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17-Year Monsoon Low, Rice Stocks Offer Cushion

New Delhi, sep 18: The monsoon situation in India this year is a cause for concern. Forecasts suggest that the country could experience its weakest monsoon in 17 years. With rainfall about 15 percent below normal, the agricultural sector is facing the possibility of significant impacts. Experts estimate that if the effects of El Niño add to the situation, crop yields could decline further. In particular, rice production, which is crucial to the country's food security, could be affected. India's rice production is estimated to fall by around 10 million tonnes this year, reaching 144 million tonnes. However, the fact that

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Rahul Criticizes Freezing of TMC's Name and Symbol

NEW DELHI, SEP 18



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi strongly reacted to the Election Commission's decision to temporarily freeze the Trinamool Congress (TMC) name and its traditional 'Flowers and Grass' symbol during the by-elections in West Bengal. He posted on X, saying, 'First vote theft, then government theft... now party theft.' He alleged that the same approach was now being followed with the TMC after the Shiv Sena and NCP. He criticized the BJP and the Election Commission, alleging that they were working together to split political parties and take away their election symbols. However, it should be noted that these are political allegations made by Rahul Gandhi.

With two factions within the TMC claiming the party's name and symbol, the Election Commission issued interim orders on September 17. It made clear that neither faction could use the name 'All India Trinamool Congress' or the 'Flowers and Grass' symbol until a final decision is reached. Subsequently, the Mamata Banerjee faction was allotted the name 'Mamata All India Trinamool Congress' along with the 'Football Player' symbol, while the rival faction was allotted the name 'Democratic Trinamool Congress' with the 'Cover/Envelope' symbol.

Rahul alleged that the Election Commission, which is supposed to protect the people's mandate, was instead assisting forces seeking to alter it. He said that the fight was not merely Mamata Banerjee's, but that of every party and every voter who wants free and fair elections. Meanwhile, the Election Commission stated that these interim arrangements had been made to protect the rights of both factions equally until a final decision is reached.

Rainfall Deficit: Revanth Seeks Central Aid



HYDERABAD, SEP 18

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has urged Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan to extend necessary assistance to Telangana to tackle drought-like conditions arising from the impact of El Niño. The Chief Minister met Chouhan, who was in Hyderabad to participate in the Southern States Agriculture Conference, along with Ministers Tummala Nageswara Rao and Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and senior officials.

Revanth Reddy apprised the Union Minister of the prevailing situation in the State due to deficient rainfall and submitted a memorandum seeking the Centre's support.

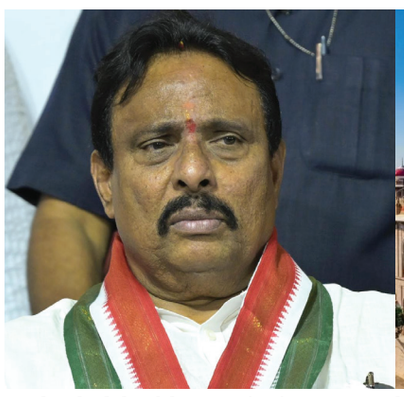
Revanth Reddy said power consumption in the agriculture sector had increased significantly due to the prevailing dry conditions. He also explained that the State government had made advance

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HC Quashes Speaker's Order, Disqualifies Nagender

Danam Nagender contested as a Congress candidate from the Secunderabad Lok Sabha seat in 2024 even while he was continuing to be Khairatabad MLA, elected on a BRS ticket the previous year

HYDERABAD, SEP 18





The Telangana High Court on Friday set aside the order of Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar dismissing petitions seeking the disqualification of Khairatabad MLA Danam Nagender and held that he stood disqualified as a member of the Telangana Legislative Assembly from April 23, 2024.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice G.M. Mohiuddin pronounced the judgment in two writ petitions filed by BRS MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy and BJP MLA Alleti Maheshwar Reddy. The petitioners had challenged the Speaker's March 11, 2026 order dismissing the disqualification pleas against Mr. Nagender.

Contested Lok Sabha election on Congress ticket

The petitioners argued that Mr. Nagender had been elected as a BRS MLA from Khairatabad in the December 2023 Assembly elections but subsequently contested the 2024 Secunderabad Lok Sabha election as a Congress candidate without first resigning from the BRS. They contended that his action attracted disqualification under Paragraph 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution.

The High Court accepted the contention and held that Mr. Nagender stood disqualified from April 23, 2024, after having contested the Lok Sabha election n the Congress ticket. Mr. Nagender had won the Khairatabad Assembly seat as a BRS candidate in the 2023 elections. He later joined the Congress and contested the Secunderabad Lok Sabha seat in May 2024, but lost the election.

Disqualification petitions against 10 MLAs

Nagender was among 10 BRS MLAs who switched allegiance to the Congress between March and August 2024. The others were Kadiyam Srihari, Pocharam Srinivas Reddy, Tellam Venkat Rao, M. Sanjay Kumar, Arekapudi Gandhi, T. Prakash Goud, B. Krishna Mohan Reddy, Kale Yadaiah and Gudem Mahipal Reddy.

The BRS had initially approached the High Court in April 2024, alleging that the Speaker's office was not acting on its petitions seeking disqualification of Mr. Nagender and two other MLAs who had joined the Congress.

A single judge of the High Court on September 9, 2024, directed the Speaker's office to fix a schedule for

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Mamata... Helplessness in the Very Place She Once Dominated!



In West Bengal politics, 'Didi' was once a symbol of unquestioned leadership. But now Mamata Banerjee is facing politically unexpected challenges. Since founding the Trinamool Congress in 1998, Mamata has remained the central figure of the party for nearly three decades. The Election Commission's recent decision to temporarily freeze the party's name and its traditional 'Flowers and Grass' symbol, along with the increasing visibility of internal differences within the TMC, has created a new political situation for her. Amid the dispute between the two factions over the party's name and symbol, the Election Commission

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KCR Farmhouse Land Survey Continues

Hyderabad, Sept.18: Revenue officials continued their survey of lands surrounding former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's farmhouse in Erravelli village of Siddipet district for the second consecutive day on Friday.

Officials are currently inspecting 388 acres under Survey No. 325 to verify the exact extent of government land in the area. Alongside ground verification, a satellite survey is being

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Godavari Pushkaralu works to be completed by April: Sridhar Babu

Hyderabad, September 18: Telangana IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu has directed officials to ensure that all works related to the Godavari Pushkaralu-2027 are completed by April next year and asked various departments to work in coordination under a special action plan.

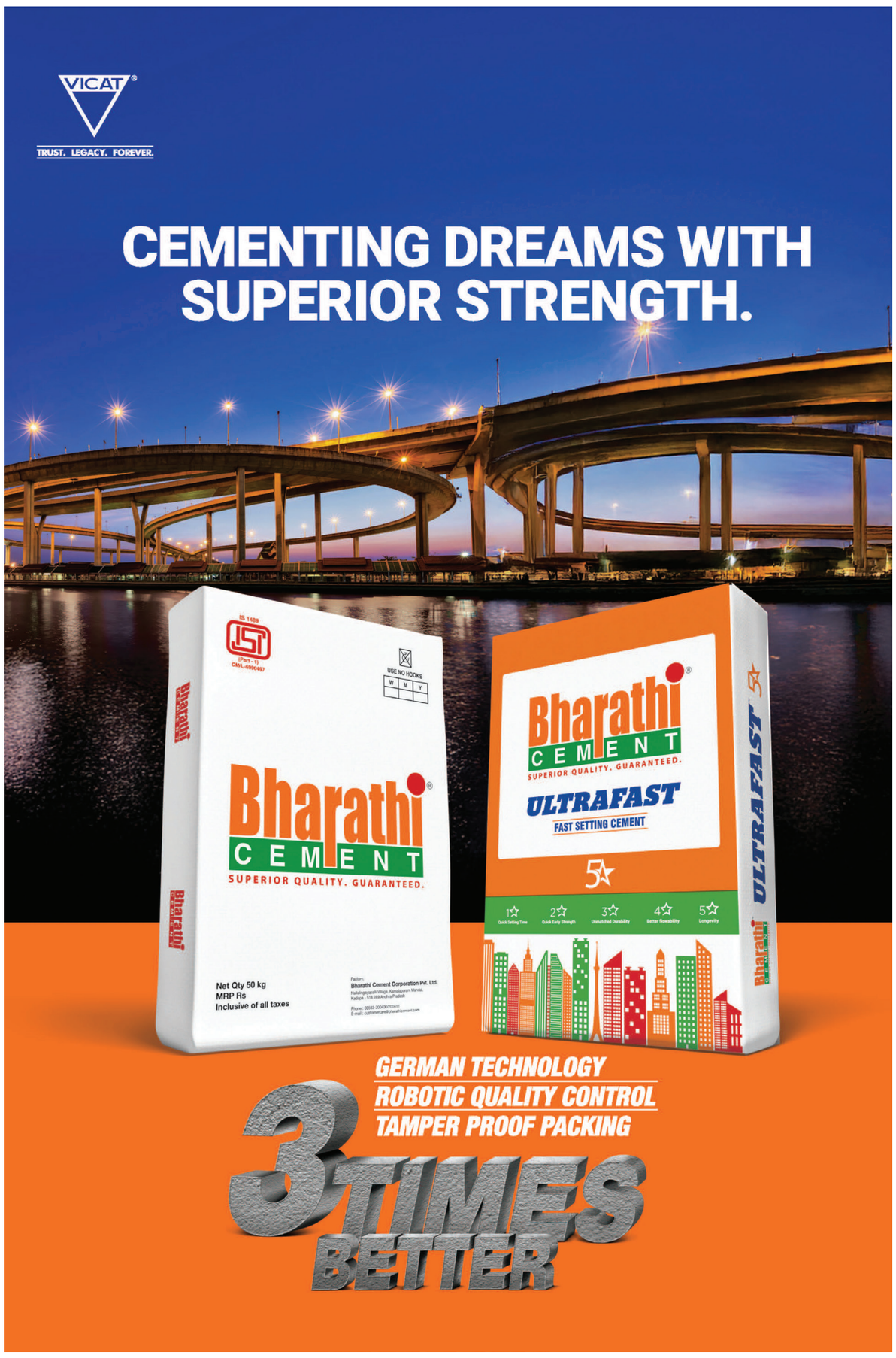


The State government intends to organise the upcoming Godavari Pushkaralu on the lines of the Kumbh Mela, the Minister said at a meeting of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Godavari Pushkaralu-2027 held at the Assembly Committee Hall on Friday.

Mr. Sridhar Babu stressed the need for a detailed field-level assessment of arrangements made during the previous Pushkaralu and directed officials to ensure that the challenges faced then were not repeated. Arrangements should be planned based on the expected pilgrim footfall at each location, he said.

Ministers Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Seethakka, Ponnam Prabhakar, Vivek Venkataswamy and Adluri Laxman Kumar participated in the meeting.

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KTR appears before ACB court in Formula E-race case



Hyderabad, Sept.18: BRS working president and former minister K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) appeared before the Nampally ACB Special Court on Thursday in connection with the Formula E-race case.

KTR, along with three other accused — senior IAS officer Arvind Kumar, HMDA Chief Engineer B.L.N. Reddy and sports consultant Kiran Malleswar Rao — appeared before the court. The court subsequently adjourned the matter to October 30 for further hearing.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has raised objections to the transfer of around Rs. 55 crore by the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) in connection with the conduct of the Formula E-race. The agency has alleged that the mandatory approvals and prescribed financial procedures were not followed.

The court had issued summons to the accused after taking cognisance of the charge sheet filed by the ACB. KTR had remained absent from the previous hearing, citing personal reasons. As the matter was adjourned to Thursday, he appeared before the court.

22-A Issues to Be Resolved on a Fast-Track Basis

High-Level Committee Constituted
Regularisation under GO 118 to Begin from the 19th
Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy in Assembly



HYDERABAD, SEP 18

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy announced in the Legislative Assembly on Friday that a high-level committee had been constituted to resolve all issues related to Section 22-A on a fast-track basis, in accordance with the announcement made by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy in the Assembly.

He said that G.O.Rt.No.564 had been issued in this regard. CCLA D.S. Lokesh Kumar will serve as the chairman of the committee, while Law Secretary Papi Reddy and Inspector General of Stamps and Registration Rajiv Gandhi Hanumanthu will be its members. The Minister said that, in accordance with the promise made by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy when he was the Malkajgiri MP to resolve the

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Region-Specific Roadmap Sought to Tackle Farm Challenges

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has called for a region-specific roadmap and stronger Centre-State coordination to tackle agricultural challenges in southern India, while Telangana has stepped up preparations to mitigate the impact of El Niño, deficient rainfall and water shortages on farmers.

SPECIAL 02

After Gachibowli Collapse, Gopanpally Building Tilts

A four-storey building on a tiny 50-square-yard plot suddenly leaned dangerously in NTR Nagar, forcing evacuations and reigniting fears of another avoidable disaster in Hyderabad.

Medchal-Malkajgiri, September 18: Hyderabad has been jolted once again by a stark warning sign of its worsening building safety crisis. A four-storey residential structure in Gopanpally's NTR Nagar developed a sudden and dangerous tilt on Friday, triggering panic, rapid evacuations and a fresh wave of anger over unsafe construction practices in the city. Residents fled as civic teams rushed to the spot and cordoned off the area to prevent a possible tragedy. The building, reportedly raised on just 50 square yards, now stands as a grim symbol of how reckless construction, weak oversight and cramped urban plotting can turn a housing block into a potential death trap overnight. The alarm in Gopanpally has landed barely weeks after the deadly collapse of an illegal seven-storey building in nearby Gachibowli's Anjaiah Nagar, where two lives were lost. That collapse exposed deep cracks in enforcement, accountability and construction monitoring. The latest incident suggests those warnings were not heeded.

Engineering teams are now inspecting the tilted structure to determine whether foundation failure, structural weakness or unauthorized alterations caused the tilt. But for residents, the question is no longer technical alone — it is whether Hyderabad is watching unsafe buildings rise until they fail in public. Hyderabad's Unsafe Construction Crisis Deepens: Gopanpally Tilt Sends Fresh Shockwaves After Gachibowli Collapse

A four-storey building on a tiny 50-square-yard plot suddenly leaned dangerously in NTR Nagar, forcing evacuations and reigniting fears of another avoidable disaster in Hyderabad. The repeated emergence of such incidents in fast-growing localities is a disturbing signal. Every evacuation may prevent a catastrophe, but each new scare also exposes the same unresolved failure: unsafe buildings are being allowed to stand until they become emergencies.



Grand Ganesh Immersion Held at Kapra Press Club

Five-day devotional celebrations conclude; Ganesh laddu fetches RS. 12,811 in auction

KAPRA, SEPTEMBER 18



The immersion ceremony of the five-foot eco-friendly clay idol of Lord Ganesha, worshipped with devotion for five days at the Kapra Press Club, was held grandly on Friday. On the fifth day, special prayers and farewell rituals were performed in the morning, following which the idol was taken in a procession to Kapra Lake for immersion.

The auction conducted on the occasion attracted the devotees and members of the club. The sacred laddu was won by Press Club Vice-President Govindakuntla Anjaneyulu for ₹12,811. The Lord's shawl and dhoti were auctioned for ₹916 and purchased by club member Gangi Krishna, while three flower garlands were secured by Press Club Advisor Belide Ashok for ₹316.

After the farewell prayers, the idol was placed on a specially decorated vehicle and taken in a grand procession to Kapra Lake. The procession continued amid traditional music, drums and devotional chants, with devotees participating enthusiastically and chanting the name of Lord Ganesha.

The five-day Ganesh Navaratri celebrations organised by the Kapra Press Club concluded with the immersion ceremony in a spiritual and devotional atmosphere.

Press Club President Merugu Chandra Mohan, Advisors Belide Ashok and former President Shanigaram Ashok, Patel Narasimha, former Treasurer Yata Raju, General Secretary Muthyam Mukesh Goud, Vice-Presidents Yavapuram Ravi, Govindakuntla Anjaneyulu and Dommati Kiran Kumar, Treasurer Ramachandra Murthy, Organising Secretary O. Narasimha, Executive Committee members Thodupunuru Balakrishna, Naresh Naai, Palugula Pawan, Sambashivudu and others participated in the programme.

Region-Specific Roadmap Sought to Tackle Farm Challenges

HYDERABAD, SEPT. 18

Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has called for closer Centre-State coordination and region-specific strategies to address agricultural challenges in southern India, as Telangana steps up preparations to mitigate the impact of El Niño and deficient rainfall on farmers.

Addressing the Southern Regional Agriculture Conference in Hyderabad on Friday, Chouhan said the focus should be on improving farmers' livelihoods, strengthening food and nutritional security and creating employment opportunities through agriculture. He stressed the need for strategies suited to the diverse agro-climatic conditions of southern States and urged governments to adopt successful practices from different regions while developing a common roadmap.

Chouhan said emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and robotics would transform several sectors, but agriculture would remain indispensable. He described farmers as the country's "Annadatas" and said ensuring food security, improving farm incomes and strengthening nutrition must remain priorities.

He highlighted the southern States' potential in horticulture and high-value crops such as spices, coffee, cashew and cocoa. He also urged States to review outdated laws and procedures that create difficulties for farmers and citizens, stressing that rules should serve people rather than become obstacles.

Chouhan said coconut exports had risen from ₹4,349 crore to ₹7,038 crore in a year, an increase of 62 per cent, and asked southern States to make use of the new coconut promotion scheme announced in the Union Budget. He also called for phased rejuvenation of ageing coconut plantations and preparations for schemes promoting cashew and cocoa.

With India entering into Free Trade Agreements with various countries, the Minister urged States to identify agricultural products with demand in international markets and help farmers meet global quality standards so that domestic production could be aligned with export opportunities.

Against this backdrop, Telangana Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy said the State government was preparing measures to reduce the impact of El Niño and protect farmers amid the water crisis. Participating in a short-duration discussion on El Niño in the Legislative Assembly, he said safeguarding drinking water supplies, protecting standing crops and securing Telangana's rightful share of river waters were the government's priorities.

Uttam said the State's water crisis had been compounded by adverse weather conditions and, according to the government, the legacy of unfinished projects, defective construction and poor water management under the previous BRS regime. He, however, said the government would not use the situation as an excuse to avoid responsibility.

"Even if we cannot prevent El Niño, the government is preparing in advance to reduce its impact. It is the responsibility of a responsive government," he said.

The Agriculture and Irrigation Departments have been placed on alert following warnings from international weather agencies, while farmers are being informed about the possibility of deficient rainfall, irrigation availability and suitable crop choices. Uttam said the southwest monsoon took nearly 15 days to cover all 33 districts and rainfall remained uneven across Telangana.

District-level irrigation advisory meetings and the weekly 'Rythu Nestham' programme are being used to keep farmers informed about water availability and encourage the cultivation of less water-intensive crops.

Rainfall Deficit: Revanth Seeks Central Aid

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arrangements to ensure that there was no shortage of drinking water or electricity. The Chief Minister said farmers were being encouraged to take up alternative crops in view of the El Niño conditions and sought the Centre's support to promote crop diversification.

He said the State government was setting up an international-standard fruits and vegetables market spread over 250 acres to promote the cultivation and marketing of alternative crops.

Referring to the Centre's allocation of two lakh houses to Telangana in the first phase under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), Revanth Reddy thanked the Union Minister for the support. He recalled that he had submitted a memorandum to Chouhan in Delhi in July, seeking sanction of houses for 11,56,915 eligible rural families in the State.

The Chief Minister requested the Union Minister to allocate the remaining 9.56 lakh houses to Telangana as per the State's requirement.

Revanth Reddy also explained that Telangana was supplying fine rice to poor families through ration shops, describing it as a measure not being implemented elsewhere in the country.

He said the State government was encouraging farmers to cultivate fine varieties of paddy by providing a bonus of Rs. 500 per quintal.

KALOJI REMEMBERED AS PEOPLE'S POET

Hyderabad, Sept.18: Padma Vibhushan Kaloji Narayana Rao was remembered as a people's poet, social reformer and a towering figure in Telangana's public life at a memorial lecture organised by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU) here on Friday.

Speaking at the Kaloji Narayana Rao memorial lecture organised to mark his 112th birth anniversary, BRAOU Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ghanta Chakrapani said Kaloji identified himself with the problems of ordinary people and devoted his life to the betterment of society.

"Kaloji adopted the language spoken by ordinary people and wrote in it," Chakrapani said, adding that his writings gave people the courage to question injustice. His thoughts, he said, continued to inspire contemporary society.

Eminent journalist and former Andhra Jyothi editor Dr. K. Srinivas delivered the keynote lecture on "Telangana Literature: The People's Struggle". He said Kaloji remained committed to social development and the principles he believed in throughout his life.

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22-A Issues to Be Resolved on a Fast-Track Basis

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regularisation problems faced by several colonies in the LB Nagar constituency, a memorandum had been issued on Friday for the regularisation of 9,700 plots in the LB Nagar constituency of Rangareddy district under GO 118.

