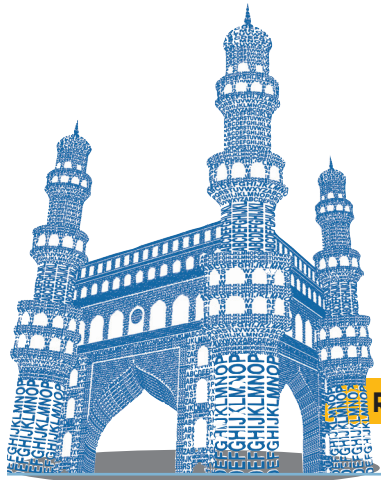




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Beyond E20: Is India Ready for Flex-Fuel?

OPINION 06

KCR Consoles Peddi's Family

SPECIAL 02



JPSC Panel Members Quit Amid Recruitment Exam Row



Ranchi: All three members of the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) resigned on Sunday amid continuing protests over alleged irregularities in JPSC and Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC) recruitment examinations. The resignations of JPSC members Ajita Bhattacharya, Anima Hans-

da and Jamal Ahmed were accepted by Jharkhand Governor Santosh Gangwar, the Lok Bhavan said in a statement.

The resignations came after more than two weeks of protests by students and aspirants demanding action over alleged irregularities in recruitment

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >



Bonalu festivities held with RELIGIOUS FERVOUR ACROSS HYD

Hyderabad, Aug.9: Bonalu festivities were celebrated with great fervour across Greater Hyderabad on Sunday, with major temples witnessing a steady influx of devotees from the early hours. Thousands of women thronged temples to offer Bonam, Odi Biyyam, sarees and other traditional offerings to the presid-

ing deities. The city wore a festive look, reverberating with drumbeats, performances by Potharajus and devotional trances of Shivasattulus. As part of the celebrations, Endowments Minister Kon-da Surekha, along with Transport Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar, MP Anil Kumar Yadav and TPCC president Mahesh

Kumar Goud, visited several historic temples across the city. They visited the Lal Darwaza Sri Simhavahini Mahankali Temple, Charminar Bhagyalakshmi Temple, Shalibanda Akkana Madanna Mahankali Temple, Gaulipura Mahankali Mateshwari

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BHATTI VISITS UC BERKELEY ENERGY CENTRE

Discusses pathways to meet renewables commitments and State's unique energy transition

HYDERABAD, AUG 9

Telangana Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka at the India Energy & Climate Center at the University of California, Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy on Sunday. Telangana Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka at the India Energy & Climate Center at the University of California, Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy on Sunday. Telangana Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka today visited the India

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >



Stones, Shoes Hurlled at Mamata's Convoy



Kolkata, Aug 9: Tensions escalated in West Bengal's Halishahar on Saturday when former Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo Mamata Banerjee's convoy was confronted and attacked by protesters while she was travelling to meet the family of party worker Birju Keot, whose death in police custody has triggered a political controversy. According to reports, protesters surrounded Banerjee's vehicle and staged a demonstration, smearing mud on the car and throwing water bottles, shoes and other footwear at the convoy. Stones were also allegedly hurled at the vehicles as the situation turned tense. The demonstrators raised slogans against the TMC leader and reportedly called her a

"thief" and the "queen of dacoits" during the protest.

The incident followed the death of Birju Keot, a TMC worker whose family has alleged that he died after being assaulted while in police custody. The allegations have intensified political tensions in the area, with the family demanding accountability and an independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death. Banerjee had travelled to Halishahar to meet Keot's bereaved family amid growing anger and controversy over the custodial death. However, before she could reach the family's residence, protesters blocked her convoy, resulting in a brief stand-off.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

BJP DARES RAHUL TO HEAR STUDENTS' VOICES

HYDERABAD, AUG.9

Telangana State BJP President N Ramchander Rao on Sunday asked when is Rahul Gandhi coming to Hyderabad with his 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' to hear the problems of students who were deceived by his own party government.

Rao, in a statement here, said Rahul Gandhi travelling across the country, especially to NDA-ruled states, claiming to be the voice of students and youth through his so-called 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' program. But when will this 56-year-old self-proclaimed custodian of the youth come to Telangana and listen to the cries of students suffering under his own Congress government, he asked.

The future of nearly 20 lakh SC, ST, BC and EBC students in Telangana is in jeopardy because of the Congress government's failure to clear



long-pending fee reimbursement due, he said and alleged that thousands of students are unable to pursue higher education or take up employment because their original certificates have been withheld by educational institutions due to non-payment of fee reimbursement arrears.

"Is Rahul Gandhi unaware of this or does his concern for students end wherever the Congress is in power," Rao questioned and pointed out

Ramchander Rao participated in BONALU CELEBRATIONS

Hyderabad, Aug.9: Telangana State BJP President N Ramchander Rao on Sunday participated in the Bonalu festival celebrations organized at various temples in Tarnaka, Lalaguda (Lalapet), and Malkajgiri areas this morning and performed special pujas to the Goddess. As part of the Bonalu celebrations, Rao visited the Sri Nalla Pochamma Temple in Tarnaka, Sri Pochamma Temple in Lalapet, Sri Ujjaini Mahankali Temple in Malkajgiri, and Sri Katta

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

that the Telangana High Court has repeatedly questioned the state government over its failure to clear fee reimbursement arrears. Educational institutions have stated

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >



Varuna Yagam at Nagarjuna Sagar on today

CM Revanth Reddy to attend Purnahuti

TELANGANA 04

BJP will turn Bhagya Laxmi Temple into a Golden Temple: Bandi Sanjay

HYDERABAD, AUG.9

Union Minister Bandi Sanjay on Sunday stated that if the BJP comes to power in Telangana, the Charminar Bhagyalakshmi temple would be transformed into a 'Golden Temple.' He pledged that the Bonalu festival would be celebrated with unprecedented grandeur and lavish funding every year. Bandi Sanjay participated in the Lal Darwaza Simhavahini Bonalu celebrations.

Speaking on the occasion, he lashed out at the Congress government and the BRS leaders. Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister Bandi Sanjay said, he visited the Charminar Bhagyalakshmi temple during the GHMC elections, BRS Working President KTR mocked at him and added that



the same KTR was seen visiting the same temple. He alleged that During the BRS regime, former CM KCR deceived the public by promising Rs 20 crore for the development of the Lal Darwaza and Ujjaini Mahankali temples but failed to deliver and added that KCR has a history of deceiving not just the people, but the deities as well while claiming that it is because of these lies the public defeated his party.

Claiming that the Congress government allocated only Rs 5.50 lakh for the Lal Darwaza Bonalu festival, Sanjay wondered as to How could such a meager amount possibly suffice for a temple visited by a lakh devotees? "They allocated Rs 33 crore for Ramzan festival but provided only Rs 20 crores for temples belonging to Hindus, who constitute 80 percent of the population. The Funds are not being released for the

development of the Simhavahini temple simply because they fear it might upset MIM party leader Owaisi. It is the old city Hindus, who pay taxes and why should there be any objection to our own money being allocated for our needs?" Will I be branded a communalist just for asking questions? The Old City undoubtedly belongs to the Hindus. Awakening Hindu society is my priority. Leaders, who criticize me ought to engage in some introspection," he said.

He called upon the Hindus, to get united and bring the Congress and BRS parties to their knees. He said that the Hindus must grasp the spirit of activism and spirituality embodied by Gen-Z and added that the Gen-Z should rise up for the Hindu unity.

CEMENTING DREAMS WITH SUPERIOR STRENGTH.

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

3 TIMES BETTER

KCR Consoles Peddi's Family

HYDERABAD, AUG 9 :

Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) president and former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on Sunday visited the residence of late former Narsampet MLA Peddi Sudarshan Reddy at Nallabelli in Warangal district and offered his condolences to the bereaved family. Peddi Sudarshan Reddy, a senior BRS leader and close associate of KCR, passed away on July 31 after suffering a cardiac arrest.

Paying floral tributes to the portrait of the deceased leader, the BRS chief consoled the grieving family members and assured them of his personal and party support.

During the visit, KCR handed over

a financial assistance cheque of ₹2.25 crore to the family. Of this, ₹1 crore each was allocated to Sudarshan Reddy's two children, while ₹25 lakh was set aside for deposit into a bank account dedicated to the welfare of the late leader's mother, Amruthamma.

Reiterating his commitment, KCR stated that the party would closely monitor the children's education and overall well-being.

The former Chief Minister's visit drew a massive gathering of BRS leaders and cadre to Nallabelli. A minor commotion broke out near the residence due to the sudden surge in crowds, prompting police intervention to clear the pathway and manage convey movement.



CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

examinations conducted by the JPSC and JSSC.

The development also comes against the backdrop of the state government agreeing to cancel the 14th JPSC preliminary examination, along with the JPSC Backlog 2023 and JPSC Backlog 2025 examinations. The government has said it would adopt a "two-pronged" approach to address the alleged irregularities and has announced several measures, including the establishment of fast-track courts and the formation of an expert committee to recommend reforms in the examination system.

Government Announces Measures After Talks

The state government announced the measures following the sixth round of talks with representatives of the protesting students on Sunday. Jharkhand Education Minister Sudivya Kumar said a CID investigation would be pursued into the criminal aspects of cases linked to alleged irregularities in the 14th JPSC examination and the 2023-25 backlog recruitments. He said that in cases involving suspected financial irregularities, the Enforcement Directorate would be requested to intervene. The government also announced plans to establish fast-track courts to deal with the cases and said chargesheets would be filed within 90 days. Kumar said the government would constitute an expert committee comprising repre-

JPSC Panel Members Quit Amid Recruitment Exam Row

sentatives from IIT-ISM, IIM and XLRI to examine the existing recruitment examination system and recommend necessary reforms.

The minister also said that the government had proposed the formation of a committee headed by a retired judge to monitor the investigations. However, the protesters rejected the proposal.

Kumar said the government could not accept the students' demand for cancellation of the Combined Graduate Level (CGL) examination as the examination was being conducted under the directives and oversight of the High Court and the Supreme Court.

Students Demand Wider Probe

The protesting students have demanded the cancellation of several recruitment examinations conducted after 2019, including the JSSC CGL, JSSC Junior Engineer (JE) and Post Graduate Teacher (PGT) examinations. They have also demanded a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the alleged irregularities. The students have maintained that they would continue their protest march towards the Jharkhand Assembly on Monday unless their demands were addressed, particularly the

demand for an independent investigation into the alleged irregularities.

The protesters have also called for strict action against those accused in connection with the alleged irregularities.

As part of their demand for greater transparency in the recruitment process, the students have sought disclosure of category-wise cut-offs for Unreserved (UR), Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), Backward Class-I (BC-I), Backward Class-II (BC-II), Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) candidates.

They have also demanded the release of Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) answer sheets and candidates' response sheets so that the examination process can be independently scrutinised.

The continuing agitation has put pressure on the state government and recruitment bodies to address concerns raised by students and restore confidence in the examination system.

CM Soren Promises Justice

Earlier on Sunday, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said the state government would ensure justice in

cases related to alleged irregularities in recruitment examinations. "The youth will receive justice, and those responsible for the irregularities will face the severest possible punishment," Soren said. The Chief Minister also stressed the importance of dialogue in resolving the issue. He said solutions to problems could be found through discussions rather than through the use of force.

Soren's remarks came amid continued protests by students and aspirants demanding action against those allegedly responsible for irregularities in the recruitment process.

Governor Appeals for Dialogue

Jharkhand Governor Santosh Gangwar also appealed to the protesting students and aspirants to resolve their concerns through dialogue. The Governor said the Chief Minister was "very concerned" about the problems being faced by students and urged the protesters to pursue a peaceful resolution to the dispute.

The resignation of all three JPSC members and the government's decision to pursue a CID investigation have emerged as significant developments amid the prolonged agitation. With the government announcing investigations, fast-track courts and an expert committee for examination reforms, attention is now focused on the next course of action by the protesting students and the steps taken by investigating agencies.

SC Collegium Recommends Chief Justices for Four High Courts

New Delhi, August 9: The Supreme Court Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, has recommended new Chief Justices for the Patna, Calcutta, Bombay, and Punjab and Haryana High Courts. The recommendations were made at the Collegium's August 6 meeting and published on Sunday.

Delhi High Court judge Justice V. Kameswar Rao has been recommended as Chief Justice of the Patna High Court. Justice Rao was appointed an Additional Judge of the Delhi High Court in April 2013 and became a Permanent Judge in March 2015. He was transferred to the Karnataka High Court in 2024 and repatriated to the Delhi High Court in July 2025. The recommendations will now undergo the prescribed appointment process.

Bonalu Celebrations in KPHB 3rd Phase: Sacred Reminder—Don't Waste Water, Respect the Divine Element. HMWSSB supports devotees at the temple as blessings flow for all.

MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI, AUGUST 09

The Bonalu festival was celebrated with great grandeur at KPHB Colony 3rd Phase, near the Sri Sri Sri Pochamma Thali Temple. Devotees gathered with reverent hearts to participate in the festivities, bringing with them faith, joy, and a spirit of thanksgiving. The temple surroundings resonated with devotional fervor as the community came together to worship and seek the blessings of Sri Pochamma Thali, whose grace is deeply cherished in the lives of the people.

As part of the celebrations, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) provided drinking water to the devotees at the temple. This thoughtful arrangement ensured that pilgrims and devotees could remain comfortable and refreshed throughout the event, so that they could focus fully on worship and celebration without any inconvenience. In a festival rooted in tradition and community, such service became a meaningful support to those who had come in de-



votion. During the occasion, General Manager Hari Shankar was present along with DGM Trinath Rao, Manager Sunitha, Moosapet circle DGM Chandrasekhar, and Alwyn Circle DGM Srinivas Raju. Their presence reflected not only official support for the festival, but also a deeper spirit of community service flowing alongside faith, showing how devotion and public care can move together for the benefit of everyone.

Speaking at the event, General Manager Hari Shankar requested all devotees not to waste water, emphasizing that in Hindu tradition water is considered sacred. He reminded everyone that water is

among the five essential elements required for human life, and conserving it is therefore both a moral duty and an act of respect toward God's creation. In his message, the call to save water was presented as a reverent responsibility—something that harmonizes daily life with spiritual values.

On this blessed occasion, General Manager Hari Shankar also shared his heartfelt wishes for the celebration, praying that everyone would have a happy Bonalu. He expressed his belief that the blessings of Sri Pochamma Thali would shower upon all of us, bringing peace, protection, and joy to every home as the festival continued in devotion and gratitude.

BHATTI VISITS UC BERKELEY ENERGY CENTRE



FROM PAGE 1

Energy & Climate Center (IECC) at the University of California, Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy. The high-level engagement focused on India's renewable energy commitments, practical pathways to achieve them, the broader energy sector landscape, Telangana's distinctive progress in the clean energy transition, and opportunities for future collaboration.

The India Energy & Climate Center, housed at UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy, leverages the university's world-class expertise in clean energy technology and policy, Silicon Valley innovation ecosystems, and California's advanced energy experience to support rapid, beneficial transformation of energy systems.

The discussions covered India's ambitious national targets, including the goal of 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030, energy security imperatives and the techno-economic opportunities created by falling clean technology costs. Participants examined implementation pathways spanning policy design, grid modernization, industrial decarbonization, storage integration and equitable transition strategies.

Special attention

The State has advanced a comprehensive Green Power Policy aimed at adding substantial renewable capacity, attracted significant investment in green power projects, expanded solar and other renewables, and pursued innovative models such as women self-

help group-led solar initiatives and farmer-centric schemes under programmes like PM-KUSUM. Telangana's emphasis on reliable 24x7 power, manufacturing of clean energy equipment, and integration of renewables with industrial growth was highlighted as a distinctive State-level model within India's overall energy transformation. Officials and researchers also explored pathways for future initiatives, including deeper technical collaboration, capacity building for policymakers, joint analysis of sector-specific challenges (power, industry, transport, and climate resilience), and mechanisms to accelerate deployment of clean technologies while strengthening energy security and economic competitiveness.

Stones, Shoes Hurlled at Mamata's Convoy

FROM PAGE 1

Police Intervene

Police personnel rushed to the spot and intervened to bring the situation under control. Security officials subsequently escorted Banerjee's convoy away from the area to ensure her safety and prevent further escalation. Banerjee later alleged that her vehicle had been attacked while she was travelling to meet the family of Keot in Barrackpore, North 24 Parganas. "Large stones were hurled at my car by anti-social elements, right in front of the police. The attack on the vehicle was so severe that if the windows had been open, my head would have been split open," she said.

Banerjee alleged that the attack was serious enough to have caused fatal injuries had the vehicle's windows been open. She also accused the police of failing to take adequate action and alleged that they were "providing protection to the BJP". TMC MP Kalyan

Banerjee described the incident as a "pre-planned attempt to murder". He alleged that BJP workers had hurled large stones at Mamata Banerjee's vehicle while she was travelling to meet Keot's family.

