



Bandi Sanjay
Slams Assembly
Proceedings



P3



BRS-Congress Clash Triggers Tension

Hyderabad, Sept. 8 | TPN Bureau

Political tensions between the ruling Congress and the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) intensified in Telangana on Tuesday after BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao was detained while attempting to travel to former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's Erravelli farmhouse.

Police stopped KTR and other BRS leaders near Hakimpet amid heightened security arrangements around the Erravelli residence. KTR was subsequently taken into preventive custody and shifted to the Bowenpally Police Station, where his detention triggered fresh protests by party leaders and supporters.

As news of the detention spread, a large number of BRS workers gathered outside the Bowenpally Police Station and raised slogans against the Congress government. Congress supporters also arrived at the location, leading to heated arguments between members of the rival parties.

The verbal confrontation soon escalated into clashes, with reports of stones, sticks and chairs being thrown during the disorder. Police personnel deployed at the scene intervened and dispersed the groups, eventually bringing the situation under control.

The developments were linked to a wider political controversy surrounding alleged derogatory remarks made against Telangana Legislative Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar. Two BRS MLCs, Tata Madhusudan, popularly known as



Tata Madhu, and Naveen Kumar Reddy, were arrested in connection with complaints over the alleged remarks. The issue has further sharpened the political confrontation between the Congress and the BRS.

The Telangana government's official portal identifies Gaddam Prasad Kumar as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and A. Revanth Reddy as the state's Chief Minister.

Meanwhile, BRS leaders and legislators staged protests after being prevented from

proceeding towards Erravelli. The party alleged that its leaders were being selectively stopped while Congress workers were allowed to move towards KCR's residence. KTR publicly questioned the police action, while authorities maintained extensive security arrangements in the area to prevent further disturbances.

The confrontation came against the backdrop of an already turbulent Assembly session. On September 7, BRS legislators wearing black T-shirts staged protests against the Congress government and

were involved in a confrontation with police outside the Assembly. Cases were subsequently registered against several BRS leaders, including KTR and former minister T. Harish Rao, in connection with the incident.

The latest incidents underline the increasingly adversarial political atmosphere in Telangana, with Assembly-related disputes, protests and police interventions continuing to fuel a sharp confrontation between the state's ruling Congress and the opposition BRS.

Tension Escalates
Over KCR Farmhouse



Siddipet, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Political tensions between the ruling Congress and opposition BRS intensified on Tuesday after rival groups converged near former Chief Minister and BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao's farmhouse at Erravelli in Siddipet district. The confrontation came amid an ongoing dispute over alleged remarks by BRS MLCs against Telangana Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar.

The Congress SC Cell had called for a protest march towards KCR's Erravelli residence, demanding an apology over the alleged remarks. In anticipation of the demonstration, police imposed prohibitory restrictions and deployed substantial forces and barricades around the farmhouse and surrounding areas.

As Congress workers moved towards Erravelli, BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao, former minister T. Harish Rao and other party leaders set out to meet KCR. BRS leaders said they wanted to reach the farmhouse to support their party chief and prevent any possible confrontation. Police, however, stopped the BRS leaders at several points, including the Hakimpet area.

KTR and Harish Rao, along with other BRS legislators and senior leaders, were subsequently taken into preventive custody and shifted to different police stations. Telangana Today reported that the standoff at Hakimpet ended after police detained the leaders and transported them separately to stations including Bowenpally and Jawaharnagar.

BRS leaders strongly objected to the police action. They alleged that the administration was allowing Congress workers to proceed towards Erravelli while preventing BRS leaders from reaching KCR's residence. KTR publicly accused the police of facilitating

the movement of Congress supporters and questioned why BRS leaders were being stopped from visiting their party chief.

The situation also turned tense near Erravelli as Congress workers attempted to advance towards the farmhouse. According to UNI, Congress protesters led by local leaders marched through Varadarajapur, while police used barricades and rope parties to prevent them from reaching the residence. Scuffles broke out between protesters and police, with some personnel reportedly sustaining minor injuries.

A separate confrontation was reported when BRS activists allegedly intercepted Congress leaders travelling towards the farmhouse near Damarakunta in Markook mandal. The competing mobilisations further heightened tensions in the area.

The controversy has its roots in Monday's turbulent Assembly proceedings, when BRS legislators protesting against the Congress government clashed with police outside the legislature. Two BRS MLCs, Tata Madhu and N. Naveen Kumar Reddy, were later arrested over alleged derogatory remarks against Speaker Prasad Kumar. A court subsequently released them on personal bonds.

The Congress has maintained that the alleged remarks were an insult to the Speaker and the Dalit community and has demanded an apology from KCR. The BRS, meanwhile, has accused the Congress government of using the controversy to suppress the Opposition and target its leaders.

The day's developments marked a sharp escalation of the Congress-BRS confrontation, with the political dispute moving beyond the Assembly into the streets of Hyderabad and Siddipet. Police maintained heightened security around Erravelli to prevent further clashes and maintain law and order.

Revanth Reddy Consoles Speaker



Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, met Telangana Legislative Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar in his chamber on Tuesday

following the contentious incidents reported outside the Assembly on Monday.

The Chief Minister visited the Speaker soon after arriving at the Assembly and offered words of support over the developments that occurred on the opening day

of the session. According to the government, certain members allegedly behaved inappropriately on the Assembly premises, used abusive language against the Speaker and engaged in confrontations involving officials.

Revanth Reddy expressed concern over the developments, stating that such conduct had brought disrepute to the dignity and decorum of the legislature. He also conveyed his regret over the incident and assured the Speaker that the government stood firmly behind him.

The Chief Minister was reportedly distressed after seeing visuals of the Speaker becoming emotional inside the Assembly precincts following the alleged personal remarks. He said elected representatives were expected to maintain restraint and respect constitutional institutions, particularly within the legislature.

During the meeting, Revanth Reddy assured Prasad Kumar that appropriate action would be taken against those found responsible. He also reiterated the government's commitment to protecting the

dignity of the Assembly and upholding the prestige of constitutional offices.

The meeting took place amid heightened tensions between the ruling Congress and opposition BRS. The controversy has triggered heated exchanges in the Assembly, with both sides making allegations over the conduct of legislators, police personnel and political leaders.

The Speaker has separately assured members that action would be considered after receiving a report concerning Monday's incidents involving BRS women legislators and police personnel at the Assembly entrance.

The Chief Minister's visit was seen as a gesture of solidarity with the Speaker at a time when the conduct of legislators and the dignity of the House have become central issues in the ongoing political confrontation.

The government has maintained that any action arising from the incidents will follow due procedure and that the functioning and dignity of the legislature must be protected.

Speaker Says Action
Against Tata Madhu
Was an Option

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Legislative Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar said he had the authority to initiate action against BRS MLC Tata Madhu over his alleged inappropriate remarks but had initially chosen not to exercise that power. He made the remarks during an informal interaction with the media amid a heated political controversy surrounding the incident.

The Speaker said that although Madhu is not a member of the Legislative Assembly, appropriate action could still be considered through democratic and institutional procedures. He contrasted this approach with what he described as the BRS practice of taking immediate disciplinary action.

Prasad Kumar also said action would be taken against police personnel if an inquiry established that they had behaved improperly with BRS women legislators Sabitha Indra Reddy and Sunitha Lakshma Reddy. The Speaker said he was awaiting the relevant report before deciding on the matter.

He further said the government was seeking an apology from former Chief Minister and BRS president K. Chandra



shekar Rao over the controversy. The Assembly later passed a resolution asking KCR to take responsibility for the conduct of BRS members and tender an unconditional apology to the Speaker.

Meanwhile, the controversy escalated with the arrest of Tata Madhu and fellow BRS MLC N. Naveen Kumar Reddy over alleged derogatory remarks against the Speaker. Police registered cases under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Both were subsequently granted bail by a court.

Prasad Kumar also said he had repeatedly requested KCR to attend Assembly proceedings. He announced that he would not preside over the House that day, with Panel Speaker Kadiyam Srihari taking charge of the proceedings.

BRS MLCs Suspended for Session



Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Tension escalated in the Telangana Legislature on Tuesday after BRS MLCs Tata Madhusudan, popularly known as Tata Madhu, and N. Naveen Kumar Reddy was suspended from the Legislative Council for the remainder of the ongoing session over alleged derogatory and unparliamentary remarks against Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar.

The controversy followed a confrontation involving BRS legislators and police at the Assembly premises on Monday. During the altercation, Tata Madhu allegedly made objectionable remarks against the Speaker and his mother. The issue triggered strong reactions from members of the ruling Congress, who demanded action against the two BRS MLCs.

Earlier on Tuesday, the Telangana Legislative Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the alleged remarks and decided to forward the available evidence to

Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy for appropriate action. Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha moved the resolution, which was seconded by Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka. The resolution also sought an unconditional apology from BRS president and former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao for the conduct of his party members.

Subsequently, Legislative Affairs Minister D. Sridhar Babu moved the suspension motion in the Council. The Council adopted it, resulting in the suspension of Tata Madhu and Naveen Kumar Reddy for the remaining duration of the session.

The decision led to protests by BRS members inside the Council. They raised slogans against the Congress government and demanded withdrawal of the suspension. Reports said some BRS MLCs squatted on the floor of the House, while marshals intervened amid heightened tensions. The controversy also spilled outside the House. Tata Madhu and Naveen Kumar

Reddy, who had earlier been arrested by Saifabad police over complaints concerning their remarks, were granted bail by a Nampally court later in the day. The court directed them to furnish personal bonds of ₹20,000 each with two sureties.

After the suspension, Tata Madhu attempted to address the media at the Council media point. Marshals stopped him from speaking there, citing his suspension, and escorted him away following a heated exchange. Speaking during the Assembly proceedings, Damodar Raja Narasimha said struggles for dignity and self-respect were central to the history of Dalit communities. He warned against attempts to undermine their self-respect and said the youth of Telangana, particularly Dalit youth, should not be underestimated. The episode has further intensified political tensions between the Congress government and BRS during the ongoing legislative session, with both sides accusing the other of violating democratic and institutional norms.

Speaker Assures
Action on
Police Conduct



Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Legislative Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar on Tuesday assured the BRS that appropriate action would be considered after receiving a report on Monday's incident at the Assembly entrance, where BRS women legislators alleged that police personnel manhandled them.

As the House assembled, BRS members wearing black badges raised the issue and demanded clarity on the action proposed against the police officers involved. Speaker Prasad Kumar said he had great respect for women legislators and would act after receiving the official report.

Legislative Affairs Minister D. Sridhar Babu said Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy had already sought a report on the incident. He assured the Opposition that the government would take appropriate action based on the findings.

BRS Deputy Leader T. Harish Rao strongly criticised the treatment of former ministers and legislators Sabitha Indra Reddy and Sunitha Lakshma Reddy. He alleged that when BRS leaders approached police seeking action over the alleged manhandling, cases were instead registered against them.

Harish Rao described the incident as an attack on the dignity of women across Telangana and accused the government of failing to protect elected representatives. He also compared the Assembly to a "Kaurava Sabha" and warned that the Congress would eventually face consequences for its conduct.

The remarks prompted a sharp response from the Speaker. Prasad Kumar expressed displeasure over Harish Rao's statements and said he too had reason to be upset because abusive language had allegedly been used against his mother.

The Speaker reiterated his personal respect for Sabitha Indra Reddy and Sunitha Lakshma Reddy, describing them as sisters and stressing that he regarded women legislators with the same regard as his own eight sisters. He again assured the House that action would follow once the report was received.

Minister Sridhar Babu accused BRS legislators of attempting to intimidate the Speaker during the proceedings. He condemned the alleged derogatory remarks directed at Prasad Kumar and said such conduct could not be justified in the legislature.

Harish Rao, however, defended BRS MLC Tata Madhu, who was arrested following remarks concerning the Speaker. Rao claimed Madhu had clarified that he had not used derogatory or abusive language against Prasad Kumar, but was nevertheless arrested and sent to jail.

The confrontation highlighted the growing political tensions between the Congress government and BRS in the ongoing Assembly session. Both sides continued to trade allegations over the conduct of legislators, police action and the dignity of the House. The Speaker's assurance that the government would await the official report before taking action is now central to the dispute.

Modi Hails India's Growth

Mumbai, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said India's strong economic performance is generating fresh optimism around the world, even as global economies continue to face geopolitical tensions, supply-chain disruptions and energy-related challenges.

Addressing the seventh edition of the Global Fintech Fest in Mumbai, Modi highlighted India's 7.8 per cent real GDP growth recorded in the April-June quarter of the current financial year. He described the performance as evidence of the resilience and strength of the Indian economy at a time when global businesses were dealing with considerable uncertainty.

The Prime Minister said India had continued to demonstrate economic stability despite pressure on energy supplies and essential commodities. He argued that the country's growth momentum, combined with ongoing structural reforms, was strengthening international confidence in the

Indian economy. Modi also referred to Japan Credit Rating Agency's recent upgrade of India's sovereign rating to A- with a stable outlook. The upgrade, the first rating in the A category from the agency in more than three decades, has been seen as recognition of India's economic growth, policy framework and improving financial-sector stability.

Emphasising the government's reform agenda, Modi said the pace of reforms would increase further. He described the next phase as an acceleration of India's "Reform Express", signalling that the government intends to continue pursuing measures aimed at strengthening the economy and improving the business environment.

A major part of the Prime Minister's address focused on India's fintech transformation and the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), which completed a decade of operation this year. Modi said UPI had demonstrated how digital public infrastructure could make financial services faster,



more accessible and more inclusive. He called for expanding UPI's international footprint by linking it with payment systems in more countries.

India has already connected UPI with systems in countries including Singapore, while Modi said greater international integration could reduce

transaction costs and make cross-border payments easier for Indians living and working abroad.

The Prime Minister also said fintech should move beyond payments into areas such as credit, insurance, savings, investments and pensions. He urged the sector to focus on cybersecurity, data

protection and consumer safeguards while adopting emerging technologies such as agentic artificial intelligence, tokenisation and quantum computing.

Modi recalled that there had once been doubts about whether banking could truly become accessible through mobile phones. He said the widespread adoption of UPI

had turned that vision into reality.

The Global Fintech Fest 2026 is being held from September 8 to 11 at the Jio World Centre and Trident BKC in Mumbai, bringing together policymakers, regulators, financial institutions, technology companies, startups and investors from across the world.

Uttam Pushes Rice Export Expansion

New Delhi, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Telangana is looking to expand its agricultural exports to the Philippines, with rice emerging as the key commodity in proposed trade cooperation between the two sides.

Telangana Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy held discussions with Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr., Secretary of Agriculture of the Philippines and a member of its Cabinet, in New Delhi on Tuesday. The meeting focused on increasing rice exports from Telangana and widening trade opportunities between the State and the Philippines.

Uttam Kumar Reddy highlighted Telangana's position among India's major paddy-producing States and said the State has the production capacity, modern rice-milling infrastructure and technical expertise required to supply quality rice in large quantities.

Laurel responded posi-



tively to the proposal and indicated that the Philippines would examine the possibility of procuring larger quantities of rice from Telangana. The discussions also covered the involvement of government agencies, authorised importers and exporters, and rice millers to develop a workable mechanism

for future supplies.

The Minister said the Philippines' substantial requirement for imported rice and its efforts to diversify international sources make the discussions particularly significant. Telangana, he said, could become a dependable long-term supplier by offering competitive prices, consistent quality

and timely deliveries.

The two sides also discussed rice varieties, pricing, quality requirements, procurement procedures, logistics, certification and sanitary and phytosanitary regulations. Officials and industry representatives are expected to examine these issues and prepare an action plan for taking the proposed trade

forward.

The discussions extended beyond rice, with Laurel also expressing interest in sourcing quality seeds and meat products from Telangana. Uttam welcomed the proposal, pointing to the State's strengths in seed production, food processing and allied agricultural activities.

The Minister said greater access to international markets could benefit farmers, rice millers, seed companies, food-processing units and other rural industries. He stressed that the government's objective was to create stable and profitable overseas markets for Telangana's agricultural sector.

Uttam also invited the Philippine Agriculture Secretary to the Telangana Rising Summit proposed to be held in Hyderabad in December 2026. The State government plans to coordinate with relevant Central government agencies and the Philippine Embassy to advance the proposed trade initiatives.

If translated into concrete export arrangements, the proposed cooperation could open another international market for Telangana's rice and other agricultural products while strengthening commercial ties with the Philippines.

Seethakka Supports Injured Women Police

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Seethakka on Tuesday met women police personnel who were allegedly injured during a confrontation involving BRS MLAs and MLCs at the Assembly gate on Monday.

The women officers reportedly briefed the minister about the incident and described the difficulties they faced while performing their official duties. According to the officers, some BRS leaders allegedly behaved inappropriately, removed their T-shirts and moved aggressively towards the police personnel deployed at the Assembly entrance. The women police personnel also alleged that they

were touched inappropriately during the confrontation. They reportedly showed visual material relating to the incident while explaining their concerns to Seethakka.

The officers expressed distress over alleged threats made during the episode, claiming they were warned that action would be taken against them if the Opposition returned to power. They said the incident had also caused considerable anxiety among their family members after photographs and videos of the confrontation circulated publicly.

Some officers reportedly told the minister that their families were urging them to reconsider continuing in duties that could expose them to such situations.

Seethakka reassured the

women personnel and encouraged them to remain firm while carrying out their responsibilities. She assured them that the government stood behind them and urged them not to be intimidated by threats.

The minister's interaction with the police personnel comes amid a wider political confrontation between the Congress government and the BRS over Monday's events at the Assembly. The Opposition has accused police personnel of manhandling its women legislators, while the ruling party has defended the conduct of police officers performing security duties.

The Assembly Speaker, Gaddam Prasad Kumar, has said that action would be considered after receiving a report into the alle-



gations concerning the conduct of police personnel. Legislative Affairs Minister D. Sridhar Babu has also stated that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy sought a report on the incident.

The competing allegations have intensified tensions

between the two parties, with the controversy extending from the Assembly floor to protests and confrontations outside the legislature.

Seethakka's meeting with the women police personnel was aimed at assuring them of institutional sup-

port and encouraging them to continue discharging their duties without fear.

The government has maintained that allegations arising from the incident will be examined through the appropriate process.