He said the regularisation process in the area would commence from Saturday under the government order and that it would be a continuous process. The government would work with sincerity until the issue was completely resolved, he added.

The Minister appealed to homeowners who had purchased plots in the area decades ago, constructed houses and had been residing there to approach the local authorities and get their properties regularised in accordance with the rules under GO 118. Regarding the regularisation of house sites in the Singareni region, he said that GO 76 had been issued during the tenure of the late Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy. Following the order, a meeting would be held on Saturday under the leadership of Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka with MLAs from the Singareni region, after which the regularisation process would be initiated.

He also announced that a decision would be taken within the next one or two days on removing from 22-A those areas that are listed under Section 22-A in revenue records but where layouts were developed with approvals from HMDA, DTCP and GHMC. The Minister further announced in the Assembly that decisions would be taken within a month on the 10–12 issues concerning 22-A that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had raised in the Assembly, thereby providing relief to 22-A applicants.

Godavari Pushkaralu works to be completed by April: Sridhar Babu

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The Cabinet Sub-Committee reviewed preparations for the Pushkaralu, including development works at prominent temples, construction of bathing ghats, transportation, infrastructure and other arrangements.

Mr. Sridhar Babu said special officers had been appointed for each district to ensure coordination among departments. Command and Control Centres equipped with advanced technology are also being established at Tier-1 locations expected to witness heavy pilgrim movement.

He said ghat-wise field-level studies had been conducted in coordination with the Collectors to identify additional requirements and minimise inconvenience to devotees.

The Minister directed officials to prioritise works that could be completed before the commencement of the Pushkaralu and set specific dweadlines based on ground realities. An integrated dashboard should also be made operational immediately to enable regular monitoring of the progress of various works, he said.

Mr. Sridhar Babu directed officials to address any shortage of engineers by deputing personnel from the Roads and Buildings Department and other departments. In view of the possibility of rainfall during the Pushkaralu, officials were also asked to plan alternative arrangements and contingency measures in advance.

He directed the concerned officials to take immediate steps for the construction of a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Bhadrachalam. Mr. Sridhar Babu said Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy had assured that adequate funds would be provided and stressed that there should be no compromise either on the arrangements for the Pushkaralu or on the quality of the works.

HC Quashes Speaker's Order, Disqualifies Nagender

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hearing the disqualification petitions. The Speaker's office challenged the order, following which a Division Bench on November 27, 2024, set aside the single-judge order.

The BRS then approached the Supreme Court. On July 31, 2025, the apex court set aside the Division Bench order and directed the Speaker to adjudicate the disqualification petitions within three months.

The Speaker subsequently dismissed the disqualification petitions concerning all 10 MLAs. The BRS challenged the orders in the High Court in respect of nine MLAs. It did not file a petition against Gudem Mahipal Reddy of Patancheru. Mr. Maheshwar Reddy separately challenged the Speaker's order concerning Mr. Nagender. The High Court reserved its judgment in the Nagender case on August 21, while arguments continued in the petitions concerning the other eight MLAs.

UoH GETS Rs.4.98-CR ICMR GRANT FOR AI-POWERED PCOS BLOOD TEST

Hyderabad, Sept.18: Researchers from the School of Life Sciences at the University of Hyderabad (UoH) have secured a Rs.4.98 crore ICMR grant for a four-year project aimed at developing an affordable, non-invasive blood test for Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS).



The project, sanctioned under the ICMR Nischayak Anveshan Extramural Grants 2026 programme, seeks to combine single-cell transcriptomics, reproductive biology and artificial intelligence to identify molecular subtypes of PCOS and potentially help doctors tailor fertility treatment.

The project officially commenced on September 16, following the ICMR's sanction on September 1. An initial Rs.1.52 crore has been allocated for the first year.

The UoH-led team plans to study molecular signatures in circulating immune cells in blood and use machine-learning models to determine whether these signatures can reflect changes associated with the ovarian follicular environment.

The researchers aim to develop a made-in-India diagnostic platform costing less than Rs.2,000, subject to successful validation and eventual development. The proposed test is intended to classify patients into molecular PCOS endotypes and could potentially help clinicians assess treatment strategies before costly fertility procedures such as IVF.

The project also seeks to create India's first single-cell transcriptomic atlas of PCOS, generating a population-specific genomic resource for future research into the disorder, drug discovery and reproductive medicine.

Prof Suresh Yenugu, Department of Animal Biology, School of Life Sciences, is the Principal Investigator. Dr. Manjari Kiran from the Department of Systems and Computational Biology is the Co-Investigator, while Dr. Sree Durga Patchava, Head of Reproductive Medicine at Virinchi Hospitals, Hyderabad, serves as the Clinical Co-Investigator.

The project is expected to strengthen UoH's research infrastructure through the addition of a high-performance GPU computing workstation and a real-time PCR system, besides creating research positions for young scientists.

The researchers say the initiative could contribute to more affordable and population-specific approaches to PCOS diagnosis and reproductive care, although the proposed diagnostic platform will require research, validation and regulatory evaluation before it can be used routinely in clinical practice.

Mamata... Helplessness in the Very Place..

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issued interim orders barring both sides from using the original TMC name and symbol until the by-elections scheduled for October 6. The Mamata faction was allotted the name 'Mamata All India Trinamool Congress' along with the 'Football Player' symbol, while the rival faction was allotted the name 'Democratic Trinamool Congress' with the 'Envelope' symbol. A final decision is still pending.

At the same time, Mamata faced another symbolic challenge in Nandigram. The Mamata faction withdrew its candidate there and announced its support for the Congress candidate. The development has attracted attention because it occurred in Nandigram, which once played a crucial role in Mamata's political journey.

Mamata strongly opposed the Election Commission's decision regarding the party's name and symbol. She declared that she would fight politically, democratically, and legally to protect the identity of the party she had built through nearly three decades of political struggle.

Now there is one key question: How will Mamata maintain her political hold without the traditional symbol and amid internal divisions within the party? The by-elections, the new symbol, and the final decision on the party's identity have all become crucial tests for her future political journey.

TGHRC Recommends Rs. 5 Lakh Compensation to Parents of Three-Year-Old Child Killed in Stray Dog Attack

HYDERABAD

The Telangana Human Rights Commission (TGHRC), headed by Dr. Justice Shameem Akther, Hon'ble Chairperson, passed orders today in HRC No. 3568 of 2025, recommending compensation of Rs. 5,00,000/- (Rupees Five Lakhs only) to the parents of a three-year-old boy, Master Nithun Powar, who died after being attacked by a pack of stray dogs at Rupla Thanda Village, Shivampet Mandal, Medak District, on 18.07.2025.

The Commission had taken suo-motu cognizance based on news reports published in various daily newspapers, namely Eenadu, Disha Daily, Andhra Jyothi and India Today/Telangana Today, highlighting the death of a three-year-old child in a fatal stray-dog attack on 18.07.2025, just a day after his birthday.

During the proceedings, the Commission called for a comprehensive report from the Government regarding deaths caused by stray-dog bites or attacks in Telangana during the period from 2020 to 2025. The report submitted by the Commissioner, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Department, confirmed the death of the child due to an attack by a pack of stray dogs.

During the enquiry, the parents of the deceased child, Mr. Jarpula Hobya and Mrs. Jarpula Lavanya, appeared before the Commission. The Commission also examined the medical records produced by the Area Hospital, Narsapur. The medical records recorded that the child was brought dead to the casualty at 6:10 P.M. on 18.07.2025, and that his death was due to multiple dog bites. The death was declared at 6:15 P.M.

The Commission observed that the death of a three-year-old child due to stray-dog bites was a matter of grave concern. It noted that several incidents of stray-dog attacks resulting in serious injuries and loss of human lives had come to its notice and emphasized the urgent need for effective, coordinated and sustained preventive measures by the Government and local authorities to control the stray-dog menace.

The Commission also referred to the recent directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India concerning the State's constitutional obligation under Article 21 to protect the life and safety of citizens and to take effective preventive measures against threats arising from stray-dog attacks.

The Commission observed that, in the instant case, there were grave lapses, omissions and commissions on the part of the concerned local body and authorities responsible for preventing such incidents, particularly the Panchayat Raj authorities of Medak District. It further observed that proper and timely preventive measures could have helped avert the incident.

Considering the age of the deceased child, the circumstances of his death, and the mental trauma, agony and suffering caused to his parents, the Commission held that the parents were entitled to reasonable monetary compensation as a measure of public law remedy. Accordingly, exercising its powers under Section 18 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, the Commission recommended as follows:

1. The Chief Secretary to Government, Government of Telangana, shall pay Rs. 5,00,000/- as compensation to Mr. Jarpula Hobya and Mrs. Jarpula Lavanya, parents of the deceased child, within three months from the date of receipt of the order.

2. The Collector and District Magistrate, Medak District, shall pursue the matter with the Government regarding sanction of the compensation and disburse the same to the parents. The concerned authorities have been directed to comply with the recommendations and submit a compliance report to the Commission. With the above recommendation, the complaint has been disposed of.

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR
DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL & ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS
(Administrative Reforms Division)

NOTIFICATION

No ADM2-201/1/2026-AR-AR: Applications are invited from eligible candidates for the appointment to the post of State Chief Information Commissioner as under.

Sl. No.	Position	Number of Position
1.	State Chief Information Commissioner	1 (one)

2. **A. Eligibility condition:**
As provided under Section 15(5) and 15(6) of the Right to Information Act, 2005 as detailed below:
(1) The State Chief Information Commissioner shall be persons of eminence in the public life with wide knowledge and experience in law, science and technology. social service, management, journalism, mass media or administration and governance.
(ii) The State Chief Information Commissioner shall not be a Member of Parliament or Member of the Legislature of any State or Union Territory, as the case may be, or hold any other office of profit or connected with any political party or carrying on any business or pursuing any profession
B. Other essential qualification:
(i) The person should be a Citizen of India.
(ii) The person should not be of unsound mind, insolvent or convicted for any crime.
3. **Age:** Person who have attained the age of 65 years shall not be eligible for appointment.
4. **Terms of Office:** Under section 16 (1) of the RTI Act, 2005 read with Section 12 of the Right to Information Rules, 2019 (notified vide Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Deptt. Of Personnel & Training No. G.S.R. 810 (E) dated 24th October, 2019):-
(i) The State Chief Information Commissioner shall hold office for a period of 3 (three) years from the date on which he enters upon his office.
Provided that no State Chief Information Commissioner shall hold office as such after he has attained the age of 65 (sixty-five) years.
5. **General conditions for Recruitment:**
(i) Candidates must fulfil the qualification and experience on the date of application. Education qualification must have been obtained from recognised University/Institute/Board/College only.
(ii) Selection/appointment will be subject to fulfilment of eligibility conditions, experiences etc., as also to verification of testimonials, antecedents and past service.
6. The salary, allowances and other terms and conditions of service of the State Chief Information Commissioner shall be as per the Right to Information Act, 2005 read with Right to Information (Term of office, Salaries, Allowances and Other Terms and Conditions of Service of State Chief Information Commissioner in the State Information Commission) Rules, 2019.
7. Persons fulfilling the criteria and interested for appointment to the above post may send their particulars in the prescribed Proforma, by post or by hand to Under Secretary (AR), Room No. 213, 3rd Floor, North Block, New Secretariat, Imphal West, Manipur-795002 or through e-mail to darmanipur@gmail.com. Prescribed Proforma may be obtained from the office of the Section (AR), New Secretariat, 3rd Floor, North Block, Imphal West or download from the website www.manipur.gov.in.
Persons serving under the State/Central Government or any other Organisation, should send their particulars through proper channel (Administrative Ministry/ Department of State- UT/Central Government or the Controlling Officer).
8. Last date of receipt of application: 5 p.m. of 15th October, 2026.

Imphal,
16th September, 2026

(K.H. Leiyaphy Rita)
Joint Secretary (AR)
Government of Manipur

GITAM Scholar Awarded Ph.D. in Mathematics

HYDERABAD



GITAM Deemed to be University proudly congratulates Dr. Kandula Rajani on being awarded a Ph.D. in Mathematics for her pioneering research titled "Contribution to Theory of Rough Sets in Near Algebras," under the guidance of Dr. P. Narasimha Swamy, Assistant Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, GITAM School of Science.

Dr. Rajani's research advances the study of rough set theory and near algebraic structures in addressing uncertainty and incomplete information. Her work introduces the concept of rough near algebras and examines rough ideals, rough substructures, and their algebraic properties and interrelationships, providing a framework for exploring algebraic structures under uncertainty.

Her significant research contributions reflect her academic excellence and commitment to advancing mathematical knowledge, with potential applications in allied areas.

Prof. D. S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor; D.V.V.S.R. Varma, Resident Director; Dr. M. Reza, Director, School of Science; and Dr. Jadav Ganesh, Head, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, congratulated Dr. Rajani on this distinguished academic achievement and her valuable contribution to the field of mathematics.

Telangana Liberation day Celebrations at the parade Grounds





HYDERABAD

On 17.09.2026, celebrations were held at the Parade Grounds in Secunderabad to mark Telangana Liberation Day. Vice President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan attended the event as the chief guest. Telangana Governor Shri Shiv Prasad Shukla, Union Ministers Shri Gajendra Singh, Shri Kishan Reddy, and Shri Bandi Sanjay Kumar, and MP Shri Eatala Rajender addressed the gathering from the stage. Telangana BJP State Vice President Smt. Jaya Shri, BJP National Council Member Smt. Geetha Murthy, Medchal–Malkajgiri SC President Shri Sudhakar, along with other leaders and members of the public, participated in the programme.

Union Ministers Gajendra Singh and Kishan Reddy said that the BJP-led Central Government has been conducting these celebrations since 2022. Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar spoke passionately, saying that the BJP would emerge victorious in the state in the upcoming elections and alleging that, at yesterday's meeting, the current Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had supported the Razakars, despite having forgotten the incidents in which the Razakars humiliated and sexually assaulted women. He stated that this would not continue for long and that the saffron flag would henceforth fly across Telangana. Sanjay further said that the government would conduct an official programme on September 17 from then on.

Hamleys Unveils Its Flagship Jubilee Hills Store in Hyderabad

A new destination for play, discovery and imagination in the heart of Hyderabad

HYDERABAD

Hamleys, the world's oldest and one of its most iconic toy retailers, has opened its flagship Jubilee Hills store — the brand's most expansive destination in Hyderabad and its 10th store in the city. Spread across 10,000 sq. ft. and three storeys, the new flagship brings together an expansive world of toys, games, gifting and play for children, families and toy enthusiasts.

The store brings the theatre of Hamleys to life, with the iconic Hamleys family including the Toy Soldier, Male and Female Pirates, Englishman and Ragdoll, alongside the much-loved Hamley and Hattie. With 10,000+ toys, games and gifting options, the flagship is designed to offer discovery and play at every turn. A dedicated play area is also set to open in November, further enhancing the experience.

To celebrate the launch, Hamleys hosted an exclusive Grand Opening on 18th September from 6:30 PM onwards, welcoming top customers, influencers, creators, media and invited guests. The evening brought the store alive with My Little Pony, PJ Masks and the entire Hamleys family, alongside special DIY activities, F&B experiences and interactive engagements curated for guests.

The Jubilee Hills flagship reinforces Hamleys' focus on Hyderabad as a key market and its ambition to create destinations that go beyond shopping to deliver memorable experiences centred around play, discovery and imagination.

About Hamleys

Founded in London in 1760, Hamleys is the world's oldest and one of its most iconic toy retailers. The brand is renowned for creating magical and immersive play experiences for children and families through its curated assortment of global and exclusive toys, interactive demonstrations and engaging in-store experiences that bring play to life.

In India, Hamleys is operated by Reliance Retail and has established itself as the country's leading premium toy retailer, with a strong omnichannel presence. Hamleys currently operates over 130 stores across 40 cities in India.

NRI Commission sought to protect interests of Telangana NRIs

HYDERABAD

Government Whip and MLC Addanki Dayakar and TPCC Vice-President Hanumandla Jhansi Reddy have urged Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to establish a dedicated Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Commission in Telangana.

The leaders submitted a representation to the Chief Minister, stating that a permanent commission would provide a single-window mechanism to address the grievances and concerns of Telangana citizens living abroad.

They highlighted the contributions of Telangana NRIs in various countries, including the US, Gulf nations, Europe, Australia and Canada, through investments, remittances, technology transfer, philanthropy, education and healthcare.

According to the representation, NRIs and their families frequently face problems involving property and land disputes, documentation, fraudulent transactions, legal assistance and emergencies involving family members in India.



Geetha Murthy lit an auspicious lamp for Modi's birthday



HYDERABAD

On 17.09.2026, on the occasion of Narendra Modi's birthday, BJP National Council Member and former State President of the Mahila Morcha Geetha Murthy lit an auspicious lamp in his name. Apartment owners Vamsi, Senthil, Jaggarau, Vinod, Santoshi Prashanth, Swarna Latha Reddy, Raji Reddy, Mallesh, Satish, and others also participated. They lit lamps while raising slogans of "Long live Modi." The entire programme, held at Geetha Murthy's residence, was conducted in a cheerful and festive atmosphere.

SHORT TAKES

A Birthday Full of Love, Cake & Blessings for Gandam Raju



***KUKATPALLY**: The KPHB Community Hall witnessed a warm and memorable birthday celebration for Gandam Raju, the senior Congress Party leader and the contested corporator candidate from the KPHB division. The event was organized with great enthusiasm and respect, bringing together leaders, activists, and well-wishers in a spirit of joy and heartfelt wishes. The celebration was graced by the chief guest, TPCC Vice-President, Kamma Corporation Chairperson and Kukatpally Congress Party In-charge Bandi Ramesh. Along with Gandam Raju, Bandi Ramesh cut the cake and garlanded him, showering blessings and congratulating him on his special day. Speaking on the occasion, they wished Gandam Raju good health, long life, and happiness filled with peace and prosperity. Later, Bandi Ramesh addressed the gathering and said that under the leadership of Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the Congress government is working sincerely for public welfare across the state. He urged everyone to join hands to further strengthen the Congress party in the Kukatpally constituency. He also encouraged the leaders and activists to continue supporting the party's mission and to stand together in service of the people.*

TGS call to Graduates

***HYDERABAD**: Telangana Gangaputra Sangham has called upon the graduates of the caste in the Nalgonda-Khammam-Warangal district s to ensure that their names are included in the voters list. Sangham state secretary T Rajesh Khanna stated in a media statement today that as the Election Commission has announced the election schedule for the Graduates MLC election from the three districts, all the Gangaputra graduates are required to enroll their names without fail. He said the election Commission has made it clear that even those whose names are there in the existing electoral rolls have to apply afresh in Form-18, it is necessary for the graduates to get their names included in the voters list by applying afresh, along with the necessary documents. He appealed to all the graduates to take interest in getting their names included in the list and exercise their franchise without fail.*

Conspiracy Underway to Understate the Population of BC Communities

- **BC sub-castes must also be included in the caste census conducted by the Centre**
- **There must be a separate column specifically for caste**
- **Four months remain for the caste census; Centre should take a decision immediately**
- **Eradication of caste discrimination is possible only when our mindset changes**
- **Telangana Rakshana Sena Chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha**





HYDERABAD

Telangana Rakshana Sena chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha alleged that the Central Government was engaging in a political conspiracy to understate the population of BC communities and prevent them from fighting collectively for their rights. She said attempts were being made to avoid showing OBCs in the census according to individual castes and instead divide the weaker sections into groups of castes, thereby preventing united struggles. Kavitha participated in the "Politics Beyond Caste" conference organised by the United Forum for SC, ST Employees and Sakala Jana Seva Sansthan at a hotel in Banjara Hills on Friday.

Speaking on the occasion, she urged the Centre to take measures to ensure there was no confusion regarding the BC population in the caste census it is undertaking. She said it would not be acceptable if the Centre merely introduced a caste column and considered the matter closed.

She demanded that the list of castes existing in every state be uploaded accurately and that sub-castes also be included in the enumeration. Otherwise, she warned, there was a danger that the BC population could appear lower than it actually is. She pointed out that the same caste has different statuses in different states across the country. To resolve this issue, she said, BC sub-castes must also be included in the enumeration. Otherwise, people belonging to sub-castes could be denied justice, and there was a risk that they might not be properly represented in the census as separate caste groups.

She said it was already known that people belonging to sub-castes among the 57 SC and ST sub-castes were not receiving justice. Despite this, she said, it would be inappropriate to spend thousands of crores of rupees on the BC caste census without providing a proper solution to the issue.

Kavitha alleged that the state government had already understated the BC population in the name of caste enumeration. She said that while people had hoped the caste census conducted by the Centre would resolve the issue, the Centre was instead making the problem more complicated. She noted that there were another four months before the caste census and urged the Centre to focus on resolving the issue within that period.

