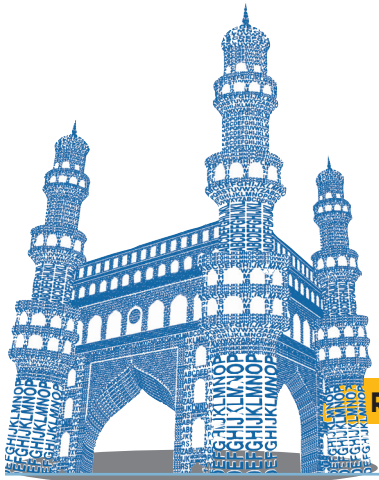




HYDERABAD HEADLINES

RNI NO.APENG/2010/33328 VOL NO.17 ISSUE NO.: 67 RANGAREDDY (HYDERABAD) PAGES: 12 RS. 1/-
THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2026 WWW.HYDERABADHEADLINES.COM



BIGGEST TAX REFORM IS STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS

GOVT SEEKS CLARITY ON USERNAMES



RAJGOPAL REDDY's OPEN REVOLT EXPOSES RIFT IN CONG

HYDERABAD, JULY 1
Fresh cracks surfaced in the ruling Congress on Wednesday as Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy openly criticised the party leadership over its style of functioning and key appointments. Explaining his absence from the recent Nalgonda meeting, Rajgopal Reddy said decisions were being taken unilaterally from Hyderabad without consulting senior leaders. He expressed resentment over appointments to the Yadagirigutta Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple trust board, claiming he was ignored despite representing the region. "I am an MLA from the Yadagirigutta region and a senior Congress leader. How can decisions be made without seeking my opinion?", he questioned. The senior MLA said he had already discussed the issue with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and would also raise it with PCC chief B Mahesh Goud and state in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan. He alleged that original Congress leaders were being sidelined while newcomers were dominating the party.

Boost Revenue, Plug Tax & Mining Leakages: Revanth



HYDERABAD, JULY 1
Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has instructed officials to prioritise revenue generation and to make concerted efforts in this area. On Wednesday, the Chief Minister convened a review meeting on revenue mobilisation at the MCRHRD in Hyderabad, attended by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy and Jupally Krishna Rao, Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju, Advisors Ramakrishna Rao, along with senior officials. During the meeting, the Chief Minister emphasised the importance of focusing on revenue mobilisation to meet the targets set forth in the state budget. He stressed the need for HMDA and TGIIC officials to concentrate on this effort. Revanth Reddy noted that it is crucial to minimise revenue losses in departments such as Commercial Taxes, Excise, and Mining, among others. Furthermore, he proposed establishing a dedicated 'chasing cell' to maintain ongoing oversight of revenue mobilisation efforts. To enhance performance, he indicated that individual departments should improve their operational efficiency. Revanth Reddy also mentioned that the list of beneficiaries needs to be linked with the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system through AI technology. He called for the budget to be focused on finalising pending projects and current undertakings, with land acquisition given top priority. The Chief Minister added that budget planning should be rooted in actual conditions rather than assumptions. "The government is prepared to offer all necessary assistance to different departments, and there must be diligence in revenue generation and resource mobilisation," stated Revanth Reddy.

CM Proposes Intelligent Traffic Signal System

MEIL and Analog AI showcases physical intelligence in traffic management
Hyderabad, July 1: Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy has proposed the integration of traffic signals across Hyderabad and adopted technology to operate the signals effectively for hassle free traffic management. The Chief Minister emphasized the integration of the system with AI to regulate traffic flow during rains. Analog AI Founder and CEO Alex Kipman and MEIL MD P. Krishna Reddy met with CM Revanth Reddy at the Bodhi Pavilion in the MCR HRD Institute today. During the meeting, the CM made several suggestions to the two organizations in the use of physical intelligence in Hyderabad. The Company heads briefed the CM about Hyderabad traffic pilot project and how technology could be

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

President Murmu Urges Graduates to Embrace Lifelong Learning



ANANTHAPURAM, JULY 1
President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday called upon students to cultivate the courage to explore new ideas and continuously acquire new knowledge as she addressed the first convocation ceremony of the Central University of Andhra Pradesh in Anantapuram. Describing the inaugural convocation as a defining milestone in the university's journey, the President praised the institution's vision of becoming a future-ready centre of excellence committed to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly quality education. She expressed confidence that the university would play a significant role in achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. Congratulating the graduating students, President Murmu said their success reflected not only their hard work but also the sacrifices of their parents, the guidance of teachers and the support of society. She urged them to give back by using their education to create employment, drive innovation, serve the public and uplift the underprivileged. Highlighting the rapid pace of technological change, the President stressed that learning should not end with a degree. She encouraged students to remain adaptable, embrace emerging technologies and develop the confidence to pursue new ideas throughout their lives. She also underlined the importance of ethical values such as honesty, compassion, empathy and respect for nature, describing them as the foundation of holistic development and responsible citizenship. Calling India's youth the nation's greatest asset, President Murmu said their creativity, resilience and commitment would be instrumental in transforming challenges into opportunities and realising the vision of a developed India by 2047. She urged graduates to pursue excellence with dedication and integrity in whichever path they choose.

125-Day Job Guarantee Begins Under VB-G RAM G Act

NEW DELHI, JULY 1
The Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act, 2025 came into force across the country on Wednesday, providing eligible rural households with a statutory guarantee of 125 days of wage employment annually. This Act replaced MGNREGA. Calling it "a historic day for rural India", Union Rural Development and Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the new law marks a transformative step towards strengthening rural livelihoods, creating durable assets, promoting women-led development and building a self-reliant rural economy. The Act seeks to make rural employment more effective, transparent and outcome-oriented while accelerating the creation of durable rural assets, conservation of natural resources, enhancement of agricultural productivity, livelihood promotion and women-led development. Along with the rollout of the Act, the Centre notified revised wage rates under the scheme.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

Women's empowerment is strongest foundation for National development: Governor



HYDERABAD, JULY 1
Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla said that women's empowerment is the strongest foundation for building a developed and inclusive India, and called for collective efforts to ensure that the benefits of economic growth reach every section of society. Addressing the inaugural session of the two-day national conference on community-led pathways for inclusive growth, organised as part of the silver jubilee celebrations of the Andhra Pradesh Mahila Abhivruddhi Society (APMAS) at the Dr. MCR HRD Institute, Hyderabad on Wednesday, the Governor commended APMAS for its 25-year journey of promoting community institutions and strengthening rural livelihoods. Describing the organisation's Silver Jubilee as more than a milestone in institutional growth, the Governor said it symbolised trust, dedicated service, innovation and social transformation. He lauded APMAS for its sustained efforts in empowering women, farmers and rural communities, and for emerging as a model for community-driven development across the country. Referring to the Self-Help Group (SHG) movement, Shukla observed that it had evolved into one of the largest social development movements in the world. As of March 31, 2025, over 170 million rural families had been brought under the SHG network across India, while 14.3 million SHGs had been linked to the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

Special Panel to Review Land Portal Irregularities

HYDERABAD, JULY 1
The Telangana Government has constituted a high-level Special Committee to investigate alleged irregularities in the Dharani and Bhu Bharati land record portals, Revenue Secretary D.S. Lokesh Kumar announced on Wednesday. The committee has been tasked with identifying those responsible, recommending strict legal and disciplinary action, and suggesting measures to prevent similar incidents in the future. Speaking after a review meeting chaired by Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy at the Secretariat, Lokesh Kumar said the ongoing forensic audit of the Dharani portal had revealed several serious concerns. According to the findings presented during the meeting, the portal's system architecture contained security vulnerabilities that were allegedly exploited by certain individuals to make unauthorized entries through specific modules. The Revenue Secretary said the Bhu Bharati portal, developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC),

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

KTR DARES REVANTH TO PUBLIC DEBATE

HYDERABAD, JULY 1
Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) strongly condemned Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's recent remarks describing Telangana as a bankrupt state. Speaking to the media at Telangana Bhavan on Wednesday, KT Rama Rao challenged the Chief Minister to an open public debate on the Congress government's administrative failures, the plight of farmers, the ongoing agrarian crisis, and the overall governance of the state. He said he was prepared to participate in a debate anywhere in Telangana, at any



time. "If Revanth Reddy has the courage, let him decide the venue, time, and subject of the debate. I will be there," KTR said. The BRS working president further declared that if he failed to expose the failures of the Congress government with facts and evidence, he would resign on the spot and permanently retire from politics. KTR also alleged that if

Telangana is facing financial distress, it is solely because of the corruption and loot by the Chief Minister, his family members, Ministers, and Congress leaders. The BRS working president said Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is suffering from a poverty of thought and has consistently been tarnishing Telangana's image. He remarked that no leader who truly cares for his state would publicly declare that it is bankrupt. Yet, Revanth Reddy repeatedly insults Telangana by calling it a bankrupt state on one occasion, an AIDS patient on another, and even a cancer patient, he said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

CEMENTING DREAMS WITH SUPERIOR STRENGTH.

**GERMAN TECHNOLOGY
ROBOTIC QUALITY CONTROL
TAMPER PROOF PACKING**

3 TIMES BETTER



Govt Seeks Clarity on USER NAMES

NEW DELHI, JULY 1:

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has issued a notice to Meta, seeking a detailed explanation within three days over WhatsApp's newly announced username feature, citing concerns over its potential misuse in cyber fraud, phishing and impersonation scams.

The ministry has also directed WhatsApp not to roll out the feature until consultations with the government are completed and its concerns are adequately addressed.

WhatsApp on Monday announced that users would soon be able to communicate using unique usernames instead of sharing their phone numbers, a move aimed at enhancing user privacy. The feature is expected to be rolled out gradually later this year.

According to the notice, the government fears that the username system could be exploited by fraudsters to impersonate individuals, government agencies, financial institutions and public authorities by creating deceptive usernames resembling genuine identities.

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has also raised concerns that the feature could undermine its SIM-binding directive, which requires messaging platforms to link user accounts to verified SIM cards to improve traceability and curb cybercrime. Officials said usernames could make it more difficult for law enforcement agencies to identify



offenders, particularly those operating with foreign numbers or fake identities.

The DoT further reiterated its directive requiring web-based versions of messaging platforms to log users out periodically and mandate re-authentication every six hours to strengthen security.

Responding to the government's concerns, Meta clarified that usernames would not replace phone numbers on WhatsApp. A phone number will remain mandatory for registration and use of the platform, while usernames will serve only as an additional privacy feature.

Meta also said it has built multiple safeguards into the feature, including reserving usernames for high-profile individuals, government entities and verified accounts to prevent impersonation. The company added that users would need to know the exact username to initiate contact, while systems are in place to detect abusive behaviour, limit unsolicited messages and identify suspicious accounts.

WhatsApp said the feature is not yet live and will be introduced in phases later this year, including in India.

GST @ 9: CJ CALLS FOR STRONGER DISPUTE RESOLUTION, TAXPAYER AWARENESS



HYDERABAD, JULY 1

GST Day 2026 was celebrated here on Wednesday, marking nine years of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, with speakers highlighting its role in transforming India's indirect tax system and calling for further reforms to strengthen taxpayer confidence.

Addressing the event as the chief guest, Chief Justice of Telangana High Court Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh, described GST as a landmark reform that has simplified indirect taxation through digitalisation, uniformity and cooperative federalism. While technology has modernised tax administration, it has also created fresh legal

challenges involving digital notices, Input Tax Credit (ITC) and appeal timelines, he noted. The Chief Justice suggested introducing amnesty schemes for time-barred appeals, an online dispute resolution mechanism through the GSTN portal and wider tax literacy programmes to reduce litigation and encourage voluntary compliance. He stressed that honest tax compliance is vital for building a transparent and self-reliant India.

Chief Commissioner of Central Tax & Customs, Hyderabad Zone, Arun Kumar, said monthly GST collections have more than doubled since the tax regime was introduced in 2017, while the taxpayer base has grown from around 60 lakh to over 1.65 crore. He

also highlighted Hyderabad CGST Zone's growth in revenue collections and taxpayer registrations.

Arun Kumar said faster refund processing, stronger coordination among GST agencies and the operationalisation of the GST Appellate Tribunal would help improve taxpayer services and speed up dispute resolution.

Padma Shri awardee and actor Dr K Brahmanandam, the guest of honour, urged citizens to fulfil their tax responsibilities, saying timely GST payment is a shared contribution to nation-building. The programme was attended by senior CBIC officials, Central and State GST officers, tax professionals, industry representatives and legal experts.

CM LOSING SLEEP OVER BJP's RISE: NRR

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao on Wednesday alleged that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was "frustrated and scared of losing power" following BJP national president Nitin Nabin's visit to Telangana.

Having chit chat with the media on the occasion of completing one year as state BJP chief, Rao said Revanth Reddy was rattled by BJP's allegations over the alleged "RR Tax", diversion of state funds to the "Delhi Darbar", and the Musi Riverfront Project. He asserted that the people would reject the Congress government just as they had voted out the previous BRS regime.

Quoting the BJP slogan, "Jitna Keechad Uchaaloge, Utna Kamal Khilega" (the more mud you sling, more the lotus will bloom), Rao thanked party leaders and workers for strengthening the organisation and expressed confidence that the BJP would form the next government in Telangana. There was a need to work hard relentlessly to help BJP to come to power in the next assembly elections, he told the party members.

CM REVANTH's WORDS REFLECT FEAR OF DEFEAT: HARISH RAO

Karimnagar, July 1: Former minister and BRS leader T Harish Rao on Wednesday claimed that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was "scared of losing power" and accused the Congress government of betraying farmers. Addressing a BRS workers' meeting in Karimnagar, Harish Rao alleged that the government had failed to implement its promises on farm loan waiver, Rythu Bandhu, power supply and compensation to farmers' families. He also demanded immediate utilisation of the Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project to provide irrigation water and protect crops. The BRS leader urged the party workers to remain vigilant during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, alleging there was a risk that the two governments might conspire to delete the opposition party votes here just as is happening in other states. He called upon booth-level workers to ensure every eligible voter completed the enrolment process.

Karimnagar MLA and former Minister Gangula Kamalakar, former Minister Koppula Eshwar, former MLAs Rasamayi Balakishan and Sunke Ravishankar, former ZP Chairperson Tula Uma along with numerous other local leaders and the party workers participated in the meeting.

Ready to resign if debt figures wrong: Jupally

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Minister for Tourism and culture, ExciseJupally Krishna Rao strongly criticised BRS working president KT Rama Rao for making unfounded accusations against the Congress government.

During a press briefing at the CLP media center in the Assembly on Wednesday, Jupally Krishna Rao, accompanied by MLAs Veerapalli Shankar and Rajesh Reddy, asserted that KT Rama Rao was disseminating misleading information by distorting the truth and alleging that ₹200 crore was allocated



for the Chief Minister's camp office.

He urged KT Rama Rao to stop making unfounded assertions and misleading the public.

"Over ₹8 lakh crore in debt was accumulated under the

BRS administration. If the figures I presented are proven incorrect, I will resign from my position as an MLA. I am willing to go to the BRS party office; if my calculations are wrong, I will submit my resignation to the Speaker. Are you willing to engage in a debate on this?" challenged Jupally Krishna Rao.

The Minister emphasised that the public will not be deceived by such misleading rhetoric. He reaffirmed his confidence that the Congress party will regain power in the upcoming Assembly elections in Telangana.

"MISSION K-100" TO STREAMLINE KHARIF PROCUREMENT

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

The Telangana Civil Supplies Department on Wednesday launched "Mission K-100", a 100-day action plan aimed at ensuring smooth procurement operations for the Kharif 2026-27 season by strengthening grain storage, logistics and financial management.

Commissioner of Civil Supplies M Stephen Raveendra, chaired a high-level coordination meeting with FCI general manager G.N. Raju here at Civil Supplies Bhavan, urging the Food Corporation of India to allocate additional storage space for quick evacuation of pending grain stocks and release long-pending finan-

cial dues. Mission K-100 focuses on five key areas - expediting Custom Milled Rice (CMR) delivery to FCI, phased paddy auctions to improve liquidity, recovery of pending central funds, modernization of Paddy Procurement Centres through mechanisation, and strengthening transportation with expanded vehicle fleets and a real-time Vehicle Location Tracking System (VLTS).

The action plan was formally rolled out through a video conference attended by the District Managers (DMs) and District Civil Supplies Officers (DCSOs), with the objective of completing critical preparatory work before the arrival of the new crop.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY UNDER SCANNER IN RAJENDRANAGAR

Hyderabad, July 1: Rajendranagar Traffic Police conducted a comprehensive safety inspection of private school transport under the directions of DCP Traffic-III Rahul Hegde. The inspection was carried out by CH. Raju, SHO Rajendranagar Traffic PS, along with a team of deputed Sub-Inspectors (SIs) and Assistant Sub-Inspectors (ASIs). The initiative aims to ensure the highest standards of safety for school children during their daily transit and to streamline traffic management around educational institutions. During the extensive drive, the

team verified the driving licenses of school bus drivers alongside essential vehicle documents, including Fitness Certificates (FC), Registration Certificates (RC), insurance, and pollution certificates. The team also inspected parking facilities, boarding and de-boarding points, reviewed the functioning of Road Safety Committees, and monitored traffic management by school staff during peak hours. School managements were instructed to immediately rectify deficiencies and strictly comply with transport safety norms.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

CM Proposes Intelligent Traffic Signal System

FROM PAGE 1

utilized for immediate solutions to the challenges facing in the urban areas. They also outlined their vision for "Next Generation Intelligent Infrastructure" and solutions based on "Physical Intelligence," which are essential for future generations.

Further, Kipman and Krishna Reddy

explained how physical intelligence—sensors and robotics—could help develop safe, efficient, and responsive urban transportation systems. The meeting highlighted the potential for creating "Cognitive Cities"—urban environments capable of tasks such as adjusting traffic signal systems based on real-time congestion, detecting and repairing water leaks in advance, managing power supply according to demand, and clearing paths for ambulances and fire tenders during emer-



gencies.

Both organizations highlighted emerging technologies to address the needs of rapidly growing cities by enhancing government operational efficiency, improving citizen services, and facilitating data-driven infrastructure planning.

On this occasion, Analog and MEIL signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the presence of the Chief Minister. The joint venture

will play an important role in strengthening mutual technical cooperation and fostering innovation-led infrastructure development. Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy and Jupally Krishna Rao, Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju, Advisor K Ramakrishna Rao, and B Ajith Reddy (CEO of Invest and Additional MD of Hyderabad Metro Rail) participated in the meeting.

Women's empowerment is...

FROM PAGE 1

banking system, collectively accessing credit exceeding ₹3.04 lakh crore. He said the achievement represented not merely financial inclusion but also the emergence of women's leadership, rural entrepreneurship and grassroots social transformation.

Highlighting Telangana's achievements, the Governor said APMAS had played a significant role in strengthening the State's women's Self-Help Groups by supporting more than six lakh SHGs, 23,000 federations and nearly 6.7 million women members. He also acknowledged the organisation's contribution to the establishment of Stree Nidhi, the community-owned financial institution that has become a vital source of affordable credit for rural women. According to the Governor, as of March 31, 2026, Stree Nidhi had extended loans exceeding ₹25,000 crore to nearly 3.2

million members, significantly improving access to institutional finance in rural areas.

The Governor further noted that APMAS is presently supporting 86 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), benefiting nearly 40,000 small and marginal farmers by strengthening agricultural value chains and enhancing their livelihoods.

Referring to Telangana's long-term vision of becoming a US\$3 trillion economy by 2047 under the "Telangana Rising-2047" initiative, Shiv Pratap Shukla stressed the need for coordinated efforts by governments, community institutions and civil society.

He called for greater emphasis on natural farming, water conservation, value addition in agriculture, climate-resilient technologies and strengthening Farmer Producer Organisations to achieve sustainable rural development.

RPF RETURNS LOST VALUABLES WORTH Rs.2.24 CR IN SIX MONTHS

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

The Railway Protection Force (RPF), Secunderabad Division, has recovered and returned lost passenger belongings worth more than Rs.2.24 crore during January - June 2026 under its flagship "Operation Amanat".

According to the RPF, valuables worth Rs.2,24,12,510 were restored to passengers in 658 cases during the six-month period. Since January 2024, the division has successfully resolved 2,747 cases, recovering property valued at over Rs.7.28 crore.

The recovered items included luggage, electronic gadgets, jewellery, cash and important personal documents. The operation relies on an integrated system of extensive CCTV surveillance, rapid tracing through reservation records and strict verification procedures before returning recovered property to owners. Senior Divisional Security Commissioner Alakunta Naveen Kumar said the initiative reflects the RPF's commitment to public service, noting that a forgotten bag often contains a person's hard-earned savings or essential documents.

