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Digital India Costs BANKS HIT, 'CASHLESS' A MYTH

SPECIAL 02

Chiru Leaks The Full Form Of 'KAAKA'

BOX-OFFICE 12



Kavitha declares herself 'arrow of Bahujans'



Kodangal, Sept.20: Rejecting claims that she is backed by established political entities, Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS) President Kalvakuntla Kavitha on Sunday declared herself the "arrow of the Bahujans" and pledged to build an independent political path rooted in social justice. Addressing the Panchajanya Sankalpa Sabha at Kosgi in the Kodangal Assembly constituency, Kavitha countered allegations describing her as an "arrow released by the BRS" or a "Congress arrow." Emphasising her ideological grounding, she stated she carries forward the principles of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, and Savitribai Phule. Challenging the state's dominant political leadership, Kavitha asserted she is prepared to take on Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, BRS president K. Chandrashekhar Rao, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. She questioned the tangible progress made under male-dominated administrations since the formation of Telangana 12 years ago, claiming that farmers, youth, women, and employees remain disillusioned. Vowing to offer a distinct model of administration, Kavitha urged voters to give her an opportunity, promising to govern with "the empathy of a mother" and fight for the welfare of all marginalised sections.



ATM Robbery: A Well-Planned Heist!

Rs 7 lakh cash stolen; CCTV cameras sprayed black, ATM cut open with gas cutter

Four-member gang suspected; one disguised as woman, black Scorpio used with fake registration number

SPECIAL 02

Nandigram Opens New Political Chapter



Mamata Banerjee backs Congress candidate Milan Pradhan for the October 6 Nandigram bypoll.

Move follows the withdrawal of Sanchita Pradhan Dey, backed by Banerjee's faction.

The bypoll could offer an indication of the scope and limits of future Opposition coordination in Bengal.

Kolkata, sep 20: In West Bengal's politics, old equations have a way of returning in new forms. The decision by former Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to support Congress candidate Milan Pradhan in the October 6 Nandigram Assembly bypoll has brought the two parties together in a constituency that carries an outsized place in the state's political history. The immediate trigger was the withdrawal of Sanchita Pradhan Dey, the candidate backed by Banerjee's faction, on September 18. Soon afterwards, Banerjee announced her support for the Congress nominee, describing Congress as a "natural ally" and saying the decision was taken in the larger interest of the country. The development is notable not merely because one party has stepped aside for another, but because of what it says about the changing vocabulary of Opposition politics in Bengal.

An old relationship, a new setting

The Congress-Trinamool relationship has never been straightforward. Mamata Banerjee herself emerged from the Congress before establishing the Trinamool Congress in 1998. Since then, the two organisations have moved between cooperation and competition, depending on the political circumstances of the time.

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Officials to begin farmer-wise enjoyment survey in Erravelli

Hyderabad, Sept.20: The land survey around the farmhouse of former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao at Erravelli village in Markook mandal of Siddipet district is progressing rapidly. However, the survey of assigned lands in Survey No. 325 was temporarily halted on Sunday for the weekly holiday and will resume on Monday. Revenue officials indicated that the next phase will focus on a farmer-wise physical verification, with particular attention to lands held by Dalit farmers. Notices have already been issued to approximately 100 farmers holding land in Survey No. 325, directing them to present relevant ownership documents and evidence at the site. Authorities plan to serve notices to another batch of over 100 farmers in phased intervals. Over the past three days, survey teams have been marking the outer boundaries of Survey No. 325. With boundary identification complete, officials will record specific individual land holdings.

An "enjoyment survey" will be conducted first to determine actual physical possession and ongoing cultivation by individual farmers. Following this verification, the land units will be formally sub-divided and updated in the official records. Officials have advised all concerned landholders to be present during Monday's field survey along with their land documents and supporting evidence.

MP Raghunandan Rao targets Congress, BRS



Hyderabad, Sept.20: Medak MP Raghunandan Rao on Sunday expressed strong displeasure with the BRS and Congress parties. He lashed out at both parties for obstructing discussions on public issues in the Assembly. He mocked their behavior, likening it to the saying, "You pretend to hit, and I will pretend to cry," noting that their theatrics were identical. He criticized both the parties for being indifferent to Telangana's development. He questioned the necessity of ruling party MLAs traveling in bulletproof buses to visit the BRS leaders' farmhouses, describing it as nothing but an abuse of power. Raghunandan Rao spoke to the media at the BJP office in Hyderabad. Speaking on the occasion, Raghunandan Rao questioned the need to re-examine

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People's problems are not raised in assemwbly: Bandi Sanjay



Hyderabad, Sept.20: Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay on Sunday remarked that the public feels as though the state Assembly sessions never truly took place. He stated that the sessions were considered to have occurred only when there is a discussion on the people's concerns and the implementation of promises made and added that the Assembly proceedings did not reflect this. He noted that the BRS party was suspended from the Assembly and added that the BJP was denied the opportunity to speak. He commented that the Assembly proceedings were entirely one-sided and merely a formality.

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6k-km road projects under HAM to begin soon: Komatireddy



Hyderabad, Sept.20: Roads & Buildings and Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Sunday announced that the Telangana government will soon commence construction of over 6,000 km of roads under the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) at an estimated cost of ₹13,000 crore. He stated that construction will begin shortly as the monsoon season comes to an end, with the corridors designed on par with National Highways.

Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, along with Cabinet colleague Vakiti Srihari and MLA Madhusudhan Reddy, laid foundation stones for HAM road developments and high-level bridge projects worth roughly ₹200 crore in the Devarakadra constituency of Mahabubnagar district. Following the event, he inspected ongoing ghat road works at the Kurumurthy Temple and held a progress review meeting. Addressing the media, the Minister lashed out at former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao for neglecting irrigation infrastructure in the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district and failing to complete the crucial Palamuru-Rangareddy project. Highlighting the State's fiscal pressures, Venkat Reddy noted that Telangana was formed with a surplus budget of ₹16,000 crore, but the previous BRS regime accumulated a total debt burden of ₹8.21 lakh crore.

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SIR Causes Stir in Delhi

Notices Issued to Prominent Figures From Advani to Rekha Gupta

New Delhi, sep 20: As part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Delhi, discrepancies have reportedly been identified in the voter details of several prominent personalities. Officials said notices have been issued to former Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj, former minister Manish Sisodia, Congress leader Kapil Sibal, and others. Along with Kejriwal, notices were also issued to his wife Sunita, his parents, and his son Pulkit. Officials said the reason was that their details could not be mapped to the previous SIR electoral roll. Meanwhile, in Rekha Gupta's records, officials reportedly found that the age difference between her and her parents was recorded as less than 15 years. After examining her documents, officials verified her voter entry.

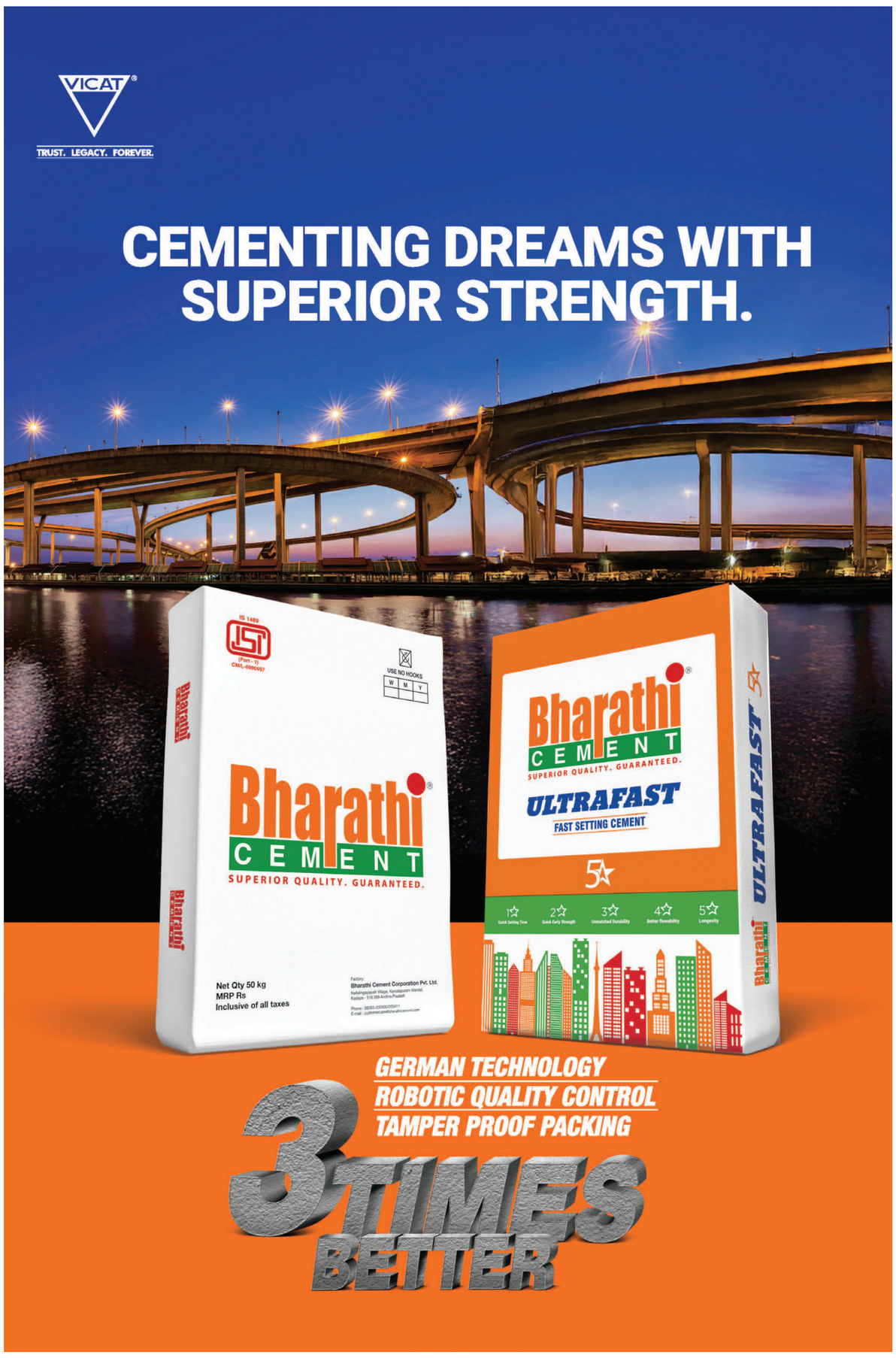
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Political Controversy Over Modi Mimicry:

War of Words Between BJP and Opposition

New Delhi, Sep 20: A performance mimicking Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the "Chhatron Ki Goonj" event attended by senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Indore has sparked a political controversy. BJP leaders strongly objected to the mimicry performed by comedian Pulkit Mani, who imitated Prime Minister Modi's gestures and manner of speaking. BJP leaders also criticized the reference made to the Prime Minister's mother. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis criticized Rahul Gandhi over the incident. In a sarcastic remark, he said it would be better if Rahul Gandhi left Congress and became a stand-up comedian. Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, and other BJP leaders also criticized the event.

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Harish questions govt's 24hr power promise

HYDERABAD, SEPT.20



Former Minister and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Deputy Floor Leader T. Harish Rao on Sunday conducted a surprise inspection at the Motakondur electricity sub-station in Yadadri Bhongir district, following widespread complaints from local farmers regarding undeclared power cuts.

Addressing the media at the sub-station, Harish Rao alleged that department personnel had intentionally removed the official log book prior to his arrival to conceal the actual power supply logs. He questioned why the state government hesitated to make the log book public if 24-hour uninterrupted power was indeed being supplied to the agriculture sector. "Log books record crucial operational data, including the duration of three-phase supply, tripping instances, and actual supply hours. Farmers in Motakondur report receiving barely six to seven hours of power daily, resulting in crop damage. We arrived to inspect the ground reality, only to find the records missing," Harish Rao said. The BRS deputy floor leader targeted local Congress MLA Beerla Ilaiah and Bhongir MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, urging them to visit the field and address the farmers' grievances directly. Harish Rao further accused the Congress administration of employing "diversion politics" to avoid accountability on agricultural power supply, the Section 22-A prohibited lands list, and alleged land irregularities. He noted that all asset disclosures regarding his family are already part of public record through official election affidavits and income tax filings.

Heavy to very heavy rain forecast for a week

Hyderabad, Sept.20: The Meteorological department has forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall in Telangana for a week from Sunday, September 20, as a low-pressure area formed over the Bay of Bengal is likely to intensify. A yellow alert has been issued for 24 districts in the State. The weather department said gusty winds with speeds of 40-50 kmph are likely to sweep across the State on Sunday, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning. Yellow alerts have been issued for Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu, Bhadradri Kothagudem, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mahabubabad, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Jangaon, Siddipet, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak, Kamareddy, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy, Narayanpet and Jogulamba Gadwal districts. Officials said heavy rainfall is likely in several districts on Monday, including Mahabubabad, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Jangaon, Siddipet, Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak, Kamareddy, Mahabubnagar and Nagarkurnool.

ATM Robbery:
A Well-Planned Heist!

KARIMNAGAR: A well-planned ATM robbery has come to light at Thimmapur in Karimnagar district, with police suspecting the involvement of a professional gang. Four persons reportedly arrived in a black Scorpio, sprayed black paint on the CCTV cameras and used a gas cutter to break open the SBI ATM before fleeing with cash. The incident occurred at the SBI ATM located along the Rajiv Highway near Thimmapur Crossroads. Locals noticed the damaged ATM in the early hours of Sunday and alerted the police. Officers who reached the spot found that the ATM machine had been cut open using a gas cutter.

CCTV Cameras Targeted First

The robbers appear to have taken precautions to prevent their movements from being recorded. They reportedly sprayed black paint on the CCTV cameras before breaking open the ATM. As a result, footage from the ATM premises may not provide crucial visual evidence. Police are now examining CCTV footage from nearby locations and along the Rajiv Highway to establish the route taken by the suspects before and after the robbery.

Four Suspects, One in Woman's Attire

Preliminary investigation suggests that four persons were involved in the crime. One of them was reportedly dressed in women's attire. The manner in which the cameras were disabled and the ATM was cut open has led police to suspect that the gang may have prior experience in ATM robberies.

Black Scorpio with Fake Number Plate

The black Scorpio used by the suspects has emerged as a key clue in the investigation. Police reportedly found that a fake registration number, belonging to another vehicle of the same colour and make, had been used on the Scorpio. The registration number was reportedly traced to a vehicle from the Nashik region of Maharashtra. Police are examining CCTV footage along the highway to determine where the vehicle came from and the route it took after the robbery.

Link to Durshed ATM Robbery?

The investigation has also turned towards a possible connection with another ATM robbery at Durshed in the Karimnagar Rural mandal. The ATM there was also reportedly damaged and cash stolen.

Police are examining CCTV footage from the Durshed incident and comparing the suspects, vehicle and modus operandi with those involved in the Thimmapur robbery. The possibility that the same gang targeted both ATMs on the same night is also being examined.

Rs 7.13 Lakh Cash: Questions Remain

Representatives of the CSM agency reportedly informed police that Rs 7,13,400 was stolen from the Thimmapur ATM. However, the amount has raised questions among local residents. Locals claim that cash was often unavailable at the ATM in recent days and that there was reportedly no cash in the machine even on Saturday afternoon. Police are therefore expected to verify the exact cash balance at the time of the robbery through cash-loading records, transaction details and other relevant records.

Questions Over ATM Maintenance

Locals have also raised concerns over the maintenance and security arrangements at the ATM. They alleged that the ATM was located away from residential areas and surrounded by trees, making it relatively vulnerable to criminals. They further alleged that the CCTV cameras at the ATM frequently remained non-functional. Police are examining the functioning of the surveillance system and the security arrangements maintained at the ATM.

Old ATM Robbery Gangs Under Scanner

The use of a gas cutter, black spray to disable CCTV cameras and a vehicle fitted with a fake registration number has prompted police to examine the possible involvement of gangs previously involved in similar ATM robberies.

Karimnagar DCP Venkataramana, Rural ACP Vijay Kumar, Thimmapur CI Bollam Ramesh, LMD SI Anwar and the clues team inspected the crime scene and collected evidence. The investigation is now focused on several key questions: Who owns the Scorpio actually used in the crime? Is there a link between the Thimmapur and Durshed robberies? How much cash was actually present in the ATM? And why were the CCTV cameras not functioning effectively?

Police are continuing their investigation based on the available CCTV footage, technical evidence and other clues collected from the scene.

Manchu Manoj Seeks Vigneshwara's Blessings at Balanagar's Vinayaka Chavithi Pandal



MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI, SEPTEMBER 20

Festive fervor swept through Vinayakanagar under the Balanagar limits as Tollywood actor Manchu Manoj visited the local Ganesha pandal to offer special prayers on the auspicious occasion of Vinayaka Chavithi. On his arrival, the actor was welcomed with warmth by members of the festival committee, who presented him with a traditional shawl in a grand felicitation.

The celebration drew a massive gathering of local residents, youth, and devoted fans, transforming the neighborhood into a vibrant carnival of devotion and joy—where every street moment felt like part of Lord Ganesha's divine festival.

After receiving the welcome, Manchu Manoj performed special pujas and offered his respects to Lord Vigneshwara, seeking blessings for prosperity, peace, and unity. Following the prayers, he spent time interacting with festival organizers, local community leaders, and devotees who had assembled in large numbers with hope and devotion. Addressing the crowd, Manoj extended heartfelt festive greetings, urging everyone to celebrate with reverence and care. "All Telugu people should celebrate this Vinayaka Chavithi festival with immense devotion, utmost care, and joy," he said.

The grand event featured active participation from prominent local figures and organizers, including family members of Naveen Fans Chief G. Naveen Kumar, along with festival committee members K. Raju Goud, R. Satish, Ashish, Akula Narender, Venu Gopal Rao, Ramu Mudhiraj, Rishi Yadav, and Prabha Reddy. Vinayakanagar Welfare Association President Pasham Srinivas, along with Satish, Giri, and numerous local devotees, also took part in the celebrations, adding to the festive spirit with their presence.

With prayers, blessings, and community togetherness at its core, Manchu Manoj's visit became a shining moment of devotion for Vinayakanagar—one that honored both tradition and the joyful spirit of Vinayaka Chavithi.

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MP Raghunandan Rao targets Congress, BRS

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land records when the state government already possesses them. He remarked that the by-elections had not proven particularly lucky for MLA Danam Nagender and expressed confidence that the BJP would win in Khairatabad assembly constituency . He criticized the Congress and BRS parties as being two sides of the same coin. He expressed anger that the administrations of both former CM KCR and CM Revanth Reddy resembled the oppressive rule of the Nizam.

On this occasion, Raghunandan Rao played videos showing KCR and Revanth Reddy praising the Nizam in the Assembly and lashed out at KCR for lavishing praise on the Nizam without restraint. He asked as to who had caused suffering to the Adivasi children. He lashed out at both Revanth Reddy and KCR and claimed that they were speaking in support of MIM party .

He mocked them for visiting the Old City and constantly praising the Majlis party . He pointed out that 90 percent of the positions in the Nizam's administration were held by Muslims. He questioned whether KCR and Revanth Reddy were praising the Nizam a ruler who had forced women to participate in the Bathukamma festival under humiliating circumstances.

Raghunandan Rao demanded to know as to how the Nizam, who was responsible for the Bairanpally incident, could be considered great? He ridiculed the two leaders, asking if they felt no shame in praising the Nizam within the Legislative Assembly.

SIR Causes Stir in Delhi

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In Delhi, "no mapping" or other logical discrepancies have reportedly been identified in the details of a total of 3.313 million voters, and the process of issuing notices to them is underway. Election officials clarified that receiving a notice does not mean that a person's voting rights have been cancelled. Instead, voters are being given an opportunity to submit documents to establish their eligibility. The final electoral roll is scheduled to be published on November 4.

War of Words Between BJP and Opposition

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They said that making remarks that insult the office of the Prime Minister and his family was inappropriate. Meanwhile, leaders from the Congress, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), and Trinamool Congress (TMC) came out in support of Rahul Gandhi. They said that in a democracy, the opposition has the right to criticize the government and the Prime Minister. They argued that political satire and mimicry are part of democratic discourse. As a result, the incident has turned into yet another political dispute between the BJP and the opposition.

6k-km road projects under HAM to begin soon: Komatireddy

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The Minister disclosed that the current Congress government pays nearly ₹6,000 crore monthly in interest obligations, which has restricted the State's eligibility for key central grants. He added that around ₹50,000 crore was borrowed off-budget through special corporations like Palamuru and Mission Bhagiratha. Reaffirming the government's commitment to regional irrigation, the Minister announced that ₹560 crore has been deposited into the District Collector's account for land acquisition under the Uddandapur project. He stated that the Congress administration accepts full responsibility for filling the Karivena reservoir and completing the overall Palamuru-Rangareddy project.

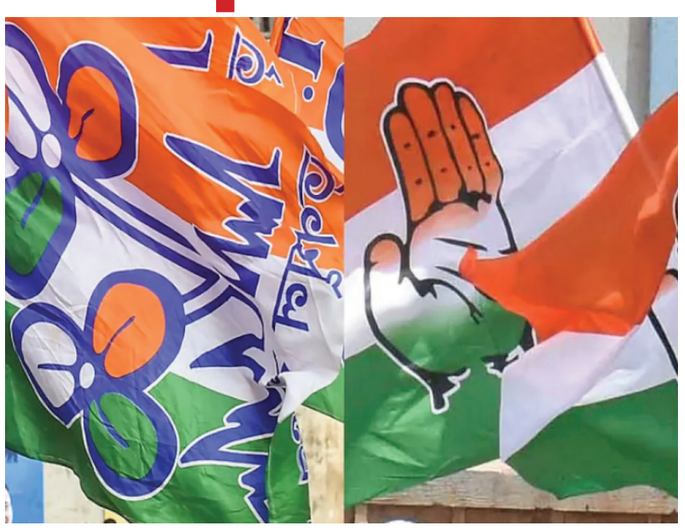
Nandigram Opens New Political Chapter

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They shared electoral platforms in earlier contests, including the 2001 Assembly election and the 2009 Lok Sabha election. Their alliance was particularly significant in the 2011 Assembly election, when the political landscape of Bengal underwent a major transformation and the Left Front's long tenure came to an end.