"Stones were thrown to assault Mamata Banerjee... The stones were thrown to kill her. It is an attempt to murder case. Hundreds of BJP workers were there and police were a silent spectator... Of course there was a direction given by the CM Suwendu Adhikari," he alleged.

BJP Denies Involvement

The BJP denied any involvement in the incident and condemned the attack on Banerjee's convoy. BJP West Bengal unit president Samik Bhattacharya said the party did not support stone-pelting, throwing mud or footwear at the former Chief Minister's convoy. He said such incidents tarnished the image of West Bengal and those responsible should face action.

West Bengal minister Ag-

nimitra Paul also condemned the incident and said such behaviour had no place in the BJP's political culture.

While criticising Mamata Banerjee's tenure, Paul said neither the BJP nor the government supported the assault, manhandling or throwing of mud, ink or footwear at political opponents.

"We do not endorse this... If anyone is carrying out such acts while claiming to represent the BJP, they are in the wrong," she said.

Emphasising that Banerjee was both a woman and a senior political leader, Paul said anyone indulging in such behaviour in the name of the BJP was "in the wrong" and should not be associated with the party.

Death of TMC Worker Sparks Controversy

The protest was triggered by the death of Birju Keot, a Trinamool Congress worker who died after falling ill while in police custody. Keot had been arrested on charges of corruption and extortion

and was subsequently shifted to a hospital after his health reportedly deteriorated. He was later declared dead at the hospital.

Police have maintained that Keot suffered a heart attack. However, his wife has alleged that he was brutally tortured while in custody and has accused the police of assaulting him. The allegations have sparked demands for an independent investigation into the circumstances of his death and intensified the political confrontation between the TMC and the BJP in West Bengal.

The TMC has accused the police of custodial abuse and sought accountability, while the BJP has called for a transparent investigation into Keot's death. The confrontation in Halishahar has added to tensions surrounding the custodial death, with both political parties demanding action while trading allegations over the circumstances leading to the incident.

BJP DARES RAHUL TO HEAR STUDENTS' VOICES

FROM PAGE 1

before the court that dues dating back to the academic year 2020-21 remain unpaid, while estimates placed in different proceedings put the pending amount at around Rs10,000 crore to Rs 12,000 crore. Their careers are being delayed, opportunities are being lost, and families are being pushed into severe financial distress because the Congress government has failed to clear pending fee reimbursement, he said.

Terming Rahul Gandhi as leader of propaganda, BJP state chief said will Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Ra-

hul Gandhi hear the real goonj of Telangana students. He said Rahul Gandhi came to Ashok Nagar during 2023 election and outright lied about a job calendar, guaranteed employment and allowance for unemployed youth in 100 days after Congress coming to power. But all promises remain unfulfilled ever after over two and a half year Congress regime, he lamented.

Rao said if Rahul Gandhi is genuinely serious about 'Chhatron Ki Goonj', he would challenge him to hold the programme in Ashok Nagar itself and face the very youth to whom he made these promises.

RAMCHANDER RAO PARTICIPATED IN...

FROM PAGE 1

Maisamma Temple in Safilguda, where he offered special prayers and sought the blessings of the Goddess. On the auspicious occasion of Bonalu, Rao prayed to the Goddess for the prosperity, health, peace, and

happiness of all the people of Telangana. Extending his heartfelt Bonalu greetings to everyone on this occasion, he wished that every family thrives with happiness, peace, and prosperity through the divine blessings of the Goddess.



Bonalu festivities held with RELIGIOUS FERVOUR ACROSS HYD

FROM PAGE 1

Temple and Mahakaleshwara Devi Temple at Mir Alam Mandi. Temple officials and priests accorded a traditional Purna Kumbham welcome to the dignitaries. The leaders offered silk clothes and Bonam to the presiding deities and participated in special prayers. The priests later offered Vedic blessings and distributed Teertha-Prasad. Meanwhile, other Cabinet Ministers visited various temples across the city and offered silk clothes and Bonam to the presiding deities on behalf of the State



government. Officials from the Endowments, Police, GHMC and Electricity departments worked in coordination to

ensure elaborate security and civic arrangements, enabling devotees to participate in the festivities without inconvenience.

Annadanam on the Occasion of Komatireddy Sai Keerthan Reddy's Birthday

*** Free Breakfast Served to More Than 200 People – Lions Club Leaders and Members Participate in Service Programme**

NALGONDA

On the occasion of the birthday of Mr. Komatireddy Sai Keerthan Reddy, son of PMJF Lion Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, Chairman of Lotus Lap Group of Schools, Hyderabad, Chairman of Komatireddy Manjula Rani Memorial Foundation, eminent educationist and environmentalist, a special service programme was organised on Sunday.

Under the aegis of Lions Club International District 320E, the Lions Club of Nalgonda Greater organised a free breakfast distribution programme at the Government Hospital, Vanasthalipuram, as part of the "Meals on Wheels" initiative.

More than 200 needy people, patients' attendants and visitors to the hospital were

provided with breakfast.

405 Days of Continuous Service

The free breakfast service has now completed 405 continuous days, and Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy congratulated the Lions Club leaders and members for maintaining the programme consistently.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Gopal Reddy said:

"Service should not be limited to a single day or occasion. It should become a continuous commitment towards society. I sincerely appreciate all the Lions Club members who are working to sustain this noble initiative."

Turn Birthdays and Family Celebrations into Days of Service Dr. Gopal Reddy appealed to families to use their celebrations as opportunities to help the needy.

"On the occasion of our children's birthdays, parents' wedding anniversaries and other family celebrations, we should set aside a portion of



our celebrations to help people in need. Such initiatives can create a culture of compassion and charity within every family."

He further emphasised that parents should encourage children from an early age to understand the importance of sharing, caring and serving society.

"Let us create awareness within our families that a part of our happiness should be shared with those who are

GITAM Scholar Awarded Ph.D. in Mathematics

HYDERABAD

GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, proudly congratulated Dr. Dada Haritha on being awarded the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Mathematics and Statistics.

Dr. Haritha carried out her doctoral research under the guidance of Dr. Krishna Kummari, Assistant Professor, School of Science,

GITAM Hyderabad, and Dr. K. Ramakoteswara Rao, Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Sciences, KL Deemed to be University, Hyderabad.

Her doctoral thesis, titled "A Study on Fixed Point Theory in Generalised Metric Spaces and its Applications," makes a significant contribution to the field of Fixed Point Theory, an important branch of mathe-



matics that plays a vital role in solving complex mathematical problems. The research presents several

novel theoretical results that strengthen existing knowledge in generalized metric spaces and provide a robust foundation for future investigations. The findings are expected to benefit researchers and promote further advancements in mathematics, science, and engineering.

Prof. D. S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor; D.V.V.S.R. Varma, Resident Direc-

tor; Dr. M. Reza, Director, School of Science; and Dr. Jadav Gandesh, Head of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, congratulated Dr. Haritha on her remarkable academic achievement and appreciated her valuable contribution to mathematical research. They wished her continued success in her future research and academic endeavors.

Tribal welfare must balance cultural heritage with development, says Adluri

HYDERABAD

Tribal communities must preserve their deep-rooted bond with forests and their cultural heritage while advancing to the forefront of development, Tribal Welfare Minister Adluri Lakshman Kumar said on Sunday.

The Minister said the State government was according the highest priority to safeguarding the rights and dignity of tribal communities while promoting education, employment, economic empowerment and women's empowerment, alongside protecting their languages, culture and traditions.

He was speaking at a programme organised by the Telangana Tribal Welfare de-

partment at Banjara Bhavan in Hyderabad to mark the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

The government's objective was to ensure that tribal children received opportunities to excel not only within the country but also on the global stage, he said.

"The Telangana government has allocated ₹18,745.16 crore under the Scheduled Tribe Special Development Fund for 2026-27. The funds are being utilised for education, infrastructure, roads, drinking water, electricity, agricultural and land development, skill development and other priority sectors in tribal areas," the Minister said. "Every



tribal village should have a road, every household should have access to safe drinking water, every student should receive quality education, every young person should

acquire a skill, every woman should have an income and every farmer should be able to cultivate his land productively. That is when a budget acquires real meaning," he said.

ABKMS–BMS Union Leaders Meet, says Union Minister Kishan Reddy



HYDERABAD

The Leaders of the Singareni Coal Mines Workers' Unions (ABKMS–BMS) on Sunday expressed their gratitude to the Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy for his initiative in securing the Manuguru PK OC-II Dip Side Extension project for Singareni thereby extending the orga-

nization's operational lifespan by another 50 years. On this occasion, they conveyed their appreciation and assured the union Minister that the entire workforce of the Singareni stands firmly behind him and supports his endeavors.

They also submitted a memorandum to the minister on the occasion and requested that the Koyagudem OC-III and

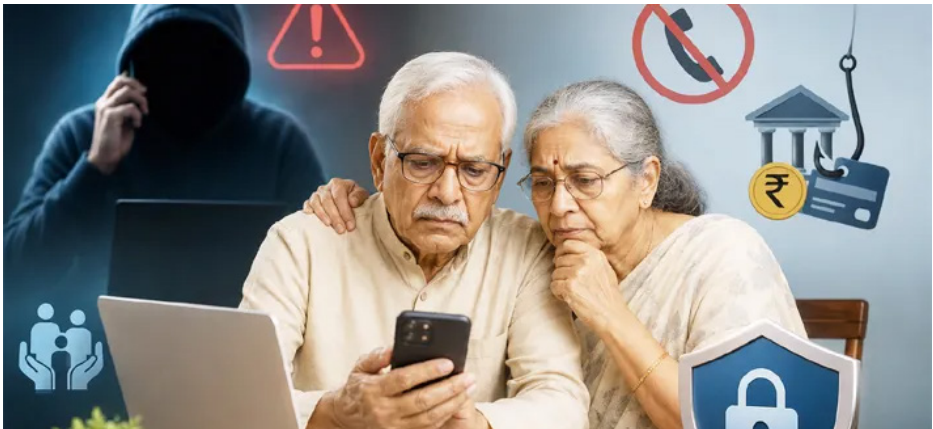
JVR OC-III coal blocks stalled for years also be allocated to the Singareni (SCCL). They explained to the Minister that during the previous BRS government's tenure, the Singareni company was prevented from participating in auctions and added that no new mines were acquired leading to a situation where the coal production is set to drop by approximately 12

million tonnes this year. They clarified that the coal production had not yet commenced in the blocks that were privatized due to issues such as land acquisition hurdles, legal disputes and tribal agency regulations.

They expressed concern that the lack of new mines was leading to the transfer of the workers from the Yellandu region thereby harming local employment and the economy.

They pointed out that the existing infrastructure, machinery and transport systems could be utilized effectively to boost the coal production and strengthen the uninterrupted supply to power plants in South India. They urged that measures be taken to ensure the job security for the workers and employment opportunities for the local population.

The leaders requested the Central Government to conduct a comprehensive review of the current allocations and take immediate action to allocate the two blocks to the Singareni either through re-allocation or re-auctioning following de-allocation if necessary.



Fraudsters Swindled Rs.102 Crore from the Elderly in 19 Months: CP VC Sajjanar

HYDERABAD

The city Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar had urged the elderly to stay alert against different types of cyber scams and added that cyber criminals swindled ₹102 crores from the senior citizens in the last 19 months in the state. He noted that the cyber criminals exploit their fears and naivety to steal their life savings.



He clarified that there was no legal provision for "digital arrest" in the country and added that no government agency or regulatory body would demand money through threats made over phone or video calls. He advised against trusting attractive part-time job offers or online trading schemes promising high returns that are circulated via platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram. He emphasized the importance of verifying whether an investment platform is registered with SEBI before investing and warned against paying additional taxes or fees to withdraw profits.

He also advised people not to share bank details, OTPs, Aadhaar numbers, or PAN numbers with anyone. "It is heartening to note that awareness regarding the cybercrime

is growing among the elderly. They are proactively asking bankers to place limits on their bank transactions to avoid falling victim to fraud. Recently, a retired State DGP requested bankers to limit cash withdrawals via his cheques to a maximum of ₹5,000. This is a commendable step. Everyone needs to exercise similar vigilance regarding the cybercrime. The Bank employees should be immediately alert if senior citizens attempt to withdraw large sums of cash suddenly. They should inquire about the reason for such a large transaction and immediately inform the customer's children or family members. If there is any suspicion that it might be a ploy by the cyber criminals, the transaction should be halted immediately. Such presence of mind and

precautionary measures by the bank staff can protect the elderly from falling prey to cybercrime gangs," he said.

He advised that if anyone receives threats or suspicious calls, they should not panic but immediately call the national helpline number 1930 or lodge a complaint via the www.cybercrime.gov.in portal. He explained that filing a complaint during the 'Golden Hour' immediately after the fraud occurs significantly increases the chances of freezing and recovering the funds. He also urged the bankers to pay special attention to large-value transactions initiated by the elderly customers at their branches. He affirmed that the Hyderabad City Police was steadfastly committed to the safety of the senior citizens at all times. (NSS)

STRONG EPOXY FOR ANY SEASON • ANY REASON

TOLL-FREE NUMBER: 040 45474612

SHORT
TAKES

May Telangana prosper with the Goddess's blessings: Minister Seethakka



HYDERABAD: State Minister Seethakka on Sunday visited the Amberpet Mahankali Temple on the occasion of the Bonalu festival. She offered silk garments to the Goddess on behalf of the state government and performed special prayers. The Temple authorities and devotees accorded a grand welcome to the Minister upon her arrival. Speaking on the occasion, she expressed the hope that the state of Telangana would remain prosperous and peaceful with the blessings of the Goddess. Minister Seethakka stated that she prayed to the Goddess for the state to achieve development across all sectors under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and for the people to live happily and safely. She expressed the hope that the people would celebrate the Bonalu festival with devotion, fervor, and joy. Along with Minister Seethakka, state Government Advisor V. Hanumantha Rao and MLC Balmuri Venkat also visited the Amberpet Mahankali Temple and offered special prayers.

Curtain raiser on Varuna Yagam

- Halfway Through Monsoon, Telangana's Lifelines Still Await Sustained Flows
- Stage set for sacred ritual of Varuna Yagam to be performed at Nagarjuna Sagar
- CM Revanth Reddy to participate as Uttam Kumar Reddy spearheads the ritual
- Hopes pinned on the sacred Yagam to outwit the challenges of El Niño conditions

HYDERABAD/NAGARJUNA SAGAR

Halfway through the southwest monsoon and already into the second week of August, Telangana's two great river lifelines — the Krishna and the Godavari — are still waiting for the sustained and widespread inflows that can put the State's reservoirs, irrigation systems and farmers comfortably through the agricultural season.

The spectre of El Niño, the uneven spatial distribution of rainfall so far and uncertainty over the behaviour of the monsoon during its crucial weeks have left Telangana with little room for complacency. More importantly, the State's water security will depend not merely on how much rain falls within Telangana, but on what happens hundreds of kilometres upstream in Maharashtra and Karnataka, which contain vast portions of the Krishna and Godavari catchments.

It is against this backdrop — somewhere between emerging hope and continuing hydrological anxiety — that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will participate in a special Varuna Yagam to be performed at Nagarjuna Sagar on Monday, August 10. The elaborate Vedic ritual will be led by Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, seeking the blessings of Lord Varuna for abundant and timely rainfall across Telangana as well as the upstream catchments of the Krishna and Godavari, healthy river flows, replenishment of reservoirs and tanks, groundwater recharge and a prosperous agricultural season.



For an Irrigation Minister tasked with managing every available TMC of water through an uncertain monsoon, leading the Varuna Yagam on the banks of one of India's largest reservoirs carries particular significance. The venue itself tells the story of Telangana's present water situation. Nagarjuna Sagar, the massive reservoir straddling the Krishna, is receiving water again. But its enormous vacant space is also a stark reminder of how far the river still has to travel before the State can breathe easy.

El Niño Shadow Over the Remaining Monsoon

The Varuna Yagam assumes added significance because the remaining course of the southwest monsoon is far from certain. Weather assessments reviewed by the Government agencies have raised concern over developing El Niño conditions and the possibility of rainfall becoming increasingly uncertain during the latter part of the season. For Telangana, the danger from an erratic monsoon is not confined to a simple rainfall deficit.

Crops require moisture over their growing cycle and tanks need repeated runoff. The aquifers require sustained recharge and major reservoirs need continuing inflows rather than one or two brief flood pulses. This makes the geographical distribution and timing of rainfall almost as important as the seasonal total. The concern becomes still more pronounced because Telangana does not control the weather over most of the catchment that feeds its two principal rivers.

