afridi, said that despite being imprisoned, Khan's determination remained unshaken and claimed the public continued to support the former prime minister.



Imran Khan, who was arrested on August 5, 2023, remains in prison while facing multiple legal cases. PTI has consistently maintained that the charges are politically motivated, an allegation rejected by the government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International called on Pakistani authorities to uphold Khan's rights. Acting Regional Director for South Asia Isabelle Lassee alleged that Khan had been denied a fair trial, subjected to prolonged solitary confinement and restricted from receiving adequate medical care and family visits. She also stated that Khan had not met his family for more than eight months and that both he and his wife, Bushra Bibi, had been denied regular access to legal counsel since December 2025.

Report Claims North Korean Missile Unit Deployed in Russia for Ukraine War

A North Korean missile unit has reportedly begun deploying to western Russia and could soon be equipped with ballistic missiles and launchers for operations against Ukraine, according to a senior official from Ukraine's military intelligence agency. If confirmed, the move would mark a significant expansion of military cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang amid the ongoing war.

Andrii Cherniak of Ukraine's Main Directorate of Intelligence said Russia plans to station a North Korean missile unit of around 90 personnel in the Voronezh region, where it would operate alongside Russia's 112th Missile Brigade. He claimed the deployment could eventually include 120 North Korean ballistic missiles and six launchers, although the final configuration is expected to be decided during high-level talks next month.

Cherniak also alleged that North Korea had already delivered a fresh batch of 40 KN-23



and KN-24 ballistic missiles to Russia, along with personnel. However, he did not specify the exact role the North Korean troops would play in Russian missile operations.

According to the Ukrainian official, Russia recently used two North Korean ballistic missiles against Ukraine for the first time since August 2025. Ukraine has repeatedly warned that it faces a critical shortage of advanced air defence systems, particularly U.S.-made Patriot missile batteries, which

are capable of intercepting ballistic missiles.

Rob Lee, a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, said any increase in Russia's ballistic missile arsenal would pose a serious challenge for Ukraine, especially ahead of winter when attacks on energy infrastructure are expected to intensify.

Reuters reported that it could not independently verify Cherniak's claims. Russia's Defence Ministry and North Korea's mission to the United

Nations did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

North Korea has become one of Russia's closest military partners since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The two countries signed a mutual defence pact in 2024. Ukrainian officials claim Pyongyang has supplied millions of artillery shells, around 150 KN-23 and KN-24 missiles since late 2023, and approximately 14,000 troops for operations in Russia's Kursk region.

Ukraine has also accused Russia of using North Korean missiles in attacks on civilian areas. Last week, a missile allegedly supplied by North Korea struck a residential house in the village of Radushne, killing at least five members of the same family.

Ukrainian authorities say the KN-23 and KN-24 missiles carry larger warheads than Russia's Iskander missiles but are less accurate, increasing the risk of civilian casualties.

Lahore Police Station Staff Suspended After Woman Alleges Rape



Pakistani authorities have suspended the entire staff of a police station in Lahore after a woman alleged that she was raped inside the station premises by a police officer. The incident has triggered an official investigation and renewed concerns over police accountability and the safety of vulnerable individuals in custody.

The alleged victim, a woman in her 20s who is reportedly mentally impaired, accused an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) attached to the Investigation Wing of sexually assaulting her after taking her to the Ghaziabad police station on Sunday, according to Pakistani media reports. Following the complaint, police registered a case under Pakistan's rape law and relevant provisions of the Police Order dealing with police misconduct. Authorities have also ordered a medical examination of the woman as part of the investigation to establish the facts surrounding the allegation.

Lahore Deputy Inspector General (Operations) Faisal Kamran confirmed that the entire staff of the Ghaziabad police station, including the station house officer (SHO), had been suspended pending the investigation. He said the SHO is ultimately responsible for everything that takes place within the police station. Kamran explained that although the

accused officer belonged to the Investigation Wing, both the Investigation and Operations Wings function from the same premises and share administrative responsibility. He said the decision to suspend the entire staff was taken to ensure accountability and maintain the integrity of the investigation.

According to the First Information Report (FIR), the woman's father told police that his daughter left home on Sunday afternoon but did not return. While searching for her, the family was reportedly informed by a witness that a policeman dressed in civilian clothes had taken the woman away on a motorcycle. The case has once again brought attention to allegations of abuse by law enforcement agencies in Pakistan and raised questions about the protection of vulnerable individuals in police custody. Human rights advocates have frequently expressed concerns over police misconduct and the need for stronger accountability mechanisms.

Authorities said further legal action will be determined based on the findings of the ongoing investigation and the medical examination. The inquiry is expected to establish the circumstances of the incident and determine whether criminal charges will proceed against the accused officer and others found responsible.

MF Distributors Fear Pressure From SEBI's New PMS Proposal



Mutual fund distributors are concerned that a new proposal by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) could create additional challenges for their business model. The proposal, which may allow portfolio managers to operate mutual-fund-only Portfolio Management Services (PMS) with a minimum investment requirement of ₹25 lakh, has raised concerns among industry participants. Distributors believe the move could accelerate an ongoing shift away from commission-based distribution, as they are already facing competition from direct mutual fund plans that allow investors to invest without intermediaries. They now fear that fee-based portfolio management services could create further pressure from another side. Industry executives said that mutual fund distributors have played an important role in expanding financial awareness and increasing retail participation in mutual funds, especially among first-time investors. However, changes in investment preferences and regulatory developments have gradually impacted traditional distribution models. The proposed MF-only PMS structure could attract high-net-worth investors who currently rely on distributors for investment advice and portfolio management. With professional portfolio managers offering customised investment solutions, distributors fear some clients may move towards these new services. Experts said the introduction of such products could lead to increased competition in the wealth management space. While investors may benefit from more choices and professional services, smaller distributors could face challenges in retaining clients and maintaining revenue streams. The mutual fund industry has witnessed significant growth in recent years, supported by rising investor participation and digital platforms. However, the increasing popularity of direct plans has already reduced the dependence on traditional intermediaries. Distributors have urged regulators to consider the impact of new products on existing market participants and ensure a balanced approach that supports both investor interests and the role of intermediaries. SEBI's proposal is part of broader efforts to expand investment options and improve access to professional financial services. However, mutual fund distributors remain cautious, saying the move could further intensify competition in an already changing investment landscape.