That partnership eventually gave way to competition as both parties sought to consolidate their independent political bases.

The Nandigram understanding therefore represents a return to cooperation, but in a very different political environment.



Why Nandigram carries weight

Few constituencies in Bengal possess the political symbolism of Nandigram. The constituency became nationally prominent during the 2007 movement against land acquisition. The events surrounding the agitation became part of the larger political process that eventually weakened the Left Front's hold over Bengal and contributed to the change of government in 2011.

Nandigram later acquired another layer of significance when it became the site of a closely watched electoral contest involving Banerjee herself.

The October 6 bypoll consequently carries interest beyond the boundaries of the constituency. The Congress campaign now has the stated backing of Banerjee's faction, while other parties continue to contest the seat independently.

A tactical pause in a larger rivalry

The latest arrangement should nevertheless be viewed in its immediate context. Banerjee's decision does not automatically amount to the restoration of a statewide TMC-Congress alliance. Both parties continue to maintain separate organisational structures and political priorities. Congress has also been seeking to strengthen its independent organisation in West Bengal.

For now, Nandigram represents a tactical convergence rather than a declared political merger of interests. That distinction is important. Electoral politics often creates temporary spaces where parties with competing long-term objectives can cooperate around a specific constituency or issue. **Nandigram appears to be one such space.**

The INDIA bloc connection

The development also highlights a recurring feature of the INDIA bloc: Opposition coordination has not followed one uniform model across the country. Parties that share a national platform may remain competitors in individual states, constituencies or elections. At the same time, circumstances can create opportunities for tactical cooperation.

Banerjee's description of Congress as a "natural ally" places the Nandigram decision within that larger framework. It signals an emphasis on coordination where the two parties can identify a common electoral purpose.

But whether this becomes a broader pattern remains an open question.

Politics beyond the ballot

There is also an organisational dimension to the Nandigram contest. The Election Commission has assigned separate names and symbols to rival factions involved in the Trinamool Congress dispute for the upcoming bypolls, with Banerjee's faction receiving a new identity and the football-player symbol.

Against this backdrop, withdrawing from the Nandigram contest and supporting Congress carries significance beyond the immediate arithmetic of votes.

For Congress, the arrangement provides its candidate with an endorsement from Banerjee's faction in a constituency where the Trinamool camp could otherwise have been a direct competitor.

For Banerjee, it avoids a contest between the two parties and places the emphasis on Opposition coordination.

What the bypoll can — and cannot — tell us

The October 6 result will inevitably be watched for indications of how voters respond to the new alignment. Yet a single Assembly bypoll cannot, on its own, establish the future direction of Bengal's Opposition politics. The more consequential question lies beyond polling day: whether the understanding remains confined to Nandigram or becomes a reference point for future cooperation.

That will depend on several factors — the electoral interests of both parties, their organisational priorities, their relationship with other Opposition groups and the political circumstances prevailing in Bengal.

For the moment, Nandigram offers something that has been less common in recent Bengal politics: two parties with a history of rivalry choosing, at least temporarily, to occupy the same electoral space.

A small constituency, a larger conversation

Political alliances are rarely permanent. They evolve with circumstances, calculations and changing electoral realities. The history of the Congress and Trinamool Congress in Bengal is itself a reminder of that fluidity.

The Nandigram bypoll does not erase the differences between the two parties, nor does it establish a new statewide alliance. What it does is create a limited experiment in cooperation.

That makes the October 6 contest worth watching not only for its result, but for what it may reveal about the possibilities and limits of Opposition coordination in Bengal.

In a state where political identities have often been shaped by sharp competition, Nandigram has once again become a stage on which a different question is being asked: when old rivals discover a common purpose, can a temporary understanding become the beginning of a new political conversation?

Former Minister Jagadish Reddy slams
Govt over farmers' woes

NALGONDA, SEPT.20



Former Minister and Suryapet MLA Guntakandla Jagadish Reddy on Sunday inspected withered crop fields in Telakanti Gudem village of Kanagal Mandal in Nalgonda district. He interacted with the farmers to console and reassure them before speaking to the media. He also visited the nearby electrical substation, examined the logbook and spoke with the concerned officials.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the Congress government's actions regarding the farmers were criminal. "Why are crops being allowed to wither when water has arrived in the Krishna river? The government understand the farmers' reactions regarding the hardships faced due to water and power shortages. The Chief Minister and ministers must explain why the crops are withering. What answer will state minister Uttam Kumar Reddy who lied about the water usage give to the farmers? The claim of a coal shortage is just as false as the claim regarding El Niño. Those, who dismiss this as mere politics should go and speak to the farmers, whose crops have withered," he demanded .

He said that the Farmers themselves say that in the past, when state minister Komatireddy was the MLA, they were unable to cultivate their crops successfully and added that it was only after former CM KCR took charge that they could cultivate their lands and achieve bumper harvests. "They are now expressing anguish that their crops have been withering again over the past three years.!How much longer will they stage dramas using El Niño as an excuse? Back then, KCR had already made the necessary arrangements to generate 21,000 megawatts of power.

During KCR's tenure, there was a continuous supply of quality electricity for 24 hours a day. We delivered it. All of you who consumed that electricity are direct witnesses to this. Why did you halt power generation at the Yadadri and Bhadradri plants? Some cite a lack of water, others a lack of coal, as reasons for cutting off power and water supplies. You are intimidating millers and forcing mills to shut down. Ministers Komatireddy, Uttam Kumar Reddy and Bhatti must answer for this," he said .

People's problems are not raised in assemwbly: Bandi

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He pointed out that there was no actual discussion regarding the 'Six Guarantees' in the Assembly. He observed that the Congress party was neither discussing the Six Guarantees nor the promises made regarding development. He questioned whether the farmhouses were being turned into tourist destinations and asked as to who authorized the visits to the farmhouses of private individuals.

He recalled CM Revanth Reddy's allegations in the Assembly regarding land encroachments and stated that if evidence exists, the lands should be reclaimed. He alleged that an opportunity was created to extract money from the BRS party leaders and implied that the matter was settled once the payment is made.

He demanded that if the land grabbing had occurred, the evidence should be made public and the government should not only reclaim the land but also initiate criminal proceedings.

He added that the public was facing severe hardships due to the '22A' land restrictions and affirmed that they would wage a legal battle if necessary. He stated that the Congress party lacks the courage to face the Khairatabad assembly constituency by-election.

He remarked that this was why MLA Danam Narender approached the Supreme Court adding that if the by-election were to take place, the political demise of the Congress would be inevitable. He asserted that the Congress party poses no competition to them and added that the real contest was between the BJP and the BRS parties.

Gyan Prakash Tripathi Represents India at 27th International Symposium on Online Journalism in Texas

Global Media Leaders Examine Truth, Democracy and the Future of Digital News

HYDERABAD

The 27th International Symposium on Online Journalism (ISOJ), one of the world's leading forums on digital journalism and media innovation, is underway at the University of Texas at Austin from September 17 to 19.

The international gathering has brought together journalists, editors, media executives, policymakers, researchers and academics from across the globe in a hybrid format, enabling both in-person and virtual participation.

Representing India at the prestigious symposium are senior journalist Rajendra Kumar Gautam, associated with the national Hindi daily Nishpaksh Divya Sandesh, and Gyan Prakash Tripathi, associated with the Lucknow-based newspaper Tijarat. Their participation highlights the growing international recognition of Indian-language journalism and the important role of regional media in shaping democratic discourse.



Truth, Trust and Press Freedom at the Centre of Debate

The opening discussions focused on some of the most urgent challenges confronting journalism today, including trust, misinformation, press freedom and the changing relationship between news organizations and the public in the digital age.

Sessions on independent journalism and the emerging creator economy examined how digital creators and independent reporters are reshaping the traditional information industry. Participants also explored the responsibilities of major media institutions during elections and periods of political uncertainty.

Senior representatives from CNN, The Washington Post, the Associated Press and JS Global Media took part in discussions on the media's role in the United States midterm elections. The day concluded with deliberations on practical strategies to rebuild public confidence in journalism, followed by a welcome reception titled "The Moody Party."

Gyan Prakash Tripathi: A Strong Voice for Indian-Language Journalism The presence of Gyan Prakash Tripathi at ISOJ carries special significance for journalists worldwide. His participation represents the experience and perspective of India's regional and linguistic media—an essential part of the country's vast and diverse information ecosystem.

At a time when journalism is undergoing profound technological and economic change, Tripathi's engagement underscores the value of inclusive journalism that connects global conversations with local communities. His contribution also draws attention to the continuing importance of credible reporting in Indian languages, particularly across North India. His participation sends a positive message to the global journalism community: meaningful innovation in news does not come only from large international outlets. It also emerges from dedicated journalists and regional publications working closely with their readers and communities.

Digital Sustainability and Artificial Intelligence in Focus

The second day of the symposium is dedicated to the future of digital news, with a particular focus on sustainability, emerging technologies and artificial intelligence.

Janine Warner, Executive Director of SembraMedia, is scheduled to present research on global trends in the sustainability of digital news. A fireside conversation will then examine who is shaping the future of journalism and the evolving roles of media organizations, technology platforms and business leaders.

Allison Murphy, CEO of Axios, and Neil Chase, CEO of CalMatters, are expected to participate as keynote speakers.

Indian delegates Rajendra Kumar Gautam and Gyan Prakash Tripathi will also present perspectives on linguistic publications, journalism and digital transformation in North India.

A Shared Commitment to Responsible Journalism

The 27th ISOJ comes at a defining moment for the global news industry. As artificial intelligence, social media and digital platforms transform the production and distribution of information, journalists everywhere face the shared responsibility of defending accuracy, independence and public trust.

Through his participation, Gyan Prakash Tripathi stands as a constructive representative of Indian journalism, demonstrating how regional voices can contribute meaningfully to international conversations about truth, democracy and the future of news.

His presence at the University of Texas at Austin reflects the growing global relevance of Indian-language journalism and offers an encouraging message to journalists around the world: credible journalism remains strongest when it is diverse, responsible and committed to serving the public.



Mahalakshmi Festival Celebrated in Damaranch Village

HYDERABAD

The Mahalakshmi festival was celebrated today in Damaranch village of Banswada mandal in Kamareddy district.

As part of the traditional celebrations, Goddess Jyeshtha Gowri was invoked, along with an invitation to Goddess Sampath Lakshmi. The rituals included Shodashopachara Puja (worship with sixteen traditional offerings) and the recitation of the Ashtottara Shatanamavali (108 names of the deity). The puja concluded with the offering of Maha Naivedyam.

After the puja, all the family members tied sacred threads around their wrists as part of the tradition. BJP National Council member Geetha Murthy, along with Anita, Anusha, Manjula, Meenakshi, Pradeep Kumar Kulkarni, Praveen Kumar, Abhilash Kulkarni, Lasya, Rahini, Hanumantha Rao, Kamala, and several other villagers participated in the celebrations.

The special festival was conducted with great grandeur under the leadership of priest Ramesh. Devotees observed a fast throughout the day, and after the completion of the puja, annadanam (distribution of food as prasad) was conducted.

BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao Visits Balapur Ganesh

HYDERABAD

BJP Telangana State President Sri N. Ramchander Rao visited the famous Balapur Ganesh in Hyderabad on Sunday and participated in special puja ceremonies.

Speaking to the media afterward, he said that the Ganesh Navratri celebrations held in Bhagyanagar (Hyderabad) have gained significant recognition across the country and that it is a matter of great happiness that thousands of devotees participate in the festivities every year. He praised the Ganesh celebrations initiated by Lokmanya Tilak, saying that they have now spread across the country and have become a symbol of unity.

He said it was commendable that the Balapur Ganesh pandal is designed every year with innovative themes. He praised this year's grand pandal, which has been created in the form of a model of the Puri Jagannath Temple, saying that it is providing devotees with a special spiritual experience. He also appreciated the arrangements made for devotees by the festival committee.

He said that he prayed to Lord Vighneshwara for abundant rainfall in the state and for Telangana to prosper with rich crops and agricultural abundance. On the occasion, he extended his Ganesh Navratri greetings to the people of the state.



In response to questions from media representatives:

Sri N. Ramchander Rao said that, marking Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi's birthday, a month-long Seva Sankalpa Abhiyan is being conducted across the country from September 17 to October 17.

He praised Modi, saying that for the past 25 years—first as Chief Minister of Gujarat and later as Prime Minister—he has worked continuously with the development of the country and public welfare as his objectives, without taking a single day of rest.

He said that, as part of the birthday celebrations, "blessing lamps" are being lit in villages and urban settlements and numerous service activities are being organized. Large-scale blood donation and food distribution camps have been held in the Saroornagar and Saidabad divisions, he said, adding that approximately 25,000 young people across the state have voluntarily come forward to donate blood.

He criticized the opposition, saying that while the country is moving toward "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India), the opposition should be playing a constructive role instead of engaging in what he described as "low-level politics."

He said that they strongly condemn what he described as inappropriate and insulting remarks made by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his associates about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mother.

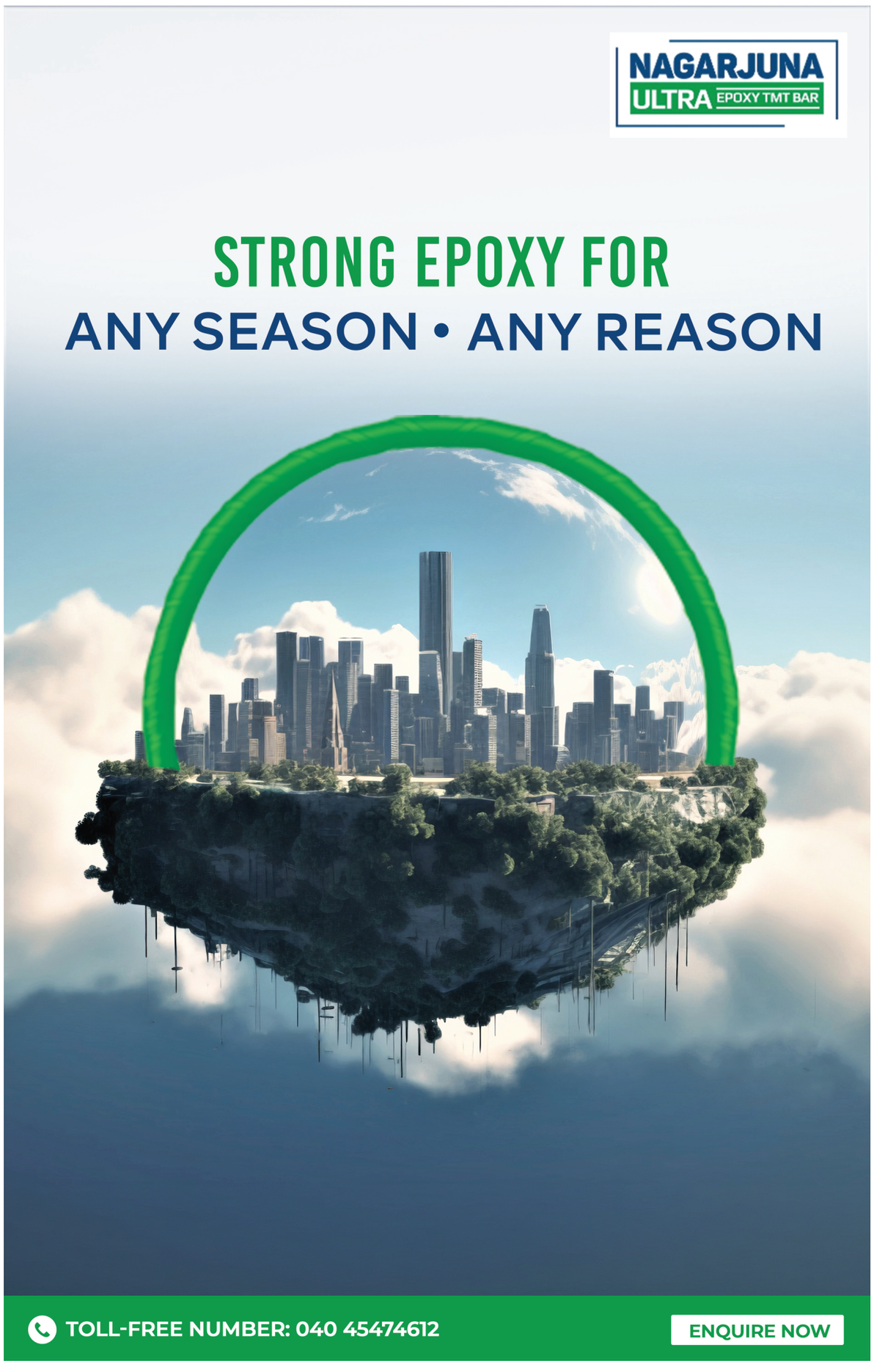
He alleged that the Congress party was resorting to personal attacks because it lacked the courage to fight the BJP on its policies. He further said that insulting the Prime Minister's mother amounted to insulting women and mothers across the country, and warned that the Congress party would have to "pay a price" for it.

GITAM Scholar Dr. Kezia Elizabeth Awarded Ph.D. in Environmental Science

HYDERABAD



GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, proudly congratulates Dr. Kezia Elizabeth M on being awarded a Ph.D. in Environmental Science for her pioneering research on green-synthesized metal sulphide nanoparticles and their applications in agriculture, wastewater treatment, and antimicrobial activity, under the guidance of Dr. Randhi Uma Devi, Department of Life Sciences, GITAM School of Science. Her doctoral research, titled "Green Metal SulphideNanoparticle Synthesis and Evaluation of Applications in Seed Priming, Photocatalytic Dye Degradation and Antimicrobial Activity," explored the eco-friendly synthesis of Magnesium Sulphide (MgS) and Ferrous Sulphide (FeS) nanoparticles using plant-based materials. The synthesized nanoparticles demonstrated promising potential in enhancing seed germination, degrading Rhodamine B dye, and combating microbial pathogens. The study highlights the potential of green-synthesized nanoparticles as sustainable solutions for improving agricultural productivity, treating dye-contaminated wastewater, and addressing microbial challenges, contributing to the advancement of green nanotechnology. Prof. D. S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor; D.V.V.S.R. Varma, Resident Director; Dr. M. Reza, Director, School of Sciencecongratulated Dr. Kezia Elizabeth on her academic achievement and significant contribution to sustainable environmental and agricultural applications of nanotechnology. They also appreciated Dr. Uma Devi for her dedicated mentorship and guidance throughout the doctoral journey.



Do You Know Where Hyd City Actually Begins?

HYDERABAD

From Patancheru at one end to LB Nagar at the other, it is all considered Hyderabad city. But where does Hyderabad actually begin? Where is Hyderabad's Zero Mile Stone, and what is the story behind it?

Where Does Hyderabad Begin?

Whenever we travel to Hyderabad from another town or city, we often see milestones saying "Hyderabad – 50 KM" or "Hyderabad – 10 KM." But have you ever wondered where the city's "0 kilometre" point is located—the point from which these distances are measured? Where exactly does Hyderabad city begin? Many people do not know about the place that serves as the city's geographical heart, the Zero Mile Stone.

Where Is Hyderabad's "Zero Mile Stone"?

Hyderabad's official and historic "Zero Mile Stone" is located directly opposite the Telangana Assembly building in Nampally. The orange-colored stone milestone clearly bears the inscription "0 KM."

During the Nizam's rule, this location was designated as a central reference point for mapping the Hyderabad State and surrounding areas and for measuring distances.

Why Was This Particular Place Chosen?

Nampally and the area around the Assembly have been important administrative centers since the time of the Nizams. Therefore, this area was regarded as the "Heart of Hyderabad" for measuring distances from different parts of the state to Hyderabad.

Moreover, the former Nampally Railway Station was an important transportation hub, while major government buildings such as Raj Bhavan and the Assembly were located in the vicinity. As a result, the point opposite the Assembly was used as the standard reference point for road-distance measurements.

The Milestone Measurements

When you travel toward Hyderabad from Kurnool, Vijayawada, Warangal, or Mumbai, the decreasing kilometre markers on the roads ultimately lead to this "Zero Mile Stone" opposite the Nampally Assembly.

Dr. Peruka Raju Emerges Winner in 'Akshara Neerajanam to the Guru' Poetry Competition

HYDERABAD

Renowned poet, writer and multilingual literary personality Dr. Peruka Raju emerged as a winner in the "Guruvuku Akshara Neerajanam" (A Literary Tribute to the Guru) poetry competition organised by Vishwa Sahiti Kala Vedika as part of the Guru Pujotsavam celebrations.



His poem, portraying the greatness of the Guru and expressing profound respect and gratitude towards teachers, received appreciation for its literary merit and emotional depth. The winners were selected on the basis of literary quality, originality, depth of thought and expression.

On the occasion, Mrs. Kalavathi, Chairperson of Vishwa Sahiti Kala Vedika, congratulated Dr. Peruka Raju and presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation. She observed that the verses flowing from his pen beautifully reflected his reverence and gratitude towards teachers.