Special Panel to Review Land Portal Irregularities

FROM PAGE 1

is based on a technology architecture similar to Dharani and could therefore be susceptible to comparable security flaws. The government also suspects that individuals involved in developing modules for the Dharani portal may have played a role in these irregularities.

To thoroughly examine the issue, the government has appointed a Special Committee comprising senior IAS and IPS officers, cybersecurity experts, and officials from the National Informatics Centre and the Registration & Stamps Department. The panel includes Medchal-Malkajigiri Collector Mikkilineni Manu Chowdary, Sangareddy Collector Prateek Jain, Joint Secretary (IT&C) Anudeep Durishetty, Telangana Cyber Security Bureau officer Harsha Vardhan, CMRO Project Director Apoorv Chauhan, ITDA Utnoor Project Officer Manda Makarand, Telangana CIB Cyber Crimes DSP A. Sampath, Registration & Stamps DIG M. Subhashini, and NIC Senior Director (IT) A. Srinivasa Subba Rao.

Acting on the directions of Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, the government has also instructed the National Informatics Centre to develop a completely new system architecture that meets the highest cybersecurity standards. The committee has been asked to submit its report within 15 days. Based on its findings, the government will initiate further action. Reiterating the government's commitment, Lokesh Kumar said there would be no compromise on the security, integrity, and transparency of Telangana's land records.

125-Day Job Guarantee...

FROM PAGE 1

The minimum daily wage has been fixed at Rs.300 across the country, while the national average wage has increased by over 10% from Rs.298.8 to Rs.327.4 per day. Several states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh, have received wage hikes ranging from 15% to 25%.

To ensure smooth implementation, the Centre has released an interim allocation of Rs.95,692.31 crore to states and Union Territories for employment generation, timely wage payments and execution of development works.

A national launch event will be held on July 2 at Mukkavaripalle village in Andhra Pradesh's Tirupati district. The programme will be attended by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, Union Ministers of State Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani and Kamlesh Paswan, among others. The event will include the distribution of Rural Employment Guarantee Cards, launch of the VB-G RAM G software platform, release of official publications, beneficiary interactions and inauguration of initiatives aimed at ensuring effective implementation of the new Act.

KTR DARES REVANTH TO PUBLIC DEBATE

FROM PAGE 1

The BRS leader said no other Chief Minister in the country speaks so derogatorily about the very state he represents.

Referring to Revanth Reddy's frequent visits to New Delhi, KT Rama Rao questioned why the Chief Minister had travelled to Delhi 72 times in just 30 months despite repeatedly claiming that Telangana receives no respect there.

He demanded that Revanth explain whom he was pleading

with during those visits and asserted that if the Chief Minister was genuinely committed to Telangana, he should remain in the state for the next two-and-a-half years and focus entirely on governance.

Rejecting the Chief Minister's claim that Telangana is bankrupt, KTR said the state had emerged as one of India's most prosperous under the leadership of K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR). Agricultural production, farmers' incomes, and irrigation had more than doubled during the BRS gov-

ernment, making Revanth Reddy's statements completely baseless, he said.

The BRS leader alleged that people across the country are not looking down upon Telangana but are instead rejecting Revanth Reddy because of his own reputation.

Countering allegations regarding state debt, KTR said the Union Government itself had informed Parliament, in response to a question raised by BJP MP Raghunandan Rao, that Telangana's outstanding debt stood at around

₹2.7 lakh crore. Despite this, Revanth Reddy continues to make contradictory claims by citing figures of ₹6 lakh crore, ₹7 lakh crore, and even ₹8 lakh crore. He accused the Chief Minister of deliberately misrepresenting the state's finances and interest payments to portray Telangana as bankrupt.

BRS MLAs Sabitha Indra Reddy, Talasani Srinivas Yadav and KP. Vivekananda and other leaders were also present in the press conference.

Journalists Submit Complaint to I&PR Commissioner Alleging Harassment

■ **Vindictive Actions by Medchal DPRO**

MEDCHAL, JULY 1

A group of journalists from Medchal–Malkajgiri district on Wednesday submitted a formal complaint to Information and Public Relations (I&PR) Commissioner Mukunda Reddy and Joint Director Jagan, seeking an inquiry into the alleged harassment and vindictive actions of Medchal District Public Relations Officer (DPRO) Swarnalatha.

In their complaint, the journalists alleged that the DPRO has been acting in a biased and arbitrary manner, particularly in the constitution of the District Accreditation Committee and the issuance of journalist accreditation cards. They stated that undue preference was given to a particular community and a single journalists' union while constituting the Accreditation Committee, ignoring fair representation. They further pointed out that



several newspapers had already published reports highlighting irregularities in the committee's formation and requested a thorough inquiry into the matter. The complainants also alleged that the DPRO has been deliberately targeting journalists during the accreditation process by creating unnecessary hurdles and behaving discourteously. They stated that despite newspapers fulfilling the eligibility criteria under Government Order (G.O.) No. 252 and

submitting applications through their authorized representatives, there has been an inordinate delay in issuing accreditation cards.

The journalists further alleged that even the accreditation cards already approved have not been distributed, causing serious inconvenience. They also claimed that bus pass approvals linked to accredited journalists are being withheld without justification as part of vindictive actions.

The complaint also stated that the DPRO lacks adequate professional knowledge in issuing official press releases, resulting in errors that create difficulties for journalists. They alleged that instead of addressing shortcomings pointed out by media persons, the officer has resorted to personal vendetta against those who questioned her functioning.

The journalists emphasized that Medchal–Malkajgiri, being one of the largest districts adjacent to Hyderabad, requires an efficient and competent DPRO to effectively publicize the State Government's welfare and development programmes. They urged the Commissioner to conduct a fair inquiry into the allegations and initiate appropriate action against the DPRO.

Journalists' union leaders including Merugu Chandramohan, Belide Ashok Gupta, Muthyam Mukesh Goud, Vasu Kumar, and Venugopal Reddy, among others, were present while submitting the complaint.

Grand Celebration of the 9th GST Day

Chief Justice Highlights GST's Role in Nation Building

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

The 9th GST Day 2026 was celebrated with great enthusiasm in Hyderabad today, marking nine years since the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST)—one of India's most significant indirect tax reforms.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court, Justice Aparesk Kumar Singh, attended the event as the Chief Guest. Addressing the gathering, he described GST, introduced on July 1, 2017, as a landmark reform that transformed India's indirect taxation system. He said that through digitalization, uniformity, and the spirit of cooperative federalism, GST has simplified the country's indirect tax structure, making tax administration more transparent, efficient, and taxpayer-friendly.

The Chief Justice observed that while technology-driven compliance has modernized tax administration, it has

also created new legal and procedural challenges related to digital notices, Input Tax Credit (ITC), and appeal timelines. Stressing the need for continuous awareness and capacity-building initiatives, he urged taxpayers, legal professionals, and tax officials to remain well-prepared to adapt to the evolving GST framework.

To further strengthen the GST ecosystem, Justice Singh suggested several reforms, including:

An amnesty scheme for time-barred appeals.

An online dispute resolution mechanism through the GSTN portal.

Expanded tax literacy and awareness programs.

He said these measures would help reduce litigation and encourage voluntary tax compliance. He emphasized that taxpayers, tax professionals, and tax administrators must work together to build a stronger GST framework, adding that honest tax compliance is essential for creating a strong, transparent, and self-reliant India.

Speaking on the occasion, Arun Kumar, Chief Commissioner of Central Tax & Customs, Hyderabad Zone, said GST has transformed India's indirect tax system over the past nine years by strengthening tax compliance, promoting digital governance, and improving ease of doing business.

Highlighting GST's achievements, he noted that:

Monthly GST collections have more than doubled since the tax was introduced in 2017. The number of registered taxpayers has increased from around 6 million (60 lakh) to over 16.5 million (1.65 crore). He also praised the Hyderabad CGST Zone for its outstanding performance, citing significant growth in tax collections and taxpayer registrations. Arun Kumar further highlighted several taxpayer-centric initiatives, including:

Faster processing of tax refunds
Better coordination among Central GST, State GST, and GST Intelligence

agencies. The establishment of the GST Appellate Tribunal, which he welcomed as an important step toward faster resolution of tax disputes.

He emphasized the importance of taxpayer awareness and infrastructure development and called for continued cooperation among taxpayers, businesses, tax professionals, and tax authorities to build a transparent, efficient, and inclusive tax system that supports India's economic growth.

Padma Shri awardee and renowned actor Dr. K. Brahmanandam attended the event as the Guest of Honour. He said that he has consistently paid GST without delay or default and emphasized that paying taxes honestly is a shared responsibility that contributes to nation-building. The event was attended by senior officials of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), officers from the Central GST and State GST departments, tax professionals, representatives from trade and industry, legal experts, and other stakeholders.

GITAM Hyderabad Graduation Ceremony on Aug 1

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, is all set to celebrate its 17th Graduation Ceremony on Saturday, August 1, 2026, marking a significant milestone in the academic journey of its graduating students. The announcement was made by Dr. Gunasekaran D., Registrar, GITAM, through an official press release issued on Wednesday. Students who have successfully completed their Undergraduate (UG), Postgraduate (PG), and Ph.D. programmes during the 2025–26 academic year are eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony. The event will bring together graduates from a wide range of disciplines, including Engineering, Management, Science, Pharmacy, Humanities,

and Architecture, to celebrate their academic accomplishments. Eligible graduates are requested to submit their applications to participate in the Graduation Ceremony between July 3 and July 17, 2026. For registration and detailed guidelines regarding the graduation ceremony, candidates are advised to visit the official GITAM website www.gitam.edu.

EASTERN RAILWAY

Open Tender Notice No.: 28-SDSTE-ASN-2026-27, dated 30.06.2026. Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, Eastern Railway, Asansol Division, Station Road, Asansol, Pin-713301 invites e-Tender for the following work. **Name of Work/Location:** "Asansol Division - Interlocking of Level Crossing Gates having TVU more than 10000 in Andals-Bara Bani, Andals/LC-Bakhtarnagar, Madhupur-Giridih Section in Asansol Division." **Tender Value:** Rs. 14,78,98,341.23. **Earnest Money:** Rs. 29,58,000/-. **Completion period of the work:** 18 months from the date of issue of LOA. **Date and time of Closing of the tender:** 22.07.2026 at 15.00 hrs. **Website particulars:** <http://www.ireps.gov.in/>, ASN-158/2026-27

Tender Notices are also available at Website www.e.r.in.indianrailways.gov.in/www.ireps.gov.in
Follow us at: [@EasternRailway](https://twitter.com/EasternRailway)
[@easternrailwayheadquarter](https://facebook.com/easternrailwayheadquarter)

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE 3rd SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE, CITY CIVIL COURT, AT: SECUNDERABAD
S.O.P. No. 09 of 2026

Between: Venaz Singh W/o Brij Pal Singh, D/o Noshir Gustasp Jainawala, Aged about 65 years Occ: Household, R/o B-24, 1st Floor, Sector-48, Gautham Buddha Nagar, Noida, U.P.-201301. ...Petitioner And
1. The Head Post Office, Krishna complex, Rashtrapati Road, Kalasiguda, Secunderabad-500003.
Rep. by Its Sr. Post Master.
2. All Concerned Respondents

To All concerned (R2)

NOTICE

The petitioner herein had filed the above petition for Grant of Succession Certificate of late Nawsha Noshir Jainawala against all concerned (R2). The Hon'ble Court was pleased to order for substitute service for any objections from anybody and posted the matter to 20-07-2026.
Hence, if any one got any objections are requested to appear before the above said Hon'ble Court at 10:30 a.m. on the said date either personally or through your authorized counsel, for submitting your claim or otherwise the matter will be adjudicated as per law.
Hence, this notice.
(BY ORDER OF THE COURT)

M.T.SRINIVAS KUMAR
Y.MEHAR SREE
B.GAJANAND, ADVOCATES
Upparally, Hyderabad, 502474/7463

COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Bid No. GEM/2026/B/7719390 Dated: 28-06-2026. Works tenders through "E" Tendering system for and on behalf of the president of India are invited for the works as detailed below: **Name of work:** Custom Bid for Service- Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for Parcel Management System equipment ie Thin Client, Electronic Weighing Machine with its yearly calibration, PW Bill Printer, Report Print. **Estimated Value:** ₹12,56,671/- **Earnest Money:** ₹25,200/- **Bid End Date & time:** At 16.00 hrs. & opening at 16.30 hrs. on 21-07-2026. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available in the website www.GeM.gov.in

DRM (C), Alipurduar Jn.
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

ENGINEERING WORKS

Tender No. DY-CE-C-APDJ-Survey2026-1; Dated: 29-06-2026. Open tender in sealed cover is invited through IREPS website for the following works from the reputed contractors/ Firms. **Name of work:** Conducting topographical survey, fixing of alignment on ground, preparation of L-sections, yard ESPs, preparation of proposals for land acquisition, processing for approval of forest diversion, tree cutting, wildlife conservation plan etc and ancillary works in connection with Chalsa-Naxal (19.85 Km) New line. **Tender Value:** ₹1,58,57,008.92; **Earnest Money:** ₹3,17,200.00; E-tender will be closed at 12:00 hrs. on 20-07-2026. For details please visit www.ireps.gov.in

Dy.CE (Con) / Alipurduar Jn.
Northeast Frontier Railway
(Construction Organisation)
"Serving Customers with a smile"

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Track Machine Unit / Royapuram / Chennai
Track machine unit / Royapuram / Chennai E-Tender Notice No. TMC-RPM-04 of 2026 & TMC-RPM-05 of 2026 Dt 30.06.2026 Deputy Chief Engineer / Track Machines / Royapuram / Chennai for and on behalf of the President of India invites ONLINE tenders for the following works as per tender notice and Complete details are given in our e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in

Tender No. TMC-RPM-2026-1-PCCM-T-28
(1) Name of work : Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for supply of spares and services for Colmar Make PCCM for Two Financial years 2026-27, 2027-28
Appx. value of the work (Rs. in Lakhs) : 670/-
Amount of EMD (in Rs.) : 485000/-
Completion period of work : 24 months.
Tender No. TMC-RPM-2025-4-PCCM-T-28
(2) Name of work : Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for supply of spares and services for Ameca Make PCCM for Two Financial years 2026-27, 2027-28
Appx. value of the work (Rs. in Lakhs) : 340/-
Amount of EMD (in Rs.) : 320400/-
Completion period of work : 24 months.
SI.No. 01 Tender Closing Date and Time : 24.07.2026 at 15.00 hrs.
SI.No. 02 Tender Closing Date and Time : 24.07.2026 at 15.00 hrs.
Note : It is the responsibility of the tenderer to check any Corrigendum issued for any correction or modifications uploaded subsequently in website, the same shall be taken into account while submitting Tender.
Deputy Chief Engineer, Track Machine/ Royapuram, For and on behalf of the President of India.

Good News for Outsourcing and Contract Employees

■ **Salaries Credited on the First of the Month**

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has fulfilled his promise regarding the timely payment of salaries to outsourcing and contract employees. The Telangana government has taken steps to ensure that employees working on an outsourcing or contract basis in government departments, corporations, societies, universities,

and other government-affiliated institutions receive their salaries on the first day of every month.

Following the Chief Minister's instructions, the Finance Department released the salaries on Wednesday.

Recognizing that delays in salary payments were causing hardships for employees, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy treated the issue as a priority. He recently directed officials to ensure that, along with regular employees, contract workers, outsourcing staff, and hon-

orarium-based employees receive their salaries without delay.

As part of implementing these directions, the Finance Department recently issued a circular to all departments and divisions.

The circular provides clear guidelines to prevent delays in the submission, verification, audit, and authorization of salary bills.

Departments have been instructed to submit salary and remuneration bills to the Treasury, Pay and Accounts, and Accounts De-

partments by the 25th of every month. The verification, audit, and authorization process must be completed by the last working day of the month.

On Wednesday, the Chief Minister reviewed the implementation of these orders with Finance Department officials.

Officials informed the Chief Minister that salaries had been credited on Wednesday for employees of all departments whose salary bills had been received for this month.

Telangana Higher Education's Landmark Visit to Germany, Paves Way for Academic Collaboration

Dr Srinivas Vooradi

HYDERABAD

A high-level delegation from the Higher Education Department of the Government of Telangana has successfully concluded half of the week-long visit to Germany, marking a significant step towards the internationalization of higher education in the State. The delegation led by Secretary of Education Dr. Yogita Rana visited three premier German universities from June 29 to July 1, 2026 to explore avenues for robust academic and research collaborations. The delegation comprised Vice-Chancellors of five major State universities -Osmania University, Kakatiya University, Mahatma Gandhi University, Palamuru University, and Satavahana University along with senior officers from the Higher Education Department, faculty members from universities, representatives from government degree and polytechnic colleges and Dr Soundarya Joseph Project Officer of RUSA.



A Schedule of Engagement and Exploration

The delegation's itinerary was designed for deep immersion into the German academic ecosystem. The visit commenced on June 29 at RWTH Aachen University, a leading technical university. Subsequent engagements were held on June 30 at Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences followed by a visit to the University of Göttingen on July 1. At each institution, the delegation toured state-of-the-art laboratories and centers of excellence, gaining first-hand insight into cutting-edge research, academic programs, teaching methodologies, and the collaborative spirit that defines German

higher education.

Forging Strong Academic Ties

The discussions focused on establishing multifaceted collaborations, including the setting up of dual-degree courses, student and faculty exchange programs, and specialized short-term courses. A key outcome of the visit was the exchange of Letters of Intent with the State universities represented in the delegation. Significantly, RWTH Aachen University has expressed a firm intent to sign a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Osmania University signalling a potential flagship partnership.

Commitment to Internationalization

The leadership of the Higher Education Department reiterated the Telangana government's strong commitment to internationalization. They expressed keenness to establish long-term, sustainable collaborations with the German institutions and pledged to take all necessary steps to realize this vision, which aligns with the State's goal of becoming a premier education hub. "We are incredibly optimistic about the positive outcomes of this visit. We believe that in a very short time, students from Telangana's higher education institutions will gain unparalleled opportunities for global learning and research," stated Dr Yogita Rana. This landmark visit is expected to significantly enhance the quality of higher education in Telangana by providing students and faculty with access to world-class academic resources and international exposure. The successful exchange of intents and the prospect of future MoUs mark the beginning of a new chapter in Indo-German academic relations at the State level.

STRONG EPOXY FOR ANY SEASON • ANY REASON

TOLL-FREE NUMBER: 040 45474612

ENQUIRE NOW

No Compromise on Quality of Telangana Public Schools

■ **Speed Up Construction Works: Education Commission**

■ **Commission Members Direct Completion of TPS Projects Within Three Months**

VANGOOR/POLKAMPALLY, JULY 1

The Telangana Government has set a target of completing the construction of its prestigious Telangana Public Schools (TPS) within the stipulated timeframe to make them available for students at the earliest.

As part of this effort, Telangana State Education Commission members Dr. Charakonda Venkatesh and Joshna Shiva Reddy inspected the ongoing construction works at the TPS campuses in Vangoor and Polkampally in Nagarkurnool district. They instructed officials to complete the projects within the next three months without compromising on quality.

The Commission members reviewed the progress of school buildings, classrooms, laboratories, administrative blocks, playgrounds, drinking water facilities, sanitation infrastructure, internal roads, and compound walls. They directed officials to ensure that every aspect of the construction adheres to government quality standards and creates an ideal learning environment for future generations.

Later, they held a review meeting with members of the School Management Committees (SMCs), engineering officials, architects, and contractors to assess the progress of the works. They instructed the teams to prepare clear work divisions, assign responsibilities, and implement daily action plans to accelerate construction. The Commission stressed that there should be no compromise on quality and that the government-prescribed deadline must be met under all circumstances.

During the review, SMC members informed the Commission that slab works for Blocks A, B, C, and D at the Polkampally TPS had been completed.



ed. At the Vangoor TPS, the Commission directed officials to further expedite the ongoing construction while maintaining strict quality standards through continuous monitoring.

SMC members assured the Commission of full cooperation and said they would coordinate locally to ensure the timely completion of the projects. The Commission also observed that delays

in certain works were due to pending decisions at the architectural level and instructed architects, engineers, and SMC members to improve coordination with the concerned authorities to speed up construction.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Charakonda Venkatesh said Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy had launched the Telangana Public Schools initiative with the vision of providing quality education to every student. He said Telangana is emerging as a state that is modernising government education on an unprecedented scale, with the goal of providing corporate-level educational facilities in government schools and creating world-class opportunities for rural students.

Dr. Venkatesh said he would revisit the schools next week to review the progress once again. He emphasized the need to assign clear responsibilities to every stakeholder and complete the works within the stipulated timeline without compromising on quality.