Caste Discrimination Is Deeply Rooted in Our DNA

Kavitha expressed anguish that caste discrimination was deeply rooted in society and even people holding positions such as the President and Speaker were subjected to caste discrimination. She said the complex issue required multi-dimensional solutions.

She said the issue had two perspectives — that of the upper caste and that of the victim — and that a proper solution could be found only by looking at the issue from the victim's perspective.

Referring to the views expressed by Maroju Veeranna, she said there was a need to empower every caste. Along with political power, the economic condition of different communities should also be improved, she said, adding that parties in power should take responsibility for this.

She stated that irrespective of the number of legal measures introduced, caste discrimination could be eradicated only when there was a change in people's mindset.

Women Must Be Paid Equal Wages as Men

Kavitha expressed concern over wage disparities faced by women despite them performing the same work as men. She said that although laws providing for equal pay for equal work exist, wage discrimination against women continues even in 2026. She tweeted about the issue on X on Friday on the occasion of International Equal Pay Day. She said genuine progress would be possible only when women's labour was given equal value.



Take Congress Development and Welfare Programmes to the People: Rajender Rao

- **Newly appointed Congress spokesperson Anantha Ramesh meets Karimnagar Assembly constituency in-charge**

KARIMNAGAR

Congress Party Karimnagar Assembly constituency in-charge Velichala Rajender Rao called upon party leaders and workers to take the development and welfare programmes being implemented by the Congress government to a wider section of the people.

Newly appointed Karimnagar District Congress Party official spokesperson Anantha Ramesh met Rajender Rao at his residence on Friday and sought his blessings after being appointed to the new responsibility. Rajender Rao congratulated Ramesh on his appointment and advised him to discharge the responsibility entrusted to him by the party effectively. He asked Ramesh to explain the government's welfare and development initiatives to the people and create greater awareness about the programmes being implemented for their benefit.

Rajender Rao also advised him to present facts before the people in response to what he described as misinformation being spread by opposition parties. He stressed the need for concerted efforts to further strengthen the Congress organisation at the grassroots level.

Ramesh thanked Rajender Rao for his support in his appointment as the District Congress Party official spokesperson. He said he would work with dedication to uphold the confidence reposed in him by the party and would actively participate in party programmes and organisational activities.

Let's Donate Organs and Blood Voluntarily



- **Lion Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy, Social Activist, Writer**

KARIMNAGAR

Renowned poet, writer and social activist Lion Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy said that there is an opportunity to donate many organs of our body while we are still alive, and when the opportunity arises, we should take advantage of it and acquire the fortune of donating our organs for the sake of life of someone who is in need. Today, on the occasion of Chairman Prabhu Kishore's birthday, a blood donation camp organized by the members of the Satavahana Lions Club and led by the in-charge of the Jeevan Dhara Blood Bank Lion Kiran and Dr Madhusudhan Reddy inaugurated the blood donation camp as the chief guest at the premises of Rekurthi Varun Motors. Speaking on the occasion, he said that healthy people who are alive can donate blood, liver, pancreas, intestines, kidneys, tissues, bone marrow, etc. He also said that eyes can also be donated after they have lost their lives. He advised that every young person should be ready to donate blood at least two or three times a year. Lion Kiran, manager of Jeevan Dhara Blood Bank, said that today many patients are dying due to not receiving blood on time and the shortage of donors has become a curse for young India. Varun Motors managers, Satavahana Lions M Mahender, N Venugopal, K Rajender Reddy, K Satyam, P Surender and others participated in this program. 45 people voluntarily donated blood in this blood donation camp. On this occasion, the in-charge of Jeevan Dhara Blood Bank, under the auspices of Satavahana Lions Club, honored Lion N Kiran.

Students Should Use Their Skills to Address Social Problems: Pro-Chancellor, MRDUH

HYDERABAD



Students should utilise their intellectual abilities, skills and creativity to find solutions to social problems, said Malla Reddy (MR) Deemed to be University (MRDU) Vice-Chancellor Prof. P. Ravinder Reddy.

He was speaking after inaugurating Vishesh 2K26, a two-day national-level student project expo, at the MRDU campus in Maisammaguda village under Gundlapochampally Municipality , on Friday.

Prof. P. Ravinder Reddy said that Vishesh 2K26 provided an excellent platform for students to showcase their talent, creativity, innovation and out-of-the-box thinking. He said participation in project expos of this nature would help students learn teamwork while also enabling them to build meaningful connections with students from different backgrounds.

MRDU Pro-Chancellor Smt. Shalini Mahender Reddy visited the project displays and interacted with the participating students, encouraging them in their innovative efforts. Her visit added further significance to the event.

He said the expo offered a particularly valuable opportunity for first-year students. He encouraged them to observe the projects developed by senior students, draw inspiration from them and work towards developing innovative projects for next year's competitions.

The Vice-Chancellor urged students to carefully consider the social impact of their projects while selecting project topics and ensure that their ideas contribute towards addressing at least one social problem.

MRDU Registrar Prof. Mandala Sreenivas and Dean Dr. S. Udaya Bhaskar , speaking on the occasion, advised students to provide comprehensive explanations of their projects to visiting students and faculty members. They said that questions and feedback from visitors could help students identify areas for improvement and further strengthen their projects.

They said the projects showcased at the expo would be evaluated in *two stages. In the first stage, a panel of faculty members would visit and assess each project. In the second stage, angel investors would visit the projects and identify those with commercial potential, with selected projects having the opportunity to attract investment.

According to Vishesh 2K26 Programme Coordinator Dr. Selywn Babu, the national-level expo has attracted significant interest from students, with around 5000+ students showcasing their projects.

Urban Infrastructure for Growing Cities is a Major Challenge for Municipal Officials

- **MAUD Secretary Dr.TK Sridevi**

HYDERABAD





The National Institute of Urban Management (NIUM) organized a orientation workshop on Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) for Municipal Commissioners, Municipal Engineers and Environmental Engineers from 66 municipalities and municipal corporations in the State, in coordination with the HUDCO, Hyderabad. Addressing the gathering, Dr. TK Sreedevi, Secretary stated that Telengana is in forefront in accessing funds under UCF and projects worth Rs.6500 Crores including the Warangal Underground Drainage Project are approved under UCF and are ready for implementation. She further said, there is tentative allocation of Rs.14,500 Crore funding available to the State under the UCF and the ULBs in the State can prepare and present bankable projects for the remaining Budget of Rs.8000 Crores.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. T.K. Sridevi said that the objectives of Viksit Bharat and Telangana Rising are aligned and that municipal officials have the responsibility of developing cities as growth engines and growth hubs through improved urban infrastructure.

She advised the smaller municipalities to come up with viable projects to transform their urban landscape. It is said under Credit Repayment Guarantee Scheme (CRGS), which is a sub scheme of UCF, the smaller municipalities can avail funds up to Rs.20 crores for an each window of 18 moths with 70% or up to Rs.7.00 Crore finance protection.

She said, NIUM and TUFIDC will support the ULBs in preparing the Project Proposals and DPRs.

A one-day workshop on "Urban Challenge Fund – Implementation and Urban Financing" was organised for Municipal Commissioners and Municipal Engineers on Friday, 18 September 2026, at the Engineering Staff College of India (ESCI), Gachibowli, under the aegis of the Telangana Municipal Administration & Urban Development Department and the National Institute of Urban Management (NIUM).

The workshop covered important topics such as "Fundamentals of Bankability of Urban Infrastructure" and "Creditworthiness of Urban Local Bodies", addressed by Vikas Chandra, Director, Deloitte; "Municipal Bonds and Capital Market Financing", presented by Sujatha Sreekumar, Managing Director, Power Tech Infrastructure Company; "Financing Bankable Urban Infrastructure Projects through HUDCO", presented by P. Subhash Reddy, Regional Officer, HUDCO; "Solid Waste Management", addressed by former IAS officer Ravikanth; and "Sustainable Urban Infrastructure", presented by Srinivas Banda, Managing Director, IDC Projects.

Kodad Opens Doors to Jobs for Rural Youth Tomorrow

- **300-plus companies participating**
- **Recruitment drive aims to offer over 3,500 jobs**
- **Common platform facilitated for industry and young jobseekers from five districts**



KODAD

For thousands of rural youngsters whose qualifications have yet to translate into employment, Kodad will become a gateway to opportunity on Saturday. The Mega Job Mela on September 19 aims to bring more than 300 companies and over 3,500 job opportunities within reach of young people from five districts.

Spearheaded by Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, in coordination with Kodad MLA N. Padmavathi Reddy, the recruitment drive seeks to address a persistent gap between educated rural youth and organised-sector employment. The initiative is being organised with support from The Singareni Collieries Company Limited and the Industries Department.

Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly , G Prasad Kumar, Chairman of the Legislative Council, Gutta Sukhender Reddy and Minister for IT and Industries, D. Sridharbabu have been invited on the occasion.

Jobseekers from Suryapet, Nalgonda, Yadadri-Bhongir, Khammam and Bhadradri-Kothagudem districts are being mobilised for the event, which will facilitate direct interaction with employers and interviews under one roof.

Graduates in engineering, pharmacy and management, along with diploma holders and other qualified youngsters, often struggle to identify suitable vacancies, establish contact with employers or travel to Hyderabad for interviews. The Kodad initiative seeks to reduce these barriers by bringing companies closer to prospective employees. The Kodad mela builds on the experience of the employment drive held in Huzurnagar in October 2025, which brought together more than 200 companies and resulted in around 900 selections.

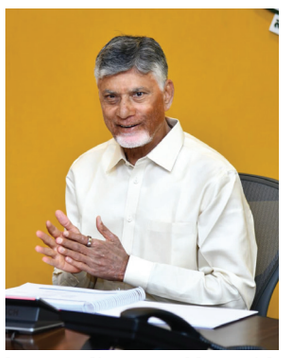
Andhra Investment Promotion Board approves projects worth Rs 526 crores

AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB) on Friday cleared 10 major IT and futuristic technology projects worth over Rs 526 crore. At its meeting presided over by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, the SIPB approved projects entailing a total investment of Rs 526.25 crore, projected to create 8,896 high-quality jobs across the state. The decision marks a significant step in establishing Andhra Pradesh as a premier global hub for Information Technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Quantum Computing, with strategic developments centred in Visakhapatnam, Amaravati and Kadapa. According to an official release, top-tier firms received approval to establish large-scale operations and training centres in Visakhapatnam. The capital region Amaravati is set to become a pioneering national hub for Quantum Computing, Photonics and AI-driven Biotechnology. The SIPB approved a policy incentive timeline extension under the AP Electronics Policy 2021-24 for AIL Dixon Technologies Pvt Ltd's Rs 70 crore manufacturing unit in Kadapa, expected to create 300 jobs. According to the release, Amaravati is officially positioned to lead India's deep-tech revolution with multiple pioneering quantum and biotech initiatives. Srsti Quantum Pvt Ltd will invest Rs 2,700 crore to set up a Quantum Computing Hardware, Nanofabrication Research and Manufacturing facility, creating 3,000 jobs. Quantum Codon Pvt Ltd will invest Rs 167 crore to establish an Integrated Quantum AI-Driven Biotechnology Innovation Campus for drug discovery research, creating 126 jobs. Arohak Technologies Pvt Ltd will invest Rs 62 crore to set up a Photonics Quantum Research & Innovation Centre, generating 300 jobs. The SIPB cleared TriQuanta Labs Pvt Ltd's proposal to invest Rs 35 crore to set up a Quantum Innovation Centre alongside India's first hybrid quantum computing hardware manufacturing unit, providing 175 jobs.

Chandrababu to Give Ownership Rights to 28,445 Families

AMARAVATI



Putting an end to four decades long wait of thousands of poor and middle-class families, who have been waiting for full ownership rights over their homes, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu distributing title deeds to 28,445 families, granting them full ownership rights at Visakhapatnam on Saturday. The land being regularised covers 399 acres, comprising 19,33,853 square yards, with a total estimated value of Rs 8,874 crore. This is the first time that such a large-scale regularisation and distribution of house-site title deeds is being undertaken in Visakhapatnam. It may be noted that thousands families have been living in houses they built themselves but without full legal rights over the land. The absence of title deeds prevented them from fully enjoying, transferring or securing their property for the future. With the initiative of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu the Coalition Government has brought an end to this long-pending problem.With this these families will gain a valuable asset, financial and social security, an inheritance for their children, self-respect and confidence about their future. After assuming office in 2024, the present government focused on the issue. Public representatives also brought the matter to the Chief Minister's attention during his district reviews. The Chief Minister subsequently directed officials to regularise government land on which houses had been constructed, wherever there were no objections, and grant ownership rights to the occupants.As a result, the government has paved the way for large-scale distribution of title deeds in Visakhapatnam, bringing a decades-old issue closer to a permanent resolution. The ongoing regularisation process will benefit families across several areas from Gajuwaka to Bheemili.The highest number of beneficiaries are from Visakhapatnam Rural, with 9,261 families. This is followed by:Mulagada: 4,213 families, Gajuwaka: 4,353, Gopalapatnam: 3,253, Pendurthi: 2,722, Pedagantyada: 1,910 families Maharanipeta: 1,235, Seethammadhara: 668, Bheemili: 464, Anandapuram: 349 and Padmanabham: 17 families. As the government accelerates efforts to develop Visakhapatnam into a world-class city, it is also taking steps to ensure that ordinary families become stakeholders in its growth. Along with efforts to attract global companies, increase investments and create employment opportunities, the government is focusing on providing poor families with property rights and greater security for their future, ensuring that the benefits of development reach the common household. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu stated in a social media post that Saturday's programme was not merely a distribution of title deeds, but a historic occasion that would provide full ownership rights over their homes to 28,000 families.The Chief Minister said that seeing happiness among families who had waited for decades for ownership rights over the homes in which they live would be the government's true satisfaction. As per schedule the Chief Minister will leave for Visakhapatnam at 10.30 AM on Saturday and after arriving in Visakhapatnam, he will interact with sanitation workers and local fishermen at RK Beach as part of the Swachh Andhra–Swarna Andhra programme.He will subsequently participate in a public meeting at the AU Engineering College Grounds, where he will distribute regularisation title deeds to the beneficiaries.



Seva Sankalp Abhiyan Launched at Smt. Indira Gandhi Government College

SHIVPURI:

As per the directives of the government, 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' was launched the other day at Smt. Indira Gandhi Government Girls College, Shivpuri, under the guidance of the college Principal Dr. N. K. Jain. The program began with the lighting of the lamp. The objective of the program was to develop a spirit of service, cooperation, social responsibility, cleanliness, health, environmental protection and public awareness among the girl students. On this occasion, NSS In-charge Dr. Renu Rai informed the students about the objectives and importance of the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' and inspired them to actively participate in various activities to be organized under the campaign. The program was conducted by Dr. Pallavi Saxena. Prof. Krishnakant Verma and Dr. Devendra Singh administered an oath to the students to discharge their duties towards society and the nation and to actively contribute to service work. On this occasion, Prof. Nilesh Choudhary inspired the students towards service and social concerns through a poem. Describing service as the basis of humanity, values and social change, he called upon the students to help the needy and actively participate in works for social welfare. At the end of the program, Dr. Rajni expressed her gratitude. After this, the present girl students and staff members pledged to make the spirit of service, cooperation and public welfare a part of their daily life. The program concluded successfully in an enthusiastic and inspirational atmosphere.

Udhayanidhi: Not Against Hindi, Oppose Its Imposition

His remarks came a day after the Supreme Court asked Tamil Nadu to reconsider its opposition to Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and observed that Hindi could not be completely excluded from the state.



Tamil Nadu Leader of the Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin on Friday said rejecting Hindi imposition did not mean the state was hostile to the language or considered itself separate from the rest of India. "We are not against any language, including Hindi. We are not functioning as a separate state. We are a state with our own uniqueness," the DMK leader said. Udhayanidhi also rejected any link between learning Hindi and patriotism, saying Tamil Nadu's two-language policy should not be viewed as a challenge to national unity. "Respecting unity in diversity and allowing individual states to follow their preferred language policy will further strengthen India's integrity," he said. His remarks came a day after the Supreme Court asked Tamil Nadu to reconsider its opposition to Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and observed that Hindi could not be completely excluded from the state. Udhayanidhi said Tamil Nadu did not need Navodaya Vidyalayas as it already ran similar schools for disadvantaged students. He also called for a special Assembly session to pass a resolution against Navodaya Vidyalayas in the state.

UDHAYANIDHI FLAGS RS 3,548-CRORE FUNDING ROW

Udhayanidhi accused the Centre of withholding Rs 3,548 crore due to Tamil Nadu under the Samagra Shiksha scheme because the state had refused to adopt the three-language policy. He said Tamil Nadu should not be denied education funds for continuing with its two-language system. The DMK leader pointed to the state's performance in higher education, women's workforce participation and science to argue that knowledge of Hindi was not essential for professional success. He cited Tamils holding senior positions at the Indian Space Research Organisation and other institutions. Udhayanidhi said the two-language policy introduced during former Chief Minister CN Annadurai's tenure reflected Tamil Nadu's linguistic position and must be protected.

WHAT THE SUPREME COURT SAID

A Bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih was hearing Tamil Nadu's plea to recall an earlier order directing it to identify land for Navodaya schools in every district.

"You have to change your mindset. It can't be that Hindi will not be taught in the soil of Tamil Nadu," Justice Nagarathna observed during the hearing. The Bench asked Tamil Nadu and the Centre to resolve their differences through talks and stressed the importance of cooperative federalism. "People in Chennai should not alienate Delhi and vice versa," it remarked. The court said Navodaya schools would give students another educational option without affecting Tamil Nadu's existing institutions or lowering their standards. The court granted the state another three months to identify land and will hear the case again on December 14.

WHY TAMIL NADU OPPOSES THE SCHOOLS

Tamil Nadu follows a two-language policy and opposes the Navodaya system because its three-language framework includes Hindi. The state also maintains that decisions involving education and language fall within its constitutional powers. Senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, appearing for Tamil Nadu, told the court that the Navodaya scheme was optional and that the state could not be compelled to implement a central policy.

Rajender Rao Seeks Lord Ganesha's Blessings for Karimnagar

Congress Karimnagar in-charge visits several Ganesh mandaps with wife Rekha; announces Rs5 lakh donation for Hanuman temple reconstruction

KARIMNAGAR



Congress Party Karimnagar Assembly constituency in-charge Velichala Rajender Rao prayed for the well-being, happiness and prosperity of the people of Karimnagar with the blessings of Lord Ganesha.

As part of the ongoing Ganesh Navaratri celebrations, Rajender Rao, along with his wife Rekha, visited several Ganesh mandaps across the city on Friday and offered special prayers.

The couple first visited the Ganesh idol at the Hanuman Santosh Mata Temple in Jyothinagar and participated in special prayers. They later visited Ganesh idols installed at Prakasham Ganj, Kothirampur, Venkateshwara Colony, Housing Board Colony and near Bharat Talkies.

Organisers, Congress leaders and local residents accorded a warm welcome to Rajender Rao and Rekha at the respective mandaps and felicitated them with shawls. Speaking on the occasion, Rajender Rao said he prayed to Lord Ganesha for the good health, happiness and prosperity of all people in Karimnagar. He said the Ganesh celebrations were being conducted peacefully and with devotion across the city.

Rajender Rao Serves Food at Annadanam

Rajender Rao inaugurated an annadanam programme organised at the Ganesh mandapam in Housing Board Colony. He personally served food to devotees and interacted with the organisers and local residents.

₹5 Lakh Donation for Hanuman Temple Reconstruction

Rajender Rao and his wife Rekha announced a donation of ₹5 lakh towards the reconstruction of the Hanuman temple at the Hanuman Santosh Mata Temple premises in Jyothinagar. After offering special prayers at the temple, the couple said they would continue to extend their support for the development of the Santosh Mata temple and would come forward to provide necessary assistance for its development. Local corporator Padala Sreeja Ajay and members of the temple committee thanked Rajender Rao and Rekha for announcing the ₹5 lakh contribution towards the temple reconstruction. Karimnagar Market Committee chairman Akula Narasanna, corporators Padala Sreeja Ajay, Padishetti Vasantha Lakshmi Bhoomayya and Akula Nandini Uday, Congress leaders, Sarpanch Nimmala Anjanna, Akula Prakash, Velpula Venkatesh, Mididoddi Kapil Madhav, Samudrala Ramana Rao, Anantha Ramesh, Tipparapu Srinivas, Bonala Ashok, Kolipaka Kanakaraju, Karre Pavani, Velichala Yuva Sena district president Kasarapu Kiran Kumar, Porandla Ramesh, Peddapalli Gopalakrishna and others participated in the programmes.