Telangana's Water Is Made Far Beyond Its Borders

The Krishna basin stretches across approximately 2.59 lakh square kilometre-

tres. Karnataka accounts for roughly 44 per cent of the basin and Maharashtra another 27 per cent. Together, the two upstream States account for more than 70 per cent of the Krishna basin. What happens to the monsoon over the Western Ghats and the Krishna, Bhima and Tungabhadra catchments in Karnataka and Maharashtra therefore eventually determines, to a considerable extent, what Telangana receives at Jurla, Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar. The dependence is equally striking in the Godavari basin. The Godavari basin extends over approximately 3.13 lakh square kilometres, with Maharashtra accounting for nearly 49 per cent. Rainfall over Nashik, Marathwada and other upper and middle Godavari catchments eventually contributes to flows travelling downstream towards Telangana and into projects such as Sri Ram Sagar and Yellampalli. That is why the State Government's water calculations extend far beyond Telangana's administrative boundaries.

Rainfall forecasts, upstream reservoir levels, catchment saturation and river discharges in Maharashtra and Karnataka have to be watched continuously before realistic assessments can be made about Telangana's irrigation availability. If rainfall becomes deficient or erratic across the critical upstream catchments, Telangana can receive normal or even locally heavy rainfall and still find its major river reservoirs short of the water required for the season.

Varuna Yagam

The Varuna Yagam at Nagarjuna Sagar will therefore symbolically be a prayer not merely for rain over Telangana, but for rain over the entire river systems that sustain the State. The flood position at 9 a.m. on Sunday showed substantial quantities of water moving through the upper and middle reaches of the Krishna basin. At Almati, inflows stood at 1,05,332 cusecs, while releases were 86,155 cusecs. Storage was 113.71 TMC against a gross capacity of 129.72 TMC.

Downstream, Narayanapur was receiving around 42,000 cusecs and releasing 18,654 cusecs. At Jurla — effective

tively the gateway to Telangana's principal Krishna reservoir system — inflows had risen to around 80,000 cusecs, while releases stood at 46,543 cusecs. The reservoir held 8.07 TMC against its capacity of 9.66 TMC. The storage at Srisailem had climbed to 179.90 TMC against its gross capacity of 215.807 TMC, leaving approximately 35.91 TMC of vacant capacity. The reservoir where Chief Minister Revanth Reddy will participate and Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy will lead the Varuna Yagam on Monday is still awaiting big inflows. Nagarjuna Sagar held only 145.65 TMC against its gross storage capacity of 312.045 TMC. It consequently still had approximately 166.39 TMC of vacant capacity. Its water level was around 518 feet, compared with a Full Reservoir Level of 590 feet.

The year-on-year comparison is even more telling

On August 9 last year, Nagarjuna Sagar had approximately 310.25 TMC, with the reservoir level at around 589.40 feet — virtually at Full Reservoir Level. On the corresponding day this year, it has less than half that storage.

Why the Yagam Matters Now

That is what gives Monday's Varuna Yagam a significance extending beyond the ceremonial. The State is not praying after the monsoon has failed. Nor is it praying when its rivers have gone completely dry. It is praying at a far more delicate moment — when the rivers have begun responding, but there is still no certainty that the response will be sustained. The ritual is being organised following Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's decision to offer prayers for widespread rains across Telangana, healthy flows in the Krishna and Godavari, replenishment of reservoirs and tanks and prosperity for the farming community. Priests and Vedic scholars associated with the Yadagirigutta Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple, in consultation with the temple Siddhanti, fixed August 10 as the auspicious date. The day-long Vedic proceedings will involve 108 Ruthviks, priests.



Free Medical Camp Draws Good Response in Kothapalli

100 people examined; medicines distributed free of cost

KARIMNAGAR

A free medical camp organised at Kothapalli (H) on Sunday received a good response from local residents, with around 100 people availing themselves of medical screening and consultation. The camp was organised by the Kothapalli Handloom Industrial Cooperative Production and Sales Society Ltd., in collaboration with Relief Prime Hospital, Karimnagar, at the Handloom Cooperative Society building. The camp was conducted from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dr. Srinivas general physical examined the patients and offered medical advice based on their health conditions. Blood pressure and blood sugar tests were conducted as part of the screening, and medicines were provided free of cost to those who required them.

Focus on early detection

Dr. Srinivas said lifestyle-related health problems such as hypertension and diabetes often go unnoticed during their initial stages as they may not produce clear symptoms. He advised people to undergo periodic health check-ups and seek medical attention at the earliest signs of illness. He also emphasised the need to follow medical advice, adopt a balanced diet and make appropriate lifestyle changes to maintain good health and prevent complications.

Healthcare access for handloom community

The organisers said the camp was held with the objective of bringing basic healthcare services closer to handloom workers, their families and residents of the locality. All 100 participants were examined and free medicines were distributed wherever necessary.

Local residents appreciated the initiative by the Handloom Cooperative Society and Relief Prime Hospital and appealed to the organisers to conduct more such medical camps in the future to improve access to healthcare and promote preventive health awareness in the community.

Quit India Movement's 84th anniversary observed at Gandhi Bhavan

HYDERABAD

The Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), in association with the Gandhi Global Family and Gandhi Gyan Pratisthan, organised a grand programme at Gandhi Bhavan on Sunday to mark the 84th anniversary of the historic Quit India Movement.

TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud unfurled the national flag on the occasion. Gandhi Global Family organisations chairman Gonna Rajender Reddy, Ministers Vakiti Srihari, Mohammed Azharuddin, Konda Surekha, Ponnamm Prabhakar and Duddilla Sridhar Babu, MP Anil Yadav and Planning Commission Vice-Chairman Chinna Reddy attended the



programme and visited various exhibits.

The leaders also visited a book exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi and an exhibition of Gandhi statues organised by the Gandhi Trust. The programme was conducted under the leadership of Seva Dal chairman Jitender.

Around 1,500 statues of Mahatma Gandhi and 150 spinning wheels (charkhas) were displayed as part of the event. A special visual presentation highlighted the discipline, courage, bravery and ideals upheld by Mahatma Gandhi and other freedom fighters during the Independence Movement. The large-scale charkha exhibition drew particular attention from visitors.

The Quit India Movement was launched under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi on August 9, 1942, with a call for an end to British rule. It marked a major turning point in India's freedom struggle and gave fresh momentum to the country's demand for independence.

Cyber Crimes, Drugs Now Bigger Challenges Than Naxalism: DGP C.V. Anand

Dr Srinivas Vooradi WARANGAL

State DGP C.V. Anand on Sunday said policing in Telangana has shifted dramatically, with cyber crimes, narcotics, financial frauds and road safety replacing Naxalism as the primary challenges.

During a review of the Warangal Police Commissionerate at NIT Warangal, he said technology is vital to modern policing but should not replace "basic policing." Officials from TGCSB, T-Spark and CID presented data on cyber crime trends and new investigation tools. Recalling his association with Warangal, the DGP said his IPS career began here and his tenure as Warangal Rural SP remains memorable. "During peak Naxalism, every day was dangerous with landmine blasts and attacks. Today's peace is due to the sacrifices of police martyrs," he said.

Flagging cyber threats, Mr. Anand said Telangana lost nearly ₹1,700 crore to cyber frauds last year. He urged people to file complaints immediately to improve chances of recovery and warned against



investment scams promising high returns. He added that Telangana ranked No.1 in the country for controlling cyber crimes in the PM's PRAGATI review. The DGP directed DCPs, ACPs and DSPs to focus on complaint redressal, quality investigations, and court case follow-ups. He stressed that officers must spend more time in the field and stay accessible to citizens.

He also expressed concern over drug peddlers targeting children with substances disguised as chocolates and called for strict action. Educational institutions must play a key role in prevention, he said.

As per the Commissionerate's report, Warangal has 50 police stations. Of 3,758 sanc-

tioned posts, 2,976 are filled and 782 are vacant. Crime registration rose by 10%. Robberies increased from 7 to 29. Cyber cases jumped from 25 to 59, with 119 cases registered in Jan-July 2026 alone. The department also reported 40 job fraud cases and 117 PDS-related cases.

The Commissioner of Police N Swetha noted that inter-state gangs from Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Odisha are entering Warangal by train for chain-snatching and bike thefts. Surveillance is being enhanced with NATGRID support. The DGP praised the 'Nenu Saitham' initiative for public-participation CC camera installation in Nallabally and Parvathagiri areas.

Sajjanar reviews security arrangements at Lal Darwaza Temple

HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar on Sunday inspected the security arrangements at the Lal Darwaza Sri Simhavahini Mahankali Temple in connection with the Bonalu festival.

After inspecting the arrangements, Sajjanar offered prayers to the Goddess and performed special rituals. Speaking on the occasion, he said elaborate security arrangements had been made in and around the temple for 48 hours to ensure the safety of devotees.

He said state-of-the-art artificial intelligence (AI) technology was being used to maintain law and order. AI-enabled cameras are being monitored continuously to identify thieves and chain-snatchers and enable swift police intervention, he said. Sajjanar said around 2,400 police personnel had been deployed for security duties in two shifts. SHE Teams and crime teams had



also been deployed, while picketing points were set up at key locations around the temples to ensure the safety of devotees, he said.

Sajjanar said drones and additional CCTV cameras

had been installed inside the temple premises as well as along the procession routes. A special control room had also been established near the Lal Darwaza Union Bank to monitor security

operations, he added.

Additional CP (Crimes) Srinivas (IPS), Additional CP (Law & Order) Tafseer Iqbal (IPS), Joint CP (Traffic) Joel Davis (IPS), Charminar Zone DCP Khare

Kiran Prabhakar (IPS), Traffic DCP Rahul Hegde, DCP (CAR Headquarters) R. Venkateswarlu, and DCPs Srinivas and Lavanya among others participated in this event.

The Majestic 'King of the Jungle' in Endangered List

(On the occasion of "World Lion Day" on 10 August)

The lions are called the "King of the Jungle" due to their arresting and fearsome personalities, and their powerful roar heard upto five miles away. They are the most majestic of the big cats. Lions represent courage, strength, majesty, and justice. Lions are the only wild cats that live in groups in grasslands and plains. The average male lion weighs nearly 418 pounds, while female lion weighs about 277 pounds. Lion can eat up to 90 pounds of meat in a single meal. The lions control herbivore population and support ecosystems health, with a lifespan of 10 - 14 years in the wild. In India, the Asiatic lion, a symbol of strength in the national emblem.

Depletion of Lion population

Globally, the lion population is said to number between 20,000 and 35,000 only. The African lions has dropped by 43 percent since 2001. The Asiatic lion



population has bounced back to quintupled number of 891 in India, largely because of conservation efforts in the Gir Lion Sanctuary and its habitat management. To celebrate the majestic lion and raise awareness about its critical role in ecosystems, the "World Lion Day" is observed annually on 10 August since 2013. This day highlights urgent needs, conflict with human

populations, prey depletion, climate change, addresses threats like habitat loss, outright poaching and encourages global efforts to protect and preserve lion populations for future generations.

World Lion Day Objectives

Lions are now listed as vulnerable to extinction and hence the immediate conservation efforts are needed to im-

plement by focusing on anti-poaching activities, habitat protection, community involvement, and genetic management for maintaining diversity. India's ongoing "Project Lion @ 2047" aims to secure and manage the growing lion population in the Saurashtra region long term. The main objectives of this day are raising awareness about their economic-ecological importance on lion population, sensitising the people, anti-poaching efforts, habitual production, educational awareness activities, media campaigns, sustainable tourism, fundraising for conservation projects, and the world commitment to save lions for future generations.

The World Lion Day must emphasise the concerns of habitat loss, human-wildlife conflicts, and genetic diversity. We should bring attention to this endangered species by raising funds to protect their populations.

- Prof : Madhusudhan Reddy Burra
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CM: Safe Water, Housing for Every Tribal Family by 2027

Govt to provide value addition and branding to forest produce to benefit tribals:CM
Government determine to expand opportunities for tribal youth by skill upgradation:CM
Govt to promote tourism in tribal areas having enormous tourism potential with extensive greenery and natural landscapes:CM

VIJAYAWADA:

Stating that the coalition government committed to protect the rights and welfare of tribal communities, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu stated that efforts are on to ensure that every tribal family has access to safe drinking water and housing by 2027. He said to prevent people in remote tribal areas depending on traditional methods of carrying patients in dolis, feeder ambulances, 108 and 104 mobile medical units have been arranged. Cell towers are also being established to strengthen digital connectivity in tribal regions. He called upon tribal communities to turn their aspirations into action and make their individual success a part of nation-building.

Addressing International Day of tribals at Ambedkar Kala Vedika in Vijayawada, the Chief Minister said tribal communities proved

that when opportunities are created, they can achieve extraordinary success while preserving Ministertheir culture and traditions. Referring to President Droupadi Murmu, the Chief Minister said her journey from an ordinary tribal woman to a minister and Governor in Odisha and ultimately to the highest constitutional office in the country was an inspiration to every citizen.With Independence day approaching, the Chief Minister urged people to ask themselves what they could contribute to society and the country. Stating that a tribal farmer who produces a better crop, a woman earning through self-employment, a student, teacher, employee, entrepreneur or worker who performs with dedication and excellence is itself contributing to the country, he called upon citizens to work with the spirit of my country, my State, my village and my family, as working for society was the

highest form of patriotism. Every person who works sincerely is an asset to society, he said. The Chief Minister said the State government has allocated Rs 4,764 crore for the comprehensive development of 27.39 lakh tribals in the state.Special focus has been placed through the Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs) on improving living standards, infrastructure, employment, livelihoods and skill development.Road connectivity is being provided to 2,336 tribal habitations on a mission-mode basis. Under the 'Adavi Talli Bata' initiative, roads covering 905 km have been laid at a cost of 48 1,000 crore. The Chief Minister said the Government had laid the foundation for Araku Coffee as a major brand 25 years ago and the product had now grown into a global brand.The Government is encouraging coffee cultivation across another one lakh

acres, while working to transform the agency areas into a major brand destination for commercial crops such as coffee, pepper and turmeric. He noted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had promoted Araku Coffee internationally by presenting it as a gift to the Australian Prime Minister. The State Government is also presenting Araku Coffee to visiting dignitaries and has established an Araku Coffee stall in Parliament. Our aim is to make Araku Coffee one of the best global brands, he added. The Chief Minister said the Government will provide value addition to forest produce from tribal areas and support the entire chain from production to processing and branding. Products such as Seethampeta-turmeric, Ram-pachodavaram- rubber, Parvathipuram- pineapple, honey and palm jaggery will be supported with better processing, branding and marketing.The Chief Minister recalled that

the international airport at Bhogapuram had been named after Manyam Veerudu Alluri Sitarama Raju, honouring the legendary freedom fighter.He said the Dhimsa performance by tribals during the airport inauguration had recently earned a Guinness World Record, providing global recognition to the rich cultural traditions of tribal communities. He also highlighted the shift towards organic cultivation in tribal areas, saying tribal farmers were producing valuable crops through sustainable agricultural practices. The Government is determined to expand opportunities for tribal youth, the Chief Minister said.He announced that 1.5 lakh tribal youth will be provided skill training to help them access employment and livelihood opportunities. Special efforts will also be made to prepare tribal students for competitive examinations. The Chief Minister said 19 MoUs signed on the oc-

casion would benefit around 60,000 people, creating additional avenues for livelihoods and development.He said the Government had established three districts specifically focused on tribal communities, giving them greater administrative priority. The Chief Minister said the Government had earlier brought GO No. 3 to ensure that local people received employment opportunities in tribal areas.He said the order had subsequently been struck down and added that the present Government was examining alternatives to protect employment opportunities for local tribal youth. With extensive greenery, forests and natural landscapes, tribal areas have enormous potential for tourism, the Chief Minister said. The Government will substantially promote tourism in these regions while ensuring that local communities benefit from the opportunities created.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu expressed deep anguish over death of medico Priyanka

directs officials to act tough on those responsible for Priyanka's death
CM orders officials to extend Rs. 20 lakh financial assistance to bereaved family

Amaravati : Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed deep anguish over the death of medico Priyanka, who succumbed to injuries sustained in Rajamahendravaram on August 3.Describing the death of the young medical student as deeply distressing, the Chief Minister said it was particularly painful to see a promising young life, with a bright future ahead, cut short in such a tragic manner. Priyanka received serious injuries when a car driven by a group of youngsters hit her in Rajamahendravaram. She was initially treated in the city hospital and was later shifted to Hyderabad by her family members for better medical care. Despite the efforts, Priyanka died while undergoing treatment.

The Chief Minister had earlier reviewed the incident with district officials and once again spoke to the District Collector and Superintendent of Police to

take stock of the case.The SP informed the Chief Minister that the accused persons responsible for the incident had already been arrested and were in jail. Expressing concern over the loss of an innocent life due to negligence, Chandrababu Naidu directed the authorities to ensure that the accused face stringent legal action under appropriate sections of law.The Chief Minister also directed the officials to extend Rs. 20 lakh in financial assistance to Priyanka's bereaved family. He assured the family of the government's continued support and directed the authorities to provide all possible assistance to them during this difficult time. Expressing his condolences to Priyanka's family, the Chief Minister said the loss of a young medical student was an irreparable tragedy and stressed that those responsible must face the consequences of their actions.

