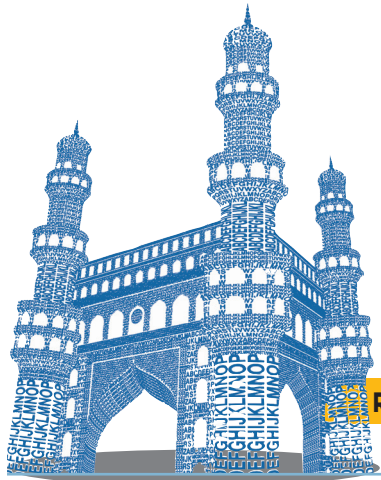




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Sachet to Pink Slips - The Squeeze

OPINION 06

Paper Leak Fears Hit MAHA TET

SPECIAL 02



REVANTH REDDY
TO
VISIT NALGONDA
today



3:35 PM
The Chief Minister will visit the Kanagal AMC Market Yard premises in Nalgonda district to lay the foundation stone for Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM) road projects and unveil the commemorative pylon.

4:00 PM
The Chief Minister will arrive at the grounds of Nagarjuna Government Degree College in Nalgonda town. He will lay the foundation stone for Phase 1 of the Drinking Water Scheme for the Nalgonda Municipal Corporation, a project estimated to cost ₹63 crore.


Afterwards, the Chief Minister will attend a **public meeting** organized at the venue.

A DAY OF DEVELOPMENT FOR NALGONDA

GRAPEVINE STIRS DELHI AS TALK OF YOGI ADITYANATH'S ENTRY INTO BJP'S HIGHEST DECISION MAKING CIRCLE GATHERS MOMENTUM

Reports of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister's possible induction into the Parliamentary Board spark buzz in political circles. No official confirmation yet. But the speculation has set off a broader debate on leadership, governance, organisational balance and the party's future political direction.

BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

Political circles in New Delhi are discussing reports that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath could be inducted into the BJP Parliamentary Board. There has been no official announcement from the party, and the development remains in the realm of political speculation.

tion. Even so, the discussion has prompted wider debate about leadership, governance, organisational priorities and the BJP's future direction. Whether the reports eventually prove accurate or not, the conversation itself reflects important questions about the evolution of India's largest political party.

Political developments often

begin as informed discussions before they become official decisions. The present speculation surrounding Yogi Adityanath is one such example. The appropriate journalistic approach is neither to dismiss the reports nor to present them as fact, but to examine why the discussion has gained momentum and what it could mean if it eventually translates into an

official decision.

Delhi's political landscape is rarely short of speculation. Much of it fades quickly. Some of it eventually develops into official policy or organisational change. The latest discussion surrounding Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's possible induction into the BJP Parliamentary

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

BJP Sounds Poll Bugle in Telangana With Nitin's Tour

HYDERABAD, JUNE 27

The Telangana BJP is gearing up for a crucial three-day visit by its national president, Nitin Nabin, beginning Saturday, with the party describing the tour as a major step in its organizational expansion and preparations for future electoral battles in the state.

State BJP leaders have been assigned key responsibilities to ensure the success of the visit, during which extensive deliberations will be held on strengthening the party structure, expanding



its grassroots network, and enhancing the role of party workers. Ahead of the visit, Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao, accompanied by Telangana BJP in-charge Abhay Patil, MP Rekha Sharma and other senior leaders, inspected preparations for the "Vijaya Sankalpa Sam-

melanam" at Nampally Exhibition Grounds in the city. About 15,000 party workers, including booth-level presidents, booth agents, state executive members and leaders from GHMC, Malkajigiri and Cyberabad, are expected to attend.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

SURYA BHAI ARRESTED IN Rs.30 LAKH FRAUD CASE

Hyderabad, June 27: Narayanguda police arrested Surya Bhai alias "Gold Man" in connection with an alleged Rs.30 lakh cheating case involving a promise to supply gold at a discounted price. Addressing a media conference here on Saturday, Narayanguda Circle Inspector Saideshwar said that the accused had allegedly convinced a goldsmith from Hayathnagar, Krishna Chari, that he could provide gold at a lower-than-market rate. Surya Bhai collected Rs.30 lakh from the victim during a meeting at a café in Himayatnagar. However, after receiving the money, he neither supplied the promised gold nor returned the amount. Following a complaint lodged by the victim, Narayanguda police registered a case and launched an investigation. The accused was arrested on Saturday and will be produced before a court, the CI said. Police further revealed that Surya Bhai is also facing another case registered at Mangalhat Police Station. In that case, he allegedly cheated individuals by promising to settle a dispute between two parties.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

CONGRESS MOVES EC OVER ALLEGED MIM ACTIVITIES

HYDERABAD, JUNE 27

The Hyderabad District Congress Committee (DCC) has urged the Election Commission of India to investigate allegations that MIM activists were distributing voter enrollment forms in certain parts of Hyderabad, raising concerns over the integrity of the electoral process. Hyderabad DCC President Syed Khalid Saifullah,

along with Rajesh, Chairman of the Hyderabad DCC EC Coordination Committee, questioned the reported distribution of voter-related forms at Amina Masjid in Paramount Colony covering Booths 53 to 57. They sought clarification on who authorized private individuals to handle the forms and why Booth Level Officers (BLOs) were allegedly absent.

The Congress leaders also

expressed concern over reports that the residents were being directed to an MIM office for voter enrollment-related procedures instead of being assisted through the prescribed house-to-house verification process conducted by BLOs.

Claiming that similar practices were occurring in other localities, Khalid Saifullah warned that

icant difficulties.

Furthermore, KT Rama Rao highlighted an issue with a digital application, claiming that not only was urea availability not facilitated through it, but even the names of Rangareddy and Malkajigiri districts were absent from its listings.

He recalled that during their time in opposition, Revanth Reddy had questioned the BRS government for not extending Rythu Bandhu support to a third crop. He also reminded the audience of the Congress's unfulfilled promises to increase the financial assistance to Rs. 15,000 and provide

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

KTR SLAMS CM REVANTH, ALLEGES TOTAL NEGLECT OF TELANGANA FARMERS

HYDERABAD, JUNE 27

BRS working president KT Rama Rao strongly criticised Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, accusing him of neglecting the interests of farmers.

He asserted that under the current Congress administration, the state has experienced a decline in development, leading to widespread hardship and despair.

Speaking to party members in Maheswaram on Saturday, the BRS working president stated that the Rythu Bandhu scheme has been discontinued, replaced by what he termed "Rahul Bandhu." He alleged



that instead of receiving crucial input subsidies, farmers are now struggling to obtain basic necessities like urea.

He pointed out that despite the Congress party's promise to ensure urea availability, farmers continue to face signifi-


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3 TIMES BETTER



Dr. Kota Neelima Urges
Voters to Stay Vigilant During
Electoral Roll Revision

HYDERABAD, JUNE 27

PCC Vice President and Sanath Nagar Assembly Constituency Congress Party In-charge Dr. Kota Neelima on Saturday urged eligible voters to remain alert during the ongoing electoral roll revision process, warning that failure to participate in the verification exercise could lead to the deletion of names from the voter list.

Dr. Neelima conducted a field inspection of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) Enumeration Forms exercise at Booth Nos. 120 and 121 in CC Nagar of Bansilalpet Division. She was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner and Electoral Registration Officer Sujatha, Booth Level Agent Augustine, Booth Level Officer Aruna, local Congress leaders, and party workers. As part of the inspection, Dr. Neelima visited households, distributed enumeration forms, and created awareness among residents on the importance of verifying their voter details. She appealed to citizens to carefully fill out and submit the forms provided by Booth Level Officers without delay.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Neelima said the right to vote is one of the most sacred rights in a democratic sys-

tem and must be protected by every eligible citizen. She cautioned that negligence during the revision process could result in eligible voters losing their names from the electoral rolls.

"Every eligible voter must ensure that their name is included in the voter list. People should verify their details, correct errors if any, and submit the enumeration forms on time to safeguard their voting rights," she said. Dr. Neelima also urged election officials to exercise diligence and ensure that no eligible voter is left out during the revision process. She called upon local Congress leaders to remain vigilant, assist residents in filling out forms, and immediately address any doubts or concerns raised by the public.

Reaffirming the Congress Party's commitment to protecting the voting rights of citizens, Dr. Neelima said the party would closely monitor the distribution and submission of SIR enumeration forms and extend necessary support to people throughout the exercise.

She stressed that the strength of India's democracy depends on the active participation of every eligible voter and their determination to safeguard their constitutional right to vote.

MUMBAI, JUNE 27

The Maharashtra government on Saturday postponed the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) 2026 following allegations of a question paper leak, just a day before the examination was scheduled to be held. Nearly six lakh candidates were expected to appear for the examination on Sunday, June 28, at 1,728 centres across the State.

Announcing the decision, the government said the examination had been deferred in the interest of maintaining transparency and protecting the integrity of the recruitment process. The decision came after confidential reports regarding an alleged paper leak emerged from Bhiwandi in Thane district. An investigation conducted by the Bhiwandi Police reportedly led to the recovery of question papers from certain individuals, which were found to contain questions similar to those in the official TET examination.

According to the government, officials of the Maharashtra State Examination Council (MSEC) were immediately summoned to verify the seized documents. During the exami-



Acting on the tip-off, the police laid a trap and detained three suspects.

nation of the material, officials found that several questions in the recovered papers matched those in the actual TET question paper. Following the findings, a case was registered at the Bhiwandi police station. Authorities said further investigations are underway to determine the extent of the leak and identify those involved in the alleged malpractice.

The sudden postponement, announced just a day before the examination, has affected lakhs of candidates who had completed preparations and made travel arrangements to reach their examination centres.

The Opposition strongly criticised the government over the incident and demanded a com-

prehensive investigation into the alleged paper leak.

Maharashtra Congress president Harshawardhan Sapkal questioned the government's ability to conduct examinations in a fair and transparent manner.

"Why is the government not capable of conducting even a single examination transparently? Why is it playing with the future of our youth? If the government does not take strict action, we will be forced to take to the streets," he said.

Officials of the Maharashtra State Examination Council sought to reassure candidates that they would not have to undergo the registration process again.

MSEC Deputy Commissioner Priya Shinde said that organising an examination of such a large scale generally takes around three weeks. She clarified that all candidates who had already registered for the examination would remain eligible and would not be required to pay any additional fee.

"Since the candidates are not at fault, no re-registration fee will be charged," she said.

Police have registered a First Information Report (FIR) against three persons in connection with the alleged leak. Officials said strict action would be taken against all those found responsible.

The MSEC has stated that the revised examination date and

other related details will be announced on its official website in due course.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde called for stringent action against those involved in the alleged malpractice. He said the accused should be booked under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) to ensure severe punishment and to prevent similar incidents in the future.

The latest controversy has once again raised concerns over the security and credibility of competitive examinations, with several stakeholders demanding stronger safeguards to protect the interests of students and job aspirants.

Rs.40-CR
MINORITY
GURUKUL
CAMPUSES
OPENED IN
ADILABAD

ADILABAD, JUNE 27:

Government Adviser Mohammed Ali Shabbir on Saturday said the Congress government was giving top priority to education and strengthening minority residential institutions across Telangana.

After inaugurating the Minority Gurukul Boys-2 School and Junior College Residential School in Adilabad, constructed at a cost of Rs.20 crore each, he said quality education and modern facilities were being provided to minority students from poor families. Minister Mohammed Azharuddin said the government was strengthening residential institutions to ensure equal opportunities for disadvantaged students. Minister Jupally Krishna Rao said Gurukul institutions were playing a crucial role in shaping students' futures.

TGMREIS President Faheem Qureshi said efforts were underway to improve academic standards and infrastructure. The dignitaries later inspected the campus facilities and interacted with students.

BJP Sounds Poll Bugle in
Telangana With Nitin's Tour

➤FROM PAGE 1

Addressing the media later, Ramchander Rao said Nitin Nabin's visit would mark a historic milestone in BJP's organizational growth in Telangana. He also visited the newly constructed BJP office in Shamshabad, which will be inaugurated by the national president. Nabin will also virtually inaugurate nine other district party offices.

Although Nitin Nabin has visited Telangana earlier, this will be his first participation in a BJP event of such scale in Hyderabad, a move expected to energize party workers

and send a strong political message across the state, Rao said.

Reiterating the party's ambition to form the next government in Telangana, Rao said BJP workers would take a renewed pledge to work towards that goal. He noted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already identified Telangana as a key focus state for the party's future expansion. "This is not merely a Hyderabad-centric programme. It marks the beginning of a new political direction for Telangana and will strengthen the BJP across the state",

Rao asserted.

Expressing confidence in the party's prospects, he said BJP would emerge victorious in the GHMC, Malkajgiri and Cyberabad regions and claimed that public support for change was growing. He maintained that opposition parties could not halt BJP's rise in the state. Meanwhile, BJP OBC Morcha National President and Rajya Sabha MP K Laxman visited Warangal to review arrangements for Nitin Nabin's programme and held discussions with the district party leaders.

HYDERABAD, JUNE 27

South Central Railway general manager Sanjay Kumar Srivastava conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Ultratech Cement Siding at Malkhaid railway station on Saturday, focusing on freight operations, infrastructure and future expansion plans. He was accompanied by K. Padmaja, Principal Chief Operations Manager, SCR; Dr. R. Gopalakrishnan, Divisional Railway Manager, Secundera-

bad Division and other senior officials throughout the inspection.

The visit began with a track inspection from Secunderabad to Tandur aboard a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR)-equipped coach, which uses advanced electromagnetic technology to assess track conditions without disrupting train services.

At Malkhaid, the General Manager reviewed freight handling facilities, loading infrastructure and train monitoring

systems at the siding's Central Control Room. He also witnessed demonstrations of modern technologies being deployed to improve operational efficiency. During a meeting with Ultratech officials, discussions were held on future development initiatives and innovative tools aimed at boosting freight movement. Srivastava also received representations from local residents and stakeholders seeking improvements in railway services in the region.



CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

GRAPEVINE STIRS DELHI AS TALK OF...

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Board belongs firmly in the first category for now. There is no official confirmation from the Bharatiya Janata Party. Nevertheless, the persistence of the reports has attracted attention across political circles and invited broader analysis.

THE DISCUSSION
EXTENDS BEYOND
AN INDIVIDUAL

The significance of the present discussion lies not merely in the possibility of one leader receiving a new organisational responsibility. Rather, it raises larger questions about how the BJP continues to shape its leadership structure as it prepares for future political challenges. Internal appointments within major political parties often reflect wider organisational thinking, making even unconfirmed reports worthy of careful examination when they gain sustained attention.

WHY THE
PARLIAMENTARY
BOARD MATTERS

The BJP Parliamentary Board occupies one of the most important positions within the party's organisational framework. It is associated with major strategic decisions relating to leadership, elections and organisational direction. Membership is generally viewed as recognition of experience, political standing and institutional confidence. Consequently, any discussion about possible changes to its composition attracts interest that extends well beyond the party organisation.

YOGI ADITYANATH'S
NATIONAL POLITICAL
PROFILE

As Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath occupies one of the most prominent

positions in Indian politics. Uttar Pradesh remains central to national electoral politics because of its size and parliamentary representation. Over successive terms, his government has highlighted achievements in infrastructure development, law and order, industrial investment, religious tourism, welfare implementation and public administration. At the same time, several policy decisions have attracted criticism from political opponents and sections of civil society. These contrasting perspectives have made him one of the country's most closely observed political leaders.

FACTS MUST REMAIN
DISTINCT FROM
SPECULATION

At present, the reported induction remains unverified. No official communication has been issued by the BJP. That distinction is fundamental. Political reporting carries the responsibility of separating confirmed developments from informed interpretation. Analysis may examine the implications of a reported development, but it must not present speculation as an accomplished fact.

WHAT THE
SPECULATION MAY
INDICATE

Political discussions often reveal broader organisational priorities. If reports of this nature gain sustained attention, they may indicate that leadership structures and organisational responsibilities remain subjects of active discussion within the party. Whether those discussions eventually result in formal decisions can only be established through official confirmation.

THE CHANGING ROLE
OF STATE LEADERS

One broader trend in Indian politics deserves attention. Chief Ministers increasingly influence national political discourse through governance, economic management and administrative performance. As states assume larger roles in investment, infrastructure and public service delivery, successful state leaders naturally acquire greater visibility within national political organisations. Any future organisational decisions involving senior Chief Ministers are therefore likely to be viewed within this wider institutional context.

GOVERNANCE AS A
POLITICAL MEASURE

Across political parties, governance has become an increasingly important measure of leadership. Voters evaluate governments through infrastructure, employment, investment, welfare delivery, public services and administrative responsiveness. Political credibility is increasingly linked to demonstrable outcomes. Organisational decisions that recognise administrative experience may therefore be interpreted as reflecting this broader shift, although each appointment is ultimately shaped by multiple political considerations.

THE WIDER
POLITICAL
IMPLICATIONS

Developments within a national political party are closely watched by both supporters and opponents. Organisational changes can influence political messaging, electoral preparation and strategic planning across the political spectrum. Even before official announce-

ments are made, discussions surrounding leadership often become part of a wider conversation about the future direction of national politics.

THE ROLE OF
RESPONSIBLE
POLITICAL
JOURNALISM

Political journalism serves the public best when it combines curiosity with restraint. It should investigate reports that carry public significance while making clear what has been confirmed and what remains under discussion. The objective is not to amplify speculation but to provide readers with context, institutional understanding and balanced analysis.

The current discussion surrounding Yogi Adityanath illustrates precisely that principle. The speculation is newsworthy because of the office involved and the broad-range organisational questions it raises. Its outcome, however, remains uncertain until an official announcement is made.

Politics is shaped not only by elections but also by the institutions and organisational decisions that influence governance and leadership. The current speculation regarding Yogi Adityanath's possible induction into the BJP Parliamentary Board should therefore be viewed with measured interest rather than premature conclusion. If an official announcement follows, it may become an important organisational development. Until then, the responsibility of serious journalism is to distinguish verified fact from informed interpretation and to help readers understand why the discussion itself has become politically significant.

MGNREGA ROW: TELANGANA
SEEKS COMMON FRONT WITH..

➤FROM PAGE 1

structure by reducing the role of State governments in implementing rural employment programmes.

Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Danasari Anasuya Seethakka attended the meeting in person, while Agriculture Minister Thummala Nageswara Rao and Employment Minister G. Vivek Venkataswamy participated virtually. Senior officials, including Special Chief Secretary Dana Kishore and Commissioner of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development D. Divya, participated in the discussions.

Members of the committee strongly felt that the proposed law infringes upon the constitutional powers of States and contains several provisions that may not withstand judicial scrutiny. Legal experts informed the committee that they had identified multiple constitutional issues that could form the basis of a challenge before the Supreme Court.

The committee held detailed discussions on whether Telangana should challenge the legislation in the Supreme Court instead of implementing it in line with the Centre's guidelines.

The cabinet panel received suggestions from the representatives of nearly 20 civil society organisations. The civil societies also sounded critical of the Centre introducing sweeping changes without consulting State governments. They described the move as a violation of cooperative federalism, saying employment guarantee programmes directly affect State finances, rural livelihoods and local implementation.

The organisations urged the Telangana government to enact its own employment guarantee law under the Constitution instead of simply adopting the proposed Central framework, which they estimated could cost the State exchequer nearly Rs 2,500 crore. They also warned that the proposed changes could reduce employment opportunities for thousands of agricultural labourers.

