HYDERABAD HEADLINES

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Lakhisarai Incident: PM Announces Ex-Gratia for Victims



NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced an ex-gratia from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for the victims of the unfortunate incident in Lakhisarai, Bihar. The Prime Minister has approved ₹2 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased and ₹50,000 for each injured person. The Prime Minister's Office said in a post on X that the assistance would be provided to the families of those who lost their lives and to those injured in the incident. The ex-gratia is intended to provide immediate financial support to the affected families and injured victims.



SHORT TAKES

Congress workers are party's greatest strength: Uttam

BHONGIR: Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Monday hailed the commitment and resilience of Congress workers, describing the grassroots cadre as the party's greatest strength and a vital link between the Congress government's welfare programmes and the people of Telangana. Addressing a Political Affairs Committee meeting attended by AICC Telangana in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, Ministers Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and Adluri Lakshman Kumar, elected representatives and senior party functionaries, Uttam Kumar Reddy said Congress workers had stood by the party

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TIMS Hospitals will provide Corporate treatment to the poor

CM Revanth Reddy announces new Osmania hospital, LB and Alwal TIMS and Warangal super specialty hospitals will be ready by December 7, 2027

- 10,000 beds will be available in the state
- State government spent Rs 21,800 crore for healthcare in just 2 years
- CM blasts KCR government for neglecting the health sector
- CM Revanth Reddy inaugurated Sanathnagar TIMS in Hyderabad today



HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy announced that the construction of the new Osmania hospital , LB Nagar, Alwal TIMS and Warangal super specialty hospitals would be completed and ready for medical services for Telangana people by December 9, 2027. Once these projects are completed, a total of 10,000 hospital beds will be available in the state , the Chief Minister said that a dedicated Director for each hospital would be appointed to oversee operations and also sanction funds to provide necessary facilities for the attendants of patients visiting the hospital. Addressing a meeting after inaugurating the Sanathnagar TIMS hospital today, the CM emphasized that measures should be taken to run these new TIMS hospitals on par with corporate hospitals. CM Revanth Reddy ordered the officials to provide incentives for super-specialty doctors who are ready to serve extra time in the government hospitals.

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BRS slams Cong over delayed TIMS, Warangal and NIMS projects

HYDERABAD

Former Minister and BRS Deputy Floor Leader T. Harish Rao has demanded that the Telangana government complete the TIMS hospitals, Warangal Multi-Specialty Hospital and the 2,000-bed NIMS block on a war footing.

Harish Rao alleged that the Congress government was seeking publicity by inaugurating projects initiated by former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao. He criticised the inauguration of TIMS Sanathnagar without full-fledged medical services and claimed that even basic facilities were yet to be arranged. He said KCR had envisioned three 1,000-bed TIMS hospitals at Alwal, Sanathnagar and LB Nagar to provide free, corporate-level super-specialty healthcare to the poor. A total of Rs.2,679 crore was sanctioned for the three facilities during the BRS regime, he said.

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Telangana CEO Holds Meeting with Political Parties on SIR-2026

HYDERABAD

Telangana State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Sri C. Sudarshan Reddy, IAS, held a meeting with representatives of recognized political parties on August 17, 2026. Additional Chief Electoral Officer Dr. Vasam Venkateshwar Reddy, IAS; Government Additional Secretary and MNO Sri N. Shankar; Deputy CEO (FAC) Sri G.S. Chary; PM (IT) nodal officers; and other concerned officials from the CEO Telangana office participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, CEO Sri C. Sudarshan Reddy, IAS, announced that the Enumeration Phase conducted as part of SIR-2026 from June 25, 2026, to August 10, 2026, had been successfully completed. He briefed representatives of the political parties on key details of the exercise. He said that 2.65 crore Enumeration Forms (EFs) had been collected from electors, accounting for 78.30% of the total electorate. He also shared details concerning deceased electors, those who had permanently migrated, electors who were unavailable/absent, electors falling under other categories, and those whose names appeared in electoral rolls in more than one location.

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T-BJP chief targets Cong over "Vande Mataram" row



HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP president N. Ramchander Rao on Monday accused senior Congress leaders of showing disrespect to the national song "Vande Mataram" alleging that Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi appeared to seek an early end to its rendition. Speaking at a BJP joining programme, Rao said the conduct of senior Congress leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge, raised questions about their respect for national symbols and national song. He also criticised the reported non-rendering of "Vande Mataram" in the Kerala Assembly. Rao welcomed social workers from Alwal and BC leaders from Musheerabad into the BJP, saying people from different sections were being attracted to the party by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and policies. On this occasion, Rao warned against the forces seeking to influence students and youth with "anti-national" ideology, he urged youngsters to remain alert to attempts to weaken the country's unity and integrity.



Zaheerabad Industrial Smart City to Create Employment for 2 Lakh People

HYDERABAD

IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu said that all development works related to the Zaheerabad Industrial Smart City will be completed by March 2028. He said the government is targeting investments of ₹15,000 crore in the industrial zone, which is being developed across 3,245 acres. Sridhar Babu participated virtually from the Secretariat in a video conference of the National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICDIT), conducted from New Delhi on Monday

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'Private lands wrongly included in 22-A list due to officials' errors'

HYDERABAD



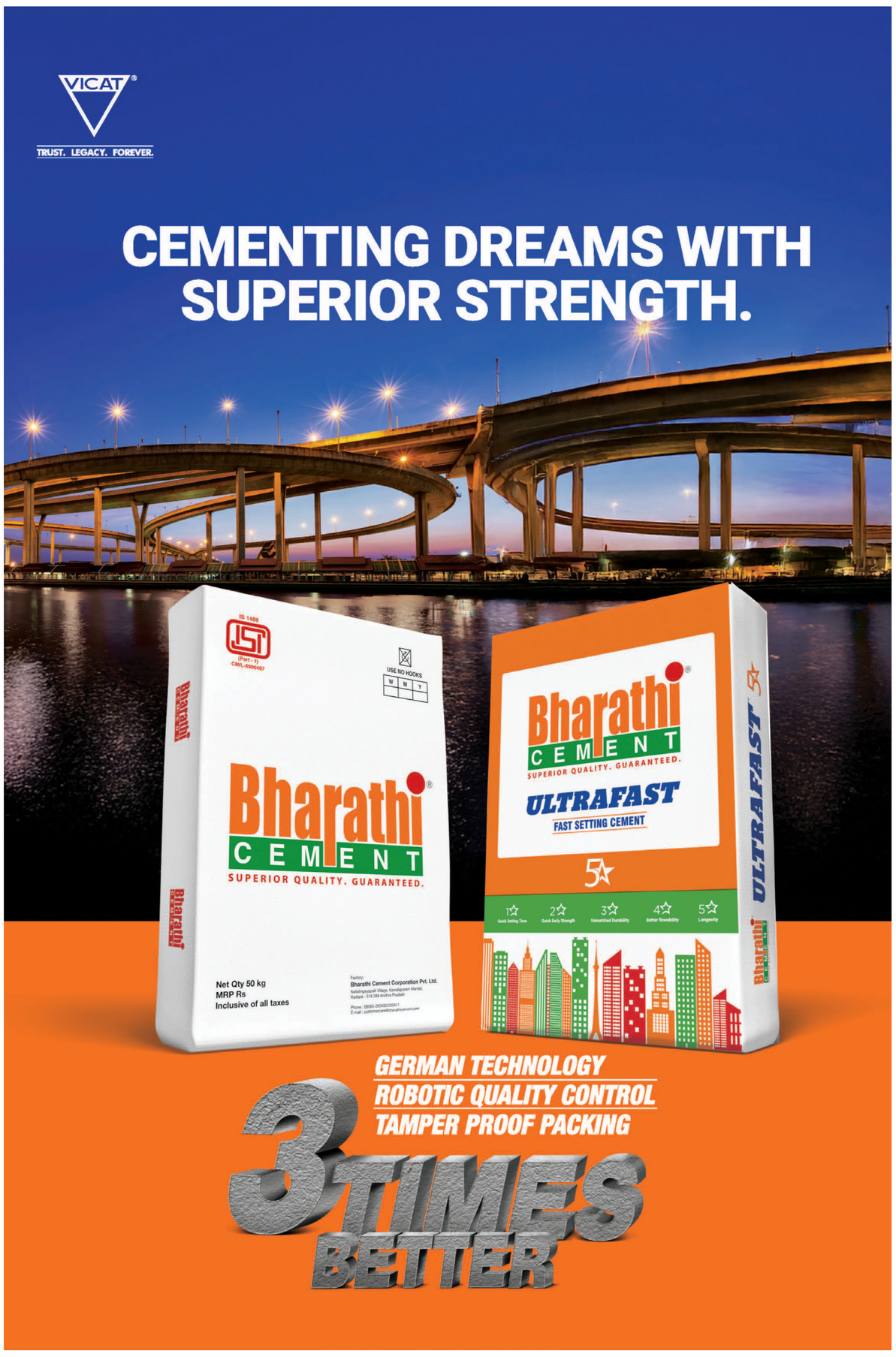
Minister for Revenue and Housing Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy has clarified that the inclusion of private lands in the 22-A prohibited properties list was due to errors by officials and assured that all such mistakes would be rectified.

Speaking to the media at the Secretariat on Monday, the Minister said the government had no intention of causing any hindrance to people's properties and urged the people not to panic. "Interfering with people's properties is not our government's policy. There is no need for anyone to worry," he said.

Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy said the government had so far received 750 complaints regarding the inclusion of private lands in the 22-A list. Of these, around 500 complaints were from Medchal and 100 from Rangareddy, besides complaints from Hyderabad.

The government had conducted inquiries into cases relating to prime areas in four districts, he said, adding that the objective was to ensure that not even a single square yard of genuine private property was affected.

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BJP FIRES THE STARTER GUN UNDER NITIN NABIN

Bharatiya Janata Party President Nitin Nabin has unveiled a brand new national team packed with experience, energy and ground level connect. Smriti Irani, Biplab Deb and Ram Madhav walk back into key roles while Union Minister Piyush Goyal takes charge as treasurer. Social media baton passes from Amit Malviya to Deepak Mhaske. Yet, one glaring blank stares out from the southern map. Telangana with its eight Members of Parliament finds itself completely ignored. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has welcomed the new set up but the cadre in the state is left wondering where the big push for power in Telangana has gone.



BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

The Bharatiya Janata Party has spoken. Loud and clear. On Monday the party central office released the full list of national office bearers under president Nitin Nabin and the message is unmistakable. This is no ordinary reshuffle. Said that this is a full scale organisational reboot designed to keep the saffron machine fighting fit for the battles ahead especially

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Students' Future Cannot Be Compromised, NTA Must Be Accountable: Dr. Virendra Singh Solanki

NEW DELHI

The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) has expressed serious concern over the re-examination of the English, Commerce and Sociology papers of UGC-NET 2026. NTA has cited factual, typographical, translation and language-related errors in the question papers as the reason for the re-examination. ABVP had earlier raised concerns over the delay in releasing the provisional answer key and had demanded its early release. Such serious errors in a national-level examination raise questions over the quality and credibility of the examination process. NTA must explain how these errors occurred and why they were not detected during the question-paper preparation and review process. Students are being made to bear the cost of repeated examinations in terms of their time, money and academic plans.

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BJP fires the starter gun under Nitin Nabin

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the crucial Uttar Pradesh assembly election next year. Thirteen national vice presidents, eight national general secretaries and sixteen national secretaries have been named. The appointments take effect immediately. It is mentioned, what stands out is the careful blend of old war horses who know every lane of Indian politics and fresh faces who bring hunger and digital firepower.



EXPERIENCE RETURNS WITH A BANG

Look who is back. Former Union minister Smriti Irani has been named national general secretary and given charge of Uttar Pradesh. The woman who once took on the Gandhi family in Amethi is now back in the thick of organisational work. Former Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb joins her as another national general secretary. Ram Madhav the sharp RSS thinker who once steered the party through difficult terrains in the North East and Jammu and Kashmir returns as national vice president. Union commerce minister Piyush Goyal has been handed the critical post of national treasurer. Rajesh Mangal will assist him as joint treasurer. BL Santhosh continues as the all important national general secretary organisation the man who keeps the party machinery humming day and night.

DIGITAL SHIFT AT THE TOP

In one of the most watched changes the party has replaced long time social media convenor Amit Malviya with Deepak Mhaske from Chhattisgarh. Four new social media co convenors have also been named. The digital battlefield is being recalibrated. In today's politics the narrative war is fought as much on phones as on the streets and the BJP is making sure its online army stays sharp and responsive.

WOMEN AND YOUTH GET REAL SPACE

Six of the thirteen national vice presidents are women. Former Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje Scindia retains her place. D Purandeshwari, Rekha Verma, Bharti Pawar and others join the top table. The party has also given space to younger leaders and faces from different regions and communities. Representation from twenty three states and Union territories has been built into the new structure. This is not tokenism. This is serious organisational politics.

THE TELANGANA SNUB THAT STINGS

Yet one southern state stands completely left out. Telangana. A state that sends eight Members of Parliament to the Lok Sabha has drawn a blank in the entire national team. Not a single face from the state finds a place among the vice presidents general secretaries secretaries or mahila morcha. This is the first time since the formation of Telangana that the state has been shut out of the national organisational structure. DK Aruna who was functioning as national vice president could not retain her position. The cadre in the state had been expecting meaningful representation in the new national body. That expectation has been dashed. The disappointment is real and widespread among the rank and file. For years the party has spoken of enlarging its presence in Telangana and of dreaming of forming a government in the next elections. That ambition now appears sidetracked. Neighbouring Andhra Pradesh has all have their men and women in the new team. Telangana alone has been left standing outside the door.

THE BIHAR BOY WHO NOW CALLS THE SHOTS

Nitin Nabin the five time Bankipur MLA and former Bihar minister took charge as national president earlier this year. At forty six he is among the youngest to hold the post. A grounded karyakarta with deep roots in the organisation Nabin has now put his own stamp on the national team. The first full meeting of the new set up is scheduled for 22 August. The real test will begin soon after. Whether the Telangana question is addressed in the coming days will tell how serious the party is about its southern ambitions.

MY SHOT

This is classic BJP style. No drama for the cameras. Just a quiet clinical restructuring that strengthens the core. Experience is respected energy is rewarded and the digital edge is sharpened. With assembly elections approaching and the long road to 2029 already in sight the party under Nitin Nabin has shown it has no intention of letting the organisation grow soft. Yet the complete absence of Telangana from the national table raises a hard question. Can a party that dreams of ruling the state afford to leave its own cadre feeling ignored at the very moment when the organisational foundations are being rebuilt. The new team is ready. The battles ahead will prove whether this mix of old steel and new fire can deliver the next set of victories including in the south.

Meeting Between Modi and Goa Governor Ashok Gajapathi Raju

NEW DELHI



Goa Governor Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday as a courtesy visit. The special meeting took place to mark the completion of one year since he assumed office as the Governor of Goa.

On the occasion, Ashok Gajapathi Raju presented Prime Minister Narendra Modi with a commemorative idol of Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy of Simhachalam. He also explained to the Prime Minister the significance and uniqueness of Lord Appanna Swamy of Simhachalam.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi enquired about Ashok Gajapathi Raju's health. He specifically asked about his well-being and wished him good health.

During the meeting, Ashok Gajapathi Raju invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit the Simhachalam temple and seek the blessings of Sri Appanna Swamy. The Prime Minister expressed his willingness to visit Simhachalam and have darshan of the deity. Meanwhile, Goa Governor Ashok Gajapathi Raju is scheduled to meet President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday.

MeeTicket app to integrate RTC, Metro, autos and cabs

HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) is set to take another step towards modernising public transport services with the development of the "MeeTicket" app under the MeeSeva platform. The app aims to bring RTC, Metro, auto and cab services onto a single digital platform, making travel more convenient for passengers. Commuters will be able to purchase RTC or Metro tickets through the app and also pre-book an auto or cab based on their destination. The platform will have an integrated payment system, with fares automatically transferred to the respective transport departments or service providers. Auto and cab drivers can join the platform as partners and provide services directly to passengers. The initiative is aimed at offering commuters a seamless, integrated travel experience through a single app, allowing them to choose the mode of transport according to their requirements.

RTC denies reports on operating autos

Meanwhile, TGSRTC management has clarified that reports claiming the corporation is planning to purchase and operate its own autos are completely untrue. The management stated that TGSRTC has no plans to purchase or operate autos, either now or in the future. It urged passengers and auto drivers not to believe rumours circulating on social media, newspapers and other platforms.

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Zaheerabad Industrial Smart City to Create Employment for 2 Lakh People

➢FROM PAGE 1

by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. Chief ministers and industries ministers from various states also participated in the conference.

Sridhar Babu explained that once the Zaheerabad Smart City becomes fully operational, it is expected to generate direct and indirect employment opportunities for around 2 lakh people.

The state government holds a 51% share in the project in the form of land, while the Central government is providing funds for the development works. Sridhar Babu said that the development plan has already been submitted to the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).

He stated that the works being carried out under the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) model would be completed within the scheduled timeframe. He said the tendering process for water-supply works has already been completed and assured that electricity-supply infrastructure would also be completed within the deadline.

The minister also urged Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal to allocate four of the 100 plug-and-play industrial parks announced by the Central government under the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana (BAVY) scheme to Telangana.

TGIIIC Managing Director Shashank, Industries Department Special Secretary Krishna Aditya, Industries Commissioner Nikhil Chakravarthy and others participated in the video conference.

Telangana CEO Holds Meeting with Political Parties on SIR-2026



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The CEO also explained the arrangements made for the publication of the Draft Electoral Roll in the state and for the Claims and Objections Phase, which will be conducted from August 17, 2026, to September 16, 2026. A detailed PowerPoint presentation was made on the SIR process. The CEO responded to questions raised by representatives of various political parties and said that the suggestions received from them would be considered and examined. Subsequently, hard copies/digital copies of the Draft Electoral Rolls were provided to representatives of the recognized political parties through hard disks.

The CEO urged all recognized political parties to actively participate in the scrutiny of the Draft Electoral Roll and in the Claims and Objections process. He appealed to all stakeholders to ensure that no eligible voter is left out of the electoral roll, so that the final electoral roll is accurate, comprehensive, transparent and error-free.

TIMS Hospitals will provide Corporate treatment to the poor





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The Chief Minister claimed that after assuming office, the people's government initiated measures to complete the TIMS hospitals at Sanathnagar, LB Nagar, and Alwal, as well as the Warangal super specialty hospital. " Revanth Anna " government was instilling confidence in the people that a pro-people government was providing healthcare to the needy.

Expressing concern over increasing cost of the private healthcare services, the CM said that we established TIMS to make corporate-standard healthcare accessible to the poor. Since assuming office, the people's government has spent ₹2,700 crore on the Arogyasri scheme and Rs 2,526 crore were released under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF). A total of Rs ₹5,226 crore were spent on healthcare for the poor till date. In the last two years, the government spent ₹21,800 crore on the Medical and Health Department .

CM Revanth Reddy criticized the previous BRS government for not constructing a new Osmania hospital despite the existing one being in dilapidated condition for 10 years. The KCR government merely laid foundation stones for the TIMS hospitals and the Warangal hospital but abandoned the projects, the Chief Minister charged. The CM alleged that the BRS leaders focused more on constructing farmhouses at Erravalli, Janwada, Moinabad, and Shankarpally. The previous government ignored the health sector completely and the leaders should introspect at least now.

The Chief Minister ridiculed KTR's claim of constructing the TIMS hospitals by the BRS government. The CM recalled KTR's conversation with some patients during his visit to a mental hospital near TIMS. KTR went to the mental hospital located nearby and asked the patients, "I am the one who built TIMS, don't you recognize me?" A patient there reportedly replied, "Calm down, son; I used to talk just like that in the beginning too. but eventually, the condition subsides. If you were the ones who built it, did you not find the time to inaugurate it in ten years? Why did not the KCR government inaugurate the TIMS hospitals ? The sins committed by the BRS leaders would not be mitigated even if they spent Rs 10 to 20 crores per constituency on public service.

