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End of Chemo, Beginning of a New Journey

HYDERABAD, SEPT.28

Basavatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital & Research Institute (BIACH&RI) organised a special 'No More Chemo Party' to mark Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and celebrate children who have successfully completed their chemotherapy. Organised by the Department of Pediatric Oncology & Hematology, the quarterly event brought together children, parents and families, doctors, nurses and healthcare staff. The celebrations featured entertainment and activities aimed at providing children with a break from the hospital

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Uttarandhra Gets Third Political Alternative



FORMER YSRCP STRATEGIST VIJAYASAI REDDY CALLS 30TH SEPT. PRESS MEET IN VIZAG ON NORTH ANDHRA BACKWARDNESS AND A NEW PARTY ROADMAP

Venumbaka Vijayasai Reddy, who walked out of the YSR Congress Party and the Rajya Sabha in January 2025, is back on the road selling a new political platform. After Vijayawada and Anantapur, the next stop is Daspalla Hotel, Visakhapatnam, at 11 in the morning on 30 September. The invitation is blunt. Uttarandhra backwardness. Solutions. Development action. The third alternative party he says he will form. Policies and principles.

This is no sudden impulse. On 19 August he stood at Tirumala after family prayers and told the press he would float a new party. He called it a platform for the people, by the people and on the side of the people. He promised to carry the common man's voice into the Assembly and Parliament. Details, he said, would come later. They have been coming in stages.

First Vijayawada on 7th September. He attacked the two-party model as a failure that does not reflect the will or interests of ordinary people. He said Andhra needs an approach that puts citizens at the centre of governance. He ruled himself out as Chief Ministerial candidate. No family member would contest that post either. He would play mentor, in the manner of Bal Thackeray. Sixty-six percent of tickets would go to youth between 25 and 40, caste no bar. Five goals were listed: lower prices of essentials with higher incomes, free power for homes and farms through solar and central subsidy, cheaper petroleum taxes, water storage raised to 3,000 TMC, and stronger government schools. The two-family grip on Andhra politics is the target he keeps naming. He says both sides have practised vindictive politics and left the state in a debt trap. Then Anantapur on 18th September. The pitch shifted to Rayalaseema. Pending irrigation, migration, jobs, a Bundelkhand-style special package, a steel plant in Kadapa. He spoke of protecting the self-respect of original Reddys while respecting every caste and faith. The party flag, he said, would go up on Ekadashi after Vijayadasami. He compared the project to actor Vijay's TVK in Tamil Nadu. If people voted for the outfit, a socially committed young person would become Chief Minister and he would guide from the side.

Now the coastal north. Uttarandhra has its own ledger of complaints: uneven industry, water stress, jobs that do not stay, infrastructure that arrives late. Reddy himself flagged one live tension days ago. Uttarandhra is not a slogan district. The Visakhapatnam Economic Region spans nine northern districts and about 16.5 million people. Growth has run slower than the state average. Industry has lagged. The tribal hills of Alluri Sitharama Raju district carry what planners call a terrain penalty. Vizag itself rose as a port and steel city, then hit a water wall. Official figures showed a 58 percent rainfall deficit through mid-September. Groundwater in Yendada fell past 30 metres. Reddy himself warned that proposed data centres around Vizag would need 11 crore litres a day while households already queue for tankers. Investment must not dry the household tap.

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Then Simon, Now SIR: "Go Back"



CM Revanth Reddy criticises the EC is cenWtralizing authorities and deleting votes of people who are against Modi rule

Student politics in Telangana are different. Varied political system in South and North India

Education sector strengthened in TG.. Skill development for all students to compete globally

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy speaks on "India's Next Chapter" at the Pratidin Conclave

CM suggests new Delimitation formula

South people are Dravidians and North are Aryans

NEW DELHI, SEP 28

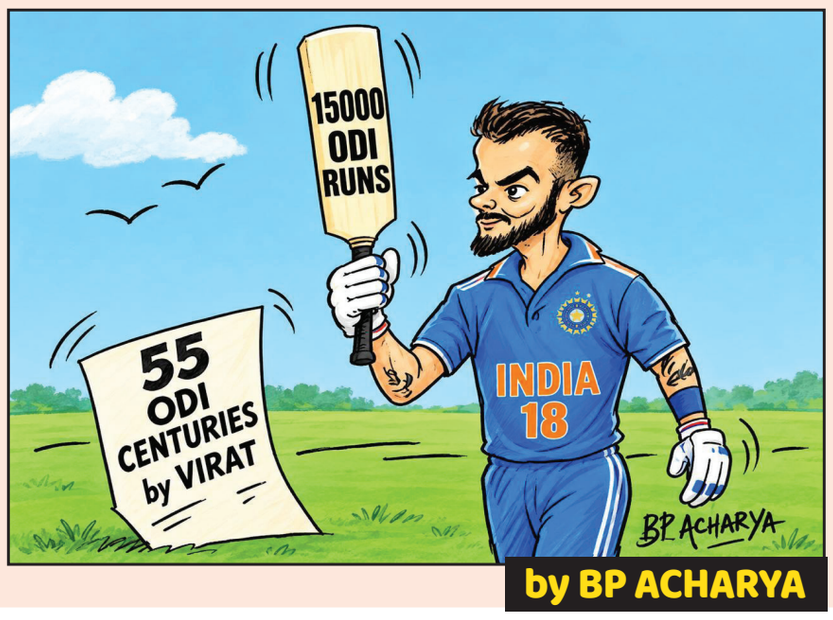
Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday called for a nationwide "SIR Go Back" movement, drawing a parallel with the freedom struggle's "Simon Go Back" campaign. Speaking at the "India's Next Chapter" session at the Pratidin Conclave in Delhi, he alleged that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was being used to remove voters and questioned the centralisation of powers in the Election Commission. These were political allegations made by the Chief Minister; independent verification of his numerical claims was not provided in the speech.

Revanth said India's student politics and political systems differ sharply between the South and North. In Telangana, he said, student politics is dominated largely by Left- and Right-wing groups, while NSUI has limited influence. He pointed out that a student who contests university elections on an ABVP ticket in the South could later enter mainstream politics as a Congress candidate, reflecting what he described as the region's different political dynamics. Recalling his own political journey, Revanth said he began as a ZPTC member in 2006 and became an independent MLC in 2007 before joining the Telugu Desam Party and winning as an MLA in 2009 and 2014. He joined the Congress in 2017 and was elected to the Lok Sabha in 2019. He said his meeting with Rahul Gandhi influenced his decision to join the Congress.

On education and skill development, the Chief Minister said Telangana was strengthening government education while trying to bridge the gap between degrees and employment. He said language and communication skills should be developed from the early years and specialised skills after Class XII. The government has been converting ITIs into Advanced Training Centres and integrating technical education with industry. The Young India Skills University was established to bring education closer to industry requirements and job opportunities. Revanth said students should not pursue education merely for certificates but acquire skills that enable them to compete globally. He cited opportunities in countries such as Germany, Japan and Korea and said foreign-language training would help Telangana's youth access international employment. The Skills University follows an industry-linked model, with companies involved in developing practical courses.

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OBTUSE ANGLE



by BP ACHARYA

Etala Meets Amit Shah

New Delhi, SEP 28: Malkajgiri Member of Parliament Etala Rajender met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi as a courtesy call. During the meeting, he briefed the Union Home Minister on the political developments in Telangana and the policies of the Congress government that, according to him, are adversely affecting the people. Rajender reportedly highlighted that the future of lakhs of students had become uncertain due to the government's

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Eastern India to Become Aluminium Hub: Kishan Reddy

Strong Aluminium Value Chain by Combining Odisha's Mining Potential with Bengal's Business Capabilities: Kishan Reddy



Kolkata, Sep 28: Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy said that, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the eastern region of India is being developed as a key centre for the country's industrial growth. He said there is tremendous potential to develop the region into a world-class aluminium manufacturing hub by linking Odisha's mineral resources with West Bengal's industrial, financial and logistics capabilities. The Union Minister was addressing

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Tribunal Scraps ₹50L Attachment in Revanth Case

SPECIAL 02

Sridhar Babu inaugurates Billtrust's new 450 Cr GCC in Hyderabad



Hyderabad, Sept.28: Minister for IT and Industries D. Sridhar Babu on Monday inaugurated Billtrust's new Global Capability Centre (GCC) at Raheja Mindspace in Madhapur. The launch marks a ₹450 crore investment by the company and a commitment to build a 1,000-member tech team over the next three years.

The new 40,000 sq. ft. facility has already scaled to 100 employees within six months, reinforcing Billtrust's long-term, AI-first approach to technology development and customer service operations.

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Speed Up Young India School Works

Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka directs engineering officials

Hyderabad, Sep 28: Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka has directed engineering officials to speed up the construction of the 'Young India Integrated Residential School' buildings, an ambitious project undertaken by the state government, and complete the works within the deadlines set by the government. The Deputy Chief Minister held a review meeting with senior officials of the Engineering Department at Praja Bhavan on Monday to assess the progress of construction of the Young India Integrated School buildings. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy CM said that engineering officials should work day and night and demonstrate significant progress in the works to complete this high-priority government programme as quickly as possible.

He stated that the main objective of the project is to provide poor students across the state, irrespective of caste or religion, with quality education of

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ED Raids: BRSSeeks Probe Status

HYDERABAD, SEPT.28

BRS public representatives and leaders on Monday met Enforcement Directorate officials at Basheerbagh and sought details of raids conducted in September 2024 at the residence and offices of Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and other locations. The delegation, led by BRS MLCs Shambipur Raju and Naveen Reddy, MLAs Vivekanand Goud and Sanjay, senior leader Talasani Sai Kiran and BRSV State president Gellu Srinivas Yadav, was initially stopped by police while attempting to submit a representation. Following a protest by BRS cadres, police allowed the delegation to meet ED Deputy Director Swathi. The leaders sought details of the investigation and action taken on cash, documents, digital devices and bank information allegedly seized during the searches. The BRS also sought updates on investigations into the Narsapur-Kodangal Lift Irrigation Scheme, Vatingapalli FIR and Kotwalguda-Manasa Hills matter.

TREAT VOTER REGISTRATION AS A MATTER OF PRESTIGE: KTR



Hyderabad, Sept.28: BRS working president and MLA K. T. Rama Rao (KTR) expressed confidence that the party would emerge victorious in the upcoming Hyderabad–Rangareddy–Mahabubnagar Graduate MLC elections. With elections to two Graduate MLC seats approaching, KTR held district-wise meetings atTelangana Bhavan with party leaders from Hyderabad and the undivided Rangareddy and Mahabubnagar districts.

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SC Reaffirms Four-Year Rule for Telangana Reservations

Eligibility as a local candidate is determined according to the Presidential Order; Jella Ankitha's petition dismissed



New Delhi, SEP 28: The Supreme Court has upheld the four-year education requirement for determining local-candidate status and reservation eligibility in Telangana. Dismissing Jella Ankitha's petition, the court said candidates seeking admission to MBBS/BDS courses must have studied for four consecutive academic years in educational institutions in Telangana immediately preceding the qualifying examination. Ankitha had studied in the state for a longer period overall but sought relaxation of the requirement concerning the four years immediately before the examination. The court held that the criteria prescribed under the Presidential Order are valid and must be strictly followed, leaving no scope for relaxation.

30 SEPTEMBER: WHEN OLD ENEMIES SHARE ONE TABLE IN DELHI

BENGAL RIVALS, A SPLIT SOUTH, AND A POLL PANEL UNDER FIRE

Opposition parties of the INDIA grouping are due to meet at the Constitution Club in New Delhi on 30 September 2026 to discuss the Election Commission, the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls, and and a fresh parliamentary notice seeking the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The meeting follows a 23 September newspaper investigation that two Election Commissioners recorded objections at least fourteen times in ten months, a 26 September September full bench reply by the Commission that its major SIR orders were taken with unanimous approval, and a rare telephone exchange between Mamata Banerjee and CPI(M) general secretary M. A. Baby. Congress Working Committee meets a day earlier. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, once a pillar of the same national table, remains politically apart from the Congress after the 2026 Tamil Nadu verdict.

Leaders who spent years tearing each other in Bengal now find one subject large enough to share a room. Mamata Banerjee of the Trinamool Congress and the CPI(M), after a letter from M. A. Baby dated 23 September and a direct phone call, have agreed that the Election

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VIJAYASAI REDDY TAKES THE THIRD ALTERNATIVE TO UTTARANDHRA

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It did not cancel the ledger. Metro rail, promised at bifurcation, is still paper after eleven years. YSRCP now accuses the coalition of starving Vizag to fatten Amaravati. The government answers with Yeleru reviews, Polavaram left canal talk for 2027 and an Uttarandhra water scheme. Both sides claim the coast. The tap still decides the argument. The accountant who once audited the YS family books now audits the two-family system he helped build. The question in Vizag will be whether the new ledger has numbers the north coast can bank on.

He remains a chartered accountant from Nellore, 69 years old, former chairman of parliamentary standing committees, former TTD trustee, former Oriental Bank director. He was YSRCP national general secretary and its longest-serving Rajya Sabha floor leader. That past gives the new pitch its sting and its baggage. Every side will ask the same thing: why now, and why this map.

MY SHOT

Andhra has heard third-front talk before. Jana Sena once wore that label. The two big machines still dominate the ground, the money and the memory. Reddy's tour is methodical: capital region, Rayalaseema, now Uttarandhra. The promises are large: youth tickets, water, power, schools, no family on the CM chair. The test is organisation, not oratory. North Andhra will listen for specifics on ports, industry water, fishing, and jobs that do not migrate. If the 30th September meet produces a clear regional charter instead of another general sermon, the third alternative becomes a big story. The state does not lack parties. It lacks delivery that reaches every region in the same season.

C. SUBRAHMANYAM

Then Simon, Now SIR

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The Chief Minister also criticised the Centre over Telangana's development projects, alleging inadequate cooperation on the Regional Ring Road, Metro expansion and national highways. He said Telangana possessed major educational and intellectual assets and argued that development opportunities should be distributed fairly among states.

On delimitation, Revanth proposed extending the freeze on Lok Sabha seat allocation for another 25 years to prevent demographic changes from disproportionately increasing the representation of larger northern states. He argued that southern states that implemented family-planning measures should not lose political representation because of their demographic success. He has previously called for an all-party consultation and a consensus-based formula before delimitation. He contrasted Kerala's 20 Lok Sabha seats with Uttar Pradesh's 80 and said a uniform increase in seats could widen the gap further. He argued that the South's economic contribution should be reflected in political representation and questioned the concentration of key Union portfolios in the North.

In a sharp regional identity argument, Revanth said "South people are Dravidians and North are Aryans", contrasting what he described as southern devotion to Shiva with the BJP's emphasis on Lord Rama. He also said the Telangana movement emerged after years of perceived domination and rejected the framing of the issue as simply a North-South conflict.

Sanjay Kumar Srivastava Presents "Employee of the Month" Safety Awards

Detailed Review Meeting on Safety of Train Operations Held Under the Chairmanship of the General Manager



Hyderabad, SEP 28: South Central Railway General Manager Sanjay Kumar Srivastava conducted a detailed review meeting on the safety of train operations across the zone on Monday at Rail Nilayam in Secunderabad. South Central Railway Additional General Manager Satya Prakash, along with the Principal Heads of various departments, participated in the meeting. Divisional Railway Managers of the Secunderabad, Hyderabad and Nanded divisions also attended the review meeting.

Eight employees from various safety-related departments of the Secunderabad, Hyderabad and Nanded divisions were presented with the "Employee of the Month" Safety Awards. The employees demonstrated exemplary commitment to their duties, remained vigilant and helped prevent unsafe situations. The award recipients included one Senior Section Engineer (Signal), two Loco Pilots, one Assistant Loco Pilot, one Track Maintainer, one Technician, one Train Manager and one Station Master.

The General Manager congratulated the award winners and appreciated them for performing their duties with the highest level of dedication.

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environment and marking an important milestone in their treatment journey. Dr. Veerendra Patil, Consultant – Pediatric Oncology & Hematology, BIACH&RI, said completing chemotherapy was a significant milestone for every child and that the initiative was intended to make the achievement a happy and memorable occasion. "The courage and determination these children show throughout their treatment are truly inspiring. Seeing them smile and celebrate with their families is deeply rewarding for all of us", he noted.

Dr. Kalpana Raghunath, Associate Director – Academics, BIACH&RI, stressed the importance of early recognition, timely diagnosis and specialised treatment of childhood cancer. She said emotional support and a positive environment were equally important during treatment.

Dr. K. Phani Koteswara Rao, Medical Superintendent, BIACH&RI, said caring for children with cancer went beyond treating the disease and included supporting their emotional well-being and providing opportunities for moments of normalcy and happiness.

The event also recognised the contribution of parents, caregivers and family members who provide continuous support to children during treatment. Team Saadhaka, which has supported the quarterly celebrations, was appreciated for helping create memorable experiences for the children and their families. The programme was attended by Dr. Kalpana Raghunath, Dr. Veerendra Patil and the Pediatric Oncology team, Dr. Phani Koteswara Rao, along with children who had completed chemotherapy, their parents, and nursing and paramedical staff.

BIACH&RI said it would continue to promote awareness about early recognition, timely medical consultation,

TREAT VOTER REGISTRATION AS A MATTER OF PRESTIGE: KTR

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Recalling the party's earlier victory in the constituency when it fielded Vani Devi, daughter of former Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao, KTR said the victory was achieved through the planned and collective efforts of party leaders. He urged the leadership to demonstrate the same unity and commitment in the forthcoming elections. KTR said the prevailing political atmosphere was favourable to the BRS and expressed confidence that the party could retain the seat. With the graduate voter-registration process now underway, he directed party leaders to take immediate steps to ensure that all eligible graduates in the constituency register their votes.

He urged leaders to treat voter registration as a matter of prestige and to make particular efforts to ensure that every eligible graduate, including members of their own families, completes the registration process. KTR claimed that the BJP's popularity was declining across the country and said its senior leadership was concerned about young voters moving away from the party. He also alleged that public dissatisfaction with the Congress government in Telangana had reached a high point. According to KTR, the younger generation was increasingly dissatisfied with both the BJP and Congress, which he referred to as "Delhi-based parties".

1,000 days in office.

The BRS leader further said that leaders from the Warangal, Khammam and Nalgonda districts had expressed confidence in the party's prospects during a review meeting held two days earlier regarding the local MLC constituency. Calling for a united effort, KTR instructed party leaders to work collectively for the BRS's success and stressed the importance of implementing a clear and effective voter-enrollment strategy, irrespective of which candidate is ultimately chosen to contest on behalf of the party.

Sridhar Babu inaugurates Billtrust's new 450 Cr GCC in Hyderabad

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Speaking at the inauguration, the Minister lauded Billtrust for its vision in establishing an AI-driven GCC in India. He expressed confidence that the Hyderabad facility will become a pivotal hub for the company's global operations and its broader innovation journey. Assuring the state government's complete support and cooperation, Sridhar Babu welcomed the company's expansion footprint in Telangana. Billtrust operates a B2B cash generation platform designed to accelerate accounts receivable processes and unlock trapped cash while maintaining strong vendor-client relationships.

Tribunal Scraps 50L Attachment in Revanth Case

New Delhi, SEP 28: CM Revanth Reddy and three others have secured relief from the Appellate Tribunal under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), which has set aside the confirmation of the ED attachment of ₹50 lakh in the 2015 cash-for-vote case. The tribunal, headed by Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari, passed the order on September 14, allowing appeals filed by Revanth Reddy, Vem Krishna Keerthan, Rudra Sivakumar Uday Simha and Bishop Harry Sebastian. The appeals challenged the February 8, 2022 order of the PMLA Adjudicating Authority, which had confirmed the ED's provisional attachment order of May 25, 2021. The tribunal observed that the alleged ₹50 lakh bribe amount had already been seized by the ACB and was in the custody of the trial court. Since the money was already secured with the court, there was no apprehension that the alleged proceeds of crime could be dealt with or alienated in a manner that could frustrate their eventual confiscation, the tribunal said.

Speed Up Young India School Works

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international standards and all necessary facilities on a single campus. The Deputy CM said that bringing children from SC, ST, BC, OC, and minority communities together at one place and providing them with the best education through an integrated system would help promote social equality among students.

He directed engineering officials to immediately prepare a special "work calendar" in coordination with the respective district Collectors for the construction of these school buildings being established in every Assembly constituency. He instructed officials to review the progress of the works on a weekly basis and regularly submit reports to him.

He also directed that CCTV cameras must be installed at the construction sites to enable continuous monitoring of the works from the field level. The Deputy CM announced that he himself would conduct surprise inspections of the schools under construction across the state starting from the second week of next month.

During the review meeting, EMC Ganapathi Reddy briefed the Deputy CM on the progress of school construction across the state. He stated that 87 schools have so far been sanctioned in 87 Assembly constituencies, and construction work has already begun at a fast pace in 70 schools. He further explained that DPRs are being prepared for another five schools, tenders for three schools are in the final stage, and there are site-related issues concerning the remaining four schools.

The officials assured the Deputy Chief Minister that all works would be completed within the timeframe prescribed by the government and that the buildings would be made available at the earliest.



Etala Meets Amit Shah

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alleged negligence. He also raised the issue of lands belonging to poor people and farmers being included in the '22A' prohibited list, causing serious difficulties to them. He explained to Amit Shah the protests being undertaken by the BJP in the Assembly and among the public on these issues, as well as the party's ongoing campaigns against what it describes as the failures of the state government.