Civil society representatives opposed the proposal to limit employment to 60 days and demanded that Telangana guarantee at least 200 days of wage employment every year, along with payment of statutory minimum wages. A major part of the discussion focused

on the proposed 60:40 funding pattern between the Centre and the States. The committee decided that the State Legal department should thoroughly examine the issue before any final decision is taken. Members also criticised the Centre's proposed allocation formula, arguing that it would penalise better-performing States while rewarding poorer performers. They noted that Telangana had already submitted suggestions to the Union government seeking changes to the formula, but expressed disappointment that these recommendations were reportedly ignored. The sub-committee felt that the wider political and administrative implications of the proposed legislation had not yet been adequately communicated to the public.

The committee decided to place the issue before the State Cabinet on July 2. The Cabinet is expected to take a final decision on whether Telangana should adopt the Central framework, enact its own legislation, approach the Supreme Court, or pursue a combination of legal and administrative measures.

CONGRESS
MOVES EC OVER
ALLEGED MIM
ACTIVITIES

➤FROM PAGE 1

any political involvement in voter enrollment could undermine public confidence in the neutrality and transparency of elections. He further alleged that some mosque committee members had informed Congress leaders they were acting under pressure from local political figures.

Calling for the sanctity of religious institutions to be maintained, the Congress leader urged all political parties to keep places of worship free from electoral activities. He appealed to the Election Commission and the Chief Electoral Officer of Telangana to conduct an immediate inquiry, verify how the forms were obtained, and ensure strict adherence to official voter verification procedures. Congress party would continue monitoring the issue to safeguard voter rights and uphold the integrity of the electoral system, he added.

KTR SLAMS CM REVANTH, ALLEGES..

➤FROM PAGE 1

pensions to two family members instead of one. He emphasised that none of these pledges have been honoured.

"The sentiment that 'Congress must be dethroned and KCR must return' is gaining momentum across Telanga-

na," KT Rama Rao declared. He added that despite Revanth Reddy holding the Chief Minister's office, public sentiment remains focused on former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao.

The BRS working president further alleged that Revanth Reddy has publicly expressed

admiration for German dictator Adolf Hitler, questioning the potential for welfare and development under such a leader. He referred to the Chief Minister with the moniker "Hitler Reddy."

He also accused the Chief Minister of misrepresenting the financial situation regard-

ing the debt accumulated by the preceding BRS government. KTR provided figures, stating that Telangana's debt was Rs. 72,000 crore at the time of its formation in 2014, and the BRS government subsequently borrowed Rs. 2.80 lakh crore over the following decade.



Indian Culture and Musical Heritage



■ **Must Be Preserved to Pass on the Spirit of India to Future Generations – Eminent Educationist and Environmentalist Dr. Lion Komatireddy Gopal Reddy**

HYDERABAD

A grand musical tribute titled “Chiru Vandanaalu to Gana Gandharva” was organized by Rajashree Musical & Cultural Association in Hyderabad on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Padma Bhushan Dr. S. P. Balasubrahmanyam, the legendary playback singer fondly remembered as the Gana Gandharva. The event stood as a magnificent celebration of Indian music, culture, and artistic heritage, bringing together renowned musicians, educationists, artists, social leaders, and music lovers from different walks of life to pay homage to the legendary singer and his unparalleled contribution to Indian music.

Delivering the Chief Guest's message, Union Minister for Coal and Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy, said that India is a civilization with thousands of years of glorious history, rich cultural heritage, and strong family values. He observed that Indian music, dance, literature, and traditional arts have earned worldwide recognition and continue to represent the true spirit of India across the globe.

He emphasized that preserving this invaluable cultural legacy is the collective responsibility of every family, educational institution, artist, and citizen. The Union Minister further assured that the Government of India will con-



tinue to encourage and support artists, musicians, and cultural organizations dedicated to safeguarding and promoting India's cultural heritage.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Lion Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, Eminent Educationist, Environmentalist, Chairman of Lotus Lap Group of Schools, TRSMA National Advisor, and Global Green Mentor Awardee 2025, stated that Indian culture, music, literature, and traditions form the very soul of our nation.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Gopal Reddy said

“Our culture, our music, and our traditions are India's greatest identity. While modern education is essential for today's children, it is equally important to nurture them with Indian values, cultural awareness, music, arts, and moral principles. This is the right time to ensure that future generations inherit the true spirit of India. Preserving our culture is not merely the responsibility of the government; it is a shared responsibility of every parent, teacher, ed-

ucational institution, and citizen. Only when education is combined with values and character can we build responsible, patriotic, and compassionate citizens.” Dr. Gopal Reddy further explained that the Lotus Lap Public Schools are committed to the holistic development of children. He said that the institution focuses not only on academic excellence but also on nurturing students in Indian culture, music, dance, yoga, literature, environmental conservation, leadership qualities, community service, and personality development through various innovative educational and cultural programmes.

He added

“The enthusiasm shown by the students, parents, and teachers of Lotus Lap Public Schools in preserving Indian culture is truly commendable. Through cultural celebrations, music education, traditional festivals, and value-based learning, we are instilling pride in India's rich heritage among our students. Today's children must become tomorrow's cultural ambassadors of India.”

The audience was captivated by the melodious performance of Nandi Award-winning singer Shri Vinod Babu, who received tremendous appreciation for his soulful renditions. Young performers from the Little Musician Academy, under the guidance of renowned music maestro Dr. K. Ramachari, presented outstanding performances featuring Indian classical music, devotional compositions, and evergreen film songs, earning standing ovations from the audience. The distinguished guests specially appreciated the remarkable talent and dedication displayed by the young musicians. The programme was presided over by Smt. Bandi Ragha Rajashree, President of Rajashree Musical & Cultural Association, while Sri Kottakonda Bhaskar, General Secretary, coordinated the event successfully.

Among those present were Former Corporator Baddam Prem Maheshwar Reddy, Pottlapalli Damodar Reddy, Vikas Ads Venkateswara Rao, Padamati Jagannathan Reddy (State Secretary, Telangana Kisan Morcha), Karate Balu, eminent musicians, cultural personalities, literary scholars, educationists, artists, and social activists.

The programme concluded with a heartfelt musical tribute to the legendary Dr. S. P. Balasubrahmanyam, celebrating his extraordinary contribution to Indian music. The evening served as a powerful reminder of the importance of preserving India's timeless cultural and musical heritage and inspired everyone present to actively contribute towards passing these rich traditions on to future generations.

Chennadi Sudhakar Rao and T. Amarender Reddy Elected President and Secretary of Hyderabad Boat Club

HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Boat Club, which has a 94-year history, has unanimously elected Chennadi Sudhakar Rao as its President and T. Amarender Reddy as its Secretary.

The election results for the 2026–2028 term were announced on Saturday. Since no other nominations were filed, the Election Officer, S. B. Madhusudan, declared that the entire executive committee had been elected unanimously.

Chennadi Sudhakar Rao has served the Hyderabad Boat Club for the past 23 years, including 19 years as President and 4 years as Secretary. The newly elected ex-



ecutive committee of the Hyderabad Boat Club is as follows:
President: Chennadi Sudhakar Rao
Vice President: Enugu Muraidhar Reddy
Secretary: T. Amarender Reddy
Joint Secretary: C. A. B. Narender Rao
Treasurer: K. Dharanidhar

Managing Committee Members:
A. M. Raja
G. Kiran Kumar
Nikunj Anil
N. Likhita
P. V. R. Reddy
Sheshagiri Rao Tummala
All office bearers and committee members were elected unanimously.

Traffic curbs in Nalgonda on Sunday for CM's public meeting

NALGONDA

The Nalgonda Police have announced extensive traffic restrictions across the town on Sunday in view of the Telangana Chief Minister's public meeting at NG College grounds. District SP Sharath Chandra Pawar said the restrictions are aimed at ensuring smooth traffic management, public safety, and hassle-free movement for meeting attendees.

According to the police, visitors from Miryalaguda and Tippurthi side are advised to reach the venue via: Miryalaguda–Tippurthi–Duppallapalli (through Panagal) route, or Nakrekal–Panagal–Pullareddy route. Parking facilities have been arranged at Kalabharathi, Mekala Abhinay Stadium, Arya Samaj Grounds and Railway Station area.

Visitors from Sagar, Devarakonda, Kanagal and Munugode side should enter through the Munugode bypass via the Rural Police Station and use designated parking areas at Rakhils Colo-

ny, VT Colony, LV Petrol Bunk, RRR, Raghavendra Colony and Ravinder Nagar. Special parking for two-wheelers has been provided at Police Parade Ground and Beat Market. Police said the general traffic movement will be temporarily suspended on roads leading to the meeting venue, particularly: DTC–Women's College–DEO Office stretch to NG College, and Clock

Tower to NG College route. Only vehicles carrying meeting attendees will be allowed towards the venue. Residents of Panagal have been advised to use the Ramalayam-Bus stand route, while those in the Hyderabad Road area should take alternative routes from the Vivekananda statue junction, as traffic will be completely restricted up to NG College.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY				
TRIVANDRUM DIVISION				
TENDER NOTICE No.SR-TVCSnT (TEND)/3/2026/07,				
Dated: 25.06.2026				
Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Southern Railway, Thiruvananthapuram-14 for and on behalf of The President of India invites e-tenders for the following works.				
Sl No.	Tender No.	Name of the works		
1	TVC-SNT-SIG-26-27-07	Signalling arrangements for the Proposed Shunting Neck Extension at Thrissur Station in TVC Division.		
2	TVC-SNT-SIG-26-27-09	Comprehensive Annual maintenance Contract for the 54-Data Logger System, 7-RTU and Control Office Application (COA) in 11-stations in TVC Division		
Sl No.	Cash Value (Approx.) (₹ Ps)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Last Date for Receipt of Tender	Completion Period
1	4755526.78	95100.00	17.07.2026 up to 15.00 Hrs	08 Months
2	14281931.09	285600.00	17.07.2026 up to 15.00 Hrs	36 Months
Complete details & tender document will be available at www.ireps.gov.in				
Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer / Trivandrum-14				

Cyberabad Police Conduct Awareness Session for Private Security Agencies

■ **Security Guards and CCTV Vendors**

HYDERABAD

Under the guidance of Sri N. Koti Reddy, IPS, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Quthbullapur Zone, an awareness session was conducted for Private Security Agencies, Security Guards and CCTV Vendors of Quthbullapur Zone on Saturday evening at CMR Technical Campus, Kandlakoya, Medchal. Around 300 participants attended the programme.

The programme was attended by Purushottam, Additional DCP, Quthbullapur Zone; Shankar Reddy, ACP, Medchal Division; Bala Gangireddy, ACP, Quthbullapur Division, along with all the Inspectors of the zone. The session aimed to enhance coordination between the police and private security personnel and strengthen public safety through effective security practices.

Addressing the gathering, DCP N. Koti Reddy emphasized that registration of all Private Security Agencies under the Private Security Agencies



Regulation (PSAR) Act, 2005 is mandatory and instructed all agencies to ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Act. He explained the legal responsibilities of security agencies using real-time case studies and highlighted the vital role played by private security personnel in crime prevention and public safety.

Participants were instructed to maintain visitor registers, verify the identity of every visitor before permitting entry into restricted areas, remain

vigilant and promptly report suspicious persons, unattended objects or any security threats to the local Station House Officer or police control room. They were also advised to extend full cooperation to the police during emergencies, law and order situations and VIP movements.

The participants were further instructed to ensure that CCTV cameras installed at entry and exit points remain functional at all times, report any technical faults immediately, maintain emergency contact numbers for

quick communication with the police, and respond promptly to instructions issued by police officers whenever required.

Cyberabad Police reiterated that effective coordination between private security agencies, security guards, CCTV vendors and the police is essential for maintaining a safe and secure environment. The participants appreciated the initiative and assured the police of their full cooperation in strengthening the security network across Quthbullapur Zone.

"Pradhanamantri Sangrahalaya" to preserve legacy of all Prime Ministers: NV Subhash

NEW DELHI

Telangana BJP Chief Spokesperson and Media In-charge NV Subhash on Saturday said the newly inaugurated "Pradhanamantri Sangrahalaya" library will serve as a unique repository documenting the contributions of every Prime Minister who has led independent India.

Speaking after inaugurating the library on the occasion of 105th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, Subhash said the initiative aims to preserve the achievements and legacy of all Prime Ministers for future generations. Every Prime Minister, irrespective of political

affiliation, has played a role in India's nation-building journey and deserves recognition in the country's historical record, he noted.

Paying rich tributes to P.V. Narasimha Rao, Subhash described him as the architect of India's economic transformation, crediting his 1991 reforms with rescuing the nation from a severe balance-of-payments crisis and laying the foundation for sustained economic growth.

"Rao's visionary leadership, administrative acumen, scholarship and commitment to national interest transformed India's economic trajectory and continue to inspire future generations", he added.

Highlighting Rao's ability to implement sweeping reforms while heading a minority government, Subhash termed his tenure a remarkable example of political statesmanship and consensus-building.

Rao's contributions received wider national recognition under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government and urged young Indians to study the former Prime Minister's life through authentic historical records. "Many believe that despite dedicating his entire political life to the Congress, P.V. Narasimha Rao did not receive the respect he truly deserved from his own party. Ironically, it has been under Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's government that his immense contributions have received greater national recognition, transcending political differences", he observed.

Describing Rao as a scholar, polyglot, prolific writer and committed nationalist, Subhash said his life offers enduring lessons in integrity, courage and public service. Pradhanamantri Sangrahalaya would function not merely as a library but as a living institution dedicated to preserving India's democratic and political heritage, he noted. PMML chairman Nirpender Mishra and Teen Murthy bhavan CEO Priyanka Mishra were present on the occasion.

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SHORT
TAKES

Telangana Youth Congress stages protest over NEET paper leak

HYDERABAD: As part of the nationwide "Chhatron Ki Goonj" campaign, the Telangana Youth Congress staged a massive protest against the NEET paper leak at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar statue on Tank Bund, Hyderabad on Saturday. Demanding the immediate resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, demonstrators held the minister morally responsible for the crisis and burned his effigy in protest. The demonstration was led by chief guests including Telangana Youth Congress President Jakkidi Shivacharan Reddy, State Youth Congress In-charge Khalid, and Co-in-charge Roshini Jaiswal. Addressing the gathering, Shivacharan Reddy accused the Central government of jeopardising the futures of lakhs of students across the country. He warned that the Youth Congress would intensify its agitation and continue protesting until the Union Education Minister steps down.

NIMS opens admissions for BPT, nursing & allied health courses

HYDERABAD: Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS), Hyderabad, has invited applications from eligible Telangana candidates for admission into BPT, B.Sc. Nursing and B.Sc. Allied Health Sciences courses for the year 2026. According to Prof. P. Chandra Sekhar MS (Orthopedics), Dean, NIMS, a total of 250 seats are available, including 50 seats in Bachelor of Physiotherapy (BPT), 100 in B.Sc. Nursing and 100 in B.Sc. Allied Health Sciences. Online applications are open from June 27 and will be accepted until 5 PM on July 11 through the NIMS website www.nims.edu.in. Candidates must also submit a hard copy of the application along with supporting documents to the Associate Dean (Academic-2), NIMS, Panjagutta, Hyderabad, by 5 PM on July 14. The institute advised the applicants to refer to the prospectus for eligibility criteria, required documents.

Harish slams Revanth over compromising Telangana's river water rights

HYDERABAD

Former minister and BRS deputy floor leader T. Harish Rao strongly criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, accusing him of compromising Telangana's legitimate rights over Krishna and Godavari waters for political interests while projecting the recent three-state meeting at Tungabhadra as a historic achievement.

Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan on Saturday, Harish Rao said the Chief Minister's lack of understanding of river water issues has become a serious threat to Telangana's future.

He alleged that while the BRS government fought relentlessly and secured approvals for major irrigation projects, the present Congress government was surrendering Telangana's interests before the Centre and neighbouring states.

Harish Rao questioned the celebrations over the replacement of gates at the Tungabhadra Dam, stating that Telangana's real concern was securing its rightful share of river waters, not symbolic events.

He pointed out that Karnataka is moving ahead with the proposed 35 TMC Naveli Reservoir upstream of the Rajolibanda Diversion Scheme (RDS), while Andhra Pradesh is planning the 20 TMC Gundrevula Project downstream of RDS. Together, these projects would enable the two states to impound nearly 55 TMC of water, severely affecting inflows into Srisailem Reservoir and



jeopardising irrigation projects dependent on it, including the Kalwakurthy Lift Irrigation Scheme and the Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Project, he said.

Harish Rao said that despite these serious developments, the Telangana government failed to oppose either project or safeguard the State's interests.

The BRS leader questioned whether the Chief Minister had secured any concrete assurance regarding Telangana's rightful 15.90 TMC allocation under the Rajolibanda Diversion Scheme, permanent closure of unauthorised Andhra Pradesh outlets on RDS, or repairs to the RDS canal system and dam.

He also sought an explanation from the Chief Minister on what transpired during the closed-door meeting attended only by the Chief Ministers of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka along with a senior Union Water Resources official, while Telangana Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy and senior State irrigation officials were reportedly kept outside.

Harish Rao alleged that Karnataka has already taken up construction of three unauthorised barrages on the Tungabhadra River without statutory approvals. He questioned why the Telangana government neither objected before the Central government nor approached the Krishna

River Management Board despite construction progressing substantially.

He accused Revanth Reddy of remaining silent while neighbouring states proceeded with projects detrimental to Telangana's water security.

Harish Rao further criticised the Congress government for failing to secure fresh approvals for Telangana's pending irrigation projects. He expressed concern over reports that the proposed Godavari river-linking plans could bypass Telangana's interests and jeopardise important projects such as Sammakka Sagar, which is expected to irrigate nearly four lakh acres in Warangal and Nalgonda districts.



Left parties launch statewide housing rights agitation after Hanamkonda protest

HANAMKONDA

Left parties on Saturday staged a massive protest in Hanamkonda against the demolition of houses belonging to poor families in Hanamkonda and Warangal districts, accusing the state government of acting vindictively and demanded housing site pattas (land titles) and construction of Indiramma houses.

Thousands of people participated in the rally organized by Left parties from Hanamkonda and Warangal districts. The protest began near Ekashila Park and proceeded through Kaloji Centre to the Subedari Martyrs' Memorial before culminating in a march towards the Collectorate.

Prominent left party leaders who took part included Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, John Wesley, Gadagoni Ravi, Gummati Narsaiah and Takkallapalli Srinivasa Rao.

Tension prevailed when police intervened and arrested several Left leaders who were staging a sit-in on the road. Activists resisted the arrests, leading to a scuffle with police. Protesters later blocked police vehicles and organized a road blockade in protest.

Addressing the gathering, CPI state secretary and MLA Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao declared that the struggle for housing rights would expand across Tel-



angana until the government fulfilled its promises. He accused authorities of targeting the poor while ignoring major land grabbers and real estate interests, and demanded immediate issuance of housing pattas and construction of houses for all eligible beneficiaries.

CPM State Secretary John Wesley condemned the demolition of huts built by poor families on government land and demanded that housing titles be granted at the same locations where structures were razed. He warned that continued demolitions could trigger intensified statewide agitations. The Left parties announced a series of protests, including picketing of the Hanamkonda and Warangal Collectorates on July 1 and a state-level dharna at Indira Park, Hyderabad, on July 6, pressing for housing rights and rehabilitation of affected families.