CM Revanth Reddy warned the BRS leaders that people will not trust the party even through false propaganda. The Chief Minister wished for KCR and KTR to remain the same until 2034. As long as the BRS leaders are telling lies, he will continue to tell the truth to the people. The Chief Minister reiterated that the people's government accorded top priority to education and healthcare, alongside agriculture and women's welfare. Abundant opportunities for nursing students in countries like Germany and Japan would help the Telangana youth to get jobs in foreign countries.

Congress workers are party's greatest strength: Uttam

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through difficult political circumstances and that their loyalty and sacrifices could never be overlooked.

Recalling his long association with the Congress organisation, including his tenure as TPCC president, he said he had personally witnessed the dedication of ordinary workers who continued to uphold the party flag even during challenging times.

"The Congress worker is our real strength. Governments and positions may come and go, but it is the worker who carries the party flag, stands with the people and keeps the Congress organisation alive at the grassroots," he said. Uttam Kumar Reddy said the Congress government had launched a wide range of welfare initiatives, but their full impact could be realised only when the party organisation effectively communicated them to the people. "We are providing free rice, free electricity, houses, free bus travel and strong support to farmers. When these programmes are combined with an active and committed Congress cadre, their impact reaches every household," he said.

The Minister called upon elected representatives to maintain regular interaction with mandal, village and booth-level workers and involve them in taking the government's welfare programmes to beneficiaries. He said Congress workers were best placed to explain government schemes to the people, identify genuine beneficiaries and bring public grievances to the notice of elected representatives and the administration.

Students' Future Cannot Be Compromised, NTA Must Be Accountable: Dr. Virendra Singh Solanki

➢FROM PAGE 1

Merely conducting a re-examination cannot be the solution; NTA must strengthen question-paper preparation, expert review, translation, proofreading and final quality checks, while fixing clear accountability for lapses. ABVP is gathering suggestions from students, academicians and other stakeholders across the country for examination reforms. Meetings have already been held in Chandigarh, Delhi and Patna, and the suggestions will be placed before the high-level committee constituted for examination reforms. ABVP stands firmly with students and will continue to raise their concerns until they are resolved.

Dr. Virendra Singh Solanki, National General Secretary, ABVP, said, "Serious errors in a national-level examination like UGC-NET are deeply concerning. Students should not have to pay the price for NTA's lapses. Playing with the future of students must stop. NTA must ensure proper examination-centre allocation and adequate travel arrangements for students appearing in the re-examination, so that they do not face additional financial or mental stress. It must also ensure that such lapses are not repeated and fix clear accountability for every stage of the examination process. ABVP firmly cautions that if students' concerns are not addressed within a stipulated time and necessary reforms are not implemented, ABVP will strongly raise this issue with students across the country. ABVP remains committed to the demands of students and will continue its efforts until a credible, transparent and reliable examination system is ensured."

BRS slams Cong over delayed TIMS, Warangal and NIMS projects

➢FROM PAGE 1

Harish Rao alleged that construction had slowed after the Congress came to power and accused the government of repeatedly announcing deadlines without completing the projects. "Deliberately delaying the work - out of political spite, fearing that KCR would get the credit if the three TIMS facilities, Warangal Health City and the new 2,000-bed NIMS block were completed - amounts to criminal negligence", he remarked.

He demanded immediate completion of the pending works and said delays in providing advanced healthcare facilities were depriving thousands of poor patients of timely treatment.

'Private lands wrongly included in 22-A list due to officials' errors'

➢FROM PAGE 1



The Minister said around 350 complaints from the erstwhile Rangareddy district pertained to EC properties. He added that several cases involving lands included in the prohibited list were pending before the High Court.

"We have identified mistakes committed by officials in some areas. Problems arose because court orders were not uploaded online. We are rectifying the errors committed by officials. Genuine cases will be resolved soon," he said.

Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy appealed to people not to worry and assured them that the government would take responsibility for ensuring justice to those affected. He also criticised attempts to provoke people in the name of the 22-A issue and said the government would address genuine grievances.

"I apologise to the people who have faced difficulties because of the 22-A issue," he said.

The Minister warned that strict action would be taken against officials if people were made to run from one office to another under the pretext of resolving 22-A-related issues. He announced that a high-level committee would be constituted to resolve 22-A cases and that a toll-free number would be established to receive complaints from genuine cases.

Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy urged people facing genuine problems related to the 22-A prohibited properties list to lodge their complaints on the toll-free number 18005-994788.

GERMAN DONER KEBAB ENTERS INDIA

First outlet launched in Hyderabad; targets more than 450 restaurants across the country



HYDERABAD

German Doner Kebab, the globally recognized premium quick-service restaurant brand, has officially entered the Indian market. The brand has opened its first outlet in the country at Film Nagar, Tollywood Lane, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad. GBC India, the master franchise partner for German Doner Kebab in India, announced the launch.

The company plans to expand its India operations across the country in phases, beginning with Hyderabad. As part of its long-term strategy, it aims to establish more than 450 restaurants across India. The expansion will include both company-operated outlets and franchise locations.

Aim to Develop the Doner Category

Speaking about the launch, Vikrant Tomar, CEO of German Doner Kebab India, said the company's objective is not merely to establish a restaurant chain in India, but to further develop the doner food category in the country.

He noted that India is one of the world's largest and youngest quick-service restaurant markets. The company aims to offer Indian consumers an international-standard doner experience.

To achieve its target of more than 450 restaurants across the country, the brand plans to combine international standards, fresh ingredients and high-quality products with a distinctive experience tailored to the preferences of India's young consumers.

Hyderabad Marks the First Step in Expansion

Ginny Sahni, Managing Director of GBC India, said that the company's partnership with German Doner Kebab, which has continued for the past decade, has given it deep knowledge of the brand's standards, operating practices and quality benchmarks.

She described the launch of German Doner Kebab in India as a natural next step in their partnership. The objective, she said, is to offer Indian consumers an international-quality dining experience built around freshness, taste and quality.

Following the opening of its first outlet in Hyderabad, the brand plans to expand to Mohali, Chandigarh and other Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities. The company will establish restaurants through both company-operated outlets and the franchise model.

German Doner Kebab Gains Global Recognition

Founded in Berlin, German Doner Kebab is currently headquartered in the United Kingdom. The brand operates restaurants across several international markets, including the United Kingdom, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Sweden and Ireland.

The brand's specialty lies in giving traditional doner kebab a modern makeover. It offers customers a distinctive food experience featuring flame-grilled doner, fresh ingredients, signature sauces and toasted waffle bread.

Focus on Taste, Freshness and Quality

The company said that its food offerings in India will place particular emphasis on taste, freshness and quality, along with protein-focused food options. The brand also plans to connect with younger consumers through music, fashion, sports, fitness, entertainment and contemporary youth culture.

GBC India is managing German Doner Kebab's operations in India. The company has experience in food preparation, product development, supply-chain management and franchise development. GBC India and German Doner Kebab have been partners for more than a decade, with both organizations emphasizing product quality, service and operational standards.

Special Partnerships to Connect with Young Consumers

To strengthen the brand's connection with young consumers in India, German Doner Kebab has appointed prominent musician, actor and filmmaker Parmish Verma as its cultural partner. The company said the partnership aims to build a strong connection with young consumers by linking the brand with music, entertainment, fashion, fitness, sports and modern lifestyles.

With its India journey beginning in Hyderabad, German Doner Kebab is preparing to expand its presence across the country over the coming years. The company has reiterated that its long-term goal is to establish more than 450 outlets in India.

About German Doner Kebab

German Doner Kebab is a premium quick-service restaurant brand that gives traditional doner kebab a modern twist. It serves flame-grilled doner made with fresh ingredients, signature sauces and toasted waffle bread.

The brand currently operates across international markets including the United Kingdom, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Sweden and Ireland. Minister Ponnam Prabhakar inaugurates German Doner Kebab's first outlet in India at Hyderabad

TG Forest Department rescues 17 cobras

HYDERABAD: Seventeen cobras have been rescued by the Forest Department during special checks conducted ahead of Nag Panchami, as officials stepped up surveillance to prevent the capture, trafficking and ill-treatment of snakes during the festival. Eight special teams comprising anti-poaching squads.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

TRIVANDRUM DIVISION

E-Tender Notice No. V/TRD-OT/05/2026-27 Items 1 & 2 Dated 13.08.2026

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer / Traction / Thiruvananthapuram acting for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-tenders for the following works.

E-Tender Notice No.	V/TRD-OT/05/2026-27 Item 1, Dated 13.08.2026	V/TRD-OT/05/2026-27 Item 2, Dated 13.08.2026
Name of the Works:	Replacement of codal life completed earthing system at 4 TSS under TVC division.	Trivandrum Division - Upgradation of overaged earthing systems at TSSs SPs, SSPs and various stations.
Tender Value:	₹ 1,11,27,619.24	₹ 2,38,64,953.7
Tender Document Cost	NIL	NIL
Period of Completion:	180 days	180 days
Earnest Money Deposit:	₹ 2,22,600/-	₹ 4,77,300/-
Date and Time of Tender closing: 07.09.2026 @14.00 Hrs		
Complete Details and Tender document will be available at https://www.ireps.gov.in		

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD) / Thiruvananthapuram

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

PALAKKAD DIVISION

E - TENDER NOTICE No. PGT/OT/18/2026

Dated: 14.08.2026

For and on behalf of the President of India, The Senior Divisional Engineer / Co-ordination / Southern Railway / Palakkad invites E-TENDERS for the following works:

Sl. No.	Name of the Works	Approximate Cash Value (₹) in lakhs	Bid Security Amount (₹)	Tender Closing Date on 15.00 hrs	Completion Period in Months
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	Divisional Engineer / East / Palakkad Jurisdiction - Raising of PF to high level PF at stations Pallipuram PF-2, Tirunavaya PF-2/3 & Ottapalam - PF No 1 & allied works	627.41	12,54,800/-	15.09.2026	Eighteen
2	Shoranur - Nilambur section: Widening of cess and Standardization of embankment work at scattered locations between Km 2.600 - 65.370 (SL)	783.59	15,67,200/-	15.09.2026	Twelve
3	Shoranur - Calicut: TSR (P) 58.324 Km (56.000 Km by SQRS and 2.324 Km by manual) with 60 Kg wider base PSC sleepers with density 1660 Nos/ Km between Km 579.200-592.834 (Dn line) and 609.210 to 653.900 (Up line) including SQRS siding.	2138.80	42,77,600/-	15.09.2026	Twenty Six

1. All the contracts on Works / goods / services will be subject to the new GST Act as applicable from time to time.
2. Contractors / Suppliers have to register themselves with GST authorities and to furnish the GST registration number in order to process the bills from 01.07.2017 onwards.
3. For complete details of the above tenders please visit Website **https://www.ireps.gov.in**

Note: It is the responsibility of the Tenderer to check any corrigendum issued for any correction or modifications uploaded subsequently in website; the same shall be taken into account while submitting Tender.

Senior Divisional Engineer / Co-ordination / Palakkad

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

SALEM DIVISION (SIGNAL & TELECOM BRANCH)

E - Tender Notice No. SA-SG-120-I-OT-10-2026, Dated: 13.08.2026

For and on behalf of the President of India, The Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer / Southern Railway / Salem Division, Salem - 636 005 invites ONLINE tenders for the following works as per tender notice given in our e-tender portal **www.ireps.gov.in** The tenderer(s) / contractor(s) intending to apply for e-tender for WORKS in Salem Division, need to get enrolled in the e-tender portal "**www.ireps.gov.in**" and only online tenders will be accepted. Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) & Tender Document Cost (TDC), in respect of e-tendering, should be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. Fixed Deposit Receipt (FDR) will not be accepted as EMD for tenders invited on IREPS (e-tender portal).

Sl. No.	Name of the Work				
1	**Salem Division:** Signal and Telecommunication works in connection with two Engineering track works.				
Sl. No.	Approximate Cost of the Work ₹	Earnest Money Deposit ₹	Cost of tender form including tax	Eligibility criteria for similar single work previously executed	Period of Completion in months
1	2,77,92,141.60	5,55,900.00	Nil	Applicable	12 Months

Tender closing date and time: **04.09.2026 at 15.00 Hrs.**

Note: Details of approximate value of tender, tender form cost, EMD & location are given on the e-portal, "**www.ireps.gov.in**" For other details, terms and conditions, the tenderers are advised to refer to the Tender documents which are available at "**www.ireps.gov.in**" website

Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer / Salem - 636 005

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

WORKS BRANCH **MADURAI DIVISION**

TENDER NOTICE No. MDU-W-12-2026 Dated: 13.08.2026

For and on behalf of the President of India, e-tenders are invited for the following works by the Divisional Railway Manager / Works / Southern Railway / Madurai. Tender closing date for **Item No. 1 to 7 on 04.09.2026 at 14.00 hrs.**

Sl No.	Name of the Works	App.Value ₹ in lakhs	EMD ₹	Period of Completion
1	SSE/P.way/VPT section - Annual maintenance of track in between MDU-NLL stations for the period of two year.	674.21	1348400	24 Months
2	TN station: Repairs to pit line, catwalk arrangements and high-pressure jet cleaning plant	187.71	375400	6 Months
3	Madurai Division: Proposed Collection and supply of 50 mm machine crushed stone ballast at VIRUDUNAGAR BALLAST DEPOT including loading into Railway wagons, unloading and spreading in connection with various track renewal works in Sr.DEN/South/ MDU jurisdiction.	935.97	1872000	7 Months
4	SSE/Works/DG section: Annual Maintenance of Essential / Urgent Repairs in Railway colony, service building and station building for the period of 24 months	239.15	478300	24 Months
5	MDU Division - Construction of Track Machine staff rest room including women staff rest room at UDT & RMD	107.19	214400	9 Months
6	Dismantling of Condemned staff quarters buildings at Madurai Colony of SSE/ Works/MDU Section (Total-52 Quarters)	38.82	77700	3 Months
7	ADEN / Central Sub-Division:- Proposed raising of existing low level Platform No1 to high level platform at Vadippatti and Madurai East Stations.	184.18	368400	4 Months

(Items 07 only)

Further details are available in detail on website **https://www.ireps.gov.in.** The Tenderer(s) / Contractor(s) to apply for e-tender for works in Madurai Division, need to get enrolled in the **e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in** and only online tenders will be accepted.

It is the responsibility of the tenderer to check any Corrigendum issued for any correction or modification uploaded subsequently in the website, the same shall be taken into account while submitting Tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Madurai



Avinash Mahanti Assumes Charge as TG SAFE Commissioner

HYDERABAD

Avinash Mahanti assumed charge as the TG SAFE Commissioner at the Drug Control Administration office on Monday. The state government has merged the Food Safety and Drug Control wings and established TG SAFE with the aim of further improving quality standards for food and medicines. Accordingly, Avinash Mahanti will continue to serve as the Director of the department. TG SAFE stands for Telangana Standards Authority for Food and Essential Drugs.

Vivek launches employment portal linking job seekers with local industries

HYDERABAD



Minister for Employment, Training & Factories and Mines & Geology Dr. G. Vivek Venkataswamy launched a first-of-its-kind employment portal in Muppireddypally village of Medak district that connects students and job seekers directly with local industries to address the regional demand for skilled labour. The Minister said the portal is a unique initiative in the country that bridges the gap between industries and students.

Speaking on the occasion, Vivek Venkataswamy noted that there are over a thousand industries in the region facing a need for skilled manpower. He described the portal as a commendable joint effort by the district administration and industry owners.

"Unemployment remains a major issue both in the region and across the country. While the Telangana government is facilitating overseas employment opportunities through TOMCOM, there is also a strong need to supply skilled labour to local industries.," the Minister said. Vivek recalled that investments worth ₹5 lakh crore were secured through the Telangana Rising Global Summit organised by the Chief Minister, and these industries require skilled manpower. He highlighted that the government is providing training in German and Japanese languages to enable youth to secure high-paying jobs. "Students should not focus solely on the software sector, as excellent opportunities exist in many other fields," he said.

GITAM Students Win Top Honours at TGCSB



'Suraksha Ka Tiranga' Cyber Awareness Event

HYDERABAD

Students of GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, have won top honours in a state- level Short Video/Reel Competition organised by the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB) as part of its SPARC (Student Program for Awareness & Responsible Cyberspace) initiative.

The state-level cyber awareness event, titled 'Suraksha Ka Tiranga: Stay Alert, Stay Aware, Stay Cyber Safe', was held at the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC), Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. The event brought together prominent personalities and senior police officials, including renowned Tollywood actor Akkineni Nagarjuna, C.V. Anand, IPS, Director General of Police, Telangana, Shikha Goel, IPS, Director, Telangana Cyber Security Bureau, and V.C. Sajjanar, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Telangana.

As part of the Independence Day cyber-awareness campaign themed 'Freedom from Fraud', TGCSB conducted a state-wide Short Video/Reel Competition to encourage students and the public to adopt safe digital practices, remain vigilant against cyber threats, and spread awareness about preventing online fraud.

The GITAM SPARC Club, Hyderabad, participated in the state-level competition and secured First Appreciation for its impactful creative presentation. The GITAM students were presented with Appreciation Certificates by the dignitaries during the event in recognition of their efforts to promote cyber safety and responsible digital behaviour.

The participation of the GITAM SPARC Club in the state-level competition was coordinated in collaboration with Venu Gopal Reddy, DSP, Sangareddy, who supported the students in their efforts to contribute to the cyber-awareness campaign.

GITAM leadership appreciated the students for their creativity, awareness, and active participation in a state-level initiative aimed at creating a safer and more responsible digital environment. The achievement reflects the commitment of GITAM students to using their knowledge and talent for creating greater social awareness.

Dr. T. Sasivardhan, Assistant Professor, Department of Artificial Intelligence & Data Science, GITAM School of Computer Science and Engineering (GSCSE), and Faculty Coordinator, SPARC Club – GITAM, coordinated the students' participation in the programme.

The recognition at the state level is a proud achievement for GITAM and underscores the university's continued emphasis on cyber awareness, responsible technology use, and student engagement in initiatives of societal relevance.



SHORT TAKES

Dr A Vinay Kumar takes charge as IFHE vice-chancellor



HYDERABAD: *Dr A. Vinay Kumar has taken charge as Vice-Chancellor of the ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education (IFHE), Hyderabad, with effect from August 3, 2026. A finance scholar and academic administrator, Dr Kumar brings over 27 years of experience in higher education, including more than two decades at IIM Lucknow, where he served as Professor and Associate Professor of Finance. At IIM Lucknow, he handled several key responsibilities spanning academic administration, institutional development, accreditation, rankings, doctoral education, research, executive education and financial management. He was also Chairman of the Doctoral Programme and held leadership roles in the Audit Committee and Employee Provident Fund. Dr Kumar has contributed to initiatives involving NIRF rankings and international accreditations such as AACSB, AMBA and SAQS. His work has also included curriculum redesign, NEP-aligned programmes, AI integration in higher education, entrepreneurship and research development. He holds a Ph.D. in Business Management (Finance) from Osmania University and has undergone executive pedagogy training at Harvard Business School. His research areas include venture capital, market microstructure, derivatives, financial-market sentiment and corporate governance.*

TGHRC recommends strict enforcement of category-B engineering admission guidelines

HYDERABAD



The Telangana Human Rights Commission (TGHRC), headed by Hon'ble Dr.Justice Shameem Akther, Chairperson, has recommended strict enforcement of the prescribed guidelines for admissions to Category-B (Management/NRI) seats in Engineering Colleges, ensuring transparency, fairness and equal opportunity to eligible students.

The Commission passed the order DT.31.07.2026 in HRC.No.4961 of 2021 on a complaint filed by Mr.Palladugu Srinivas, J.A.C., Osmania University, alleging irregularities in the Category-B admission process for the academic year 2021–2022 in St. Martin's Engineering College, Dhulapally, and Vardhaman College of Engineering, Shamshabad. The complainant alleged that eligible students were not provided an effective opportunity to submit applications, despite notifications being issued, and that the prescribed admission procedure was not properly followed.

The Secretary, Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHE), submitted a report stating that both colleges had issued notifications on 18.09.2021 in three newspapers and completed admissions as per the prescribed guidelines and schedule. The complainant, however, disputed the report and produced documents in support of his allegations.

The Commission observed that the allegations were serious and that, if true, there would be a discrepancy between the notified admission procedure and its actual implementation, potentially affecting the legitimate educational opportunities of eligible and meritorious students.