Special train services extended

CHENNAI

South Western Railway has extended the services of the SMVT Bengaluru–Malda Town–SMVT Bengaluru Express Special trains with revised timings and coach composition. Train No. 06565 SMVT Bengaluru–Malda Town Express Special will operate on Sundays from September 20 to November 22, 2026. It will depart SMVT Bengaluru at 11.40 p.m. and reach Malda Town at 4.35 p.m. on the third day. The return Train No. 06566 Malda Town–SMVT Bengaluru Express Special will run on Wednesdays from September 23 to November 25, departing Malda Town at 4 p.m. and reaching SMVT Bengaluru at 12.45 p.m. on the third day. The revised composition will include one AC two-tier coach, three AC three-tier coaches, 10 sleeper coaches, eight general second-class coaches and two luggage-cum-brake vans. Timings at several stations, including Dankuni, Bardhaman, Bolpur Shantiniketan, Rampur Hat and New Farakka, have also been revised.

Tulu to be Karnataka's second additional administrative language in 2 districts

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday announced that Tulu would be made the state's second additional administrative language in Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts.



Speaking after a Cabinet meeting held in Mangaluru, Shivakumar said, "Today, we have decided to make Tulu a language applicable to Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts and to declare it as the state's second additional (administrative) language."

He said Tulu, spoken primarily in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, had potential for educational and cultural growth. A Cabinet note shared by the Chief Minister's Office described it as the "second additional administrative language". He also said the government had decided on a new tourism policy for the Malnad and coastal regions. Shivakumar said the government would bring out a separate policy for coastal Karnataka in view of its long coastline, rich cultural tradition, and religious and heritage sites. He said tourism projects in the Malnad and coastal regions would be treated as infrastructure projects, and investors would be offered incentives. "Those who invest in tourism -- because this is a full greenfield sector -- should be given greater support. They should be given time to repay their loans," he said, adding that prolonged monsoons affect tourism activity in the coastal and Malnad regions. He also said the government would take up new urban development planning and provide incentives related to fisheries. Shivakumar further said the government had approved the Karnataka Marine Biotechnology Policy, 2026-31. Under it, the government will establish the Fisheries, Marine and Blue Economy University by upgrading the existing college, and increase its intake from 60 seats to 200. On the demand to rename Dakshina Kannada district as Mangaluru district, CM Shivakumar said the government would issue a draft notification and invite public opinion for a month. "We have more or less come to the view that Dakshina Kannada district should be declared as Mangaluru district. But public opinion is also necessary here," he said. He added that the government would consider people's sentiments and the traditional aspects associated with the name before taking a final decision. The chief minister said the Cabinet had approved projects worth about Rs 32,611 crore, including around Rs 16,000 crore for rural development and another Rs 16,000 crore for Mangaluru, Udupi and the coastal region. He said the decisions had taken into account demands raised by MLAs, MPs, the Chamber of Commerce, fishermen, industries and trade bodies. Shivakumar also announced that the government would hold Cabinet meetings at 10 to 12 places across Karnataka over the next 15 months. "We want to see the entire state. Wherever there is a position, wherever there is a need, we will have to go, because every part of the state is important for us," he said, describing the approach as "Samagra Karnataka, Samruddha Karnataka" (Inclusive Karnataka-Prosperous Karnataka).

Do Not Test the Patience of Employees

TNGOs, TGOs JAC demand immediate PRC, pending DAs; seek scrapping of CPS and restoration of OPS

KARIMNAGAR

The government should take clear and immediate decisions on the long-pending and legitimate demands of employees, TNGOs district president and JAC chairman Daram Srinivas Reddy and TGOs district president and JAC convenor Madipalli Kali Charan Goud demanded on Friday. They said the patience of employees should not be mistaken for weakness and warned that failure to address their concerns could lead to a stronger democratic movement. An emergency meeting of the TGEJAC was held at the TNGOs Association Bhavan in Karimnagar on Friday to discuss employees' pending issues, the prevailing situation and future course of action.

Speaking at the meeting, the JAC leaders recalled the significant role played by employees in the Telangana statehood movement, saying that they had participated in the agitation despite threats of ESMA and other cases. They said employees had hoped that their legitimate issues would be resolved after the formation of Telangana, but several key demands have remained pending for nearly three years, leading to growing dissatisfaction among employees. The leaders said employees had looked forward to the government meeting scheduled for September 18 with the expectation that their concerns would be addressed. However, the postponement of the meeting had caused disappointment and frustration among employees. They urged the government to stop delaying the matter and initiate time-bound measures to resolve the issues.

Immediate PRC and DA Release Sought

The JAC leaders demanded immediate announcement and implementation of the Pay Revision Commission (PRC) in view of the rising cost of living. They also sought the release of pending Dearness Allowance (DA) instalments and effective implementation of the Employees Health Scheme (EHS), for which employees are making contributions.



They further demanded timely settlement of amounts accumulated by employees through GPF and other savings, besides immediate clearance of pending dues payable to retired employees.

The leaders reiterated their demand for scrapping the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) and restoration of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) to ensure social security for employees after retirement.

'Stop Delaying Issues in the Name of Committees'

The JAC leaders said that over the past three years, state-level JAC representatives had submitted several representations and held repeated discussions with senior government representatives seeking resolution of employees' problems. They said employees had postponed proposed protest programmes several times in the hope that the issues would be resolved through discussions, but no clear solution had emerged so far. They urged the government to take concrete decisions instead of delaying the issues in the name of committees. Employees continue to play a key role in implementing government welfare schemes, carrying out programmes at the grassroots level and delivering public services, they said. The government should also consider the welfare of employees who are responsible for implementing its welfare programmes, they added. "An employee is not an enemy of the government, but a partner in governance," the JAC leaders said, adding that employees would serve the public with greater commitment if their legitimate rights and concerns were addressed.

They urged the government to take positive and immediate decisions on PRC, pending DAs, EHS, employees' accumulated savings, retirement dues and pension security.

JAC Leaders Attend

TNGOs district secretary Sangem Laxman Rao, Gazetted Officers' Association district secretary Dr Aravind Reddy, state leader Guda Prabhakar Reddy, Revenue Association president Vijay Kumar, women's president Irumalla Sharada, town president Marupaka Rajesh Bharadwaj, and leaders U. Nagaraju, Satyanarayana, Naresh Patel, Sunitha, Surya, Shailaja, Sushmita, Azgar Ali, Fourth Class Employees' Association district president Kota Ramaswamy, Bairi Srinivas, Shankar, Waris Nawab, Ajay Kumar, Kamalakar, Shashikumar and Giridhar Rao were among those present.

EDITORIAL

The Symbol Freeze: Electoral Integrity and Political Identity

The Election Commission of India (ECI) recently issued an interim order freezing the name "All India Trinamool Congress" (AITC) and its iconic "Flowers and Grass" symbol. The poll panel intervened following a bitter internal dispute between factions led by former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and rebel leader Ritabrata Banerjee. Ahead of the October by-elections in Assembly constituencies like Nandigram and Rejinagar, candidates from both camps filed conflicting Form-B nomination papers claiming sole authority over the parent party. To prevent either side from gaining an unfair electoral advantage before conducting full substantive hearings, the ECI temporarily assigned distinct interim identities. The Mamata Banerjee-led group was allotted the name "Mamata All India Trinamool Congress" with a "Football Player" symbol, while the rebel faction led by Ritabrata Banerjee and Arup Roy was recognized as "Democratic Trinamool Congress" with an "Envelope" symbol.

Under Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, the poll commission is empowered to resolve factional claims involving recognized political parties. Determining organizational majority requires evaluating detailed documentation, legislative backing, office-bearer support, and organizational history. Because exhaustive evidentiary hearings cannot be completed in the middle of an active election cycle, freezing the contested symbol serves as a standard neutral mechanism. This interim procedure aligns with several recent precedents in Indian electoral politics, such as the freezing of the Shiv Sena's "Bow and Arrow" symbol in 2022 and the Lok Janshakti Party's "Bungalow" symbol in 2021 before final determinations were reached.

The temporary loss of the "Flowers and Grass" motif—hand-drawn by Mamata Banerjee when she founded the party in 1998—presents immediate operational challenges. In Indian elections, visual symbols on Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) function as primary brand identifiers, particularly among grassroots voters. Both factions now face the arduous task of rapidly re-orienting their cadres and voter base toward the newly assigned interim symbols before polling day. Loyalists of the former Chief Minister have sharply criticized the ruling as an unconstitutional setback, while the rebel faction maintains that internal party democracy must supersede individual cults.

Beyond the immediate heat of the campaign trail, the ECI's action underscores the primacy of statutory frameworks over political stature. While interim allocations allow the scheduled by-elections to proceed without operational ambiguity, the long-term mandate of the poll panel remains unchanged. The true organizational legacy of the Trinamool Congress will ultimately be decided through rigorous verification of party records, legislative strength, and constitutional adherence, rather than through public rhetoric.

A SEAT LEFT EMPTY

There is a seat left empty
beside the window today,
where someone once sat quietly
and watched the world pass away.

The morning still brings sunlight,
the evening still brings rain,
but the chair remembers footsteps
that will not come again.

A cup remains on the table,
a book lies where it fell,
and silence fills the little space
where familiar stories dwelled.

Nobody asks who moved the chair,
nobody speaks the name,
but every heart that knew that place
remembers just the same.

The world keeps moving forward,
the clocks refuse to wait,
yet some absences stay with us
long after it is late.

We learn to live around them,
we learn to smile once more,
but sometimes an empty seat
can say what words are for.

It holds a thousand memories,
a laugh, a touch, a face,
a lifetime folded quietly
within an ordinary place.

And when the evening shadows fall
across the silent room,
that empty seat is not empty—
it carries someone home.

For people may leave our days,
but never truly leave;
they settle into memories
we carry when we grieve.

So let that seat remain there,
untouched beneath the light—
a quiet reminder of someone
who made our world more bright.

And if someday I pass it by
and feel the old ache start,
I will know that empty seats
can still be full of heart.

Who Should Set the Limits for Artificial Intelligence



As artificial intelligence moves from laboratories and consumer applications into decisions affecting jobs, credit, healthcare, education and public services, the central issue is no longer what AI can do, but who should decide what it is allowed to do. Effective governance will require governments to set enforceable boundaries, scientists to provide independent evidence, industry to offer technical expertise and citizens to have a meaningful voice. The challenge is to ensure that as machines gain greater power to shape human lives, that power remains transparent, accountable and subject to public oversight.

The central question about artificial intelligence is no longer what it can do, but what it should be allowed to do. AI is moving rapidly into decisions that shape everyday life — from recruitment and credit to healthcare, education and access to public services. A wrong answer from a machine is one problem. A wrong answer that determines whether a person gets a job, a loan or medical attention is another. The debate over AI regulation therefore leads to a more fundamental question: who should set the limits on a technology that is increasingly capable of shaping human lives?

In a democracy, governments must carry the primary responsibility. Privacy, protection against discrimination, consumer rights, data security and liability cannot be left to voluntary commitments. If an AI system denies a loan, rejects a job application or produces a discriminatory outcome, "the algorithm decided" cannot become a legal defence. There must be a clearly identifiable institution that is accountable for the decision. The European Union's risk-based AI regulatory framework reflects an attempt to establish such accountability while allowing useful applications of the technology to develop.

Yet legislation alone cannot keep pace with AI. Models, capabilities and risks are evolving faster than conventional law-making processes. Governments therefore need sustained technical expertise, including from the companies developing these systems. Industry has first-hand knowledge of how AI models are built, where they fail and how they might be misused.

That expertise, however, cannot become regulatory authority. AI companies have legitimate commercial interests involving investment, competition and rapid product deployment. Asking an industry to define the limits of its own power would create an obvious conflict of interest. Industry must have a place at the regulatory table, but the final responsibility for public safeguards must remain with institutions accountable to citizens.

Scientists have an equally important, but distinct, role. Regulation must be based on evidence rather than either technological optimism or public fear. Researchers can assess reliability, identify patterns of error, examine disparate impacts and evaluate safety. The United Nations' move towards an independent international scientific panel on AI recognises this need for credible evidence. But science can establish what a system is capable of doing; it cannot, by itself, decide what society ought to permit. Questions of rights, dignity and public interest ultimately involve political and ethical choices.

That is why those who experience AI's consequences must also have a voice. Teachers can see how automated systems affect classrooms. Workers experience the consequences of changing employment patterns. Patients encounter the risks of machine-assisted medical decisions. Writers and artists have concerns about how their work is used to train AI systems. A regulatory process dominated by governments, technology companies and technical experts could leave out precisely those whose lives it seeks to regulate.

The challenge becomes greater because AI does not respect national borders. A model developed in one country can be deployed in another, while digital services can reach users across several jurisdictions simultaneously. Completely fragmented national rules could increase uncertainty for both businesses and consumers. Yet a single global law is equally difficult to envisage. The practical objective should therefore be common principles rather than identical legislation — minimum standards for privacy, human rights, safety, transparency and accountability.

There is also a question of representation. If countries with the greatest technological and financial power dominate global AI rule-making, developing economies could find themselves largely adopting standards they had little role in shaping. For India, the issue is particularly significant. Its linguistic diversity, employment structure and challenges in education, agriculture, public health and delivery of public services create AI policy questions that cannot simply be imported from advanced economies. Developing countries must participate in shaping global AI governance, not merely become markets for technologies designed elsewhere.

Ultimately, AI governance is about more than regulating a new technology. It is also about deciding how power will be distributed in societies where machines increasingly influence consequential decisions. Governments can make laws; scientists can provide evidence; industry can contribute technical expertise; civil society can question impacts; and international institutions can facilitate cooperation. The system works only when none of these actors is allowed to exercise unchecked authority.

This is particularly important as AI moves from being a consumer product to becoming part of the infrastructure through which decisions are made. Who receives credit, whose application is reviewed first, what information reaches a user and which tasks are automated are not merely technical choices. They can determine access to opportunity and shape the distribution of power.

The answer to who should write AI's rules, therefore, cannot be a single institution. Governments must establish enforceable boundaries. Scientists must provide independent evidence. Technology companies must disclose relevant technical knowledge and risks. Affected communities must have a meaningful voice. Independent bodies must scrutinise compliance, while countries must cooperate on basic global standards. The principle underlying all of this is straightforward: the power to govern AI must itself remain accountable to the public.

The defining question of the AI age is not simply how powerful machines may become. It is who decides the limits of that power — and who answers when those limits are crossed. Before societies write rules for artificial intelligence, they must ensure that those writing the rules are subject to scrutiny themselves.



K AMARAVATI
MEMBER
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UPI CHARGES: EXPANDING THE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM OR BURDENING CONSUMERS?

In India's digital economy, the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is no longer merely a mode of payment; it has become an integral part of everyday economic life. From vegetable vendors to large businesses, from taxis to online shopping, and from household transactions to commercial payments, UPI has transformed the way people conduct financial transactions—their habits, speed and even the language of payments. Therefore, the issue of charges associated with UPI is not merely a business matter for banks or fintech companies. It has a direct bearing on consumer behaviour, the cost of doing business for small merchants and the future direction of India's digital economy.

A factual clarification is important here. Under the framework announced by the government in September 2026, person-to-person (P2P) UPI payments will remain completely free, irrespective of the amount. Merchant payments up to ₹2,000 will also remain outside the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) framework. For specified person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions above ₹2,000, an MDR of 0.4% has been prescribed, with a maximum of ₹300 per transaction for transactions of ₹75,000 or more. The government has also clarified that MDR is not a transaction fee directly collected from the customer; it is a merchant-side charge distributed among participants in the payment ecosystem. Yet, this change should not be viewed merely through the narrow question of whether a "charge" has been imposed. The real question is how to make the digital payment ecosystem financially sustainable over the long term and, more importantly, how its costs should be distributed. The greatest strength of UPI has been its simplicity and the consumer perception that digital payments are virtually cost-free. In August 2026 alone, UPI recorded about 24.51 billion transactions worth nearly ₹29.82 lakh crore. These figures demonstrate that UPI is no longer an alternative payment mechanism; it has become part of the basic infrastructure of India's economic life.

The expansion of UPI has also brought about a profound psychological shift. People have begun to regard digital payments not merely as a convenience but as a natural part of everyday behaviour. Earlier, taking out cash for a payment of ₹10, ₹50 or ₹100 was routine; today, the same transaction can be completed within seconds on a mobile phone. When a service remains free for years, consumers naturally stop thinking about the underlying costs of technology, banking infrastructure and cybersecurity. Consequently, whenever any form of charge or cost subsequently emerges, discomfort is almost inevitable. This is where one of the major contradictions of the modern market economy becomes visible. Many digital and consumer services are initially offered free of cost, at extremely low prices or with substantial discounts. Consumers become accustomed to the convenience, their behaviour changes and, after the service gains widespread acceptance, a new cost structure may emerge. Different versions of this model can be seen across ride-hailing services, online commerce, digital subscriptions and various platform-based services. It would not be appropriate to suggest that the same strategy is followed in every case, but the consumer's question remains legitimate: if a service has a long-term cost, why should its potential cost structure not be made transparent from the beginning?

In the case of UPI, this question becomes even more significant because its users are not limited to urban middle-class consumers. Small shopkeepers, street vendors, home-based entrepreneurs, rural consumers and first-time participants in the formal banking system constitute an important part of the digital payment ecosystem. The government's 2025 incentive scheme also sought to keep small merchants' BHIM-UPI transactions up to ₹2,000 within the zero-MDR framework, while providing financial support to strengthen digital payments. Therefore, the first principle of any charging mechanism should be the protection of small payments and small businesses. Increasing costs on transactions of ₹100, ₹500 or ₹1,000 could run contrary to the larger objective of digital inclusion. By contrast, the cost associated with high-value commercial transactions can be considered separately, provided that the charges are transparent, limited and announced in advance, and that their burden is not unfairly passed on to consumers.

The example of debit and credit cards is also relevant here. The widespread adoption of UPI has pushed card payments into a relatively different position, particularly for everyday small-value transactions. If the cost of certain high-value merchant transactions through UPI rises, some businesses may look towards alternative payment instruments. Cards, net banking, wallets and other digital channels could become more active in some segments. This could increase diversity in the payments market. However, if consumers are confronted with different charges, conveniences and conditions across every payment method, the very simplicity that made digital payments attractive could be weakened. The objective of competition, therefore, should not merely be to shift consumers from one payment instrument to another, but to provide them with better and more transparent choices. At the same time, keeping UPI completely free also has a cost. A payment system that operates 24×7 requires continuous expenditure on banking servers, data centres, cybersecurity, fraud-prevention mechanisms, customer support and technological upgrades. As transaction volumes grow, so does the need for investment in reliability, capacity and resilience. The government's 2025 incentive framework also linked part of the support to improving system uptime and reducing technical failures.

Therefore, the question should not simply be whether every UPI service must remain free forever. The more important question is: How can the cost of maintaining and upgrading the system be distributed fairly and transparently? If the government, banks, fintech companies and payment networks derive economic and strategic benefits from the ecosystem, they must also ensure adequate investment in security, reliability and innovation. The purpose of any charge should not merely be revenue generation; it should contribute to building a stronger, safer and more efficient digital payment infrastructure. The most important consideration, however, is consumer trust. The digital economy runs on trust. If a service is presented as "free" today and its cost suddenly becomes visible tomorrow, consumers may naturally feel uncertain about the future of that service. Hence, whenever any digital payment framework is introduced or modified, its potential costs, fee structure and conditions for implementation should be communicated clearly in advance. Consumers should know which services are free, which may carry a cost, who bears that cost and what its maximum level will be.

India is rapidly expanding its digital economy. At such a moment, the success of UPI should not be measured merely by the number or value of transactions. It must also be measured by stability, security, accessibility and consumer confidence. India's long-term development ambitions depend upon productivity, innovation and robust digital infrastructure; international economic analysis has likewise linked productivity and innovation capacity with sustained long-term growth. The debate over UPI charges, therefore, is not really a debate between "charges versus free payments." It is a test of the economic philosophy underlying India's digital transformation—whether digital convenience can remain affordable, simple, secure and inclusive for ordinary citizens while the ecosystem itself becomes financially sustainable. A balanced approach would ensure that small-value payments remain free, small merchants are protected from unnecessary costs, high-value commercial transactions have a rational cost structure, charges are publicly disclosed in advance, and resources generated within the payment ecosystem contribute to strengthening its security, capacity and technological resilience.

India does not need to slow down the expansion of digital payments; it needs to prepare the next generation of its digital payment infrastructure. UPI's greatest achievement is that it has taken payments beyond the limits of bank branches and physical wallets and placed them on the screen of a mobile phone. The next challenge is to ensure that this convenience remains both economically sustainable and accessible to the common consumer. For a country aspiring to become one of the world's leading economies, digital payments are no longer merely a technological innovation; they are the pulse of economic life. Therefore, while determining their cost, the priority should be greater than market revenue alone: consumer trust, the capacity of small businesses, and the long-term credibility and resilience of Digital India.