Officials from various departments, Engineer Anand, Architect Bharat, School Management Committee members, Vangoor and Polkampally Sarpanches Purugula Yadaiah and Ankuri Naramma, along with local leaders, participated in the inspection.



Revanth Reddy in frustration of losing power: NRR

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Telangana BJP President N Ramchander Rao today strongly condemned Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's remarks on the visit of our party's National BJP President Nitin Nabin to the state.

In a chat with media on the occasion of his successful completion of one year as BJP State Party President tenure, Rao said "The remarks on Nitin Nabin's visit to Telangana as a political arrogance of CM Revanth Reddy who is in fear and frustration of losing his power in coming assembly elections.

He said CM Revanth Reddy is so frustrated when our party's national president Nitin Nabin spoke on facts on ex-

tracting revenue through "RR Tax" and diverting people's hard earned money to "Delhi Darbar" and apprehension of misusing of funds of Musi project in the name of Musi River-front project.

He said Nitin Nabin's call for a "Congress-Mukt" Telangana also severely hurt to Congress party and its leaders. He further stated that despite being repeatedly rejected by the Indian voter, Congress and its leaders continue to cling to arrogance.

BJP state chief asserted that the people of Telangana would never accept such language as used by Revanth Reddy. Just as the people threw out the arrogant farmhouse dynasty of former CM KCR, the same fate

awaits for CM Revanth Reddy and the Congress government in coming days ahead.

Taking a dig at Congress onparty he reminded Congress party saying that "Jitna Keechad Uchaaloge, Utna Kamal Khilega (the more mud you sling, the more the lotus will bloom). Rao thanked all party leaders including party MPs, MLAs, MLCs, party Morchas leaders and workers who supported him in strengthening the party and said there was a need to work hard relentlessly to help BJP to come to power in next assembly elections. State party chief official spokesperson and Media in-charge on N V Subhash and other leaders were also present on the occasion.

Warangal's new Police Commissioner Swetha assumes charge, prioritises law and order



Dr Srinivas Vooradi

WARANGAL, JULY 1

N. Swetha Reddy, who assumed charge as the Police Commissioner on Wednesday, asserted that maintaining law and order across the Commissionerate would be her foremost priority. She appealed for public cooperation in ensuring a safe and peaceful environment. Upon her arrival at the Warangal Police Commissionerate, the Commissioner was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour by the armed police. She formally took over charge from outgoing Commissioner Sunpreet Singh at the Commissioner's office. Senior police officers, including Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs), Assistant Commissioners of Police (ACPs), Inspectors, and other personnel, welcomed the new Commissioner. They greeted her by presenting saplings and notebooks. Addressing the officers, Ms. Swetha Reddy said the police force would work in close coordination to maintain public order, curb crime, enhance public safety, and deliver efficient policing services. She emphasised that the Commissionerate would focus on strengthening public trust through professional, responsive, and effective policing.

Curiosity about Unidentified Flying Objects - UFO

(On the occasion of "World UFO Day" on 02 July)

The term UFO, first coined in the 1950s by Edward J. Ruppelt of US, is used to refer to any object or phenomena that has not been previously observed in an area. Roswell incident of 02 July 1947, when a mysterious object reportedly crashed near Roswell, New Mexico and hence the "World UFO Day" has been celebrated annually on 02 July. The full form of UFO is "Unidentified Flying Object", received national and international public attention during 1950s by means of flying saucers. The UFOs are a constant subject of conspiracy theories around the world. This day is all about raising awareness of UFOs phenomena, encouraging people to learn more about sightings, encourage scientific inquiry in youth, promote open minded discussions about unexplained aerial events, space exploration, and the possibility of life beyond Earth.

World UFO Day Events:

Since it's inception, World UFO Day has grown into an international event, with celebrations ranging from sky-watching sessions to educational programs, all aimed at inspiring curiosity and critical thinking. This day is celebrated in various ways such as hosting a sky-watching session, appropriate documentary screening by ufologists and curious people, setting up creative activities, organise debates, and the relevant science sessions can be organised. The UFO and aliens related films like E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, Independence Day, The Day the Earth Stood Still and Men in Black can be specially screened to suitable public on this day.

All around the globe, unusual lights in the sky or strange occurrences keep humans always curious about otherworldly beings. Movies and television series keep our imaginations alive. It's no surprise conspiracy theories are also prominent when it comes to UFOs. World UFO Day recognises our curiosity about life from another dimension.

- Prof : Burra Madhusudhan Reddy
9949700037.

Nalgonda Railway Station Being Redeveloped

■ **under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme**

■ **Works nearing completion to provide comfort and convenience to Rail Users**

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Indian Railways is undertaking a comprehensive transformation through the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS), which envisions the redevelopment of stations across the nation to provide world-class facilities to passengers. In Telangana, 40 Railway Stations are being redeveloped at an estimated cost of over ₹2,000 crores. The initiative gained significant momentum when the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, laid the foundation stone for station redevelopment projects in the state during August 2023 and February 2024.

Nalgonda Railway Station, under Secunderabad Division of South Central Railway, is being redeveloped at a cost of ₹17.01 crore. The station caters to nearly 3,000 passengers daily and handles

about 44 trains per day, including DEMU/MEMU services. It serves as a vital commuting hub for passengers travelling towards Hyderabad city, particularly to Secunderabad, Kacheguda, and Lingampalli, for employment and business purposes.

Nalgonda Railway Station is classified as a Non Suburban Grade 4 station located in the southern part of Telangana. It falls under the Secunderabad Division of South Central Railway and is situated on the Nadikudi – Bibi Nagar section. The station plays a crucial role in connecting passengers from the region to Hyderabad city and other surrounding areas, thereby contributing significantly to regional mobility and economic activity.

The redevelopment works proposed under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme at Nalgonda station include construction of a 12 metre wide Foot Over Bridge, provision of additional cover over platforms measuring 3,309 sqm, development of circulating area with landscaping, platform surfacing over 9,657 sqm, and interior renovation of the concourse,



VIP lounge, waiting halls, and toilets. The plan also encompasses installation of Divyangjan friendly facilities, new signages, modern furniture, and facade improvement to enhance passenger convenience and station aesthetics. Several works have already been completed, including cover over platforms, installation of lifts, platform surfacing, approach road development, parking facilities, circulating area improvement, and renovation of waiting halls. The on-going

works, such as the Foot Over Bridge, facade improvement, and Divyangjan facilities, are progressing expeditiously. This redevelopment substantially improves passenger amenities, accessibility, and overall travel experience. This initiative reflects the commitment of Indian Railways to modernize infrastructure and deliver world class services to its passengers, thereby transforming railway stations into vibrant centres of convenience and connectivity.



“VAIDYO NARAYANO HARI.”

■ **MP Eatala Rajender Extends Doctors' Day Greetings**

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

On the occasion of Doctors' Day, Malkajigiri Member of Parliament Eatala Rajender participated in the celebrations held at Lakshmi Hospital, Vanasthalipuram. The event was also attended by BJP leaders Srinivas Reddy, Rangareddy, Lachhi Reddy, Koppula Narasimha Reddy, Rana Pratap, and doctors Dr. Srikanth, Dr. Shwetha, Dr. Vamsi, and Dr. Srujana.

During the event: Awards were presented to several individuals. A number of doctors were felicitated for their services.

A new Rehabilitation Ward at the hospital was inaugurated. Speaking on the occasion, Eatala Rajender said:

"Doctors are often compared to God. That is why we say 'Vaidyo Narayano Hari' (The physician is akin to Lord Narayana).

Doctors risk their own lives to save the lives of others. They serve every patient with patience and dedication, no matter how many come to them. They are truly selfless.

When COVID-19 struck, even doctors experienced fear for the first time. When the first COVID patient was admitted at Mahendra Hills, people living nearby were frightened. We immediately shifted the patient to Gandhi Hospital.

At a time when everyone was

afraid to provide treatment, I personally visited the hospital as the head of the department to encourage the medical staff. I assured them that the government stood with them and told them that courage was the best medicine against fear.

We treated the pandemic like a war, arranging PPE kits, sanitizers, medicines, and other essential supplies.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed us that no matter how powerful humans believe they are, nature can humble everyone. I once again salute all the doctors, healthcare workers, and sanitation staff who risked their lives to serve the people during that difficult period. On the occasion of Doctors' Day, I extend my heartfelt greetings to all doctors."

Government Will Support Fisheries Graduates, Says Minister Vakiti Srihari

■ **Plans Underway to Create Employment Opportunities in Fisheries Sector; Efforts on to Fill Vacancies**

MAHABOOBANAGAR, JULY 1

Telangana Fisheries Minister Vakiti Srihari has assured students who have completed the Bachelor of Fisheries Science (BFS) course that the government will support them and work towards creating meaningful opportunities in the fisheries sector.

A delegation of BFS students met the minister at the State Secretariat on Wednesday and submitted representations regarding various issues. The minister immediately called Fisheries Managing Director Nikhila to discuss their concerns. Speaking on the occasion, Vakiti Srihari directed officials to prepare a comprehensive report on how BFS graduates can be effectively engaged in the fisheries industry after completing their studies.

He said Telangana has so far produced



More than 500 BFS graduates, Over 200 MFSc graduates, and More than 50 PhD holders in Fisheries. In addition, over 60 students from Telangana have completed fisheries education at Pebbair Fisheries College and other fisheries institutions across the country.

Every year, around 70 students graduate from fisheries courses.

The minister said it would not be possible to provide government jobs to every graduate in the Fisheries Department. Instead, the government is formulating plans to enable these graduates to become entrepreneurs and create employment opportunities for others through fish production and allied activities.

He noted that the government has already undertaken major reforms in the Sports, Dairy Development, Animal Husbandry, and Youth Services departments and is now introducing similar reforms in the Fisheries Department.

Highlighting the state's requirements, Vakiti Srihari said Telangana needs around 85 crore fish seed (fingerlings) annually for free distribution in reservoirs and tanks. However, only

15 crore are currently produced within the state, forcing the government to procure the remaining 70 crore from neighbouring states.

He said fisheries graduates should be encouraged to increase local fish seed production so that government expenditure benefits Telangana's own youth while making the state self-reliant. The minister stressed that Telangana should not have to depend on other states for fish seed and that both production and supply should be developed within the state.

He said Telangana currently produces around five lakh metric tonnes of fish annually and expressed confidence that production could increase further with proper support and incentives.

With the government planning to include fish curry in the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, the minister directed officials to prepare a report on how fisheries graduates can contribute to the implementation of the programme.

During the meeting, Fisheries Managing Director Nikhila informed the minister about vacancies in both the regular and outsourcing wings of the Fisheries Department. The minister instructed officials to submit detailed information on the vacant posts so that steps could be taken to fill them.

School Bus Safety Under Scanner in Rajendranagar

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Rajendranagar Traffic Police conducted a comprehensive safety inspection of private school transport under the directions of DCP Traffic-III Rahul Hegde.

The inspection was carried out by CH. Raju, SHO Rajendranagar Traffic PS, along with a team of deputed Sub-Inspectors (SIs) and Assistant Sub-Inspectors (ASIs). The initiative aims to ensure the highest standards of safety for school children during their daily transit and to streamline traffic management around educational institutions. During the extensive drive, the team verified the driving licenses of school bus drivers alongside essential vehicle documents, including Fitness Certificates (FC), Registration Certificates (RC), insurance, and pollution certificates.

The team also inspected parking facilities, boarding and debarking points, reviewed the functioning of Road Safety Committees, and monitored traffic management by school staff during peak hours. School managements were instructed to immediately rectify deficiencies and strictly comply with transport safety norms.



YSRCP Will Stand by Sanitation Workers Removed from Kurnool GGH

Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy

TADEPALLY, JULY 1

Sanitation workers who had been serving as contract employees for several years at the Kurnool Government General Hospital (GGH) met former Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) President Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy at the party's central office in Tadepalli on Wednesday. They submitted a representation, stating that they had been removed from their jobs without prior notice after a new contractor took over, leaving their families in severe financial distress. The workers said that after the coalition government awarded the hospital's sanitation contract

to Padmavathi Hospitality Agency, they were abruptly dismissed despite having worked at the hospital for many years. As a result, they said they had lost their livelihoods and appealed to Y.S. Jagan to help them secure justice. After listening to their grievances, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy assured the workers that the YSR Congress Party would stand by them. He said the party would provide the necessary legal assistance through its legal cell to help protect their jobs and fight for their rights. He also affirmed that the party would extend all possible support to safeguard the interests of the affected sanitation workers.



Complete power projects on schedule, says Ap Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Minister for Energy Gottipati Ravi Kumar has directed officials to intensify efforts to eliminate power interruptions and low-voltage issues across the State, while ensuring that all ongoing power infrastructure projects are completed within the stipulated timelines. Chairing a review meeting with senior officials of the Energy Department at the State Secretariat on Wednesday, the Minister assessed the status of power supply, progress of transmission projects, thermal power generation, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) projects, and the State's long-term power requirements. The Minister instructed officials to hold regular meetings with contractors executing APTRANS-CO projects and ensure that there are no delays in project implementation. He said officials must take responsibility for completing the works within the prescribed deadlines and coordinate closely with District Collectors to resolve field-level issues without delay. Officials informed the Minister that the performance of thermal power stations had

improved significantly. They said the Plant Load Factor (PLF) had crossed 80% during the January to June 2026 period. The Minister noted that the PLF had remained between 45% and 50% during the previous YSRCP government's tenure. Mr. Ravi Kumar directed officials to maintain adequate stocks of quality coal to support at least 15 days of uninterrupted thermal power generation at all times. Referring to the Chief Minister's directions, the Minister said APGENCO should be further strengthened to enhance the State's own power generation capacity, thereby reducing dependence on power purchases from external sources. He also asked officials to prepare a comprehensive action plan for the development and management of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) in anticipation of the State's growing electricity demand. Emphasising the importance of consumer-centric governance, the Minister said the Energy Department should work towards improving the quality of services and enhancing public satisfaction with the power sector.

Development in Harmony with Nature is Sustainable

AMARAVATI, JULY 1:

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Forests and Environment Pawan Kalyan on Wednesday virtually inaugurated 18 newly developed urban forests, eco-parks, and community-based eco-tourism projects from the Mangalagiri Camp Office, dedicating them to the people of the state. State Ministers Anam Ramanarayana Reddy, Anagani Satya Prasad, and Savita also participated virtually in the programme. Addressing the event, Pawan Kalyan said, "A nation that grows in harmony with nature will endure forever. Development achieved alongside nature is the only sustainable development." He added that the state's true legacy should not be limited to monuments built by people but should also include the natural environment preserved for future generations. He said that with cities and towns expanding rapidly, the urban forests would function as the 'green lungs' of urban areas by helping maintain ecological balance.

The project has been implemented at a cost of ₹36 crore, funded through the Central Government's Nagar Van Yojana along with local resources. Each urban forest has been

Andhra Pradesh Launches 18 Urban Forests
Urban forests to serve as 'green lungs' amid expanding concrete cities
18 urban forests developed at a cost of Rs36 crore
Projects blend biodiversity conservation with traditional heritage
Parks offer recreation, wellness, and eco-tourism facilities
Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan virtually inaugurates 18 urban forests across the state



developed over approximately 50 hectares at an average cost of ₹2 crore. Special Red Sanders Conservation Parks have been established at Koduru, Kailasagiri, and Madanapalle. In addition, Nakshatra Vanams and Rashi Vanams, inspired by India's traditional knowledge and cultural heritage, have been created to promote biodiversity conservation. Pawan Kalyan said the parks are designed not only to increase green cover but also to promote physical and mental well-being.

Facilities include:

- Bird habitats
- Boating and kayaking
- Trekking trails
- Yoga centres

- Open gyms
 - Other recreational attractions
 - "Let's Protect Our Green Heritage"
- Calling upon the public to preserve the new facilities, Pawan Kalyan said that as cities increasingly become concrete landscapes, these urban forests will provide people with much-needed peace and a closer connection with nature. He described the parks as a green legacy for future generations, urging citizens to protect them and contribute towards building a greener and cleaner Andhra Pradesh.

Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy Praises the Initiative

Minister for Endowments Anam Ramanarayana Reddy said he had personally visited the urban forest in the Nellore Rural Assembly constituency and found it to be an excellent recreational destination for families, offering greenery, tranquility, and modern amenities. He suggested integrating the nearby hill and the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple with the urban forest by developing a trekking route, which, he said, would provide residents with a unique blend of spiritual and adventure tourism. The event was attended by MLAs Kotla Jaya Surya Prakash Reddy, Gouthu Sirisha, Dr. B.V. Jayanageswara Reddy, Dr. Parthasaradhi, and Mohammed Shahjahan Basha, along with Forest and Environment Department Principal Secretary Kantilal Dande, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests P.V. Chalapathi Rao, Forest Advisor Mallikharjuna Rao, Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) N. Nageswara Rao, IT Advisor P. Nageswara Rao, DCF A. Srinivasulu, and other senior officials.

TVK MLA Claims 10 MLAs, Minister May Join DMK

Speaking exclusively to India Today, Elaiyaraja said the accused, Thirunavukkarasu, claimed that several legislators had already agreed to cross over and repeatedly tried to persuade him to join the alleged plan.



Amid allegations of horse-trading that have thrown Tamil Nadu's political circles into a dither, TVK MLA N Elaiyaraja has claimed he was offered Rs 30-35 crore to switch sides, with the accused allegedly telling him that 10 ruling party MLAs and a sitting minister had already agreed to join the DMK.

Speaking exclusively to India Today, Elaiyaraja said the accused, Thirunavukkarasu, claimed that several legislators had already agreed to cross over and repeatedly tried to persuade him to join the alleged plan.

"The accused Thirunavukkarasu claimed he has already convinced 10 TVK MLAs and one minister to side with the DMK. He told me he has even convinced a sitting minister and offered me Rs 30-35 crore in cash. He said this was a

huge offer for me and tried convincing me." The MLA said he outright rejected the alleged offer and remained committed to Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay. "I told him that had I known this was the reason he was calling me, I wouldn't have picked up the phone itself," he told India Today.

Reiterating his loyalty to the ruling party, Ilayaraja said he had no intention of betraying the mandate given to him by the people.

"I want to be loyal to my leader Vijay. I want to make a name for myself and do good to people by the time I leave this world. Something sounds fishy. He claimed 10 MLAs and a minister had agreed." The fresh claim comes hours after Tamil Nadu Police arrested Thirunavukkarasu, Naresh and Thiagarajan in connection with the alleged bid to induce TVK

legislators. Police have also named former DMK minister V. Senthil Balaji and his brother Ashok Kumar in the FIR, alleging links between the accused and the alleged conspiracy. The DMK has denied the allegations.

According to Elaiyaraja's original complaint, Thirunavukkarasu allegedly contacted him claiming to represent a political consultancy and sought to influence his vote on a proposed assembly resolution concerning the Speaker. The MLA alleged he was offered Rs 30-35 crore and warned of consequences if he refused. The alleged conversation led to a police complaint and the subsequent arrests.

The controversy has since snowballed into a full-blown political slugfest, with the ruling TVK accusing the DMK of attempting to destabilise the Vijay government through horse-trading. In response, the DMK has filed a complaint before the Governor and the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC), seeking an FIR against Chief Minister Vijay over separate allegations that he attempted to induce two DMK MLAs to resign.

Andhra Dy CM Pawan Kalyan warns legal action against misuse of social media

AMARAVATI, JULY 1

Issuing a stern warning to those misusing social media, Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Wednesday announced a special cell in his office to receive complaints from public.

He said that complaints can be submitted with digital evidence such as screenshots, links, and videos. "We will examine every genuine complaint, forward it to the concerned officials, and ensure that legal action is taken," the Deputy Chief Minister said in a video. He urged citizens to identify those who repeatedly misuse social media through fake accounts and to provide their details to the government. "We will take strict action against those involved in such offences under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), the Information Technology Act 2000, and other relevant laws," he said. The Jana Sena leader added that if necessary, the state government will enact new legislation to curb misuse of social media. He, however, assured that the state government will fully uphold the freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution.



Rail Connectivity Boost for Narsapuram

Arunachalam Train Made Regular, Bengaluru Service Announced
Centre Committed to Developing Narsapuram Through Railway Projects: Union Minister Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma

BHIMAVARAM, JULY 1

forts are also underway to:

Union Minister Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma said that a long-standing demand of devotees and the public has been fulfilled with the conversion of the Narsapuram-Arunachalam (Tiruvannamalai) Weekly Express into a regular train service. The minister formally flagged off the regular service at Bhimavaram Town Railway Station on Wednesday. He said the train, which was introduced as a special service on July 9 last year, recorded 110% occupancy, prompting discussions with senior railway officials that ultimately led to approval for a permanent weekly service.