Accordingly, exercising powers under Section 18 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, the Commission recommended that TSCHE strictly enforce the guidelines for Category-B admissions, ensure that no arbitrary or unauthorized procedure is adopted, and safeguard transparency, fairness and equal opportunity for all eligible candidates.

With the recommendation, further proceedings in the case were closed. A copy of the order and complaint was directed to be sent to the Secretary, TSCHE, for necessary action.

Harish Rao slams Congress govt over indiscriminate inclusion of lands in 22A list



HYDERABAD

Former minister and BRS Deputy Floor Leader T. Harish Rao alleged that the Congress government was indiscriminately placing lands in the prohibited properties list under Section 22A, causing severe confusion and uncertainty among people across Telangana.

He said lakhs of people were living in fear, unsure whether their properties had been included in the 22A list or not.

In a chit chat with media persons at Telangana Bhavan on Monday, Harish Rao said the Urban Land Ceiling Act had been repealed across the country in 1999. In Telangana, the then Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy had completely abolished the Act in 2008. "What kind of justice is it to now bring back lands that had been exempted from the ceiling limits and cleared at that time, and include them under Section 22A?" he asked.

Harish Rao said the move was evidence of the government's lack of basic understanding and administrative grip. "If even government lands such as those belonging to the airport and the Outer Ring Road have been included in the 22A prohibited list, it shows how appalling the functioning of the officials is," he said.

Harish Rao alleged that lakhs of properties in Hyderabad city were overnight included in the prohibited list. He said properties of people who had built houses and been living peacefully for the past 20 years in Survey Nos. 8 and 9 of Srinagar Colony had also now been included in the 22A list.

"It is atrocious to include even apartment flats purchased 30 years ago in the prohibited list. Where are those people supposed to go now?" he asked. The BRS leader said many ordinary people were unaware that their properties had been included in the 22A list. "They pay the challan amount and complete the payment process for registration, only to be told at the last moment that their land falls under 22A and that the registration cannot proceed," he said.

Harish Rao further alleged that the government was effectively looting public money by refusing to refund the challan amount paid for registration.

The BRS MLA said banks had earlier sanctioned loans against lands for which official NOCs had been issued by the government. "Now, by bringing the same lands under the 22A list, the government is creating problems for both property owners and banks," he said.

Harish Rao cited the inclusion of areas such as the Banjara Hills Housing Society in the prohibited list as another example of the seriousness of the situation. Harish Rao alleged that Section 22A had become a tool for the government to "indiscriminately exploit" people.

He claimed that it was an open secret that a 30 per cent commission was being demanded for any work in the Revenue department, including getting a property removed from the 22A list. "Not a single file is moving in the Revenue department without a 30 per cent commission," he alleged.

Harish Rao also expressed surprise that even Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's house had reportedly figured in the 22A prohibited list. "The government swung into action only after the issue affected the Chief Minister's own house," he alleged.

Young tennis stars shine at TSTA tournament in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD

The Kia Tennis Premier League (TPL), in association with the Telangana State Tennis Association (TSTA), hosted a State Ranking Tournament in Hyderabad on August 15 and 16, providing young players a platform to compete for ranking points and gain valuable experience.

The tournament, conducted under the Race to Gold scholarship programme, featured Boys' U-10, U-12 and U-14, and Girls' U-12 and U-14 singles categories. Ayansh Abhilashi won the Boys' U-10 title, while Hiyan Shah and Adhitya Devarakonda emerged champions in the U-12 and U-14 categories respectively. In the girls' events, Parivita V. claimed both the U-12 and U-14 titles.

The tournament is part of TPL's effort to strengthen grassroots tennis and provide aspiring players with competitive exposure.

The Race to Gold programme also offers selected youngsters tennis equipment support and access to coaches, nutritionists, physiotherapists and mental trainers. TPL co-founders Kunal Thakkur and Mrunal Jain welcomed the enthusiasm among young players and said such tournaments would help build a stronger grassroots tennis ecosystem.

The event also comes ahead of the Eighth season of Kia Tennis Premier League, scheduled to be held in Hyderabad in December, further strengthening the league's presence in Telangana.

12 kg hashish oil worth Rs.1.5 cr seized, six held in Hyd

HYDERABAD

The LB Nagar Zone Special Operations Team (SOT), in coordination with Vanasthalipuram police, busted an interstate hashish oil trafficking network and arrested six persons, including a woman and two children in conflict with law, at Chintalkunta on Sunday. Police seized 12 kg of Hashish Oil worth an estimated Rs.1.5 crore, besides five mobile phones and Rs.5,000 in cash. Acting on credible information, police intercepted the group while they were allegedly transporting the contraband from Alluri Sitharama Raju district in Andhra Pradesh to Bengaluru through Hyderabad. Four carriers had allegedly concealed the hashish oil in 1-kg packets strapped to their legs and stomachs using adhesive tape. Each carrier was reportedly carrying 3 kg.

Police identified Gemmeli Srinu, 25, and his wife Nibiya K.B., 27, as the alleged organisers. Two other accused were identified as carriers, while two minors were also involved as carriers. According to police, Srinu had previously been booked in two NDPS cases in Andhra Pradesh. Investigators suspect that he and his wife recruited unemployed tribal youth to transport hashish oil for money. Police said the consignment was allegedly being transported for a promised payment of Rs.10 lakh. The suspected supplier Krishna and Bengaluru-based receiver Sijo are absconding and efforts are on to trace them.

PD Act Invoked Against PMJ Jewellers Robbery Gang



Detention Orders Issued Against Five Key Accused

KARIMNAGAR

The Karimnagar Police have invoked the Preventive Detention (PD) Act against five key members of the gang allegedly involved in the sensational armed robbery at PMJ Jewellers in Karimnagar town. Karimnagar Police Commissioner Goush Alam issued detention orders against the five accused.

On May 3, 2026, the accused allegedly broke into PMJ Jewellers, opened fire at the staff with firearms and fled with gold ornaments worth approximately ₹82 lakh. The incident caused widespread concern across the state. So far, police have arrested eight accused in connection with the case. Of them, PD Act detention orders were issued against the five prime accused on Monday, August 17.

Accused Detained Under the PD Act

1. Raghunath Karmakar @ Jagira Singh, 41, West Bengal
2. Ravish Kumar @ Pradyuman, 23, Nalanda district, Bihar
3. Suryamani Kumar @ Sanoj, 21, Nalanda district, Bihar
4. Yadav @ Zainul Abdin, 33, Phulwari Sharif, Patna district, Bihar
5. Mohammed Adil Khan, 31, Phulwari Sharif, Patna district, Bihar

According to the police, the detention orders were issued under the PD Act with the objective of preventing the accused from repeatedly engaging in criminal activities, ensuring public safety and sending a strong message to those involved in organised and violent crimes.

The detention orders issued by Karimnagar Police Commissioner Goush Alam were served on the accused at the Karimnagar District Jail. They were subsequently shifted to Cherlapally Central Prison.

Commissioner Goush Alam appreciated Karimnagar Town ACP N. Venkataswamy and Karimnagar II Town Inspector K. Srujan Reddy for their key role in the process of invoking the PD Act.

The Police Commissioner made it clear that the Karimnagar Police would deal firmly with those involved in criminal activities. He stated that stringent legal action would continue against offenders who pose a threat to public safety and law and order.

Food security, welfare and voting rights at heart of Congress agenda: Natarajan



BHONGIR

AICC Telangana in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan on Monday placed food security and protection of the rights of the poor at the centre of the Congress party's organisational and political agenda, saying the welfare measures being implemented by the Telangana government reflected the party's long-standing vision of ensuring that no vulnerable family was denied food, shelter, healthcare or democratic rights. Addressing a meeting of the Political Affairs Committee of the erstwhile Nalgonda district at Bhongir, Natarajan drew a direct link between the right to vote and the right of ordinary citizens to access the social security measures created for their welfare.

Ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and Adluri Lakshman participated in the meeting.

Her remarks came in the backdrop of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. She urged Congress workers to remain vigilant and ensure that no genuine voter, particularly from economically weaker sections, was excluded from the electoral rolls.

Natarajan said the Congress organisation would devote its efforts during the month-long exercise to protecting the voting rights of genuine electors and coordinating with the administration wherever necessary. The AICC in-charge emphasised that protecting a poor citizen's name on the electoral roll was not merely an electoral exercise but part of a larger effort to safeguard the person's dignity and access to the benefits of the welfare state.

Referring to the Telangana government's programmes, including the distribution of fine rice, Indiramma Indlu and Aarogyasri, she said eligible beneficiaries must continue to receive the benefits without disruption.

Natarajan also indicated a strategic shift in the Congress's preparations for the 2028 Assembly elections, with the party seeking to increasingly focus on a direct political contest with the BJP while strengthening its organisational base.

She stressed the need to consolidate traditional Congress strongholds and turn districts such as the erstwhile Nalgonda, Mahabubnagar and Khammam into strong organisational bastions, while simultaneously expanding the party's presence in areas where the BJP is seeking to make inroads.

The strategy, she indicated, would involve strengthening the party from the grassroots upwards, with particular emphasis on booth-level organisation and protecting the Congress's electoral base.

Stating that no genuine voter should be deprived of the right to vote, Natarajan reiterated that the poor must also continue to enjoy their entitlements to fine rice, Indiramma housing and healthcare under Aarogyasri.

Students hit streets against Shakti merger; AIDSO calls for bandh

HYDERABAD

Over 500 students of Quli Qutb Shah Government Polytechnic staged a protest rally from the QQGPT college to Bahadurpura Junction on Monday, opposing the Telangana government's proposed merger of ITIs, vocational institutions and Polytechnic colleges, vide GO 97, under the Skill Human capital and Knowledge Training Initiatives (SHAKTI) / Young India Skills University (YISU) framework.

Under the banner of All India Democratic Students' Organization (AIDSO), students alleged that the restructuring could dilute technical education and undermine institutional autonomy. They demanded withdrawal of the merger proposal, consultations with students and teachers, and guarantees on courses, examinations, certificates and higher-education eligibility. "Mechanically merging distinct educational streams - each having its own unique curriculum, course duration, and academic objective - will dilute the quality of technical education and compromise institutional autonomy", the student leaders remarked and strongly condemned the government for introducing such far-reaching administrative restructuring without conducting any prior democratic consultation with students, teachers, or educational experts.

AIDSO has called for a state-wide bandh on August 18, warning of intensified protests if the government fails to reconsider the proposal. It demanded the government to make complete implementation framework of SHAKTI and YISU public and invite objections from all educational stakeholders.

IPM Brings Honours to Niranjan Reddy — Congratulations Pour In



KARIMNAGAR

Congratulations are pouring in for Karimnagar Rural Circle Inspector Anumula Niranjan Reddy, who was honoured with the prestigious Indian Police Medal (IPM) in recognition of his courage and dedication in the line of duty, particularly for his efforts in controlling Naxalite activities and curbing anti-social elements.

Niranjan Reddy received the Indian Police Medal from Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy at a ceremony held in Hyderabad on August 15. On Monday, he paid a courtesy visit to Karimnagar Police Commissioner Goush Alam, who congratulated him and conveyed his best wishes on the achievement.

"Your Services Are Truly Exemplary"

Commissioner Goush Alam appreciated Niranjan Reddy's courage, commitment and dedicated service in ensuring public safety. He said that receiving the prestigious Indian Police Medal was a matter of pride for the entire Karimnagar Police Commissionerate.

He noted that sincere and dedicated service in the police department always deserves recognition and encouraged other police personnel to work with greater commitment for the welfare and safety of society and strive for similar honours.

Special Appreciation from the Public

People in Niranjan Reddy's jurisdiction also extended special congratulations to him following the receipt of the IPM. They appreciated his contribution to maintaining law and order, ensuring public safety and taking proactive measures against anti-social activities. Several members of the public felicitated him and lauded his dedicated service.

Warm Welcome at the Police Station

Niranjan Reddy received a warm welcome from police personnel when he returned to the police station for the first time after receiving the IPM. Expressing his happiness over the prestigious honour, he said that the recognition had brought him immense satisfaction and that he would continue to discharge his duties with even greater responsibility and dedication.

Police officials and personnel said that Niranjan Reddy's achievement had inspired the entire police force and would motivate others to follow his example and work with greater commitment for the safety and welfare of the people.

No Deviation in DSC Recruitment

All details of the recruitment process are available online
YSRCP is resorting to "hit-and-run" tactics over DSC
Fake protests staged with Odisha laborers and 90-year-old Jagan "Gen Z" people
Challenge to YSRCP: If you have the courage, come to the Assembly and debate
CM Chandrababu's speech in the Legislative Assembly on Mega DSC recruitment

AMARAVATI, AUGUST 17

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu made it clear that there was no deviation anywhere in the Mega DSC recruitment process. He said that all details relating to the recruitment process had been made available online in a transparent manner. The CM criticized YSRCP leaders for spreading misinformation about the process through "hit-and-run" tactics. He spoke about the DSC recruitment issue in the Legislative Assembly.

The Chief Minister said:

"We believed that if students are provided with quality education and skills, they can become the best human resources. We have taken steps accordingly. By promoting IT, we created some of the best technology-related human resources in the world.

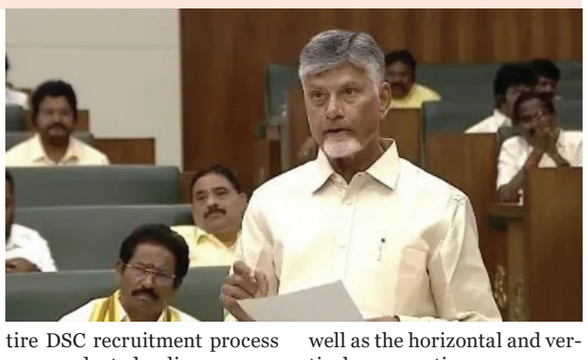
The Telugu Desam Party has always promoted the education sector. NTR introduced reforms through residential schools. NTR was also the first to establish a women's university to provide women with opportunities for higher education. When I became Chief Minister in the initial years, we immediately took steps to address the lack of schools in the undivided state. We established a primary school for every kilometer, a junior college and an engineering college in every mandal, and a medical college in every district. Development is possible only when educational standards are improved. The governments in power between 2019 and 2024, which did not recruit teachers, made a lot of claims about their work in the education sector.

So far, 14 DSC recruitments have been conducted, and 11 of them were carried out during TDP and NDA governments. Not a single person has complained so far that corruption took place.

In the past, we also provided dry rations with the objective of increasing student attendance in schools. The TDP government was the one that introduced the mid-day meal scheme in the state. We later extended the scheme up to the intermediate level.

We also decided to provide reservation for women in education. We introduced a special law to make teacher transfers transparent.

Over the past 30 years, we have brought about changes in the education sector through innovative reforms. In SC and ST residential schools, we are preparing students for competitive examinations, including entrance examinations for institutions such as IITs and IIMs. Between 2019 and 2024, around 10–12 lakh students stopped attending government schools. That is why we introduced the 'Thalliki Vandanam' scheme to provide financial assistance to all children. As educational standards improved in the state, more than one lakh students moved from private schools to government schools." The entire DSC recruitment process was conducted online



The Chief Minister further said:

"The previous government did not recruit even a single teacher for five years. As soon as we came to power, we made the decision through our first signature and filled 15,941 posts through the Mega DSC.

The entire process was completed transparently and the appointments were finalized within just 148 days. The TET and DSC notifications, as well as the horizontal and vertical reservation processes, were implemented rigorously.

We selected 42,000 questions across 13 subjects and conducted the examination using a highly effective system. The examinations were conducted through the computer-based testing (CBT) system at 154 centers, and the results were also released transparently.

A total of 15,941 candidates were selected and appointed purely on merit. Along with zonal- and state-level committees, we also established an appellate authority to resolve complaints. Under the sports quota, we implemented the same rules followed by the Central Government. Everyone who secured these jobs is highly talented and earned their position through hard work. The teachers said that the Mega DSC had finally rewarded their efforts.

The results were announced strictly according to the merit-cum-roster system. The entire selection process was online. Where could there be greater transparency than this?

A retired IAS officer who previously worked in the government and a former minister are making statements according to their own wishes. There was not even a single deviation from the recruitment procedure specified in the notification.

People associated with the litigant party filed hundreds of cases and created obstacles. Even after official explanations were provided, they continued to hatch a new conspiracy every day.

The 'axe party' [a derogatory reference to the opposition] organized protests over DSC with Odisha laborers and 90-year-old Jagan 'Gen Z' people. Unable to tolerate these allegations any longer, teachers themselves have now taken to the streets.

A large number of teachers protested in Kurnool the day before yesterday and in Vijayawada yesterday. They raised slogans saying that they would teach children their lessons, but if their merit was insulted, they would also teach the people responsible a lesson." "They are playing PUBG instead of coming to the Assembly"

The Chief Minister said:

"Our government is accountable to the people, not to parties and individuals who engage in conspiracies. I challenge them: if they have the courage, come to the Assembly and debate.

Those who know that they will be caught red-handed if they come to the Assembly are staying away. They are behaving on the streets in a 'hit-and-run' manner.

I want to tell those who secured jobs through DSC that no conspiracy will work in the state. The appointments were made with complete transparency, responsibility, and accountability.

Along with reforms in the education system, we will bring even greater transparency to examinations.

That shameless party is staying away from the Assembly and playing PUBG outside. Responsible people should come to the Legislative Assembly and put forward their demands.

In my entire life, this is the first time I have seen a party that has not attended the Assembly for two and a half years. They are taking salaries and privileges without even attending the Assembly.

As Chief Minister, I have complete responsibility toward the people. The people themselves should decide what responsibility those others have."

Absconding accused in Thane firing bid case held at Delhi airport

THANE:

Officials of the Mira-Bhayandar, Vasai-Virar (MBVV) Police Commissionerate on Monday intercepted and detained the absconding accused, Akhtar Kasamali Merchant, at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi, an officer said.

Merchant, wanted in connection with a 2023 extortion and attempted murder case, was taken into custody following the issuance of a Non-Bailable Warrant (NBW) and an Interpol Red Corner Notice (RCN) against him.

The case dates back to October 13, 2023, when an unidentified man entered the International Baking Company in Mira Road of Thane district. The assailant pulled out a pistol and attempted to open fire. Although the attempt failed, the suspect was captured on CCTV, leading to the identification of the network involved.

Sanatana Dharma Teaches Us to Lead a Noble and Meaningful Life: MP Etala Rajender

Sanatana Dharma teaches us how to make human life noble and meaningful
Our faith and dharma are the reasons India remains prosperous and exemplary
Organizations like Hare Krishna are needed to eradicate several social ills in the country
Let us preserve and protect this devotion: Etala Rajender, MP

MP Etala Rajender participated in the "ISKCON Golden Jubilee Celebrations" held at the Nampally Exhibition Grounds.

Speaking at the event, he said:

"Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare... This chant now resonates not only across India but throughout the world. "There was a time when India was looked down upon and people were fascinated by Western civilisation. I offer my deepest respects to the spiritual teachers who established this organisation on American soil. "Thousands of ISKCON centres have emerged across the world and touched the hearts of millions of people. We proudly say that this is our philosophy. "India is synonymous with Sanatana Dharma and faith. Our country was once regarded as the Vishwaguru—the spiritual and knowledge leader of the world. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is working tirelessly to restore India to that position. "Today, concepts such as Star Wars and rocket science are discussed, but our epics, the Mahabharata and Ramayana, contain references to remarkable technologies. The arrows used by Arjuna in battle demonstrate the technological imagination of that era.





"Of the billions of living beings on this planet, human beings alone possess the ability to respond, communicate and speak. Our dharma teaches that human life must be lived in a noble and meaningful manner.

"Even in the Kali Yuga, the teachings of our spiritual gurus and dharma can preserve and strengthen human relationships.

"The world is essentially a web of human relationships. We must support and help those who are in need.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the call for a Nasha Mukt Bharat—a drug-free India. We see many social problems in the country. Governments alone may not have the capacity to eradicate all of them. Organisations such as Hare Krishna can play an important role in eliminating these social ills.

"Despite having such a large population, if India continues to remain a great and exemplary nation, the reason is our faith and our philosophy.

"A nation is not defined merely by GDP, the economy or infrastructure. It is also defined by human relationships.