LALIT GARGG
Writer, Journalist,
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Rajiv Gandhi assassination report cited in security rules for Rahul's Indore event



A police security note for Rahul Gandhi's Indore programme triggered a political row over its Verma Commission reference. Congress called the mention insensitive and political, while police and the BJP said it was meant to tighten event security. A row broke out on Friday over a police security conditions document issued for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' programme in Indore, after it referred to observations in the Verma Commission report set up following former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1991. Police said the report was cited only to explain the responsibility of event organisers in security matters. The Congress, however, accused the ruling BJP of using the reference politically and also raised the issue of Rahul Gandhi's Special Protection Group security having been withdrawn in 2019. The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha is scheduled to hold the youth outreach programme in Indore on Saturday. According to the Congress, the police document said the "Verma Commission report has analysed the role of event organisers and local political activists in great depth and detail" and that the "Commission clarified that the organisers' irresponsible attitude was the primary reason for the security breakdown in the Sriperumbudur incident on May 21, 1991." Former PM Rajiv Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi's father, was killed in a suicide bombing at Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu on May 21, 1991. The Verma Commission was formed to examine the security lapses that led to the assassination.

Madhya Pradesh Congress president Jitu Patwari said this was the first time police had referred to Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in a security conditions document for a party event and claimed it showed the BJP government's intent. "First, the government withdrew Rahul Gandhi's SPG security (in 2019), and now his father's assassination is being cited while granting permission for his event," Patwari said. He also alleged that the BJP was misusing its power to obstruct the programme.

Rejecting the charge, state BJP spokesperson Rakesh Singh Yadav said the Congress was not giving accurate information to police and the administration about the expected turnout and other details. "The Verma Commission report has been cited to ensure foolproof arrangements for Rahul Gandhi's event. Otherwise, if any untoward incident happens, the Congress will immediately blame the government," he said.

Bihar CM Calls Floods Serious, Highlights ₹23,000-Cr Power Subsidy

Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Wednesday presented a 150-day report card of his government, highlighting the opening of 211 degree colleges in a single day, the construction of 700 model schools and the allocation of nearly 1,000 acres of land for industries. He said his government's goal was to ensure that by 2030, no youngster from Bihar would have to leave the state to pursue education.



Choudhary also spoke about the annual menace of floods in Bihar. This year's deluge affected around 49 lakh people across 15 districts. Calling the situation serious, he outlined the measures being undertaken by his government to minimise the impact of floods in the coming years. Speaking at the 'NDA Government, Prosperous Bihar' session at Panchayat Aaj Tak in Patna, Choudhary pointed out development work had accelerated over the past three to four months, while acknowledging the contribution of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to Bihar's development. Asked about the BJP's long-standing dream of having one of its own as Bihar's Chief Minister, Samrat Choudhary was reminded that Bihar was the only Hindi-speaking state where the party had never held the top post. He was asked what had been done to fulfil people's dreams now that the BJP's own dream had been realised. In response, Samrat Choudhary said there was no doubt that people's expectations were high, but development work had continuously progressed over the past three to four months. Referring to the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, he acknowledged that Nitish Kumar had done a lot of work in electricity, roads and education. His government was now focusing on building on that work and accelerating it.

BIHAR CM EXPLAINS HOW SILT WORSENS FLOOD CRISIS

Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary explained the math behind the state's annual floods, saying Bihar receives water from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Nepal's Terai region. Around 6.5 lakh cusecs of water comes from Uttar Pradesh, while about 11.5 lakh cusecs reaches Bihar from Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. Water from Nepal's Terai region, he said, depends on rainfall there, making Bihar a junction for the waters of several rivers. Choudhary said the Ganga is a major challenge, with increasing silt affecting the river's course and the spread of water. He said the Ganga is about six kilometres wide when it enters Bihar near Buxar, but the width rises to around 32 kilometres in the area where water is discharged towards Jharkhand. In Bhagalpur, it is around 26 kilometres wide, and around 22 kilometres in Khagaria and Munger. Calling this year's situation serious, Choudhary said around 17 lakh cusecs of water came into the Ganga, while its water level was about a foot higher than in 2016. He said the state had already worked on the Kosi and Gandak, but the challenge posed by rivers and floods remained. He also flagged the Farakka Barrage and silt accumulation up to Bhagalpur as key issues. He said the government had formulated a silt policy and was working on using soil extracted from the Ganga and north Bihar's rivers. Choudhary said Bihar would also raise its concerns over water sharing, particularly its need for water for drinking and agriculture. He said the government was seeking a permanent solution by working on river flow, silt and water use. A team has also been sent to the Netherlands to study river management, he said.

SAMRAT CHOUDHARY'S VISION ON EDUCATION

The Chief Minister said around 3.5 lakh children were studying in the model schools. Earlier, children aspired to study at Netarhat, Sainik School, Deoghar's Ramakrishna Mission School or Simultala. The same system has now been brought to the model schools, where good teachers have been appointed and complete facilities for NEET preparation are being provided. Alongside this, the government has launched the Vidyarthi Saathi app. Samrat Choudhary said that even if a child needs to study at 1 am, a teacher will be available. Once students log in to the app using an OTP, a teacher becomes available within a minute, and the facility remains operational round the clock. On average, 1.5 lakh children use the app to study at 1 am, while the number rises to two lakh on Sundays. The entire data is tracked in real time.

He said that in the 80 years since Independence, there had been only 272 degree colleges across Bihar, and there were no colleges at the block level. He said 211 degree colleges were opened in a single day on July 15.To ensure that there was no shortage of teachers, the process was started on June 25 and recruitment and postings were completed in a record one month. The Chief Minister said that when he personally met these teachers, he learnt that many had left jobs in Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai to return to Bihar.



Aam Aadmi Party stages dharna-pradarshan in support of the victim families of the Sagar liquor tragedy

Bhopal: Demanding justice and fair compensation for the victim families of the Sagar liquor tragedy, the Aam Aadmi Party, Madhya Pradesh, staged a dharna-pradarshan under the leadership of former Delhi Government Minister and Madhya Pradesh in-charge Jitendra Singh Tomar. Office bearers and workers from across the state raised their voice in support of the victim families. Shivpuri District President Rajkumar Gupta "Bablu" along with City President Ayush Goyal also reached Bhopal with his team and participated in the protest, and demanded Rs 25 lakh compensation for the families of the deceased, immediate financial assistance to the affected families, and a fair investigation into the matter with strict action against the guilty. Office bearers and workers from various districts of the state were present in the protest.



Shankar Shah, Raghunath Shah Sacrificed Lives for Sanatan Culture: CM Yadav

BHOPAL

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav has said that before the freedom movement of 1857, the tribal icons of Madhya Pradesh, immortal martyrs Raja Shankar Shah and Kunwar Raghunath Shah, awakened the masses against British rule through the power of their pen and poems. At that time, against the oppression of the British, what the sword could not do, was done by the writings of Raja Shankar Shah. His songs ignited a longing and awakening for freedom among the people and infused new energy.

He carried the nation and religion together. Due to Raja Raghunath Shah's dedication to his own language, own religion, creativity and literary pursuit, the local people had immense reverence for him. His son Kunwar Raghunath Shah also stood shoulder to shoulder with him. In no time, the roots of the British government were shaken.

The British soldiers captured both of them and put a condition before them to accept subjugation to the Queen and change their religion. But Raja Shankar Shah gave a befitting reply to the British and refused to accept slavery. He told the British officers that he is a descendant of Rani Durgavati, and that we are proud of the life values of Indian culture and Sanatan. Frightened by the courage of Raja Shankar Shah, the British officers unjustly martyred them by tying them to cannons. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav was addressing a program organized on the martyrdom day of tribal icons Raja Shankar Shah and Raghunath Shah in Jabalpur.

20 Odisha Districts on Alert as Bay Low-Pressure Area Looms



Odisha has placed 20 districts on alert as a Bay of Bengal low-pressure system is expected to strengthen. Authorities say preparations are in place, with heavy rain and thunderstorms likely over the coming days.

The Odisha government has put 20 districts on alert and asked 10 others to remain vigilant as a low-pressure system is expected to form over the Bay of Bengal and is likely to intensify into a depression, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said on Friday. The state said it was prepared to deal with the situation, even as weather officials continued to track the system closely.

The India Meteorological Department said an upper-air cyclonic circulation over north Thailand was likely to emerge over the north Andaman Sea on Friday evening and trigger the formation of a low-pressure area over the region on Saturday evening. Manorama Mohanty, director of the Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar, said, "Thereafter, it is likely to intensify gradually and move towards south Odisha-north Andhra Pradesh coasts during subsequent 3-4 days." Mohanty said IMD scientists were closely monitoring the system and would issue further updates as it evolved. While the system was likely to intensify into a depression, the weather office had not made any clear forecast on whether it would develop into a cyclonic storm, she said. "There is nothing to be panicked over the weather system. IMD will inform people at an appropriate time if the system intensifies further. However, intense rainfall activities will begin across south Odisha from September 22," Mohanty said. Pujari said some weather models indicated the possibility of a cyclone. He said 20 districts had been issued a yellow alert for heavy rain, with rainfall of 7 cm to 11 cm expected, and added that the warning could be revised after the low-pressure area formed on Saturday evening. A meeting of senior officials, including Special Relief Commissioner Rajesh P Patil, was held and directions were communicated to district collectors, the minister said.

Meanwhile, the IMD issued an orange alert for thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds in 15 districts over the next 24 hours. These are Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapada, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj. Heavy rain is likely at isolated places in Mayurbhanj, for which a yellow warning has been issued.

Technical Seminar Held at BLW During Official Language Fortnight

VARANASI



A technical seminar was organized today, August 18, 2026, by the Official Language Department at Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) under the aegis of the 'Official Language Fortnight' and under the guidance of General Manager Shri Ashutosh Pant. The seminar provided information regarding the department's operational procedures, official language policies and rules, and the practical application of 'e-Office' in Hindi. The primary objective of the technical seminar was to promote the use of the Official Language and encourage the seamless and simple use of Hindi in the technical domain. In his address, Chief Official Language Officer and Chief Mechanical Engineer -Production & Marketing, ShriRam Janam Chaubey, shared valuable insights on the use of Hindi in technical fields, technical terminology, and various aspects of the Official Language policy. He motivated employees to effectively use Hindi in their official work. On this occasion, Deputy Chief Marketing Manager-Sales, Shri Anup Mishra, delivered a lecture on the use and significance of Hindi in the technical sector. He highlighted the need for maximizing the use of Hindi in technical operations. During the seminar, employees were informed about the Official Language Department's website -rajbhasha.gov.in as a source of authentic and useful information. Details regarding the various facilities and resources available for conducting office work in Hindi were also shared.

Additionally, employees were apprised of the constitutional articles and provisions pertaining to the use of Hindi as the Official Language. The seminar aimed to raise awareness among employees about the effective implementation of the Official Language policy and to encourage greater use of Hindi in both technical and administrative tasks. The program was skillfully conducted by Senior Translator Shri Vijay Pratap Singh, while the vote of thanks was proposed by Senior Translator Shri S. Gururajan.

Haryana Accelerates Digital Connectivity, 5,154 Gram Panchayats Connected with BharatNet

Chief Secretary Anurag Rastogi reviews broadband reforms as the state targets a ₹150-crore incentive tied to RoW implementation

CHANDIGARH

Haryana has expanded digital connectivity, now covering 5,154 of 6,222 Gram Panchayats under BharatNet and activating 45,130 FTTH connections. Chief Secretary Anurag Rastogi today reviewed these broadband and telecom infrastructure initiatives. At the State Broadband Committee meeting, Rastogi reviewed the implementation of the Telecommunications (Right of Way) Rules, 2024, the progress on the Amended BharatNet Programme, the expedited telecom infrastructure application clearances, 5G infrastructure, expansion, and protection of underground utility networks.

The meeting was significant as ₹150 crore has been allocated to Haryana under Part VI of the Centre's Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI), 2026-27. This incentive depends on Haryana achieving six specified telecom reform milestones. Haryana has met one key milestone by resolving all Right of Way applications pending as of March 31, 2026, earning an incentive of up to ₹22.5 crore. The ₹150-crore reform package includes ₹45 crore for RoW order implementation, ₹22.5 crore for the state RoW portal, up to ₹22.5 crore for clearing the application backlog, ₹7.5 crore for reducing average disposal time to 45 days or less, ₹37.5 crore for BharatNet compliance, and ₹15 crore for meeting power-sector requirements. The Chief Secretary reviewed timelines for the remaining reforms and emphasized coordinated action among departments and field authorities to ensure smooth telecom infrastructure rollout and achievement of milestones. A key highlight was progress under the Amended BharatNet Programme. Of 6,222 Gram Panchayats, 5,154 (82.84%) have been covered, with 1,068 remaining. Haryana has 45,130 working FTTH connections, achieving 72.53% of the 62,220 target.

The programme aims to deliver high-speed connectivity to Gram Panchayats through a resilient network. The State Support Agreement addendum has been signed, and the Invest Haryana portal has been upgraded for BharatNet.

The committee discussed additional measures to support the programme, such as providing secured space for BharatNet equipment at Gram Panchayats, implementing a single Common Application Form for electricity connections, consolidated billing, and installing smart meters.

Haryana has advanced digitization of telecom infrastructure approvals by continuing with the upgraded Invest Haryana portal, which now accommodates the RoW Rules, 2024 and BharatNet. Key functions such as permission timelines, temporary overground networks, and special projects have been integrated. The meeting also focused on reducing the average disposal time for new RoW applications to 45 days or less, another reform milestone carrying an incentive of ₹7.5 crore. Rastogi reviewed steps to enhance district-level coordination through District Level Telecom Committees, chaired by Deputy Commissioners. The committee considered holding regular quarterly meetings to address telecom infrastructure issues and pending RoW cases at the field level. The committee also emphasised broader use of the Call Before u Dig (CBuD) platform to prevent accidental damage to underground infrastructure during excavation. Haryana has 1,204 registered departmental users, and the committee discussed expanding its use across departments, district administrations, and field offices.

The committee considered supporting the next phase of 5G infrastructure, including small cells, rooftop sites, poles, and fibre on suitable government buildings and street furniture, in line with the RoW framework.

Regarding green energy, the meeting reviewed installing smart meters on telecom tower connections to enable providers to access green energy. Smart meters are also required at Gram Panchayats under the Amended BharatNet Programme, allowing shared infrastructure for renewable energy access and BharatNet electricity billing.

The Chief Secretary emphasised the timely completion of the remaining milestones, improved departmental coordination, and the leveraging of technology to expedite approvals and strengthen Haryana's digital infrastructure.

The State Broadband Committee, chaired by the Chief Secretary, serves as the state-level arm of the National Broadband Mission. It is responsible for implementing broadband guidelines and monitoring progress across Haryana. Sh. Apoorva Kumar Singh, Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Haryana, PW (B&R) Department, Sh. Vijayendra Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary to Govt., Haryana, Development & Panchayats Department, Sh. J.Ganesan, Commissioner & Secretary, CRID and Sh. Samwartak Singh Khangwal, Director, Information Technology, Electronics & Communication, Haryana were also present in the meeting.

Supreme Court closes EPFO wage ceiling plea after limit raised to Rs 25,000

The Supreme Court said the EPFO wage ceiling revision plea needed no further hearing after the Cabinet approved a higher limit. The move is set to widen provident fund and pension coverage for over 51 lakh more employees.



The Supreme Court on Friday said a plea seeking revision of the wage ceiling under the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme did not require further consideration after the Union Cabinet approved raising the limit to Rs 25,000 per month from Rs 15,000.

A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih noted that the relief sought in the petition had effectively been addressed by the Cabinet decision. The matter came up during hearing of a plea that said the existing wage ceiling had remained unchanged since 2014 and sought its immediate revision. During the hearing, the bench told the petitioner's lawyer, "We saw in the newspapers. All your prayers have been granted."

The petitioner's counsel, however, said a notification on the decision had not yet been issued. The bench then said, "We take notice of the said submission and we find that the writ petition would not call for any further consideration as we think that following the Cabinet decision, the consequential steps would be taken by the respondents." It also told the petitioner's counsel, "The newspapers said they have taken a Cabinet decision. They will notify." The government on September 16 approved raising the wage ceiling for mandatory coverage under the EPFO to Rs 25,000 per month from Rs 15,000, with the aim of expanding access to provident fund savings and pension protection. Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw had said at a press briefing that the decision was expected to bring more than 51 lakh additional employees under mandatory EPFO coverage. He had said, "Rs 25,000 per month salary will be the new ceiling for provident fund deduction".

India, Russia set to deepen defence ties with focus on technology sharing, joint production

HONG KONG



India and Russia are seeking to deepen their decades-old defence relationship by moving beyond conventional arms sales towards greater technology and industrial cooperation, with missile exports and fighter-jet offers emerging as indicators of the evolving partnership, a report said this week, citing analysts.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi exchanged a handshake and warm embrace ahead of last weekend's BRICS summit in New Delhi, with Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal describing the moment on social media as "A bond that keeps growing stronger!"

The meeting signalled a broader shift in India-Russia defence cooperation, analysts said, as New Delhi and Moscow explored greater collaboration in joint production, technology sharing and export-oriented weapons development, a report in South China Morning Post (SCMP) highlighted.

Srikumar Menon, a former Indian diplomat, told SCMP that discussions on BrahMos missile modernisation and Russia's offer of technology transfer for Su-57 stealth fighter jets demonstrated "the growing maturity, depth and strategic sophistication" of the bilateral defence partnership. India and Russia have set a USD 100 billion bilateral trade target for 2030, compared with about USD 60 billion currently.

Russia has traditionally supplied a large share of India's military hardware, from tanks to fighter jets, but New Delhi has increasingly looked to France, the US and Israel for advanced defence technology and to diversify its supply chains amid the uncertainties due to the Russia-Ukraine war, the report mentioned.

"Russia has been hampered by Western sanctions since 2022 in accessing advanced components and technology, which in turn affected defence supplies to India," Menon said. According to the report, the shift has moved the relationship beyond a conventional buyer-seller model towards joint production, technology transfer and greater localisation under the "Make in India" programme launched in 2014.

The export success of BrahMos highlighted the changing nature of the partnership. The missile, which travels at three times the speed of sound and can be deployed from land, sea, air and underwater platforms, has found a growing market in a region increasingly concerned about maritime security, it noted. The Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam have already signed agreements to acquire the system, while Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim told NDTV last Saturday that Kuala Lumpur was engaged in exploratory discussions of its own.

Speaking to SCMP, Srinivaasan Balakrishnan, Director of strategic engagements and partnerships at the Indic Researchers Forum, said that although no agreement for an advanced BrahMos variant was announced during the Putin-Modi meeting, it heightened "the political priority of the next generation BrahMos work that was already under way". According to Balakrishnan, the proposed upgrades cover a smaller, lighter variant of BrahMos designed for India's Tejas jets, a submarine-launched variant and a hypersonic version that could travel at five times the speed of sound. "The next step should be to move from jointly producing an existing weapon to jointly developing the next generation of weapons. If Moscow is genuinely prepared to deepen technology sharing, BrahMos could become the foundation for a much more ambitious Indian-Russian defence industrial partnership," he told SCMP.

Rights group slams Pakistan for re-arrest of human rights lawyers hours after SC bail

ISLAMABAD

Leading human rights organisation Amnesty International condemned the re-arrest of Pakistani human rights lawyers Imaan Zainab Mazari-Hazir and Hadi Ali Chattha just hours after Pakistan's Supreme Court granted them bail, accusing authorities of misusing the justice system to target critical voices. The remarks came after a division bench of the Supreme Court on Thursday granted both lawyers bail and suspended their sentences in the social media posts case, and they were re-arrested shortly after.

"Imaan and Hadi's re-arrest dispels any pretence that the charges against them are anything other than a politically motivated attempt to punish them for their human rights work. Their case demonstrates once again the authorities' willingness to weaponise the legal system against critical voices," said Babu Ram Pant, Amnesty International's Deputy Regional Director for South Asia. He said that the latest charges, brought against them for simply attending a peaceful protest, are not only absurd but an insult to their lifelong commitment to human rights.



Nepal Finance Minister thanks India for support after flash floods

NEW DELHI

Nepal's Finance Minister, Swarnim Wagle, on Friday thanked the Government of India for its support in rescue and relief efforts following the recent flash flood in Rasuwa, the Embassy of Nepal in India stated.

"Hon. Dr. Swarnim Wagle, Finance Minister of Nepal, met H.E. Dr. S Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India, in New Delhi. Minister Wagle thanked the Government of India for its support in rescue and relief efforts following the recent flash flood in Rasuwa," the Embassy wrote on X.

"The two Ministers discussed ways to deepen the longstanding Nepal-India friendship and strengthen bilateral cooperation, particularly in investment, energy and connectivity," it added.

Last week, Relief and rescue items, including materials for tunnel rescue and forensic supplies, sent by India were handed over to Mahabir Pun, Nepal's Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation.

"The 8th Indian flight with relief and rescue items, including materials for tunnel rescue and forensic supplies, reached Kathmandu and were handed over to Nepal's Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, Mahabir Pun," Ambassador of India to Nepal, Naveen Srivastava, said on X.