Andhra Pradesh to Get India's First AI-Enabled Smart Street Lighting Network



10.5 LAKH STREETLIGHTS ACROSS 123 BULBS TO BE UPGRADED WITH INTELLIGENT LED TECHNOLOGY

VIJAYAWADA, AUGUST 9: Andhra Pradesh is set to roll out what is being described as India's first AI-enabled smart street lighting project, with the Centre-backed Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) planning to replace nearly 10.5 lakh conventional streetlights across 123 urban local bodies (ULBs) with Individual Light Monitoring (ILM)-enabled Smart LED systems.

The project, being implemented in partnership with the Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration (CDMA) under the Andhra Pradesh Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) Department, will integrate every streetlight with an Individual Light Monitoring controller linked to a centralised control and monitoring system. The technology will enable municipalities to remotely switch lights on and off, monitor energy consumption, detect faults, regulate lighting through adaptive dimming and undertake predictive maintenance. GIS-based asset management, automated alerts and performance analytics will also help civic bodies monitor the lighting network in real time.

According to EESL estimates, the initial phase covering 7.5 lakh streetlights could reduce electricity consumption by around 20 per cent, resulting in annual deemed energy savings of approximately 19.57 million units (MU). The project is expected to significantly reduce municipal electricity expenditure and maintenance costs while improving street-light reliability and public safety.

EESL will sign a tripartite agreement with CDMA and the respective ULBs for implementation of the project. The

scope includes design, supply, installation, testing and commissioning, besides comprehensive operation and maintenance. Principal Secretary, MA&UD, S. Suresh Kumar said Andhra Pradesh was poised to set a national benchmark by adopting ILM-based Smart LED technology on such a large scale. He said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had emphasised safeguarding public interest, transparency and accountability in implementing the programme.

He said real-time monitoring of individual lighting assets, automated performance tracking and transparent measurement of energy savings would help reduce wastage and maintenance expenditure while improving service delivery. P. Sampath Kumar, CDMA, said the MA&UD Department had translated the government's commitment to honouring every MoU into action by operationalising the agreement with EESL. High-level review meetings with commissioners of regional ULBs have been scheduled from August 11 to 14 to finalise execution of the tripartite agreement across the State.

EESL CEO Akhilesh Kumar Dixit assured the State government that the company would complete the project within the stipulated timeline and work towards making Andhra Pradesh a national model for smart and energy-efficient urban lighting.

The project is being positioned as the next-generation expansion of the Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP), under which EESL has already replaced more than 1.3 crore conventional streetlights across the country with energy-efficient LED systems.

55 people caught in one night after history-sheeter threatens Kerala Police

Kerala Police launched Operation Grip after threats by history-sheeter Arjun Ayanki. The state-wide drive aims to dismantle gangs and keep Onam peaceful. The Kerala Police have launched a state-wide crackdown on rowdy elements and gang members after recent threats issued by history-sheeter Arjun Ayanki, officials said on Sunday. The drive, called 'Operation Grip', is aimed at breaking criminal networks and targeting gangsters as well as their asso-

ciates and sponsors. State Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala said the operation had begun on Saturday, while police said 55 people had been apprehended by 10 pm that night. Ayanki was arrested on Sunday from Kannur after allegedly threatening police officers in Kothamangalam following police action against him. Speaking to reporters, Chennithala said, "A number of people involved in criminal activities, history-sheeters are being monitored and nabbed.



We will not allow any goonda activities in Kerala." ADGP (Law and Order) P Vijayan said the operation was planned while police

were tracking Ayanki. "When we saw Arjun Ayanki's statement and challenge, we viewed it as a measure to ensure no one

else would throw such challenges again. Because of that, after launching a programme called 'Operation Grip', as part of an effort to bring all the identified notorious goondas more strongly before the law, around 55 people were apprehended by 10 pm on Saturday night," he said. Police sources said the drive was being carried out in coordination with the state and district intelligence units. A senior officer said history-sheeters involved in criminal gang activities were be-

ing monitored, those still active were being detained, and people absconding in cases linked to goonda activities were also being traced. The officer said the move was aimed at ensuring a peaceful Onam season in the state. Police said Ayanki was involved in 23 criminal cases. He had also challenged Chennithala on social media while in hiding. Police had recently registered a case against Ayanki for allegedly making defamatory statements against VD Satheesan on social media.

ED Director Rahul Navin gets one-year extension

NEW DELHI:

The Centre has extended the tenure of ED Director Rahul Navin by a year beyond August 13, a government order said. A 1993-batch Indian Revenue Service officer of the Income Tax cadre, 59-year-old Navin has been leading the federal anti-money laundering agency as its chief since September 2023. The order issued by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on Saturday said it has approved extension in tenure of Navin as Enforcement Directorate (ED) Director for a period of one year beyond August 13, 2026, i.e. up to August 13, 2027, including extension in service beyond the date of his superannuation, i.e. July 31, 2027, or until further orders whichever is earlier.

Tamil Nadu may offer childbirth incentives as fertility rate falls below 1.4

Tamil Nadu Health Minister KG Arunraj said the state may consider incentives for couples to have more children. The remark spotlights concerns over a low fertility rate, an ageing population and changing maternity care patterns.

Tamil Nadu Health Minister KG Arunraj on Sunday said the state government could consider incentives for couples to have more children as it looks at the impact of a falling fertility rate and an ageing population. He said the state's Total Fertility Rate had fallen below 1.4, well below the replacement level of 2.1, and described the trend as a major public health challenge.

Addressing the mid-year workshop of the Obstetrics and Gynaecological Society of South India, Arunraj said nearly 16 per cent of Tamil Nadu's population was aged

above 60. Referring to steps taken elsewhere, he said the government could examine measures similar to those in Andhra Pradesh. "We were told that in places like Andhra Pradesh, there are government schemes providing incentives for couples to have a third child. Therefore, in the future, there could definitely be such things (here) too," he said. The minister said 99 per cent of childbirths in the state take place in hospitals, but the share of deliveries in government facilities had fallen steadily from 65.8 per cent in 2017-18 to 51 per cent now. He attributed this to private medical colleges offering free maternity care and to the extension of the Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Benefit Scheme to private hospitals.

He said the government had recently launched the 'Thaai Maaman Thangam' scheme to reduce the financial burden on poor and middle-class families seeking pri-



mate healthcare. Arunraj said the health department would carry out a detailed study to find out why deliveries at government hospitals were declining despite the availability of quality care through Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care centres. Responding to reports of pregnant women facing long queues at outpatient registration counters, he said an Aadhaar card was not mandatory and that no government hospital could deny treatment in its absence. He also referred to a scheme that allows patients to gener-

ate an outpatient receipt from home using a smartphone. On medical education, Arunraj criticised the previous administration for allowing three private medical colleges to get Deemed University status, alleging that this had affected social justice and the 7.5 per cent quota for government school students. He said the present government had quickly met the National Medical Commission's requirements and secured 150 additional seats across three government medical colleges this year. He added that the state's medical counselling schedule and merit list would be published on August 10. He also warned of strict action against private medical colleges accused of illegally collecting fees beyond the stipulated period, and said a newly formed committee was looking into complaints. On the political front, Arunraj rejected opposition charges that the ruling government

was only renaming schemes started by earlier administrations, and said policy continuity was necessary for good governance. He also accused the opposition of compromising on social justice and state rights by aligning with the BJP to protect its leaders from past corruption allegations. Reiterating the state's stand on the Cauvery water dispute, he said the government and Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay would not yield to pressure from the Centre and would stay united in opposing Karnataka's proposed Mekedatu dam project while protecting Tamil Nadu's federal rights. In sum, Arunraj used the event to flag concerns over Tamil Nadu's falling fertility rate and ageing population, outline steps being considered in maternal healthcare, announce measures in medical education oversight, and restate the government's position on key political and inter-state issues.



EDITORIAL

India's Cities and the Challenge of Sustainable Growth

India's cities are at the centre of the country's economic transformation. They generate employment, attract investment, support innovation and provide opportunities to millions of people. As urbanisation continues, however, cities face the challenge of expanding rapidly while ensuring that growth remains sustainable, inclusive and comfortable for residents. Urban growth brings significant benefits. Better roads, public transport, housing, commercial centres and digital infrastructure can improve productivity and create new opportunities. Cities such as Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai have demonstrated how urban economies can contribute strongly to national development. At the same time, rapid expansion can place considerable pressure on land, water, transport, waste management and public services.

One of the most visible challenges is mobility. Increasing private vehicle ownership has contributed to congestion, longer travel times and greater pressure on roads. Strengthening public transport, improving last-mile connectivity and creating safer facilities for walking and cycling can make urban mobility more efficient. A city where people can reach workplaces, schools and essential services conveniently is not only more sustainable but also more productive. Water security is another important concern. Growing populations and changing weather patterns are increasing pressure on urban water resources. Cities need to give greater attention to rainwater harvesting, wastewater treatment, recycling and the restoration of lakes and other natural water bodies. Protecting these resources should be viewed as an investment in the future rather than merely an environmental responsibility.

Waste management also requires sustained attention. As consumption increases, cities generate larger quantities of solid waste. Segregation at source, recycling, composting and scientific processing can reduce the burden on landfills. Citizens, local authorities and businesses all have a role to play in building cleaner neighbourhoods. Urban planning must also preserve green spaces. Parks, urban forests, lakes and tree cover provide environmental and social benefits, including better air quality and improved living conditions. Development and environmental protection need not be opposing objectives. With careful planning, infrastructure projects can coexist with ecological assets.

Affordable housing should remain another priority. Economic growth is meaningful only when people from different income groups can find suitable housing and access essential services. Planning housing closer to employment centres and public transport can reduce commuting pressures and support more inclusive cities.

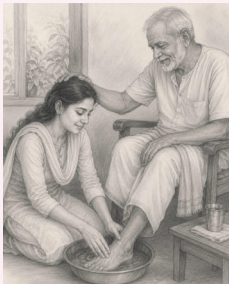
Technology can further improve urban management. Digital systems can help monitor traffic, water supply, waste collection, energy consumption and public services. However, technology should complement effective planning and administration rather than replace them.

Sustainable urban growth ultimately requires long-term thinking. Cities must plan not only for today's population but also for future generations. Strong local institutions, responsible citizens, efficient infrastructure and environmentally conscious development can help India build cities that are economically vibrant and socially inclusive.

The future of India's urban development will depend on finding the right balance between growth and sustainability. Well-planned cities can become engines of prosperity while also offering cleaner, healthier and more liveable environments. The goal should not simply be to build bigger cities, but to build better cities for everyone.



DAUGHTER-IN-LAW? ... A DAUGHTER.



This is not just a tale the years unfold,
But a truth lived in silence, quietly told.
Each month, beneath a stranger's sky,
A father waits... with a hope-filled eye.

Not words, but wounds that never spoke,
In broken mirrors, my spirit broke.
Yet she — a spring in fading light —
Offered her shoulder... restoring my sight.

She saw the small things no one knew,
The old dhotis, the silent sorrow I withdrew.
She read through lies I gently laid,
And smiled... as if the pain would fade.

“Sit carefully, dear father,” her voice so mild,
Though not my daughter... she cradled me like a child.
Her hands healed what time had torn,
She gave me back the years I'd worn.

In her questions, a quiet love grew,
And in my silence, she somehow knew.
“If there's a next life,” I softly prayed,
“Let me be your son,” — and there I stayed.

We rush to feed the hungry child,
But leave old parents waiting... meek and mild?
Their hunger is for love, not just bread,
Their thirst — for care, not what's said.

This isn't duty, nor passing chore,
But a sacred bond... nothing less, nothing more.
Let our hands serve with tenderness true,
Let joy return to the eyes that once raised you.

Not born from them — yet love can start,
From chosen kindness, from open heart.
Even today, to every parent who waits,
Let us be children... not just of fate.



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



OPINION

FROM MOORE TO MOR: THE QUIET HISTORY OF CAPITAL'S OLDEST RAILWAY COLONY

Whenever the legal luminary and teacher Atyab Siddiqui visits any place near Delhi Junction, he makes it a point to take a detour and see Mor Sarai Railway Colony. He spent many of his childhood years here after a flat was allotted to his father, Comrade Aftab Ahmad Siddiqui, in this first railway colony of the capital.

Built in 1919, the colony greets visitors with old, crumbling walls that seem tired and neglected, as if no one felt the need to repair them any longer. Broken windows in many houses stand like silent witnesses, evidence that these homes have lain empty for a long time. The air carries a quiet mixture of history and sadness.

We were walking towards the house of a special man who has called this place home since 1942. He was only three or four years old then. India was still under British rule, and life was very different. Remarkably, his address has remained unchanged for more than eight decades.

Mor Sarai Railway Colony lies just a short distance from Kauriya Pul. As we arrived, we met Nand Kishore standing outside his house. Now 89, he greeted us with warmth and clear, sharp eyes. Despite his age he remains completely fit and active. His memory is excellent, and he loves sharing stories from the past. He clearly recalls Independence in 1947, when he was around eight. His father worked in the railways and had been allotted a house in this colony—the first railway colony in Delhi.

“I vividly remember visiting Mor Sarai to woo the voters when I was contesting the Chandni Chowk assembly election in 1977. I was the Janata party candidate and Mor Sarai was part of the constituency. It was a typical Raiwal colony where people of different states lived happily. Life in Mor Sarai has always been closely bound to the Indian Railways. Before Independence the colony was diverse,” informs Dr. Raj Kumar Jain. Who also taught in DU for several decades.

Partition in 1947 brought deeper changes. Many Muslim families lived in the colony. Some chose to



move to Pakistan; others stayed and continued their lives here. The colony absorbed these shifts while preserving its strong community spirit.

Nand Kishore's father retired in 1957. By then Nand Kishore himself had joined the railways and received the same house that had been allotted to his father. This continuity gave the family a deep sense of stability. Life moved forward in a steady rhythm. Nand Kishore not only did his job but also became active in trade-union work. His office was at Delhi Junction, where he worked hard and fought for workers' rights. Years passed quickly. By 1997 it was time for him to retire. The little boy who had arrived in Mor Sarai in 1942 completed nearly sixty years of service and stepped down. Meanwhile the railways have been planning to redevelop the colony since 2015. Under the new plans, houses of current employees are no longer re-allotted in the old way.

With deep emotion Nand Kishore walks around the colony and points to different houses, recalling who once lived in each. He stops in front of one particular house and pauses. This was the home of veteran trade-union leader Aftab Ahmad Siddiqui, who lived here with his family for many years.

Comrade Siddiqui dedicated his life to the cause of workers. He fought for both organised and unorganised labour. He led protests

and dharnas, faced police lathis, and played a key role in building the union for coolies and porters at Delhi's railway stations so they could demand their rightful dues. He worked tirelessly to make the major railway strikes of 1967 and 1974 a success. Comrade Siddiqui breathed his last in his flat in this very colony in 1986.

Partition had also left its mark: about half a dozen Muslim railway families vacated their homes and boarded trains for Pakistan. Yet several other Muslim families rejected the idea of Pakistan and continued to live here.

Mor Sarai Railway Colony remains a living witness to Delhi's changing history—from the British era through Independence and Partition into modern times. Interestingly, the name “Mor Sarai” has no direct link with peacocks, even though the word suggests they might once have roamed here. The real story is different. The land originally belonged to the family of Lala Chhunnamal, a wealthy and respected figure of old Delhi. The British wanted to build a railway colony on it. Lala Satyanarain Gurwale, one of the founders of Hindu College, helped persuade the Chhunnamal family to give the land. A British officer named Moore was in charge of the effort. The colony was named after him. Over time local people began pronouncing “Moore” as “Mor,” and the name stuck.



“Now, Mor Sarai stands as a quiet reminder of Delhi's railway heritage. It carries stories of struggle, unity, inclusion and the simple lives of hardworking people,” concludes Dr. Jain.

BEYOND E20: IS INDIA READY FOR FLEX-FUEL VEHICLES?

“August 10 is observed as World Biofuel Day to raise awareness about the need to shift from fossil fuels to cleaner, renewable alternatives. As energy security and climate concerns intensify, biofuels are becoming an important part of the transition to a more sustainable energy system.”

After achieving 20 per cent ethanol blending in petrol, India should focus not on immediately raising the blending target, but on preparing a vehicle system capable of using higher ethanol blends. Flex-fuel vehicles can play a central role in this transition. If a vehicle can run on different proportions of ethanol and petrol, India can move towards higher blends without imposing a single fuel composition on the entire vehicle fleet. Ethanol blending in petrol has risen from about 1.5 per cent in 2013-14 to 20 per cent in 2025-26. Ethanol production capacity has increased from 421 crore litres in 2014 to nearly 2,000 crore litres in 2026. Between 2014-15 and May 2026, ethanol blending is estimated by the Union government to have substituted more than 31 million tonnes of crude oil, saving over ₹1.90 lakh crore in foreign exchange. The next question, therefore, is not simply how much more ethanol India can produce, but whether its vehicles and fuel infrastructure can absorb that additional ethanol.