He also announced that regular weekly express services between Narsapuram and Bengaluru will begin from July 10.

The minister said ef-

Introduce a Narsapuram-Visakhapatnam train. Launch a direct Narsapuram-Varanasi train service. Secure a halt for the Vande Bharat Express at Tadepalligudem. Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma further stated that modernization works under the Amrit Station Scheme have been completed at the Bhimavaram Town, Tadepalligudem, and Narsapuram railway stations, equipping them with modern passenger amenities.

He reiterated that the Central Government is giving high priority to national highway and railway infrastructure projects in the Narsapuram Parliamentary Constituency and is committed to developing infrastructure that can serve as a model for other parliamentary constituencies in Andhra Pradesh.

SU conducts Medical Simulation Workshop

DR SRINIVAS VOORADI

Mangaluru, July 1: The Institute of Allied Health Sciences of Srinivas University (SU) successfully organized the Medical Simulation Workshop on 'Building Confidence and Clinical Competence', bringing together distinguished academicians, healthcare professionals, faculty, and students for an enriching day of learning and skill development. The inaugural ceremony was graced by Dr. A. Srinivas Rao, Chancellor of Srinivas University, who addressed the gathering and emphasized the importance of simulation-based education in developing competent and confident healthcare professionals. The event featured an inspiring keynote address by Dr. Satya Pal Singh, former Union Minister of State (HRD, Higher Education & Water Resources), Government of India and Former Member of Parliament, who highlighted the transformative role of innovation, research, and quality education in shaping the future of healthcare. The occasion was further enriched by the presence of Dr. Akla Singh, an eminent academican and



educationist, whose insights emphasized excellence in higher education and interdisciplinary collaboration. Participating in the Workshop a distinguished healthcare professional and academic leader Dr. Rishi Palpu addressed the gathering sharing valuable perspectives on advancing clinical education through technology-driven learning. The Workshop had two sessions, one on 'Simulation-Based Resuscitation Training: Building Confidence in BLS' by Dr. Akhil Rao U.K. followed by 'Simulation-Based Clinical Skill Training' by Blessing Dhas. The Workshop provided participants with hands-on exposure to modern medical simulation techniques, enhancing clinical competence, teamwork, critical thinking, and patient safety.

Vijayan slams UDF over tax cut, accuses govt of favouring liquor company

Pinarayi Vijayan has accused the UDF government of favouring a liquor company in its first budget through a steep tax cut on low-alcohol spirit-based drinks, saying the duty was reduced from over 251% to 120% and warning that it would adversely affect public health.



Leader of the Opposition in the Kerala Assembly, Pinarayi Vijayan, has accused the UDF government of using its first budget to favour a liquor company by proposing a sharp cut in taxes on low-alcohol, spirit-based beverages.

He alleged that the move would cost the state hundreds of crores of rupees while benefiting private liquor companies. In a newspaper article on Wednesday, Vijayan said the proposal was a "planned

move" and not a routine administrative decision.

He claimed the tax on low-alcohol liquor had been reduced from more than 251 per cent to 120 per cent, and said this would lower prices and increase alcohol consumption instead of protecting public health. Vijayan claimed the government revived a file that had been pending since 2023 under the previous LDF administration. He alleged that the file moved

through the Secretariat at an unusually fast pace, reached the Chief Minister's Office within hours and was cleared in record time. He further alleged that the concession was meant to benefit liquor companies from neighbouring Karnataka rather than farmers or consumers in Kerala.

He also questioned why the government announced a tax concession before deciding whether such products would be allowed for sale in the state, saying even the Excise Department had indicated that a final decision would be taken only under the proposed new liquor policy. Vijayan said the LDF had earlier considered encouraging low-alcohol beverages made from fruits such as jackfruit and cashew apples to support farmers and small-scale industries. He claimed the present proposal instead

favours spirit-based ready-to-drink alcoholic beverages. He also criticised the government's handling of the issue, alleging that the proposal was pushed through without the usual consultative process involving the departments concerned and the Cabinet.

Referring to the UDF's election pitch, Vijayan alleged that the "Team UDF" concept presented to the people is no longer heard of.

"Today, liquor companies and monopoly interests seeking to take control of the coastal region have become the new allies in Team UDF. This is a clear indication of the direction in which the UDF government is moving. Neither the chief minister nor the Cabinet can evade responsibility in this matter," he said, summing up his criticism of the government's tax proposal.

Annamalai Maintains 'DMK Files' Allegations Amid Defamation Row

K Annamalai said DMK MP TR Baalu has withdrawn the Rs 100 crore defamation case linked to his DMK Files allegations. He said he stands by every claim and noted the development comes as his 'We the Leaders' movement moves towards becoming a political party.



Former Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai on Tuesday claimed that DMK MP TR Baalu has withdrawn the Rs 100 crore defamation suit filed against him over the BJP leader's "DMK Files" allegations, asserting that he continues to stand by every claim he made against the previous DMK government and certain party leaders.

In a post on X, Annamalai said Baalu had filed the

defamation case after he published details of the alleged assets and companies owned by the senior DMK leader and his family through his "DMK Files" campaign.

"Thiru TR Baalu filed a defamation case against me for publishing the assets/companies owned by him and his family through DMK Files, and he had sought Rs 100 crores in damages," Annamalai

wrote.

The former state BJP chief said that, after a certain stage in the trial, he argued the case himself and personally cross-examined Baalu, adding that the details of the proceedings were already in the public domain. Annamalai further alleged that during one of the cross-examinations, Baalu made "defamatory remarks" against him in court without any basis, prompting him to file a separate case against the DMK MP over those statements.

"Today, Thiru TR Baalu, out of his own wishes, decided to withdraw the defamation case filed against me by him. He filed the defamation case against me; to carry it further or not was his decision and not mine," he said. Reiterating his position, Annamalai

said he continued to stand by "every single remark" he had made against the previous DMK government and certain members of the ruling party. He also thanked advocates Paul Kanagaraj, Kumaraguru and members of the BJP legal team for supporting him during the trial, ending his post with the remark, "Truth always triumphs!" The development comes days after Annamalai announced that his newly launched "We the Leaders" movement is on course to be converted into a political party in July. He has said the organisation aims to enrol 50 lakh members and position itself as a people-centric political alternative in Tamil Nadu, focusing on issues such as governance, corruption and the growing drug menace in the state.

EDITORIAL

The Boiling Continent:
Europe's Unsparing
Wake-Up Call

For generations, Europe's temperate climate was a global gold standard—a predictable, mild rhythm of distinct seasons that shaped its architecture, agriculture, and societal habits. Today, that rhythm has completely shattered. The continent is trapped in the grip of a historic, relentless climate crisis characterized by early, intense heatwaves. The rapid transition from a cool spring to a punishing summer has pushed temperatures past 40°C across central and western European cities like Vienna, Budapest, and Paris. This sudden surge is no longer a localized anomaly; it is a clear symptom of a broader, systemic emergency. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) recently highlighted a sobering fact: Europe is the fastest-warming continent on Earth, heating up at roughly double the global average rate since the mid-1990s. The region is seeing its historical weather baseline entirely rewritten. Scientists from World Weather Attribution note that the intense daytime highs and abnormally warm nights choking European cities would have been “virtually impossible” just fifty years ago.

The immediate toll of this heat is measured in human lives. The World Health Organization reported more than 1,300 excess deaths within just a single week of extreme temperatures. Strikingly, it is the overnight lows—or lack thereof—that present the greatest risk. When the night failing to cool below 25°C denies the human body a chance to recover, heat stress rapidly evolves from a severe discomfort into a quiet killer. The crisis is heavily exacerbated by Europe's historical infrastructure. Millions of homes, schools, and offices across the continent were intentionally built to capture and retain warmth, missing the passive ventilation or cooling systems necessary to survive modern summers. Now, as citizens rush to install residential air conditioning, energy grids are buckling under unprecedented demand.

Beyond the cities, the environment is paying an equally steep price. Worsening droughts, parched agricultural lands, and an elevated risk of wildfires threaten the continent's long-term food supply and ecosystems. Simultaneously, severe marine heatwaves in the Mediterranean and the Bay of Biscay are disrupting marine life while reducing the natural cooling effect coastal zones usually rely on. This climate reality exposes a profound gap in global leadership. While scientific evidence solidifies the human fingerprint on these extreme weather systems, political urgency appears to be stalling. Major international summits have frequently pushed critical environmental policies to the back burner in favor of immediate economic or geopolitical pressures.

However, this logic ignores the long-term reality: climate change is inherently economic. It drives inflation, devalues land, disrupts productivity, and strains public healthcare systems to the point of collapse. Europe's ongoing ordeal must serve as a turning point. Patchwork emergency measures—like opening public cooling centers or issuing dynamic red alerts—are vital for immediate safety, but they treat the symptoms rather than the disease. Governments can no longer afford to delay the strict emission targets laid out in the Paris Agreement. To safeguard its future, the continent must aggressively transition away from fossil fuels, rethink urban planning to incorporate green spaces, and heavily invest in climate-resilient infrastructure. The boiling summers are a stark reminder that the environment will not wait for policy to catch up.

THE ETERNAL SENTINEL



Before the morning learns to bloom,
A soldier wakes while stars still loom.
He covets neither crown nor praise

His only glory: India's name,
Where Himalayas touch the skies,
And dawn in saffron silence lies,
He plants his footsteps, firm and deep,
So millions else may safely sleep.
The glacier bites, the desert burns,
Yet duty neither bends nor turns.
The wind may rage, the heavens fall
His oath stands taller than them all.
The earth becomes his humble bed,
The boundless sky his roof instead.

His hunger yields to duty's call,
His love of homeland outlives all.
When iron storms consume the night,
He answers darkness—light with light.
Not born to conquer, rule, or reign,
But bear another's grief and pain.
His rifle does not worship hate.
It guards the gates of peaceful fate.
For every child who laughs today,
A soldier held the night at bay.

The Tricolour is more than thread.
It breathes through every martyr's breath.
Its saffron kindles fearless fire,
Its white lifts truth forever higher.
Its green renews the dreaming earth;
The Ashoka Wheel keeps justice's worth.
Should destiny demand his breath,
He greets with pride the path of death.
For those who fall defending right
Become the dawn's undying light.
No marble holds their endless flame;
No monument contains their name.
The rivers murmur what they gave;
The mountains keep the oath they made.

O Mother India, vast and free,
Your soul is our eternity.
While oceans kiss your sacred shore,
We'll guard your dream forevermore.
Empires fade like evening rain.
Crowns return to dust again. Yet one immortal flame survives.

A soldier's oath through countless lives.
When history folds its final page,
Beyond all power, pride, and age,
One truth shall stand when time is gone—
The soldier may rest...
Yet never his sacrifice.
The warrior may fall...
Yet never the nation for which he stood.



... Dr. Peruka Raju ...
National Poet
7810032847



OPINION

Ground-Level Ozone Is Delhi's Next Big Environmental Crisis

For years, Delhi's air pollution debate has centred on smog, particulate matter, stubble burning, and vehicular emissions. But a far more dangerous and invisible threat is rapidly emerging—ground-level ozone pollution. As rising temperatures, unchecked urbanisation, and industrial emissions intensify ozone formation, India's battle for clean air demands a fundamental shift from seasonal blame games to a comprehensive rethink of sustainable urban development.

India's capital, Delhi, has long been battling the grave menace of air pollution. Every winter, a thick blanket of smog, toxic air, and suffocating atmospheric conditions become a matter of national concern. Until now, public discourse on this crisis has largely revolved around PM2.5, PM10, stubble burning, and vehicular emissions. However, a new and even more insidious threat is rapidly emerging—ground-level ozone pollution. A recent report by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has revealed that not only Delhi-NCR but also cities such as Jaipur, Chandigarh, and Ahmedabad are increasingly falling into the grip of ozone pollution. Unlike visible smog, ozone pollution is invisible, yet its effects gradually undermine human health, agriculture, and the environment. Ironically, even such a critical issue is often reduced to political blame games. At times, farmers are held solely responsible because of stubble burning; at others, vehicles become the exclusive target. The truth, however, is far more complex. If we genuinely seek to address the root of the problem, we must critically reassess unplanned urbanisation, unchecked industrialisation, current patterns of energy consumption, and the prevailing model of development.

Today, Delhi is not merely the nation's capital; it has also become one of India's largest pollution hotspots. During summer, rising temperatures, intense sunlight, and chemical reactions between nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds emitted by vehicles and industries lead to the formation of ground-level ozone. This is fundamentally different from the ozone layer high in the stratosphere, which shields the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Ground-level ozone is a toxic gas that reduces lung function, aggravates asthma, irritates the eyes, and increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases. Across Delhi-NCR, an increasing number of people are suffering from breathing difficulties, allergies, and respiratory illnesses, with ozone pollution playing an increasingly significant role.

The Delhi Government has undertaken several commendable initiatives to curb pollution. Incentives for electric vehicles, a comprehensive EV policy, expansion of public transportation, development of charging infrastructure, and the phased withdrawal of highly polluting vehicles are all positive steps. If effectively implemented, these measures could bring meaningful improvements in air quality over the coming years. However, vehicle policies alone cannot solve the crisis. The deeper

challenge lies in unplanned urbanisation. Over the past two decades, vast stretches of agricultural land, ponds, and green spaces in Delhi and its surrounding regions have been transformed into sprawling concrete landscapes. This has severely disrupted the ecological balance. Areas where rainwater once naturally percolated into the soil are now covered with cement and asphalt. Traditional water bodies have disappeared, tree cover has declined, and urban temperatures have risen significantly. Consequently, cities now remain several degrees warmer than neighbouring rural areas—a phenomenon that accelerates the formation of ground-level ozone.

Urban expansion is often celebrated as a symbol of progress, yet this development has come at the expense of nature. Cities demand more roads, electricity, housing, and industries. To meet these needs, forests are cleared, farmland disappears, and water bodies are destroyed. As a result, pollution is no longer confined to the air; it has also contaminated water resources, degraded soil quality, and threatened biodiversity. Such a trajectory of development ultimately works against human well-being. The number of private vehicles in Delhi continues to rise. Public transportation, despite significant improvements, has yet to become efficient and convenient enough to persuade large numbers of people to abandon private vehicles. Promoting electric mobility is undoubtedly welcome, but one crucial question remains: if the electricity powering these vehicles is generated primarily from coal-fired thermal power plants, pollution is merely shifted from city streets to power generation sites. Therefore, the transition to electric mobility must be accompanied by a simultaneous expansion of renewable energy, particularly solar power, along with investments in sustainable public transport.

Ozone pollution is not merely a public health issue; it also poses a serious threat to agriculture. Scientific studies have shown that ozone interferes with photosynthesis, thereby reducing crop productivity. At a time when farmers are already struggling with climate change, erratic monsoons, and rising temperatures, ozone pollution could further intensify the agricultural crisis. India's National Clean Air Programme has established ambitious targets for improving air quality in numerous cities. However, the time has come to broaden its scope. Instead of focusing exclusively on particulate matter, equal attention must be given to secondary pollutants such as ozone through enhanced monitoring, scientific research, and targeted mitigation

strategies. Air quality monitoring systems must become more comprehensive, technologically advanced, and transparent.

Citizens also have a vital role to play. Practices such as open burning of waste, construction dust, burning of biomass and plastic, and improper disposal of industrial waste must be eliminated. Greater use of public transport, cycling, and walking should be actively encouraged. Large-scale afforestation, expansion of urban green belts, and restoration of traditional water bodies must become integral components of pollution-control strategies. Air pollution is not merely an environmental challenge; it is also an economic and social crisis. Rising pollution-related illnesses place enormous pressure on healthcare systems, reduce workforce productivity, and inflict billions in economic losses. Most alarming of all is its impact on children and young people, whose health and future are increasingly at risk. Unless decisive action is taken today, future generations will bear an even heavier burden.

The initiatives undertaken by the Delhi Government deserve appreciation and offer hope for meaningful progress. Yet lasting success will require coordinated efforts involving the Union Government, state governments, local authorities, industry, scientists, and civil society. Pollution cannot be attributed to a single government, a single season, or a single source. It is the cumulative outcome of our development model, our lifestyle choices, and our relationship with the environment. The need of the hour is not political blame but visionary policymaking and collective responsibility. If we truly aspire to breathe clean air, we must move beyond pollution-control measures alone and embrace a new model of development that is in harmony with nature. Otherwise, invisible pollutants such as ground-level ozone will continue to silently poison our cities, turning the very model of modern development into one of the greatest threats to human civilization.



LALIT GARGG
Writer, Journalist,
Columnist

NINE YEARS OF GST: INDIA'S BIGGEST TAX REFORM IS STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS

July 1, 2026 marks nine years since the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced across India, replacing a fragmented indirect tax regime with the vision of “One Nation, One Tax.” Widely regarded as the country's most significant tax reform since Independence, GST fundamentally reshaped India's indirect taxation by integrating multiple Central and State levies into a unified system. While the reform has strengthened tax administration, expanded the tax base, and accelerated the digital transformation of compliance, its journey also highlights the challenges of implementing a complex fiscal reform in a diverse federal economy. Nine years on, GST has delivered substantial gains, but its evolution is far from complete.

Before GST, India's indirect tax structure was characterised by multiple overlapping taxes. The Centre levied excise duty and service tax, while States imposed Value Added Tax (VAT), entry tax, luxury tax, octroi and several other local levies. Businesses operating across State borders had to comply with multiple tax laws, creating administrative complexity and increasing compliance costs. More importantly, taxes were often imposed on taxes already paid, resulting in the cascading effect that inflated the final price of goods and services. Interstate checkpoints further delayed freight movement and increased logistics costs. GST was designed to eliminate these inefficiencies by creating a common national market under a destination-based tax system.

The idea of GST was first proposed in 2000, but it took over a decade of political negotiations and Centre-State consultations before the Constitution (101st Amendment) Act paved the way for its implementation in 2017. The GST Council, comprising the Union Finance Minister and State Finance Ministers, emerged as an important institution of cooperative federalism. Over the past nine years, it has played a central role in revising tax rates, rationalising procedures, addressing implementation



challenges and adapting the tax framework to changing economic conditions. Perhaps the most significant achievement of GST has been the substantial reduction of the cascading effect through the Input Tax Credit (ITC) mechanism. Businesses can now claim credit for taxes paid on inputs, ensuring that taxation applies primarily to value addition rather than multiple stages of production. Equally significant has been the complete digitisation of indirect tax administration. Registration, return filing, tax payments, e-way bills and e-invoicing have all moved online, improving transparency and enabling data-driven detection of tax evasion. The removal of interstate check-posts has also improved supply chain efficiency and reduced logistics costs across the country.

The initial years, however, were far from smooth. Businesses and tax administrators faced technological glitches, compliance challenges and frequent procedural changes. Over time, the GST Council simplified return filing, expanded the Composition Scheme for small taxpayers and introduced several compliance reforms. At its 56th meeting held on September 3, 2025, the Council approved a rationalisation of GST rates by consolidating the tax structure around the principal 5% and 18% slabs while introducing a

special 40% demerit rate for selected luxury and sin goods. These changes came into effect from September 22, 2025, marking another step towards a simpler and more rational tax regime.

The reform's impact is visible in several measurable indicators. The number of registered GST taxpayers has more than doubled from around 6.5 million at the time of implementation to over 15 million today, reflecting greater formalisation of economic activity. Revenue collections have also shown steady growth. In April 2026, India recorded its highest-ever monthly gross GST collection of ₹2.42 lakh crore, representing an annual growth of 8.7 per cent. Rising GST revenues have strengthened the fiscal capacity of both the Union and State governments, providing additional resources for infrastructure development and welfare programmes.

Despite these achievements, important structural challenges remain. The existence of multiple tax slabs continues to create classification disputes for similar goods and services. Frequent regulatory changes and technology-driven compliance requirements, including e-invoicing, continue to impose disproportionate burdens on smaller businesses. Genuine taxpayers also face difficulties when input tax credit is denied because of supplier de-

faults, even when they have complied with all statutory requirements.

Several sectors also remain outside the full GST framework. Petroleum products, electricity and significant segments of real estate continue to be excluded, limiting the objective of a truly comprehensive indirect tax system. Bringing these sectors under GST will require sustained political consensus between the Centre and the States. At the same time, strengthening the nationwide functioning of the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) will be essential for faster dispute resolution. Looking ahead, the tax framework must also evolve to address emerging areas such as artificial intelligence-driven commerce, digital platforms, cryptocurrencies and other technology-led business models.

Nine years after its launch, GST has firmly established itself as the foundation of India's unified domestic market. Yet, it should not be viewed as a completed reform but as one that continues to evolve. Rationalising tax rates further, reducing compliance costs for small enterprises, expanding the tax base by bringing excluded sectors within the GST framework and improving dispute resolution will determine the next phase of its success. If these reforms are pursued with consistency and cooperative federalism, GST will not merely remain India's largest tax reform—it will become one of the country's most important drivers of long-term economic growth, investment and competitiveness.



