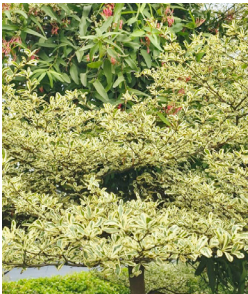


Rare 'Badanika' Plant Found at Ambedkar Park

Vijayawada, Aug 24 | TPN Bureau

A rare parasitic plant, *Dendrophthoe falcata*, locally known as *Badanika*, *Vadanika*, *Vajanika*, *Elinga* and *Jiddu*, has been identified growing on an ornamental tree at Ambedkar Park in Vijayawada.

The plant was found on *Terminalia mantaly* while observing the park's vegetation. It is distinguished by its green branches and leaves and attractive clusters of red flowers. Unlike ordinary plants, *Dendrophthoe falcata* grows on tree branches and derives part of its water and mineral nutrients from the host tree. However, its green leaves enable it to produce food through photosynthesis,



making it a partial stem parasite. Dr. Ch. Srinivasa Reddy, Lecturer in Botany, SRR & CVR Government Degree College, Vijayawada, said the discovery highlighted the biodiversity found even in urban parks. He said parks provide habitats for diverse plants, birds and insects, and identifying such species could help create greater public awareness about urban biodiversity.

Veligonda Project to Transform Drought-Hit Western Prakasam: Lanka Dinakar



Velagapudi, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Chairman for the implementation of 20-Point Programmes (Viksit Bharat-Swarna Andhra Pradesh) Lanka Dinakar said the Veligonda project would bring relief to drought- and fluoride-affected areas of Western Prakasam. He said completion of the first phase would provide irrigation to 1.09 lakh acres, drinking water to 25 lakh people and irrigation facilities for 4.50 lakh acres of drought-prone land. Water availability to Donakonda and Kanigiri industrial zones would also create employment opportunities. Dinakar said the Alliance

government had paid ₹768 crore in three instalments to 6,206 displaced families in two months, out of ₹888.55 crore due to 7,318 families. He thanked Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Irrigation Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu for accelerating the project. He recalled that he had reviewed the project with Ramanaidu in September 2024 and had submitted a letter to the Chief Minister on January 1, 2025, seeking Godavari water linkage through Bollapalli. He said the Chief Minister subsequently announced the linkage and that efforts were underway to complete the second phase within two years.

Young Leaders Discuss Vision for Viksit Bharat

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

The second day of the "Viksit Bharat Young Political Leaders Dialogue-2026", organised by Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) Andhra Pradesh, was held at the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), Vijayawada, on Saturday. The event, conducted on August 22-23 under the theme "Leadership for Tomorrow", featured discussions on women's participation in politics, governance reforms and India's development journey. Rashmi Samant addressed a session on "Women Leading India's Transformation", while Jayaprakash Narayan spoke on "India Before 2014 and After 2014". An achievers' session highlighted success stories and pathways for Viksit Bharat. Participants included Jahnvi Dangeti, selected by NASA; Bhupathiraju Aneesh Varma and Venkata Karthik, Guinness World Record holders; Dr. Dadi Teja, startup founder and inventor; and Bhargav, founder of Gnyanasa. The concluding session focused on future action plans, civic participation and public service. BJP Andhra Pradesh State President PVN Madhav, Union Minister of State for Steel and Heavy Industries Srinivasa Varma and BJYM Andhra Pradesh State President Sunil Reddy attended.

Indrakeeladri Hundi Counting on August 24

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

V.K. Sheena Naik, Temple Executive Officer and Special Grade Deputy Collector, announced that the counting of Hundi offerings at Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Devasthanam, Indra keeladri, Vijayawada, will be held on August 24. The counting will commence at

7 a.m. on the sixth floor of the Mahamandapam. Temple authorities have made necessary arrangements for the counting process, which will be conducted as per established procedures. Devotees and concerned officials have been informed about the schedule. The counting will cover offerings deposited in the temple Hundi.

No Clean Chit for Ramoji in Margadarsi Case: Ambati

Tadepalli, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Former Minister and YSRCP Guntur district president Ambati Rambabu said the Supreme Court did not give Ramoji Rao a clean chit in the Margadarsi illegal deposits case. Speaking at the YSRCP Central Office, he said the criminal proceedings ended only due to Ramoji Rao's death and that dismissal of Undavalli Arun Kumar's petition did not establish that Margadarsi's deposit mobilisation was lawful. Ambati said the RBI had earlier questioned Margadarsi's collection of around \$2,600 crore in public deposits and held that a Hindu Undivided Family could not accept such deposits under Section 45S of the RBI Act. Referring to a recent Parliament reply, he said the Union Government had also clarified that HUFs cannot mobilise public deposits. Ambati questioned RBI's later decision not to pursue the matter and said Undavalli would continue the legal fight.

Protect Sabarimala Sanctity, Says BJP AP President Madhav

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

BJP AP State President P.V.N. Madhav alleged that attacks were being carried out against Hindus, Hinduism and temples and claimed that a parallel system was operating within society. Speaking on the Sabarimala issue, he said the sanctity of the temple must be protected and alleged that Communist governments were attempting to undermine Indian Dharma. Madhav alleged that the Kerala government had conspired against Hinduism and

that anti-social elements had approached courts to weaken the temple's traditions. Referring to the controversy over women's entry into Sabarimala, he alleged that the previous Communist government had acted in league with anti-national forces and attempted to loot the temple's gold. He called upon Hindus to collectively protect Sabarimala's unique sanctity. He said the Central Government was pursuing a legal battle concerning Sabarimala and urged the Andhra Pradesh coalition government to join the case if



necessary. Madhav also criticised the Kerala government for allegedly failing to provide

adequate facilities for devotees and refusing land for pilgrim shelters. He said many people were willing to provide Annadanam and urged devotees and organisations to continue efforts for better facilities. Madhav announced that steps would be initiated from November 15 to address the problems faced by Ayyappa devotees by January 20. He also said he would approach the Centre for additional trains and proposed establishing a TTD-like administrative system and an information centre at Sabarimala.

Youth Should Enter Politics to Serve People, Says Srinivasa Varma

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister of State for Steel and Heavy Industries Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma said the BJP was giving priority to women's empowerment and youth leadership to realise the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. Addressing the valedictory session of the two-day Viksit Bharat Young Political Leaders Dialogue-2026 on Saturday, he said 33% of organisational positions in the BJP and its affiliated morchas had been reserved for women for the past 25 years. Srinivasa Varma said the party was following the principle of implementing what it

advocated, before enacting laws. He highlighted women holding positions as Union Ministers, MPs and party leaders, citing West Godavari as an example. He recalled that Nirmala Sitharaman had earlier served as an Andhra Pradesh BJP spokesperson. He urged youth to enter politics with the objective of public service rather than seeking positions, and encouraged them to emerge as future MLAs, MPs and Ministers through grassroots work. Recalling his 36-year association with the BJP, he said he joined the party for the nation's welfare when it had only two Lok Sabha seats. He called on youth to con-



tribute to Viksit Bharat by 2047 through public service and leadership. BJP State President PVN Madhav, BJYM State President Sunil Reddy, and BJP State General Secretaries Nagothu Ramesh

Naidu and Sannareddy Dayakar Reddy participated. The programme featured sessions on leadership, women's empowerment, India's development and pathways to Viksit Bharat.

Durga Temple EO Inspects Shrines at AP Bhavan in Delhi

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Devasthanam Executive Officer (EO) V.K. Seena Naik inspected the ancient Shiva temple and Sri Kanaka Durga Devi shrine at the Andhra Pradesh Bhavan complex in New Delhi on Sunday. Seena Naik inspected the Shiva temple, which was brought under AP Bhavan's jurisdiction following Delhi High Court orders. He said steps had been taken to ensure uninterrupted daily rituals and worship. Pending appointment of a permanent priest,

the priest serving at the Kanaka Durga Devi shrine was assigned additional responsibility for conducting rituals at the Shiva temple. AP Bhavan officials would provide the required ritual materials. He said further arrangements would be made in consultation with the temple's Vedic committee and Sthanacharyas, in accordance with Agama traditions. The EO later inspected the Kanaka Durga temple managed by Indrakeeladri Devasthanam and said he would brief the Trust Board Chairman and Endowments



Commissioner on its development. A development action plan would be prepared under

their guidance. AP Bhavan staff participated in the inspection.

Diarrhea Situation in Uyyuru Under Control

Amaravati, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

The State Medical and Health Department said the diarrhea situation in Uyyuru Municipality, Krishna district, was under control, with 19 cases reported between August 19 and 23. Of the 15 patients admitted to Uyyuru CHC, six were discharged and nine remained hospitalised, while four received outpatient or home treatment. All patients were stable and no deaths were reported. A state medical team led by Dr. K. Arjuna Rao, Joint Director, CDP, State Surveillance Unit, Dr. P.L. Dayakar, District Medical and Health Officer, Krishna, and



Dr. A.V. Seshu Kumar, DCHS, Krishna, inspected affected areas. A Siddhartha Medical College rapid response team also conducted tests. The cases were confined to

Wards 5, 7 and 9. Twenty-nine water samples and stool samples were sent for laboratory testing. Officials suspected drinking-water contamination, while outside food could have contributed. Chlorin

ation, tanker water supply, ORS distribution and door-to-door surveillance are continuing under State Health and Family Welfare Commissioner Chakra dhar Babu's directions.

Youth Must Be Encouraged Beyond Party Lines: Yogendra Yadav

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Political analyst Prof. Yogendra Yadav urged political parties to unite beyond ideological differences to encourage youth and address challenges facing the country. He was speaking at a seminar on "Youth Power in the Political Arena - Gen Z" organised by B.P. Mandal Trust President Dr. Ala Venkateswarlu at M.B. Bhavan on Sunday. B.V.N. Satyanarayana presided. Delhi University Professor N. Sukumar warned that personality cults could lead to authoritarianism and threaten democracy. CPM State Secretary V. Srinivasa Rao said youth were no longer influenced by

"Modi's WhatsApp University" and described the Gen-Z movement as progressive. CPI State Secretary G. Eswaraiah said the movement reflected growing youth discontent. Vadde Sobhanadreeswara Rao stressed the need to protect the Constitution, while retired IAS officer G.S.R.K.R. Vijay Kumar called for policies benefiting weaker sections. Party in-juncts included PDSO Secret ary Bhanu, SFI General Secret ary Prasanna Kumar, AISF President Nasar Ji, Congress Vice President Kolunakonda Shivaji, AIYF State Secretary Yugandhar, YSRCP student wing President P. Chaitanya and Gen-Z activist Megha Reddy.

Probe Missing Goddess's Mangalsutram: Malladi Vishnu

Tadepalli, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

YSRCP former MLA Malladi Vishnu demanded a comprehensive inquiry into the reported disappearance of the sacred Mangalsutram of Goddess Bhramaramba at Pedakakani Malleswara Swamy temple. Addressing the media at the YSRCP Central Office, he alleged that the incident exposed negligence by the coalition government and the Endowments Department. Vishnu questioned how the Mangalsutram went missing during the sacred Savana month and why police were not informed immediately. He sought details on CCTV functioning, the possibility of theft and responsibility for temple security. He also questioned why priests were reportedly called to the police station at midnight. He alleged that incidents involving missing gold, cash and hundi irregularities had surfaced at Pedakakani and other major temples, including Vijayawada Kanaka Durga temple. Vishnu demanded stronger security, CCTV surveillance and protection of temple jewellery, hundi collections and properties. He also criticised the delay in appointing Veda Parayanadars in TTD and urged action on priests' welfare issues. He warned that YSRCP would intensify its agitation if the government failed to act.

AEE Recruitment Exams Conducted Peacefully



Tirupati, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

The written examinations for recruitment to Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) posts under Andhra Pradesh Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (APSPDCL) were conducted peacefully on the first day. APSPDCL Chairman and Managing Director Siva Sankar Lotheti inspected the examinations at Annamacharya Engineering College in Tirupati and the Ion Digital Examination Centre at Cherlapalli. Siva Sankar Lotheti said 4,571 of 5,757 candidates attended the examinations at 23 centres across nine districts under APSPDCL jurisdiction,

recording 79 per cent attendance. He said 2,053 of 2,583 candidates attended the morning session and 2,518 of 3,174 attended the afternoon session. Across the State, 76 per cent attendance was recorded. He said officials ensured security, health services, biometric attendance and candidate verification, besides maintaining strict supervision. The examinations were completed without any untoward incidents. Chief General Manager/HRD CH Ramachandra Rao, Tirupati Circle Superintendent Engineer V. Chandrasekhara Rao, Executive Engineers Chinnareddappa and Gangadhar Reddy participated in the inspections.

NHM Staff Told Not to Change Bank Accounts Unnecessarily

Amaravati, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Health and Family Welfare Commissioner Chakradhar Babu advised National Health Mission (NHM) employees not to change their bank accounts without valid reasons, warning that doing so before Aadhaar seeding is completed could delay salary payments. NHM salaries are credited through the Aadhaar-Based Payment System (ABPS) and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to Aadhaar-linked bank accounts. Chakradhar Babu said premature account changes were causing techni-

cal issues in payment processing and directed district medical and health officials to take necessary measures. He said account changes and delays in Aadhaar seeding were affecting salary payments for thousands of employees covered under a single bill, involving nearly ₹60-70 crore. Employees were advised to update new bank details in employment records only after Aadhaar seeding was completed. Officials also urged staff to verify that their names, account numbers and other bank details matched employment records to prevent payment delays.

Gazetted Officers' Association Welcomes 2026 Job Calendar

Amaravati, Aug 21 | TPN Bureau

All India Gazetted Officers' Welfare Association General Secretary Venkatampalli Ravishankar welcomed the Andhra Pradesh government's approval of the 2026 Job Calendar and issuance of G.O. No. 81 for recruitment to 10,060 posts. He described the decision as excellent news for unemployed youth and appreciated the government for approving direct recruitment vacancies across various departments in four phases. He said the calendar includes 149 Group-I posts, 673

Group-II posts and teacher vacancies, besides posts in Panchayat Raj, Municipal, Revenue, Electricity, Finance, Water Resources, Forest and Welfare departments. V.M. Ravishankar, National General Secretary, All India SC/ST Gazetted Officers' Welfare Association, urged the government to continue releasing a job calendar every year and fill vacancies across all departments in a phased manner. He expressed hope that the recruitment process would provide greater employment opportunities for eligible candidates.

YSRCP Condemns Karumuri's Arrest, Calls It Political Vendetta

Tadepalli, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Former Ministers Chelluboina Venugopala Krishna, Anil Kumar Yadav and Vidadala Rajini condemned the arrest of former Minister Karumuri Venkata Nageswara Rao, alleging political vendetta by the TDP-led coalition government. In a joint statement, they said a false case had been filed against Karumuri, a senior BC leader, over alleged irregularities in liquor transportation. They also said his son Sunil had earlier been arrested and alleged that the family was being targeted. The former Ministers claimed liquor procurement and sales

under the YSRCP government were conducted transparently, with illegal liquor curbed, government-run retail outlets introduced, and belt shops and permit rooms abolished. They alleged that the previous Chandrababu Naidu government had favoured selected distilleries and TDP-linked liquor syndicates. They accused the coalition government of diverting attention from alleged irregularities during the 2014-19 regime by targeting YSRCP leaders and former officials. They demanded an end to the alleged harassment of BC leaders and YSRCP functionaries and warned that people would respond strongly if the political vendetta continued.

"God Has Given Me an Opportunity to Serve My Janmabhoomi After Serving My Karmabhoomi," Says Praveen Prakash



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 01

Q. As an IAS officer, you worked within the administrative system for decades. What convinced you that you could bring greater change by entering politics rather than continuing to contribute through public administration?

A. Given a choice, I would have continued in the IAS until 2031. I had intended to complete my service and continue contributing through public administration. However, due to certain special circumstances, I had to come out of the service earlier than planned.

Now that I have left the service, I have returned to my native place. In a way, I feel that perhaps God has given me an opportunity to serve my birthplace after spending most of my career serving my karmabhoomi. Maybe this was the path that was meant for me.

So, rather than looking at it as a choice between administration and politics, I see it as a new opportunity to continue serving people in a different capacity. I am simply going with the flow and taking this journey forward with that belief.