India expedited the delivery of relief supplies, equipment and expert personnel to Nepal through eight special flights since August 26.

"India continues to provide humanitarian assistance to Nepal in support of ongoing rescue and relief operations in the wake of devastating flash floods. An eighth Indian Air Force flight carrying humanitarian assistance reached Kathmandu today," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

According to the MEA, more than 130 tonnes of relief material has been sent to Nepal, apart from the deployment of 54 expert personnel from India to support Nepal's ongoing rescue, relief and forensic operations.

"In addition to the standard relief material comprising temporary shelters, blankets, hygiene kits, solar lamps and medicines, the Indian side has provided specialised items and equipment such as: (i) tunnel and mud rescue equipment, including mud rescue suits, gas detectors, breathing apparatus, inflatable walkway etc.

Russia summons Britain's charge d'affaires over supply of UAVs

MOSCOW

Britain's charge d'affaires in Russia, Danae Dholakia, was summoned by the Russian Foreign Ministry on Friday over the increase in the supply of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and other weapons systems to Ukraine. "It was stated that the United Kingdom's policy of confrontation on the Ukrainian track is obviously aimed at drawing out and escalating the armed conflict and is delaying the possibility of a political settlement. It was pointed out that substantial supplies of long-range offensive weapons place London in the position of an accomplice to the bloody atrocities committed by the Kyiv regime, which can only be characterised as terrorism and war crimes," said a statement released by the Russian Foreign Ministry. According to the statement, the British side was presented with a list of international obligations it violates by providing support to Kyiv and was informed of the comprehensive risks associated with its 'destructive actions.

Uyghur group calls on Trump to raise issue of human rights abuses in Xinjiang during Xi's US visit

WASHINGTON



The World Uyghur Congress (WUC) has called on the US President Donald Trump and his administration to raise the issue of Uyghur genocide in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China, as well as transnational repression of diaspora communities by Chinese authorities, during President Xi Jinping's visit to the US on September 24.

According to the WUC, the United States formally recognised the deteriorating situation in Xinjiang as genocide for the first time on January 19, 2021. The US State Department reaffirmed that position in an official statement on September 10, weeks ahead of Xi's visit. "Xi's visit to Washington is a strategic moment to move beyond words of condemnation on the Uyghur genocide. The United States has been a strong and vocal ally to the Uyghur people, and Donald Trump has to use this opportunity to continue proving it," said WUC President Turgunjan Alawdun. The group said that although the Chinese authorities have changed the repression tactics, millions of detained and disappeared individuals remain unaccounted for.

"Labour transfer programs have increased in recent years, forcibly displacing Uyghur workers and coercing them into work. With the implementation of the Ethnic Unity and Progressive Law, even the most basic expressions of religious and cultural rights have been criminalised," said the WUC, highlighting the atrocities by Chinese authorities.

"The Chinese government has also been actively trying to disrupt diaspora communities abroad, by intimidating, threatening Uyghurs abroad, particularly human rights activists on US soil. Such horrific atrocities necessitate a robust and coordinated response from the United States and the international community. The US now has the opportunity to take a principled stance and enact real change," it added.

The WUC urged the US administration to substantively and meaningfully raise the Uyghur genocide in its discussions with Xi Jinping and other Chinese officials during their visit to Washington. It appealed to the US leaders to demand that Beijing stop "genocide of Uyghurs and other human rights violations" and honour its human rights obligations as a condition for normal relations with China. The organisation further called on the US to press the Chinese government to end its policies of transnational repression, particularly in American territory, in order to protect the American Uyghur, Tibetan, Hong Kong, and Chinese diaspora communities.



South Korea: Indian envoy discusses opportunities to strengthen cultural exchanges with Miryang's Mayor

SEOUL

India's Ambassador to South Korea, Gourangalal Das, met Friday with Miryang Mayor Ahn Byeong-gu to discuss opportunities to strengthen further cooperation in culture and people-to-people exchanges.

"The Ambassador met with the Mayor of Miryang, Mr Ahn Byeong-gu, today and discussed opportunities to strengthen further cooperation in the field of culture and people-to-people exchanges. The meeting coincided with the Sarang Festival of India in Korea, held at Yoga Culture Town in Miryang," the Embassy of India in South Korea stated on X. Earlier in the day, the rhythms of Odissi took centre stage in Gimhae, a city with longstanding civilisational ties with India. According to the Embassy, the troupe, led by Madhulita Mohapatra, delivered a beautiful performance, bringing the beauty of this classical dance form to Korean audiences. "Sarang - Festival of India in Gimhae. The rhythms of Odissi took centre stage in Gimhae, a city with longstanding civilisational ties with India. Led by Ms Madhulita Mohapatra, the troupe delivered a beautiful performance, bringing this classical dance form to Korean audiences. The journey continues. Next stop: Miryang," the Embassy stated on X. The troupe also performed in Busan on Thursday. The festival started in Seoul on Tuesday and is scheduled to perform in Gwangju and Nami Island through September 22. "Ramayana in Rhythm: Sarang Comes Alive in Seoul! Sarang – Festival of India in Korea opened in Seoul yesterday to a full house, with a spellbinding Odissi dance drama inspired by the Ramayana. The eight-member troupe, led by Ms Madhulita Mohapatra, brought the beloved epic to life through graceful movement .

Swedish survey ranks India as top country in business climate among 40+ markets

NEW DELHI

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday highlighted that India has been ranked as the top country in business climate among 40+ global markets in the latest Business Climate Survey 2026 by the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in India (SCCI). "India is the world's favourite destination to do business. Amid global turbulence, India's business climate is setting the gold standard for stability, growth, and ease of doing business," the Union Minister said in a post on social media platform X.

The Global Business Climate Survey 2026 edition presents insights from 41 markets, offering a broad view of Swedish companies' perspectives of doing business abroad.

The survey aims to provide a framework for comparing economic performance, outlook, and operating conditions over time in key Swedish export markets. It highlights the challenges companies face and identifies opportunities for Swedish companies considering entry into new markets or expansion in existing ones.

"APAC (Asia-Pacific) remains the most optimistic region, with India and Vietnam among the highest-rated markets. In contrast, Middle East and Africa indicates a shift toward more cautious sentiment, with notably lower scores in Saudi Arabia, where the share of companies expressing a positive outlook has declined from 90 per cent in 2025 to 44 per cent in 2026.

Russia expands entry ban list in response to EU's 21st package of sanctions

MOSCOW



Russia has substantially expanded its entry ban list for European Union (EU) representatives in response to the EU's 21st package of anti-Russian sanctions adopted on July 23, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Friday.

"In response to the EU's unlawful decisions, the Russian side has significantly expanded the list of representatives of European institutions, EU member states and a number of European states supporting Brussels' anti-Russian policy, who are banned from entering our country," the ministry said in a statement. The ministry said that the list includes individuals involved in making decisions on providing military aid to Ukraine, conducting activities aimed at undermining Russia's territorial integrity, the imposition of anti-Russian sanctions, causing damage to Russia's relations with third countries, and obstructing Russian maritime navigation, Xinhua News Agency reported. "Restrictive measures have also been imposed against 'civil activists' and representatives of academic communities in European states who hold hostile positions toward Russia, as well as members of national parliaments of EU member states and the European Parliament who voted for anti-Russian resolutions and draft laws," the statement added.

Meanwhile, Russia has also demanded that Japan remove the US Typhon systems from its territory, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Friday.

"On September 3, a note of protest was sent to the Japanese side in Moscow and Tokyo in connection with the deployment of U.S. ground-based Typhon systems, designed for launching intermediate- and shorter-range missiles, on the island of Kyushu," said Zakharova in a statement.



India extends viability gap funding support for passenger ferry connecting Sri Lanka

COLOMBO

The government of India has extended the Viability Gap Funding for the Nagapattinam–Kankesanthurai passenger ferry for another year, marking the third consecutive year of support.

"Government of India has extended the Viability Gap Funding for the Nagapattinam–Kankesanthurai passenger ferry for another year, marking the third consecutive year of support. Since its resumption in August 2024, the ferry has carried over 52,000 passengers, strengthening connectivity and people-to-people ties between India and Sri Lanka," the High Commission of India in Colombo stated on X on Friday. On Wednesday, the construction of a new two-storey accident and emergency unit at the District General Hospital in Sri Lanka's Mannar has begun with financial assistance received from the Indian government.

Finland: Indian envoy discusses opportunities for closer cooperation with Kuopio Mayor

HELSINKI



Ambassador of India to Finland, Hemant Kotalwar, on Friday met Soile Lahti, Mayor of Kuopio and discussed India-Finland bilateral relations and opportunities for closer cooperation.

"During his visit to Kuopio, Ambassador Hemant Kotalwar met Mayor Soile Lahti and discussed India-Finland bilateral relations and opportunities for closer cooperation. The Mayor briefed the Ambassador on Kuopio's strengths in health, education and research, Pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, its growing ICT sector, and the contribution of the Indian diaspora to the city," the Embassy of India in Finland stated on X.

The Ambassador also met Kaija Savolainen, Managing Director, and representatives of the Kuopio Chamber of Commerce to discuss opportunities for expanding India-Finland trade and investment.

"Ambassador Hemant Kotalwar met Kaija Savolainen, Managing Director, and representatives of the Kuopio Chamber of Commerce to discuss opportunities for expanding India-Finland trade and investment, particularly in the context of the finalisation of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement," the Embassy stated on X.

He also visited the University of Eastern Finland (UEF), where he met Minna Hendolin, Director of Impact, and her team. They discussed UEF's ongoing cooperation with Indian institutions and opportunities to further deepen academic and research collaboration between India and Finland.

In June, Finnish President Alexander Stubb described India as an "influential actor" on the global stage and underscored the importance of hearing New Delhi's perspective during a meeting with External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar on the sidelines of the Kultaranta Talks in Helsinki. Following the meeting, Stubb took to X and posted, "We met today at Kultaranta with India's Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar. We discussed the situation in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, efforts to end Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, and the upcoming G7 summit. India is an influential actor whose views are important to hear."

The two leaders exchanged perspectives on the evolving geopolitical situation and underscored the importance of diplomacy in navigating an increasingly uncertain global environment.

Sharing the details of the meeting, EAM took to X and said, "Pleased to meet President Alexander Stubb of Finland on the sidelines of the Kultaranta Talks. We exchanged views on the evolving geopolitical situation and underscored the importance of diplomacy in navigating an increasingly uncertain global environment."

Indian civil society raises PoJK rights concerns at UNHRC

GENEVA

An Indian civil society representative has raised concerns over the shrinking civic space and alleged human rights violations in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) during the ongoing 63rd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Speaking during the General Debate under Item 3 on civic space and democratic participation, the representative said an open, free and inclusive civic space was essential for meaningful democratic participation and functioning democracies. The Indian civil society group drew particular attention to the situation in PoJK, saying protests and tensions in the region had escalated since June. It referred to reports of loss of life and the alleged disproportionate use of force by security forces,

calling for accountability, dialogue and protection of fundamental freedoms. The statement also linked the growing public grievances in PoJK to economic difficulties, including inflation and unemployment.



Odisha govt announces 'Silicon Valley' at Naraj, secures Rs 23,600 crore proposals

BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday announced that the state government will develop eastern India's Silicon Valley in Naraj, Kataka district. While participating in the SEMICON India 2026 seminar in New Delhi, CM Majhi announced the development of Odisha Silicon Valley on an 870-acre site in Naraj, near Cuttack. Odisha Silicon Valley will host major semiconductor, electronics, and IT projects.

According to an official statement, the Odisha Silicon Valley area in Naraj offers a highly favourable strategic location for connectivity and industrial infrastructure.

"With seamless connectivity to the Cuttack–Bhubaneswar urban corridor, the site also provides efficient multimodal access to major ports such as Paradip and Dhamra, along with connectivity to key national highways. These advantages position Naraj as a potential strategic hub for the semiconductor supply chain, logistics, and allied industries," the state government said. It further noted that semiconductor fabrication facilities and assembly units require reliable access to substantial quantities of water and power, and the site's proximity to the Mahanadi River provides a significant locational advantage for meeting industrial water requirements.

FSSAI suspends licence of Paradise Distilleries over serious non-compliances

NEW DELHI

India's food regulator on Friday suspended the licence of Paradise Distilleries, following serious non-compliances observed during the inspection of the food premises.

The FSSAI licence, issued to Paradise Distilleries Pvt. Ltd., has been suspended with immediate effect for 15 days.

The FBO has been directed to cease all food business activities during the suspension period and rectify the deficiencies within the stipulated period. The FSSAI said in a statement that expired flavours and colours were found being used in the manufacturing of alcoholic beverages, which may affect the safety and quality of the final products.

"Poor hygiene and sanitation conditions were observed, including an improperly closed final blended tank, a bottle rinser covered with grease and dust, broken glass pieces and absence of a proper glass policy," said the statement. The food regulator said that the FBO had not made the required changes to the labels as per the notice issued by the Central Licensing Authority and had not provided a satisfactory reply. "Multiple structural and operational deficiencies were observed, including improper fitting of doors, inadequate lighting and working space, flaking paint/plaster, unhygienic packing, improper storage, ineffective pest control and poor personal hygiene of food handlers," said the FSSAI.

Sensex, Nifty end flat as Tata stocks tumble, crude oil eases marginally

Indian equities ended mixed on Friday as easing crude and bargain buying lifted the Nifty while Tata and IT stocks dragged the Sensex. The session kept focus on Tata Sons uncertainty, IPO-driven liquidity shifts and whether lower oil and yields can sustain the recovery.



Benchmark indices ended mixed on Friday as easing crude oil prices and bargain buying after the recent sell-off helped the Nifty recover, while heavy selling in IT and Tata Group stocks kept the Sensex under pressure. Strong demand for IPOs also continued to divert liquidity from the secondary market. The BSE Sensex opened at 74,575.24 and closed at 74,294.96, down 19.63 points or 0.03%. The Nifty 50 opened at 23,334.70 and ended at 23,346.40, gaining 75.80 points or 0.33%. Despite Friday's recovery, the Sensex and Nifty fell 0.65% and 0.22%, respectively, during the week, marking their sixth straight weekly decline. This is the longest losing streak for the Indian market since 2020.

TATA STOCKS UNDER PRESSURE

Tata Group stocks were among the key drags on Friday, with investors reacting to heightened uncertainty over the potential listing and leadership of Tata Sons following a public dispute. TCS was the biggest Sensex loser, falling 4.33%. Tata Steel declined 1.73%, while the broader Tata Group stocks also came under pressure. According to the information provided, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, Tata Investment Corporation and Tata Chemicals were among the major Tata stocks that fell sharply, with declines ranging from 2.5% to 11.1%. The selling reversed some of Thursday's gains, when Tata stocks had rallied after Tata Sons reappointed N Chandrasekaran as chairman for another five years and decided to consider a public listing. The Tata Sons developments have also come alongside a proposal from the Shapoorji Pallonji Group to monetise a portion of its stake in the holding company.

IT STOCKS DRAG BUT BANKS, METALS SUPPORT NIFTY

IT stocks remained under pressure after their strong performance earlier in the week. Nifty IT fell 1.03%. TCS declined 4.33%, while Tech Mahindra fell 1.82%, HCLTech dropped 1.43% and Infosys declined 0.56%. The weakness in IT came amid concerns that prolonged higher interest rates could weigh on global technology spending. Several heavyweight stocks helped limit the broader market's losses. Adani Ports was the top Sensex gainer, rising 3.72%. Power Grid gained 2.47%, HDFC Bank rose 2.26%, Bharti Airtel advanced 2.11% and Bajaj Finance gained 1.08%. Eternal rose 0.82%, L&T gained 0.78%, SBI advanced 0.54% and Axis Bank rose 0.23%. Among the sectoral indices, Nifty Metal was one of the strongest performers, gaining 1.51%. Nifty Media rose 1.34%, Nifty Realty advanced 1.19%, Nifty Financial Services Ex-Bank gained 1.10% and Nifty MidSmall Financial Services rose 0.98%. Nifty Pharma gained 0.49%, Nifty PSU Bank rose 0.66% and Nifty Private Bank advanced 0.44%. Nifty Auto was almost flat, while Nifty FMCG declined 0.23%. Nifty Consumer Durables fell 0.43% and Nifty MidSmall IT & Telecom slipped 0.03%. The broader market ended stronger than the benchmark indices. Nifty 100 rose 0.50%, Nifty 200 gained 0.65% and Nifty 500 advanced 0.82%. Nifty Midcap 50 rose 0.87%, while Nifty Midcap 100 gained 1.24%. Nifty Smallcap 100 was the strongest performer, rising 1.74%. India VIX fell 7.36% to 11.39, pointing to a sharp decline in market volatility. Insurers also remained in focus, with HDFC Life and SBI Life gaining 4% and 2.8%, respectively, during the session, according to the information provided.

NSE IPO FULLY SUBSCRIBED

The Rs 2.3-billion NSE IPO was fully subscribed on its second day of bidding, adding to the strong activity in India's primary market. Five Indian IPOs are currently open for subscription. The continued rush for new issues has become an important factor for the secondary market, as investors allocate money towards IPOs and listing opportunities. Crude oil prices eased on Friday, providing some relief to Indian equities. Brent crude was trading at $103.41 a barrel, down 1.35%, while WTI crude was at $101.47, down 0.43%. However, oil remains above $100 a barrel amid continuing Middle East tensions. Elevated crude prices remain a risk for India because they can put pressure on inflation, the trade balance and the rupee.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said moderation in crude prices and global yields helped improve risk appetite, although geopolitical uncertainty remained a concern.

"Equities extended their recovery as moderation in crude and global yields improved risk appetite, despite concerns around the continued geopolitical uncertainty. Investor sentiment was further supported by positive global cues following largely anticipated policy actions from major central banks," Nair said.

He said the rebound was broad-based across sectors, although IT stocks declined due to profit booking after their recent outperformance.

"While the recent moderation in oil prices and yields has provided near-term relief, the sustainability of the market recovery will depend on further easing of global macro risks and a meaningful revival in foreign investor inflows," Nair said. The market therefore enters the next week after six consecutive weekly declines, with crude oil prices, global yields, foreign flows, Tata Sons developments and the continuing IPO boom likely to remain key factors for investors.

NSE IPO balances Investor and Seller expectations, says CBDO Sriram Krishnan

HYDERABAD

The National Stock Exchange's much-awaited Initial Public Offering (IPO) has received a strong response from investors, with NSE Chief Business Development Officer (CBDO) Sriram Krishnan describing the issue pricing as reasonable and saying the exchange successfully balanced the expectations of selling shareholders and investors. Addressing a press meet in Hyderabad on Friday, Krishnan said NSE began its IPO roadshows on July 30 and subsequently held extensive discussions with institutional investors. The initial indicative price range of Rs 2,000 to Rs 2,100 per share was subsequently revised following feedback from IPO bankers. The final price band was fixed at Rs 1,700 to Rs 1,785. He said the anchor book attracted 189 investors and raised Rs 6,746 crore. The main IPO opened on Thursday, September 17, with the Rs 22,561.57 crore issue being entirely an offer for sale. NSE itself will not receive proceeds from the issue. Krishnan said the response remained encouraging despite global uncertainties, including geopolitical developments and concerns surrounding artificial intelligence related developments. Krishnan said that as of 1 pm on Friday, the NSE IPO was witnessing a steady response across investor categories. He said the employee portion had been fully subscribed, while the Qualified Institutional Buyers category had already been subscribed 1.2 times and the Non Institutional Investors portion was also oversubscribed. The retail portion had received around 60 per cent subscription by 1 pm, according to the update he shared. Krishnan expressed confidence that the issue would be fully subscribed by the end of Friday, while the final day of the IPO on Monday would determine the overall level of subscription.



On concerns about the IPO pricing, Krishnan said NSE had arrived at what it considered a reasonable valuation. He explained that reducing the price also involved the risk of some selling shareholders withdrawing, making the process a difficult balancing exercise between sellers and buyers.

CAS and Index Options Settlement

On the Closing Auction Session (CAS), Krishnan said CAS was introduced primarily to help passive fund managers carry out index rebalancing at closing prices and avoid tracking errors. Foreign passive fund managers, including BlackRock and Vanguard, had sought such a mechanism from SEBI. Following consultations, the system was introduced and, according to Krishnan, has worked efficiently. He acknowledged concerns among market participants regarding the inclusion of CAS in determining settlement prices for expiring index options. He said SEBI's consultation paper proposed a gradual transition to a new methodology involving VWAP calculations over specified periods. Krishnan said such regulatory changes would ultimately help the growth and development of the market.

On Derivatives, Krishnan said they were here to stay, while acknowledging regulators' concerns over retail investors suffering losses in options trading. He said prescribing investor eligibility criteria could potentially provide a mechanism to determine who should participate in options trading and help protect retail investors.