Ministers Demand Action Against BRS Leaders

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Telangana ministers Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Jupally Krishna Rao and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Tuesday criticised BRS leaders over the controversy surrounding alleged remarks against Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar and the conduct of some opposition legislators during Monday's confrontation at the Assembly. Sridhar Babu accused BRS leaders of bringing disrepute to the democratic institution by allegedly using abusive language against the Speaker. He demanded an immediate public apology from BRS leaders, particularly party chief K. Chandrashekar Rao, K.T. Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao. The minister also condemned the alleged manhandling of police personnel inside the Assembly premises. He referred to purported video footage involving KTR, Pochampally Srinivas Reddy, N. Naveen

Kumar Reddy, Dr Sanjay and others, alleging that some police personnel were grabbed and verbally abused. Sridhar Babu said the House should proceed with its remaining agenda only after the BRS leaders apologised to the Speaker.

Jupally Krishna Rao demanded immediate action against BRS MLC Tata Madhu over his alleged remarks concerning the Speaker and his mother. He called for the cancellation of Madhu's membership in the Legislative Council. Jupally also accused the previous BRS government of using suspensions to suppress opposition voices and criticised the party for allegedly disrupting Assembly proceedings while in Opposition.

Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said failing to take action against Tata Madhu would amount to disrespecting the office of the Speaker. He questioned how such language could allegedly be directed at a Dalit Speaker and criti-

cised both KCR and KTR over their political statements. Minister Vivek Venkatswamy also criticised KCR, accusing him of failing to protect Dalit interests, and urged the Legislative Council Chairman to consider action against Tata Madhu. The controversy has triggered a broader confrontation between the Congress and BRS, with both parties demanding action against members of the opposing camp. The Speaker has said that appropriate action will be considered based on reports concerning the incidents.

The government has maintained that the dignity of the Assembly and constitutional offices must be protected, while the BRS has rejected allegations of misconduct and questioned the action taken against its leaders. The dispute is expected to remain a major issue during the ongoing Assembly session as both sides continue to press their respective demands.

called both KCR and KTR over their political statements. Minister Vivek Venkatswamy also criticised KCR, accusing him of failing to protect Dalit interests, and urged the Legislative Council Chairman to consider action against Tata Madhu. The controversy has triggered a broader confrontation between the Congress and BRS, with both parties demanding action against members of the opposing camp. The Speaker has said that appropriate action will be considered based on reports concerning the incidents.

The government has maintained that the dignity of the Assembly and constitutional offices must be protected, while the BRS has rejected allegations of misconduct and questioned the action taken against its leaders. The dispute is expected to remain a major issue during the ongoing Assembly session as both sides continue to press their respective demands.

Seethakka Questions BRS Conduct



Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Minister Seethakka strongly criticised BRS leaders during the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, accusing them of making inappropriate remarks against Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar and subsequently denying the allegations.

Speaking during the proceedings, Seethakka questioned the circumstances surrounding the confrontation involving former minister and BRS MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy. She asked who had pushed Sabitha during the incident and criticised the conduct of BRS leaders towards women police personnel deployed at the Assembly entrance.

Seethakka also questioned the behaviour of BRS Deputy Leader T. Harish Rao, asking whether he would remove his clothes in the presence of women. She said BRS leaders should have ensured the safety of their women legislators before bringing them to the forefront of the confrontation.

The minister alleged that BRS leaders had manhandled and verbally abused a woman police officer while she was performing her duty. She said video footage was available to establish what had occurred and demanded appropriate action against legislators accused of assaulting police personnel.

Describing the Legislative Assembly as a temple of democracy, Seethakka urged BRS women leaders to reflect on the con-

duct of their party members and the circumstances that led to the confrontation. Her remarks came amid a wider political dispute over Monday's incidents at the Assembly entrance, with the BRS alleging that its women legislators were mistreated by police. The ruling Congress, however, has accused BRS members of misconduct and inappropriate behaviour towards officials.

The controversy has led to demands from both sides for action against those allegedly responsible. Assembly Speaker Prasad Kumar has said that an official report would be examined before any decision is taken regarding the conduct of police personnel.

Seethakka also referred to internal developments within the BRS and questioned the party's decision to expel K. Kavitha, asking why action was taken against her following remarks concerning Harish Rao.

The exchange added to the tense atmosphere in the Assembly, where Congress and BRS members continued to trade allegations over the treatment of women legislators, police personnel and the Speaker.

Seethakka maintained that elected representatives must uphold the dignity of the legislature and respect officials performing their duties. She called for accountability over the alleged incidents and urged members to exercise restraint during political protests and Assembly proceedings.

Night Bus Services Gain Strong Response



Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said the newly introduced "Third Shift" night bus services in Greater Hyderabad have received a strong response, with 9,286 passengers using the services during the first seven days. The services were launched on September 1 on six important routes to address the needs of late-night commuters, including employees, students and other passengers.

The Minister said the response demonstrated the growing demand for safe and reliable public transport during late hours. He added that the government would examine passenger demand, traffic patterns and route requirements before extending the night services to more parts of Hyderabad.

The initiative currently covers 15 buses operating on six routes, with services running during the late-night and early-morning period. The routes connect major residential, commercial and IT corridors, including Patancheru, Secunderabad, Hayathnagar, Kondapur, Bachupally and Waverock. Officials had earlier said the services were planned after assessing increased late-night travel linked to Hyderabad's IT sector, nightlife and shift-based employment.

Under the present schedule, Route 222A operates between Koti and Patancheru with four buses, 16 trips and a 45-minute frequency. Route 218 connects Afzalgunj with Patancheru using two buses and eight trips at 75-minute intervals.

Route 219 links Secunderabad and Patancheru with two buses and eight trips, also at a 75-minute frequency. Route 290U connects Hayathnagar with Secunderabad through several important eastern and central Hyderabad locations, operating three buses and 14 trips.

Route 195W connects Bachupally with Waverock through Nizampet, JNTU, Hitee City and other major employment hubs. Three buses make 18 trips at 40-minute intervals. Route 10H connects Kondapur and Secunderabad with two buses, six trips and a 50-minute frequency.

Prabhakar said the government's broader objective was to strengthen public transportation and gradually create a system capable of serving commuters around the clock. The Transport Department operates under the Telangana government, while the state portal identifies Ponnam Prabhakar as the Transport Minister.

The minister said passenger feedback would remain a key factor in deciding future expansion. If demand continues to grow, additional routes and services could be introduced in phases, helping commuters who currently depend on private vehicles, autos and app-based taxis during late-night hours.

Mallu Ravi Seeks NCSC Probe

New Delhi, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Congress MP Dr. Mallu Ravi met National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) Chairman Kishor Makwana in New Delhi on Tuesday and submitted a formal complaint seeking action over a reported incident involving the alleged "purification" of a dais after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge addressed an event in Uttarakhand.

Mallu Ravi urged the NCSC to take cognisance of the reported incident and conduct a detailed inquiry to establish the facts. He also requested the Commission to initiate appropriate action if the allegations were found to be true. The MP said the reported act raised serious concerns over equality, dignity and social justice. He stressed that practices suggesting discrimination based on caste were particularly concerning in view of the constitutional prohibition of untouchability.

Ravi said institutions responsible for



protecting the rights of Scheduled Castes should examine such allegations seriously and ensure that constitutional safeguards are upheld. The complaint submitted to the NCSC seeks an official examination of the circumstances surrounding the incident and appropriate measures based on the findings.

The development comes amid renewed political discussions over caste discrimination and social equality. Ravi maintained that every citizen, irrespective of caste or social background, is entitled to equal dignity and respect.

He expressed hope that the NCSC would consider the complaint and take necessary steps in accordance with the law and constitutional principles. A

Northern Telangana: The Destination to Reach



Resources Abound... Now Value Must Be Created

Over the past twelve years, Northern Telangana has proven one thing beyond doubt: the region does not suffer from a scarcity of resources. It is endowed with the waters of the Godavari, fertile arable land, rich coal deposits, extensive power generation capacity, an industrial base, thriving agricultural markets, and vibrant human capital. What is needed now is not an exploration for new resources, but adding greater value to existing ones. If raw materials can be turned into finished goods, agriculture into agro-industry, coal into an integrated industrial chain, education into market-ready skills, and transit corridors into commercial trade linkages, Northern Telangana can leapfrog from its current economic baseline to the next level.

The Godavari: Far More Than Just Water

Looking at the Godavari's role in the future growth of Northern Telangana purely through the lens of irrigation is insufficient. Assured water expands acreage; expanded acreage increases agricultural output. But if that output merely travels from the village to the local wholesale yard and stops there, the farmer's income hits a ceiling. When post-harvest stages such as processing, packaging, cold storage, branding, marketing, and exports are added, the value of the produce multiplies manifold. With the expansion of irrigation infrastructure already reshaping the agricultural landscape across Telangana, subsequent capital investments must focus not just on converting water into yield, but on converting that yield into higher economic value.

The next agrarian revolution in Northern Telangana lies not merely in harvesting more crops, but in unlocking greater value from every harvest. Integrating the agrarian strengths of the Nizamabad-Kamareddy belt with major food-processing hubs will inject fresh momentum into the rural economy. For key produce like turmeric, paddy, maize, and cotton, finished consumer products command significantly higher value than raw commodities. Food processing parks, cold chains, modern warehousing, packaging units, agricultural research, and market intelligence must be integrated into a single supply chain. The economic value that originates in the farmer's field should not terminate at the local mandi-it must feed into industrial value chains. That is the



Chennu Peddiraju

Senior Journalist

sustainable path to elevate agriculture from a welfare-supported sector into an engine of wealth generation.

A Second Life for Coal

Coal will remain central to Northern Telangana's industrial horizon. However, the coal-driven economy requires a strategic transition. Looking across the footprint of Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL)-the mining townships, thermal power stations, and freight networks-one sees a diversified, multi-sector economic backbone. The immediate imperative is to insert higher-value downstream links into this chain. Extracting coal from the earth is only the initial economic activity. Its broader impact is realized when an entire industrial ecosystem forms around it: heavy engineering, equipment manufacturing, specialized maintenance services, technical consultancies, and dedicated logistics. The objective must shift from merely "extracting more coal" to asking: "How much economic value can we generate per ton of coal mined?" Providing viable alternative livelihoods, skill upgradation, equitable rehabilitation, and ecological restoration across mining belts must be an integral part of this transition.

Ramagundam-Peddapalli: Poised to Evolve into an Industrial Cluster

The Ramagundam-Peddapalli corridor already commands a robust industrial baseline anchored by thermal power, chemical fertilizers, coal mining, and rail freight infrastructure. The next frontier is attracting downstream and ancillary manufacturing. When small and

medium enterprises (SMEs) cluster around large-scale primary plants: Local entrepreneurs gain broader business opportunities. Sustainable employment is created locally for regional youth. Service sectors-including logistics, housing, retail, education, and health-care-flourish in tandem. Industrialization in Northern Telangana must be cultivated as a complete industrial ecosystem rather than a collection of isolated mega-plants. In mineral-rich districts like Mancherial and Bhupalpally, the mere presence of natural resources does not automatically guarantee shared prosperity. Rather than shipping raw minerals out of the district, developing localized, value-adding industries keeps capital and economic activity circulating within the home region. This boosts not only jobs, but also local municipal revenues, commercial enterprise, and the tertiary services sector. Moving from a raw resource-supplying region to a value-generating powerhouse is the core objective.

Karimnagar and Nizamabad: Regional Economic Anchors

Building a Telangana that does not depend on Hyderabad for every essential need requires developing the state's tier-2 cities into independent regional growth poles: Karimnagar has the potential to evolve into an advanced hub for higher education, healthcare, regional commerce, and business services. Nizamabad can seamlessly connect its vast agricultural produce with modern agro-processing, food enterprises, and cold-chain logistics. When these urban centers serve as integrated service hubs for the surrounding rural districts, development disperses equitably across regions rather than concentrating around

the state capital. While academic institutions are essential for regional growth, their economic utility remains unrealized if graduating youth must migrate to Hyderabad or other metropolises for white-collar jobs. Technical and vocational curricula must align with the operational requirements of local industries, agro-enterprises, healthcare systems, IT-enabled services, and logistics hubs. Local skills for local needs; local employment for local talent. Strengthening this virtuous cycle will curb distress migration while driving up regional per-capita incomes. Laying highways and rail lines represents physical infrastructure, but connectivity's true value lies in execution: How quickly do regional goods reach target retail markets? How significantly have freight overheads fallen for farmers? How reliably can local factories source raw materials? How accessible is the consumer market for incoming investors? Linking Northern Telangana not just to Hyderabad, but radially with Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, and other parts of Telangana, will dramatically broaden its economic reach.

The Destination to Reach

The defining pillar for Northern Telangana's future is decentralization: Karimnagar: Service, education, and healthcare core. Nizamabad: Agro-processing and commodity trade hub. Ramagundam-Peddapalli: Heavy industrial and energy cluster. Mancherial-Bhupalpally: Mineral and resource-based industrial nodes. Nirmal-Adilabad: Agro-forest produce and specialized artisanal-resource hubs. Interconnecting these hubs will create a polycentric regional economy that thrives without single-point dependency on Hyderabad. The goal is not to create an alternative to Hyderabad, but to eliminate the compulsion to depend on it. Northern Telangana needs no reinvention to establish its identity; the assets that define it already exist. The Godavari is there. Coal reserves are there. Agriculture, industry, historic towns, and human capital are already present. The imperative is linking them into an unbroken economic chain: Water must translate into crops. Crops must feed into industries. Coal must generate downstream value. Industries must create local jobs. Education must build practical skills. Skills must generate disposable household income. When this occurs, the progress of Northern Telangana will not be confined to statistical ledgers. It will be reflected in rising family incomes, sustainable local jobs, well-planned urban growth, and dynamic rural economies. What Northern Telangana achieved over the past twelve years represents the structural foundation. The mandate for the coming phase is building a value-creating economy upon that bedrock. Northern Telangana has no shortage of resources; it requires value-additive vision, strategic integration, and dedicated capital investment. That is the destination the region must now reach.



Bandi Sanjay Slams Assembly Proceedings



Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar strongly criticised the proceedings of the Telangana Legislative Assembly, alleging that both the Congress government and BRS were diverting attention from pressing public issues through political confrontations and verbal exchanges. Sanjay said people were unhappy with the conduct of legislators and alleged that the use of abusive language against the Speaker by BRS members was unacceptable in a democratic institution. He demanded legal action against those accused of assaulting police personnel, including BRS MLC Tata Madhu, while also calling for action against police personnel who allegedly used excessive force against BJP activists during protests over fee reimbursement. He questioned the decision to spend two days discussing a single controversy while issues affecting citizens remained unattended. According to Sanjay, students were waiting for fee reimbursement dues and certificates, farmers in southern Telangana were concerned about irrigation water, and unemployed youth were struggling amid limited employment opportunities. He also highlighted pend-

ing Dearness Allowance arrears, retirement benefits and bills affecting employees, teachers and pensioners. Other concerns, he said, included problems related to Section 22A land restrictions, rising prices, inadequate housing, sanitation and mosquito-borne illnesses. Sanjay criticised the alleged treatment of senior women legislators Sabitha Indra Reddy and Sunitha Laxma Reddy by police, describing it as unacceptable and demanding action against those responsible. He also questioned the political status of BRS leader K. Chandrashekar Rao and urged the government to ensure his participation in Assembly proceedings, even suggesting that sessions could be conducted at Erravalli if necessary. Alleging that Congress and BRS were working together against public interests, Sanjay said both parties were engaging in political theatrics instead of addressing people's grievances. He urged the Assembly to focus on solutions and provide BJP members adequate opportunities to raise public concerns. Sanjay asserted that the BJP would eventually form the government in Telangana and said development would require a "double-engine" government.

D.K. Aruna Condemns Police Conduct

Mahabubnagar, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

BJP Mahabubnagar MP D.K. Aruna strongly condemned the alleged treatment of former ministers and sitting MLAs Sabitha Indra Reddy and Sunitha Laxma Reddy by police personnel inside the Telangana Legislative Assembly premises. Aruna questioned who had instructed the police to allegedly behave inappropriately towards the two women legislators and asked whether the directions had come from Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy in his capacity as Chief Minister or Home Minister. She demanded an immediate explanation from the state government. She said the Assembly had discussed alleged objectionable remarks made by an MLC against the Speaker and had called for an apology and appropriate action. Aruna argued that the alleged conduct towards the women MLAs should also be examined by the House and treated with equal seriousness. Expressing concern over the alleged use of physical force, Aruna claimed that the legislators were subjected to humiliating treatment, including being pulled and manhandled. She said such behaviour was unacceptable, particularly within the premises of the legislature, and demanded strict action against the police personnel responsible. Aruna pointed out that both women legislators had previously served as ministers in the undivided Andhra Pradesh. She stressed that elected representatives must



be treated with dignity irrespective of their political affiliations and said women legislators deserved special respect. "If elected women representatives are treated in this manner, what can ordinary women expect?" she asked, stressing that the issue should not be viewed merely through a political lens. Calling the incident a matter that transcended party politics, Aruna said she was speaking both as a woman and as a Member of Parliament. She urged the Chief Minister and the state government to publicly apologise for the alleged incident. Aruna also demanded a prompt inquiry and disciplinary action against police personnel found responsible, asserting that maintaining dignity, equality and respect for women should be fundamental to the functioning of democratic institutions.

BJP Seeks Governor's Intervention on Fee Dues

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

A delegation of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Telangana State president N. Ramchander Rao, met Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla at Lok Bhavan on Tuesday and submitted a memorandum seeking his intervention for the release of nearly Rs 15,000 crore in pending fee reimbursement dues.