"Seeing the devotion and spiritual joy with which you are participating in this programme, it is clear that such happiness cannot be bought with money. It comes through devotion. We must preserve it carefully.

"Despite having so many comforts and material wealth today, what we are losing is love. Human relationships are being weakened.

"The great epics such as the Ramayana are unique treasures of our country. If we put their teachings into practice, they can contribute to human welfare.

"Today, even the person one has married can sometimes become a source of suffering. The unrest in society can be reduced through the guidance of spiritual teachers and the Sanatana Dharma they propagate."

Chennai–Rameswaram, Tiruchendur Express Trains to Get LHB Coaches

CHENNAI, AUGUST 17:

In a move aimed at improving passenger safety and comfort, Southern Railway will replace the existing conventional coaches with Linke-Hofmann-Busch (LHB) coaches on two important express train services. The Chennai Egmore–Rameswaram Sethu Superfast Express (22661/22662) will operate with LHB coaches from Chennai Egmore from October 22, 2026, and from Rameswaram from October 19, 2026. Similarly, the Chennai Egmore–Tiruchendur Chendur Superfast Express (20605/20606) will be converted to LHB coaches from Chennai Egmore from October 20, 2026, and from Tiruchendur from October 21, 2026. Following the conversion, both train services will have a revised coach composition comprising one AC First Class coach, two AC Two-Tier coaches, three AC Three-Tier coaches, nine Sleeper Class coaches, four General Second Class coaches, one Divyangjan-friendly Second Class coach and one Luggage-cum-Brake Van. The introduction of LHB coaches is expected to provide passengers with a safer and more comfortable travel experience.



I apologise on his behalf: Vijay after minister names Karunanidhi without title

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay apologised in the Assembly after a minister referred to M Karunanidhi without honorifics. The intervention calmed DMK protests and underscored Tamil Nadu's strict legislative decorum.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay apologised in the Assembly on Monday after a minister referred to former chief minister M Karunanidhi directly by name, without using the customary honorifics. The remark triggered immediate protests from the opposition DMK over what it called a breach of decorum.

Vijay stepped in quickly to calm the House and said the manner in which the late leader had been addressed was wrong. "I apologise on his behalf," Vijay said, after Forest Minister R V Ranjith Kumar mentioned Karunanidhi without using terms such as "Kalaignar" or "former Chief Minister".

The issue arose during a debate on the demands for grants for the Health and Revenue departments. In his speech, Ranjith Kumar criticised earlier cash-for-votes practices, referred to the controversial "Thirumangalam formula", and claimed that in previous elections, up to Rs 1,500 per vote had been distributed in his Kancheepuram constituency.

Contrasting those elections with the present administration, the minister said the current government had come to power without distributing money for votes. However, while listing what he described as poll tactics of the past, he referred to the DMK patriarch simply as "Karunanidhi". This went against a long-standing convention in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, where respected leaders are addressed with formal protocol titles. The omission drew loud protests from DMK members, led by former minister K K S S R Ramachandran. As tensions rose, Vijay stopped the minister mid-speech and acknowledged that referring to Karunanidhi in that manner was inappropriate. His apology ended the immediate disruption and brought the debate back on track.

Free, Quality Healthcare for People Is the Goal of the People's Government

Government Hospitals Are Like Modern Temples: Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka

HYDERABAD, AUGUST 17

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka said the Telangana government is paying special attention to strengthening the public healthcare sector in the state. He described the inauguration and dedication to the public of the TIMS hospital at Sanath Nagar, built on 53 acres with a capacity of more than 1,000 beds and named after Dr. Marri Channa Reddy, as a significant initiative.

Bhatti Vikramarka said the hospital is not merely a building but will serve as a modern healthcare temple, providing free medical services to lakhs of people in Telangana in the future. He said that since the People's Government came to power in 2023, it has spent and released ₹8,922 crore for the development of government hospitals and medical infrastructure. He explained that ₹3,880 crore had been released over the past two-and-a-half years specifically for the construction of TIMS hospitals at Sanath Nagar, Alwal and LB Nagar, as well as other major super-speciality hospitals. The Deputy Chief Minister said the government has allocated substantial funds and expedited work on projects including TIMS Sanath Nagar, TIMS Alwal, TIMS LB Nagar, the Warangal Super-Speciality Hospital, the expansion of NIMS, and construction of a new building for Osmania Hospital.





In addition, Bhatti said ₹3,953 crore had been released for another 193 health projects. He revealed that ₹1,452 crore had been provided through accelerated payments between October and July to ensure that hospital construction projects were completed quickly. Another ₹331 crore had been released for the construction of sub-centres, he added.

Bhatti criticised the previous government, saying that only ₹70 crore had been spent on the construction of the TIMS Sanath Nagar Super-Speciality Hospital during its tenure. The total cost of the Sanath Nagar hospital is around ₹1,126 crore, while the present government has already released ₹845 crore, he said. He remarked that it was inappropriate for the previous government to spend only ₹70 crore and then claim credit for the entire project. He urged the opposition not to mislead the public through false propaganda about the development programmes being undertaken by the government. He said it was the government's responsibility to make the facts available to the people, which was why he had presented the figures.

Bhatti Vikramarka made it clear that the objective of the People's Government is to ensure that citizens do not face any financial burden while accessing healthcare. He said the government is implementing the Rajiv Aarogyasri scheme, under which 1.06 crore families out of the state's 1.15 crore families are eligible for medical assistance of up to ₹10 lakh per year. More than ₹100 crore is being released every month for Aarogyasri, he said. He stated that the government is taking a comprehensive approach to medical infrastructure, hospital construction, Aarogyasri, and the procurement of medical equipment required by hospitals. "This is only the beginning," the Deputy Chief Minister said, announcing that several super-speciality hospital buildings would be completed this year and thousands of additional beds would be made available to the public. He said the government's objective is to dedicate government hospitals to the people and provide modern healthcare services to the poor. He expressed confidence that the newly constructed hospitals would serve as modern temples for the poor. Bhatti Vikramarka said that, with the special initiatives of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha, major changes are being brought about in Telangana's healthcare sector.

EDITORIAL

From Announcements to Action: Telangana's Real Development Test

Telangana has entered a phase of ambitious development, with the State government announcing major infrastructure projects, welfare initiatives, investment plans and employment-oriented programmes. These initiatives reflect a clear desire to accelerate growth and improve the quality of life of citizens. Yet, the real measure of governance lies not in the scale of announcements but in how effectively they are implemented.

Development requires more than launching schemes or unveiling ambitious targets. Roads, housing, public transport, irrigation, healthcare, education and urban infrastructure must reach people within clearly defined timelines. Every major project must have adequate financing, professional execution and transparent monitoring. Delays can raise costs and reduce public confidence, while poor implementation can weaken even well-designed programmes.

Telangana's economic ambitions also require a strong focus on employment. Attracting industries and investments is important, but the ultimate objective should be the creation of productive and sustainable jobs. Skill development programmes need to be closely aligned with emerging opportunities in technology, manufacturing, life sciences, services and other sectors. Young people should have access not only to government recruitment opportunities but also to a growing private-sector economy.

Infrastructure will remain central to the State's transformation. Hyderabad's expansion, the proposed Future City, improved connectivity and investments in transport and other urban facilities can strengthen Telangana's position as an economic hub. At the same time, development must remain balanced. Smaller cities and rural areas need better roads, digital connectivity, educational institutions, healthcare facilities and economic opportunities.

Welfare programmes are equally important, particularly for vulnerable sections of society. But welfare and development should complement each other. Support provided to families should help create pathways towards education, skills, employment and greater economic independence. This approach can make welfare more sustainable while strengthening household incomes.

The State also needs robust systems for monitoring public expenditure and measuring outcomes. Citizens should be able to see whether promised projects are progressing, whether funds are being used efficiently and whether programmes are producing the intended benefits. Technology can play a greater role in tracking projects, identifying delays and improving public service delivery.

Telangana has the resources, talent and economic potential to achieve significant progress. The next stage, therefore, is less about making bigger promises and more about delivering existing commitments efficiently. Clear timelines, fiscal discipline, administrative coordination and accountability will be crucial.

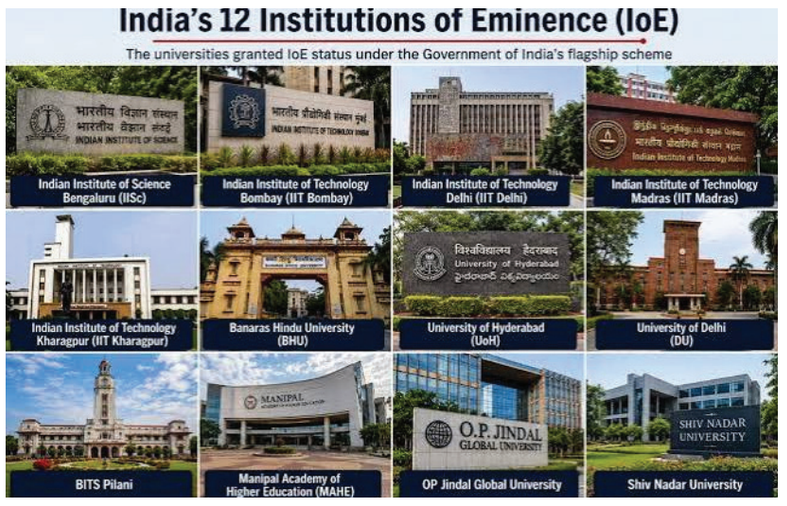
The success of Telangana's development journey will ultimately be judged not by the number of projects announced, but by the roads that are completed, the homes that reach families, the jobs created, the services improved and the opportunities made available to young people.

The transition from announcements to action is the real test of governance—and Telangana's next chapter should be defined by measurable results on the ground.

IITS: BUILDING INDIA'S TALENT, STRENGTHENING INDIA'S FUTURE

" The first IIT was established at Kharagpur in 1950 and formally inaugurated on August 18, 1951. IITs were subsequently established in Bombay, Madras, Kanpur and Delhi. In 1961, an Act of Parliament accorded the IITs the status of institutions of national importance."

Jawaharlal Nehru saw the Indian Institutes of Technology as a strong foundation for India's technological self-reliance. The idea of the IITs can be traced to the recommendations of the N.R. Sarkar Committee in 1945. The committee proposed establishing higher technical institutions on the lines of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States. Their central purpose was to produce the technical manpower needed for India's industrial development. The IITs were conceived not merely to produce competent engineers, but to create scientists, engineers and technical professionals who could strengthen a newly independent India industrially and technologically.



The context in which the IITs were established is important. India then had limited opportunities in advanced technology, research and large-scale industry. The country therefore chose to build talent first, with the expectation that this talent would subsequently drive industry, research and technological development. That objective remains relevant even today. This leads to the central question. Are these institutions, built and sustained with taxpayers' money, delivering adequate value to the country?

Running the IIT system involves substantial public expenditure. According to information provided by the government in the Rajya Sabha in 2022, the average annual expenditure per IIT student was about Rs 5.2 lakh. This is not a subsidy paid directly to the student, but the average institutional expenditure per student. Even so, the figure gives a sense of the scale of the public investment behind an IIT education. The same government response stated that there was no provision requiring IIT graduates to work in India for a specified period after completing their education.

The achievements of the IITs are beyond dispute. Their graduates have made their mark in leading global companies, research, technology, business, education and the public sector. The IITs themselves have contributed research with applications for industry and society. Yet another question follows. How much of the talent created through public investment ultimately contributes to India's development?

There is no official evidence to suggest that a majority of IIT students leave India for foreign jobs. Government data presented in the Lok Sabha in 2018 showed that, in 2016-17, the share of students choosing jobs abroad was 0.85% at IIT Kharagpur, 3.84% at IIT Bombay, 5.53% at IIT Delhi, 1.85% at IIT Madras and 1.36% at IIT Kanpur. These figures refer only to those who chose jobs abroad and do not capture total overseas migration. Therefore, it would be unfair to simply argue that "IITs are sending talent abroad." But another question remains valid: is it unreasonable to expect some responsibility towards the country from those educated in institutions sustained by public money?

"India does not offer me enough opportunities, so I am going abroad" is a familiar argument. In some fields, it may well be true. Other countries may offer greater research funding, larger institutions and more employment opportunities. But another question deserves consideration: if opportunities are inadequate, should we also share some responsibility for creating them?

When the IITs were established, India itself had few such opportunities. The country first invested in creating talent and then sought to expand opportunities through that talent. The same thinking remains relevant today. If talented people leave because opportunities are inadequate, who will create the opportunities India needs?

What happens in other countries?

There is no general rule requiring every student educated abroad to return to their home country. However, some government-funded scholarship programmes do require beneficiaries to return and serve their countries for a specified period. Britain, Singapore and India, among others, have such conditions in certain publicly supported overseas education programmes.

If governments can expect a public return when they finance a student's education abroad, why should it be unreasonable to discuss a similar sense of responsibility in the case of IITs, which are sustained by Indian taxpayers? This does not mean forcing every IIT graduate to remain in India for life. Individual freedom must remain intact. The question is whether public investment should also generate a reasonable public return.

The need for a middle path:

At the time of entering an IIT, students could be made clearly aware of one fact: their education is supported by public money. Those who work in India for a period in research, defence technology, advanced industry, manufacturing or technology enterprises could be given stronger incentives. For those who choose to leave for overseas employment immediately after graduation, the government could examine, within reasonable limits, a mechanism to recover part of the public investment.

This would not amount to restricting overseas opportunities. It would simply seek to ensure that public investment also creates some public benefit. But the responsibility cannot rest with students alone. If India wants to retain talent, it must create better research opportunities, quality jobs, stronger industries, investment and an environment in which new enterprises can grow. Telling talented people to "stay in India" is easy. Creating conditions that make them want to stay is the government's real responsibility.

At the same time, going abroad should not automatically be equated with turning away from India. Indians working overseas can still create value for the country by investing in India, supporting research and building enterprises.

The question, therefore, is not simply "Should IIT graduates stay in India or go abroad?" The real question is: how much national value is being created from an IIT education funded substantially by the public? An IIT seat is more than a stepping stone to an individual career; it is an opportunity created through public investment. Students should have the freedom to make their own choices. But the society that created that opportunity should also receive some return from it.

The success of the IITs should not be measured merely by how much the world wants their graduates. It should also be measured by how much value that talent creates for India.

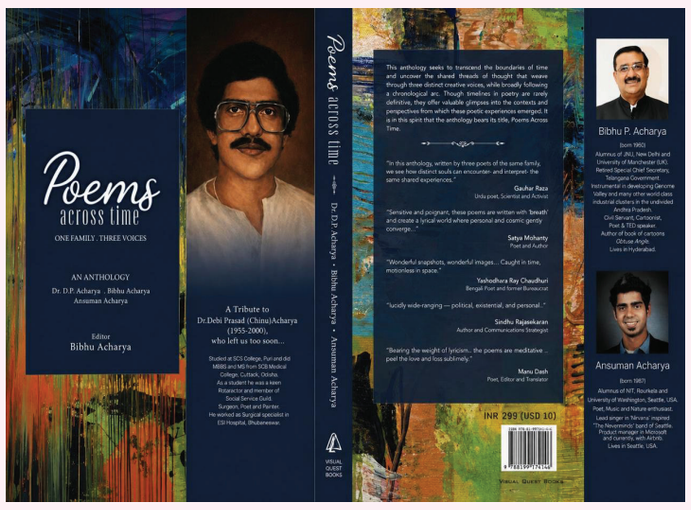


D. JAIRAM
Subject Expert – Current Affairs
Founder & Mentor
Sri Jairam Competitive Academy

POEMS ACROSS TIME

One Family. Three Voices

Edited by Bibhu Acharya



Review by
Malay Mishra, IFS (Retd.)
Former diplomat and writer

I just finished one full reading of the book of poems, despite my many distractions. Exquisite—that's one word to describe this bunch of verses flowing out of the heart of all three poets. Debi Prasad's poems are haunting, dripping with a permeating sadness, while Ansuman's are imbued with melancholy against the backdrop of love and longing. Bibhu's poems contain all the elements of life, with a dose of officialese. On the whole, the poems are a majestic creation, appealing directly to the soul force beneath this mundane frame. Truly mundane to monumental. But I still feel this is a wonderful work of poetic art.

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Poems Across Time
Edited by Bibhu Acharya
Publisher: Visual Quest
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Available on Amazon

A NEW CHAPTER IN HEALTH CARE WITH AI

Artificial Intelligence is gradually becoming an important part of modern healthcare. What was once largely discussed as a future possibility is now finding practical applications in hospitals, clinics, laboratories, research, and healthcare management. AI can help healthcare professionals analyse large amounts of information, identify patterns, support clinical decisions, and manage routine tasks more efficiently. Its growing presence is changing the way healthcare professionals use technology in their daily work.



One of the most useful aspects of AI is its ability to work with large volumes of healthcare data. Doctors and other healthcare professionals can use AI-supported tools to organise and interpret information, helping them make decisions based on relevant data. AI can also assist with medical imaging and other diagnostic processes, while leaving the final clinical judgment with qualified healthcare professionals. In this way, technology can serve as an additional support rather than a replacement for human expertise.

AI is also finding a place beyond direct clinical care. Healthcare organisations can use technology to manage appointments, records, workflows, and other routine processes. By reducing repetitive administrative work, AI-supported systems may allow healthcare professionals to spend more time on tasks that require human interaction and attention. Better use of technology can also help organisations manage resources and improve the overall efficiency of healthcare services.

Another area with considerable potential is preventive healthcare. AI can help analyse health information and identify patterns that may support early attention to certain health concerns. It may also contribute to remote monitoring, allowing healthcare professionals to follow selected health indicators outside traditional clinical settings. Such applications could become increasingly useful as healthcare systems look for ways to provide timely care while reaching larger populations.

The future possibilities are even wider. AI could support personalised treatment planning by helping professionals consider information from different sources. It may contribute to medical research by assisting researchers in analysing complex datasets and identifying areas for further study. AI could also support the development of new healthcare tools and improve access to information and services, particularly as digital healthcare continues to grow.

At the same time, technology cannot replace the human side of healthcare. Medicine involves communication, compassion, professional judgment, ethical considerations, and an understanding of individual circumstances. These qualities remain essential even as digital tools become more capable. The most useful approach is therefore to see AI as a tool that can work alongside healthcare professionals and support their expertise.

The growing use of AI also makes education and training important. Healthcare professionals need to understand how AI-supported systems work, where they can be useful, and how their information should be interpreted. Technology experts, healthcare organisations, and policymakers also have roles to play in creating suitable practices for the use of AI. Collaboration among these groups can help healthcare systems make informed decisions as new technologies emerge.

Responsible use will be another important part of this journey. Healthcare involves sensitive information and decisions that can have a direct impact on people's lives. Accuracy, privacy, security, transparency, and appropriate oversight therefore need continued attention. Building trust in technology will depend not only on how advanced an AI system is, but also on how carefully and thoughtfully it is introduced into healthcare settings.

These issues are increasingly becoming part of the wider healthcare conversation. The Future Healthcare Summit 2026: Shaping the Future of AI in Healthcare, hosted by Philips in association with ET-HealthWorld and scheduled for 20 August 2026 in New Delhi, will bring together healthcare leaders, clinicians, policymakers, and technology experts to discuss the evolving role of AI. The summit will provide an opportunity to exchange views on emerging applications, practical opportunities, workforce needs, and the responsible use of AI in healthcare.

India has a particularly important opportunity in this area. With a large and diverse population and growing healthcare needs, technology can support efforts to make healthcare services more accessible and efficient. However, the benefits of AI will depend on how well technology is adapted to real healthcare needs and how effectively professionals and organisations are prepared to use it.

The changing face of healthcare is therefore not simply about replacing traditional methods with technology. It is about finding better ways for technology and human expertise to work together. AI can provide new tools, new insights, and new possibilities, while healthcare professionals continue to provide the experience, judgment, and human connection that patients need.

As AI continues to develop, its role in healthcare will evolve as well. The future may bring applications that are difficult to predict today. What remains important is to approach these developments with openness, careful evaluation, and a clear focus on improving healthcare. With the right balance between innovation and human responsibility, Artificial Intelligence can become a valuable part of the continuing transformation of healthcare.