The case for flex-fuel:

As the ethanol share rises, fuel characteristics change. Ethanol has a higher octane rating than petrol, but lower energy density. Higher blends can therefore affect fuel consumption, while engine calibration, fuel systems and material compatibility also become important. India already has a huge population of petrol vehicles of different ages and technologies. Converting this entire fleet to higher blends at once is neither practical nor desirable.

Flex-fuel vehicles offer a way around this constraint. Their engines and fuel-control systems are designed to operate with varying proportions of ethanol and petrol. This gives consumers greater fuel flexibility and allows the transition to higher ethanol use to take place gradually. However, flex-fuel does not automatically mean cheaper motoring. Ethanol may be cheaper per litre, but its lower energy density can increase the quantity required to travel the same distance. The relevant measure for consumers should therefore be the cost per kilometre, not merely the price per litre.

Brazil offers the clearest example of how such a system can work. Since August 2025, Brazil has raised the ethanol content of regular gasoline from 27 per cent to 30 per cent. According to recent Indian government information, more than 80 per cent of new cars sold there are flex-fuel vehicles. The Brazilian experience shows that higher ethanol blending depends not only on producing more ethanol, but also on aligning vehicle manufacturing, fuel distribution and consumer choice.

India has begun moving in this direction. In June 2026, high-ethanol fuel was introduced at 48 outlets for flex-fuel vehicles. The plan is to expand this to 500 outlets by December 2026 and around 5,000 by December 2027. Such fuel is not intended for conventional petrol vehicles. Flex-fuel vehicles can be designed to operate with ethanol blends ranging from 20 per cent to as high as 100 per cent. This should not be confused with a nationwide decision to raise the ethanol content of regular petrol beyond 20 per cent. As of July 2026, the Union government had not taken such a decision. It has said that any move towards higher blending would require scientific and technical studies and consultations with vehicle manufacturers, oil companies and research institutions.

The supply challenge:

A larger flex-fuel fleet will create greater demand for ethanol. At present, sugarcane, maize and surplus rice are among the important feedstocks. For 2025-26, the government allocated 5.2 million tonnes of surplus rice for ethanol production. Using surplus grain can

meet part of the present requirement, but continued growth in ethanol demand should not increase pressure on food crops. This makes second-generation ethanol from agricultural residues increasingly important. Rice straw, bagasse and maize residues can provide additional feedstock without directly competing with food production.

The challenge is to make this technology commercially viable. Agricultural residues are dispersed across farms and require collection, storage and transportation before they reach processing plants. A viable supply chain, along with fair returns to farmers for crop residues, is therefore essential.

The environmental benefits of biofuel also need to be measured across its entire life cycle. Water and fertiliser use, farm machinery, transportation and energy consumed during processing all affect the final carbon footprint. Future policy should therefore measure actual life-cycle emissions rather than treating every litre of ethanol as an automatic environmental gain.

Fuel infrastructure is equally important. More flex-fuel vehicles will be useful only if high-ethanol fuel is reliably available. Vehicle production, ethanol capacity and fuel outlets must therefore expand together rather than independently.

The rapid growth of electric vehicles does not make flex-fuel technology irrelevant. India cannot replace its enormous existing internal-combustion vehicle fleet with electric vehicles in a short period. Long-distance travel, rural mobility and the existing vehicle stock will continue to require liquid fuels for some

time. Electric mobility, biofuels and other alternatives are therefore likely to co-exist during the transition.

A measured transition:

India should first continue monitoring the long-term effects of the 20 per cent blend. Higher blends should undergo domestic testing for vehicle performance, emissions, fuel efficiency and consumer costs. If the results are favourable, flex-fuel capability can be expanded gradually in new vehicles, alongside the development of fuel outlets, quality standards and an appropriate pricing framework.

In 2026, the Bureau of Indian Standards issued specifications for higher ethanol blends, including 22, 25, 27 and 30 per cent blends. These are technical standards, not a nationwide mandate to introduce those blends.

The objective after 20 per cent should therefore not be another percentage target. India needs to build an integrated system in which vehicles can use higher ethanol blends, fuel infrastructure can supply them reliably, feedstock can be secured without compromising food security, farmers receive a fair return, and consumers do not face an unreasonable increase in the cost of mobility.

Brazil demonstrates that flex-fuel vehicles can support a high-ethanol transport system. India need not replicate the Brazilian model. It needs a system suited to its own agriculture, vehicle fleet, water resources and energy requirements. The next stage of ethanol blending should begin not with a new percentage, but with preparing the ecosystem required to make that percentage workable.



D. JAIRAM

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Manipur CM
urges Meiteis to
play 'big brother'
role to restore
peace

At a Tiranga Rally, Y Khemchand Singh urged Meiteis to act as a big brother and rebuild trust across communities. He said Manipur's peace and development depend on unity, while warning against elements trying to inflame tensions. Manipur Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh on Sunday said the Meitei community must play the role of a "big brother" among the state's communities to help restore peace and ensure development. Addressing a Tiranga Rally, he said Manipur could move forward only if its communities worked together. He also urged people to join the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign, saying the national flag reminds citizens that they must love the country like their own family. Singh said mistrust had been created among communities by certain elements and asked people to stand against those trying to disturb peace. Recalling Manipur's past, the chief minister said various communities had come together to protect the state. "In the history of Manipur, several communities came together to protect the land. During the devastating Burmese war in the 19th century, community leaders united to defeat and oust the enemies who had occupied the land," he said.

Assam Floods: Woman Returns
Home to Devastation After 20 Days

A Sivasagar homemaker returned after 20 days to find her flood-hit home and belongings destroyed. Her plea now is not just for rebuilding, but for assurance that heavy rain will not bring the same devastation again.

A homemaker in Assam's Sivasagar town returned to her flooded home on Sunday, 20 days after fleeing with her two minor daughters, to find wedding photographs ruined, her late mother's dinner set scattered, and her daughters' study tables toppled with their books and supplies destroyed. With ankle-deep water still inside the house, Nasiman Zaman said her biggest worry was not just rebuilding her home, but whether there would be any assurance that such devastation would not happen again when it next rains heavily. Zaman and her daughters have been staying at her husband's sister's house in another part of the town since escaping on July 21. She said around 15 people,



including her brother-in-law's family and a sister-in-law's family, are now living there together. While she said they were fortunate to have relatives to stay with, she added that both she and her daughters were afraid of returning to their own home. "Our house is on the ancestral land of my husband's family. My brother-in-law's house is next to ours, and besides his is the house of their cousin. All our houses have been inundated, with some facing worse situation than us even," Zaman told PTI. She said the water was four feet high and had entered the ground floor of

her two-storeyed house over the lower sill of the window when she left at around 6 pm on July 21. During the day, she had engaged four workers to move some household goods to the upper floor, which is still under construction. "My husband, who is a government employee, was away on official work in Guwahati. Water started entering the house around noon, and within six hours, it was nearly at my chest level. It was getting dark, power had been cut off, and we somehow managed to come out," she recalled. Zaman said she was able to save a few electronic gadgets, some clothes,

ornaments and important documents, but most other things in the house, from the sofa set to beds, almirahs and utensils, were damaged. "My husband and I went to see the house today, and found ankle-level water still. The study tables of our girls have been toppled and all their supplies destroyed. The album with our wedding memories has been destroyed. Every small thing that made the house our 'home' has been damaged," she said. Describing their present situation, she said, "We are about 15 people now living under one roof. We are among the luckier ones as we have our own family to stay with. But we have to go back to our own place. My daughters are scared to return, and so am I. What will happen when it rains again?" Zaman said water from the Nazira side, one of the worst-affected areas in the flood, entered their locality behind the Circuit House before flowing into the Dorika river, which was already in spate, and then submerged nearby areas.

"I am no expert, but as a resident of the area, I can understand that there is a problem of drainage. Natural culverts and outlets have narrowed due to road and bridge constructions. Water is being pumped out, but it is not adequate," she said. She said starting again would be difficult, but added that cleaning and setting up the house was not her main concern. "That we are safe is our biggest blessing. Our daughters will also come to terms with the loss, and we can rebuild our home and memories again. But we need the assurance that such havoc won't be unleashed again. Even after 20 days, water is stagnant in our area, a locality which has never seen floods. We can't abandon our homes nor can we live there safely," she said. For Zaman and others in the area, the immediate loss is being counted in damaged homes and belongings, but the larger concern remains the same: when they return, they want reassurance from the authorities that they will be protected from a repeat of the flooding.



NFR to Observe 'Har
Ghar Tiranga' Campaign

Maligaon, 09 August, 2026: Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) will observe the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign from 9th August to 17th August, 2026, in line with the initiative of the Government of India to encourage citizens to hoist the National Flag at their homes and foster a personal and emotional connection with the Tiranga. The 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign was launched by the Government of India in 2022 under the aegis of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', with the objective of inspiring citizens to participate in the celebration of the spirit of patriotism and national unity by proudly displaying the National Flag at their homes. Every year, NFR observes the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign with great enthusiasm, promoting the spirit of patriotism and encouraging active public participation. Continuing this tradition, NFR will once again observe the campaign this year, across its jurisdiction. Railway officials and employees will be encouraged to actively participate in the campaign and inspire their families as well as members of the public to proudly hoist the National Flag at their homes during the campaign period. Flag hoisting ceremonies will be organised at railway offices and establishments, while prominent railway stations and other important railway premises will be illuminated in the colours of the Tiranga as a mark of national pride. As part of the campaign, NFR will undertake a series of awareness and outreach activities at railway stations, offices and other establishments to spread the message of 'Har Ghar Tiranga'. Instrumental renditions of the National Song 'Vande Mataram' will be played through the Public Address System at major railway stations, and suitable patriotic programmes will be organised to foster the spirit of unity and nationalism. Officers, employees and members of the public will also be encouraged to upload their "Selfie with Tiranga" as a symbol of their participation in the nationwide campaign. These initiatives aim to strengthen the spirit of patriotism, national pride and unity while encouraging everyone to celebrate the Tiranga with respect, dignity and pride. The campaign aims to strengthen the spirit of patriotism, national pride and unity among citizens and encourage everyone to celebrate the Tiranga with respect and pride.

Kashmiri Pandits Accuse Parties
of Exploiting Their Suffering

Displaced Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu camps have accused political parties of invoking their suffering only during elections. They say decades of neglect, poor infrastructure and pending rehabilitation have reduced them to political orphans.



Hundreds of displaced Kashmiri Pandits living in Jagti township and nearby camps in Jammu have accused political parties of using their suffering only in election manifestos while failing to address their problems. Describing themselves as "political orphans" and the "new untouchables", they demanded steps to ensure a dignified life as guaranteed by the Constitution. Residents said they remain caught between near non-functional civic representation, failing infrastructure and long-pending rehabilitation promises. They said their concerns are raised during elections, but disappear afterwards, leaving many in the community feeling neglected and pushed to the margins of

the political process. Advocate Vishva Ranjan Pandita, a resident of the Jagti camp, said, "Used by everyone, represented by none, this is the real tragedy," adding, "the hardest exile is the one imposed by our own country." Residents across camps for the displaced community, which left Kashmir in the 1990s after the outbreak of militancy, said this neglect had deepened over time, with some even threatening to take "drastic measures" to end their miseries. Tito Ganju, chairman of Panun Kashmir, which has been raising issues faced by migrants in the camps, said the core grievance was that the community was remembered by political parties only during election cycles.

"Kashmiri Pandits may have been made political orphans, but we are not destined to remain political orphans. We are the indigenous bearers of Kashmir's civilisational memory and one of the most enduring expressions of Indianness in the Valley," he said. Ganju said that while governments over the years may ignore them or try to speak about Kashmir without the community, "history and geopolitics will not permit that fiction to last". Speaking about what he called decades of administrative neglect, community members expressed anger over crumbling infrastructure and unfulfilled rehabilitation promises. Ganju added, "We are not the discarded chapter of Kashmir's story.

Biofuels as an
Alternative to Fossil Fuels

(On the occasion of "World Biofuel Day" on 10 August)

The word 'biofuel' or 'bio-fuel' is derived from 'biomass'. Fuels produced from renewable biological sources, including plants and algae, are called "biofuels". Biofuels offer solutions to the challenges of solar, wind and other alternative energy sources. 'Biodiesel' is recognized as an important biofuel. Biodiesel is a liquid fuel produced from renewable sources such as vegetable oils and animal fats. Biodiesel is used as an alternative to fossil fuels such as petrol or diesel. Biofuels produced from food sources such as sugar, starch, vegetable oil, algal biofuel, biobutanol, wood-pellet fuel, and animal fats include biodiesel, bioethanol (alcohol), biogas, biohydrogen, vegetable oil, bioether, and biomass. US as a Biofuels Manufacturing Hub: Today, the United States is the largest producer of biofuels. Biofuels have a promising future in India. Biofuels are a suitable alternative to fos-

sil fuels to reduce negative climate changes and greenhouse gas emissions. Biofuels are used for transportation, heating, and electricity generation. Biofuels can also be produced from organic waste generated from agricultural or industrial waste, businesses, and municipalities, which can have a positive impact on climate change. The use of biofuels as environmentally friendly alternative fuels compared to fossil fuels is gradually increasing. Various Types of Biofuels - Main Advantages: Traditional biofuel sources include sugar, vegetable oils, and animal fats. First-generation biofuels include biodiesel, vegetable oil, and biomass. Second-generation biofuels include ethanol and biodiesel made from agricultural or other waste. Third-generation biofuels include butanol made from algae, and fourth-generation biofuels are produced using genetic engineering technol-

ogy. Biofuels are used in sectors such as transportation, power generation, heating (wood pellets), industry, aviation (biojet fuel), agriculture (biomass), and shipping (biodiesel/ethanol). It should be noted that there is a need to promote biofuels, which are renewable, carbon or greenhouse gas emission-free, energy secure, provide multiple benefits such as waste utilization, job creation, available resources, and economic development. Governments need to take initiatives towards the production of climate-friendly biofuels compared to fossil fuels. The use and production of sustainable biofuels with inexhaustible energy resources should be taken up on a large scale. Let us note that instead of burning agricultural waste in cultivation fields, it would be appropriate to use it for the production of biofuels, and let us produce biofuels on a large scale in India too.



Union Civil Aviation Minister
Shri Naidu paid courtesy call on
Chief Minister Dr. Yadav

DR. BHUPENDRA VIKAL Bhopal, August 9: Union Civil Aviation Minister Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu paid a courtesy visit to Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav at the Chief Minister's residence on Sunday. On this occasion, Chief Secretary Ashok Barnawal, Central Civil Aviation Secretary Sameer Kumar Sinha, Member Planning in the Union Civil Aviation Ministry Anil Gupta and Additional Chief Secretary Aviation Department Sanjay Shukla were also present. Chief Minister DrYadav greeted Union Minister Shri Naidu with a warm welcome and a memento on his arrival at the Chief Minister's residence. While giving information to Union Minister Shri Naidu about the history of construction of Bhopal Lake, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that this pond has been made by cutting natural rocks.

Govt to introduce
bill in Lok Sabha
to broaden
NCDC's mandate
for co-operative
sector growth
NEW DELHI: (AUG 9)

The government will introduce a bill in the Lok Sabha on Monday aimed at broadening the mandate of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), enabling the organisation to give loans and grants directly to co-operative societies or any entity engaged in the development of the sector. The NCDC, a statutory organisation under the Ministry of Cooperation, was established in 1963 under the National Co-operative Development Corporation Act, 1962. Its main functions include planning, promoting, and financing programs for the production, processing, marketing, storage, and export-import of agricultural produce, foodstuffs, and other notified commodities.

Villagers Block Road Demanding
Permanent Bridge over Kamal River

Sunil Thapliyal Barkot/Naugaon, Uttarkashi : Villagers from Talda, Sunara Chhani, Thali and adjoining villages staged a road blockade on the Naugaon-Purola Motor Road on Sunday, demanding construction of a permanent bridge over the Kamal River. The protesters remained on the road for nearly four hours, bringing traffic to a standstill and causing long queues of vehicles on both sides of the road. The agitation was led by social worker Prakash Kumar. The villagers expressed their anger over the alleged delay in construction of the permanent bridge, stating that the demand has been raised before the government and administration for several years. Despite repeated assurances, no concrete action has been taken so far. The villagers said that the damaged bridge has made transportation particularly difficult during the monsoon season, affecting the daily movement of people from several surrounding villages.