The BJP delegation urged the Governor to advise the Congress government to clear the arrears, stating that the delay was affecting the educational prospects of nearly 40 lakh students across Telangana. The delegation also sought a dedicated discussion in the ongoing Assembly session on the issue for at least one full day. The delegation included BJP state general secretaries N. Gautam Rao, T. Virender Goud and Vemula Ashok, vice-presidents, state secretaries, media representatives and BJYM leaders. Some youth-wing activists who were allegedly injured during police action against protesters on Monday also accompanied the delegation. Speaking to the media after the meeting, Ramchander Rao said students had been waiting for reimbursement payments accumulated during both the previous BRS administration and the present Congress government. He claimed that although some funds had been sanctioned



for students joining the current academic year following court observations and BJP protests, substantial old dues remained unpaid. According to the BJP leader, the arrears had also created difficulties for private educational institutions. He alleged that colleges were struggling to pay lecturers and professors and, in some cases, were forced to defer or reduce salaries. He warned that prolonged financial stress could affect the quality of education. Ramchander Rao criticised Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, who also holds the Education portfolio, over what he described as the government's failure to resolve the issue. He said the Governor had responded positively to the representation and assured the delegation that he would speak to the Chief Minister and

advise the government to take appropriate action. The BJP state president also criticised the conduct of the Assembly proceedings, alleging that Congress and BRS members were focusing on political disputes instead of discussing students' problems. He demanded a special discussion on fee reimbursement arrears during the current session. Ramchander Rao further alleged that BJP and BJYM activists were subjected to preventive arrests and police lathi-charge during protests. He sought withdrawal of cases filed against the protesters and said several injured activists were receiving treatment. He warned that if the government failed to respond within a few days, the BJP would intensify its agitation across Telangana, with greater participation from students.

Kavitha Questions Political Conduct

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Former MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha questioned the growing use of abusive political rhetoric, asking why opponents were being targeted with threats and personal attacks instead of being challenged through democratic and political means. Reacting to the recent controversy surrounding Congress MLA Veeralapalli Shankar, Kavitha alleged that his remarks were not an isolated incident and claimed that he had previously used offensive language against political leaders, communities and institutions. She questioned why the Congress leadership had not initiated disciplinary action and asked whether the party approved of such conduct.

Kavitha also questioned the alleged mobilisation of ruling-party leaders outside the residence of an opposition leader. She sought clarity on the Chief Minister's role in the episode and questioned the response of the state police, asking whether law enforcement agencies were taking appropriate action. Turning to public concerns, Kavitha said several sections of society were facing unresolved problems. Students, she said, were waiting for pending fee reimbursement payments, while unemployed youth remained uncertain due to the absence of



fresh job notifications and a clear job calendar. She highlighted farmers' concerns over the shortage of urea and the inclusion of agricultural lands under the prohibited '22-A' category. Polytechnic students, she said, were protesting against GO 97, while women were increasingly worried over reports of crimes, including murders and sexual assaults. Kavitha further pointed to complaints from students in residential educational institutions regarding food quality and basic facilities. Government employees

and teachers, she said, were also seeking action on pending issues, including implementation of the Pay Revision Commission and payment of outstanding Dearness Allowance arrears. She criticised both the ruling and opposition parties for spending two days of the Assembly session on political confrontations instead of public matters. Kavitha urged legislators to focus from the following day on issues affecting citizens and adopt concrete measures to resolve them.

Visa Fraud Case: Woman Questioned

Ibrahimpatnam, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Ibrahimpatnam police questioned Ramanandana on Monday in connection with an alleged fraud case involving the collection of lakhs of rupees from victims on the promise of renewing UK visas and arranging employment opportunities. Police said a case was registered following a complaint by Kranthi Kumar. Cases have been filed against Ramanandana, Madhukar and Madhukar's father, Mohana Rao. Look-out notices were also issued against the accused. According to police, Ramanandana later contacted authorities through email, expressing her willingness to cooperate with the investigation and seeking withdrawal of the notices. Ramanandana appeared before investigators for questioning after returning to India on a three-week leave. During the inquiry, she reportedly denied any involvement in the alleged visa renewal transactions. She also claimed that she had no association with Destiny Consultancy and said her husband, Madhukar, was responsible for managing its operations. Police said Ramanandana would be questioned again on September 16.



Investigators also indicated that Madhukar was expected to appear for questioning after Ramanandana returned to the United Kingdom. Meanwhile, more alleged victims are approaching the police with complaints. Srinivasa Rao of Addanki is among those who claimed to have lost money after being promised a UK visa renewal and a Certificate of Sponsorship for his son. Rao alleged that he paid Rs 18.5 lakh after being assured that his son would receive employment in the UK. He said he borrowed money to make the payment after developing confidence in Ramanandana through videos posted on YouTube. According to Rao, communication stopped after the money was transferred, leaving him unable to recover the amount. He alleged that several other people had also been similarly affected. Police are continuing their investigation and are examining the financial transactions, consultancy activities and allegations made by the complainants.

Ayyappa Puja Conference Concludes



Gundlupochampally, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

The two-day Kerala Tantric Ayyappa Puja Conference, organised in Hyderabad to familiarise devotees with traditional Ayyappa worship practices followed in Kerala, concluded with a grand mantra initiation ceremony. The spiritual programme was held on September 6 and 7 at AVR Convention Hall in Gundlupochampally, attracting Ayyappa devotees and spiritual practitioners. The sessions were conducted under the guidance of Brahmasri T.D.P. Nambodiri Guruji, founder of Mantra Vidya Peetham in Chengannur, Kerala, and supervised by K. Niranjan Rao Guruji. The first day began with Guru Vandana, followed by practical sessions explaining various aspects of Ayyappa worship according to the Kerala Tantric tradition. Participants were given hands-on training in conducting rituals and understanding customary procedures. The programme also featured the Ashtadasha Kalas

ha Puja and Ayyappa Padi Puja, performed in accordance with traditional practices. An evening Ayyappa Bhajana Sandhya provided devotees an opportunity to participate in devotional singing and prayer. The second day featured the Ayyappa Mantra padasha Mahotsavam, the principal attraction of the conference. The mantra initiation ceremony was followed by Guru Pada Puja and a felicitation programme. Certificates were also presented to participants who completed the training. An interactive session with Guruji was organised later in the evening. Participants sought clarification on various aspects of Ayyappa worship, ritual procedures and Padi Puja practices, with the Guruji providing guidance and explanations. Organisers said the conference provided devotees with an opportunity to learn traditional worship methods through both spiritual instruction and practical training. The event concluded in an atmosphere of devotion, learning and community participation.

Kaushik Reddy Targets Congress

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

BRS MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy criticised Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and the Congress government over recent developments in the Telangana Legislative Assembly, alleging that the ruling party was diverting attention from public issues through political confrontations. Speaking at the Assembly Media Point, Kaushik Reddy claimed that the Chief Minister had used objectionable and derogatory language on the floor of the House. He questioned whether action would also be initiated against ruling-party leaders who, he alleged, had made offensive remarks against opposition members. Kaushik Reddy also questioned the constitution of an Ethics Committee headed by Kadiyam Srihari, alleging that political considerations were influencing the process. He demanded equal standards while dealing with allegations involving legislators across party lines. The BRS MLA condemned the arrest of MLC Tata Madhu and alleged that his remarks concerning the Speaker had been misrepresented. He also accused the Congress government of deliberately disrupting Assembly proceedings and questioned the authority of police personnel to prevent opposition legislators from entering the House. Kaushik Reddy further alleged that women legislators Sabitha Indra Reddy and Sunitha Laxma Reddy were subjected to inappropriate treatment during a confrontation with police. He demanded accountability for those responsible and said the BRS would continue raising the issue until the government apologised. He also accused the Congress government of stopping the second phase of the Dalit Bandhu scheme and alleged that funds meant for beneficiaries in Huzurabad were being withdrawn. Kaushik Reddy challenged the Chief Minister and Congress leadership to face the electorate and made a political vow involving his resignation and an apology gesture if the Congress performed strongly in Huzurabad. He alleged that the government was failing to uphold democratic standards and demanded that the Assembly focus on public concerns rather than political disputes.

Minister Srihari Helps Collapsed Official

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Minister Vakiti Srihari displayed promptness and compassion at the Telangana Legislative Assembly premises after Naveen Mittal's Personal Secretary (PS), Raju, suddenly collapsed on Tuesday. The incident occurred while the Assembly proceedings were underway. On noticing Raju in distress, Minister Srihari immediately came forward to assist him and reportedly administered cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) as an emergency measure. The minister also provided first aid and ensured that medical assistance was sought

without delay. Medical personnel were called to the spot to assess Raju's condition and provide necessary care. Following the initial intervention, arrangements were made to shift him to a hospital for further medical treatment. An ambulance was summoned and Raju was transported for medical attention. The minister's immediate response drew attention at the Assembly premises, with those present appreciating his efforts to assist the official during the medical emergency. The incident highlighted the importance of providing immediate first aid and emergency medical support when a person suddenly collapses. Prompt CPR and rapid access



to professional medical care can be critical in situations involving cardiac or breathing

emergencies. Officials and staff at the Assembly premises reportedly assisted in coordinating medical support and transportation to the hospital. Further details regarding Raju's health condition were not immediately available. The incident briefly disrupted the routine activity at the Assembly premises, as officials and staff gathered to ensure that the affected person received timely assistance. Minister Srihari's intervention was seen as an example of immediate humanitarian response during an unexpected medical emergency, with priority given to securing medical attention and ensuring the official was shifted to hospital care as quickly as possible.

Buddhist Tourism Ties Discussed

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Tourism Special Chief Secretary Vani Prasad and Telangana State Tourism Development Corporation (TGTDC) Managing Director Gautami held discussions with a Buddhist delegation from Sri Lanka on Tuesday to strengthen cultural and tourism ties between the two countries. The Sri Lankan delegation included prominent Buddhist monk and Sahanya Foundation chairman Agraheer Kassapa Dheroo, along with Kausalya and Vaibhav. The meeting was facilitated by



Buddhavanam Special Officer Mallepalli Laxmaiah and focused on Buddhist heritage

preservation, research, education and tourism development. The delegation submitted a proposal seeking establishment of a dedicated Sri Lankan Buddhist centre at Buddhavanam, the major Buddhist tourism project being developed by the Telangana government. The proposed centre would focus on Buddhist culture, history, philosophy, study and research. Vani Prasad said Telangana has several important Buddhist heritage sites and that efforts were underway to develop them comprehensively, with Buddhavanam envisioned as a central hub. She assured the delegation that the Telangana government and TGTDC would extend neces-

sary cooperation towards establishing the proposed Sri Lankan centre. Later, representatives from Bhutan's travel, tourism and Buddhist sectors also met the Telangana officials. Former MP Ranjan Jamitho and Soul Tours and Travels CEO Langra Dorji were among those who attended. The discussions with the Bhutanese representatives covered strengthening tourism cooperation, attracting Buddhist pilgrims and tourists from Bhutan to Buddhavanam, developing Buddhist tourism circuits and promoting greater mutual engagement. Buddhavanam In-charge Manager D.R. Shyam Sundar Rao and other officials were also present.

Voters Raise Concerns Over SIR Notices

Quthbullapur, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Concerns over voting rights surfaced in Suraram Colony as residents staged a protest against confusion surrounding notices issued during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The protest was held outside the SIR verification centre at Louis Braille Bhavan, where locals questioned whether eligible voters should face difficulties in exercising their franchise because they lack certain documents. Protesters said many residents were unclear about the purpose of the notices, the evidence required for verification and the procedure to be followed after receiving them. Raising slogans and displaying placards, the protesters stressed that voting is a constitutional right of eligible

citizens and should not depend solely on the availability of extensive documentation. They expressed concern that vulnerable sections, including homeless persons, economically weaker families, illiterate residents and migrant workers, could face difficulties if the verification process relies heavily on documentary evidence. They urged authorities to ensure that lack of documents alone does not unfairly raise doubts about a person's eligibility. The residents said the SIR exercise should focus on identifying genuine and eligible voters rather than creating fear or uncertainty among the electorate. They called for clear communication, adequate assistance and transparency at verification centres. The protesters also appealed to the Chief Electoral Officer to take steps to ensure that no eligible voter is



excluded from the electoral rolls because of procedural confusion or difficulties in producing documents. Chandrasekhar, Ramu, Ramakrishna, Narendar Reddy and others participated in the protest.

BRS Seeks Action on Election Promises

Quthbullapur, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leaders staged a protest in Saibaba Nagar, questioning the Congress government over the alleged delay in implementing promises made during the Assembly election campaign. The protest was led by senior BRS leader Varala Vinod Kumar in the 292nd Division. As part of the pro-

gramme, party leaders submitted a representation at the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, seeking action on issues concerning various sections of society. The protesters demanded that the government fulfill its commitments to unemployed youth, students, farmers, senior citizens and widows. They alleged that several assurances made by the Congress, including 420 promises, 13 declarations and six guarantees, had not

been implemented as promised. The BRS leaders said the protest was organised under the slogan, "Let us question public issues and fight for our rights." They stated that the programme was conducted following directions from Medchal-Malkajigiri BRS president and MLC Shambipur Raju and Quthbullapur MLA K.P. Vivekananda Goud. The protesters urged the government to provide clarity on the status of its electoral

commitments and take concrete steps to fulfil them. They said public representatives must remain accountable for assurances made to voters during elections. BRS activists Rajkumar Mudiraj, Tara Singh, Gattu Ashok, Bhaskar, Raju Yadav, Narayana, Chinnave Venkataswamy, Bairish Goud, Majid Pasha, Badri, Hayat Pasha, Zaher, Muncer, Anil, Ganesh and Ravi were among those who participated in the protest.



Pranshuta Wins Two Gold Medals

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Dasi Pranshuta has earned two gold medals in the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism at Osmania University, bringing recognition to her family and academic institutions. A native of Kunaram village in Peddapalli district, Pranshuta was born in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. She pursued her schooling at Kendriya Vidyalayas in Bengaluru and Warangal, where she emerged as a topper in both Class 10 and Intermediate examinations. She continued her academic journey at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University (BAMU), excelling in her undergraduate studies and securing the top position. She later joined Osmania University for postgraduate studies in Mass Communication and Journalism, where she achieved the distinction of winning two gold medals. Pranshuta is the daughter of Dasi Prabhakar, a former Indian Air Force officer, and Kalpana, a government school teacher. Prabhakar served



in the Indian Air Force and took part in the Kargil War. He was also honoured with a service medal for his contribution to the nation. Her parents expressed happiness over their daughter's achievement and said her success reflected years of discipline, commitment and hard work. Pranshuta's accomplishment has brought pride to Kunaram and serves as an example of how sustained academic dedication can lead to outstanding achievements.

Sanjay Kumar Criticises Government

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

BRS MLA Kalvakuntla Sanjay Kumar criticised the Telangana government over recent Assembly developments, alleging that the administration was failing to address pressing public concerns and was instead indulging in political confrontations. Speaking at the Assembly Media Point, Sanjay Kumar alleged that police personnel had behaved inappropriately with women legislators during protests at the Assembly premises. He questioned the deployment and conduct of police personnel and demanded accountability for those allegedly involved. He said the BRS had preserved photographic evidence of the incident. The MLA also raised concerns over what he described as increasing crimes against women and alleged that the government had failed to respond adequately to the situation. Sanjay Kumar said the BRS would raise several public issues in the Assembly, including problems related to Section 22A land restric-

tions, GO 97, urea shortages, power supply, fee reimbursement, Rythu Bharosa and Dalit Bandhu. He also sought clarity on pension benefits for beedi workers in his constituency. He questioned what he called unnecessary expenditure on projects and events, including Future City and the Musi beautification programme, arguing that public funds should instead be used for welfare measures. The MLA further alleged that large areas of land had been brought under the 22A prohibited list and demanded that the government address concerns of affected landowners. Sanjay Kumar also criticised the functioning of the Assembly, comparing its sitting days with those of legislatures in other countries. He demanded that the Telangana Assembly meet for at least a month each year to ensure adequate time for detailed discussion of public issues. He urged the Chief Minister to avoid what he described as petty politics and concentrate on governance and people's grievances.

Vijaya Ramana Challenges BRS

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Congress MLA Ch. Vijaya Ramana Rao accused BRS leaders of attempting to divert attention from their alleged misconduct during

the recent Assembly controversy. He alleged that BRS members had made offensive remarks concerning a serving police officer's mother and criticised what he described as disrespectful language

directed at the Chief Minister and the Speaker. Vijaya Ramana Rao also accused former Chief Minister K. Chandrababbarao of failing to provide adequate representation to Dalits in the cabinet during his

tenure. He alleged that the BRS government had also deprived Dalits of land and claimed that the Dalit Bandhu scheme was introduced primarily for electoral purposes. The MLA demanded that

KCR attend the Assembly and apologise on behalf of BRS legislators for the previous day's incident. He said the remarks made against the Speaker were deeply distressing and alleged that they had caused

considerable emotional anguish. He also criticised BRS women leaders over their conduct during the confrontation, accusing them of turning the episode into a political spectacle.

CITU Demands ASHA Salary Hike

Tangallapalli, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

CITU District Secretary Kodam Ramana condemned the preventive arrests of ASHA workers in Tangallapalli mandal and demanded that the Telangana government immediately implement its promised fixed monthly salary of Rs 18,000. The ASHA workers were reportedly preparing to travel to Hyderabad to participate in a dharna at Indira Park organised by the ASHA Workers' Union. The protest was aimed at pressing for implementation of the salary demand and resolution of other pending grievances during the ongoing Assembly session. Police detained the workers preventively and took them to the local police station. Ramana visited the Tangallapalli police station and expressed solidarity with the detained workers. He questioned the action against health workers



who were seeking better working conditions and fulfilment of government assurances. He said protests could not be suppressed through preventive arrests and urged the government to demon-

strate its commitment by addressing the workers' demands. He also sought immediate clearance of pending payments, including six months of PRC arrears and dues related to leprosy-control pro-

grammes, Pulse Polio campaigns and election duties. Ramana demanded that ASHA workers not be burdened with online NCD data-entry work or forced to carry heavy screening kits. He also opposed pressure through ANC and PNC service targets. The CITU leader sought 20 days of casual leave and maternity leave for ASHA workers, along with Sundays and other holidays. He called for greater attention to their health and welfare, recalling their frontline role during the COVID-19 pandemic. He further demanded Rs 50 lakh insurance coverage and Rs 50,000 financial assistance towards funeral expenses for ASHA workers. Ramana warned that continued inaction could lead to an indefinite statewide strike. He said ASHA workers across Telangana were prepared to intensify their agitation if their demands remained unresolved.

Onion Prices Soar



Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Onion prices have risen sharply across the Telugu states, placing additional pressure on household budgets. Retail prices, which were around Rs 30-50 per kg a month ago, have now climbed to Rs 70-80 per kg in several markets. White onions are selling at even higher rates, with prices crossing Rs 100 per kg. At Hyderabad's Malakpet wholesale market, onion prices are currently ranging between Rs 4,500 and Rs 5,200 per quintal, reflecting the tight supply situation. Traders attributed the increase to a decline in onion production in major growing states, particularly Maharashtra and Karnataka.