Don't politicise voter roll revision, participate in SIR: Kishan Reddy

HYDERABAD

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Saturday urged the political parties not to create suspicion among the public over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls being undertaken by the Election Commission of India, describing it as a routine constitutional exercise aimed at ensuring transparency and accuracy in the voter list.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP state office in Hyderabad, Kishan Reddy said the SIR process was not a new initiative and had been conducted several times in the past, including during Congress governments. He stressed that the exercise was being carried out independently by the Election Commission and was not linked to any political party or government. "The objective is to ensure that every eligible Indian citizen gets the right to vote while removing duplicate entries, names of deceased persons and ineligible voters from the rolls", he added.

Accusing some political parties of view-



ing the exercise through a political lens, he alleged that misinformation was being spread to mislead the public. He appealed to citizens across Telangana and Telugu-speaking regions to actively participate in the revision process to safeguard their voting rights. Kishan Reddy said an accurate electoral roll was essential for the smooth functioning of democracy and claimed that voter awareness and turnout

had increased in states where similar revision exercises were conducted. He added that the process helped rectify irregularities and strengthened public confidence in the electoral system. Emphasising the independence of the Election Commission, he said making baseless allegations against the constitutional body and creating unnecessary doubts among voters was inappropriate.

BRS has lost public trust: Congress MLA T Rammohan Reddy

HYDERABAD

Congress MLA T. Rammohan Reddy, representing the Parigi Assembly constituency, has asserted that the public has lost faith in the statements of BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao, deeming his party's credibility eroded. Speaking to the media at the CLP media centre within the Assembly on Saturday, he characterised KTR's recent meeting in Parigi as an "utter flop." He alleged that the gathering was so sparse that organisers struggled to fill a small function hall and had to actively plead with arriving party work-



ers not to walk out before KTR could deliver his speech. The MLA contended that development in Parigi has stagnated under the previous BRS administration, and therefore, K.T.

Rama Rao lacks the standing to discuss developmental progress. "The current Congress government is initiating the construction of a 100-bed hospital in Parigi," he remarked. During KCR's

tenure, not a single double-bed-room house was constructed in Parigi. We are now facilitating housewarming ceremonies for Indiramma houses," the MLA said.

"Our government is committed to advancing women's development, evidenced by the sanctioning of interest-bearing loans totaling ₹60,000 crore for self-help groups.

Additionally, the government is procuring buses for these groups and subsequently leasing them to the RTC. KTR must explain what was done for women during the BRS regime," Rammohan Reddy said.

Cyberabad police strengthen security network with awareness drive for guards, CCTV vendors

HYDERABAD

In a bid to enhance public safety and strengthen coordination between law enforcement and private security personnel, Cyberabad Police conducted a large-scale awareness programme for private security agencies, security guards and CCTV vendors in Quthbullapur Zone on Saturday. The session, held at CMR Technical Campus in Kandlakoya, Medchal, witnessed participation from nearly 300 stakeholders. The programme was organized under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner of Police (Quthbullapur Zone) N. Koti Reddy.

Addressing the gathering, DCP Koti Reddy stressed that registration of all private security agencies under the Private Security Agencies Regulation (PSAR) Act, 2005, is mandatory and urged agencies to strictly comply with the law. Using real-life case studies, he explained the legal responsibilities of security agencies and highlight-



ed their crucial role in crime prevention and public safety. Participants were instructed to maintain visitor registers, verify identities before granting access to restricted areas, remain vigilant and immediately report suspicious activities, unattended objects or security threats to the police. They were also advised to ensure uninterrupted functioning of CCTV cameras, promptly report technical issues and maintain emergency contact details for quick coordination with law enforcement. The

programme was attended by Additional DCP Purushottam, ACPs Shankar Reddy and Bala Gangireddy, along with inspectors from the zone. Cyberabad Police emphasized that close coordination between private security agencies, CCTV vendors and the police is essential for maintaining a safe and secure environment. Participants welcomed the initiative and assured full cooperation in strengthening the security network across Quthbullapur Zone.

Panchayat secretary caught taking Rs.25,000 bribe in Khammam

In a major anti-corruption operation, the Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) caught Thammisetty Suresh, Panchayat Secretary of Bhanapuram Gram Panchayat in Mudigonda Mandal of Khammam district, red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs.25,000 on Saturday.

According to ACB officials, the accused demanded the bribe from a complainant for processing building permission and allotting a house number to a one-room sheet-roofed house under construction in Bhanapuram village. The tainted cash was recovered from his possession during the trap operation. The ACB stated that the official misused his position to obtain undue advantage. He has been arrested and will be produced before the Special Judge for SPE and ACB Cases, Warangal.

Women's groups demand immediate rollout of reservation law

HYDERABAD

Women's organisations and representatives of various political and social groups on Saturday demanded the immediate implementation of the Women's Reservation Act, 2023, without linking it to the census and constituency delimitation processes.

The demand was raised at a meeting of the State Alliance for Women's Reservation held at Raja Bahadur Gour Hall in Makhdoom Bhavan, Himayat Nagar, under the chairmanship of Magsaysay Award winner Shantha Sinha. Representatives from several women's organisa-

tions, civil society groups and political parties participated in the meeting and called for greater political representation for women. Speakers argued that delaying implementation of the law would deny women their rightful share in decision-making bodies.

Addressing the gathering, Shantha Sinha urged women to raise their voices against social challenges such as poverty, illiteracy and poor health. Professor Rama Melkote said women's reservation would help advance social justice and enable meaningful participation of women in governance.

CPI leader Pashya Padma

recalled the efforts of veteran leader Geeta Mukherjee in building consensus on the Women's Reservation Bill and alleged that the BJP government had delayed implementation by linking it to the census and delimitation exercise. Participants resolved to intensify their campaign for the implementation of the Women's Reservation Act and called upon democratic forces to unite in securing political empowerment for women across the country.

Speakers included Professor Surepally Sujatha (representing independent women's organizations and

networks), Sunitha Deepti (NAPM), Ashalatha and Rukmini (Makam), Puli Kalpana (DBF), Sister Lizzy (Telangana Domestic Workers Union) and Professor Rama Melkote, among others.

The Representatives from Left-wing and democratic parties - including Pashya Padma (CPI), Mallu Lakshmi (CPI-M), V. Sandhya (CPI-ML), Sharada (Congress-I), Tripurana Venkataratnam (former Women's Commission Chairperson), Kalvakuntla Kavitha (TRS), Arunodaya Vimala, Lakshmi Ragulapalli (TJS), and Shantha (DSP)—along with others, participated.

Ancy breaks Anju's 22-year-old long jump national record, Kushare sets high jump NR

BY PHILEM DIPAK SINGH

BHUBANESWAR: (Jun 27) Kerala long jumper Ancy Sojan smashed the 22-year-old national record previously held by the legendary Anju Bobby George, while high jumper Sarvesh Kushare also etched his name in the record books on a memorable day of Indian athletics during the National Inter-State Championships here on Saturday. The 25-year-old Ancy leaped a stunning 6.88m in her fifth attempt to better the previous national record of 6.83m, which Anju set during the 2004 Athens Olympics. She also bettered the Asian Games qualifying mark of 6.48m set by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI). She also became the season leader among Asian athletes. She was earlier second among Asian athletes this season with her 6.75m jump, which was her previous personal best.

CM Naidu Disburses ₹300 Crore to Veligonda Families

MARKAPURAM:

In a significant step towards rehabilitation of Veligonda displaced families, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu handed over a cheque for Rs 300 crore towards the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) package for 2,351 displaced families today and assured that the government would stand by them and ensure justice, rehabilitation and a better future. Addressing farmers and displaced families at Gantavanipalle in Markapuram district after inspecting the Veligonda Project works today, the Chief Minister stated that giving up ancestral lands for a project is a great sacrifice. Governments have a moral responsibility to ensure that such families live with dignity and prosperity. The Veligonda Project has affected 7,225 displaced persons, each carrying a story of loss and sacrifice. Families that lived for generations in villages such as Kalanuthala, Sunkesula, Chintalamudipi, Buduncherla, Katamaraju

Govt committed to protect interests of Veligonda Project displaced families: CM Veligonda Phase-I to deliver water this season:CM



Thanda, Sairam Nagar, Mettigondi, Basavayipalli, Lakshmipuram, Akkacheruvu and Gottipadu have had to leave behind their homes and memories to make way for a project intended to transform the future of four districts. Stating that leaving one's birthplace is painful, the Chief Minister said that every displaced family has a story of sacrifice and the state government government will ensure justiceto all those families. Calling Veligonda a "historic project", the Chief Minister said it would provide irrigation to 4.47

prioritising completion of the project, Chandrababu Naidu said and added that the total cost of the Veligonda Project has now reached Rs 10,580 crore, of which Rs 6,736 crore has already been spent, while another Rs 3,844 crore is required for completion.Since assuming office in 2024, the coalition government has spent Rs 759 crore on project works and sanctioned Rs 905 crore for rehabilitation and resettlement, of which Rs 300 crore has now been released.

The Chief Minister alleged that the previous government neglected the project, failed to provide compensation to displaced families and left critical works incomplete. Our government has accelerated works and is committed to completing the project and restoring people's trust," he said. The Chief Minister also outlined a broader development vision for Markapuram district, including promotion

of horticulture and agro-processing industries.Employment opportunities for local youth.Improved connectivity to the nearby Ramayapatnam port to facilitate exports.Development of infrastructure in rehabilitation colonies and the newly formed district.

Appreciating Water Resources Minister Nimmala Rama Naidu for closely monitoring project works, Chandrababu Naidu said the Minister had been spending considerable time at the project site to ensure speedy completion.The Chief Minister called upon people to support development-oriented governance and said his government remained committed to transforming drought-prone regions into prosperous agricultural hubs. Ministers Nimmala Rama Naidu, Gottipati Ravi Kumar, Dola Bala Veer-anjaneya Swamy, MP Srinivasulu Reddy and large number of people participated.

Jagan Warns Smart Kitchens Will Cost 85,000 Jobs

TADEPALLI (ANDHRA PRADESH)

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party President Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has launched a scathing attack on the state government's proposed "Smart Kitchens" initiative, alleging that it threatens to displace nearly 85,000 women who have long served as mid-day meal cooks in government schools. In a sharp post on X, Jagan accused the administration of using the scheme as a cover to reward its own supporters while pushing thousands of women into joblessness.

Many of these workers, he noted, have dedicated over two decades to ensuring nutritious meals for schoolchildren, yet now face an uncertain future. Adding to their plight, Jagan highlighted that salaries for the mid-day meal staff have not been paid for the past two months, deepening their financial distress. He recalled that during his tenure, the YSRCP

government had raised the honorarium for these workers from ₹1,000 to ₹3,000 per month. He reminded the public that the current government had promised even greater support before the elections, but instead is now attempting to dismantle their livelihoods under the guise of modernisation. Jagan pledged that the YSR Congress Party would stand firmly with the mid-day meal workers and fight for their rights. He demanded the immediate release of pending wages and urged the government to fulfil its election commitments by increasing remuneration rather than stripping away the livelihood of thousands of women. "This is not just about wages; it is about dignity and survival," Jagan asserted, warning that the government's move could devastate families dependent on these modest incomes. He emphasised that the women who have tirelessly served generations of schoolchildren deserve respect and security, not abandonment.

Library to showcase contributions of every PM to India's nation-building journey: N.V. Subash

NEW DELHI, JUNE 27:

The Pradhanamantri Sangrahalaya, inaugurated on the occasion of the 105th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, is envisioned as a unique knowledge repository dedicated to documenting and showcasing the contributions of every Prime Minister who has led independent India, Telangana BJP Official Spokesperson and Media In-charge N.V. Subash said on Saturday. Speaking after inaugurating the library, Subash, who is also one of the grandsons of P.V. Narasimha Rao, said the initiative has been conceived by family members to ensure that the achievements and legacy of every Prime Minister find a permanent place for future generations to study, understand and appreciate.

"The idea behind naming it Pradhanamantri Sangrahalaya is simple yet significant. Every Prime Minister, irrespective of political affiliation, has contributed in some measure to India's nation-building journey. This library aims to serve as a common platform to preserve and present those contributions for posterity," he said. The inauguration coincided with the 105th birth anniversary of P.V. Narasimha Rao, India's ninth Prime Minister, whose leadership during one of the country's most challenging economic crises fundamentally transformed the nation's future through landmark economic reforms. Subash said Rao's bold decisions in 1991 not only rescued India from an unprecedented balance-of-payments crisis but also laid the foundation for the country's emergence as one of the world's fastest-growing economies. "History must truthfully record that when India stood at the brink of an economic collapse, it was P.V. Narasimha Rao's decisive political leadership and far-sighted vision that initiated reforms which changed the country's economic trajectory forever. Those reforms opened India's economy to the

world, encouraged investment, strengthened industry and created opportunities for millions," he observed. He said the younger generation deserves to know how a leader from an ordinary middle-class family rose through determination, scholarship and administrative excellence to become one of India's most consequential Prime Ministers. "His remarkable political journey spanning over six decades, his administrative acumen, literary brilliance and unwavering commitment to national interest deserve a far more prominent place in India's historical narrative and academic discourse," Subash said. Referring to Rao's leadership of a minority government, Subash noted that implementing sweeping structural reforms under such politically challenging circumstances required extraordinary political wisdom and consensus-building abilities. "Leading a minority government is never easy. Yet, P.V. Narasimha Rao demonstrated exceptional statesmanship by

steering India through one of its gravest economic crises and delivering reforms whose benefits continue to be felt even today. His political management and strategic vision remain a case study in effective governance," he said. Subash further remarked that Rao consistently placed national interest above political considerations throughout his public life. "He believed that the nation always comes first. His decisions reflected conviction rather than political expediency. That commitment to national interest is perhaps one of the greatest lessons contemporary politics can draw from his life," he said. Expressing regret over what many consider the inadequate recognition accorded to Rao during his lifetime and even after his demise, Subash said history has gradually corrected that injustice. "Many believe that despite dedicating his entire political life to the Congress, P.V. Narasimha Rao did not receive the respect he truly deserved from his own party.

While liquor is available even in remote areas, farmers are struggling to procure fertilizers, alleges party general secretary Nagi Reddy; he also demands withdrawal of app-based distribution system as poor Internet connectivity and digital payment issues are denying access to subsidised fertilizers in rural and Agency areas

Nellai Express Partial Cancellation Revised Due to Tirunelveli Yard Works

Chennai: Southern Railway has revised the partial cancellation of the Nellai Superfast Express in view of ongoing yard remodeling works at Tirunelveli. The changes supersede the earlier notification issued on June 11. Train No. 12631 Chennai Egmore–Tirunelveli Nellai Superfast Express, scheduled to depart Chennai Egmore at 8.50 pm on June 28, will now be partially cancelled between Talaiyuthu and Tirunelveli instead of the previously announced Vanchi Maniyachchi–Tirunelveli section. As a result, the train will terminate at Talaiyuthu. Similarly, Train No. 12632 Tirunelveli–Chennai Egmore Nellai Superfast Express, scheduled to leave Tirunelveli at 8.50 pm on June 29, will now remain partially cancelled between Tirunelveli and Talaiyuthu, replacing the earlier notified cancellation between Tirunelveli and Vanchi Maniyachchi.

Consequently, the return service will originate from Talaiyuthu at 9.00 pm on June 29. Passengers are advised to take note of the revised arrangements and plan their journey accordingly.

Southern Railway Tops Nation in Special Train Occupancy During FY 2025-26

Chennai: Southern Railway recorded the highest passenger occupancy on special trains among all railway zones during the 2025-26 financial year, carrying nearly 33 lakh passengers and generating over ₹243 crore in revenue through its extensive special train operations. According to Southern Railway, it operated 2,513 trips across 229 reserved special train servicesduring FY 2025-26, transporting 32.98 lakh passengersand earning ₹243.22 crore. The trains recorded an average occupancy of 1,312 passengers per trip, significantly higher than the Indian Railways average of 894 passengers, making Southern Railway the best-performing zone in the country on this key efficiency parameter. The special train services were introduced after assessing passenger demand during festivals, holidays and peak travel seasons. Major routes covered included Southern Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Bengaluru, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, as well as long-dis-

tance services connecting eastern, western and northern parts of the country. In addition to reserved services, Southern Railway also operated 1,762 unreserved special train services during the financial year to cater to additional passenger demand. To improve occupancy and provide alternative travel options, the railway closely monitored waiting lists on regular trains and introduced special services wherever demand was high. Wait-listed passengers on regular trains received SMS alerts informing them about seat availability on special trains operating on the same routes. Southern Railway also widely publicised special train schedules through its website, print, electronic and social media platforms. Railway officials said the combination of demand forecasting, capacity augmentation and targeted passenger outreach helped reduce waiting lists, improve passenger convenience and achieve record occupancy levels during the year.

YSRCP alleges fertilizer shortage in Andhra Pradesh

While liquor is available even in remote areas, farmers are struggling to procure fertilizers, alleges party general secretary Nagi Reddy; he also demands withdrawal of app-based distribution system as poor Internet connectivity and digital payment issues are denying access to subsidised fertilizers in rural and Agency areas



YSRCP general secretary (Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare) M.V.S. Nagi Reddy on Friday said that Andhra Pradesh was facing severe fertilizer shortage and accused the NDA government of neglecting farmers during the crucial kharif season. Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters at Tadepalli, Mr. Nagi Reddy alleged that liquor was available even in remote areas, but farmers were struggling to procure fertilizers. Urging the government to withdraw the app-based distribution system, he said poor Internet connectivity and digital payment issues in the rural and Agency areas were preventing farmers from accessing subsidised fertilizers.

Flagging discrepancies in the official rainfall data, Mr. Nagi Reddy said the Agriculture Department reported a 25.8% rainfall deficit as of June 24, while the AP Water Resources Information and Management System (APWRIMS) website showed 1.4 mm deficit on June 26.

Mr. Nagi Reddy said the area under paddy and

maize cultivation had increased from 1.46 lakh hectares to 2.95 lakh hectares compared to the corresponding period the previous year, warranting higher availability of chemical fertilizers. He argued that chemical fertilizers were essential for food security and warned against excessive reliance on organic farming, citing Sri Lanka's food crisis as an example.

Questioning the government's claim that organic farming was being practised in 18 lakh acres, he asked why demand for chemical fertilizers had not declined. He alleged that organic farmers were receiving little institutional support.

The YSRCP leader further accused the government of failing to ensure remunerative prices for tobacco and mango growers, and alleged that juice processing units formed a cartel to suppress mango prices. He demanded that the Centre and State jointly provide ₹360 crore to support mango farmers and called for immediate steps to remove app-based restrictions, ensure adequate fertilizer supplies and safeguard farmers' interests.

Magnus Carlsen Returns, Divya Deshmukh Set for Global Chess League Debut

MUMBAI, JUNE 27, 2026

The Global Chess League (GCL), a joint venture between Tech Mahindra and FIDE, will return for its fourth season with the Season 4 Player Draft set to take place in Mumbai on June 29, ahead of the league in Bengaluru from September 3–13. The player draft will feature the return of Magnus Carlsen after a season away, while reigning FIDE Women's World Cup champion Divya Deshmukh is set to make her Global Chess League debut in Season 4.

The Season 4 player pool features 36 Grandmasters across generations, including World Champions, World Cup winners, Olympiad medallists and leading names from the global chess circuit. With a mix of retained stars and players entering the draft, franchises will have a wide field to shape balanced six-player squads across categories.