DR. KRISHNA KUMAR VEPAKOMMA
Professor & Principal (Retd.)
Columnist

Vice President Graces Central University of Tamil Nadu Convocation

Knowledge alone is not sufficient; lifelong learning, innovation and adaptability are essential for the future: Vice President

Education must go beyond examinations and marks to foster independent thinking, creativity and social responsibility: Vice President

Public examination reforms necessary to punish wrongdoers and protect the interests of honest students: Vice President.. Living for oneself is not a sin, living only for oneself is: Vice President

"Become creators rather than consumers of knowledge; innovators rather than imitators; leaders rather than followers": Vice President



Vice President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan today graced the 11th Convocation of the Central University of Tamil Nadu (CUTN) at Thiruvarur and congratulated the graduating students on reaching an important milestone in their lives. Addressing the graduates, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan said a convocation celebrates not merely the award of degrees but the transformative power of education, the pursuit of knowledge and the dedication, perseverance and resilience that brought the students to this significant moment. He also congratulated the parents and teachers of the graduating students, acknowledging their sacrifices and noting that they had foregone many of their present-day comforts for the glorious future of their children and students. Highlighting the significance of Thiruvarur, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan said the sacred town, home to the magnificent Thyagaraja Temple, has for centuries been a centre of spirituality, scholarship and artistic excellence.

He noted that the sacred land had nurtured saints, scholars and the legendary Trinity of Carnatic music. True greatness emerges when culture, learning and values flourish together, he said.

The Vice President highlighted the tremendous expansion of higher education over the past twelve years. He said that at convocation ceremonies across the country, he often sees more women receiving degrees and medals than men, describing the trend as a welcome development. The Vice President said education today cannot be measured merely by examinations or marks. "It must be measured by the ability to think independently, communicate effectively, work collaboratively and continue learning throughout life," he said. He appreciated the Central University of Tamil Nadu for embracing this vision through its emphasis on multidisciplinary education, research, innovation and value-based learning.

Referring to the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, recently passed by Parliament, the Vice President said preventing unfair means in examinations and protecting the interests of students are of paramount importance.

Recalling his tenure as Governor of Jharkhand, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan said that a similar bill had been passed by the Jharkhand Government during his tenure, and as the then Governor he had signed it immediately, enabling it to become law.

"Bad elements in society must be punished to protect the interests of good people," he said, emphasising the need for strong measures to safeguard the integrity and fairness of public examinations.

The Vice President urged the graduates to "become creators rather than consumers of knowledge, innovators rather than imitators, and leaders rather than followers."

Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan said that under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India is working towards the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. He urged the youth to keep "Nation First - Rashtra Pratham" at the heart of their actions and harness their knowledge, skills and leadership for national development. The Vice President urged the police and security agencies to take strict action against drug peddlers and those involved in spreading the menace of drugs. He said drug abuse not only destroys the lives of individuals but also adversely affects families and society, and protecting young people from this menace is a collective responsibility. He reiterated his appeal to students to "Say No to Drugs" and encouraged them to urge their friends to stay away from substance abuse. Concluding his address, the Vice President wished every graduate success, fulfilment, good health and the satisfaction of making a meaningful difference to society.

A total of 1,103 graduates received their degrees at the convocation, including 50 Gold Medallists who distinguished themselves through academic excellence. Of the 1,103 graduates, 616 are women. Women also secured 37 of the 50 Gold Medals.

Governor of Tamil Nadu Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha (Nagapattinam) Thiru V. Selvaraj, Chancellor Prof. G. Padmanabhan, Vice-Chancellor Senior Prof. Sulochana Shekhar, faculty members, parents and students were also present on the occasion.



NF Railway Upgrades Netaji Vidyapith Railway H.S. School at Maligaon

MALIGAON, 17 AUGUST, 2026:

Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has undertaken comprehensive infrastructure upgradation of Netaji Vidyapith Railway Higher Secondary School, Maligaon, with a focus on providing students with modern, safe and improved educational facilities. As part of the initiative, a new G+1 RCC building with 20 classrooms and modern classroom furniture has been constructed, significantly enhancing the school's academic infrastructure. The upgradation works also include construction of a covered Prayer Shed, renovation and modernization of the Subir Raha Memorial Auditorium. The facade of the school building has also been enhanced along with a new canopy and exterior painting, giving the institution a modern and improved appearance. Further, improvements have also been made in the approach road, existing office and classrooms, drainage system etc. Netaji Vidyapith Railway Higher Secondary School was established on 23 rd January, 1948, in honour of the legendary freedom fighter Netaji Subash Chandra Bose. Over the years, the institution has produced several distinguished alumni, including Dr. Paritosh Kansa Banik, former Director of NIT, Silchar; Dr. Jayashree Bhattacharjee, former Principal of Vardhman Mahavir Medical College and Hospital, New Delhi; and Shri Rajib Dhar, FIDE-rated chess player. The institution, run by Northeast Frontier Railway, continues its legacy of nurturing students and empowering them to achieve excellence and become the best version of themselves. The renovated Subir Raha Memorial Auditorium, newly constructed classrooms, new Prayer Shed and upgraded facade were inaugurated by Shri Chetan Kumar Shrivastava, General Manager, N.F. Railway, on 15 th August, 2026. The comprehensive upgradation reflects NFR's continued commitment towards strengthening educational infrastructure and creating a better learning environment for students.

Prime Minister condoles the loss of lives due to a fire tragedy in Birbhum, West Bengal

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today expressed deep anguish over the loss of lives due to a fire tragedy in Birbhum, West Bengal.

The Prime Minister extended his condolences to those who have lost their loved ones and prayed for the early recovery of the injured. He added that the local administration is actively assisting those affected in the mishap.

In a post on X, the Prime Minister's Office shared:

"Anguished to hear about the loss of lives due to a fire tragedy in Birbhum, West Bengal. I extend my condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon. The local administration is assisting those affected in the mishap: PM @narendramodi"

Cutting-Edge Research to Combat & Eradicate Breast Cancer

(On the occasion of "World Breast Cancer Research Day" on 18 August)

Breast cancer is becoming a scourge and a deadly disease for women worldwide. Tumors or lumps form in the breast when cells grow uncontrollably, leading to breast cancer. In 2022, breast cancer was diagnosed in about 2.3 million women worldwide, and 6.7 lakh women lost their lives fighting the dangerous disease. The male community should take appropriate precautions to prevent mothers, sisters, girlfriends, and daughters from contracting breast cancer and raise awareness about the disease among them. Women infected with the disease should be given confidence and courage. Regular diagnostic tests should be done. Precautions should be taken to prevent the disease.

World Breast Cancer Research Day-2026:

In developed countries, 90 percent of women are dying from breast cancer, in India it is 66 percent, and in low-income countries it is 40 percent. Medical and health departments, in coordination with other organizations, should protect women from breast cancer. As part of the efforts to eradicate the deadly breast cancer, it has become a tradition to observe "World Breast Cancer Research Day" on August 18 every year to continue research and organize necessary awareness programs among the people about controlling the deadly disease. With complete health protection, early detection, and proper treatment, there is a chance to completely cure breast cancer. These platforms are used to emphasize the need for cutting-edge research to combat and eradicate breast cancer. Funding for research to eradicate this disease, establishing research laboratories, using modern technologies, increasing clarity in diagnosis, raising awareness among women about the need to perform simple self-examinations and detect breast cancer lumps, implementing new treatment methods, saving patients' lives, recognizing the services of researchers, informing patient caregivers, and supporting the efforts of researchers should continue. Identifying lumps in the breast as a symptom of breast cancer, and promoting new medical treatments should continue.

Precautions to Prevent Breast Cancer:

It is essential to make lifestyle changes as prescribed by doctors to avoid breast cancer. Let us, along with women, the male community, be aware of the following: controlling body weight, eating nutritious food, exercising daily, avoiding bad habits like alcohol/alcohol/tobacco, breastfeeding mothers, getting regular checkups, detecting and treating breast cancer at an early stage and taking appropriate precautions to prevent breast cancer from entering our families. Let us wisely avoid losing lives to breast cancer. It is important to note that breast swelling, changes in breast shape or size, bleeding from the breast, nipple tenderness or pain are the most important. Women who notice lumps in the breast should immediately consult a medical professional and start treatment. Wear pink ribbons in the breast cancer campaign and provide invaluable services that save lives with dedication. Among the hundreds of types of cancer, breast cancer is the most common. Poor women struggling with poverty are not aware of such a deadly disease. In these situations, family heads should raise awareness in their own way or with experts. Leaves should be prepared before the hands get sick. Precautions should be taken before the disease occurs. Even if the disease occurs, tests should be done at the early stage and treatment should be continued. It should be believed that prevention is better than treatment.

SKM to submit memorandum to MPs, seek push for change in Centre's 'corporate-centric' policy

NEW DELHI: (AUG 17)

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) will submit a memorandum to MPs and MLAs between August 17 and 25, urging them to press the Centre and state governments to change what the farmers' organisation describes as a "corporate-centric" development policy and address the issues facing farmers and working people.

The SKM, the umbrella organisation of several farmer groups, said farmer representatives will travel in convoys from villages to hand over the memorandum to elected representatives and seek their intervention on its demands.

The organisation is specifically seeking the intervention of MPs and MLAs to put pressure on the prime minister and chief ministers for a change in policies under the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' framework, which it alleges favour corporate interests.

Tiger Reserve Denies Film Shoot Permission

KOCHI:

The deputy director of the Periyar Tiger Reserve on Monday told the Kerala High Court that permission cannot be granted to shoot a film starring actor Mohanlal, saying that judicial and government orders prohibit shooting commercial movies or television serials within wildlife sanctuaries, national parks or tiger reserves. The submission was made in response to a plea by Malayalam film director Tharun Moorthi seeking directions to the Divisional Forest Officer, Ranni and Deputy Director, Periyar West Division, Peerumedu to expeditiously decide his request for permission to shoot his film, "Athimanoharam", at Pamba and Sannidhanam.

The Deputy Director of the Periyar Tiger Reserve said that the areas mentioned in the representation by the director form part and parcel of the sanctuary and have been leased or diverted in favour of the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) to facilitate the Sabarimala pilgrimage, but the legal status of the leased/diverted forest land remains unchanged.

Will India achieve its net-zero emission target by 2070?

NEW DELHI:

At the 26th climate summit held in Glasgow, India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced that it would become a carbon-neutral country by 2070. But to achieve this goal, India will need an investment of about 22.7 trillion US dollars (about 500 billion US dollars per annum on average) by 2070. There is an estimated financial gap of about US$6.5 trillion, which would require an increase in foreign capital investment to fill. Expensive and new technologies such as green hydrogen, battery storage, and carbon capture require foreign technical support and global capital. At the moment, as promised at the conference, India will increase its non-foesssible energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030. A total of 297.36 GW of power generation capacity based on non-fossil fuel sources has been installed in the country as on 30th June 2026. This includes 288.58 GW of renewable energy capacity and 8.78 GW of nuclear power capacity. In 2015 alone, the NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) had laid a strong foundation for this, targeting a 33-35 per cent reduction in GDP emission intensity by 2030 and a 40 per cent share of the installed capacity of electric power based on non-fossil resources. For all this, the industrial sector has been targeted to phase out coal utilisation by 2065, phase out all other uses of coal by 2060, to reach solar-based generation capacity to 1,700 gigawatts (GW) by 2050, and wind power-based generation capacity to 557 GW by 2050.

What is the meaning of net zero? It means balancing or neutralising the carbon we produce. We achieve net zero when the amount of greenhouse gases we produce does not exceed the amount of greenhouse gases absorbed from it. India's net-zero emissions target is not just a dream. It has already started in the country. This is the reality of Bela village in Maharashtra, which has now become the first village in the country where carbon emissions are zero. Bela village adopted many simple but effective policies. More than 90,000 trees were planted by the tree plantation drive. Which is helpful in absorbing carbon dioxide and improving air quality. These plantation campaigns were organised during festivals and marriage ceremonies to encourage community participation and honour auspicious events. Traditional clean cooking stoves (wood-burning stoves) were replaced by LPG and solar-powered alternatives, significantly reducing indoor air pollution and carbon emissions. Solar panels were installed on public buildings and homes to generate renewable energy, harnessing clean energy for daily use. The village prioritised waste segregation and composting, thereby reducing waste going to landfills and converting waste into valuable resources. Rainwater harvesting was implemented. Single-use plastics were banned and waste was systematically converted into compost or recycled materials, thereby reducing the environmental impact.

Currently, Bhutan and Suriname are the only two countries in the world that are carbon negative, that is, they absorb far more carbon than they emit. Both countries benefit from vast forest area in comparison to their small population and limited industrial activities.

Amid the global crisis looming over the world, developing countries are also contributing to reducing carbon emissions. Being the third largest emitter of carbon in the world when India set goals and strategies on the international stage to tackle the climate crisis. However, it is important to note that India's emissions vary widely compared to other top pollutants. India emits about 3 gigatons every year, while the US and China emit 5 gigatons and 14 gigatons respectively. In addition, India has the lowest per capita emissions (1.9 metric tonnes) and contributes less than 7 percent of global pollution despite making up 17 percent of the world's population. In fact, India is more likely to reach the net-zero target earlier than the US and China.

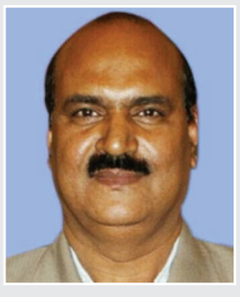
Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the 5-point strategy Panchamrit that will eventually make India net-zero by 2070. India will increase non-foessible energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030. Currently, the non-foessible energy capacity is 297 GW. 50 per cent of India's energy consumption will be met by renewable energy. India has set a target of reducing 1 billion tonnes of carbon emissions by 2030. By 2030, India will reduce carbon intensity by 45 percent. And thus India will achieve its net-zero target by 2070.

India is taking various actions to deal with this global crisis. The largest renewable energy park in Gujarat is all set to open. In addition, plans to reduce dependence on coal (and not set up new coal power plants) and de-carbanise Indian Railways by 2030 are a step in the right direction.

The biggest challenge for India is to secure climate finance. Being a developing country, India is dependent on developed countries in terms of funds to develop new technology and methods to reduce its dependence on coal. At the conference, Prime Minister Modi had demanded that rich countries provide 1 trillion dollars as soon as possible. Unfortunately, many of these countries' promises regarding climate finance have still not been fulfilled. According to NITI Aayog's 'Net Zero' report, the Commission aims to outline the development of India as a USD 30 trillion economy by 2047. By 2070, India will need an investment of about 22.7 trillion US dollars (about 500 billion US dollars per annum on average). There is an estimated financial gap of about US$6.5 trillion, which would require an increase in foreign capital investment to fill.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) of about $45.72 billion has been attracted in the country's renewable energy sector from FY14 to FY2026. In addition, domestic financial institutions (12 public sector banks, Indian Renewable Energy Development Organisation-IREDA, Power Finance Corporation Limited-PFC, Rural Electrification Corporation Limited-REC, India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited-IIFCL, National Infrastructure Financing and Development Bank-NABFID and Small Industries Development Bank of India-SIDBI have invested Rs.12.32 lakh crore in the renewable energy sector during the said period.

In conclusion, the goal of becoming net zero will not be easy for any developing country. However, without the necessary financial support, it will be very difficult for developing countries to revolutionise technology. So the right way to achieve the collective goal is to be for rich countries to come forward and lead. Because they can afford a lot of early research and development, developed countries are more likely to create innovative decarbanisation technology. India also has to change its energy infrastructure. Some strategies may also require citizens to make changes in their lifestyle. With the right strategy and global support, India is likely to successfully fulfil its promises.



S. N. Verma

TRUMP THREATENS OMAN OVER IRAN DEAL

WASHINGTON, AUGUST 17

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday threatened to bomb Oman if it "gets in the way" of a U.S. deal with Iran over the Strait of Hormuz and called on Tehran to surrender, according to a report.

"If Oman gets in the way, we'll bomb [expletive] them," Trump told Fox News journalist Trey Yingst, referring to ongoing discussions between Oman and Iran over control and navigation arrangements in the strategic waterway, even as Washington pursues its own talks with Tehran.

Iranian and Omani officials have been holding discussions for several weeks on future maritime navigation arrangements through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's Foreign Ministry said earlier on Monday that the two sides were working towards a joint declaration on the issue.

Trump, however, has repeatedly insisted that the Strait of Hormuz is under U.S. control, despite the continued restrictions on maritime traffic through the vital shipping route. Tehran effectively closed the strait at the beginning of the West Asia war on February 28, sharply affecting the movement of vessels through the waterway.

On Friday, August 14, Trump said he could even declare the Strait of Hormuz part of U.S. territory. Iran responded by asserting that the strategically important waterway, which Tehran has effectively blockaded, "will remain Iranian."

Before the launch of the U.S.-Israeli war against Iran, the Strait of Hormuz was regarded as an open international waterway. The narrow passage is one of the world's most strategically important maritime routes and carries significant quantities of global energy shipments, along with other commodities.

Tehran has used its effective control over the strait as leverage in the broader confrontation with the United States and its allies. Washington and Israel have sought to weaken Iran's military capabilities and pressure Tehran to abandon its controversial nuclear programme.Iran's coastline runs along the northern side of the Strait of Hormuz, while Oman lies to the south. The waterway is therefore strategically important to both countries, as well as to global energy markets and international shipping.



Trump also called on Iran to surrender, telling Yingst that Tehran should "put up the white flag of surrender," according to a post by the Fox News journalist on X detailing his interview with the President.

Despite the continuing war and its growing unpopularity among sections of the American public, Trump said he was in no hurry to reach an agreement with Iran. The conflict comes ahead of the November midterm elections, in which opposition Democrats are seeking to regain control of Congress from Trump's Republican Party.

Trump also claimed that his administration maintains a direct back-channel with officials of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Describing the Iranian side as experienced negotiators, Trump said, "They're good poker players, but they're dying," according to Yingst's account of the interview. The latest remarks add to mounting tensions surrounding the Strait of Hormuz, as Iran and Oman pursue their own discussions on maritime navigation while the United States seeks to secure an agreement with Tehran. Any prolonged disruption to shipping through the waterway could have significant implications for global energy supplies and international trade.

Balen Shah Under PARLIAMENT'S SCRUTINY

KATHMANDU, AUGUST 17



Nepal House Speaker Dol Prasad Aryal has directed Prime Minister Balendra Shah to appear in Parliament and answer lawmakers' questions, prompting opposition parties to end their 77-day protest. The directive, issued during Monday's House of Representatives meeting, is the first such instruction to Shah since he became Prime Minister in March. Opposition parties had been disrupting parliamentary proceedings, demanding that Shah attend the House and participate in the regular question-and-answer session as required by parliamentary rules. Speaker Aryal directed Shah to attend a House meeting and respond to questions on important matters concerning his office and areas under his jurisdiction, in accordance with Rules 56 to 60 of the House regulations. Following the ruling, opposition parties suspended their protest, allowing regular proceedings to resume.

The opposition had also been demanding an explanation over Shah's May 31 remarks concerning Nepal's alleged encroachment on Indian territory. They had called for him to withdraw the statement or clarify his position. Opposition lawmakers initially staged a protest at Monday's meeting. The Nepali Congress, UML, Nepali Communist Party, Shram Sanskriti Party and Rastriya Prajatantra Party also demanded that the monthly Prime Minister's question-and-answer session be held according to parliamentary rules.

While Aryal's ruling addressed the Prime Minister's participation in the question-and-answer process, he did not issue a separate directive on the opposition's demand over Shah's May 31 remarks.

Under Rule 56, the Speaker is required to allocate the first hour of one House meeting during the first week of every month for lawmakers to question the Prime Minister on important matters related to his office and responsibilities.

Shah is now expected to appear before Parliament and respond to lawmakers' questions, potentially ending months of tension between the government and opposition over parliamentary accountability.

Indonesia earthquake death toll RISES TO 68



JAKARTA, AUGUST 17

The death toll from the 7.7-magnitude earthquake that struck Indonesia's East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) province has risen to 68, the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) said on Monday.