K AMARAVATI
MEMBER
PLUS NGO





Col. Harpal Singh Grewal, New Director of ESCI

HYDERABAD, JULY 01:

Col HS Grewal is an accomplished leader with 38+ years of experience in the Indian Army and Corporate Sector, specializing in Administration, Communications, Information Systems, and Electronic Warfare. A Master's from IIT Roorkeein Communication System Technologies, he commanded an Electronic Warfare Unit & NCC Group HQ and is a recipient of several Commendation Cards including the COAS Commendation and India Achievers Award. He has presented research on Software Defined Radios, EMI/ EMC and Next Generation Networks at various national and international forums. An enthusiastic sportsman, he enjoys hockey, cricket and golf. Col Grewal has assumed charge as Director, Engineering Staff College of India, Gachibowli, Hyderabad on 1st July, 2026.



Raj Singh and Urvasi Rangara Promoted as Additional Directors

State Government Issues Promotion Orders Elevating Both Officers from Joint Director to Additional Director
CHANDIGARH, JULY 1

The Haryana Government has promoted two senior officers of the Information, Public Relations and Languages Department, Sh. Raj Singh and Ms. Urvasi Rangara, from the post of Joint Director to Additional Director with immediate effect.

The necessary administrative orders in this regard have been issued by the Commissioner and Secretary, Information, Public Relations, Languages and Culture Department.

Ram Temple donations case: Impose martial law, hand over probe to Army, says Congress

BHOPAL:

The Madhya Pradesh Congress on Wednesday demanded that the Army investigate the alleged Ayodhya Ram Temple donations embezzlement case and impose martial law in the entire region, claiming that normal agencies will not be able to conduct an impartial probe into the sensitive matter. The opposition party alleged that the SIT has taken action only against low-rung employees who count donation money, but no FIR has been registered against the main culprits.

The Congress also demanded the dissolution of the current committee of the Shri Ram Janma-bhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust.

Operation Fadnavis: Aaditya Thackeray claims conspiracy to weaken Maharashtra CM

When asked whether the Shiv Sena (UBT) suffers from a perception problem of being family-run organisations, Aaditya Thackeray said he was "very proud" of his family legacy and insisted that political legitimacy ultimately comes from electoral acceptance.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray has described the recent wave of defections from his party as part of an elaborate plan allegedly orchestrated by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde to weaken Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. He further alleged that Shinde is acting on instructions from senior BJP leadership at the Centre, with the objective of undermining Fadnavis's prospects in national politics.

The remarks come amid continuing political hostility between the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Shinde-led faction, following the switch of six out of nine MPs from the Thackeray camp to the rival Sena group. Speaking to Rajdeep Sardesai on India Today TV, Thackeray said the Shiv Sena (UBT) was "collateral damage" in what he described as a broader pattern of political engineering in Maharashtra and beyond, terming the recent defections as part of "Operation Devendra Fadnavis."

'FADNAVIS'S LAST ASSEMBLY SESSION AS CM'

Explaining what he meant by "Operation Devendra Fadnavis," Thackeray alleged that several senior leaders who were once seen as potential national-level contenders had, over time, been systematically moved or "repositioned" within the party hierarchy.

He claimed that Shinde's actions were effectively serving interests within the BJP at the Centre, with the aim of ensuring that Fadnavis is no longer seen as a contender for the Prime Minister's post.

He also suggested that Fadnavis could eventually be moved to the Union Cabinet, indicating that the current political arrangement in Maharashtra may not be permanent.

"Mark my words: this could be Devendra Fadnavis's last Assembly session as Chief Minister," he said, adding that Shinde is seeking to regain the Chief Minister's post.

Thackeray cited the examples of Nitin Gadkari and Shivraj Singh Chouhan to support his argument.

"When Gadkari was about to become BJP president for the third time, controversies around Poorti and other issues surfaced. Shivraj Singh Chouhan, a widely accepted and popular Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, was subsequently moved from state



leadership and brought into the Union Cabinet," he said.

'MONEY POWER INFLUENCING DEFECTIONS'

Responding to allegations that he has repeatedly claimed defections are driven by money without producing concrete proof, the Shiv Sena (UBT) leader insisted that evidence does exist. "I do have evidence," he said, referring to televised clips and widely circulated visuals. He pointed to a video involving Rajesh Shirsagar allegedly asking a contractor for money, and another showing Sanjay Shirsat sitting beside bags of cash, both of which, he noted, were carried by multiple news channels. Thackeray argued that these incidents point to a broader pattern in Maharashtra politics, where defections are often followed by sudden personal financial gains.

He alleged that several legislators who switched parties experienced a sharp rise in wealth shortly after joining the ruling

side.

Some, he said, purchased luxury apartments in high-rise buildings, while others acquired expensive cars within months of their defection. "How does such sudden economic upliftment happen immediately after changing political sides?" he asked.

'PROUD OF MY FAMILY LINEAGE'

When asked whether the Shiv Sena (UBT), like other regional parties including the TMC, suffers from a perception problem of being family-run organisations, something critics argue makes them more vulnerable to defections, Thackeray said he was "very proud" of his family legacy and insisted that political legitimacy ultimately comes from electoral acceptance. The question referred to repeated criticism by the BJP that "parivarvaad" (dynastic politics) has driven leaders in smaller parties to quit in search of greater freedom and opportunities elsewhere.

"I'm very proud of my heritage, my legacy, my family," he said, adding that leadership is ultimately validated at the ballot box. "If the people accept me, they will accept me. And for the last two elections, they have accepted me," he said. He argued that defections were not driven by dissatisfaction with family-led parties, but by other

factors such as legal pressure and inducements. He alleged that "some leaders who switched sides were facing cases from agencies like the Enforcement Directorate, Income Tax Department, or CBI, while others were offered money."

Thackeray also turned the criticism back on the BJP, claiming that dynastic politics is not limited to regional parties and that the BJP itself has a significant number of leaders from political families. He described this as a contradiction in the party's public stance. "That's the baggage they're carrying, and that's where the hypocrisy speaks out very loud," he said.

'BJP IS BABAR JANATA PARTY'

The 36-year-old leader also strongly criticised the BJP over the controversy surrounding alleged irregularities in donations linked to the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, questioning the functioning of the temple trust.

Reiterating Shiv Sena's historical association with the Ram Temple movement, he pointed to the party's 2018 campaign and contributions made to the trust.

"In 2018, when the BJP had forgotten the Ram Temple, we had gone there and said, 'Pehle Mandir, phir Sarkar.' That's when the BJP remembered. The Ram Temple was built thanks to the Supreme Court's decision, not the BJP," he said.



Organisational meetings held in all five assemblies of Aam Aadmi Party

emphasis given on strengthening the organization

DR.BHUPENDRA VIKAL

Shivpuri. Aam Aadmi Party successfully organized organizational meetings in all five assembly constituencies of the district. The meetings were attended mainly by Madhya Pradesh co-in-charge Surjit Singh Pawar, State Organization Minister Amit Sharma, State Vice President Ms. Maniksha Singh Tomar and State Youth Wing President Vikram Singh Lodhi who came mainly from Delhi. In these meetings, District President Rajkumar Gupta, District Organization Minister Yogesh Sharma and Women Wing District President Mrs. Neetu Parihar were also present in all the assembly meetings.

Pohari assembly meeting in-charge Mukesh Ojha and DrIt was organized by Damodar Dhakad and Sunil Puri Goswami, in which a large number of workers participated. The meeting of Kolaras Assembly was organized by Assembly in-charge Satish Kushwaha in Badarwas. In the meet-

ing, the state officials were warmly welcomed with fire-works and a large number of workers were present. The meeting of Karaira Assembly was organized in Narwar by Kaluram Kushwaha, Hanumant Singh Kansana and Lokendra Rawat and Ajmer Singh. The meeting of Pichor Assembly was organized by Assembly in-charge Sanit Gupta and Jairam Jo. In all the meetings, Madhya Pradesh co-in-charge Surjit Singh Pawar gave detailed guidance regarding strengthening the organization up to the booth level, adding new workers and strongly raising public issues. His views were appreciated by all the workers and they expressed confidence in moving forward with the resolve to strengthen the organization. District President Rajkumar Gupta expressed his gratitude to all the state officials, assembly in-charges and workers and said that these meetings will give new energy and strength to the organization in Shivpuri district.

CM Bhagwant Mann launches monthly aid scheme for Punjab's women



Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Wednesday launched the Punjab government's monthly financial assistance scheme for women, "Mawan Dhiyan Satkar Yojna", and said AAP had fulfilled its final poll guarantee made before the 2022 Assembly polls. Under the scheme, women from the general category will get Rs 1,000 a month, while women from the Scheduled Castes will get Rs 1,500.

Addressing a gathering of women, Mann said more than 40 lakh women had already been registered under the scheme. He said the benefit had started from July and that funds would be transferred directly to bank accounts, with some women at the event saying they had received messages about the money being credited.

Mann called the day "historic" and described the initiative as a major step for women. "The 'Satkar Raashi' has started from July and it will pave the way for women live with dignity and pride." The first instalment of Rs 4,500 for Scheduled Caste beneficiaries and Rs 3,000 for women from the general category was transferred to bank accounts on Wednesday. Senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia and Cabinet minister Aman Arora were present at the event. After the launch, Sisodia said AAP honoured every promise made to the people.

Mann had said on Tuesday that benefits under the scheme would be applicable from July 1 even if registration cards were delivered later. Women aged 18 years and above who are registered as voters in Punjab and have a valid Aadhaar card showing Punjab residency along with a valid voter ID issued by the Election Commission are eligible. However, regular or retired employees of the Punjab government, the Centre, or any other state or Union Territory government, elected MLAs or MPs, and the spouses of serving ministers, MPs or MLAs are excluded. With the launch now formalised, the scheme has begun payments while setting out who will receive the monthly assistance and from when.

Reservation protest turns violent in Jaipur, police deploy tear gas and cane-charge

JAIPUR, JULY 1

A violent clash erupted between protesters and the police in Jaipur on Wednesday evening following a Mahapanchayat of nomadic and semi-nomadic (DNT) communities. The protesters, who were demanding 10 per cent reservation, attempted to march towards the Chief Minister's residence after the gathering. When police stopped them at barricades, the situation escalated into violence. The protesters allegedly pelted stones at police personnel, prompting the police to resort to a lathi-charge and tear gas shelling to disperse the crowd. Around a dozen people, including police personnel and local residents, were injured in the violence. Several protesters were also injured during the police action. A heavy police force was deployed, and authorities said the situation was later brought under control. Around 50 protesters have been detained. Members of the nomadic and semi-no-

madic communities had gathered at Vidyadhar Nagar Stadium for a Mahapanchayat to press their demand for 10 per cent reservation. After the meeting concluded at around 6 p.m., participants announced a march towards the Chief Minister's residence. Police had already put extensive security arrangements in place and erected barricades to prevent the march. When protesters attempted to breach the barricades, a scuffle broke out, which soon turned violent. DCP (North) Karan Sharma said the police had facilitated a meeting between a delegation of the protesters and senior government officials, and the discussions had been positive. According to Sharma, despite the talks, some protesters suddenly turned aggressive, attempted to break through the barricades and allegedly misbehaved with local residents.

When police intervened, they allegedly began pelting stones at both police personnel and civilians.

NFR Enhances Loco Pilot Training with Interactive Tech

MALIGAON, 1 JULY, 2026:

In a significant step towards strengthening operational safety and modernising railway training practices, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has introduced several interactive digital technologies at crew lobbies across Katihar Division to enhance the learning experience of Loco Pilots. These initiatives are aimed at providing more effective, practical and technology-driven training, enabling crew members to improve their operational knowledge and decision-making skills while ensuring safer and more efficient train operations.

As part of the initiative, interactive touch panels have been installed in all crew lobbies of the division. These digital platforms facilitate day-to-day learning, counseling sessions and quick access to important operational information, making the training process more engaging and user friendly. Katihar Division has also introduced interactive quizzes on the Au-



tomatic Signalling System, allowing Loco Pilots to regularly assess and strengthen their understanding of signalling principles directly at the crew lobbies. In addition, a physical working model of the Automatic Signalling System has been implemented to provide practical demonstrations and improve conceptual understanding through hands-on learning.

To further enrich route learning, the division has introduced interactive route videography covering both day and night conditions. These high quality videos provide loco pilots with realistic visual familiarisation of railway routes, helping them identify signals, landmarks, gradients and other operational features under varying visibility conditions. This

digital approach is expected to significantly improve route knowledge and operational preparedness before undertaking train operations.

The division has also launched a dedicated podcast series on railway operational topics, including the functioning of the R.S.Valve, offering an innovative platform for continuous learning. Simultaneously, the crew lobby at Malda Town (MLDT) has been upgraded with improved digital infrastructure and modern facilities to support technology-enabled training and counselling. These initiatives reflect NFR's continued commitment towards leveraging digital technologies to build a highly skilled workforce, strengthen safety standards and promote excellence in railway operations.

Madhya Pradesh is the leading state of the country from spiritual

DR.BHUPENDRA VIKAL

Bhopal: Chief Minister DrMohan Yadav has said that the land of Barwani and Nimar has been rich with saints, culture and folk traditions. The saint tradition of India has always shown the right direction to the society, with their guidance the spirit of harmony, restraint and service develops in the society. Service to the poor, needy and suffering is true devotion, society progresses only when religion and service go together, this is the basic message of Indian culture. The Khatu Shyam Temple to be built in Talun of Barwani district will strengthen this glorious heritage and the coming generations will also connect with this heritage. Chief Minister DrYadav was addressing the consecration of Khatu Shyam Temple in Talun and the 21 Kundiya Mahayagya program virtually from the Chief Minister's residence.

cultural and religious point of view: Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav Virtually addressed the consecration program of Khatu Shyam Mandir Talun Barwani



Baba Shri Khatu Shyam sacrificed his life for the protection of religion and public welfare. Chief Minister DrYadav said that today's occasion is not only the consecration of the temple, but also the festival of reverence, faith and renaissance of Sanatan culture. May the blessings of Baba Shri Khatu Shyam be upon all the devotees. Baba Khatu Shyam is called the support of the defeated, because he is con-

sidered the god who removes the sorrows of his devotees. Baba Khatu Shyam is considered to be the incarnation of Barbarik. In Mahabharata, he had offered his head to Lord Krishna for the protection of religion and public welfare. His unique sacrifice is the supreme example of bravery, humility and dedication in Indian culture. After parikrama of Maa Narmada ji, the idea of building a Khatu Shyam

temple came to the mind of Mahant Shri Shashi Giri Ji Maharaj and with the cooperation of the devotees of the city, the dream of the temple came true.

The state government is continuously working for the conservation and development of ancient heritage

Chief Minister DrYadav said that Madhya Pradesh is the leading state of the

country from spiritual, cultural and religious point of view. The state government is continuously working for the conservation and development of ancient heritage. Religious tourism and cultural development also strengthens the local economy. This temple will also become an important stop in that journey. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav prayed to Baba Shri Khatu Shyam for happiness, prosperity and health in everyone's life and for the development of the state and welfare of the people of the state. MP Gajendra Patel, District Panchayat President Wadwani Balwant Patel, Mahant Maha Mandaleshwar Hari Surenra Giri Maharaj, President Khatu Shyam Mandir Wadwani Shashi Giri Maharaj and other saints, public representatives and a large number of devotees were present in the program.

India, Japan initiatives together a democratic axis in Indo-Pacific, blend security with development

NEW DELHI, JULY 1

From Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) to Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions (MAHASAGAR), India's maritime vision has grown into a leadership position, which resonates with Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) framework, as said by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi herself in a recent article.

Together, the initiatives of two Premiers represent a democratic axis in the Indo-Pacific that blends security with development, and deterrence with inclusivity.

In a world order marked by uncertainty, India and Japan are betting that their converging visions will not only secure the seas but also empower nations across the Global South to chart their own course.

Outlining India's policy towards the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), Prime Minister Na-

rendra Modi first articulated SAGAR in March 2015 while commissioning the offshore patrol vessel Barracuda, built in Kolkata's Garden Reach in Mauritius.

It was a maritime outreach strategy aimed at ensuring stability and prosperity in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Prime Minister Modi described SAGAR as India's commitment to act as a "net security provider" and to uphold trust, transparency, and peaceful resolution of maritime disputes.

A decade later, in March 2025, when Prime Minister Modi returned to Mauritius, he unveiled MAHASAGAR. This expanded vision reflects India's ambition to move beyond the Indian Ocean and position itself as a leader of the Global South, offering a framework that blends security with development, trade, and sustainability.

Interestingly, in several Indian languages, "Sagar" means



sea, and "Mahasagar" the ocean. The use marks a strategic evolution from a regional focus on the Indian Ocean to a global maritime vision, with particular emphasis on the Global South, as was pointed out earlier by Suchitra Durai, former Ambassador of India to Thailand.

Prime Minister Modi's engagements with Mauritius, Maldives, Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana and the Philippines, are aligned with the MAHASAGAR vision, she opined.

Incidentally, Prime Minister Sane Takaichi's article aligns her FOIP vision with her Indi-

a counterpart Narendra Modi's initiative.

According to Takaichi, a genuinely free and open region is not one where only the great powers enjoy freedom but one where every nation is able to chart its own course of its own free will, unswayed by external coercion. She praised India as an indispensable partner, noting that India is a maritime nation that has taken concrete action to provide regional stability and support the resilience of countries in the area.

Her words underscore a convergence, where Japan's FOIP emphasises rule of law

and freedom of navigation, and India's MAHASAGAR adds a developmental dimension.

Together, they present a democratic counter-narrative to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its "String of Pearls" encircling strategy in the Indian Ocean.

The Indo-Pacific is the geopolitical theatre of the 21st century. China's assertiveness, whether through military expansion in the South China Sea or infrastructure diplomacy in South Asia, has unsettled smaller nations.

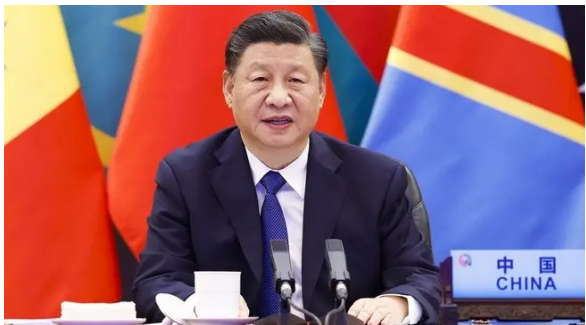
Even the United States, being influential, is still recalibrating its commitments. This creates space for middle powers like India and Japan to step up. For India, MAHASAGAR will establish its role as a responsible power, balancing hard security with soft power. For Japan, FOIP ensures that democratic values and freedom of navigation remain central to regional order.

And for the Global South

overall, MAHASAGAR and FOIP offer alternatives to dependency on China, emphasising partnership and autonomy.

India and Japan friendship has a long history of association, with strong cultural and civilisation ties. In the recent past, the relationship has transformed to a partnership of great substance and purpose. Regional and broader international ties include the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGR), and defence ties like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, a strategic dialogue that also include the United States and Australia.

In the former instance, India and Japan are already collaborating on projects in countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and some African nations. As Japan's FOIP and India's MAHASAGAR converge, the Indo-Pacific may witness a new axis of cooperation -- one that blends security with development, and deterrence with inclusivity.



China using 'two-faced diplomacy' in Central Africa: Report

BEIJING, JULY 1

China publicly speaks about peace, economic cooperation and regional stability while aggressively positions its military and takes actions that fuel violence, a report has detailed while accusing Beijing of using "two-faced diplomacy" in several parts of the world.

China's dual policy is also seen in Africa, where Beijing's official position was opposed to its actions. China claims that it wants peace as a potential mediator in civil war in Sudan. However, that stance is contrasted by the proliferation of weapons made by its state-owned companies, which prolongs the conflict by supplying weapons to both sides, according to a report in the Africa Defense Forum (ADF) magazine.

It quoted a geopolitical analyst accusing China of employing two-faced diplomacy in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where it has partnered with the government while maintaining defence and economic ties with Rwanda and Uganda.

"Beijing's growing military and defence-industrial activities in the region signal a narrow, opportunistic turn that risks fueling further instability," Samir Bhattacharya, an associate fellow at Observer Research Foundation, wrote in his May 11 essay titled 'The Two Faces of China's Security Engagement in Central Africa' which was quoted by ADF.

"This two-faced diplomacy — designed to protect investments and enhance influence — risks ultimately undermining the very investments it seeks to secure," Bhattacharya had mentioned.