Since its launch, the Global Chess League has redefined elite chess through its franchise-based mixed-team format and technology-led fan experience. Hosted in India

Season 4 Player Draft Heads to Mumbai on June 29
Six franchises will build their squads at the Season 4 Player Draft ahead of the Global Chess League in Bengaluru from September 3–13.

for the first time, Season 3 marked a major milestone for the league, setting new benchmarks with AI-powered in-arena innovations, enhanced broadcast experiences and the continued expansion of GCL Contenders, its global talent pathway initiative. The season concluded with Alpine SG Pipers being crowned champions after a dominant performance in the final.

Ahead of Season 4, Peeyush Dubey, Chairperson, Global Chess League, said, "Over the past three seasons, the Global Chess League has demonstrated how a franchise-based team format can bring together the world's leading players while attracting new audiences to chess. Season 4 continues that journey with an outstanding player pool that reflects the quality and diversity of talent that the league continues to attract. We are excited to bring the league to Bengaluru, a city with a rich sporting tradition and a deep-rooted



chess culture, and look forward to seeing the six franchises build squads capable of producing another highly competitive season. The player draft will see teams assemble six-player squads across four categories—one Icon, two Superstar Men, two Superstar Women and one Prodigy—in the league's six-board rapid format, where every board carries equal significance.

The marquee draft list includes five-time World Champion Viswanathan Anand, 2025 FIDE World Cup winner Javokhir Sindarov, Women's World Rapid Champion Kon-

eru Humpy, former Women's World Champion Alexandra Kosteniuk, World Championship challenger Ian Nepomniachtch and former World Cup champion and Olympiad gold medallist Levon Aronian. They are joined by emerging stars, including reigning World Rapid Champion Volodar Murzin and Indian Grandmaster Leon Luke Mendonca, offering franchises a blend of proven champions and emerging talent as they complete their squads for Season 4. Gourav Rakshit, Commissioner, Global Chess League, added, "The Sea-

son 4 draft is where every franchise begins building its squad for the season ahead. The Global Chess League's unique format places equal emphasis on every category, making team composition as important as individual excellence. With a player pool featuring World Champions, established Grandmasters and emerging talent, the draft will shape the balance and competitiveness of every team heading into Season 4."

With the player pool now confirmed and the retention window complete, attention now turns to the Season 4 Player Draft in Mumbai on June 29, where the league's six franchises—upGrad Mumbai Masters, Fyers American Gambits, Ganges Grandmasters, Triveni Continental Kings, PBG Alaskan Knights, and Alpine APL Pipers—will assemble their squads for the Bengaluru edition, culminating in the title decider on September 13.

About Tech Mahindra Glob-

al Chess League

The Global Chess League is the world's first and largest official franchise league of its kind, with chess players from all over the world competing in a unique joint team format. It is a joint venture between Tech Mahindra, a part of the Mahindra Group, and FIDE. The league will feature male and female chess champions competing in the same team. Playing on the popular rapid format, the league's joint male-female teams will have the rare distinction of being a unique multiplayer team in the world of professional sports. In addition, the league is a one-of-its-kind live televised chess event offering fans a unique viewing experience. Tech Mahindra and FIDE will explore innovative ways to promote the game through interactive technology-enabled platforms by leveraging next-generation technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality, among others.



EDITORIAL.

The Graying Dividend:
India’s Race Against the
Demographic Clock

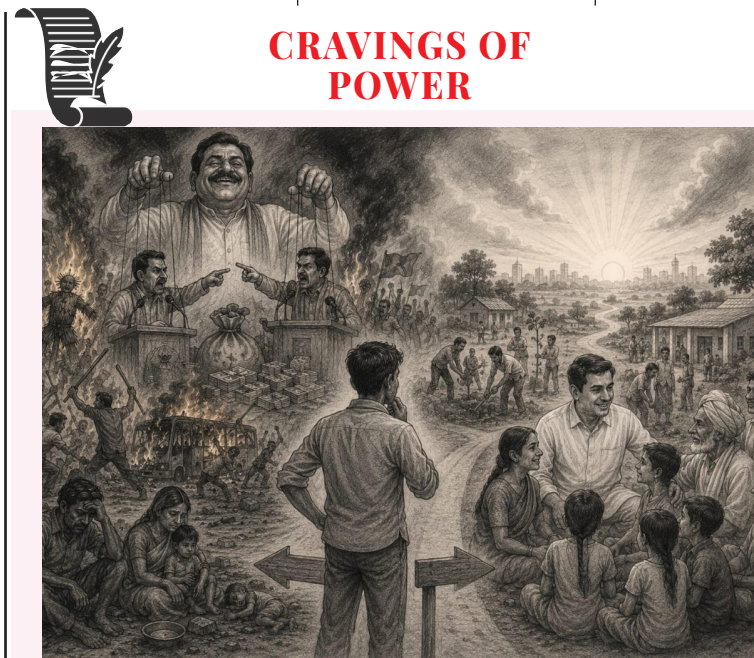
The rapid transformation of India’s population landscape is quietly steering the nation into uncharted socio-economic territory. For decades, the dominant narrative surrounding India was defined by its immense “demographic dividend”—a burgeoning, youthful workforce poised to drive historic economic growth. However, recent data revealing that India’s Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has dipped significantly below the replacement level of 2.1 shatters the myth of an endless youth boom. The country is now facing a dual reality: while it remains home to the world’s largest young population, it is simultaneously accelerating toward an aging society. What makes this shift particularly precarious is that India is on track to grow old before it grows rich, a demographic phenomenon that defies the historical trajectories of developed Western nations or East Asian economies.

This transition is not uniform, creating a complex internal fault line across the subcontinent. India is essentially dividing into two distinct demographic zones. The southern and western states, having invested early and effectively in healthcare, female literacy, and family planning, have seen their fertility rates plummet, in some cases approaching levels seen in parts of Europe. Meanwhile, several northern and eastern states continue to see higher, though declining, birth rates. This imbalance signals a massive demographic divergence. In the coming decades, the south will grapple with a shrinking native workforce, empty classrooms, and an exploding elderly population requiring extensive care. The north will continue to produce a labor surplus, but one that is historically hindered by gaps in high-quality education and modern skill development.

The immediate consequence of this divide will be an unprecedented surge in internal migration. To sustain their economies, industries in the aging southern states will increasingly rely on a steady influx of young workers migrating from the north. This massive relocation of labor is not just an economic necessity; it is a profound social challenge. If left unmanaged, it risks triggering regional anxieties over linguistic identity, cultural friction, and political representation, especially as future delimitation exercises threaten to alter parliamentary seat distributions based on population sizes. For India to remain cohesive, public policy must proactively foster social integration, ensuring that migrant workers are granted robust social security, dignified housing, and political inclusivity wherever they relocate.

Simultaneously, the structural foundations of India’s economy must pivot to support a graying nation. The traditional Indian social fabric has long relied on the joint family system as a default safety net for the elderly. As families shrink and urbanization accelerates, that informal net is fraying. India urgently needs to build a formal, state-backed social security apparatus. This requires a monumental scaling up of geriatric healthcare, specialized public infrastructure, and sustainable pension schemes. Funding this transition will be exceptionally difficult if the current workforce is not rapidly upskilled. A youthful workforce is only an asset if it is highly productive; if India fails to transition its current youth from low-skill informal jobs into high-value manufacturing and tech-driven sectors, it will miss the window to generate the national wealth required to fund elderly care.

Ultimately, India’s demographic shift demands a complete departure from past policy mindsets. The challenge is no longer about population control, but about population management and equitable resource distribution. It requires a rare level of cooperative federalism, where aging states and youthful states work in tandem rather than competition. Time is a luxury India does not have. The choices made today regarding education spending, migration policies, and healthcare infrastructure will determine whether India’s demographic transition becomes a masterclass in economic adaptation or a cautionary tale of a missed historical opportunity.



Think for a moment, pause the race,
What’s become of this sacred place?
Day before yesterday Telangana Bandh,
Today Samaikyandhra takes its stand.

Yesterday, streets in a fury flared,
Effigies burned, while none were spared.
Leaders clashed at Chowrasta square,
Destroying what the people share.

But tell me what’s the purpose, why?
Just to let another promise die?
It’s not for justice, not for right,
It’s hunger dressed in public fight.

Cravings clothed in a noble name,
The next election is their game.
Pretenses, protests, every shout,
Hide the truth they care for clout.

And while they play with smoke and flame,
The poor still toil, still bear the shame.
No work, no food, no dreams to chase,
No leader lifts the lowly’s face.

A separate state or one combined,
Will not uplift the suffering kind.
Not unless a heart is stirred
That speaks not just, but keeps its word.

So think again what do we need?
A voice that heals, not one that feeds
On selfish aims and reckless pride
But one that stands with us, beside.

...: **Dr. Peruka Raju** ...:
National Poet
7810032847



OPINION06
‘MOTHER’ OF 127 KIDS TO PAINT FOR
127 ABANDONED CHILDREN

VIVEK SHUKLA

In the bustling lanes of Jaipur, where vibrant traditions collide with the harsh realities of urban life, Manan Chaturvedi stands as a beacon of unwavering compassion. A trained fashion designer and accomplished painter, she could have easily carved a glamorous career dressing the elite. Instead, she chose to clothe the dreams of abandoned children, becoming a mother to over 127 of them-around 60 girls-through her organisation, Surman Sansthan.

Her story is one of profound sacrifice, artistic brilliance, and relentless advocacy for child rights, culminating in a unique 24-hour painting marathon at Delhi’s Palika Bazar (Connaught Place, Gate 6) on June 30 and July 1, 2026.

Born in Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh, Manan-meaning deep thought and contemplation-reflecting her introspective and purposeful nature. She studied at Tagore Public School, graduated from Maharani College in Jaipur, and pursued fashion designing in Delhi. From childhood, a quiet inclination towards social service marked her days; she would distribute toys, food, and clothes to underprivileged children. Yet, her life took a definitive turn one ordinary day while crossing a road in Jaipur. A stranger pointed out an abandoned child, and without hesitation, Manan picked her up and took her home. That single act sparked a journey that has transformed hundreds of lives.

Founded in January 1998, Surman Sansthan is more than an orphanage-it is a “divine home” and sanctuary where abandoned, orphaned, and destitute children find family, safety, and opportunity. The home in Jaipur nurtures children of all ages as one big family, providing nutritious food, clothing, medical care, education, and skill development to help them reintegrate into mainstream society. Manan has personally rescued children from dire circumstances, including drug trafficking, sex rackets, and extreme neglect. Over the years, Surman Sansthan has offered a loving home to more than 120 children at a time, while reuniting over 750 with their families. Many of the children call her “Mama,” and she embraces the role fully, living among them with her own three biological children.

Her sacrifices have been extraordinary. When funds ran low, Manan sold her jewellery to feed the children. Evicted from



Fashion designer-turned-child rights crusader Manan Chaturvedi has transformed the lives of 127 abandoned children through Jaipur-based Surman Sansthan, using art, activism and extraordinary personal sacrifice to give vulnerable children a home, education and hope.

rented spaces, she persisted undeterred, often facing dismissal from formal organisations. As former Chairperson of the Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, she amplified her advocacy, running awareness campaigns through art, theatre, and projects like “Manan – The Voice of Children,” “Angel of Love,” and “Yes I Am.” Her mission is clear: no child belongs on the street or in exploitative labour; every child deserves a school and a loving home.

What sets Manan apart is her seamless fusion of artistry and activism. A passionate painter known as “Rangreza” (one who colours), she channels her creativity into large-scale campaign artworks. Rather than designing haute couture for the wealthy, she uses her brushes to “fill colours in lonesome eyes.” Her marathon painting shows-24, 48, or even 72 hours non-stop-are legendary. She transforms a truck into a vibrant stage with lights,



music, and slogans, producing dozens of paintings that are sold to fund the home. Every stroke and every sale directly supports the children’s education, health, and dreams.

This June 30-July 1, Delhi will witness her dedication anew. At Palika Bazar, Gate No. 6, above the Central Plaza in Connaught Place, Manan will undertake a 24-hour non-stop painting marathon against child labour and in support of underprivileged children. The event promises to be a spectacle of endurance and empathy, where art becomes a powerful voice for the voiceless. Attendees can witness her creative process, engage with the cause, and perhaps take home a piece that carries the spirit of resilience. She gives full credit to her journalist husband, Surinder Chaturvedi, three kids and team for their full support in running a home for kids.

Manan’s personality shines through her work: resilient, deeply empathetic, and op-

timistic. Colleagues and visitors describe her as a woman of boundless love and discipline. Testimonials from those who have visited Surman Sansthan speak of well-behaved, joyful children thriving in a structured yet affectionate environment. “Their dreams are my passion,” she often says, encapsulating a philosophy where personal ambition dissolves into collective upliftment. Her awards reflect this impact-the Prof. Yeshwantrao Kelkar Youth Award (2011), Swatantryaveer Savarkar National Award (2017), and many others honour her tireless service.

Beyond immediate care, Surman Sansthan envisions larger horizons, including a new home on Sikar Road capable of sheltering up to 1,200 children. Construction is underway, but the dream relies on continued support through art sales, donations, and volunteers. Programs like Palna (cradle for infants), Kanyadan, Koshish (women’s support), and others address specific needs, emphasising holistic development.

Manan Chaturvedi’s life challenges us to rethink success. In an era of individualism, she embodies humanity’s highest calling-turning personal talent into public good. Her paintings are not mere canvases; they are bridges to brighter futures. As she prepares for the Delhi show, one can imagine the vibrant hues emerging under her brush: symbols of hope, family, and freedom. For the 127 children she mothers and countless more she has touched, Manan is proof that one person’s compassion, fuelled by creativity and courage, can rewrite destinies.

In her own words, the journey for the children’s dreams will continue till her last breath. Jaipur’s “Street Mama” reminds us that true artistry lies not in adorning the privileged, but in illuminating the forgotten. As visitors flock to Palika Bazaar this weekend, they will not just see paintings-they will witness a living masterpiece of love in action.



VIVEK SHUKLA

Economic Highlights

SACHET TO PINK SLIPS - THE SQUEEZE

The inflationary squeeze is no longer confined to household budgets. It is spreading across the entire consumer economy.

As food, transport and healthcare costs continue to rise, Indian families are being forced to rethink even routine purchases. Branded detergents, shampoos, soaps and grooming products are no longer automatic additions to the shopping basket. Instead, consumers are increasingly opting for smaller packs, switching to cheaper brands, delaying purchases or waiting for discounts. Inflation is changing not only what Indians buy, but also how they buy.

It calls for immediate cut in domestic petrol prices, stoppage of disastrous ethanol experiment, and pass on the crude prices fall from a high of \$ 126.40 in January to \$ 72 barrel in June to Indian consumers after a six-year-long super high prices, ignoring even rock bottom prices – below \$ 40 - during Covid19.

Inflation shift is now visible in the country’s largest consumer goods companies. On June 16, 2026, Procter & Gamble (P&G) India acknowledged that inflation is making consumers more discerning, including households that can still afford branded products. The company’s assessment comes as retail inflation rose from 3.48 percent in April to 3.93 percent in May, driven primarily by food – food inflation rises to 4.20 percent, alongwith medical and transport costs.It leads to severe cut in household discretionary spending, even the essentials.

Profits Erode, FPI flight
More than 20 leading Indian companies in the FMCG, manufacturing and transport and logistics sectors have seen their margins erode in the past few months as wholesale inflation, soaring crude oil prices and a weakening rupee pushed up operating costs.

The stocks are in tizzy. Between March 1 and June 25, 2026, the NIFTY 50 gained a nominal 0.15 percent, but inflation and the rupee’s depreciation turned those gains into losses in real terms. Adjusted for purchasing power, investors suffered an estimated real gross return of around -3.5 percent in rupee terms and about -5 percent in dollar terms.

Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) outflows from Indian equities have reached



an unprecedented scale, with cumulative net sales exceeding Rs 2.25 lakh crore over the year - March 2026 outflow - Rs 1.17 lakh crore; April Rs 60,847 crore, disproportionately hitting technology, finance, and capital goods stocks; May outgo Rs 32,963 crore; and in June an estimated Rs 62,800 crore pulled from equities in the first fortnight alone.

Information technology, energy and metal stocks were among the worst performers, with several large-cap companies trading 30-50 percent below their 52-week highs. Including industry heavyweights such as Reliance Industries and Infosys.

Sache Economy
Companies, however, are facing their own cost squeeze. Higher crude oil prices, now nullifying, have sharply increased the cost of plastic packaging, freight and manufacturing inputs. P&G says its plastic costs have risen by nearly 50 percent, reflecting how energy prices ripple through the entire FMCG supply chain. While firms can attempt to protect sales through refill packs, promotional offers and smaller pack sizes, widespread price cuts are difficult when input costs remain elevated.

The result is a difficult balancing act. Consumers are trying to stretch every rupee without compromising essential needs, while companies are struggling to preserve volumes and profit margins without alienating increasingly price-sensitive customers. If inflation persists, the battle will not simply be over market share. It will be over purchasing power itself, as households and businesses alike adapt to a more expensive economic reality.

FMCG companies still have room to compete on price, though large reductions may be difficult. Refill packs use less

packaging. A short discount can pull back a customer who planned to delay the purchase. Products that last longer may also sell better when shoppers are counting each expense. Freight, plastic and factory bills remain high, so companies cannot cut prices across every product without taking a hit.Sachets often cost more for the quantity supplied. Buyers know this in many cases, but the immediate payment is smaller. At the counter, that can settle the decision.

Niti Aayog

High food inflation means a larger share of household income is diverted to the kitchen table, forcing families to compromise on branded goods, grooming, or personal care products in favour of cheaper unbranded alternatives.

NITI Aayog highlights that sustained economic growth and evolving consumption patterns require careful monitoring of price stability to protect consumers’ real purchasing power. In August, 2024, the government and the Reserve Bank of India signed an inflation-targeting agreement.A report on reducing, if not eliminating construction-building related activities, cause large outgo of government funds, impliedly high debt was in circulation. NITI Ayog later denied it.

Attrition

A RBI report flagged high employee attrition of 25 percent in private banks posing operational risk. Employee attrition rates are high across select private sector banks and small finance banks (SFBs), the report said.

Attrition or reduction in employees has been continuous. Indian companies hit

by inflation span multiple sectors, with consumer goods (FMCG), auto, and manufacturing taking the hardest hits due to elevated crude, packaging, and logistics costs. These cost-push pressures have triggered price hikes and “shrinkflation” to protect margins. Leading companies in India that have navigated margin pressures and implemented price actions include topmostFast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) and other companies, including squeeze even in the private education sector.

India’s education sector faces a twin attrition crisis: chronic faculty vacancies in public institutions and high teacher turnover in private schools, driven by burn-out, excessive workloads and inadequate support. Nearly 982,662 teaching posts remain vacant out of 6.9 million sanctioned positions, while central universities face faculty shortages of 56 percent at the professor level and 38 percent among associate professors. In some private schools, teacher attrition has reached 34 percent as administrative burdens mount. The problem is compounded by a decline in non-teaching support staff, further increasing workload on low-paid faculty.

Unsecured 12 million Gigs

Between 2021 and 2026, India’s labour market underwent a profound shift. More than 100,000 domestic jobs disappeared from traditional IT and technology firms, while the unsecured low-pad gig economy grew 55 percent to nearly 12 million workers. As secure employment gives way to lower-paid, precarious work, household purchasing power erodes, weakening consumer demand and corporate revenues. The challenge is no longer just creating jobs—it is creating quality jobs capable of sustaining long-term economic growth.