The two leaders also discussed the upcoming by-election in the state.

Rajender also briefed Amit Shah about the programmes being conducted under the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan', organised to mark the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi completing 25 years in public service. The statements about the Congress government's policies and the "22A" issue are presented as claims attributed to Rajender/the BJP, rather than as independently verified facts. Recent reporting confirms Etala Rajender is the BJP MP from Malkajgiri and has previously met Amit Shah in Delhi.

Eastern India to Become Aluminium....

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representatives from the industry and business sectors at an Aluminium Road Show held in Kolkata on Monday. "Bengal has a special place in India's industrial history. It is the land that produced great personalities such as Swami Vivekananda, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Besides contributing ideas, literature, culture and leadership to India, the region also laid strong foundations for industrial development. It is time to connect that rich legacy with modern industrial opportunities and once again establish Bengal as a key force in the country's development," Kishan Reddy said.

The Modi government is strengthening infrastructure in Bengal, including connectivity, logistics, ports, railway projects and road projects, the Union Minister said. From modern projects such as under-river metro systems to industrial corridors, connectivity is being expanded and the necessary ecosystem is being developed to enable local industries to access international markets, he added. The Minister said aluminium plays a crucial role in several sectors, including defence, railways, renewable energy, electric vehicles and aerospace. He also stated that aluminium would play an important role in India's efforts to achieve its Net Zero 2070 target.

"Our objective is not only to increase aluminium production, but also to ensure that value addition takes place within India for the aluminium produced here. High-value finished products should be manufactured within India itself. That is the goal of Aatmanirbhar Bharat," the Union Minister said. Although India plays a significant role in the global aluminium sector, he said there is a need to bridge the gap between the country's production capacity and the use of aluminium in value-added applications.

He said the Aluminium Vision 2047 has been formulated with this objective. The vision aims to increase India's aluminium production nearly sixfold, raise bauxite production to 150 MTPA (million tonnes per annum), significantly expand recycling and promote low-carbon technologies. Kishan Reddy said India also aims to increase its share of the global aluminium market from 3.8% in 2023 to 10% by 2047.

No Shortage of Coal in the Country

Later, speaking to the media, the Union Minister said there was no shortage of coal in the country and that coal production and supply were continuing without interruption. "It is natural to face some challenges related to coal production during the monsoon season. As the monsoon season is coming to an end, normal conditions have been restored. Coal production is currently continuing as usual, and we are supplying coal to the maximum extent possible," Kishan Reddy said.

30 SEPTEMBER: WHEN OLD ENEMIES SHARE ONE TABLE IN DELHI

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Commission row and the Special Intensive Revision deserve a coordinated national reply. Banerjee told a Serampore rally that she had sent word to Rahul Gandhi: the parties must sit together. Baby told interviewers that Banerjee "responded instantly" and that the circle should go beyond the INDIA grouping to other willing parties.

That is the headline twist. It is not a Bengal alliance. State CPI(M) secretary Mohammed Salim has already drawn the line. National protest is one thing. An electoral pact with Trinamool in West Bengal is another. The distinction matters. Readers who confuse a common press note with a common candidate list will misread the week.

The Constitution Club Table Is A Test Of Nerve, Not A Wedding. It Will Show Who Can Argue The Voter List Without Rewriting Old State Wars.

The Commission, for its part, has not stayed silent. On 26 September Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar sat with Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi at Nirvachan Sadan. The press note that followed said the SIR order of 24 June 2025, covering all States and Union Territories and beginning with Bihar, was issued with "unanimous approval of the Commission." The same note recorded that the Supreme Court upheld that order on 27 May 2026. The bench also eased personal

appearance rules for electors who received notices, extended claims and objections in Delhi till 30 October 2026 and in Maharashtra till 12 October 2026, and ordered a review of the ECINet software by a committee that includes an independent expert from an IIT or IIIT.

That is the official record. The political record is hotter. The 23 September investigation in The Indian Express said Sandhu and Joshi had placed written objections at least fourteen times across ten months, four of them on a single day. The points on record, as reported, included orders issued without the full Commission's knowledge, changes around Form 6 for new electors, access of field officers to the digital roll, and central control of the voter database. The Commission answered that internal notes are part of deliberation and must not be confused with the final order of the institution.

Opposition leaders have used the report to shift fire from the Commission as a whole onto the office of the Chief Election Commissioner. Trinamool's Derek O'Brien said, "First, GK (Gyanesh Kumar) has to GO. Certain other demands have been raised as well. Those demands are very much in place, including how a CEC is selected and how SIR was a fraud. We will work unitedly, purposefully and swiftly." Rahul Gandhi said, "Vote chori is a crime against people and a direct attack on our Constitution." Banerjee told her rally that names of about ninety two lakh electors were struck off in Bengal under SIR, that her party went to court and restored thirty two lakh, and that the fight would continue till the Chief Election Commissioner left office. Congress leaders have cited about 13.8 crore names removed from draft rolls in the first three SIR phases across thirty one States and Union Territories.

Two earlier notices seeking Kumar's removal have already travelled through Parliament. A March notice signed by a large bloc of members was not admitted by the presiding officers. A fresh Rajya Sabha notice of 24 April remains pending. Parties now speak of a third notice, to be legally vetted and moved in both Houses. Removal of a Chief Election Commissioner follows the same high threshold that applies to a Supreme Court judge: the prescribed number of signatures, debate in both Houses, and an order of the President. Numbers in the present Lok Sabha do not favour the movers. Politics, however, often fights first on perception.

Parliament Can Shout For A Removal. Only The Text Of The Constitution Can Deliver One. That Gap Between Noise And Law Is Where This Week Will Live.

THE SOUTH SHADOW OVER A NORTH TABLE

Here is the other twist the posters will not print in red. Congress and the DMK, long standing partners in the old southern compact, are no longer walking as one. After the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly result, the Congress extended support to the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam government. The DMK called that a breach of trust, sought separate seating in the Lok Sabha, and stayed away from an earlier INDIA gathering in June. Whether M. K. Stalin's party takes a chair on 30 September is still the open question inside the opposition. A table that gains Bengal rivals and loses a southern pillar at the same hour is not a simple picture of unity. It is a picture of calculation.

"We will fight unitedly and it is not a necessity to judge who is red, who is blue and who is yellow. The election process must have to be transparent and clean.

Mamata Banerjee, Serampore, 26 September 2026.

Congress Working Committee meets on 29 September to fix its own line before the larger huddle. Expected names at Constitution Club include Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, Mamata Banerjee, Abhishek Banerjee, Akhilesh Yadav, Uddhav Thackeray and M. A. Baby. The agenda, as sources have told multiple newsrooms, runs beyond one office. It includes a joint protest calendar, a demand for an independent inquiry into Commission decisions, and a political argument over how the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners should be selected in future.

"The INDIA bloc is important, but it has to be INDIA bloc plus the parties which are not there." M. A. Baby, on his call with Banerjee.

THE FOURTEEN NOTES AND THE ONE BENCH

The public fight now turns on a simple civic question. Can two constitutional colleagues record repeated written objections and still sit, days later, behind one unanimous press note? The Commission says yes: discussion inside is not the same as the final order outside. The opposition says the notes prove a one person command over a three member body. Between those two readings lie Form 6, ECINet, field access, Bengal appeals, Goa's missing names on a a final roll, and the trust of the ordinary elector who only wants to know whether the list still carries a living citizen. No party owns that anxiety. The voter does.

MY SHOT

30 September will not rewrite the Constitution in an afternoon. It may rewrite the opposition's map for a season. If Bengal's oldest foes can sit on one national file without pretending they have signed a state treaty, the meeting has done one honest job. If the same room cannot admit that the DMK walkout, the pending Rajya Sabha notice, and the Commission's unanimous minute of 26 September are all part of the same story, then the country will hear another press conference and receive no new light. The voter list is not a pamphlet. It is the republic's attendance register. Parties may arrive in Delhi to save their alliances. The only alliance that finally matters is the one between the citizen and the name on that register. SCOOPX will watch the door of Constitution Club, not the posters outside it.

C. SUBRAHMANYAM

MakeIntern Conducts Training Programme on AI-Driven Pharmacovigilance and Regulatory Intelligence





HYDERABAD

MakeIntern, E-Cell, IIT Hyderabad, is conducting a three-day specialised training programme for students of GITAM School of Pharmacy, Hyderabad, focusing on emerging applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in pharmaceutical safety, regulatory affairs, and compliance from 28-30 September 2026. Md. Hashim works at the intersection of pharmacovigilance, pharmaceutical quality systems, and regulatory science is the main resource person for this training programme.

The training programme covers two key areas: "AI-Based Pharmacovigilance & Real-World Drug Safety Analytics" and "Global Regulatory Intelligence & AI-Powered Compliance."The programme is designed to provide students with practical insights into the evolving role of AI and data-driven technologies in pharmacovigilance, real-world drug safety, regulatory intelligence, and pharmaceutical compliance.

Through expert-led sessions and industry-oriented learning, the programme aims to strengthen students' understanding of contemporary regulatory practices and equip them with skills relevant to the rapidly changing pharmaceutical and healthcare landscape.

The initiative reflects MakeIntern, E-Cell, IIT Hyderabad's commitment to bridging academic learning with emerging industry requirements and enabling students to develop future-ready competencies in pharmaceutical technology, regulatory affairs, and AI-driven healthcare solutions. The three-day programme provides an opportunity for GITAM School of Pharmacy students to engage with current trends, technologies, and practical approaches shaping the future of drug safety and global regulatory compliance.

GITAM Organizes Two-Day Workshop on 'Autonomous Mobile Robots'

The Department of Mechanical Engineering, GITAM School of Core Engineering, Hyderabad, successfully organized a two-day hands-on workshop on 'Autonomous Mobile Robots' to provide students with practical exposure to emerging technologies in robotics and automation.

Around 70 students actively participated in the workshop and gained valuable hands-on experience through interactive learning sessions and practical demonstrations. The workshop provided participants with an opportunity to deepen their understanding of autonomous mobile robotics and clarify their technical queries through engaging discussions and question-and-answer sessions.

The participants appreciated the workshop for its practical and industry-relevant approach, stating that it offered valuable insights into the rapidly evolving field of robotics and automation. They also expressed that the knowledge and skills gained through the programme would help broaden their career prospects and prepare them for emerging opportunities in the field.

The workshop was coordinated by Dr. A. Kiran Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, under the supervision of Prof. Ramesh Vaddi, Director, GITAM School of Core Engineering, and Dr. Jayprakash Srivastava, HoD. Department of Mechanical Engineering.

BRAOU online programmes admissions for UG & PG

HYDERABAD

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University released Admission Notification for Online Admission Programmes in B.Com (TM/EM); M.Com (EM); M.A Telugu and MBA (EM) for the Academic year 2026-27. The Candidates enroll themselves for admissions through 'Online' in across the globe. The Admission/Tuition fee can be paid by through Credit Card/Debit Card and online payments.

The Admissions Prospectus are available in the University Portal: www.braouonline.in or www.braou.ac.in. For more details, contact on toll-free No.18005990101, Help Desk : 040-23680222 / 333/ 555 for guidance seeking admission into Online Programmes.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
(CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION)
E-TENDER
Tender Notice No. 12-CECNMS-2026-E-671454 DATED 23-09-2026
Tender Notice No. 13-CECNMS-2026-E-693693 DATED 23-09-2026
Tender Notice No. 14-CECNMS-2026-E-650214 DATED 24-09-2026
For and on behalf of The President of India, The Chief Engineer, Construction, Southern Railway, Egmore, Chennai 600 008 invites e-tender for the following work(s) as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal www.ireps.gov.in. The tenderers/Contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal **www.ireps.gov.in** and only online tenders will be accepted.

NAME OF THE WORK
CHENNAI BEACH-VILLUPURAM Section - In addition to ROB (A) Proposed construction of 6.0m wide Foot Over Bridges in lieu of LC 47 between Kattangulathur and Singaperumal Koil stations (B) Proposed construction of 3.0m wide Foot Over Bridge in lieu of LC-64 between Madurantakam and Karunguzhi stations (C) Proposed construction of 3.0m wide Foot Over Bridge in lieu of LC-75 between Pakkam and Acharapakkam stations (TWO PACKET SYSTEM)
Proposed Conversion of Goods spur lines into coaching lines, Provision of High level Passenger Platform and widening of Single face High level Platform to high level island platform with platform shelters and reconstruction of existing Public Foot over Bridge in Kumbakonam Yard. (TWO PACKET SYSTEM)
Proposed 1x3.0x2.75m RCC Pre-cast Box Pedestrian Subway in addition to ROB in lieu of exg LC No.137 at km 457/300-400 by air pushing method between Vanjipalaiyam and Somanur Stations. 2) Proposed 1x3.0x2.75m RCC Pre-cast box Pedestrian Subway in addition to ROB in lieu of exg. LC No.141 at Km 463/23-25 by air pushing method between Somanur and Sulur road stations. 3) Proposed 1x7.0x3.60m RCC Pre-cast box subway in addition to pro. ROB in lieu of exg. LC No.142 at km 466/21-23 by air pushing method between Somanur and Sulur road stations.

Cash Value ₹	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Period of Completion (Months)	Closing Date @ 15.30 Hrs
102662281.36	2053300.00	6	15-10-2026
169946395.78	3398900.00	9	15-10-2026
58978997.33	1179600.00	12	16-10-2026

For further details, please refer to web site portal **www.ireps.gov.in** or contact Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Construction, E.V.R. High Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008.
Chief Engineer (Construction),
Egmore, Chennai - 600 008

MLAs Urge Public to Protect Votes Before SIR Deadline in Kukatpally



Madhavaram Krishna Rao Directs Leaders to Raise Awareness and Coordinate with Local BLO's for Voter Registration Issues

MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI

On Monday, 28th September 2026, Kukatpally constituency MLA Madhavaram Krishna Rao held a teleconference with the former corporators, division presidents, and in-charges of the Kukatpally assembly constituency.

In the meeting, the MLA focused on the SIR (Special Information Registration) and voter registration process. He said that since the deadline is coming to an end, many people are receiving notices that their votes may be missing or not properly registered. According to him, this has caused confusion and difficulties for the public, especially because there is very little time left. The MLA urged all leaders to stay available and help every voter. He also appealed to citizens to take a little time to check and protect their vote, warning that if voters do not act in time, it may affect access to government welfare schemes and services.

He further instructed party leaders to create awareness among the public so that no one loses their vote. The MLA asked them to submit updates and reports regularly. He also said that if anyone faces problems, they should immediately contact the local B.L.O (local representatives) and take responsibility to ensure voters' rights are protected.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
ELECTRICAL (TRD) BRANCH, TIRUCHCHIRAPPALLI DIVISION
TENDER NOTICE
For and on behalf of the President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager, Traction Distribution, Southern Railway, Tiruchchirappalli - 620001 invites online E-tenders from prospective tenderers / bidders for the following work.

1	Tender Number	TPJ-TRD-2026-2027-16	TPJ-TRD-2026-2027-17	TPJ-TRD-2026-2027-18
2	Name of work	TPJ Div. - Provision of Anti Bird Disc Device	TPJ Division- Electrification of left over un-electrified lines across the TPJ Divisions- ELECTRIFICATION AT TVR & ULU Yard	TPJ Division-Creation of Wagon ROH Facilities at TPGY Wagon Depot- Electrical Traction Arrangement
3	Approx. value of tender in ₹	22,23,650.00	53,16,657.41	99,07,059.31
4	Cost of tender booklet in ₹	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	Bid Security in ₹	44,500.00	1,06,300.00	1,98,200.00
6	Date & Time of Bidding	08.10.2026 to 15:00 Hours on 22.10.2026		
7	Date & Time of Tender Opening	After 15:00 Hours on 22.10.2026		
8	Period of completion	6 Months	9 Months	9 Months
9	Period of validity of offer	84 days from the date of tender opening		

NOTE: All Addendum/Corrigendum, Time extension, clarifications, etc. will be uploaded on or before 08.10.2026 on the website only and will not be published separately in Newspapers. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated.
DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER,
Electrical Traction Distribution, Tiruchirappalli

SCR Strengthens Checks on Water Quality Supplied at Kurnool City Railway Station and Colony

All 1917 Water Samples Collected at Kurnool City Railway Station and Colonies from 1st to 26th September 2026 Found Fit for Consumption.

HYDERABAD

South Central Railway (SCR) is consistently monitoring the water quality in order to ensure the availability of safe and potable drinking water across its railway network. As part of this exercise, the zone has amplified inspections, maintenance activities, and water-quality monitoring at Kurnool City Railway Station and the connected railway colonies of Hyderabad Division.

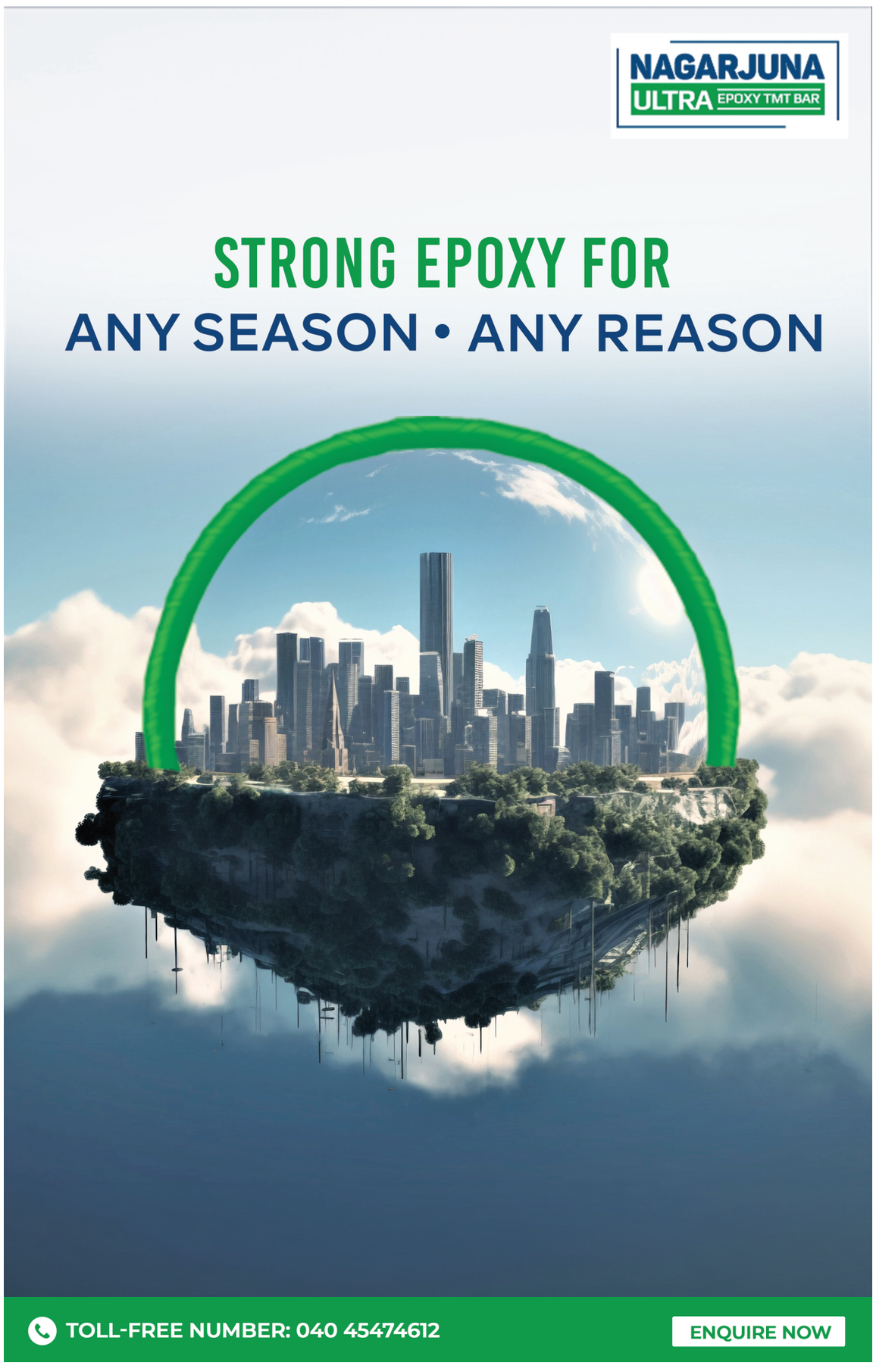
The comprehensive review covered groundwater sources, municipal water supply, storage facilities, chlorination processes, and distribution systems.



To further strengthen water quality assurance, SCR has enhanced monitoring mechanisms through daily checks of residual chlorine levels and regular bacteriological testing to detect any possible E. coli contamination. Water samples collected from Kurnool City Railway Station and railway colonies between 1st and 26th September 2026 indicated satisfactory water quality across all parameters.

Key findings of the monitoring exercise include

- 1917 drinking water samples tested for residual chlorine levels at the station and colonies, with all samples found satisfactory and no water sample was reported unfit.
- 315 drinking water samples were subjected to bacteriological examination, and none was found unsafe and no E. coli-positive sample was detected.
- 17 water samples were sent for chemical analysis, and all were found fit for consumption.
- 94 joint inspections of drinking water sources, Ground Level Reservoirs (GLRs), and High-Level Reservoirs (HLRs) were conducted by the Engineering and Medical Departments. Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, South Central Railway, has directed officials to maintain continuous monitoring and ensure that drinking water remains completely free from contamination. He emphasized that the quality of water supplied at railway stations should meet the standards prescribed in the Indian Railways Medical Manual. He further instructed officials and supervisors to sustain the same level of vigilance across the zone through frequent testing and monitoring, ensuring the availability of clean, safe, and pure drinking water for all passengers and railway residents.