Q. Your campaign poster highlights your 30 years of IAS experience, education at IIT Kanpur and the Maxwell School in the US. Do you believe these credentials will influence voters, or do you still need to build a strong grassroots connection with them?

A. Ultimately, in an election, the people are the judges and I am the candidate. My credentials are like a CV that I am presenting before them. My 30 years in the IAS represent experience across various public systems, including public health, education, infrastructure, urban governance and anti-corruption measures. That experience gives me an understanding of how different systems work and how public issues can be addressed.

My education at IIT Kanpur has given me a technical and analytical perspective. Being an IIT Kanpur graduate from Uttar Pradesh who is now seeking to contest an Assembly election is also relatively unusual. Generally, people from this background do not enter electoral politics. I hope that demonstrates my sincerity and my willingness to step outside my comfort zone to serve people.

My education at the Maxwell School of Public Policy has also given me exposure to public policy and best practices from around the world. But I see all these credentials only as an initial introduction. They cannot substitute for a genuine connection with voters.

After that introduction, I want to be their advocate. People should feel comfortable approaching me and reaching out to me with their problems. Throughout the campaign, my most important objective is to convince the four lakh voters that I can be like a member of their family that they will have access to me and the freedom to speak to me openly.

That kind of relationship cannot be created through a poster or a CV. It has to be built personally. That is why I have started going door to door and shop to shop and spending five to six hours every day meeting people. Building that personal connection with the people is a separate journey, and I believe it is the most important part of this campaign.

Q. Varanasi Cantonment has traditionally been a strong BJP constituency. Why do you believe Congress can challenge the BJP's established political strength here in the 2027 Assembly elections?

A. There is a new trend in politics today, with many young people, including those from Generations Y and Z, entering public life. I belong to Generation X, having been born in 1971. At 55, with 30 years of experience in the IAS, I felt that I should take on the most difficult seat rather than choose an easier option.

From the Uttar Pradesh perspective, Varanasi Cantonment has been with the BJP for nearly three decades. I am consciously putting forward an alternative perspective and seeking to challenge an established political pattern.

I deliberately chose Varanasi Cantonment because it is one of the most difficult constituencies to contest. If I can succeed here by convincing people and earning their trust, it will give confidence to others as well. It will demonstrate that electoral politics is dynamic and that established political equations can change

when you are able to connect with people and win their confidence.

That is why I consciously chose Varanasi Cantonment. I believe that if we want to bring change, we should be willing to take on the most difficult challenges first.

Q. Is there any assurance from the Congress high command regarding your candidature?

A. Generally, the present practice in most political parties is to allow two or three potential candidates to prepare for a constituency. Towards the end, the party conducts surveys and selects one candidate from among them.

At present, I am among the final three candidates being considered. Whether I will be selected as the final candidate is something only time and the party's survey will tell. The decision is likely to be taken around November or December.

Q. Why did you particularly choose this constituency? Is Varanasi Cantonment your native constituency, or do you have any personal connection with the area?

A. I have been living in Varanasi since 2002. In many ways, Varanasi is similar to places like Visakhapatnam or Tirupati, where government employees from surrounding regions often settle after retirement. Varanasi serves as a major settlement for government employees from across the Purvanchal region after their retirement.

My father was also a government employee, and after his retirement, our family settled in Varanasi. We have been living here ever since, and we currently reside in the Varanasi Cantonment constituency.

So, while it may not be my ancestral or native constituency, I have a long-standing personal connection with Varanasi. Having lived here for more



than two decades, I felt that this was the constituency where I should seek an opportunity to serve.

Q. You spent a major part of your administrative career in Andhra Pradesh. How will you convince Varanasi Cantonment voters that you understand their local problems and aspirations as deeply as leaders who have worked here at the grassroots level?

A. I understood from the beginning that this would be one of the first questions people would ask me. So, after taking VRS in 2024, the first thing I did was to familiarise myself with the constituency at the grassroots level. There are around 400 polling stations in the constituency, and I personally walked to all of them. Today, I can visit any polling station and the surrounding colonies and have a fair understanding of the local area.

The next step was to interact with people through our Congress



address agricultural stakeholders and other participants under the programme.

CM Naidu will leave the camp office at 9:55 am and reach Katrenipadu in Musunuru mandal at 10:15 am. At 10:45 am, he will join Governor Abdul Nazeer in welcoming the Vice President. The hybrid seed launch is scheduled for 11 am.

Gourmet Popcornica has partnered with thousands of farmers cultivating popcorn maize across thou-

sands of acres nationwide. Its Musunuru facility is among Asia's largest popcorn processing centres and supplies popcorn to cinema theatres across the country.

The initiative aims to boost farm incomes through improved seed technology, value addition, processing and branding, while creating greater commercial opportunities for popcorn maize cultivation.

K Kalyan Krishna Kumar



Resident Editor
True Point English Daily

network. Through these interactions, I have developed a fairly clear understanding of the problems and concerns of the constituency.

My administrative experience also gives me another advantage. The same problem can be addressed differently by different governments and administrations depending on the local context. I have seen how various issues were handled in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. My experience in the IAS has also exposed me to international best practices.

The challenge is to adapt those experiences and best practices to the specific needs of Varanasi. Whether the issue is healthcare, education, youth employment, urban infrastructure or corruption, I believe I can combine my administrative experience with local understanding to develop practical solutions.

In simple terms, my approach is: think globally and act locally.

Q. Are you planning to undertake extensive door-to-door interactions and meetings with residents before the election? What are the key issues you want to understand directly from the people of the constituency?

A. Yes, I have already started this outreach. People have different concerns depending on their trade, business or profession, so I want to listen to all of them directly and understand their individual as well as common problems.

My main focus over the next two to three months is to maximise direct door-to-door contact with residents. I am undertaking this in the form of a padayatra, walking through the constituency and meeting people personally.

I am spending around six to seven hours every day on this outreach. My priority is to listen first, understand the concerns of different sections of society and then identify the key issues that need to be taken up for the constituency.

Q. Do you think voters in Varanasi Cantonment will give special importance to your IAS background and educational qualifications, or will issues such as employment, roads, sanitation, drainage, education and local infrastructure matter more to them?

A. Ultimately, as a people's representative, my responsibility will be to solve these problems. My IAS experience and educational background may make me better equipped to understand and address them, but that background has no value to people if I cannot deliver results.

I am very clear about that. My experience and qualifications are only meant to tell people that I am capable of taking on these challenges and that they should give me an opportunity to prove myself.

My message to the people is simple: Give Congress one chance. The BJP has been here for nearly 30 years. Give us one opportunity and compare our performance with what has been done so far. That is the appeal I want to make to the voters: Give us one chance.

Q. Why did you choose the Congress as your political platform? What specifically attracted you to the party and its leadership at this stage of your career?

A. Having worked in government for many years, I believe that economic development is one of the most important priorities for any society. For me, development should be inclusive, with a focus on increasing the incomes and opportunities of the poor and the middle class.

Take the Banarasi saree industry, for example. If we want to make Banarasi sarees more prominent globally and expand the industry, the benefits should reach everyone involved, irrespective of their community or religion.

The objective should be to bring people together and create broader economic opportunities.

This philosophy of inclusive development and increasing the incomes of the poor and middle class is close to the Congress ideology, and that is what attracted me to the party.

At the same time, I respect the fact that different political ideologies exist. Every country has different political schools of thought, and India is no exception.

The Congress and BJP represent different ideological approaches, and both have existed for a long time because they have found support among people.

I am proud of the ideology that I have chosen and that has attracted me to Congress. But that does not mean I look down upon people who follow a different ideology. I respect the democratic space for different political viewpoints while remaining committed to the ideology I believe in.

Q. When did you join the Congress?

A. I have been associated with the Congress for about a year now. It has been a gradual association rather than something that happened overnight.

Q. As a former senior bureaucrat, you have seen governments and political parties function from close quarters. What are the biggest differences you expect to encounter when you move

from administration to electoral politics?

A. Earlier, as a bureaucrat, there was another layer-the political executive-from whom we would receive guidance and feedback on whether we were moving in the right direction. As a people's representative, there will be no such intermediary. I will be directly accountable to the people.

The second major difference is the nature of the role itself. As a bureaucrat, I was primarily an implementer or executor. Once feedback and directions were received, my responsibility was to execute them through the administrative system.

As a people's representative, my role will be different. I will become a bridge between the people and the government. I will listen to people's concerns, understand their aspirations, provide feedback to the government and ensure that their voices are heard.

So, in simple terms, a bureaucrat is an implementer, while a people's representative is a bridge between the people and the government.

Q. If the Congress gives you the opportunity to contest from Varanasi Cantonment, what would be the three most important issues on which you would seek the people's mandate?

A. My first priority would be employment generation. I want to attract more industries and economic activity to Varanasi so that more employment opportunities are created for local people.

My second priority would be the removal of corruption. During my interactions with people, I have found that corruption is a major concern in Varanasi. Addressing it and ensuring greater transparency in public services would be one of my key objectives.

The third priority would be urban development, particularly improving municipal services and the functioning of the municipal administration.

So, my three key priorities would be employment generation, eliminating corruption and improving urban development and municipal services.

Q. Do you have any political background in your family?

A. No, I am the first person in my family to enter politics. I come from a family of government employees. My father, my brothers, my uncles and I have all been part of government service. There is no political background in my family.

Q. As an IAS officer, you had the authority to implement decisions. Today, you are seeking the people's mandate to serve as their elected representative. Why should a Varanasi Cantonment voter choose an administrator-turned-politician over a traditional grassroots politician?

A. A policy or an Act is only as good as its implementation. We may create an excellent policy, but if we are unable to implement it effectively, it serves little purpose.

My 30 years in the IAS have given me extensive experience in implementing policies and understanding what works on the ground. That experience has also helped me develop the ability to translate people's aspirations and demands into practical and implementable policy frameworks.

I believe this is one of the key advantages I bring. I can understand people's concerns, but at the same time, I know how to design policies that can actually be implemented through the government machinery.

Ultimately, what is the benefit of a policy that exists only on paper? My administrative experience gives me the ability to bridge that gap between policy formulation and effective implementation.

Q. How supportive is your family of your decision to enter politics, especially since your family has a background in government service?

A. As middle-class families, we are generally risk-averse. We do not want our nearest and dearest to take major risks because we worry that if things do not work out, they may have to face significant hardship.

In my case, there are several uncertainties. Will I get the party ticket? If I get it, will I win the election? These are all big questions. Generally, middle-class families in India tend to discourage their members from taking such risks. That is also one reason why entrepreneurship is relatively less common in our country.

We often have a similar attitude even when it comes to national service. We believe that the best people should serve as soldiers and defend the country, but instinctively, we would prefer that someone else's family takes that risk rather than our own.

Politics is also seen as a profession involving considerable uncertainty and risk. So, my family understands my decision and tells me that, at my age and with my experience, I should know what is best for me. But I would not describe their response as wholehearted or open-hearted support. They are accepting my decision, but they are naturally concerned about the risks involved.

Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan to Visit Eluru Today

Eluru, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan will visit Musunuru in Eluru district on Monday and join Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu in launching the country's first non-GMO high-expansion popcorn maize hybrid seed at the Gourmet Popcornica Factory.

The Vice President will felicitate farmers and

address agricultural stakeholders and other participants under the programme.

CM Naidu will leave the camp office at 9:55 am and reach Katrenipadu in Musunuru mandal at 10:15 am. At 10:45 am, he will join Governor Abdul Nazeer in welcoming the Vice President. The hybrid seed launch is scheduled for 11 am.

Gourmet Popcornica has partnered with thousands of farmers cultivating popcorn maize across thou-

sands of acres nationwide. Its Musunuru facility is among Asia's largest popcorn processing centres and supplies popcorn to cinema theatres across the country.

The initiative aims to boost farm incomes through improved seed technology, value addition, processing and branding, while creating greater commercial opportunities for popcorn maize cultivation.

BRICS Sports Ministers Adopt Joint Declaration

Continue

BRICS Working Group on Sports Technology, BRICS Sports Manufacturing Conclave and BRICS Traditional and Domestic Sports Exhibition Games 2026.

The Conclave will be held in Udaipur in November, while the traditional sports games are proposed for October 12-13 in

Ahmedabad.

Dr. Mandaviya congratulated participating countries and expressed confidence that the partnership would develop into meaningful and continuous sporting cooperation, contributing to India's BRICS theme of "Building for Stability, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."

Hotels, Restaurants Face Sanitation Checks Across Vijayawada

Uday Banavath

Vijayawada: Hotels, restaurants and RO plants across Vijayawada are under increased scrutiny over sanitation, hygiene and drinking water standards, with establishments serving food and water expected to strictly follow public health norms. Clean kitchens, proper waste disposal and safe drinking water are essential to prevent health risks to consumers. Several sanitation lapses were uncovered during surprise inspections conducted by Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) Public Health teams across the city on Sunday, following directions from Commissioner Dhyana chandra. Officials inspected establishments to assess kitchen hygiene, waste management and drinking water facilities.



The inspections covered Kaleswara Rao Market, Canal Road and Tarapeta under

Circle 1; Red Circle, Sitarampuram and Governorpet under Circle 2; and Benz Circle, MG Road and Eenadu areas under Circle 3. Zonal Commissioner K. Prabhudas said establishments could not compromise on sanitation standards. "Hotels and restaurants must treat hygiene as a daily responsibility. We will not compromise when it comes to public health and sanitation," he said. Officials detected violations at some establishments and issued notices directing managements to rectify deficiencies within three days. Two hotels were fined a total of ₹10,000 for violating regulations, with the amount collected. Prabhu said failure to comply would invite stringent action. "The three-day deadline is an opportunity for managements to correct the deficiencies. Those who fail to comply will face further action, including

possible cancellation of their trade licences," he said. He also stressed the need for continuous compliance.

"Proper waste disposal, clean kitchens and safe drinking water are basic requirements. Establishments must ensure these standards are maintained at all times, not only when inspections are conducted," he added.

Officials warned that establishments failing to rectify deficiencies could face cancellation of their trade licences and urged hotels, food establishments and RO plants to maintain hygienic premises and safe drinking water facilities. Zonal Commissioner K. Prabhudas, Assistant Medical Health Officer Dr. Annappurna, Sanitary Supervisors Somaraju, Salim and Ramesh, along with Sanitary Inspectors, participated in the inspections.

TDP Stands by BCs, Says MP Kesineni Chinni



Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni) said the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) has always stood by Backward Classes (BCs) and credited the alliance government with providing 34% reservation to BCs in local body elections. He was speaking after unveiling statues of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao installed by TDP leaders in the 42nd Division of Vijayawada West constituency.

Kesineni Chinni paid tributes to both leaders and later participated in the distribution of sarees to underprivileged women. He praised TDP cadre for installing the statues and said the services and ideals of Phule and NTR would always be remembered. He said TDP leaders had visited households under the "Intintiki Telugu Desam" programme to understand public issues.

He alleged that the previous YSRCP government had neglected and targeted BCs. Kesineni Chinni said TDP workers in Vijayawada West were united for constituency development and urged people to follow the ideals of Phule and NTR. Arya Vysya Corporation Chairman Dundi Rakesh, Minority Cell State General Secretary Mohammad Fataullah, SAAP Director Santosh Kumar, former Corporator Abdul Khader and others attended.

Sports Help Develop Leadership Qualities : Vamsi Deepak



Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Department of Language and Culture Superintendent G. Vamsi Deepak said sports help develop leadership qualities among youth. He inaugurated the 'Asmita Khelo India Soft Tennis Women's City League' organised by the Andhra Pradesh Soft Tennis Association at SRK Tennis Academy, Poranki, on Sunday.

He said the Asmita League would promote the growth of soft tennis, which was steadily gaining popularity across Andhra Pradesh. Dr. D. Naveen Kumar, Chairman of Andhra Pradesh Soft Tennis

Association and State Coordinator, Asmita Soft Tennis League, physical education teachers and others participated.

Tennis coach Y. Siva Ramakrishna and Andhra Pradesh Netball Association Treasurer M. Veeranjanyulu presented medals to winners.