SHIVAJI SARKAR



Preparations for Grand Simhastha Continue at Pace: CM Dr. Yadav

DR.BHUPENDRA VIKAL

Bhopal: Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav said that Simhastha, is world's largest religious congregation. It represents the confluence of India's rich culture, philosophy, centuries-old heritage, unwavering faith and spiritual traditions. Bathing in the sacred waters of the Maa Kshipra during Simhastha is believed to cleanse one of sins. He said the State Government is working to make Simhastha-2028 a grand, event, with preparations and all necessary arrangements progressing at a rapid pace. He emphasised that only through collective dedication, commitment, and teamwork can Simhastha-2028 set a new benchmark.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav was addressing a mega training workshop on the theme 'Experience of Simhastha-2016, Resolve for Simhastha-2028' in Ujjain on Saturday. The Chief Minister, addressing officers from the administration, police, health department, Municipal Corporation, construction agencies and other stakeholders associated with Simhastha-2028, said that Simhastha is the centre of faith for millions of devotees and a symbol of India's traditions and heritage. Preserving its sanctity is a shared responsibility. He called upon officials, employees, volunteers, and public representatives to work collectively with a spirit of service, stating that teamwork is the key to success.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav

reiterated that 'Clean Simhastha, Healthy Simhastha' is the Government's guiding resolve. He emphasised that ensuring the safety of millions of pilgrims would remain the highest priority, with special emphasis on crowd management, emergency services, and rapid response systems.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav informed that development projects worth more than ₹25,000 crore are currently underway in Ujjain and surrounding districts to facilitate devotees arriving from across India and abroad. Once completed, these projects will restore the grandeur associated with the era of Samrat Vikramaditya and usher in a new chapter of religious, spiritual and economic prosperity. He said that more than 400 million devotees are expected to visit Ujjain during Simhastha-2028. With newly constructed and upgraded ghats, nearly 4 crore devotees will be able to take the holy dip within 24 hours. The Government is making comprehensive arrangements to ensure that every pilgrim can bathe in the sacred waters of the Shipra River.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India is witnessing a remarkable transformation, with religious tourism receiving fresh impetus. The nation is progressing through the philosophy of 'Development through Heritage.' Ujjain, the city of Mahakal and Kaal (Time), occupies a unique place in India's spiritual landscape, and only the fortunate



receive the opportunity to visit it. Infrastructure development for Simhastha-2028 is being undertaken with a long-term vision and with the blessings of the Almighty. He noted that every Simhastha has inspired introspection on past challenges, and the workshop had been organised with the same objective.

Committees to be Constituted for Simhastha-2028

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav recalled serving as a Scout and Guide volunteer during the 1980 Simhastha and participating in Simhastha Committee meetings in 1992. He said committees for the upcoming Simhastha would soon be constituted, bringing together experienced people from all sections of society so that their valuable suggestions could be incorporated. The Chief Minister noted that in earlier Simhasthas, arranging accommodation for saints and devotees posed a major challenge. However, since 2022, Ujjain has witnessed rapid expansion of hotels, road widening and infrastructure development. Nearly every major road used by devotees

has been widened, while new ghats are under construction along the Shipra River. The Sevarkhedi-Silarkhedi Water Project will ensure adequate water availability in the Shipra. Permanent ghats will also prevent soil erosion and help maintain a continuous and uniform river flow.

Enhanced Road, Rail and Air Connectivity

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that road connectivity between Ujjain and all neighbouring cities is being significantly strengthened. Necessary arrangements will also be made in coordination with neighbouring states to facilitate smooth movement of pilgrims. Railway infrastructure is also being upgraded. With the operationalisation of the Fatehabad rail track, trains bound for Nagda no longer need to pass through Ujjain. He also acknowledged the Prime Minister and the Union Railway Minister for sanctioning a new railway station for Ujjain. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav, expressing confidence said that suggestions from experienced officers and citizens with previous Simhastha events would help ensure

the successful organisation of Simhastha-2028.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said, sharing details of the ongoing preparations that New ghats extending over 29 kilometres are being constructed on both banks of the Shipra River at a cost of ₹778 crore to provide safe and convenient bathing facilities for devotees from across India and abroad. Existing permanent ghats spanning 7.8 kilometres are being upgraded at a cost of ₹120 crore. Ujjain is being connected through an integrated network of roads, railways, and air connectivity, with six-lane and four-lane roads being developed in all four directions. The Ujjain-Indore six-lane highway, costing approximately ₹1,692 crore, is nearing completion.

To facilitate crowd movement and prevent congestion, 22 new bridges are being constructed, and existing bridges are being widened at a cost of ₹853.46 crore. The project includes 17 river bridges and 5 railway overbridges. A Central Digital Command Centre is being developed at a cost of ₹139 crore for real-time monitoring, crowd management, traffic regulation, and emergency response. The centre will feature integrated CCTV surveillance across the city and fair area, AI-based crowd management, and advanced emergency coordination systems. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that special focus is also being placed on integrated disaster management, capacity building of human resources and fire safety management to ensure a safe

Simhastha.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav informed that major connectivity projects include Ujjain-Jaora Road – ₹5,017 crore, Ujjain-Indore Greenfield Corridor – ₹2,935 crore, Ujjain-Jhalawar Road (2-lane to 4-lane) – ₹2,523 crore, Ujjain-Maksi Road (2-lane to 4-lane) – ₹351 crore, Ujjain-Garoth Road – ₹2,660 crore and Simhastha Bypass – ₹7.02 crore. To ensure seamless rail connectivity during Simhastha, 236 special trains will be operated. Seven railway stations—Ujjain, Nai Khedi, Chintaman, Panwasa, Mohanpura, Pingleswar, and Vikram Nagar—are also being upgraded and modernised. A new airport is being developed over approximately 457 acres on the Ujjain-Dewas Road. In addition, four modern helipads are being constructed at Sadawal at a cost of ₹13.45 crore.

A short film highlighting the infrastructure development works being undertaken for Simhastha-2028 was also screened during the workshop. MLA Shri Anil Jain Kaluheda and other local public representatives attended the workshop. Ujjain Commissioner and Simhastha Mela Officer Shri Ashish Singh briefed participants on the preparations. Ujjain Collector Shri Roshan Kumar Singh, retired and serving administrative and police officers associated with previous Simhastha events were also present. Additional Director General of Police, Ujjain, Shri Rakesh Gupta proposed the vote of thanks.



NF Railway Illuminates Lumding Railway Station with Architectural Facade Lighting

MALIGAON, 27 JUNE, 2026

In a significant step towards enhancing passenger amenities and modernizing railway infrastructure, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has commissioned architectural facade lighting at Lumding Railway Station, transforming it into a visually striking landmark and improving its night-time visibility and ambience. The project involves the installation of energy-efficient RGB LED facade lighting fixtures with programmable illumination effects, providing uniform lighting across the station frontage, domes, columns and other architectural elevations. Weatherproof outdoor fittings and cabling have also been provided to ensure reliable operation under all weather conditions. The newly installed lighting system not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the station but also promotes sustainable and eco-friendly infrastructure through the use of long-life LED

technology, which is expected to reduce maintenance requirements while ensuring efficient illumination. With its vibrant illuminated appearance, Lumding Junction has emerged as a distinctive landmark of Northeast Frontier Railway, reflecting NFR's commitment to providing world-class infrastructure and enriching the overall passenger experience. The architectural facade lighting project forms part of NFR's continuous efforts to blend functionality with aesthetic excellence and create railway stations that are modern, sustainable and visually appealing. The illuminated station has added a distinct identity to Lumding Junction, enhancing the travel experience while promoting eco-friendly and passenger-centric infrastructure. Through such initiatives, Northeast Frontier Railway remains committed to developing world-class railway facilities and improving passenger amenities across the region.

Amarnath Yatra true symbol of social harmony: J&K LG

SRINAGAR: (Jun 27) Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said the annual Amarnath Yatra is a true symbol of social harmony, and appealed to all sections of the society to actively support and contribute to the sacred journey. The LG met with civil-so-

ciety groups, business leaders, MLAs and religious heads to discuss the upcoming pilgrimage that begins on July 3. During his interaction, Sinha appealed to all sections of the society to actively support and contribute to the pilgrimage, which he said is a true symbol of social harmony.

UBT Questions Silence on Ram Mandir Irregularities, NEET Leak

MUMBAI, JUNE 27

The Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasahab Thackeray on Saturday accused the ruling political leadership and Hindutva outfit 'Sakal Hindu Samaj' of maintaining a hypocritical silence over the alleged theft and financial irregularities at the Ayodhya Ram Mandir and the NEET paper leak scandal. It has questioned why organisations that frequently take to the streets over issues like 'Love Jihad', religious conversions, and cow slaughter have remained completely passive when major irregularities involve individuals within their own ideological fold. The Thackeray camp in the scathing editorial of party mouthpiece Saamana claimed that The Sakal Hindu Samaj is sleeping like Kumbhakarna." It taunted, "while a restless Lord Ram and his family have, once again, departed for exile." The editorial highlighted recent revelations concerning the "loot" of donations, collection



boxes, and silver items at the Ayodhya Ram Mandir. It pointed out that while a Special Investigation Team (SIT) was formed and cases were registered against eight individuals, the main suspects, including Champat Rai and other trustees, were allegedly shielded by the government. "In Ayodhya, individuals linked to the temple and the BJP bought lands at throwaway prices and later sold them back to the Ram Mandir Trust at inflated rates. AAP MP Sanjay Singh provided evidence to the SIT, but it wasn't investigated. Now, minor figures like

Tinnu Yadav and Anukalp Mishra have been arrested by the UP government," said the editorial. Taking a sarcastic swipe at the political ecosystem, the editorial suggested that the 'Sakal Hindu Samaj' and top BJP leaders only raise a "loud voice for Hindutva" if a Muslim name is involved. "Should someone spread a rumour that Tinnu and Mishra are actually Muslims operating under fake Hindu names just to wake up the Sakal Hindu Samaj?" the editorial asked sharply, adding that because the accused are Hindu, these organisations have "closed their eyes and mouths." The Thackeray camp expanded its criticism beyond Ayodhya, linking the silence of these pro-Hindutva groups to the massive NEET-UG examination paper leak scandal.

The editorial said that Maharashtra emerged as a major hub for the paper leak, with eight to ten individuals and a coaching class owner arrested. It underscored that these accused indi-

viduals possess strong Hindutva and BJP connections, saying that the scam has devastated the lives of thousands of Hindu children, driving some to suicide, yet the 'Sakal Hindu Samaj' has failed to hit the streets to protect the interests of these youths. The editorial further highlighted instances of political compromise and corruption that went unprotested. It claimed that BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari stated that cows older than 14 years could be slaughtered, yet no Hindutva outfits organised protest marches in West Bengal against this stance. It alleged financial mismanagement and "loot" at the holy Mahakal Temple in Ujjain under the BJP-led state government, noting that leaders have remained quiet.

The Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena argued that the Ram Mandir awakened Hindutva and served as the political launchpad for the current leadership, yet the deity's own temple is now being plundered.

HM Shah to attend 'Janata Darbar', chair review meetings in Gujarat today

AHMEDABAD/ GANDHINAGAR, JUNE 27

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to undertake a series of official programmes in Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad on Saturday, covering the launch of a cooperative mobility initiative, development review meetings and public interaction events. According to official programme details, HM Shah will begin the day at the Mahatma Mandir Convention and Exhibition Centre in Gandhinagar, where he will launch Bharat Taxi (Gujarat), a cooperative-based ride-hailing service developed under the Ministry of Cooperation. The initiative is based on the 'Saarthi Hi Maalik' model, under which drivers are also stakeholders in the platform. Government



briefings have described it as a driver-owned, zero-commission digital mobility system aimed at expanding the cooperative sector into urban transport. After this, the Union Minister will chair a meeting of the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) at the Circuit House in Sector-20, Gandhinagar. DISHA meetings review the implementation of Central government schemes and district-level development projects, with partici-

pation from MPs, MLAs and senior administrative officials. Later in the day, HM Shah is expected to hold two separate review meetings in Ahmedabad on the 'Green Lok Sabha' initiative under the Gandhinagar parliamentary constituency. The first meeting at 5:15 P.M. will be with government officials, followed by a second session at 6 P.M. with organisational representatives. Both meetings will review progress under the 'Samuhik Vriksharopan' (collective tree plantation) campaign, which forms part of a wider afforestation programme being implemented across the constituency. The 'Green Gandhinagar' initiative has been a key focus of recent constituency-level development planning, with authorities previously setting targets for large-scale plantation drives aimed at increasing

green cover and improving environmental conditions in urban and semi-urban areas. Recent government reviews have also linked the programme with broader infrastructure and civic development works in the region. In the evening, at 7 P.M., HM Shah will attend a public 'Janata Darbar' in the Sabarmati Assembly segment, covering the Raniip and Sabarmati wards. The interaction is scheduled at Swaminarayan International School in Raniip area of the city, where public grievances and constituency issues are expected to be heard. Officials said the day-long schedule reflects continued focus on cooperative sector expansion, administrative review of central schemes and constituency-level environmental and civic initiatives across Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad.

P V Narasimha Rao : Father of Indian Economic Reforms

Pamulaparthi Venkata (PV) Narasimha Rao was born on 28 June 1921 in a small village Laknepalli of Narsampet Mandal, Warangal district, Telangana. His father Sitarama Rao and mother Rukma bai hailed from agriculture family. Later, he was adopted by Pamulaparthi Ranga Rao and Rukminamma from Vangara village of Bheemadevarapalli Mandal of Hanumakonda district. He completed his school education starting from Katkuru village. He studied BA degree in Osmania University, Law degree from Bombay University and master's degree in Law from Nagpur University. In the 1930s and 1940s, he partici-

ipated in freedom struggle against Nizam of Hyderabad and also colonial rule.

Versatile Scholar, Freedom Fighter and Politician:

He was a distinguished freedom fighter, member of Indian National Congress, a versatile scholar, and the 9th Prime Minister of India(1991-96), widely celebrated as "The Father of Indian Economic Reforms". He also served as Chief Minister of AP (1971-73), and held crucial positions in union cabinet as minister of Home, Defence, External Affairs before becoming PM. He was member of AP Legislative Assembly (1957-77), member of parliament (1977-97), and Indian National Congress Pres-

ident (1991-96). He was the first person to serve as PM from South India and also from outside the Nehru-Gandhi family to complete his five year tenure.

Economic Reforms : LPG Policies:

After Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, PV took the helm of a minority government. Along with Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, he dismantled the licence raj and introduced the liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG) policies that saved India from financial bankruptcy. This policy transformed India from a heavily regulated, quasi-socialist structure to an open-market economy. He initiated the

"Look East" policy to improve diplomatic and economic ties with Southeast Asia, while advancing India's nuclear program. His premiership also navigated immense turbulence, mostly Babri Masjid demolition in Ayodhya and the subsequent challenges to his leadership.

He was honoured posthumously with India's highest civilian award Bharat Ratna in 2024 by GoI. After retirement from politics, he published an autobiography titled "The Insider". He was married to Satyamma and had three sons and five daughters. He took his last breath on 23 December 2004 at the age of 83 due to heart attack.

Assam Man Held for Stealing TMC MP's Bank Funds

KOLKATA, JUNE 27

The police have arrested a man on charges of cyber fraud, almost a year after he stole lakhs of rupees from the bank account of Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee, said a senior police officer on Saturday. The accused has been identified as Mokuleshar Reza. He was arrested from Rangapani area in Assam by the Cyber Crime division of Kolkata Police on Friday. The Trinamool Congress MP was a victim of cyber fraud. About Rs 56 lakh had disappeared from his bank account. According to the police, the incident took place in November 2025. The Trinamool MP



had alleged that Rs 56 lakh was withdrawn from the Calcutta High Court branch of a state-owned bank. According to the police, the accused entered the bank disguised as a lawyer. Allegedly, the accused first changed the number of Kalyan Banerjee's registrar number that was linked to the bank account. Then he took full control of

the account and withdrew the money. It is said that a huge amount of gold was bought with that money. The police are making efforts to recover the gold. The arrested person will be produced in a city court on Saturday. It is worth noting that the state-owned bank had, however, returned the money to the MP a year ago. At that

time, the Trinamool MP had said that the money had been deposited in his account by the bank.

According to Kalyan, he may have got the money back because he is an MP. He expressed doubts about what would have happened if it had happened to a common man.

He also made a complaint against the Centre over the issue. At the same time, the police were also investigating the matter after receiving a complaint from the Trinamool Congress MP. Almost a year later, the accused has been nabbed. Following the development, the Trinamool Congress MP is yet to make any official remarks.



Pakistan's central bank profit transfer to govt seen falling 41 pc: Report
NEW DELHI

Pakistan is projected to face a sharp decline in one of its largest sources of non-tax revenue, with profit transfers from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to the federal government expected to fall by nearly 41 per cent in FY27 as easing inflation and lower interest rates reduce the central bank's earnings, according to a report.

According to an analysis by Pakistan Observer, the SBP's profit transfer is estimated to decline to PKR 1.44 trillion in FY27 from PKR 2.43 trillion in FY26, a drop of almost PKR 1 trillion. The report said the decline marks the end of an extraordinary period during which historically high policy interest rates enabled the central bank to generate record earnings from its holdings of Pakistan Investment Bonds and Treasury bills, providing a major boost to government finances.

With the SBP cutting interest rates to support economic recovery, yields on government securities have declined, significantly reducing the central bank's income and, in turn, its contribution to the federal exchequer, it added. According to Pakistan's budget documents, receipts under civil administration and other government functions, which largely comprise SBP profit transfers, are projected to fall to PKR 1.48 trillion in FY27 from PKR 2.47 trillion in the outgoing fiscal year. The report further noted that the shrinking contribution comes at a time when Islamabad continues to face mounting fiscal pressures, including high debt-servicing costs, development spending and increased allocations.

Somali forces kill 30 al-Shabaab militants in southern operation
MOGADISHU

The Somali National Army (SNA) and international partners killed 30 al-Shabaab militants during a joint operation in the Middle Shabelle region of southern Somalia, officials announced on Saturday. According to the Ministry of Defence, the forces also destroyed two vehicles, weapons, ammunition, and other logistical supplies used by the group to plan terrorist attacks.

The military operations took place on Tuesday and Wednesday, specifically targeting al-Shabaab mobilisation centres and training facilities, Xinhua news agency reported. The ministry said the targeted locations were actively used by the militant group to store vital military supplies. "The Ministry of Defence extends its appreciation to the international partners supporting Somalia's counter-terrorism efforts, whose continued assistance has played a significant role in the success of these operations," the ministry said in a statement. Al-Shabaab did not comment on the operations, which took place amid intensified ground offensives by Somalia's elite forces and their international partners.

Defence deal with China risks creating long-term dependency for Bangladesh: Report

DHAKA

Although Bangladesh can derive opportunities from relations with China, those opportunities carry the risk of long-term dependency if not strategically balanced. Defence modernisation should be pursued in line with the country's economic capacity, technology development and human resource growth, a report has stated.

"There are signs of a major change in Bangladesh's foreign policy. Amidst the long-standing diplomatic balance, initiatives to increase defence, infrastructure and economic co-operation with China have now come to the fore. New discussions have begun surrounding Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's visit to China—especially the possibility of purchasing J-10CE fighter jets from China, military technology cooperation and Chinese financing for major infrastructure projects", according to a report in leading Bangladeshi daily 'Dhaka Tribune'.

The report also questioned the rationale behind the multi-billion-dollar acquisition



tion of J-10 CE fighter jets, asking whether such a massive defence expenditure is justified for a developing country where critical sectors such as healthcare, education, skills development and employment continue to face significant challenges.

It stressed that Bangladesh's security does not rest on weapons alone. A country's long-term strength is built on the foundations of a robust economy, technological advancement, a skilled workforce

and strong social institutions. Therefore, before expanding its defence ties with China, the report said, Bangladesh must carefully assess whether such engagement constitutes a necessary strategic investment or risks creating the foundations of long-term dependency.

"Bangladesh is planning to buy the J-10 CE multirole fighter jet from China. Discussions are underway to buy 20 to 24 fighter jets under a possible deal, which could be worth several billion dollars. China

is promoting the J-10CE as a modern 4.5-generation fighter jet. It is claimed to have an AESA radar, a modern missile system and multi-role combat capabilities. However, a section of international defence analysts believes that the actual combat effectiveness of the aircraft has not yet been fully proven," it mentioned.

The report stressed that procuring a fighter jet is not merely about acquiring the aircraft but also requires long-term training, pilot development, spare

parts, maintenance systems and technical support.

It warned that growing dependence on one country's military technology could create long-term strategic pressure in terms of future supplies of spare parts, maintenance support, and future upgrades.

China's military technology, the report said, has also faced scrutiny over the years. In 2016, Yu Shu, the first Chinese female J-10 CE pilot, lost her life in a training crash involving the fighter jet in Hebei Province of China.

Highlighting the wider implication of Bangladesh's military dependence on China, the report said, "For a developing country like Bangladesh, defence spending of several billion dollars, therefore, needs to be considered not only from a military perspective but also from an economic priority perspective. The question is, if the same amount of money had been spent on the country's technological education, health system, or skills development, which investment would have increased Bangladesh's strength more in the long run?"

PM Modi lauds Indian community's contribution to Seychelles' progress

VICTORIA



Kicking off his State Visit to the archipelagic island, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday lauded the Indian community's contribution towards Seychelles' progress. "The Indian community in Seychelles accorded a very warm welcome this evening. Their deep affection for India and enduring contribution to Seychelles' progress are truly admirable. The Indian diaspora has long served as a vibrant bridge between our two nations, strengthening people-to-people ties and enriching our shared journey," PM Modi wrote on X.

PM Modi arrived in Seychelles on Saturday afternoon to attend the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the country's National Day as the Guest of Honour and further strengthen the bilateral cooperation. On arrival, following the playing of the national anthems of both countries, PM Modi and President Patrick Herminie received the military salute during the Guard of Honour inspection.

The Prime Minister also briefly enjoyed a vibrant cultural welcome, witnessing a traditional Seychellois 'moutya' performance by a local group of dancers, followed by a performance of

'Nrutya', an authentic folk dance from Kutch, , presented in his honour.

The folk performance was delivered by 18 members of the Seychellois Indian diaspora, originally from Kutch in Gujarat, celebrating cultural heritage and the spirit of Independence.

This marks PM Modi's second State Visit to Seychelles. Earlier this year, President Herminie undertook a State Visit to India.

"India remains one of Seychelles' closest and most valued development partners, supporting numerous infrastructure, healthcare, education and community development initiatives while working closely with Seychelles to promote peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region," the Office of the President of Seychelles stated ahead of PM Modi's arrival.

Pakistan's relentless persecution of Ahmadis breaches fundamental internal human rights norms: Report

KABUL

The continued persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan represents a persistent violation of fundamental human rights and international legal commitments. It undermines religious freedom, personal security, political participation, equality before the law, and the right to live with dignity, a report has stated.

The report argued that addressing these concerns requires repealing discriminatory laws, ensuring accountability for violence, safeguarding places of worship and burial sites, and guaranteeing Ahmadis equal protection under the law.

"The persecution of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan is a sustained human rights crisis rooted in discriminatory law, social hostility, and weak



state protection. Recent reports of police pressure around Ahmadi funeral rites in Badin are not isolated events but part of a broader pattern in which the community faces restrictions on worship, burial, speech, voting, and physical security," a report in the 'Afghan Diaspora Network' detailed.

"Pakistan's treatment of Ahmadis is shaped by laws that formally exclude them from equal

citizenship. Human Rights Watch notes that Pakistan declared Ahmadis non-Muslim in 1974 and later amended its penal code in 1984 to criminalise core aspects of their faith, including publicly declaring themselves Muslim, using Islamic religious language, or referring to their places of worship as mosques. These laws do not merely regulate conduct, but they target identity and belief itself," it added.

ed. The report cited Amnesty International, which stated that the legal framework has been used to prevent Ahmadis from practising their religion, while exposing them to "arbitrary arrest and criminal prosecution".

Ahmadis in Pakistan, it said, have long endured recurring violence by non-state actors, with state institutions failing to protect them. Referring to the July 2024 finding of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the report documented a "grave rise in extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, detentions, attacks on places of worship, and restrictions on peaceful assembly and association". It noted repeated attacks on Ahmadi cemeteries and worship sites, highlighting that even the deceased were not spared from abuse.

Removing 'Indo' from Pacific Command undermines US strategic vision in IOR: Report

WASHINGTON

The notion that Washington can shape Asia's future security architecture without placing India at the center of its strategic calculations is increasingly at odds with geopolitical realities, as geography alone makes such an approach untenable, a report has stated. The Indian Ocean is a vital artery for global trade, energy supplies, and maritime commerce, while key chokepoints — from the Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb to the Strait of Malacca — lie within India's broader strategic landscape. Any durable maritime security framework will inevitably require India's active participation, according to a report in the



American magazine 'The National Interest'. "The decision of the United States to restore the US Indo-Pacific Command to its former designation as the 'US Pacific Command' may appear, at first glance, to be little more than bureaucratic housekeeping. Governments rename institutions all the time. Acronyms

change. Organisational charts evolve. Yet in international politics, symbols often reveal deeper strategic thinking. Names are not merely administrative labels; they are declarations of priority, geography, and purpose. That is why removing the 'Indo' from America's most important regional military command

matters," the report detailed.

"The significance of this decision extends far beyond semantics. It raises fundamental questions about how the United States views the emerging balance of power in Asia, the future of its relationship with India, and the role that partnerships will play in sustaining a stable international order. More importantly, it signals a possible retreat from one of the most successful strategic concepts Washington has developed in recent decades: the Indo-Pacific," it added. Emphasising that the issue carries profound strategic significance, the report said that the inclusion of "Indo" in the Indo-Pacific concept was never a mere geographical label but reflected Washing-

ton's recognition that India had become indispensable to Asia's evolving security architecture. It recognised that the Indian and Pacific Oceans had evolved into a single interconnected strategic theatre, with India playing a pivotal role in maintaining the regional balance. "To remove the 'Indo' today is to risk sending a message that India's role in American strategy is somehow secondary or optional. That would be a profound strategic mistake," the report noted.

It further argued that the debate over removing "Indo" goes far beyond terminology, raising questions about whether the United States still has the long-term strategic vision to navigate a rapidly changing world order.

'Great opportunity to rest ties': Senior leaders on US President Trump's proposed visit to India

NEW DELHI

After US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's statement that President Donald Trump may undertake a visit to India early next year, veteran leaders called it a "great opportunity" to reset ties following the West Asia conflict and amid the proposed trade deal between the two nations.

Chairman of Australia India Strategic Alliance, Jagvinder Singh Virk, termed Rubio's statement as "very significant development".

"After the war, the relationships are being reset. Over the last one or two years US' relations were strained not only with India but with countries across the world -- whether it was Australia, Canada, Europe or France," he told IANS.

Moreover, he underlined that ignoring India can prove to be "dangerous" for any nation in the world.

"When US President Donald Trump visits India (next year), it will be a great opportunity to reset ties," he added.

Echoing similar view, former Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) S.P. Vaid said: "Over the past some time, relations between India and the US have witnessed some strain. Especially since President Donald Trump came to power, things have changed. Otherwise, India and the US had maintained a strategic partnership."

"He (President Trump) singled out India for 50 per cent tariff and recently when he imposed 15 per cent tariff on other nations, Trump declared

that we need to pay 10 per cent extra. So, he has signaled out India," he said.

Referring to Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir being appreciated by the US, the former Jammu and Kashmir DGP said: "This has definitely strained our ties. I credit Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Foreign Ministry for maintaining patience."

BJP MP Brij Lal said: "Donald Trump is welcome in India. America is still the largest economy in the world and is our biggest business partner. So, when he comes, our trade deal which is already in the final stage... our relationship with America will be stronger." Meanwhile, Marco Rubio also said that India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is on its way to becoming a global power and increasingly participating in the decisions being made on the international stage.

Reacting to Rubio's remark, BJP leader Rohan Gupta questioned the Opposition whether they agree to the praise showered by the senior US official.

"They should have at least tweeted that they are standing with US' appreciation for PM Modi's leadership and India's economy," he told IANS.

However, Congress MP Imran Masood accused the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Central government of handing over India's market to America. Referring to the proposed India-US trade deal, Masood said: "India's economy, its farmers will be destroyed while US economy will prosper, so why won't they praise us."

India's East Asia push opens new opportunities for Mongolia: Report

ULAANBAATAR/NEW DELHI

India's growing engagement with East Asia across several areas, including technology, trade, supply chain resilience, and soft power, offers fresh opportunities for Mongolia's landlocked economy. The two countries' shared non-bloc approach complements their respective economic and growth strategies, a report has stated.

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar recently concluded his East Asia tour, which included a visit to Mongolia, underscoring the growing strategic partnership between the two countries. The visit highlighted expanding economic engagement and a shared political commitment

to deepen cooperation, reinforcing connectivity between Eurasia and the Indo-Pacific, according to a report in international online magazine 'The Diplomat.'

EAM's June 22-23 official visit to Mongolia was part of the 10-year strategic roadmap built in 2025 during Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa's State Visit to New Delhi. In his press statement, EAM Jaishankar described Mongolia and India as "strategic partners" and "spiritual siblings."

According to the report, the strategic priorities of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government — spanning from digital and physical connectivity to defence partnerships, economic integration, and

cultural diplomacy — closely align with Mongolia's economic and development goals, reinforcing India's role as a key third-neighbour partner.

During his visit on June 22, EAM Jaishankar toured the flagship Mongol Oil Refinery project in Dornogovi Province. India is constructing Mongolia's first-ever green-field oil refinery under a USD 1.7 billion line of credit. Once operational, the refinery is expected to become the country's second-largest foreign investment project after Rio Tinto's Oyu Tolgoi mine, with the potential to transform Mongolia's energy sector.

"Importantly, the oil refinery is one of the largest investments being financed by Mongolia's



third neighbours outside of the mining sector. The successful completion and operation

of the refinery will serve as a major source of diversification for Mongolia's limited market.

Hence, the completion of the project is highly anticipated by both Mongolia and India,"

the report detailed. "However, mining remains an important focus of Mongolia's economic strategy — and India is also a possible third destination for Mongolia's coking coal industry. Given India's increasing need for coal for its technological advancement and steel industry, Jaishankar expressed interest in exploring logistical opportunities for Mongolia to export coking coal and other mining products to India," it added.

Beyond economic engagement, the report said, India and Mongolia have increasingly relied on soft power to shape their international and regional outreach. Cultural diplomacy, shared religious heritage, and educational co-

operation have emerged as the cornerstones of their bilateral relationship.

Highlighting the importance of EAM Jaishankar's recent visit, the Foreign Ministry of Mongolia said, "This visit is of great significance in strengthening the 'Strategic Partnership' between the two countries, enriching trade and economic cooperation with new ideas and links, and determining the direction of future cooperation."

With Mongolia seeking investment from its third neighbours, India is expected to play a key role as a significant partner. Likewise, Mongolia has become an important pillar of New Delhi's Act East Policy, the report noted.



NSE, Jio IPOs have retail investors excited. But are big listings worth the hype?

NSE and Jio are already generating plenty of excitement. But before investors join the rush, recent IPO history offers an important lesson about hype, valuations and long-term returns. Read on to find out why big listings don't always translate into big gains.

If you've been following the stock market recently, you've probably come across two names over and over again: NSE and Jio. One runs India's largest stock exchange. The other transformed how India consumes mobile data. Neither company has listed yet, and investors may have to wait some time before they get a chance to buy the shares. Both the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Jio Platforms have only recently filed their Draft Red Herring Prospectuses (DRHPs) with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), marking the first major step in the IPO process. The filing of a DRHP does not mean the IPO is around the corner. Sebi will now review the draft documents, seek clarifications if required and issue its observations before the companies can proceed with their public offerings. Only after that process is completed will issue dates be announced and the road to listing begin. Yet investor excitement is already building. Valuation estimates are flying around, discussions on social media are intensifying and retail investors are

beginning to calculate potential listing gains — the profits they could make if the shares open above their IPO price on debut day. It's not difficult to see why. **WHY INVESTORS ARE WAITING FOR NSE, JIO IPOs** After years of regulatory hurdles and delays, NSE has finally moved a step closer to the public markets. The exchange's listing plans have remained stuck for nearly a decade, making this one of the most anticipated IPOs in recent memory. The proposed issue is expected to be a pure Offer for Sale (OFS). In simple terms, existing shareholders will sell part of their stake and receive the proceeds. NSE itself will not receive fresh capital from the IPO. Based on prevailing valuations in the unlisted market, the issue could be worth around Rs 28,000 crore to Rs 30,000 crore, making it one of India's biggest-ever public offerings. Jio Platforms is no less significant. The company, which sits at the centre of Reliance Industries' digital ambitions, has also filed its DRHP with Sebi. Unlike NSE, Jio's proposed offering is expected to be largely a fresh issue, meaning most of the money raised will go to the company itself. Such capital can then be used for expansion, investments and strengthening the business. Market estimates suggest the issue could raise between Rs 35,000 crore and Rs 40,000 crore, potentially making it India's largest-ever

IPO. Both companies come with formidable credentials. NSE reported a net profit of over Rs 10,000 crore in FY26 and continues to dominate India's equity derivatives market. Jio Platforms, meanwhile, generated revenue of nearly Rs 1.5 lakh crore and profit of more than Rs 30,000 crore during the same period. Few would dispute that these are among the strongest businesses preparing to enter the public markets. But that is precisely what makes the upcoming listings interesting. The bigger question is not whether NSE and Jio are good businesses. Most investors would agree they are. The real question is whether buying into a big IPO automatically translates into long-term wealth creation. **A LESSON FROM INDIA'S IPO BOOM** Recent history suggests the answer is not always straightforward. India witnessed an IPO boom in 2025. Companies raised a record Rs 1.83 lakh crore through 108 main-



board IPOs, making it the biggest fundraising year in the country's history. Investor demand remained robust and many issues were subscribed multiple times over. Yet the outcomes told a more nuanced story. The median listing gain for IPOs fell to just 3.8%. More importantly, a majority of those IPOs eventually slipped below their listing prices despite delivering gains on debut. In other words, many investors who celebrated on listing day found themselves looking at a very different pic-

ture a few months later. **HYPE VS ACTUAL RETURN** According to Ratiraj Tibrewal, CEO of Choice Capital, that gap between listing-day excitement and long-term performance is not accidental. "Grey market buzz, over-subscription headlines and listing-day excitement create the illusion that quick gains are automatic," he said. For many retail investors, the IPO journey often begins not with studying a company's business but by checking

LOTTERY-TICKET MINDSET

The challenge for investors is not deciding whether these are quality businesses. It is determining how much future growth is already reflected in the price at which they will eventually be offered. That is where IPO investing often becomes complicated. "The biggest mistake retail investors make with mega IPOs like NSE and Jio is treating allotment as a lottery ticket instead of a buying decision," Tibrewal said. According to him, many investors spend more time discussing GMPs and listing gains than understanding valuations

— a measure of what the market believes a company is worth. Investors also tend to obsess over subscription numbers and allotment chances while paying less attention to earnings growth, competition and long-term business prospects. For long-term investors, valuation may matter far more than allotment. A great company can still become a poor investment if bought at an excessive price. Likewise, a company does not need spectacular listing gains to generate strong returns over time.

subscription numbers, grey market premiums and social media discussions. Grey market premium, or GMP, refers to the unofficial premium at which IPO shares trade before listing. It is often viewed as an indicator of expected listing gains, although there is no guarantee that those expectations will eventually be met. Tibrewal believes investors often mistake IPO allotment for a near-certain profit opportunity. "The gap between listing-day euphoria and long-term performance is structural

not coincidental," he said. According to him, IPOs often serve a purpose beyond simply raising money. "Promoters and private equity investors use the IPO primarily as an exit, offloading shares at peak valuations to a public that has far less information about the company's true financial health," Tibrewal said. Put simply, some of the earliest investors in a company use the IPO as an opportunity to cash out a portion of their holdings after years of growth. Retail investors, meanwhile, typically enter much later, often when public attention is at its highest. **LISTING DAY GAINS NOT THE FINAL VERDICT** That is why Tibrewal cautions investors against treating listing day as the final verdict. "Price discovery doesn't end on listing day—it barely begins," he said. Price discovery is the process through which the market gradually determines what a company is truly worth. According to Ti-

brewal, that process can take anywhere between 12 and 18 months as companies pass through multiple earnings cycles and investors begin focusing on business performance rather than market excitement. "The opening price reflects scarcity and excitement. True value emerges over the following quarters through earnings, institutional flows and valuations," he said. That may be the most important lesson for investors preparing for the arrival of NSE and Jio. The excitement surrounding both companies is understandable. They are profitable, dominant in their respective sectors and likely to attract enormous interest whenever they eventually hit the market. But if India's recent IPO boom has taught investors anything, it is that listing gains and long-term returns are rarely the same thing. Getting an allotment may be the easy part. Figuring out whether the stock is worth owning years later is where the real challenge begins.

NSE VS JIO IPO

go to exiting shareholders, while Jio is largely a fresh issue funding growth. These are different propositions that demand different scrutiny," Tibrewal said. In simple terms, the money raised through the two offerings is headed to different places. In NSE's case, existing shareholders are monetising part of their investments. In

Jio's case, most of the capital raised is expected to go back into the company. That does not make one better than the other. NSE offers investors exposure to one of India's most profitable financial market institutions. It is a mature business with dominant market share, strong cash generation and a near-central role in India's

capital markets. Jio offers a different proposition. Investors are effectively buying into Reliance's broader digital ecosystem, which spans telecom services, digital platforms, enterprise solutions and future technology ambitions. In simple terms, one is largely a play on India's growing financial markets. The other is a bet on India's expanding digital economy.

UPI transactions surges from 2 crore in FY17 to over 24,162 crore in FY26

NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

What began as a simple payment platform 10 years ago now powers daily digital commerce across India as UPI transactions increased from just 2 crore in FY2016-17 to over 24,162 crore in FY 2025-26, an official fact-sheet said on Saturday. The JAM Trinity — Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, and mobile connectivity — revolutionised financial inclusion and welfare delivery in India. It brought millions into the formal banking system and enabled seamless access to government services. Jan Dhan Yojana expanded banking access rapidly nationwide. Bank accounts increased from 14.72 crore in March 2015 to 57.78 crore by February 2026. Deposits rose from



Rs 15,670 crore to Rs 2.94 lakh crore during the same period. Additionally, Aadhaar created a trusted biometric identity platform for secure and instant digital authentication. Aadhaar enrolments increased from 0.42 crore in 2010-11 to over 144 crore by March 2026, the fact-sheet informed. Mobile connectivity further strengthened the JAM ecosystem by expanding

digital access across India. As of March 2026, 85.5 per cent of Indian households owned at least one smartphone, while over 109 crore people had internet access. Together, JAM became the backbone of Digital India's inclusive governance architecture. As of June 2026, Direct benefits transferred worth over Rs 51 lakh crore, transferred directly to 176 crore citizens, improving

transparency and digital governance nationwide. DigiLocker is replacing physical documents with a secure digital wallet and transforming document storage and verification across India. As of March 2026, the platform has registered over 70.69 crore users and issued more than 850 crore documents, making verification faster, paperless, and more reliable. Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has transformed public procurement by making it transparent, efficient, and paperless. As of June 2026, it has recorded a cumulative Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of over Rs 18.4 lakh crore, including Rs 5 lakh crore in FY 2025-26, while enabling over 11 lakh MSMEs to access government markets.

Rare Kidney Transplant Success at Medicovert Hospitals

HYDERABAD, JUNE 27, 2026 :

Doctors at Medicovert Hospitals, Secunderabad, successfully performed a highly complex kidney transplant on a 49-year-old patient from Sudan, giving him a new lease of life after he was diagnosed with chronic kidney failure of unknown origin, accompanied by severe thrombocytopenia (low platelet count). The patient was admitted with advanced symptoms of chronic renal failure and was immediately started on maintenance hemodialysis. As part of the transplant evaluation, his son and daughter were assessed as potential kidney donors. Since the exact cause of the patient's kidney failure could not be identified, the medical team conducted an extensive evaluation, including advanced genetic testing,



to rule out the possibility of recurrence of the disease after transplantation. Both prospective donors also underwent comprehensive medical and immunological assessments. During the evaluation, the patient's son was found to have immunological incompatibility due to the presence of anti-HLA antibodies, making him unsuitable as a donor. Following detailed counselling and discussions with the family, the patient's daughter was selected as the kidney

donor. A multidisciplinary team led by Senior Nephrologists Dr. Prabhu Charan and Dr. Rajeev, Senior Urologist Dr. Raghuvver, and Head of Transplant Anaesthesia Dr. Srinivas successfully performed the kidney transplant after obtaining all necessary medical, legal, and ethical clearances. The surgery was particularly challenging because of the patient's abnormal vascular anatomy. However, the experienced transplant team meticulously

managed the complex procedure and completed it successfully. Following the transplant, both the donor and recipient received comprehensive post-operative care under the close supervision of a multidisciplinary team. They recovered remarkably well and were discharged from the hospital within a week. During one month of follow-up, the patient showed excellent graft function with no signs of infection or organ rejection. He has now regained normal kidney function, is in good health, and has safely returned to his home country, Sudan. This successful transplant highlights Medicovert Hospitals' expertise in managing highly complex kidney transplant cases through advanced diagnostics, meticulous planning, and coordinated multidisciplinary care.

Will life insurance pay after a fire? Here's what every family should know

Recent fire tragedies have triggered questions over whether life insurance pays after accidental deaths. Experts say standard term plans generally cover such deaths unless false disclosures or policy exclusions apply.

Recent fire tragedies in Malviya Nagar and Lucknow have left families grappling with an unimaginable loss. In the aftermath of such incidents, the focus understandably remains on the lives lost, the survivors and the questions around safety lapses.

But once the initial shock begins to subside, another difficult reality confronts many families — the financial uncertainty that follows the death of a loved one. Will the life insurance policy pay? Can a claim be rejected if the building is later found to have violated fire safety norms? Does an accidental death require a separate insurance rider? These are questions many policyholders and nominees have been asking after recent incidents. Insurance experts say there is considerable confusion around how life insurance claims work after accidental fire deaths, with several myths often causing unnecessary anxiety. Here's what families should know.

A FIRE DEATH IS GENERALLY COVERED UNDER TERM INSURANCE

One of the biggest misconceptions surrounding accidental deaths is that insurers may refuse to honour life insurance claims if the death occurs in a fire. According to insurance experts, that is generally not the case. Shilpa Arora, Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of Insurance Samadhan, says a standard term life insurance policy is designed to provide financial protection regardless of how the policyholder dies, subject to the policy terms. "Term insurance is a universal contract where the claim is payable under all circumstances. Claims can generally be rejected under Section 45 if the insurer



believes incorrect information was provided regarding income or education while buying the policy," she says. Abhishek Kumar, Sebi-registered investment adviser and founder of SahajMoney, echoes the same view. "Standard life insurance policies do pay out the full sum assured for accidental deaths, including fire tragedies, provided the policy is active and all material facts were honestly disclosed at inception," he says. Kumar adds that one of the biggest myths is that families need to buy an accidental death benefit rider for the claim to be paid. "A common myth is that an accidental death benefit rider is required to get any payout at all, whereas the base policy itself covers deaths caused by accidents," he says.

CAN A FIRE SAFETY VIOLATION LEAD TO CLAIM REJECTION?

Following recent fire incidents, many people have questioned whether a life insurance

claim can be denied if investigations later reveal that a hotel, commercial establishment or other building lacked mandatory fire safety approvals. According to Arora, such concerns are often misplaced. "Such conditions are prevalent in general insurance contracts and not life insurance contracts. If a death certificate is issued, the claim will generally be paid. People should read the terms and conditions of their term insurance contract, which typically has no such exception except force majeure that would need to be established by the government or the Supreme Court," she says.

In other words, the alleged negligence of a building owner or lack of statutory fire approvals does not automatically deprive a nominee of the life insurance proceeds.

WHEN CAN A LIFE INSURANCE CLAIM BE REJECTED?

Experts say there are cir-

cumstances where claims may become disputed, but they are generally linked to the policyholder's disclosures or specific policy exclusions rather than the fire itself. Arora says life insurance claims are most commonly questioned when insurers believe material facts were concealed while purchasing the policy. Kumar says standard exclusions continue to apply. "The claim can still be rejected if the tragedy occurred during an illegal activity or while the insured person was under the influence of intoxicating substances, which are standard exclusions across insurers," he says. He also highlights another important point. According to Kumar, an insurance company may invoke "lack of duty of care" only where an individual intentionally ignores safety protocols. Ordinary victims caught in an accidental fire would not generally be expected to lose life insurance coverage merely because a building is later found to have violated fire safety norms.

DON'T CONFUSE LIFE INSURANCE WITH GENERAL INSURANCE

Experts say much of the confusion arises because people often mix up life insurance with general insurance policies. "There are many misconceptions because people confuse life insurance with general insurance contracts. Even in general insurance, intention is seen.

DON'T RELY ONLY ON TERM INSURANCE

While a term insurance policy provides financial support to a family after the death of the earning member, experts say it should not be the only layer of protection. Kumar recommends that families also consider a personal accident policy or an accidental disability rider. "A dedicated personal accident policy or an accidental disability rider is vital because it provides a lump sum or regular income if an accident leads to permanent or temporary disability. A robust family floater health insurance policy with a high sum insured is equally critical to manage extensive hospitalisation and critical care expenses without depleting life savings," he says. Recent fire tragedies have understandably raised questions about insurance claims and financial protection. While every claim is assessed based on the terms and conditions of the policy, experts say families should not assume that a life insurance claim will be rejected simply because a death occurred in a building later found to have violated fire safety norms. The bigger takeaway is to understand what your policy covers, make complete and truthful disclosures while purchasing insurance, keep nominee details updated and preserve all policy documents. In times of tragedy, misinformation can add to a family's distress. Knowing how life insurance works can help ensure that genuine claims are not delayed or abandoned because of myths and misconceptions.



Monsoon Health

Why Viral Infections Surge

Understanding the Seasonal Health Risks

The arrival of the monsoon is one of the most anticipated times of the year in India. After months of scorching summer heat, the first showers bring cooler temperatures, fresh air and much-needed relief. The rains rejuvenate rivers, nourish crops and transform dry landscapes into lush greenery. However, alongside these benefits comes another annual trend that healthcare professionals witness every year—a significant rise in viral infections.

Hospitals and clinics across the country begin reporting a surge in patients suffering from fever, cough, cold, sore throat, body aches, stomach infections, diarrhoea and mosquito-borne illnesses such as dengue and chikungunya. Although many people assume these illnesses begin only after continuous rainfall, infectious disease specialists explain that the process starts much earlier, even before the monsoon officially arrives.

Rising humidity, fluctuating temperatures, poor ventilation, stagnant water and contaminated drinking water together create ideal conditions for viruses, bacteria and disease-carrying mosquitoes to thrive. Seasonal changes also influence human behaviour, increasing opportunities for infections to spread rapidly among communities.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), weather conditions have a significant influence on the transmission of respiratory, vector-borne and water-borne diseases. This makes preventive measures especially important before and during the rainy season.

Explaining why viral infections become more common every year during this period, Dr. Harshad Limaye, Director of Infectious Diseases & Internal Medicine at Nanavati Max Super Speciality Hospital, says that both environmental changes and human behaviour contribute to the annual increase in illness.

Viral Infections Begin Rising Even Before the Monsoon

Many people believe the monsoon itself causes infections. However, experts point out that the increase actually begins during the weeks leading up to the rainy season.

According to Dr. Limaye, "Every year, as the weather begins to change and the first spells of rain arrive, many families notice a familiar pattern: fever, cough, cold, body ache, stomach infections, dengue-like illness and viral fever cases begin to rise. This is not

a coincidence. The period before and during the monsoon creates the perfect environment for many infections to spread faster."

Before heavy rainfall begins, humidity levels gradually increase while temperatures remain relatively warm. This combination allows several viruses to survive longer outside the human body, increasing their chances of infecting new hosts.

The changing weather also puts temporary stress on the body's immune system. Frequent shifts between hot afternoons, cool evenings and sudden rain showers make it more difficult for the body to adapt, leaving some individuals more vulnerable to infections.

Higher Humidity Helps Viruses Survive Longer

Humidity plays a major role in determining how long viruses remain infectious in the environment.

Certain respiratory viruses survive better when moisture levels in the air increase. Viral particles expelled through coughing, sneezing or talking can remain suspended in the air for longer periods or settle on surfaces where they continue to remain infectious.

Dr. Limaye explains that before the monsoon fully sets in, increasing humidity combined with warm temperatures creates ideal conditions for several viruses to spread more efficiently.

The WHO also notes that seasonal weather changes influence the survival and transmission of respiratory pathogens, particularly in densely populated urban settings.

Indoor Crowding Accelerates Respiratory Infections

Another major reason respiratory infections increase during the rainy season is the way people change their daily routines.

Cloudy skies, rainfall and humid weather encourage people to spend more time indoors. Families gather in enclosed rooms, children remain inside classrooms, offices become crowded and commuters spend long hours in packed buses, trains and metro coaches.

Dr. Limaye says, "People also tend to spend more time indoors when the weather becomes cloudy, humid or rainy. Closed rooms, crowded public transport, schools, offices and homes make it easier for respiratory viruses such as flu-like illnesses to pass from one person to another through coughing, sneezing or close contact."

Poor ventilation further increases the risk because virus-containing droplets accumulate inside enclosed spaces rather than dispersing into fresh air.

Respiratory viruses commonly spread through:

- Coughing and sneezing
- Talking at close range
- Touching contaminated surfaces
- Shaking hands followed by touching the face
- Sharing personal items

This explains why schools, offices and public transportation often become hotspots for seasonal viral infections during the monsoon.

Mosquito-Borne Diseases Surge After the First Rains

One of the biggest health concerns associated with the monsoon is the sharp rise in mosquito-borne diseases.

Rainwater collects in numerous locations around homes and public spaces, including flowerpots, buckets, tyres, rooftops, construction sites, drains, coolers and uncovered containers.

Dr. Limaye explains, "Rainwater collects in flowerpots, tyres, terraces, construction sites, drains and uncovered containers. These small pockets of stagnant water become breeding places for mosquitoes."

The mosquitoes responsible for transmitting dengue and chikungunya, particularly *Aedes aegypti*, prefer to breed in clean stagnant water found around residential areas.

According to the National Centre for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC), even a small amount of stagnant water is sufficient for mosquitoes to lay eggs.

The increase in mosquito-borne diseases does not occur immediately after rainfall. Mosquitoes first require several days to complete their breeding cycle. Once they bite infected individuals, the virus spreads further, and newly infected people usually develop symptoms after an incubation period of several days.

This is why dengue and chikungunya cases often peak a few weeks after continuous rainfall begins.

Heavy Rainfall Increases Water-Borne Viral Diseases

The monsoon affects not only mosquito breeding but also drinking water quality. Heavy rainfall can overwhelm drainage systems, causing sewage water to mix with drinking water supplies. Flooding can damage pipelines, contaminate wells and increase exposure to harmful viruses. According to Dr. Limaye, "Heavy rainfall and flooding can disturb drainage systems and allow sewage to mix with drinking water sources. When water is not stored or treated safely, viruses that spread through contaminated water can cause outbreaks of jaundice-like illnesses, especially hepatitis A and E." These viral infections initially resemble ordinary fever but gradually progress to more serious illness.

Common symptoms include:

- Fever
- Weakness
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Dark-coloured urine
- Yellowing of the eyes and skin
- Liver inflammation

The WHO identifies hepatitis A and hepatitis E as important water-borne viral diseases that frequently occur where sanitation and drinking water quality are compromised.

Gastrointestinal Infections Also Become More Common

Besides hepatitis, contaminated food and water contribute to various stomach infections during the rainy season.

Street food exposed to flies, improperly stored cooked food, contaminated drinking water and poor hand hygiene significantly increase the risk of viral gastroenteritis.

Symptoms often include:

- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Stomach cramps
- Fever
- Dehydration

Children and older adults are particularly vulnerable because dehydration can develop rapidly.

Doctors therefore advise avoiding roadside food during periods of heavy rainfall and consuming only properly cooked meals prepared under hygienic conditions.

Who Faces the Highest Risk?

Although viral infections can affect people of all age groups, certain individuals face a much greater risk of developing severe illness or complications.

Dr. Limaye cautions that "Children, elderly people, pregnant women, and those with diabetes, asthma, heart disease, kidney disease or weak immunity need extra care, as even a simple viral fever can become more troublesome for

them."

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the WHO have consistently highlighted that people with chronic illnesses have a higher risk of complications because their immune systems may not respond as effectively to infections.

Young children also tend to develop dehydration more quickly during stomach infections, while older adults may experience worsening of existing medical conditions following viral illness.

Pregnant women require special attention because certain infections may affect both maternal and fetal health.

Everyday Habits That Can Prevent Infection

The encouraging news is that many monsoon-related illnesses are preventable.

Simple hygiene practices and environmental precautions can significantly reduce the risk of infection.

Dr. Limaye recommends:

- Do not allow water to collect around the house.
- Keep all water storage containers tightly covered.
- Empty flowerpots, coolers and buckets regularly.
- Use mosquito repellents, especially during the daytime for dengue prevention.
- Wear full-sleeved clothing whenever possible.
- Install window screens and mosquito nets.
- Drink boiled, filtered or properly purified water.
- Avoid consuming roadside food during heavy rains.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap before eating and after using the toilet.
- Maintain proper indoor ventilation.
- Keep children at home if they develop fever or respiratory symptoms.

The WHO also recommends improving sanitation, eliminating mosquito breeding sites, ensuring access to safe drinking water and practising regular hand hygiene to reduce seasonal disease transmission.

sion.

Strengthening Immunity During the Monsoon

While no food can completely prevent viral infections, maintaining a healthy immune system helps the body respond more effectively.

Doctors advise:

- Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables.
- Staying well hydrated.
- Getting sufficient sleep every night.
- Exercising regularly.
- Managing stress levels.
- Avoiding unnecessary antibiotic use without medical advice.

Good nutrition combined with healthy lifestyle habits supports the body's natural defence mechanisms throughout the season.

Recognising Warning Signs That Need Medical Attention

Many viral illnesses improve within a few days with adequate rest, hydration and supportive treatment. However, certain symptoms require immediate medical evaluation. According to Dr. Limaye, medical attention should be sought if:

- Fever persists for more than two days.
- High fever is accompanied by severe body pain.
- A rash develops.
- Breathing becomes difficult.
- Repeated vomiting prevents drinking fluids.
- Urination decreases significantly.
- The patient becomes unusually drowsy or confused.
- Bleeding occurs from the nose, gums or skin.
- Yellowing of the eyes or skin appears.
- Weakness continues to worsen.

These symptoms may indicate serious illnesses such as dengue, hepatitis or severe dehydration that require prompt diagnosis and monitoring.

Early medical evaluation allows doctors to identify warning signs before complications become life-threatening.





Maharaja Trophy KSCA T20

Manish Pandey guides Gulbarga Mystics to thrilling victory



HUBBALI: Experienced batter Manish Pandey rolled back the years with a composed unbeaten 43 as Gulbarga Mystics registered a thrilling three-wicket victory over Mysuru Warriors in the Maharaja Trophy KSCA T20 Tournament in Hubballi on Saturday. Chasing a modest target of 156, the Mystics appeared to be cruising at 66 for one before a dramatic collapse triggered by Ritesh Bhatkal, reduced them to 77 for four. Pandey then anchored the chase with his trademark calmness, steering his side home with seven balls to spare. Batting at No. 6, Pandey remained unbeaten on 43 off 31 deliveries, striking five boundaries, as he held his nerve despite wickets falling around him.

GCL Season 4

Carlsen returns, Divya debuts as player draft



MUMBAI: The Global Chess League (GCL) is gearing up for its fourth season. The Season 4 Player Draft is scheduled for July 29 here, before the league begins in Bengaluru from September 3–13. This draft will see Magnus Carlsen return after a year's absence, and Divya Deshmukh, the current FIDE Women's World Cup champion, will make her debut in the league. The Season 4 player pool includes 36 Grandmasters from different generations, such as World Champions, World Cup winners, Olympiad medalists, and top figures from the international chess scene.

India face defining test against Australia with semi-final berth on line

LONDON

The race for semifinal spots in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 reaches a defining moment on Sunday as India lock horns with giants Australia in the final Group 1 fixture at Lord's in London.

For Harmanpreet Kaur's side, the qualification equation is simple -- defeat the tournament favourites, and a place in the last four will almost certainly be secured. Anything less would leave India anxiously following the outcome of the earlier Bangladesh-South Africa clash.

India have put themselves in contention through a strong recovery after their opening setback against South Africa. Consecutive victories over Pakistan, the Netherlands, and Bangladesh have lifted the world No. 3 side to six points, while a healthy net run rate of +2.268 gives them an additional cushion should qualification scenarios become complicated.

Australia, however, remain the benchmark of the competition. Four commanding wins from four matches have virtually guaranteed the six-time champions a semi-final berth, with an exceptional net run rate of +4.724 placing them comfortably atop Group 1. While an extraordinary collapse combined with a massive South Africa victory could theoretically affect their standing, the reigning powerhouse remains firmly in control of its own destiny.

One of Australia's greatest strengths has been the absence of over-reliance on individual brilliance. Despite dominating every opponent so far, none of their players currently feature among the tournament's top 10 run-scorers or wicket-takers.