"May your literary journey continue to flourish, May your pen remain ever in motion, And may your words continue to illuminate and inspire society," she wished.

The programme was attended by Mrs. G. Bhavani, Women's President; Mrs. Anjani Kumari, Telangana Women's President; Bharathi Devi, Women's Secretary; Sharath Babu, Prasad, Shivakumari, Sheikh and others, who congratulated Dr. Peruka Raju on his achievement.

Dr. Peruka Raju is presently serving as a Junior Commissioned Officer in the Indian Army while continuing his literary pursuits as a poet, writer, critic and multilingual scholar. A soldier in the service of the nation and a soldier of letters in the service of literature, he continues to leave his distinctive imprint on both worlds.

Two more literary collections from his pen are also set to reach readers shortly. "Jawan," a Telugu poetry collection, and "All Is Well," an English poetry collection, are being readied for publication. While Jawan gives poetic expression to the experiences of a soldier's life, patriotism and human emotions.

SHORT TAKES

Free Health camp for Sr. Citizens

HYDERABAD: *In connection with World Senior Citizens day, Lions International District 320 A, 320 D and Senior citizens forum of Gandhinagar (Hyderabad) are organizing a Free Mega Health camp for senior citizens on October 2, 2026, from 8.30 am, at AV college, domalguda in the city. Health, sports, cultural programs and legal advice form part of the event. Medical practitioners from different branches like Cardiology, vascular, general physician. General surgeon, urology, Gastroenterology, orthopedic, homeopathy, ayurveda will attend on the people. Medicines will be distributed free to the needy. Senior citizens above 60 years can avail the facilities by registering their names.*

Huge crowds turn up for Khairatabad Bada Ganesh darshan

HYDERABAD: *The Khairatabad Bada Ganesh pandal witnessed a massive turnout of devotees on Sunday, with thousands thronging the venue to seek darshan of the Mahaganapati. The holiday saw a surge in the number of devotees arriving to have a glimpse of the idol. With all the queue lines packed, large groups of devotees were seen waiting along the roads for darshan. Meanwhile, Ganesh idol immersion ceremonies were underway at Tank Bund, resulting in heavy crowds in and around the area. After offering prayers at the Bada Ganesh, many devotees enthusiastically headed towards Tank Bund to witness the immersion festivities. The entire area was virtually transformed into a sea of humanity. Devotees also visited Ganesh pandals across different parts of the city, attracted by idols installed with various themes. With the nine-day Ganesh Navratri celebrations scheduled to conclude on Thursday.*

Sri Kodandarama Graces on Hanumantha Vahana

TIRUMALA: *On the sixth day of the ongoing Srivari Salakatla Brahmotsavams at Tirumala, Sri Malayappa Swamy appeared before the devotees in the Alankaram of Sri Kodandarama Swamy atop the Hanumantha Vahana on Sunday morning. With majestic elephants leading the procession, the Hanumantha Vahana Seva proceeded in a grand and spiritually charged atmosphere amidst bhajans and kolatams by groups of devotees, the divine chanting of the Jeeyangars and the auspicious sonics of Mangala Vaidyams. A large number of devotees gathered along the four Mada Streets had the divine darshan of the deities. The divine relationship between Sri Rama and Hanuman, represents the harmonious blend of devotion, knowledge and the spirit of service.*

Kodad Mega Job Mela Sets a Major Milestone in Rural Employment Outreach: speaker

- **Uttam brings 350 companies onto one platform to connect educated rural youth with employers**
- **Over 30,000 registrations; 5,625 candidates shortlisted**



HYDERABAD

In a massive recruitment exercise aimed specifically at opening employment opportunities for educated unemployed youth from rural pockets, the Kodad Mega Job Mela brought together around 350 companies, attracted over 30,000 registrations and concluded with 5,725 candidates shortlisted.

Spearheaded by Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy and Kodad MLA N. Padmavathi Reddy, the September 19 initiative placed rural unemployment at the centre of a large-scale industry–youth engagement. Its objective was to bring employers within reach of qualified young people whose access to corporate recruitment remains constrained by geography, limited information and financial circumstances.

By the close of the exercise, 5,725 candidates had been shortlisted. The mela's outreach extended across Suryapet, Nalgonda, Yadadri-Bhongir, Khammam and Bhadradri-Kothagudem districts. Companies representing information technology, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, healthcare, banking, retail and other sectors offered candidates a common platform to explore employment opportunities.

Explaining the thinking behind the initiative, Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies highlighted the difficulties faced by rural families that make considerable sacrifices to educate their children. Even after completing engineering, pharmacy, management and polytechnic courses, many young people struggle to identify vacancies, establish contact with employers or travel repeatedly to cities for interviews.

The Minister said the initiative was intended to close this gap by bringing companies directly to the region. A young graduate's village address or family circumstances, he emphasised, should not become a barrier to accessing employment opportunities.

The initiative sought to connect two groups that often remain separated despite their mutual needs- companies looking for qualified personnel and educated rural youth looking for a first opportunity. By facilitating direct interaction, the mela gave candidates a chance to present their qualifications, attend interviews and understand the requirements of organised-sector employment. Building on the earlier Huzurnagar job mela experience held last year , the Kodad exercise involved preparatory engagement with industrialists, educational institutions and district administrations. Mobilisation across five districts sought to ensure that recruitment opportunities reached young people beyond the usual urban employment networks. The Industries Department and Singareni Collieries Company Limited supported the initiative.

Addressing the youths attended job mela, the Telangana Legislative Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar said the exercise was milestone in Rural employment outreach in the State.

Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukender Reddy, Ministe for IT and Industries, D. Sridharbabu, Minister for Roads and Buildings, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Adluri Lakhman Kumar, Uttam Kumar Reddy, Padmavathi Reddy and the District Collector, Tejas Nandlal Pawar took part in the job Mela enthusing the young participants.

They interacted with employers and jobseekers, and congratulated candidates who secured offers. Prasad Kumar welcomed the scale of participation and called for similar employment drives across Telangana, underlining the importance of creating opportunities closer to where young people live.

Sports are the Basis of Personal Health

- **Lion Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy, President of Cycling Association**



KARIMNAGAR

Despite giving special place to sports in our education system, there is a lack of interest in sports, and the health of the society is linked to sports, said

Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy, the president of the Karimnagar District cycling associations. Speaking as the chief guest at the sports competitions organized by the Lions Club of Golden Satavahana under the leadership of Zone Chairman Lion M Shankar at the Karimnagar Satavahana University campus today, he said that we should not forget that our daily routine is closely related to physical and mental health and career growth.

He suggested that we should practice at least 45 minutes of physical exercise every day in our lifestyle. He said that physical exercises have many benefits related to sports. He said that regular exercise, nutrition and an stress-free lifestyle should be adopted. Speaking, the organizer Lion M Shankar said that by organizing these competitions for walkers on the Satavahana University campus, the best message would be given to the youth.

He inaugurated the walking and jumping competitions organized on the occasion of International University Sports Day by waving the flag and addressing the participants. As part of these competitions, 3.5 km walking and frog jump competitions were organized and prizes were given to the winners by the chief guest. Golden Satavahana members Lion Giridhar Rao, Lion Narasimha Reddy, Lion Ramulu, Lion Gangadhara, Lion Devaiah, Lion Ajay along withSatavahana Lions Club members Lion E Ramesh, Lion M Mahender, Lion N Venugopal, Lion Dr V Srinivas, Lion M Aravind, Lion P Surender, etc. participated. On this occasion, the chief guest Lion Captain Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy was felicitated by the Golden Satavahana members and Lion Shankar, who organized the games, was felicitated by the Satavahana Lions Club organizers.

Malkajgiri police gear up for Ganesh immersion with 5,874 personnel

HYDERABAD

The Malkajgiri Police Commissionerate is implementing a comprehensive security blueprint, 'Ganesh Suraksha Sankalp–2026', to ensure seamless monitoring throughout the Ganesh immersion processions.

In an official statement issued on Sunday, Police Commissioner Badugula Sumathi stated that elaborate security arrangements have been put in place to prevent any lapses. This marks the first large-scale Ganesh immersion programme under the newly reorganised, urban-centric Malkajgiri Commissionerate. A total of 5,874 police personnel will be deployed across the commissionerate's jurisdiction. The operation will also integrate additional forces, specialised outside units, and officials from various civic departments. CP Sumathi urged all Ganesh Utsav committees and local mandapam organisers to complete mandatory online registration for every installed idol. She noted that registration enables law enforcement to track exact mandapam locations, designated procession routes, timing, and local CCTV coverage. Continuous monitoring will remain active from the initial day of idol installation through the final immersion proceedings, the Commissioner added.

Former Minister Jagadish Reddy slams Govt over farmers' woes

NALGONDA



Former Minister and Suryapet MLA Guntakandla Jagadish Reddy on Sunday inspected withered crop fields in Telakanti Gudem village of Kanagal Mandal in Nalgonda district. He interacted with the farmers to console and reassure them before speaking to the media. He also visited the nearby electrical substation, examined the logbook and spoke with the concerned officials.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the Congress government's actions regarding the farmers were criminal. "Why are crops being allowed to wither when water has arrived in the Krishna river? The government understand the farmers' reactions regarding the hardships faced due to water and power shortages. The Chief Minister and ministers must explain why the crops are withering. What answer will state minister Uttam Kumar Reddy who lied about the water usage give to the farmers? The claim of a coal shortage is just as false as the claim regarding El Niño. Those, who dismiss this as mere politics should go and speak to the farmers, whose crops have withered," he demanded .

He said that the Farmers themselves say that in the past, when state minister Komatireddy was the MLA, they were unable to cultivate their crops successfully and added that it was only after former CM KCR took charge that they could cultivate their lands and achieve bumper harvests. "They are now expressing anguish that their crops have been withering again over the past three years.!How much longer will they stage dramas using El Niño as an excuse? Back then, KCR had already made the necessary arrangements to generate 21,000 megawatts of power.

During KCR's tenure, there was a continuous supply of quality electricity for 24 hours a day. We delivered it. All of you who consumed that electricity are direct witnesses to this. Why did you halt power generation at the Yadadri and Bhadradri plants? Some cite a lack of water, others a lack of coal, as reasons for cutting off power and water supplies. You are intimidating millers and forcing mills to shut down. Ministers Komatireddy, Uttam Kumar Reddy and Bhatti must answer for this," he said .

From Telangana War Room to Delhi National War Room

- **Rudra Santhosh Kumar Gets Key Role in Congress' 100-Day National Campaign on Caste Census**
- **Telangana's Booth-Level Coordination Experience Gains National Recognition**

KARIMNAGAR

From coordinating the caste census campaign at the grassroots level in Telangana to taking up a key responsibility at the national level, Rudra Santhosh Kumar has been entrusted with an important role in the Congress party's proposed 100-day national campaign on caste census.

According to party sources, the AICC has appointed Rudra Santhosh Kumar as the War Room Coordinator for the nationwide campaign. An appointment letter has reportedly been issued by the AICC.

The national war room is expected to coordinate awareness programmes, state-wise action plans, training programmes, organisational coordination, digital monitoring and weekly progress reports as part of the 100-day campaign.

Telangana Experience Comes into Focus

Rudra Santhosh Kumar had earlier played a key role in coordinating the caste census-related organisational activity in Telangana during 2024–25. A dedicated war room and call-centre mechanism were set up at Gandhi Bhavan to maintain coordination with party workers and organisational representatives at various levels.

According to party sources, the system facilitated regular interaction with mandal presidents, block-level representatives, village-level functionaries and booth-level workers. The campaign continued for around 45 days, with more than 2,000 workers and organisational representatives reportedly contacted every day.

The party has also claimed coordination with more than 100 caste associations and around 35,000 booth-level workers across Telangana.

National OBC Workshop in Delhi

The development assumes significance in the backdrop of the National OBC Workshop held at the AICC headquarters in Indira Bhavan, New Delhi, on September 8.

The workshop was chaired by AICC National Coordinator Koppula Raju. AICC OBC National Chairman Anil Jaihind Yadav, AICC Minority Department National Chairman Imran Pratapgarhi and representatives of OBC and minority departments from different states participated in the meeting.



The discussions covered the proposed national caste census campaign, state-wise programmes, organisational coordination, grassroots-level outreach and monitoring mechanisms, according to party sources.

45-Minute Presentation on 100-Day Plan

As part of the proposed 100-day campaign, Rudra Santhosh Kumar presented a 15-week action plan for implementation across the country.

His presentation, which reportedly lasted around 45 minutes, covered the proposed structure of state-level war rooms, selection and training of master trainers, district-level training programmes, expansion to mandal and village levels, digital monitoring, weekly progress reports and coordination between states.

The proposed mechanism envisages dedicated coordination systems in each state, with monitoring extending from the state level to districts, mandals and villages.

100 Days, 15 Weeks, Nationwide Coordination

The campaign is proposed to be implemented in phases over 100 days. State-level orientation programmes, master-trainer training, district-level programmes, OBC community outreach and coordination with civil society organisations are among the activities included in the proposed plan.

The national war room is expected to function as a central coordination platform for collecting weekly feedback from states, identifying challenges and facilitating necessary coordination and guidance.

From Grassroots Experience to National Role

Rudra Santhosh Kumar's earlier experience in war-room management, call-centre coordination, digital monitoring, booth-level mobilisation and daily progress tracking during the Telangana caste census campaign is now being brought into the proposed national framework.

The move marks an expansion of the organisational experience developed in Telangana to a nationwide campaign, with the proposed AICC war room serving as the central coordination mechanism for the 100-day caste census campaign.

Gowliguda Gurudwara marks a Century of Faith and Service

HYDERABAD



Thousands of Sikh devotees and people from different communities gathered at the Exhibition Grounds, Nampllay on Sunday to mark the centenary celebrations of the historice Central Gurudwara Sahib Gowliguda.

Founded in 1926, the Central Gurudwara Sahib Gowliguda has stood witness to the transformation of Hyderabad across generations. Through changing times, it has retained its essential message of equality, brotherhood, compassion and sewa selfless service. Its centenary, therefore, was much more than the completion of 100 years. It was a celebration of the Sikh community's enduring presence and contribution to the social and cultural life of Telangana.

Celebrating the historic and landmark occasion, the Prabhandak Committee of Central Gurudwara Sahib Gowliguda, in association with Sikh Gurudwaras across Telangana organised "Vishaal Diwan " (Mass Religious Congregation) where thousands of Sikh devotees and other faiths participated in congregation and offered prayers to Guru Granth SahIb Ji (Holy Scripture of Sikhs) at Exhibition Grounds.

The occasion was graced by prominent Sikh spiritual and community leaders, including Singh Sahib, Sant Baba Kulwant Singhji, Revered Jathedar (Head Priest) of Takht Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchalnagar Sahib, Nanded, Maharashtra. Takht Sachkhand Sri Hazur Sahib is one of the five supreme Takhts (seats of temporal authority) in Sikhism. Sant Baba Balwinder Singhji, Hazur Sahib wale is a highly revered spiritual figure and community leader associated with Gurudwara Langar Sahib in Nanded, Maharashtra, Harmeet Singh Kalka, President of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) participated in the centenary celebrations.

The spiritual atmosphere of the gathering was heightened by Gurbani Kirtans (Holy Hymns) and Kathas (Sermns) recited by renowned Ragi Jathas (Sikh preachers) from different parts of the country. Bhai Jagjeet Singh Babiha of Delhi, Bhai Balpreet Singh of Ludhiana, Bhai Jagpreet Singh Khannewale, Bhai Ravinder Singh and other Ragi Jathas and Katha Vachaks rendered d Shabad Kirtans and spoke on the teachings of the Sikh Gurus.

"The historic centenary celebrations are a celebration of faith, service and unity, bringing the entire community together," Central Gurudwara Sahib Gowliguda Prabhandak Committee, President, S. Trilok Singh said.

The centenary celebrations also underlined the Gurudwara's contribution beyond its religious identity. For generations, it has served as a place of prayer, fellowship and selfless service, reflecting the Sikh tradition of sewa at the heart of community life. Its social, cultural and spiritual activities have helped strengthen the bonds between the Sikh community and Hyderabad's wider social fabric. As the Gurudwara enters its second century, the celebrations carried a message of continuity — preserving a rich spiritual heritage while inspiring younger generations to uphold the values of service, equality and compassion, he said.

Heavy to very heavy rain forecast in Telangana for a week

HYDERABAD



The Meteorological department has forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall in Telangana for a week from Sunday, September 20, as a low-pressure area formed over the Bay of Bengal is likely to intensify. A yellow alert has been issued for 24 districts in the State. The weather department said gusty winds with speeds of 40-50 kmph are likely to sweep across the State on Sunday, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning.

Yellow alerts have been issued for Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu, Bhadradri Kothagudem, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mahabubabad, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Jangaon, Siddipet, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak, Kamareddy, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy, Narayanpet and Jogulamba Gadwal districts.

Officials said heavy rainfall is likely in several districts on Monday, including Mahabubabad, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Jangaon, Siddipet, Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak, Kamareddy, Mahabubnagar and Nagarkurnool. The low-pressure area is currently located over the north Andaman Sea and adjoining east-central Bay of Bengal. It is likely to move west-northwestwards and gradually intensify, officials said. The system is likely to intensify into a depression by September 21 and a deep depression by September 22.

The system is expected to move towards the west-central and northwest Bay of Bengal, close to the south Odisha-north Andhra Pradesh coasts, by the morning of September 23, officials said. Under its influence, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely in several districts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on September 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25, the Meteorological department said.

Local Transport Operators Stage Protest Against Transport Charges

BHOPAL

Local transport operators staged a sit-in protest today at Chuna Bhatti Square in the capital city of Bhopal, under the leadership of the Local Transport Jagrukta Sahayata Samiti, raising various demands. During the protest, truck operators stopped their vehicles and expressed their opposition to the government. A large number of vehicle owners and operators associated with the local transport sector participated in the demonstration. The committee president said that they have four major demands before the government, the main one being the immediate withdrawal of the additional charges being imposed in the name of transportation. He said transport operators are particularly upset about the environmental charge, which exceeds ₹4 lakh. According to him, the transport business is already under financial pressure due to rising costs and various existing charges, and imposing additional fees in such circumstances is unjustified. The protesters appealed to the government to immediately consider their demands and provide relief. The committee warned that if the process of forcibly imposing additional taxes and charges continues, local transport operators across the state may expand their agitation and could decide to go on strike in the coming days. The transport operators urged the government to resolve their problems at the earliest.

Minor short circuit at Lalbaugcha Raja pandal; attended immediately: Official

MUMBAI: A minor short circuit occurred in the "feeder pillar" at Mumbai's famous Lalbaugcha Ganesh pandal, which draws thousands of devotees, on Sunday, a civic official said. The short circuit was promptly brought under control, and no injuries were reported, he said. The Ganesh pandal in Mumbai's Lalbaug area is among the most visited Ganeshotsav venues in the metropolis.

Andhra Pradesh CM calls for tackling El Nino as a challenge

AMARAVATI



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday called for tackling the El Nino phenomenon as a challenge. He suggested adopting short-term and medium-term plans to tackle the impact of El Nino. He reviewed the impact of El Nino, necessary measures to tackle the situation, and the implementation of the action plan. The Chief Minister held a teleconference with senior officials from various departments, district collectors, staff, and Rythu Seva Kendras (RSKs) personnel. He stated that a rainfall deficit of 50.7 per cent has been recorded across the state. The highest rainfall deficits are observed in Prakasam, Annamayya, and Sathya Sai districts. While cultivation was planned for 30.84 lakh hectares during the Kharif season, farming operations have commenced on 79 per cent of the land due to the impact of El Nino. Although pulse cultivation is satisfactory, the cultivation of oilseeds remains low. He asked officials to focus on supporting farmers and keeping prices in check. Orders were issued to officials to control the prices of rice, onions, palm oil, and red gram. "We anticipated El Nino conditions well in advance. Everyone must work according to the pre-prepared action plan. The impact of El Nino affects not just farmers, but all sectors. While striving to protect farmers from the effects of El Nino, measures must also be taken to prevent price hikes," he said. The Chief Minister advised optimal utilisation of funds allocated to support horticultural crops in high-risk RSK areas. He emphasised the need to focus on cultivating crops based on market demand

"We have arranged for crop insurance; if crop loss occurs, we must ensure the insurance payout reaches the farmers," Chandrababu Naidu said. He directed officials to check stock levels of rice and release rice stocks into the market to keep prices under control. "We are currently procuring onions from various regions to control their prices. Onion cultivation needs to be encouraged to meet future demand. Decisions already taken to control the prices of palm oil and red gram must be implemented swiftly," he said. The Chief Minister asked officials to encourage kitchen gardens and ensure that vegetables are grown through kitchen gardens managed by self-help groups.

Indiramma Indlu Towers Get Allocation Letters

to Be Issued to Beneficiaries From Tomorrow via SMS, WhatsApp and TGHB Website
Foundation Stone for Indiramma Indlu Towers at Raidurg to Be Laid by Hon'ble Housing Minister Sri Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on September 21, 2026

HYDERABAD



Allocation letters for beneficiaries selected under all Indiramma Indlu Towers projects will be issued from tomorrow. The allocation letters will be sent directly to the registered mobile numbers of selected beneficiaries through SMS and WhatsApp. They will also be made available on the official website of the Telangana Housing Board (TGHB) so that beneficiaries can download their allocation letters.

Selected beneficiaries are therefore requested to check both their registered mobile numbers and the TGHB website. Online facilities related to Indiramma Indlu applications and lottery-based selection are already available on the official TGHB website.