China's primary interests in the DRC are economic, with firms related to Beijing have control on most of cobalt, coltan, copper and uranium mines and the Congolese armed forces have been posted repeatedly to mining sites in the east to safeguard Chinese assets, the report mentioned.

The DRC's ongoing battles with M23 rebels include Chinese drones and weaponry on both sides, as the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda have all bought Chinese weapons.

Pakistan 'guest' in Balochistan for few more years: Baloch activist

QUETTA, JULY 1

Leading Baloch human rights defender Mir Yar Baloch has slammed China for using Islamabad as a "diplomatic gun" against India over New Delhi's decision to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) following the heinous Pahalgam terror attack last year by Pakistan-backed terrorists. Highlighting "realities on the ground", he also asserted that Pakistan is now only a "guest in Balochistan for a few more years".

The people of Balochistan, he said, have reaffirmed their resolve to launch a global campaign to expose "terrorism of Pakistan and China" in response to attempts being made by Islamabad and Beijing to spread disinformation over India's suspension of the IWT.

"China and Pakistan's presence in Balochistan is illegal and unlawful, and both occupiers must leave the Baloch sea and surface immediately. China is attempting to use Pakistan as a diplomatic gun against India. Beijing should understand under which international law it has been permitted to join hands with Pakistan to conduct and facilitate the Baloch genocide of the Baloch people over the past 70 years for the purpose of plundering CPBC, Balochistan's mineral resources, and its rare earth



minerals," Mir posted on X. "China is fully aware that Balochistan has never been a part of Pakistan.

Nevertheless, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, it is investing 70 billion dollars in Balochistan against the will and wishes of the Baloch people through the use of guns, tanks, artillery, and fighter aircraft, while the benefits of these investments are illegal and unlawful," he added.

Mir alleged that China has been supporting Pakistan's military and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) with advanced drones, technology, intelligence sharing, and other resources, claiming that the assistance has contributed to state violence, gross human rights abuses, and the economic exploitation of Balochistan. He further said that China has no right to become a "direct participant in the genocide, ethnic cleansing, and slaughter of the Baloch people" in pursuit of its financial and economic interests.

Trump hails first flight of new Air Force One

WASHINGTON, JULY 1

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday hailed the inaugural flight of the new Air Force One, calling it the first journey aboard what he described as "maybe the greatest commercial plane ever built" while also declaring that talks on the "denuclearisation" of Iran were progressing well.

Speaking to reporters before boarding the aircraft for travel to the opening of the Teddy Roosevelt Presidential Library, Trump said the aircraft symbolised America's stature and replaced a presidential fleet that had become outdated. "So, this will be the first flight of what I think is maybe the greatest commercial plane ever built," Trump said. "I said to Boeing, what's the best one? They said this is the best plane ever built." He said the aircraft had recently been modified to meet presidential security requirements.

"They just completed it. They made it appropriate for a president; that means the security



and all of the different bells and whistles they put on, very complex stuff, but it's really quite something," he said.

Calling the aircraft one "that the United States of America should have", Trump noted that the existing Air Force One fleet was "35-36 years old".

"It really didn't look appropriate for our country. So, we're very proud of this; the country is very proud of it," he said.

Asked about the cost of the aircraft, Trump said it had been provided by Qatar. "It cost very little relative to what it would cost if we did it a different way.

So, this was a gift from a country that's treated us very well, and they're an ally of ours over in the Middle East, Qatar," he said.

Trump said he had sought permission from Qatar to use the aircraft while new presidential aircraft ordered from Boeing were still under construction. "I went to Qatar; I said, I'd like to use it for a period of time because the other ones, as you know, are under construction," he said. According to Trump, Qatar's Emir responded: "No, no, I'd like to make a contribution to the country." The President also used the appearance

to offer an upbeat assessment of US-Iran diplomacy following recent American military strikes.

"As far as things are going, the denuclearisation of Iran is moving along well. They've had very good meetings, and we'll see," he said. "We hit them very hard for three nights, as you know, but we're getting along very well."

Pressed on whether Washington could return to military action if Iran failed to comply with the memorandum of understanding, Trump replied: "I think they've come a long way. We hit them very hard last week. I think they're fine." "I think we're going to -- it's the denuclearisation of Iran, it's very simple. And Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon," he added.

Trump also pointed to what he described as strong economic performance, saying stock markets were setting records and investment commitments had reached "\$19.1 trillion". He argued that rising markets were benefiting ordinary Americans through retirement savings.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's tenure extended by a year amid global challenges

NEW DELHI, JULY 1

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's tenure has been extended by a year beyond its scheduled end in mid-July, it was announced on Wednesday.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the extension of service for the 1989 batch Indian Foreign Service officer for a period of one year beyond his original tenure ending on July 14, 2026 -- that is, up to July 14, 2027, or



until further orders, whichever is earlier. The order, issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) under the Ministry of Personnel, Pub-

lic Grievances and Pensions, invokes provisions of Fundamental Rule 56(d).

Misri, a seasoned diplomat with extensive experience in key bilateral and multilateral assignments, has been at the helm of India's foreign policy apparatus since his appointment as Foreign Secretary in 2024. His tenure has coincided with a period of intense global geopolitical flux, including ongoing tensions in West Asia and Ukraine, evolving dynam-

ics in the Indo-Pacific, India's assertive role in the Global South, and critical neighbourhood engagements with China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

Sources indicate that the extension reflects the government's confidence in Misri's leadership and the need for continuity in steering India's foreign policy during a crucial phase. Misri, who has served in Pakistan, Europe, and the US and has been the Ambassador to Myanmar and China.

Balochistan: Three more civilians forcibly disappeared by Pakistani forces

QUETTA, JULY 1

Another three civilians were forcibly disappeared by Pakistani forces in Balochistan, leading human rights organisations alleged on Wednesday. Paank, the Baloch National Movement's Human Rights Department, mentioned that 20-year-old driver Azizullah was allegedly taken away by Pakistani forces during a raid on June 29 in the Paroom area of the Panjgur district.

Citing reports, the rights body stated that security forces, accompanied by a state-backed armed group, took him to an undisclosed location while his whereabouts remained unknown.

Paank called on the Pakistani authorities to "immediately reveal Azizullah's whereabouts; ensure his safety; release him if he is being held unlawfully or present him before a competent court; and conduct an independent investigation to hold those responsible accountable."

"Enforced disappearance is a serious violation of interna-



tional human rights law and must end," the rights body stressed.

In a separate incident on the same day, another civilian, Umer Jan Baloch, was subjected to enforced disappearance from the Chitkan Bazaar area in Panjgur. Paank cited witnesses who said that Umer was forcibly taken from his shop by personnel associated with Pakistani security forces.

"Since the incident, there has been no official information regarding his whereabouts or legal status, causing extreme distress to his family, who are extremely concerned for his safety," the

rights body noted. Meanwhile Baloch Voice for Justice (BVJ) on Wednesday strongly condemned the repeated enforced disappearance of a civilian, Ahmed Mengal, from Khuzdar district in Balochistan, while calling on human rights organisations to intervene to ensure his immediate and safe release. According to the BVJ, personnel of Pakistani forces and intelligence agencies allegedly detained Mengal from his shop in the Jakharabad area of Khuzdar on May 26 and transferred him to an undisclosed location. Since then, his whereabouts remain unknown.

Beijing seminar reflects China's push to reinterpret Islam along party lines: Report

ROME, JULY 1

A recent seminar in Beijing underscored the evolution of China's Sincisation of Islam — a campaign which requires religious groups to align their doctrines, customs and moral values with Chinese culture. Increasingly, the initiative has shifted beyond cultural adaptation to become a political programme that expects religious leaders to internalise and promote Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) doctrine, according to a latest report.

The prominence of Chinese President Xi Jinping's thought throughout the training reflects the extent to which the process has evolved. Islam is being reinterpreted through a political lens, while religious leaders are being trained to guide the faithful in line with the party's ideological framework, a report in the Italy-based online magazine 'Bitter Winter' detailed. "The latest training programme for imams and Islamic teachers, held from



May 10 to 16 at the Central Institute of Socialism in Beijing, offered another glimpse into the direction China expects Islam to take. The event was presented as a seminar on the Sincisation of Islam, yet the curriculum focused almost entirely on Xi Jinping's political thought. The Quran appeared only as a distant backdrop, while the real focus was on consolidating ideological loyalty," the report mentioned. "The opening speeches set the tone. Participants were told to study Xi Jinping's views on religion, absorb "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Charac-

teristics for a New Era", and cultivate what officials called the correct understanding of the nation, ethnicity, history, culture, and religion. The language echoed the formula now used across all officially recognised faiths: religious leaders are expected to guide believers toward identification with the state, the Party, and the narrative of national rejuvenation," it added.

According to the report, the training was less a discussion of Islamic theology and more an exercise in political indoctrination. The seven-day programme featured lectures on Xi Jinping

Cultural Thought, the CCP's approach to religious governance, and the construction of a unified national identity. "Forty-five imams and Islamic educators from across China attended. Their task was to learn how to reinterpret Islam in ways that reinforce the Party's priorities. The emphasis on governance according to law referred not to Islamic jurisprudence but to the regulatory framework that places all religious activity under state supervision," it stated. The report noted that the trend reflects a broader effort to reshape all religions into vehicles for a state-approved cultural identity.

The closing ceremony reinforced the same message: "Islamic clergy must contribute to China's modernisation and to the project of national unity." While the Party's rhetoric permeated every aspect of the event, the report said, the training was presented as a patriotic duty, with participants reminded that "their role is to guide believers toward loyalty to the state."

US detains three Cubans after Rubio action

WASHINGTON, JULY 1

Three Cuban nationals, including a former employee of a Cuban government-linked organisation sanctioned by the United States earlier this month, have been taken into federal custody after Secretary of State Marco Rubio terminated their legal status, the State Department said. State Department spokesperson Tommy Pigott said the three were apprehended by federal agents this week after Rubio revoked their legal status. According to the department, Carlos Antonio Lloga Dominguez, his wife and their son are now in federal custody pending removal from the United States. The department alleged that Lloga Dominguez "spent more than a decade working as a foreign subversive for the Communist Cuban regime's premier influence and intelligence front group in the United States."

It said he spent more than 10 years employed by the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the People (ICAP) and "has continued to maintain ties to the transnational communist subversion network throughout his time residing in our nation."



India Targets Recycling 16,000 Ships in 10 Years
NEW DELHI:

India aims to recycle nearly 16,000 ships over the next decade, and the country has announced a financial commitment of USD 8 billion to support the growth of the shipbuilding and ship recycling sectors, Union Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said on Wednesday. According to an official statement, India and the European Union have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation in sustainable ship recycling, with both sides expressing confidence in the progress made in facilitating the inclusion of Indian ship recycling facilities under the European Union Ship Recycling Regulation (EU-SRR). During discussions between Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sonowal and European Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy, Jessika Roswall, the two sides reviewed the ongoing audit and compliance process for Indian ship recycling yards, seeking recognition under the EU regulatory framework, it added.

Sensex rises over 440 points, Nifty closes above 24,000; IT stocks cap gains

Financial, auto and FMCG stocks powered the rally, while weakness in IT shares and concerns over a weak monsoon kept investors cautious.

Benchmark equity indices ended higher on Wednesday, with the Sensex gaining nearly 444 points and the Nifty reclaiming the 24,000 mark, as buying in financial, auto and consumer stocks outweighed losses in information technology shares. Falling crude oil prices, easing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and optimism around an India-US trade agreement supported investor sentiment, although concerns over a weak monsoon continued to limit gains. The BSE Sensex rose 443.97 points, or 0.58%, to close at 76,922.64. The NSE Nifty50 gained 140.10 points, or 0.59%, to settle at 24,005.85. Financials, auto and consumer goods stocks led the advance, while IT stocks remained under pressure. Lower crude oil prices also



improved the outlook for inflation and India's current account, lending support to domestic equities. The broader market also ended in positive territory. Nifty 100 gained 0.60%, Nifty 200 rose 0.55%, Nifty 500 advanced 0.50%, Nifty Midcap 50 climbed 0.69%, Nifty Midcap 100 gained 0.34% and Nifty Smallcap 100 rose 0.36%. India VIX, the market's fear gauge, fell 2.62%. Among sectoral indices, Nifty Realty emerged as the top performer, gaining 3.58%, followed by Nifty FMCG, which rose 2.08%, and Nifty Media, up 2.07%. Nifty

lost 0.54% and Nifty500 Healthcare declined 0.39%. **TOP GAINERS AND LOSERS** Among Sensex stocks, Eternal surged 5.71%, followed by Asian Paints, Hindustan Unilever, Adani Ports, Mahindra & Mahindra, State Bank of India, Kotak Mahindra Bank, UltraTech Cement, Maruti Suzuki, Axis Bank, ITC, Reliance Industries, Bharti Airtel, BEL, Bajaj Finance and Bajaj Finserv. On the other hand, HCL Technologies fell 3.46%, Tech Mahindra declined 3.06%, Tata Consultancy Services dropped 2.55%, Infosys lost 1.51%, Larsen & Toubro fell 1.24%, Tata Steel slipped 1.59% and HDFC Bank edged lower by 0.28%. Despite the positive close, investors remained cautious over the weak progress of the southwest monsoon. Market participants fear that a prolonged rainfall deficit could hurt agricultural output, rural demand and corporate earnings in the coming quarters. The Indian rupee also

weakened 0.6% against the US dollar to 95.2475, tracking losses in Asian currencies ahead of remarks from the US Federal Reserve Chair and amid uncertainty over US-Iran negotiations. **WHAT TO EXPECT?** Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said that te domestic markets entered H2CY26 on an optimistic footing as multiple headwinds began to abate, with the anticipated US-India trade agreement, easing Middle East tensions, and benign oil prices emerging as the key drivers of positive sentiment. "The recovery was broad-based with an outperformance of large caps due to a favourable valuation and an expectation of a partial reversal of FPI sentiment after the last two years of outflows. While near-term sentiment remains constructive, markets are likely to stay data-dependent, with investors balancing improving domestic fundamentals against evolving global macroeconomic and geopolitical developments," he added.

IndiGo's new budget-friendly 'Lite' fare for cabin baggage flyers takes off July 15

IndiGo has introduced a new budget-friendly fare called IndiGo Lite for Economy Class passengers. The new option is aimed at travellers who fly with only cabin baggage and do not want to pay for services they do not use.



The airline said IndiGo Lite will be available for booking from July 1, 2026, through its direct channels, including the IndiGo website, mobile app and contact centre. Travel under this fare will begin from July 15, 2026. The new fare will be offered on both domestic and international non-stop flights. It will be available for one-way, return and multi-city bookings, and can be booked for both adults and children. According to the airline, the fare is designed for passengers travelling with only cabin baggage. By paying only for the services they use, customers can have greater control over their travel costs. Announcing the launch on X, IndiGo said, "Travel smart. Travel Lite. Meet IndiGo Lite – a fare designed for those who carry less, wait less, and do more." The airline believes the new fare will appeal to passengers looking for a simpler and more affordable travel option. Meanwhile, at the time of writing, shares of InterGlobe Aviation, IndiGo's parent company, were trading 0.25% lower at Rs 5,355.50 on Wednesday.

NLC INDIA CMD PRASANNA KUMAR MOTUPALLI CONFERRED EINSTEIN WORLD RECORDS

NEYVELI, JULY 01:

Shri Prasanna Kumar Motupalli, Chairman and Managing Director, NLC India Limited (NLCIL), was conferred the prestigious Einstein World Records Recognition in appreciation of his exemplary and visionary decision to introduce free bus transportation for school students studying in Neyveli Township, a welfare initiative that has significantly benefited thousands of students and their families. The recognition was presented on 30th June 2026 at A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Hall, Neyveli by Dr. J. Monica Roshinee, Co-Founder of Einstein World Records, in the presence of the Functional Directors of NLC India Limited, senior officials, teachers, and students from NLCIL schools. The initiative, introduced under the leadership of Shri Prasanna Kumar Motupalli,

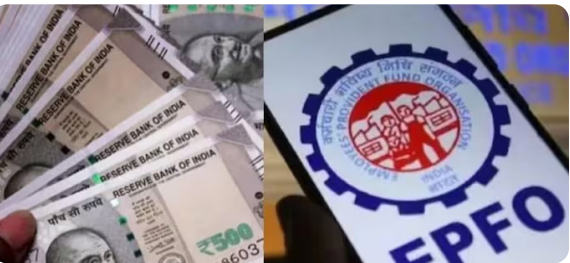
in August 2024 has transformed the daily commute of school children by ensuring safe, timely and cost-free transportation to educational institutions across Neyveli Township. The initiative has not only eased the financial burden on families but has also enhanced accessibility to quality education. A touching testimony was shared by a girl student of NLC Girls Higher Secondary School, Block 11 during the function, who expressed that the free bus service had brought significant economic relief to her family while ensuring that she reached school safely and on time every day. Her heartfelt words reflected the positive impact of the initiative on thousands of students across the township. Speaking on the occasion, a teacher from NLC Girls Higher Secondary School, Block-11, observed that the availability of free transportation has encouraged many parents, par-



ticularly those with girl children, to admit their daughters in Neyveli schools with greater confidence, thereby promoting girls' education and educational inclusiveness. Reading the citation, Dr. J. Monica Roshinee, Co-Founder of Einstein World Records, stated that the recognition was being conferred in appreciation of a socially impactful decision that has directly benefited thousands of children. She remarked that NLC India Limited is fortunate to have such a vision-

ary Chief Executive Officer whose leadership reflects compassion, commitment and concern for society. Addressing the students, she encouraged them to dream big, remain ambitious and aspire to become transformational leaders like Shri Prasanna Kumar Motupalli. Accepting the recognition, Shri Prasanna Kumar Motupalli stated that nearly 30,000 school children are pursuing their education in Neyveli Township, a number that exceeds the employ-

ment strength of NLC India Limited itself. He noted that the consistently outstanding academic performance of students from Neyveli schools stands as testimony to the unwavering commitment of the teachers, the hard work of the students and the strong support extended by parents. He encouraged the students to continue striving for excellence, set higher goals and achieve even greater milestones in life. Dedicating the recognition to the entire NLC India family, Shri Prasanna Kumar Motupalli said: "This recognition is not an individual achievement but the outcome of the collective commitment of the entire NLC India family. Every meaningful initiative becomes successful only through the wholehearted support of my colleagues on the Board, our employees, teachers, officers, workmen and their families. I gratefully dedicate this recognition to all of



EPFO extends online service outage till July 2: What does it mean for members?

EPAs part of the upgrade, members will not be able to submit fresh claims through the EPFO portal during the maintenance period. The organisation has also temporarily stopped the processing of claims while the migration work is underway.

12.00 am on July 2. **ONLINE CLAIM SERVICES REMAIN UNAVAILABLE** As part of the upgrade, members will not be able to submit fresh claims through the EPFO portal during the maintenance period. The organisation has also temporarily stopped the processing of claims while the migration work is underway. EPFO has clarified that members who had already submitted their claims before the maintenance began do not need to file them again. Those claims will be processed once the upgraded system becomes operational.