SDM Reaches Spot, Holds Talks with Villagers Following information about the road blockade, Purola Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Mukesh Ramola reached the spot and held discussions with the protesting villagers. He listened to their concerns and subsequently conducted an on-site inspection of the damaged bridge location over the Kamal River. The SDM assured the villagers that efforts would be made to start construction of a trolley within one week

to provide temporary connectivity during the rainy season. He also assured them that necessary efforts would be made to obtain government approval at the earliest for the Detailed Project Report (DPR) prepared for construction of the Talda bridge. Agitation Ends After Assurance Following the assurance from the SDM, the villagers called off the road blockade and protest. However, they warned that they would be forced to resume their agitation if trolley construction does not begin within a week and concrete progress is not



made towards obtaining approval for the permanent bridge DPR. The villagers said that construction of the bridge is not merely a requirement of Talda village but is an important connectivity issue for Talda, Sunara Chhani, Thali and several other nearby villages. In the absence of a permanent bridge, villagers, schoolchildren, elderly people and patients face serious difficulties in crossing the river, particularly during the monsoon season. The villagers said that a permanent bridge over the Kamal River would significantly improve

connectivity between the surrounding villages and Naugaon and Purola, besides providing a long-term solution to transportation problems during the rainy season. Villagers Present During Protest Those who participated in the road blockade and protest included Ankit Ramola, Suman Rana, Gajendra, Sunil Rawat, Janak Negi, Dinesh Kumar, Hrithik Chamoli, Naveen Chamoli, Harendra Singh Rana, Surendra Rana, Vipin Rawat, Manvendra Rana, Vijay Kumar, Sachin Kumar and Deepak Ramola, among many other villagers.

Hemant Soren assures justice
to Jharkhand exam protesters,
warns against politics

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Sunday said his government would deliver justice with full transparency to youths protesting alleged irregularities in recruitment exams. He said the students' concerns were also his concerns and promised strict action against those found guilty. Soren also said the agitation should not be politicised and alleged that vested interests were trying to disrupt democracy in the state. He warned those with political ambitions against misleading the youths and said problems at home could be resolved through dialogue, not force. Addressing the Jharkhand Adivasi Mahotsav, the chief minister said, "Unable to accept the state's self-reliance, vested interests are working at full force in Jharkhand to disrupt democracy here. Samvad and not 'lathi-danda-bandook' can solve all problems. Weapons are meant for enemies at the border. I promise the exam protesters that justice will be delivered with full transparency." Referring to the protest against the alleged NEET exam paper leak at Jantar Mantar in Delhi, he said, "All saw how youths were tortured, had to face pellet guns, baton charges, and were declared traitors." Apparently targeting the BJP, Soren accused rival political parties of spreading lies and misinformation to mislead Jharkhand's youth and said some intellectuals were also involved in this.

Tibet to remain under China's control until CCP equates sovereignty with territorial integrity: Report

BEIJING

China's grip over Tibet is not just about land but about control, legitimacy, and survival, and the province will continue to remain under its control until the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) equates sovereignty with absolute territorial integrity, according to a report.

For more than seven decades, China has maintained control over Tibet, which functions as a natural shield between China and South Asia. Due to its vast glaciers and rivers, Tibet is often described as the "Third Pole." The Brahmaputra, Mekong, and Yangtze, all originating from Tibet, make the region important for China's long-term water security. China has invested in the development of highways, airbases and railways in Tibet, making the region a militarised zone that showcases power across Asia, according to a report in Tibet Express.

The CCP calls Tibet an in-



separable part of China, a narrative backed by propaganda, education, and policy. Relinquishing Tibet would be considered unravelling the very legitimacy of the CCP. China has insisted that Tibet has always been part of the country, despite historical evidence showing independent governance in Tibet.

"China's hold on Tibet is not just about land -- it is about control, legitimacy, and survival. As long as the Party equates sovereignty with absolute territorial integrity,

Tibet will remain under occupation. Only when China undergoes internal transformation—whether through democratisation, decentralisation, or a reimagining of its national identity—will the possibility of Tibet's freedom emerge. Political reform: A more pluralistic China could allow genuine autonomy or even independence movements to flourish," Khedroob Thondup, nephew of Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama, said in a report in Tibet Express. Tibet is not only a piece

of land but showcases China's imperial reach and a cornerstone of its strategic security. For China, losing control over Tibet means accepting weakness, which affects its narrative of unity, according to the report. In July, the head of a leading Tibet advocacy group said China has been intensifying human rights abuses in Tibet and using a new law to place its forced assimilation policies on a legal footing. Ryan Fiorese, executive director of the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT),

said the situation inside Tibet remained deeply troubling. He urged the US and other governments to press Beijing to resume negotiations with the Dalai Lama or his representatives.

"The situation inside Tibet is quite grim," Fiorese told IANS in an interview. "The human rights abuses by the Chinese government are escalating."

Fiorese cited China's Ethnic Unity and Progress Law, which came into force on July 1, saying that the measure gave legal cover to policies aimed at weakening Tibet's distinct identity.

"The Chinese government just implemented on July 1st, just a few days ago, the Ethnic Unity and Progress Law, which codifies many of Beijing's forced assimilation policies into Chinese law," he said. "Many of the stipulations in the Ethnic Unity and Progress Law contravene China's own constitution and its international human rights commitments."

Afghan police seize narcotics, arrest six in Takhar

KABUL

Afghan police have seized a quantity of narcotics and arrested six people in northern Takhar province, provincial police spokesman Nizamuddin Omir said Sunday. The suspects were arrested on Saturday night while allegedly transporting the narcotics, which had been concealed in vehicles, Omir said, Xinhua News Agency reported. The case has been referred to relevant authorities, and preliminary investigations into the suspects are underway, he added.

On July 16, Afghan police seized 241 kilograms of illicit drugs and arrested nine suspects during two recent separate operations in northeastern Badakhshan province, the official media Bakhtar News Agency said.

According to the report, special police forces discovered the narcotics during raids conducted in the Pul-e Begum and Tashkan areas, where the drugs were recovered from a vehicle and a residential house.

The statement said nine individuals were taken into custody during the operations. The suspects are under investigation, while authorities reaffirmed their commitment to combating drug trafficking and related criminal activities across the country. The counter-narcotics police commander in Nimroz, Mawlawi Esmatullah Ahmad.

Measles outbreak in Bangladesh claims six more lives, death toll crosses 870



DHAKA

As many as six children died with measles-like symptoms in Bangladesh in 24 hours until 8 a.m. (local time) on Sunday, raising the total number of confirmed and suspected measles-related fatalities in 2026 to 873, local media reported.

All the latest deaths were suspected measles fatalities in Bangladesh, according to the statement released by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). Following the latest update, the number of laboratory-confirmed measles fatalities remained unchanged at 98, while the number of suspected measles-related fatalities rose to 775, the United News of Bangladesh (UNB) reported.

During the 24-hour period, 988 new suspected measles cases were reported in Bangladesh, raising the total number of suspected measles cases nationwide to 136,320. During the same period, 75 new confirmed measles cases were reported, raising the cumulative number of laboratory-confirmed infections to 17,115.

As Bangladesh continues to witness a sharp increase in measles cases, a leading international advocacy group has described the 2026 outbreak as one of the country's worst public health crises in recent history, highlighting the concern that the disease is preventable through vaccination.

In its latest report titled 'Preventable Tragedy: Bangladesh's 2026 Measles Outbreak', Canada-based Global Centre for Democratic Governance (GCDG) said that although the measles outbreak appeared sudden to the public, it was not an unexpected event from an "epidemiological perspective".

The report noted that the crisis resulted from a combination of disruptions to vaccine supply and health programs in

2024-2025 during the former interim government led by Muhammad Yunus, along with missed routine vaccinations, cancellations of scheduled supplementary immunisation programmes, administrative delays in vaccine procurement, and a failure to promptly identify at-risk populations.

According to GCDG, Bangladesh had long procured WHO-approved vaccines through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)'s international supply chain; however, the interim government replaced this system with an open tender procurement process. Citing UNICEF, the report said the agency repeatedly warned the interim government of a potential vaccine shortage through five to six formal letters and around 10 meetings held between 2024 and 2026.

Referring to Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) data reported by Bangladesh daily Samakal, the GCDG noted that measles vaccination coverage fell to 56.2 per cent in 2025, the lowest level recorded between 2017 and 2025.

It added that WHO later identified the nationwide stock-out of the measles-rubella (MR) vaccine in Bangladesh during 2024-2025 and the lack of regular vaccination as the main contributors to the decline in immunity among children and the 2026 outbreak "Overall, the nationwide spread of measles resulted from a combination of administrative and health-system failures, including the programmatic vacuum created under the interim government; disruptions in vaccine procurement, transportation, and supply; vaccine stock-outs and canceled EPI sessions; declining MR1 and MR2 coverage; an increasing number of children missing scheduled vaccinations; the absence of supplementary.

Taiwan building fleets of drones to repel Chinese invasion: Report



TAIPEI

Taiwan is building fleets of flying drones and unmanned attack boats to repel any future invasion from China, a media report said, noting accelerating efforts of Taipei to implement a strategy learned from Kyiv. "The goal is to use them to help locate and attack Chinese forces approaching the island, relying on Taiwanese soldiers trained to move quickly before China can strike them. US commanders who developed this strategy call it a 'hellscape': overwhelming an invading force with waves of drones, missiles, and artillery, and making an amphibious assault so risky that China's leaders are deterred from trying," said the report by The New York Times. According to it, the threat faced by Taiwan is urgent, as China, which is roughly 110 miles away, claims the self-governed island and, according to its leaders, it will not rule out using force to absorb Taiwan.

The report said that Taiwan is trying to emulate Ukraine's 'David-versus-Goliath approach' where cheap and nimble drones are used to level the playing field

against a much larger opponent. "China's army is not yet strong enough to easily invade Taiwan, many experts believe, and recent purges in the People's Liberation Army's high command have undermined its readiness. But like Taiwan's military, it has been building up fleets of crewless planes and boats, and is investing heavily in technology to detect and jam drones," the report noted.

It also said that the government wants Taiwan to make 100,000 drones a month by 2030, with around half of them exported, aiming to make the Island a drone industry superpower. The government also wants the military to acquire 210,000 aerial and seaborne drones.

According to Mick Ryan, a retired Australian major general who has studied Ukraine and Taiwan, Kyiv's recent success at long-range strikes suggests that Taipei could also attack vessels leaving ports in China if Beijing launched an amphibious assault, the report said. "For Taiwan, acquiring the drones may be the straightforward part. To master drone warfare, Taiwan must also retool its military organisation, training, and doctrine.

India-Japan cooperation being built around de-risking shared economic vulnerabilities: Report

TOKYO

The India-Japan relationship looks like a promising strategic partnership, and the cooperation is being built around de-risking shared economic vulnerabilities, said a report.

According to the report by Tokyo Review, both Japan and India face the harsh realities of weaponised supply chains, energy insecurity, and dependence on China for critical minerals and pharmaceutical ingredients.

It noted that the centre of gravity in the bilateral relationship is 'unmistakably' commercial, and those shared vulnerabilities were addressed directly in the recent India-Japan summit, where both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Sanae Takaichi participated, emphasising three priority areas of cooperation in economic security, energy resilience and technology.

"During the summit, Prime Minister Modi noted that nearly 129 private-sector agreements



had been concluded over the past year, opening the way for more than JPY 2 trillion in Japanese investment. Energy security, defence technology co-development, and semiconductor resilience: the priorities announced at the summit all point the same way. Business is at the heart of this relationship; economic security cooperation is what will keep it beating for years to come," the report added.

It noted that the warmth on display during Takaichi's visit

was hard to miss. It highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi introducing Takaichi as his younger sister, saying it's "a gesture of closeness rarely extended to a foreign head of state."

The report also countered the interpretation of Japan's outreach to India as a hedge against an 'increasingly unpredictable' US.

The Tokyo Review report called it an oversimplification and said that the Takaichi visit and the current trajectory of

India's relationship with Japan are what the two governments already stated: a "Partnership of Strategic Convergence," and a bilateral partnership worthy of consideration on its own terms, and not a comparison of Japan-US or India-US relations.

"Judged on its own terms, as an answer to a different and increasingly urgent set of problems, the India-Japan relationship looks like a promising strategic partnership.

President Pezeshkian holds meeting with Supreme Leader Khamenei

TEHRAN

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday met the Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, and discussed several issues, local media reported. According to Iran's semi-official Mehr news agency, the Supreme Leader and the President held a detailed discussion regarding the issues and problems of the country, particularly meeting the people's livelihood needs.

It noted that they also discussed the current conditions of the conflict and the future ahead, along with developments in resources, expenditure, energy and economic interaction with foreign countries.

On Wednesday, Pezeshkian said



communication with Khamenei is very "difficult at the moment," but his presence is a "great strength" for the country to continue its path.

The United States and Israel killed Iran's former Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on February 28 out of "des-

peration," expecting Iran to collapse after the "brutal" action, Pezeshkian said in an interview published on the website of his office on Wednesday.

"However, the country continued, and our (new) beloved leader was selected," he said. "Our new dear leader's presence is a very great strength for us to be able to continue this path, although communication with him is very difficult at the moment."

He said Iran is facing its "most difficult" circumstances, citing intensified banking sanctions, curbs on foreign transactions, a naval blockade, and an ongoing war, reports Xinhua news agency. Mojtaba Khamenei, son of Ali Khamenei, was selected as Iran's new Supreme Leader by the country's Assembly of Experts in early March.

Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Aragchi on Sunday stated that there are currently no ongoing negotiations with the United States. The Foreign Minister's stance came while speaking to reporters at the Centre for Political and International Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iran's semi-official Tasnim News Agency reported.

"We currently have no negotiations with the United States. Intermediaries are still making efforts to find ways to resume negotiations. From our perspective, there can be no resumption of talks until the United States ends its violations of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and makes amends for the breaches it has committed," Aragchi said.

Russia explores railway route to Indian Ocean, eyes land connectivity with India

NEW DELHI

Russia is exploring the possibility of developing a railway route that could eventually provide the country with land-based access to the Indian Ocean and connect it with India, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin has said. In an interview with Russian news agency TASS, Khusnullin said Moscow should examine alternative transport routes to reduce its dependence on key maritime choke-points, including the Bosphorus and the Strait of Hormuz.

According to Khusnullin, one possible option could involve a railway corridor running from Russia through Turkmenistan, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan before reaching India. He said Russia would consider any route that could provide access to India.

The proposal, however, remains at an exploratory stage. There is currently no confirmed railway route, passenger train service, ticket pricing or launch date connecting Russia and India under the proposed plan. Khusnullin highlighted the strategic importance of developing alternative routes amid concerns surrounding major maritime passages. The Strait of Hormuz is among the world's most important shipping routes, with around 25 per cent of global oil trade and nearly 20 per cent of LNG shipments passing through it. The Russian Deputy Prime Minister said concerns linked to the Bosphorus and the Strait of Hormuz underline the need to explore alternative land-based transport corridors. A railway connection towards India could provide Russia with another route to move goods towards the Indian Ocean without relying entirely on maritime transportation.

US weapons stocks run low amid Iran war

WASHINGTON

The US is running considerably low on critical missile interceptors and other munitions after months of war with Iran, according to a former US Defence Secretary, as concerns grow over America's ability to replenish weapons stocks quickly and maintain military readiness against other potential threats.

Mark Esper, who served as Defence Secretary during President Donald Trump's first term, said shortages of Patriot and Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) interceptors were serious and warned that rebuilding stocks would take time.

"It is a serious situation that goes back to the end of the Cold War and decisions we made between them and then with the

onset of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars," Esper told ABC News on Sunday. "And frankly, it accelerated during the Biden administration when we were expending munitions or giving munitions to Ukraine. And it's, of course, in the last six, seven months, it's really taken a toll that we've now find ourselves considerably low with regard to interceptors such as Patriot and THAAD, and to some ground attack weapons as well."

Esper said his biggest concern was China and the message that depleted American stockpiles could send about US deterrence.

"When I look at the world, I'm most concerned about China and the messages it may be sending there and the deterrent effect of our munition stockpiles, and more importantly of our defence industrial base," he added.



The Pentagon is seeking an additional \$67 billion in defence funding, in part to replenish depleted stockpiles, according to NBC News.

Democratic Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut said he would oppose additional funding while the Iran war continued, but would support replenishing US

arsenals once the conflict ended. "We have used up almost all of our interceptors, the majority of our Tomahawks. We have put the United States in a dangerous position," Murphy added.

"We have allowed Russia and China to imagine things that they couldn't have imagined early because of our inability to defend ourselves and our allies."