BNPB Deputy for Prevention Abdul Muhari said 26 people died in Manggarai regency, 24 in East Manggarai, eight in Nagekeo, four in Sikka, and two each in Ende, West Manggarai and Ngada. Another 213 people were injured. At least 1,576 aftershocks have been recorded since the main earthquake, the agency said. Roads in the affected areas remain generally passable, although some restrictions continue. Authorities said no residents were currently reported missing across the seven affected regencies.

The Health Ministry has dispatched two field hospitals to Manggarai and Nagekeo and deployed medical and crisis-management teams to support health services in the earthquake-hit areas. Meanwhile, electricity restoration on the western and eastern parts of Flores Island has reached 99.5 per cent, while telecommunications services across Flores have recovered to 95.4 per cent.

The Indonesian military has also deployed personnel and equipment to speed up the distribution of relief supplies to areas that are difficult to reach. The East Nusa Tenggara provincial government has declared a 14-day emergency response period following the earthquake that struck on August 15. According to a provincial government decree issued by Governor Melki Laka Lena, the emergency response period will run from August 15 to August 28. The earthquake was centred about 30 km northeast of Mbay in Nagekeo Regency, at a depth of 15 km, according to the decree.

The earthquake caused extensive damage to buildings and infrastructure across the affected areas. A total of 914 houses were heavily damaged, 126 sustained moderate damage and 317 suffered light damage. The disaster also damaged 93 educational facilities, 36 health facilities and 38 government offices.

WILDFIRES RAGE ACROSS EUROPE AS BELGIUM BATTLES HISTORIC BLAZE

BRUSSELS, AUGUST 17



Wildfires continued to spread across several European countries on Monday, with firefighters battling major blazes in Belgium, Greece, France, Spain, Portugal and Croatia. The fires come after weeks of hot and dry weather, with studies linking increasingly frequent heat waves and droughts to human-induced climate change.

Around 576,000 hectares (2,225 square miles) have been burned across Europe so far this year, according to the European Forest Fire Information System. The area is twice the size of Luxembourg. Europe recorded its worst wildfire season last year, when more than one million hectares were destroyed, and 2026 could surpass that record as the fire season continues.

Belgium

Around 500 firefighters and troops were battling a massive blaze in Belgium's High Fens park on the German border, with rain helping their efforts on Monday. The fire, which started on Friday, has destroyed about 3,000 hectares (7,500 acres), making it Belgium's largest wildfire in modern history. King Philippe cut short his summer holiday to visit the area and meet emergency crews. Calling the High Fens a "national treasure," he described the situation as a "difficult moment for Belgium." Germany's Defence Ministry said it would send two military water-bombing helicopters to assist Belgian firefighters.

Around 30 residents of the German town of Monschau were evacuated on Sunday after the fire threatened to cross the border, but the immediate danger has since eased. Smoke from the blaze has spread into Germany and France.

Belgian weather agency IRM forecast 5 to 9 millimetres of rain in the High Fens on Monday.

Greece

Firefighters on the Greek island of Salamina, near Athens, were close to extinguishing two fires that killed two people and forced nearly 500 residents and visitors to evacuate by boat. The fires spread within minutes amid strong winds, trapping an elderly couple near their home. Salamina, a popular destination for day travellers, was crowded with visitors when the fires broke out.

France

French Prime Minister Sebastian Lecornu was jeered by residents during a visit to the fire-ravaged village of Le Porge in western Gironde. About 183 homes were destroyed in last month's huge wildfire, which forced more than 220,000 residents and tourists to evacuate. Residents criticised the government's response and accused authorities of prioritising wealthier areas, including the Cap-Ferret peninsula. Meanwhile, a wildfire in the nearby Landes region that began Thursday was brought under control. Around 250 evacuated residents in Luglon were expected to return home.

Spain

A Spanish soldier was killed and hundreds of people evacuated as a major wildfire continued in Aragon. The fire, which began last Monday, has threatened a 1,000-year-old monastery and destroyed around 16,600 hectares. French firefighters have been sent to help Spanish crews contain the blaze.

Portugal

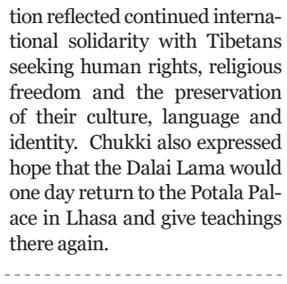
Several wildfires were burning in Portugal, with hundreds of firefighters involved in firefighting operations. Five firefighters suffered minor injuries when their vehicle caught fire while responding to a blaze near Dine, close to the Spanish border. Other fires were reported near Boticas and Chaves, according to Portugal's civil protection agency ANEPC.

Croatia

A wildfire in the tourist town of Omis, which forced around 1,000 people to evacuate, has been stabilised, authorities said. Croatian media reported one death and around 40 injuries, with seven people reportedly in critical condition. Police said four people had been arrested on suspicion of starting some of the wildfires along parts of the Adriatic coast. The widespread fires have placed emergency services under severe pressure and highlighted Europe's growing vulnerability to prolonged heat, drought and increasingly destructive wildfire seasons.

OVER 200 TIBETANS, SUPPORTERS PROTEST CHINA'S POLICIES NEAR SWISS PARLIAMENT

BERN, AUGUST 17



More than 200 Tibetans and their supporters gathered near the Swiss Parliament in Bern to protest what the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) described as China's intensifying assimilation policies in Tibet.

The peaceful demonstration, held on August 14, also marked the 44th day since the self-immolation of Tibetan activist Lobga Rangzen, according to the CTA.

The protest was jointly organised by the Tibetan Community in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, Swiss Tibetan Friendship Association, Swiss Tibetan Women's Association, European Tibetan Youth Association and Swiss V-TAG.

The gathering was attended by Tibetan community leaders, former Tibetan parliamentarians, former representatives of the Tibet Bureau and officials from the Tibet Bureau in Geneva, including Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama Thinlay Chukki and UN Advocacy Officer Phuntsok Topgyal.

Participants raised slogans, held a scarf-presentation ceremony before Rangzen's portrait, sang the Tibetan national anthem and observed a minute of silence for Tibetan martyrs. Prayers for peace were also offered.

Addressing the gathering, Chukki thanked Tibetans and supporters for remembering Rangzen and drawing attention to human rights concerns in Tibet. She said his self-immolation should prompt greater international scrutiny.

The CTA said it has recorded 157 known cases of self-immolation inside Tibet since 2009.

Chukki criticised China's Ethnic Unity and Progress Law, adopted on March 12 and effective from July 1, claiming that it further institutionalises policies threatening Tibet's cultural, linguistic and religious identity. She alleged that the legislation gives greater priority to Mandarin, increases state control over Tibetan monasteries and could also affect supporters of the Tibetan cause outside China.

Chukki urged the United Nations to send a delegation to China and Tibet to document alleged human rights violations. She also called on Switzerland to increase diplomatic pressure on Beijing and urged Swiss parliamentarians to keep Tibet's human rights situation on the political agenda.

The CTA said the demonstration reflected continued international solidarity with Tibetans seeking human rights, religious freedom and the preservation of their culture, language and identity. Chukki also expressed hope that the Dalai Lama would one day return to the Potala Palace in Lhasa and give teachings there again.

Iran Warns US Over Blockade

TEHRAN, AUGUST 17

Iran has decided to shift its strategy in the conflict with the United States from a defensive posture to a "fully offensive" one and has given Washington several weeks to implement a memorandum of understanding between the two sides, a senior Iranian official told Reuters on Monday.

The warning marks a further escalation in Tehran's rhetoric as a U.S. naval blockade puts increasing pressure on Iran's economy and shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has fallen to a fraction of its prewar level. The senior Iranian official said Tehran no longer considers it realistic to rely on pressure on Washington or mediation by regional countries to achieve a lasting peace.

Iran has instead set a deadline of "a few weeks" for the United States to fully implement the memorandum, the official said. The precise timetable will be conveyed to Washington and regional governments through mediators.

If diplomacy fails, "all Iranian entities" will be prepared to escalate tensions in the Strait of Hormuz and across the region, the official said, adding that Iran would not wait indefinitely while the United States maintains its naval blockade.

The comments come as Israeli officials say they are detecting signs that Iran's hard-line leadership is preparing for a more offensive phase of the conflict, potentially targeting energy infrastructure, shipping routes and U.S. allies in an effort to increase the economic and political cost of the war.

The U.S. blockade has sharply curtailed Iran's ability to export oil, one of its most important sources of hard currency. Damage to energy infrastructure and additional sanctions have further increased the economic pressure on Tehran.

U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth said last week that the Navy could maintain the blockade "indefinitely" by rotating ships through the region. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has also said Washington plans additional measures aimed at deepening Iran's economic isolation.

President Donald Trump has said the United States has "total control" of the Strait of Hormuz, describing the naval operation as a "wall of steel." Tehran, meanwhile, insists that the strategic waterway remains under Iranian control and that normal commercial traffic will not resume until Washington meets its commitments.

Hormuz traffic plunges

The Strait of Hormuz is a narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. It is one of the world's most important energy chokepoints. Before the war, roughly one-fifth of global crude oil and liquefied natural gas shipments passed through the strait.

Traffic has since collapsed.

Kpler ship-tracking data showed that only five commodity vessels transited Hormuz on Saturday, while none were recorded on Sunday. This compares with more than 130 ship transits a day before the United States and Israel launched the war against Iran in late February.

Some vessels may be travelling with their tracking systems switched off and therefore would not appear in the figures.

The decline accelerated after the United Arab Emirates reported attacks on three tankers operated by the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company last week.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said Washington must meet Tehran's conditions before normal shipping through Hormuz can resume. He has also said Iran's discussions with Oman concern the technical creation of new shipping lanes because the previous routes can no longer be used, rather than an agreement by Tehran to reopen the strait.

Interim agreement collapsed

The latest Iranian warning follows the collapse of efforts to revive an interim agreement reached in June.

The memorandum was intended to end military operations and establish a timetable for both sides to fulfil their commitments. However, it quickly unravelled. Trump declared the agreement "over" on July 7, and Iran subsequently suspended it.

Washington has accused Tehran of failing to reopen Hormuz. Iran, in turn, says the United States failed to lift restrictions on Iranian ports and release frozen Iranian assets as required under the agreement.

Attempts by mediators to bridge the differences have made no significant progress. The new comments about a deadline appear to sharpen Iran's position after Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei on Monday disputed claims that the memorandum contained a 60-day deadline.

Baghaei said Washington had failed to fulfil its obligations and that Iranian forces were ready to respond. Araghchi similarly argued that there was no ceasefire to extend because the memorandum had ended the war before, according to Tehran, the United States violated it and fighting resumed. Qatar and Pakistan have continued exchanging messages with Tehran, Araghchi said, but Iran has not decided whether to resume direct negotiations with Washington.

Risk of regional escalation

Israeli officials believe the economic pressure intended to constrain Iran could itself become a catalyst for escalation."If Tehran concludes that the continuation of the blockade threatens the stability of the regime and its ability to finance the security apparatus and the organisations it supports, it may try to change the equation through regional escalation," a senior Israeli official said.

Under that assessment, Iran could seek to disrupt oil and gas supplies, drive up global energy prices and increase domestic political pressure on Trump to end the conflict and return to negotiations, particularly as the United States approaches the November midterm elections.

Israel is also monitoring Iran's efforts to rebuild missile and drone capabilities and other military infrastructure damaged during the war.

Lenskart Sets Up China Subsidiary

NEW DELHI:

Eyewear firm Lenskart has set up a step-down subsidiary in China that will be engaged in the business of trading, importing, exporting and procuring spectacle frames as well as other optical products, the company said in a regulatory filing on Monday.

The step-down subsidiary has been set up under Lenskart's Chinese joint venture Baofeng Framekart Technology (BFT).

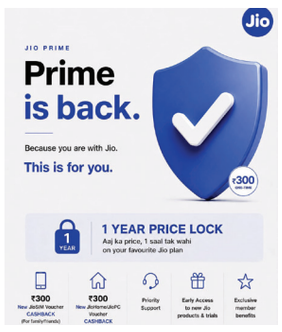
"The step-down subsidiary of the company has been incorporated under the name Wenzhou Framekart Trade Co Ltd on August 14, 2026. The company has received the Certificate of Incorporation in respect thereof on August 17, 2026," the filing said.

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Building a Healthier Viksit Bharat

Chhattisgarh Governor flags off Six REC-supported Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) worth RS 7.21 Crore

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 17

Under the CSR initiative of REC Limited, Hon'ble Governor of Chhattisgarh, Shri Ramen Deka, flagged off six Mobile Medical Units (MMUs), worth Rs.7.21 Crore, at Lok Bhawan, Chhattisgarh, on August 15, 2026. The flag-off ceremony was held in the presence of Shri Satyaban Sahoo, Chief Project Manager (CPM), Regional Office Raipur, REC Limited, along with officials from REC Limited and the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), Chhattisgarh.

Through this CSR initiative, REC Limited aims to bridge healthcare gaps and strengthen last-mile healthcare delivery in underserved areas of Chhattisgarh, bringing essential services closer to communities. The initiative reflects REC Limited's commitment to inclusive and sustainable development and contributes to the vision of a healthier and more inclusive Viksit Bharat.

Sunil Mittal to step down as Airtel Payments Bank chair; Shabnam Sinha to take over

Mittal was appointed non-executive chairman of Airtel Payments Bank in April 2016. During his tenure, the bank expanded its reach across both urban and rural India and built a large network of banking points.



Airtel Payments Bank is set for a change at the top, with founder and chairman of Bharti Enterprises Sunil Bharti Mittal stepping down as its non-executive chairman. He will also leave the bank's board on September 30, 2026.

Shabnam Sinha, currently an independent director on the bank's board, will take over as chairperson from October 1 for a three-year term. Her appointment has been approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

MITTAL TO STEP DOWN AFTER A DECADE

Mittal was appointed non-executive chairman of Airtel Payments Bank in April 2016. During his tenure, the bank expanded its reach across both urban and rural India and built a large network of banking points. Mittal said it had been a privilege to watch the bank grow from an initiative focused on accessibility into an institution serving millions of customers across the country.

He expressed confidence that Sinha would build on the foundation laid by the bank and take it into its next phase of growth.

SINHA BRINGS THREE DECADES OF EXPERIENCE

Sinha has been an independent director at Airtel Payments Bank and currently chairs its Special Committee for Monitoring Frauds. She is also a member of the Risk Management and IT Committees.

She brings more than three decades of experience across development finance, financial services, public policy and institutional transformation.

Her career includes a stint at the World Bank, where she advised governments and institutions across Asia, Africa and Europe on governance, risk management and operational effectiveness.

Sinha said digital financial services were becoming an important part of India's inclusive growth story. She said she would work with the board and management to build on the bank's existing momentum and expand its reach among customers and communities.

The leadership change comes as Airtel Payments Bank enters its next phase, with digital banking and financial inclusion becoming increasingly important to India's financial services landscape.

Sensex ends 281 points lower, Nifty below 24,300; Infosys down 3%

Benchmark stock market indices ended lower on Monday, weighed down by a sharp fall in IT stocks and elevated crude oil prices. The weakness came despite gains in metals, realty and some private sector banks, while investors remained cautious about the impact of higher oil prices on the domestic economy.



The BSE Sensex closed 281.09 points, or 0.36%, lower at 77,728.16, while the Nifty 50 fell 78.35 points, or 0.32%, to 24,287.65. The Sensex had opened at 77,892.92 and moved between a high of 77,928.68 and a low of 77,453.75 during the session.

IT STOCKS LEAD THE FALL

IT stocks were the biggest drag on the benchmarks. The Nifty IT index fell 1.75%, with all major large-cap IT names ending in the red.

Infosys was the biggest Sensex loser, falling 2.66%. HCLTech declined 2.53%, TCS fell 1.87%, Tech Mahindra dropped 1.77% and ITC lost 1.57%. Sun Pharma also declined 2.20%.

The weakness in IT came as investors remained cautious about the sector after recent concerns around technology spending and the global outlook.

METALS, REALTY HELP LIMIT LOSSES

Not all sectors ended lower. The Nifty Metal index gained 1.26%, while the Nifty Realty index rose 1.46%. The Nifty Private Bank index also gained 0.23%.

Among the Sensex stocks, Tata Steel was the biggest gainer, rising 1.47%. Axis Bank gained 1.03%, Reliance Industries rose 0.80%, BEL added 0.49%, HDFC Bank gained 0.36% and Larsen & Toubro advanced 0.33%.

Bajaj Finance was also up 0.21%. ICICI Bank ended almost flat, with a marginal 0.01% decline.

On the other side, Trent fell 1.34%, NTPC declined 1.20%, Hindustan Unilever dropped 1.15% and Bharti Airtel fell 1.13%. M&M also declined 1.13%, while Bajaj Finserv lost 1.03%.

BROADER MARKET SHOWS MIXED TREND

The broader market was relatively more resilient than the benchmark indices.

The Nifty 100 fell 0.26%, while the Nifty 200 and Nifty 500 declined 0.20% and 0.13%, respectively. However, the Nifty Midcap 50 gained 0.10% and the Nifty Midcap 100 rose 0.05%.

Small-cap stocks performed better, with the Nifty Smallcap 100 gaining 0.36%. The India VIX, a measure of expected market volatility, rose 0.48% to 11.36.

Apart from metals and real estate, some pockets of the market also remained firm.

The Nifty Oil & Gas index gained 0.08%, while the Nifty Private Bank index rose 0.23%. Nifty Financial Services 25/50 was almost unchanged, with a marginal 0.00% move.

However, the Nifty FMCG index fell 1.05%, Nifty Healthcare declined 0.46% and Nifty Pharma fell 0.39%. Nifty PSU Bank slipped 0.37%, while Nifty Financial Services Ex-Bank declined 0.08%.

The Nifty Midcap IT & Telecom index fell 0.76%, showing that weakness was not limited to the largest IT companies.

CRUDE OIL, RUPEE REMAIN KEY CONCERNS

Crude oil remained elevated during the session. WTI crude was trading at $83.09 a barrel, up 0.84%, while Brent crude was at $89.61, up 1.23%.

Higher oil prices remain a concern for India because the country is a major crude importer. A sustained rise in oil prices can increase import costs and put pressure on inflation, the rupee and corporate margins.

The Indian rupee also weakened on Monday. It fell 0.2% to end at 95.6025 against the US dollar, its weakest level in two weeks.

The rupee came under pressure as oil prices moved higher. Market sentiment was also affected after the Reserve Bank of India brought forward the end date for its discounted forex swap facility for overseas deposits by a month. The rupee avoided a sharper fall due to likely intervention by the central bank, traders said.

The market is likely to remain focused on crude oil prices and developments around the Middle East, particularly as elevated oil prices remain an external risk for Indian equities.

At the same time, the relative strength in mid- and small-cap stocks and buying in sectors such as metals and realty provided some support to the broader market.

The mixed market performance also showed that while the benchmark indices remained under pressure, investors continued to find opportunities in specific sectors and stocks.



Copper is getting costlier. Here's why buyers are willing to pay more

Copper is vital for India's clean energy and industrial growth. In the world's race to build a cleaner future, copper has emerged as the critical metal making that transition possible. From power grids and electric vehicles to renewable-energy projects and data centres, the metal is finding its way into almost every part of the new energy economy.

Similarly, India's growing appetite for copper is now being reflected in a sharp rise in prices. Copper futures in India have climbed to around Rs 1,400 per kg in August, while London Market Exchange (LME) global copper prices have also remained close to record-high levels. On August 17, MCX copper contracts were trading at around Rs 1,400 per kg. But the more telling sign may be what is happening beyond the headline price.

For a factory that relies on copper to keep its production line running, the rising cost can quickly eat into margins. Yet, instead of waiting for prices to fall, buyers are willing to pay a premium to secure the metal immediately. This raises poignant questions of why is copper suddenly in such high demand. Why are buyers willing to pay a premium for it? And how does a price set on the LME eventually affect what an Indian manufacturer pays? To understand the current surge, it is important to know why the world needs a large amount of copper in the first place.

COPPER PRODUCTION STRUGGLING TO GO UP

Building a new copper mine is a long and expensive process. It can take years to identify viable deposits, secure environmental and government approvals, develop the mine and to further build the infrastructure needed to bring the metal in the market. On top of that, the existing mines are continuing to face declining ore quality, operational disruptions and rising costs.