WHY IS EPFO UPGRADING ITS SYSTEM? According to EPFO, the upgrade is intended to improve the overall experience for members. By consolidating its database and updating its software applications, the retirement fund body hopes to speed up claim processing, improve service delivery and strengthen the security of its systems. The organisation has apologised for the temporary disruption and thanked members for their patience while the work is being completed. **WHERE TO SEEK HELP** Members who need assistance during the outage can contact the EPFO call centre by dialling 14470. If the migration work is completed as scheduled, all online claim-related services are expected to become available again from 12.00 am on July 2, 2026. **MAINTENANCE PERIOD EXTENDED ONCE AGAIN** EPFO is carrying out a planned database consolidation and software upgrade to improve its claims processing system. The organisation says the exercise is aimed at making its services quicker, more efficient and more secure for members. The maintenance was initially scheduled to end on June 28, with online services expected to return on June 29. However, the timeline has now been revised once again. The latest notice says the maintenance work will continue until 11.59 pm on July 1, and services are expected to be restored from

Sharath Chandra Maroju Named HMA President

HYDERABAD, 1ST JULY 2026



The Hyderabad Management Association (HMA), an affiliate of the All India Management Association, has at its Annual General Meeting elected Mr. Sharath Chandra Maroju as its President for the term 2026 to 2027. He assumes office in July 2026, bringing to the role more than two decades of leadership across engineering, sustainability, and enterprise. Mr. Sharath Maroju is the Founder and CEO of Syndic Engineers, a Hyderabad-based firm focused on energy and sustainable environment solutions. Since co-founding the company in 2016, he has built a practice spanning EPC consulting and project solutions across power, water and wastewater, air pollution, and chemical treatment for industries as varied as pharma, cement, sugar, distillery, ethanol, steel, FMCG, and biotechnology. An award-winning entrepreneur and innovator, Mr. Sharath Maroju was conferred the FTCCI Excellence Award in Science and Engineering by the Chief Minister of Telangana. He has filed a patent for a sustainable solution that generates green hydrogen from pharmaceutical wastewater, and serves on the Board of Governors

of the Board of Technical Education instituted by the Government of Telangana. He holds a Master's in Thermal Engineering from JNTU, a Micro Master from IIM Bangalore, certification as a Chartered Engineer from the IEI, an ADBA from the London School of Business and Finance, and a law degree from Kakatiya University. He is also a Chartered Arbitrator (CIArb) under the Royal Charter, London, and a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt certified by MSMSE, Government of India. Setting out his vision for the term, Mr. Sharath Maroju said: "I am deeply honoured to lead the Hyderabad Management Association at a moment when management itself is being reshaped by technology, sustainability, and a new generation of leaders. My agenda for the year ahead rests on three commitments, to Renew the association's foundations, to Reimagine how we engage our members and the

wider community, and to Rise as a centre of management excellence for the city and the region. I look forward to working with our members, partners, and the AIMA family to make this a defining year for HMA." Mr. Sharath Maroju's professional journey includes earlier leadership roles at Kirloskar Oil Engines Limited, Thermax Limited, Mitsubishi in the United Kingdom, and Flexible Mobility in Singapore and Malaysia. A keen writer with a long-standing interest in literature and Indian classical music, he is the author of several books on sustainability and engineering, including "Green Hydrogen as an ESG Imperative", "Industrial Wastewater Remediation", "Rubbish to Revenue", and "Carbon Capture to Toner", alongside numerous articles and publications on the circular economy, ESG, and sustainable engineering. Beyond his professional work, he serves as Trustee of the VSMILE Foundation, a philanthropic trust dedicated to women's empowerment and girl child education. The Hyderabad Management Association extends its congratulations to Mr. Sharath Maroju and looks forward to a year of renewed purpose and growth under his leadership.

MEIL and Analog Bring Physical Intelligence to India

HYDERABAD, INDIA | JULY 1, 2026:



Megha Engineering & Infrastructures Limited (MEIL) and **Analog** today announced a strategic partnership to deploy Physical Intelligence across India. Physical Intelligence is the capacity of machines to perceive, understand, and act within the real world. Not through rigid programming. Through continuous learning. Building a living model of the world that grows more intelligent with every interaction. This partnership brings that capability to India at scale. MEIL brings the reach. Analog brings the intelligence. Together, they will work across infrastructure, mobility, industrial systems, public safety, urban transformation, and intelligent operations. The announcement also marks a deepening of the technology relationship between India and the United Arab Emirates. PV Krishna Reddy, Managing Director of MEIL, said: "Infrastructure has always been the foundation of progress. The future of infrastructure is intelligent, connected, and adaptive. That is exactly what this partnership builds. We are proud to work with Analog to bring Physical Intelligence to India." Alex Kipman, Founder and CEO of Analog, said: "India is one of the most important technology opportunities in the world. The engi-

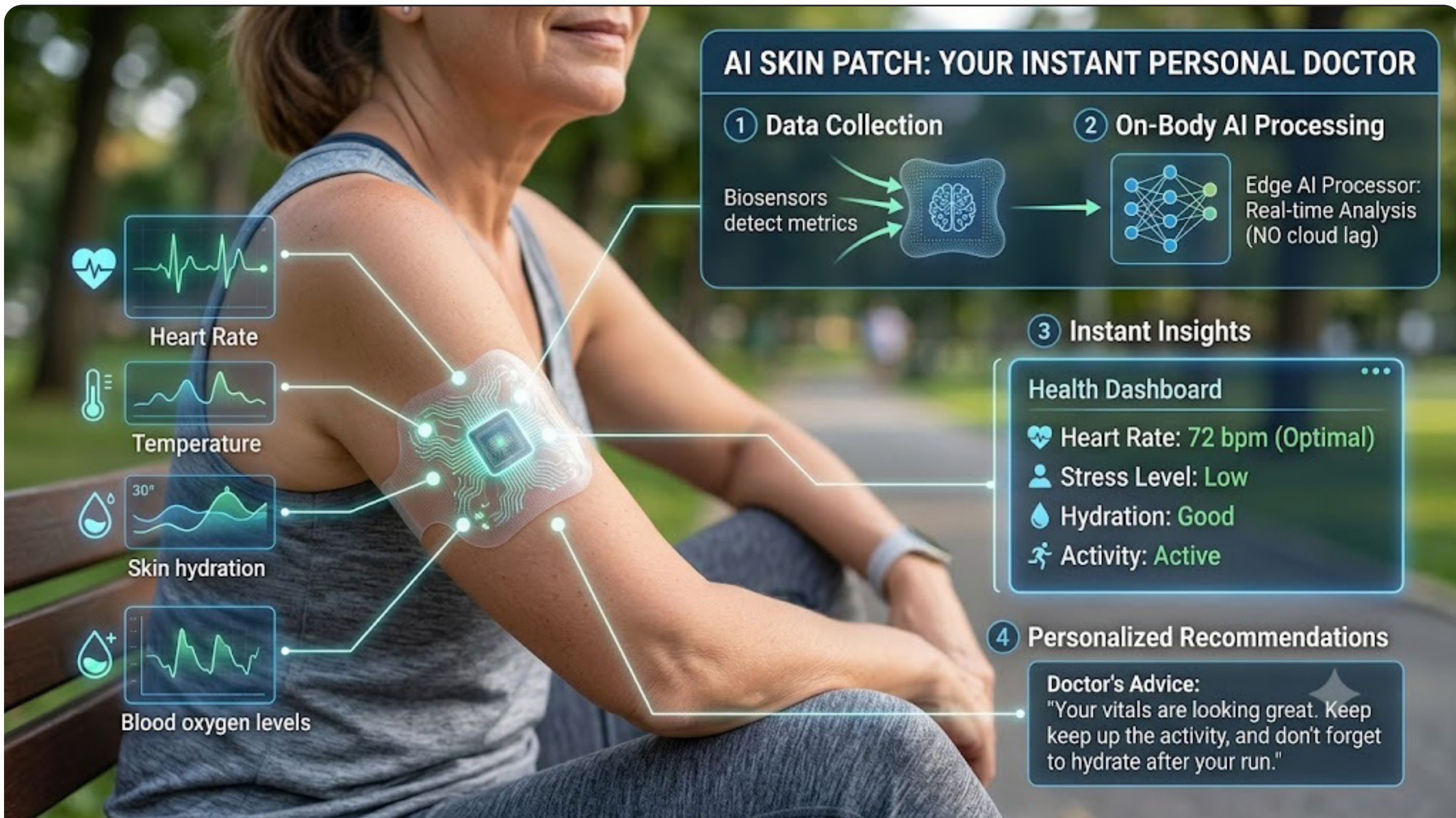
neering talent here is extraordinary. The infrastructure ambition is extraordinary. The entrepreneurial energy is extraordinary. Physical Intelligence belongs in this moment. And MEIL is the right partner to help us build it. Together, we are building a future without limits." The partnership will advance deployments across intelligent infrastructure and mobility, smart urban systems, advanced sensing and operational intelligence, robotics and spatial computing, industrial transformation, public safety, and AI-enabled real-world environments. Beyond deployments, the collaboration will invest in long-term capability creation, talent development, and ecosystem building in India. The announcement reinforces Hyderabad and Telangana's position as a leading destination for advanced technology investment and builds on Analog's presence in India following the signing of foundational agreements at the Telangana Rising Global Summit. About MEIL Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Limited (MEIL)

is one of India's fastest-growing infrastructure and engineering conglomerates, headquartered in Hyderabad, Telangana. Over the last three decades, it has built a reputation for delivering large-scale, complex, and critical projects across irrigation, energy, transportation, hydrocarbons, and manufacturing, with operations both in India and internationally. Focused on technical excellence and community impact, MEIL brings expertise in tunnels, ports, highways, water systems, power, and heavy engineering. Its projects emphasize quality, timely delivery, and environmental responsibility, creating durable infrastructure that supports sustainable development. About Analog Analog is a company born from the belief that intelligence belongs in the real world. The company is building a living fabric of Physical Intelligence that connects people, places, and things into one continuously learning and self-reinforcing world model. Headquartered in Abu Dhabi with lead investment from G42, Analog partners with governments and global enterprises to design systems that see, think, and act within the physical world. From intelligent cities and autonomous infrastructure to immersive cultural experiences and robotics, Analog is creating technology that amplifies rather than limits what it means to be human.

FSSAI Flags Red Bull, PepsiCo, Sting

The FSSAI issued notices to six energy drink brands -- Red Bull Energy Drink, PepsiCo's Adrenaline Rush Energy Drink, Reliance Consumer Products' Campa Energy Drink Gold Boost, Sting Energy Drink, Hell Energy and Coca-Cola-backed Monster Energy. In a post on Instagram, the food regulator said it had issued notices to these brands claiming to be energy drinks for violations related to branding and promotional claims. The FSSAI has not notified any specific standard for products classified as "energy drinks" or similar beverages. It alleged that the brands marketed their products using descriptors such as "energy drink" on branding and labelling despite the absence of such a notified category. It further clarified that the food category system under its regulations is intended for classification purposes and not for product naming or labelling. The food regulator also objected to certain functional and therapeutic claims associated with such products.

Coca-Cola-backed Monster Energy. In a post on Instagram, the food regulator said it had issued notices to these brands claiming to be energy drinks for violations related to branding and promotional claims. The FSSAI has not notified any specific standard for products classified as "energy drinks" or similar beverages. It alleged that the brands marketed their products using descriptors such as "energy drink" on branding and labelling despite the absence of such a notified category. It further clarified that the food category system under its regulations is intended for classification purposes and not for product naming or labelling. The food regulator also objected to certain functional and therapeutic claims associated with such products.



AI Skin Patch Brings the Doctor to Your Skin

Tiny wearable performs AI-powered health analysis in milliseconds without the cloud

In a major breakthrough that could transform the future of healthcare and wearable technology, researchers at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Molecular Engineering (UChicago PME) have developed an innovative skin-like artificial intelligence (AI) computing patch capable of analyzing health data directly on the human body. Unlike existing wearable devices such as smartwatches, which typically send data to external servers for analysis, this revolutionary patch performs complex AI computations within milliseconds on the device itself.

The development marks a significant step toward creating intelligent wearable and implantable medical devices that can monitor, interpret, and respond to health conditions in real time without relying on cloud computing or wireless communication. The findings have been published in the prestigious journal Nature Electronics.

A New Generation of Smart Wearables

Modern wearable devices—including fitness bands and smartwatches—have become increasingly sophisticated in monitoring health metrics such as heart rate, oxygen saturation, physical activity, sleep quality, and even electrocardiogram (ECG) signals. However, despite these capabilities, the majority of data processing still occurs outside the device. Typically, health information collected by wearables is transmitted through Bluetooth or internet connections to smartphones or cloud-based servers where artificial intelligence algorithms analyze the information. While effective in many situations, this process introduces delays that may prove critical during medical emergencies. The new AI skin patch eliminates this bottleneck by performing all essential computations directly on the wearable device. This "edge computing" approach enables instantaneous analysis, reducing response times from seconds to mere milliseconds. For life-threatening conditions such as ventricular fibrillation—a dangerous heart rhythm disorder—even a few milliseconds can make the difference be-

tween life and death.

Developed Through a Collaborative Scientific Effort

The breakthrough is the result of a collaborative effort between researchers at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Molecular Engineering and Argonne National Laboratory. The team succeeded by developing advanced manufacturing techniques that allowed organic electronic components to be printed directly onto flexible, skin-like materials. This achievement overcomes one of the biggest challenges in wearable electronics—building high-performance computing systems that remain flexible enough to stretch, bend, and move naturally with the human body.

According to Sihong Wang, Associate Professor of Molecular Engineering at UChicago PME and co-senior author of the study, the goal extends far beyond improving wearable devices.

"The future that we're trying to realize is to make wearable and implantable devices smarter. It's helping people have a personal, instantaneous doctor integrated into their devices."

Making Electronics Behave Like Human Skin

For several years, Wang's laboratory has focused on creating electronics that mimic the flexibility and softness of biological tissues. Traditional silicon chips are rigid and fragile, making them unsuitable for direct attachment to the body's constantly moving surfaces. Human skin stretches, twists, and bends thousands of times every day. To solve this problem, the research group previously developed several flexible electronic technologies, including:

- Stretchable transistor arrays
- Flexible electronic circuits
- Stretchable OLED displays
- Skin-compatible electronic materials

The latest project builds upon these earlier innovations by integrating artificial intelligence directly into stretchable electronics.

The result is a wearable computing platform capable of staying in close contact with human tissues while continuously processing health information.

Neuromorphic Computing Inspired by the Human Brain

One of the most remarkable aspects of the new technology is its use of neuromorphic computing. Unlike conventional computers that process data using standard digital logic, neuromorphic systems imitate the structure and function of the human brain.

These systems rely on networks of interconnected electronic components that behave similarly to biological neurons and synapses, allowing them to perform AI tasks efficiently while consuming very little power.

For wearable medical devices, neuromorphic computing offers several important advantages:

- Faster decision-making
- Lower energy consumption
- Continuous learning capability
- Compact hardware
- Real-time processing

The researchers sought to create a stretchable neuromorphic computing circuit capable of analyzing health signals while remaining flexible enough to move with the body.

Organic Electrochemical Transistors: The Core Technology

At the heart of the AI skin patch lies a special class of electronic devices known as organic electrochemical transistors (OECTs). Unlike conventional silicon transistors used in computers and smartphones, OECTs process information using both electrical currents and ions moving through a gel-like electrolyte. This unique operating mechanism closely resembles how biological neurons communicate. Even more importantly, each transistor possesses its own memory because the electrolyte retains information over time. This allows the devices to function similarly to brain synapses, which strengthen or weaken their connections as learning occurs. Instead of simply switching on and off like traditional transistors, OECTs can simultaneously process and store information. This combination of computing and memory significantly improves efficiency for AI applications.

Overcoming Major Manufacturing Challenges

Although organic electrochemical tran-

sistors offer enormous potential, manufacturing them at large scale proved extremely difficult. Flexible substrates cannot tolerate the high temperatures and harsh chemicals commonly used in conventional semiconductor fabrication. Additionally, the gel electrolyte used inside the transistors behaves almost like a liquid. Without careful control, neighboring transistors can merge together, creating electrical short circuits and rendering the device unusable. The research team had to rethink traditional manufacturing methods. According to Wang, one of the biggest questions was whether these materials could be adapted for photolithography, the standard patterning technique used across the microelectronics industry.

A New Polymer Gel Solves the Problem

The researchers developed an entirely new polymer gel capable of changing its properties when exposed to ultraviolet (UV) light. During manufacturing, the UV light hardens the gel into precisely defined microscopic structures while preserving the flexibility required for wearable electronics. This innovation allowed the team to fabricate an astonishing 10,000 organic electrochemical transistors per square centimeter, equivalent to approximately 64,500 transistors per square inch. Such transistor density represents a major leap forward for flexible electronics and makes practical AI computing on wearable devices possible.

Engineering AI in Physical Materials

While software developers typically think of artificial intelligence as mathematical algorithms, building AI directly into hardware presents a completely different challenge. According to Zixuan Zhao, graduate student at UChicago Computer Science and co-first author of the study, every neural network weight becomes a physical material rather than simply a numerical value. Each electronic component has its own variability, manufacturing imperfections, and physical limitations. The challenge was designing AI hardware capable of maintaining computational accuracy despite these unavoidable characteristics.

Successfully overcoming these limitations

demonstrates that advanced neural networks can function reliably within flexible electronic materials.

Real-Time Heart Rhythm Analysis

To evaluate the performance of their AI computing array, the researchers focused on one of medicine's most urgent cardiovascular emergencies—ventricular fibrillation. During ventricular fibrillation, chaotic electrical activity causes the heart to stop pumping blood effectively. Without immediate treatment, the condition can rapidly become fatal. Current treatment usually involves delivering a powerful electrical shock to reset the heart rhythm. However, scientists have proposed a more precise alternative that tracks abnormal electrical waves as they travel across the heart and delivers small corrective pulses before the abnormal rhythm spreads. The major obstacle has always been computation speed. Electrical wavefronts move across heart tissue within milliseconds. Sending information to remote servers for analysis simply takes too long. The new AI patch addresses this problem by processing data directly where it is collected.

As Wang explained:

"This is a situation where it's not feasible to have remote computing. It just takes too long. But if you have a computing device that can do the analysis within the body, it could be possible."

Outstanding Accuracy Under Real-World Conditions

The research team tested the stretchable transistor array using cardiac mapping data obtained from a donated human heart. The AI system successfully identified the location of dangerous electrical wavefronts with an impressive 99.6 percent accuracy. Even more remarkably, the device maintained this high level of performance while stretched to more than one and a half times its original length. This demonstrates that the electronic components continue functioning reliably despite significant mechanical deformation—an essential requirement for wearable and implantable medical devices.

Predicting Heart Attack Risk

Beyond monitoring heart rhythms, the researchers also evaluated the AI array's ability to estimate an individual's risk of suffering a heart attack.

The neural network analyzed multiple health indicators simultaneously, including:

- Cholesterol levels
- Blood sugar measurements
- Maximum heart rate
- Electrocardiogram (ECG) readings
- Personal medical information

Using these combined inputs, the system achieved an overall heart attack risk prediction accuracy of 83.5 percent. While additional development is needed before clinical use, the results demonstrate the potential for wearable AI systems to provide continuous personalized health assessments.

Toward an Integrated Intelligent Health Platform

The researchers envision the stretchable AI computing array as only one component of a much larger intelligent healthcare ecosystem.

Future versions of the technology may combine:

- Advanced biosensors
- Stretchable wireless communication systems
- On-body artificial intelligence
- Drug delivery mechanisms
- Real-time medical alerts

Such integrated systems could continuously collect physiological information, analyze it instantly, detect abnormalities, and even initiate therapeutic responses without requiring human intervention.

Instead of merely tracking health data, wearable devices could actively participate in disease prevention and treatment.

A Glimpse Into the Future of Personalized Medicine

The AI skin patch represents a significant milestone in the evolution of wearable healthcare technology. By moving artificial intelligence directly onto flexible electronic devices, researchers have demonstrated that complex medical analysis no longer needs to depend on remote servers or cloud computing.



Women's T20 World Cup

Have beaten England twice in knockouts, not foreign territory for us: Wolvaardt



LONDON: South Africa captain Laura Wolvaardt said the side head into their Women's T20 World Cup semi-final against England, to be played in front of a packed crowd at The Oval on Thursday, buoyed by past knockout wins over the hosts, as they chase a third successive final appearance. "We've been able to beat England twice in knockout phases in World Cups, so it's not foreign territory for us. We can beat anyone on the day. So, trying to think back to those tournaments, what we did well in those semi-finals, what sort of mindset we were in. But I think this is a team that really is able to rise to the big occasions, so, hopefully everyone's at their best tomorrow," said Laura in the pre-match press conference on Wednesday. South Africa, runners-up in 2024 and 2023 editions, qualified as the second-placed team from Group A, while England have dominated the competition with five straight wins.

Kane's brace helps England overcome Congo 2-1, seal last 16 spot



ATLANTA, JULY 1

Skipper Harry Kane led from the front and scored twice to help England fight back from a goal deficit at half-time to overcome Congo 2-1 in a Round of 32 match at the Atlanta Stadium on Wednesday and set up a last 16 clash with Mexico. This is the first time in the World Cup since 1986 that the Three Lions have come back to win a match after trailing by a goal at half-time, surviving a huge scare to progress to the Round of 16. Kane found the back of the net in the 75th minute with a header and then unleashed a blistering shot into the roof of the net in the 86th minute as England showed resilience to recover from a goal down after Brian Cipenga scored his first international goal for Congo DR ahead in the seventh minute. After Germany and the Netherlands crashed out of this World Cup in the knock-out stage, it seemed England could

join them in returning home early as they trailed by a goal past the hour mark. They did create many chances in the second half but were thwarted by Congo goalkeeper Lionel Mpsi, who pulled off a few brilliant saves and kept Congo's hopes alive till late into the match. But Kane was not done and topped his magical performance with two fine goals. He beat Lionel Mpsi with a well-placed header from substitute Anthony Gordon's cross from the left following a ball in from Declan Rice. The England captain then put the 1966 champions into the next round with his second goal, rocketing a shot into the roof of the net after receiving the ball from Anthony Gordon and advancing into the area. This was Kane's 13th World Cup finals goal and his fifth of this North American campaign. Earlier, DR Congo were off to a confident start as they surged to an early lead with Cipenga scoring his maiden goal. Ci-

penga, who produced the assist for Axel Tuanzebe's goal that secured World Cup qualification against Jamaica, did one better with an early strike. England tried to launch many attacks as they dominated possession, but could not get past the Congo defence and goalkeeper as they went into the half-time with their backs to the wall. It was a tough time for England, but they did not lose patience in a period in which Kane was brought down inside the penalty box, but the referee did not award them a penalty. At the start of the second half, Mpsi made a double save, first beating out Jude Bellingham's shot to the near post, then pushing out the rebound with assistance from Chancel Mbemba. Marcus Rashford got into a similar position as Brian Cipenga for the Congo DR goal, but fired into the side-netting after getting clear in the area. However, Kane then changed the outcome of the match by scoring twice in just over 10 minutes to seal victory.