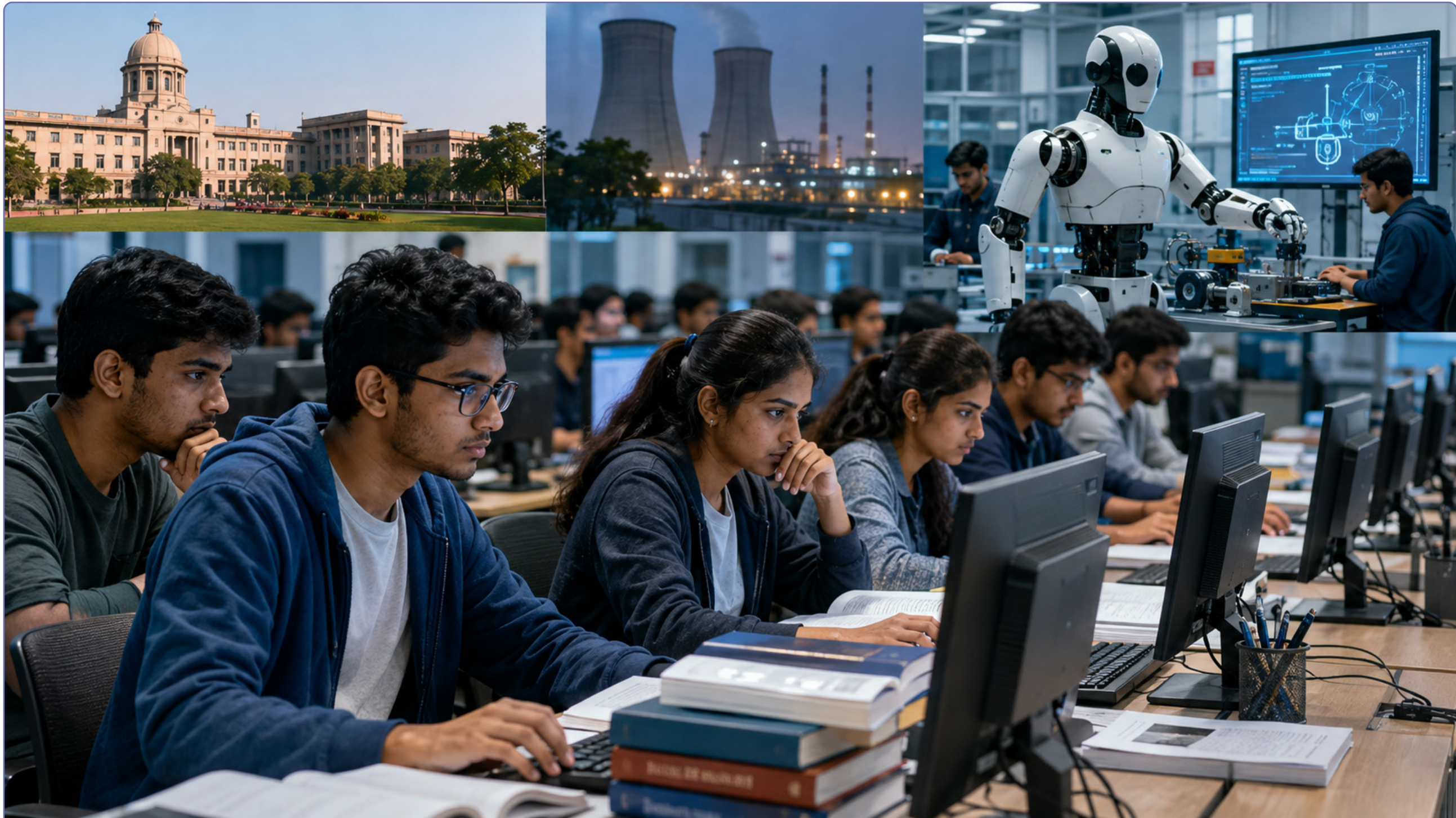
Republican Senator Jim Banks of Indiana, meanwhile, defended Trump's handling of the Iran war and said the President's legacy would be tied to preventing Tehran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. "His legacy is going to be largely wrapped up in ensuring that Iran never has a nuclear weapon," Banks told NBC News.

He said the US military had wiped out 85 per cent of Iran's ballistic missiles and damaged

its defence industrial base. He also credited Trump's naval blockade with crippling Iran's economy.

Esper said the administration was pressing defence companies to accelerate weapons production. But he cautioned that there was no quick solution. "When you're talking about taking two years to build a Patriot missile, whatever we do now is not going to help in the short term, but nonetheless needs to be done for strategic reasons," he added.

Patriot and THAAD are among the United States' principal missile-defence systems. Patriot batteries can intercept aircraft, cruise missiles and some ballistic missiles, while THAAD is designed to intercept ballistic missiles during the final phase of their flight.



NEW DELHI

For thousands of students looking beyond a conventional engineering degree, the Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE) 2027 is set to offer more than just an entrance route to postgraduate programmes. The examination, organised this year by IIT Madras, is emerging as a gateway to higher studies at premier institutions, recruitment opportunities in public sector undertakings and technical and research careers. IIT Madras is expected to begin the GATE 2027 registration process on August 14, 2026. Candidates can submit applications without a late fee until September 21. The examination will be conducted in computer-based test mode on February 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21, 2027. But before candidates rush to fill out the application form, the organising institute has issued an important reminder: applicants must carefully check whether they meet the eligibility requirements for the examination. The eligibility framework for GATE 2027 is broader than many students may assume. Candidates studying in the third year or higher of an undergraduate degree programme, as well as those who have completed an approved degree, can appear for the examination. Importantly, the qualifying disciplines are not restricted to engineering and technology. Students from science, commerce, arts and humanities can also be eligible, depending on the prescribed conditions.

Eligibility Rules Expand GATE's Reach

The traditional image of GATE is that of an examination primarily meant for engineering graduates seeking admission to MTech programmes. The eligibility provisions for GATE 2027, however, underline a much wider academic scope. Candidates currently studying in the third year or higher of an undergraduate programme can appear for the examination. Those who have already completed a government-approved degree programme can also apply. The qualifying degree can be in Engineering, Technology, Architecture, Science, Commerce, Arts or Humanities. This wider eligibility opens the examination to students who may not have previously considered GATE as part of their academic or career plans. For candidates from non-engineering backgrounds, the availability of relevant test papers creates another route towards postgraduate education and research opportunities. Candidates with qualifications obtained through professional societies must also pay close attention to the recognition requirements. Those holding certifications from bodies such as the Institution of Engineers (India), Institution of Civil Engineers, Institution of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers and the Aeronautical Society of India must ensure that their examinations are recognised by the relevant authorities as equivalent to qualifications such as BE, BTech, BArch or BPlanning. The same principle applies to candidates who have obtained or are pursuing their qualifying degree outside India. Such candidates must either be in the third or higher year of an eligible undergraduate programme or have completed a bachelor's degree of at least three years' duration in an eligible discipline. For all applicants, checking the official eligibility requirements before registration will be critical. An application submitted without meeting the prescribed academic conditions can create

GATE 2027

Eligibility, Exam Pattern, New Paper and Career Opportunities Explained

IIT Madras to begin registration from August 14; candidates from engineering, science, commerce, arts and humanities can apply, while new Robotics and Automation paper expands the exam's scope

30 Papers, Two-Test Option

GATE 2027 will have 30 test papers and will be conducted entirely in English. Candidates can appear for either one paper or up to two papers, subject to the combinations allowed by the examination authorities. Each paper will carry 100 marks. The General Aptitude section will account for 15 marks and will be common to all papers. The remaining 85 marks will cover the syllabus of the selected discipline. The structure means that candidates will need to balance general aptitude preparation with in-depth preparation in their chosen subject. The range of available papers also illustrates how far GATE has moved beyond its traditional engineering-focused identity. The examination includes disciplines such as Aerospace Engineering, Biotechnology, Civil Engineering, Environmental Science and Engineering, Ecology and Evolution, Geomatics Engineering, Geology and Geophysics, Mining Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences and Statistics. For students considering two papers, the decision will require additional planning. Candidates must ensure that their selected combination is permitted and that they can adequately prepare for both syllabi.

problems later in the admission or recruitment process.

Registration Begins in August

The GATE 2027 application process is expected to begin on August 14, with candidates allowed to apply without a late fee until September 21. The examination itself will be spread across six dates in February 2027 — February 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21. GATE is conducted jointly by the Indian Institute of Science and the seven IITs on behalf of the National Coordination Board, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India. IIT Madras is the organising institute for the 2027 edition. Candidates planning to appear should not wait until the final days of registration to examine eligibility, select their test paper and gather the required information. With the examination covering a large number of disciplines, choosing the appropriate paper will be one of the first major decisions applicants need to make.

Robotics and Automation Makes Its Debut

One of the most notable changes in GATE 2027 is the introduction of a dedicated paper on Robotics and Automation. The move comes at a time when robotics, automation, artificial intelligence and intelligent manufacturing systems are rapidly changing the nature of technical employment. The introduction of the new paper gives students interested in these areas a dedicated academic

IITs and NITs Remain Major Destinations

For students pursuing higher education, postgraduate admission remains one of the most significant advantages of a strong GATE performance. A good score can help candidates compete for MTech and related programmes at institutions such as IISc Bengaluru, IITs, NITs and other participating institutions, depending on the programme and admission rules. The attraction is clear. An MTech programme at a premier institution can allow students to specialise in a technical field, develop advanced subject knowledge and prepare for careers in industry, academia or research. Institutions including IIT Bombay, IIT Madras, NIT Tiruchirappalli and NIT Warangal offer postgraduate programmes across a range of engineering and technology disciplines. For students who want to pursue research or eventually move into doctoral studies, postgraduate education can provide an important foundation. Financial assistance may also be available to eligible students under applicable institutional and government rules. But competition for popular programmes is intense. Candidates therefore need to look beyond simply qualifying for GATE and focus on securing a score that matches the requirements of their preferred institutions and programmes.

pathway within the GATE framework. The change also reflects the evolving requirements of the technology sector, where automation and intelligent systems are becoming increasingly important across manufacturing, healthcare, logistics, defence, mobility and other industries. Another structural change involves Textile Engineering and Fibre Science. The TF paper has been converted into a sectional paper under Engineering Sciences, or XE. The syllabus across GATE papers has also been revised. Candidates preparing for the examination therefore need to ensure that they are using the latest syllabus and not relying solely on preparation material from previous years.

A Score That Can Open Multiple Doors

The importance of GATE extends well beyond the examination hall. A valid GATE score can be used for admission to postgraduate and doctoral programmes in institutions supported by the Ministry of Education. It can also be relevant to recruitment processes conducted by several public sector organisations. The GATE score remains valid for three years from the date of announcement of results, giving successful candidates some flexibility in planning their next academic or professional step. However, a valid score does not automatically guarantee admission or employment. Institutions may have their own eligibility criteria, cut-offs and selection processes. Similarly, PSUs decide independently whether and how they will use GATE scores for recruitment. Candidates must therefore treat GATE qualification as an opportunity to enter the next stage of a selection process rather than as an automatic ticket to a job or postgraduate seat.

PSU Recruitment Adds to the Attraction

For engineering graduates, one of the biggest attractions of GATE continues to be the possibility of entering the public sector. Several Public Sector Undertakings have used GATE scores during different recruitment cycles to shortlist engineering candidates for technical positions. Organisations such as ONGC, BHEL and IOCL have recruited candidates through GATE-based processes at various times. A PSU career can offer competitive salaries, allowances, medical benefits and employment stability, making such opportunities highly sought after among engineering graduates. However, the recruitment process is not uniform across organisations. A candidate who qualifies in GATE cannot assume that a PSU appoint-

ment will automatically follow. Individual organisations issue separate recruitment notifications specifying the eligible disciplines, qualifying marks, GATE paper requirements, age conditions and subsequent selection stages. Some recruitment processes may involve interviews or other assessments after candidates are shortlisted on the basis of their GATE performance. Therefore, students preparing for GATE with a PSU career in mind should follow the recruitment notifications of individual organisations in addition to preparing for the examination itself.

Beyond PSUs: Research and Scientist Roles

GATE can also be relevant for candidates who want to pursue technical and scientific careers. Government and research organisations have recruitment pathways for engineers, scientists and technical professionals, although the exact requirements vary from one organisation to another. Institutions and organisations such as BARC, DRDO, ISRO, BIS, NIC and NTRO have offered technical or scientific career opportunities through different recruitment mechanisms. For candidates interested in research and advanced technology, such roles can provide exposure to major national projects and specialised areas of science and engineering. The career possibilities can extend across fields such as electronics, computing, defence technology, space technology, infrastructure and other advanced technical domains. This makes GATE particularly valuable for students who are still deciding whether they want to pursue a conventional industry career, higher education or research.

Humanities and Science Students Get a Larger Window

Perhaps one of the less-discussed aspects of GATE 2027 is its relevance to students outside traditional engineering streams. The inclusion of Arts, Humanities, Commerce and Science in the eligibility framework means students from these backgrounds can examine whether GATE aligns with their academic plans. The Humanities and Social Sciences paper, for instance, provides an examination route for eligible candidates from relevant academic backgrounds. For such students, GATE can potentially connect undergraduate education with postgraduate and research opportunities in areas where the score is accepted. The development also reflects a broader shift in higher education, where boundaries between traditional disciplines are becoming less rigid. Technology, data, science, social sciences and interdisciplinary research increasingly overlap, creating demand for students with varied academic backgrounds.

Preparation Must Begin With the New Syllabus

With the examination scheduled for February, candidates have several months to prepare. The first step should be to understand the latest syllabus and exam pattern for the selected paper. The 15-mark General Aptitude section should not be ignored. Although it represents a smaller share of the total paper, preparation in this section can help candidates secure valuable marks. The larger 85-mark subject component will require detailed understanding of the chosen discipline. Candidates should focus on concepts, previous examination questions, regular revision and timed practice.





CRICKET

Sarfraz Khan replaces injured Sai Sudharsan in India's squad



COLOMBO: Right-handed batter Sarfraz Khan has been named as a replacement for injured left-handed batter B Sai Sudharsan in India's squad for the upcoming two-match Test series against Sri Lanka. "Sai Sudharsan has been ruled out of the Test series against Sri Lanka. The left-handed batter, who has been at the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Bengaluru, has made significant progress in his recovery from the right toe stress reaction and is recovering well. The BCCI Medical Team is closely monitoring his progress," the BCCI said in its official statement.

FOOTBALL

Barcelona coach Flick confirms Araujo's Liverpool move



MADRID: Barcelona's Uruguayan defender Ronald Araujo is on the verge of joining Liverpool on a season-long loan, Barca coach Hansi Flick has confirmed on Sunday. "Ronald is a great guy and a fantastic player; he is strong and fast and good with the ball, but I think he also needs to do something new. In football as in life, things change, and you have to accept them," said Flick after his side played in a triangular tournament against Nottingham Forest and Udinese in Udine on Sunday, as quoted by Xinhua.

Search for Head of Sports Science & Medicine at CoE is on as top candidates back out: VVS Laxman

BENGALURU

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has hit a major road-block in its attempt to appoint a Head of Sports Science and Medicine (SSM) at its Centre of Excellence (CoE), with multiple high-profile international candidates backing out after nearing agreement.

Speaking to reporters at the high-performance facility, CoE head VVS Laxman disclosed that despite extensive global recruitment drives, top choices, including a leading Australian expert and the former sports science head of the famous All Blacks rugby team, withdrew from the process at the final stage.

The SSM head post has been vacant since Nitin Patel, the former India men's team physio, left the facility after March 2025. "I think we have done a very extensive interview process. Andrew was part of the interview process when Nitin was selected in 2012. That's why we reached out to Andrew the moment we got to know that Nitin didn't want to continue or his term was getting finished.

"Andrew almost agreed and then backed out. Now, the second interview process was an extensive one. I can share, the first candidate was from Australia. The second and third candidates are already working at the CoE. "Now, it's our responsibility to upskill them while looking to identify someone of that stature and experience and knowledge. So that process, it's not that the BCCI is not looking now for the suitable candidate, but you have to find the right candidate," said Laxman.

Highlighting the scarcity of qualified personnel capable of managing elite athletes, BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia acknowledged the difficulty in finding an expert who meets the board's high benchmarks.

"In fact, it's a rare commodity to fit into that position. So we have our



technical persons who are at a certain standard. So the person who will be heading the sports sector, he must be much better than them. So there are very limited people, not only in India but across the world.

"Therefore, we are facing some problems in spite of repeated processes being done. We are not getting the right candidate. So, because of the shortage and acute shortage, I should say, we are not getting the person. But the process is on to find the right candidate." Tracing the timeline of recruitment failures since Patel's exit, Laxman revealed that multiple global specialists pulled out due to personal reasons and unwillingness to commit to a full-time, on-site role in Bengaluru.

"Unfortunately, after Nitin left as the head of sports science, we didn't get anyone who can fill in that shoes or position. We had Andrew Leipus (who previously worked as Indian team physio and is now with IPL team Punjab Kings). In fact, everything was agreed upon. Devajit had with him two or three meetings and

everything was agreed upon.

"Suddenly Andrew at the last moment citing family reasons backed off. Then we conducted a full fledged interview process where we had Dr. Dinshaw (Pardiwala), Dr. Ashish Soni and Dr. Rohan Khavte and myself, where we shortlisted five candidates out of which the number one, I don't want to name him, was an Australian.

"After selecting him, suddenly he backed out saying that he cannot move to Bangalore because one of the important reason and condition is it's a full time job. It is not a consultant or a part time one. You want that person to be here because like I'm here because it's a day to day monitoring.

"It cannot happen as a periodic monitoring, and unfortunately, that professional also didn't join. Then there was another professional who was the head of sports science of All Blacks. We engaged with him and he almost agreed. At the last moment, he backed out," he explained.