Swiggy Shares Erase Gains After Profit Booking; Investors Assess Future Outlook

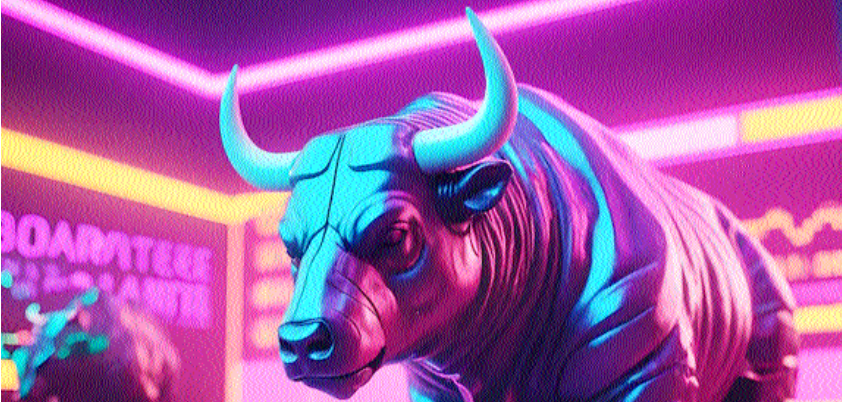
Swiggy shares witnessed a volatile trading session as the stock erased its early gains amid profit booking by investors. The company's shares initially surged around 5 per cent after Swiggy announced an ambitious target of achieving core earnings of ₹10,000 crore by FY31, supported by growth in its food delivery business and quick commerce platform Instamart. The early rally reflected investor optimism over the company's long-term growth strategy and expansion plans. Swiggy highlighted its focus on strengthening its core businesses, improving operational efficiency and increasing scale across its food delivery and quick commerce segments. However, the gains were short-lived as investors booked profits following the initial surge. The stock moved into negative territory during intraday trading as market participants evaluated the company's future growth prospects and valuation levels. Analysts said Swiggy's ability to achieve its FY31 earnings target will depend on sustained growth in food delivery, improving profitability in Instamart and effective management of competition in the quick commerce sector. Market experts said investors should closely monitor key factors such as revenue growth, margin improvement, customer retention and progress towards profitability before making investment decisions. The stock's movement also reflects broader market trends, where investors have become more selective about growth-oriented companies and are focusing on clear profitability pathways. Swiggy's FY31 outlook has provided a positive long-term vision, but the near-term performance of the stock may continue to depend on quarterly results, competitive pressures and execution of its business strategy. Investors are now weighing whether the recent decline after the initial rally offers a buying opportunity or whether further clarity on earnings growth is needed before taking fresh positions in the stock.

Hindustan Aeronautics shares rise 6% after Goldman Sachs upgrade

Shares of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) surged 6% after global brokerage Goldman Sachs upgraded the stock rating, citing improving execution prospects for the LCA Mk1A programme and progress in engine supplies. The upgrade marks the first positive rating revision from Goldman Sachs since it initiated coverage on the stock in October 2025. HAL shares gained 6.09% following the brokerage's decision, driven by investor optimism over the company's future growth prospects. Goldman Sachs highlighted key factors, including the successful execution of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk1A project and the availability of engines from GE, which are considered crucial for meeting production targets. The company has been working on increasing aircraft deliveries under the LCA Mk1A programme, which is a significant part of India's defence manufacturing push. Timely engine supplies and production progress are expected to play an important role in strengthening HAL's order execution capabilities. During the earnings call of the previous quarter, HAL management had stated that it had received six engines from GE and that the aircraft were undergoing testing. The company has been monitoring the supply chain developments closely to ensure smooth progress in the manufacturing process. The brokerage's upgrade has renewed market interest in HAL, which remains one of India's key defence sector companies. The firm plays a major role in designing, manufacturing and maintaining aircraft and defence platforms for the Indian armed forces. Analysts believe that improved execution, a strong order pipeline and greater focus on indigenous defence production could support HAL's long-term growth. The company is also expected to benefit from increasing government spending on defence modernisation and the push for self-reliance in defence manufacturing. However, market experts have advised investors to consider valuation levels, execution risks and sector-specific factors before making investment decisions. Defence stocks often depend on government contracts, project timelines and supply chain efficiency. The Goldman Sachs upgrade has provided a boost to HAL shares, with investors closely watching the company's ability to deliver on major defence programmes, especially the LCA Mk1A project and future aircraft manufacturing plans.

Nifty Holds Above 24,600, Sensex Gains 374 Points as PSU Banks Rally

Indian equity markets ended higher on August 6, with benchmark indices gaining momentum amid strong buying interest in banking stocks, particularly public sector banks. The Sensex closed with a gain of 374 points, while the Nifty managed to stay above the crucial 24,600 mark. The BSE Sensex settled at 78,954.76, rising 373.76 points or 0.48 per cent, while the NSE Nifty 50 ended at 24,636, gaining 11.35 points or 0.05 per cent. The broader market showed mixed trends, with some segments witnessing profit booking despite overall positive sentiment. PSU bank stocks emerged as the major drivers of the session, helping the indices maintain gains. Banking shares received strong investor support, while sectors such as chemicals also performed well. However, realty, media and auto stocks faced pressure during the trading session. Nearly 200 stocks touched their 52-week highs during the session, reflecting continued investor confidence in select companies.



Among the stocks reaching fresh yearly peaks were Navin Fluorine, Neuland Laboratories, Tata Technologies, AU Small Finance Bank, PNB Housing Finance, Welspun Corp, Tata Capital, Craftsman Automation, Shriram Finance, Pidilite Industries, Aegis Logistics, Sai Life Sciences and Titan Company.

Market sentiment was supported by positive global cues, stable crude oil prices and optimism over economic developments. Investors also tracked corporate earnings and sector-specific updates while maintaining caution due to ongoing volatility in global markets. Reliance Industries was among the major contributors

to the Sensex gains, while banking heavyweights also helped strengthen the market mood. Analysts noted that the market remained resilient despite fluctuations during the session. The performance of PSU banks highlighted continued investor interest in government-backed lenders, with expectations of improving asset quality and stronger financial performance supporting sentiment. The Nifty PSU Bank index was among the top-performing sectoral indices during the day. Experts said investors are closely watching upcoming economic data, global market trends and corporate developments for further direction. While benchmark indices remain near elevated levels, selective buying in fundamentally strong companies continues to support the market. With the Nifty sustaining levels above 24,600 and the Sensex closing near 79,000, the Indian stock market maintained its positive momentum, although traders remained cautious amid possible volatility in the coming sessions.

Juniper Green Energy, MV Electrosystems extend gains after listing

Shares of Juniper Green Energy and MV Electrosystems continued their strong performance after listing, extending gains in the stock market. The newly listed companies attracted investor attention, with both stocks witnessing significant upward movement during trading. Juniper Green Energy gained 15.78%, while MV Electrosystems surged 44%, reflecting strong buying interest among investors following their market debut.

The sharp rise in both stocks highlights the positive sentiment surrounding the newly listed companies. However, market analysts have advised investors to remain cautious and follow proper risk management strategies. Experts have suggested maintaining stop-loss levels for both stocks to protect gains and manage potential downside risks amid market volatility. Juniper Green Energy operates in the renewable energy sector, while MV

Electrosystems is focused on electrical and technology-related solutions. The listing performance of both companies indicates strong market interest in businesses linked to emerging sectors. Newly listed stocks often experience high volatility due to investor demand, market expectations and limited trading history. Analysts recommend that investors closely monitor price movements, company fundamentals and broader market trends before making investment decisions.

The strong post-listing performance of Juniper Green Energy and MV Electrosystems comes at a time when investors are showing increased interest in companies with growth potential across renewable energy and technology segments. While the gains have provided early returns for shareholders, experts have advised investors not to make decisions based only on



short-term price movements. Evaluating long-term business prospects and maintaining disciplined invest-



ment strategies remain important for managing risks in newly listed stocks.