Instead, different match-winners have emerged each game, underlining the depth that has made Australia



the dominant force in women's cricket over the past decade. Veteran all-rounder Ellyse Perry has led their batting effort with 127 runs, while left-arm spinner Sophie Molineux has been the side's most successful bowler with six wickets.

India, in contrast, have been driven by standout performances from key individuals. Vice-captain Smriti Mandhana has once again provided stability at the top of the order, accumulating 167 runs across four innings and consistently laying the platform for the middle order. With the ball, left-arm spinner Shree Charani has enjoyed a breakthrough tournament, claiming a competition-leading 12 wickets to emerge as India's biggest weapon through the middle overs.

Sunday's contest also represents a historic occasion for India, who will play their first-ever women's T20 In-

ternational at Lord's. Australia have previous experience at the iconic venue but suffered defeat against England in their only women's T20I appearance there in 2023, a result India will hope offers encouragement rather than coincidence.

History, though, overwhelmingly favours Australia. The two sides have met 37 times in women's T20 Internationals, with Australia winning 27 contests compared to India's nine victories, while one match ended in a tie. Their dominance extends to the Women's T20 World Cup as well, where Australia hold a commanding 5-1 advantage, including victories in both the 2020 final and the 2023 semi-final.

India's lone World Cup triumph over Australia came during the 2018 group stage in the West Indies, when Smriti Mandhana produced a memo-

rable innings of 83 to guide her side to victory. More recently, however, the rivalry has become considerably more balanced. India knocked Australia out in the semi-finals of the 2025 Women's ODI World Cup before following it up with a T20I series victory on Australian soil earlier this year—results that have reinforced the belief that Harmanpreet Kaur's side can overcome the world's No. 1-ranked team when it matters.

Australia will still start as favourites given their flawless campaign and enviable squad depth, but India enter the contest carrying momentum, confidence, and a realistic opportunity to script another landmark victory. With a semi-final place within touching distance and Lord's providing the backdrop, the stage is set for one of the tournament's biggest encounters.

When: Sunday, June 28, 7:00 PM IST
Where: Lord's Cricket Ground, London
Where to watch: The West Indies vs Ireland clash will be broadcast on Star Sports Network and live-streamed on JioStar.

Squads:
India: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Bharti Fulmali, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (wk), Shree Charani, Yastika Bhatia, Nandni Sharma, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh, Kranti Gaud, Prema Rawat, Radha Yadav
Australia: Sophie Molineux (c), Nicola Carey, Ash Gardner, Kim Garth, Lucy Hamilton, Grace Harris, Alana King, Phoebe Litchfield, Tahlia McGrath, Beth Mooney (wk), Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Georgia Voll, Georgia Wareham



Kerala's 11-year-old girl Divi wins FIDE World Cup Under-12 title

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Eleven-year-old Chess prodigy Divi Bijesh of Kerala scripted another chapter in Indian chess history by clinching the FIDE World Cup Under-12 Girls Championship in Batumi, Georgia, becoming the first player from the state to win FIDE World Cup titles in both the Under-10 and Under-12 categories.

Representing India at the prestigious championship, Divi produced a commanding performance against a field of more than 85 of the world's leading young players, finishing with nine points from 11 rounds.

She seized sole lead after the seventh round and never relinquished it, before drawing her final-round game against Russia's Alisa Yunker to seal the world title. The triumph marks Divi's third world title in just two years, further underlining her emergence as one of the brightest young talents in world chess.

She had created history in 2025 by becoming the inaugural FIDE World Cup Under-10 Girls champion and also won the World Under-10 Rapid Championship the same year.

Her latest success also secures qualification for the FIDE World Cadet Champion-

ship to be held later this year, where she will once again represent India on the global stage.

Still only 11-years-old, Divi has now amassed 25 medals, including 13 international gold medals, in an extraordinary career that has rapidly placed her among India's most accomplished young chess players.

A Class 6 student of Alan Feldman Public School in Thiruvananthapuram, Divi is the daughter of Bijesh and Prabha and the younger sister of Devnath Bijesh.

Her rise has been nurtured through the Chola Chess talent development programme, with guidance from Woman Grandmaster Aarthi Ramaswamy and Woman FIDE Master Harshini.

Her long-time coach and mentor, Sreejith G.S. of Masters Chess Academy in Thiruvananthapuram, has played a pivotal role in shaping her career.

Already the youngest Woman Candidate Master (WCM) from Kerala and recipient of the Kerala Ujjwala Balyam Award, Divi's latest triumph adds another glittering milestone to Indian chess and reinforces Kerala's growing reputation as a nursery for world-class talent.

'The belief was always there,' says Prendergast after guiding Ireland to victory

BRISTOL

Player of the Match Orla Prendergast said Ireland's belief never faded despite a difficult tournament after her match-winning half-century guided the team to its first-ever victory in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup with a six-wicket win over West Indies at the County Ground on Saturday.

Prendergast produced

a brilliant 63 off 44 balls, hitting eight fours and two sixes, as Ireland comfortably chased down 129 in 18.1 overs. The all-rounder also contributed in the field as Ireland completed a memorable all-round performance to end their campaign on a high. Reflecting on the historic victory, Prendergast said the win was especially satisfying because the squad had remained confident

throughout the tournament despite a series of disappointing results. "It just means so much. We've had the belief throughout this tournament, and unfortunately, it hasn't come together just yet. But the belief we all had was there constantly. So just so much relief to finally have that win and so much happiness," Prendergast said after receiving the Player of the Match award.

Inter-State Athletics: Jumpers Ancy, Sarvesh break national records in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR

Kerala's Asian Games medallist Ancy Sojan obliterated the women's long jump record that has stood for more than two decades, with a brilliant performance at the 65th National Inter-State Athletics Championships at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Saturday evening.

The 25-year-old international long jumper entered her name in the record books in her fifth attempt as she landed at the 6.88m mark to improve the long-standing record of 6.83m set by Anju Bobby George in 2004 in Athens.

"My goal today was to record a personal best of 6.75m, which I recorded four weeks ago in Ranchi," a jubilant Ancy Sojan said of getting into a good rhythm from the word go. She began her record-breaking campaign with a jump of 6.73m. Her second jump was no mark. Her third jump was 6.67m, while her fourth jump was 6.72m. She was on cloud nine when the electronic scoreboard flashed 6.88m. Her last and sixth jump was 6.69m.

Ancy Sojan dedicated her record-breaking gold medal performance to her father. "He wanted someone in the family to be a national record holder. The gold medal will be a precious gift to him," the elated long jumper said.

Last year, she was struggling with health issues. She had to take a break. "It was mentally and physically challenging. I'm happy to have made a comeback, that too ahead of the Aichi Nagoya Asian Games starting September 19," says Ancy Sojan.

Maharashtra's seasoned high jumper Sarvesh Anil Kushare, 31, was the second athlete on Saturday who etched his name in record books as he improved the men's high jump record to 2.31m. The previous national record of 2.29m was set by Te-



jaswin Shankar in 2018. Sarvesh further raised the bar to 2.35m but wasn't successful. "I was feeling good. I got a big boost when I cleared 2.27m. Thereafter, I pushed and made an attempt to break the national record," says the newly crowned high jumper. He broke the national record on his third attempt.

Away from the track, the men's 1500m meet record of 3:40.10 set by Baha-

dur Prasad in Chennai was also erased by Yoonus Shah of Uttar Pradesh. He clocked 3:37.55 secs. Yashas P. also improved the meet record in the men's 400m hurdles. His winning time of 49.14 seconds was better than his previous record of 49.37 seconds.

Several medal winners also achieved the Japan Asian Games qualification mark in their respective events.

India sign off with four medals from Asia Cup Bridge Championships

PANAJI

Host nation India concluded its campaign in the 5th Asia Cup Bridge Championships with an impressive haul of three silver and one bronze, underlining the country's strong performance across both the Team and Matchpoint Finals on Saturday.

The standout performance came from the India B Seniors team, which topped the league stage before scripting one of the tournament's most memorable victories—a dramatic 126–125 (1 IMP) semifinal win over Japan—to book a place in the Gold Medal Final. The team eventually settled for Silver after a hard-fought championship clash against Australia in the event recognised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS) and supported by the Sports Authority of India (SAI). The India B Seniors



squad, comprising Sukamal Das, Hemant Jalan, Jitendra Solani, Anil Padhye, Rajesh Dalal, and Raju Tolani, which was guided by Coach & NPC Anal Shah, delivered a remarkable campaign that saw it remain in contention for the title until the closing stages of the final.

India also bagged a bronze medal in the Men's Team Championship, with the India A team finishing on the podium. Fur-

ther success came in the Matchpoint Finals, in which Savleen Thadani and Sadhana Gupta secured silver in the Women's Pairs, while Subir Majumder and Sujit Kumar Bhattacharjee won silver in the Seniors Pairs.

The gold medals in the Team Championships were shared among Asia's leading bridge nations, with Australia winning the Seniors title, Hong Kong China emerging as champions in the

Men's event, Indonesia claiming the Women's title, and China securing the Mixed Teams crown.

In the Matchpoint Finals, Wei Ho and Sun Wei Lee (Chinese Taipei) won the Men's title, Barbara Travis and Lori Smith (Australia) triumphed in the Women's event, Suk King Chan and Kon Wong (Hong Kong China) claimed the Mixed title, while Younghong Cheng and Wei Wei Tsao (Chinese Taipei) captured the Seniors crown.

India also excelled in the Friendship Pairs, an additional event held alongside the championships. Arun Bapat and Ajay Khare emerged champions to win gold, finishing first with 616.64 points, while Kamna Sharma and Abhijit Pal secured the bronze medal with 586.82 points, adding further distinction to India's overall campaign.

'Have no doubt Sooryavanshi will be a force for Indian cricket and world cricket'

LONDON

Rajasthan Royals' Director of Cricket Kumar Sangakkara has backed teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi to make a mark in international cricket, saying that he has all the ingredients to be a force for Indian cricket and world cricket.

Sooryavanshi, 15, is currently on his first tour with the Indian team for the ongoing T20I series in Ireland, before he arrives in England for a five-game series starting on July 1 in Durham. He

earned his maiden India call-up on the back of making 776 runs in 16 innings at a strike rate of 237.30 for RR, including hitting 72 sixes.

Sooryavanshi also scored 175 in India beating England in the final to win this year's Under-19 World Cup and Sangakkara, the former Sri Lanka captain, thinks the youngster is well-equipped to handle fame and attention.

"I feel Vaibhav will handle all the attention very well. At Rajasthan Royals, we pay a lot of attention to how we manage

him and protect him. We keep an eye on him to make sure he stays grounded and focused. He will have many opportunities ahead, in cricket and commercially.

"How he balances that, and the support he gets from his family and the team, will be crucial. But one thing I can say for sure is that Vaibhav loves batting. He loves the game. The fame and flash don't really affect him. He is very grounded and curious about many things.

"He doesn't just live and breathe cricket all the time. He



has space for other things. I have no doubt he will be a force for Indian cricket, world cricket, and in franchise cricket. Mentally, he is in a good place. I think he will deal with everything that comes with fame very well," said Sangakkara on Sky Sports.

He also recalled how the franchise first spotted Sooryavanshi, who made his Ranji Trophy debut, at just 12. "In 2023, our analyst Akshay sent us a text about a 12-year-old kid named Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. He said the boy was incredibly talented and we

needed to have a look. His coach Manish Ojha had told Vaibhav's father that the kid was ready for the big leagues at just 12.

"We were surprised at first, thought it was a joke. But Akshay was very sure, so we brought him in. Rahul Dravid was the head coach at RR then. They watched him for five or six minutes and said, 'We have to buy this lad.' I first saw Vaibhav during a camp in Guwahati.

"In a small side net, Jofra Archer and Sandeep Sharma were bowling with the new ball. No

one wanted to bat there. Vaibhav walked in and said, 'I'll bat.' The sound off his bat was like a gunshot. He took on Archer and Sandeep with ease. At one point, Archer just stopped and laughed because this 14-year-old was treating him with utter disdain."

Sangakkara further narrated an anecdote from this season to underline the teenager's confidence, as he hit a brilliant 93 off 38 balls to power RR to a memorable victory over Lucknow Super Giants at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur.





Thaman's Early Push For OG 2

Thaman has earned a reputation for delivering powerful background scores and elevating films with his music.Over the years, he has delivered some of his best work for stars like Nandamuri Balakrishna and Pawan Kalyan. However, when it comes to promoting films featuring Pawan Kalyan, Thaman often takes his enthusiasm to another level. Movie lovers have already seen how aggressively he built excitement around “OG” through a series of social media posts and updates. Now, even before “OG 2” gathers full momentum, Thaman appears to have started doing the same. His recent social media activity has prompted fans to joke, “Anna already duty ekkesadu,” implying that Thaman’s promotional campaign for the film has begun well in advance. Interestingly, the music director is now operating in a far more competitive environment than before. While Devi Sri Prasad was once considered his primary rival in Telugu cinema, the landscape has changed significantly. A. R. Rahman has recently bagged Peddi starring Ram Charan, while Anirudh Ravichander continues to dominate several big-ticket projects across South India. G. V. Prakash Kumar is also securing notable assignments, and Bheems Ceciroleo has emerged as one of the busiest composers in Telugu cinema. With competition intensifying from multiple directions, visibility and branding have become just as important as the music itself. Thaman clearly understands the value of staying connected with fan bases and generating excitement around the projects he is associated with. Whether one calls it promotion or passion, fans are convinced that Thaman has already begun his “duty” for “OG 2.”

Venky-Trivikram Film Gets Release Date

The wizard of words, Trivikram Srinivas returns to direction, joining hands with everyone’s favourite Victory Venkatesh for a highly anticipated entertainer Aadarsha Kutumbam AK47 that promises to blend heart, humour, high emotion with lot of thrills on the big screen. The film shoot is progressing at brisk pace. This reunion marks the coming together of two powerhouse talents who have redefined Telugu family entertainment. The first look matched all the expectations and now makers are ready to impress audience with a big update. Aadarsha Kutumbam AK47 is all set for the grand release on October 2nd. Team is ready to surprise audiences. Known for his impeccable storytelling and emotional finesse, Trivikram is expected to craft yet another universally appealing family entertainer with a twist. Victory Venkatesh, the ever-charis-



matic star of family cinema, steps into a role shaped by Trivikram’s signature writing and wit. The film is being produced by S. Radha Krishna under the prestigious Haarika & Hassine Creations banner. More details will be announced soon.

Prabhas’ Fauzi Finally Locks Release Date

Prabhas and Hanu Raghavapudi’s ambitious period drama Fauzi is finally gearing up for a major update. The film, set in the pre Independence era, has been carrying strong expectations ever since its title and first poster were unveiled. After the setback of The Raja Saab, Prabhas fans have been eagerly waiting for a substantial update from Fauzi. Apart from the title poster and a brief audio glimpse, the makers have maintained complete silence, adding to the curiosity surrounding the project. According to sources, the team has now locked December 3 as the film’s release date. An official announcement is expected very soon. Recent industry reports have also indicated that the



makers are targeting a December release window and are preparing to kick off promotions. The film has already completed a major portion of its shoot and is now moving steadily towards the final stages. Hanu Raghavapudi is said to have blended intense emotions with a grand patriotic backdrop, making it one of the most awaited films in Prabhas’ lineup. Fans are particularly excited to see Prabhas in the role of a soldier, while debutant Imanvi’s pairing with the star has also generated curiosity. Veteran actors Mithun Chakraborty, Anupam Kher and Jayapradha are playing key roles in the film. Backed by Mythri Movie Makers on a lavish budget, Fauzi promises a visually rich emotional drama. With the release date reportedly locked and promotional activities expected to begin soon, Prabhas fans finally have something big to look forward to.

Ravipudi Beauty Shines In Saree

Grace meets glamour as Krithi Shetty dazzles in a gorgeous saree paired with a striking designer blouse. The elegant drape, soft silky hair and confident styling elevate her look, while the fashionable blouse adds a modern touch without overshadowing the traditional charm. The actress carries the saree with effortless poise, making every frame picture perfect. Her radiant smile, minimal accessories and flawless styling create a refreshing blend of sophistication and youthful elegance, making the photo shoot an instant visual delight for fans. On the work front, Krithi Shetty is currently working in director Anil Ravipudi’s upcoming multi-starrer featuring Venkatesh, Kalyan Ram and Keerthy Suresh.

Atlee Readies RAAKA Blast For August



After the phenomenal success of Pushpa 2, Allu Arjun joined hands with Atlee for the ambitious pan Indian project Raaka. Mounted on a massive budget with extensive visual effects, the film is progressing at a brisk pace. The first look poster of Raaka came as a big surprise and instantly grabbed attention. Allu Arjun’s intense makeover left fans curious, with many demanding a glimpse to understand the film’s world. However, the makers have remained silent ever since the poster launch. That silence could finally end soon with a major update expected in August. According to sources, the team has now shifted its focus towards the extensive visual effects work. If everything goes as planned, the makers are likely to unveil the first glimpse of Raaka in August. The teaser is expected to offer the audience their first proper look into the film’s universe. Deepika Padukone plays the female lead, while Rashmika Mandanna, Mrunal Thakur and Janhvi Kapoor are also rumored to be part of the project. Sai Abhyankar is composing the music for the film. Produced on a grand scale, Raaka is shaping up to be one of the biggest Indian films in production. The film is expected to arrive in theatres in the second half of 2027.

Hero Takes 40% Of Film’s Budget: Dil Raju

Film budgets have gone up heavily. Producers are trying to cut costs in many areas, but the same correction is not happening when it comes to heroes’ remuneration. How much does a hero take from a big film’s budget? How much is finally left for the producer? Dil Raju has now explained this with a clear example. “When a film is made with Rs 300 crore, nearly Rs 120 crore goes only as the hero’s remuneration. If a distributor buys it as a crazy project, he faces losses. If it is released through third parties or hires, exhibitors face losses. Finally, in the industry, the losses are being shared only by three people — producer, distributor and exhibitor,” Dil Raju said. After looking at these calculations, Dil Raju said he is now working only with heroes who understand him and his economics. According to him, many heroes are still not able to understand the present market situation. “Even if a film flops, I am first



checking how much minimum amount I can recover. From there, I am starting discussions with the hero. I am explaining that market calculations have completely changed. I am telling them in advance how much theatrical revenue and non-theatrical revenue can come. Then I am discussing how we can share that amount. Some heroes are understanding it, and some are not. I am travelling only with those who understand. I am clearly telling them how much I can give,” he said. Dil Raju said that just as single screens are moving from the rental system to the percentage system, heroes also should move from fixed remuneration to a sharing system. He pointed out that big heroes in Bollywood have already moved to the sharing model. He said he is making films with Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar under the sharing system. According to Dil Raju, if heroes also move to the sharing system, they will take more responsibility for the film. He believes that this will automatically help bring the budget under control.

Glamour Hits New Highs

Disha Patani makes a striking style statement in a stunning blue outfit that perfectly blends glamour with elegance. The fitted ensemble, soft makeup and minimal accessories enhance her fashionable appearance. Her confident expressions and graceful styling make the look stand out without appearing overdone. The actor carries the outfit with ease, showcasing her toned physique through stylish yet tasteful poses. Every frame reflects her signature charm, effortless confidence, and modern fashion sense, making the photoshoot another talking point among her fans. On the work front, Disha was last seen in Welcome to the Jungle, which is currently running in theatres. She is now looking forward to the release of Awarapan 2, one of her most awaited upcoming projects.