They said adverse weather conditions, including the impact of El Niño, have affected crop yields and reduced arrivals in wholesale markets. The reduced availability has pushed up wholesale prices, with the increase subsequently being reflected in retail markets across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Traders said the elevated prices are expected to persist for some time and may ease only after fresh supplies from the local harvest begin reaching markets. Consumers have expressed concern over the sudden increase, as onions are a regular kitchen staple. Market observers said prices could remain volatile until supply improves and fresh arrivals become more consistent.

Mohan Naik Earns PhD



Chinnashankarampet, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Halavath Mohan Naik, who comes from a remote tribal hamlet, has achieved a significant academic milestone by earning a PhD from Osmania University. Mohan Naik received the doctorate during Osmania University's 85th convocation ceremony. The degree was presented by Telangana Governor and OU Chancellor Shiv Pratap Shukla in the presence of chief guest Dr. Krishna Ella, founder and chairman of Bharat Biotech, and OU Vice-Chancellor M. Kumar. He completed his doctoral research in the Department of Hindi at Osmania University on the topic "Buddhist Philosophy in Contemporary Hindi Plays" (Samkaleen Hindi Natakon Mein Bauddha Darshan). His research was carried out under the guidance of Professor Sheela Mishra. Naik's academic journey was marked by several challenges. Growing up in a tribal thanda, he had to pursue his education amid financial difficulties and limited facilities for

study. Despite these obstacles, he remained committed to higher education and continued working towards his academic goals. Apart from academics, Naik was actively associated with the second phase of the Telangana movement. He later served as the Sarpanch of Kamaram Thanda and went on to take responsibilities as president of the Sarpanches' Forum and the Mandal Congress Party, with the support of Mynampally Rohit and Hanumantha Rao. His achievement has been widely viewed as an inspiring example for young people in rural and tribal communities. His journey demonstrates that determination and sustained effort can help overcome difficult circumstances. After receiving the doctorate, Naik expressed gratitude to all those who supported and encouraged him throughout his educational journey. His accomplishment has brought recognition to his native community and highlighted the importance of perseverance in pursuing higher education.

Two Held for Ganja Sale

Suryapet, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Police arrested two youths for allegedly selling ganja in Ramannagudem village under the jurisdiction of Atmakur (S) police station in Suryapet district and seized 104 grams of the contraband. Acting on credible information about the illegal sale of ganja in the village, Atmakur (S) police conducted checks and detained Allipuri Akhil, 23, and Mattapalli Gangaraju, 22, both residents of Ramannagudem. During the operation, police seized 104 grams of ganja, two mobile phones and a motorcycle allegedly used in connection with the activity. Suryapet Rural Circle Inspector Rajashekhar said a case had been registered against the two accused under provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

After completing the necessary procedures, the accused were produced before a court and remanded to judicial custody. The CI disclosed details of the arrests at the circle office on Monday. Atmakur (S) Sub-Inspector Ailayah and other police personnel were present during the briefing. Rajashekhar appealed to young people to stay away from ganja and other addictive substances, warning that drug consumption could seriously affect their education, careers and future prospects. He urged youth to concentrate on education, employment and sports and adopt healthier pursuits. The CI further warned that police would continue monitoring the illegal sale and consumption of narcotic substances in the area. He said strict legal action would be taken against individuals found involved in drug trafficking or related activities.

Loyola Students Extend Support

Bachupally, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Second-year Commerce students of Loyola Academy Degree and PG College participated in a humanitarian service programme at the Desire Society in Bachupally on Tuesday as part of the institution's 'Planet' social service initiative. The students spent time with children living with HIV/AIDS, offering them encouragement, companionship and emotional support. The initiative aimed to promote compassion among students while creating awareness about the challenges faced by children affected by the disease. The programme was conducted under the guidance of college Vice-Principals Fr. B. Peter and Fr. Anil Kumar, Correspondent Fr. A. Rex Angelio and Fr. Dr. N.B. Babu. Extension Activities Officer Stephen Asirvadam coordinated the activity. College Director Dr. Neelima and Project Head Venkatesh conducted an awareness session for students on HIV/AIDS, covering its transmission, symptoms and preventive measures. They stressed the importance of dispelling misconceptions surrounding the disease and urged students to oppose discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS. During their interaction, the students developed a warm bond with the children and shared guidance on health, personal hygiene, self-care, cleanliness and education. The interaction provided the students with an opportunity to understand the importance of empathy and social responsibility. College representatives said such initiatives help students develop a humanitarian outlook while encouraging them to contribute meaningfully to society. The participating students said they intended to remain connected with children living with HIV/AIDS and continue supporting them through future social service programmes. The initiative highlighted the role educational institutions can play in promoting awareness, compassion and an inclusive attitude towards vulnerable communities.

BRS Conduct Questioned

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Congress MLC and Whip Balmuri Venkat Narsing Rao accused BRS leaders K.T. Rama Rao and T. Harish Rao of deliberately protecting their party MLAs despite allegations of misconduct. Reacting to an incident in which BRS leaders allegedly removed their shirts in the presence of women police personnel, Rao questioned whether such behaviour reflected the political culture promoted

by former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao. He further alleged that BRS leaders were intentionally insulting the Dalit community through their actions. Rao said the Congress would continue its campaign seeking the removal of Tata Madhu from his position. Rao maintained that accountability was essential and asserted that the issue would remain a matter of public concern until appropriate action was taken.

Adi Srinivas Demands KCR Apology

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Congress MLA and Whip Adi Srinivas alleged that BRS president K. Chandrashekar Rao had failed to respond to the incident reported in the Assembly on Monday. He demanded that KCR attend the Assembly and apologise to Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar over the episode. Srinivas alleged that police personnel

deployed for duty were pushed aside during the incident. He also questioned the conduct of a BRS MLA who had appeared with bandages on Monday but, according to him, showed no visible signs of injury the following day. Srinivas accused the BRS leader of staging a drama to gain public sympathy. He said such conduct undermined the dignity of the Assembly and demanded accountability from those involved.

Physiotherapy Day Marked at MIMS



Ghanpur, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

World Physiotherapy Day was celebrated with enthusiasm at Mediciti College of Physiotherapy in Ghanpur, under Yellampet municipal limits, with students and faculty participating in a series of activities. Various competitions were organised for students as part of the celebrations. The main programme was later conducted in the college auditorium and began with the traditional lighting of the lamp. Dr. C. Mallikarjuna Reddy, Academic Director of SHARE Medical Care Foundation, attended the event as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Ramesh Reddy highlighted the growing significance of physiotherapy in modern healthcare. He said physiotherapy plays an important role in helping patients restore mobility, strength and normal physical functioning following medical treatment. College Principal Dr. Mohammed Rafi said the programme was intended to increase awareness about the contribution of physiotherapy to healthcare, particularly in managing and preventing

complications associated with heart-related conditions. Dr. Mallikarjuna Reddy stressed the importance of prevention and early intervention in healthcare. He said people should give greater attention to preventive measures rather than waiting until illnesses become serious. Early identification of heart-related disorders, followed by appropriate medical advice and lifestyle precautions, could help protect lives, he observed. Students also presented skits highlighting the applications and benefits of physiotherapy, using the performances to communicate health-related messages to the audience. Prizes were subsequently distributed to winners of the various competitions. Dr. Ram Kalyan, Professor S. Haimavathi, doctors, faculty members and students attended the celebrations. The programme provided an opportunity to recognise the contribution of physiotherapy professionals while encouraging students to promote awareness about rehabilitation, preventive healthcare and healthy living.

Balaram Naik Sought for TPCC Post



Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Leaders of the All India Tribal JAC have demanded that senior Congress leader and Mahabubabad MP Porika Balaram Naik be appointed as the next president of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC). The demand was raised at a meeting held at Osmania University under the leadership of Tribal JAC State president Suresh Naik. All India Tribal JAC chairman Ravinder Naik attended the meeting as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, Ravinder Naik said the Banjara community has a significant population across the country and claimed that the community had played an important role in strengthening the Congress party in Telangana. However, he alleged that the Lambada and Banjara communities had not received adequate political representation or recognition in the state government. He appealed to Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge, senior party leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, and other members of the party's leader-

ship to consider appointing Balaram Naik as TPCC president. Ravinder Naik also sought greater representation for the Banjara community within the Congress organisation at the national level. He pointed out that leaders belonging to Scheduled Caste, Backward Class and minority communities had previously headed the Telangana Congress, while the Scheduled Tribe community had yet to receive the opportunity. He said several Lambadi organisations were supporting Balaram Naik's candidature, describing him as a senior and committed Congress leader. The meeting was attended by tribal student leaders Ravi Naik, Praveen Naik Maloth, Suresh Naik, Gopi Naik, Sneha, Swapna, Ramesh and Prakash. Leaders from various tribal welfare and community organisations, including Rukmini Bai, Sandhya Bai, Korra Lakpathi, Chandulal Rathod and Bhukya Bhaskar Naik, also participated. Congress leaders Shankar Naik, Rangalal Naik and Gugulothu Sriram Naik were among those present.

Sant Sena Maharaj Remembered



Ichoda, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

The death anniversary of Sri Sant Sena Maharaj was observed with devotion and grandeur at Ichoda mandal headquarters in Adilabad district on Tuesday. The programme was organised by the Nai Brahmana Seva Sangham, Ichoda, at the local community association building, with a large number of members and devotees taking part. Association representatives said the death anniversary of Sant Sena Maharaj is traditionally observed every year during Shrivana Krishna Paksha Dwadashi or Trayodashi, the 12th or 13th day of the waning phase of the Shrivana month. They said the annual observance was aimed at remembering his spiritual teachings, values and dedication to service. As part of the celebrations, members offered

floral tributes to the portrait of Sant Sena Maharaj and recalled his contribution to the community. A food donation programme was later organised, with meals served to devotees and members of the public. Earlier, the Sanatana Dharma Seva Samiti of Ichoda conducted a Hanuman Chalisa recitation as part of the religious proceedings. Ichoda Sarpanch Kodapa Jalai Jaku, Nai Brahmana Seva Sangham president Kathalapur Giridhar and secretary Jangama Prasad attended the event along with association members Singarapu Lakshman, Degala Ravi, Kodikula Vittal, Kathalapur Pothanna, Vadnala Ramu and Ravi. Representatives and community members from Nai Brahmana associations in Sirikonda, Neradigonda and Sonala mandals also participated and paid their respects to Sant Sena Maharaj.

Ramchandru Nayak Condemns BRS Conduct

Hyderabad, Sept 8 | TPN Bureau

Congress MLA and Whip Ramchandru Nayak strongly criticised BRS leaders over their conduct during Monday's Assembly proceedings. He alleged that their behaviour was shameful and accused the opposition

party of attempting to create unrest after losing power following years of alleged irregularities and corruption. Nayak further alleged that BRS leaders insulted the Dalit community through their actions. He claimed that they behaved disrespectfully towards police personnel deployed for duty and were subsequently

spreading what he described as false propaganda to portray themselves as victims. Nayak demanded cancellation of BRS MLA Tata Madhu's Assembly membership, alleging that Madhu had behaved improperly towards the Speaker. He said strict action was necessary to uphold the dignity of the legislature.

Editorial

Political Domination
Overshadows
People's Problems

The opening day of the Telangana Assembly Sessions once again exposed the growing gap between political competition and the real problems faced by the people. Instead of using the Assembly as a platform to discuss public issues and find practical solutions, both the Opposition and the ruling party appeared more interested in gaining political advantage.

The Opposition seems determined to create tension and confront the police, while the ruling party is attempting to target Opposition leaders and expose their alleged conduct in the name of political values and accountability. In this political battle, both sides appear to be competing for dominance rather than demonstrating seriousness about governance.

Every confrontation is being treated as an opportunity to score political points. Every controversy is being converted into a weapon against the other side. The Opposition wants to portray the government as authoritarian, while the ruling party seeks to project the Opposition as irresponsible and disruptive. This cycle may benefit political parties in the short term, but it does little to benefit ordinary citizens.

The real concern is that the Assembly is gradually becoming an arena for political championship rather than a forum for addressing people's grievances. Issues relating to employment, development, welfare, infrastructure, education, healthcare and the economy require serious debate and constructive solutions. Instead, political energy is being consumed by accusations, counter-accusations and confrontations.

Both sides must recognise that people did not elect their representatives merely to witness political battles. They expect their representatives to debate issues, question policies, provide alternatives and ensure that governance improves.

The coming elections may be influencing the strategies of both the ruling party and the Opposition. However, electoral calculations cannot permanently replace public responsibility. Political parties may gain temporary mileage from confrontation, but people ultimately judge governments and Opposition leaders by their performance.

Telangana needs politics that delivers solutions, not politics that thrives on tension. The Assembly must return to its real purpose: representing the people and resolving their problems.

-Editor

A 20-Seat Public Mood...
A Signal for Pawan's Role in 2029?

Jana Sena's Independent Litmus Test in Local Body Polls



Chennu Peddiraju

Senior Journalist

The 2029 Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh are still a long way off, yet the maneuvers of political parties already point in that direction. In particular, the Jana Sena Party (JSP), a partner in the ruling coalition, is crafting fresh plans for its political expansion. At this juncture, the latest India Today-CVoter Mood of the Nation (MOTN) survey projected that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) would secure 20 out of 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh. The survey projected: TDP-JSP combine: 18-19 seats, BJP: 1-3 seats, YSRCP: 4-5 seats. These figures estimate outcomes if parliamentary elections were held today-they are not a direct projection of the 2029 Assembly election results. Nevertheless, a buzz has emerged on social media claiming that, according to the survey, the public wants Pawan Kalyan to become Chief Minister in 2029.

What Is the Real Signal from the Survey?

The primary takeaway for Andhra Pradesh is the substantial public goodwill the ruling NDA coalition continues to enjoy. In 2024, the TDP, Jana Sena, and BJP joined forces to prevent a split in the anti-incumbency vote, handing the YSRCP a heavy defeat. Two years into governance, a projection of 20 Lok Sabha seats for the alliance is a notable political indicator. However, this raises a pertinent question: should this 20-seat projection be seen solely as the strength of the Telugu Desam Party, or does Jana Sena hold a significant political stake in it? This question brings Jana Sena's upcoming strategic moves into sharp focus.

Pawan's 2024 Decision vs. Jana Sena's 2026 Strategy

Pawan Kalyan's political decision ahead of the 2024 elections was clear: forge an alliance with the TDP and the BJP. He consistently maintained that the coalition was essential for govern-

mental stability. A few months after forming the government, he openly praised Chandrababu Naidu's leadership on the floor of the Assembly, stating that Naidu should continue as Chief Minister for another decade. In 2025, he reaffirmed his commitment to alliance unity, expressing confidence that the TDP-JSP-BJP alliance could endure for 15 to 20 years. Viewing Jana Sena's current 2026 strategy as an attempt to find an alternative to Chandrababu Naidu would be premature. The objective is different: strengthening Jana Sena's independent organizational footprint while remaining an integral part of the coalition.

Local Body Polls: The Real Litmus Test

This is why the upcoming local body elections are becoming pivotal. In the 2024 Assembly elections, Jana Sena contested 21 seats. The party now believes the same seat-sharing ratio should not automatically apply to local body elections. Instead, it is advancing the idea of contesting wherever the party possesses ground strength. Reports indicate that party chief Pawan Kalyan has instructed Jana Sena MLAs not to confine them-

selves to their assembly segments, but to assess organizational strength across broader regions. The party appears to be preparing to pitch for a more substantial share of seats in local elections. This marks a meaningful shift: local elections will reveal where voters back Jana Sena on its own merits rather than purely as part of the broader coalition vote.

A Test of Jana Sena's Independent Strength

Attributing Jana Sena's 2024 success entirely to its stand-alone strength is as premature as reducing it solely to the alliance. The synergy of the TDP, JSP, and BJP was evident in the final tally. Now, the party faces a different challenge: how far can it build its grassroots organizational machinery while leveraging the alliance? If Jana Sena contests a wider slate of local body seats and secures substantial victories, its political bargaining power within the coalition will naturally increase by 2029. Conversely, subpar results would signal that its organizational structure still has ground to cover. Local elections are therefore an acid test of Jana Sena's institutional capacity. Pawan's Expanding

Political Stature

Pawan Kalyan's evolving profile is another factor to consider. He is no longer just the president of Jana Sena; he is the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh holding major ministerial portfolios. He has also established a distinct profile within the national NDA. On his recent birthday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded Pawan Kalyan as a widely respected public figure and commended his role in driving good governance under the NDA in Andhra Pradesh. While this does not indicate an imminent chief ministerial role, it reflects a political stature that extends beyond state boundaries into national NDA circles.

Where Does Chandrababu Naidu Stand?

Political analysis requires nuance here: pointing out Pawan's political rise does not imply an erosion of Chandrababu Naidu's standing. The two leaders possess distinct political strengths. Mainly Chandrababu Naidu has Decades of administrative experience, a statewide organizational network built over four decades, and extensive political capital. Where as Pawan Kalyan Personal mass appeal, strong youth support, a central role in forging the 2024 alliance, and his executive responsibilities in government. Viewing the 2029 elections through a "Chandrababu vs. Pawan" lens is an oversimplification. The real question is how each party expands its independent organizational base while preserving coalition unity. Between now and 2029, the political ground can shift along several axes. Before the readers many questions poses. How effectively will the government

deliver on its commitments?

How will public perception of the coalition evolve? To what extent can the YSRCP rebuild its grassroots machinery? How will the leadership succession dynamic evolve within the TDP? How much ground strength will Jana Sena demonstrate in local elections? How far can the BJP expand its independent footprint in the state? Without clarity on these factors, determining the leadership landscape for 2029 remains speculative.

Where the Story Truly Begins

The projected 20 Lok Sabha seats reflect the enduring strength of the coalition. Simultaneously, Jana Sena's proactive posture ahead of local elections introduces an independent test of strength. Taken together, the central question surrounding Pawan Kalyan's political trajectory is not "Will he become Chief Minister tomorrow?" Rather, it is: "How much will his political leverage within the coalition expand by 2029?" Local body elections are poised to provide the first answers. If Jana Sena delivers on its expectations, Pawan Kalyan's role in future political discussions will naturally draw greater focus. This neither guarantees a chief ministerial bid nor implies an immediate alternative to Chandrababu Naidu's leadership. What it will measure is whether Jana Sena is successfully transitioning from a junior coalition partner into an increasingly consequential political force in its own right. For now, political focus remains on the upcoming local body polls-where the opening chapter of the 2029 narrative will likely be written.

Degrees Are Increasing...
Why Are Jobs Declining?



Higher education in India has expanded rapidly over the past few decades. What was once accessible only to a limited section of society has now reached even rural areas. By 2023, the share of graduates among young people aged 20-29 had increased from just 4 per cent in 1983 to 28 per cent. This represents a remarkable expansion of educational opportunities. However, at the same time, the number of graduates in this age group had reached 63 million, of whom around 11 million were unemployed. This is where the real problem lies. India is educating an increasing number of young people, but its economy has not created employment opportunities at the same pace for those who are becoming more educated. The State of Working India 2026, released by

Azim Premji University, also highlights this contradiction. The number of graduates has increased much faster than the availability of graduate-level employment. At the same time, people with degrees continue to earn higher average incomes, indicating that the value of education itself has not disappeared. The deeper problem lies in the transition from education to employment. In other words, the degree still has value, but the pathway from a degree to a suitable job has become increasingly weak. One major reason is the widening gap between the education system and the labour market. Students often pursue degrees primarily to obtain formal qualifications, while employers increasingly demand practical skills, work experience, communication abilities and tech-

nological competence. As a result, there are young people who possess degrees but lack the skills required for available jobs, while others possess the necessary skills but cannot find suitable employment. However, attributing unemployment entirely to a lack of skills would present only half the reality. According to the Institute for Human Development and ILO report, the Indian economy is not creating enough well-paying, white-collar jobs to match the growing number of highly educated young people. The problem is particularly severe among young people from economically disadvantaged and socially marginalised communities. This is one of the reasons why millions of young Indians continue to compete for government jobs. The huge num-

ber of applications received for even a single government vacancy is not merely a reflection of an obsession with government employment. It reflects the search for stable income, job security and social dignity. Although the private sector offers employment opportunities, not all of them provide the kind of jobs young people aspire to. Low wages, contractual employment, lack of job security and long working hours remain significant concerns. Therefore, the important question is not simply whether jobs exist, but what kind of jobs are available? Another important dimension is the situation of rural youth. Students in urban areas generally have greater access to coaching, internships, networking opportunities and pri-

vate training. In rural areas, however, many young people lack proper guidance on what to pursue after graduation, which skills to acquire and where employment opportunities exist. As a result, a large number of them spend several years preparing for competitive examinations. Social inequality further deepens this problem. According to the ILO report, in 2022, unemployment among graduates or those with higher education was 35 per cent among SC youth and 33.4 per cent among ST youth, compared with 28.7 per cent among OBC youth and 26.5 per cent among the General Category. This clearly shows that obtaining a degree alone does not guarantee equal access to employment opportunities. Meanwhile, technological changes such as artificial intelligence and automation are likely to transform the nature of employment even further. Some traditional jobs may decline, some may undergo significant changes, while new categories of employment may emerge. The era in which a single degree could guarantee one stable career for an entire lifetime is therefore likely to become even less relevant. But the solution cannot simply be to ask every young person to collect more certificates and qualifications. What is needed is a stronger connection between education and the labour market, greater opportunities for apprenticeships and internships within industries, stronger small and medium-sized enterprises, and economic policies

that actively create new and productive employment opportunities. The real problem facing India is not that there are 'too many degrees'. The problem is that quality employment is not growing at the same pace as the number of degree holders. An educated young population is one of India's greatest assets. But if the country fails to provide productive, dignified employment that matches their skills and aspirations, the same demographic advantage can turn into a major socio-economic challenge.

If India is to convert its demographic dividend into an economic dividend, narrowing the gap between education and employment must become an urgent priority. Therefore, it is not enough to question young people by asking, "What skills do you have?" The country must also ask, "How many jobs have been created that match those skills?" The expansion of colleges may be a sign of educational progress.

The rise in the number of degrees may reflect the expansion of access to higher education. But if young people continue to spend years searching for employment after earning those degrees, the problem cannot be viewed merely as a failure of the youth. It is a larger failure involving the education system, the economy and the labour market. India must not merely create more degrees. It must create enough quality jobs that give those degrees real economic value. That is the real measure of development.

Basada Sampath Yadav

Education Expert
7032132593

51,979 Tip-Offs Help Punjab Cops Arrest Over 25,000

Punjab's anti-drug campaign, Yudh Nashean Virudh, has received a major boost from citizen participation, with 51,979 tip-offs helping enforcement agencies arrest 25,339 people between March 1, 2025, and September 3, 2026. The tip-offs were received through the Safe Punjab Helpline (97791-00200), which allows citizens to provide information about suspected drug peddling and related activities. The figures show the growing role of public-generated intelligence in supporting the state's anti-narcotics enforcement efforts. According to the data, 59,293 FIRs have been registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act during the campaign period. Of these, more than 25,000 arrests were linked to information received through citizen tip-offs. The crackdown has also targeted



major players in the drug trade. As many as 696 "big fish" were arrested with more than 2 kg of heroin each, indicating that enforcement agencies have focused on individuals allegedly handling large quantities rather than limiting action to street-level peddlers. The scale of recoveries further underlines the extent of the operation. Authorities seized 3,757 kg of

heroin, 964 kg of opium, 45 tonnes of poppy husk, 1,288 kg of ganja and 71 kg of methamphetamine, commonly known as ICE. In addition, 62 lakh tablets and capsules were recovered under the NDPS Act. The campaign also resulted in the seizure of Rs 22 crore in drug money. A total of 2,675 cases involving commercial quantities of drugs were registered.

Punjab DGP Gaurav Yadav said citizen tip-offs had provided additional strength to the Anti-Narcotics Task Force and expressed confidence that public participation would increase further. Nilabh Kishore, ADGP, Anti-Narcotics Task Force, Punjab, said the figures reflected an approach combining enforcement action with citizen-generated intelligence. The campaign has also focused on helping people struggling with addiction. Police facilitated the admission of 42,498 persons into de-addiction centres, while another 1,55,970 persons were taken to Outpatient Opioid Assisted Treatment (OOAT) clinics. Separately, 11,239 individuals received immunity under Section 64A of the NDPS Act after voluntarily undergoing treatment, highlighting the campaign's dual focus on disrupting drug networks and encouraging rehabilitation.

Rahul Gandhi Calls Punjab Protester, Police Personnel Face Action



Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has spoken to Mohanjit Singh Sheron, who is undergoing treatment at Civil Hospital, Sangrur, following allegations of police assault. The phone call has brought the controversy into the national political spotlight as the Congress stepped up its criticism of the Punjab government. Rahul Gandhi spoke to Sheron during a visit by Punjab Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring to the hospital. Warring facilitated the conversation between the Congress leader and Sheron, who was allegedly beaten after being detained by police during Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's event in Sangrur. The Punjab government has meanwhile initiated action against police personnel in connection with the incident. DSP Harwinder Singh has been transferred, while Inspector Partek Jindal, SI Baljit Singh and ASI Harpreet Singh have been sent to the Sangrur Police Lines with immediate effect. The controversy began after Sheron was allegedly detained when he was seen around 200 to 230 metres from the Chief Minister's Lok Milni event. He was reportedly holding a black flag and raising slogans against the government.

According to the police, security personnel and officials removed Sheron from the spot and took him for verification. Police claimed that eight FIRs had previously been registered against him under serious criminal sections. Police said preventive action was subsequently initiated and Sheron was arrested around 10:30 pm before being kept at Cheema Police Station. Officials have relied on a medical examination conducted before his production before the SDM, which recorded "no fresh injury marks present on examination." Police also claimed that two drug tests conducted the following morning returned positive results. However, after Sheron was handed over to his family following intervention by the village panchayat, he was taken to Civil Hospital, Sangrur. Doctors there recorded 10 injuries in his medico-legal report (MLR), creating a discrepancy between the initial medical examination and the subsequent report. Police officials have highlighted the difference between the two medical records. The complete medical record and other relevant documents have now been placed under the supervision of police headquarters for further examination. Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema has condemned the incident and said allegations of assault are being investigated. Rahul Gandhi's direct conversation with Sheron and the government's disciplinary action against police personnel have added political weight to the controversy. The incident has now emerged as a fresh flashpoint between the ruling AAP government and the opposition Congress in Punjab, with questions continuing over Sheron's detention, the alleged assault and the conflicting medical findings.

PM Modi Takes 'Naraaz Fufa' Swipe at Opposition

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday took a sharp swipe at the opposition while contrasting the challenges faced by India in 2013 with the country's present economic and social position. Addressing the centenary celebrations of Delhi University's Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC), he also spoke directly to students about entrepreneurship, innovation and India's future. Referring to his Independence Day address from the Red Fort on August 15, Modi said he had administered "homoeopathic pills" to his critics by using the term "Dimagi Naxals". He said the remarks had prompted opponents to reveal their "true colours". The Prime Minister divided people into two categories, saying one group positively transforms society's strength into national strength, while another behaves like a "Naraaz Fufa", or angry uncle, who questions every major initiative. Modi cited criticism surrounding projects and initiatives including the world's largest statue, bullet



trains, UPI, semiconductor chips and the new Parliament building. He also referred to the memorial for army personnel who died for the country, saying critics repeatedly questioned the need for such projects. Looking back at the situation before 2014, Modi referred to

the 2013 Kedarnath disaster, the 2008 banking crisis and the Mumbai terror attack. He said his government had also faced major challenges, including COVID, the Russia-Ukraine war and the Iran conflict, but India had emerged stronger. The Prime Minister high-

lighted India's expanding global trade links, saying free trade agreements had been signed with nearly 40 countries over the last decade. He said opening new markets would create additional opportunities for the country's youth. Modi expressed confidence that India would become a developed nation through the efforts of its 1.4 billion citizens. He said India would emerge as a global hub for research and innovation and predicted that the country would have its own space station and host the Olympics. Addressing students, he contrasted campus life at SRCC with opportunities outside college. He said young Indians now aspire to build startups, unicorns and space ventures, ambitions that were less common before 2013. He urged students to think beyond existing achievements and asked why global companies could not be Indian. Modi concluded by calling for greater self-reliance and collective determination to build a developed India.

Mohan Bhagwat's UK Visit to Address Hindutva Misconceptions

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat's ongoing visit to the United Kingdom is aimed at addressing misconceptions about Hindutva and Bharat and strengthening civilisational dialogue with Western academics, public figures and the Indian diaspora. RSS Prachar Pramukh Sunil Ambekar said. Bhagwat arrived in the UK for a visit from September 2 to 7 as part of the RSS centenary celebrations. Ambekar said the tour would provide an opportunity to explain the organisation's understanding of Hindutva and its cultural perspective on Bharat. "There are a lot of misconceptions," Ambekar said, explaining that Bharat should not be viewed merely as a political nation-state but as a cultural concept. He added that Hindutva was not a religion or a fixed ideological concept, but one that respects and accepts the truth and practices of different religious traditions. Ambekar said Bhagwat would meet prominent public figures, organisations and members of the Indian diaspora during his UK engagements. He had already visited the Shri Swami Narayan tem-



ple in Willesden, while other meetings were expected to focus on dialogue, collaboration and strengthening long-term relations between the UK and India. The visit is being undertaken at the invitation of the organisation Integral. Ambekar said people-to-people engagement was necessary alongside government-level diplomatic relations and that cultural and civilisational dialogue could

contribute to greater mutual understanding. "We believe that apart from the diplomatic dialogues at the government level, there is a need for people-to-people dialogue; there is a need for civilisational and cultural relations at large," Ambekar said. Bhagwat's UK visit follows engagements in North America. On August 29 in New York, Ambekar

addressed a multi-faith leaders' meeting organised at the invitation of American Hindus for Engagement and Dialogue (AHEAD). The meeting was attended by 175 participants representing different denominations and religions. He also addressed the 'Universal Oneness' conference at Madison Square Garden, which brought together more than 6,000 delegates from 853 cities and 39 US states, representing 250 organisations. Around 250 university students from across the United States also participated. The interfaith meeting adopted a five-point "Call for Action" resolution. Bhagwat later travelled to Toronto at the invitation of Canadian Hindus for Outreach, Relations and Dialogue (CHORD), where he addressed the 'Hindu Vishwa Bandhu' conference. More than 2,000 delegates representing 175 organisations from all ten Canadian provinces attended. The RSS was established during India's freedom struggle by Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, who believed a strong and cohesive society was essential for sustaining independence.

Yogi to Review Varanasi Flood Situation Today



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is scheduled to visit Varanasi on Saturday to assess the flood situation and review relief measures being implemented for affected residents. According to reports, Yogi Adityanath will arrive in Varanasi at around 5:00 PM. Before reaching the city, he will conduct an aerial survey of flood-affected areas to assess the situation on the ground and review the extent of inundation. The Chief Minister will travel to Varanasi from Azamgarh and hold a meeting with officials and public representatives at the Police Lines 'Safe House'. The meeting is expected to last around 20 minutes and will focus on the flood situation, relief operations and measures being taken for affected people. Following the review meeting, Yogi Adityanath will visit a flood relief camp at a college, where he is expected to distribute relief materials among people affected by the floods. Later, the Chief Minister will offer prayers at the Kaal Bhairav and Vishwanath temples before leaving for Lucknow at around 7:30 PM. The visit comes as several parts of Uttar Pradesh continue to face the impact of rising river levels and flooding. In Varanasi, there has been some relief for residents as the water level of the Ganga River has started receding. However, several areas of Moradabad's Mundha Pande region have been inundated following a rise in the water level of the Kosi River. Roads have been submerged, disrupting normal movement, while residents are using boats provided by the administration to travel through affected areas. Earlier on Thursday, Yogi Adityanath assured flood-affected families in Farrukhabad that his government was committed to finding a permanent solution to the recurring flood problem. Addressing a gathering in Farrukhabad, the Chief Minister said the government was taking steps to protect both people and livestock in flood-affected villages. He directed the administration to ensure adequate fodder, vaccinations and medicines for cattle. "We are making every effort to ensure that in areas where floodwaters have entered villages, livestock is not harmed. Complete arrangements are being made on a war footing across every area to provide fodder, vaccinations, and essential medicines for cattle," Yogi Adityanath said. His Varanasi visit is expected to provide an opportunity to assess relief operations directly and issue further instructions to officials on flood management.

India's First Sentient Corporate Campus to Rise in Pune

India's first "sentient" corporate campus will be established at the Bajaj Finserv Campus in Koregaon Park Annexe, Pune, with the project designed to combine artificial intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), sustainability and employee-focused facilities. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis laid the foundation stone for the project on Friday. Speaking at the ceremony, Fadnavis said the Bajaj Finserv Campus would be not only the largest corporate campus but also among the country's most intelligent and sustainable workplace ecosystems. Built with AI and IoT at its core, the campus will be designed to sense its environment and the needs of its occupants and proactively adapt to changing conditions in real time. According to company sources, AI and IoT systems will enable the campus to respond to variations in weather, occupancy and environmental conditions.



Sensors and analytics will be used to optimise energy and water consumption while monitoring crowd density and movement. IoT-enabled predictive maintenance systems will monitor critical infrastructure, while automation and robotics will support day-to-day campus operations. The campus will feature an eco-efficient design intended to maximise natural breeze and daylight and reduce cooling requirements. It will operate on renewable energy and target 80 per cent water recycling, along with rainwater harvesting and zero-waste operations.

A biophilic design will bring nature into the workplace through extensive green areas, including rare Ayurvedic gardens, Miyawaki forests and replanted native forests. Native species from Maharashtra will be incorporated to promote biodiversity and strengthen the campus ecosystem. The workplace will also have floor- and cluster-level monitoring of air quality and temperature. An integrated employee application will provide access to campus facilities and services, including navigation, parking and bookings. Healthcare and wellness will form another key component of the

campus. An integrated medical centre will provide telemedicine and emergency response services, supported by dedicated wellness facilities for employees. Sanjiv Bajaj, Chairman & Managing Director, Bajaj Finserv, said the campus would be developed in accordance with global LEED and IGBC standards. "Built to global LEED and IGBC standards, the Campus will combine eco-efficient and biophilic designs with AI-driven systems and operate entirely on renewable energy," Bajaj said. He added that the campus would demonstrate India's growing technological and financial capabilities while reflecting the country's move towards a technology-ready and environmentally responsible future. The project is expected to establish a new model for corporate workplaces by integrating intelligent infrastructure, sustainability, biodiversity, digital services and employee wellbeing into a single ecosystem.



DNA Testing Gives Nepal Families Hope for Missing Relatives

DNA testing has emerged as a crucial final hope for families searching for relatives who remain missing after devastating floods in Nepal, with authorities struggling to identify hundreds of bodies recovered from floodwaters and debris. The disaster, which struck on August 26, has killed at least 1,287 people in Nepal, while 5,083 remain missing, according to disaster authorities. The scale of destruction and the condition of many recovered bodies have made conventional identification extremely difficult. Police have so far collected 2,272 DNA samples, including 1,260 from bodies and 1,012 from relatives of missing people, as authorities work to establish identities. Officials said 1,030 bodies had been buried after DNA samples and other identification procedures were completed. The figure includes 222 women, 355 men and 453 bodies whose sex could not be determined.

For families, the testing process represents more than forensic identification. It could bring an end to days or weeks of uncertainty and allow relatives to perform final rites for loved ones. One such family is that of Raj Kumar Diyali, 33, who disappeared along with his 30-year-old wife Shriti and their four-year-old son Siraj after the Bhotekoshi River flood struck Syaphrubesi in Rasuwa district. Raj Kumar's relatives searched along the river as far as Chitwan and Nawalpur. Five days after the flood, his nephew Avinash discovered a severed human hand in Nawalpur and sent a photograph to Amrit Diyali, Raj Kumar's relative. Amrit said the hand closely resembled his brother's. He subsequently sent a sample from the remains to the National Forensic Science Laboratory in Kathmandu for DNA testing. The sample is reportedly 182nd in line for examination. "We have stopped hoping for any-



thing else," Amrit told The Kathmandu Post, expressing the family's desire for certainty even if the remains are confirmed to belong to Raj Kumar. The floods began in the Bhotekoshi River area of Rasuwa near Nepal's northern border with China before causing widespread destruction downstream. To make identification easier, Nepal Police has opened a DNA sample collection centre in Bidur, Nuwakot, enabling relatives of missing people to provide samples without travelling to Kathmandu. Deputy Inspector General of Nepal Police Hospital Dr Damodar Poudel said samples from close blood relatives, including parents, children and siblings, are particularly useful for comparison with DNA recovered from unidentified bodies. Authorities have also uploaded details of 1,270 unidentified bodies on the Nepal Police website, allowing families to check whether their missing relatives are among those recovered.

Zelensky Proposes Ceasefire Ahead of US Envoys' Russia, Ukraine Visits

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky has proposed a temporary ceasefire with Russia as US envoys Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff prepare to visit Moscow and Kyiv for talks aimed at finding a possible settlement to the Russia-Ukraine war. Zelensky confirmed that Witkoff and Kushner will travel to Moscow on Saturday and Kyiv on Sunday. The proposed pause in hostilities is intended to ensure the safety of the US representatives and provide the necessary conditions for negotiations and logistical arrangements. "There will be no air strikes from our side," Zelensky said, calling on Russia to mirror the move by suspending its air attacks for the duration needed to conduct the negotiations. Zelensky said Ukrainian diplomats had held discussions to prepare for the American delegation's visit to Kyiv. During those preparations, it was decided that normal operations in Russian airspace should continue so the envoys could arrive safely. "Russia must mirror



this by ensuring silence without its air strikes for the time needed to hold these negotiations and resolve the logistical issues associated with this American visit," Zelensky said. His proposal came hours after Russia carried out a daytime airstrike on Kyiv. Zelensky said the attack targeted

the headquarters of Ukraine's intelligence service and the office of its intelligence chief. The Ukrainian president said Kyiv was focused on engaging with the American envoys rather than Russia itself and wanted practical proposals that could help end the conflict, which has continued for

four-and-a-half years. "We'll see what proposals Steve and Jared have and what Moscow will say to them," Zelensky wrote. Russia has intensified daytime air attacks on Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities in recent days, with civilian areas repeatedly coming under attack. Before the Friday strike on Kyiv, Russia launched a major overnight attack on the Odesa region that killed one person and injured at least five others, including a child. Over night attacks elsewhere also killed two police officials in Dnipro, according to the report. A US official confirmed the planned visits earlier in the day. The trip will mark the first visit by the Trump administration's envoys to Kyiv for negotiations over a settlement. The proposed ceasefire could provide a brief window for direct diplomatic efforts, although its success will depend on whether Russia accepts Zelensky's call to halt airstrikes during the US delegation's mission.

US Strikes Three Iranian Oil Tankers After Naval Attacks



US forces struck three Iranian crude oil tankers after the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) launched ballistic missile attacks against two US Navy warships operating in regional waters, the US Central Command said. In a post on X, the US Central Command said an aircraft carrier and a guided-missile destroyer successfully avoided what it described as "multiple unprovoked Iranian attacks". No US personnel were injured in the incidents, according to the command. Following the attempted attacks, US forces destroyed two IRGC-linked crude oil tankers, M/T Downy and M/T Stark 1. The vessels were targeted off the coast of Kharg Island and near Jask. A third tanker, which was not carrying a cargo, was also disabled in the Gulf of Oman. The US Central Command said the three vessels were part of what it described as a multibillion-dollar shadow network that finances the IRGC and its proxies. The strikes represent a significant escalation in the confrontation between Washington and Tehran, with oil infrastructure and shipping becoming increasingly central to the conflict. Admiral Brad Cooper, commander of the US Central Command, said the US military would continue to defend its forces and warned that Iran's oil fleet could face further action. "Let the message to the IRGC be clear: If you shoot at two of our ships, we will impose an even higher economic cost - taking out three of yours," Cooper said. "We will not hesitate to defend American forces, and if necessary, destroy Iran's limited and exposed oil fleet," he added. Iran earlier accused the US of attacking an Iranian tanker near Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf, semi-official Iranian news agency Tasnim reported. Local sources quoted by Tasnim said there were no casualties and that the tanker's crew was being evacuated. US President Donald Trump had on August 31 posted a brief message on social media accompanied by an AI-generated video, saying Kharg Island was being "blown to smithereens". Kharg Island is strategically important to Iran's oil industry. Iran is the third-largest producer in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and has historically depended heavily on the island as a key transit point for crude exports. Before the outbreak of the US-Iran war, Kharg Island handled around 90 per cent of Iran's crude oil exports, making any military action around the facility potentially significant for the country's energy revenues and global oil markets. The latest strikes underscore the growing risks to Iranian oil shipments and regional maritime security as tensions between the US and Iran continue to intensify.

Jaishankar to Address UN General Assembly on September 26

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is scheduled to address the annual high-level session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 26, according to a revised provisional list of speakers released by the UN. The 81st session of the UN General Assembly will begin on September 8, with world leaders set to address the 193-member organisation during the General Debate from September 22 to 28. Jaishankar is scheduled to speak during the afternoon session on September 26. Jaishankar also addressed world leaders from the UN lectern last year, and his upcoming appearance is expected to provide India with an opportunity to outline its position on major international developments and global challenges. Brazil will traditionally be the first country to speak when the General Debate opens on September 22, followed by the United States. US President Donald Trump is scheduled to address world leaders from the iconic UN General Assembly podium on September 22. It will be his second address to the UN session



during his second term in the White House. The 81st session will be presided over by Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman, who was elected in June to lead the 193-member UN organisation. The annual high-level gathering is considered the busiest diplomatic period at the United Nations Headquarters, bringing together heads of state, government leaders

and senior officials for discussions on pressing international issues. This year's session comes amid continuing geopolitical conflicts across several regions. The months-long US-Israel war against Iran has had a major impact on countries of the Global South and least developed nations, particularly through rising food and fuel costs linked to continued disruption in the Strait of Hormuz.

Several high-level meetings are also scheduled during the General Assembly session. These include a commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development, a meeting on climate action and a just transition, and a high-level meeting addressing existential threats posed by sea-level rise. The agenda will also include discussions on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, along with a plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Heads of government from Bangladesh and Nepal are scheduled to address the General Debate on September 24, followed by Pakistan on September 25. The session will also mark the final high-level General Assembly gathering for current UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, whose second five-year term ends in December. The selection process for the next UN chief is underway, with attention focused on whether the 80-year-old organisation will appoint a woman to the top post for the first time in its history.

USS Abraham Lincoln Returns With Heavy Rust After 286 Days at Sea

The USS Abraham Lincoln has arrived at a Thai port after an unusually long deployment, drawing attention to extensive rust covering the nearly 1,100-foot aircraft carrier. The warship docked at Laem Chabang on the Gulf of Thailand, south of Bangkok, on Wednesday after spending 286 days at sea, according to the US Navy. The carrier left San Diego last November and spent months conducting combat and blockade operations against Iran in the Middle East. Its heavily corroded hull has highlighted the physical toll of an extended deployment, although naval experts say such rust is not unexpected for a ship that remains at sea for prolonged periods. Carl Schuster, a former US Navy captain, told CNN that rust along the waterline is common on vessels that have spent more than 60 days continuously operating at sea. He explained that crews cannot carry out extensive hull maintenance while a carrier is deployed, particularly during combat operations. Removing the corrosion requires



workers to reach the waterline, sand away the rust, apply two coats of rust-preventative primer and then add two coats of naval grey paint. Schuster estimated that the Lincoln could require about 30 days of preservation work to remove all the rust. Some urgent repairs could begin

during the carrier's stay in Thailand, although the short port visit means only high-priority maintenance is expected. Schuster said the bow and forward hull would likely receive attention first because those areas experience greater exposure to corrosive salt water and the stresses created by

rough seas. The Lincoln's visit to Laem Chabang is expected to last several days and provides the crew with its first significant rest-and-relaxation break following the demanding deployment. However, the ship's condition is not the only concern associated with its prolonged time at sea. Reports have also pointed to low morale among some crew members, with supply shortages reportedly contributing to dissatisfaction. At least one incident involving a crew member going overboard has also been reported. The developments illustrate the challenges faced by naval personnel and equipment during extended operations far from home ports. While surface corrosion is largely a maintenance issue, prolonged deployments can also place considerable pressure on crews, logistics and operational readiness. For the USS Abraham Lincoln, the Thailand stop therefore represents both a much-needed break for its sailors and an opportunity to begin addressing the physical effects of nearly 10 months at sea.

Sri Lanka Arrests Ex-President's Son Over \$800,000 Airbus Bribe

Sri Lankan anti-graft authorities have arrested lawmaker Namal Rajapaksa, son of former president Mahinda Rajapaksa, over allegations that he received \$800,000 in connection with a major Airbus aircraft deal. The Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC) arrested Namal Rajapaksa after questioning him about the



\$2.3 billion transaction involving Sri Lankan Airlines. Colombo Chief Magistrate Asanga Bodaragama ordered the 40-year-old politician to remain in custody for two weeks while investigators continue their probe. CIABOC told the court that Rajapaksa received \$800,000 from money allegedly paid by European aircraft manufacturer Airbus to Sri Lankan politicians and officials to secure the deal. A Sri Lankan businessman is alleged to have arranged the transfer through two Singapore bank accounts. Rajapaksa's lawyer Nishantha Dayananda sought bail, but the court rejected the request. The investigation has also focused on former president Mahinda Rajapaksa, who was questioned by CIABOC in May over allegations that he received kickbacks linked to the aircraft purchase. The Rajapaksa family has denied receiving bribes and has described the corruption allegations as politically motivated. Former Sri Lankan Airlines chief executive Kapila Chandrasena told investigators in March that he had handed nearly \$500,000 in kickbacks to the senior Rajapaksa. Chandrasena was found dead at a relative's home in May, shortly before he was due to be rearrested. The cause of death has not been established. A joint investigation by US, British and French authorities had previously found that Airbus agreed to pay about \$16 million in bribes in Sri Lanka. Around \$1.7 million was allegedly routed to Chandrasena before the scandal emerged. The payments were connected to the purchase of 10 Airbus aircraft, a transaction that required cabinet approval during Mahinda Rajapaksa's presidency from 2005 to 2015. Court submissions stated that Chandrasena initially told investigators he had paid Mahinda Rajapaksa 60 million rupees, equivalent to about \$461,000 at the time, in three instalments in 2013. He later withdrew the allegation, saying it had been made under pressure. The corruption case comes as Sri Lankan Airlines continues to face severe financial difficulties. The national carrier has accumulated losses estimated at nearly \$2 billion, while repeated efforts to privatise the debt-laden airline have failed.

EU-India Agri-Food Trade Set to Double by 2032

India and the European Union are poised to significantly expand their agri-food trade, with bilateral commerce in the sector expected to double to 10 billion by 2032, driven by changing consumer preferences, rising demand for healthy and premium foods and the anticipated India-EU Free Trade Agreement. Industry leaders and trade officials said India's food processing sector is undergoing rapid transformation, with the level of agricultural produce being processed expected to rise from the current 16-17 per cent to 25-30 per cent by 2030. Government efforts to formalise the sector and strengthen infrastructure are expected to support this expansion. "The Indian food processing industry is valued at over US\$500 billion (estimated), with immense potential to convert India's strong agricultural production into value-added products, improve quality and shelf life, and expand exports," said J.P. Dongre, deputy agricultural marketing advisor &



director at Ministry of Food Processing Industry (MOFPI). Dongre said MOFPI is supporting micro, small, medium and large entrepreneurs through financial assistance for modern machinery, packaging infrastructure and cold-chain facilities. He was speaking on the sidelines of a precursor event for Anuga Select India and Anuga FoodTec India 2026. The co-located trade fairs will be

held from September 29 to October 1, 2026, at the BEC in Mumbai. The events are positioned as a major B2B marketplace connecting manufacturers, global suppliers, importers, distributors, HoReCa leaders and technology providers across agrifoods, dairy, beverages, fine foods and food processing. India's food processing level has increased sharply from 3-4 per cent a decade ago to 16-17 per cent

currently. Dongre said the expected rise to 25-30 per cent by 2030 could bring India closer to processing levels seen in leading European countries. Raghav Jadli, president of All India Food Producers Association, said Anuga FoodTec India provides opportunities beyond product promotion, including joint ventures, technology partnerships and stronger import-export cooperation. "EU-India bilateral trade in agri-food products currently stands at around 5 billion, accounting for only about 4 per cent of total bilateral trade of approximately 125 billion," said Pawel Stachowiak, Counsellor Trade & Economic Affairs - European Union. Volker Klima, Head of Agriculture & Food Division, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, New Delhi, said Germany would reinforce its presence through a dedicated pavilion featuring at least 12 companies from the food, beverages, confectionery and processing sectors.

NSE Gets Sebi Nod for Mega IPO



The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has cleared the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) of the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE), paving the way for one of the country's biggest initial public offerings (IPOs). The proposed issue is expected to raise around Rs 30,000-31,000 crore through an offer for sale (OFS) by existing shareholders. The NSE IPO is set to become the second-largest public offering in India, behind the proposed Jio Platforms IPO, which recently received Sebi approval and is expected to raise around Rs 37,000-38,000 crore through fresh equity issuance. Sebi's approval for NSE came a day after the Supreme Court accepted settlement terms reached between Sebi and NSE concerning past regulatory lapses in the co-location and dark fibre cases. The settlement removes a major regulatory hurdle that had delayed the exchange's listing plans for several years. NSE had filed its DRHP with Sebi for the second time in June 2026. Its first draft offer documents were submitted in December 2016 for an IPO of around Rs 10,000 crore through an OFS. However, regulatory scrutiny linked to the co-location issue kept the listing process on hold for nearly a decade. The shareholders proposing to sell shares include State Bank of India, MS Strategic (Mauritius), Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, Aranda Investments (Mauritius), Bank of Baroda, Stock Holding Corporation of India, General Insurance Corporation of India, The New India Assurance Company, National Insurance and United India Insurance Company. NSE's largest public shareholder, Life Insurance Corporation of India, will not sell any shares through the proposed IPO. NSE is expected to become the third Indian stock exchange to be listed, after Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). NSE began operations on June 30, 1994, while BSE, established on July 9, 1875, is Asia's oldest stock exchange. Market expert and Graded Financial Services founder Thakur Ajit Singh said the IPO could have an impact extending beyond the exchange sector. He said NSE's unlisted-market valuation of around Rs 4.88 lakh crore, or \$58 billion, could create new valuation benchmarks for market infrastructure institutions, depositories, asset management companies and retail brokerage platforms. As of March 31, 2026, NSE was India's largest exchange by total cash-market and equity-derivatives turnover and ranked third globally by the number of cash-equity trades, according to the World Federation of Exchanges. Its listing will add NSE to an expanding group of listed Indian market infrastructure institutions, including CDSL, NSDL, BSE and MCX.

Scapia, Axis Bank Launch Travel-Focused Credit Card

Scapia and Axis Bank have launched the Scapia Axis Bank Credit Card, targeting India's growing community of new-generation travellers with a combination of digital payments, travel rewards and booking services through a single platform. The card integrates payments, rewards and travel on the Scapia app, allowing customers to manage spending, book journeys and redeem rewards. Eligible everyday spends and UPI transactions can earn rewards, which can be redeemed for flights, hotel stays, experiences, shopping and other travel-related offerings. Available on both Mastercard and RuPay networks, the card is designed to provide a digital experience covering everything from everyday payments to travel bookings. The partnership combines Axis Bank's capabilities in cards and payments with Scapia's travel-focused platform. Anil Goteti, Founder and CEO, Scapia, said the partnership marked a new chapter for the company as more young Indians travel domestically and internationally. He said Scapia was built around the idea of giving travellers an



integrated platform to spend, book trips, shop for travel and earn rewards. According to Goteti, Scapia users have already travelled to more than 175 countries. Arnika Dixit, Group Head - Cards, Payments and Wealth Management, Axis Bank, said the partnership reflected a focus on simple, digital-first products aligned with changing travel habits. She said combining Axis Bank's payment capabilities with

Scapia's travel ecosystem would create a more connected experience, offering greater convenience, flexibility and value throughout the customer journey. Cardholders can earn up to 10 per cent rewards on eligible everyday spending and up to 20 per cent rewards in the form of Scapia Coins on eligible travel bookings. The coins can be redeemed for flights, stays, visas, experiences and other offerings available

through the Scapia platform.. For international travellers, the card offers zero forex markup and Smart Forex features intended to provide greater visibility and control over overseas spending. Airport benefits include access to lounges, dining and premium retail, while onboarding and card management are handled digitally through the app. Gautam Aggarwal, President, India & South Asia, Mastercard, said travel had become a major segment of India's consumer economy and that travellers increasingly expected secure, seamless and globally accepted payment options. Sohini Rajola, Executive Director Growth, NPCI, said RuPay's integration with UPI had expanded digital payment convenience and that the partnership would combine travel benefits with the network's broad acceptance. For Scapia, the launch marks its third banking collaboration and an important step towards reaching more Indian travellers. For Axis Bank, it strengthens its co-branded card strategy and presence in travel and digital-first segments.

Govt Rejects 'No Takers' Claim on Coal Gasification Scheme



The government has rejected reports claiming that its Rs 37,500-crore Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects has failed to attract applications, calling such conclusions premature with the first-round application deadline still approaching. The Ministry of Coal clarified that applications can be submitted until September 7, 2026, and the actual response to the scheme cannot be assessed conclusively until the application window closes. In a statement, the Ministry of Coal said reports suggesting that the scheme had received no applications did not reflect the current status of the application process. It stressed that the number of applications received in the first round could only be determined after the deadline. The Union Cabinet approved the Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects on May 13, 2026, with a total financial outlay of Rs 37,500 crore. The initiative aims to accelerate coal and lignite gasification in India and encourage the conversion of domestic coal and lignite into higher-value products such as syngas, methanol, ammonia and urea. The government expects the scheme to reduce dependence on imported feedstock while strengthening India's energy and economic security. Following the Cabinet approval, the Ministry of Coal conducted outreach programmes and stakeholder engagements to attract potential project developers. Roadshows were organised in New Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai, involving representatives from State Governments, public and private sector companies, technology providers, investors, financial institutions and other stakeholders. The Ministry said Talcher Fertilisers Limited (TFL) and NTPC Limited had already submitted their respective applications through the online portal. It said this demonstrated that claims that the scheme had "no takers" were factually incorrect. The large scale and technical complexity of coal and lignite gasification projects require considerable preparation before applications can be submitted. Prospective applicants have to prepare Pre-Feasibility Reports, examine technology options, arrange coal, lignite and other feedstock, evaluate project economics and develop detailed project proposals. Officials therefore expect additional applications to be submitted as the September 7 deadline approaches. The clarification comes amid growing government efforts to promote domestic coal utilisation beyond conventional power generation. Through gasification, coal and lignite can serve as feedstock for industrial products, potentially opening new avenues for domestic manufacturing and reducing reliance on imported raw materials. With the application window yet to close, the Ministry maintained that any assessment of the scheme's response at this stage would be premature.

Trump Venezuela Oil Deal Alarms US Energy Industry



US President Donald Trump's sweeping oil agreement with Venezuela has triggered unease among parts of the US energy industry, after the administration secured a 35% stake in a private company with long-term rights to develop Venezuelan oil fields. Trump has described the agreement as potentially "the greatest deal ever made," but some US oil executives believe the arrangement could disrupt ongoing commercial negotiations and place them at a disadvantage in accessing some of Venezuela's most promising oil assets. People familiar with the matter told Bloomberg that several industry leaders were surprised by the agreement. They requested anonymity to discuss the issue candidly, amid concerns about publicly challenging a deal strongly backed by Trump. Interest from US and international energy companies in rebuilding Venezuela's severely degraded oil industry had intensified in recent months. A ceremony in Caracas on Wednesday was attended by acting President Delcy Rodriguez, US Energy Secretary Chris Wright and executives from Chevron Corp., Eni SpA and GE Vernova Inc., which signed investment agreements. However, those agreements were overshadowed by Trump's announcement on his social media platform that the US government would take a 35% stake in North American Blue Energy Partners (NABEP), a private oil company led by investor Alejandro Betancourt. NABEP has secured 100-year rights to develop 17 Venezuelan oil fields. The arrangement was marshalled by the US State Department and the Pentagon and reportedly caught several energy companies off guard, including firms already involved in commercial discussions in Venezuela. The development highlights a difficult balancing act for the Trump administration. Washington wants to accelerate investment, increase oil production and generate revenue to help rebuild Venezuela. At the same time, major oil developers capable of increasing production of the country's heavy crude have remained cautious because of continuing political and economic risks following the capture of longtime President Nicolás Maduro. Supporters of the agreement argue that the arrangement could help bring Venezuelan crude back into global markets more quickly. Critics within the industry, however, worry that the government's involvement could create a powerful competitor to private US producers. Under the agreement, the US will hold a 35% stake in NABEP and receive the right to 20% of the company's production at cost. Kevin Book, managing director at Washington-based ClearView Energy Partners, said government ownership could create an incentive to protect the investment. "The question," Book said, is whether the arrangement will complement the broader oil industry or compete with it. Administration officials have attempted to reassure energy companies, arguing that the NABEP arrangement could provide greater security for private-sector investments in Venezuela.

Forex Reserves Hit Record \$740.80 Billion



India's foreign exchange reserves have climbed to a new record of \$740.80 billion, boosted by the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) special foreign exchange measures and strong inflows through swap facilities. The reserves increased by \$11.475 billion during the week ended August 28, taking the total well above the previous record of \$728.494 billion recorded for the week ended February 27. The latest rise also marked the ninth consecutive week of growth in India's forex reserves. The increase comes after the RBI introduced special swap windows to attract dollar inflows and strengthen its ability to manage pressure on the rupee. During the West Asia war, the central bank had sold dollars to stabilise the currency after the rupee came under significant pressure. On June 8, the RBI announced the USD-INR Forex Swap facility covering Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) or FCNRR(B) deposits, external commercial borrowings (ECBs) and overseas foreign currency borrowings (OFCB) inflows. Radhika Rao, senior economist and executive director at DBS Bank, said the intervention approach appeared to be changing. She noted that the USD-INR exchange rate, which had remained relatively steady despite strong FCNR inflows, had recently moved sharply lower, testing below the 95 level and reaching the mid-94 range amid intervention dollar sales and broader movements in the US currency. India's forex reserves consist of foreign currency assets (FCAs), gold reserves, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) and the country's reserve position with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Foreign currency assets, the largest component, rose by \$9.34 billion during the week to \$600.67 billion. Gold reserves increased by \$2.19 billion to \$116.41 billion. India's SDR holdings with the IMF stood at \$18.81 billion, declining by \$43 million during the week but remaining \$188 million higher than at the end of March. The country's reserve position with the IMF fell by \$11 million to \$4.914 billion, although it remained \$106 million above the end-March level. Meanwhile, the RBI also absorbed more than Rs 6.02 lakh crore from the banking system through two variable rate reverse repo (VRRR) auctions as surplus liquidity remained exceptionally high. In one three-day VRRR auction, banks parked Rs 5.41 lakh crore with the RBI against a notified amount of Rs 7 lakh crore. The cut-off rate was 5.24 per cent. In another three-day auction with a notified amount of Rs 1.5 lakh crore, banks deposited Rs 60,419 crore with the central bank at the same rate.

Ocean Cleanup Chief Invites River Cleaner to Join Team

A 21-year-old student from Madhya Pradesh has received an unexpected job invitation after his efforts to clean a polluted river attracted the attention of Ocean Cleanup CEO Boyan Slat. Surendra Singh Chaudhary, popularly known on social media as "Bittu Tabahi", has been cleaning the Ajnar River in Biaora largely on his own. The BSc student began the cleanup campaign on January 26, 2026, taking on the task of removing waste and debris that had accumulated in the river. His efforts recently gained wider attention online after photographs showing the condition of the river before and after the cleanup were shared on social media. The

images highlighted the difference made by Chaudhary's persistent work and prompted a response from Slat. Reacting to a post featuring Chaudhary and his cleanup mission, Ocean Cleanup CEO Boyan Slat wrote a brief but striking message: "Come work for us."The invitation quickly added an unexpected dimension to Chaudhary's environmental mission. What began as an individual attempt to improve the condition of a local river has now attracted recognition from a global organisation known for tackling plastic pollution and cleaning waterways. Chaudhary has continued his work despite facing several challenges. His cleanup activities have exposed him



to health risks, including encounters with snakes. He



has also suffered infections in his limbs while working near a local temple.Despite those difficulties, Chaudhary

has continued removing waste from the river and documenting his efforts through photographs. His social media posts have helped bring attention to the condition of the Ajnar River and the importance of local participation in environmental cleanup efforts.The campaign has also received support from the local civic administration. Biaora Municipal Corporation Sub-Engineer Rupesh Kumar Netam said the municipality has been providing assistance to Chaudhary by supplying heavy machinery to remove accumulated waste. "There is a young man named Surendra Singh Chaudhary who regularly cleans the Ajnar River in Biaora, the municipi-

pality also provides him with support in this effort.Chaudhary's story has since become an example of how an individual initiative can attract institutional support and international attention. His work demonstrates that environmental action does not always begin with a large organisation or a major campaign.For now, Slat's invitation remains a remarkable recognition of Chaudhary's efforts. A student who started cleaning a polluted river largely by himself has found his work noticed far beyond Biaora, with a potential opportunity to work with one of the world's prominent environmental organisations now on the horizon.

Apple Begins Ternus Era With Major Product Wave



Apple is preparing to enter a new phase under Chief Executive Officer John Ternus, with the company set to unveil a major lineup of new devices and product categories over the coming years. The shift will begin with Apple's September 9 "Surprise and Shine" event, where Ternus is expected to take the stage to introduce the latest iPhones and Apple Watches. However, the upcoming event is being viewed as only the opening chapter of a much larger product cycle that could extend through 2026, 2027 and beyond. For much of the past 15 years, Apple has concentrated on improving established product lines and expanding services that generate recurring revenue. Apart from launches such as the Apple Watch and AirPods, the company has introduced relatively few entirely new device categories. That approach is now expected to change. Apple has reportedly been developing a pipeline of new products for around five years, with several fresh form factors and product areas in development. Ternus has already signalled his enthusiasm about the company's future. In a message to employees, he said he was excited about the major launch ahead as well as products already being developed and ideas that had yet to be imagined. Although Tim Cook was Apple's CEO when many of the products were conceived and developed, they are largely associated with Ternus' team. Cook's decision to allow Ternus to introduce the products has added significance to the leadership transition. Ternus formally took command on September 1, just days before the major product event. The timing has positioned the new CEO at the centre of Apple's next stage of innovation. One of the biggest products expected in the rollout is a foldable iPhone, internally referred to by some Apple employees as the iPhone Ultra. The device is expected to feature a large internal screen and a smaller external display, folding to roughly the size of a passport. Reported features include an A20 Pro chip, Apple's in-house C2 modem, Touch ID support, split-view multitasking and an advanced hinge designed to make the display crease less noticeable. The phone is expected to have regular and ultrawide-angle cameras but no telephoto lens, along with dark and light colour options. The foldable iPhone is also expected to carry a premium price of more than \$2,000. Apple's product plans and timelines could still change, with some projects potentially delayed or cancelled. The company, based in Cupertino, California, declined to comment on the reported product pipeline.

Founder Defends 'Disgusting' Website After Job Seeker's Criticism

A startup founder's unusual response to a job seeker's blunt criticism of his company website has sparked attention online, after he thanked her for the feedback but said the website was intentionally designed to attract a particular audience and repel others. The interaction began when a job seeker contacted Pritam Kudev, founder and CEO of men's beauty and personal care brand Mannlich, through LinkedIn. After exploring the company's website and products, she offered detailed feedback about what she believed could be improved. The job seeker said she "cringed hard" after visiting the website and described it as "very repelling and borderline disgusting." According to her, the site appeared to focus heavily on pictures of shirtless men and men applying products rather than presenting the products in a more carefully curated manner. She said she liked the concept of skincare for men but added that



she would not return to the website to purchase a product for her father. She suggested making the platform simpler, more gender-friendly and more welcoming to potential customers. The woman also identified herself as a developer and pointed out that the website appeared to be lagging. Since she was currently looking for work, she offered to help improve the website and said she

hoped her suggestions would be useful. Kudev responded by thanking her for the honest feedback. However, he explained that the website had been created for a specific type of consumer base. He said the intention was also to repel people who did not fit that target audience, adding that the company was glad the website had achieved that objective.

Kudev later shared a screenshot of the exchange on LinkedIn, bringing wider attention to the conversation. While posting it, he questioned the outreach approach being used by young job seekers and wrote, "Whoever is teaching these kids to use such templates for outreach. Where are your legs?" The exchange also highlighted the increasingly informal nature of recruitment outreach on professional networking platforms. While unsolicited feedback can be risky for job seekers, the episode showed how direct criticism can sometimes lead to an unexpected public conversation between a candidate and a company founder. Kudev also invited candidates interested in working with Mannlich to apply for opportunities in marketing, content and operations. He specifically asked people who were not "Repelled" by the website to share their portfolios, turning the unusual criticism into a broader recruitment appeal.

German Police Check Indian Tourists, Leave Former Cop Impressed

Former Delhi Police ACP Rajindar Pathania has recalled two experiences from a trip to Germany that gave him a different perspective on policing, public service and civic responsibility. After more than 38 years in the police service, Pathania said one particular encounter with German police left a lasting impression. His tour bus, carrying a group of Indian travellers, was stopped and surrounded by German police officers. The passengers were taken to a police station, where they were asked to get off the bus one by one. The officers checked their passports and visas and also searched their luggage. While the security procedure initially made Pathania concerned, it was the way the luggage inspection was handled that particularly caught his attention. According to Pathania, German police officers personally picked up the passengers' bags, carried them to the baggage scanner and returned them to the bus after the inspection was completed. For the former police officer, the incident demonstrated that enforcing the law does not necessarily have to come at the expense of dignity or respect. He said the experience made him reflect on the meaning of wearing a uniform and the responsibilities that come with exercising authority. Pathania said policing can involve strict enforcement while still being carried out with sensitivity and a sense of service. He wrote that the dignity of a uniform is not merely about authority, but also about using that authority with humanity.His second memorable



experience in Germany involved something far removed from a police station - the cleanliness of public spaces.Pathania said he was struck by the condition of roads and public areas, where he observed little unnecessary litter. He shared short videos from his trip to highlight the surroundings and questioned whether Germany's cleanliness could be attributed entirely to better government systems.While acknowledging the importance of administration, Pathania argued that citizens' attitudes and their sense of

responsibility were equally significant. Governments can build infrastructure, employ sanitation workers and conduct cleanliness campaigns, he said, but people themselves have a major role in keeping public spaces clean.He urged Indians to look beyond simply blaming authorities for sanitation problems and consider everyday behaviour. He raised questions about who throws rubbish on roads, dirties public walls and fails to treat shared spaces with the same care given to their homes.For Pathania, the two expe-

riences carried connected lessons. The first concerned how public servants should exercise authority, while the second focused on how citizens should use their freedom responsibly.He said travelling abroad should not only involve admiring another country's beauty and infrastructure. It can also provide lessons that travellers can bring home.Pathania concluded that a cleaner and better India requires responsibility from both public servants and citizens, with each playing a role in improving society.

Hybrid Work Wins After Pune Woman Says WFH 'Fried' Her Brain

A Pune woman's experience of working entirely from home for two weeks has sparked an online conversation about the benefits and drawbacks of remote work. Mohini Chavan said the temporary shift from her usual hybrid routine left her mentally exhausted and trapped in a repetitive daily cycle. Chavan shared her experience on Instagram, explaining that her organisation normally follows a hybrid working model but allows employees to work from home for two weeks during the year. While the arrangement can be particularly useful for employees who live away from their hometowns and

want to spend time with family, Chavan said the unchanged workload and lack of a change in surroundings made the experience difficult for her. "I don't know how people do permanent work from home, bro. Salute to them!" Chavan said while describing her experience. According to Chavan, working from home did not reduce her professional responsibilities. She continued to complete her regular workload, but the absence of an office environment meant that her days began to feel almost identical. She said that after spending two weeks mostly indoors, she felt mentally drained. "What I've



realised over these two weeks is that my brain is completely fried," she said, adding that she felt as though she had barely stepped outside during the entire period. The repetitive routine also extended into her weekends. Chavan said she went out for only one day, while the rest of the time followed the same pattern of working, eating and remaining at home. "Even during the weekend, I only went out for a day. Otherwise, every day has felt exactly the same," she said.For Chavan, the experience highlighted why she prefers a hybrid work arrangement rather than permanent remote employment. She said

going to the office provides a much-needed break from the home environment and offers opportunities for social interaction. Under her usual hybrid setup, Chavan gets to meet friends, have conversations, learn new things and experience a change in surroundings. She also said commuting and travelling occasionally help break the monotony of staying indoors."At least the hybrid system feels like the best balance to me," she said, explaining that spending two days in the office allows her to meet people, try different things, learn, talk and share experiences.Chavan's comments reflect a broader debate around

workplace flexibility, where remote work can offer convenience and time with family but may also create feelings of isolation and repetition for some employees.Her Instagram post carried the message, "Salute to permanent work from home employees," acknowledging those who have adapted to a fully remote lifestyle. For Chavan, however, the return to her hybrid routine appears to be something to look forward to. After two weeks of working from home, the office now represents more than just a workplace - it offers the social interaction and change of environment she says she missed.

Stuttgart Thrash Cologne to Bounce Back

Stuttgart produced a commanding response to their opening-day defeat against Bayern Munich, cruising past Cologne 4-1 in the Bundesliga. After suffering a heavy 5-1 loss to Bayern in their previous outing, Stuttgart dominated the contest and delivered the reaction they had been seeking. Stuttgart, who secured a return to the Champions League after finishing fourth last season, controlled proceedings for much of the match. Grischka Proemel said the team wanted to respond strongly following the Bayern defeat and was pleased with the performance. Cologne managed to keep Stuttgart at bay during the opening stages, but their resistance ended in the 39th minute when Bilal El Khannouss produced a brilliant individual effort. The former Leicester winger raced through the Cologne defence, nutmegging two players before sending a low strike into the bottom corner.



El Khannouss described the goal as "pure instinct", saying it was not something that could be trained and happened in the moment. He also expressed hope that it would be the first of many goals he scores during the season. Stuttgart continued to dominate after the break and doubled their advantage on the hour mark. El

Khannouss initiated the move down the flank before finding Germany defender Maximilian Mittelstaedt. The defender delivered a cut-back into the area, allowing Proemel to guide his shot into the net. Stuttgart striker Ermedin Demirovic then added another goal with 15 minutes remaining.

Demirovic charged into space down the right channel before finishing from a tight angle to put the hosts firmly in control. Cologne managed to pull one goal back through debutant Mikey Moore, who is on loan from Tottenham. Moore burst into the box and sent a square ball across the area, but the delivery ultimately resulted in an own goal from Stuttgart defender Ramon Hendriks. However, Stuttgart had the final say in spectacular fashion. In the final minute, Josha Vagnoman produced a stunning long-range effort, crashing a looping clearance into the top corner from outside the box. The emphatic victory allowed Stuttgart to quickly move beyond their disappointing defeat to Bayern Munich and provided a major confidence boost as they look to build on last season's fourth-place Bundesliga finish and their return to Champions League football.

Raina Questions India Exile During Kohli-Kumble Era



Former India batter Suresh Raina has opened up about his exclusion from the national team during the Virat Kohli-Anil Kumble era, revealing that he sought answers from the captain and coaching staff but never received a concrete explanation. Raina, who retired from international cricket in 2020 at the age of 33, was left out of India's squad for the 2019 ODI World Cup in England. Reflecting on the period, he said he and Yuvraj Singh initially failed the Yo-Yo fitness test but later cleared it after returning to domestic cricket and scoring runs. Speaking to former India batter Aakash Chopra, Raina said he repeatedly questioned the team management about his absence. "I asked questions, I didn't get answers. So I asked questions, talked to people... captain and coaches," he said. Raina acknowledged that every captain has different preferences and that team combinations can change with leadership. He also admitted that he could have performed better during that phase and felt his experience, along with Yuvraj Singh's, could have been valuable for the 2019 World Cup campaign. "Every captain has his own team," Raina said, pointing out that different players received preference when the leadership changed. He added that another batter and wicketkeeper were chosen for the World Cup, while suggesting that circumstances had changed significantly by then. The former left-handed batter also indicated that his knee injury may have been used as a reason for his omission. Raina questioned why he and Yuvraj were not considered after proving their fitness and returning to domestic cricket. He recalled that the team had become one of the fittest sides during that period and said players were expected to meet demanding fitness standards. Raina also contrasted the Yo-Yo testing conducted under Gary Kirsten with the process used later. Despite the disappointment surrounding his international career, Raina said he has no regrets. His comments have now renewed attention on the selection decisions that shaped India's squad before the 2019 World Cup and ultimately contributed to the end of his international career.