In Sub-Junior, D. Arifa won first, D. Aliya second, and G. Nitya and K. Kavaya third. In Junior, K. Tanushree, S. Sravya, P. Nandini and S. Jyothsna secured the top positions. In Senior, M. Bhavana, M. Kalyani, K. Jhansi and T. Suvarna won the respective places.

Suryopasana Seva Performed at Indrakeeladri

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

The Suryopasana Seva was performed with devotion at Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Devasthanam on Indrakeeladri on Sunday morning. Temple Vedic scholars conducted the ritual for the welfare of devotees and the world, following scriptural traditions. During the seva, scholars performed special Archana to Lord Surya while chanting Aruna Parayana, Mahasura Parayana and Surya Ashtottara Shatanamavali. They explained that Suryopasana is believed to promote good health, radiance and mental peace, with Sunday holding special significance for Sun worship. Following the ritual, special Harathi was offered to Goddess Kanaka Durga and Teertha-Prasadam was distributed among devotees. Devasthanam officials said special arrangements were made to manage the increased rush on Sundays. Devotees wishing to participate in Arjita Sevas such as Suryopasana can obtain tickets through the Manamitra WhatsApp service or Devasthanam



counters. Temple officials, priests and devotees participated.

Implement G.O. 45 in Power Sector, Union Demands

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

United Electricity Employees Union State General Secretary P. Sudarshan Reddy demanded immediate implementation of G.O. No. 45, which raised the retirement age from 60 to 62 for employees of State-run corporations, PSUs and societies. He said several organisations covered under Schedules 9 and 10 of the State Reorganisation Act had implemented the order, while the electricity sector

was delaying it citing the need to form a committee. The delay was causing hardship to retired and retiring employees, he said. Sudarshan Reddy rejected claims of excessive financial burden and said field-level electricity employees could also work until 62, citing police, fire service and RTC personnel. He urged Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu to intervene, implement G.O. 45 in the electricity sector and end employees' uncertainty.

PACS Must Ensure Proper Crop Insurance Registration : Buddha Prasad



Avinigadda, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Avanigadda MLA Mandali Buddha Prasad urged farmers to enrol for crop insurance under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana before the extended deadline of August 31 and secure coverage for

their crops.

Buddha Prasad said some farmers were hesitant to pay premiums due to alleged irregularities by cooperative societies during the previous government. He said premiums were deducted from some crop loan accounts, but farmers were allegedly not given receipts. He directed PACS presidents and secretaries to ensure transparent registration and proper handling of insurance premiums. Officials were asked to closely monitor the process and prevent irregularities. He said the government extended the deadline considering the prevailing rainfall deficit and urged farmers to utilise the opportunity.

DYFI Demands Revision of Job Calendar

Vijayawada, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

DYFI State President Y. Ramu and Secretary G. Ramanna alleged that the State government had betrayed unemployed youth by releasing an inadequate Job Calendar despite promising it for two years. They questioned the inclusion of only 10,060 posts against nearly two lakh vacancies. They said 19,996 Police Constable posts were vacant but only 2,265 were proposed for recruitment,

demanding notifications for 11,639 Police Constable and SI posts. They sought recruitment to 10,000 teacher posts instead of 2,991, and filling 800 Group-1 and Group-2 posts against over 5,000 vacancies. They also demanded filling librarian, Animal Husbandry Assistant and AEE vacancies and immediate Special DSC recruitment for persons with disabilities and Adivasis. The leaders warned of statewide protests if the calendar was not revised.

Mega Cleaning Drive Conducted at RGUKT Hostels

Nuzvid, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

A mega cleaning drive was conducted at the I1 and I2 boys' hostels on the RGUKT Nuzvid campus to ensure a clean and healthy environment for students. Accumulated trash and discarded materials were removed from hostel rooms and surrounding areas, while drainage channels were cleaned to improve sanitation. Bleaching powder was applied across the hostel premises as a preventive measure against infectious diseases, and steps were taken to control the mosquito population. The cleaning drive was supervised by RGUKT Vice-Chancellor Prof. M.L.N. Rao and Administrative Officer (AO) Dr. Lakshmana Rao. Dean of



Student Welfare (DSW) Dr. Rajesh, Campus Maintenance In-charge Dr. Srihari and Chief Warden Suresh also participated. Wardens, caretakers, house-keeping supervisors and other staff members supported the initiative. Officials said the drive was aimed at maintaining hygienic hostel surroundings and safeguarding the health and well-being of students.

HCL Group Marks 50 Years with Sid Sriram Concert

Vijayawada, August 22 | TPN Bureau

HCL Group continued its 50th anniversary celebrations with a special employee concert featuring acclaimed singer and composer Sid Sriram at the HCLTech campus in Vijayawada on Friday. More than 3,000 employees from HCL Group and the Shiv Nadar Foundation attended the event. Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Chairperson, HCL Group and HCLTech; Rahul Singh, Chief Operating Officer, Corporate Functions, HCLTech; Vijay Guntur, Head of CTO & Ecosystems, HCLTech; and Shiva Prasad, Centre Head, HCLTech Vijayawada, joined employees in the celebrations. Sid Sriram performed several popular songs, with employees singing and dancing along.



The Vijayawada event was the fourth concert in the Group's special golden jubilee series, following programmes in Noida, Lucknow and Chennai. HCL marked its official 50th anniversary on August 11. The celebrations are continuing across locations, highlighting the organisation's five-decade journey and its employees.

CPM Demands Pattas for Brahmarambapuram Residents

Vijayawada, August 23 | TPN Bureau

CPM State Committee member Donepudi Kashinath and East City Secretary Puppala Krishna demanded immediate resolution of the registration issue in Brahmarambapuram under Vijayawada's 22nd Division. The party staged a protest at the Malaria Hospital, seeking registered title deeds for residents. They said nearly 2,000 houses had B-form deeds, but residents lacked registration rights despite living there for

around 80 years. They alleged the absence of registration was affecting access to loans and creating difficulties during emergencies. The leaders expressed concern over surveys for proposed development projects and possible demolition of houses. They said the government had ordered reclassification and later announced regularisation under G.O. No. 30, but registration had not begun. They demanded free registration deeds and announced a "Chalo Collector Office" programme on August 31.

Durga Temple EO Inspects Temples at AP Bhavan

Vijayawada, August 23 | TPN Bureau

Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Devasthanam Executive Officer (EO) V.K. Seena Naik inspected the ancient Shiva temple and Sri Kanaka Durga Devi shrine at the Andhra Pradesh Bhavan complex in New Delhi on Sunday. Seena Naik reviewed the Shiva temple, which was brought under AP Bhavan's jurisdiction following Delhi High Court orders. He said the Devasthanam had taken immediate steps to ensure uninterrupted daily rituals and worship. Pending appointment of a permanent priest, the priest serving at the Kanaka Durga shrine was given additional responsibility for conducting rituals at the Shiva temple. He said AP Bhavan's Resident Commissioner's office would provide



required ritual materials. Further steps would be taken after consultations with the Vedic committee and Sthanacharyas to follow Agama traditions. The EO also inspected the Kanaka Durga temple and said details regarding its development would be placed before the Devasthanam Trust Board Chairman and Endowments Commissioner. Delhi AP Bhavan staff participated.

Security Guards Seek Payment of Nine Months' Pending Wages

Vijayawada, August 23 | TPN Bureau

Security guards working at the Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Social Sculpture Complex have expressed distress over prolonged non-payment of salaries. The guards alleged that their wages have remained unpaid for nine months and accused contractor Nitesh Chaudhary of repeatedly delaying payments on various grounds.

They said one security guard has not received wages for 13 months, leaving employees struggling to support their families and forcing them to borrow

money for daily needs. Three guards have reportedly quit their jobs due to the prolonged financial hardship.

The employees said they had repeatedly brought the issue to the attention of officials but no solution had been found. They expressed disappointment that their grievances remained unresolved despite the complex being located close to the Collector's office.

The security guards appealed to senior officials to intervene immediately, clear their pending wages and establish a mechanism to ensure timely salary payments in future.

Sports Promote Healthy Competition Among Youth: Devineni Avinash

Vijayawada, August 23 | TPN Bureau

NTR District YSRCP President Devineni Avinash attended a pickleball tournament organised by the United Student Organization (USO) at Novotel Pickle & Brew Court in Vijayawada as chief guest. He congratulated the players and said sports promote physical fitness, discipline, perseverance and leadership among youth. He welcomed the growing popularity of pickleball and encouraged youngsters to participate actively in sports. Avinash presented prizes to singles winner Sumanth Devarapalli and runner-up Yashwanth. He appreciated the



USO organisers for conducting the tournament successfully and expressed hope that more such events would be held to encourage youth participation. SRM University students Parvathaneni Nagendra and Prathipati Manikanta also participated.

Federation Seeks Autonomy for Cooperative Banks

Vijayawada, August 23 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh State Co-operative Urban Bank and Credit Society Federation President Chalasani Raghavendra Rao demanded protection of cooperative banks' autonomy and withdrawal of restrictions imposed by the Centre and RBI.

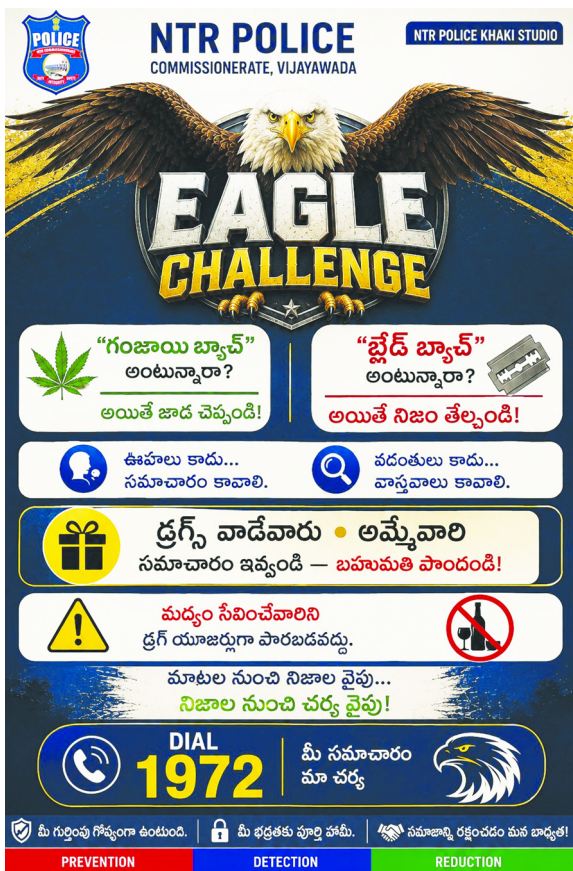
Speaking at a press conference at the Press Club on Sunday, he said cooperative societies were formed through voluntary public participation and alleged that excessive central interference was unconstitutional.

He said cooperation was in the State List and opposed amendments to the Banking Regulation Act affecting cooperative



banks. Raghavendra Rao demanded dissolution of the Model Bye-law Drafting Committee and opposed restrictions on directors' tenure and eligibility. He also sought reduction of DICGC premiums, full deposit protection and elections in eight urban cooperative banks currently managed by nominated committees. He sought land in Amaravati for the Federation's office and training centre.

NTR Police Launches Challenge to Curb Drug Abuse



Vijayawada, August 23 | TPN Bureau

The NTR Police Commissionerate has launched the "NTR Police Commissionerate Challenge" to encour-

age citizens to share credible information about ganja and other prohibited narcotics. The police urged people to provide specific leads regarding the location of drugs, users, suppliers and sellers instead of spreading rumours. They clarified that alcohol consumption should not be confused with drug use, as alcohol and prohibited narcotics are different. The police also appealed to the public not to create unnecessary hype over alleged "blade gangs" or "ganja gangs" and instead provide concrete information if such groups exist. Citizens can share information by calling 112 or 1972. The identity of informants will be kept strictly confidential.

Vangaveeti Ranga Was a Modern-Day Robin Hood: Kandula Durgesh

Nidadavolu, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Minister for Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Kandula Durgesh described Vangaveeti Mohana Ranga as a "modern-day Robin Hood" who stood by the poor and worked beyond caste and religious barriers. He was speaking at Kanuru Aghraharam in Peravali mandal, where he and Kapu Corporation Chairman Kothapalli Subbarayudu unveiled statues of Vijayanagara Emperor Krishnadevaraya and Vangaveeti Mohana Ranga on Sunday. Following the unveiling, peace doves were released and blankets were distributed to elderly people and women. Durgesh praised villagers for constructing a mandapam for visitors and installing the statues. He said Ranga



remained popular among youth, who continued to raise slogans of "Ranga Amar

Rahe", and pledged to work towards fulfilling his ideals. Durgesh also highlight-

ed development works worth ₹4.40 crore undertaken in Kanuru Aghraharam during the two-year tenure of the coalition government. Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, ₹73 lakh was allocated to provide drinking water connections to every household. He said new roads would be constructed from September and announced plans for a Hindu cremation ground and community halls for other social groups. Durgesh expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, saying he was committed to serving the people of Nidadavolu constituency. Housing Board Director Priya Sowjanya, Peravali Mandal TDP President Athikari Srinu, Janasena President Pippara Ravi and other alliance leaders attended.

Grand Maha Ganapati Idol Soil Collection Draws Huge Participation



Machilipatnam, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

A grand soil collection procession was organised in Machilipatnam for the construction of the 63-foot 'Sagarateera Maha Ganapati' idol at Manginapudi Beach. State Minister for Mines, Geology and Excise Kollu Ravindra, his spouse and local residents participated in the procession, which began at Moodu Shambala Center and proceeded towards Manginapudi. Soil collected from households, agricultural fields and sacred places was gathered during the procession, including from Vijaya Ganapati

Temple at Moodu Sthambala Center and Ganapati Temple at the ZP Center. The organising committee has also collected soil from prominent locations across the country. Kollu Ravindra said worshipping a clay Ganesha was synonymous with respecting and loving nature. He said the initiative was aimed at connecting people with tradition, culture and nature and involving every household in the celebrations. He said Minister Nara Lokesh had also sent soil from his residence and that Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan would visit soon. He said 11-day Vinayaka Chavithi celebrations would feature cultural programmes and replicas of Tirumala, Simhachalam, Kanaka Durgamma and Ayodhya Ram temples. Robust traffic arrangements and barricades were being installed to facilitate devotees. Ravindra expressed hope that the celebrations would contribute to regional development and prosperity in Andhra Pradesh.

A Fit Srikakulam Is My Goal : Rammohan Naidu



Srikakulam, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister of Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu said his goal was to build a fit and healthy Srikakulam through greater participation in sports. He was speaking at the closing ceremony of the MP Cup 2026 chess tournament held at NTR Bhavan in the district headquarters on Sunday. Rammohan Naidu paid floral tributes to former Union Minister Yerrannaidu before interacting with participants and congratulating them. He presented prizes to the winners and certificates of appreciation

to all players. He said chess provided an effective workout for the brain and developed foresight by teaching players to anticipate opponents' moves. He said the Yerranna Sports Festival was launched to encourage athletes across all disciplines and provide them a platform every month to display their talent. Rammohan Naidu said sports contributed to both health and overall development and noted that Srikakulam had produced talented athletes, including Karnam Malleswari. He stressed the need for parents to encourage children to pursue sports and assured that more competitions would be organised. Srikakulam MLA Gondu Shankar, TDP State Vice-President Tammineni Sujatha, Vamsadhara Project Committee Chairman Aravala Ravindra Babu, City TDP President Pandranki Shankar, Telugu Yuvatha District President Menda Dasu Naidu and District Chess Association President Sanapala Bhimaravu, among others, participated.

Direct Mayoral Polls Heat Up Local Body Battle

East Godavari, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

The government's decision to restore direct elections for Municipal Chairpersons and Corporation Mayors has intensified political activity across the undivided East Godavari region. The decision, approved at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, has triggered excitement and anxiety among aspirants. With municipal terms expired and special officers in charge, preparations are reportedly focusing on voter lists, reservations and ward reorganisation. Direct elections would allow people to vote separately for Mayors or Chairpersons and ward representatives, giving urban leaders a stronger direct mandate than

under the earlier indirect system.

The government's proposal to reorganise Zilla Parishads based on new districts could also create separate bodies for Kakinada, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Konaseema, East Godavari and Polavaram districts, leading to new ZPTC seats and political opportunities. The proposed 34% BC reservation in rural local bodies and 33.33% in urban bodies has further increased interest among aspirants. Political circles are closely watching whether TDP, Jana Sena and BJP contest together, while YSRCP cadres indicate plans to fight independently.

The final election schedule will depend on voter-list revision, reservations and ward reorganisation.

Appalanaidu Urges Janasena Cadres to Gear Up for Local Polls



Eluru, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

APSRTC Zone-2 Chairman and Eluru Janasena In-charge Reddy Appalanaidu called upon Janasena cadres to prepare for the upcoming local body elections. Addressing leaders, Veera Mahilas and Janasainiks at the Eluru Janasena office on Sunday, he said fighting for public issues remained the party's ideology, irrespective of whether it was in power. He

urged cadres to work with the discipline, commitment and fighting spirit promoted by party president and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, assuring recognition for dedicated activists. Appalanaidu said Janasena had a strong position across all 50 divisions in Eluru. Applications from aspiring corporator candidates will be accepted from August 25 to 30. A five-member committee comprising Raghavayya Chowdary, Siripalli Prasad, Nimmla Jyothi Kumar, Kasturi Sai Tejaswini and Obilishetti Sravan Kumar Gupta will scrutinise applications. He urged cadres to support the alliance government during the polls. Nara Seshu, Raghavayya Chowdary, Siripalli Sivara makrishna Prasad, Donepudi Lovaraju, Illa Srinivas and others attended.

Over 200 Students Compete in Amaravati Chess Tournament



Amaravati, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

A one-day rapid chess tournament featuring more than 200 school students was organised at the Sri Pingali Venkayya Conference Hall in the District Collectorate under the aegis of Rotary Club of Greater Amaravati and in coordination with the NTR District administration. The tournament was inaugurated by Rotary Club of Greater Amaravati Charter President Dr. Kodali Valli,

Charter Secretary Dr. Himabindu and Dr. Aishwarya Yalamanchili. The competition was conducted over seven rounds, with 25 prizes, including cash awards, presented to winners. Certificates were given to all participants. District Collector Dr. G. Lakshminsha attended the prize distribution ceremony as chief guest and presented trophies and prizes. He appreciated parents for encouraging their children and said chess helped develop critical thinking, concentration and decision-making skills. In the open category, Vizzi Hemanth Kumar won first prize, Gajula Meghashyam Sai secured second and Nandagopal stood third. Internationally rated chess coaches K. Suresh and U. Dasu conducted the tournament. Dr. Ram Chand, P. Apparao and Shiva also participated.

Prabhakar Assures Development Support for Kolleru Lanka Villages

Eluru, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Denduluru MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar said the Alliance government would extend full support for the development of Kolleru Lanka villages. He participated in the Sri Ganganamma Goddess Jataara at Penumaka Lanka village in Kaikaluru constituency on Sunday and offered special prayers. Alliance leaders welcomed him with a bike rally and honoured him with flower garlands and shawls. Prabhakar later inaugurated a mini-function hall near the Sri Ganganamma temple. The facility was constructed in memory of late Ramakrishnam Raju with the support of his parents, Kunapuraju Rangaraju and Baby, for devotees' convenience. Prabhakar appreciated the donors and



assured that infrastructure problems in Penumaka Lanka would be resolved under the leadership of Kaikaluru MLA Kamineni Srinivas. He later participated in the Anna Samaradhana and served Anna Prasadam to devotees. A large number of Alliance leaders, village elders and devotees participated in the event.

Retired Employees Association Elects New State Leadership



Eluru, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

The State General Council meeting of the Andhra Pradesh Government Retired Employees Association was held on Saturday and Sunday at Nerella Raja Function Hall in Eluru. District President K. Mahalakshmi and Secretary D. Gangadhara Rao said the General Council unanimously approved the reports presented by the State President, General Secretary and Treasurer

. P.S.N.P. Sastry was unanimously elected as State President, S.S.N. Raju as General Secretary and N. Narayana Rao as Treasurer. A 45-member leadership team was elected, including four Associate Chairmen, 16 Vice Presidents, 17 Secretaries and five Organizing Secretaries. Returning Officer and retired Deputy Collector B. Somashekhar Rao, along with Assistant Officer and retired Tahsildar D.V.S. Subbarao administered the oath to the newly elected leaders.

The association demanded immediate constitution of the 12th PRC Commission and announcement of Interim Relief, clearance of 11th PRC arrears and DA dues, release of five pending DR installments, and cashless medical services through EHS cards.

108 Couples Perform Satyanarayana Swamy Vratam

Eluru, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Mass Sri Rama Sahita Satyanarayana Swamy Vratams were performed with devotion at Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple with Sridevi and Bhudevi in Sunkara Vari Thota, Eluru, on Sunday. The rituals were organised during Dhanurmasam, with 108 couples participating and offering prayers. Eluru District TDP President and MLA Badeti Chanti and Vijayawada APSRTC Regional Chairman and Janasena Eluru Constituency In-charge Reddy Appalanaidu attended the programme as

chief guests and performed special prayers.

Later, they inspected the temple's Kalyana Mandapam, which is currently under construction. They appreciated the temple committee for organising the mass vratams and assured their support in mobilising funds required for completing the Kalyana Mandapam, which had reportedly fallen into a dilapidated condition. Following the religious programme, Annadanam was organised for thousands of devotees. Temple committee members, devotees and local leaders participated in the celebrations.

Cordon-and-Search Operation Conducted in Kukkalavari Palem

Bapatla, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

A large-scale cordon-and-search operation was conducted at Kukkalavari Palem under Bapatla Rural Police Station limits as part of "Operation Vajra Prahar". The operation was carried out under the directives of DGP Harish Kumar Gupta, Eagle IGP AK Ravi Krishna, Eagle Operations SP M. Maheswara Raju, Bapatla District SP B. Umamaheswar and Eagle Admin SP G. Swarooparani, under the supervision of Bapatla SDPO Ch. Chandramouli. Police and Eagle personnel jointly cordoned off the area and conducted house-to-house searches. They

checked suspicious meeting points, vacant plots and other sensitive locations, besides verifying individuals and monitoring persons with criminal records. Special attention was given to preventing narcotics trafficking, possession and consumption, smuggling and anti-social activities.

During vehicle checks, auto-rickshaws and two-wheelers without proper documents were seized for legal action under the Motor Vehicles Act. Police said the operation strengthened public confidence and created deterrence among criminals. The programme concluded with the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan pledge.

Liquor Racket on Tirumala Being Covered Up: Bhumana

Tirupati, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

Former TTD Chairman Bhumana Karunakar Reddy alleged that TTD Vigilance, police and the TTD administration were collectively covering up a liquor and gutka racket on Tirumala hill. Speaking to the media, he demanded the immediate release of CCTV footage and phone-location records to establish the facts. Bhumana claimed Eega Ramu was caught near Kousthubham Guest House on August 21 between 7.30 and 8 pm while allegedly supplying 182 quarter bottles of liquor to Balaji. He said Eega

Priya was separately caught near Nagateertham with thousands of gutka packets. However, the FIR reportedly showed both incidents as occurring at Alipiri Link Bus Stand the following morning. He questioned the change in location and demanded CCTV footage from Kousthubham Guest House, Nagateertham and Alipiri Link Bus Stand, besides phone locations of SI Srivani and Eega Ramu. Bhumana alleged that nearly 1,000 liquor quarter bottles reach Tirumala daily and called for a comprehensive probe into the racket and those allegedly protecting it.

Employees' Premier League Promotes Unity and Team Spirit

Ibrahimpatnam, Aug 23 | TPN Bureau

The Employees' Premier League, a mega cricket tournament for Andhra Pradesh government employees, concluded at the Andhra Cricket Association Stadium in Mulapadu on Sunday. Organised by the United Telugu Journalists Association (UTJA), the tournament featured 10 teams representing various departments. In the final, the AP NGO Association team scored 149 for eight wickets in 16 overs, while the School Education team also reached 149 for five wickets, taking the match to a Super Over. The AP NGO team emerged victorious in the Super Over.

District Collector Dr. G. Lakshminsha and AP NGO State President A. Vidyasagar presented prizes to the winners and outstanding performers. Lakshminsha said sports helped employees maintain physical and mental fitness, reduce workplace stress and improve concentration. He highlighted teamwork, leadership, coordination and decision-making as key benefits. Vidyasagar said sporting activities promoted friendship, unity, discipline and camaraderie among employees. Vysya Corporation Chairman Doondi Rakesh, UTJA organisers P. Ramesh Babu, Saikrishna, Chinni and Ajay, and several AP NGO leaders and employees attended.

Poetry as a Walking Human Being: The Essence of Varavara Rao's Poetry



Varavara Rao occupies a distinctive place in Telugu poetry. At the center of his work are the human being, freedom, social justice, resistance to exploitation, and the lived realities of ordinary people. For him, poetry is not an exercise in ornamentation; it is a moral act that interrogates life and its structures of power.

His poems carry anger, anguish and rebellion, but they are equally alive with love, tenderness, compassion and faith in the future. This is precisely why a poem of his may begin in the urgency of protest yet ultimately remain in the reader's mind as a profound human question.

For Varavara Rao, poetry is not only an aesthetic object standing apart from life. If life is turbulent, wounded and unjust, poetry too must disturb our complacency. His poems do not allow the reader the comfort of passive appreciation; they compel us to think, question and confront reality.

Some poets look at flowers. Others look at the people crushed beneath them. Varavara Rao belongs to the latter. His poetry does not reject beauty; it reminds us that beauty remains incomplete until it stands beside justice.



To read Varavara Rao is to hear, first, the heartbeat of a human being, then the footsteps of an age and finally, the silence in which history begins to question itself. His poems transform private grief into collective memory. A farmer's tear, a prisoner's silence, a tribal forest, a mother's waiting these become, in his hands, chapters in the larger history of humanity.

Nature, too, is never a decorative landscape in his poetry; it is a moral compass. A river is not merely a flow of water but the journey of the people. A seed is not simply the promise of harvest but the possibility of the future. Fire is not only destruction but the energy of transformation. Every image carries the pulse of life renewing itself against despair.

In an age where almost everything is assigned a market value, Varavara Rao's poetry recalls a forgotten truth: a human being cannot be measured by price, only by dignity. It insists that equality is greater than privilege, justice more enduring than prosperity, and humanity more valuable than success.

For this reason, Varavara Rao's poetry ultimately belongs not to a single ideology but to everyone who believes in the inviolable worth of human life. It remembers those whom history has chosen to forget. It keeps hope alive in the darkest hours. Above all, it teaches us that poetry is not an escape from reality but a way of restoring the human voice to a world that

too often loses the courage to listen.

Sahacharulu Some books do not merely give us information after we read them. They awaken memories that have long been asleep within us. V.V.'s Sahacharulu is one such book. This is not a biography. It is not the path walked by a single individual. It is the story of an era narrating its own wounds.

We often assume that time comes to a halt behind prison walls. But in this book, it is time that moves the most-not a step forward, but inward, into the deepest interiors of the human being. In Varavara Rao's writing, compassion never shouts. Anger does not turn into violence. It settles instead like a certainty. Here, literature is not mere ornamentation; it is a repository of memory-an attempt to ensure that memory is not forgotten. Forgetting an individual may be forgivable; but how do we forget an era?

This is what Sahacharulu tells us: the people around us, those who walk with us, those who speak with us, will one day turn into history. Here, "companions" are not merely those who walked beside us. They are those who carried the same dream on their shoulders, who hid the same fear in their throats, who shared the same silence through long nights.

V.V.'s poetry is not a verse that lies quietly asleep on the page. It is a sleepless night, an alert road. There is no ornamentation in his poetry-after all, what use is ornament to the hungry?

What remains here is a shattered life, betrayed labour, and a hope that keeps walking.

V.V.'s words are never flowers. They are a row of wounds. They wake a sleeping society like a blaring alarm. In his poetry, the poor person's voice does not learn grammar. Even love here is not floral. Love is a hand placed on a comrade's shoulder; a letter written on a prison wall. Speaking of prison walls, one is reminded of the Malayalam writer Vaikom Muhammad Basheer's story Mathilukal, and the film based on it by Adoor Gopalakrishnan, with Mammootty in the lead. In Sahacharulu, V.V. only questions. A poem that does not

ries into collective consciousness.

Varavara Rao's language here too privileges honesty over ornamentation, anguish over rage. He does not portray anyone as heroic giants, nor does he hide their weaknesses. That is precisely what lends this book its profound credibility. Reading Sahacharulu, one clearly understands that a movement is not merely a collection of slogans. It is a commitment that stands firm on its goal despite complexities in human relationships-contradictions, conflicts, disagreements, pauses.

After reading Sahacharulu, one feels that the histories of many movements in this country

Varala Anand



Poet, Film Critic & Recipient of Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award for Translation

question is not poetry at all in his work. Personal anguish in his writing resonates as a collective wound. That is why reading V.V.'s poetry is not merely a literary experience; it is a responsibility. The poem does not end with his writing; it begins within us.

Sahacharulu is not simply a compilation of personal memories written by Varavara Rao. It is a living history of a movement's time, a human garland of a generation's resistance. The companions who appear in this book are not just individuals; they are symbols of an era, embodiments of political and cultural consciousness.

This work emerges from V.V.'s emotional and political responsibility toward those who walked alongside him in the movement. While introducing each companion, Varavara Rao focuses not on their private lives but on their political positions, social roles, and sacrifices. Here, a "companion" does not mean a friend. He is someone who believed in the same dream, shared the same danger, endured the same confinement. That is why these companions transform from personal memo-

ries into collective consciousness. should be measured not by names of individuals, but by their sacrifices. The language in Varavara Rao's writing does not scream. It is like a shadow cast on a prison wall, like an old wound no one notices. He neither entertains nor decorates with his sentences. He writes them and leaves them to truth. That is why, while reading, there are moments when one must stop and sit silently. I did exactly that.

When the book ends, it does not feel finished. A certain weight enters our thoughts, our minds, our walk. A portion of history settles into our silence. Only then do we realize that this book is not about companions-it is about us. About all of us. The question we must ask ourselves is how far we have stood as companions to our own time. Socially, this book is a poetic history.

A poet does not merely describe his time; he asks the questions his time is afraid to ask.

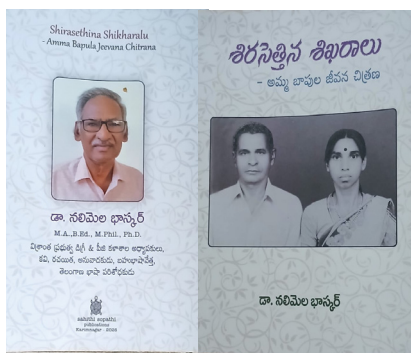
And though his poetry may arise from a particular moment in history, its deepest and most enduring subject remains the human being.

When Ordinary Lives Become Timeless Literature

A Literary Monument to Parenthood and Rural Telangana

Some books entertain the mind. Some touch the heart. A rare few reshape our understanding of life itself. Shirasethina Shikharalu, a Telugu Book belongs unmistakably to the last category. More than a memoir, it is an eloquent tribute to parents, a celebration of the teaching profession and a profound meditation on gratitude, integrity, compassion and the enduring values of rural Telangana.

Published in Ashada 2026 by Sahiti Sopathi Telangana, this 112-page volume is modest in size yet immense in emotional and literary depth. Every chapter transcends personal remembrance to become a lesson in humanity. What appears to be the story of one family gradually unfolds as the collective memory of an entire generation. Born in 1956 at Narayanapur, Ellareddypet Mandal, present-day Rajanna Sircilla District, to Sri Ramachandram and Smt Bucchamma, Dr Nalimela Bhaskar is a distinguished multilingual scholar, translator, researcher and retired college lecturer. His literary journey, enriched by more than forty five books, including fifteen translations, reflects a lifelong commitment to language and culture. Recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Translation Award, the Kaloji Award and numerous other honours, including My Gift Sahitee Puraskaram, he remains one of the most respected literary voices in contemporary Telugu letters. Yet, among his many achievements, this book reveals his most cherished identity: that of a grateful son. The emotional heart of the book is Bucchamma. She is portrayed not merely as a mother but as the quiet architect of an entire family's future. Rising before dawn, gently awakening her son with the affectionate advice that lessons learnt early in the morning remain forever in the mind, she transforms everyday motherhood into a sacred vocation. Her discipline, immaculate housekeeping, affectionate care, culinary skill, silent sacrifices and unwavering devotion illuminate every page. Dr Bhaskar does not simply remember his mother; he immortalises the invisible strength that sustains every



loving home. Through Bucchamma, motherhood itself becomes literature. Standing beside her is Ramachandram, an exemplary teacher whose life embodies honesty, discipline, humility, and unwavering dedication. Crossing streams, forests, flooded paths, and difficult terrain merely to reach his school, he never allowed hardship to interfere with his responsibility toward his students. His life reminds us that teaching is not merely a profession but a moral commitment to society. His uncompromising dedication to his children's education forms one of the strongest pillars of the narrative. Despite financial limitations, he refused to compromise on their schooling, careers, or future. Equally inspiring is the family's commitment to ethical living, reflected in the author's own rejection of dowry and the responsible fulfilment of family obligations with dignity and compassion.

Several episodes remain unforgettable. Ramachandram's courage while serving alone in remote Lambadi settlements recalls the vigilance of a soldier guarding the nation's frontier. His lifelong refusal to accept corruption silently teaches that integrity remains the noblest form of public service. Beyond family relationships, the narrative celebrates humanity's intimate bond with nature. Forests are not merely landscapes but living companions deserving reverence and protection. The emotional bond between people and animals, especially the grief surrounding the loss of a

buffalo calf, reflects a civilisation that regarded all living beings as members of one extended family. Such passages preserve a disappearing world of compassion and ecological harmony.

The recollections of village life, extended families, neighbours, festivals, kinship and the warmth of Telangana's rural communities transform the book into an invaluable social document. Personal memories become collective history, preserving the moral imagination of an era built upon simplicity, trust, gratitude and mutual affection. Dr. Bhaskar's prose is distinguished by remarkable restraint. He neither sentimentalises the past nor glorifies suffering. Instead, he transforms lived experience into enduring literature, allowing deeply personal memories to resonate as universal human truths. His elegant use of Telangana idiom lends authenticity while preserving literary dignity. That artistic balance between memory and literature gives the work its lasting significance.

Even after health challenges following laser eye treatment, the author's unwavering dedication to literature and translation reflects the spirit of a true literary pilgrim. His own life becomes an extension of the very values celebrated throughout this work.

Ultimately, Dr. Nalimela Bhaskar has achieved something extraordinary. He has not merely preserved the memory of his parents; he has transformed their ordinary lives into timeless literature. Bucchamma emerges as the summit of motherhood. Ramachandram stands as the summit of integrity, education, and selfless service. Between these two towering peaks stands the author himself, shaped by their values and preserving them for generations yet to come.



Dr Peruka Raju

Author & Literary Critic

By the final page, it becomes evident that Shirasethina Shikharalu is not written solely for the author's parents. It is written for every mother whose sacrifices remained unspoken, every father whose silent struggles shaped a family's future, every teacher who transformed lives without seeking recognition, every family that cherishes values and every reader who believes that humanity remains our greatest inheritance.

Verdict

Few books possess the rare ability to preserve both memory and morality with equal grace. Shirasethina Shikharalu achieves precisely that. What begins as a son's affectionate remembrance gradually unfolds into a profound meditation on parenthood, education, integrity, gratitude, and the quiet heroism of ordinary lives.

This is not merely a memoir. It is a literary archive of values. It is not simply the story of one family; it is the moral biography of an entire generation. To read Shirasethina Shikharalu is to honour a mother, salute a father, remember a teacher, rediscover the soul of rural Telangana and reaffirm the timeless virtues that define our civilisation.

In an age increasingly measured by achievement, speed and material success, this remarkable work gently reminds us that the highest peaks of human civilisation are neither wealth nor fame, but gratitude, integrity, compassion and remembrance. For its literary sincerity, emotional authenticity, cultural richness and profound humanism, Shirasethina Shikharalu deserves a distinguished place in contemporary Telugu literature. It is a book to be read, remembered, revisited and cherished.

Casket, full of dreams

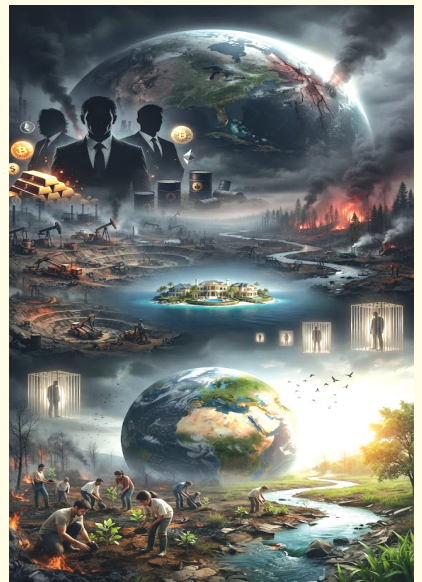


Dream, daughter of night,
Solace the troubled soul
Comforting through piles of broken images
Each droplet of foggy dream slips on a window pane
Silky & slippery
Prothling & floating
They have no script
Nor screenplay
Nurturing the oblivion
They push me into bliss
Haunting with tinted streamers
Dreams, Oh! they cut through life
as if they define Life and Love
Tales upon tales, piling for ever
Tales on wings, tales coloured with feathers
as delicate as balloons, as frail as airships
Self pricking all of a sudden
Self annihilating as fog....
Dying, dying and phoenix again
They are there in words and letters too
Its all about you
It gets the same story
Story of Life and Love
Let me....wait!
wait for the fulfilled dream!
Life asks for Love.....

Dr Srinivas Vasudev,
Academic Director,
Krishnaveni Talent School, Hyderabad
Ph : 9991991363



The Dark Greed



Perhaps the earth itself regrets the load
Of uncanny people with untidy deeds
A day comes when it dooms into dark
Unable to clear the inhuman dark
Filthy Islands bought by the rich
As abodes of luxury, as circles of perversion
Young girls are gifted, bodies are grilled
Lynching and munching as animals of lust
Every oil mine becomes a funeral pyre
With their thirst for wealth, earth to ashes
Turn the forests into deserts of death
Hurriedly digging their own graves
Gold, crypto, dollar -or the blood of the poor
If you ever feel disgusted with yourselves
Buy the moon and settle there
And leave this earth to us
We shall wash away your pus and blood
We shall weed out the sins of greed
We shall sow a few seeds of peace
We shall make this earth smile again!

Manivadan Vajja
Librarian, KV Waltair
9010357185



Palanquin of My Heart

There are plenty of leaves
But, flowers are precious.
There are many days spent in happiness
But, the days spent with my son are precious.
Two dearest days of life
One, when my mother brought me in
Two, when I brought them in.
The soft cheeks, turned rough
The soft voice, turned hoarse
The soft touch, turned blunt
Yet, the feelings are tender,
which linger in his name.
Love makes someone fragile.
These are those fragile moments.
I miss you beyond words or expressions.
Not that I glorified this day all the years.
But, you sit in the palanquin of my heart.
I always feel light in weighing your weight.
Today, this distance doubled your weight,
Making my heart heavier.



B Suneela Jyotsna
TGT English
KV Waltair
suneela.jyo@gmail.com



Railways Runs First Double-Stack Long-Haul Train

Mumbai: Indian Railways has achieved a significant operational milestone by successfully running its first double-stack long-haul container train on the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC), carrying 360 TEUs from Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT), Mumbai, to the CONCOR GCT terminal at Varnama in the Vadodara division. The train covered approximately 422 kilometres after departing JNPT at 7 pm on August 21, 2026. The long-haul service was formed by combining two double-stack container rakes, enabling a large volume of cargo to be transported in a single train movement. Each rake carried 45+1 containers. The leading rake operated with locomotive number 60311 and weighed 1,817 tonnes, while the rear rake was hauled by locomotive number 24690 and weighed 2,105 tonnes. Together, the two rakes carried a total of 360 TEUs, with the combined train weight reaching 3,922 tonnes. The operation demonstrates Indian Railways' growing capability to handle high-volume containerised freight effi-

ciently over dedicated freight routes. The double-stack long-haul configuration allows substantially more cargo to be moved in a single journey compared with conventional freight services. Such trains can also help reduce congestion at ports and freight terminals by moving larger quantities of containers in fewer train movements. Faster evacuation of containers can improve terminal efficiency and reduce the time cargo spends waiting for onward transportation. The initiative is also expected to improve utilisation of railway infrastructure and reduce the requirement for locomotives and container flat wagons for transporting equivalent volumes of freight. Fewer train movements can allow available corridor capacity to be used more efficiently. Another major advantage is the potential reduction in freight transit time. By carrying a greater quantity of cargo in a single long-haul service, Indian Railways can support faster movement of containers from JNPT and other freight terminals to their destinations. The service also highlights the environ-



mental benefits of shifting freight from road to rail. Since the train is electrically hauled, greater use of rail freight can reduce dependence on diesel-powered trucks. Moving large quantities of cargo

in a single double-stack train can help lower diesel consumption, road congestion and vehicular emissions. The successful operation marks another



step towards strengthening India's dedicated freight infrastructure and promoting efficient, high-capacity and sustainable freight transportation across the country.

Agartala Flooded as Haora River Crosses Danger Mark



Agartala: Several parts of Tripura's capital Agartala were inundated after the Haora River crossed the danger level following heavy overnight rainfall, prompting authorities to step up rescue and evacuation operations in low-lying areas. Floodwaters entered homes in the Chandrapur-Baldakhal area late Saturday night as the river rose sharply, forcing residents to leave with essential belongings. Jirania Sub-Divisional Magistrate Animesh Dhar said vulnerable residents, including a three-day-old baby, a disabled person and a stroke patient, were among those evacuated from the Baldakhal area. "Sudden heavy rainfall last night caused river levels to rise, forcing residents to evacuate with their belongings as water entered their homes," Dhar said. Rescue teams continued to assist people stranded in inundated locations, while the administration opened four relief shelters in Mandai, Old Agartala, Chandrapur and Ranirbazar under Jirania subdivision. Several displaced residents have already taken shelter at facilities in Mandai and Old Agartala. The other relief centres remained available for families requiring emergency accommodation. Civil Defence personnel, scouts, teams from the Tripura State Rifles' 10th and 2nd Battalions, and personnel from the State Disaster Response Force have been deployed for rescue and relief operations. Five boats are currently being used to evacuate residents and transport essential supplies, while another boat has been kept on standby. Authorities said there were no reports of major casualties or extensive damage so far. A detailed assessment of the situation will be undertaken after floodwaters recede and affected areas become accessible. The administration has also arranged essential supplies, including food and milk for children, for families affected by the flooding. Although rainfall has stopped and weather conditions have improved, officials said the Haora River remained close to the danger mark, keeping the administration on alert. Dhar said rescue operations would continue until water levels begin to fall and conditions return to normal. Officials are also monitoring vulnerable areas and remaining prepared to shift additional residents to relief shelters if the situation worsens. The exact number of people evacuated could not immediately be confirmed, as residents were continuing to move between affected areas and safer locations. Authorities urged people in low-lying zones to remain cautious and cooperate with rescue teams.

Air India Express Flight Delayed 5 Hours

Ranchi: An Air India Express flight from Ranchi to Bengaluru was delayed by around five hours on Sunday after the airline had to arrange fresh oxygen cylinders following a passenger's medical emergency on the incoming flight, an airport official said. Air India Express flight IX 1239 arrived at Birsa Munda Airport in Ranchi from Bengaluru at around 8:55 am. During the journey, a passenger reportedly experienced breathing difficulties and was provided oxygen on board. The passenger was stable after landing and subsequently left the airport for home, according to officials. However, the incident led to a delay in the aircraft's return journey to Bengaluru. The airline needed to replenish its oxygen cylinder supply and arranged additional cylinders from New Delhi, which were then transported to Ranchi. Airport Director Vinod Kumar Singh said the Bengaluru-bound return flight, IX 1244, eventually departed at around 1:51 pm, approximately five hours after the aircraft's arrival. "The flight number IX 1239 of Air India Express arrived here around 8.55 am. The return flight IX 1244 departed about five hours late for Bengaluru with passengers from Ranchi around 13:51 after oxygen cylinders were arranged from Delhi and brought here," Singh said. The delay affected passengers scheduled to travel from Ranchi to Bengaluru, who had to wait at the airport while the required medical equipment was arranged. Officials did not report any further medical emergency involving passengers at the Ranchi airport. The passenger who had required oxygen during the incoming flight was said to have remained stable. The incident highlights the operational challenges airlines can face when medical emergencies occur during flights, particularly when essential medical supplies need to be replenished before an aircraft can operate its next sector. Airlines routinely carry emergency medical equipment on board, including oxygen supplies, to assist passengers who develop breathing difficulties or other medical conditions during a flight. In this case, additional cylinders had to be brought in before the aircraft could depart for its next destination. The flight ultimately resumed its journey to Bengaluru after the oxygen cylinders arrived from Delhi, bringing the disruption to an end.



The Railway Passenger : A Source of Revenue, or a Citizen to Be Served?

Thousands of Crores for Station Modernisation, but Basic Passenger Facilities Still Neglected New railway station buildings are coming up across the country, with modern facades, foot-over bridges, escalators, lifts and spacious concourses. The government highlights these as symbols of railway modernisation. But for an ordinary passenger, the first requirements are much simpler: safe drinking water, clean toilets, adequate seating and shelter from the sun and rain. These are basic facilities, yet they remain inadequate at many stations. This is not merely a passenger complaint. The latest report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has highlighted the same concern. According to the CAG report tabled in Parliament in last week, an audit of 512 non-suburban railway stations across 16 railway zones found deficiencies in one or more basic passenger amenities at 458 stations—more than 89 per cent. Shortcomings included drinking water, seating, toilets, platform shelters, fans, water coolers and signboards. More worrying is that the problem is not confined to small or low-traffic stations. Even stations in the NSG-1 to NSG-3 categories, which handle significant passenger traffic and generate substantial revenue, were found lacking basic amenities. This suggests that the problem cannot simply be attributed to low passenger numbers or the small size of a station. Water Available, But Not Fit to Drink? The most disturbing finding concerns drinking water. The CAG report found E. coli bacteria in samples collected from water coolers at some railway stations. This is far more serious than an ordinary maintenance failure. When passengers depend on railway stations for drinking water, contamination becomes a direct public health concern. E. coli can cause gas-



trointestinal illnesses, including diarrhoea and, in severe cases, serious infections. Railway stations are places where passengers may have to wait for hours. Families travel with children, women and elderly people. Ensuring safe drinking water in such public spaces should therefore be treated as a basic responsibility, not an optional facility. The finding also raises a larger question: What exactly do we mean by railway infrastructure? Is modern infrastructure only about impressive buildings and sophisticated equipment, or does it also include the basic services that passengers depend on every day? This is not a new problem. Another important point is that the CAG has not identified these deficiencies for the first time. Earlier audit reports had raised similar concerns. A CAG report released in 2016 had also pointed to shortcomings in passenger amenities, including clean toilets, platform shelters and facilities for persons with disabilities. If similar deficiencies continue to appear a decade later, the question is no longer simply why these problems exist. The more important question is: Why were

they not adequately addressed despite being highlighted earlier? Modernisation should not merely change the appearance of railway stations. It should improve the everyday experience of passengers. The Passenger Is More Than a Revenue



Chennu Peddiraju

Senior Journalist

Source For Indian Railways, the passenger is not merely someone who purchases a ticket. The passenger is at the centre of the railway system itself. Technology-driven improvements are certainly welcome. IRCTC is introducing a new website designed to increase ticket-booking capacity substantially, while artificial intelligence is also being introduced to help passengers assess the likelihood of wait-listed tickets being confirmed. Such innovations can make railway travel more convenient. New trains, faster services,

sands of crores are being spent on station redevelopment. It is how much priority is being given to the basic needs of passengers within that expenditure. A railway station is not merely a building. It is a public space that serves millions of people every day. Its appearance matters—but it is secondary. The first question is much simpler: Does the passenger receive basic dignity, safety and comfort? The CAG report has once again placed that question before the country. Now, the Railways must provide the answer.

Jharkhand Job Protests: 3 FIRs, 928 Booked



Ranchi: Three FIRs have been registered against 28 named individuals and more than 900 unidentified people following clashes between police and job aspirants protesting alleged irregularities in recruitment examinations in Jharkhand's Giridih and Hazaribag, officials said on Sunday. The cases were filed a day after three FIRs were registered at Ranchi's Kotwali police station against 14 named individuals and 200 unidentified people. The Ranchi cases relate to allegations of obstructing government work and clashing with police during protests by recruitment exam aspirants. In Giridih, two FIRs were registered at the Town police station in connection with incidents reported on Friday and Saturday. Another FIR was lodged in Hazaribag, where protesters have been accused of obstructing government work and assaulting police personnel. The latest cases follow demonstrations by thousands of students over alleged irregularities in Jharkhand's recruitment examinations. On Friday, a large number of job aspirants gathered at Gandhi Maidan in Giridih, where they planned to burn an effigy of Chief Minister Hemant Soren. The protest reportedly turned tense when police intervened, leading to a scuffle between the protesters and security personnel. Officials said the clashes resulted in cases being registered against individuals accused of unlawful activities and interference with government duties. The protests have highlighted growing frustration among job aspirants over recruitment procedures and alleged discrepancies in examinations. Students have been demanding transparency and corrective action from the state authorities. The FIRs in Giridih and Hazaribag add to the legal action already initiated in Ranchi, taking the number of named individuals booked across the three locations to at least 42, apart from more than 1,100 unidentified people. Police officials are expected to examine video footage and other evidence to identify those allegedly involved in violence, obstruction and attacks on personnel. Further action will depend on the findings of the investigations. The protests come amid continuing pressure on the Jharkhand government to address concerns raised by aspirants seeking jobs through state recruitment examinations. Student groups have repeatedly called for fair and transparent recruitment processes and swift resolution of complaints. Authorities have maintained that law and order must be preserved during demonstrations, while protesters have insisted that their concerns over recruitment irregularities be addressed. The investigations into the three latest FIRs are underway.

8.23 Lakh Central Government Posts Vacant



Bhopal: More than 8.23 lakh sanctioned posts were lying vacant across central government civilian establishments as of March 1, 2024, highlighting a major workforce gap at a time when government employment remains a key aspiration for millions of young Indians. The figures emerged through an RTI response obtained by Neemuch-based activist Chandra Shekhar Gaur. According to the Department of Expenditure's Pay Research Unit, 30,99,556 employees were in position against a sanctioned strength of 39,23,212, leaving 8,23,656 vacancies. This means roughly 21 per cent of the sanctioned civilian workforce was unoccupied. "These figures are worrying at a time of rising unemployment. Government jobs are the right of the youth. The government should begin the process of filling these vacant posts on the highest priority," Gaur said. The largest gaps were reported in the Defence Ministry's civilian establishment and the Railways. Defence had 5,56,248 sanctioned posts but only 3,14,005 employees, leaving 2,42,243 vacancies, or about 43.5 per cent of its sanctioned strength. These figures concern civilian defence employees and do not represent vacancies in the armed forces. The Railways had 14,79,701 sanctioned positions, with 12,39,576 employees in place. Its 2,40,125 vacancies accounted for nearly 30 per cent of the total gap. The Ministry of Home Affairs had 11,18,233 sanctioned posts against 10,07,348 employees, leaving 1,10,885 vacancies. Together, civilian defence establishments, Railways and Home Affairs accounted for nearly 5.93 lakh vacancies. Several other departments also reported substantial shortages. The Department of Posts had 61,546 vacancies, while the Department of Revenue had 69,662 unfilled positions, equivalent to nearly 39 per cent of its sanctioned strength. Significant proportional gaps were also recorded in specialised departments. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying had 1,378 vacancies out of 2,393 sanctioned posts, leaving nearly 58 per cent unfilled. AYUSH had 233 vacancies out of 432 posts, while the Department of Health Research had 34 vacancies among 62 sanctioned positions. The Ministry of Labour and Employment had more than 41 per cent of its sanctioned posts vacant. Environment, Forest and Climate Change had around 38 per cent vacancies, while the Department of Higher Education had nearly 37 per cent. Strategic establishments were not immune either. The Department of Atomic Energy had 10,234 vacancies, while the Department of Space had 4,126. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology reported 1,681 vacancies. The RTI response provides a snapshot of sanctioned and occupied civilian posts and does not include vacancies in public sector banks or public sector undertakings. The data has renewed attention on the need to accelerate recruitment to strengthen government services while creating employment opportunities.

Hyundai, IIT-M Launch Cancer Aid Programme

Chennai: Children from economically disadvantaged families undergoing cancer treatment can now seek financial assistance under the Hyundai Hope for Cancer programme launched by the Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF) in partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M). The initiative has opened an online nomination facility through which treating doctors, hospitals, parents, caregivers, NGOs and social organisations can refer eligible children for financial support from its Cancer Care Fund. Applications can be submitted through the programme's online portal. Treating physicians can nominate patients by providing the required medical records and completing the patient nomination form. The programme is aimed at helping families struggling to meet the cost of paediatric cancer treatment, particularly those from economically weaker sections.



Through financial assistance, the initiative seeks to reduce the burden on families and help eligible children continue their treatment. Prof. S. Mahalingam of the Department of Biotechnology at IIT-M, who is spearheading the initiative, said the programme was intended to reach families across

India who may not be aware of the financial assistance available to them. Under the programme, eligible paediatric cancer patients will receive treatment support subject to the prescribed eligibility criteria, documentation requirements and review process. The initiative also seeks to expand

awareness about available assistance by allowing multiple stakeholders, including hospitals, doctors, caregivers and non-governmental organisations, to identify and nominate children who require financial support. The opening of the online nomination facility is expected to make the assistance programme more accessible to families in different parts of the country. By involving treating doctors and hospitals in the nomination process, the programme can also facilitate the submission of relevant medical information required for reviewing applications. Hyundai Hope for Cancer is part of efforts by HMIF and IIT-M to support children battling cancer while assisting families facing financial challenges during prolonged treatment. The programme encourages eligible families and organisations working with paediatric cancer patients to use the online nomination facility and seek support from the Cancer Care Fund.

Sebi Proposes Tighter Ad Curbs for Online Bond Platforms



New Delhi: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has proposed tighter advertising rules for online bond platform providers (OBPPs), seeking to prevent promotional campaigns from influencing investors to make decisions without adequate due diligence. The proposed revised advertisement code, outlined in a consultation paper issued on Friday, aims to address the growing use of digital advertising, social media and influencer-led promotions by online bond platforms. Under the proposed framework, OBPPs would face restrictions on advertisements that create a sense of urgency or use behavioural prompts and fear-of-missing-out (FOMO) messaging. Sebi said such promotional strategies could encourage investors to act hastily without properly assessing the risks associated with debt securities. For advertisements featuring specific securities, platforms would be required to provide standardised information. This would include details such as the issuer, tenor, credit rating, nature of the security, clean and dirty prices, yield to maturity and the Credit Risk-o-meter. The regulator has also proposed stricter guidelines on the use of phrases such as "fixed returns", "predictable returns" and "passive income". Such descriptions would have to be presented in a manner that does not give investors the impression that returns are assured. Advertisements using the term "fixed returns" would be required to carry a prominent disclaimer clarifying that fixed returns are not guaranteed. The disclaimer would also highlight that investments in debt securities are subject to market, credit and default risks. Sebi has further proposed curbs on vague promotional claims, including "high yield", "high rated" and "high returns", unless such claims are adequately supported by relevant information. The proposed advertisement code is intended to operate alongside the common advertisement code applicable to specified entities regulated by Sebi. The regulator has invited comments and feedback from stakeholders on the consultation paper until September 11. The proposals come as online bond platforms increasingly use digital channels to reach retail investors, making clearer and more balanced disclosures important for informed investment decisions. Sebi's proposed measures are aimed at ensuring that promotional communication remains factual and transparent while reducing the possibility of investors being influenced by aggressive marketing tactics.

Tesla, Chinese EV Makers Recall 4 Million Cars



Hong Kong: Tesla and several Chinese electric vehicle makers are recalling more than four million vehicles in China over safety concerns involving electronic door handles, according to officials. Tesla alone is recalling around 2.98 million vehicles, including the Model 3, Model Y, Model X and Model S. Chinese EV manufacturers Xiaomi and Leapmotor are also recalling hundreds of thousands of vehicles, while Geely and XPeng are recalling selected electric vehicle models. The recalls are linked to concerns over hidden or flush electronic door handles increasingly used in modern vehicles. Unlike conventional mechanical handles, these systems rely partly on the vehicle's electrical system to operate. The technology has become increasingly popular among EV manufacturers because it provides vehicles with a sleek exterior design and can also help improve aerodynamic efficiency. However, safety concerns have emerged over the ability of such handles to function after a serious accident or electrical failure. In the event of a major road crash, damage to a vehicle's electrical system could prevent electronic door handles from operating normally. This could leave passengers trapped inside the vehicle and make it difficult for emergency responders to open the doors from outside. Xiaomi is reportedly recalling around 390,000 vehicles, while Leapmotor is recalling approximately 370,000 cars. Geely and XPeng have also announced recalls covering certain EV models as authorities increase scrutiny of the safety implications of electronically operated door systems. Tesla is expected to address the issue in affected vehicles through dedicated software updates. The updates are intended to improve the operation of the door systems and reduce the potential safety risks during emergency situations. The large-scale recalls come as Chinese authorities prepare to introduce stricter safety requirements for vehicle door handles. China has already indicated that hidden car door handles will be prohibited in new vehicles from 2027. The upcoming restrictions are aimed at improving passenger safety and ensuring that vehicle doors can be opened reliably during emergencies, particularly when a car's electrical systems have been damaged. The recall campaign is therefore being viewed as an effort to upgrade safety systems in existing vehicle models before the new regulations take effect. It also highlights the challenges facing automakers as they increasingly replace conventional mechanical components with electronically controlled technologies. For EV manufacturers, the issue could lead to additional costs related to recalls, software upgrades and compliance with evolving safety standards. At the same time, the regulatory push could influence future vehicle designs as automakers reassess the balance between innovative styling, aerodynamic efficiency and emergency accessibility. The recalls underline the growing importance of safety testing for advanced vehicle technologies as electric and software-driven cars become increasingly common in the Chinese automobile market.

India's Alternative Assets Market May Hit \$2tn by 2034

New Delhi: India's alternative investment market could grow more than five-fold to exceed \$2 trillion by 2034, driven by rising participation from high-net-worth individuals, family offices and investors seeking higher-yielding assets beyond traditional investments, according to a report by EY and Julius Baer. The report highlights the growing importance of alternative assets as Indian investors increasingly diversify their portfolios across private markets and emerging investment opportunities. The market, currently estimated at around \$400 billion, is projected to expand significantly over the next decade as wealth creation accelerates and investors seek new avenues for long-term returns. Family offices are emerging as a major force behind the expansion of India's private capital ecosystem. According to the report, these investment entities are increasingly using their sector expertise, networks and long-term investment horizons to support emerging businesses and new ventures.

"Family offices have emerged as one of the most transformative forces shaping India's private capital ecosystem," the report said. Their investment strategies are also expanding beyond conventional asset classes. Family offices and wealthy investors are increasingly exploring opportunities in technology, renewable energy and other high-growth sectors. Such investments allow them to gain exposure to businesses with strong long-term growth potential while diversifying away from traditional public market assets. The growing appetite for alternative investments is also being supported by demand for assets that have lower correlation with traditional investments such as listed equities and bonds. Investors are increasingly looking at private equity, venture capital, private credit, real estate and other alternative opportunities as part of broader wealth management strategies. The report suggests that India's expanding pool of wealthy investors will remain an impor-



tant catalyst for the alternative investment industry. As family wealth increases and younger generations become more involved in investment decisions, demand for sophisticated private-market opportunities is expected to rise. Family offices are also playing a greater role in backing innovative companies and entrepreneurs, leveraging their long-term approach to participate in emerg-

ing sectors. The projected rise from around \$400 billion to more than \$2 trillion by 2034 underlines the rapid transformation of India's investment landscape. The trend could create significant opportunities for asset managers, private-market firms and businesses seeking long-term capital, while further strengthening India's position as a growing destination for alternative investments.

India Boosts Venezuela Oil Imports

New Delhi: India has significantly increased crude oil imports from Venezuela amid growing concerns over supply disruptions linked to tensions between the United States and Iran and potential disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz, according to Kpler shipping data. Venezuelan crude shipments to India are estimated to have reached around 444,000 barrels per day in August, making the South American country India's fourth-largest oil supplier. Venezuela has overtaken Iraq and the United States, whose supplies stood at around 118,000 barrels per day and 153,000 barrels per day, respectively, during the month. India resumed significant crude imports from Venezuela in April, and the country's position among India's oil suppliers has risen rapidly since then. Indian refiners have increased purchases from Venezuela, Brazil and African producers as supply disruptions and geopolitical uncertainties have affected shipments from West Asia. At the same time, India continues to rely heavily on Russian crude. Russia remained the country's largest oil supplier in August, with shipments estimated at nearly 2



million barrels per day. Russian crude imports had reached around 2.6 million barrels per day in June and July, accounting for more than half of India's total crude oil consumption. The diversification of suppliers is increasingly becoming an important part of India's energy security strategy. With tensions in the Middle East raising concerns over shipping routes and crude availability, refiners are seeking supplies from geographically diverse markets to reduce their exposure

to disruptions in any single region. Kpler Senior Manager Sumit Ritolia said India was simultaneously pursuing several strategies, including increasing domestic production as far as possible, diversifying overseas crude suppliers and transportation routes, developing strategic and commercial reserves, and accelerating alternatives such as natural gas, biofuels, electric vehicles and renewable energy. However, shifting to suppliers

located farther from India comes with additional costs. Venezuela, West Africa and other Latin American producers are geographically farther from India than Gulf suppliers. Longer shipping distances can increase transportation, insurance and other logistics expenses for Indian refiners. According to Ritolia, alternative sources can provide India with some protection against supply disruptions caused by geopolitical tensions, but they could also increase the country's overall oil import bill. India imports the bulk of its crude oil requirements, making the country particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in global crude prices, freight costs and geopolitical disruptions. The latest increase in Venezuelan supplies reflects New Delhi's broader effort to strengthen energy security by maintaining access to crude from multiple regions. The diversification could help Indian refiners maintain steady supplies during periods of disruption, although higher logistics and insurance costs may limit the economic benefits of sourcing crude from distant markets.

Gemini Edibles Files Draft IPO Papers With Sebi

Hyderabad: Hyderabad-based Gemini Edibles and Fats India Ltd (GEF), the company behind popular brands including Freedom, Be-Rite, First Klass and Sri Kripa, has filed draft papers with market regulator Sebi to raise funds through an initial public offering (IPO). The proposed IPO will be entirely an Offer for Sale (OFS), meaning the company itself will not receive any proceeds from the issue. Instead, the money raised will go to the existing shareholders selling their stakes. Promoters Alka Chaudhary and Golden Agri International Enterprises Pte Ltd, along with investment firms Black River Food 2 Pte Ltd and Investment and Commercial Enterprise Pte Ltd, are proposing to sell up to 4.11 crore equity shares through the OFS. Following the proposed IPO, GEF's

shares are expected to be listed on both the BSE and NSE. Motilal Oswal Investment Advisors and IIFL Capital Services have been appointed as the book-running lead managers for the issue. The IPO will provide existing investors and promoters with an opportunity to monetise part of their holdings while giving public-market investors an opportunity to participate in the growth of the edible oils business. GEF has established a strong presence in India's branded edible oil market and is the country's largest player in the branded sunflower oil segment by sales. The company held an estimated 18% market share by revenue in 2025-26, highlighting its position in the highly competitive edible oils industry. The company has built a wide distribution network across India, with more than 1,600 distributors,



around 300,000 retail outlets and approximately 60 warehouses and stock points. GEF has also reported strong revenue growth in recent years. Its revenue increased from Rs.10,755.95 crore in 2024-25 to around Rs.12,650 crore in 2025-26, reflecting continued expansion in its branded edible oils business. The company's key brands, particularly Freedom, have helped it

strengthen its presence across retail markets. The growth of organised and branded edible oil consumption in India has created opportunities for established players with extensive distribution networks. The proposed listing could also increase GEF's visibility among institutional and retail investors and provide a public-market valuation benchmark for the company. However, since the IPO consists entirely of an OFS, GEF will not receive fresh capital from the issue for business expansion, debt reduction or other corporate purposes. The proceeds will accrue to the existing shareholders participating in the offer. The final size, pricing and other details of the IPO will be determined at a later stage, subject to regulatory approvals and market conditions.

Mumbai Metro Names Ginger Cat 'Chief Feline Officer'

Mumbai's metro network has found an unlikely new member of its organisational hierarchy a ginger cat that has become a familiar and much-loved presence at Gundavali Metro station. The feline recently went viral after commuter Sandesh Samant photographed it sitting casually near the entrance of the station. Amused by the cat's regular presence, Samant tagged the Maha Mumbai Metro Operation Corporation Ltd (MMMOCL) on social media with a playful request to give the animal an official position.

"Dear Maha Mumbai Metro Operation Corporation Ltd, please give this pure soul of Gundavli Metro station an official position. It's working for free at the moment," Samant wrote. Rather than ignoring the unusual suggestion, MMOCL decided to join in on the fun. The metro operator humorously appointed the cat as its "Chief Feline Officer", giving the station regular a title worthy of a corporate executive. "That's our Chief Feline Officer," MMOCL said in its response. The organisation jokingly listed the cat's

responsibilities as "station inspections, commuter observation, and sitting exactly where everyone can admire them." The metro authority also added a feline-inspired assessment of its performance, declaring that so far, the cat's work had been "purrfect". The light-hearted exchange quickly attracted attention online, with commuters and social media users sharing their own experiences of encountering the cat at Gundavali station. One user said the feline had become such a familiar sight that they looked for it every

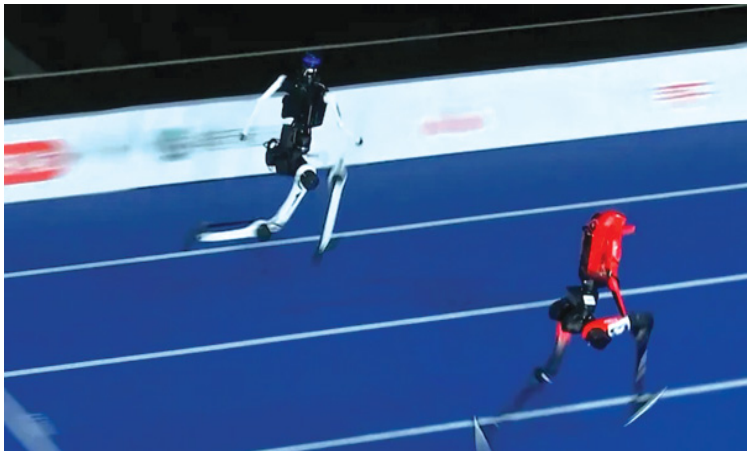
morning while travelling through the station. "I swear. Every morning at Gundavli, I look for it," the user commented. Another social media user proposed giving the cat a slightly different responsibility, joking that it should be appointed "Chief Mouse Catcher" from the day of its promotion. The playful interaction has turned the ginger cat into an unofficial mascot of the station, highlighting how animals can unexpectedly become part of the daily lives of commuters. While the "Chief Feline Officer" designation is clear-

ly a humorous one rather than a formal appointment, the cat appears to have earned something arguably more valuable - a loyal following among passengers who enjoy seeing it during their daily journeys. For now, the furry station regular can continue its duties of inspecting platforms, observing commuters and, most importantly, sitting exactly where it can attract maximum attention.



Chinese Humanoid Robot Runs 100m Faster Than Usain Bolt

A Chinese humanoid robot has made headlines after reportedly running 100 metres in 9.32 seconds, beating the long-standing human world record held by Jamaican sprinting legend Usain Bolt. The robot, named Lightning, was developed by Chinese smartphone maker Honor and clocked a remarkable time during a preparatory event ahead of the second World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing. China's state broadcaster reported that Lightning reached a peak speed of 14.5 metres per second during the run. Bolt's men's 100-metre world record stands at 9.58 seconds, set at the 2009 World Athletics Championships in Berlin. Lightning's reported time was therefore 0.26 seconds faster than the fastest official human mark. However, the comparison comes with an important distinction: Lightning is a machine, while Bolt's record was achieved by a human athlete under World Athletics competition rules. The robot's performance is therefore best viewed as a technological milestone rather than a new human athletics record. The achievement nevertheless highlights the rapid development of humanoid robotics in China. Beijing has identified humanoid



robots as a strategic emerging industry, with technology companies and policymakers investing heavily in artificial intelligence, robotics hardware and automation. Lightning has already demonstrated its capabilities over longer distances. In April, the robot reportedly completed the 21-kilometre Beijing half marathon in 50 minutes and 26 seconds, a time faster than the pace corresponding to the elite men's human world record. At the time, Lightning stood 169 centimetres tall and had legs measuring 95 centimetres. Researchers have since extended its legs by 10 centimetres to 1.05

metres, according to China Central Television, ahead of the World Humanoid Robot Games. The event in Beijing brings together humanoid robots competing in a range of challenges designed to showcase advances in robotics, mobility and artificial intelligence. Lightning's latest sprint has added another eye-catching chapter to the competition. While Usain Bolt remains the undisputed record-holder among humans, China's robotic sprinter has demonstrated just how quickly machines are evolving - raising intriguing questions about how far humanoid technology can eventually go.

Honda Engineer's Anime Hair Steals the Internet

A Honda engineer has unexpectedly become an internet sensation after his striking anime-inspired hairstyle caught the attention of social media users around the world. Shotaro Odate, a senior research and development engineer at Honda, recently appeared in a Honda R&D video explaining technology related to advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS). While the subject of the presentation was highly technical, viewers quickly became more interested in Odate's extraordinary hairstyle. His hair was styled into sharp, upward-pointing spikes that immediately reminded social media users of characters from popular anime and video game franchises. Many compared his appearance to the iconic Super Saiyan transformations from Dragon Ball, while others spotted similarities with characters from Naruto, Final Fantasy and Tekken. Odate was featured discussing efforts to improve ADAS technology using offset-corrected and adaptive grasp detection. The presentation focused on automotive safety and technology, but his distinctive look soon became the unexpected star of the clip. According to reports, Odate has an



impressive professional record to match his unusual appearance. He is credited with more than 250 patents connected to automotive safety technology, with some reports putting the figure at 253. His work reportedly includes innovations involving steering sensors, braking systems and intelligent seat belt technology. That combination of serious engineering expertise and an unmistakably anime-inspired appearance made him an instant hit online. Clips and images of Odate quickly

spread across platforms including X, TikTok and Instagram. Social media users embraced the comparison to fictional heroes, with some even jokingly describing him as a "real-life Goku". One user wrote, "Born to be a Final Fantasy character, forced to be an engineer." Another joked, "Bro got cut from Tekken and started working at Honda." "This guy is the literal anime engineer who every other engineer freaks out over when he walks into the room," another commenter said. A fourth user summed up the situation with a workplace-themed joke: "When you have a Final Fantasy cosplay party at 3 pm but gotta pitch that business presentation at 2 pm." The viral reaction highlights how an ordinary corporate technology video can unexpectedly become internet entertainment. Odate's hairstyle may have grabbed the headlines, but his extensive work in automotive safety suggests there is plenty of substance behind the striking appearance. For now, however, the Honda engineer appears to have earned an unofficial new title online: the anime hero of automotive engineering.

DeepSeek Tests New AI Model to Rival Anthropic's Opus 4.8

Chinese artificial intelligence company DeepSeek has unveiled an experimental multimodal AI model designed to compete with advanced systems from US-based rival Anthropic. The new model, called DeepSeek-V4-Flash-Vision-Exp, is an experimental version of the company's flagship text-focused V4 Flash model. Unlike the original text-only system, the new version can understand visual inputs such as images and screenshots and use that information to perform tasks. DeepSeek said the experimental model retains the text capabilities of V4 Flash, including reasoning, agentic functions and broad world knowledge. The company also claimed that its performance is "close to" Anthropic's advanced Opus 4.8 model in tests focused on multimodal agentic capabilities. Agentic AI systems are designed to go beyond simply answering questions. They can interpret information, plan actions and carry out tasks with limited human supervision, making them increasingly important in areas such as software development, research and workplace automation. DeepSeek has previously developed multimodal systems, including its DeepSeek-VL family of vision-language models. However,



the latest release brings image understanding and task execution into its most advanced V4 model series. The experimental model is currently available to users through DeepSeek's API, allowing developers to test its visual reasoning and agentic capabilities in applications. The announcement comes as Chinese and US technology companies intensify their competition in artificial intelligence. Chinese developers have increasingly sought to match the capabilities of leading US models while keeping development and operating costs comparatively low. DeepSeek has already disrupted expectations in the global AI industry with models that demon-

strated strong performance despite being developed with fewer resources than some leading US systems. Its emergence has intensified debate over the cost of building advanced AI and the advantages of open-weight models. The latest vision-enabled experiment signals that DeepSeek is now pushing beyond text-based AI and targeting increasingly sophisticated multimodal systems. If its performance claims hold up in broader independent testing, DeepSeek-V4-Flash-Vision-Exp could further strengthen the company's position in the rapidly evolving AI race - particularly in the growing market for models capable of seeing, reasoning and acting on behalf of users.

2-Hour Traffic, 9-Minute Airport Rush in Bengaluru

A Bengaluru traveller's airport journey has captured attention online after rain turned a routine trip from Indiranagar into a 2-hour-15-minute battle with traffic - only for the airport experience to be completed in just nine minutes. Nitin Sharma shared his experience on X, describing how rain-related congestion made his journey to Bengaluru airport painfully slow. What would normally be a straightforward trip became an exhausting ordeal as traffic crawled along the route. Sharma said the situation became so frustrating that, at one point, he felt he might miss his flight altogether. The journey from Indiranagar to the airport eventually took 2 hours and 15 minutes, with rain and traffic combining to create major delays. But the dramatic contrast began as soon as he entered the airport. According to Sharma, he needed only nine minutes to travel from the airport entrance to his departure gate. He credited DigiYatra and the airport's streamlined operations for making the final part of his journey exceptionally quick. Highlighting the irony, Sharma wrote, "Yet another day of life made bearable by world-class digital infrastructure in a city with third-rate physical infrastruc-



ture." His post struck a chord with other Bengaluru residents and travellers, many of whom said they had experienced similar struggles during rainy weather. "Had the same plight yesterday and barely made it to my flight! But after check-in, it was a breeze because of DigiYatra," one user commented. Another user offered a humorous take on the city's traffic woes, saying, "Bengaluru has reached the stage where your international journey doesn't begin at the airport." The incident highlights a curious contradiction in Bengaluru's trav-

el experience. Modern digital services can help passengers breeze through airport procedures, but getting to the airport can still be the biggest challenge. For Sharma, the numbers tell the entire story: 135 minutes stuck in rain-hit traffic, followed by just nine minutes inside the airport. The experience has once again sparked online debate about Bengaluru's traffic infrastructure and the need for better urban mobility solutions, particularly during the monsoon. For now, however, DigiYatra appears to have earned some praise - even if the roads leading to it did not.

'Having a Job Is Worth Appreciating': Woman's Reality Check

A woman's candid take on the current job market has sparked discussion online after she urged dissatisfied employees to appreciate having a job while millions of others struggle to secure one. Social media user Mridul Gupta shared a video on Instagram highlighting the difficulties faced by jobseekers amid layoffs, hiring freezes and intense competition for vacancies. Her message was aimed at people who regularly complain about their jobs but may not realise how difficult it can be to find another one in the current market. Gupta pointed to the experiences of jobseekers who are sending dozens or even hundreds of applications without receiving interview calls. She also highlighted what she described as a particularly difficult trend: experienced professionals being rejected for posi-

tions that are considered entry-level. "People are sending fifty, hundred, even two hundred applications per day and not hearing back," Gupta said. She added that people with years of professional experience are also facing rejection when applying for entry-level positions. Gupta acknowledged that disliking one's job is perfectly understandable. However, she argued that employees should consider their circumstances before assuming that finding a new opportunity will be easy. "If you hate your job, that's completely fine, a lot of people do," she said. "But before you spend your morning complaining about having to log in, remember, a lot of people out there are refreshing their inbox every second just to receive an interview invitation," she



added. Her central message was not that people should remain permanently stuck in jobs they dislike, but that employment itself can provide a degree of security in an uncertain labour market. "You don't have to love your job, but in a market like this, having one is still something to be grateful for," Gupta said. The video resonated with several social media users, with many agreeing that finding employment has

become increasingly difficult for professionals across different experience levels. One user simply commented, "So true." Another wrote, "Be grateful you have a chair in an office." A third user shared a personal experience, saying, "I was laid off from my job in Dubai." Gupta's remarks have opened up a broader conversation about workplace dissatisfaction and job security. While employees continue to seek better salaries, healthier workplaces and career growth, the uncertainty surrounding hiring has made voluntarily leaving a job a much more complicated decision. Her message ultimately offered a simple reality check: a job may not always be perfect, but during a difficult employment market, having one can be valuable in ways that are easy to overlook.



ARN MAHESH

Seventeen-year-old Vijayawada skater Kopparapu Kaivalya has created history by becoming the first Indian ice skater to compete in the ISU Junior Grand Prix of Figure Skating. Kaivalya represented India at the international ISU Figure Skating Junior Grand Prix held in Xi'an, China, from August 19 to 22. The prestigious competition featured skaters from 26 countries, giving the young Indian athlete an opportunity to compete against some of the best junior talents in the world. The event marked Kaivalya's second international ice skating championship. Earlier this month, from August 1 to 6, he represented India at the Asian Open Figure Skating Championships 2026 in Jakarta, gaining valuable international experience. Speaking about his journey, Kaivalya highlighted the challenges faced by Indian ice skaters due to a lack of infrastructure and professional coaching. He said countries such as Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia have around 40 indoor ice skating rinks collectively, providing athletes with regular practice and international-level training. In contrast, India currently has only one ice skating rink, in Dehradun, he said. Kaivalya also pointed out the shortage of specialised ice skating coaches in the country. He said he managed to reach the international level largely through online training videos and by drawing on his experience in roller skating. The teenager has already established himself as a successful roller skater, winning seven international medals and currently occupying 22nd place in the World Skate rankings. His achievements in both disciplines have made him the first Indian skater to compete at an international level in both roller and ice skating, according to his account.

Kaivalya Makes History in Ice Skating

Kaivalya said greater government support, financial assistance and the development of indoor ice skating rinks could help India produce world-class skaters. He added that he has so far funded his international participation largely from his own resources and has not received financial support despite seeking assistance. Financial constraints have also forced him to withdraw from some international competitions despite having the talent to participate. Kaivalya now has ambitious goals. He wants to win a gold medal for India at the World Championships in roller skating and eventually secure a gold medal in ice skating at the Winter Olympics. His journey, he said, is a reminder that with proper infrastructure, coaching and financial backing, Indian athletes can compete successfully on the world stage.

Australia bounced back in emphatic fashion, defeating Bangladesh by an innings and 51 runs in the second Test to level the two-match series 1-1.

The victory was a dominant response from Australia after Bangladesh had stunned them with a historic win in the opening Test. This time, the Australian bowlers produced a ruthless performance, wrapping up the low-scoring contest early on the second day. Bangladesh were dismissed for just 64 in their first innings, with Australia's pace attack making full use of the conditions. Australia then posted 210, securing a substantial lead despite the challenging batting conditions.