Biocon shares gain 4% after Q1 profit rises 53%



Shares of Biocon gained 4% in trading after the company reported a strong performance in the first quarter, with

consolidated net profit rising 53.36% year-on-year. The positive earnings growth was supported by strong perform-

ance in the company's biopharma business. Biocon's net profit increased to Rs 136.8 crore in the first

quarter, compared with the previous year's period. The company's consolidated total income also increased to Rs 4,390.5 crore, from Rs 4,021.6 crore in the year-ago quarter. Following the announcement of the quarterly results, Biocon shares rose to Rs 441.85 on August 6, reflecting investor confidence in the company's financial performance and growth outlook. The company's biopharmaceutical segment remained a key contributor to revenue growth, supported by demand across its business areas. The improvement in profitability

highlighted the impact of operational performance and business expansion efforts. Investors closely tracked Biocon's quarterly results as the pharmaceutical sector continues to focus on growth opportunities, cost efficiency and global market expansion. The company's performance in the first quarter provided positive sentiment among market participants. Analysts said the rise in share price reflected optimism over the company's earnings momentum and future prospects. However, they advised investors

to consider broader market conditions, sector trends and company fundamentals before taking investment decisions. Biocon continues to strengthen its position in the healthcare and biotechnology space, with focus areas including biosimilars, research and development, and global partnerships. The latest quarterly performance has reinforced expectations of steady growth as the company expands its presence in domestic and international markets.

SBI Mutual Fund launches second SIF strategy for stocks beyond top 100

SBI Mutual Fund has launched its second Specialized Investment Fund (SIF) strategy, named SBI Magnum Equity Ex-Top 100 Fund, focusing on companies outside India's top 100 by market capitalisation. The new fund offer (NFO) will open for subscription on August 7 and close on August 20, 2026. The scheme is designed to provide investors exposure to emerging companies that fall beyond the largest 100 listed firms in terms of market value. According to the fund house, the strategy will invest 65-100% of its assets in equities and equity-related instruments of companies outside the top 100 category.



The fund aims to identify businesses with strong growth potential and provide

investors an opportunity to participate in companies that may become future market leaders. The strategy will focus on companies with scalable business models, competitive advantages and long-term growth prospects. SBI Mutual Fund said the fund is suitable for investors looking for equity exposure beyond large-cap companies and those willing to accept the risks associated with mid-cap and smaller companies. Since the portfolio will include firms outside the top 100 segment, investors may experience higher volatility compared with large-cap-focused schemes. The launch comes as asset management companies con-

tinue to expand their product offerings under the Specialized Investment Fund framework introduced by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). These funds are designed to offer investors strategies that differ from traditional mutual fund categories while providing greater flexibility in portfolio construction. SBI Magnum Equity Ex-Top 100 Fund marks SBI Mutual Fund's second SIF strategy, reflecting the growing interest among investors in diversified equity opportunities beyond established market leaders. The NFO will remain open until August 20, 2026, allowing investors to subscribe during the initial offering period. Market experts advise investors to evaluate their risk appetite, investment goals and time horizon before investing in such equity-oriented products

Bandhan Mutual Fund Launches Contra Fund, NFO Opens on August 10

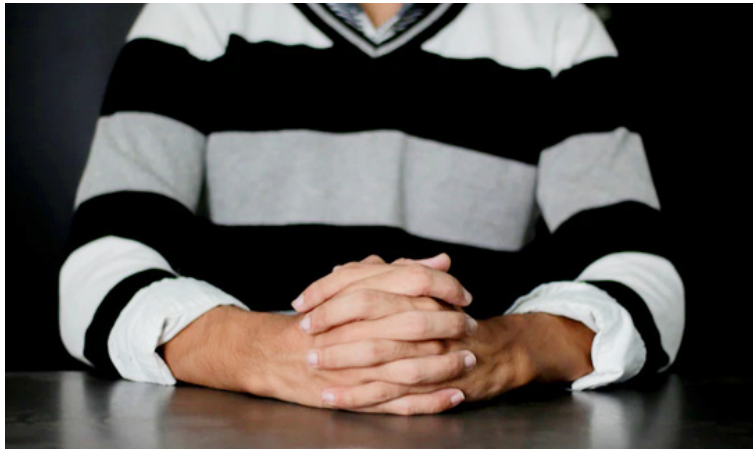
Bandhan Mutual Fund has announced the launch of its new Contra Fund, with the New Fund Offer (NFO) opening for subscription on August 10. The fund is designed for investors seeking opportunities in fundamentally strong companies that are currently undervalued or out of favour due to temporary market conditions. According to Bandhan Mutual Fund, the Contra Fund will follow a contrarian investment approach by identifying businesses with strong fundamentals that may be facing short-term challenges due to sector-wide concerns, cyclical pressures, macroeconomic uncertainties or prevailing market sentiment. The fund aims to invest in companies that have the potential for future growth and re-rating as their

business performance improves and market perception changes over time. The strategy focuses on identifying opportunities where current valuations do not fully reflect the company's long-term potential. Bandhan Mutual Fund said the fund is suitable for investors who understand market cycles and are willing to stay invested for a longer period to benefit from potential value creation. Contra investing generally involves taking positions in companies that are temporarily ignored by the market but have the ability to recover and deliver returns. The launch comes at a time when investors are increasingly looking for diversified investment options amid changing market conditions. Mutual fund houses have been introducing specialised products to cater

to different investment preferences and risk profiles. Experts said contrarian funds require patience, as returns depend on the revival of companies and sectors that are currently facing challenges. Investors need to consider factors such as their financial goals, risk appetite and investment horizon before investing in such schemes. With the launch of Bandhan Contra Fund, the asset management company aims to provide investors with an opportunity to participate in potential value opportunities across sectors and companies that could benefit from improving fundamentals in the future.



'Entry-Level' Job Rejection Over Experience Requirement Sparks Online Debate



A former software engineer's account of being rejected for an entry-level hardware job due to insufficient experience has gone viral, reigniting debate over hiring practices and the meaning of "entry-level" positions in today's job market. The applicant shared the experience on social media, explaining that they had previously worked as a software engineer but wanted to transition into the hardware sector. To gain practical experience, they applied for what was advertised as a trainee-level network and low-voltage cabling position intended for high school graduates. According to the applicant, the interview

went well, and the recruiter even described them as a "perfect fit" for the role. However, the outcome took an unexpected turn when the company rejected the application, citing a lack of labour experience. The candidate said they asked how much experience was required for a position advertised as entry-level with training provided. The response, they claimed, was that applicants were expected to have between three and five years of relevant experience. Expressing frustration, the former software engineer wrote that they were "going crazy" over the contradiction,

questioning how newcomers could gain experience if entry-level roles demanded several years of prior work. The post quickly gained traction online, with many social media users sharing similar experiences and criticizing what they described as unrealistic hiring expectations. One user said they had been rejected from a grocery store shelf-packing job despite holding two law degrees, while another remarked that the term "entry-level" had lost its meaning. A third user claimed they were rejected for lacking experience even though they had eight years in the same field, arguing that employers often set inconsistent standards. Another commenter offered a different perspective, suggesting that some companies routinely include a three-to-five-year experience requirement in entry-level job listings as a convenient way to reject candidates who may not be the right fit for other reasons. The viral post has once again highlighted the growing frustration among job seekers navigating a competitive employment market, where experience requirements for entry-level positions continue to draw criticism. The discussion has also prompted broader questions about hiring transparency and whether employers should better align job descriptions with actual expectations.