At the same time, the demand outlook is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore. S&P Global estimates that global copper demand could rise from around 28 million tonnes in 2025 to 42 million tonnes by 2040, a jump of nearly 50%. This growth is expected to come largely from electrification, renewable energy, electric vehicles and AI data centres. This creates a fundamental mismatch where the copper consumption can rise rapidly, but new supply takes years to develop. This pressure is already visible in the market for copper concentrate, the raw material that is processed into refined copper. When concentrate becomes scarce, smelters have to compete for fewer supplies, pushing up their costs and squeezing their margins.

WHY ARE BUYERS WILLING TO PAY A PREMIUM?

The reason becomes clearer when you look at a copper-intensive manufacturer. Even if copper prices are rising, the company cannot simply wait for them to fall if it needs the metal to fulfil an order. A delay in securing supplies could lead to disrupted production, push back deliveries or even cost the company its loyal customer. In such cases, paying a premium for copper today feels less expensive than not having the metal at all. A trader can choose to stay out of the market when copper prices look too high. But a cable maker, transformer manufacturer or other industrial buyer may not have that option because copper is essential to keeping their production running. The premium paid over the global benchmark is therefore an important signal which shows that buyers are competing for limited supplies in a particular market. When buyers continue to pay a premium, it means that the demand is coming from businesses that need the physical metal to keep operations running.

Vijay Shekhar Sharma owned Resilient to sell 4.98 pc stake in One97 Communications

NEW DELHI:

Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma-owned Resilient Asset Management plans to sell a 4.98 per cent stake in One97 Communications in a block deal, according to an exchange filing.

Proceeds of the deal, however, will be retained by China-based Alibaba group firm Antfin under its existing Optionally Convertible Debenture (OCD) agreement with the seller, Resilient Asset Management, the filing stated.

Antfin had transferred its 10.3 per cent direct stake in One97 Communications, which owns the Paytm brand, to Resilient Asset Management at a total valuation of USD 628 million, while the Chinese firm continued to hold economic rights in the stake..

German Doner Kebab enters Indian market with first outlet in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD, AUGUST 2026



German Doner Kebab (GDK), a globally recognised premium quick-service restaurant (QSR) brand, has entered the Indian market with the opening of its first outlet at Film Nagar, Tollywood Lane, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad. GBC India, the master franchise partner of GDK in India, announced the launch on Monday, marking the beginning of the brand's planned expansion across the country. GDK is targeting more than 450 restaurants in India as part of its long-term growth strategy. Founded in Berlin and headquartered in the United Kingdom, GDK has a presence across the UK, the U.S., the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Sweden and Ireland. The brand is known for its contemporary take on doner, combining flame-grilled meat, fresh ingredients, signature sauces and toasted waffle bread. The company said its India proposition would focus on flavour, freshness, quality and protein-oriented food choices. It also aims to establish a connection with younger consumers through its association with music, fashion, sport, fitness and contemporary youth culture.

GDK India is being launched by GBC India, which brings experience in food manufacturing, product development, supply chain and franchise development. The partnership between GBC and GDK has developed over more than a decade, with a focus on product quality and operational standards.

Vikrant Tomer, Chief Executive Officer, GDK India, said the company's objective was not merely to establish a restaurant chain but to develop the doner category in the country. "India has one of the largest and youngest QSR markets in the world. We aim to bring a globally benchmarked doner experience to Indian consumers," he said.

He said the company's target of more than 450 restaurants would be supported by consistent global standards, fresh ingredients and an experience tailored to India's young consumer base.

Ginny Sahni, Managing Director, GBC India, said the company's association with GDK over the past decade had helped it understand the brand's standards and operating culture. "Launching GDK in India is a natural next step, bringing freshness, flavour and a global dining experience to our local audience," she said. Following the Hyderabad launch, the company plans to expand into markets such as Mohali and Chandigarh, besides other emerging Tier-I and Tier-II cities. The expansion will include a combination of company-owned and franchised outlets.

As part of its cultural positioning in India, GDK has also partnered with musician, actor and filmmaker Parmish Verma as its Cultural Partner. The association is aimed at connecting the brand with younger audiences through music, entertainment, fashion, fitness and contemporary culture. The company said Hyderabad would serve as the starting point for its India journey, with the long-term ambition of establishing more than 450 outlets across the country.

About German Doner Kebab

German Doner Kebab is a premium QSR brand offering a contemporary interpretation of doner kebab. Its menu combines flame-grilled doner, fresh ingredients, signature sauces and toasted waffle bread. The brand has an international presence across the UK, U.S., UAE, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Sweden and Ireland.

India's Tourism Boom

Why Travel and Adventure Are Entering a New Era From Sightseeing to Experiences

Tourism in India is undergoing a major transformation. Travel is no longer limited to visiting monuments, taking photographs at popular tourist spots or spending a few days at a traditional hill station. A new generation of travellers is looking for something more — adventure, nature, culture, local experiences and the thrill of discovering places away from the conventional tourist circuit. From trekking in the Himalayas and rafting through mountain rivers to scuba diving in India's island destinations and camping under desert skies, adventure tourism is rapidly becoming an important part of the country's travel economy. The change is being driven by rising incomes, better connectivity, social media, digital travel platforms and, most importantly, a growing desire among Indians to explore their own country.

India's geographical diversity gives it a natural advantage. Within its borders are some of the world's highest mountains, long coastlines, dense forests, deserts, rivers, islands and historic landscapes. This diversity allows the country to offer almost every form of tourism imaginable. The challenge now is to convert this enormous potential into a sustainable tourism industry without damaging the very landscapes and communities that attract visitors.

A New Generation of Indian Travellers

The Indian tourist is changing. Earlier, a family holiday often meant visiting a famous temple, monument, beach or hill station. Today, younger travellers are increasingly planning trips around experiences.

A weekend may involve trekking through a forest, camping near a lake, cycling through a rural landscape or exploring a previously unknown village. Longer holidays may combine adventure with culture, food and nature. Social media has played a major role in this transformation. A scenic mountain trail, a remote village, a waterfall or a campsite can become a travel destination after a few viral photographs or videos. Platforms that allow travellers to share experiences have dramatically expanded the visibility of destinations that were once known only to local communities. This has created opportunities for smaller tourism businesses as well. Homestays, local guides, camping operators, adventure companies and regional transport providers are increasingly becoming part of the tourism ecosystem.



India's Mountains Become Adventure Destinations

The Himalayas remain at the heart of India's adventure tourism story. From Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, the mountain regions offer extraordinary opportunities for trekking, camping, skiing, mountaineering and mountain cycling. Trekking has become particularly popular because it offers an accessible entry into adventure tourism. Travellers do not necessarily need expensive equipment or extensive experience to undertake shorter routes. For experienced adventurers, however, the Himalayas offer far more demanding expeditions. The attraction is not simply the physical challenge. Mountain tourism provides travellers with an opportunity to experience landscapes and communities that are very different from urban India. For local economies, this can be significant. Guides, porters, drivers, homestay owners, food suppliers and small shops can all benefit from a steady flow of tourists. But the growing popularity of mountain destinations has also raised concerns about waste, overcrowding and pressure on fragile ecosystems. The future of Himalayan tourism will therefore depend heavily on responsible destination management.

The Growing Appeal of Water Adventures

India's coastline and rivers are opening another major chapter in adventure tourism. Water-based activities that were once considered niche are increasingly becoming part of mainstream holidays. Goa has long been associated with beach tourism and water sports, while the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep offer some of India's most attractive marine experiences. Scuba diving, snorkelling, kayaking and other activities are attracting travellers interested in exploring the underwater world. River rafting has also gained popularity, particularly in the Himalayan region. For many tourists, travelling through a river surrounded by mountains offers an experience that conventional sightseeing cannot provide. The growth of water tourism, however, brings safety and environmental responsibilities. Trained instructors, proper equipment, weather monitoring and strict safety standards are essential. Marine ecosystems and rivers must also be protected from excessive tourism pressure.

Beyond the Famous Destinations

One of the most interesting developments in Indian tourism is the growing search for lesser-known destinations. Travellers increasingly want to escape crowded tourist centres. Instead of visiting only the most famous locations, they are looking for quiet villages, unexplored trekking routes, forest stays, rural landscapes and culturally distinctive regions. This trend could help spread the economic benefits of tourism beyond India's major tourist hubs. A small village with a few homestays can generate income for local families. A trained local guide can earn a livelihood by taking visitors on trekking routes. Traditional food, handicrafts and cultural performances can become additional sources of income. Such tourism also gives visitors a more authentic experience. Rather than simply observing a destination from outside, travellers can interact with local communities and understand their way of life.

Wildlife Tourism Finds a Larger Audience

Adventure tourism is not always about extreme physical activity. For many travellers, entering a forest at dawn in search of wildlife is an adventure in itself. India's national parks and wildlife sanctuaries attract domestic and international visitors interested in tigers, elephants, birds and other wildlife. Safari tourism has become an important component of the country's nature-based travel economy. Wildlife tourism can create a positive relationship between conservation and local economic development. When local communities receive income from tourism, protecting forests and wildlife can become an economically valuable activity. But uncontrolled tourism can create its own environmental problems. Too many vehicles, noise, irresponsible behaviour and pressure on sensitive habitats can disturb wildlife. The future of wildlife tourism therefore depends on maintaining a careful balance between allowing visitors to experience nature and ensuring that ecosystems remain protected.

Rural Tourism Opens a New Door

India's villages could become one of the country's most important tourism assets in the coming years. Urban travellers are increasingly interested in experiences that take them away from city life. Staying in a village, eating locally prepared food, learning traditional crafts, participating in farming activities or experiencing a local festival can provide a completely different form of holiday. Rural tourism also has the potential to create employment without requiring large industrial investments. A family can convert part of its house into a homestay. A local artisan can demonstrate traditional crafts. Farmers can introduce visitors to agricultural practices. Young people can work as guides or develop small tourism-related businesses. If managed properly, rural tourism can therefore become a tool for local development while helping preserve traditional culture.

Technology Is Changing How India Travels

Technology has transformed almost every stage of the travel journey. A traveller can now discover a destination through a short video, compare accommodation online, book transportation digitally, navigate using GPS and make payments without carrying large amounts of cash. Artificial intelligence is beginning to influence travel planning as well. Digital platforms can increasingly suggest destinations, activities and travel plans based on individual preferences. For adventure tourism, technology can also improve safety. Weather alerts, digital maps, location tracking and emergency communication can help travellers and authorities respond more effectively in remote regions. But technology has a downside. A destination that suddenly becomes popular online can face an unexpected rush of visitors. Roads, hotels, water systems and waste-management facilities may not be prepared for such demand. Tourism technology therefore needs to become a tool not just for promotion but also for destination management.

Sustainability Becomes the Biggest Question

India's tourism growth comes with an important question: how much tourism can a destination handle? Mountains, beaches, forests and islands are not unlimited resources. Uncontrolled construction, plastic waste, excessive traffic and pressure on water resources can damage destinations. The irony is that tourism can destroy the very attractions on which it depends. This makes sustainable tourism more than an environmental slogan. It is an economic necessity. Destinations need better waste management, responsible construction, efficient water use and stronger visitor regulations. Tourists also have a role to play by avoiding littering, respecting local communities and following environmental guidelines. The objective should not be to prevent tourism but to make tourism compatible with the long-term health of the destination.

Safety Will Shape Adventure Tourism

As adventure tourism grows, safety is becoming an increasingly important concern. Activities such as rafting, trekking, skiing, paragliding and diving involve genuine risks. Poorly maintained equipment, untrained operators or inadequate emergency services can turn an exciting holiday into a dangerous experience. India's adventure tourism industry therefore needs stronger professional standards. Guides and instructors need proper training, operators need reliable equipment and destinations need emergency-response systems. Tourists must also understand that adventure does not mean ignoring warnings. Weather conditions, altitude, water levels and local regulations can change quickly. A mature adventure tourism industry is one where excitement and safety exist together.

Tourism as an Engine of Local Economies

The economic importance of tourism extends far beyond hotels. A tourist travelling to a remote destination may spend money on transport, accommodation, food, guides, activities, shopping and local products. That spending can support dozens of small businesses. Adventure tourism can have an especially strong local impact because many activities require local knowledge and services.For young people in rural and mountainous areas, tourism can provide alternatives to migration in search of employment. If local communities are directly involved, tourism revenue can remain within the region. This makes tourism an important tool for regional economic development.

The Problem of Overtourism

Tourism's success can sometimes become its biggest challenge. When thousands of visitors arrive at the same destination during peak periods, roads become congested, accommodation prices rise and local infrastructure comes under pressure. Waste and water consumption increase, while residents may find their daily lives disrupted. Several popular mountain, coastal and heritage destinations are facing this pressure. The answer lies in better planning. Tourism should be distributed across different seasons and locations rather than concentrated in a handful of famous places. Developing lesser-known destinations can also reduce pressure on established tourist centres while creating new economic opportunities.

Domestic Tourism Will Remain a Major Force

India's enormous domestic market gives its tourism industry a unique advantage.

Millions of Indians are now travelling for leisure, pilgrimage, adventure, business and family holidays. Better highways, expanding airports, improved rail connectivity and digital booking services are making travel more accessible. Weekend tourism is also becoming increasingly important. Travellers do not always need a long vacation. A two-day trip to a nearby hill, forest, beach or heritage town can provide a much-needed break from urban life. This growing domestic demand could provide a stable foundation for India's tourism industry even as international tourism patterns change.

A New Opportunity for India

India now has an opportunity to build a tourism industry that combines adventure, culture, nature and technology.

The country's strength is not one particular destination. It is the extraordinary variety of experiences available across different regions. A traveller can explore Himalayan villages during one holiday, experience desert landscapes on another trip and discover coral reefs or tropical forests on the next. The opportunity is enormous, but growth must be managed carefully. Tourism infrastructure must expand without destroying natural resources. Local communities must receive a fair share of the economic benefits. Adventure activities must be professionally managed, and environmental protection must remain central to destination planning.

Conclusion: The Future Belongs to Experiential Travel

India's tourism story is moving beyond the traditional idea of sightseeing. The modern traveller wants to experience destinations rather than simply visit them. Adventure tourism, rural tourism, wildlife experiences, eco-tourism and cultural travel are becoming important parts of this new landscape. Technology is making travel easier, while rising domestic demand is creating opportunities across the country. But India's tourism future will ultimately depend on balance. The country needs more tourists, but not at the cost of its mountains, forests, beaches and communities. It needs new destinations, but not uncontrolled construction. It needs adventure, but with safety. And it needs economic growth, but with benefits reaching the people who live in the destinations. If India can achieve that balance, tourism can become much more than a source of holiday experiences. It can become a powerful engine of employment, rural development, conservation and cultural exchange. The next generation of Indian tourism may therefore be defined by a simple change in mindset — from travelling to see places to travelling to experience them.

SHORT NEWS

Korea Masters 2026

Youngster Ortega sets Real Madrid youth system transfer record



MADRID: Real Madrid's youth system continues to give the club financial benefits with the confirmation of the sale of 19-year-old C-team player Jacobo Ortega to RC Strasbourg on Monday. Ortega, who was the top scorer for Real Madrid in last season's youth league, has cost Strasbourg 10 million euros (11.6 million U.S. dollars) for 70 percent of his rights, making him the most expensive sale for Real Madrid for a player who has never played in its first team. "Real Madrid C.F. and RC Strasbourg Alsace have agreed to the transfer of our player Jacobo Ortega," the Real Madrid website explained, adding, "he joined Real Madrid in 2018 at the age of 12 and has been part of our youth academy for eight seasons." Ortega has signed a five-year contract with Strasbourg, which has the same club owners (BlueCo) as Premier League outfit Chelsea. Other youth team products have also brought income to Real Madrid this summer, with Gonzalo Garcia and Cesar Palacios bringing in around 50 million euros, while the club also earned around 20 million.

Hyderabad Black Hawks Evolves into Telugu Black Hawks

Uniting the Global Telugu Diaspora Through Volleyball



HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Black Hawks today announced its evolution to Telugu Black Hawks, marking the next chapter in the franchise's journey to bring together the people of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, while building a deeper connection with the global Telugu diaspora through volleyball. As one of the founding franchises of the Prime Volleyball League, the club has always believed its role extends beyond the professional team. From the beginning, the Black Hawks vision has been to grow volleyball across both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and create opportunities for young players to engage with the sport. Over the past four years, that commitment has taken the Black Hawks across both states. The franchise has collaborated with the Isha Foundation on volleyball initiatives across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, organised the Vijay Deverakonda Black Hawks Open across districts in both states, and organised numerous volleyball clinics, open trials and pre season camps across the region.

These experiences reinforced something that had been part of the franchise's vision from the beginning. While Hyderabad is its home, the community around the Black Hawks extends far beyond the boundaries of one city. The evolution to Telugu Black Hawks reflects that reality. Hyderabad will forever remain the club's home and an integral part of its identity. The new name builds on those roots to embrace people across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, while also creating a connection with the millions who make up the Telugu diaspora around the world. Speaking on the occasion, Abhishek Reddy Kankanala, Principal Owner of Telugu Black Hawks, said "Four years ago, we started with the dream of building a professional volleyball team. Today, that dream has evolved into something much bigger. Our vision has never been limited to winning matches. Over the last four years, we have taken volleyball into communities across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh through tournaments, clinics, trials, camps and grassroots programs. The more we worked across both states, the clearer it became that the Black Hawks belonged to a much larger community. Hyderabad will always be where our journey began and will remain at the heart of who we are. This evolution is not about moving away from Hyderabad. It is about widening the circle. Telugu Black Hawks belongs to everyone who has been part of the Black Hawks journey, while creating a team that people across Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and the Telugu diaspora around the world can proudly call their own." Looking ahead, Telugu Black Hawks intends to deepen this commitment through grassroots development, academies, school programs, coaching, talent identification and competitive opportunities that create a pathway from discovering volleyball to playing the sport at the highest level. As Telugu Black Hawks begins this new chapter, the ambition remains the same: to compete for championships while building a volleyball movement that brings together communities at home and around the world.

Telugu Black hawks New Squad

Telugu Black hawks strengthened their squad in the PVL 2026 players auction. Telugu Black Hawks have picked a strong squad for Season 5, which will be held in Ahmedabad this year. At the auction held in Goa on Monday, Black Hawks bought Tanish Choudhary for ₹14 lakh, Vinit Kumar (₹8 lakh), Mouhsin PA (₹5 lakh), Hari Prasad B S and Deepak (₹3 lakh each), while exercising their Right to Match to retain Niyas Abdul Salam for ₹4 lakh.

Squad

: Tanish Choudhary (₹14 lakh), Vinit Kumar (₹8 lakh), Mouhsin PA (₹5 lakh), Niyas Abdul Salam (₹4 lakh), Hari Prasad B S (₹3 lakh), Deepak (₹3 lakh), Warangal player Mettu Siril Reddy (₹1 lakh), Namith MN (₹1 lakh), Shikhar Singh, John Joseph*, Deepu Venugopal and Preet Karan.



Badminton WC: Sindhu makes winning start with clinical opening-round victory

NEW DELHI

Former winner PV Sindhu began her latest World Championships campaign emphatically, brushing aside Ireland's Sophia Noble 21-7, 21-11 in just 29 minutes in the 2026 edition at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium on Monday to move into the women's singles Round of 32.

The fifth-seeded Irish debutant, ranked 141st in the world, found herself under pressure almost immediately against the World No. 9. Sindhu, who raced through the opening exchanges and established an 8-0 advantage before Noble could settle into the contest.

The gulf in experience was evident as the 31-year-old Sindhu, who won the World Championship in 2019 in Basel, controlled the rallies and kept the 21-year-old Irishwoman from building any sustained momentum. Noble eventually opened her account, but the early damage had already put the opening game firmly in Sindhu's grasp, with the Indian closing it out 21-7.

Noble returned for the second game with greater composure and managed to stay within striking distance through the first half. She went into the interval only three points behind the Indian, offering signs that the contest could become more competitive.

Sindhu, however, quickly stamped her authority back on the game. The Indian shifted gears after the interval, winning 10 of the next 13 points to pull decisively away and leave Noble with no route back into the contest. The 31-year-old Indian, who won silver in 2016 and bronze in the 2020 editions of the Olympic Games, completed a straight-forward 21-11 second-game win to wrap up her 10th World Championships campaign with an assured opening performance.