Despite the vacancy at the helm, Laxman praised the existing internal

team for stepping up and restructuring the department into localized operational units. "So to fill in that position, you require someone not necessarily of the stature or experience, but the knowledge and understanding of Indian cricketers.

"So because we didn't get any head of sports science, we've divided and I think a lot of credit should be given to the professionals who are already in the sports science team because they have stepped up. We have got the verticals, four verticals, the rehab vertical, the performance vertical, the domestic vertical and the education vertical. Reiterating that the BCCI will not compromise on quality merely to fill the slot, Laxman confirmed that the hunt for the right candidate remains active. "I think the lookout is there, but you have to find someone who is qualified and capable enough to take up that position. I think that that lookout is still there. So we require to definitely fill in that position and the suitable candidate has to be identified and I think that lookout is still there."



Diksha, Aditi stay inside top-20 at London Championship

LONDON

Diksha Dagar and Aditi Ashok remained inside the Top-20 after the third round of the \$2 million PIF London Championship at Centurion Club on Saturday, while Pranavi Urs slipped down the leaderboard following a difficult outing.

Diksha, a carded a 1-over 72 to move up three places from tied-22nd to tied-19th. She stands at 1-under 215 after 54 holes, having opened the tournament with rounds of 75 and 70. Aditi, meanwhile, followed her opening rounds of 71 and 73 with another 73 to remain tied-19th. She had started the day tied-16th.

Pranavi had been the leading Indian after the opening two rounds, climbing to tied-12th following rounds of 71 and 72. However, a 6-over 78 in the third round dropped her to tied-38th at 5-over 221.

Diksha, currently the highest-ranked Indian on the Ladies European Tour Order of Merit, will now look to close the tournament strongly in the final round. At the top of the leaderboard, Canada's Anna Huang strengthened

her grip on the tournament with a bogey-free 8-under 65. The 18-year-old moved to 19-under and opened up a three-shot advantage over England's Charley Hull heading into the final round. Huang, a three-time LET winner who secured her third title in May, has led the tournament from the opening round. She began her third round with a birdie on the first hole and added another on the fourth before producing back-to-back birdies on the eighth and ninth. She repeated the feat on the 14th and 15th before ending her round in spectacular fashion with an eagle on the 18th for the third successive day.

A victory in London would see Huang become the youngest player to win four LET titles. Hull occupies sole second place at 16-under after a 6-under 67. The five-time LET winner made nine birdies and three bogeys in her third round, following her stunning 11-under performance on the second day. With the title race headed for a final-round showdown, the Indian trio will look to finish their campaigns strongly.

Jaiswal hits 61, Siraj slams hat-trick of sixes as India seal six-wicket win in warm-up game

COLOMBO

Yashasvi Jaiswal top-scored with 61 while fast bowler Mohammed Siraj showcased his power-hitting capabilities by blasting a hat-trick of sixes to propel India to a thrilling six-wicket victory over Sri Lanka Cricket XI on the third and final day of their warm-up fixture at the NCC Ground on Sunday. Chasing a target of 207 after Sri Lanka XI de-

clared their second innings at 200/6, India required 23 runs off the final two overs in a race against time. Siraj, who finished unbeaten on 32 off just 15 balls, launched Sonal Dinusha for a maximum over the boundary in the 44th over before unleashing absolute carnage against Keshara Nuwantha in the 45th and final over of the day. Siraj smashed three consecutive sixes to different parts of the

ground off Nuwantha to wrap up the chase in sensational fashion with three balls to spare and ensured India hit the bonus runs needed to complete their full quota of overs for the match. Earlier, the final day provided encouraging signs for India as regular skipper Shubman Gill returned to active action following an impact injury to his right ring finger sustained during Thursday's practice session.

Shubman Gill is very much ready for the Test match at Galle, says Sairaj Bahutule

COLOMBO

India's spin bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule confirmed that captain Shubman Gill's absence from the first two days of the warm-up fixture against Sri Lanka Cricket XI was purely a precautionary measure and added that the right-handed batter is fully fit and ready for the first Test in Galle starting on August 15.

Gill, who opted to sit out of the first two days due to an impact injury on his right ring finger during a practice session on Thursday, returned to open the batting in the second innings and looked fluent during his 44-run knock. "I think it was just a precaution more than anything else and he has been absolutely fine. He has been doing his training and the management decided that we could just take that precaution of not putting him into



that first day. I think everything, the way he batted in the second inning was again flawless and he is very much ready for the Test match," Bahutule said in the post-game press conference.

Highlighting the skipper's analytical preparation for the Test series in the island nation, Bahutule noted that Gill leaves nothing to chance when preparing for specific opposition bowling line-ups. "I think Shubman takes his preparation very seriously and he

is a very meticulous boy.

"He understands that whatever is the demand for that particular series with the attack, which has been successful for the Sri Lankan team, his preparation is done accordingly. So, the net bowlers who have come with us, they have a good opportunity to bowl Shubman and we were doing a few scenarios with which Shubman was responding. I think this helps him to prepare and that was our effort."

Speaking about giving batting time to pacers Gurnoor Brar and Mohammed Siraj, who unleashed big hits with the bat in the bag end of the innings, Bahutule stated it's a part of the plan to get batting contributions from them in the Test series.

"The lower order bowlers, as you saw, Gurnoor and Sairaj did a good batting time. So, there is a process. All the lower order bowl-

ers, who basically bat in lower order, their contribution will always be very useful to achieve a good total in the Test match and that is the entire process. We are encouraging them to bat as much as possible in the nets and see how they can contribute towards the team score." Left-handed top-order batter Devdutt Padikkal also impressed during the fixture, scoring a stroke-filled, unbeaten 142 in the first innings to push his case for inclusion in the starting eleven, especially with B Sai Sudharsan ruled out due to right big toe stress reaction.

"I think whoever gets that opportunity, Devdutt got this opportunity. He expressed himself. He batted beautifully and he is ready to (play). Whatever the decision, once we go to Galle, we will see the pitch and whatever decision has to be taken, it will be (done).

Those who play, will flourish': PM Modi meets India's CWG medallists



NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday congratulated India's Commonwealth Games 2026 medallists for their historic performances in Glasgow and urged the country's athletes to continue inspiring the nation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday met with the Commonwealth Games 2026 medallists and congratulated the athletes for delivering historic performances in boxing, judo, athletics and para-athletics. "Those who play, will flourish. Always cheer for Bharat. Bharat Mata Ki Jai!," PM Narendra Modi posted on Instagram.

India finished fourth in medal standings with 39 medals (13 gold, 17 silver and nine bronze) despite competing in a significantly reduced programme that excluded medal-rich sports such as wrestling, badminton, table tennis, hockey and shooting.

India's boxing contingent returned

from Glasgow with seven gold and three silver medals, with the seven gold medals coming from Preeti Pawar (54kg), Jaismine Lamboria (57kg), Sakshi Choudhary (51kg), Priya Ghanghas (60kg), Arundhati Choudhary (70kg), Sachin Siwach (60kg) and Ankush Panghal (80kg). The three silver medallists were Jadumani Singh (55kg), Olympic medallist Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) and Narendar Berwal (90+kg).

Sakshi Choudhary, one of India's boxing gold medallists, spoke about the significance of meeting the Prime Minister and said the interaction left the athletes proud and delighted.

"We, all the Commonwealth Games medallists, were invited by our honourable Prime Minister. We feel extremely proud, and it was a wonderful experience meeting him. He is very humble, and we were very happy to meet him."

The seven gold medals also marked the best-ever performance by Indian

women boxers at the Commonwealth Games. Indian judo contingent also produced its best-ever Commonwealth Games performance. India participated in 12 judo events in Glasgow and won four medals – two gold, one silver and one bronze, compared to three medals, with no gold, in 2022.

The breakthrough was led by Khelo India athletes Asmita Dey and Harsh Singh, who created history by winning India's first-ever Commonwealth Games gold medals in judo. Asmita became the first Indian woman judoka to win Commonwealth Games gold, while Harsh became the first Indian male judoka to achieve the feat.

Athletics delivered 10 medals, comprising five silver and five bronze. Gulveer Singh became the first Indian track and field athlete to win two individual medals at a single Commonwealth Games, claiming silver in the men's 10,000m and bronze in the 5,000m.

'I believed in the Delhi project': Rodriguinho reflects on five-goal Durand Cup debut

RANCHI

Rodriguinho's first start for SC Delhi could hardly have gone better, but the Brazilian forward was quick to shift the focus away from his remarkable five-goal haul and towards the belief that brought him to India in the first place.

"This is the result of the belief that everybody had in the team," Rodriguinho said after SC Delhi's emphatic 7-0 victory over Defenders FC in the Durand Cup. "I would like to thank all the coaching staff for their teachings and support." The

Brazilian needed just 13 minutes to complete his hat-trick on his starting debut before adding two more goals, including a curling effort from the edge of the box. The result sent SC Delhi to the top of Group C with maximum points from two matches and put them within touching distance of the knockout stages.

Yet for Rodriguinho, the performance was less about individual achievement and more about the faith his new club showed in him.

"In Brazil, we are always keeping an eye on the Asian market," he explained. "India has been grow-

ing more and more, with more and more players coming here. There are also a lot of Brazilian players with big names who have played in India. So, we had some knowledge about Indian football, and I believed in the Delhi project. I was happy that they believed in me." That belief has already begun to look justified.

Rodriguinho arrived in India without the profile of some of the more established foreign names to have played in the country. Within his first start, however, he had introduced himself to Indian football in spectacular fashion. His adaptation



off the pitch has also been helped by the reception he has received. "I am getting along very well with the people here," he said. "They are very open and talkative. They are very curious. They want to learn and they

want to listen. I am having a great time with them."

There have been adjustments, including to the food, but the forward appears increasingly comfortable in his new surroundings. That comfort has translated onto the pitch, where he has shown an ability to move between the lines, link play and find scoring positions.

Rodriguinho sees similarities between his own game and that of Brazilian international Matheus Cunha.

"I think my profile is very similar to Matheus Cunha," he said. "He can play in different positions

in the front. He can play as the only striker and he can also play between the lines. I get a lot of inspiration from him because he is a very versatile player." If Cunha is an influence on his playing style, Neymar remains the player who occupies a special place in his footballing imagination.

But Rodriguinho's own description of his game is far more straightforward. "I can describe myself with one word: I am someone who finishes actions," he said. "I want to improve everything."

That ability to finish was on full

display in Ranchi. The Brazilian's first goal came after he controlled a pass on his chest, spun away from his marker and calmly placed a left-footed finish into the bottom corner. The second followed barely a minute later, while the third completed his hat-trick before the match had settled into its rhythm.

Two more goals followed after the break. For all the attention that his five-goal performance has generated, Rodriguinho remains keen to project a personality that is considerably more understated than his finishing.



Jakkanna Disappoints Mahesh Fans



Cinema's impact on society is often debated, with many believing that films influence people more negatively than positively. But every once in a while, a film manages to create a real impact, and a recent incident in Tamil Nadu is a perfect example. An eight year old girl from Chennai reportedly opened up about sexual abuse after watching Vijay's Jananayagan. The film features a scene explaining good touch and bad touch, helping children understand where appropriate and inappropriate touching begins. The girl remembered the message from the film and told her father about the alleged abuse she had faced. He immediately approached the police, following which the accused was arrested under the POCSO Act. The incident has now brought appreciation for the film's message. But the interesting part is that the original idea did not come from Jananayagan. The scene was actually inspired by Anil Ravipudi's Bhagavanth Kesari, where Balakrishna delivered a similar message to school children in a sensitive manner. Anil Ravipudi has always been known as a family entertainment director who tries to bring meaningful and socially relevant points into his commercial films. Presenting such an important subject through a star hero like Balakrishna made the message reach a much wider audience. The impact of that scene was strong enough for Vijay to notice it and adopt similar elements for his farewell film. Despite Jananayagan receiving mixed response, the film reached a huge audience and reportedly crossed Rs 300 crore in its full run. For Anil Ravipudi, this is certainly a big achievement. A scene created for a commercial entertainer travelled beyond its original film, inspired another star hero's farewell project and, most importantly, helped a young girl recognise and speak about abuse. The awareness credit should go to Anil too.



Tamil Nadu POCSO Case: Credit Goes to Anil Ravipudi!

Nayanthara Steals the Spotlight

Nayanthara is one of the fewest heroines of the present era to stand the test of time and emerge as a lady superstar with her longevity. She scored numerous blockbusters and built a unique image among her contemporaries. While most of the leading South female stars like Samantha, Trisha and Kajal Aggarwal actively promote their films, Nayantara for unknown reasons distanced herself from promotional events and let her work speak for itself. This decision though received some criticism still suited the phase of her career when she was carrying films on her shoulders as the leading lady. Surprisingly, she turned up for the promotional event of her upcoming film Toxic, which stars Yash in the lead role, and turned the spotlight. Rather than looking her renewed decision as a break from an old habit, it can be seen as a practical move that reflects how the film industry is changing. Especially, a film like Toxic, which has faced so many challenges from the start because of controversies and other issues, requires strong aggressive promotional campaign not just from Yash but also from the entire cast as well because of the high budget and efforts involved. Moreover, Toxic garnered huge attention because of the ensemble female cast. Along with Nayanthara, the cast includes Kiara Advani, Rukmini Vasanth, Tara Sutaria and Huma Qureshi. Each actress brings her own popularity and fan base. In such a star studded affair, every public appearance naturally attracts attention to the entire cast instead of just one individual. By joining the promotions, Nayantara becomes an active part of that collective energy rather than remaining absent from it. Had Nayantara skipped the event just like she did for many of her previous outings, other happening actresses could have dominated her. This could have further given chance for critics to point out Nayantara after the film's release as well. When experienced stars like Nayantara, Huma and Kiara

stand alongside younger and equally popular actresses, it reflects mutual respect and strengthens the film's overall appeal. Her presence also sends a positive message about teamwork of Toxic. Promotional events are no longer viewed as competitions between actors, but for the well being of the film and to help the producer. Besides the promotions of the film, this decision could also work in her favour as it will increase her public visibility and help her engage with fans like most of the heroines doing nowadays.



Ritika Nayak Turns Tollywood's Lucky Charm

Ritika Nayak is emerging as one of the happening actresses in Telugu cinema. What makes her journey special is that every film she has been associated with so far has turned out to be a success at the box office. From her impressive debut in Ashoka Vanamlo Arjuna Kalyanam to her brief but memorable appearance in Nani's Hi Nanna, Ritika has maintained a perfect success rate. More recently, Mirai ended as the biggest hit of her career. Now, Varun Tej's Korean Kanakaraju's success has further strengthened her position. The young actress is now being treated as a lucky charm by many in the industry. Producers are showing keen interest in casting her, thanks to her growing popularity. What stands out is that Ritika is not rushing to sign every offer that comes her way. Instead, she is carefully selecting films that offer meaningful screen presence. Her upcoming bilingual film Duet, being made in Telugu and Tamil, has already generated curiosity among movie lovers. Industry insiders believe Ritika is building her career in a very calculated manner. At a time when actresses are chasing quantity, Ritika seems focused on quality. One needs to see how she handles her career from here on. Still, many believe she should consider accepting roles a little faster, as taking too much time is not always a positive sign, especially when audience perspectives and the industry are changing rapidly.



Preity Proves Why She's A Style Star

Preity Mukhundhan is currently riding high on love from her fans, and she recently gave her three million followers something to cheer about with a fresh set of stunning pictures. The actress took to social media to share the new shots, and it did not take long for the pictures to go viral among her admirers. In the photos, Preity looked absolutely radiant in a shimmering silver embellished saree paired with a matching backless blouse, letting her sequinned drape do all the talking. She kept her styling minimal yet elegant, with soft waves and statement jhumka earrings completing the glamorous look. On the work front, Preity's film Idhayam Murali is now streaming on Netflix. The coming-of-age romantic drama, which also stars Atharvaa and Kayadu Lohar, is available to watch in Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.



Prabhas Appreciates Team KOKA!

Varun Tej's Korean Kanakaraju is running successfully in theatres, and the movie is heading towards breakeven, which will be done today. It's a much-needed hit for Varun Tej, Merlapaka Gandhi, UV Creations, and First Frame Entertainments. Meanwhile, the movie gets special appreciation from Rebel Star Prabhas who took to Instagram to share his views. Prabhas' post carried a particularly warm tone as he congratulated Varun Tej, director Merlapaka Gandhi, actress Ritika Nayak and Satya, while also appreciating UV Creations and First Frame Entertainments for the film's success. For Varun Tej and his team, the appreciation from a star of Prabhas' stature added another memorable moment to their current success story. The Korean Kanakaraju team responded by thanking Prabhas for his encouraging words. Their message reflected the significance of receiving recognition from one of Telugu cinema's biggest stars. The movie is expected to continue the strong run, and rake in big figures on its third day, and the bookings also looking very strong for Sunday.