Businessman's Replica Rolex Sparks Debate on Luxury and Status



A discussion on luxury, branding and social perception has gone viral after a Delhi-based entrepreneur shared the views of a businessman with an estimated net worth of around RS.500 crore, who revealed that he wears a first-copy Rolex watch instead of an original luxury timepiece. The conversation, shared on LinkedIn by entrepreneur Rohan Dhawan, has ignited widespread debate over whether luxury purchases are driven by craftsmanship and heritage or simply by the social status they project. According to Dhawan, he recently met a businessman wearing what appeared to be a two-tone Rolex Daytona, a watch typically valued at more than RS.25 lakh. After complimenting the

watch, he was surprised to learn that it was a replica purchased through an Instagram page for just RS.10,000. The businessman reportedly explained that his financial status meant people in his social and professional circles never questioned the authenticity of the watch. Since the replica served the same basic purpose of telling time and attracted similar compliments, he saw little justification for spending lakhs on the genuine version. Reflecting on the encounter, Dhawan admitted that although he personally prefers owning fewer but authentic luxury items, the conversation made him reconsider how people perceive expensive products. He observed that public perception is often influenced more by the owner's social standing than by the product itself. He further noted that someone wearing genuine branded products may still be suspected of using replicas, while wealthy individuals carrying counterfeit luxury goods are rarely questioned because of their established reputation. The post quickly gained traction on LinkedIn, prompting users to share differing opinions. One commenter argued that luxury ownership depends on an individual's motivation, saying genuine collectors value craftsmanship and heritage, while others are primarily interested in the image associated with premium brands. Another user suggested that luxury products have long served as symbols of status, and those who have already established their wealth may no longer feel the need to prove it through authentic designer items. The discussion has highlighted broader questions about consumer behaviour, branding and the value attached to luxury goods. While many defended purchasing genuine products for their quality and legacy, others argued that if the objective is merely appearance, replicas may seem a practical alternative. The viral debate continues to fuel conversations on whether luxury is defined by authenticity, craftsmanship or perception.

Total Solar Eclipse on August 12, 2026 to Miss India

The first total solar eclipse of 2026 is set to occur on August 12, bringing a rare celestial spectacle to parts of Europe and the Arctic region. During a total solar eclipse, the Moon moves directly between the Earth and the Sun, completely covering the Sun's bright surface for observers located within a narrow region called the path of totality. According to NASA, the eclipse will be visible as a total eclipse across Greenland, Iceland, northern Spain, parts of Portugal, the Atlantic Ocean and northern Russia. People located along the path of totality will witness the sky becoming dark during daytime, with the Sun's outer atmosphere, known as the corona, becoming visible for a brief period. However, skywatchers in India will not be able to witness this astronomical event. NASA's visibility maps indicate that neither the path of totality nor the partial eclipse zone will extend over India. While millions of people across Europe, parts of North

America and north-western Africa will experience either a total or partial eclipse, no location in India will have visibility of the August 12 eclipse. Astronomy enthusiasts planning to observe the event are expected to travel to some of the best viewing locations, including northern Spain, Iceland, Greenland, northern Portugal and northern Russia. Among these destinations, Spain is likely to attract a large number of eclipse watchers due to its accessibility, suitable summer weather conditions and availability of viewing locations. The eclipse will take place on Wednesday, August 12, 2026. The exact timing will differ depending on the observer's location along the eclipse path. According to NASA's eclipse predictions, the entire event will continue for several hours globally, while the period of totality at most locations will last less than two minutes. Experts have also highlighted the importance of eye safety while observing

the eclipse. The National Solar Observatory has warned that looking directly at the Sun during the partial phases of a solar eclipse without proper protection can cause serious and permanent eye damage. Regular sunglasses are not sufficient to protect eyesight during the event. Observers must use certified solar eclipse glasses or approved solar filters to safely watch the partial phases. Only those located within the path of totality can view the eclipse with the naked eye, and even then, only during the short period when the Moon completely blocks the Sun. The August 12, 2026, total solar eclipse will be one of the major astronomical events of the year, offering scientists and enthusiasts a rare opportunity to observe one of nature's most impressive phenomena. Although India will miss this eclipse, future celestial events will continue to provide opportunities for skywatchers across the country.



Indian Professional Shares Five Workplace Lessons Learned in the US



An Indian professional's reflections on workplace culture in the United States have attracted attention on LinkedIn after he shared five habits he learned while pursuing higher education and working there. Anushk S said his move to America exposed him to a completely different approach towards communication, responsibility and professional discipline. In his LinkedIn post, Anushk recalled experiencing a "culture shock" after moving to the US. He said the way tasks were handled, meetings were conducted and responsibilities were assigned was different from what he had experienced earlier. After spending several years in the country, he identified five workplace practices that he believes American professionals follow effectively and that people across the world can learn from. The first lesson he highlighted was respecting time. According to Anushk, punctuality is considered an important part of professionalism in American workplaces. Meetings generally begin as scheduled, deadlines carry importance and delays are not taken lightly. "People respect your time, and they expect you to respect theirs. Meetings begin on time, deadlines mean something, and being late is rarely treated casually," he wrote. He added that this discipline helps build trust among colleagues. The second lesson was the importance of preparation. Anushk said the casual approach of "dekh lenge" does not work in many US workplaces. Employees are expected to understand the subject, anticipate possible ques-

tions and prepare solutions before discussions begin. He also pointed out the value of ownership. In many American organisations, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, allowing employees to understand who is responsible for a task, who has decision-making authority and who must deliver the final outcome. The fourth workplace habit he appreciated was the way feedback is provided. Anushk said effective feedback is usually specific, constructive and often shared privately. The focus remains on improving performance rather than criticising individuals. His final observation was about taking action. He noted that professionals in the US are often willing to start working on ideas even when every detail is not finalised. A strong concept, clear vision and the ability to gain support can be enough to begin, with improvements made along the way. However, Anushk also acknowledged the strengths he learned from India. He said India taught him resilience, adaptability and the ability to create opportunities despite limited resources. He concluded that combining these qualities with preparation, ownership, honest feedback, respect for time and the confidence to act early can help professionals become more effective. The post has generated discussions on LinkedIn, with several users sharing their own experiences of workplace culture in India and abroad. Many agreed that professional habits vary across countries, but adopting positive practices from different work environments can help individuals grow.