On the same day, Hon'ble Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations Minister Sri Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy will lay the foundation stone for the Indiramma Indlu Towers at Raidurg in the Serilingampally Assembly constituency. At Raidurg, it has been proposed to construct 480 flats, each measuring approximately 528 sq. ft., on around 2.85 acres of government/Telangana Housing Board land located behind Malkam Cheruvu. Each eligible beneficiary will have to pay only ₹6 lakh, while the government will provide a ₹5 lakh subsidy per flat and bear the entire cost of the land. The Raidurg–Knowledge City area is one of Hyderabad's prominent locations with some of the highest real-estate values. In the TGIIC e-auctions held in August 2026, nearby parcels measuring 5.25 acres and 5.38 acres were sold at ₹264 crore and ₹269 crore per acre, respectively, for approximately ₹1,386 crore and ₹1,447 crore in total. If these prices are considered as indicative market benchmarks, the value of the 2.85 acres being used for the Indiramma Indlu project would be approximately ₹752 crore to ₹767 crore. Even in such a high-value prime location, where a comparable flat in the open market could be worth around ₹50 lakh, the government is providing an Indiramma Indlu flat to each eligible beneficiary with a beneficiary contribution of only ₹6 lakh, along with an additional ₹5 lakh government subsidy and free land. This is intended to provide affordable housing to ordinary citizens close to major employment hubs and urban infrastructure.

The Telangana Housing Board officials have completed all necessary arrangements for the programme to be held at Raidurg. The Vice Chairman & Housing Commissioner has requested the concerned allottees from the Serilingampally constituency to arrive at the venue with their family members by 3:30 PM and participate in large numbers to make the foundation-stone ceremony a success.

SCR laid Special Focus on Quality of Water Supplied at Stations, Colonies and Hospitals

A Team of Inspectors supervising the quality and it is being monitored by the officers
During the Last Seven Days No Sample was reported asUnfit

HYDERABAD

South Central Railway laid special focus on the quality of the water being supplied at Railway stations as well as Railway colonies. In order to ensure the qualityin the supplied water regular checks are being conducted as per the laid down guide lines as stipulated in the Indian Railways Medical Manual. These checks and quality of the water is being supervised by the team of supervisors and Inspectors from Medical department of Railways and monitored by the officers. The water quality is being tested in three aspects for the water being supplied to the Stations, Colonies and Hospitals. The water quality tests being conducted and corrective measures followed are detailed below

1. Availability of Residual Chlorine in Drinking water after disinfection of Water: Daily Water samples willbe checked at Source of Water and tail end point of supply.

Corrective Measure for Unfit Sample: Whenever the Sample is found unfit in Residual Chlorine, the Concerned Senior Section Engineer (Water Works) will be intimated to ensure Proper Chlorination.

2. Testing for Bacteriological Analysis: This test is carried out to find out any presence of E.Coli/ Coliform Bacteria in the supplied water. For conducting this test,Water Samples will be collected once in a month in major Stations/ Colonies/Hospitals and once in two months in minor stations/ colonies.

Corrective Measure for Unfit Sample: Whenever the Sample is found unfit under Bacteriological Analysis, the Concerned Senior Section Engineer (Water Works) will be intimated to clean the Ground Level Reservoir /Water Tanks. In case of Water Coolers (cool water) , Senior Section Engineer (Electrical) will be intimated for cleaning. After cleaning, Repeated Sample will be collected in presence of Engineering Department officials. If again the sample is found unfit, Joint inspection/ Sanitary Survey will be done along with the Engineering Department Officials. 3. Testing for Chemical Analysis: Water samples will becollected for testing of Chemical Analysis once in Six Months from the existing source of supply. Further, Testing for Chemical Analysis will also be done in case of new source of water.

Corrective Measure for Unfit Sample: Whenever the Sample is found unfit under Chemical Analysis, the Concerned Senior Section Engineer (Water Works) will be intimated for further course of action basing on the parameters found out of the Prescribed limit.

Details of the No. of samples collected for the period from 09.09.2026 to 15.09.2026 (For the Seven Days period) over the SCR is as follows.

Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, South Central Railway instructed all the officers and supervisors to be more vigilant and to conduct frequent checks at regular intervals for ensuring the quality of water being supplied at Railway stations, Colonies and Hospitals.

Deficiencies in Anti-Defection Law Must Be Rectified: K. Narayana

Leaving loopholes in the anti-defection law unaddressed has led to disgraceful developments across the country that undermine and make a mockery of democracy.

HYDERABAD

The Election Commission has clear records of the political party on whose ticket each candidate contested an election. If an elected representative switches parties after the election and acts contrary to the mandate given by the people, why should the law not be amended to provide for immediate disqualification once defection is established? Both the Congress, which was in power at the national level in the past, and the BJP, which is currently in power, must bear responsibility for the present situation. If the Congress was at fault in the past, the BJP, being in power today, has an opportunity to correct those shortcomings. Why is it not doing so? It is the responsibility of the Central Government to strengthen the law and prevent defections that weaken democracy. Will history forgive political leaders who defend defections that undermine the people's mandate and democratic values?

— Dr. K. Narayana
Chairman, National Control Commission, CPI

YSRCP accuses Andhra coalition govt of undermining Vizag's development

VISAKHAPATNAM



YSR Congress Party has slammed the TDP-led coalition government in Andhra Pradesh for what it called deliberately undermining the development of Visakhapatnam to promote Amaravati. The party also accused the government of time and again targeting the opposition with false propaganda and skirting the major issues being faced by the locals. Speaking to the media here on Sunday, former minister Gudivada Amarnath said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has been misusing all platforms to target YSRCP and its leadership. It was YS Jagan Mohan Reddy who has given 1.30 lakh house site pattas, and the works were stalled by the coalition government, he said. Amarnath alleged that Chandrababu Naidu wants to show Visakhapatnam in a poor light and did not bother to take corrective measures to address the acute drinking water scarcity in the city even during monsoon. This could be a deliberate move to stall the development of the city only to promote Amaravati, which is his real estate project, he said.

Prime land in Visakhapatnam has been given away to his favoured few for a pittance, and most of the beneficiaries were real estate companies, and some of them have come out of nowhere. Even Minister Nara Lokesh's co-brother and local MP has been involved in a major land grab, he alleged.

The YSRCP leader said that house site pattas distribution is a sheer drama ahead of the local body elections, which is very clear when Chandrababu, instead of speaking about the drinking water scarcity and the Steel Plant issues, started speaking against YSRCP and its leadership.

All reservoirs have dried up, and the parched citizens were looking forward to some assurance from the Chief Minister, who has again disappointed and cheated them, he said.

The former minister remarked that people are vexed with the event management of Chandrababu, who has been resorting to prophecies instead of addressing the core issues, besides targeting YSRCP.

YSRCP had succeeded in stalling the illegal mining in Panchadaral zone, he said, adding that the party will take up all people's issues.

Bopparaju Venkateswarlu Elected Unopposed as AP Revenue Services Association President for Sixth Term

Krishnamurthy Elected Unopposed as State General Secretary for Third Term

VIJAYAWADA





The 18th State Council meeting of the AP Revenue Services Association (APRSA) was held on Sunday at Revenue Bhavan in Vijayawada, under the chairmanship of State President Bopparaju Venkateswarlu.

proceedings began with the unfurling of the Revenue Association flag at Revenue Bhavan, followed by floral tributes to the bronze statue of Comrade Thota Sudhakar Prasad. Subsequently, nominations for the state elections were filed, followed by the State Council meeting.

Election Results

At the State Council meeting, Election Officer P.V. Krishnarao and Assistant Election Officer Phani Kumar announced that Bopparaju Venkateswarlu had been unanimously elected State President of the Association for a sixth term, while Chebrolu Krishnamurthy was unanimously elected State General Secretary for a third term. Gottapu Sriramamurthy was elected State Associate President and R.N. Divakar was elected State Treasurer. Along with them, another 26 members were unanimously elected to various positions in the state executive committee, including vice-presidents, organising secretaries and state secretaries, the election officers announced.

Modernisation of Land Records

Speaking after their election, newly elected State President Bopparaju Venkateswarlu and State General Secretary Chebrolu Krishnamurthy said that revenue employees would discharge their responsibilities diligently and continue to fight for the rights of employees. They said they would work to uphold the dignity of the Revenue Department and bring a good name to the government. Resolving the problems faced by revenue employees would remain their primary objective.

They said the key objectives of revenue employees were to improve the accuracy of land records, reduce land disputes and provide landowners with reliable and transparent records. They demanded promotions for eligible Grade-II VROs against vacant Grade-I VRO posts and promotions for eligible Grade-I VROs to the post of Senior Assistant as per their due quota. They also demanded that the long-pending salaries of Village Revenue Assistants (VRAs) be increased to ₹21,000 per month. They assured that the Association would continue its efforts to resolve the promotion and service-related issues of revenue employees and that all revenue employees would discharge their duties responsibly while working to protect the dignity of the department.

They recalled that obtaining copies of manual land records in Andhra Pradesh was once a difficult process for the public. Today, digitisation of land records through Webland, along with the issuance of various certificates and verification documents, has made several services accessible to citizens. They said that revenue services are now available through mobile phones and claimed that such a level of accessibility is not even available in some developed countries. They noted that countries such as the United States, Germany and Switzerland follow different systems for digitising land records and providing public access to them. In some places, there is no free access for the general public and user charges can be substantial. They stressed the need to further strengthen systems to regulate unauthorised transactions, enhance record security and prevent illegal alterations through mechanisms such as record locking. They reiterated that improving the accuracy of land records, reducing land disputes and providing landowners with reliable and transparent records are the primary objectives of revenue employees.

Delegation of Powers on Land-Related Issues

With regard to resolving land-related issues, including additions to and deletions from the prohibited properties list under Section 22-A, dotted lands and other matters, the Association welcomed the recent decision of the coalition government to delegate certain powers previously exercised by District Collectors and Joint Collectors to Revenue Divisional Officers and Tahsildars, with the aim of avoiding delays. They said the revenue machinery would discharge its responsibilities transparently and in accordance with the rules while handling these matters. They appealed to every revenue employee, particularly all Tahsildars across the state, to make effective use of the opportunity provided by the government, work with commitment, earn public appreciation and bring a good name to the government.

Progress in Employee Service Matters

The Association said it had been continuously working to resolve the service-related problems of revenue employees and highlighted several achievements secured through its efforts.

Key Achievements of APRSA

Obtained government orders for observing June 20 as Revenue Day, recognising the 239-year history of the Revenue Department dating back to the British era and the East India Company. Facilitated promotions for 58 Special Grade Deputy Collectors and the constitution of panels for the period from 2019 to 2024. Worked towards securing approval for seven Deputy Tahsildar panels covering the period from 2018–19 to 2025–26. Facilitated approximately 250 Deputy Collector promotions between 2022 and 2025–26. Secured ad hoc promotions to Deputy Collector for 116 employees. Facilitated promotions of 296 Deputy Tahsildars to Tahsildar. Worked towards introducing a uniform cadre strength for the state's Collectorates. The newly elected state executive committee will give special attention to promotions and service-related issues affecting employees across all categories in the Revenue Department, filling vacancies and addressing workload-related concerns, Bopparaju Venkateswarlu and Chebrolu Krishnamurthy said. They assured that the Association would take employees' legitimate issues to the government and work towards their resolution, while extending its cooperation to ensure that revenue services are delivered to the public more quickly and transparently. AP JAC Amaravati Releases Special Bulletin on Its Achievements special bulletin highlighting the journey, struggles and achievements of AP JAC Amaravati was released on Sunday at Revenue Bhavan. AP JAC Amaravati was launched on February 5, 2017, with 17 employee associations, with the objective of protecting employees' rights and resolving their problems. By 2026, it has grown into the state's largest Joint Action Committee, with 94 departmental associations. The special bulletin documenting the organisation's struggles and achievements in addressing employees' issues was released by Chairman Bopparaju Venkateswarlu, Secretary General Palishetti Damodara Rao, Associate T.V. Phaniperrāju, Treasurer Thimmasarthi Nageswara Rao, Organising Secretary B. Kishore Kumar, Publicity Secretary R. Srinivasa Rao, and NTR District Chairman Battira Ramakrishna.

EDITORIAL

Tehran's Seven Demands: A Moment of Truth for U.S. Gulf Strategy

The diplomatic posture of the Middle East has reached a critical juncture following Iran's delivery of a seven-point proposal to the White House through Qatari mediation. Hand-delivered amid ongoing hostilities, the conditions outlined by Mohsen Rezaei, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, set forth a firm framework for de-escalation. Primary among these demands are an immediate end to multi-front warfare, the release of long-frozen Iranian financial assets, and a complete lifting of the U.S. naval blockade. The document presents President Donald Trump with a stark choice: negotiate an exit from what Tehran terms a geopolitical quagmire, or brace for a "decisive war" capable of engulfing American military and commercial interests across the region.

Tehran's initiative reflects a calculated strategy that marries diplomatic maneuvering with strategic military deterrence. By leveraging backchannel partners like Qatar and Pakistan, Iranian leadership signals a desire to halt the current cycle of strikes and counter-strikes while maintaining an uncompromising stance on sovereign rights. Crucially, the public messaging leaves little room for middle ground. Tehran has tied the future of regional maritime stability and its adherence to international agreements, including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, directly to Washington's willingness to process these seven demands. The proposal acts as both an olive branch and an ultimatum, framing U.S. compliance not as a favor, but as a pragmatic necessity.

For the Trump administration, the proposal poses a deep political and strategic dilemma. Accepting Iran's conditions—especially the immediate unfreezing of assets and removal of naval blockades—could be interpreted by critics as capitulation under coercion. On the other hand, dismissing the offer out of hand risks escalating the conflict into an open-ended confrontation along crucial maritime arteries, spanning from the Persian Gulf to the Arabian Sea. With global energy markets sensitive to any disruption in the Strait of Hormuz and American military assets remaining within range of asymmetric counter-strikes, the economic and operational costs of continued escalation are formidable.

Ultimately, Iran's seven conditions force a moment of truth for foreign policy in Washington. De-escalation through diplomatic channels offers a structured exit route from an unpredictable war, but it requires addressing fundamental economic and security grievances. Whether President Trump opts for tactical compromise or doubles down on military posture, the response to Tehran's proposal will shape the stability of the Middle East and the trajectory of international security for years to come.

THE DAY WE GREW OLDER

There was no bell, no warning,
no door that closed behind us.
We simply woke one morning
and found childhood had moved out.

The streets were still the same,
the evening still carried birds home,
but our pockets were full of keys
instead of marbles and dreams.

Once, we measured life
by summer holidays and sunsets,
by how long a cricket match lasted,
by the distance a paper boat could travel.

Then came the quiet arithmetic—
rent, deadlines, medicines,
birthdays we nearly forgot,
and calls we kept postponing.

Our parents, once giants in the doorway,
began to stoop beneath the years.
Their hands, which had lifted our worlds,
started searching for ours.

Friends became photographs,
voices became messages,
and familiar laughter
began arriving from distant cities.

We learned that some departures
do not require a goodbye.
People can leave slowly—
one silence, one missed call at a time.

Even our dreams changed clothes.
The wild ones learned caution;
the impossible ones became
a list of things we might still do.

And somewhere between
the first funeral and the first grey hair,
we discovered the cruelest truth:

Time does not announce
what it is taking from us.

It leaves the chair empty,
dims the photograph,
turns yesterday into a country
we can visit but never enter.

Yet beneath all this becoming,
something stubborn survives—
the child who still looks upward
when rain begins.

Perhaps growing older
was never about losing youth.

Perhaps it was learning
to carry what we loved
without being able to carry it back.

So here we stand,
older than we imagined,
younger than tomorrow will allow—

holding our memories like lanterns
against the gathering dark.

And if someone asks
when we became old,

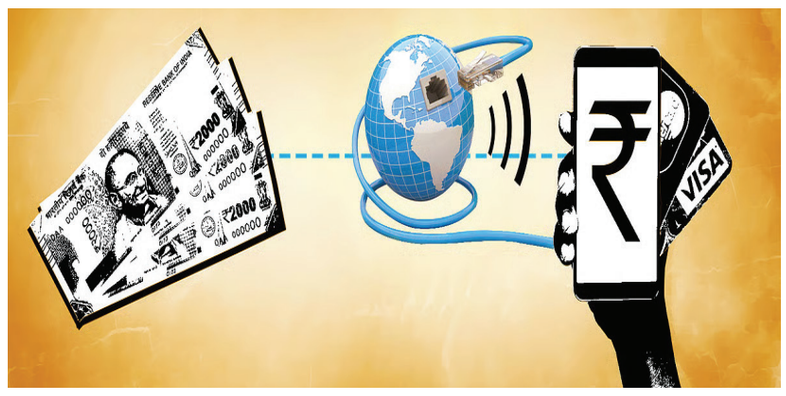
we will have no date to give.

Only this:

We grew older
the first time
we realised
the people we loved
were growing old without us.

ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

DIGITAL INDIA COSTS BANKS HIT, 'CASHLESS' A MYTH



There is an uproar over ending a free digital payment regime, UPI, valued at Rs 29 lakh core, to a partially paid one by the merchants above sales of Rs 2000. The Opposition, to shopkeepers to common users are dismayed and question the process.

Perhaps, the government after many years has taken a pragmatic decision in the interest of banks that are extremely stressed since 2016 demonetisation, introduction of Jan Dhan schemes in a tearing great hurry, merger of many public sector banks amid hidden costs and risks, along with severe drain of funds for dividend to the government.

People forget that when UPI was launched in 2016, it wasn't free. There were uniform merchant discount rate (MDR) charges of 0.065percent on all transactions. Despite being a new product and charges, it grew rapidly. It was only in April 2020, during the Covid19 lockdown, that UPI and other digital payments were made free.A steep fee to save banks.

Over the years, there is a depositsqueeze. Credit growth outpaces deposit mobilisation as household savings shift to mutual funds and equities. An intense competition for retail deposits pushes up interest expenses for lenders, who are stretched into high-risk retail loans to protect net interest margins, raising credit costs.

Gradually, the banking system realises that replacing cost with digital money has not been as pragmatic as envisaged. The cost is swelling.Digital banking, once promoted as a cost-saving and frictionless alternative to cash, has increased expenses. Banks have replaced the physical costs of vaults and cash transportation with continuous spending on cybersecurity, fraud prevention, ageing legacy systems, AML and KYC compliances, and dependence on cloud providers, payment networks and software vendors.

Digitalisation has not eliminated banking costs; it has shifted these from physical cash management to an expensive and endless technology burden.Nor has it reduced the printing of paper money. Compared to 2016, in 2026 currency notes in circulation more than doubled. India had approximately 90.26 billion individual currency notes in circulation in 2016 worth Rs 15.4 lakh crore, costing Rs 3420 crore. It grew to around 176 billion individual pieces by March 2026 valued at Rs 41.23 lakh crore costing Rs 4875.2 crore. Undoubtedly, digital transactions have added high cost and logistics to the banking system.

Banks, The NPA & Credit Risks

, however, India's banking system appears healthier than it has been in years. Non-performing assets (NPAs) have fallen, capital buffers remain comfortable and profitability has improved. Yet beneath these reassuring numbers, a different set of pressures is building. Banks face rising deposit costs, changing lending patterns, expanding digital infrastructure expenses and risks.

The Reserve Bank of India's June 2025 Financial Stability Report placed the gross NPA ratio of scheduled commercial banks at 2.3 per cent and the net NPA ratio at 0.5 per cent at the end of March 2025. Its subsequent Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2024–25 put the gross NPA ratio at 2.2 per cent at the end of March 2025 and 2.1 per cent at the end of September 2025. But a falling NPA ratio does not mean that credit risks have disappeared. During 2024–25, scheduled commercial banks added approximately Rs 2.26 lakh crore in fresh NPAs. Reductions totalled about Rs2.75 lakh crore, including Rs1.58 lakh crore through write-offs and nearly Rs67,693 crore through recoveries, as per the RBI.Write-offs should not be confused with cash recovery. Lower NPAs are welcome, but the quality of resolution matters.

Deposits: Funding Costs Rise

Credit demand remains strong, while banks face tougher competition for deposits as households shift towards mutual funds, equities and other financial assets. This raises funding costs, forcing banks to offer attractive deposit rates when lending rates cannot rise proportionately. The RBI's 2024–25 report recorded deposit growth of 11.1 per cent and credit growth of 11 per cent in FY25, highlighting the importance of stable, low-cost deposits.

Rising funding costs are also squeezing net interest margins (NIMs), which declined from 3.3 per cent to 3.1 per cent during the comparative period, increasing the cost of expanding credit.

For banks, especially those dependent on retail deposits, this is not merely an accounting concern. It affects the cost of expanding credit.

Jan Dhan Inclusion Pressure

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana has transformed access to formal banking. As of February 28, 2025, it had 54.97 crore accounts, including 30.60 crore held by women. Rural and semi-urban accounts accounted for 36.59 crore. Basic savings accounts without minimum balance requirements generate limited direct fee income. Low-balance or inactive accounts or remote area operations add to administrative workloads.This does not make Jan Dhan a banking failure despite about six crore nil balance accounts. It highlights a policy question:who should bear the continuing cost of universal financial access?Digital automatically does not improve financial efficiency.

Long-Term Loans Hit Banks

The relationship between long-term credit risk management and bank profitability over an extended 17-year period shows an inverse relationship. When banks experience a high volume of credit accumulation or inefficient risk management over a 17-year horizon, their profitability is significantly harmed.

Loan types that stretch across long-term horizons (typically 15 to 20 years, averaging a 17-year lifecycle), are hitting commercial bank balance sheets primarily through various consortium loans. With deposits growing slower at around 12 percent, banks are heavily prioritising high-yield corporate capex and working capital loans rather than oversaturating long-term locked retail assets.