NSE's 32 Year Journey

Krishnan traced NSE's journey from its establishment in 1992 and commencement of operations in 1994. He highlighted its introduction of online screen based trading, real time risk management, wider broker access and an institutional ownership model as key differentiators. He said NSE subsequently expanded into clearing and settlement, indices, market data, equity derivatives, currency, commodities and other segments. NSE also introduced innovations such as NSDL, electronic gold receipts and electricity futures. Today, he said, NSE has emerged as a vertically integrated exchange with a strong technology platform, global scale and a broad range of financial products.

BIRKENSTOCK EXPANDS ITS HIGH-STREET PRESENCE IN INDIA

HYDERABAD

WITH NEW CONCEPT STORE IN HYDERABAD

BIRKENSTOCK brings its tradition, function and quality to Hyderabad – celebrating craftsmanship and introducing its Autumn/Winter 2026 collection – to excite footbed lovers across the city. The global zeitgeist and purpose brand - and inventor of the footbed, has stood for a tradition in shoemaking, with roots dating back to 1774.

The brand is pleased to announce the opening of its new store in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, continuing to deepen its retail footprint across India's key markets. Banjara Hills, one of Hyderabad's prominent high-street destinations, marks the brand's latest step in that journey. Known for its vibrant retail and lifestyle scene, Banjara Hills brings together the city's most recognised fashion and design addresses, making it a natural home for BIRKENSTOCK's newest store.





Spanning 3216 sq.ft., the new store brings together BIRKENSTOCK's signature silhouettes, including ARIZONA, GIZEH, MADRID, BOSTON and MAYARI, alongside its diverse clog universe and closed shoe offering. The store also marks the first BIRKENSTOCK store in Hyderabad to feature the 1774 Collection display, bringing the brand's premium line to the city.

For the Autumn/Winter season, familiar styles are being re-imagined with new colours, materials and finishes, enhanced with embellishments such as rivets, braided leather elements or an extended buckle collection – adding diversity to the functional element. Animal prints and textured leathers, along with closed-toe styles, built on BIRKENSTOCK's focus on quality and function while staying true to the brand's DNA. Consumers visiting the Banjara Hills store can experience BIRKENSTOCK's signature footbed first-hand, alongside the product excellence and craftsmanship the brand is known for. The store offers visitors the opportunity to experience the sensation of walking as nature intended, second only to walking barefoot on natural ground, reflecting the brand's mission to bring the footbed to as many people as possible, no matter their age, background, gender or taste. The opening reflects BIRKENSTOCK's continued confidence in Hyderabad as a growing market for the brand in India and invited footbed lovers and new fans to explore the world of BIRKENSTOCK.



CII-Green Business Centre Bridges Academia and Industry

The Industry-Academia initiative at 25th CII Energy Efficiency Summit brought 40+ research submissions and 18 shortlisted papers into the spotlight, connecting emerging ideas with industry needs.

HYDERABAD

The Confederation of Indian Industry's Green Business Centre (CII-GBC) is strengthening the bridge between academia and industry through its National Platform for Industry-Academia Collaboration for Research and Innovation in Energy Efficiency and Sustainability, with the initiative taking centre stage at the 25th CII Energy Efficiency Summit 2026 being held at HICC, Hyderabad.

The Academic Paper Presentation Session on "Low Carbon Technologies and Energy Efficiency", brought together researchers, scholars, faculty members, students and industry professionals to showcase research and explore pathways for translating academic ideas into practical, scalable solutions. More than 40 submissions from researchers and scholars across India were received for the paper presentation track. Following a structured evaluation, 18 abstracts were shortlisted for presentation, giving researchers an opportunity to place their work before industry leaders, technology providers and sustainability practitioners participating in the Summit. The research areas included industrial decarbonization, renewable energy & biofuels, cement, concrete, built environment, materials for circular economy and AI for industry & sustainability.

Mr. K S Venkatagiri, Executive Director, CII-Green Business Centre, said: "The real value of research is created when an idea moves beyond the paper and begins solving a problem on the ground. This platform is designed to create that journey—from the laboratory to the pilot, and from the pilot to scale. By bringing researchers face-to-face with industry, we are creating an environment where academic excellence meets real-world experience, where industry challenges can inspire new research, and where promising technologies can find pathways to adoption. Our ambition is to build a sustained national ecosystem in which knowledge, innovation and industry action reinforce each other to accelerate India's energy transition. Such platforms play a crucial role in recognising emerging ideas and enabling researchers to translate knowledge and research into practical, scalable solutions that create value for industry, society and the nation."

The initiative comes at a time when India's transition towards energy efficiency, sustainability and decarbonisation requires more than incremental improvements. New technologies, materials, processes, business models and approaches are increasingly needed across sectors. Against this backdrop, the Academic Paper Presentation initiative under 25th CII Energy Efficiency Summit, provides researchers and students with more than a forum to present their work. It creates an opportunity to receive feedback from experts, understand industry perspectives and assess the relevance and practical applicability of their research to real-world challenges and opportunities. For industry participants, the session offers a window into emerging technologies, ideas and talent that could shape the next generation of sustainable industry, while creating potential pathways for research collaboration, technology pilots, internships, project engagements and partnerships. The shortlisted papers were evaluated by a multidisciplinary jury comprising Prof. Jyotirmay Mathur, BIS Chair Professor, Mechanical Engineering Department, Centre for Energy and Environment, MNIT Jaipur, and Chair of the Jury; Prof. Morapakala Srinivas, Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, BITS Pilani – Hyderabad Campus; and Prof. Vijaya Lakshmi Thatiparthi, Professor, Department of Environmental Science & Technology, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University Hyderabad (JNTUH). Over the longer term, CII-GBC envisions the initiative as a national ecosystem connecting educational institutions, industries, technology experts, researchers, innovators and sustainability practitioners. The initiative also creates opportunities for research findings and emerging technologies to move towards wider adoption by facilitating interaction between knowledge creators and industry stakeholders. Through networking, research proceedings, expert discussions, recognition and potential collaborative engagements, the platform seeks to create stronger pathways from research to implementation and from innovation to impact.

India's IT software exports rise 9.5 pc to cross $239 bn in 2025-26

MUMBAI

India's total IT software export services, including services delivered by foreign affiliates of Indian companies, increased by 9.5 per cent during financial year 2025-26, compared with the previous financial year, to touch the $239.3 billion mark, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday. India's exports of software services, excluding their sales through overseas commercial presence, increased by 8.2 per cent year-on-year during the financial year 2025-26 to $221.4 billion, the RBI said. Computer services continued to account for more than two-thirds of India's total software services exports during the year; BPO services remained the dominant component of IT enabled services (ITES) exports, the RBI statement said. Among BPO services finance and accounting services, auditing and bookkeeping and tax consulting services was the dominant streams. Private limited companies dominated 2025–26 software exports with 9.3 per cent growth. The United States of America remained the major software exports destination with a share of 54.1 per cent, followed by European countries (31.8 per cent) where the UK had a major share of 15.4 per cent.



AP vs Telangana

Realty Growth Story

Real estate in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana is entering a new phase, but the two neighbouring states are following distinctly different paths. While Hyderabad has already established itself as a major technology, business and residential hub, Andhra Pradesh is building its next growth story around Amaravati, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada and emerging infrastructure corridors.

The contrast is increasingly visible in the way property demand is generated. Telangana's market is largely supported by an existing urban economy, established employment centres and a mature residential ecosystem. Andhra Pradesh, meanwhile, has a stronger element of future-city development, infrastructure creation and expectations around new economic activity. This makes the two markets different not only in terms of property prices, but also in terms of maturity, risk, demand drivers and the kind of buyers they attract.

Hyderabad Gives Telangana a Strong Head Start

Telangana's real estate story is closely connected to Hyderabad. Over the past two decades, the city has evolved from a technology centre into a diversified metropolitan economy with IT, global capability centres, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, financial services, education and professional services supporting property demand. This economic base gives Hyderabad an important advantage: people are buying homes not only because they expect future development, but also because employment and infrastructure already exist. Knight Frank reported that Hyderabad recorded 38,403 residential sales in 2025, a 4 per cent increase over the previous year. The city's average residential price reached ₹6,721 per sq ft during 2025, up 13 per cent year-on-year. The momentum continued into 2026. In the first half of the year, Hyderabad recorded 19,249 housing sales, up 1 per cent year-on-year, while average residential prices rose 7 per cent to ₹8,258 per sq ft. The numbers also reveal a changing character of the market. Hyderabad is increasingly moving towards premium housing, with buyers willing to spend more for larger homes, better amenities, stronger connectivity and proximity to employment centres.

The West Hyderabad Engine

The most powerful part of Telangana's property story remains the western corridor. Gachibowli, HITEC City, Madhapur, Nanakramguda, Financial District and Kokapet have developed into a connected commercial and residential ecosystem. The presence of large technology companies, financial institutions, pharmaceutical companies and global capability centres has created a steady employment base. Commercial real estate is reinforcing residential demand. Cushman & Wakefield reported that Hyderabad recorded 5.2 million sq ft of office leasing in the first half of 2026, a 25 per cent year-on-year increase. Global capability centres accounted for 37 per cent of quarterly leasing during the period, while Gachibowli was the city's most active office corridor.

This is significant for residential real estate because office expansion generally creates demand for nearby housing, rentals, retail and social infrastructure.

Kokapet and the Financial District represent the next phase of this transformation. These locations are moving from peripheral development into major premium urban districts. Large residential towers, commercial developments, schools, hospitals, retail destinations and improved road connectivity are gradually creating a more self-contained urban environment.

Amaravati's Opportunity and Its Uncertainty

That difference makes Amaravati potentially transformative, but it also makes the market more dependent on execution. A new capital requires roads, water supply, drainage, public transport, government offices, schools, hospitals, retail, hotels and private-sector employment before it can function as a complete city. The Andhra Pradesh government is currently advancing several such components. APCRDA's current procurement records, for example, include electricity distribution infrastructure and a district cooling system for the government complex. However, the pace of development remains an important factor. Recent reporting has highlighted delays in some Amaravati infrastructure works, showing that the transition from plans and sanctions to completed infrastructure remains a key issue for the property market. For buyers, therefore, the difference between announced infrastructure and completed infrastructure matters enormously. A road shown on a master plan does not immediately create the same property value as a functioning road. Similarly, a proposed office campus does not generate residential demand until companies actually occupy it and employees begin working there.

Visakhapatnam Adds Another Dimension to Andhra Pradesh

While Amaravati represents the capital story, Visakhapatnam offers Andhra Pradesh a different real estate narrative. Vizag already has an established urban population, industrial base, coastline, port economy, educational institutions and tourism appeal. This makes its property market less dependent on a single future project. The city's long-term potential is also being supported by major infrastructure developments. The opening of the Bhogapuram international airport in August 2026 is expected to strengthen connectivity to the northern coastal region, while proposed technology and business investments could further diversify demand. Visakhapatnam's property market therefore combines an existing city with future infrastructure. That is different from Amaravati, where much of the investment thesis is connected to the creation of a new urban capital.

Vijayawada and the Capital Region Connection

Vijayawada occupies another important position. It is already a functioning commercial and transport centre and sits close to Amaravati. As government offices, institutions and infrastructure expand around the capital region, surrounding locations can benefit from the growth of employment and services. Areas such as Tadepalli, Mangalagiri, Guntur-side corridors and other parts of the capital region are therefore likely to remain closely linked to Amaravati's development. The important point is that Andhra Pradesh's real estate story should not be viewed simply as "Amaravati versus Visakhapatnam". The broader picture includes a network of cities and corridors whose fortunes could become increasingly interconnected. Hyderabad's Strength Is Employment; Andhra's Bet Is Infrastructure This is perhaps the biggest difference between the two states. Hyderabad's property market has a powerful employment-to-housing cycle. Companies create jobs, employees need homes, families require schools and healthcare, and businesses establish retail and services. The resulting ecosystem attracts additional companies and residents. Andhra Pradesh is attempting to create similar ecosystems through infrastructure-led development. Amaravati needs government institutions and private businesses to generate employment. Visakhapatnam needs additional technology, services and infrastructure activity to deepen its economic base. Vijayawada and the capital region can potentially benefit from both. This means Telangana currently represents a more mature urban real estate model, while Andhra Pradesh represents a broader development and urbanisation opportunity.

But Hyderabad Is No Longer an Easy Growth Story

The maturity of Hyderabad also creates a different set of challenges. Property prices have increased significantly, and developers are increasingly concentrating on premium and luxury housing. At the same time, inventory has been rising. Knight Frank recorded 56,095 unsold housing units in Hyderabad in H1 2026, with inventory equivalent to about 5.9 quarters of sales.

A separate recent report based on CREDAI Hyderabad and CRE Matrix data said housing sales in Greater Hyderabad declined 13 per cent in the first half of fiscal 2026, even as prices remained elevated. The difference in the figures reflects different reporting periods and methodologies, but both point towards an important reality: Hyderabad is a large and established market, yet buyers are becoming more selective. The next stage may therefore be less about indiscriminate expansion and more about location, product quality, developer credibility, connectivity and price justification. Andhra Pradesh Is Building a Different Kind of Property Market Andhra Pradesh's real estate market is more fragmented than Telangana's because it does not have a single city dominating the entire state to the same extent as Hyderabad dominates Telangana. Instead, Andhra Pradesh has multiple potential growth centres. Amaravati represents the administrative-capital story. Vijayawada and the surrounding capital region provide an established urban and commercial base. Visakhapatnam represents the coastal metropolitan story, supported by its industrial, technology, port and services potential. Other cities and corridors are also developing around transport, tourism, industry and logistics. This makes Andhra Pradesh's property market more geographically diverse.



The Buyer Profiles Are Also Changing

In Hyderabad, end-users remain a major force. Knight Frank said housing demand in H1 2026 remained largely end-user driven, supported by employment in technology, GCCs, BFSI and professional services. The typical buyer may be an IT professional, business owner, senior executive, family upgrading to a larger home or an NRI looking for a property connected to Hyderabad's economic growth. In Andhra Pradesh, the buyer profile can be more varied. There are local end-users, NRIs, landowners, business families and buyers interested in emerging urban corridors. This does not mean every buyer in Andhra Pradesh is speculative, nor that Hyderabad has no investors. Rather, the underlying demand structures are different.

Premiumisation Is Emerging in Both Markets

Another common trend is the growing importance of premium housing. In Hyderabad, rising land and construction costs, stronger household incomes and demand for amenities have pushed developers towards larger apartments and premium gated communities. The registration data also indicates increasing transaction values. In 2025, Hyderabad recorded 75,222 residential registrations, down 2 per cent in volume, but the total value increased 11 per cent to ₹52,351 crore. Andhra Pradesh could experience a similar transition as new urban districts develop. As Amaravati gets government infrastructure and Visakhapatnam gets improved connectivity and business investment, demand may gradually move from basic plots and conventional housing towards organised apartments, gated communities, commercial spaces, hospitality and mixed-use developments.

Infrastructure Will Decide the Next Phase

For both states, infrastructure will remain the key link between real estate and economic growth.

Telangana already has a substantial infrastructure base around Hyderabad, including the Outer Ring Road, airport connectivity, established IT corridors and expanding urban roads. Future projects can therefore extend an existing network. Andhra Pradesh has a larger opportunity to shape new urban corridors from the beginning. But it also faces the challenge of building those networks at scale. Amaravati's government complex, trunk infrastructure, roads, utilities and flood-management systems will be particularly important. APCRDA documents show ongoing work across these areas. The successful completion of such projects could gradually convert the capital region from a land-led market into a more diversified city-led market.

Land Versus Apartments: Another Key Difference

Land remains psychologically and financially important in Andhra Pradesh, particularly around emerging development corridors. The greenfield nature of Amaravati has created considerable interest in land because buyers associate infrastructure development with future urban expansion. Hyderabad, by contrast, has moved much further towards vertical development. High-rise apartments, gated communities and mixed-use developments dominate many of the city's major growth corridors. This does not mean land has lost importance in Telangana. Rather, land scarcity and urbanisation have made developed residential products increasingly important. For Andhra Pradesh, the transition from land-led speculation to built-up, income-generating real estate will be an important indicator of market maturity.

Two States, Two Real Estate Timelines

The biggest mistake would be to compare Andhra Pradesh and Telangana only through current property prices. The two markets are operating on different timelines. Hyderabad has already passed through several phases of expansion and is now entering a more mature stage where affordability, inventory, infrastructure capacity and premiumisation are becoming increasingly important. Andhra Pradesh is at an earlier stage in several of its emerging markets. Amaravati is being rebuilt as a planned capital, Visakhapatnam is developing as a larger economic centre and Vijayawada is positioned between established urban demand and the capital-region expansion. Therefore, the real comparison is not simply Hyderabad versus Amaravati. It is an established metropolitan ecosystem versus an emerging multi-city growth ecosystem.

The Road Ahead

Telangana's advantage lies in the depth of Hyderabad's economy. Its real estate market is supported by jobs, established infrastructure, corporate investment and a large population base. Even as the market becomes more selective, the underlying urban ecosystem remains substantial. Andhra Pradesh's opportunity lies in its development potential. Amaravati can create a new administrative and institutional centre, Visakhapatnam can strengthen its position as a major coastal economic city, and Vijayawada and surrounding areas can benefit from the expansion of the capital region. But Andhra Pradesh's next phase will depend heavily on execution. Planned roads, government complexes and investment announcements must translate into functioning infrastructure, employment and occupied commercial spaces. Ultimately, both states are moving towards more sophisticated real estate markets, but from different starting points.

Amaravati: From Vision to Construction

Amaravati is fundamentally different from Hyderabad because it is being developed as a greenfield capital city. The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority describes Amaravati as a planned greenfield capital spread across 217.23 sq km. Its development model involves infrastructure, government buildings, residential areas, commercial districts and other urban facilities. After a period of uncertainty and stalled development, the project has entered another implementation phase following the 2024 state elections. The scale of the planned investment is substantial. APCRDA documents say Phase I of the Amaravati Capital City Development Project is planned for 2025-2029, with an estimated investment of about $3.64 billion. The programme includes the Amaravati Government Complex, trunk infrastructure and neighbourhood-level infrastructure. Government records also show that multiple works have received administrative sanctions during 2026, including major works relating to the Secretariat and government complex, High Court, Assembly, roads, utilities and flood-management infrastructure. For real estate, this creates an important distinction.In Hyderabad, residential development largely follows existing employment. In Amaravati, property development is expected to grow alongside the creation of the city's economic and administrative ecosystem.

SHORT NEWS

World Squash Championship

Yugan Sakthivel Muthukumaar wins Trap Men Junior gold



PORPETTO (ITALY): India's Yugan Sakthivel Muthukumaar won the gold medal in the Trap Men Junior event at the ISSF Junior World Cup Shotgun on Friday. The 15-year-old marksman hit 27 targets in a closely contested final to edge out Italy's Francesco Tanfoglio by a single hit. Tanfoglio claimed the silver medal with 26 hits, while fellow Italian Simone Roncen secured bronze with 21 targets. Earlier, Yugan demonstrated remarkable composure to advance to the medal round. He shot a qualification score of 114 across five rounds (22, 22, 24, 23, 23) to finish tied for sixth place. In the subsequent shoot-off for the last qualification spot, the Indian shooter held his nerve to defeat Spain's Eduard Salichs 2-1. Starting from the sixth position in the final, Yugan maintained consistent rhythm throughout the elimination stages. He struck decisive hits in the closing sequences to finish ahead of a competitive field and secure India's first medal of the meet.

Davis Cup: India trail Korea 0-2 after Suresh, Nagal suffer comeback defeats



SEOUL

India suffered a difficult opening day in their Davis Cup in Qualifiers 2nd Round tie against Korea as Dhakshineswar Suresh and Sumit Nagal both surrendered leads in three-set battles to leave the visitors 0-2 down at the Olympic Tennis Court here on Friday.

For the first time, Korea was one victory away from a Davis Cup quarter-finals spot after Soonwoo Kwon and Hyeon Chung staged dramatic comebacks against India's top two singles players.

The turnaround came in the afternoon session when Kwon handed Suresh his first Davis Cup loss, recovering from a slow start to win 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Suresh began strongly on a warm but cloudy afternoon, breaking Kwon in the first service game. Although backed by a partisan home crowd, the Korean had trouble finding his footing on the slow court early on.

But the tide turned in the second set as Kwon stepped up on return and began to attack Suresh's serves early. The tactic yielded four double faults from the Indian before Kwon converted a break point in the sixth game and served out the set.

Suresh again started well in the decider but Kwon kept up the pressure and broke in the sixth game. The Korean found success with his backhand repeatedly and earned Korea's first match point in the ninth game. Suresh did save it but Kwon wrapped up the match in the next game.