Rejected by 100 Investors, CEO Builds \$4 Billion AI Startup

Persistence and belief in an unconventional idea have helped turn Synthesia into one of the world's leading artificial intelligence startups, despite its founder facing rejection from more than 100 investors in the company's early days. Victor Riparbelli, co-founder and chief executive of London-based Synthesia, remained convinced that AI-generated video would transform the way businesses communicate, long before generative AI became a global trend with the emergence of tools such as ChatGPT. While many investors believed the technology was too early and doubted there was a viable market, Riparbelli continued to pursue his vision. Founded in London in 2017, Synthesia focused on developing AI technology capable of creating realistic videos from text prompts. At a time when artificial intelligence was still far from mainstream, the startup was working on technology that many considered futuristic. According to CNBC Make It, Riparbelli believed that breakthrough innovations often appear unrealistic in their early stages, but those that succeed have the potential to reshape entire industries. One of the company's biggest strategic decisions was to shift its focus from entertainment to business applications. Instead of targeting content creators, Synthesia concentrated on helping companies produce training videos, employee onboarding materials and internal



communications more efficiently and at a lower cost. The move proved to be a turning point in the company's growth.

Today, Synthesia enables organisations to generate professional-quality videos using AI-powered digital avatars without requiring cameras, actors or film production crews. Businesses across multiple industries use the platform to create multilingual and personalised video content quickly and cost-effectively. According to TechCrunch, Synthesia recently achieved a valuation of \$4 billion after securing fresh funding, cementing its position as one of Europe's most valuable AI startups. The latest investment round also included a secondary share sale, allowing some early investors and employees to sell a portion of their holdings while continuing to support the company's long-term expansion. Reflecting on his entrepreneurial journey, Riparbelli has emphasised that founders should not expect everyone to understand ambitious ideas immediately. He believes resilience is essential because many transformative innovations initially face scepticism before gaining widespread acceptance. Synthesia's remarkable rise from repeated investor rejections to a multi-billion-dollar valuation highlights the importance of perseverance, adaptability and long-term vision. The company's success demonstrates how identifying the right market, staying committed to innovation and believing in an idea despite setbacks can ultimately redefine an industry and inspire entrepreneurs worldwide.

Sanitation Workers Recover RS.11 Crore Lottery Ticket Thrown Away by Winner

A lottery winner in Italy received an unexpected second chance after sanitation workers recovered a winning ticket worth nearly RS.11 crore (€1 million) that she had accidentally thrown into the garbage. The woman, whose identity has not been revealed, had purchased the lottery ticket from a shop in Bitonto, southern Italy. After checking the ticket, she was reportedly informed that it was "non-payable", a message that appears when the prize amount is too large to be processed by the shop. Believing the ticket had no value, she left it behind, and it was later discarded. However, after returning home, a family member informed her that the numbers on the ticket had actually won the lottery. The woman had been playing the same numbers - 2, 4, 8, 10 and 51 - regularly because they were connected to a loved one. Realising her mistake, she immediately



rushed back to the shop to retrieve the ticket. By then, the ticket had already been thrown away and the waste had been collected. The woman and her family then approached Roberto Nicola Toscano, administrator of waste management company SANB, seeking help to recover the valuable ticket. Toscano said his team traced the possible route of the discarded ticket, though the chances of finding it appeared extremely low as it

had already been taken away by a garbage truck. "We reconstructed the journey of the ticket, without much hope of finding it, as it had already been picked up by a garbage truck," Toscano said. Fortunately, the waste management team managed to identify and stop the correct vehicle. Due to safety concerns involving potentially hazardous materials in the garbage, the truck was sent to a specialised facility equipped to conduct the search. Workers spent more than a day carefully examining the waste. During the search, they found several discarded lottery tickets and paper stubs, but continued look-

ing until they finally discovered the winning ticket. "Among them was the stub we were looking for, which was miraculously still in one piece," Toscano said. When Toscano informed the woman that the ticket had been recovered, she was overwhelmed with emotion. He said she cried with happiness during the phone call and that he wished he could have congratulated her in person. The recovery operation, however, came with additional costs. Since SANB is a public agency, the winner was required to sign an agreement to cover expenses related to the search effort. Despite the unexpected challenge, the operation ended successfully, allowing the woman to claim her life-changing lottery prize after what could have been a devastating mistake. The incident has since become a remarkable example of teamwork, determination and an extraordinary stroke of luck.

Ravi Shastri's Predicted India Squad for 2027 World Cup Sparks Debate

Former India head coach Ravi Shastri's predicted squad for the 2027 ICC Cricket World Cup has generated discussion among cricket fans and experts, with former opener Aakash Chopra describing it as a "hatke" selection and awarding it an 8/10 rating. The 2027 World Cup will be hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia in October-November, and although the tournament is still over a year away, discussions over India's possible squad have already begun. Shastri's squad features Shubman Gill as captain, alongside experienced stars Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Shreyas Iyer. The former coach also included Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul and Rishabh Pant, despite uncertainty over Jaiswal's long-term place in the ODI setup and Pant's recent absence from the format.



Analyzing the selection, Chopra said Jaiswal's inclusion was one of the most interesting aspects of the squad. While acknowledging the left-hander's impressive performances, including two ODI centuries, he questioned whether the young-

ster would make India's final World Cup squad. Chopra also pointed out that Pant had not received a consistent run in ODI cricket and wondered whether he would return, especially with Ishan Kishan currently enjoying strong backing.

Shastri's squad also includes all-rounders Hardik Pandya, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Washington Sundar, Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel. Chopra felt the inclusion of the experienced left-arm spin duo of Jadeja and Axar was a

sensible decision, considering their proven performances in limited-overs cricket. The pace attack consists of Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Mohammed Shami, Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Kuldeep Yadav as the specialist spinner. While

Chopra said Bumrah, Siraj and Kuldeep were automatic selections, he found the inclusion of both Shami and Bhuvneshwar particularly interesting. Calling it a "hatke" squad in true Mumbai style, Chopra praised several of Shastri's choices but expressed doubts that the final World Cup squad would resemble the one proposed by the former coach. He also noted the absence of a specialist left-arm fast bowler, which he believes could be a key requirement for India's balance. Despite his reservations, Chopra rated Shastri's squad 8 out of 10, saying it was an exciting combination of experience and emerging talent. With more than a year remaining before the World Cup, India's selectors will continue to monitor player form and fitness before finalizing the squad for the marquee tournament.

Mohammad Kaif Compares Coaching Styles of Gautam Gambhir and VVS Laxman



Former India cricketer Mohammad Kaif has highlighted the contrasting coaching approaches of Gautam Gambhir and VVS Laxman, as criticism continues to mount over the Indian team's recent performances under Gambhir. Kaif's remarks come after India suffered disappointing series defeats against Ireland and England, leading to calls from some quarters for Gambhir to be removed as head coach. India lost the two-match T20I series against Ireland before enduring a difficult white-ball tour of England, where the team was comprehensively beaten, including a 4-0 defeat in the T20I series. In contrast, India performed impressively against Zimbabwe under the guidance of VVS Laxman, who currently heads the BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE), while Gambhir was unavailable. Speaking about the difference between the two coaches, Kaif praised Laxman's preference for a traditional team combination. He noted that Laxman relied on seven specialist batters and four specialist bowlers rather than including an additional all-rounder simply to strengthen the batting lineup. "What VVS Laxman did brilliantly in Zimbabwe was backing a traditional combination: seven proper batsmen

and four proper bowlers. He didn't overly rely on finding an all-rounder for the number eight spot just for the sake of it. He backed his playing XI clearly. When a new coach comes in, winning the easy matches is expected, but the pressure builds during these tough overseas tours," Kaif said. Gambhir has faced criticism for frequently opting to play an extra all-rounder at No. 8 instead of selecting a specialist bowler, a strategy that some believe weakened India's bowling attack during crucial matches. Despite the criticism directed at Gambhir, Kaif stressed that responsibility for the team's performances should not rest solely with the coach. He believes captain Shubman Gill also has a significant role to play in shaping India's future, particularly in the Test format. "I want to focus less on the coaches and more on the captain. The coach will guide the team, but a captain's tenure can last 10-12 years. I want to see how Shubman Gill motivates his players and handles the team when the chips are down," Kaif said. He also praised Gill's leadership qualities, pointing to his successful stint with the Gujarat Titans in the IPL. According to Kaif, Gill has the potential to become a long-term leader capable of guiding India through challenging phases in international cricket.