Digital Banking: Efficiency with New Liabilities

Digital banking brings rising costs in cybersecurity, cloud systems, fraud detection and compliance. Card and internet frauds accounted for 66.8percent of cases, while advances-related frauds comprised 33.1percent of the amount involved. Risks are shifting across retail, microfinance, agriculture and real estate, with bank–NBFC linkages potentially spreading stress. The RBI stress tests projected 2.5percent gross NPAs by March 2027—but this is only a scenario, not a forecast.

India's banks have stronger capital and improved asset quality, with the RBI reporting a 17.4percent capital-to-risk-weighted-assets ratio in March 2025. But financial stability goes beyond NPAs and capital. Deposit costs, recoveries, cybersecurity, digital infrastructure and off-bank credit risks matter. The real test is whether banks remain profitable, protect depositors and withstand changing economic conditions.

Digital transactions should gradually be discouraged. It has not reduced physical currency circulation though exponentially added to the costs to banks. Its risks are known but agencies are wary speaking about it. A higher fee and more caution as well as going back to cash is more welcome and the myth of black money is already busted.



SHIVAJI SARKAR

WHEN LIFE NEEDS A PAUSE NOT A FULL STOP



Some days begin in a hurry, and end in the same hurry.
By night, there is a strange feeling that the whole day has gone somewhere.

Life has become a continuous routine for many people. Wake up, go to work, attend to responsibilities, come back home and start again the next morning. There may be nothing seriously wrong, but there may also be nothing that gives a person real satisfaction. A person keeps moving because there is no time to stop and ask whether the direction is right.

Sometimes, sitting quietly for ten minutes can tell more than a whole day of running around.
A little silence can make a person understand what a busy mind keeps hiding.

A change in life does not always mean leaving a job, moving to another place or making a big decision. Sometimes it simply means changing a habit that has been draining energy for years. It can mean spending less time on unnecessary things, giving more time to family, sleeping properly, reading something useful or simply taking a walk without looking at the phone every few minutes.

People often think that starting again means admitting that something went wrong.
But there is nothing wrong in saying, "This is not working for me anymore."

A person may spend years trying to satisfy everyone around him. He may choose a career because others suggested it, live in a particular way because society expects it, and continue relationships only because he is afraid of what others may say. After some time, he may realise that he has been living according to everybody's expectations except his own.

At that point, a small change can feel like a big relief.
Sometimes, the first step is simply being honest with oneself.

Modern life has made many things easier, but it has also made life crowded. There are messages to answer, calls to attend, targets to complete, bills to pay and endless information to consume. Even when the body is resting, the mind continues running. This constant movement slowly makes a person forget what genuine rest actually feels like.

A mobile phone can be switched off for a while.
A tired mind also deserves the same kindness.

There is also a difference between being busy and being useful. A person may remain busy throughout the day and still feel that nothing important was achieved. Hours can disappear in unnecessary conversations, endless scrolling, repeated worries and work that could have been planned better. The problem is not always a shortage of time; sometimes it is the way time is being spent.

At the end of the day, the question is not only, "What did I do?"
It is also, "Was it worth giving my time to?"

A reset in life does not require erasing the past. Past mistakes, disappointments and failures have their own place in a person's journey. They teach lessons that success sometimes cannot teach. The important thing is not to keep reopening old wounds and calling them memories.
Some things are better learned from and left behind.
Carrying every old burden will only make the next journey harder.

There comes a stage when a person starts valuing peace more than appearance. Money remains important, success remains important and responsibilities cannot be ignored. But along with these things, there must also be space for health, family, friendship, personal interests and a little time for oneself.

A life that looks successful from outside may still feel empty inside. Real success is also about feeling comfortable with the person one has become.

Perhaps the best time for a reset is not after everything falls apart. It is before that happens. When the mind repeatedly says that something needs to change, that voice should not always be ignored. A small correction made at the right time can prevent a much bigger problem later.
A road need not be abandoned just because it has a turn ahead.
Sometimes, all that is needed is to slow down and choose the turn carefully.

Life does not come with a reset button like a mobile phone or a computer. But a person can pause, think, change a habit, correct a mistake and begin again. There is no age limit for doing that. There is no perfect day waiting somewhere in the future. The right moment can simply be the moment when a person decides to take charge of his own life.

A fresh beginning does not always need a new life.
Sometimes, it only needs a new way of looking at the old one.



CHITIKENA KIRAN KUMAR
Eminent Poet, Writer & Editorial Columnist
Member: International Benevolent Research Forum

Lado Lakshmi Yojana Extended to Families Earning Up to Rs. 1.80 Lakh

CHANDIGARH



Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini addressing the gathering during a programme organised at village Sultanpur, Ladwa Assembly Constituency, Kurukshetra district on September 20, 2026.

September 20: Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that eligible women belonging to families with an annual income of up to Rs. 1.80 lakh will receive the benefit of the Lado Lakshmi Yojana from November. The government has fulfilled its promise of providing Rs. 2,100 per month to women by implementing the Deen Dayal Lado Lakshmi Yojana. The scheme was expanded on September 17, on the occasion of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi's birthday, and families with an annual income of up to Rs. 1.80 lakh have now been included among the beneficiaries. He said that following the expansion of the scheme, the portal has been opened for applications and eligible women will start receiving the benefit from November 1. Earlier, families with an annual income of up to Rs. 1 lakh were eligible for the scheme. So far, more than Rs. 2,000 crore has been transferred online to the bank accounts of eligible women. The Chief Minister was speaking at Jan Samvad programmes organised in the Ladwa Assembly constituency on Sunday. He said that the government has provided government jobs to 2 lakh youth in the state over the last 12 years on the basis of merit, without 'Kharchi-Parchi'. Earlier, under the previous government, candidates had to seek money and recommendations to secure government jobs, but now the son of a poor family can get a government job, from Group-D to HCS, purely on the basis of merit. He said that development works are being carried out at a rapid pace under the leadership of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi. At village Kalirano, the Chief Minister announced Rs. 21 lakh for village development and Rs. 2 lakh for library books. Similarly, he announced Rs. 21 lakh for the development of Sultanpur village and Rs. 5 lakh for the Gurudwara Sahib. He also announced Rs. 21 lakh each for village Sonti, village Bir Sonti and the Gurudwara Sahib in the villages. Former Minister of State Sh. Subhash Sudha and OSD to the Chief Minister Sh. Mahendra Saini were also present on the occasion.

The Chief Minister said that before the elections, the Haryana Government had made 217 commitments to the people, of which 70 have so far been fulfilled, while work on the remaining commitments is being carried out at a rapid pace. He said that immediately after taking oath, the government had started working towards fulfilling its commitments. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi, a network of roads has been developed across the state to connect various areas with national highways and other major roads. The Chief Minister said that Haryana was the first state in the country to start procuring all 24 crops produced by farmers at Minimum Support Price (MSP). He said that Congress leaders are asking the government for details of the 24 crops, but they themselves do not have complete knowledge about the types of crops being produced by farmers in the state. He alleged that the opposition is now spreading misinformation among farmers in the name of MSP. He said that no farmer in the state now dumps his crop on the road, as the state government has addressed this problem by implementing the Bhavantar Bharpai Yojana. Under the scheme, if farmers receive a lower price for their produce in the mandis, the government compensates them for the difference in price.

He said that the Congress government had provided only Rs. 137 crore to farmers as compensation for crop losses during its tenure, whereas the present government has provided Rs. 16,500 crore to farmers for crop losses.

Deputy Commissioner Sh. Vishram Kumar Meena, Chairman Sh. Gurnam Singh Saini, Chairman Sh. Subhash Kalsana, Chairperson Sh. Kanwaljeet Kaur, Chairman Dr. Ganesh Dutt, Chairperson Sh. Sakshi Khurana, Kalirano Sarpanch Sh. Rajiv Kumar, Sultanpur Sarpanch Smt. Mamta Rani, Sarpanch Sh. Suresh, Sarpanch Sh. Sukhwinder Singh, Sh. Naib Singh Patak Majra and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.



Seva Setu Abhiyan Draws Strong Response in Ningthoukhong

BY ASEM BHAKTAA SINGH

NINGTHOUKHONG: The Seva Setu Abhiyan under Seva Sankalp Abhiyan organised by BJP Bishnupur Mandal received an overwhelming response at Ningthoukhong on Sunday with 817 people participating, of whom 80% were women. The programme was held at the residence of Home & Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Govindas Konthoujam in collaboration with the District Medical Office, District Supply Office, Social Welfare, Agriculture and Horticulture Departments, Bishnupur.

A major attraction was the Free Mega Health Camp with consultations in Medicine, Pediatrics, Dermatology, Dental, Diabetology, Surgery, Obs & Gynaecology, Ortho, ENT, Eye and Optometry. Free services included Medicines, ECG, Hemoglobin, Lipid Profile, Kidney Function Test, Liver Function Test, Uric Acid, Diabetic and Blood Tests.

The consultation was scheduled from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM but due to heavy rush, it continued till 5:15 PM.

The Social Welfare Department also provided wheelchairs and rice to beneficiaries along with assistance under Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana, e-KYC updation and other aids.

The Agriculture Department provided knapsack sprayers and free seeds of groundnut, moong, arhar and soybean. The Horticulture Department shared information on MIDH, Per Drop More Crop, PMFBY, RKVY and development of makhana in Manipur.

One participant, L. Phajabi Devi, said the camp is very helpful for rural people who lack money and medical facilities in village areas. She thanked Govindas Konthoujam and wished him good health and great success.

Punjab BJP chief attacks AAP govt over 'suppression' of anti-drug voices

CHANDIGARH



Punjab BJP President Kewal Singh Dhillon on Sunday launched a blistering attack on the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in the state, accusing it of failing to curb the drug menace and allegedly attempting to silence voices raised against the open sale of drugs in the state.

In a post on X, Dhillon highlighted three alleged incidents involving individuals who, according to him, had raised concerns about drugs, linking them to Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's home district of Sangrur. "First, Mohanjeet Singh from Sheron village... then Gulzar Singh from a Dalit family in Tur Banjara... and now Jagsir Jaga, a poor labourer from Namol village," Dhillon wrote. Targeting the AAP government, the Punjab BJP chief alleged that authorities were focusing on suppressing those speaking out against drugs instead of taking effective action to control the menace."The 'AAP' government, failing to curb drugs, is now focusing on silencing voices raised against drugs," he said in his post.

Dhillon claimed that Jagsir Singh, who had raised his voice against the alleged open sale of drugs in his village, was subjected to treatment similar to that of Gulzar Singh. He further alleged that the incident left Jagsir so devastated that he was forced to consume poison.

Expressing outrage, the BJP leader said it was "extremely shameful" that three such incidents had allegedly occurred within a single month in Sangrur, the Chief Minister's home district.

"If the Chief Minister cannot protect the people of his own area from drugs and the mafia, then what will happen to the rest of Punjab?" he asked.

Dhillon's attack comes as the AAP government has launched a door-to-door campaign to apprise people of its achievements during the last four-and-a-half years in Punjab. Reaffirming the BJP's support for anti-drug campaigners, Dhillon said his party would not allow innocent people's voices to be suppressed and stood firmly with Jagsir Singh and others fighting against drugs.

BJP, Ally Discuss Joint Campaign for Tripura Village Polls

AGARTALA

Ahead of the upcoming September 28 Village Committee elections in Tripura's tribal areas, efforts are underway to further strengthen coordination between the ruling BJP and its ally Tipra Motha Party (TMP).

The alliance partners contesting the elections discussed joint campaigning strategies based on local conditions and ways to collectively address various issues that may arise during the electoral process. Veteran BJP leader and Tripura Power Minister Ratan Lal Nath on Sunday chaired the third meeting with the leaders of the Tipra Motha Party (TMP) at the State Guest House here to discuss the campaigning strategies in the politically important Village Committee elections. The meeting discussed in detail where and how the alliance partners could jointly campaign at the local level. Talking to the media after the meeting, Minister Nath said that joint campaigning would not be necessary in every area and that appropriate strategies would be adopted based on local conditions and requirements. He said special emphasis was being laid on direct interaction with voters. This includes door-to-door campaigning, courtyard meetings, market-based meetings and small public gatherings. The minister said these programmes were being organised mainly at the local level. Nath said Sunday's meeting was held at the state level to discuss the possibilities of joint campaigning, further strengthening coordination among the alliance partners and ways to collectively resolve problems that may arise during the election campaign. He said the main objective was to jointly address the problems and that coordination among the alliance partners would continue in the coming days in view of the Village Committee elections. The minister further said that the issues discussed at the meeting had been brought to the notice of Tipra Motha Party supremo Pradyot Bikram Manikya Debbarma, state BJP president Abhishek Debroy and Chief Minister Manik Saha. On Saturday, in another important meeting, the Village Committee elections in the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) were discussed in detail, and all state BJP leaders attended the meeting. After the meeting, taking to X, Chief Minister Saha wrote: "Ahead of the upcoming Village Committee elections, I participated today in the organisational meeting organised by the Bharatiya Janata Party, Tripura State, held at the Muktdhara Auditorium in Agartala. The meeting featured detailed discussions on preparations for the forthcoming elections, strengthening the organisation further, and reinforcing organisational activities all the way down to the booth level."

Gujarat: Ahmedabad Crime Branch catches Rajasthan murder accused

AHMEDABAD

The Ahmedabad Crime Branch has arrested a 54-year-old man who had been absconding for 24 years in a 2002 murder case registered in Rajasthan, after tracing him to the Vejalpur area, where he had allegedly been living under a concealed identity and had changed several residences over the years. The accused, identified as Dinesh Desai, was wanted in connection with the murder of Dalaram Nai in Dungli village under Sadri police station in Rajasthan's Pali district. Police said Desai had initially returned to his native Kankrej in Banaskantha district after the murder, but fled after police visited his house and subsequently moved to Ahmedabad. According to the Crime Branch, a dispute over ancestral property and business between two relatives had led to the murder conspiracy. The accused and three other persons allegedly travelled from Ahmedabad to Pali in a four-wheeler and intentionally rammed the motorcycle on which Dalaram Nai was travelling near Berra Tilawani at Sharad Dungli. The victim died in the incident, while the accused allegedly left the car at the spot and fled in an attempt to make the death appear to have been caused by an accident. A murder case was subsequently registered based on the police investigation and an earlier complaint. The case was registered at Sadri police station under Sections 302, 120(B), 481, and 308 of the Indian Penal Code. Crime Branch Inspector A.P. Jebaliya said the unit had been conducting searches for accused wanted in long-pending cases in Gujarat and outside the state.

G. Kiran Kumar Assumes Office as Member of the Bar Council of India

NEW DELHI



Sri G. Kiran Kumar, who was elected as a member of the Bar Council of India (BCI) from Telangana, officially assumed office as a member of the Bar Council of India today in New Delhi.

The programme was attended by Bar Council of India Chairman Sri Mannan Kumar Mishra, along with several BCI members. Sri Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, the outgoing BCI member from Telangana, was also present and extended his best wishes to Sri Kiran Kumar.

Sri G. Kiran Kumar was born and brought up in Siddipet. His parents are Sri Bala Kishan Rao and late Smt. Radha. His wife is Smt. Suchitra, and his children are Sukshith and Akshith.

Sri Kiran Kumar has been practising law for more than 25 years and has been actively involved in addressing the issues and welfare of advocates. He served as the General Secretary and subsequently as the President of the Metropolitan Criminal Courts Bar Association (MCCBA), Nampally, Hyderabad.

During his tenure in the Bar Association, he worked towards implementing several welfare initiatives and improving infrastructure for advocates.

After assuming office as a member of the BCI, Sri Kiran Kumar expressed his gratitude to the members of the Telangana Bar Council, advocates, friends and well-wishers who supported his election.

He stated that he would sincerely work to bring the issues, needs and rights of advocates from Telangana to the attention of the Bar Council of India and strive for the welfare, professional development, dignity and protection of advocates.

Sri Kiran Kumar further stated that strengthening State Bar Councils and working towards resolving important issues concerning advocates at the national level would be among his key priorities.



NFR to Operate Four Pairs of Festival Special Trains During Puja, Diwali & Chhath

MALIGAON

Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has decided to operate four pairs of festival special trains to facilitate the smooth and convenient travel of passengers during the forthcoming Puja, Diwali and Chhath festival season. Among these special trains, Train No. 05742/05741 (New Jalpaiguri – Gomti Nagar – New Jalpaiguri) will run from 04th October to 30th November, 2026, with 09 trips in both directions. Train No. 07555/07554 (Katihar – Purnia – Katihar) will run daily from 01st October to 30thNovember, 2026, with 61 trips in both directions. Train No. 07540/07539 (Katihar – Manihari – Katihar) will run from 02ndOctober to 30th November, 2026, with 43 trips in both directions, while Train No. 07544/07543 (Katihar – Manihari – Katihar) will run from 01st October to 01st December, 2026, with 18 trips in both directions.

Accordingly, Train No. 05742 (New Jalpaiguri – GomtiNagar) special will depart from New Jalpaiguri every Sunday at 08:30 hours to reach Gomti Nagar at 09:10 hours on Monday. In the return direction, Train No. 05741 (Gomti Nagar – New Jalpaiguri) special will depart from Gomti Nagar every Monday at 12:20 hours to reach New Jalpaiguri at 15:00 hours on Tuesday. The train will have stoppages at important stations including Siliguri Jn., Thakurganj, Araria Court, Purnia, Katihar, Mansi, Khagaria, Samastipur, Hajipur, Chhapra and Gorakhpur, among others.

Train No. 07555 (Katihar – Purnia) special will depart from Katihar daily at 21:30 hours to reach Purnia at 22:40 hours. In the return direction, Train No. 07554 (Purnia – Katihar) special will depart from Purnia at 23:40 hours to reach Katihar at 02:00 hours. The train will have stoppages at Dalan, Rautara and Ranipatra.

Train No. 07540 (Katihar – Manihari) special will depart from Katihar at 19:00 hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, reaching Manihari at 20:00 hours. In the return direction, Train No. 07539 (Manihari – Katihar) special will depart from Manihari at 03:15 hours on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays, reaching Katihar at 04:15 hours. The train will have stoppages at Mansahi and Mahiyarpur.

Further, Train No. 07544 (Katihar – Manihari) special will depart from Katihar at 20:30 hours on Mondays and Thursdays, reaching Manihari at 21:30 hours. In the return direction, Train No. 07543 (Manihari – Katihar) special will depart from Manihari at 05:00 hours on Tuesdays and Fridays, reaching Katihar at 06:00 hours. The train will have stoppages at Mansahiand Mahiyarpur. The details of stoppages and timings of these trains are available in IRCTC website and are also being notified in various newspapers and social media platforms of N. F. Railway. Passengers are requested to verify the details before undertaking their journey.

Give Our Planet One Day Off a Year

(On the occasion of "Zero Emission Day" on 21 September)

Greenhouse gases have a dangerous impact on the planet Earth and people's health. From rising sea levels to wildlife's to extreme weather and food supply disruptions, it is vital that carbon emissions are reduced, so we can tackle climate change. We all have to play our responsible role to reducing our own personal carbon footprint, and we can use "Zero Emission Day (ZeDay)", observed on September 21 annually, to reflect on our impact on the planet. It is a way to reduce our carbon emissions and encourage others around the world. This day can be used to mitigate climate change and bring awareness to the disastrous effects of global warming. Zero Emission Day was founded in 2008 by Canadian environmental activist Ken Wallace. The theme of Zero Emission Day-2926 is "Give Our Planet One Day Off a Year" as a small responsibility to control the use of fossil fuel that can lead to zero carbon emission for safe and healthy planet Mother Earth.

World is in a State of Climate Emergency:

According to the UN, the world is in a state of climate emergency, and human activities are the main cause of global warming, 3.6 billion people live in areas extremely susceptible to climate change, and between 2030 - 50 climate change is thought to lead to 2.5 lakh additional deaths per annum, from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea, and to heat stress alone. It is paramount importance to reduce our own carbon footprints, and advocate for corporations to do the same so that future generations will be able to live on a habitable planet. The main aims of Zero Emission Day is to reduce our own carbon footprints, educate public on climate crisis, advocate for positive change. On this day, people around world reduce or stop using fossil fuels for 24 hours. The goal is simple but more powerful. Give the planet a break from emissions and show how life can continue without polluting the air.

Small Lifestyle Changes for Better Environment:

2023 was found to be the hottest year since 1850, and global average temperatures were 2.12 degree Fahrenheit warmer than the 20th century average. Ecosystem restoration can create 3.7 tomes as many jobs as oil and gas production per dollar, meaning that protecting the planet could not only benefit our safety, but also our wallets. It is high time for all of us, individuals to corporates to set their own clean and green energy targets to meet to net-zero carbon targets by 2050. By lowering emissions, we support public health, reduce climate risks, and help ecosystems recover. Small choices like cycling instead of driving motor vehicle, switching to efficient lighting, bring awareness through social media, encourage Eco-friendly habits, promote the use of renewable resources, or powering down electronics show how simple steps can add to meaningful change. Let's encourage individuals, communities, governments, and organisations to minimise their use of fossil fuels and adapt sustainable practices for 24 hours to experience a "day off" for the planet.

Dr. B. Madhusudhan Reddy
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Pakistan: 14 infants' deaths expose healthcare crisis

ISLAMABAD

A sudden fire at the neonatal unit of one of Pakistan's most prominent state-run hospitals in late August claimed the lives of 14 babies.

An article by Islamabad-based foreign correspondent Farhan Bokhari highlighted the grievous nature of Pakistan's healthcare system, especially against the backdrop of its recent attempt to mediate between the U.S. and Iran.