For Noble, the match marked her first appearance at the World Championships. Sindhu, by contrast, arrived with five medals from the event already on her résumé and the experience of having been a world champion. The Indian will now face a more demanding test in the Round of 32, where she will meet Canada's World No. 49 Wen Yu Zhang.

Sindhu was one of three Indian winners on the opening day so far. Earlier, top women's doubles pair Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand also advanced in women's doubles after defeating Spain's Paula Lopez and Lucia Rodriguez 21-9, 21-13. The Indian pair will next face the 16th-seeded American combination of Lauren Lam and Allison Quynh Lee. M. R. Arjun and Hariharan Amsakarunan also progressed in men's doubles, although their opening-round match ended prematurely.

'At home, World Championship debut, world No. 1 — it's a special win'



NEW DELHI

India's Ayush Shetty described his stunning victory over world No. 1 Shi Yu Qi as the "top one" of his career, saying beating the defending champion on his World Championships debut at home made the achievement particularly special.

"I would like it as the top one. At home, World Championship debut, world number one, I think it's a special win and I'm super happy today," Ayush said after producing one of the biggest upsets of the opening day.

In the men's singles first-round match held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium on Monday, the 20-year-old Indian beat the top seed and defending champion Shi, winning the game 21-14, 13-21, 21-19, and thus achieved his first win against the Chinese player in their four previous encounters.

Although Ayush had lost all three of his earlier matches against Shi, including their most recent one in the final of the Badminton Asia Championships, he did have a clear tactical plan and carried it out under heavy pressure. "Yeah, I think we analysed the matches well; tactically I was much better today. I think the last time we played, he outplayed me, but I was prepared for the game, and I think I was super prepared and happy," he said.

The Indian began strongly, securing a 3-0 lead and being ahead by 11 points at the interval. He kept up his intensity after the break and won the first game 21 to 14. In the second game, Shi reacted by entering into a series of rapid exchanges with Ayush and ultimately secured the advantage to win 21–13, thereby forcing a final match.

However, Ayush took the last game early on, moved ahead 6-3, extended his lead to 9-4 and had an impressive 11-5 advantage when the interval came. After the exchange of ends, it seemed that the Indian player had taken the lead with a score of 16-5.

Hockey World Cup: Indian men go down fighting 2-4 to England

AMSTELVEEN

The Indian men's team suffered a 2-4 defeat against England in their second Pool D match of the FIH World Cup 2026 at the Wagener Hockey Stadium in Amstelveen on Monday.

Nicholas Bandurak scored twice for England, while Stuart Rushmere and Henry Croft added one each as England overturned a 1-2 deficit to secure victory, which confirmed a top-two finish in the pool for Zachary Wallace's team. For India, captain Harmanpreet Singh converted a penalty corner, while Dilpreet Singh finished off a well-worked move in the second quarter. The contest began at a frantic pace before both sides settled into their structures. India created the first clear opportunity in the seventh minute when Jarmanpreet Singh found himself with almost the entire goal in sight, five yards inside the circle, but his hurried effort went wide as goalkeeper Oliver Payne dived across.

England earned a penalty corner in the 10th minute after a referral, but Manpreet Singh produced an excellent stick block to deny the flick. England broke the deadlock in the 14th minute. A brilliant aerial caught the Indian defence napping, leaving Mohith with a 2 vs 1 situation, and Bandurak finished clinically to make it 1-0. India responded almost immediately, with Dilpreet testing Payne, but the England goalkeeper palmed the effort away. India drew level two minutes into the second quarter.



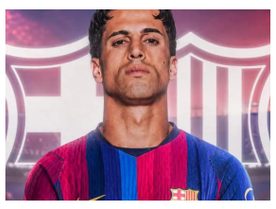
After winning a penalty corner, Harmanpreet stepped up and unleashed a rocket of a flick into the top-left corner, giving the goalkeeper no chance. England threatened again through Bandurak, who narrowly missed from close range, before India completed their comeback in the 25th minute to take the lead.

The goal came after Hardik Singh worked the ball along the baseline to Abhishek, who sent a bouncing pass towards the far post. Dilpreet was perfectly placed and needed only a simple touch to put India 2-1 ahead.

India entered half-time with the lead and had enjoyed the better attacking numbers, registering eight shots on goal compared to England's three. England, however, continued to build patiently after the interval, while India's defensive structure initially remained difficult to penetrate. The visitors found the equaliser in the 39th minute against the run of play.

Cancelo confirms Barca return after ending contract with Al-Hilal

MADRID



Portuguese international defender Joao Cancelo is on the verge of returning to FC Barcelona on a permanent deal, the player confirmed on Monday. The 32-year-old spent a successful six-month spell on loan at Barcelona from Al-Hilal last season, but had to return to the Saudi Arabian club at the end of Barcelona's title-winning campaign. He and Al-Hilal reached an agreement to end their relationship over the weekend, and Cancelo flew into Barcelona on Monday.

The defender posted an image of himself inside the plane with the message "coming back home," and spoke briefly to the press on his arrival at the airport. "I am very happy to be here, which is where I want to be," said Cancelo, who is expected to sign a three-year contract in the coming days. Meanwhile, Sergio Busquets has returned to work at FC Barcelona eight months after ending his playing career at Inter Miami. The 38-year-old was confirmed by FC Barcelona as a member of the Barca Atletic (Barcelona B-team) squad as one of the assistants to Juliano Belletti.

1st Test: Suthar, Jadeja help India take 178-run lead despite Dinusha's maiden ton

GALLE



Left-arm spinners Manav Suthar and Ravindra Jadeja shared seven wickets between themselves as India bowled Sri Lanka out for 284 on Day Three of the first Test, and sealed a formidable 178-run first-innings lead before rain forced early stumps to be taken at the Galle International Stadium in Galle on Monday.

Arriving on the tour with immense expectations, Suthar lived up to the billing by striking with his very first ball and finishing with 4-76 in a spell where he got turn and bounce while hitting the right lengths. His veteran spin partner Jadeja chipped in with 3-57, and even crossed the 350 Test-wicket mark.

Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, and Prasidh Krishna took a wicket apiece to round off a thoroughly clinical collective bowling effort for India, who briefly entertained hopes of enforcing the follow-on after reducing the hosts to 90/5.

However, Sonal Dinusha and Niroshan Dickwella mounted a stubborn recovery through a 146-run sixth-wicket partnership as the ball softened and lost its bite. The duo showed exceptional composure and absorbed pressure, including sweeping and reverse-sweeping very well, to deny India the opportunity to put pressure on them.

While Dinusha pushed on to register a brilliant maiden Test hundred off 168 balls, Dickwella's search for an elusive three-figure score continued on his return to the format after nearly three years. The wicket-keeper-batter remains with the record for most Test half-centuries without a hundred when he fell for a well-made 80 off 115 balls as Krishna produced a beauty with the old ball to trigger the final collapse.

In the morning, India's first innings wrapped up inside four balls and less than three minutes for 462, after Asitha Fernando took out Prasidh Krishna when he gloved behind to Dickwella. After that, India's bowlers immediately went to work and needed just two deliveries to get their first breakthrough.

Siraj struck with a classic outswinger and induced an edge from Nishan Madushka to have him caught at first slip and send the opener back for a duck. After that, the Indian spin troika of Suthar, Kuldeep and Jadeja took complete control on a pitch offering sharp turn and bounce.

Suthar made an immediate impact by striking with his very first delivery -- drawing Dinesh Chandimal forward with an immaculate piece of drift and spin and catching the glove edge, with Rishabh Pant completing a sharp catch behind the stumps.

Suthar continued to press and built pressure with relentless accuracy to dismiss Lahiru Udara for 27, after he mistimed a cut off a bouncing and turning delivery to give a simple catch to backward point.

At 53/3, Sri Lanka needed a partnership to stabilise their innings, but Indian captain Shubman Gill produced a moment of brilliance in the field to dent the hosts further. Diving full length to his left at short extra cover, Gill plucked a stunning one-handed catch inches above the turf to dismiss Kamindu Mendis for 14 off Kuldeep's bowling.

Jadeja then joined in to complete a dominant display in the first session just three minutes before the lunch break. Operating with a tight stump-to-stump line, Jadeja extracted sharp turn to catch the outside edge of Sri Lanka captain Dhananjaya de Silva (21), with KL Rahul diving low at first slip to complete the catch and get another session in India's favour.

Resuming from 99/5, Sri Lanka looked in danger of conceding a massive first-innings deficit. But Dickwella, playing a Test match after three years, and Dinusha exhibited exceptional composure on a turning pitch, including sweeping and reverse-sweeping very well, by adding 124 runs for the unbroken sixth-wicket stand, thus denying India the opportunity to put pressure on them.

Dickwella was the initial aggressor, employing the sweep shot with great effect to disrupt India's spin rhythm. In the 32nd over, India burned a review when left-arm spinner Manav Suthar rapped Dickwella on the pads, only for the ball tracking to confirm the impact was outside off-stump.

Ravindra Jadeja similarly came close to breaking the stand in the 35th over, appealing passionately for an LBW decision against Dickwella. India reviewed once more, but the ball-tracker showed the ball bouncing over the leg stump, costing the visitors their second review.

NorthEast United fend off Shillong Lajong to qualify for semis

SHILLONG

Alaaeddine Ajaraie orchestrated a breathtaking second-half comeback with a sensational hat-trick as NorthEast United FC defeated Shillong Lajong FC 5-2 in a high-stakes Northeastern derby in the 135th Durand Cup at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Shillong on Monday.

After trailing 2-1 at the break in torrential rain, the Highlanders turned the quarterfinal clash on its head with four second-half goals, booking their spot in the Durand Cup semifinals. With this emphatic result, all four semifinalists for the 135th Durand Cup have been officially confirmed: Mohun Bagan Super Giant, Sporting Club Delhi, East Bengal FC, and NorthEast United FC.

Setting up for the crucial quarterfinal, both sides adopted an attacking 4-3-3 formation. Shillong Lajong FC head coach Ranit Sarkar named Ranit Sarkar in goal, with Kitboklang Khyriem, Arthur Tio, Joedson Dos Santos and captain Kenstar Kharshong forming the back four. Lamlallian S. T., Gladdy Nelson Kharbuli and Damaitphang Lyngdoh marshalled the midfield, while Joao Vitor De Paula Morais (Jota), Figo Syndai and Nelson Rymbai led the attack.

NorthEast United FC head coach Juan Pedro Benali also opted for a 4-3-3 setup, with Gurmeet Singh in goal behind a defence comprising Abdul Rabeeh, Eneko Satrustegui, Asheer Akhtar and captain Redeem Tlang. Macarton Louis Nickson, Antonio Moyano and Muthu Irulandi Mayakkannan formed the midfield trio, while Jithin M.S., Alaaeddine Ajaraie and Etyan Jesus Gonzalez Morales spearheaded the attack. The match began under difficult conditions as heavy rain left the pitch slick and challenging. The surface made its impact almost immediately when Shillong captain Kenstar Kharshong slipped awkwardly in the opening exchanges, although he was able to continue after receiving treatment.

NorthEast adapted more quickly to the conditions and created the first meaningful chance in the seventh minute when Eneko Satrustegui headed narrowly wide from an Antonio Moyano corner. The Highlanders made their early dominance count in the 11th minute through a moment.

Wedding Bells For Anirudh-Kavya?



Sensational music director Anirudh Ravichander and Sunrisers Hyderabad owner Kavya Maran are once again making headlines. According to several reports in the Tamil media, they are all set to get married in Greece on November 10. The speculation gained fresh momentum after Anirudh's uncle, veteran actor Y.G. Mahendran, publicly spoke about the relationship and indirectly stated that the marriage will happen soon. Interestingly, wedding rumors involving the duo have been circulating for more than a year. While Anirudh had previously dismissed similar reports, the latest reports have once again gained traction. Kavya Maran is one of the most recognizable faces in the IPL, owns Sunrisers Hyderabad, and is the daughter of Sun TV owner Kalanithi Maran, while Anirudh remains one of the busiest and most successful music composers in Indian cinema. As of now, fans are eagerly waiting for an official announcement. Until then, the reported destination wedding plans remain a major talking point on social media. Anirudh is high on the success of his new film DC, which had great music.



Rakul Nails THE SEQUIN LOOK

Rakul Preet Singh is proving age is just a number with her latest stunning photoshoot. The actress, gearing up for her much-awaited role in Ramayana, dropped a set of pictures that instantly caught fans' attention.She wore a shimmering black sequinned gown with a sheer crystal-studded neckline and a bold cutout back with lace-up detailing. She kept it simple with a sleek bun, ear cuffs, and dewy makeup, letting the gown steal the show. Nearing her 40s, Rakul continues to impress with her fitness and style. With almost two decades in the industry, she has built a strong name in Tollywood and is now steadily making her mark in Bollywood too, with Ramayana as one of her biggest upcoming projects.



Venky Atluri Targets Telugu Stars

Venky Atluri has recently earned the tag of the "New-Age Trivikram Srinivas" for his large-scale commercial entertainers. His last three films have proved his mettle. Be it Sir (Vaathi), Lucky Baskhar or the latest Vishwanath And Sons, the filmmaker has cemented his position among Tollywood's bankable directors. Besides delivering content-backed films, Venky has also churned out successful box-office entertainers. Now, all eyes are on Venky Atluri's next. There is growing demand for him in Tollywood. After directing Dhanush, Dulquer Salmaan and Suriya, Telugu fans are eagerly waiting to see Venky team up with Telugu stars. When asked about his next project, Venky quipped, "Nothing is finalised. Yet to start working on the script." Let's hope things fall into place soon and Venky collaborates with a top Tollywood star and producer Naga Vamsi is best at getting the things done. If Venky joins hands with a prominent Telugu star, there is no doubt that the combination could work wonders at the box office.

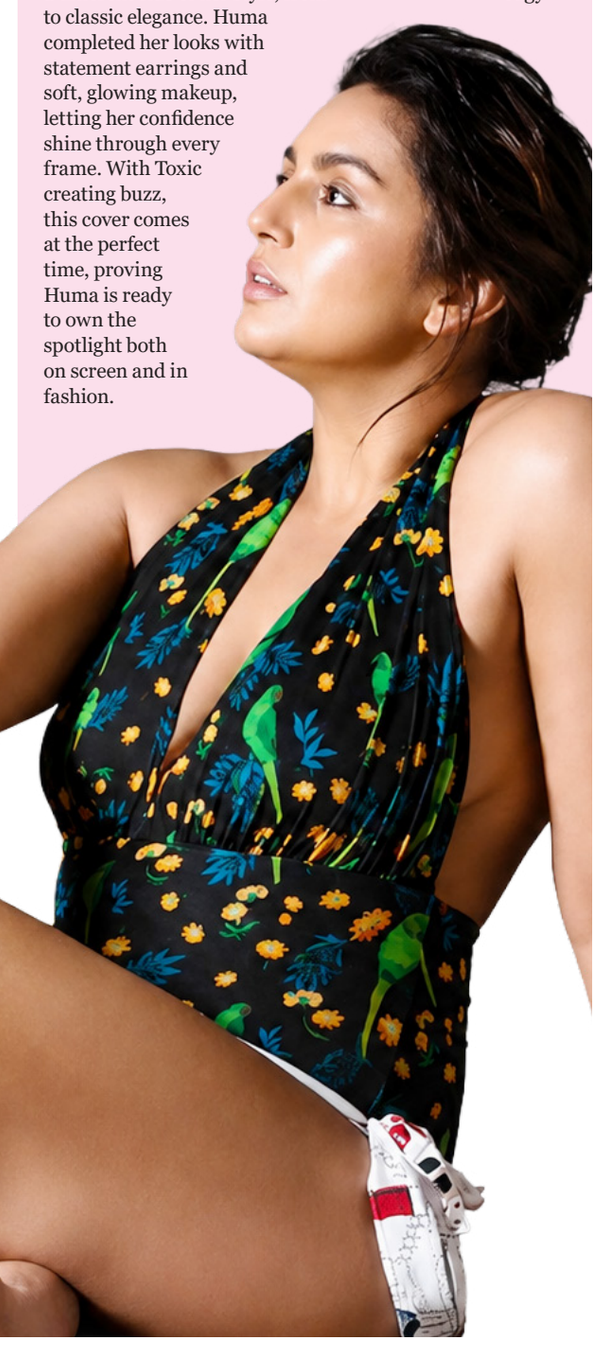
Ameer log Podcast Breakthrough

A grounded story, real locations and natural performances are the main highlights of Ameer Log, the upcoming Telugu film directed by Ramana Reddy Soma. Produced by Madhavi Reddy Soma under Awwal Number Productions, the film is set to release on August 21. MC Hari, Manoj, Sashidhar and Vedha Jalandharr play key roles. Interestingly, the title Ameer Log came before the story. Director Ramana Reddy heard the phrase in a podcast featuring actor Manoj Bajpayee and became curious about its meaning. He then started building a story around the title, which eventually became a tale about three young men from a Hyderabad basti. The director wanted to show the real life of a Hyderabad basti without making it look artificial. So, instead of creating sets, the team shot in an actual basti. He also used sync sound to keep the performances natural and realistic. Ramana Reddy had earlier made a short film, which taught him the importance of proper preparation. For Ameer Log, he made sure to have a bound script before starting the feature film. Spirit Media also came on board after watching the film and appreciating its content, especially the second half. The director also thanked Rana Daggubati for his support and promotion. With its realistic setting and simple storytelling, Ameer Log is now gearing up for its August 21 release.



Huma Qureshi Owns The Cover

Huma Qureshi is proving she is a true fashion powerhouse with her latest magazine cover, and it's impossible to look away. The actress, all set to impress fans with her upcoming film Toxic, brought serious glam to the shoot with multiple striking looks. She switched between four bold outfits, a black and white feathered dress, a rich maroon pantsuit, a flowing white gown with dramatic sleeves, and an elegant black gown covered in crystal embellishments. Each look showed off a different side of her style, from edgy to classic elegance. Huma completed her looks with statement earrings and soft, glowing makeup, letting her confidence shine through every frame. With Toxic creating buzz, this cover comes at the perfect time, proving Huma is ready to own the spotlight both on screen and in fashion.



RAPO23 Non-Stop 24 Hr Shoot



Energetic Star Ram Pothineni is raising the bar for his directorial debut RAPO23 by taking on an extraordinary workload both in front of and behind the camera. The actor-director completed a marathon 24-hour shooting stretch on the outskirts of Pondicherry, underlining the scale of his commitment to the project. The latest Pondicherry schedule lasted for nearly nine days and featured an elaborate production setup. While delivering his performance as the protagonist, Ram was also actively involved in directing the proceedings, making the lengthy schedule particularly challenging. The shoot was eventually brought to a temporary halt after unexpected rains disrupted the proceedings. The team has since returned to Hyderabad, but plans are already in place to travel back to Pondicherry and finish the portions left incomplete on the same massive setup. RAPO23 is being mounted as a large-scale production, with Krishna Pothineni bankrolling it on Rapo Cinematics banner. More details about the film's world, characters and additional cast are expected to emerge as production progresses.



Anurag Kashyap PRAISES PALLABURUSU

Annapurna Studios and Epic Studios' latest production venture Pallaburusu has received a special appreciation from acclaimed Bollywood filmmaker Anurag Kashyap. After watching the film, Kashyap shared a highly positive response, describing it as a beautiful and refreshing film that leaves a smile on the viewer's face. Kashyap particularly appreciated the simplicity and emotional core of the film. His feedback stands out at a time when commercial cinema is increasingly driven by larger-than-life action and high-intensity storytelling. He found Pallaburusuto be a refreshing departure, with its warmth, family emotions and grounded treatment making an impact. The filmmaker also showered praise on director Uday Chauhan, expressing interest in seeing more of his work. Kashyap's appreciation is significant as it comes from a filmmaker known for his distinctive storytelling sensibilities and strong understanding of cinema. With Anurag Kashyap's encouraging words adding to the buzz, Pallaburusu now has another reason to attract audiences looking for a different kind of family entertainer.



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Editor: Pisati Janga Reddy, Ph : 040 24123467, Email : hyderabadheadlines@gmail.com