BCCI Tightens Fitness Norms After Communication Gaps Surface



The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is set to introduce stricter and more uniform fitness standards for national team players following a series of injury setbacks and disappointing performances in England and Ireland. According to a report, the BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE) is working on establishing fixed baseline fitness parameters to ensure greater consistency in player assessment and selection. The move comes after injuries to key players, including Jasprit Bumrah and Harshit Rana, exposed shortcomings in the existing fitness monitoring system. Reports suggest that the medical teams at the CoE and with the Indian team struggled to coordinate effectively while evaluating players, leading to inconsistencies in fitness assessments. Following the appointment of Adrian Le Roux as the BCCI's strength and conditioning coach last year, replacing Soham Desai, the Bronco Test replaced the Yo-Yo Test as the primary fitness assessment. However, a uniform benchmark had not been established until now. The BCCI medical team has reportedly fixed a target time of 5.15 to 5.20 minutes for completing the Bronco Test drills, making it a key criterion for national team selection. A BCCI source claimed that players were subjected to varying fitness benchmarks over the past year. Some senior

cricketers were reportedly allowed comparatively easier targets to clear fitness tests, while players such as Harshit Rana and Nitish Kumar Reddy were declared fit in line with the immediate requirements of the team management. The report also highlighted communication issues regarding the revised fitness programme. Regular India players were allegedly not adequately informed about the new fitness protocols. Fast bowler Mohammed Siraj was reportedly caught by surprise when the revised tests were conducted at the CoE before the team's departure for Sri Lanka. Harshit Rana's case has emerged as another point of concern. The pacer reportedly suffered cramps during the third T20I against England after returning from a knee injury. The Indian team management later found him to be four kilograms overweight. According to the report, Rana has since been instructed to keep his weight below 96 kg. He has reduced his weight to 94 kg and is expected to receive fitness clearance next week. However, the report noted that Rana weighed 97 kg when he was cleared for selection for the England tour, raising questions about the effectiveness of the previous assessment process and reinforcing the need for stricter, standardised fitness protocols within Indian cricket.

BCCI Introduces Stricter Fitness Benchmarks with Bronco and 2K Tests



The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is set to introduce a more rigorous and standardized fitness programme for players as it looks to improve overall fitness standards ahead of the 2027 ICC Cricket World Cup. According to a report in The Times of India, players will now have to meet minimum fitness benchmarks through the Bronco Test and the 2-km run, in addition to existing assessments, before being considered for national selection. The move comes amid growing concerns over frequent injuries and declining fitness levels among Indian cricketers. The report also stated that the BCCI and the Indian team management are unhappy with physio Kamlesh Jain following repeated player breakdowns and an overall dip in fitness standards. The BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE) is expected to implement a uniform fitness programme, replacing the previous approach with a more structured and demanding evaluation system. The Yo-Yo Test, introduced during Virat Kohli's captaincy, has long been the primary fitness assessment for Indian players. The shuttle-run test measures speed, endurance and recovery by requiring players to complete 20-metre shuttle runs at progressively increasing speeds with short recovery intervals. Under the latest BCCI guidelines, play-

ers must achieve a minimum score of 16.5, up from the earlier benchmark of 16.1. The Bronco Test, introduced last year by BCCI strength and conditioning coach Adrian le Roux, is designed to assess cardiovascular fitness and endurance. Widely used in rugby, the test requires players to complete shuttle runs to markers placed at 20 metres, 40 metres and 60 metres. One complete circuit covers 240 metres, and players must complete five continuous sets, covering a total distance of 1,200 metres without rest. Their overall completion time is then recorded. The newly introduced 2K Test requires players to complete a two-kilometre run as quickly as possible. The assessment evaluates endurance and cardiovascular capacity by measuring how long players can sustain a high level of physical effort. The Centre of Excellence has fixed the qualifying benchmark at 9 to 10 minutes. The stricter fitness criteria reflect the BCCI's efforts to reduce injuries and ensure players maintain peak physical condition throughout an increasingly demanding international calendar. With selection now linked directly to fitness benchmarks, the board hopes to build a fitter and more resilient squad for upcoming international competitions.

Mohammed Shami Ready for India Return, Says Childhood Coach



Mohammed Shami Eyes India Comeback as Childhood Coach Backs Veteran Pacer Veteran Indian fast bowler Mohammed Shami remains focused on making a return to the national side despite being out of international cricket since the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy. While the BCCI selectors have not included him in recent squads, Shami's childhood coach, Mohammed Badruddin, believes the experienced pacer still has a major role to play for India, particularly in overseas conditions and major ICC tournaments. Shami has enjoyed an impressive career and was the highest wicket-taker in the 2023 ODI World Cup, playing a key role in India's run to the final. However, injuries and changing selection priorities have kept him out of the national setup over the past year. Despite the setback, the 35-year-old has continued to perform consistently in domestic cricket, strengthening his case for a comeback. During the previous domestic season, Shami picked up an outstanding 37 wickets in just seven Ranji Trophy matches. He followed that performance with 15 wickets in seven Vijay Hazare Trophy games, proving that he continues to be a dependable wicket-taking bowler in both red-ball and white-ball formats. Speaking to India Today, Mohammed Badruddin revealed that Shami has been working hard to improve his fitness. According to the coach, the veteran pacer has lost five kilograms since last season and is determined to return to peak physical condition. "Shami's mood is positive. He is quite motivated for the next season. He still has cricket left. He is ready, and if the country needs him, he will be ready to

serve," Badruddin said. The coach also highlighted India's recent struggles in the pace department, particularly during the tour of England. Bowlers such as Harshit Rana and Prasidh Krishna struggled with injuries, while young pacer Gurnoor Brar found it difficult to make an impact in challenging conditions. Badruddin believes Shami's experience would have been invaluable during that series and could become even more important in the lead-up to the 2027 ODI World Cup, which will be held in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. "India did not bowl well in England, where the fast bowlers get a lot of help. Shami could have been really useful there. It is not easy to bowl in South Africa. You need experience there," he said. Apart from focusing on his own return, Shami recently paid tribute to former India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane after the latter announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. Sharing a heartfelt message on Instagram, Shami praised Rahane's class, discipline and unwavering commitment to Indian cricket, thanking him for his memorable contributions and wishing him success in the next chapter of his career. With India's pace attack undergoing a period of transition and fitness remaining a key concern for several bowlers, Shami's consistent domestic performances and renewed focus on conditioning have kept him firmly in contention. Whether the selectors and head coach Gautam Gambhir decide to recall the veteran remains to be seen, but Shami appears determined to be ready whenever the opportunity arises.