The article, titled "Deaths of 14 Infants Exposes Unwelcome Facts About Pakistan's Global Image" and published in Nikkei Asia, focused on the tragedy at a public hospital established four decades ago with Japanese funding.

The fire, caused on August 26 by a fault in an air-conditioning unit, quickly spread through the nursery where 15 newborns were being kept in incubators or on oxygen. Only one baby survived.

The incident drew sharp criticism, exposing contradictions in Pakistan's image. While the country projects itself as the "Islamic world's only nuclear-armed nation" and a mediator in global conflicts, it continues to face an economic crisis that undermines basic services such as healthcare, education, and emergency response.

Bokhari wrote that the tragedy underscored class disparities. The elite enjoy privileges, while the less privileged rely on underfunded hospitals. He argued the incident has tarnished Pakistan's global image, showing its inability to meet even basic needs.

He cited the United Nations' latest Human Development Index (HDI), which ranked Pakistan 168th in 2026, down from 147th in 2016, placing it in the "low human development" category. HDI rankings are a key measure of quality of life and well-being.

Foundation stone laid for first of 13 India-funded bridges in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO

India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Santosh Jha, on Sunday joined Bimal Rathnayake, Minister of Transport, Highways and Urban Development, in laying the foundation stone for the Moragahakanda Bridge in Matale, the first of 13 permanent bridges to be constructed across Sri Lanka under India's grant assistance.

"India, Sri Lanka Building stronger and resilient connectivity! Pleased to join Hon. Bimal Rathnayake, Minister of Transport, Highways and Urban Development, in laying the foundation stone for the Moragahakanda Bridge in Matale, the first of 13 permanent bridges to be constructed across Sri Lanka under India's grant assistance," High Commissioner Jha stated on X. "The project is part of India's USD 450 million reconstruction and rehabilitation package .

India, Italy entering more demanding phase of bilateral ties, says Report

ROME



As Brussels moves the trade agreement between India and the European Union (EU) towards signature, India and Italy are entering a more demanding phase of their ties, with John Cabot University recently launching the first Track 1.5 dialogue to analyse how the ties between the two nations have changed over the years, according to a report.

While the EU is accelerating engagement with India, the bilateral ties between Rome and New Delhi have been changing rapidly in recent years, according to a report in Decode39.

India and Italy established a Strategic Partnership in 2023, adopted a Joint Strategic Action Plan for 2025–2029 in 2024 and elevated ties to a Special Strategic Partnership during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Italy in May. Under the new framework, the Foreign Ministers-led mechanism will monitor implementation of the Action Plan and provide strategic guidance to the relationship.

Recently, the first Italy–India Track 1.5 Dialogue was organised by the Guarini Institute for Public Affairs at John Cabot University (JCU) in Rome. India's Ambassador to Italy, Vani Rao, attended the event's public programme. The discussion was held under the Chatham House Rule and analysed how the ties between India and Italy have changed over the years as the two countries are set to mark the 80th anniversary of diplomatic ties in 2027.

The event highlighted an economic relationship between India and Italy, whose potential is more than the infrastructure that backs it. Financial institutions can play a greater role in facilitating commerce between India and Italy, while non-tariff barriers and regulatory divergence continue to obstruct deeper integration between the two nations, according to the Decode39 report.

A similar transition between India and Italy is taking place in the defence sector. Defence cooperation between India and Italy now encompasses personnel exchanges, procurement, research and development and industrial partnerships. The two nations also engage in naval visits and training activities. Italy and India are on opposite sides of a maritime system linking the Indo-Pacific, the Middle East and Europe and protecting the routes running through this space is an economic and security interest. India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) becomes relevant in this framework.

The IMEC for Italy provides a geographic link between its growing engagement in the Indo-Pacific and its traditional Mediterranean projection, while it offers India another way to strengthen ties with European markets through the Gulf and the Mediterranean.

"The 80th anniversary of diplomatic relations and the year dedicated to cultural tourism, both in 2027, will offer an opportunity to broaden these foundations further. The Guarini Institute intends to build on the first Track 1.5 dialogue with a larger initiative at John Cabot University next year," Emanuele Rossi wrote in the Decode39 report.

"The point, however, extends beyond commemoration: with a Special Strategic Partnership, an Action Plan running through 2029, a €20 billion trade target, growing defence cooperation, the European FTA and IMEC in the background, the challenge is now to turn this architecture into results. Eighty years after diplomatic relations began, Rome and New Delhi no longer need simply to reaffirm their desire for closer friendship: they need to define what, in practice, a Special Strategic Partnership can deliver," the author added.

On September 17, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni wished PM Modi on his 76th birthday, saying that both nations continue to strengthen their "deep bond of friendship" and build together a future of cooperation and prosperity.

In response, PM Modi thanked PM Meloni for her warm wishes and noted that he looks forward to close cooperation between India and Italy.

Earlier this month, PM Modi congratulated Meloni on becoming the longest-serving Prime Minister in Italy's postwar history and wished her continued success in the years ahead. He appreciated her efforts in strengthening the Special Strategic Partnership between the two nations.

Meloni, thanking PM Modi, said that the ties between the two nations are right now stronger than ever before, while the "Special Strategic Partnership that we launched during our last meeting is the recognition of the importance of this bond and of the will to unite the expertise of our Nations to create new opportunities for growth, seizing the extraordinary opportunities for collaboration that we have before us".



Pakistan's defence commitments to Saudi Arabia under scrutiny after Houthi strikes, says Report

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's defence commitments to Saudi Arabia are under scrutiny after the first serious test of those agreements, a report said.

"The renewed Houthi assault on Saudi territory, however, is exposing the unresolved question beneath that architecture: how much of Pakistan's security role is an operational commitment, and how much remains declaratory deterrence?", said the report in Eurasia Review.

Pakistan signed the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) with Saudi Arabia in September 2025, under which aggression against either state is treated as aggression against both. That was followed by the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement, signed on August 7 by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. "An armed attack against one of the three states is to be regarded as an attack against all," the report said of the Mecca agreement, describing its language as unusually explicit.

Islamabad is also embedded in the Multinational Maritime Defence Coalition, announced on July 30 by Saudi Arabia and 13 other countries and operational since September 2, with Pakistan's Commodore Rashid Sheikh serving as deputy commander — the second-highest position in the force. Pakistan has presented the Mecca accord as a mechanism for collective deterrence and regional stability, the report said. "The problem is that the first serious test has produced caution rather than clarity," it said, noting that Pakistan's Foreign Ministry had said on September 10 that no military response under the Mecca Agreement was being discussed.

Indian missions abroad hold Viksit Bharat Run under Seva Pakhwada

FRANKFURT

Indian missions across Europe on Sunday organised the Viksit Bharat Run 2026 as part of Seva Pakhwada, observed from September 17 to October 2. The Consulate General of India in Frankfurt held the run at the headquarters of German football's governing body. "India in Germany (Consulate General of India, Frankfurt) organised Viksit Bharat Run 2026 on 20 Sep 2026 at the home of football in Germany, i.e. Deutscher Fussball Bund (DFB) e.V. Members of the Indian diaspora enthusiastically participated to celebrate India's journey towards Viksit Bharat. Consul General Ms. Shuchita Kishore welcomed and thanked all participants for joining in large numbers and encouraged them to make committed efforts .

Powerful symbol of trust, confidence and friendship: Japan's Air Chief soars in Tejas

JODHPUR



Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) Chief of Staff General Takehiro Morita said his flight in India's indigenous fighter aircraft, Tejas, is not only a valuable experience but also a powerful symbol of trust, confidence, and friendship. The Air Chief made the remarks at the second edition of the bilateral air exercise between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the JASDF, Exercise Veer Guardian-2026, which is being conducted at Air Force Station Jodhpur.

Indian Air Force Chief Air Marshal A.P. Singh and General Morita flew in the Tejas, showcasing the growing defence and aerial cooperation between the two countries. "I will remember it not only as a truly valuable experience, but also as a powerful symbol of trust, confidence, and friendship", General Takehiro Morita said while speaking during the joint press interaction.

"Our partnership has progressed beyond simply conducting exercises together to refine our tactical capabilities at a practical level. Through increasingly sophisticated training, our two air forces have advanced our cooperation. These efforts strengthen our capability to contribute to peace and stability, and over time help strengthen regional deterrents. Japan and India share that common vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific," he added. He further said that the sophistication of the bilateral exercises reflects both the maturity of the partnership and shared commitment to peace and stability in the region.

The range of activities includes exercises, exchanges at every level from senior leadership to subject matter experts and possibly co-operation in the space domain. Air Chief Marshal AP Singh welcomed General Morita and his contingent to India. Speaking about the partnership between the two Air Forces, the CAS said: "It is a partnership built on mutual respect, professional trust, and shared commitment to peace and stability; And India and Japan share a vision of a free, open and rule-based Indo-Pacific". He further added that the synergy achieved by both Air Forces was akin to Kizuna. Kizuna means the enduring bonds between people, close relationships forged through mutual trust and support. He described it as "A bond that grows stronger through shared experiences, mutual respect, and collaboration".

India, Sri Lanka reaffirm maritime partnership with SLINEX 26

NEW DELHI



India and Sri Lanka reaffirmed the enduring maritime partnership and shared commitment to a secure Indian Ocean Region (IOR) with the bilateral exercise SLINEX26 in Visakhapatnam, the spokesperson of the Indian Navy said on Sunday.

"Sri Lanka Naval Ship Sindurala arrived at Visakhapatnam for the 13th edition of the bilateral exercise SLINEX26, scheduled from 17–21 Sep 26. SLINEX26 reaffirms the enduring India-Sri Lanka maritime partnership and shared commitment to a secure Indian Ocean Region," the Spokesperson stated on X. The exercise began with the Harbour Phase, followed by the Sea Phase.

According to the Ministry of Defence, INS Kavaratti, an indigenous Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette, and INS Jyoti, the Fleet Tanker, will participate from the Indian Navy. At the same time, SLNS Sindurala represents the Sri Lanka Navy.

"Conceptualised in 2005, SLINEX has evolved into an important forum for fostering maritime cooperation, interoperability and mutual understanding between the two Navies," said the Ministry.

The Harbour Phase, conducted under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command, commenced with an opening ceremony and reception onboard INS Kavaratti for the visiting crew of SLNS Sindurala.

"The phase includes professional interactions, cross-deck visits, sharing of best practices, Yoga, sports and cultural activities. The subsequent Sea Phase will focus on enhancing operational synergy and interoperability through coordinated activities at sea," noted the Ministry.

"Aligned with India's vision of MAHASAGAR, SLINEX-26 reinforces India's commitment to a secure, stable and inclusive maritime environment and further consolidates the enduring maritime partnership between India and Sri Lanka," it added. Earlier in September, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Udaygiri arrived in Sri Lanka's Colombo for a three-day operational visit, aimed at strengthening maritime cooperation between the two nations.

The ship's visit coincides with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's visit to Sri Lanka. The Indian Navy said INS Udaygiri's visit underscores India's unwavering commitment to realising the vision of MAHASAGAR. In a post on X, the Indian Navy Spokesperson wrote, "Indigenously constructed multi-role stealth frigate INS Udaygiri arrived at Colombo, Sri Lanka, for a three-day operational visit from 08–11 Sep 26. The ship's visit coincides with the landmark visit of Hon'ble Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh, who also attended a deck reception onboard INS Udaygiri."

Jaishankar set to visit New York, to address UNGA session on Sept 26

NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar will lead the Indian delegation to United States, for the High Level Week at the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

EAM Jaishankar will address the High-Level Session of the 81st UNGA on September 26. During his visit, EAM Jaishankar will attend various plurilateral and bilateral meetings, according to the statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The details were shared by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in a press release on Sunday. The 81st session of the UNGA will convene world leaders to revitalise global cooperation, give a critical push to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and drive collective action for peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet, according to the statement released by the United Nations (UN).

"Two key platforms will spotlight action and solutions: the flagship SDG Media Zone produced by the UN Department of Global Communications with dynamic interviews and panel discussions on SDG solutions held from 21–25 September; and the Goals Lounge, convened by the UN Deputy Secretary-General and hosted by the UN Office for Partnerships from 14-25 September, featuring unscripted dialogues, deep dives into vital issues and interactive experiences," the UN said in a statement.

At the General Debate from September 22-28, the world leaders will make statements outlining their positions and priorities in the context of complex and interconnected global challenges. The theme for the general debate of the 81st session of the General Assembly is "Restoring trust, managing transformation: a United Nations that delivers for all."

Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman will preside over the UN General Assembly's 81st session. During the UNGA's 81st session, presidents, prime ministers and senior representatives of 193 UN Member States address the UNGA from its iconic green marble podium. The speeches provide a global snapshot of national priorities and concerns, with conflicts, economic challenges, humanitarian crises, climate change, development and emerging technologies expected to feature prominently, according to the UN statement.



India, EU discuss implementation of priorities under strategic partnership

BRUSSELS

India and the European Union (EU) on Sunday discussed inter-parliamentary engagement, high-level exchanges, and implementing priorities under the Strategic Partnership between the two sides.

The discussions took place during a meeting between India's Ambassador to Belgium and the EU, Pranay Verma, and Director-General for External Policies in the European Parliament, Pietro Ducci.

"Ambassador Pranay Verma met Mr. Pietro Ducci, Director-General for External Policies in the European Parliament. They had a fruitful exchange of views on India-EU inter-parliamentary engagement, high-level exchanges and implementation of priorities under the India-EU Strategic Partnership," the Indian Embassy in Belgium posted on X.

India and the EU elevated their ties to a 'Strategic Partnership' during the fifth India-EU Summit held in The Hague in 2004. The relationship between India and the EU is based on shared values and principles such as democracy, the rule of law, a rules-based international order, and multilateralism.

The ties between the EU and India are multifaceted and cover various sectors, including trade and investment, technology and innovation, security and defence, connectivity and global issues.

Invest in Peace: For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day

(On the occasion of "International Day of Peace" on 21 September)

Today, clouds of unrest have gathered all over the world. Direct, indirect, and covert wars continue. A situation has arisen where the doves of peace cannot fly freely. Wars have been raging for years. The Ukraine-Russia war that began on 24 February 2022 is still recording carnage today. The Israel-Palestine (Gaza) war that began on 07 October 2023 is still raining bombs today. The Iran war with the US/Israel has been ongoing since 28 February 2026 and is affecting the economies of the world. Lakhs of lives have been lost in these wars. Millions of innocent people are migrating with their lives in their hands or are living miserable lives in refugee camps. The uncertain situation between India and Pakistan continues. UN mediation is not working to stop wars and crises. The UN has become a paper tiger. Trump's dramas are also fueling global unrest.

International Day of Peace-2026 Theme

Wars are causing loss of life and property as well as human rights violations. The reckless thinking of top leaders of USA, Iran, Russia, Gaza and Israel, Donald Trump, Putin and Netanyahu, is contributing to the escalation of wars. Instability is reigning. Hegemony is doubling. In order to establish a peaceful environment around



the world, according to a unanimous resolution adopted by the UN in 1981, it has become a tradition for countries around the world to observe "International Peace Day" on 21 September every year. When there is peace, poverty is reduced and social tolerance increases. The theme of International Peace Day-2026 is "Invest in Peace: For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day". Today, the world is facing armed conflicts, extreme weather events, geopolitical crises, the spread of fake news or information, social disintegration, economic disruptions, unemployment, human rights violations, terrorism, and inequality that threaten global peace.

Human Survival ii Danger by Ongoing Wars

If World War-3 were to happen today, the world would surely turn into ashes in a matter of moments. Digital warfare can turn the earth into a wasteland. When poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and inequality reign as the world's enemies, bloody wars with cutting-edge weapons are meaningless. We have won the war against the Covid disaster. Let us win the battle against adverse climate change. Let us stand firm in confronting natural disasters. Let us constantly chant humanity as the great mantra of peace. With self-control and religious tolerance, the doves of peace should fly freely. Peace cannot be established through wars. Welfare cannot be achieved through crises. If we join hands, development will inevitably occur, but if we separate, degradation will inevitably occur. Destruction will occur with bombs, and development will occur with answers. When borders are erased and the world becomes a hamlet in the digital network, we should know that only peace will be the foundation for the well-being of humanity.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals-2030 have been set to help world peace, such as ending poverty and hunger, ending education, gender inequality, clean energy and water, and global coordination. Discussions, conferences, competitions in schools, and workshops should be organized for world peace. Concepts like non-violence, mutual respect, and deep understanding should be promoted. Let us know that peace is more powerful than all weapons. Let us forget our differences and move forward together. Let us uphold human rights. Let us end wars and man-made crises.

- **Lion capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy**
9949700037 .

Assam Eyes 40,000 Jobs in Battery Push

GUWAHATI

Assam has the potential to emerge as a major energy hub for the country and could become the "Battery of India" in the coming years, Adani Group Director Jeet Adani said on Sunday.

In his remarks at the foundation stone laying ceremony of Adani Power's 3,200 MW thermal power project in Chapar in the state's Dhubri district, Jeet Adani said Assam's transformation over the past few years has been remarkable, with the state emerging as one of India's most attractive investment destinations.

"Over the past 5 years, I've been to Assam 40 times. But standing here today, right in the middle of all of you on this beautiful land, is a massive honour for me," he said.

"I truly believe that in the coming years, Assam won't just generate energy for its own needs -- it will become a major energy hub, powering the security of the entire nation. You could say that Assam has the potential to become the 'Battery of India'," Jeet Adani added.

He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for creating an environment that has accelerated economic growth, infrastructure development and business opportunities across the state.



Jeet Adani said Assam is no longer known only for its natural beauty and cultural heritage, but is increasingly gaining recognition as a hub for investment, industry, and large-scale development projects. Reflecting on the Adani Group's journey in Assam, Jeet Adani said the company initially entered the state with the objective of contributing to its growth but soon discovered expanding opportunities across multiple sectors. He praised Chief Minister Sarma's governance style, describing it as focused on swift execution and rapid implementation of projects.

"Last year, at the Rising Northeast Global Investors Summit, our Group Chairman, Gautam Adani, announced that the Adani Group would invest up to Rs 1 lakh crore in the Northeast over the next 10 years. Today, I am incredibly proud to share that work is already underway in Assam with an investment of nearly Rs 80,000 crore," he stated.

He emphasised that job creation and local participation remain central to the Group's investment strategy. The upcoming Rs 48,000-crore thermal power project, which will have a generation capacity of 3,200 MW, is expected to become the largest power generation asset in the Northeast.

"We've already conducted 4 to 5 job drives here, and 4,500 local youth from Assam have already been hired! The Adani Group's businesses in Assam will generate around 40,000 direct and indirect job opportunities for the people here," Jeet Adani noted. "And this is just the beginning. As we grow in Assam, opportunities for local youth will grow with us. Our goal is to ensure that more and more local talent becomes an active part of this growth journey," he stressed.

Village Household Toilets Cross 12.22 Crore

NEW DELHI

Over 12.22 crore individual toilets have been built in rural households across India, and 98,273 biogas plants have been constructed as of September 17, 2026, bringing 5.69 lakh villages nationwide into the ODF (open defecation free) Plus category under the Swachh Bharat campaign, according to a government factsheet released on Sunday. An ODF Plus village not only sustains ODF status but also effectively manages solid and liquid waste, while maintaining visual cleanliness. Along with sustaining ODF Plus village status, these villages are classified into three progressive stages: Aspiring, Rising and Model. Aspiring villages manage either solid or liquid waste. Rising villages manage both solid and liquid waste. Model villages, in addition to managing both waste streams, also demonstrate visual cleanliness and display ODF Plus messaging. More than 10.28 crore toilets were constructed across 36 states and union territories between 2014 and 2019. Rural India was subsequently declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) in 2019. This achievement transformed the nature



of India's sanitation landscape. The focus shifted from an emphasis on household toilet access to a broader concern with the sustainability of sanitation practices and the management of waste at the village level. This became the focus of Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin Phase II. It focuses on sustaining ODF status and strengthening Solid and Liquid Waste Management systems, the statement said. GOBARdhan (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan) is a flagship umbrella initiative under SBM-G Phase II that converts cattle dung, agricultural crop residue, and organic waste into biogas, compressed bio-gas (CBG), and organic manure. These national-level numbers reflect bigger changes at the individual and community levels, because lasting transformation begins with everyday behaviour. A toilet becomes meaningful when households choose to use, maintain and sustain it. Similarly, effective waste management begins with decisions and practices within individual households. Recognising this, SBM-G places Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) at the centre of sustaining ODF outcomes. Households are encouraged to adopt safe toilet use and disposal practices, understand appropriate sanitation technologies, and manage wet waste through compost pits or biogas plants. The focus also extends to everyday hygiene practices, including handwashing, safe water storage, maintaining sanitation facilities, and avoiding littering and spitting in public spaces. Thus, sanitation extends beyond the provision of infrastructure. It becomes a set of everyday practices adopted within households, reinforced through communities, and sustained through collective behaviour, the statement added.



Govt targets India as top silk producer by 2028-29: Giriraj Singh

BENGALURU

Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh on Sunday said India's silk production has risen from 26,000 metric tonnes in 2014 to 42,000 metric tonnes today, as the Government aims to make the country the world's largest producer of silk by 2028-29.