Congress Holds Maha Dharna Over Voter List Irregularities in Suryapet

Remove CEC Gyanesh Kumar and Arrest Him Immediately, Demands Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy

SURYAPET

State Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies N. Uttam Kumar Reddy alleged that Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar had taken unilateral decisions during the voter list revision process and was involved in illegal alterations. He demanded that Gyanesh Kumar be removed from his post and arrested immediately.

The minister participated in a Maha Dharna held in front of the Suryapet District Collectorate on Monday under the leadership of District Congress President Gudipati Narsayya. Later, along with Nalgonda MP Kunduru Raghuveer Reddy, MLC Shankar Naik, MLA Mandula Samel and AICC member Ram Reddy Sarvotham Reddy, he submitted a memorandum to the District Collector.



Speaking on the occasion, Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy demanded the immediate removal and arrest of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. He alleged that Gyanesh Kumar was acting as an agent of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the Centre and was taking unilateral decisions without consulting the other Election Commissioners.

He alleged that Gyanesh Kumar was the key person behind several irregularities in the SIR process across the country and accused him of acting in favour of the RSS and BJP. He further alleged that the BJP, which is in power at the Centre, was attempting to come to power by illegally deleting votes belonging to sections that support the Congress party, rather than winning public support.

The minister warned that the people of the country were ready to teach such forces an appropriate lesson. Congress leaders demanded a comprehensive explanation regarding the voter list revision process, transparency in the procedure, and a detailed inquiry into the allegations raised by them.

Earlier, under the leadership of AICC member Ram Reddy Sarvotham Reddy, Congress workers burnt an effigy of CEC Gyanesh Kumar near the New Bus Stand in the district headquarters and organised a massive rally with hundreds of motorcycles.

Members of the Telangana Agricultural and Farmers Welfare Commission Cheviti Venkanna Yadav, Market Committee Chairman Koppula Venka Reddy, senior state Congress leader Pothu Bhaskar, TPCC General Secretary Chakilam Rajeswara Rao, district Congress leader Morishetti Lakshadi, senior Congress leader Chintakuntla Lakshmi Narayana Reddy, along with Congress mandal presidents, councillors, sarpanches, village unit presidents and secretaries, party leaders and workers participated in the programme.

PRIORITY TO BC WELFARE, says Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka

- 60 Crore for Katamayya Protective Kits for 50,000 People
- 450 Crore in Scholarships Deposited for 1.30 Lakh Students
- 'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' to Be Launched from November
- Overseas Scholarship Application Deadline Extended to October 15



HYDERABAD

The government is giving the highest priority to the implementation of welfare schemes for Backward Classes (BCs) in the state, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka said.

Speaking at a high-level review meeting on the BC Welfare Department held at Praja Bhavan on Monday, he said steps were being taken to ensure that the benefits of welfare schemes reach every eligible beneficiary.

Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, BC Welfare Department Principal Secretary Balamayadevi, MJP Secretary Saidulu, BC Welfare Department officials Mallaiah Battu, Alok Kumar, Padma, Indira, Srinivas Reddy, and others participated in the meeting. During the meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister said that funds under the pre-matric and post-matric scholarship schemes were being deposited directly into students' bank accounts through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system.

Under the new system, ₹450 crore has so far been directly deposited into the bank accounts of 1,30,000 students, he said. He also instructed officials to ensure that diet and cosmetic charges for students staying in hostels are deposited directly into their accounts every month without delay.

Rs.60 Crore for 'Katamayya Protective Kits'

The Deputy Chief Minister said that under the 'Katamayya Protective Kits' scheme, aimed at the welfare of toddy-tappers, kits had so far been sanctioned for 50,000 beneficiaries, of which 40,000 kits had already been distributed.

It has been decided to distribute the protective kits to another 10,000 beneficiaries currently undergoing training after they complete their training, he said. A total of ₹60 crore is being spent on the scheme, the Deputy Chief Minister stated.

'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' to Begin in November

The Deputy Chief Minister announced that the 'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' scheme, designed to provide employment and opportunities for socio-economic advancement to unemployed BC youth in the state, would be launched from November.

He directed officials to transparently scrutinize the applications already received under the scheme in the presence of district collectors and select eligible applicants as beneficiaries.

Bhatti Vikramarka assured that pending bills of the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule (MJP) Gurukuls would be cleared soon.

Minister Ponnam Prabhakar requested that own buildings be sanctioned for the Gurukul educational institutions. Bhatti Vikramarka said the government would examine the matter.

Overseas Scholarship Deadline Extended

The Deputy Chief Minister said that ₹18.40 crore had been released this year to 180 students under the Overseas Scholarship Scheme in the form of first and second installments.

He announced that the deadline for applications for the Overseas Scholarship Scheme had been extended until October 15, to provide an opportunity to all eligible students.

He also assured that funds would soon be released for the construction of self-respect buildings for BC caste associations.

Ravi Gugulothu assumes charge as TGSWREIS secretary

HYDERABAD

Senior IAS officer Ravi Gugulothu assumed charge as Secretary of the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TGSWREIS) at the organisation's head office at DSS Bhavan, Masab Tank, Hyderabad, on Monday. He formally took charge from FAC Secretary Kambhampati Sharada.

On the occasion, officials and employees of the head office welcomed Ravi with bouquets and potted plants. He subsequently interacted with officers and staff of various sections and familiarised himself with the functioning of the organisation, besides seeking details of their respective duties, responsibilities and key operational issues.

Soon after assuming charge, Ravi personally visited and inspected all sections of the Head Office. He interacted directly with officers and staff, enquiring about their responsibilities, issues being faced by them and matters pending at various levels.

He emphasised that the functioning of the Head Office should not remain confined to the movement of files, but should remain closely linked to the quality of services and facilities being delivered to students at the field level.



Kavitha Draws Up Strategy to Make a Mark in Local Elections

HYDERABAD

Telangana Rakshana Sena chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha is chalking out a strategy to make a strong impact in the upcoming local body elections in Telangana. As part of this effort, she is holding a series of meetings with key party leaders.

Kavitha held a meeting with leaders from the erstwhile Adilabad and Khammam districts at the Telangana Rakshana Sena office in Banjara Hills on Sunday. On Monday, she met with leaders from the erstwhile Mahabubnagar and Medak districts.

In addition to preparing party leaders and cadres for the upcoming Zilla Parishad and Mandal Parishad elections, she is also directing them to remain continuously connected with the public in the coming days and take steps to address their problems.

She sought feedback from the leaders on the response from the public to the Panchajanya Sankalpa meetings held in Nizamabad and Kodangal. She also asked what role people expect the TRS to play as the principal opposition party and what other programmes should be undertaken.

Kavitha recalled that the government was forced to respond after the Telangana Rakshana Sena took up the issue following the fire accident at RIMS Hospital in Adilabad, in which five children died.

She said that the government, which had allegedly neglected RIMS Hospital for years, released ₹11 crore for immediate measures. She also pointed out that the district collector reviewed the problems at RIMS Hospital and submitted a report to the government on the works that needed to be undertaken.

Kavitha recalled that after she visited the hospital, met the families of the victims and extended her support, the government announced compensation of ₹5 lakh each to the families of those who died.

She directed Telangana Rakshana Sena leaders and activists to immediately respond whenever people face problems anywhere in the state and stand by them.

She instructed the party leaders to contest and demonstrate their strength in the Greater Hyderabad, Cyberabad, Malkajgiri, Greater Warangal and Khammam municipal corporations, as well as in Siddipet and other municipalities. The district-wise meetings will continue until Wednesday. On Tuesday, Kavitha will meet leaders from the erstwhile Nizamabad and Nalgonda districts, while on Wednesday she will meet leaders from the erstwhile Warangal and Karimnagar districts.

In view of the upcoming Greater municipal corporation elections, she will soon hold a special meeting with leaders from Hyderabad and the erstwhile Ranga Reddy district.

Telangana showcases agriculture progress at national Rabi conference

NEW DELHI

Telangana showcased its initiatives, achievements and action plan for the Rabi 2026–27 season at the Rabi 2026 National Agriculture Conference being held in New Delhi on September 28 and 29.

The conference, organised by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare at the Bharat Ratna C. Subramaniam Auditorium, Pusa NASC Complex, was attended by Agriculture Production Commissioner and Agriculture Department Secretary K. Surendra Mohan, Director of Agriculture Dr. B. Gopi, Director of Horticulture Yasmin Basha and other senior officials. Telangana presented its programmes under three broad themes—crop diversification and production growth, sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture, and digital agriculture, infrastructure and risk management.

29,009 quintals of pulse seeds

The State plans to expand pulse cultivation to around one lakh acres during Rabi 2026–27 and distribute 29,009 quintals of certified seeds. The action plan targets a 15 per cent increase in chickpea cultivation and a five per cent rise each in green gram and black gram cultivation.

Under the National Mission on Edible Oils–Oilseeds, 28,680 quintals of seeds will be distributed through value-chain clusters covering 20,490 hectares. Last year, 40,939 farmers benefited from the programme.

For the coming Rabi season, the State requires 18.78 lakh quintals of seeds for 78.73 lakh acres, against current availability of 20.30 lakh quintals.



Telangana also highlighted its measures to curb counterfeit seeds, including the use of the PD Act and QR-code tagging of seed bags under the SATHI portal.

77,125 farmers in natural farming

Under the National Mission on Natural Farming, 77,125 farmers are participating through 617 clusters across the State.

The State has allocated ₹147.91 crore for agricultural mechanisation during 2026–27. The process of bringing the State onto the DBT portal is expected to be completed by October 15.

To strengthen market linkages, 617 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) have been established. G.O. RT No. 390 provides FPOs opportunities on par with PACS in procurement of produce at support prices.

Narayanpet, Jogulamba Gadwal, Jangaon and Nagarkurnool districts have been selected under the Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana.

52.33 lakh Farmer IDs created

Telangana has completed 52.33 lakh Farmer IDs, representing 89 per cent registration, under the Farmer Registry. Around 1.51 crore land parcels have been linked to the registry, with the remaining work targeted for completion by December 31, 2026.

Jagtial: Where History, Spirituality and Nature Come Together

Dr Srinivas Vooradi

KARIMNAGAR

Everyone has a desire to see new places, to know the way of life, customs, culture and traditions of the people there. Traveling with family members and friends not only leaves a lasting impression, but also reduces the stress of daily life and expands our knowledge. It introduces us to the cultures of different regions. It provides an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of nature and provides us the way to know history. However, tourism should also be accompanied by responsibility. It is the responsibility of every tourist to ensure that our travels do not cause any damage to nature, historical monuments, or the way of life of local people. By promoting environmentally friendly and responsible tourism, we can provide our natural, historical, and cultural wealth to future generations.

It is appropriate to recall the tourism splendour of Telangana. There is no dearth of historical, spiritual and natural tourist destinations in Telangana. Among them, Jagtial district holds a special place. Jagtial district is a unique place where history, spirituality, natural beauty, Godavari River culture, and rural lifestyle are blended together. Hills, rivers, temples, forts, ancient structures, lush green fields, and rural environment are a special treasure that attracts tourists.

Kondagattu – a magnet for Jagtial tourism

Kondagattu Sri Anjaneyaswamy Kshetra, located in the vicinity of Muthyampet village in Mallial mandal, is a famous spiritual tourist destination not only in the district but also in Telangana. Nestled in the lap of nature amidst the hills, this temple attracts devotees from various parts of the State. The uniqueness of Kondagattu is not limited to the temple alone. The hills surrounding the temple, the lush greenery, and the natural



beauty seen during the monsoon season are a special attraction for visitors. Kondagattu is known as a place where one can enjoy the beauty of nature along with spirituality. In the wake of increasing tourist arrivals, there is a need to prioritize cleanliness, greenery, plastic control, and waste management in the Kondagattu area.

Dharmapuri – Spiritual splendour on the banks of Godavari

Dharmapuri, situated on the banks of the Godavari River, is another popular spiritual tourist destination in Jagtial district. The main attraction here is the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple. Along with the temple darshan, the natural beauty of the banks of the Godavari river impresses the visitors. The riverside area offers a peaceful atmosphere to devotees and tourists. Dharmapuri is a place where spirituality, river culture, and natural beauty come together. The Godavari River provides natural beauty to many parts of the district. The local culture, festivals, and traditions associated with the river also attract tourists.

Jagtial Fort – A Living Evidence of History

The historic fort in Jagtial town is one of the proud heritage structures of the district. The star-shaped architecture and the historical background surrounding the fort are the main attractions for tourists. Historical monuments are not just stones and walls. They are living testimonies to the lifestyle, architectural skills, and history of governance of past generations. Therefore, it is everyone's responsibility to preserve heritage monuments like Jagtial Fort. There is a possibility of further expanding tourism opportunities in the district if comprehensive tourist routes are developed connecting Kondagattu, Dharmapuri, and Jagtial forts.

Kotilingala – a standing testimony to the history of the Satavahanas

Kotilingala is one of the most important places reflecting the historical glory of Jagtial district. Located at the confluence of Godavari and Peddavagu, this place holds a special place in ancient history. Located about 19 kms from Dharmapuri, about 55 kms from Karimnagar, and about 218 kms from Hyderabad, Kotilingala, although currently in a rural environment, has emerged as a historical site of great importance in the past. Coins and archaeological remains from the Satavahana period testify to the antiquity of this region. Kotilingala has historical significance as the first capital of the Satavahanas. Coins, pottery and other remains found during archaeological excavations provide valuable information about the civilization and commercial activities of that time. The Kotilingas on the banks of Godavari are not only historically significant but also home to natural beauty. The surroundings of the Sripada Yellampally project and the Godavari backwater area offer opportunities for tourism development. Facilities like boating under the auspices of the Tourism Department are also increasing the tourist attraction. There is a possibility of developing Kotilingala as a unique tourist destination combining history, archaeology, spirituality, and nature tourism.

The splendor of Trikutalaya on the banks of Valgonda - Godavari

Valgonda in Mallapur mandal of Jagtial district is another historical and spiritual place located on the banks of the Godavari river. Local history states that the name Valgonda was derived from the geographical features of the area sloping towards the hilly area on the banks of the Godavari. The Valigonda temple situated on a hillock on the banks of the Godavari, is a special attraction of this area. The architectural style, which reflects the artistic styles of the Chalukyas, gives this temple historical significance. The architectural features are similar to the Trikutalayam in the Raikal region. The lush green fields, hills, the flowing Godavari River, and the natural beauty surrounding Valgonda attract tourists. The chirping of birds and the rural atmosphere amidst the fields add to the beauty of the area. Valgonda, which has historical and spiritual significance along with its natural beauty, needs to be further introduced on the tourism map.

Raikal and Metpalli areas – opportunities for rural tourism

The Raikal and Metpally areas of the district have opportunities to introduce rural lifestyle, agricultural culture, local food traditions, and folk arts. Promoting rural tourism can create additional income streams for local people. It can provide a market for locally produced food items, handicrafts, and agricultural products. It can provide employment opportunities for local youth in tourist guides, homestays, transportation, and hospitality sectors.

The Godavari – A natural boon for Jagtial tourism

The Godavari River is a great gift from nature to the Jagtial district. The green fields, hills, river flow, and rural atmosphere on the banks of the Godavari are natural resources that attract tourists. Eco-friendly tourist routes can be developed by connecting the Godavari catchment areas like Kotilingala, Valgonda, Dharmapuri etc. However, special precautions should be taken to avoid polluting the Godavari River and its surroundings in the name of river tourism development.

Cleanliness is the main responsibility in tourist areas

Cleanliness is key in preserving the beauty of tourist destinations. Steps should be taken to prevent the accumulation of plastic waste in areas like Kondagattu, Dharmapuri, Kotilingala, Valgonda and others. Every tourist should throw garbage in the garbage bins at the designated places. Single-use plastic should be reduced. Reusable bottles and bags should be used. Everyone should act responsibly by not throwing garbage, plastic, and puja paraphernalia into the Godavari River.

Tourism development to benefit locals

If tourism develops, its benefits should reach the local people. Employment opportunities should increase for the local youth. Products made by women's groups should find a market. Local artists and craftsmen should be encouraged. The uniqueness of Jagtial can be further highlighted by introducing local foods, folk arts, and rural lifestyle to tourists.

Enhance environmental awareness among students

Students should be made aware of the importance of conservation of tourist destinations from an early age. They should be explained the importance of local history, heritage buildings, and natural resources. The history, spiritual significance, cultural importance and uniqueness of the temples of Kondagattu and Dharmapuri, the history of the Satavahanas of Kotilingala, and the uniqueness of the Trikutalaya of Valgonda should be introduced to the students. Students should be involved in cleanliness and plant protection programs in tourist areas.

Don't damage nature in the name of development

Tourism should develop. However, nature should not be damaged in the name of development. Tourist areas should not be filled with unnecessary concrete structures, but infrastructure should be developed in accordance with local environmental conditions. Hills, rivers, trees, birds, wildlife, and historical monuments are the basic resources of tourism. The true meaning of sustainable tourism is to preserve and develop them.



Let's show the world the tourism glory of Jagtial

If Kondagattu stands as a symbol of spirituality, Dharmapuri stands as a symbol of the spiritual splendor of the Godavari banks. Jagtial Fort stands as a symbol of historical heritage. Kotilingala reminds us of the ancient history of the Satavahanas. Valgonda stands as a symbol of the Trikutalaya architecture of the Chalukya period and the natural beauty of the Godavari banks. By effectively promoting this diversity and connecting tourist destinations, greater opportunities will be created for the tourism sector in Jagtial district. At the same time, tourism will also contribute to the economic development of the district by increasing employment and business opportunities for the locals.

Responsible tourism is the way of the future

Tourism is not just for our enjoyment. It is a great opportunity to learn about our history, understand our culture, and enjoy nature. As much as there is a need to introduce the world to the tourist wealth of Jagtial, there is also an equal responsibility to preserve it for future generations. "It is the responsibility of all of us to preserve nature, preserve the ecological balance, and provide the natural, historical, and cultural heritage of Jagtial to future generations. Let us showcase the tourism potential of Jagtial district to the world and promote responsible tourism that is in harmony with nature," said Collector of Jagtial district B. Satya Prasad.

"Let's enjoy nature. but let's not destroy nature. Let's learn history, but let's not damage historical monuments. Let's learn about the local culture, but we must respect the feelings of the locals," said the District Public Relations Officer Vangari Sridhar.

Delhi Government Takes Strict Measures to Curb Pollution

Construction activities to be banned from December 10 to January 20; no fuel without a valid PUC certificate

NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has begun taking advance measures to prevent a rise in air pollution during the winter season. Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa participated in a high-level meeting chaired by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav. Several strict decisions were taken to protect people from pollution. The government has decided to double parking charges from November 1. A complete ban on construction activities will be imposed from December 10 to January 20. Vehicles will not be provided fuel if they do not have a valid Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificate. Officials have also advised giving priority to work-from-home arrangements during the winter. In addition to the existing 588 electric buses, another 150 electric buses will be made available. As part of the Zero Burning initiative, heaters will be distributed and heating spots will be set up at temporary shelters. The government said that pollution levels have already been brought under control in 42 of Delhi's 62 identified pollution hotspots.

End of 'Vote Chori' Will Signal End of BJP's Rule: Uttam

Says Rahul Gandhi has taken the battle to protect India's electoral democracy to the front lines

Praises Congress workers for their unwavering loyalty

HYDERABAD / MIRYALAGUDA

Senior Congress leader and Telangana Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy declared that the end of "vote chori" would mark the beginning of the end of the BJP's rule at the Centre. Addressing a public meeting in Miryalaguda, he said the campaign against alleged electoral manipulation had gathered nationwide momentum under the leadership of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. "The fight against vote chori, which poses a grave threat to the country's democratic electoral process, has now reached a decisive stage. Rahul Gandhi is leading this battle from the front with courage and determination," he said. Uttam Kumar Reddy alleged that the BJP was weakening democratic institutions to perpetuate itself in power. He urged Congress workers and citizens committed to democracy to join the struggle led by Rahul Gandhi.

He said Congress workers in even the remotest parts of the country continued to demonstrate unflinching faith in the party despite electoral setbacks and political challenges. Telangana, particularly the erstwhile Nalgonda district, had consistently delivered some of the Congress party's strongest electoral victories, he added. Expressing confidence in Rahul Gandhi's leadership, Uttam Kumar Reddy said the country was looking forward to seeing him become Prime Minister.

"Rahul Gandhi will become the next Prime Minister, and the Congress will return to power in Telangana for a second consecutive term," he asserted.

CM Vijay to launch 1-gram gold ring scheme, a key TVK poll promise, on Monday

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay will launch Tamil Nadu's gold ring scheme for newborns at Madurai's Rajaji hospital on Monday. The initiative, a key poll promise of the ruling TVK, aims to strengthen trust in government maternity care and encourage safe institutional deliveries.

The Vijay government has allocated an annual outlay of Rs 755.83 crore for the scheme, and 1.28 lakh gold rings have been made ready in the first phase. (Photo: PTI)

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay will launch the Thaaimaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam on Monday, under which the government will provide a one-gram gold ring to babies born in state-run hospitals. He will launch the scheme at the Government Rajaji Hospital in Madurai and present gold rings to 25 newborns, sources said on Sunday. The scheme will give each eligible newborn delivered at a government hospital a one-gram, 22-carat gold ring. Mothers of the newborns must be permanent residents of Tamil Nadu. It was earlier scheduled to be launched on September 15, the birth anniversary of late Chief Minister CN Annadurai, but was postponed due to Vijay's overseas trip to London.

Arriving by special flight, Vijay will inaugurate the scheme at the GRH auditorium. He is also scheduled to visit the maternity ward to personally present rings to infants born on the day. The gold rings will be given to beneficiaries when they are discharged from hospitals.

The state government has allocated an annual outlay of Rs 755.83 crore for the scheme, and 1.28 lakh gold rings have been made ready in the first phase. The government said in a press release that the rings will carry unique serial numbers and will be distributed in tamper-proof packaging. The scheme will be implemented across the state, except in areas under the Maduranthakam and Dharapuram Assembly constituencies, where bypolls are scheduled on October 6.

Eligible beneficiaries must be registered under the Pregnancy and Infant Cohort Monitoring and Evaluation system and have a Reproductive and Child Health ID. Government sources said the scheme would increase public trust in government healthcare services and promote safe delivery practices in hospitals.

According to the government, around 7.80 lakh children are born in Tamil Nadu every year and, as per the National Family Health Survey-6, 99.9 per cent of these deliveries take place in healthcare institutions.

Of these, around 4.20 lakh deliveries, or 53 per cent, take place in government hospitals, with 90 per cent of government institutional deliveries happening at Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care centres.

A specialised monitoring committee headed by the respective district Collector has been formed in every district to oversee local implementation, inventory tracking and transparency in distribution.

Work orders have been issued to Joyalukkas and Kalyan Jewellers to supply the one-gram gold rings under the Thaaimaman Thanga Mothiram Thittam, a key pre-poll promise of the ruling TVK. A Government Order on the scheme's implementation was notified on June 23.

Later in the day, Vijay will declare open the renovated Gandhi Memorial Museum and inspect its facilities. Though not officially confirmed, he is also expected to visit the Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple, which recently underwent consecration.

Karnataka minister says guarantee schemes have tightened state's finances

Karnataka minister HC Balakrishna said the state would have found it easier to meet other demands had it not introduced its five guarantee schemes.



He made the remark while addressing persons with disabilities protesting in Ramanagara on Saturday night. "If we did not have these guarantees, perhaps all these things would not have appeared to us to be such major problems. It would have been easy for us to do all this," the municipal administration minister said. "But we have to run the government. Everything must be managed within the system and within the budget."

Balakrishna said the government had to fund the schemes while paying salaries, carrying out development work and providing assistance to farmers during droughts. He urged the protesters to consider those commitments when assessing the government's response to their demands.

"We are caught in the middle of all these problems and struggling," he said.

The minister stressed that neither the government nor Chief Minister DK Shivakumar intended to stop the guarantees. They were introduced for public welfare, he said, adding that his remarks should not be taken as a refusal to address the protesters' concerns.

The five guarantees cover free household electricity, monthly payments to eligible women, free bus travel for women and transgender persons, foodgrains for low-income households, and unemployment assistance for eligible young people.

Kerala student asks for free ticket, bus conductor questions her gender; case filed

The conductor mistook the student for a boy, issued her a Rs 15 ticket despite her being eligible for free travel, and questioned her gender when she sought a zero-value ticket.



Police have registered a case against a Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) conductor for allegedly insulting a Plus Two student by questioning her gender and issuing her a ticket on a Priyadarshini bus, where women are entitled to travel free of charge, near Kochi, officials said on Monday. The conductor, Mahesh, has also been suspended following a preliminary inquiry by the KSRTC Vigilance wing. Police said a case was registered on Sunday under Sections 296 and 79 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and an investigation is under way. Mahesh, however, denied insulting the student and said the incident was a misunderstanding. According to police, the incident took place on Saturday when the girl and her friends boarded the bus operating from North Paravur to Kochi. The student had tonsured her head after visiting a temple and was wearing a T-shirt and jeans. Police said the conductor allegedly mistook her for a boy and issued her a Rs 15 ticket. When the student asked for a zero-value ticket, the conductor allegedly made insulting remarks and questioned how he was supposed to know that she was a girl. Police said statements have been recorded from the complainant, the conductor and some passengers. Speaking to reporters on Monday, Mahesh said he initially issued the Rs 15 ticket because he believed the student was a boy. He said he replaced it with a zero-value ticket after she clarified that she was a girl. "I didn't realise, because seeing her made me think she was a boy. Saying 'sorry', I issued the Rs 15 ticket," he said. Mahesh also said a woman passenger sitting nearby had initially mistaken the student for a boy. He denied using any abusive or insulting language against the girl and said some passengers had given statements to the police. Police said the investigation was progressing. Mahesh said he was confident that he would be able to prove his innocence in the case.

Tiruchanoor Karthika Brahmotsavam to Feature TTD-Style Electrical Decorations Inspired by Tirumala

Arrangements to Provide Devotees with a Spiritual Experience: TTD JEO Dr. A. Sharath

TIRUPATI

TTD JEO Dr. A. Sharath has directed the engineering officials to undertake attractive electrical decorations on the lines of Tirumala for the grand conduct of the Karthika Brahmotsavam of Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru at Tiruchanoor.

The JEO, along with officials, inspected the arrangements for the Ammavari Karthika Brahmotsavam, which will be held from December 5 to 14, on Monday and issued several instructions.

Electrical Decorations to Attract Devotees

Speaking on the occasion, the JEO instructed officials to make the electrical decorations more vibrant and beautiful this year compared to last year. He directed that the areas surrounding Tiruchanoor as well as major junctions in Tirupati be illuminated with decorative lights, reflecting the grandeur of the Ammavari Brahmotsavam.

Special Focus on Brahmotsavam Arrangements

The JEO inspected the development works being undertaken in view of the Brahmotsavam and instructed officials to complete them within the stipulated deadline. He emphasized the need for strong arrangements based on advance planning so that devotees do not face any inconvenience. He specifically directed officials to complete arrangements such as robust queue lines and barricades well in advance, keeping in view the expected rush of devotees on the days of the Gaja Vahanam and Panchami Theertham.

Coordination Among Departments to Provide Devotees with a Spiritual Experience

The JEO instructed officials of all departments to coordinate closely and make arrangements to ensure convenient darshan and a spiritually fulfilling experience for devotees during the Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Karthika Brahmotsavam.

Later, along with the officials, he inspected the garden, entry and exit routes, Vahana Mandapam, the four Mada streets, and the areas around Gate Numbers 1, 2 and 3, and issued several instructions.

TTD Deputy EO Harindranath, VGO Giridhar, AVSO Srihari Rao, DE Ravishankar Reddy, Additional Health Officer Dr. Sunil Kumar, temple priest Babu Swamy, and other officials participated in the programme.

Budaun Double Murder: HC Acquits Four on Death Row

PRAYAGRAJ: (SEP 28)

The Allahabad High Court has acquitted four persons who were sentenced to death by a trial court in 2017 Budaun double murder case, holding that prosecution's evidence did not prove guilt beyond reasonable doubt. A division bench comprising Justice Atul Sreedharan and Justice Achal Sachdev directed the accused's release forthwith if they are not wanted in any other case. Observing that evidence pointed to suspicion, but did not prove guilt beyond reasonable doubt, the bench in its September 8 order allowed appeal of Vijay Pal, Ramveer, Kishan Lal and his wife Jaldhara and set aside death reference.

SC Asks Centre to Examine Statutory Framework for 18-Year Age Limit on Social Media

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has asked the Centre to examine the possibility of putting into statutory framework a requirement that social media platforms and other digital intermediaries comply with Indian laws governing minors, including an 18-year minimum threshold for independently entering into contracts with such platforms.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana made the observation while hearing a plea filed by the Just Rights for Children Alliance (JRCA), seeking safeguards for children accessing social media and other digital platforms. Justice Bagchi observed the requirement should not remain a mere guideline and asked the Centre to examine giving it a "statutory format" under intermediary-rule framework. "Please pass directions under the intermediary rules that they fashion their software, or whatever the platform is called, in conformity with Indian law. The software has to be in conformity with Indian law," Justice Bagchi told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta.

Mehta said the government would examine the issue. "Something can be done, something should be done and will be done," he said. Mehta also referred to the provisions relating to intermediaries under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act. The court was hearing a plea raising concerns over minors being allowed to independently create and maintain accounts on digital platforms despite their legal incapacity to enter into contracts. During the hearing, the Solicitor General submitted that the issue raised in the petition was, prima facie, covered by the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. The counsel for the petitioner, however, submitted that the relevant provisions of the Act would come into force only in 2027 and therefore could not address the issue in the interim. Senior advocate HS Phoolka, appearing for the petitioner, JRCA, submitted that agreements entered into by minors are void under existing law and that there was no need to wait for the data protection law to come into force to address the issue.

The Solicitor General said a similar regime could operate through parental control or regulation, with the contract being entered into between the parent and the digital platform. The court also observed that several intermediaries are incorporated or registered in other jurisdictions, including the United States, but have entered the Indian market and are required to comply with Indian law. Phoolka submitted that the Centre could invoke Section 79 of the Information Technology Act to issue directions to intermediaries requiring them to comply with the law. The petitioner has sought directions to ensure that digital platforms take into account the legal incapacity of minors to enter into contracts and put in place safeguards governing their access to online services. The plea has also raised concerns over risks faced by children online, including grooming, sexual exploitation, digital trafficking, sextortion, behavioural profiling, misuse of personal data and cyberbullying. Reacting to the development, Just Rights For Children founder Bhuwan Ribhu said, "The fact that children cannot be allowed to enter into a contract, and that all such agreements with social media companies are void, is a precedent for the entire world." Globally, the laws need to be understood and enforced to ensure justice and protection of children, he said, adding that when users are mandated to provide their particulars and disclose their identity, it would substantially reduce the online exploitation and abuse of children.

Southern Railway to Augment Five Express Trains Permanently

CHENNAI, SEP 28:

Southern Railway has announced the permanent augmentation of five pairs of express trains with additional coaches to meet growing passenger demand and improve travel convenience.

The Tambaram–Sengottai–Tambaram Silambu Superfast Express (20681/20682) will get one AC Two Tier, two AC Three Tier, three Sleeper Class and one General Second Class coach. The augmentation will take effect from October 2 for the train departing Tambaram and from October 3 for the return service from Sengottai.

The Tambaram–Kanniyakumari–Tambaram Superfast Express (22657/22658) will also receive one AC Two Tier, two AC Three Tier, three Sleeper Class and one General Second Class coach. The revised composition will come into effect from October 4 from Tambaram and October 5 from Kanniyakumari. After augmentation, both these trains will have one AC First Class-cum-AC Two Tier coach, two AC Two Tier coaches, four AC Three Tier coaches, 11 Sleeper Class coaches, four General Second Class coaches and two Divyangjan-friendly Second Class coaches. The Dr MGR Chennai Central–Coimbatore–Dr MGR Chennai Central Shatabdi Express (12243/12244) will be augmented with one additional AC Chair Car coach from October 1. Following the change, the train will have one AC Executive Chair Car, nine AC Chair Cars and two Luggage-cum-Brake Vans.

The Chennai Egmore–Mangaluru Central–Chennai Egmore Express (16159/16160) will receive one additional Sleeper Class coach. The change will be effective from September 29 for the service from Tambaram and from October 1 for the return service from Mangaluru Central. Its revised composition will include one AC Two Tier, two AC Three Tier, 12 Sleeper Class, two Chair Car, four General Second Class and two Divyangjan-friendly Second Class coaches.

The Dr MGR Chennai Central–Thiruvananthapuram Central–Dr MGR Chennai Central service (22207/22208) will get two additional AC Three Tier coaches. The augmentation will take effect from October 2 from Chennai Central and October 4 from Thiruvananthapuram Central. The train will thereafter comprise one AC First Class, two AC Two Tier, 11 AC Three Tier coaches, one Pantry Car and two Luggage-cum-Brake Vans.

The permanent coach augmentation is aimed at increasing passenger capacity on these routes in view of sustained demand.

Conviction rates in crimes against women decline in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR, SEP 28

Despite the Odisha government and police emphasising measures to improve conviction rates in heinous crimes and crimes against women, the conviction rate in several major categories declined in 2025 compared to the previous year. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi informed the Assembly on Monday that the conviction rate in rape cases fell from 13 per cent in 2024 to 11.6 per cent in 2025. Trials were completed in 1,666 rape cases in 2024, resulting in 216 convictions. In 2025, 1,467 trials concluded, with 170 convictions. The conviction rate in attempted rape cases dropped from 9.3 per cent in 2024 to 5.1 per cent in 2025. Four of 43 cases ended in convictions in 2024, while only two of 39 cases did so in 2025. Cases of assault on women with intent to outrage modesty saw a marginal decline from 3.8 per cent in 2024 to 3.6 per cent in 2025. In 2024, 127 convictions were recorded in 3,378 trials, while in 2025, 153 convictions were recorded in 4,265 trials. Convictions in cases of cruelty by husband or relatives fell from 2.4 per cent in 2024 to 1.5 per cent in 2025. In 2024, 53 convictions were recorded in 2,192 trials, while in 2025, 50 convictions were recorded in 3,323 trials.

The conviction rate in cases involving insult to the modesty of women also fell from 3.6 per cent in 2024 to 2.9 per cent in 2025. In 2024, 21 convictions were recorded in 591 trials, while in 2025, 15 convictions were recorded in 515 trials.

EDITORIAL

When Politics Changes Sides, Voters Pay the Price

In a democracy, political parties may change their positions, alliances may shift and elected representatives may move between political formations. Politics is, after all, a changing field. But when such changes occur after an election, they raise an important question: what happens to the mandate given by voters?

The voter does not cast a ballot merely for an individual. A vote is usually a choice involving a candidate, a political party, its policies and the programme it presents before the electorate. When an elected representative changes political affiliation after winning on one party's ticket, that connection between the voter's choice and the representative's subsequent political course can become less clear.

This does not mean that every change of political affiliation is necessarily wrong. Political circumstances evolve, and representatives may have genuine differences with their parties. Democracies must also allow room for political expression and individual judgment. The larger concern is whether such changes respect the spirit of the mandate received at the election.

India's anti-defection law was introduced precisely to address instability and unprincipled defections, while attempting to balance party discipline with the constitutional role of elected representatives. Over the years, however, questions have continued over how effectively the existing framework deals with changing political loyalties and how quickly such disputes are resolved. The real issue is therefore not simply who crosses the political aisle. It is whether voters are given clarity when the political identity under which their representative was elected changes. If an elected representative moves to another party, the electorate should not be left wondering whether its original mandate still has meaning. This is also why timely decisions by the competent constitutional authorities matter. Prolonged uncertainty can turn what should be a constitutional process into an extended political controversy. Clear procedures and predictable timelines can help ensure that questions relating to elected representatives are settled institutionally rather than through prolonged political argument.

Political parties, too, have a responsibility. They should recognise that winning an election creates an obligation that extends beyond the next political opportunity. Representatives are accountable not only to party leadership but, above all, to the people who elected them. Ultimately, democracy is sustained by trust. Governments may change, alliances may change and political careers may take unexpected turns. The voter, however, remains the constant participant in the democratic process.

The challenge is to ensure that political mobility does not weaken electoral accountability. Whatever the political circumstances, the sanctity of the voter's mandate must remain at the centre of representative democracy

BEYOND KASHMIR AND TERRORISM:

India's Firm Message to Pakistan



The 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly once again witnessed the familiar questions between India and Pakistan—questions whose resolution remains critically important for peace and stability in South Asia. According to the United Nations, the 81st session commenced on September 8, 2026, while the General Debate was held from September 22 to 26. The central theme of this year's debate was "Building Trust, Managing Change and Delivering an Effective United Nations for All." At a time when the world is grappling with wars, terrorism, economic inequality, energy crises and geopolitical tensions, the question becomes even more significant: When will South Asia break free from the cycle of old disputes?

In his address to the General Assembly on September 26, India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar delivered a pointed and forceful statement. Without naming Pakistan, he referred to a "serial practitioner of terrorism" who, a day earlier, had misrepresented facts and attempted to normalise terrorism and evade its consequences. He made it clear that this could not be accepted. He also asserted India's right to exercise self-defence against terrorism and stressed that governments sponsoring terrorism must be held accountable. He further underlined the need to expose and act against the financial sources that sustain terrorism. A day earlier, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had raised the Kashmir issue in his address and criticised India's decision concerning the Indus Waters Treaty. Pakistan presented its position from its own perspective on the international stage, while India continued to raise questions regarding Pakistan's alleged support for cross-border terrorism. Pakistan's representative also levelled serious allegations against India concerning terrorism and Kashmir. Thus, the UN platform once again became a stage for mutual accusations between the two countries. But the real question is: After all these accusations, how much progress has actually been made towards a solution?

The foremost question before Pakistan concerns its policy towards terrorism. India has consistently alleged that terrorist networks operating from Pakistani territory or with its support pose a serious security challenge to India. Jaishankar made this point in clear terms, stressing that terrorism and friendship cannot go hand in hand and that those responsible for terrorism must change their course.

Pakistan, on the other hand, has also accused India of supporting terrorism and has held India responsible for violent incidents within Pakistan. The truth and evidence relating to individual allegations may require investigation and verification in specific cases. Yet one broader reality remains undeniable: terrorism has exacted a devastating human, economic and social cost from the people of both countries. Pakistan itself has been grappling with terrorist violence for decades. The question, therefore, is: How long will Pakistan continue to view terrorism primarily through the lens of strategic policy rather than recognising the threat it poses to its own national security and future?

Terrorism cannot become the permanent instrument of a nation's foreign policy. When terrorism is employed as a strategic tool, it can eventually turn into a threat to the very country that seeks to use it—damaging its internal security, economy and international credibility. Pakistan itself has suffered immensely from terrorist violence. It therefore has a historic opportunity to approach the issue of terrorism not merely from an India-centric perspective, but also in the context of its own national security and the future of its people. Combating terrorism is not simply about fulfilling another country's demand; it is fundamentally about protecting Pakistan's own citizens. The second major question concerns Kashmir. Pakistan once again raised the Kashmir issue at the UN General Assembly. Yet nearly eight decades of such debates have demonstrated that merely raising the issue on international platforms does not resolve the problem. The Kashmir dispute has deepened mistrust between India and Pakistan, generated security tensions and diverted attention from development priorities in both countries. If Pakistan genuinely seeks peace and stability in the region, it needs to seriously consider what it is achieving for the future of its own citizens by keeping Kashmir at the permanent centre of its foreign policy. Repeatedly raising Kashmir at international forums while leaving pressing domestic challenges in the background cannot provide a sustainable long-term solution for any country.

The third—and perhaps the most serious—question concerns Pakistan's economy and the everyday life of its citizens. Inflation, employment, energy, education, healthcare and social security are fundamental responsibilities of any government. Foreign policy becomes meaningful only when its ultimate objective is to make the lives of a nation's citizens safer, more prosperous and more dignified. For Pakistan, this is the time to seriously reflect on whether greater energy should be devoted to political and diplomatic campaigns against India on international platforms, or to the economic needs of its people, institutional stability and human development. It is equally important that India-Pakistan relations not be viewed solely through the prism of mutual accusations. India's security concerns are genuine, and the foremost responsibility of any government is to protect its citizens. Jaishankar also emphasised India's right to self-defence and its commitment to a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism at the United Nations.

At the same time, however, lasting regional peace requires a balance between firmness against terrorism and keeping avenues for dialogue open. Dialogue can be meaningful only when there is clarity and sincerity on the question of violence and terrorism. Pakistan must also understand that the world today does not merely listen to statements; it closely observes policies, actions and conduct. The fundamental purpose of the United Nations General Assembly is to provide a platform for multilateral dialogue, peace and cooperation. If that platform is repeatedly used merely to level accusations against one another, the question naturally arises: What do the people of India and Pakistan actually gain from it?

India and Pakistan are both nuclear-armed neighbours. Therefore, tensions between them cannot remain merely a bilateral issue. Their consequences can extend to the security of the entire South Asian region and, potentially, to global stability. The most important question before Pakistan today is one of introspection: Does it want to build its future on the foundations of old disputes, Kashmir-centric politics and allegations surrounding terrorism—or on economic development, education, employment, institutional strength and regional cooperation? India, too, faces the challenge of keeping the possibilities of lasting peace in South Asia open without compromising national security. The answer to when Pakistan will change cannot be provided by another country. Ultimately, change depends upon Pakistan's own political will, institutional decisions and policy choices. But the direction is clear: terrorism must not be allowed to become a political instrument in any form; the economic needs of the people must receive priority; confrontation centred perpetually around Kashmir must give way to a broader vision of the future; and relations with neighbouring countries must evolve on the foundations of trust, mutual respect and peaceful cooperation rather than violence.

If Pakistan chooses this path, the benefits will not accrue to India alone. They will extend to the people of Pakistan and to the entire South Asian region. But if it continues along the old path, the most difficult question will ultimately be posed not by the world, but by its own citizens: How long will the politics of the past be allowed to determine the present—and the future—of coming generations?



LALIT GARGG
Writer, Journalist, Columnist

JEEVANA TARANGALU

Born in the cradle of a cloud,
a raindrop borrowed wings from the wind,
crossed the threshold of the sky,
and came to rest
upon the brow of the earth.
Merging with the Ganges,
it became sacred water
lifted reverently to the forehead
sinking into the soil,
it became breath to the root,
green in the field,
grain for the hungry
falling into a filthy drain,
the same drop became
something no hand wished to touch.
The raindrop had not changed
where it arrived
rewrote its destiny.
So it is with us.
In a mother's arms,
we are all innocent raindrops.
No hatred inhabits a newborn fist,
no religion is written on a tender cheek,
no border runs through a child's heart.
Our tears carry the same salt.
Our blood bears the same red.
Then where do all these walls come from?
Who plants these thorns
between one heart and another?
One hand
pulls a trigger
and silences a breath
another
stands before a bullet
to save one.
One word
can set a heart ablaze
another becomes balm
to a heart
broken into pieces.
One awakens
the beast within a human being
another searches
even within the beast
for the human still alive.
The flesh is the same
only the paths are different.
Steeped in hatred,
a human becomes a storm
touched by love,
the same human becomes moonlight.
When violence enters the hand,
a human becomes a weapon
when compassion enters the heart,
a human becomes a sanctuary.
Look
thunder may shake the heavens,
lightning may dazzle the night,
but thunder
cannot raise a blade of grass,
nor lightning
persuade a flower to bloom.
It is the quiet raindrop
that whispers into the seed
the secret of spring.
So
tell me not
how high you have climbed
tell me how many
you have lifted with you.
Tell me not
how many bowed before you
tell me how many
stood taller because of you.
Tell me not
how many hands applauded you
tell me how many tears
your hands have wiped away.
That is your height.
That is your triumph.
That is your true address.
Polluted water
can be filtered.
A clouded mirror
can be wiped clean.
But what can cleanse
a heart darkened by hatred?
Perhaps
a single drop of compassion
enough for humanity
to take root again
even in the cracks
of a heart turned to stone.
A raindrop is not sacred
merely because it joins a sacred river
its journey becomes sacred
when it reaches a thirsty root
and rises again as life.
Nor is a human being great
merely for being born human
life becomes meaningful
when we become light
in someone else's darkness.
When rain touches the earth,
it is nature
when one heart touches another,
it is tenderness
when one human hand
wipes another human tear
that is humanity.
One day,
time will loosen our names
from the memory of the world,
and earth will swallow
our footprints.
Yet
a tear we stopped,
a life we helped rise,
a heart in which we kindled hope
may continue walking this earth
long after our footsteps
have disappeared.
And perhaps
life will ask us only this:
not how long you lived,
but in how many lives you remained
not how much you gathered,
but how much goodness you left behind
not which river carried you,
but what became cleaner, kinder, brighter
because you passed through it.
So
do not merely thunder
be the rain that gives life.
Do not merely flash
be the lamp that outlives the night.
Do not point at the world
and demand that it change
turn that finger inward
and touch your own heart.
For every river
that ever changed the landscape
began somewhere
with a single drop.
Every dawn
that defeated darkness
began with a single ray.
And every change
that moved humanity forward
began in
a single human heart.
Why should that heart
not be yours?
Before asking the world
to become better
become the beginning.
Let change cease to be
a word upon your lips
and become
the life within your footsteps.
Let humanity cease to be
something we preach
and become
something we leave behind.
Then you need not wait
for Time to pass its verdict
let your life itself
become
the verdict of Time.

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Banks Must Serve People, NOT JUST PROFIT



DR. BALAJI DEEKSHITULU P V
8885391722



The rise of digital banking, UPI and mobile payment applications has fundamentally changed the way people handle money. Today, customers can transfer funds, pay bills, make purchases and manage many financial transactions without ever entering a bank branch. This raises an important question: if banking services are increasingly available through smartphones, what should the modern bank branch actually be responsible for?

Banks were created not merely to operate as profit-making institutions, but also to serve depositors, borrowers and the wider economy. Yet many ordinary customers increasingly experience banks as institutions designed around procedures, charges and convenience for the institution rather than convenience for the citizen.

The question becomes even more important for senior citizens. Elderly customers may not be comfortable with mobile applications, internet banking, biometric authentication or complicated digital procedures. Why should a 60- or 80-year-old person or lot of buzzy public repeatedly travel to a bank merely to complete a basic service? Can banks not adopt a doorstep-service model, similar in spirit to certain postal services, for customers with genuine mobility difficulties?

Customer service also needs a fundamental rethink. A complaint cannot be considered resolved simply because a ticket number has been generated. When an elderly customer is unable to operate digital banking facilities or resolve an important banking problem, institutions should have mechanisms for meaningful assistance—including doorstep support where appropriate.

Another issue concerns bank holidays. Five-day banking may provide operational and employee benefits, but the public interest must also be considered. If banks remain closed for extended periods while financial transactions continue around the clock through digital platforms, customers need accessible alternatives and adequate human support. Banking holidays should not become an additional burden for people who depend on physical branches.

There is also a much larger question of public confidence: how responsibly do banks manage other people's money?

Ordinary depositors are often questioned about every transaction and expected to comply with strict documentation and verification requirements. At the same time, large corporate lending has periodically produced substantial non-performing assets and loan-related controversies. The issue is not about targeting any particular businessman or company; it is about whether the same principles of accountability, transparency and prudential lending are applied consistently across the banking system.

When a small borrower struggles to repay a modest loan, the consequences can be immediate. When a very large borrower faces financial difficulties, the resulting restructuring, recovery proceedings or write-offs can involve enormous sums. This difference naturally creates questions about fairness.

Banks therefore need to rebuild public trust—not merely through advertising, but through transparent lending, stronger accountability, responsible recovery mechanisms and equal treatment of customers.

The future of banking cannot simply be about more apps, more automated systems and fewer branches. Technology should reduce the burden on citizens, all transfer the responsibility of customer service from institutions to customers.

A truly modern bank should combine digital efficiency with human responsibility. It should be technologically advanced enough to provide instant services, yet socially responsible enough to send assistance to an elderly customer who cannot reach the branch.

Banks hold the people's money. They must therefore remember that their ultimate responsibility is not merely to shareholders, balance sheets or quarterly profits, but also to the citizens whose trust makes the banking system possible.

Justice Upadhyaya second Lucknow bench lawyer elevated to Supreme Court in 25 years

LUCKNOW: (SEP 28)

Delhi High Court Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya is the second legal practitioner from the Allahabad High Court's Lucknow bench to be elevated to the Supreme Court in the last 25 years.

Justice Upadhyaya began his legal and judicial career in Lucknow and served for more than 11 years as a judge of the Lucknow bench before becoming a chief justice.

"Justice Upadhyaya is the only second legal practitioner of the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court to be elevated as a Supreme Court judge in the last 25 years. Before him, it was only Justice Brijesh Kumar who was elevated as a Supreme Court judge in 2000," advocate Ritika Singh Sisodiya said.



Allahabad HC summons senior govt officials for not paying full compensation for land acquired in 1959

LUCKNOW: (SEP 28)

The Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court has expressed strong dissatisfaction over the state machinery's failure to fully compensate a landowner whose family land was acquired 65 years ago in 1959. The court has summoned Lucknow's additional district magistrate (land acquisition) and chief treasury officer to appear personally on October 6 and explain why action should not be initiated against them for non-compliance with the orders passed by the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Authority (LARA). A bench of Justices Rajan Roy and Manjive Shukla on Monday passed the order on a petition filed by the landowner, Rajkumar Shailendra Singh.

Grand Conclusion of Official Language Fortnight-2026 at BLW

70 Winning Officers and Employees Honoured

General Manager Shri Ashutosh Pant said, "Hindi is our own language; let us adopt it increasingly in official work."

VARANASI



The 'Official Language Fortnight-2026', held at Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW), Varanasi, from September 14 to 28, 2026, concluded on September 28 with a prize distribution ceremony and an Official Language seminar at the Technical Training Centre auditorium. The event was presided over by BLW General Manager Shri Ashutosh Pant, while Prof. Sushma Ghildiyal, Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Banaras Hindu University, attended as the guest speaker.

The program commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the General Manager and Principal Heads of Departments. Shri Ram Janm Chaubey, Chief Official Language Officer and Chief Mechanical Engineer (Production & Marketing), honoured General Manager Shri Ashutosh Pant and guest speaker Prof. Sushma Ghildiyal by presenting them with planters and mementos. He subsequently delivered the welcome address.On this occasion, the 38th issue of BLW's official language magazine, 'Bareka Darpan', was released by the General Manager, the guest speaker, and the Principal Heads of Departments. The General Manager and the guest speaker honoured 70 winning officers and employees who had excelled in various Hindi competitions—including essay writing, noting and drafting, debates, and seminars—held during the Official Language Fortnight.

In his presidential address, General Manager Shri Ashutosh Pant expressed his happiness at witnessing the awareness and enthusiasm for Hindi among the employees during the Official Language Fortnight. He stated, "Banaras is the home of Hindi; therefore, we should all use Hindi words as much as possible in our official work." He remarked that just as many Hindi words have gained currency in English and other languages, useful words from other languages should also be seamlessly incorporated into Hindi. He expressed confidence that a day would come when the widespread use of Hindi would render the observance of 'Rajbhasha Pakhwada' (Official Language Fortnight) unnecessary.

Guest speaker Prof. Sushma Ghildiyal noted that Hindi has established a distinct identity on the global stage. She emphasized that communicating in Hindi is essential to awaken and strengthen the spirit of the language. She added that the development of Hindi is possible only if we use it extensively in our daily lives as well as in official work.

Senior officials of BLW were present at the ceremony, including Principal Chief Electrical Engineer Shri Manish Kumar, Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer Shri Vivek Sheel, Principal Chief Materials Manager Shri Alok Agarwal, Principal Financial Adviser Shri Muktesh Mittal, Principal Chief Engineer Shri Ram Janm, Principal Chief Personnel Officer Shri Lalji Chaudhary, Principal Chief Medical Officer Dr. Sunil Kumar, Inspector General-cum-Principal Chief Security Commissioner Shri Devraj Kumar Maurya, and Deputy General Manager Shri Sagar. A large number of officers and employees attended the event, including Joint Secretary of the Staff Council Shri Pradeep Kumar Yadav and other council members—Shri Shrikant Yadav, Shri Sushil Kumar, Shri Manish Kumar, and Shri Amit Kumar.

Senior Translator Shri Vijay Pratap Singh conducted the program and proposed the vote of thanks.

Government emphasising sports to connect youth with health, discipline and nation-building: CM

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 28:



Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini addressing the gathering during the Opening Ceremony of Namo Cricket League, organised at Panchkula on September 28, 2026.

Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini today inaugurated the Grand Finale of the Namo Cricket League-2026 at the cricket ground of Tau Devi Lal Sports Complex, Sector-3, Panchkula, marking a vibrant celebration of youth, sportsmanship and the resolve to build a drug-free India. On the occasion, the Chief Minister paid his heartfelt tributes to Shaheed Bhagat Singh, a lasting source of inspiration for the youth, on his birth anniversary. The Grand Finale matches will continue until October 4. Chief Minister's Political Secretary Sh. Tarun Bhandari was also present at the event. The trophy for the Namo Cricket League-2026 was recently unveiled in Panchkula by the Chief Minister himself.

Addressing the gathering, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that more than 3,200 teams and over 50,000 players from five states have participated in the Namo Cricket League, which is being organised with the objective of spreading awareness against drug abuse. A total of 32 teams have reached the Grand Finale stage after emerging victorious in matches held in their respective states. The Chief Minister congratulated and extended his best wishes to the Sudesh Bhandari Charitable Trust, partner organisations, the organising committee, coaches, volunteers and all participants associated with the league. He said the name of the league is associated with Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi and his commitment to public service. The Prime Minister considers the youth of the country its greatest strength and has emphasised the role of sports in promoting health, discipline, self-confidence, employment and nation-building.The Chief Minister highlighted initiatives such as Khelo India and the Fit India Movement, along with modern training systems for athletes, saying these initiatives have contributed to creating a new sporting environment in the country. He said that young athletes from small towns, villages and modest family backgrounds are increasingly representing India on the international stage and bringing glory to the country. The Chief Minister said sports and sportspersons are deeply rooted in the culture of Haryana. He said that athletes from the state have consistently performed strongly at the Olympics, Paralympics, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and other international competitions. Referring to India's performance at the recent 23rd Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, he said India secured fourth position on the medal tally with 39 medals, including 13 gold, 17 silver and 9 bronze. Sportspersons from Haryana contributed 11 medals to India's tally, comprising 7 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronze medals. He attributed the achievements of Haryana's athletes to their hard work as well as the state's sports policy, which focuses on identifying talent, honouring sporting achievements and creating a strong foundation for sports. He said the state government is working to secure the future of athletes through sports nurseries, modern stadiums, training facilities, cash awards and government employment opportunities. The Chief Minister said medal-winning athletes in Haryana are eligible for cash awards of up to Rs 6 crore. Over the past 12 years, cash awards totalling Rs 742 crore have been distributed among 17,544 athletes from the state, while 260 outstanding sportspersons have been provided government jobs.

He further said that modern sports infrastructure is essential for developing sporting talent. Approximately Rs 1,100 crore has been spent on sports infrastructure in the state over the past 12 years. To identify and nurture talent at the grassroots level, the government has also established 2,000 sports nurseries across Haryana. Highlighting the theme of the Namo Cricket League, the Chief Minister said the event aims to spread awareness against drug abuse and encourage young people to adopt a healthy and disciplined lifestyle. He urged everyone to not only stay away from drugs themselves but also motivate others to do the same. On the occasion, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini administered a pledge for a drug-free India to the athletes and members of the public present at the event. Sufi singer Kanwar Grewal enthralled the audience with a captivating musical performance during the programme. Among those present were Chairman Sh. Mohan Lal Kaushik, Mayor Sh. Shyam Lal Bansal, Executive Vice-Chairman of the Haryana Shivalik Development Board Sh. Om Prakash Devinagar, OSD to the Chief Minister Sh. Bhopal Khadri, and other dignitaries.

SC refuses to pause UPI charges above Rs 2,000; issues notice to govt, RBI

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to pause, for now, the Centre's decision to impose a merchant discount rate on specified UPI person-to-merchant transactions above Rs 2,000 from October 15.



The court, however, agreed to examine the challenge to the move and asked the Centre, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to respond within four weeks. The case came up on a public interest litigation filed by advocate Anjan Datta against the Centre's September 14 notification and the MDR framework announced on September 15. The government has ended nearly six years of fully free UPI payments by introducing a 0.4 per cent fee on transfers above Rs 2,000 made to merchants through the platform, while keeping person-to-person transactions and small payments outside the charge.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana issued notice to the Centre, the RBI and the NPCI on the plea. Appearing for the Centre, Additional Solicitor General N Venkataraman told the bench that 96 per cent of people using the gateway were exempt. "The Government of India is not taking even a single rupee out of it," he said. The bench asked the Centre to file its counter affidavit explaining the basis for imposing a fee on transfers above Rs 2,000 made to merchants through the UPI platform. Venkataraman said charges for essential services were capped at Rs 5 and added, "It is neither a tax nor a fee." The bench then observed, "We need all these facts in a short affidavit. It will help us understand better. It is less a legal issue and more a technical issue." During the hearing, the court said it would like to see the legal source for implementing the charge. "Is it a tax or a fee? If not a fee, then what is the executive basis for making this expropriation?" the bench asked. The law officer replied that it was not an expropriation and said it was a settlement fee between payment aggregators and banks. "The government is several steps away from this money," he said. After notice was issued, the petitioner's counsel requested, "Please stay it till then", but the bench declined to grant interim relief.

Under the framework, the MDR on payments of Rs 75,000 and above will be capped at Rs 300. Essential and thin-margin sectors such as railways, telecom, insurance, fuel and agricultural inputs will pay a flat MDR of Rs 5 per transaction above Rs 2,000. Payments into mutual funds, securities and through stockbrokers and dealers will attract 0.02 per cent MDR, also capped at Rs 300. Person-to-person transfers, which account for 37 per cent of UPI's transaction volume and 70 per cent of its transaction value, will continue to attract zero charges regardless of size. The plea alleged that the levy had been introduced without adequate statutory safeguards, transparency or public consultation. It challenged the constitutional validity of the amended Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, alleging that it gave unguided powers to the executive to decide which electronic payment modes would receive no-charge protection. "Declare that no MDR or analogous compulsory charge may be imposed or recovered merely on the strength of a press release or FAQs absent a duly authorised, authenticated and published statutory instrument," the plea said. The petitioner also questioned the distinction between UPI transactions and RuPay debit card payments, saying the notification continued no-charge protection for RuPay debit cards without any monetary ceiling. The plea said the framework was arbitrary and discriminatory and could hurt merchants, especially those with low margins, while also raising concerns about indirect consumer burden and digital exclusion. It sought cancelling or suspension of the framework to the extent that it imposed MDR on UPI transactions above Rs 2,000, or, alternatively, a reconsideration after transparent consultation, publication of empirical data, an impact assessment and safeguards for micro and small enterprises.

"Direct that any future MDR classification be based on relevant considerations including merchant turnover, statutory MSME status, actual margins, geography and ability to bear the cost and avoid cliff-edge treatment unsupported by evidence," the plea said. In sum, the Supreme Court has not halted the new MDR regime due to start on October 15, but it has sought responses from the Centre, the RBI and the NPCI on the legal and technical basis of the move, while the petitioner continues to challenge the framework and its impact on UPI merchant payments above Rs 2,000.



Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Featured in Lonely Planet's 'Best in Travel 2027'

Highlighting Darjeeling as A Global Destination for Toy Train Journeys

MALIGAON

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR), the iconic heritage railway of Northeast Frontier Railway, has received another significant international recognition with Darjeeling being featured among the 50 destinations in Lonely Planet's prestigious Best in Travel 2027 list. Lonely Planet has described Darjeeling as "Best for a Toy Train journey", placing the historic Darjeeling Himalayan Railway and its unique mountain railway experience in the global travel spotlight.

The recognition further highlights the enduring appeal of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, popularly known as the "Toy Train", which has become synonymous with the cultural and tourism identity of Darjeeling and the Eastern Himalayas. The DHR, opened in 1881, is renowned for its pioneering engineering solutions for establishing a railway through challenging mountainous terrain and forms part of the Mountain Railways of India UNESCO World Heritage Site, having been inscribed in 1999. Its historic stations, steam locomotives and distinctive mountain journey continue to offer visitors a unique experience through the hills, tea gardens and settlements of the Darjeeling region.

The Lonely Planet recognition comes at a time when Northeast Frontier Railway is undertaking various initiatives to promote the DHR as both a living railway heritage and an important tourism asset of the region. Heritage train journeys, steam locomotive rides, cultural events and experiential tourism programmes are providing visitors with opportunities to experience the railway's rich heritage while strengthening the tourism ecosystem of the Darjeeling hills. Events such as the Ghum Winter Festival, Station Mahotsav and Summer Festival have further enhanced visitor engagement with the historic stations and the local communities associated with the DHR.

The DHR's tourism initiatives also focus on community participation, environmental awareness and sustainable tourism. Heritage joy rides and outreach programmes undertaken in collaboration with local communities and environmental stakeholders are helping promote responsible tourism, while digital initiatives, experiential programmes and educational visits are engaging younger generations with the history, engineering and cultural significance of this unique railway heritage.

The inclusion of Darjeeling in Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2027 further enhances the global visibility of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, enabling Northeast Frontier Railway to showcase its rich railway heritage and unique Toy Train experience while promoting sustainable tourism and the cultural and socio-economic potential of the Darjeeling hills to visitors from India and across the world.



IT Department Launched searches at 12 Locations over Suspected irregularities

MUMBAI, SEP 28:



The Mumbai Income Tax Department launched searches at 12 locations over suspected fund irregularities. Investigators believe that funds are allegedly being routed abroad under the guise of financing film projects. Multiple teams from the Mumbai Income Tax Department are currently verifying documents, financial records, and details of the alleged overseas transactions. Last year, in December, Mumbai Police launched a hunt for Aman Preet Singh, the brother of Rakul Preet Singh, in a drug case In an operation carried out by the Elite Action Group for Drug Law Enforcement (EAGLE) Force and West Zone police here on December 19, 2025, two businessmen were arrested for allegedly peddling drugs and 43 grams of cocaine and 11.5 grams of MDMA were seized from them. Aman was suspected to have purchased drugs five times from the two peddlers.

Odisha: Over 1 lakh flood-affected people evacuated; coastal districts on alert as Mahanadi in spate

BHUBANESWAR/ BALASORE: (SEP 28)

The Odisha government has shifted around 1.4 lakh people to safer locations over the past four days, as a fresh wave of flood affected several districts, officials said on Monday.

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said the government has evacuated 1.4 lakh people from low-lying areas across 7,834 villages under 1,360 gram panchayats. In addition, 219 wards in 38 urban local bodies (ULBs) have also been affected.

Officials said river Mahanadi also experienced a "minor flood" that crisscrossed the densely populated coastal districts, after release of excess water from the Hirakud Dam.

Pakistan's internal problems will continue to provide fertile ground for instability: Report

ISLAMABAD



Pakistan continues to bleed as Baloch insurgency, Islamist terrorist sectarian violence, and political tensions test the fragile internal balance of the country. Each year, as many as 1,000 people have been killed due to militant violence in Pakistan, a report has detailed.

Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have escalated over the past many months, with repeated exchanges of fire and growing concerns over civilian casualties. Pakistan has accused the Taliban of providing sanctuary to the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) inside Afghanistan, an allegation denied by Kabul. Apart from the TTP, Pakistan's security forces also face attacks from other Sunni Islamist groups like the Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group (HGB), a report in 'Modern Tokyo Times' mentioned.

In addition, Baloch insurgent groups continue to challenge Pakistan's sovereignty, with some calling for greater autonomy and others seeking separation from Pakistan. Balochistan demonstrates not only a security problem but a deeper political confrontation over the nature of the state itself.

The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) has claimed that it is leading a struggle movement for independence against the Pakistani state, which they accuse of exploiting their homeland. The BLA has been carrying out attacks against China as well, as the group has accused both Beijing and Islamabad of extracting Balochistan's rich resources to the detriment of local communities. Apart from these security challenges, Pakistan also faces internal political tensions. Pakistan's struggle is related to the balance of power between civilian institutions, the armed forces, provincial authorities, ethnic movements, religious actors, and competing political constituencies, the report mentioned.

Pakistan continues to confront a range of internal security challenges, including the persistent threat posed by Islamist insurgent groups, periodic sectarian violence, and long-standing separatist movements in Balochistan. These pressures unfold against a backdrop of political tension, where civilian governance remains strained and the influence of the armed forces is a defining factor in national decision-making," wrote analyst Lee Jay Walker.

The result is a nation caught between central authority and peripheral identity, civilian institutions and military influence, religious militancy and secular political interests, and national sovereignty and cross-border insecurity. Pakistan's internal problems will continue to provide fertile ground for instability until these tensions are addressed through security, political representation, economic opportunity, and regional diplomacy, according to the report in Modern Tokyo Times.

On September 24, the BLA claimed responsibility for 25 operations across Balochistan over the past few days targeting Pakistani forces that resulted in the death of 18 security personnel and injuries to several others, local media reported.

In a statement issued to the media, BLA spokesperson Jeeyand Baloch said that its fighters carried out attacks between September 14-23 in several parts of the province, including Panjgur, Kech, Kharan, Khuzdar, Mastung, Washuk, Nushki and other areas, The Balochistan Post reported. He said that during the operations, the BLA attacked Pakistani military convoys and posts, surveillance infrastructure, supply routes, and what the group described as "death squads".



India reaffirms 'unwavering' commitment to combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia

NEW YORK

Sibi George, Secretary (West) at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), on Monday affirmed India's unwavering commitment to combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at the High-Level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of Adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) during the ongoing 81st United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

"Secretary(West) Sibi George delivered India's Statement in the High-Level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of Adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) during the UNGA81 in New York. He reaffirmed India's unwavering commitment to combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and to promoting equality and dignity for all," the MEA stated on X.

"India underscored the need for concrete, nationally led and internationally coordinated efforts towards the full and effective implementation of the DDPA," it added.

Last week, Secretary George highlighted the need for stronger international cooperation to return cultural properties during a high-level side event at the UNGA.

"Secretary (West) Sibi George participated in the High-Level Side Event, 'From Commitments to Action on Reparatory Justice,' co-hosted by Ghana, Germany and France. He highlighted the need for stronger international cooperation to facilitate the return and restitution of cultural properties and heritage to their countries and communities of origin," the MEA stated on X.

Secretary George also participated in the Peacebuilding Commission Ministerial meeting on the 'National Ownership in Practice: Strengthening Inclusive State Institutions through International Peacebuilding Support'

"He reaffirmed the centrality of national ownership in peacebuilding and shared India's perspectives on nation-building, focusing on decentralisation of power, human-centric digital public infrastructure, and inclusive development with a focus on women and youth participation in the nation-building process," the MEA stated on X. "India has extended tens of billions in grants, concessional credit, and capacity-building, including through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, with priority for LDCs and SIDS countries," it added.

India showcases forest and landscape restoration initiatives at COFO 28



ROME

India on Monday highlighted its significant achievement in forest and landscape restoration and reaffirmed its commitment to sustainable forest management, climate action and resilient forest landscapes at the Twenty-eighth Session of the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation) Committee on Forestry (COFO 28), being held in Rome from September 28 to October 2, said the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

"India highlighted the consistent progress made in enhancing its forest resources. The country's forest and tree cover stands at 82.74 million hectares, accounting for 25.17 per cent of its geographical area. The FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025 ranks India 9th globally in forest area and 3rd in net annual forest area gain. Forests and trees also remain central to India's climate commitments," highlighted the ministry.

It said that India has created an additional carbon sink of 2.29 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent by 2021 and has enhanced its ambition to create an additional carbon sink of 3.5–4.0 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent by 2035, compared with 2005 levels.

"The Statement further highlighted its commitment under the Bonn Challenge to restore 26 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2030, of which 21.76 million hectares have already been brought under restoration. Further, major landscape restoration initiatives being undertaken were showcased," said the Ministry.

It noted that under the Aravalli Green Wall, approximately 6.45 million hectares of degraded land have been identified for restoration. "In coastal landscapes, the MISHTI initiative is advancing mangrove restoration while strengthening climate resilience and supporting local livelihoods. India also highlighted that the number of Ramsar Sites in the country has reached 101," the Ministry said.

It said India also showcased Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam – Plant4Mother, a whole-of-government and whole-of-society initiative under which more than 3.5 billion saplings have been planted. "It underlined the need for effective and sustainable financing, particularly for developing countries, and encouraged FAO to strengthen support for accessing climate, biodiversity and blended finance and for developing long-term restoration programmes," noted the Ministry.

India also called for stronger coherence between FAO's forestry work, the Global Forest Goals, and other forest-related international processes, along with enhanced South-South and triangular cooperation to share knowledge, best practices, and scalable solutions.

"The country reaffirmed its commitment to working with FAO and Member States in shaping the proposed UN Decade for Afforestation and Reforestation in line with Sustainable Forest Management, 2027–2036, to build a coherent continuum from restoration of degraded ecosystems to resilient, productive and inclusive forest landscapes," the Ministry emphasised.

India reaffirms commitment to conservation of Whales at IWC-70

CANBERRA

India on Monday underlined the need for conservation of whales and other cetaceans at the 70th meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC-70), being held in Hobart, Australia, from September 28 to October 2.

"In its Opening Statement at IWC-70, India emphasised the importance of continued collaboration among range countries, scientific institutions and relevant international organisations for effective cetacean conservation," the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change noted in a statement. It said India highlighted that improved scientific information on population status, distribution, movements, breeding ecology, and threats is essential to strengthen conservation measures and support informed decision-making.

"India reaffirmed its support for scientific studies and evidence-based approaches to ensure that the conservation and management of cetaceans remain grounded in sound scientific understanding. It also emphasised the importance of greater cooperation among governments, researchers and local communities in developing practical and locally appropriate approaches to address threats to cetaceans," said the Ministry.

The meeting is especially significant as it coincides with the 80th anniversary of the signing of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) was established under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, signed in Washington, D.C., on 02.12.1946, as the global body responsible for managing whaling and conserving whales.

India, Cote d'Ivoire explore enhanced cooperation at multilateral fora

ABIDJAN

India's Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire, Ramesh Babu Lakshmanan, paid a courtesy call on Monday on Lamine Ouattara, Director General for Multilateral Affairs at the West African nation's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the two sides explored ways to strengthen cooperation at multilateral fora.

"Ambassador Mr. Ramesh Babu Lakshmanan paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Lamine Ouattara, Director General for Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cote d'Ivoire. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views on various multilateral issues of mutual interest and explore avenues for enhanced cooperation at multilateral fora," the Indian Embassy said in a post on X. Last week, Lakshmanan called on Cote d'Ivoire's Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Niale Kaba, and the two sides discussed various issues of mutual interest and explored avenues to strengthen the partnership between the two nations. "Ambassador Ramesh Babu Lakshmanan paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mrs Niale Kaba, Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cote d'Ivoire. They exchanged views on a wide range of issues of mutual interest and explored avenues to strengthen and deepen the multifaceted partnership between India and Cote d'Ivoire," the Indian Embassy said in a post on X.

"A reaffirmation of our shared commitment to expanding cooperation and building an even stronger India-Cote d'Ivoire partnership," it added. In August, Union Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh was on a three-day official visit to Cote d'Ivoire.

WFP faces funding shortfall as insecurity, climate shocks deepen humanitarian needs in Ethiopia

ADDIS ABABA



The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) on Monday warned of deepening natural and man-made humanitarian challenges in Ethiopia as a "severe" funding shortfall hampers its relief operations.

In its latest Ethiopia country brief, the UN agency noted that Ethiopia, with a population of approximately 140 million, continues to advance a far-reaching economic reform agenda aimed at unlocking long-term growth and strengthening its development trajectory, Xinhua News Agency reported.

It, however, stressed that despite these ambitious reforms, persistent inflation, combined with insecurity, displacement and climate shocks, "continue to erode household resilience and heighten food security concerns." The agency noted that El Nino-driven rainfall disruptions are further exacerbating the situation by threatening the October-to-January harvest, worsening drought conditions, and heightening food security risks across the Afar, Amhara, Tigray, and Oromia regions, with humanitarian needs expected to rise further through 2027.

To mitigate anticipated impacts, the WFP has advanced preparedness for El Nino-related shocks, including plans for a phased emergency response in the Afar, Amhara, and Tigray regions starting in September, targeting a total of 1.43 million people. The WFP's operational update also noted that some 1.9 million people were assisted in August.

Meanwhile, the UN agency warned that "a severe funding shortfall" is hampering its life-saving operations, with its country portfolio just 46 per cent funded for October 2026 to March 2027, leaving a net funding requirement of 251 million U.S. dollars.

Telangana TDP Demands Immediate Release of Telangana Fee Reimbursement Dues for 2021–22 to 2024–25

Leaders meet Rajya Sabha MP Vem Narender Reddy, urge CM to clear arrears transparently, ensure timely payments, and protect students' education continuity

MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI

The Telangana TDP former state secretary Kodali Ravi Kumar and Sriramoju Shiva Kumar, senior leader of Telangana TDP and GHMC contesting corporator, along with TNSF (Telugu Nadu Students' Federation) leaders, met Rajya Sabha MP Vem Narender Reddy at his residence in Hyderabad today. During the meeting, the TDP leadership submitted a memorandum demanding the immediate release of Telangana fee reimbursement dues pending from 2021–22 to 2024–25.

Speaking after the meeting, Kodali Ravi Kumar and Sriramoju Shiva Kumar said the continued delays have created an atmosphere of uncertainty for thousands of students who rely on the reimbursement scheme to pursue higher education.

They pointed out that the gap has grown year after year, and with multiple academic years pending together—2021–22, 2022–23, 2023–24 and 2024–25—it has become more than a financial issue, directly affecting students' ability to remain academically on track and complete critical stages of their education.

The memorandum highlighted that the impact of unresolved reimbursement is being felt across several phases of a student's academic life. It reportedly has caused obstacles in continuing studies, while some college managements are alleged to be exerting pressure on students due to unpaid dues. Students are also said to face difficulties related to examinations, hall tickets, certificates, and planning for further education, forcing them to manage uncertainty instead of concentrating on learning.



The TDP leaders further emphasized that the burden extends beyond students. Families who depend on reimbursement are reportedly undergoing additional financial stress, and private educational institutions are also said to be experiencing pressure due to pending reimbursement bills.

They noted that when reimbursement money does not reach colleges, it disrupts internal financial commitments, including challenges in meeting teacher and staff salary obligations.

In their main appeal, the delegation urged the Chief Minister to take immediate action by releasing pending fee reimbursement dues specifically for 2021–22 to 2024–25 without further delay. They also requested that the government publish pending amounts clearly and transparently, both college-wise and student-wise, so students can understand their status without confusion or recurring setbacks.

The memorandum asked for an effective mechanism to ensure reimbursements reach all eligible students promptly and for clear instructions to be issued to colleges so that pending dues do not become a reason for blocking or disrupting education. The delegation also stressed the need to prevent arrears from accumulating again by adopting a system where reimbursement is released within a fixed timeline every academic year.

Further, the memorandum requested a high-level review at the Chief Minister's level to arrive at a permanent solution rather than temporary measures that leave students waiting year after year. It also sought priority clearance for talented SC/ST students in English medium studying in the best available private institutions by ensuring their pending reimbursement amounts are settled.

MP Vem Narender Reddy responded positively to the memorandum, assuring the delegation that the issue would be taken up seriously with the concerned authorities.

The TDP leadership reiterated that fee reimbursement on time is not just financial support, but a safeguard for equal educational opportunity—ensuring delayed government assistance does not jeopardize students' futures or force them to discontinue their education midway.

11-Month-Old's Brain Artery Reconstructed, Not Blocked

Infant Recovers After Rare Aneurysm Surgery at Medicover Hospitals

Neurosurgeons clip and reconstruct the aneurysm while preserving blood flow to the brain; child discharged in stable condition

SECUNDERABAD





An 11-month-old child has been discharged in stable condition from Medicover Hospitals, Secunderabad, after neurosurgeons successfully repaired a large aneurysm on a key brain artery while preserving the artery itself. The rare and technically challenging procedure was performed in an infant, where the extremely small blood vessels and limited blood volume significantly increase the complexity of neurosurgery. Details of the case were shared at a press conference held at the hospital today. An aneurysm is a weakened, bulging section of a blood vessel wall. In this child, the aneurysm involved the right A2 segment of the anterior cerebral artery, a vessel that supplies blood to the front and inner parts of the brain. The aneurysm was detected during evaluation after the child was brought to the hospital with seizures and high-grade fever. The child's age made treatment particularly challenging. An infant has a very limited blood volume and extremely small cerebral blood vessels. The size and structure of the aneurysm also made minimally invasive, catheter-based treatment unsuitable. After detailed evaluation, the neurosurgical team decided to repair the aneurysm while preserving the parent artery — the normal vessel carrying blood to the surrounding brain — rather than closing it off. Blocking the artery was considered only as a backup option. Under general anaesthesia, the child underwent a craniotomy, a surgical procedure in which an opening is temporarily made in the skull to access the brain. The surgeons then performed microsurgical clipping and reconstruction of the aneurysm, successfully preserving the parent artery. The team also performed EDAMS, a surgical technique aimed at supporting blood supply to the brain. The procedure required close coordination between multiple specialties. Dr. Shighakolli Ramesh, Senior Consultant Neurosurgeon , led the neurosurgical management, with Dr. Deepa Dharanappa Shetty, Senior Consultant Neonatologist and Paediatrician , involved in the child's specialised paediatric and neonatal care. The anaesthesia team, led by Dr. Srinivas, HOD – Anesthesiology, along with Dr. K. Pradeep, Anesthesiology , played a critical role in maintaining the child's vital functions throughout the prolonged procedure. The anaesthesia and operating-room teams worked through the night to ensure the child's stability during the complex surgery.

Following surgery, the child was successfully weaned off ventilator support and showed good recovery. After continued monitoring and multidisciplinary care, the infant was discharged in stable condition.

*Dr. Shighakolli Ramesh, Senior Consultant Neurosurgeon, Medicover Hospitals, Secunderabad, said:

"Operating on an 11-month-old with such a complex cerebral aneurysm is a formidable challenge. With a very small blood volume and tiny blood vessels, every step demands extreme precision. Our objective was not only to treat the aneurysm but also to preserve the parent artery and maintain blood flow to the brain. This outcome was possible because of meticulous planning, microsurgical expertise and close coordination between the neurosurgery, paediatric, anaesthesia and operating-room teams. We are happy to see the child recover well and return home with the family."

The case highlights the importance of specialised paediatric neurosurgical care, advanced microsurgical techniques and multidisciplinary teamwork in managing rare and complex cerebrovascular conditions in infants



RECPDCL Hands Over Ranipur Chunar Power Transmission Limited

SPV of Intra State Transmission Project of Uttar Pradesh, to M/s H G Infra Engineering Limited

NEW DELHI

REC Power Development and Consultancy Limited (RECPDCL), a wholly owned subsidiary of REC Limited, a Maharatna CPSU under the Ministry of Power, handed over Ranipur Chunar Power Transmission Limited, the project-specific Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), to the successful bidder, M/s H G Infra Engineering Limited, on 26th September 2026.

M/s H G Infra Engineering Limited emerged as the successful bidder through the Tariff-Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) process conducted by RECPDCL, the Bid Process Coordinator, for development of intra-state transmission project "Construction of 220/132/33 kV AIS Substation, Ranipur (Mau) and 220/132/33kV AIS Substation, Chunar (Mirzapur)" in Uttar Pradesh on a Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis.

The SPV was handed over by Sh. Rajesh Raj, Sr. GM & HoD, RECPDCL to Mr. Ujjval Verma, CGM (Finance), H G Infra Engineering Limited, in the presence of other senior officials from RECPDCL, H G Infra Engineering Limited and Uttar Pradesh Power Transmission Corporation Limited.

The transmission project broadly envisages establishment of 220/132/33 kV AIS Substation at Ranipur (Mau) & 220/132/33kV AIS Substation at Chunar (Mirzapur), 220 kV D/c line form Rasra to Ranipur along with other associated works. The project implementation schedule is 18 months.

India's IPO pipeline hits Rs 3.86 lakh crore. What's driving the rush

India's IPO market is showing little sign of slowing down. Even as companies have already raised a sizeable amount from the primary market this year, a much larger queue of potential listings is waiting to come through.

The mainboard IPO pipeline has reached around Rs 3.86 lakh crore as of September 2026, about 3.5 times the Rs 1.10 lakh crore raised through 84 mainboard IPOs so far this year, according to the Association of Investment Bankers of India (AIBI). The industry body, in its mid-term white paper titled India Capital Markets: Navigating Geopolitics, Capital & Growth, said the numbers point to a primary market that is becoming a more sustained source of capital for businesses rather than just a periodic fundraising window.

AROUND 130 COMPANIES HAVE SEBI APPROVAL

Of the Rs 3.86 lakh crore pipeline, around Rs 2.43 lakh crore comes from companies that have already received Sebi approval. Another Rs 1.44 lakh crore is linked to companies awaiting approval. Overall, around 130 companies have received approval, while another 75 or so have filed their Draft Red Herring Prospectuses (DRHPs) and are waiting for the green light. Mahavir Lunawat, Chairman, AIBI, said the scale of the pipeline shows how much the market has changed.

"India's primary market has moved well beyond an episodic fundraising cycle," he said, adding that the current pipeline, along with participation from QIBs (Qaulified Institutional Buyer), HNIs and retail investors, shows that the IPO market is becoming a broader channel for capital formation. The growth has been building over the past decade. Mainboard IPOs raised a cumulative Rs 8.36 lakh crore between 2016 and 2026 YTD. Annual fundraising rose from Rs 26,494 crore in 2016 to Rs 1.76 lakh crore in 2025. The number of IPOs has also climbed. There were 26 mainboard IPOs in 2016, compared with 103 in 2025. In the first part of 2026 alone, 84 issues have already hit the market.

SME IPOs ADD ANOTHER LAYER TO THE MARKET

The expansion is not limited to large companies. SME IPOs have also become a bigger part of India's primary market. There were 267 SME IPOs in 2025, the highest annual number during the period covered by AIBI, followed by 156 issues in 2026 YTD. Together, SME companies have raised Rs 39,849 crore through IPOs between 2016 and 2026 YTD.

Amazon India inaugurates Ashray centre in Kondapur

in partnership with the Government of Telangana

HYDERABAD





Ahead of festive season, Amazon India today inaugurated a new Ashray centre in Kondapur, a busy commercial and residential hub in Hyderabad, set up in partnership with the Government of Telangana. The centre was established following a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed earlier this year with the Government of Telangana, marking Amazon's first collaboration with the state government to establish Ashray centres. With this launch, Amazon now operates a total of 10 Ashray centres in Hyderabad.

Ashray is Amazon's network of dedicated rest centres for all delivery drivers across the e-commerce and logistics sector. These centres are equipped with air-conditioned seating, drinking water, electrolytes, charging points for mobile phones, clean washrooms, first-aid kits, and comfortable resting space, designed to help delivery drivers rest and recharge during their routes. The new centre was inaugurated in the presence of Dr. G. Srijana, IAS, Municipal Commissioner, Cyberabad, Amit Narayan, IAS, Zonal Commissioner, Cyberabad Municipal Corporation; Brian Kenner, Director, Public Policy, Amazon; and Shadab Anwar, Director, Amazon India.

The MoU, signed earlier this year, covers the establishment of five Ashray centres in high-footfall areas across Hyderabad, including Kondapur, Bharathinagar and Patancheru. The Kondapur centre is the first to become operational, with Amazon planning to establish the remaining four centres by the end of this year. As part of the partnership, the Government of Telangana, through the Cyberabad Municipal Corporation, supported site identification, facilitating the necessary approvals, and providing administrative coordination to help establish the centres. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment between Amazon and the State Government to strengthen community infrastructure and expand access to shelter and support services in the region. At present, Amazon has a network of over 150 centres across 17 cities, including Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad among others.

Dr. G. Srijana, IAS, Municipal Commissioner, Cyberabad, said: "It is encouraging to see Amazon India invest in initiatives that support the wellbeing of delivery drivers, and I am pleased to see the Ashray centre come to life in Telangana. Delivery drivers spend much of their day on the move, and having dedicated spaces to rest, recharge and access essential facilities can make a meaningful difference to their everyday experience. Ashray is a thoughtful initiative that responds to a very practical need."

Salim Memon, Director - Operations, Amazon India, said: "Ashray was built on a simple idea — that every delivery driver deserves a clean, comfortable place to rest during their workday. This is the first time we are working hand-in-hand with the Government of Telangana to bring Ashray centres to life, and our collaboration marks an important milestone in that journey. Inaugurating this centre means we can take these facilities directly to drivers wherever they are. With a network of over 150 centres across 17 cities, we continue to invest in the well-being of the people who power last-mile delivery across India."



Sensex ends 315 points higher, Nifty above 23,100; Axis Bank up 3%

Benchmark indices ended higher on Friday, recovering partially after Thursday's sharp sell-off, but the rebound was not enough to prevent another weekly decline. Persistent concerns over elevated crude oil prices, high bond yields and foreign fund outflows kept gains in check.

The Sensex closed at 73,895.74, up 315.20 points or 0.43%, while the Nifty 50 gained 77.40 points or 0.34% to end at 23,140.50. Despite Friday's recovery, both indices ended lower for the seventh straight week. The Nifty fell around 0.9% during the week, while the Sensex declined 0.5%. The broader market saw a mixed trend. The Nifty 100 rose 0.38%, while the Nifty 200 gained 0.27% and Nifty 500 advanced 0.23%. The Nifty Midcap 50 fell 0.25% and Midcap 100 declined 0.14%, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 gained 0.15%. India VIX fell 4% to 12.18.

FINANCIAL, AUTO STOCKS SUPPORT MARKETS

Financial and auto stocks helped the benchmarks recover after Thursday's sell-off. Axis Bank was the top Sensex gainer, rising 2.82%, followed by M&M, which gained 2.24%. Asian Paints rose 1.93%, Bajaj Finance gained 1.21%, HCLTech advanced 1.17% and Titan rose 1.01%. Other notable gainers included IndiGo, L&T, HDFC Bank, Power Grid and Reliance Industries. On the other hand, Trent was the biggest Sensex loser, falling 1.41%. Infosys declined 0.81%, Tech Mahindra fell 0.06%, ICICI Bank dropped 0.41% and Kotak Mahindra Bank declined 0.47%.

SECTORAL PERFORMANCE

The Nifty Auto index rose 0.89%, while Realty gained 0.92%. Consumer Durables advanced 0.95%, Financial Services 25/50 rose 0.33%, FMCG gained 0.40% and Private Bank increased 0.45%. Metal rose 0.35%, PSU Bank gained 0.28% and Chemicals advanced 0.23%. IT was among the weaker sectors, falling 0.17%. Media declined 0.23%, Pharma fell 0.10% and Healthcare dropped 0.47%. The Nifty MidSmall Financial Services index fell 0.52%, while the Financial Services Ex-Bank index declined 0.07%.

CRUDE REMAINS A KEY CONCERN

Brent crude was trading at around $105.39 a barrel, down 1.14%, while WTI crude fell 1.85% to $92.86.

Despite Friday's decline, crude remains at elevated levels and continues to be a key risk for Indian markets because of its impact on inflation, the import bill and corporate profitability.

Friday's gains came after the Nifty and Sensex recorded their steepest single-session fall in 10 weeks on Thursday. The previous session's sell-off was driven by rising crude prices, higher global bond yields and concerns over the proposed IRDAI changes to insurance commission structures.

Financial stocks faced particularly heavy selling during the week, while IT stocks also remained under pressure. The Nifty Financial Services index fell 1.6% during the week, while the Nifty IT index declined 2.4%, marking their fourth consecutive weekly losses. The broader Nifty Midcap 100 and Smallcap 100 fell 2.1% and 0.9%, respectively, during the week. The Nifty's seven-week losing streak is its longest in six years. Before the current streak, the index had recorded seven or more consecutive weekly losses only four times in the past 25 years — in 2020, 2008 and twice in 2001.

ITR deadline extended to November 21: Which taxpayers get the extension?

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has extended the income tax return (ITR) filing deadline for taxpayers requiring audits for Assessment Year 2026-27 from October 31 to November 21, 2026. The deadline for submitting tax audit reports has also been extended from September 30 to October 21, 2026, allowing additional time for audits and reconciliations. The extension applies to companies, non-corporate taxpayers whose accounts require auditing, and partners of audited firms. However, taxpayers covered under Section 92E, including those filing Form 3CEB for international or specified domestic transactions, will continue to follow the existing deadline of November 30, 2026.

From Location Tracking to SOS Alerts, JioShield Helps Keep Children and Senior Citizens Safe

JioShield at ₹1,000 per year, averaging approximately ₹83 per month.

Location and battery alerts to help families stay informed about where children and senior citizens are and how much battery their phones have left.

Anniversary offer includes Jio recharge vouchers worth ₹1,000.

MUMBAI



Whether children are away from home or senior citizens are stepping out alone, families can now access location tracking and SOS alerts in one place. Jio has launched JioShield, offering a range of features designed to support both physical and online family safety, including location tracking, SOS alerts, screen-time management, and app and contact controls.

With JioShield, parents can track their children's location and receive important safety alerts. They will also be notified when the phone's battery is running low. For children, parents can control which apps and contacts they can access and how much time they spend on screens. This allows parents to monitor and manage their children's online activities. The same features can also help families stay connected with elderly parents and assist them when needed. Setting up the service on mobile phones is simple. Parents need to install the JioThings app on their phones and the JioShield app on the child's or senior citizen's phone. Once the two apps are connected, parents can manage location tracking, screen time, apps, and contacts from their own phones. JioShield is priced at ₹1,000 per year, averaging approximately ₹83 per month, with a one-time payment of ₹1,000 required. As part of Jio's 10th anniversary offer, customers will receive Jio recharge vouchers worth a total of ₹1,000. Based on this benefit, the company is positioning the service as effectively free. The offer also includes 12 months of Canva Pro, valued at ₹4,000, and a 28-day Unlimited 5G upgrade. The ₹1,000 recharge vouchers will be issued in 10 denominations of ₹100 each and can be redeemed when recharging with Unlimited 5G plans priced at ₹399 or above. The offer has been available since September 26. The child's or senior citizen's phone must run Android 10 or above and have an active Jio number. The JioThings app for parents is currently available on Android, with the iOS version scheduled to become available from October 1.

India's New Tourism Trail

Adventure Meets Exploration

Tourism is no longer simply about visiting famous monuments, taking photographs and returning home with souvenirs. Across India, travel is changing into a more immersive experience, with people increasingly looking for destinations that combine nature, culture, physical activity and a sense of discovery. From trekking through Himalayan trails and rafting in mountain rivers to exploring forests, deserts, coastlines and lesser-known villages, adventure tourism is becoming an important part of the country's travel landscape. The growth of adventure tourism reflects a broader change in the way people spend their leisure time. Young travellers, families, working professionals and even senior citizens are looking beyond conventional sightseeing. They want to walk through landscapes, experience local traditions, participate in outdoor activities and spend time away from crowded urban environments. Social media has also contributed to this shift, making remote destinations more visible and encouraging travellers to explore places that were previously known mainly to local communities. India, with its extraordinary geographical diversity, has enormous potential for this form of tourism. The Himalayas, Western Ghats, northeastern hills, deserts of Rajasthan, beaches of Goa and the Andaman region, forests of central India and the rivers of the north all offer different possibilities for adventure and exploration.



From Sightseeing to Experiences

The modern traveller increasingly wants more than a checklist of tourist attractions. A holiday is often planned around an experience rather than a destination alone. A person visiting Uttarakhand may choose a trekking route instead of limiting the trip to hill stations. Someone travelling to Rajasthan may combine heritage tourism with desert camping and jeep safaris. In Kerala, visitors may combine backwater journeys with cycling, hiking and village experiences.

This transition has created a more diverse tourism economy. Hotels, homestays, tour operators, transport providers, local guides, equipment suppliers and small businesses can all benefit when travellers stay longer and participate in several activities.

Adventure tourism also encourages travellers to explore areas beyond major cities and established tourist centres. This can create economic opportunities in rural and remote regions where traditional employment options may be limited.

The Himalayas: A Natural Adventure Playground

The Himalayan region remains one of India's most important destinations for adventure tourism. Stretching across several states and union territories, the mountains offer opportunities ranging from relatively easy nature walks to demanding high-altitude expeditions. Trekking is among the most popular activities. Routes in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh attract travellers seeking mountain landscapes, forests, meadows and remote villages. Some trails are suitable for beginners, while others require physical preparation, experienced guides and specialised equipment. The mountains also support activities such as mountaineering, skiing, paragliding, mountain biking and river rafting. Destinations such as Manali, Bir, Rishikesh, Gulmarg and parts of Sikkim have developed strong identities around outdoor adventure. Yet the attraction of the Himalayas comes with responsibility. Fragile mountain ecosystems can be affected by large tourist numbers, plastic waste, unplanned construction and traffic. Sustainable tourism therefore becomes particularly important in high-altitude destinations.

Rivers Turn Travel into Adventure

India's rivers have become another major attraction for adventure travellers. River rafting, kayaking and other water-based activities offer a combination of excitement and natural beauty. Rishikesh has emerged as one of the country's best-known rafting destinations, with travellers navigating stretches of the Ganga while surrounded by hills and forests. Rivers in Himachal Pradesh and other Himalayan regions also attract adventure enthusiasts. The popularity of river tourism has created employment for trained guides, instructors, boat operators and support staff. It has also encouraged the development of camps, homestays and restaurants in areas located away from traditional tourist centres.

Safety, however, remains central to water-based adventure. Weather conditions, river levels, equipment quality and the experience of guides can directly affect the risks involved. Responsible operators and properly trained personnel are therefore essential for the long-term growth of the sector.

Beaches Beyond Sun and Sand

India's long coastline offers a different form of adventure. Beaches are increasingly being associated not only with relaxation but also with water sports and marine experiences.

Goa remains one of the most popular destinations for activities such as parasailing, kayaking, scuba diving and other water sports. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands offer opportunities for diving and exploring marine ecosystems, while parts of Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra are also developing coastal adventure experiences.

Scuba diving has become particularly attractive to travellers interested in underwater landscapes. Coral reefs, marine life and clear waters provide an entirely different form of tourism from conventional sightseeing.

Coastal tourism, however, must be developed carefully. Marine ecosystems are vulnerable to pollution, excessive construction and irresponsible tourist activity. Protecting beaches, coral reefs, mangroves and marine species is essential if these destinations are to remain attractive for future generations.

Forests and Wildlife Add a Different Dimension

Adventure tourism does not always mean extreme physical activity. Wildlife tourism offers its own form of exploration, with travellers entering forests to observe animals and understand ecosystems. India's national parks and wildlife reserves provide opportunities for safaris, birdwatching, nature walks and photography. The forests of Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Assam and Rajasthan attract visitors interested in tigers, elephants, rhinoceroses, birds and other wildlife. For many travellers, the excitement comes from uncertainty. Unlike a conventional tourist attraction, wildlife cannot be scheduled. A safari may produce a dramatic animal sighting or simply provide an opportunity to observe birds, trees and landscapes. The growing interest in wildlife tourism can support conservation when managed properly. Tourism revenue can contribute to local livelihoods and create incentives to protect natural habitats. At the same time, excessive vehicle movement, noise and overcrowding can disturb wildlife. Responsible tourism therefore requires strict rules and visitor discipline.

The Desert: Adventure in a Different Landscape

Rajasthan demonstrates how adventure tourism can develop even in an environment where mountains and rivers are absent. The Thar Desert provides opportunities for camel safaris, dune experiences, desert camping and off-road exploration. Jaisalmer has become closely associated with desert tourism, attracting visitors to its historic fort as well as the surrounding sand dunes. Travellers can combine cultural tourism with outdoor experiences, spending evenings at desert camps and learning about local music, food and traditions. Desert tourism also demonstrates the importance of local communities. Traditional artists, camel owners, guides, cooks and craft producers can become part of the tourism economy. When visitors spend money locally, tourism can support livelihoods beyond hotels and large travel companies.

Adventure Tourism in the Northeast

India's northeastern states possess enormous but still developing tourism potential. Mountains, forests, rivers, caves and indigenous cultures create opportunities for trekking, rafting, camping and exploration. Meghalaya is particularly known for its landscapes, waterfalls, caves and living root bridges. Arunachal Pradesh offers mountain scenery, remote villages and trekking opportunities, while Sikkim combines Himalayan landscapes with cultural and ecological tourism. The region's appeal lies partly in its relative distance from India's major urban centres. Travellers seeking quieter destinations are increasingly interested in northeastern states. Better connectivity, responsible infrastructure and local participation could help expand tourism while protecting the region's fragile ecosystems and cultural identity.

The Rise of Weekend Adventure

Adventure tourism is no longer limited to long holidays. The growth of short breaks has created a market for weekend experiences close to major cities. People living in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai and other cities increasingly look for destinations that can be reached within a few hours. Trekking, camping, cycling, kayaking, nature walks and farm stays can provide a quick escape from urban routines. This trend is particularly visible among young professionals. Instead of taking one long holiday every year, many travellers prefer several shorter trips. Digital platforms make it easier to discover activities, compare operators and organise transportation. Weekend tourism can also distribute tourist spending across a wider network of smaller destinations. However, sudden increases in visitors can put pressure on roads, water supplies, waste-management systems and natural areas.

Technology Is Changing Adventure Travel

Technology has transformed the way travellers discover and experience destinations. Smartphones, navigation applications, online booking platforms and social media have made information about remote locations more accessible. A traveller can now research a trekking route, check weather conditions, reserve accommodation and hire a local guide before leaving home. Digital payments have also made transactions easier in many tourist destinations. Social media has played an especially important role. Photographs and videos from previously unfamiliar locations can quickly attract thousands of visitors. This can benefit local businesses but can also create sudden pressure on fragile locations. Technology can therefore be both an opportunity and a challenge.

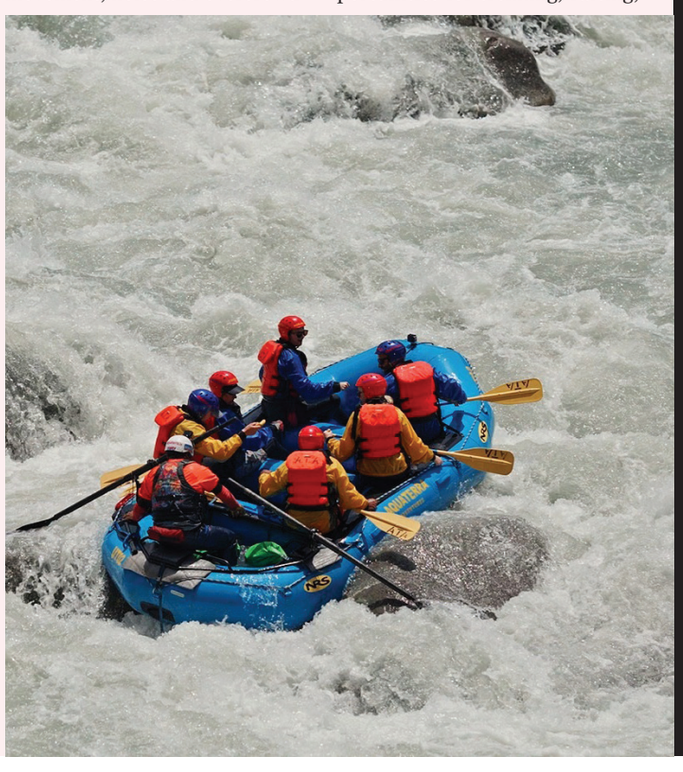
Adventure Tourism and Local Communities

One of the strongest arguments for developing adventure tourism is its potential to create local employment. A trekking destination needs guides, porters, drivers, cooks, accommodation providers and equipment suppliers. A rafting destination requires trained instructors, boat operators and support workers. Homestays can provide another source of income for rural families. Visitors who stay in local homes often experience regional food, customs and lifestyles more directly than those staying exclusively in large hotels. Tourism can also encourage communities to preserve traditional practices. Local food, handicrafts, music and festivals can become part of the visitor experience.

However, communities need to be participants rather than simply service providers. Planning tourism with local residents can help ensure that economic benefits remain within the region and that development respects cultural traditions.

The Importance of Sustainable Travel

The future of adventure tourism depends heavily on environmental responsibility. Natural landscapes are the main attraction, but they can also be damaged by uncontrolled tourism. Plastic waste, littering, excessive water consumption, traffic, noise and unplanned construction can reduce the quality of tourist destinations. Popular trekking routes can suffer from soil erosion and waste accumulation, while beaches and forests can face similar pressures. Sustainable tourism requires travellers, businesses and authorities to share responsibility. Carrying reusable products, avoiding littering, respecting wildlife, staying on designated trails and following local regulations are simple but important steps. Tourism businesses can contribute by reducing waste, using resources efficiently and employing local residents.





Asian Games: Record-breaking Vithya, gutsy

Sreeshankar, Parul, Gulveer double make it India's day

NAGOYA



Vithya Ramraj broke a 42-year-old record in the women's 400m hurdles for a bronze medal; Parul Chaudhary and Gulveer Singh won their second medals while Yash Vir Singh and Rahul Yadav secured a double podium as India had a great day in track and field competitions at the Asian Games 2026 in Nagoya on Monday.

Parul Chaudhary added the women's 5000m bronze to the women's 3000m steeplechase, and Gulveer won the men's 1500m silver to add to the medal of the same colour he won in the men's 10,000m, while Murali Sreeshankar jumped to a silver medal despite a debilitating injury that made him forego his last two rounds and an opportunity to fight for gold.

There were opportunities for more medals as the women's 4x100m relay team made a dramatic comeback to qualify for the final. Tamanna, Sneha SS, Sudeshna Shivankar, and Abinaya Rajarajan clocked a season-best 43.65 seconds to win Heat 2, securing the third-fastest overall time.

The quartet was trailing in 4th to 5th position going into the final stages of the relay before turning things around with a sensational finish.

However, the day belonged to Vithya Ramraj as she came up with a brilliant performance to break the national record in the women's 400m hurdles on Monday.

Vithya Ramraj produced a landmark performance at the Asian Games 2026 on Monday, breaking the 42-year-old national record held by legendary Indian athlete PT Usha to win bronze in the women's 400m hurdles.

Vithya clocked a personal best of 54.75 seconds to finish third in a thrilling final, improving the previous national benchmark of 55.42 seconds by 0.67 seconds. The record had been set by Usha at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, where she finished fourth in the Olympic final.

Vithya had previously equalled Usha's mark at the 2023 Asian Games, where she also won bronze. Three years later, she finally moved beyond the mark that had stood as one of the longest-standing records in Indian athletics.

The Indian was firmly in medal contention through the race and held her position in the closing stages, but could not match the late surge of Mariam Kareem of the United Arab Emirates. Kareem stormed to gold in a Games-record 54.31s, while Kazakhstan's Adelina Zems secured silver with a personal best of 54.58s.

India secured a silver-bronze double in the men's javelin throw at the Asian Games 2026 on Monday, with Yash Vir Singh and Rohit Yadav finishing second and third, respectively, at the Nagoya City Mizuho Park Athletic Stadium.

Yash Vir achieved a personal best of 85.72 metres to win the silver medal, whereas Rohit secured bronze with a throw of 84.35 metres. Sri Lanka's World No. 1 Rumesh Tharanga Pathirage took home gold with a best throw of 88.55m. Reigning Olympic champion, Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, finished fourth with a throw of 80.29 metres.

The result meant India won two medals in the men's javelin at the Asian Games for the second successive edition. At Hangzhou 2023, Neeraj Chopra won gold with 88.88m, while Kishore Jena took silver with 87.54m. Neeraj, who had also won gold at Jakarta 2018, couldn't defend his title in Japan as he had pulled out of the remainder of the season after the Diamond League in Doha due to injury.

Parul added another bronze medal to her Asian Games campaign, finishing third in the women's 5000m final with a time of 15:14.61 to claim her second podium finish. Parul timed her run to perfection in a closely fought battle for the minor medals, producing a strong finishing kick in the closing stages to move past Kazakhstan's Norah Tanui and secure third place. Bahrain's Winfred Yavi won the gold medal, while Japan's Nozomi Tanaka took silver.

The Indian had remained within touching distance of the leading group for much of the race despite a fast early pace. Tanui initially took control and opened up a sizeable gap over the rest of the field, with Yavi settling into the chasing pack.

Gulveer Singh, after a remarkable second-place finish in the 10000m event, added another silver medal to his kitty on Monday, this time from the men's 1500m at the ongoing Asian Games 2026.

Gulveer displayed a dominant run to finish second in the 1500m race with a personal best time of 3:36.72 as he sandwiched the two Japanese runners - Kazuto Iizawa and Nagiya Mori - at the podium. Iizawa clinched the gold with an Asian Games record time of 3:36.35, only 0.37s ahead of Gulveer, while Mori was third with a time of 3:37.92s.

Meanwhile, India's Avinash Sable failed to bag a medal in the men's 3000m steeplechase final as he finished fourth. Sable produced his season's best time of 8:21.67, but was 4.31s behind the gold medal winner Ryuji Miura of Japan. Another Japanese, Ryoma Aoki, was second with a run of 8:17.60s, while Qatar's Zakaria Elahlaami was third with a time of 8:18.13s. Murali Sreeshankar was the braveheart of the day, securing a silver medal despite a serious injury to his foot that had him limping after his second attempt in the men's long jump final.

Murali Sreeshankar produced a gutsy performance to win silver in the men's long jump at the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, overcoming severe pain from an ankle injury to finish with a best effort of 8.07m.

Sreeshankar, who won silver in the Hangzhou edition, registered his best jump on the second attempt to move into second place and stayed there until the end of the competition. China's Shi Yuhao won gold with a season-best 8.17m, while Uzbekistan's Anvar Anvarov secured bronze with 8.06m.

The Indian appeared in control of his challenge for a medal until the fourth round, when he suffered a heavy landing after slipping off the mark. He immediately showed signs of discomfort and removed his spikes before medics advised him to have the ankle assessed.

SHORT NEWS

ASIAN GAMES

Telangana Shooter Esha Singh wins Silver medical in Asian Games



CM Revanth Reddy congratulates Esha Singh

HYDERABAD: Chief Minister Sri A Revanth Reddy congratulated Esha Singh, star Indian shooter from Hyderabad, Telangana, for winning the Silver medal in the women's 25m pistol individual event at the ongoing Asian Games in Japan. The Chief Minister praised Esha Singh for her outstanding performance and bravely handled the pressure of five shoot-offs, missing the gold medal by a narrow margin.

Esha Singh's fighting spirit is an inspiration to the sports world, the CM said, expressing hope that the shooter will record many more great victories on international stages and also bringing laurels to the country as well as Telangana state in the future.



Asian Games: Usha hails Vithya Ramraj after she breaks IOA Prez's 42-year-old national record

NEW DELHI

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha hailed Vithya Ramraj's landmark performance at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games, saying it was an "incredibly special moment" to see the Indian athlete break her 42-year-old national record in the women's 400m hurdles.

"Congratulations, Vithya!! Records are meant to be broken, and there is no greater reward for an athlete than to see the next generation go beyond the boundaries we once set," Usha said in a release. "Vithya Ramraj breaking my 43-year-old national record in the 400m hurdles is an incredibly special moment for me. As athletes, we compete to challenge ourselves, to push limits and, ultimately, to leave the sport better than we found it," she added.

Usha said seeing a young athlete surpass a milestone that had stood for decades was a moment of pride not just for the athlete but also for the sport.

"When a young athlete comes along and surpasses a milestone that has stood for decades, it is a moment of pride—not just for the athlete, but for the sport itself," she said. "The greatest legacy of a record is not how long it stands, but how it inspires the next athlete to dream of going beyond it," Usha added.

Ramraj produced the record-breaking performance in the women's 400m hurdles final on Monday, clocking a personal best of 54.75 seconds to win the bronze medal. The Indian improved Usha's previous national record of 55.42 seconds by 0.67 seconds. Usha had set the mark at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, where she finished fourth in the final.

At the 2023 Asian Games, Ramraj had matched Usha's record, earning her a bronze medal as well. Three years later, she not only surpassed that mark but also won her second consecutive bronze at the continental event.

Mariam Kareem from the UAE won the gold medal with a time of 54.31 seconds, a Games record, and Adelina Zems of Kazakhstan secured silver with a personal best of 54.58 seconds. Ramraj stayed in contention for the medals throughout the race but was unable to equal Kareem's late surge.



Squad revamp necessary to build 200-plus firepower for WPL 2027, says UPW head coach Nayar

NEW DELHI

Facing a dry run of four seasons without making a significant mark in the Women's Premier League (WPL), UP Warriorz (UPW) head coach Abhishek Nayar has said a thorough tactical overhaul was necessary to assemble a high-intensity batting order capable of matching the tournament's evolving 200-plus scoring standards.

UPW, who finished at the bottom of the WPL 2026 points table, executed a sweeping squad clean-up on the retention deadline day by parting ways with international players Deandra Dottin, Chloe Tryon, and Amy Jones, alongside domestic names like Kiran Navgire, Shweta Sehrawat, and India leg-spinner Asha Sobhana.

"At the end of the season, when our coaches had a meeting, and even recently the coaches had a meeting at the end, we kind of gave a lot of the players certain things to work on and felt we wanted to assess how they go from there.

In that, Asha was one of the players that we felt had obviously taken a lot of positive strides. "So, it was sort of a hard decision for us. But we just felt coming into this auction, I felt when you take over for the first time, you try and understand the process of a franchise and what has gone on in the system.

"You always want to rely on the good before you can look at the bad, and I think having been here for one year, we felt sometimes a bit of a change is not a bad thing. So, we are taking kind of a punt in a lot of ways to try and see if we can change how we formulated the team last year and see if a different combination can give us better results," Nayar told Star Sports on the retention deadline show on Monday.

Despite the exits, the franchise has retained an 11-member core that features premier overseas stars in captain Meg Lanning, Phoebe Litchfield, Sophie Ecclestone, and Tara Norris. The retained Indian contingent is headlined by star all-rounder Deepti Sharma, alongside Harleen Deol, Shikha Pandey, Kranti Gaud, Pratika Rawal, Shipra Giri, and Simran Shaikh. Explaining the shift in women's T20 batting dynamics, Nayar acknowledged that relying on older scoring benchmarks left the side under-resourced against opposition teams regularly breaching the 200-run barrier.

"I've always believed in being quite honest. I think one of the things at the end of the season, when we were thinking, and I was thinking about it a lot, I always felt that as a team, when we picked a side, sometimes players click or they don't.

"But somewhere I felt WPL took a step and a notch up last year. In the past, teams were reaching 200 more frequently than years before that. So when you rely on data, sometimes it can deceive you because 170-160 was a power score, and the team we sort of built was a team that could achieve that, we felt.

But every time a team surpassed that 200-mark, it became really hard for us. "We didn't have the firepower, and it's still going to be hard in this auction. An auction doesn't mean things are going to be changed.

'Not stopping after my third Asian Games,' says Pincky Balhara after Kurash bronze

NAGOYA



Pincky Balhara battled through a right knee injury to win a bronze medal in the women's 78kg kurash competition at the 2026 Asian Games, claiming her second Asian Games medal and making it clear that she has no plans to call time on her career.

Competing in her third Asian Games, the 28-year-old Delhi athlete was beaten 5-0 by South Korea's Sumin Mo in the semifinal at the Aichi Prefectural Martial Arts Hall. The result left Pincky with a bronze, matching her medal-winning performance from the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta.

Pincky's heavily strapped right knee proved a major impediment during the semifinal, with Sumin repeatedly targeting the injured leg and restricting the Indian's attacking options. The South Korean's tactics helped her build a points advantage and book her place in the final. "I was determined not to give away points. Sumin knew my weakness, and she made good use of that," Pincky said in an interview to SAI media.

The bronze was another testament to Pincky's resilience in a sport where she has emerged as one of India's leading names. A former junior Asian champion in 2015, she also won gold at the 2024 World Nomad Games and has been a national champion. Pincky has also spoken about overcoming difficult personal circumstances and criticism following the death of her father before the 2018 Asian Games.

"A section of the media said I was taking sympathy for my father's death before the 2018 Asian Games. I proved them wrong with my medal (silver). That fire still burns in me. The blood of a Jat girl is very hot, and that is what keeps me going against adversity," Pincky said.

Despite securing another Asian Games medal, Pincky is already looking beyond Aichi-Nagoya and rejected suggestions that her third appearance at the continental showpiece could mark the end of her career.

"A lot of people are saying my career is over after my third Asian Games. While I agree that the colour of the medal is not what I had aspired to, I am not stopping yet. I have worked very hard in the last eight years for this medal," said Pincky.

India fielded a six-member squad in kurash at the Aichi-Nagoya Games, with the team holding a brief training camp in Saharanpur before travelling to Japan. Indian Kurash Association president Ravi Kapoor said the team needed greater international exposure and more extensive preparation ahead of major competitions.

"We could have done better had our team got some international exposure and training before coming to the Games. We need a lot of support from the government. PM Narendra Modi's vision to make sports a career option must impact our players too," said Kapoor.

Pincky recalled the difference that overseas preparation made ahead of the 2018 Asian Games, when Indian players trained for 19 days in Uzbekistan, one of the sport's traditional strongholds. "The tough training there helped. We learnt to be competitive and did that the hard way. We need more such camps before big events," said Pincky.

Improving starting eleven is our primary goal; we aim to finally cross finish line in WPL 2027, says DC head coach

NEW DELHI



Describing player retentions and releases as the most challenging aspect of his job, Delhi Capitals (DC) head coach Jonathan Batty has said that four-time runners-up will enter the upcoming Women's Premier League (WPL) 2027 player auction with a singular focus on fine-tuning their starting eleven to finally break their finale jinx.

New Delhi, Sep 28 (IANS) Describing player retentions and releases as the most challenging aspect of his job, Delhi Capitals (DC) head coach Jonathan Batty has said that four-time runners-up will enter the upcoming Women's Premier League (WPL) 2027 player auction with a singular focus on fine-tuning their starting eleven to finally break their finale jinx.

On the retention deadline day, DC released six players, including big overseas names in South Africa opener Lizelle Lee and Australia leg-spinner Alana King, alongside India's off-spin bowling all-rounder Sneh Rana, wicketkeeper-batter Taniyaa Bhatia, as well as uncapped duo Pragati Singh and Srujana Eddla. "It's always a really difficult time of year. Retentions and releases are probably the most challenging part of the job. You obviously want to have the right players in your team and in your squad to give you the best chance of going into the season.

"Delhi have always been really strong in terms of the quality of the playing eleven to the depth of the squad that we've always had. So for us, going into this retention-release cycle to try and work out how we can improve our starting eleven as a priority is really challenging.

"We had 11 super players who were in the starting eleven last year, and to try and improve on that is really, really difficult. So we've made some really difficult decisions. There's been a lot of debate and discussion around the management group and our scouts, to come to the point where we've obviously released those six players that we have - it's been a challenging time," said Batty to broadcasters Star Sports during the retentions announcement show on Monday.

DC, though, have retained a formidable 13-member squad built around a star-studded core. The side features major international heavyweights in Marizanne Kapp, Laura Wolvaardt, Annabel Sutherland, Chinelle Henry, and Lucy Hamilton.

The retained domestic contingent is headlined by skipper Jemimah Rodrigues and explosive opener Shafali Verma, alongside Minnu Mani, Deeya Yadav, Mamatha Madiwala, Nandni Sharma, Niki Prasad, and N Sree Charani.

Having suffered heartbreak in all four WPL finals so far, Batty took pride in the team's consistent run to the summit clash while remaining confident that a title breakthrough is right around the corner.

"We're really proud of the performances that the DC girls have put in over the last four years, and getting to every final, you say it's an incredible achievement. We haven't reached our goal, which is always to try and win the tournament. So hopefully this year we'll get the icing on the cake and get over the line.

Parul Chaudhary bags second bronze with 5000m podium finish

NAGOYA

India's Parul Chaudhary added another bronze medal to her Asian Games campaign, finishing third in the women's 5000m final with a time of 15:14.61 to claim her second podium finish at the Games.

Parul timed her run to perfection in a closely fought battle for the minor medals, producing a strong finishing kick in the closing stages to move past Kazakhstan's Norah Tanui and secure third place. Bahrain's Winfred Yavi won the gold medal, while Japan's Nozomi Tanaka took silver. The Indian had remained within touching distance of the leading group for much of the race despite a fast early pace. Tanui initially took control and opened up a sizeable gap over the rest of the field, with Yavi settling into the chasing pack.

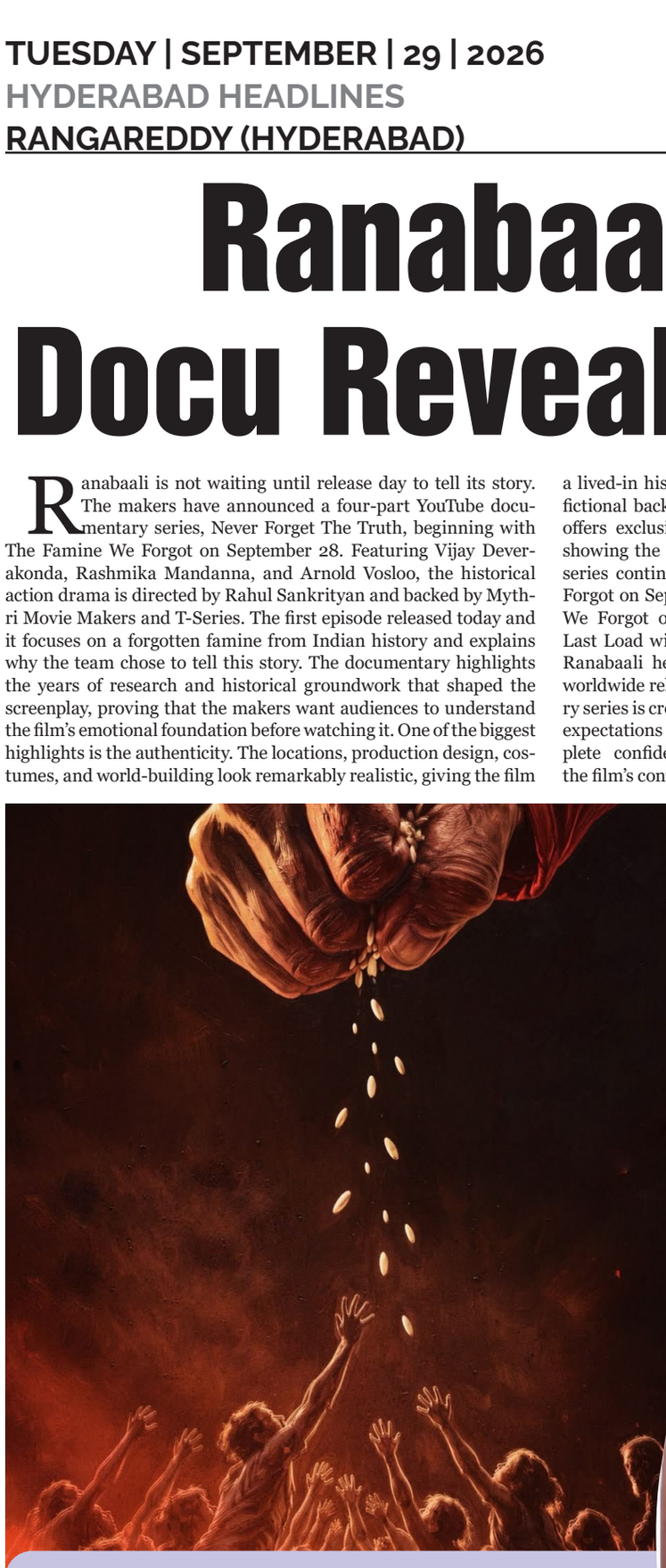
Parul and compatriot Seema Kumari were initially positioned in the middle of the field as Tanui continued to push the pace. Yavi began closing the gap around the halfway stage, gradually moving herself into a position to challenge for the title.

As the race entered its decisive phase, Parul remained in contention for a medal while Seema slipped further behind. Yavi eventually moved into the lead on the final lap and increased the pace, with Tanaka attempting to stay with the Bahrain runner.



Ranabaali Docu Reveals All

Ranabaali is not waiting until release day to tell its story. The makers have announced a four-part YouTube documentary series, Never Forget The Truth, beginning with The Famine We Forgot on September 28. Featuring Vijay Deverakonda, Rashmika Mandanna, and Arnold Vosloo, the historical action drama is directed by Rahul Sankrityan and backed by Mythri Movie Makers and T-Series. The first episode released today and it focuses on a forgotten famine from Indian history and explains why the team chose to tell this story. The documentary highlights the years of research and historical groundwork that shaped the screenplay, proving that the makers want audiences to understand the film's emotional foundation before watching it. One of the biggest highlights is the authenticity. The locations, production design, costumes, and world-building look remarkably realistic, giving the film a lived-in historical texture rather than a fictional backdrop. The documentary also offers exclusive behind-the-scenes footage showing the scale of the production. The series continues with The History We Forgot on September 30 and The Men We Forgot on October 2, while The Last Load will be announced later. As Ranabaali heads towards its October 16 worldwide release, this documentary series is creating the right expectations with complete confidence in the film's content.



Shalini Pandey Sparkles In Style

Shalini Pandey, who recently opened up about a morphed photo of her being circulated online and the trolling that followed, is now back in the spotlight for a much happier reason. The actress attended Manish Malhotra's Mijwan show, which celebrated 15 years of Mijwan and its work empowering women artisans.Sharing her pictures, Shalini called it an honour to be part of the evening and thanked Shabana Azmi for having her. She was dressed in a Manish Malhotra piece, a mirror-work halter crop top with crystal-lined diamond-shaped mirrors that caught the light beautifully. She paired it with rich golden velvet trousers, and a sleek, neat bun and a dewy glow kept the focus on the shimmer. In the frame, she poses with her arms raised and her eyes closed, and the whole shot looks like a moment from a dance sequence.



Nani's Credibility Stands Tall



Even before the release of The Paradise, there was a lot of debate and discussion about whether Nani could enter the Tier 1 or top star league of Tollywood .Given the film's massive hype and Nani's first of its kind Jadal look and his histrionics combined with the film's ultra mass setup, The Paradise opened with terrific numbers and emerged as a career-best opening for Nani. However disappointing everyone, The Paradise opened to divided talk and a mixed response. With this, many in the industry and trade started expressing doubts over the whole Tier 1 discussion surrounding Nani. Still, thanks to Nani's credibility, The Paradise managed to put up a strong and solid show despite the mixed talk. Interestingly, after the film's mixed talk, Nani took to social media and acknowledged it publicly. He said he is accepting all the appreciation and brickbats and said he took all the feedback. This is a laudable move. Despite the film's lead actor openly taking to social media and publicly accepting the divide talk, it hasn't had any effect on the film's first week box-office numbers. This gave a big boost to the film's whole team who came out and called for a press meet. All these reflect one thing – the trust and confidence of audience on Nani. The film pulled strong numbers in its first weekend, and beyond everything, the audience's trust in Nani played a major role. At the same time, some debates have also seen comparisons between the collections of multiple films and The Paradise, with attempts to corner Nani. But one thing remains clear: many movie lovers, along with his fans, believe that Nani's credibility is bigger than any tier in Tollywood. Keeping the box-office numbers aside, The Paradise has several flaws, yet audiences are still willing to watch the film at least once. That itself shows the level of trust Nani has built among moviegoers. Going forward, Nani needs to choose good films that match the trust he has built among audiences. Credibility is something that takes years to build but can be affected by a series of wrong choices. Nani has already proved that his credibility goes beyond box-office numbers. If he continues to come up with strong and engaging films, there is no doubt that this trust will only grow stronger.

Chiru Set For Global Talk Show?

The long wait is finally over as megastar Chiranjeevi is all set to make his digital (OTT) debut with Netflix. As per the latest update, he will headline the streaming platform's first celebrity talk show for an international audience. The project marks a new chapter in Chiranjeevi's successful career, taking his reach to a wider global audience across the world. According to the latest buzz, the project will be presented in a podcast-style format. A few years ago, he started hosting Meelo Evaru Koteeswarudu, but it ended after just one season. However, several details about the show are still under wraps. One of the biggest questions is whether Chiranjeevi will interview celebrities from the film industry or whether the podcast will focus primarily on his own life and career. Considering his four-decade journey, Chiranjeevi has plenty of stories to share, from his early days in cinema and struggles. At the same time, it will be very interesting to see him interviewing other celebs as well. There is also curiosity about whether the format will feature guests from across Indian cinema or international entertainment. A global Netflix platform could give Chiranjeevi a much larger reach than a conventional regional talk show. There is also news that Chiranjeevi's daughter, Sushmita Konidela, is the one behind the show. While the concept sounds exciting, the official format, episode count, guests, and launch date are yet to be revealed. Stay tuned for more.



Alia Bhatt Loved-Up Pic Goes Viral



Alia Bhatt made Ranbir Kapoor's birthday special with a series of pictures shared on social media. Among them, this romantic throwback picture of the couple has grabbed attention. The picture shows Alia and Ranbir sharing a close and playful moment while posing together. Alia's birthday post also included a few other personal glimpses from their life. The actress often gives fans a peek into their family moments and this post was no different. The loved-up picture has once again caught the attention of fans, with many appreciating the couple's chemistry and the warmth seen in Alia's birthday wish for Ranbir.

Sai Abhyankkar's Telugu Film Mystery



Sai Abhyankkar has become one of the most talked-about young talents in South Indian cinema after delivering back-to-back successful songs. However, many have been wondering why he has not signed any Telugu projects despite the growing demand. We at Gulte have come to know that thereis an interesting reason behind it. Going into details, Allu Arjun and Atlee's Raaka is sai to mark Sai Abhyankkar's Telugu debut as a music director. Sai has signed an agreement with the makers that he will refrain from signing another Telugu film until Raaka's release. Such clauses are not completely new in the film industry, as such restrictions are more commonly discussed in the case of heroines and, occasionally, lead actors. Seeing a music director being tied to such a condition is relatively unusual. Sai Abhyankkar has already created strong buzz with his music and is being closely watched by filmmakers across industries. His association with Allu Arjun's Raaka has further increased expectations around his Telugu entry. For now, Raaka appears to be his major Telugu introduction, with the film expected to bring him directly before a massive audience. Let's see what kind of films this young lad will sign in the days to come. An official confirmation is yet to be made in this regard.

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