Yuki Bhambri Eyes Deep US Open Run With Michael Venus



India tennis player Yuki Bhambri will reunite with New Zealand's Michael Venus for the men's doubles at the US Open 2026, hoping to build on last year's breakthrough semifinal appearance and make an even deeper run. Bhambri enjoyed a memorable campaign at Flushing Meadows last year, reaching the last four and coming within one victory of a place in the final. The experience, he believes, has created a different mindset heading into this year's tournament. The Indian said the deep run has brought a "mental switch" as he prepares to return to the Grand Slam. He also recalled his strong memories from last year and expressed confidence ahead of the final Grand Slam of the season. Bhambri said his previous success in both singles and doubles, combined with his semifinal appearance, had made last year a breakthrough moment in his career. He added that he is excited to return to the tournament and compete again. The Delhi-born player also has a strong connection with New York, describing it as one of his favourite cities. Bhambri said the city's atmosphere, its scale and the support of Indian fans make playing at the US Open a particularly special experience. He recalled attending matches at Arthur Ashe Stadium simply to experience the energy generated by the crowd. According to Bhambri, the presence of a large Indian community adds another dimension to the tournament, with fans regularly turning up to support him and other Indian players. Bhambri and Venus will now begin their campaign together with ambitions of another extended run. However, their opening match presents a difficult challenge, as they will face two American players. The Indian stressed that the unpredictable nature of the doubles draw means the pair cannot afford to look beyond their first-round assignment. Several upsets have already highlighted the competitiveness of the tournament, making every match potentially difficult. Bhambri said the partnership will approach the tournament one match at a time while maintaining the ambition of going all the way. He acknowledged that the first-round opponents are tough but said he and Venus are looking forward to competing together again. With last year's semifinal run providing both confidence and motivation, Bhambri will look to combine that experience with his partnership with Venus as they chase a place in the latter stages of the US Open 2026.

India Face Pakistan in Crucial Women's Asia Cup Clash

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur has created history by becoming the first cricketer, male or female, to captain in 150 T20I matches as India take on Pakistan in a highly anticipated Group A clash of the Women's Asia Cup 2026. Pakistan captain Fatima Sana won the toss and elected to bat first, but her side endured a disastrous start. Pakistan were struggling at 32/4 after seven overs, with India's spinners causing major problems for the Pakistan batting line-up. India spinner Shree Charani led the attack with three wickets, putting Pakistan under severe pressure during the early stages of the innings. India's disciplined bowling ensured that Pakistan failed to build any meaningful partnership and were forced onto the defensive from the outset. The match carries significant importance for Pakistan, who are looking to secure their place in the semi-finals. Pakistan began their campaign with a victory over



Thailand and need another strong performance to strengthen their position in the group. India, meanwhile, have already booked their place in the semi-finals following emphatic victories over Thailand and Hong Kong in their opening two Group A matches. The clash against Pakistan therefore gives Harmanpreet

Kaur's side an opportunity to maintain their winning momentum while testing themselves against one of their biggest rivals. The match is also attracting considerable attention because of Smriti Mandhana's pursuit of another major record. The India superstar batter is 78 runs away from becoming the highest-ever

run-scorer in women's T20I cricket. Mandhana has consistently been among the leading performers in the shortest format and could further strengthen her place in the record books if she produces a substantial innings against Pakistan. Her battle with the Pakistan bowling attack is expected to be one of the major highlights of the contest. For Pakistan, the immediate priority is to recover from the early collapse and post a competitive total. With four wickets already down, their middle order faces a difficult task against an Indian bowling attack that has quickly gained control. India's strong start and Harmanpreet Kaur's landmark captaincy milestone have added further significance to an already high-profile encounter, while Pakistan must find a way back into the contest to keep their semifinal hopes alive.

Arshdeep Singh, Samreen Kaur Get Matching Tattoos

India pacer Arshdeep Singh and actor-model Samreen Kaur have taken their relationship into the spotlight after revealing matching tattoos featuring each other's handwriting and small red hearts. The development comes shortly after Arshdeep confirmed his relationship with Samreen through Instagram, ending weeks of speculation surrounding their reported romance. Samreen Kaur, born on September 7, 1999, in Jammu and Kashmir, is an actor, model and social media influencer. She completed her BCom (Honours) from Symbiosis College of Arts and Commerce, Pune, before pursuing modelling and acting. Her career gained attention after she represented Jammu and Kashmir at the Femina Miss India 2018 pageant, where she emerged as a finalist. She subsequently worked on modelling assignments before entering films and digital projects. Samreen has appeared in the ZEE5 web series Nail Polish and fea-



tured in films including 83 and Sardaar Ji 2. She has also appeared in music videos with singers such as Jubin Nautiyal, Badshah and Guru Randhawa. Songs including Baawla and Tujhe Bhoolna Toh Chaaha helped increase her popularity. The relationship rumours surrounding Arshdeep and Samreen gained momentum during IPL 2026. Speculation began after a viral Snapchat post appeared to

show the India cricketer holding hands with a woman whom fans believed was Samreen. Social media users subsequently compared tattoos, accessories and outfits visible in the images with photographs shared by Samreen online. Her repeated appearances at Punjab Kings matches further intensified the speculation. Samreen attended Punjab Kings' clash against Mumbai Indians at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium and

was later seen supporting the franchise during matches in Chandigarh. Her presence at several games, combined with paparazzi sightings outside stadiums, led to increased discussion about her reported relationship with Arshdeep. Before the cricketer publicly confirmed their relationship, fans had already attempted to connect the pair through their social media activity, public appearances and travel posts. The matching tattoos now add another personal detail to their much-discussed relationship. By choosing each other's handwriting for the designs, Arshdeep and Samreen appear to have given the tattoos a distinctly personal significance. Arshdeep has established himself as an important member of India's pace attack, while Samreen continues to build her profile across acting, modelling and social media. Their relationship has consequently attracted attention from both cricket and entertainment audiences.

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Not Yet in India's Red-Ball Plans



Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is set for a busy period of cricket, but the young batting sensation is currently not part of India's red-ball plans, according to a report. The 15-year-old is, however, expected to remain an important option for India in T20Is as he continues to make rapid progress across formats. Sooryavanshi will feature in

the Duleep Trophy final before joining India's plans for the upcoming T20I series against Afghanistan. He is then expected to represent the country at the Asian Games. From October, he could also be involved in assignments against the West Indies and New Zealand. While his immediate pathway appears focused heavily on white-

ball cricket, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is closely monitoring his development. BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia said the board wants Sooryavanshi and other emerging players to receive the right guidance so they can build long and successful careers. The BCCI recently held a review meeting attended by Devajit Saikia, India Test and ODI skipper Shubman Gill, T20I captain Shreyas Iyer, head coach Gautam Gambhir, Centre of Excellence (CoE) head VVS Laxman and other senior BCCI officials at the board's headquarters in Mumbai. Saikia stressed that the BCCI is taking Sooryavanshi's progress seriously and does not want his early success to result in a short-lived international career. He said the board hopes the youngster can serve India for many years, similar to legendary batter Sachin Tendulkar

and other players who became icons of Indian cricket. Sooryavanshi has already achieved several milestones at an extraordinary age. Recently, at 15 years and 157 days, he became the youngest player to score a half-century in Duleep Trophy history, breaking a 57-year-old record. He also impressed during India's series against Zimbabwe, scoring 151 runs in three matches as India completed a 3-0 clean sweep. His performances earned him his maiden Player of the Series award. With a demanding schedule ahead, Sooryavanshi will have opportunities to continue developing his T20 credentials. However, the latest report indicates that India's national red-ball setup is not currently considering him, suggesting the BCCI intends to manage his transition carefully rather than rush him into Test cricket.

Rajinikanth's Dharman Wraps Second Schedule

The makers of director Ashwath Marimuthu's eagerly awaited action entertainer Dharman have announced that the film's second schedule of shooting has been completed. The film features Tamil superstar Rajinikanth in the lead and is being produced by Raaj Kamal Films International, the production house of veteran actor and parliamentarian Kamal Haasan. Raaj Kamal Films International shared the update on its social media platforms along with a video clip, writing, "Dharman 2nd Schedule Wrapped. Swag Mode: ON." One of the scenes featured in the video shows Rajinikanth portraying a senior medical faculty member while lecturing junior doctors. The second schedule began on August 13, with the makers describing Rajinikanth's character as "The deadly doctor" while announcing the shoot. The project has generated considerable excitement among fans since its announcement, particularly because of Rajinikanth's unusual role as a doctor who takes on criminals. In June, the makers released a making video showcasing the process behind Rajinikanth's appearance in the film. Director Ashwath Marimuthu also shared a new poster featuring the superstar and revealed that the team had responded to audience interest regarding his hairstyle and look. Earlier, Raaj Kamal Films International released a glimpse video titled "THE OG SWAG" that offered a look at the making of the first look. The video showed accessories being arranged for Rajinikanth to choose from, while Ashwath demonstrated the exact pose he wanted the superstar to adopt. Kamal Haasan was also seen accompanying Rajinikanth, with the two legends of Tamil cinema exchanging pleasantries. While announcing the title, Kamal Haasan described the film with the phrase "Dharmame vellum!" meaning "Only Dharma will win", and referred to the project as Thalaivar 173. The title poster showed Rajinikanth inside a hospital operation theatre, holding a scalpel, while appearing to stand over the body of a slain rowdy sheeter. Dharman has music by Anirudh, while Niketh Bommi is handling cinematography and Pradeep E Raghav is responsible for editing. National Award-winning duo Anbariv is choreographing the action sequences. The film is produced by Kamal Haasan and R Mahendran, with S Disney serving as co-producer. The latest schedule update has added to anticipation surrounding the project, particularly with Rajinikanth's character, action-driven storyline and the collaboration between the superstar and the production house led by Kamal Haasan.

Ram Gopal Varma Questions Teachers' Day

Filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma sparked debate on Teachers' Day with a provocative post explaining why he did not want to wish people a "Happy Teachers' Day". He argued that an individual who truly thinks independently would naturally resist being taught and that genuine



learning begins when students question what they are told. Taking to his X timeline, Ram Gopal Varma wrote a lengthy post challenging conventional ideas about education and teaching. He said blind learning was not education but "domestication" and argued that progress begins when a student realises that a teacher could be outdated or wrong. The director illustrated his argument with examples from history and popular culture. He referred to Albert Einstein, saying the scientist



disliked the rigid Prussian school system but went on to develop the theory of relativity while working as a clerk. He also cited filmmaker Steven Spielberg, who became one of the most prolific directors despite being refused admission to a film academy. Ram Gopal Varma argued that these individuals advanced because they refused to simply follow the syllabus imposed by teachers. According to him, true learning involves unlearning what a teacher forces a student to accept. He further claimed that while he had witnessed successful engineers, doctors and lawyers, he had never seen a successful teacher. He argued that people who become truly successful tend to retain their knowledge as something unique rather than turning it into a public service. The filmmaker also questioned the broader role of teachers in society. He said that when knowledge is offered publicly rather than treated as a personal advantage, it loses its uniqueness. He argued that teachers could produce followers rather than leaders by encouraging students to conform instead of developing independent thinking. He also brought parents into his argument, saying well-meaning parents send children to teachers who, in his view, can weaken their ability to think independently and turn them into a socially conditioned herd. To reinforce his views, Ram Gopal Varma quoted renowned personalities including George Bernard Shaw, who wrote, "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches," and Oscar Wilde, who said, "Anyone who is incapable of learning takes to teaching." Concluding his post, the director maintained his position by stating that he therefore did not want to wish people a "Happy Teachers' Day", adding the hashtag #HappyTeachersDay. His remarks quickly drew attention for their unconventional and sharply critical take on education and the traditional teacher-student relationship.

Nani Marks 18 Years in Cinema

Telugu star Nani has completed 18 years in the film industry as an actor and thanked his fans and audiences for their unwavering love and support. Reflecting on the milestone, Nani said he had never taken their affection for granted and assured them that he never would. Taking to his X timeline, Nani marked the completion of 18 years in cinema with a heartfelt message. "18 years. Officially an adult in cinema. Never took your love for granted. I won't ever," he wrote.

Nani began his acting journey with Ashta Chamma, directed by Mohana Krishna Indraganti, which released on September 5, 2008. Over the years, he has evolved from an actor into one of Telugu cinema's prominent heroes and has also established himself as a producer.

The actor is currently working on director Srikanth Odela's highly anticipated action entertainer The Paradise. Backed by SLV Cinemas, the film is scheduled to hit theatres on September 24. It was initially planned for release on March 26, 2026, before the makers postponed it first to August 21 and later to September 24.

The recently released teaser has heightened expectations around the film. It opens with a voiceover questioning who the place belongs to, followed by Nani's dramatic arrival through an acrobatic stunt. Sporting two plaits and covered in blood, he is shown walking slowly while sipping what appears to be a beverage.

Mohan Babu, who plays the antagonist, is seen addressing the people as "My beloved people of Paradise." The teaser then unfolds with intense action, violence and references to oppression and rebellion. A woman questions whether the government is meant for feudal lords or the people, while another voice calls upon the oppressed community to rise against tyranny.

The teaser concludes with Nani, drenched in blood and carrying a chain made of blades, seated on a pile of bodies while warding off the evil eye. The visuals suggest that The Paradise will be a dark and intense action thriller centred on rebellion against oppression.

The film is expected to release in eight languages: Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, English, Spanish, Bengali, Kannada and Malayalam.

Kamal Haasan Congratulates Bethlehem Kudumba Unit Team



Actor, producer and parliamentarian Kamal Haasan has congratulated the team of director Girish AD's Malayalam blockbuster 'Bethlehem Kudumba Unit', starring Nivin Pauly and Mamitha Baiju in the lead roles. Mythri Movie Makers, which is distributing the film in the Telugu states, shared a video of the core team meeting Kamal Haasan. The production house described the gathering as a special moment for the team following the film's strong performance and its Telugu release. The video shows Kamal Haasan warmly welcoming the team led by producer Fahadh Faasil. The members were seen interacting with the veteran actor before posing for photographs with him. 'Bethlehem Kudumba Unit' has emerged as a

major box-office success, crossing the Rs 200-crore mark worldwide. The film, which released globally on August 21, has quickly developed into a blockbuster, adding to the growing popularity of Malayalam cinema beyond Kerala. The film's success has also prompted its makers to appeal to audiences to protect the theatrical experience. Bhavana Studios, the production house that distributed the film, recently asked viewers not to record or circulate snippets and key scenes from theatres on social media. Nivin Pauly shared the statement on his social media timelines with a request for public attention. Bhavana Studios thanked audiences for the strong response before urging them to avoid recording scenes and sharing them online so that viewers could experience the film's surprises on the big screen. The story of 'Bethlehem Kudumba Unit' was written by Girish AD and Kiran Josey. Ajmal Sabu handled cinematography, while Vishnu Vijay composed the music. Akash Joseph Varghese served as the editor. The film's production began in September last year. Nivin Pauly had earlier described the project as something that would be "very special". Bhavana Studios is a production company partnered by director Dileesh Pothan, actor Fahadh Faasil and scenarist Syam Pushkaran. Its involvement in the film has further connected the project with prominent names from the Malayalam film industry. The meeting with Kamal Haasan comes as the film continues its theatrical run and expands its reach among Telugu-speaking audiences through Mythri Movie Makers. With its strong worldwide collections and growing audience response, 'Bethlehem Kudumba Unit' has become one of the notable Malayalam successes of the year, while Kamal Haasan's appreciation has added another high-profile moment to the film's celebrations.



Farah Khan Reveals AR Rahman Made Masakali for Om Shanti Om

Director and choreographer Farah Khan has revealed an interesting piece of Bollywood music history, saying Oscar-winning composer AR Rahman originally created the popular 'Masakali' track for her 2007 film 'Om Shanti Om', rather than Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra's 'Delhi-6', where the song eventually appeared.

Farah made the revelation during a conversation with music director Vishal Dadlani at his farmhouse, featured in her YouTube vlogs. The two discussed their decades-long professional association and recalled how the music for 'Om Shanti Om' eventually came together.

Farah said she had initially approached AR Rahman to compose the music for 'Om Shanti Om', starring Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone. Before Vishal-Shekhar came on board, Rahman had already created 'Masakali', although Farah was unsure where the song would fit in the film.

"The first song which Rahman made for Om Shanti Om was Masakali! I don't know where I was going to put it but I love that song and love that word," Farah recalled during the vlog.

She also remembered telling Vishal that she planned to approach Rahman and, if the collaboration did not work out, she would consider Vishal and Shekhar for the project.

Vishal had hoped the arrangement with Rahman would work and suggested that he and Shekhar could assist him on the film. However, the duo ultimately composed the music for 'Om Shanti Om', delivering a soundtrack that became one of the film's major attractions.

During the conversation, Vishal jokingly observed that even if he and Shekhar had not worked on the film, 'Om Shanti Om' would still have had great music. Farah, however, credited the duo for making the film's music "epic".

Vishal described 'Om Shanti Om' as a rare example of traditional, large-scale Bollywood masala musical filmmaking.

He also recalled the elaborate visual treatment of songs such as 'Dhoom Tana', noting that audiences continue to discuss how such sequences were created before the widespread use of artificial intelligence.

"The big, masala music that was in 'Om Shanti Om', is the only one. This is the last one! The traditional masala Bollywood musical is this one," Vishal said.

The revelation adds an unexpected twist to the history of 'Masakali', which eventually became one of the most recognisable songs of 'Delhi-6', released in 2009.

The song featured Abhishek Bachchan and Sonam Kapoor and was composed by AR Rahman for Mehra's film. Its journey from an unused composition for 'Om Shanti Om' to a signature song of 'Delhi-6' highlights the unpredictable path that popular film music can sometimes take.