Inaugurating the 77th Foundation Day programme of the Central Silk Board and an exhibition of silk products and technologies, Singh said the Centre is committed to expanding the sericulture sector and improving the economic progress of silk farmers. The Centre has set a target to scale up production to 60,000 metric tonnes by 2030–31. He explained that by boosting mulberry leaf yield and increasing cocoon-rearing cycles, the Government aims to raise farmers' annual income to Rs 10–12 lakh. Singh emphasised that scientists' innovations, hybrid varieties, and modern machinery must reach farmers directly. He noted that demand for Indian silk is rising internationally as China's production declines. Strengthening the value chain from sericulture to weaving, expanding India's textile market to 300 billion dollars, and ensuring minimum economic security for weavers and workers are key priorities, he added. Union Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Shobha Karandlaje said Karnataka leads the country in silk production.

She highlighted that the Government is focusing on infrastructure and industrial growth to strengthen the sector. The government is prioritising modern technologies and high-density production methods to produce silk to global export standards, reduce imports, and boost domestic output. She added that entrepreneurs are increasingly registering under the MSME framework, supported by subsidies and quality improvement schemes. Padmini Singla, Joint Secretary (Silk), Ministry of Textiles, said high-yielding silkworm hybrids and machinery are being introduced, along with AI, GIS, and Machine Learning technologies to inspect quality and boost production capacity. The programme also saw the Silk Board exchange Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with various organisations, distribute appointment letters to 28 scientists, confer awards on outstanding employees and stakeholders, and release publications and periodicals.

Gold likely to stay range-bound next week as dollar, West Asia tensions guide market: Analysts

NEW DELHI

Gold is likely to remain volatile and range-bound in the coming week as traders track movements in the US dollar and bond yields, developments in the West Asia conflict and the direction of crude oil prices, analysts said. After a week dominated by monetary policy and geopolitical developments, investors will turn their focus to a fresh batch of economic data, including mid-month manufacturing and services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI readings) from major economies. The data on US housing, durable goods orders and consumer sentiment readings due to be released towards the end of the week will also be closely watched for cues on the outlook for monetary policy and bullion demand, they added.

India's young engineers must cross academic boundaries: Mizoram Governor

NEW DELHI

Calling on the next generation of engineers to embrace interdisciplinary thinking, Mizoram Governor General (Dr) Vijay Kumar Singh has said India's future technological leadership would depend on engineers who can work across traditional academic and professional boundaries.

Addressing the 18th IEI Industry Excellence Summit & Awards 2026 here, organised by the Institution of Engineers (India) (IEI), the Governor highlighted the crucial role engineering has played in India's development and urged young professionals to build on that legacy. The summit was held under the theme, "Engineering India's Global Footprint: Technology, Talent and Trust."



General Singh said India's engineering accomplishments span a wide range of sectors, including dams, steel plants, highways, metro networks, renewable energy systems, telecommunications, the space programme, indigenous defence manufacturing and digital public infrastructure.

He stressed that while India has already achieved significant milestones, the responsibility of shaping the country's next phase of growth rests with today's engineering talent.

According to the Governor, the boundaries separating engineering disciplines are rapidly disappearing. He noted that civil engineers increasingly need expertise in technologies such as geographic information systems (GIS), sensors, artificial intelligence and climate modelling, while mechanical engineers are being drawn into robotics and advanced manufacturing.

Similarly, electrical engineers are working on energy storage and smart-grid technologies, and software engineers are increasingly involved with hardware systems, cybersecurity and physical infrastructure.

He said engineering graduates must move beyond narrowly defined specialisations and develop the ability to collaborate across disciplines, experiment with new ideas and create practical solutions to real-world challenges.

He also advocated stronger emphasis on design thinking, field exposure, interdisciplinary projects and prototyping within engineering education.

Highlighting India's capacity to build infrastructure at scale, General Singh said equal attention must now be given to maintaining and sustaining existing assets. He pointed to the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as a major engineering success story, saying that while it is commonly viewed as a fintech innovation, it is underpinned by sophisticated engineering involving interoperability, distributed systems, cybersecurity, real-time processing and large-scale digital infrastructure.

The Governor also cited India's space programme as an example of engineering excellence achieved despite resource and technology constraints.



Finance Ministry calls meeting with banks ahead of 3-day nationwide strike

NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has convened a meeting of chief executives of public sector banks (PSBs), regional rural banks (RRBs), the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) and NABARD on Monday to review preparedness and contingency plans ahead of a proposed three-day nationwide bank strike beginning September 28.

The meeting, which will be chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), is expected to focus on measures to ensure continuity of banking operations and the availability of essential customer services during the strike period. Officials are likely to discuss contingency arrangements to minimise disruptions, particularly as the proposed industrial action coincides with the half-yearly closing period for banks. The strike has been called by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella body representing seven bank employee and officer unions. The unions have raised several demands, with the implementation of a five-day banking week emerging as a key issue. UFBU had earlier organised a nationwide strike on September 11 over the same demand. The previous strike affected over-the-counter banking services, cash transactions and cheque clearances in several parts of the country. While banking operations remained largely normal in Mumbai, disruptions were reported in states including Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, particularly in smaller cities and towns.

Apart from a five-day work week, the unions are seeking improvements in pension benefits, implementation of a uniform dearness allowance formula for pensioners and an option for employees covered under the National Pension System (NPS) to switch to the old pension scheme. UFBU has claimed that it represents nearly 90 per cent of the country's banking workforce. The proposed strike could have a wider impact on customers because September 26 and 27 fall on a weekend. As a result, normal branch operations could remain affected for up to five consecutive days, from September 26 to 30, increasing concerns about cheque processing, cash transactions and other branch-dependent services. The unions had served a strike notice on August 26, following which conciliation meetings were held involving union representatives, the IBA and government officials. However, discussions failed to produce a breakthrough on the demand for a five-day banking week.

Centre, Bengal Govt Meet to Boost Fisheries

NEW DELHI

The Centre's Department of Fisheries is organising a review meeting in Kolkata on September 21 to chart a roadmap for the state's huge untapped fisheries potential, according to an official statement issued on Sunday. Union Minister for Fisheries Rajiv Ranjan Singh and West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari will co-chair the meeting. The deliberations are expected to identify priority interventions and strengthen Centre-State collaboration to accelerate sustainable and inclusive growth in West Bengal's fisheries sector. The meeting will provide a comprehensive platform to review the progress of various schemes and programmes in West Bengal and deliberate on key focus areas for future development. Presentations by the Department of Fisheries, Government of India, and the Government of West Bengal, along with interactions with leading fisheries research, regulatory, and financial institutions, will facilitate discussions on enhancing production, expanding aquaculture, adopting technology, developing infrastructure, strengthening institutional support, and promoting investment. This will be followed by the handing over of administrative approval for integrated reservoir development in West Bengal. West Bengal, the second largest fish-producing state in the country, contributed 25.43 lakh tonnes to India's total fish production in 2025-26. An investment of Rs 617 crore under various schemes supported the production increase by strengthening production technologies, post-harvest infrastructure, processing, and capacity building. These initiatives provided livelihood opportunities to more than 30 lakh fisherfolk and developed a robust fisheries ecosystem supported by value chain and market access. The Government of India has also notified 34 fisheries production and processing clusters, including a dry fish cluster in Purba Medinipur, West Bengal. The Department of Fisheries is placing special emphasis on strengthening fisheries farmer producer organisations (FFPOs) and fisheries cooperatives, while also focusing on digitisation of the fisheries sector in the state through various initiatives.



The review meeting is expected to provide direction to accelerate growth in West Bengal's fisheries and aquaculture sector through stronger convergence between the Central and State Governments and key stakeholder institutions.

The deliberations are expected to help identify priority areas for intervention, strengthen implementation of flagship fisheries schemes and programmes, promote technology-led and sustainable development, and increase investments across the fisheries value chain.

The meeting is also expected to help improve fishers' livelihoods, increase fish production and productivity, strengthen market linkages, boost ornamental fisheries, improve post-harvest infrastructure, and advance the vision of a resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive fisheries sector in the state, the statement added.

Defence, AAI Appoint Officers for Adilabad Airport

HYDERABAD

The Defence Ministry and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) have appointed nodal officers for the development of the joint-user airport at Adilabad in Telangana.

The Defence Ministry has appointed Air Force Station Begumpet commandant, Air Commodore Rahul Shukla, and Headquarters Training Command (Bengaluru) CATCO (Command Air Traffic Control Officer) Group Captain Jyoti Prakash Sabharwal as the nodal officers, while the AAI has appointed its Executive Director, Arch, Sujoy Dey as the nodal officer for liaison with the Telangana government.

The Ministry of Defence and AAI conveyed this to Telangana Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju through separate communications.

Union Minister for Coal and Mines, G. Kishan Reddy, on Sunday posted on X that after pursuing the matter with the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Civil Aviation, they now have nodal officers appointed from both the ministry and the authority for close coordination with the state government



regarding the construction of an air force training centre and a joint user Airfield (JUA) for civil and defence purposes at Adilabad.

"The infrastructure that will be built by the Ministry of Defence includes trainer aircraft, visiting aircraft parking dispersals, weather shelters, aircraft hangars, operational complex, training facilities, and maintenance infrastructure facilities. On the civilian side, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) would set up a Civil Terminal and a Maintenance and Repair Operations (MRO) facility," he said. "Apart from the required infrastructure, a corresponding domestic setup will also be required for the defence personnel that would include single living quarters, married personnel quarters, sports and recreational facilities and essential amenities. Dedicated engineering utilities such as water supply and sanitation will have to be developed," he added.

The Central minister urged the Telangana government to also appoint a nodal officer, as this will ensure smooth coordination with all stakeholders and expedite the project. Kishan Reddy said on Saturday that said a joint-use airport would come up on 1,500 acres at Adilabad for both defence and civilian purposes.

He said that he, other Union ministers and Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had held talks on the establishment of the airport.



AI to Redefine Education by 2050

The global labor market stands at a historical inflection point where technological acceleration, demographic transformations, geoeconomic realignments, and the green transition are fundamentally altering the nature of work. According to the World Economic Forum's landmark Future of Jobs Report 2025, structural churn will affect approximately 22% of total global jobs by 2030, with 170 million new roles created while 92 million are displaced. More striking than the raw employment numbers is the unprecedented velocity of skill evolution: global employers project that 39% of core workplace skills will be transformed or rendered obsolete over the next five years alone. This rapid erosion of skill longevity poses a direct existential challenge to the traditional higher education model. For decades, universities have operated on a linear, front-loaded paradigm where young adults acquire a terminal degree between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two to power a four-decade career. Today, that structural assumption is breaking down under the weight of technological acceleration. When the half-life of technical skills drops to less than three years, a traditional four-year degree risks being partially outdated before a student even walks across the graduation stage. To remain relevant, post-secondary education must undergo a foundational structural shift, transitioning from static credentialing institutions into dynamic, AI-led lifelong learning ecosystems that accompany workers across their entire productive lives toward 2050.

Empirical Evidence of Labor Disruption and the Skills Gap

Understanding this educational imperative requires examining the primary catalyst of labor market transformation detailed in the Future of Jobs Report 2025. Drawing from extensive empirical data across over 1,000 global employers representing more than 14 million workers, the World Economic Forum identifies technological integration as the dominant driver of workforce restructuring. Advancements in artificial intelligence, big data analytics, robotics, and energy systems are no longer theoretical future prospects; they are active, operational disruptions reshaping daily operations across every sector. The report highlights that nearly two-fifths of required worker skill sets will shift by 2030, creating a persistent, structural skills gap that 63% of businesses cite as their single greatest barrier to transformation. While technical proficiencies in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and data infrastructure lead the fastest-growing technical skill trajectories, human-centric cognitive and emotional capacities are surging in equal measure. Analytical thinking remains the most critical core skill demanded by employers, accompanied closely by creative thinking, resilience, flexibility, agility, curiosity, and a commitment to continuous, lifelong learning. In an era where automated systems handle routine cognitive and physical labor, the primary human competitive advantage lies in higher-order problem solving, adaptive learning, and complex reasoning.

Institutional Inertia and the Decline of Degree Monopoly

This widening gap between workforce needs and available capabilities exposes a deep misalignment in how universities design, deliver, and accredit knowledge. Traditional higher education institutions operate on extended timelines where curriculum revisions, academic governance approvals, and faculty hiring cycles take anywhere from three to five years. By contrast, modern industry tools, algorithmic models, and operational frameworks mutate on six-month development cycles. When enterprise requirements change exponentially faster than university governance can adapt, degree programs inevitably suffer from severe curriculum inertia. Students accumulate substantial educational debt to master frameworks that may no longer reflect current industry practice upon graduation. Furthermore, the rising phenomenon of "degree inflation"—where employers demand baccalaureate credentials for entry-level positions without a corresponding increase in actual job complexity—has begun to unravel as forward-looking organizations drop rigid degree requirements in favor of verifiable skill assessments and modular certifications. Consequently, the conventional university degree is gradually losing its monopoly as the exclusive gateway to professional economic mobility.

Reimagining the University Ecosystem by 2050

By looking past immediate operational friction toward the year 2050, the structural friction between academic institutions and evolving labor markets points toward the complete unbundling and continuous rebundling of higher education. Rather than viewing education as a discrete, time-bound phase of early adulthood, the society of 2050 will treat learning as an ambient, ambient-integrated, continuous utility. The fundamental structure of the university will evolve from a physical, gated campus designed for localized degree production into an open, distributed learning ecosystem powered by artificial intelligence. In this reimagined ecosystem, the traditional four-year bachelor's degree will be replaced by a lifelong learning ledger—a dynamic, cloud-based record of an individual's evolving competencies, cognitive abilities, and practical experiences. Instead of relying on a static diploma awarded decades in the past, individuals will maintain an active, real-time skill score that updates automatically as they master new concepts, complete work-integrated modules, and adapt to emerging industrial paradigms.

The Role of Lifelong AI Mentors in Professional Workflows

At the center of this transformation will be the lifelong autonomous AI learning companion. By 2050, every individual will be paired during secondary education with a hyper-personalized, context-aware AI mentor that accompanies them throughout their working career. This digital companion will possess a comprehensive, evolving model of the individual's unique cognitive profile, including their baseline knowledge, learning speeds, spatial reasoning abilities, behavioral tendencies, and career ambitions. Rather than requiring individuals to pause their employment to attend synchronous physical lectures, the AI mentor will embed learning directly into daily professional workflows. Using real-time diagnostic telemetry, the system will identify emerging knowledge deficits or operational friction during work tasks and instantly generate contextualized, micro-learning modules to bridge those gaps. If an engineer in 2050 encounters a novel quantum-computing algorithm or an unprecedented materials architecture, their AI learning companion will dynamically author custom simulations, interactive tutorials, and targeted exercises designed specifically for their individual learning style, enabling them to master the necessary concepts in real time without leaving their workspace.

The Evolution of Faculty into Cognitive and Ethical Coaches

This transition to AI-led learning will also redefine the pedagogical role of human faculty within higher education institutions. The traditional model of university instruction, dominated by broadcast-style lectures and standardized written evaluations, will become obsolete as generative and agentic AI systems assume full responsibility for fundamental content delivery, routine assessment, and personalized tutoring. Freed from the administrative and repetitive burdens of introductory teaching, university faculty will pivot toward high-value human interaction. Professors will function as cognitive coaches, ethical guides, collaborative research leaders, and facilitators of complex, multidisciplinary problem-solving. Higher education campuses will transition from physical lecture halls into collaborative innovation hubs where learners gather periodically to engage in hands-on laboratory experimentation, interdisciplinary debate, ethical debate, and real-world project incubation. The human element of university life will become deeply focused on developing those high-value human attributes highlighted by the World Economic Forum—resilience, leadership, empathy, creative synthesis, and ethical decision-making—which remain inherently difficult for machine architectures to replicate.

Decentralized Accreditation and Skill Verification

The transition from degree-centric credentialing to continuous, AI-driven education will require a complete overhaul of global qualification frameworks and accreditation systems. Today's accreditation bodies evaluate institutions based on input metrics, such as physical facilities, faculty credentials, and credit-hour seat time. By 2050, these metrics will be obsolete, replaced by outcome-oriented, decentralized verification networks that track real-world capability. Micro-credentials, earned continuously through workplace projects, verified AI simulations, and peer-reviewed problem-solving, will be authenticated using tamper-proof, interoperable digital ledgers. Employers seeking talent will no longer filter candidates by institutional pedigree or degree title; instead, they will query global skill networks to identify individuals with the precise, verified competency profiles required for specific projects. This shift will democratize economic opportunity, allowing self-directed and non-traditional learners from all backgrounds to prove their capabilities in a transparent, merit-based global marketplace.

Funding Higher Education as a Continuous Service

The financial and institutional framework supporting higher education will similarly undergo a fundamental overhaul by 2050, moving from upfront tuition billing toward continuous, subscription-based "Education-as-a-Service" models. Under the traditional financial paradigm, students or their families bear immense, upfront capital costs to purchase a multi-year educational package, taking on significant financial risk before entering the labor market. In the lifelong learning paradigm, higher education will be funded through ongoing collaborative models involving individuals, corporate employers, and public workforce development agencies. Universities will offer lifelong learning memberships that provide continuous access to their research networks, laboratory facilities, AI coaching systems, and peer communities across a six-decade career horizon. Employers, recognizing that continuous upskilling is significantly more cost-effective than constant workforce turnover, will fund these educational subscriptions as a standard employee benefit, transforming corporate training budgets into direct investments in university ecosystems.

Mitigating Equity Risks and the Digital Divide

Despite the compelling benefits of an AI-led lifelong learning model, the transition between now and 2050 presents critical societal, ethical, and economic challenges that policymakers and educational leaders must actively address. Chief among these concerns is the risk of widening digital and cognitive divides. If advanced AI learning companions and continuous higher education subscriptions are accessible only to affluent populations or high-margin corporate sectors, existing socioeconomic inequalities will accelerate. Less privileged workers could find themselves trapped in rapidly disappearing, low-skilled roles without the financial means or digital infrastructure required to access continuous reskilling platforms. To prevent this outcome, governments and international institutions must classify lifelong learning infrastructure as a fundamental public utility, guaranteeing universal access to high-bandwidth connectivity, open-source AI tutoring platforms, and lifelong education vouchers for all citizens regardless of income.

Phase 1 Roadmap: Immediate Hybridization (2025–2032)

The structural roadmap leading from the present moment to 2050 will unfold across several distinct evolutionary phases over the coming decades. In the immediate phase, spanning the late 2020s and early 2030s, universities will engage in widespread hybridization, embedding micro-credentials directly into traditional degree programs and forging deep research and operational partnerships with enterprise technology providers. During this phase, generative AI tools will transition from auxiliary writing aids into mainstream, institutionally supported personal tutors for foundational disciplines such as mathematics, computer programming, and language acquisition. Concurrently, work-integrated learning frameworks will expand significantly, allowing students to alternate between academic study and employer-funded apprenticeships designed to mitigate the skills gaps identified in the World Economic Forum's findings.

Phase 2 Roadmap: Structural Unbundling and Networked Verification (2032–2042)

During the second phase, extending through the 2030s and into the early 2040s, the traditional four-year residency model will lose its position as the default pathway for higher education. Universities will increasingly unbundle their offerings, allowing students to complete a compact, foundational one- or two-year learning experience focused on core philosophy, ethics, systems thinking, and quantitative literacy before entering the workforce under a lifelong learning subscription model. During this period, global skill verification networks will gain widespread adoption among multinational corporations, gradually eclipsing traditional regional accreditation as the primary benchmark of professional qualification. Physical university campuses will increasingly consolidate or reconfigure their operations, repurposing underutilized undergraduate residence halls into dynamic, multi-generational research hubs, executive reskilling retreats, and advanced collaborative laboratories.

Phase 3 Roadmap: The Era of Ubiquitous Lifelong Education (2042–2050)

By the third phase, approaching 2050, the integration of artificial intelligence, higher education, and global labor markets will achieve fully realization. The boundaries separating learning, working, and innovating will dissolve entirely. Education will no longer be an event that occurs at specific ages or within specific physical walls; it will be a continuous, ambient layer woven directly into the fabric of daily life and professional practice. Universities will function as global stewards of human knowledge, cognitive development, and advanced research, serving as life-long intellectual anchors for a global workforce constantly adapting to scientific discovery and technological innovation.

Preserving Human Agency and Critical Thought

Another primary challenge involves preserving human agency, critical thinking, and intellectual independence in an educational ecosystem heavily mediated by artificial intelligence. If learners become overly reliant on hyper-personalized AI companions to curate knowledge, structure problem-solving steps, and perform complex analysis, they risk experiencing cognitive atrophy—a decline in independent critical reasoning, serendipitous intellectual exploration, and creative friction. To safeguard against cognitive passivity, future educational frameworks must explicitly build in "productive friction"—deliberate pedagogical challenges that require learners to question algorithmic recommendations, critique synthetic data, debate contrasting philosophical perspectives, and synthesize ambiguous, unstructured information without automated assistance. The ultimate objective of AI-led lifelong learning must not be to outsource human thought to machine architectures, but rather to elevate human cognitive potential, fostering resilient, independent thinkers capable of navigating an increasingly complex world.

SHORT NEWS

CRICKET

Umesh parts ways with Vidarbha, seeks new domestic team



NEW DELHI: Senior India fast bowler Umesh Yadav has decided to part ways with Vidarbha in the ongoing domestic season, and seek fresh opportunities elsewhere. Umesh, 38, has obtained his No-Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Vidarbha Cricket Association (VCA). "He has officially received his NOC from Vidarbha and is currently evaluating his options. Umesh's talks are currently underway with two to three state associations, primarily smaller states, though nothing has been finalised yet. "He has returned to New Delhi from Nagpur, which is where he spends most of his time now, and will take a final call on his next domestic cricket team.