Rahane Urges Balance of Experience and Youth in Test Cricket

Former India batter Ajinkya Rahane has stressed the importance of retaining experienced players in the Test squad, saying a healthy mix of senior and young cricketers is essential for success in the longest format. His remarks come amid India's recent struggles in Test cricket and are being viewed as an indirect message to the BCCI selectors and head coach Gautam Gambhir. Rahane, who retired from all forms of cricket last month after representing India in 85 Test matches, reflected on the team's decline in the format during an appearance on the Stick to Cricket podcast. His final Test appearance came against the West Indies in 2023. Since then, India have endured a difficult period, suffering two home whitewashes and missing out on qualification for the 2025 World Test Championship (WTC) final. India currently occupy seventh place in the WTC standings, leaving their chances of reaching the 2027 final under serious threat. With a two-match Test series against Sri Lanka approaching, Rahane shared his views on how captain



Shubman Gill and coach Gautam Gambhir can help revive the team's fortunes. Rahane said Test cricket demands patience, resilience and strong character. According to him, teams must be capable of surviving difficult sessions rather than always looking for quick results. "Because I haven't been playing Test

cricket for the last two years, I've been sitting at home watching the Indian team lose matches, even in India. Test cricket needs character. You need to build such characters and play competitive cricket. Playing out difficult sessions is what matters," Rahane said. Speaking about Gambhir, Rahane noted that although they played together for

India, he never played under him as a coach. He reiterated that success in Test cricket comes from handling pressure and enduring challenging phases during matches. Rahane expressed concern over the lack of experienced players in the current Indian Test side following the retirement of several senior cricketers. He said selectors should focus on maintaining a balanced squad where seasoned players can mentor youngsters. "I still feel Test cricket needs seven or eight senior players and two or three younger players. Right now, almost everyone is new and there are hardly any senior cricketers left. Test cricket needs that balance," he said. Rahane also admitted he is worried about the future of Test cricket, particularly in India. He emphasised that countries such as India, England, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa must continue to prioritise the traditional format. According to him, respecting and retaining senior players during periods of transition is vital to preserving the quality and competitiveness of Test cricket.

Nani's The Paradise Teaser Released

The makers of The Paradise, one of the most anticipated Telugu films of the year, unveiled its official teaser on Thursday, offering a glimpse into an intense action drama headlined by Nani. Along with the teaser, the team also announced that the film will hit theatres worldwide on September 24, 2026.

Directed by Srikanth Odela, The Paradise marks his second collaboration with Nani after the blockbuster Dasara. The film is also regarded as the actor's most ambitious and costliest project to date. Ever since the release of its first glimpse and the promotional song Aaya Sher, the movie has generated significant buzz among cinema lovers.

The newly released teaser showcases grand visuals, high-octane action sequences and a gritty narrative centered around Nani's character. Sporting a striking makeover, Nani plays the leader of an oppressed tribe who rises against adversity to challenge powerful forces. The teaser hints at a story filled with intense emotions, large-scale action and themes of resistance and empowerment.

Srikanth Odela appears to have mounted the film on a massive scale, with the teaser highlighting lavish production values and visually rich cinematography. The action-packed sequences, combined with the larger-than-life storytelling, indicate that the makers are aiming for a pan-Indian cinematic spectacle.

Adding to the impact is the powerful background score composed by Anirudh Ravichander, which enhances the dramatic tone of the teaser and complements the film's action-driven narrative. The music and visuals together have received an enthusiastic response from fans on social media,



with many praising Nani's transformation and the film's scale.

Produced by Sudhakar Cherukuri under the SLV Cinemas banner, The Paradise features an ensemble cast that includes Mohan Babu, Kayadu Lohar, and Raghav Jayal in key roles. The teaser reflects the substantial investment made in the project, with impressive visuals and elaborate production

design evident throughout.

With its compelling teaser, ambitious storytelling and a successful actor-director reunion, The Paradise has further heightened expectations ahead of its theatrical release. The film is expected to be one of the biggest Telugu releases of 2026 as Nani and Srikanth Odela look to recreate the success of Dasara on an even grander scale.



Minister Kandula Durgesh Launches Low-Budget Film 'Power'



The Telugu film Power, a low-budget production featuring fresh talent, was officially launched in Vijayawada on Thursday in the presence of State Minister for Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Kandula Durgesh. The inaugural ceremony was held at the Ghantasala Government College of Music and Dance, where the minister formally launched the project by switching on the camera and giving the first clap for the opening scene.

The film is being produced under the VRP Creations banner and is directed by Venkataramana Pasupuleti. The event was attended by members of the cast and crew, film industry guests and well-wishers, marking the beginning of the film's production journey.

Addressing the gathering, Kandula Durgesh congratulated the filmmakers for taking up a project driven by creativity and fresh ideas despite being made on a modest budget. He said the Telugu film industry has always provided opportunities for newcomers and encouraged innovative storytelling.

According to the minister, such films play an important role in introducing new actors, directors and technicians while enriching the industry's creative landscape.

Expressing confidence in the project, Durgesh said Power has the potential to connect with audiences if it is backed by a strong story and sincere performances. He remarked that the success of a film depends more on its content and the dedication of its makers than on the size

of its budget. He wished the entire team success and hoped the film would receive a positive response upon its release.

The minister also reiterated the State government's commitment to supporting the growth of the Telugu film industry. He said the government would continue to encourage filmmakers, particularly those introducing original concepts and providing opportunities to emerging talent.

Director Venkataramana Pasupuleti thanked Kandula Durgesh for attending the launch ceremony and extending his encouragement to the project. Members of the production team expressed optimism that the film's engaging storyline and committed performances would resonate with audiences.

The choice of the Ghantasala Government College of Music and Dance as the venue added significance to the event, highlighting the connection between cinema and Andhra Pradesh's rich cultural heritage.

With the formal launch completed, the makers are expected to commence regular shooting shortly. Details regarding the lead cast, technical crew and release schedule are likely to be announced in the coming weeks.

Produced under the VRP Creations banner, Power aims to prove that compelling storytelling, fresh talent and committed filmmaking can make a lasting impact regardless of budget, joining a growing wave of content-driven Telugu films from emerging filmmakers.

Lokesh Kanagaraj's Acting Debut DC Builds Strong Buzz Ahead of Release

Acclaimed filmmaker Lokesh Kanagaraj is all set to make his acting debut with the action entertainer DC, directed by Arun Matheswaran. The film has already created significant excitement among movie enthusiasts, thanks to the coming together of some of the biggest names in South Indian cinema. Actress Wamiqa Gabbi plays the female lead, while music composer Anirudh Ravichander has scored the soundtrack and background music.

The film will be distributed in the Telugu states by Asian Suresh Entertainment, which is expected to give the movie a wide release across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. With the promotional campaign gaining momentum, DC has emerged as one of the most anticipated action films of the season.

One of the biggest attractions of the project is the collaboration between Lokesh Kanagaraj, Arun Matheswaran and Anirudh



Ravichander. Lokesh has earned a massive fan following through blockbuster films such as Kaithi, Vikram, Leo and Coolie, while Arun Matheswaran is known for his intense storytelling style in films like Rocky and Captain Miller. Anirudh, meanwhile,

continues to be one of the most sought-after music directors in Indian cinema, with several chart-topping albums and acclaimed background scores to his credit.

The promotional material released so far has received a positive response from audi-

ences. The teaser and posters showcase a gritty and stylish action world filled with high-energy sequences, promising a visually engaging theatrical experience. The intense action choreography, dark tone and Anirudh's powerful background score have further heightened

expectations surrounding the film. Fans are particularly eager to see Lokesh Kanagaraj in front of the camera for the first time after years of establishing himself as one of the industry's most successful directors. His transition from filmmaker to actor has become a major talking point, adding to the anticipation for the project.

Industry observers believe that DC has the potential to attract audiences across language markets, given the popularity of its cast and crew. The combination of an action-driven narrative, stylish presentation and strong technical talent has positioned the film as a promising entertainer.

As the release date draws closer, excitement continues to build among fans. Whether DC lives up to the high expectations remains to be seen, but the film has undoubtedly generated considerable buzz and is expected to open strongly at the box office upon its release.

Anand Deverakonda's Epic to Release in Theatres on September 11



Young actor Anand Deverakonda is gearing up for the release of his upcoming romantic drama Epic, which is set to hit theatres on September 11. The makers officially announced the release date on Thursday, with Anand sharing the update through his social media platforms, further building excitement among fans.

Directed by Aditya Haasan, Epic stars Vaishnavi Chaitanya as the female lead. The film has already generated considerable buzz following the release of its teaser, which received an encouraging response for its fresh storyline, picturesque visuals and youthful romance.

Set against the backdrop of the United Kingdom, Epic follows the journey of Aditya, played by Anand Deverakonda, a middle-class youngster who travels to England to pursue higher education at Bournemouth University. Alongside his studies, Aditya dreams of becoming a short-film director. During his time abroad, he falls in love with Kadali, portrayed by Vaishnavi Chaitanya, and the story explores their relationship through a blend of romance, emotion and light-hearted moments.

The teaser has particularly impressed audiences with its relatable characters and entertaining sequences. One of the standout moments features Aditya spending time with his girlfriend when

he unexpectedly receives a video call from his parents in India. Caught shirtless during the call, he hurriedly claims that he is working out after being questioned by his father, played by Sivaji. The humorous exchange has become one of the most talked-about scenes from the teaser and has further increased anticipation for the film.

Music for Epic has been composed by acclaimed Malayalam composer Hesham Abdul Wahab, whose work is expected to enhance the film's romantic and emotional appeal. The cinematography is handled by Azeem Mohammad, while Naveen Nooli serves as the editor.

The film is jointly produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya, who have backed several successful Telugu films in recent years. With its overseas setting, youthful romance and emotionally engaging narrative, Epic is expected to appeal to young audiences as well as family viewers.

As the release date approaches, the makers are expected to intensify promotional activities with songs, trailers and promotional events. Backed by a promising cast, an experienced technical team and a positive response to its teaser, Epic is shaping up to be one of Anand Deverakonda's most anticipated releases and will arrive in theatres worldwide on September 11.

Sonu Sood Graces Grand Pre-Release Event of Telugu Entertainer Anakapalli



The makers of Anakapalli, an upcoming Telugu entertainer blending romance, family emotions and unexpected twists, held a grand pre-release event in Anakapalli on Thursday. Bollywood actor Sonu Sood, who attended the event as the chief guest, extended his best wishes to the cast and crew and appealed to audiences to watch the film in theatres.

Directed by Khagesh Thammineni, Anakapalli stars Vikram Sahidev, Sandhya Vashistha, and Tarak Ponnappa in lead roles. The film is produced under the Bhavya Sri Movie Makers and Nakkina Narratives banners by Kandregula Naidu and Trinadha Rao Nakkina, with Kandregula Kumar Raja serving as co-producer. Trinadha Rao Nakkina has also penned the story and screenplay and plays a pivotal role in the film.

Addressing the gathering, Sonu Sood praised the team's efforts and urged moviegoers to support the locally rooted story by watching it on the big screen. He expressed confidence that the hard work put in by the cast and crew would translate into success at the box office.

Producer Lagadapati Sridhar, who watched the film before its release, said Anakapalli has been designed to entertain audiences of all age groups. He

noted that the film's engaging twists and music would be among its biggest strengths and revealed plans for a wider release after a special screening in Anakapalli.

Lead actor Vikram Sahidev said director Khagesh Thammineni had worked tirelessly to bring the project to life. He added that filming in Anakapalli had created a special bond with the region and described the production team as one big family. He appealed to audiences to encourage the film by watching it in theatres.

Speaking at the event, Trinadha Rao Nakkina said it had been his long-cherished dream since his student days to host a film event in Anakapalli. He expressed happiness that the dream had come true through a film in which he served as writer, producer and actor.

Producer Kandregula Naidu said he made the film in memory of his father and thanked everyone who supported the project. Lead actress Sandhya Vashistha said her character carries significant importance and highlighted that the film combines a heartfelt love story with strong family emotions.

Former minister Dadi Jagan Prabhakar also attended the event and wished the team success, expressing hope that audiences would wholeheartedly support Anakapalli upon its release.

Varun Tej, Naga Babu to Share Screen Space for the First Time in Bhari

Actor Varun Tej has confirmed that he will share screen space with his father, Naga Babu Konidela, for the first time in his upcoming sports drama Bhari.



The announcement has created excitement among Mega fans, making the film one of the most anticipated Telugu projects currently in production.

Varun Tej revealed the update during an interaction with NRI audiences, officially confirming Naga Babu's participation in the film. While the makers have not disclosed details about Naga Babu's role, the real-life father-son pairing has already become a major attraction for fans. The announcement comes as Varun Tej gears up for the release of his horror-comedy Korean Kanakaraju, which is set to have paid premiere shows ahead of its theatrical release. The film has generated decent pre-release buzz, with the team hoping for a positive response from early audiences. In Bhari, Varun Tej plays a volleyball player in a story

that combines sports action with emotional drama. The film is directed by Yadhu Vamsi, who earned critical acclaim for the National Award-winning Telugu film Committee Kurrollu. Expectations are high for his collaboration with Varun Tej. The film is produced by Niharika Konidela under the Pink Elephant Pictures banner, while Anudeep Dev is composing the music. The makers are expected to deliver an inspiring sports drama with strong emotional elements and energetic performances. The combination of an acclaimed director, an established lead actor and the first-ever on-screen collaboration between Varun Tej and Naga Babu has significantly raised expectations for Bhari. Although the release date is yet to be announced, the project has already generated considerable interest. Fans are now eagerly awaiting the film's first look, teaser and additional casting announcements as production progresses.