"I felt a lot more nervous than I have in a long time," Kwon said after the match. "Of course, I usually feel some nerves, but today they were particularly intense. At the beginning, my vision was almost blurred. From the second set onward, I began to feel more relaxed. Although things did not go well in the first set, I tried to get a better read on his serving patterns. In the second set, I was able to read those patterns and hold my return position to one side, which helped me play much better." Kwon finished with seven aces and converted an impressive 92 per cent of his first serve points.

Nagal, who is India's top-ranked, then appeared to be on course to even matters up when he raced to a 4-0 lead against Chung in the evening session. But the Korean had other ideas and eventually triumphed 2-6, 6-4, 7-5 in three hours and five minutes of relentless tennis. Nagal broke Chung twice in the first set and led 5-2 before serving out the set. Chung saved four set points but Nagal eventually took the first set.

The second set saw a series of long rallies and gritty service holds before Nagal broke to go up 4-3. But the Indian couldn't make the advantage count.

Nagal double faulted in the next game to allow Chung a chance to break back and the Korean did not miss. Chung then broke Nagal again to take the second set 6-4 and force a decider.

Chung continued the onslaught in the fourth game of the final set but Nagal fought back, breaking three games later. The momentum kept shifting as both players fought through the physical and mental challenges of the match.

At 5-5, Nagal finally buckled under pressure, serving a double fault to hand Chung a match point. The Korean seized the opportunity to notch another comeback and give Korea a 2-0 lead.

"When I was broken at 3-3 in the second set and fell behind 3-4, I actually felt more relaxed," Chung reflected after the win. "I thought my opponent might feel the pressure of wanting to close out the match. I kept believing that I would get at least one opportunity and that, if I could take it, the momentum might shift again. At 5-5 in the third set, there was no real strategy left. We had both been playing for more than three hours, so it became a battle of mental strength."

India now face a must-win situation on the second day of the tie. Saturday will begin with the doubles rubber before the two reverse singles matches. Korea need just one more victory to seal the tie and book a place in their first-ever Davis Cup quarter-finals.



SK Srivastava Lays Foundation Stone for Indoor Volleyball Court and Gym

- **Step towards strengthening sporting activities across the zone**

HYDERABAD

Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, South Central Railway laid foundation stone for construction of Indoor Volleyball Court and Gym today i.e., 18th September, 2026 at Railway Sports Complex, Secunderabad. Shri Satya Prakash, Additional General Manager, SCR; Ms. Aroma Singh Thakur, IG cum Principal Chief Security Commissioner & President, SCR Sports Association (SCRSA); Shri P. Koteswara Rao, Financial Advisor & Chief Accounts Officer (Staff Welfare Services) & General Secretary, SCRSA; Principal Heads of the Departments, Divisional Railway Manager, Hyderabad Division and other senior officials were also present on the occasion.



With a view to provide enhanced facilities for sportspersons and fitness enthusiasts, a new Indoor Volleyball Court and Gym facility is set to be developed at Railway Sports Complex. In this direction, foundation stone was laid today for construction of the same. The new Indoor Volleyball Court is proposed to have playing court with a size of 18.00 m x 9.00 m, with non-slip matte flooring for enhanced safety and better playing conditions, along with spectator seating. Further, the upcoming Gym will be equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, including an Olympic Training Zone, Personal Training area, Physiotherapy and Recovery Lounge, Grand Entry Lobby, Cardio Zone, Weight Zone and Functional Training area, among other facilities.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, SCR stated that the SCR sportspersons are displaying outstanding performance at both National & International sports events. He stated that the zone is committed towards further strengthening sports activities and encouraging its employees to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle. He stated that the Indoor Volleyball Court will provide an ideal facility for regular training, coaching and hosting competitive and international-level matches, while the state-of-the-art Gym will support sportspersons in strength and fitness training, physiotherapy and recovery.

Khalin Joshi secures third title of the season, wins Naya Raipur Open 2026



NAYA RAIPUR

Bengaluru golfer Khalin Joshi produced a composed bogey-free final round to win the inaugural Nava Raipur Open 2026 by one stroke at the Fairway Golf & Lake Resort here on Friday, securing his third title of the season.

The 34-year-old Joshi, who started the final round with a one-shot lead, carded a three-under 31 to finish at 13-under 123. His winning card read 29-30-33-31. Joshi made three consecutive birdies from the third to fifth holes during the nine-hole final round to hold off a strong challenge from the chasing pack. The victory was Joshi's third of the season after his wins at the Andhra Open in April and the J&K Open in August. It was also his ninth overall title on the PGTI Tour.

Joshi, who won his maiden Asian Tour title at the Open India in 2018, took home the winner's cheque of INR 15 lakh.

Persistent rain during the tournament left the course unsuitable for full 18-hole rounds, prompting the Tournament Committee to reduce each of the four rounds to nine holes, all played over the back nine.

The final round was also suspended for several hours, leaving Joshi uncertain about whether play would resume.

"After the delay, the course did not appear playable, and we heard that the final round might be abandoned. I still had to regain my focus and prepare mentally in case play resumed. I stayed calm and composed, and I'm delighted with how I handled the situation," Joshi said.

Mhow's Om Prakash Chouhan produced the joint-lowest score of the day with a five-under 29, featuring an eagle on the par-five fourth and three birdies. He finished joint second at 12-under 124. Chouhan shared second place with Panchkula's Raunil Kukar and Ahmedabad's Anshul Patel, who also finished at 12-under 124. All three received INR 699,867 each.

F4 Indian Championship Returns to Kari Motor Speedway for Round 2 as Championship Battle Intensifies

NATIONAL

The Indian Racing Festival 2026 returns to the Kari Motor Speedway (KMS) in Coimbatore this weekend, with the F4 Indian Championship set for Round 2 on September 19–20. Just a week after an action-packed opening round at the same circuit, the young grid returns to KMS with another three races and crucial championship points up for grabs.

The opening round set the tone for the season, with Aris Kyriakou leading the championship on 51 points after securing three podium finishes. Luviwe Sambudla follows in second with 38 points after his Race 1 victory, while Aaron Mehta sits third on 32 points. With three races on the schedule this weekend, the field will look to close the early points gaps and build momentum as the six-round championship progresses.

Round 1 saw Aris Kyriakou claim the first Grand Slam of Indian F4 Season 5, taking pole, the Race 3 win, fastest lap and leading every lap. Aaron Mehta became the youngest front-row starter, podium finisher and lap leader in Indian F4 history, while Aaryan Narola became the championship's second-youngest race winner and one of only 12 drivers to lead every lap of an Indian F4 race. Sambudla and Narola will return to KMS looking to build on their race victories, while Mehta will aim to convert his qualifying pace into another strong points finish.



With the drivers returning to the same circuit just seven days later, Round 2 will bring a new dimension to the competition. Having already experienced the demands of KMS, the field will have an opportunity to fine-tune their setups and racecraft, potentially making for an even closer contest across the three races. As the championship moves into its second round, every point will become increasingly valuable in shaping the early title race. The Indian Racing Festival 2026, powered by JK Tyre, continues its 2026 season with the F4 Indian Championship as it heads into its second of six rounds. With the championship battle beginning to take shape, the Coimbatore weekend will mark another important step in the development of India's young racing talent. Catch the action live: The Indian Racing Festival will be broadcast on STAR Sports KHEL in Hinglish, STAR Sports 2 Kannada in Kannada and STAR Sports 2 Tamil in Tamil. Fans can also stream the action on JioHotstar in English, Hinglish, Kannada and Tamil, while the STAR Sports YouTube channel will stream the races for viewers in territories outside India.

Asian Games: 'We are well prepared,' says India's kabaddi captain Sunil Kumar

NEW DELHI

Indian men's kabaddi team captain Sunil Kumar believes the side is well prepared for the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, with an extended training programme helping the players build combinations, work on tactics and strengthen their individual skills ahead of the continental showpiece. The 27-year-old right defender, who was part of India's gold-medal-winning campaign at the Hangzhou Asian Games in 2022, will lead a squad that combines experienced players with emerging talent.

The current 12-member squad includes four members of the Hangzhou gold-medal-winning side: Sunil, Arjun Deshwal, Aslam Inamdar and Pawan Sehrawat. The team also features established Pro Kabaddi League players such as Ashu Malik, Jaideep Dahiya, Devank Dalal and Rahul Sethpal, while Ayan Lohchab represents the younger generation.

'Breaking Rohit's record for fastest T20I ton one of my biggest achievements'

NEW DELHI

Eclipsing Rohit Sharma's record for fastest men's T20I century by an India batter through smashing a breathtaking 30-ball century against Afghanistan, left-handed opener Abhishek Sharma said achieving this at the Arun Jaitley Stadium stands as a defining milestone and attributed the blistering knock to a fearless team environment backing him to play aggressively. Abhishek tore into the Afghanistan bowling attack by hitting 108 off just 34 balls and took India to a formidable 221/7, as they won by 127 runs to win the series 3-0. His 30-ball century broke the record for the fastest T20I hundred by a Test-playing nation batter, surpassing the previous record of 33-ball tons held by Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza and New Zealand's Finn Allen.

The fastest overall hundred in T20 cricket remains Sahil Chauhan's 27-ball effort for Estonia. Abhishek brought up his landmark century, his third ton in the format, with a quick single before dropping into a brief meditation pose on the pitch to celebrate. He was eventually dismissed by leg-spinner Rashid Khan, but after hitting nine boundaries and 11 sixes.

"It's a big achievement, not for just me, for all the Indians I could probably say, because I still remember the way Rohit bhaji used to play T20 cricket, I really loved and enjoyed when I was watching back at home and breaking that record, it's one of my biggest achievements for now," Abhishek said in a video posted on bcci.tv on Friday.

Highlighting the firm backing from head coach Gautam Gambhir and T20I captain Shreyas Iyer, Abhishek stated that minor setbacks like the defeats in Ireland and England did not diminish the batting unit's aggressive blueprint built over the last two years. "I said on the first day as well when I got the Man of the Match award, we dominated the whole two years before the World Cup and probably just after the World Cup, 1-2 series can't define our betting department and the way we want to play.

"It's our responsibility as a batter to make sure we create that atmosphere again, where we have freedom to just go and express ourselves. Big mention to coach and captain because once they are on your side, I feel it gives you more freedom and confidence."

Both Asia Cup trophies will land up at BCCI headquarters one day

MUMBAI

BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia on Friday expressed firm confidence that both the men's and women's Asia Cup trophies will eventually be housed at the board's headquarters here.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led Indian women's team declined to accept their winner's medals and the trophy from ACC President Mohsin Naqvi, who also serves as the PCB chairman and Pakistan's interior minister, after winning the Asia Cup final in Dubai last week. It mirrors a similar stance taken by the Indian men's team following their Asia Cup triumph last year. "We congratulated our women's team for their superb victory in Dubai last week. They have very nicely won the first match against Japan and we hope that they will win the gold medal in the Asian Games on 22nd of this month.

"Asia Cup trophies... we hope it will come one day. I will not give you a timeline, but I can assure you that both the trophies will come up and land up in this BCCI head office at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai," Saikia told reporters at the end of the 95th BCCI AGM held at its headquarters on Friday. The player auction for the upcoming IPL season will take place in the second week of December, which will also be the final mini-auction of the current 2023-27 rights cycle. To commemorate 20 years of the league, the BCCI is planning grand celebrations for the upcoming edition.



"We have also discussed about engaging and activating our state associations to give support to physically-challenged cricketers. The BCCI will complete 100 years in December 2027, so we will do centenary celebrations from December 2027 for one year," added Saikia.

Saikia further clarified that former Assam Ranji Trophy cricketer Subhadeep Ghosh has been brought in as the Indian men's cricket team fielding coach on a short-term assignment following the exit of T Dilip. Ghosh, who previously worked with the senior women's side between 2021 and 2023 and serves as a fielding coach at the BCCI Centre of Excellence, assumed the role ahead of India's two-Test tour of Sri Lanka in August.

BCCI AGM: Dhumal, Majumdar retained in IPL Governing Council; umpires set for pay raise

MUMBAI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Friday re-elected Arun Singh Dhumal and M Khairul Jamal Majumdar to the Indian Premier League (IPL) Governing Council during its 95th Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at the board headquarters here on Friday.

With no other candidates filing nominations for the two seats, Dhumal, seeking another term as IPL chairman, and Majumdar, representing the Indian Cricketers' Association (ICA), faced a clear run to get formally re-elected.

With BCCI electoral officer A.K. Joti confirming the final list of valid nominations following scrutiny, it paved the way for the duo's seamless re-election to maintain administrative stability in the franchise T20 league's decision-making body.

In another key decision, the general body unanimously approved a revised payment structure and grade reclassification for domestic umpires and match referees, alongside passing core financial and administrative resolutions.

The board formally adopted its audited statement of accounts for the 2025-26 financial year and approved the annual budget for 2026-27, while appointing auditors for the upcoming fiscal cycle. With significant milestones on the horizon, the general body resolved to mark the 20th edition of the IPL in 2027 with grand celebrations. The board will also kick off preparations for its centenary in 2028.

Radhika Apte On Women's Biggest Struggle



Actress Radhika Apte recently opened up about why women often struggle to make time for their own desires while balancing work, motherhood, and household responsibilities. Speaking about the subject in the context of 'Lust Stories 3', she emphasized the need for women to have space to pursue their interests and live beyond their roles and responsibilities. When asked whether it was always about men having more time to think about their sexual desires and whether working women also had little time to think about their own desires, Radhika agreed with the observation and said women often had "zero time" because of their hectic routines. She told IANS, "I think what you said is so true because women have zero time, it's so hectic, and that's the problem." Referring to "Lust Stories 3," Radhika said the film also explored the idea of women making space for their own desires. She recalled a line from the story in which the character Coco asks whether it was time to do something for themselves and their desires. According to Radhika, such desires could be as simple as wanting to take a walk or explore something new. "Whether that's a sexual desire or desire to go and, you know, go to Borivali National Park for a walk, it doesn't matter," she said. Radhika also spoke about how a woman's identity can often become closely associated with motherhood after having children. "Identity completely switches to motherhood, and that's not true. You are also a person.There's also a small child inside you who wants to try different things and just live life," she added. The actress also highlighted the difference in the way household responsibilities are often shared between men and women. She pointed out that after completing a long day at work, men may return home and rest, while women often continue with cooking, cleaning, childcare, and other household duties. She explained, "After working for 12 hours, a man comes home, has dinner, and goes to sleep. But that is not the case with women. After working a 12-hour shift, a woman comes home, cooks food, serves dinner to everyone, cleans the house, changes the bedsheets, prepares for the next day and takes care of all the household responsibilities. "And I know many women who have children, while their husbands want to get a good night's sleep, so they sleep in another room because they have to go to work. And you know what? I go to work, and it's way easier to go to work than to spend 12 hours at home with your child. It's exhausting. So, I think that's why, if the duties are shared, this won't happen," added Radhika. Radhika Apte featured in the "Lust Stories 3" segment directed by filmmaker Vikramaditya Motwane, which premiered on Netflix on September 18. The segment explored themes of husband-swapping and female solidarity.

Upendra Unveiled In Zombie Reddy 2

The makers of director Suparn S Varma's eagerly awaited film, 'Zombie Reddy2 NXT LVL', featuring actor Teja Sajja in the lead, on Friday released the first look poster of Kannada star Upendra in the film, much to the delight of fans and film buffs. The first look poster of the actor was to mark his birthday on Friday. Sources close to the unit say that Real Star Upendra will be seen in a prominent role in the film, which will also mark the debut of actress Shanaya Kapoor in Telugu. The poster released on Friday presents Upendra in a never-seen-before wild, fierce and larger-than-life avatar, showcasing an intriguing appearance that instantly commands attention. He is seen hanging upside down from a massive tree branch, holding a long weapon in one hand. His rugged appearance, flowing hair and intense expression give the character a mysterious identity. The dark costume and tribal-inspired patterns further strengthen the raw and unconventional look. The background features a dense forest, blazing torches and mysterious silhouettes. The combination of the eerie setting and Upendra's unconventional pose creates a distinctive fantasy-action atmosphere. Adding to the impact is the tagline, "Ready to turn the world upside down." 'Zombie Reddy 2 NXT LVL – Dead Or Alive' is scheduled to hit screens across Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Hindi, Nepali and Japanese languages. For the unaware, 'Zombie Reddy' creator Prasanth Varma has returned as the creator of the sequel, while Suparn S Varma has donned the director's hat for the sequel. Known for his work across acclaimed projects such as 'Haq', 'Rana Naidu' and 'The Family Man 2', besides his writing contributions to several notable films and web series, Suparn brings a distinct intensity to the franchise. The film is being produced by TG Vishwa Prasad and Krithi Prasad under the People Media Factory banner.

Rashmika Graces Vogue Cover



Rashmika Mandanna has been on a bit of a roll lately, she recently appeared in Cocktail 2, an above-average watch that kept her firmly in the conversation, and now she's landed one of the biggest covers of the year. The actor fronts Vogue India's October issue, styled atop a surreal, hand-painted skyline of miniature buildings, cranes and red ladders, a sharp black pantsuit in one shot, a whimsical floral co-ord with a dramatic quiff in another. The shoot ties into her upcoming Milan trip, where she'll attend Vogue World as the magazine's representative, a big global flex for the Pushpa and Animal star. In the interview, Rashmika addressed her years-long accent debate, South fans say it's not South enough, North fans say it is. Her mother tongue is Kodava; she's stopped trying to fix the contradiction. On the work front, Rashmika Mandanna is playing legendary Carnatic vocalist MS Subbulakshmi in her upcoming biopic, MS: A Legacy On Screen.



Ranveer Singh Takes A Big Step For 1,000 Girls



Ranveer Singh turned his Ganesh Chaturthi visit into a meaningful gesture by pledging to support the education of 1,000 girls. The actor made the announcement after visiting Mumbai's famous Lalbaugcha Raja and seeking the blessings of Lord Ganesha. Ranveer said he wanted to express his gratitude for the happiness he and his family experienced over the past year. On the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday, he announced that he would join the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan and contribute towards the education of 1,000 girls. The actor said he hoped the initiative would please Bappa and bring his blessings for the journey ahead. His announcement quickly became a talking point as videos from his Lalbaugcha Raja visit surfaced on social media. Ranveer has also been busy on the work front. After Dhurandhar and its sequel Dhurandhar: The Revenge, he is now preparing for Pralay, which is expected to be a zombie thriller directed by Jai Mehta. K alyani Priyadarshan will make her Bollywood debut with the film. With his latest gesture, Ranveer's festive appearance was not just about seeking blessings but also about supporting girls' education.

Divya Bharathi Owns The Frame

Divya Bharathi, who is known for her sultry photoshoots, has once again impressed fans with her latest set of portraits. This time, she surprises everyone with a bold yet elegant look, moving away from her usual style but still managing to leave a lasting impression. In the new pictures, Divya is seen in a monochrome maroon outfit, pairing a sheer, off-shoulder cape top with high-waisted, wide-leg pants. The flowy sheer drape adds a dramatic touch to the look, especially as it billows around her in the wind. She accessorises minimally with statement earrings, letting the outfit do the talking. Her expression, a candid, mid-motion glance to the side, adds an effortless, editorial feel to the frames. On the work front, Divya Bharathi is currently busy filming the Tamil movie Madhil Mel Kaadhal.

The Paradise Cuss Word Has Deep Emotion: Nani

Natural Star Nani has revealed that beneath the intense action and larger-than-life world of The Paradise lies a deeply emotional mother-son relationship. Addressing the media at the Bengaluru press meet, the actor explained how the film combines raw action, spectacle and emotion while introducing audiences to a world they have never seen before. "If I have to describe The Paradise in one line, it is a mother-and-son story. However, this mother and son are not placed in a situation that we have seen before. They are in a world, a place, a conflict and a situation that we have never seen a mother and son go through before. I think that is what makes their equation very special." Nani believes the action in The Paradise is driven by a strong emotional foundation. According to the actor, the film's high-octane sequences are designed to create an emotional connection with the characters rather than function merely as spectacle. The Paradise revolves around a tribe and its struggle for identity. "The Paradise is a revolutionary film about a tribe called Sawari who fight for their identity." The actor was equally appreciative of director Srikanth Odela's vision and filmmaking approach. He said the director has a clear focus on creating memorable theatrical moments while putting his actors in demanding situations. "Srikanth Odela is the kind of director who wants to give theatrical highs in his movies. He likes to put his actors in challenging situations." The cuss word used in the first glimpse invited a lot of criticism. Responding to that, Nani stated, "There is a strong emotion behind the cuss word in the film. It comes at a very crucial situation in the story. The audience won't feel odd when they discover the reason behind it." Nani has also undergone considerable physical preparation for the role. However, instead of aiming for a conventional six-pack physique, he focused on achieving the bulkier appearance demanded by his character. "I have really worked out for the movie, but I did not build six-pack abs because the character required me to look bulkier." Describing the film as "extremely intense, raw, violent, emotional and adrenaline-pumping," Nani is confident that The Paradise will offer a first-of-its-kind experience in theatres.



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