Bangladesh's second innings followed a similar pattern. The visitors were bowled out for only 95, handing Australia a comprehensive innings victory. The match ended in the first over of the second session on day two, highlighting the extent of Australia's dominance. Mitchell Starc was the standout performer with the ball, finishing with 10 wickets in the match. His relentless pace and accuracy

Australia Crush Bangladesh by an Innings

repeatedly troubled the Bangladesh batters and played a central role in Australia's victory. Captain Pat Cummins also made a major contribution, claiming six wickets across the two innings. Nathan Lyon picked up three wickets, while Josh Hazlewood added one as Australia's bowling attack completely dismantled Bangladesh's batting line-up. Australia had resumed their first innings on 165 for eight on the second morning. Cameron Green and Nathan Lyon then added crucial runs to extend the total to 210. Green scored a valuable 67, while Lyon remained unbeaten on 32. The pair put together a 38-run partnership for the ninth wicket, providing Australia with an important boost. After Green was dismissed, Lyon continued to fight alongside Hazlewood, with the pair adding another 24 runs for the tenth wicket. Bangladesh's Shoriful Islam was their most successful bowler, finishing with impressive figures of seven for 48. Taskin Ahmed, Taijul Islam and Mehidy Hasan Miraz claimed one wicket each. With the victory, Australia avoided a series defeat and restored parity at 1-1. After Bangladesh's surprise triumph in the first Test, Australia's emphatic response underlined the gulf between the two sides when their bowling attack was firing on all cylinders. For Bangladesh, the result will be a disappointing end to a series in which they had initially produced one of their most memorable Test victories. For Australia, however, the second Test served as a powerful reminder of their resilience and ability to bounce back under pressure.



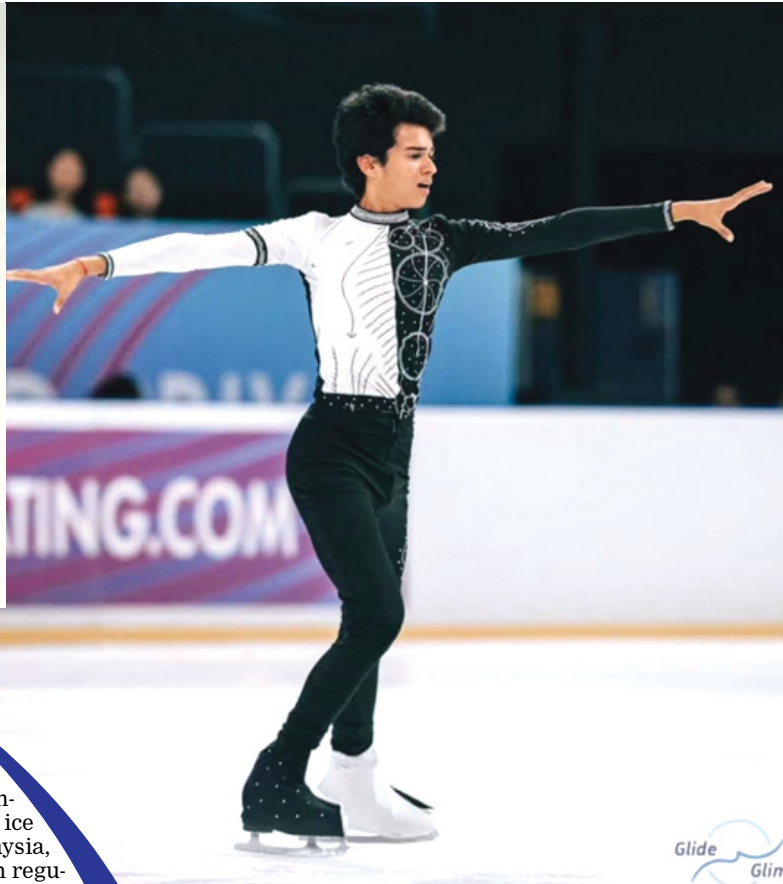
Karn Sharma Announces Retirement

Veteran Indian leg-spinner Karn Sharma has announced his retirement from all forms of international and domestic cricket, bringing the curtain down on a career that spanned several years across different levels of the game. The 38-year-old played one Test, two ODIs and one T20I for India. Although his international opportunities were limited, Sharma established himself as a reliable performer in the Indian Premier League and domestic cricket. Sharma is currently representing Kanpur Superstars in the Uttar Pradesh T20 League. He confirmed that the match against Meerut Mavericks on August 25 will be his final game as a professional cricketer. Following his retirement, Sharma said he would remain available for coaching and other roles connected with cricket. He also expressed his gratitude to everyone who supported him throughout his career. Sharma's biggest impact came in the IPL, where he played 90 matches and claimed 83 wickets. His ability to bowl effectively in the middle overs made him a valuable option for several franchises over the



years. One of the most remarkable achievements of his career came through an IPL record involving three different teams. Sharma became the first player to win IPL titles in three consecutive seasons with three dif-

ferent franchises. He was part of the Sunrisers Hyderabad squad that won the IPL title in 2016. The following year, he lifted the trophy with Mumbai Indians in 2017 before completing the remarkable three-season run with Chennai Super Kings in 2018. His international career was brief, with his only Test appearance coming for India alongside two ODI and one T20I outings. Nevertheless, his long association with domestic cricket and the IPL ensured that he remained a familiar figure in Indian cricket. Sharma's retirement marks the end of an era for a leg-spinner who contributed to some memorable IPL campaigns despite spending relatively little time in India's international setup. His decision to move into coaching and other cricket-related responsibilities could allow him to pass on his experience to the next generation of players. As he prepares for his final match on August 25, the veteran spinner leaves the playing field with a notable IPL legacy and three championship medals from three different teams.



India End Day One on 300/5 Against Sri Lanka



India made a strong start to the second Test against Sri Lanka, reaching 300 for five at stumps on the opening day after a largely dominant batting display. Devdutt Padikkal continued his impressive form with a century, while captain Shubman Gill and Ravindra Jadeja also made valuable contributions. Padikkal was the star of the day, scoring 117 off 193 balls.

The left-hander followed up his century in the first Test with another hundred, underlining his growing importance to India's Test batting line-up. His innings included a composed partnership with Gill that helped India recover after a cautious start. Gill scored a fluent 50 off 108 balls, striking six boundaries. He and Padikkal added 120 runs for the third wicket before Gill was dismissed by Asitha Fernando in the 52nd over, caught by wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella. Earlier, Yashasvi Jaiswal made 45 before being bowled by Fernando. Jaiswal had looked set for a half-century after hitting three boundaries in the same over, but an attempted off-side shot produced an edge onto the stumps. His dismissal also led to a brief verbal exchange with Fernando, although players from both sides quickly intervened. KL Rahul contributed 18 before falling to Lahiru Kumara, who induced an outside edge that was taken by the wicketkeeper. India were subsequently steadied by Padikkal and Gill. Rishabh Pant's innings was cut short after he was forced to retire hurt on three. The wicketkeeper-batter was struck on the forearm while attempting a shot against Kumara in the 58th over. Despite receiving treatment from the physiotherapist, Pant left the field because of the pain. Jadeja then joined Padikkal and scored a useful 43 from 83 balls. He was India's fifth wicket, bowled by Fernando in the 85th over after failing to judge the delivery correctly. Dhruv Jurel was unbeaten on seven at stumps, while debutant Saransh Jain remained not out on four. Fernando was Sri Lanka's most successful bowler, claiming three wickets, while Kumara and Keshara Nuwantha took one each. India made one change from the first Test, bringing in 33-year-old off-spinner Saransh Jain for Kuldeep Yadav. Sri Lanka made two changes, handing a debut to Kamil Mishara and bringing in Pasindu Sooriyabandara. India, who won the opening Test, will look to build a substantial first-innings total on the second day and strengthen their bid to complete a series clean sweep.

Saransh Jain Makes India Debut Without IPL

At 33, Saransh Jain has earned his India Test debut without ever playing in the Indian Premier League, marking a rare return to the traditional pathway of domestic cricket. Jain was named in India's playing XI for the second Test against Sri Lanka, becoming only the third Indian player since the IPL era began to make his international debut without having featured in the lucrative T20 league. Before Jain, Murali Vijay and Mohammed Shami achieved the distinction. Vijay made his Test debut against Australia in 2008, while Shami entered international cricket in an ODI against Pakistan in 2013. Both players earned their opportunities through strong performances in domestic cricket. Jain has followed a similar route. The spin-bowling all-rounder has been a consistent performer in India's domestic circuit, combining useful batting with effective bowling. In 54 first-class matches, he has scored 2,223 runs and taken 188 wickets, numbers that eventually brought him into the national selection picture. His selection is notable at a time when the IPL has become one of the most important platforms for players seeking India recognition. Performances in the tournament often attract the attention of selectors, particularly for limited-overs cricket. Jain's journey, however, highlights that sustained excellence in domestic cricket can still open the door to the national team. The debut also gives Jain another distinction. At 33 years and 145 days, he has become the oldest Indian player since 2000 to make his Test debut. The last Indian to debut at an older age was Robin Singh, who was 35 years and 23 days old when he entered Test cricket in 1998. Jain's story stands in sharp contrast to the recent emergence of teenage sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi, who made headlines by becoming one of India's youngest international debutants in T20 cricket. While Suryavanshi represents the rapid rise of young talent, Jain's selection demonstrates the value of patience, consistency and years of domestic experience. For Jain, the Sri Lanka Test is the culmination of a long domestic journey. His numbers with both bat and ball have finally earned him the opportunity to represent India at the highest level, without taking the IPL route that has become increasingly common in modern Indian cricket.



Bobby Deol Wants Beyond Villain Roles

Actor Bobby Deol is making a conscious effort to move beyond his increasingly familiar image as a villain, saying he wants to explore a wider range of characters and genres. Speaking on the sidelines of the Jagran Film Festival, Bobby said actors are often typecast after finding success with a particular kind of role. The 57-year-old actor acknowledged that he has been receiving numerous offers to play antagonists but is determined to experiment with different characters. "If an actor becomes successful in a particular kind of role, they keep getting similar roles. That's what happens in the industry. And I try really hard to break out of that," Bobby said. He pointed to his recent film *Bandar* as an example of his attempt to take on unconventional roles. Directed by Anurag Kashyap, the film features Bobby as an ageing star accused of rape by his former girlfriend. Released in theatres in June, the movie received positive reviews from critics. However, Bobby has continued to appear as an antagonist in several major projects. His other releases this year included *Alpha*, starring Alia Bhatt and Sharvari, and *Jana Nayagan*, in which he appeared alongside Tamil actor and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay. In both films, Bobby played negative characters.

The actor said he still enjoys portraying villains because the roles can offer considerable variety. According to him, antagonists can have different personalities, motivations and emotional shades, allowing actors to approach each character differently. "Even within antagonist roles, there are different kinds of antagonists, with different shades. So I enjoy playing those," he said. Bobby also revealed that he has several web series lined up, promising that they will offer something different from his recent work. His next project is Prime Video's spy thriller series *Teen Kauwe*, which is currently in production. The series also stars Sidhant Gupta, Fatima Sana Shaikh and Pavail Gulati. Despite his willingness to experiment, Bobby admitted that over-the-top and slapstick comedy remain genres he finds difficult to understand and perform. He said such films require exceptionally strong writing because comedy can be a risky space for actors. "I don't understand over-the-top comedy, slapstick comedy so much. I feel very uncomfortable doing that," he said. The 2026 edition of the Jagran Film Festival concluded on August 22, bringing together filmmakers, actors and cinema enthusiasts from across the industry.



Alia Bhatt and Sharvari-starrer *Alpha*, the first female-led spy action thriller from Yash Raj Films' Spy Universe, is set for its digital premiere after a disappointing theatrical run. Directed by Shiv Rawail, *Alpha* arrived with considerable expectations, backed by the popularity of the Spy Universe and a strong ensemble cast. However, despite the franchise connection and star power, the film failed to make a significant impact at the box office. The latest update is that *Alpha* will begin streaming on Netflix from August 28, 2026. The film will be available in Hindi, while there is currently no official confirmation about the availability of dubbed versions. Alia Bhatt leads the film alongside Sharvari, with both actresses playing prominent roles in the spy action thriller. The movie also features several established names from the franchise. Hrithik Roshan makes a cameo appearance as Kabir, while Bobby Deol and Anil Kapoor play key roles. The film was positioned as a major expansion of the YRF Spy Universe, which has previously featured popular characters played by stars including Salman Khan, Shah Rukh Khan and Hrithik Roshan. With *Alpha*, the franchise aimed to bring female protagonists to the forefront of its action-driven universe. While the theatrical response fell short of expectations, the film's arrival on Netflix gives it an opportunity to reach a much wider audience. OTT releases have often helped films that underperformed in cinemas find renewed interest among streaming viewers. For Alia Bhatt and Sharvari, *Alpha* also represents an important addition to their filmographies, particularly because of its large-scale action and connection to one of Indian cinema's most commercially successful spy franchises. With its Netflix premiere now locked for August 28, attention will shift to whether *Alpha* can receive a stronger response from streaming audiences than it did during its theatrical release.

Alia Bhatt's Alpha Gets OTT Date

Raashii Khanna Marks 13 Years in Cinema

Actress Raashii Khanna has completed 13 years in the Indian film industry, reflecting on a journey that began with *Madras Cafe* in 2013 and has since taken her across Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam cinema.

The actress, who was recently seen in a special appearance in *120 Bahadur*, said the years have passed quickly because she has always viewed acting as a privilege rather than simply a profession.

"Thirteen years is a long time, and it has gone quickly because the work has never stopped feeling like a privilege," Raashii said while looking back at her career.

She recalled her debut in *Madras Cafe* as an important milestone that shaped her approach to cinema.

According to the actress, the film gave her an opportunity to be part of stories that mattered to her and introduced her to collaborators who supported her early career. "Looking back at *Madras Cafe* reminds me why I started. It gave me the chance to tell stories that matter to me, and I am grateful to every collaborator who has backed me along the way," she added. Over the past 13 years, Raashii has established herself across multiple Indian film industries. Her work in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam cinema has helped her build a pan-India profile, with the actress deliberately choosing projects across languages and genres. Her upcoming projects include the second season of *Raj & DK's* popular series *Farzi*. Raashii is currently filming the series and will reprise her role as RBI officer Megha Vyas. She will once again share the screen with Shahid Kapoor and Vijay Sethupathi. *Farzi* is a crime thriller centred on a disillusioned artist who turns to counterfeiting after becoming frustrated with his financial circumstances. The series is created, directed and produced by Raj & DK. Raashii also has several high-profile film projects in the pipeline. She will be seen opposite superstar Rajinikanth in the Tamil action thriller *Dharman*. The actress is also set to star opposite Akshay Kumar in filmmaker Anees

Nandamuri Balakrishna's upcoming Bazmee's upcoming comedy-drama. With several major projects lined up, Raashii film *NBK 111* is reportedly targeting a December 24, 2026 theatrical release, setting up a potential Christmas-season clash with several major films. Khanna's 13-year journey appears to be entering another promising phase as she continues to expand her presence across Indian cinema. The film, directed by Gopichand Malineni, is currently progressing amid heightened expectations from Balakrishna's fans. The actor recently suffered an injury during the shoot and is expected to return to the sets in September 2026. He is keen to resume filming and ensure that the project does not face further delays. If the December 24 date is finalised, *NBK 111* will stay away from the Sankranti 2027 race and instead target the Christmas holiday window. The period has proved favourable for Balakrishna in the past, with both *Akhanda* and *Akhanda 2* reportedly enjoying strong theatrical success following their December releases.

However, the proposed release date could bring intense competition. *Avengers: Doomsday* is expected to release in Telugu during the same period, while Denis Villeneuve's *Dune: Part Three* is also scheduled around Christmas. Shah Rukh Khan's *King* is another major title targeting the festive season. With big-ticket Hollywood and Bollywood projects competing for screens and audience attention, *NBK 111* could face a challenging theatrical battle if it retains the December 24 date. The makers will have to carefully assess the release landscape, particularly across the Telugu-speaking states and other major markets. Kajal Aggarwal is paired opposite Balakrishna in the film. Venkata Satish Kilaru is producing the project under the *Vridhhi Cinemas* banner, while S. Thaman is composing the music. The project has already generated considerable interest among Balakrishna's fans, with its teaser creating buzz around the actor's action-packed appearance. The film is expected to showcase him in another powerful mass-oriented role. With Balakrishna planning to return to the sets in September, the coming months will be crucial for the production. If the team manages to complete the remaining shoot and post-production work on schedule, *NBK 111* could arrive on December 24 and enter one of the most competitive release windows of the year.

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NBK 111 Eyes Christmas Release

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