ASIAN GAMES

'Good start, but there are areas to improve,' says Fulton after India's 13-1 win



NAGOYA: India head coach Craig Fulton was pleased with his team's emphatic 13-1 victory over Indonesia in their opening Pool A match at the Asian Games here on Sunday but said there were still areas to improve ahead of their next fixture against Sri Lanka. India began their title defence in dominant fashion as eight different players found the target, with Dilpreet Singh scoring four goals. Shilanand Lakra and Sukhjeet Singh scored twice each, while Abhishek, Rajinder Singh, Mandeep Singh, Harmanpreet Singh and Jugraj Singh were also on the scoresheet. "Yeah, happy with the first game. I think the boys did well for the four quarters. Not an easy game.

India Begin Asian Games Kabaddi Campaign in Aichi-Nagoya

- **Defending Champions Eye Golden Double**
- **Defending champions in both categories, the Indian men's and women's teams will begin their title defence on September 21. The men's team will face hosts Japan in their opening match, while the women's team will take on Bangladesh.**

DAKSHA



India's men's and women's kabaddi teams will begin their campaigns on September 21 at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games. India, which won gold medals in both the men's and women's events at Hangzhou 2022, enters the competition as defending champions.

Kabaddi matches will be held from September 21 to 26 at the Tokai Citizens Gymnasium. Ten teams in the men's competition and eight teams in the women's competition will compete through a round-robin group stage, followed by the semi-finals and gold-medal matches.

Groups

The Indian men's team is placed in Group A alongside hosts Japan, the Republic of Korea, Chinese Taipei and Bangladesh. Group B comprises Iran, Nepal, Thailand, Pakistan and Malaysia. As a result, India and Iran, two of the leading forces in Asian kabaddi, have been placed in separate groups and cannot meet in the group stage.

The Indian women's team is in Group A alongside Iran, Japan and Bangladesh. Group B features Chinese Taipei, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Nepal. Unlike the men's competition, India will face Iran in the women's group stage itself.

Teams to Watch

Iran remains another major force in kabaddi. It is the only country besides India to have won Asian Games gold medals in both the men's and women's kabaddi competitions. At Jakarta 2018, Iran ended India's run of seven consecutive men's gold medals. Iran also denied India gold in the women's event at the same Games, defeating India 27–24 in the final.

India avenged both defeats at Hangzhou. The Indian men defeated Iran to win gold, while the women edged past Chinese Taipei 26–25 in a thrilling final. In women's kabaddi, Chinese Taipei has also established itself as a strong team alongside India and Iran. Meanwhile, Bangladesh and the Republic of Korea, both multiple medallists at the Asian Games, are in a group that presents a strong challenge for the Indian men. Hosts Japan will also look to make the most of home support as local spectators get their first opportunity to watch top-level kabaddi.

Indian men's head coach Balwan Singh has won 14 international gold medals as a coach, including India's three Kabaddi World Cup titles in 2004, 2007 and 2016. He will be assisted by BC Ramesh, who has won the Pro Kabaddi League twice—first with Bengal Warriors in Season 7 and later with Puneri Paltan in Season 10.

Singh outlined his team's approach to facing their opponents, saying that no team would be underestimated. "We do not consider any opponent a weak team. If we make a mistake anywhere, the opposition gains the advantage. Therefore, our focus must be on making as few mistakes as possible throughout the full 40 minutes," he said. He added that players are being reminded in the dressing room to respect every opponent, regardless of the score.

Under coaches Neetha Dadwe and Mamatha Pujari, the Indian women's team enters the tournament aiming for its fourth gold medal in five Asian Games appearances. India has won a medal at every Asian Games in which it has competed—gold in 2010, 2014 and 2022, and silver in 2018. Pushpa Rana has been named captain, with Sonali Shingate expected to play a key role. Sanju Devi, the MVP of the 2025 Women's Kabaddi World Cup, is also part of the squad.

Assistant coach Mamatha Pujari also identified Iran and Chinese Taipei as India's toughest opponents in the tournament. "We are keeping a particularly close watch on Iran and Chinese Taipei," she said. She noted that Iran plays an extremely fast and aggressive game throughout the 40-minute match. India will face Iran in the group stage on September 23 and could meet Chinese Taipei in the semi-final or final. As a result, the Indian women face a more challenging path to the gold medal than the men. For the men, India and Iran can meet only if both teams reach the final.



'You're lifting women's cricket to new heights: Jay Shah lauds Mandhana

NEW DELHI

The International Cricket Council (ICC) chairman Jay Shah on Sunday heaped praises on India women's cricket team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana for becoming the leading run-scorer in T20I cricket across men's and women's game.

Mandhana achieved the feat during the Asian Games semifinal against Bangladesh women at the Korogi Sports Park, where she played a strong cameo of 37 off 19. In the process, she surpassed former New Zealand cricketer Suzie Bates to top the run-scorers' list with 4788 runs in 171 innings.

"Many congratulations to @mandhana_smriti for going top of the Women's T20I run charts (4,788 runs). By rewriting history, you are lifting women's cricket to new heights and setting the standard for young dreamers everywhere. Here's to many more milestones ahead!" Shah posted on X. Coming into the game, Mandhana had 4751 runs in 170 innings and needed to score only eight to go past the New Zealand icon, and she did that pretty early in her innings when she hit a couple of fours in her first seven balls with two singles too. Mandhana had recently become the leading run-scorer in women's international cricket as well. During the Asia Cup, she broke the record of former India skipper Mithali Raj to become the most prolific run-scorer in the women's game.

She hit 124 against Hong Kong in the Asia Cup to surpass Mithali's tally of 10,868 runs and also hit her 18th international hundred, which was the most in women's international cricket, making her go past the legendary Meg Lanning. The century record was later equalled by South Africa women's captain Laura Wolvaardt.

Premier League: Isak strike helps Liverpool edge Bournemouth 1-0

BOURNEMOUTH



Alexander Isak scored just before the hour mark as Liverpool secured a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Bournemouth in the Premier League at the Vitality Stadium on Sunday.

The forward's goal proved to be the difference in a tightly contested game, with Liverpool holding on despite sustained pressure from the home side in the second half. Cody Gakpo played a key role in the goal as he made a strong run down the right before beating two defenders and sending a cross into the penalty area. Florian Wirtz got a touch to the delivery under pressure, with the ball falling kindly to Isak, who made no mistake from close range.

Bournemouth had made a bright start to the second half and came close to breaking the deadlock through Ryan Christie. The midfielder sent a cross from Rayan wide from inside the six-yard box before dragging another effort wide from outside the area. Liverpool then found the breakthrough in the 58th minute. Isak thought he had added another shortly afterwards when he fired a low effort past goalkeeper Dorde Petrovic, but the flag was raised for offside.

Bournemouth continued to push for an equaliser, with Evanilson forcing a save from Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker. The Brazil international curled an effort towards goal after breaking free, but Alisson went down to his left to make the stop.

The hosts were largely restricted to efforts from distance and crosses as Liverpool's defence remained organised. Adam Truffert fired over the bar, while Alex Scott sent a free-kick wide. Liverpool had also created the better openings during a quiet first half. Dominik Szoboszlai twice came close from free-kicks, sending one effort over the bar and another narrowly wide.

Asian Games: India women beat Singapore for second straight TT win, men lose to Iran

TOYOTA

India women's table tennis registered a come-from-behind win against Singapore in a thrilling second tie in Group F at the Sky Hall Toyota here on Sunday.

India were trailing 1-2 against Singapore before Sreeja Akula and Yashaswini Ghorpade staged a comeback to win their matches and hand India a 3-2 win in their second Group F tie. They had earlier beaten Indonesia in their opener 3-0.

After their first two ties, the Indian side is on top of Group F with four points from three matches, and they will be meeting Pakistan next in their last group-stage outing on Monday.

Against Singapore, Yashaswini started strongly with a 3-1 win over Jian Zeng before Sreeja came second best in a thrilling five-game encounter against Ming Loy. She lost 2-3 as Singapore levelled the tie before Zhao Tan defeated Diya Chitale in four games to help Singapore lead the tie 2-1.



With their backs against the wall, the Indian team staged a comeback as Sreeja came roaring in her second match after losing the first game 6-11. She won the next three games 11-3, 11-7, 11-4 to win the match 3-1 as India levelled the tie 2-2.

Yashaswini, who started with a win in the first match against Singapore, then returned for the decider and showed nerves of steel to win 3-2 despite losing the first game 5-11. She won the next two games 11-8, 12-10 but lost the fourth one 4-11. The fifth game also went to the distance before the Indian held her composure to take the final game 11-9 and win the match and the tie for India.

Meanwhile, the men's team also won their Group F opener against Indonesia by 3-0. Sathiyan Gnanasekran defeated Muhammad Negara 3-0, Manav Thakkar beat Muhammad Junindra 3-2, while Manush Shah beat Affan Pratama 3-0 to hand India a 3-0 victory.

The men's side also went down in the second tie to Iran 0-3 later. Manush Shah, Manav Thakkar and Harmeet Desai all lost their matches as India men's team lost their second group outing.

Asian Games: Gagan Narang video calls Elavenil after double silver, shares advice for mixed-team event

NEW DELHI



Former Olympic medallist and Elavenil Valarivan's mentor Gagan Narang video-called the Indian shooter after her double-silver feat at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games and urged her to quickly reset and focus on the mixed team event.

Elavenil enjoyed a memorable day at the Games on Sunday, helping India win silver in the women's 10m air rifle team event before adding another silver in the individual competition at the Aichi Pref. General Shooting Gallery.

Narang, who has guided Elavenil's development through his academy, shared a video of his conversation with the shooter on social media and offered her advice on recovering, staying focused and keeping things simple ahead of the next event.

"Two medals at the Asian Games! Congratulations, Elavenil, on a fantastic performance. Two medals are a reflection not just of what happens on competition day, but of the years of discipline, patience, hard work and countless hours behind the firing line," Narang wrote on Instagram.

Narang, who himself won two silver medals at the 2010 Asian Games, said the focus of his conversation with Elavenil was on what comes next, rather than dwelling on the medals already won.

"It was good to catch up after the event, celebrate what has been achieved and then quickly turn our attention to what comes next, the Mixed Team event," he wrote.

Elavenil revealed that Narang called her while she was on her way for her dope test and that their conversation included specific insights from the individual final.

"Gagan sir video called me. I was just going for my dope, and I took a few minutes off, and I was talking to Sir. He did have some really good insights about my finals, and I am glad that he had that noted down and he could give that to me and I could work on it," Elavenil said during a media interaction.

"So, yes, I did speak with him. It was a very, very happy call. And of course, he did tell me about me following his footsteps, which, again, I am very grateful to learn from him," she added.

The former shooter advised Elavenil to recover well, stay hydrated, eat right, sleep well and trust the technique and routine that had brought her to the Asian Games.

"Stay in your own bubble and take the next match one shot at a time," Narang wrote.

He also asked her not to overanalyse the previous matches, chase scores or medals, or make sudden changes to her technique or equipment.

"Don't get caught up in expectations, social media or what others are shooting," he added.

Having already secured two silver medals, Elavenil is now set to compete in the mixed team 10m air rifle event, with pre-event training scheduled before the competition.

Talented Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has a long way to go, says Sanath Jayasuriya

GURUGRAM



Legendary Sri Lanka cricketer Sanath Jayasuriya has lauded young Indian batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, saying that he has a long way to go, while terming Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson as talented and proven players.

15-year-old Sooryavanshi, who made his international debut in the T20I tour of England in July. was recently an unused member in India's 3-0 series win over Afghanistan at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, as Abhishek and Sanju made 346 runs between themselves across the series, including sharing a 142-run opening stand in the third T20I.

The trio are in Japan for the historic one-off T20I in Sano on Tuesday, before playing in the Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan. "They're talented and they've been proven players and all three, Sooryavanshi and all these players are really good. Sooryavanshi has a long way to go and when he will get the opportunity, he will do good," Jayasuriya said to IANS on the sidelines of the launch of the Corporate Cricket World Cup on Sunday.

Commenting on Sri Lanka's prospects at the Asian Games, where the women's team is set to battle against India in the gold medal game and the men's campaign is scheduled to kick off later this week, Jayasuriya backed both squads to deliver strong performances. "I think we have a talented, good team for Asian Games, men's and women's and they're doing well and I hope they will continue to do well," he noted.

He also reserved special praise for rising Sri Lankan batting all-rounder Sonal Dinusha, and hailed his ability to deliver under pressure. Dinusha had scores of 100 and 84 in the first Test against India in Galle which Sri Lanka lost. But his knocks of 103 and 133 not out in the second one at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground in Colombo helped Sri Lanka seal an epic draw. "Very good player, and future of Sri Lanka. It's always been good to see a player like him performing really well under pressure. It's not easy and in every innings he played really well," he added. The former explosive opener, who is serving as the global ambassador for the Corporate Cricket World Cup, stated the importance of workplace tournaments in unearthing hidden talent and offering second chances to players who missed out on mainstream pathways. The pan-India competition will see 192 corporate teams square off across 24 cities, with each city fielding eight teams. Following the city-level qualifiers, the top two teams from each destination will secure a berth in the July 2027 showpiece event.

Chiru Leaks The Full Form Of 'KAAKA'



Megastar Chiranjeevi and director Bobby Kolli are teaming up for the second time after delivering the blockbuster Waltair Veerayya. Their upcoming collaboration, Kaaka, has already generated considerable buzz, with the makers offering a glimpse into Chiranjeevi's character through the title glimpse released on the Megastar's birthday. The glimpse received a tremendous response from fans and moviegoers. Now, Chiranjeevi has added to the excitement by revealing the name of his character in Kaaka. During an event, the Megastar elaborated on the title and disclosed that he will be seen as Kadiri Kalidas in the movie. The latest Chiru Leak has delighted fans, particularly the character name, which carries a dynamic feel. The revelation has further added to the strong buzz surrounding Chiranjeevi's role in the film. The shoot of Kaaka is progressing at a brisk pace. Bankrolled by KVN Productions, the movie is set to hit cinemas on January 13, arriving as a Sankranthi festive release. The film features Anaswara Rajan in a pivotal role.

Samavarthi Promises Theatrical Magic

Actor Satyadev is all set to entertain audiences with his upcoming film Samavarthi, directed by Ajay Nag V. Produced by Sivacharan Reddy Jakkidi and Shashidhar Reddy Padamati, the film features Ganavi Laxman as the female lead, with Srikanth playing a key role. The film is gearing up for a multilingual release in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam. The makers unveiled the teaser at an event in Hyderabad on Saturday. Billed as an ecological action thriller, Samavarthi introduces its world and characters through an intriguing tiger-and-deer narrative, offering a glimpse into the film's intense backdrop and setting the stage for an engaging cinematic experience. Speaking at the event, Satyadev revealed that director Ajay Nag was the first person to personally approach him and ask him to be part of a film. "Until now, I have never asked anyone to make a film with me. But Ajay was the first person who made me set aside my hesitation and asked me to work with him," he said. The actor also shared that the team shot across several forests in South India, making the project a memorable adventure. "It was a great adventurous experience for all of us. I believe audiences will experience the same excitement when they watch the film in theatres," Satyadev added. Director Ajay Nag expressed his appreciation for Satyadev's dedication, stating that the teaser itself reflects the immense effort the actor put into the film. He also expressed confidence that Samavarthi would deliver a blockbuster success for Satyadev. Producers Shashidhar and Sivacharan expressed their belief that the film would create a magical experience on the big screen and become a memorable success for everyone associated with it. The teaser launch event was attended by Srikanth, Ganavi Laxman, Mohan Bhagath, Sinjith Yerramalli, and other members of the film's team. With its intriguing premise and adventurous backdrop, Samavarthi is gearing up to offer audiences an immersive theatrical experience.



Itlu Arjuna Teaser: A Mute Man's Unusual Love Story



Director Venky Kudumula is venturing into production with Itlu Arjuna, introducing Aniesh as hero. Made on What Next Entertainments banner, the movie marks the directorial debut of Mahesh Uppala. After making initial buzz through a glimpse, songs and posters, the makers today released the film's teaser. What happens when a young man has plenty to say but cannot make anyone understand him? Itlu Arjuna builds its teaser around this unusual premise. He is a mute youngster whose world revolves around a simple desire. He is in love with Keerthy and wants to shake hands with her, see her up close, and talk to her, although he cannot speak. This light-hearted track soon takes an intriguing turn, with the police and a gang of villains after him. Aniesh looks charming on screen and deserves appreciation for taking up such a challenging character at the very beginning of his career. He carries the role with confidence and makes a strong impression through his expressive performance, particularly since his character cannot speak. Anaswara Rajan complements him well as the female lead, and their unique and interesting love track adding warmth. Their pairing looks refreshing on screen. The teaser also reflects Mahesh Uppala's confidence as a storyteller. Cinematographer Raja Mahadehav delivered colourful frames. S Thaman's lively background score brings the required mood to the narrative. Particularly, New Guy In Town track enhances the liveliness. With an unusual protagonist and a mysterious storyline laced with laughs and lovely moments, Itlu Arjuna offers enough reasons to stay curious. The film arrives in theatres on October 30th.

Jadal Has Extreme Madness, With A 'Shock' Value!

Natural Star Nani is stepping into a distinctly intense space with The Paradise, his collaboration with Dasara director Srikanth Odela. While the film promises a raw and action-heavy theatrical experience, Nani says the story is ultimately driven by emotion, particularly the bond between a mother and son."There is as much action in The Paradise as I have never done before. But every fight begins with a strong reason and an emotional lead. Srikanth enjoys a commercial movie and emotion equally. He is a very theatre guy. He designs every scene in a way that the audience can enjoy it in theatr es. Srikanth approves a take only when he is fully satisfied with it." The Paradise is set in a fictional world revolving around the Sawari tribe. Nani explained, "The Paradise is set in a place where the fictional tribe called Sawari has no recognition. Even when they die, they have no identity. They don't exist in the law. Their fight is for an identity." At the centre of this world is Nani's character Jadal, whose appearance and behaviour are unlike the relatable characters the actor has generally played. Nani stressed that his hairstyle is not merely a visual experiment. "The Jadal is not just to try a new look. There's a valid reason behind it. The character didn't grow up in normal society. He has an extreme madness from the beginning. With a little shock value and wonder, you will watch him and feel that he is very different." The physical transformation came with its own challenges. "The main problem was the Jadal look. Sometimes we shot for 36 hours in a single stretch. Working with the Jadal hair was very difficult. Rope shots were even harder. The fight masters felt sorry for us. The makeup takes around one to one-and-a-half hours in the morning, and removing it takes about 20 minutes." The actor also pushed himself in the dance department. "I haven't done many songs with scope for dance before. But according to Srikanth, I am a good dancer. I pushed myself for him. After Aaya Sher and then Yesha Nagula, Srikanth's belief in me came true. I also enjoyed doing the dances." Music is another major component of The Paradise. Nani believes Anirudh Ravichander has delivered something particularly special for the film. "I feel this will be the best music from Anirudh. The Paradise has given him an opportunity to bring out his best. Anirudh has an extreme grip on sound, while Srikanth has a strong grip on our folk songs. You will witness their craziness in theatres." The film's emotional backbone, however, remains the mother-son relationship. "The film starts with mother emotion and ends with mother emotion. The mother emotion takes you home. That emotion will give you a hangover. This is a film for family audiences. The mother-son emotion is very real. Since there is a lot of violence, it may be difficult for very young children to watch. But this is a proper drama and an emotional film. Everything you expect from a commercial cinema can be seen in it." The actor also spoke about Mohan Babu, who plays a particularly brutal character. "Srikanth suggested his name. He has never done something this brutal before. Mohan Babu was very excited. There are some scenes in this story where you see what he does and how much torture he inflicts. Raghav is popular for his dance and has very good comedy timing. He will be seen in a Completely different role in this film. Kayaadhu Lohar has a very interesting and surprising role. Sonali is extremely professional. The effort she put in is next level. She never complained about anything and worked extra hours in very tough conditions. She is the best choice for the character." Nani also revealed that the film's third single will be released tomorrow.



Kayadu To Promote The Paradise, But Not Before Release!

Ever since the promotional campaign for The Paradise picked up, fans have been wondering about the absence of Kayadu Lohar from the film's promotional activities. With Nani actively generating buzz ahead of the release, social media has been filled with questions about why the actress has stayed away from the promotions so far. The makers recently addressed the issue and clarified that Kayadu is currently occupied with multiple shooting commitments. Nani revealed in Chennai that her packed schedule has made it difficult for Kayadu to participate in the promotional events. However, according to sources close to us, Kayadu has agreed to take part in the film's post-release promotional campaign. The actress is expected to allocate four to five days after the release to promote the film and interact with the media. This strategy could work in the film's favor. If The Paradise opens strongly and generates positive word of mouth, Kayadu's post-release appearances may help sustain the buzz and keep the film in the spotlight for a longer period.For now, the focus remains on the promotions being handled by the rest of the team. The pre-release event will be held tomorrow in Hyderabad. Directed by Srikanth Odela, The Paradise has music by Anirudh and also has Mohan Babu, Raghav Juyal, and Sampoornesh Babu in key roles.

Ivory Magic By Kayadu

With Nani's The Paradise set to hit screens worldwide on September 24, all eyes are on female lead Kayadu Lohar, and her latest look isn't helping calm the buzz. She stunned in a monochrome ivory saree with a cutwork blouse featuring bishop sleeves and crisscross waist detailing, giving the traditional drape a modern edge. A layered gold necklace with a kundan pendant, soft hoops, and an ear cuff added subtle sparkle, while loose wind-swept waves and dewy, mauve-lipped makeup completed the effortless vibe. The look drops as Kayadu rides a hot streak, recent releases Idhayam Murali, I'm Game, and Immortal, right before her big pan-India moment opposite Nani.

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