Wimbledon: Gauff escapes past Sierra into 3rd round with three-set victory

LONDON, JULY 1

Seventh seed Coco Gauff of the United States staged a remarkable comeback, winning six straight points in the final-set tiebreak to secure a hard-fought three-set victory over Sloana Sierra in a gripping battle in the Ladies' Singles second round at Wimbledon on Wednesday. Argentina's Sierra pushed Gauff to the limit, nearly pulling off an upset before the 22-year-old American fought back to win the match 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 in a victory after 2 hours and 8 minutes and reached the third round at the All-England Club. Gauff's resilience shone through in the pitched battle fought on No.1 Court as she advanced to the next round. Sierra has played Gauff twice in the season so far, and things have progressively become more difficult for the American each time. She had gotten progressively more comfortable with the daunting prospect of playing the two-time Grand Slam singles champion, and that was evident in the scoreline. After winning just two games in their first-ever meeting at the United Cup in January, Sierra pushed Gauff to the brink at the Internazionali BNL d'Italia in Rome, holding a 3-0 final-set lead before

losing six of the last seven games. This turned out closer on Wednesday. Trailing 5-3 in the final set-- and 7-4 in the subsequent deciding tiebreak -- Gauff won six straight points in the thrilling conclusion to claim a thrilling victory in 2 hours and 8 minutes. Despite losing in three tense sets to Anastasia Potapova last month at Roland Garros, Gauff's latest final-set heroics continued a trend for her on the biggest stages. She is now 22-7 in three-set matches at Grand Slams in her career. Earlier, world No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka survived a spirited fightback from American McCartney Kessler to book her place in the third round of Wimbledon, recovering from 5-2 down in the second set and saving four set points before sealing a hard-fought 6-1, 7-6(9) victory. Sabalenka will now face former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko. Ostapenko delivered one of the day's strongest performances, defeating Croatia's Antonia Ruzic 6-2, 6-0 in just 66 minutes. The Latvian wiped away memories of her error-filled first-round win over Harriet Dart, in which she had 13 double faults. She hit an impressive 34 winners against just 10 unforced errors.

Mohun Bagan SG look to stay in title with win over NorthEast



- Telangana Swimmers Shivani Karra and Vritti Agarwal Felicitated
- Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan Congratulates State's Swimming Stars

HYDERABAD, JULY 1

Telangana Government Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan felicitated Telangana swimmers Shivani Karra and Vritti Agarwal at his chamber in the State Secretariat on Wednesday, recognising their outstanding achievements in swimming. Congratulating the athletes, Jayesh Ranjan said it was a matter of pride that Shivani Karra has been selected to represent

India at the 12th Asian Age Group Swimming Championships 2026, to be held in Bangkok. He also praised Vritti Agarwal for her exceptional performance at the 79th Senior Aquatic Championships 2026 held in Ahmedabad. Gold in one freestyle event, Silver in another, and Bronze in the 400m, 800m, and 1,500m freestyle categories, showcasing her outstanding talent. She also set a new national record and Best Indian Performance in the 800m freestyle, clocking 9:05.47, surpassing the 15-year-old national record set by Richa Mishra in 2011. Jayesh Ranjan described the achievement as remarkable and highly commendable. The felicitation ceremony was attended by Telangana Swimming Association Secretary Umesh, coach Ayush Yadav, and other officials.

Don't think I was utilised properly in last year's Tests in England

MUMBAI, JULY 1

India's seam bowling all-rounder Shardul Thakur has said he was under-utilised during last year's Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy in England, adding that he remains determined to play international cricket again. Thakur, 34, appeared in the Tests in Leeds and Old Trafford, scoring 1, 4, and 41 runs while bowling just 27 overs across the two matches and taking two scalps. "I 100 per cent desire to play for India again. At the back of my mind, it's always there. Even if you're dropped or discarded, I think

hope is a very strong word. "As long as hope is alive, everything is possible. It's very hard to comment on why I may have missed out on a few selections. But after the 2024-25 season, the kind of season I had, I think I could have played a few more games and literally made a difference. When I played in England, I don't think I was utilised properly. In batting, yes, it was my mistake that I played a loose shot in Leeds. "But in Manchester, I batted beautifully, I would say, because it was overcast, the ball was swinging, and there was one length from where the

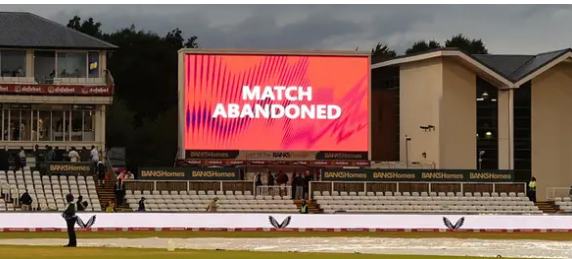


ball was hardly bouncing. I survived that spell, and India still put up a very, very strong total in the first innings. Then the pitch became flat, and we were also able to save the game,"

1st T20I: Series opener between India and England called off after first innings

CHESTER-LE-STREET, JULY 1

The first T20I between India and England was abandoned without a result on Wednesday night as heavy rain came pouring down before the home side could start its reply to the visitors' 189/7 in 20 overs at the Riverside Ground on Wednesday. The ground staff brought out the covers and applied them across the square as rain started soon around the time the players walked off the ground at the end of the 20th over of the Indian innings. The downpour became strong soon after and continued unabated as the players from both sides waited. They waited till 9 pm local



time, the cut-off for a five-over game. The umpires finally decided that the match could not restart and called it off. The two captains walked out of their respective dressing rooms and shook hands before going back in. Earlier, thanks to half-centuries from skipper Shreyas Iyer and Abhishek Sharma, along with a late surge from Shivam Dube, India overcame slight drizzle and a

gloomy evening to post 189/7 in 20 overs. On a not-so-easy pitch, Iyer hit his first fifty as India's T20I captain -- his knock of 68 came off 47 balls, laced with six fours and a six. Abhishek, meanwhile, hit 59 off 24 balls studded with six fours and four sixes. Dube applied the finishing touches by hitting 42 not out off just 21 balls, including two boundaries and three sixes.

Wimbledon: Sabalenka survives Kessler scare, sets up blockbuster third-round

LONDON, JULY 1

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka survived a spirited fightback from American McCartney Kessler to book her place in the third round of Wimbledon, recovering from 5-2 down in the second set and saving four set points before sealing a hard-fought 6-1, 7-6(9) victory on Wednesday. Sabalenka will now face former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko. Ostapenko delivered one of the day's strongest performances, defeating Croatia's Antonia Ruzic 6-2, 6-0 in just 66 minutes. The Latvian wiped away memories of her error-filled first-round win over Harriet Dart, in which she had 13 double faults. She hit an impressive 34 winners against just 10 unforced errors. Sabalenka, on the other hand, felt relieved to win in straight sets after Kessler significantly raised her game in the second set. "Incredible level in the second set from her," Sabalenka said in her on-court interview. "She really tested me today, and I'm really happy to pass the test. She really stepped in; she played super aggressively. It felt like whatever decisions she made, they worked for her." After losing the first set, Kessler changed the match with fearless attacking play. The American, who won last year's Nottingham grass-court title, often charged the net and won 11 of 15 net points in the



second set. She aimed for her third career victory over a Top-10 player and her first against a reigning World No. 1. Serving for the set at 5-3, Kessler had two set points, but Sabalenka responded with her usual aggression to keep herself in the match. They produced a thrilling tiebreak where neither player managed to gain a two-point lead from the third point onward. Kessler had two more set points at 7-6 and 8-7, but Sabalenka saved them with a service winner and a brilliant forehand volley, respectively. Although Kessler fought off two match points, the Belarusian finally secured victory with her 32nd winner of the afternoon. Sabalenka shared the mantra she repeated to herself during the intense final mo-

ments. "Stay low and put the pressure back on her," Sabalenka said. "And maybe you'll be lucky enough to get this set." This win also highlighted Sabalenka's impressive composure in tiebreaks. She improved her 2026 tiebreak record to 9-2 after ending 2025 with a 22-3 mark, while extending her Open Era record to 21 consecutive Grand Slam tiebreak victories. A thrilling third-round matchup awaits. Sabalenka leads the head-to-head against Ostapenko 3-1, but Ostapenko won their most recent encounter, a 6-4, 6-1 victory in the 2025 Stuttgart final. This will also be their first matchup on grass, where Ostapenko has two titles, while Sabalenka is still in search of her first title on that surface.

Brook is the 'front-runner' for Test captaincy after Stokes'

CHESTER-LE-STREET, JULY 1

Former England skipper Eoin Morgan has listed Harry Brook as the front-runner to take over the Test captaincy following Ben Stokes' retirement, adding that he would look to get a different white-ball skipper if the right-handed batter is handed the top role. Brook is currently England's white-ball captain and was the vice-captain in Tests when the side lost the recent three-game series to New Zealand by 2-1. "I think you can coach all three formats of the

game. We've seen it with India, with Australia. The thing I don't like, though, is having one captain across all three formats - and that creates a problem for England. "I think there's possibly only one candidate (for the Test job) in that changing room, and that's Brook - unless they go back to Joe Root. Brook is the front-runner for me, and I would look elsewhere for the white-ball captaincy. "I think there are more options to give the white-ball captaincy within the side... candidates like Phil Salt, Sam Curran, and an outside pick



like Will Jacks," said Morgan ahead of the broadcast of the first T20I between England and India at the Riverside Stadium. England fast bowler Mark Wood said he was proud of how Stokes was an asset for the side, both as a player and captain. "I haven't spoken to him (Stokes) yet. Obviously, a lot has happened, so you let things settle down a bit. I'm just very proud of Ben, as a friend growing up here in Durham - we came through the academy together. "The man that he is, I can't speak highly enough of him. You, as all ex-players, or play-

ers who play with him, and they can't believe how loyal he is, and how good he was to play with." With India expectedly not giving a debut to teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, former head coach Ravi Shastri felt he should have been given a go. "I think India need to give him a burst as quickly as possible. 'I'd have given him a shot in (recent series in) Ireland, and even against England - unleash him early! Especially when he's in his sort of form, he's red hot - and he's got a damn smart cricketing brain."





Sreeleela Reveals MBBS Shoot Struggle

Actress Sreeleela has opened up about balancing her medical studies with her film career while shooting for the energetic track “Viral Vayyari.” On the occasion of Doctor’s Day, the actress shared how she remained committed to her MBBS dream even amid a busy shooting schedule. She recalled how she used to rush between sets and examinations. Calling medicine her lifelong passion, Sreeleela revealed that she always ensured her academics took priority. Speaking about shooting for the energetic song “Viral Vayyari,” she shared, “Being a doctor has always been my dream and my biggest passion. Even while shooting for Viral Vayyari, I made sure my MBBS exams came first. I’d finish my shoot, rush back for my practical’s, and return to the set whenever I got a break. It wasn’t easy, but pursuing medicine has always meant the world to me.” The peppy dance number ‘Viral Vayyari’ is from the Telugu romantic entertainer ‘Junior.’ The song composed by Devi Sri Prasad features Kireeti Reddy and Sreeleela. “Junior,” written and directed by Radha Krishna Reddy, is produced by Sai Korrapati through Vaaraahi Chalanita Chitram. Shot simultaneously in Telugu and Kannada languages, the film also featured Genelia D’Souza and V. Ravichandran in important roles. The film was released on 18 July 2025. “Junior narrates the story of a young man named Abhi (played by Kireeti), who works under Vijay Soujanya (Genelia Deshmukh). His life takes an unexpected turn when he uncovers a shocking truth linked to her and his father’s past, changing everything he thought he knew.” Up next, Sreeleela is set to be seen in a strong slate of upcoming films spanning different languages and film industries. Her upcoming projects include the Telugu action film “Ustaad Bhagat Singh,” the Tamil drama “Parasakthi,” and a Hindi romantic musical directed by Anurag Basu, in which she will share screen space with Kartik Aaryan.



Sigma Dubbing WRAPPED UP

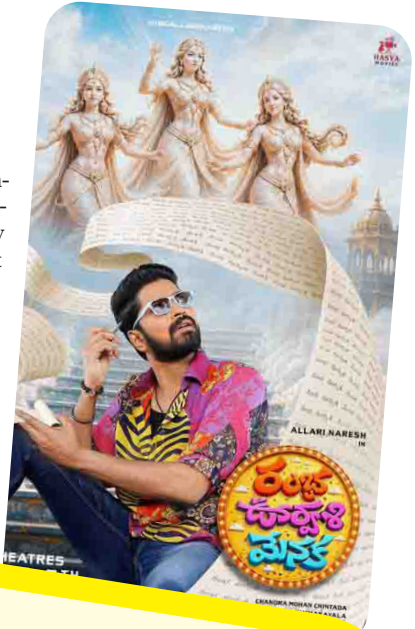
Actor Sundeep Kishan, who plays the lead in director Jason Sanjay’s eagerly-awaited Tamil film ‘Sigma’, has now announced that dubbing for the film has been wrapped. Taking to his social media timelines, Sundeep Kishan wrote, “And Dubbing Wrapped for #Sigma .. July 31st release ...” The film unit had wrapped up the film’s shooting in December last year. Lyca Productions, the firm

producing the film, had taken to its social media timelines then to announce the wrapping up of shooting. It had said, “#SIGMA shoot wrapped. Get ready for the Teaser on 23.12.25 at 5 PM.” The makers had also shared a video clip consisting of some Behind the scenes visuals and the team finally posing for a final wrap up picture. The film is among the most eagerly awaited releases in Tamil as Jason Sanjay, who is making his debut as a director with ‘Sigma’, is the son of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and well known actor Vijay. Sources say Catherine Tresa will be seen dancing alongside Sundeep Kishan for a vibrant track, composed by music director Thaman, in this film. The foot-tapping number, which will be a highlight of the film, has been shot on an expansive and colourful set. Actor Sundeep Kishan’s striking first-look poster that was unveiled recently captured him in

a rugged, contemplative avatar. The poster set the tone for a high-octane adventure set against the backdrop of a treasure hunt brimming with mystery, wit, and adrenaline. The story follows a maverick protagonist- a true Sigma, who charts his own path, breaking conventions and rising through grit and resilience. Blending edge-of-the-seat heist thrills with humor and heart, ‘Sigma’ will offer a refreshing new flavor to mainstream cinema, the sources point out. The film boasts of a fine technical unit. It includes cinematographer Krishnan Vasant, editor Praveen K.L., and art director Benjamin M. The multilingual project, filmed simultaneously in Tamil and Telugu, has traversed an exciting range of landscapes- from the bustling streets of Chennai and rugged terrains of Salem to the breathtaking Thalakona forests and exotic locales of Thailand. Sources say that post-production work of the film is now on at a brisk pace and that the movie is set for release on July 31 this year.

Allari Naresh’s RUM FL: Fantasy Humor

The makers of Allari Naresh’s 65th film made his birthday even more special by unveiling the film’s title, Ramba Oorvasi Menaka, and releasing a spectacular first-look poster that offers a peek into its fantasy and humorous world. The creatively designed poster showcases Allari Naresh in a peculiar avatar, seemingly caught between the heavens and earth, surrounded by celestial beings and endless scrolls. The poster teases an imaginative storyline where fantasy meets comedy, setting the stage for an out-and-out entertainer. Directed by Chandra Mohan Chintada, the film is being bankrolled by Razesh Danda and Nimmakayala Prasad under the banners of Annapurna Studios and Hasya Movies. The technical department features Raam Reddy as cinematographer, and Chaitan Bharadwaj as music director. Ramba Oorvasi Menaka has made an impressive first with the first look poster. The film is slated for atrical release worldwide on September 4th.



After Jana Nayagan, Eyes On Toxic



KVN Productions is one of the noted production houses in Kannada, which is slowly venturing into Telugu and Tamil as well. The production house is going through its share of lows, but they are still the producers in discussion. Today, they released new content about Toxic, which raised many doubts about censorship. Interestingly, it is also sparking a debate about producers’ courage in creating such content. Firstly, their production venture, Jana Nayagan, faced censorship issues. The team faced hurdles in obtaining a censor certificate. And then, there could be political reasons behind it, but the other films, for instance, a Kannada film KD – The Devil, also suffered similar problems. The producers must have been a little careful in their choices so they don’t attract the censor’s heat. Now, Yash’s Toxic has already created quite some buzz with the content that has been released earlier. The team is trying to convey that the content will be bold and explosive, but even adults are feeling that it is getting a little overboard, which must be looked into. Having said that, KVN productions had the courage to bankroll triple-digit projects that carry this much censorship risk. If Toxic also attracts the censor troubles, the producers must seriously look into the choices they are making to ensure a smooth and seamless viewing experience to the audiences by avoiding unnecessary controversies.

Adivi Sesh Calls G2 His Most Special

Actor Adivi Sesh has shared insights into why his upcoming film “G2” holds a special place in his career. In an exclusive quote shared with IANS, he said that returning to shoot ‘G2’ in July is exciting, as the film has now reached an important stage in its making. He explained that each shooting schedule so far has carefully contributed to shaping the story, and the team is now closer to fully realizing their creative vision. Adivi shared, “Coming back to G2 in July feels exciting because we’re entering a crucial stage of the film. Every schedule has helped shape this story with a lot of care, and we’re now getting closer to bringing our vision to life. The love that audiences have shown the Goodachari franchise has always pushed us to think bigger and work harder, and that’s the approach we’ve carried into G2.” “There’s still a lot of work ahead, but I’m looking forward to getting back on set with the team. I know fans have been waiting for this film, and we’re doing everything we can to make that wait worthwhile,” he added. The upcoming spy action thriller also features Emraan Hashmi and Wamiqa Gabbi in key roles. “G2,” the sequel to the much-acclaimed Goodachari, is directed by Vinay Kumar Sirigineedi, who makes his directorial debut. He had previously worked as an editor and assistant director on the film “Major.” The project was officially announced by Adivi Sesh in December 2018, but its progress was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Speaking about the film, Adivi had earlier said, “We’ve spent a lot of time building this film carefully, and now we’re entering the next stretch. Every schedule has taken us a step closer to telling the story the way we envisioned it. I’m looking forward to getting back on set in July because this phase includes some of the most important portions of the film.” “The response to the Goodachari franchise has always motivated us to raise our own standards, and that’s exactly what we’re trying to do with G2. I know fans have been waiting patiently, and I hope the finished film rewards that patience.”



Kajal Recalls Teasing Sister Nisha

Actress Kajal Aggarwal revealed how she used to tease her sister Nisha Aggarwal during childhood. Taking to the Stories section of her official Instagram handle, the ‘Singham’ actress shared that in order to torment Nisha, she used to tell her that they had picked her up from a department store from across the street, and if she does not behave herself, they would return her. “When we were younger, I used to torment my sister by saying, we picked her up from the department store across the street and will return her with a credit note if she misbehaves (sic),” Kajal wrote on the photo-sharing app. Kajal’s post comes in response to a fun question asked by a user to Nisha. During a question-and-answer session, an Instagram user asked Nisha, “Why do you look so similar to kajal aggarwal?” To this, she gave a witty reply saying, “I mean... that’s usually how siblings work, right? Same parents, same genes... a little resemblance is expected! @kajalaggarwalofficial” On the professional front, Kajal will be seen sharing the screen with Shreyas Talpade in the upcoming drama, ‘The India Story: Slow Poison’. Speaking about her next, she shared that the movie reflects the fears and concerns of several parents in today’s time. Kajal shared a statement, saying, “The India Story is a film with a strong social message at its core. As a mother, the story resonated with me on a very personal level because it reflects the fears and concerns that many parents carry today.” Presented by Zee Studios in collaboration with MIG Production & Studios, ‘The India Story: Slow Poison’ has been written by Sagar B. Shinde. The courtroom drama is expected to get a worldwide release in theatres on July 24 this year. It will be available in multiple languages, including Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil.