HYDERABAD HEADLINES

RNI NO.APENG/2010/33328 | VOL NO. 17 | ISSUE NO.: 166 | RANGAREDDY (HYDERABAD) | PAGES: 12 | RS. 1/-

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2026 | WWW.HYDERABADHEADLINES.COM







OBTUSE ANGLE



by BP ACHARYA

Fortress Delhi: Jantar Mantar Deserted as 7,000 Protesters, Four Former CMs Detained

Jantar Mantar deserted as mass detentions foil CJP stir; leaders trade charges over crackdown.

Opposition cries 'Super Emergency' as Delhi detains thousands; BJP calls protest a flop show.

30,000 security personnel deployed as CJP's protest over alleged vote theft triggers political showdown.

CJP vows nationwide stir as police detain thousands; CJP To Resume Jantar Mantar March Tomorrow

> We are here to be arrested. Come and arrest us." Dipke said the detention of CJP leaders amounted to dictatorship and questioned the police action against protesters.
>
> ***Abhijeet Dipke, CJP leader***

> "We are going to ensure that this regime and the people who have attacked the Constitution are defeated." He urged young people to continue protesting.
>
> ***Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader***

> "This has gone beyond an Emergency; it has become a Super Emergency.
>
> ***Mamata Banerjee, TMC chief***

> "The security clampdown in Delhi is worse than the Emergency." Kejriwal called on people to reach the capital and demand the CEC's resignation over alleged vote theft.
>
> ***Arvind Kejriwal, AAP chief***

> "If the detainees are not released within 24 hours, I will consider a peaceful protest, including a hunger strike or a march in Leh or Delhi."
>
> ***Sonam Wangchuk, activist***

NEW DELHI, OCT. 10

An unprecedented security clampdown and the detention of more than 7,000 protesters, including Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leader Abhijit Dipke, four former chief ministers and YouTuber Dhruv Rathee, thwarted a planned mass mobilisation at Jantar Mantar on Saturday to demand the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

Jantar Mantar, a designated protest site, wore a deserted look throughout the day as more than 30,000 police and paramilitary personnel were deployed across the national capital. Multiple layers of barricades, the closure of 45 metro stations and intensive security checks at border points, railway stations, bus terminals, hotels and other sensitive locations disrupted movement across Lutyens' Delhi.

Opposition parties described the crackdown as worse than the Emergency. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who was in Chennai for his Chhatron Ki Goonj event, urged young people to continue protesting, asserting that the Opposition would ensure the defeat of the government and those who had attacked the Constitution.

Several Opposition leaders, including former chief ministers Arvind Kejriwal of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Mamata Banerjee of the Trinamool Congress (TMC), Pinarayi Vijayan of the CPI(M) and Manik Sarkar of the CPI(M), were detained at different locations across Delhi as they attempted to join the protest called by the CJP.

CM Revanth warns crisis looms large under El Nino conditions

officials to finalise a robust action plan to tackle El Nino crisis

Create awareness among people on the El Nino challenges

Take measures to protect standing crops

Postpone electricity intensive activities.. 8 months are crucial

A special meeting with ministers soon on El Nino

Appeal to centre to increase job days

'War Room' to continuously monitor the situation

CM Revanth Reddy holds a meeting with officials today



Hyderabad , October 10: Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy directed officials to prepare a robust plan for immediate action amid the emerging crisis conditions caused by El Niño in the Telangana state. On Saturday, the Chief Minister held a review meeting with senior officials at his Jubilee Hills residence on the El Niño weather condition in the state . During the extensive discussions with officials on the course of action required to tackle the potential risk of a severe future crisis, the CM emphasized the need to formulate a proper action plan, particularly to address the drinking water crisis , irrigation, agriculture, and the supply of electricity .

CM Revanth Reddy warned that failure to anticipate the impending crisis caused by El Niño could lead to severe problems in the future. The Chief Minister emphasized that all necessary precautionary measures should be taken to address every challenge.

Creating awareness among people from village to state level on El Nino conditions was discussed in the meeting. A campaign about the El Nino impact through TV channels, cinema halls and cultural troops to educate people from the village to state level would be launched soon.

" Next 8 Months Are Crucial"

The Chief Minister cautioned the next eight months are crucial in dealing with the El Niño crisis. Stating that the public should also be involved

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KTR demands cancellation of Radial Road-2 tenders



Hyderabad, Oct.10: BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao has accused the Congress government in Telangana of irregularities in the ₹3,296-crore Radial Road-2 tender process and demanded the immediate cancellation of the tenders and a comprehensive inquiry into the alleged irregularities. In an open letter to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Saturday, KT Rama Rao questioned the allocation of contracts, the disqualification of bidders who had reportedly quoted lower prices, and the award of packages at rates allegedly higher than the estimated costs. He demanded that the government make all tender documents public and explain the decisions taken in selecting contractors. The project envisages an 81.15-km greenfield expressway connecting the Outer Ring Road at Budvel to NH-167N near Kodangal. It has been divided into three packages. The BRS working president questioned whether the tendering process had been conducted transparently and whether technical eligibility criteria had been applied uniformly to all bidders. He alleged that certain companies were disqualified on technical grounds while contracts were awarded to firms allegedly favoured by the authorities. He also questioned how 13 bids for a project of this scale could have been evaluated and processed in approximately five working days. Stressing the need for accountability, KT Rama Rao demanded full transparency in the tendering process and said the protection of Telangana's public funds must remain paramount.

Governor hails Bathukamma's bond with nature

HYDERABAD, OCT.10

Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla stated that Bathukamma, the unique floral festival of Telangana, represents the State's rich cultural heritage, traditions and deep-rooted bond with nature. On the occasion of Engili Pula Bathukamma, marking the beginning of the vibrant floral festival, the Governor extended his warm greetings to all the people of Telangana, particularly women. In a statement on Saturday, the Governor observed that decorating Bathukamma with a variety of flowers and celebrating the festival collectively reflects the spirit of unity, harmony, affection and reverence for nature among the people of Telangana.

He wished that the blessings of Goddess Gauramma bring happiness and prosperity to every household and that the cultural splendour of Telangana continues to shine across the world.

AITUC-BACKED EMPLOYEES UNION WINS RTC RECOGNITION POLLS

Hyderabad, Oct.10: CPI leader K. Narayana has congratulated Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) workers and the AITUC-affiliated Employees Union on its victory in the trade union recognition elections. Narayana said the union's victory and the support extended by allied unions should strengthen the collective struggle for workers' rights. He accused the Congress of politicising the elections by openly calling on workers to "defeat the Communists", despite the polls being intended to be fought independently of political affiliations. Narayana said the unity among the Employees Union and allied trade unions should continue beyond the elections and help advance workers' demands.

Telangana to set up Centre of Excellence for MSMEs: Sridhar Babu

Monthly grievance day planned to address MSME concerns

HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 10

Telangana plans to establish a Centre of Excellence for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to help businesses adopt modern technology, access investment and expand their markets, IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu said on Saturday.

The proposed centre will support technology adoption, market access and investment linkages, with a focus on promoting products made in Telangana in national and international markets.



Inaugurating the LUB MSME South India Summit, organised by Laghu Udyog Bharati (Telangana) at Taj Deccan in Banjara Hills, Mr. Sridhar Babu said MSMEs played a vital role in industrial development and supported the livelihoods of millions of families. He said the State government had introduced a dedicated MSME policy to strengthen the sector and improve support for small businesses. The government was also planning to organise a monthly MSME Grievance Day to address MSME grievances and facilitate their resolution, he said.

Mr. Sridhar Babu said steps were being taken to improve industrial estates in Hyderabad and its outskirts. He urged MSMEs to focus on product quality, technology adoption, skill development and production capacity to remain competitive. SBI Managing Director Ram Mohan Rao and Laghu Udyog Bharati (Telangana) representatives Y. Venkateswarlu, K. Narendra Nath Dutt and Om Anuj Khadelwal, among others, attended the summit.

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Slash Your Power Bills: TGSPDCL Urges Telangana Residents to Capitalize on PM Surya Ghar Scheme

With streamlined approvals, fee waivers, and direct Central subsidies up to ₹78,000, TGSPDCL makes transitioning to clean energy seamless and cost-effective.



Medchal-Malkajgiri, October 10: In a major push toward energy self-sufficiency and clean power adoption, the Telangana Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TGSPDCL) has issued an appeal encouraging domestic electricity consumers across the state to adopt rooftop solar installations. Released from Hyderabad on October 10, 2026, the utility emphasized that generating solar power directly at home lowers monthly electricity bills, reduces grid dependence, and enables excess electricity to be fed back into the power grid under applicable net-metering regulations. The initiative operates within the framework of the Central Government's PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSGMBY), which provides direct Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to make residential solar energy affordable for households.

Under the PM Surya Ghar scheme, domestic consumers can claim a maximum financial subsidy of ₹78,000 for installing a 3 kWp rooftop solar system. The subsidy is structured to give maximum early benefit, delivering ₹30,000 per kW for the first 2 kWp installed and ₹18,000 for the third kWp, with total central funding capped at the 3 kWp threshold. Extending coverage to multi-family properties, Group Housing Societies and Resident Welfare Associations (GHS/RWAs) can access ₹18,000 per kW up to a total capacity of 500 kWp to meet energy requirements for common utilities and electric vehicle charging points. To qualify for subsidies, installations must use solar modules manufactured from domestically produced solar cells in strict accordance with the Domestic Content Requirement (DCR) standards.

To streamline the transition for consumers, TGSPDCL has integrated its systems with the PM Surya Ghar Portal 2.0 and removed major bureaucratic delays. Residential systems up to 10 kWp no longer require technical feasibility studies, load enhancements are automated with fees collected through regular utility billing cycles, and requirement for physical net-metering agreements has been relaxed. Furthermore, for registrations submitted between June 22, 2026, and March 31, 2027, TGSPDCL has waived application fees for systems up to 10 kWp. The DISCOM actively maintains monthly coordination meetings on the first Wednesday of every month alongside solar vendors, TGREDCO, and REC officials to address bottlenecks, while having recently conducted division-level Seva Setu awareness camps featuring live portal registration demonstrations and user testimonials.

This utility initiative aligns directly with the state government's overarching renewable strategy championed by Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Sri Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka. Approved under the Utility-Led Aggregation (ULA) model on November 15, 2025, Telangana aims to deploy 4,066 MW of capacity across 20.33 lakh households, with TGREDCO serving as the primary implementing agency alongside the linked Gruha Jyothi and PM Surya Ghar schemes. Within TGSPDCL's specific operational territory, 10,11,533 households have been targeted for a 2,023 MW capacity, with initial MNRE approval already granted for 20,175 first-phase installations. Parallel rural initiatives backed by ₹943.47 crore in administrative sanctions cover solarization for 40,349 households across 80 villages—including 14,898 households in TGSPDCL areas—along with solar power installations planned for 16,805 agricultural pump sets.

As of October 9, 2026, TGSPDCL has achieved impressive milestones across all active solar tracks, recording a total of 79,976 registrations, 62,818 installed systems, and a cumulative installed capacity of 831.872 MW across the region. Net-metering accounts for 29,777 installed systems yielding 640.852 MW, while the PM Surya Ghar scheme accounts for 29,816 installations totaling 125.613 MW. The Model Solar Village programme accounts for 3,190 systems generating 6.407 MW, alongside 35 operational installations under PM-KUSUM Component-A adding 59 MW. Urging the public to join this movement, TGSPDCL CMD Sri Jitesh V. Patil, IAS, highlighted that adopting rooftop solar allows consumers to actively reduce their personal bill burden while advancing environmental protection across Telangana. Eligible households can register online via the official national portal at pmsuryaghar.gov.in or consult local DISCOM section offices to apply.

25 Crore Children's Dreams: Lotus Lap Students Shine at Seva Sankalp Abhiyan Competitions

Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy Appeals to Telangana CM Revanth Reddy to Organise Statewide Competitions on Telangana Vision–2047

HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 10



Students of Lotus Lap Public Schools, Dilsukhnagar and Boduppal branches, enthusiastically participated in district-level elocution and painting competitions organised under the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan in collaboration with Lotus Lap Public Schools. The competitions were held on October 10 at Delhi Public School (DPS), Hyderabad, with the objective of nurturing creativity, communication skills, national awareness and a spirit of responsibility towards nation-building.

Young Minds Dream of Viksit Bharat–2047

The competitions revolved around inspiring themes such as My Dream for Viksit Bharat, My Vision for a Developed Telangana, India's Journey Towards Viksit Bharat–2047, and The Role of Youth in Nation-Building. Through English elocution, students confidently presented their ideas and aspirations, while the painting competition provided a creative platform for young artists to express their vision of a developed India and Telangana.

Special Focus on Operation Sindoor

The topic Operation Sindoor – Courage, National Security and the Sacrifice of Our Armed Forces formed an important part of the elocution competition. It encouraged students to understand and appreciate the bravery, dedication and sacrifices of India's armed forces in protecting the nation's security.

Management Congratulates Participants

Lotus Lap Public Schools Chairman, Vidya Ratna Lion Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, and Director Mr. Komatireddy Abhishek Reddy congratulated the students on their enthusiastic participation, confidence and creative expression. They encouraged students to participate in more educational and extracurricular activities, develop leadership qualities and strive for excellence in every field.

The programme concluded with the distribution of prizes to the winners and certificates to the participants in recognition of their efforts and achievements.

Appeal to Telangana CM for Statewide Telangana Vision–2047 Competitions

On this occasion, Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy appealed to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Telangana, Sri A. Revanth Reddy Garu, to organise statewide painting, elocution and debate competitions on the theme "Telangana Vision–2047."

He urged the state government to provide equal opportunities to students from all government and private schools and conduct the competitions at school, mandal, district and state levels. Emphasising the importance of involving children in the state's long-term development journey, he stated that such competitions would promote innovative thinking, leadership, environmental awareness, social responsibility and active participation in building a developed Telangana. "The dreams of 25 crore children can become the foundation for a stronger and more developed India. Every child deserves an opportunity to express ideas, share aspirations and contribute to the future of our nation and state. By introducing children to Telangana Vision–2047 at an early age, we can nurture confident, responsible, creative and environmentally conscious citizens who will shape tomorrow's society," Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy said.

Nurturing Responsible Citizens for the Future

Lotus Lap Public Schools remains committed to nurturing creativity, leadership, social responsibility and national awareness among students. Through academic learning, competitions and community-oriented initiatives, the institution strives to identify and develop every child's potential and prepare students to contribute meaningfully to the progress of the nation. Seva Sankalp Abhiyan – Inspiring Young Minds, Empowering Children's Dreams and Building the Future of Viksit Bharat and Viksit Telangana!

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Fortress Delhi: Jantar Mantar Deserted as 7,000 Protesters, Four Former CMs Detained

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"This has gone beyond an Emergency; it has become a Super Emergency," Banerjee said. Several detained leaders alleged that they were driven around in police vehicles for hours.

CPI(M) general secretary M.A. Baby, veteran Left leader Brinda Karat, CPI(ML) Liberation general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, activist Yogendra Yadav, lawyer Prashant Bhushan and All India Students' Association (AISA) president Neha were among those detained.

Gandhi also criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), describing "cowardice" as their "core characteristic". The Congress, which has been organising protests demanding the CEC's resignation over allegations of vote theft, however, maintained its distance from the CJP's agitation.

Dipke and two other CJP leaders, Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka, were detained by Delhi Police from inside their aircraft soon after it landed in the national capital from Mumbai. In a video shared by the CJP, Dipke was heard telling police personnel who entered the aircraft, "We are here to be arrested, come and arrest us." Before the detention, police informed the CJP leaders that they did not have permission to hold the protest at Jantar Mantar. Dipke alleged that the leaders were being treated like criminals and described the action as dictatorial, claiming that even former prime minister Indira Gandhi had not taken such steps.

YouTuber Dhruv Rathee, who lives abroad and had travelled to India to join the protest against CEC Kumar, was detained by police from his residence in Sector 56 of Gurugram on Saturday.

Stone-pelting incidents, police injured

Tensions escalated at two locations in the capital as groups of protesters allegedly clashed with security personnel. Around 1 pm, several protesters jumped barricades near Akashwani Bhawan on Imtiaz Ali Marg and hurled stones at police personnel, injuring two of them. The protesters were subsequently detained.

A similar incident occurred in the evening near the Hanuman Temple in Connaught Place, where some protesters allegedly threw stones at security personnel. Seven police personnel were injured in incidents linked to the detention of protesters. Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Anant Mittal also sustained a hand injury while detaining Left leaders, including AISA's Neha. A senior police officer said multiple FIRs were likely to be registered in connection with the alleged assaults on police personnel.

Police detained groups of protesters from several locations, including Hanuman Temple, Akashwani Bhawan, Safdarjung Flyover and Kerala House. Announcements were repeatedly made at Jantar Mantar, asking people and mediapersons not to congregate in one place. A few protesters who managed to reach the designated protest site were also taken into custody. Police sources said more than 7,000 protesters were detained across Delhi, including over 2,000 in the New Delhi area. More than 120 companies of Central Armed Police Forces assisted Delhi Police in managing the security arrangements. Personnel were stationed at strategic locations, while mock drills were conducted at several places to assess preparedness and response mechanisms.

Authorities also monitored social media platforms for attempts to mobilise people for the protest. More than 200 content creators were reportedly under scrutiny as police examined online posts and messages linked to the proposed gathering. Liquor shops across Delhi were closed as a precautionary measure.

CJP vows to continue agitation

In a prerecorded video message released soon after his detention, Dipke said CJP in-charge Ajinkya Shinde would lead the protest at Jantar Mantar. The organisation maintained that its agitation would continue nationwide, irrespective of the detention of its leaders.

Police informed Dipke about the death of his paternal grandmother, Savitribai Shankarrao Dipke, 85, in Maharashtra and offered to facilitate his journey to his hometown on humanitarian grounds. Family sources said she died at her residence in Santuk Pimpri village in Hingoli district around 11.30 am on Saturday following a prolonged illness.

Activist Sonam Wangchuk said he would consider launching a peaceful protest, including a hunger strike or a march in Leh or Delhi, if the detainees were not released within 24 hours.

Wangchuk had joined an earlier 36-day CJP agitation at Jantar Mantar over the NEET paper leak issue, which ended on July 25 following the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. The agitation had witnessed major disorder during a march towards Parliament on July 20, when security personnel attempted to stop the protesters.

BJP calls protest a 'flop show'

The BJP criticised the Opposition, claiming that the protest intended to hold the capital "hostage" had turned into a "flop show". The ruling party accused Rahul Gandhi of spreading anarchy in collusion with foreign powers and compared him to historical figure Mir Jafar. BJP leader Sambit Patra described the developments as a victory of democracy over "mob rule", as police detained hundreds of young people and several political leaders attempting to reach Jantar Mantar.

BJP president Nitin Nabin accused Gandhi, Kejriwal and the CJP of attempting to destabilise the country with the backing of foreign forces. He asserted that the government would act firmly against their alleged intentions and said BJP workers would counter their plans on the ground. The party held a series of press conferences and deployed senior leaders to respond to the Opposition's allegations.

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the capital would not be allowed to be held hostage. She accused Gandhi and Kejriwal of attempting to turn Delhi into a "battleground" in coordination with the CJP, which she described as their "B-Team".

Congress attacks government over detentions

AAP leaders, including Kejriwal, who had openly supported the CJP's protest, were also prevented from reaching Jantar Mantar. Kejriwal had announced that he would participate in the agitation along with his family members. Shortly before his detention, Kejriwal issued a "Delhi chalo" call, urging young people across the country to reach the capital and demand the CEC's resignation over alleged vote theft. He described the security clampdown and the detention of CJP leaders as worse than the Emergency. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge criticised the Modi government over the police action, alleging that it had turned the "mother of democracy" into a "muzzled democracy". He said the BJP and RSS had displayed cowardice through the crackdown.

Several journalists also alleged that they were detained despite displaying their press identity cards. According to the reporters, police personnel seized their official phones before taking them to detention buses along with other protesters. Visuals circulating on social media showed journalists displaying their press identity cards from inside the buses.

With restrictions affecting major transport hubs and several parts of the capital, commuters were advised to follow official announcements and plan their journeys accordingly.

CJP To Resume Jantar Mantar March Tomorrow

Delhi is on high alert on Saturday as the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) prepares to stage a major protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar at Jantar Mantar. Authorities have planned a deployment of over 20,000 police and Central Armed Police Forces personnel, alongside restrictions on metro, rail and internet services. Police have denied permission for the demonstration, but CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke has said supporters will proceed with the protest.

Yogi Challenges Akhilesh to Face-Off in Ayodhya in 2027



LUCKNOW, OCT 10

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has responded to Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav's challenge to contest the 2027 Assembly elections from Ayodhya by daring the former chief minister to enter the fray from the temple town himself. "Akhileshji, I have an offer for you. You also file your nomination from Shri Ayodhya Dham, and I will do the same," Adityanath said on Saturday while inaugurating and laying the foundation stones for 78 development projects worth over Rs 800 crore in Balrampur district.

The exchange has intensified the political sparring between the BJP and the SP ahead of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, with Ayodhya emerging as the focal point of their contest. Yadav had challenged Adityanath on Thursday to contest from Ayodhya, questioning the BJP's confidence in the constituency. He claimed that the ruling party was trailing in surveys conducted after the SP announced Tej Narayan Pandey as its candidate. "Ever since we announced our candidate, the BJP has been holding survey after survey, and it is falling behind in every survey. We are now hearing that they have not been able to find a new candidate for Ayodhya. If the chief minister, who makes tall claims, is so confident, he should contest the election from Ayodhya himself and prove it," Yadav had said.

Responding to the challenge, Adityanath accused the SP chief of being unsettled by the development taking place in the state. He said Ayodhya was a sacred place for the BJP and not merely an electoral battleground. "The Samajwadi Party is rattled. He (Yadav) can no longer see the development taking place in the state, nor does he have the ability to recognise it," the chief minister said, reiterating his challenge to Yadav to contest against him directly. "Let us test our luck once. Why fight through your followers? The contest should be face-to-face," he added.

Yadav hit back, asserting that a young SP candidate was capable of defeating the BJP in Ayodhya. Invoking the controversy over alleged irregularities in donations to the Ram temple, he accused the BJP of shielding those allegedly involved. "One of our young 'PDA' sentinels is enough to defeat the donation thieves in Ayodhya. Those who give clean chits to thieves are partners in crime. The public will end their arrogance. Have you forgotten the Lok Sabha?" Yadav said in a post on X. The SP has already named Tej Narayan Pandey as its candidate from Ayodhya. The alleged misappropriation of Ram temple donations has become a key issue in the Opposition's criticism of the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh. The political exchange comes as both parties begin positioning themselves for the 2027 Assembly polls, with Ayodhya carrying particular political and symbolic significance following the construction of the Ram temple.

CM Revanth warns crisis looms large under El Nino conditions



➢FROM PAGE 1

as partners in implementing the action plan during the crisis, the CM noted that the power crisis may intensify in the coming days. While the government is prepared to incur any necessary expenditure to procure the required electricity for the state, the CM made it clear that the availability of power in the market is scarce . The officials were advised to ensure the prudent use of available electricity and to take measures to temporarily postpone electricity-intensive activities wherever possible. In view of the water crisis, the Chief Minister ordered the officials to assess the standing crops and ensure there is no water shortage until the harvest is complete. The CM emphasized the need for special measures to prevent the water crisis from worsening in the future and insisted that precautions be taken to ensure not a single drop of water goes to waste.

"Special Meeting with Ministers Soon"

CM Revanth Reddy announced that a special meeting with ministers would be held soon to discuss the impact of El Niño and the prevailing rainfall deficit in the state. Some key decisions would be taken after deliberating on the situation in areas with low rainfall, the difficulties faced by farmers, and the immediate measures the government needs to implement. Amidst the prevailing drought-like conditions in approximately 215 mandals across the state, the state government has already adopted a resolution in the Assembly and appealed to the Centre to declare these areas as drought-affected, provide adequate financial assistance, and allocate a special package of ₹20,000 crore. The Chief Minister instructed officials to appeal to the Centre to provide an additional 50 days of employment as against the standard 125 days under the employment guarantee scheme. The state government is ready to facilitate these extra workdays, the CM said that a decision regarding the formation of an all-party committee, if necessary, would be taken after discussing the matter with the ministers.

Officials were directed to organize awareness programs—spanning from the village level up to the mandal, district, and state levels—following the Dussehra festival. The CM also suggested setting up a 'war room' to continuously monitor the situation and establishing a toll-free helpline. The Chief Minister ordered senior officials from the CMO to constantly oversee power supply arrangements. Government Advisor Ramakrishna Rao, MP Vem Narendar Reddy, Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju, DGP CV Anand, and other senior officials participated in the meeting.

CM REVANTH TO INAUGURATE SAMAKHYA GLOBAL BUSINESS MEET ON OCT 14

HYDERABAD, OCT.10

The Samakhya Chamber of Commerce will organise the two-day Samakhya Global Business Meet - 2026 at the HITEX Exhibition Centre in Hyderabad on October 14 and 15, with Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy set to inaugurate the event. The announcement was made by chamber representatives TVN Rao, PV Rao, AV Ratnam, Thota Chandrasekhar and Rajinikanth at a press conference in Lakdikapul on Saturday.

Revanth Reddy will attend as the chief guest and inaugurate the meet at 10.30 am on October 14. Renowned actor and Padma Vibhushan awardee Konidela Chiranjeevi will participate at 5 pm on the same day. Union Minister of State for Rural Development Kamlesh Paswan will also attend the inaugural programme. The meet aims to promote business partnerships, attract investments, explore international markets and strengthen cooperation across industries. It will bring together entrepreneurs and business representatives from diverse sectors to facilitate networking, investment opportunities and new commercial collaborations.

Teachers Urged to Identify and Address Students Learning Difficulties

Dr Lion Komatireddy Gopal Reddy calls for individual attention, effective teaching strategies and stronger parent-teacher collaboration





HYDERABAD

Subject teachers should take the lead in identifying students' learning difficulties and addressing them through individual attention, targeted teaching strategies and regular progress reviews, educationist and environmentalist Dr Lion Komatireddy Gopal Reddy said at a teachers' meeting at Oakwood International School, Dilsukhnagar.

Dr Gopal Reddy, Chairman of Lotus Lap Public Schools and Oakwood International Schools (CBSE), said a teacher's responsibility extended beyond delivering lessons to understanding each student's learning needs and supporting meaningful academic progress. He urged teachers to assess students' understanding regularly, identify areas of difficulty and determine the reasons behind them. Challenges such as difficulty understanding concepts, reading problems, weak comprehension or hesitation in asking questions, he said, should receive timely attention and support.

Individual attention is essential

Noting that students differ in their learning styles, levels of comprehension and pace of learning, Dr Gopal Reddy advised teachers against adopting a uniform approach in the classroom. He called for teaching methods to be adapted to individual learning requirements.

He stressed that teachers should identify the root cause of a learning difficulty before attempting to resolve it. Setting aside time for individual interaction, clarifying doubts, reinforcing concepts through additional practice and monitoring progress regularly could help students overcome learning gaps, he said.

"Identifying a problem is only the first step. A teacher must understand its underlying cause and work towards an appropriate solution. Subject teachers have a crucial responsibility in ensuring that every child understands what is being taught," he said.

He also emphasised the need to strengthen foundational skills, including reading, comprehension, writing, critical thinking and the ability to frame and answer questions.

Partnership between teachers and parents

Dr Gopal Reddy said a child's academic performance could be influenced by several factors, including the home environment, parental expectations and emotional well-being. He encouraged teachers to maintain constructive communication with parents and work with them to support students' academic and personal development. Teachers should approach students with patience and empathy rather than creating fear or comparing them with their peers, he said. Recognising incremental improvements and encouraging individual progress could help build confidence and foster a positive attitude towards learning. He also called for a systematic approach to tracking student performance, identifying learning gaps and providing remedial instruction wherever necessary.

School leaders and teachers participate

Oakwood International Schools Director Mr Bhavani Shanker, Principal Ms Shirisha, Samaritan Public School Principal Ms Devi, school incharges, heads of department (HODs) and subject teachers participated in the programme. The meeting focused on identifying students' academic and behavioural concerns, improving classroom management, resolving subject-related doubts and strengthening coordination between teachers and parents. Teachers took part in discussions on improving classroom practices and providing more effective support to students. Dr Gopal Reddy said the broader objective of education should be to help every child overcome learning difficulties, develop self-confidence and make academic progress according to their individual abilities.

Telangana eyes global rice markets: Stephen Raveendra

HYDERABAD



Telangana is expanding its agricultural role from feeding the nation to feeding the global market, stated Stephen Raveendra, Commissioner of Telangana Civil Supplies and Ex-Officio Principal Secretary.

Addressing international agricultural leaders at the International World Rice Conference (IWRC) 2026 in Manila, Philippines, Stephen Raveendra highlighted Telangana's rapid rise as an agricultural powerhouse and invited global trade partners to explore direct commercial ties with the state.

Highlighting the state's yield performance, he noted that Telangana produced 18.5 million tonnes of rice last season. This accounts for nearly 12 percent of India's total rice production while using just 10 percent of the nation's rice-growing land, he said.

"The Civil Supplies department is strategically shifting its focus from surplus management to unlocking global value from our agricultural abundance," Stephen Raveendra said.

He emphasised that the state is aggressively promoting high-quality fine and superfine rice varieties tailored to international consumer demands and premium global markets. Building on a successful shipment of 30,000 tonnes of rice to the Philippines in 2025, Telangana is actively pursuing long-term supply partnerships across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The state is encouraging international buyers, retailers, food corporations, and exporters to partner directly with local suppliers for traceable, customised shipments, he said.

Stephen Raveendra reaffirmed the state government's commitment to establishing transparent, long-term trade relations that elevate Telangana into a branded, reliable, and globally competitive origin for premium rice.

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E-Tender Notice No.26.2026 Dt: 07/10/2026

Senior Divisional Engineer/ Coordination / Guntakal acting for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tenders for the following works:

S.No.: 01 **Tender No.:** Engg-GTL-Bridges-2163 **Description of work :** Guntakal Division: SW1: RU-NRE & GDR-RU-KPD sec: Provision of cradle arrangement work for various major bridges and ROBs in SSE/Br/RU jurisdiction. SW2: BAY-GTL, GY-KLU & DMM-PAK section: Provision of Cradle arrangements for the various major and ROBS in SSE/Br/Central/ GTL jurisdiction. **Advertised Value (₹):** 5,93,82,199.11ps **Earnest Money Deposit in (₹):** 11,87,600.00ps

S.No.: 01 **Tender No.:** Engg-GTL-Bridges-2164 **Description of work :** Guntakal Division: Proposed Annual maintenance of Water level Monitoring system in the waterway bridges for Three years- Total 7 Bridges (RU-GY 579 UP, GDR-RU 59 UP, GDR-RU 118 DN, KLU-GY 45, RU-GY 688 DN, GTL-WD 1017DN, BAY-GTL 292 UP **Advertised Value (₹):** 62,55,900.00ps **Earnest Money Deposit in (₹):** 1,25,100.00ps

Any corrigenda will be issued online only.

Divisional Railway Manager/ Works/Guntakal

Tender No.GTL-EM-47-2026-27 Date:08.10.2026

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/ Maintenance/Guntakal, acting for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Tender No.: GTL-EM-47-26-27 **Name of work :** Guntakal Division-Provision of APFC Panels in AD, HX, NRE, RC, and RU Sections for Improving the Power Quality. **Approximate Value (₹):** 1619304.14

Closing date and time: 30-10-2026 at 15:00 hrs

For bidding the tender and other details, log in to **http://www.ireps.gov.in**. Corrigendum of tender, if any, will be issued online only.

Note: To participate/Bid in this e-Tender, the tenderer should have a valid DSC(Digital Signature Certificate).

Sr.Divisional Electrical Engineer, Maintenance, Guntakal

E-Tender Notice No:GNT/E.08/ GS/TrD/2026-27

E-Tenders form the Contractors for the following works are invited by the undersigned up to **15.30 hrs on 09.11.2026.**

S.No.: 01 **Tender Title:** NLPD: Augmentation of freight examination facilites at NLPD station - 25kv OHE Arrangements. **Tender Ref No:** GNT/E.08/GS/TrD/2026-27 **Approx value in (₹):** 3,84,15,401/- **Earnest money deposit in (₹):** 7,68,300/- **Cost of tender form (non-refundable in) (₹):** NIL

Last Date and time for online submission of E-bids: 09.11.2026 up to 15.30 hours.

For any detailed information log on to website **www.ireps.gov.in** on or after 08.10.2026 up to 15-30 hrs on 09.11.2026. Any further Communication / Corrigendum shall only be intimated through E-portal **www.ireps.gov.in**

Sr.Divisional Electrical Engineer/ TRD/Guntur
SCoR-A431

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at https://www.ireps.gov.in or www.scor.indianrailways.gov.in

ESCI Holds First Skill Convocation for EV Battery Sustainability Engineers

HYDERABAD

The Engineering Staff College of India (ESCI), Hyderabad, held its first Skill Convocation Ceremony for the Automotive Sector's EV Battery Sustainability Engineer course on 10th October, 2026. The candidateswho successfully completed the industry-oriented skill development programme received their certificates from the distinguished guests at the ceremony.

The 600-hour course, launched for the first time in India by ESCI in February 2026, was designed to equip candidates with industry-ready skills in electric mobility and battery sustainability. The programmecomprised 300 hours of practical training, 150 hours of theoretical instruction and 150 hours of on-the-job training. The certificates awarded to the successful candidates are approved by the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET), under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India.

Dr. Shruti Patil, Director, Symbiosis Artificial Intelligence Institute, Symbiosis International University, Pune, who was the Chief Guest, emphasized the importance of skill-oriented courses in creating opportunities for self-employment and entrepreneurship. Drawing a comparison with the growth of the IT and service sectors, she said that industry-relevant skills like Machine learning, Data Sciences and Agentic AI were essential for professional success. Congratulating the successful candidates, Dr. Patil said that they have to worktowards building a sustainable future for the electric mobility ecosystem.

Shri V. B. Singh, Immediate Past President of the Institution of Engineers (India) (IEI), reaffirmed the Institution's commitment to promoting excellence in engineering and strengthening India's position as a global leader.

Dr. G. Ranganath, Past President of IEI, stated that the initiative had been conceived during his presidency in 2023–2024 and had materialized in 2026 through the continued efforts and follow-up of the present IEI President, Sri Manish Mahendra Kothari, along with the necessary approval from the Ministry.

Shri Sanjay Sen, President-Elect of IEI, said that the Institution was planning to introduce several more skill-oriented courses to meet the emerging needs of industry and technology. He encouraged interested candidates to visit the official IEI website for information about upcoming programmes.

Colonel Harpal Singh Grewal, Director, ESCI, said that the EV Battery Sustainability Engineer course was an important step towards developing skilled professionals for a greener and more sustainable India. He urged Dr. Shruti Patil to motivate students of her institute to contribute AI-based technical papers on the occasion of the 41st Indian Engineering Congress, scheduled to be held at the ESCI campus in Hyderabad from December 18 to 20, 2026. He also informed her that selected papers will be published in Springer Journal Shri Ashishsingh Dixit, Secretary and Director General of IEI, said that the EV Battery Sustainability Engineer programme would contribute to the development of environmentally sustainable technologies and support the vision of a greener India.

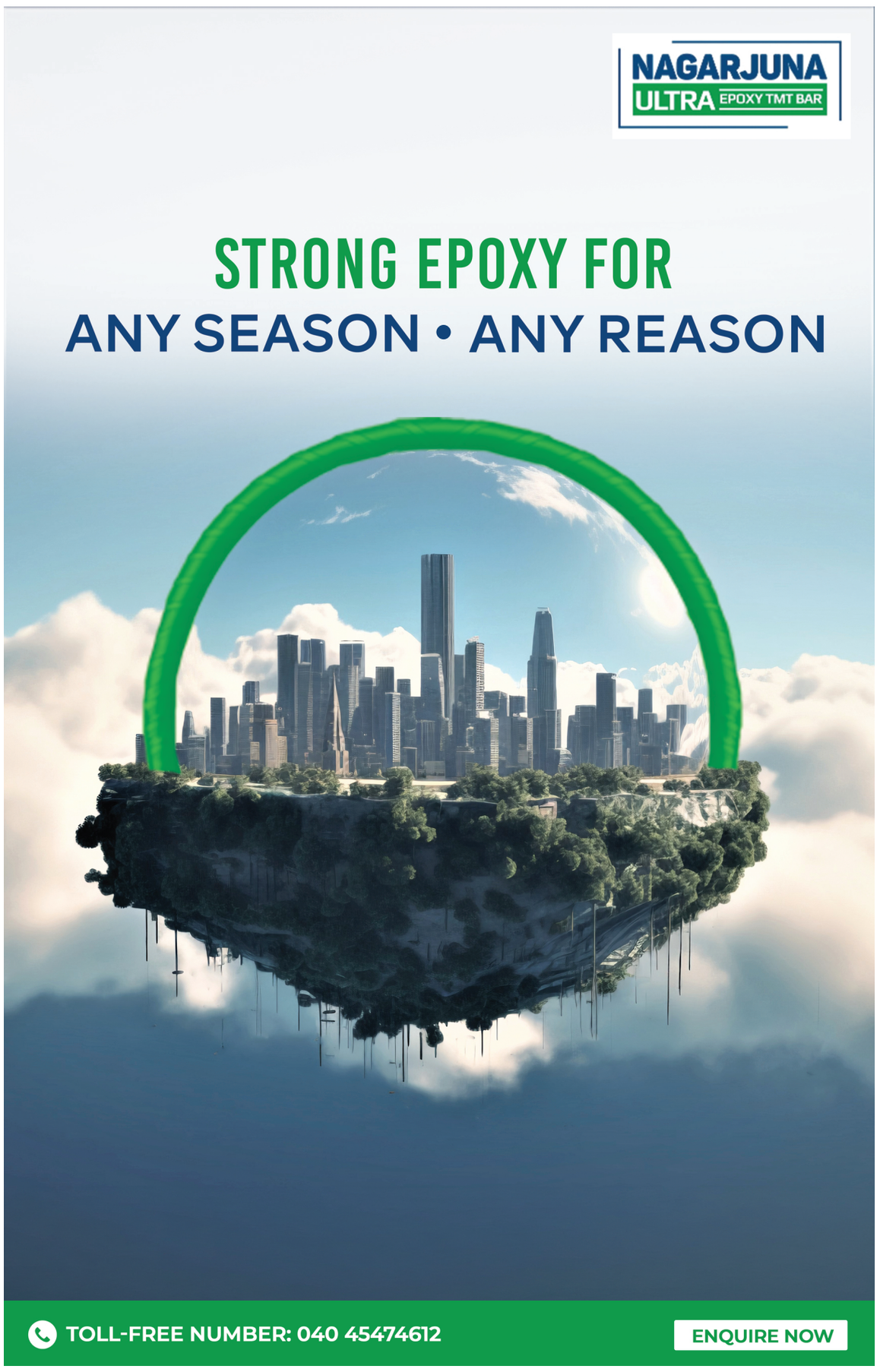
Shri Sai Kishore of the Faculty Development Cell, ESCI, explained the structure and implementation of the course and highlighted the career prospects available to its successful participants. He also announced that registrations for the second batch of the EV Battery Sustainability Engineer course had commenced from October 10, 2026.

The ceremony was attended by Sri Sajjan Singh Yadav and Sri Lochan Kumar Adhikari, Vice-Presidents of IEI, Dr. Ramana Naik, Chairman of IEI, Telangana State Centre Dr. Venkatesham, CEO of Vasavi Motors, and several other distinguished personalities from academia, industry and the engineering fraternity.

Komatireddy extends financial aid for hearing-impaired child's surgery

HYDERABAD

Roads & Buildings and Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy has extended financial assistance to a hearing- and speech-impaired child from Panigiri village in the erstwhile Nalgonda district, facilitating specialised surgery and pledging support for the child's education. The child's parents, Jampala Mahesh Kumar and Rajitha, also have hearing and speech impairments. They were distressed after their child was born with the same condition. Although doctors assured them that timely surgery and speech therapy could help the child develop speech, the high cost of treatment posed a major financial burden on the family. The couple approached Komatireddy for assistance. Responding to their request, the Minister initially provided ₹2 lakh and coordinated with medical specialists to arrange treatment at KIMS Hospital in Kondapur, Hyderabad, where the child underwent surgery successfully. On Saturday, the Minister visited the hospital to enquire about the child's health and interact with the family. He provided an additional ₹2 lakh to meet the expenses of further treatment and recovery. Doctors said the child was expected to develop the ability to speak in the coming months following post-operative speech therapy. The Minister also assured the family of continued support, pledging to bear the child's educational expenses to ensure that financial constraints did not hinder the child's future.



Biological farming can save Rs. 40,000 cr annually, says BIPA

HYDERABAD



The BioAgri Input Producers Association (BIPA) has proposed a phased 25% reduction in chemical fertiliser and pesticide use through the integration of biological inputs, estimating potential annual savings of Rs.40,000 crore for the national exchequer.

The proposal was a key focus of BIOAGRI 2026, the association's sixth annual summit held at Ramoji Film City, Hyderabad, under the theme "Biological Intelligence & Smart Agriculture".

BIPA plans to release a white paper outlining a roadmap for integrating biological inputs into conventional agriculture and initiate consultations with the government, industry and research institutions for a national policy on biological input integration.

The association said the transition could lower farming costs, improve soil health, reduce fertiliser subsidy expenditure and import dependence, and strengthen agricultural exports. It also called for a national programme to improve soil organic carbon. The summit featured 30 speakers and 36 exhibitors, with discussions on biotechnology, artificial intelligence, precision farming and sustainable agriculture. Former Plant Protection Advisor to the Government of India Dr. J. P. Singh inaugurated the event. BIPA also presented its 2026 awards recognising women leaders in agribusiness, scientific research, doctoral research, product innovation and market outreach. The Bio-ag Women Leadership Excellence Awards went to Dr. Sandeepa Kanitkar of Kanbiosys, Sudha Reddy of K N Biosciences and Lakshmi Narayanan of T-Stanes & Company.

BIPA said stronger collaboration among policymakers, scientists and industry would be essential to mainstream biological solutions in Indian agriculture. BIPA office-bearers Dr. K. R. K. Reddy, President Emeritus; Dr. A. John Peter, President; Dr. Venkatesh Devanur, Secretary General; Praharaju Laxminarayana, Vice President; and C. H. V. Srinivas, Joint Treasurer, outlined the association's priorities and the outcomes of the summit.

Pink Brigade Marches in Strength in Suryapet District Headquarters

BRS Organizes Grand Decade Celebrations to Mark 10 Years Since the Formation of Suryapet District

BRS Workers, Town Residents, and Youth Hold a 2K Run in Suryapet to Thank KCR for Creating the District

SURYAPET, OCTOBER 10





Former MLAs Dr. Gadari Kishore Kumar and Bollam Mallaiah Yadav, District Party President and Former MP Lingayya Yadav, Former ZP Chairperson Deepika Yugender Rao, Huzurnagar Constituency In-charge Onteddu Narasimha Reddy, State Leaders Y. Venkateshwarlu and Nandyala Dayakar Reddy Attend the Event

Suryapet: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) organized grand decade celebrations to mark the completion of 10 years since the formation of Suryapet district.

As part of the celebrations, BRS workers, local residents, and young people participated in a 2K run in the district headquarters to express their gratitude to former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) for establishing the district. Party cadres took out a two-kilometre rally from Saddala Cheruvu to the New Bus Stand.

Former MLAs Dr. Gadari Kishore Kumar and Bollam Mallaiah Yadav, district party president and former MP Lingayya Yadav, former Zilla Parishad chairperson Deepika Yugender Rao, Huzurnagar constituency in-charge Onteddu Narasimha Reddy, and state leaders Y. Venkateshwarlu and Nandyala Dayakar Reddy attended the programme as chief guests.

A large number of party workers arrived from the Suryapet, Thungathurthy, Huzurnagar, and Kodad constituencies to participate in the celebrations.

Remarkable Development After District Formation

Addressing the gathering, former Thungathurthy MLA Dr. Gadari Kishore Kumar explained to the younger generation how Suryapet had witnessed remarkable development following its formation as a separate district. He said that under the leadership of KCR, and through the tireless efforts of former minister Jagadish Reddy, several major development projects had been undertaken. These included the District Collectorate, SP office, medical college, Tank Bund, integrated market, SRSP water supply, and Gurukul educational institutions. He also highlighted development works worth ₹6,000 crore across the constituencies.

Kishore Kumar said that the new districts established by KCR with foresight and vision had become gateways to development. Suryapet district, in particular, had witnessed significant progress, he claimed.

He stated that the formation of new districts had brought administration closer to the people and ensured more inclusive development. With officials available within the district, people could approach authorities more easily to resolve their problems.

He further claimed that the appointment of district Superintendents of Police had helped reduce crime, while leadership opportunities and per capita income had increased. According to him, the decentralization of administrative powers had enabled the benefits of welfare and development programmes to reach disadvantaged sections of society.

Criticism of the Congress Government

Criticizing Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Kishore Kumar alleged that the current government failed to understand the importance of district reorganization and was preoccupied with personal allegations and exploitation rather than development. He described the formation of new districts as the beginning of a new era, adding that Telangana had emerged as a model for the country. Calling upon voters to respond to the Congress in the upcoming graduate constituency elections, he urged them to teach the party a lesson through the ballot box.

Addressing Revanth Reddy, he said that KCR represented a historic legacy and a towering leader, and that attempting to erase his legacy was an act of political folly.

Telangana Goes Global

PHILIPPINES, OCT 10



: Telangana is no longer just feeding India; it is preparing to feed the world. Addressing global agricultural leaders at the International World Rice Conference (IWRC) 2026 in Manila, Philippines, M. Stephen Raveendra, IPS, Commissioner of Civil Supplies & Ex-Officio Principal Secretary to Government, showcased Telangana's emergence as an agricultural powerhouse and extended an open invitation to international buyers and trade partners.

Telangana produced 18.5 million tonnes of rice last season, accounting for nearly 12 per cent of India's total rice production from just 10 per cent of the country's rice-growing area. The Civil Supplies Department is now strategically shifting its focus from managing surplus to creating global value from Telangana's agricultural abundance. The state is actively promoting high-quality fine and superfine rice varieties to meet evolving international consumer preferences and establish a strong presence in premium global markets.

Building on the successful export of 30,000 tonnes of rice to the Philippines in 2025, Telangana is now seeking long-term supply partnerships across Asia, Africa and the Middle East, with international buyers, retailers, food companies and established exporters invited to explore direct commercial opportunities for sourcing high-quality fine and superfine rice from the state. The Civil Supplies Department is working to transition Telangana from a commodity supplier into a branded, reliable and globally competitive rice supplier, offering customised and traceable supply solutions that meet international specifications. Through transparent and sustained global partnerships, the state aims to convert its substantial rice surplus into greater economic value while strengthening its position in premium international markets and ensuring that its domestic food-security requirements remain fully protected.

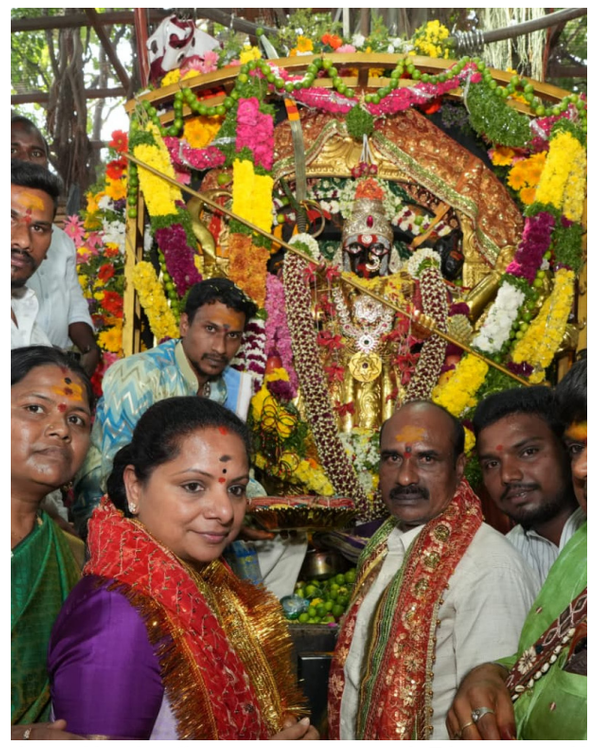
The state is committed to building transparent international partnerships that create lasting economic value and establish Telangana as a trusted global rice supplier.

Proper Facilities Must Be Provided for Devotees at Falaknuma Khali Mata Temple

Providing Basic Amenities at a Place Visited by Thousands of Devotees Is the Government's Responsibility

TRS Chief Visits Falaknuma Khali Mata Temple and Offers Special Prayers

HYDERABAD, OCT 10



Telangana Rakshana Sena chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha expressed concern over the difficulties faced by devotees due to the lack of basic amenities at the Khali Mata Temple in Falaknuma, located in the Old City of Hyderabad. She said it was unfortunate that even basic facilities had not been provided at a temple visited by thousands of devotees every day. On Friday, Kavitha visited the Falaknuma Khali Mata Temple and offered special prayers. Speaking to the media afterward, she said the Khali Mata Temple in the Old City held immense faith and significance for the people of Hyderabad and was a place where devotees sought blessings and fulfilled their wishes.

She pointed out that basic facilities were lacking at the temple. There was no proper road access to the premises, and even washroom facilities for women were unavailable. She added that railway land surrounds the temple and a burial ground is located nearby, making road construction difficult. Kavitha said she would make efforts to coordinate with the Endowments Department and railway officials to facilitate road construction and ensure that adequate amenities were provided at the temple. She also appealed to the local MLA to take the initiative to address these issues.

Batukamma Festival Greetings

Meanwhile, as the Batukamma festival is set to begin today, Kavitha extended her greetings to the people of Telangana through a post on X. She expressed her wish that all the women of Telangana would celebrate Batukamma, a festival symbolizing the state's culture and traditions, with joy and enthusiasm. She described Batukamma as a symbol of Telangana's self-respect.

Kavitha said that just as Batukamma had served as a cultural bridge during the movement for the formation of Telangana state, people should now come together and work collectively for the development and progress of all sections of society and for building a Telangana that empowers the Bahujan communities.

Mutual Respect Is the Key to Healthy Relationships

DG Charu Sinha Speaks at 'Stand With Her' Discussion Forum

Hyderabad, October 10: Charu Sinha, Director General of the CID, Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), and Women Safety Wing, said that toxic patriarchal attitudes characterized by anger, ego, and a desire for dominance must be changed. She emphasized that men can also change their learned behaviours. Men and women complement each other, and neither is superior or inferior to the other, she asserted. She was speaking at the eighth discussion forum organized on Saturday at WE Hub and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University in Hyderabad as part of the 'Stand With Her' campaign.



Emotional Regulation Is Essential

Anusha suggested that taking some time to regain emotional control during an argument can be helpful. However, she cautioned that misunderstandings may arise if a person does not communicate to the other party that they need some time. Actress and television anchor Jhansi observed that both men and women continue to perpetuate outdated attitudes related to gender discrimination within families and society. She urged everyone to recognize and change such behavioural patterns.

Sports Help Relieve Stress

Actor Vamsi Chaganti said that sports and physical exercise can help channel anger in constructive ways. Pamela Satpathy, Special Commissioner of the Labour Department, stressed that preserving relationships is more important than winning an argument when disagreements arise. Seetha Pallacholla, CEO of WE Hub, urged people to identify and change attitudes such as dismissing women's opinions and experiences or unnecessarily explaining things to women that they already understand.

Equality Is the Goal

The speakers emphasized that overcoming anger, ego, and discriminatory attitudes requires open dialogue, respect for others' opinions, and self-control. Through the 'Stand With Her' initiative, discussions are held every month on a specific topic to raise awareness about gender equality, mutual respect, and social change.

The discussion was attended by Anusha from CDEW and the Women Safety Wing; actress Jhansi; actor Vamsi Chaganti; WE Hub CEO Seetha Pallacholla; IAS officer Pamela Satpathy; TV9 senior news anchor Deepti Vajpayee; police officers and personnel; and others.

There are Specific Medications Available for Mental Illnesses Also

Dr. L. Varshi, Renowned Psychiatrist

HYDERABAD, OCT 10

A significant number of people around the world are suffering from mental disorders and are falling seriously ill, and today even for mental illness also an accurate medication available, said Dr. L. Varshi, a renowned psychiatrist. Speaking as the chief guest at a program organized by the Satavahana Lions Club on the occasion of World Mental Health Day at the Suma Hospital premises, he said that mental illness is caused by many reasons such as mental stress, anxiety, fear, loneliness, drug use, work stress, and insomnia, and if detected early, complete treatment can be provided. He said that from the level where there was no cure for mental illness in the past, today complete treatment can be provided if the right doctors are consulted at the right time. He said that if mental illness is diagnosed within two weeks, proper treatment can be provided. He said that the civil society should not hesitate to consult psychiatrists, as mental illnesses are increasingly being registered in today's fast-paced lifestyle. He said that counseling and drug treatment may also be required for mental illnesses. Program Chairman Lion Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy said that mental problems are becoming a problem worldwide and are affected by 45 crore people. He expressed regret that everyone from the age of 14 to the elderly of 100 years is suffering from mental disorders. He suggested that the civil society in the neighborhood should have a minimum understanding of mental problems and provide appropriate advice. Dr. Varshi was felicitated by the members of the Satavahana Lions Club at this event. At the same event, the city's leading ENT doctors cut a cake on the occasion of the birthday of Dr. Chakravartula Ramana Chari and expressed their wishes and felicitated him. Club President Secretaries Lion M Mahender, Lion N Venugopal, Lion Capt Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy, Lion E Ramesh, Lion K Rajender Reddy, Lion V Jagadeeswarachari, Lion Dr. S Manoharachari, Lion D Tir-

Welfare Schemes Are the Strength Behind Congress's Success

- ***Congress cadre urged to ensure a landslide victory for Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy***
- ***Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and Ministers Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy and Tummala Nageswara Rao call upon Congress cadre***

KHAMMAM, OCTOBER 10



Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and Ministers Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy and Tummala Nageswara Rao stated that the welfare schemes introduced by the People's Government would serve as a major strength for the Congress party in the upcoming Graduates' MLC elections. They called upon party leaders and workers to work collectively to ensure a landslide victory for Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy, the Congress candidate for the Nalgonda–Khammam–Warangal Graduates' Legislative Council constituency.

They were speaking as guests at a meeting held on Saturday at SR Function Hall in Khammam town. The meeting was presided over by District Congress Party President Nuthi Satyanarayana Goud.

The leaders advised party workers to take up the graduates' voter registration drive on a campaign mode and ensure that every eligible graduate was registered as a voter.

They said that a clear action plan was essential to secure a substantial majority in the MLC elections. Following the district-level meeting, they suggested conducting meetings in all five Assembly constituencies, followed by meetings at the mandal and village levels, to accelerate the graduates' voter registration process.

They called for the appointment of a senior leader as in-charge for each Assembly constituency and urged party leaders and workers to coordinate their efforts under their leadership. They explained that even those who had registered as voters in the past would need to register again in accordance with the current election process.

The leaders also asked party workers to identify graduates in Congress-affiliated families and ensure that they completed voter registration. Subsequently, they advised the cadre to reach out to neutral voters and graduates from other sections who viewed the government's welfare schemes favourably, seeking their support for the party's candidate.

Sarvotham Reddy Belongs to a Family Dedicated to Congress

The leaders stated that the family of Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy had a longstanding association with the Congress party. They recalled that the families of late leaders such as Ramreddy Venkat Reddy and Damodar Reddy had stood by the party whenever their support was needed.

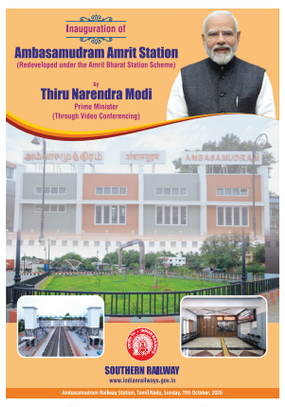
They said the Congress party would never forget a family that had worked with dedication and commitment for the organisation. They urged every party leader and worker to consider Sarvotham Reddy not merely as a candidate but as a representative of the Congress party and to take responsibility for ensuring his victory.

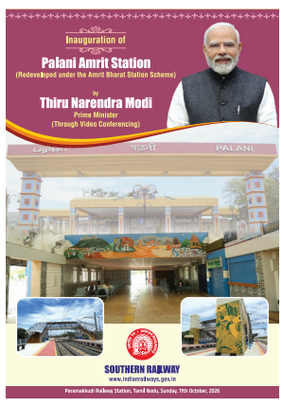
They stressed the need for vigilance and active participation at every stage, from voter registration to casting votes in the election.

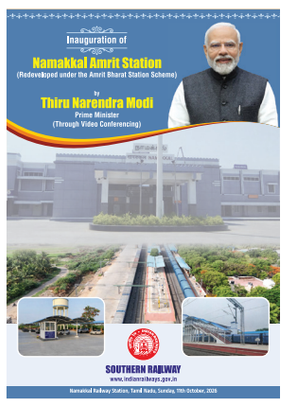
Describing Khammam district as a region with a strong foundation for the Congress party, they urged the cadre to demonstrate the same unity in the Graduates' MLC elections and work towards securing a decisive majority for Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy.

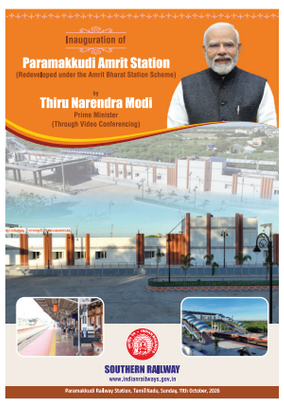
MLAs Ramdas Naik, Matta Ragamayi and Koram Kanakaiah also addressed the meeting.

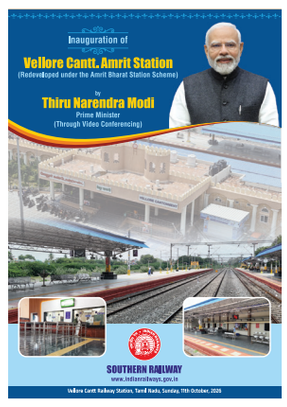
Five Redeveloped Amrit Stations











Ambasamudram

Chennai: Ambasamudram Railway Station in Tirunelveli district, on the Tirunelveli–Tenkasi section of Madurai Division, has been redeveloped under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme at a cost of ₹13 crore. Set in the Tamirabarani valley at the foot of the Western Ghats, it is the nearest railhead for Papanasam, Agasthiyar Falls and Manimuthar Falls and Dam. The station now has entrance and exit arches, a new entrance porch, an improved facade and canopy, covered parking and waiting halls. Other additions are a new 6 m wide foot overbridge, two lifts on the existing foot overbridge, platform shelters, landscaping, passenger information and train and coach indication boards. Divyangjan facilities include ramps with handrails, toilets and booking counters.

Palani

Palani Railway Station in Dindigul district, on the Dindigul–Pollachi section of Madurai Division, has been redeveloped at about ₹20 crore. It is the principal rail gateway to the Arulmigu Dhandayuthapani Swamy Temple, one of the six abodes of Lord Murugan, which draws lakhs of devotees each year, especially during Thai Poosam and Panguni Uthiram. The works include a new entrance arch, a renovated station building with new canopy and facade, covered parking for cars and two-wheelers, a new waiting hall and toilet block, and a renovated concourse and booking counter. Platform works include a new 6 m wide foot overbridge, two lifts on the existing foot overbridge, a covered ramp with tactile paving, platform shelters, passenger information and train and coach indication boards. Art and culture works on the canopy columns and Divyangjan facilities complete the upgrade.

Namakkal

Namakkal Railway Station in Namakkal district, on the Salem–Karur section of Salem Division, has been redeveloped at a cost of ₹17 crore. It serves a thriving trade and transport centre known for its rock-fort hill and rock-cut cave temples, the Anjaneyar temple with its monolithic idol of about 18 feet, and the Kolli Hills. The station building has been renovated and extended on the ground and first floors, with a new entrance porch and arch, a renovated waiting hall, an executive lounge and two booking counters. The circulating area has been widened with new two-wheeler and four-wheeler parking. Platforms have been resurfaced with tactile tiles and granite and fitted with new shelters and LED lighting. A new 6 m wide foot overbridge with lifts, passenger information and train and coach indication boards, and Divyangjan facilities including a dedicated booking counter have also been provided.

Paramakkudi

Paramakkudi Railway Station in Ramanathapuram district, on the Madurai–Manamadurai–Rameswaram section of Madurai Division, has been redeveloped at a cost of ₹14 crore. Paramakkudi is the largest town and main market hub of the district, and an important rail gateway for pilgrims and tourists heading to Rameswaram. The works include a new entrance arch, an improved station building facade and canopy, an improved circulating area with wider vehicle lanes and a separate pedestrian pathway, about 1,250 sq m of covered parking, a new waiting hall and toilets, and an improved booking counter and concourse. A new 6 m wide foot overbridge, two lifts on the existing foot overbridge, upgraded platform surfaces with tactile and warning tiles, new platform shelters and passenger information systems have also been provided. Local art and culture are reflected in the station area, and Divyangjan facilities are in place. The station is expected to help the town's handloom sector reach wider markets.

Vellore Cantonment

Vellore Cantonment Railway Station in Vellore district, on the Katpadi–Villupuram section of Tiruchirappalli Division, is an NSG-5 station in the heart of Vellore city. It has been redeveloped at a cost of ₹8 crore. The city is a centre of heritage, healthcare, education and commerce, and the station serves tourists, patients, students and business travellers. The works include a new portico and facade, an approach road with pedestrian pathway, improved circulating and parking areas, and an improved waiting hall with a reserved lounge and a retiring room. A new toilet block with water cubicles, an upgraded booking office and concourse, platform shelters (10 bays) with surface improvement on Platforms 1, 2 and 3, and landscaping with a selfie point have also been added. Passenger facilities include coach guidance display boards, arrival and departure information boards, announcement systems and digital clocks, along with Divyangjan facilities.

Karaikal–Peralam Rail Line

The 23 km Karaikal–Peralam New Line, developed at a cost of over ₹550 crore, is an important milestone in strengthening railway connectivity in Tamil Nadu. This rail link has provides a direct route between Karaikal and the Mayiladuthurai–Tiruvarur rail corridor, reducing travel time for passengers. The line also provides rail connectivity to Karaikal Port, enabling faster movement of cargo like coal, fertilisers and food grains to industries and markets. This will support trade, freight movement and economic growth in the region. The connectivity will also benefit pilgrims and tourists by providing easier access to Thirunallar's famous Saneeswarar Temple and other important destinations in the region.

Three Rail Flyovers (Road Over Bridges) at Coimbatore

3 Rail Flyovers built at an investment of over ₹120 crore will enhance railway capacity, improve operational efficiency and ensure smoother movement of trains. For years, closed level crossings on busy roads in Coimbatore led to long queues of buses, trucks, ambulances, school vans and two wheelers. The rail flyovers will allow road traffic to move without waiting for trains and enable trains to operate without interruptions. For the people of Coimbatore and nearby areas, these flyovers will reduce congestion, save travel time, improve road safety and ensure smoother movement of passengers and goods. Together, these railway projects represent an important step in the ongoing modernisation of railway infrastructure in Tamil Nadu. By improving passenger facilities, strengthening regional connectivity and enhancing the efficiency of rail operations, the initiatives will contribute to the Tamil Nadu's industrial, commercial and tourism potential while supporting the aspirations of its people



INDIA bloc leaders in J&K hold protest under 'Save Democracy Week' campaign

SRINAGAR, OCT 10

INDIA Bloc leaders belonging to different political parties in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday carried out a joint protest under the nationwide 'Save Democracy Week' and 'Vote Bachao, Desh Bachao' campaign. For the first time, political rivalries belonging to the Congress, National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Saturday came out together to stage a joint protest here. The protesters attempted to start a protest march from the Congress headquarters on the Maulana Azad Road, but were stopped by police personnel deployed in strength to prevent the march. They were forced to withdraw into the compound of the Congress, where they subsequently staged a symbolic protest within the office premises.

The INDIA bloc protesters were carrying flags of the Congress, NC and PDP. Congress leaders accused the BJP-led government at the Centre of undermining the Constitution and democratic institutions.

Protesters said they were holding a joint peaceful protest and that there is one united voice from Jammu and Kashmir to Kanyakumari that Gyanesh Kumar, Prime Minister and Home Minister, should go.

The leaders also criticised restrictions imposed in Delhi, including curbs on movement and internet services, and alleged that democratic freedoms were under threat.

The INDIA bloc leaders urged people across the country to unite in defence of the Constitution and democratic institutions.

The "Save Democracy Week" campaign (also known as the "Vote Bachao, Desh Bachao" or Save Vote, Save Country campaign) is a nationwide political movement launched by the opposition INDIA bloc, being held from October 2 to October 8, 2026 (with extended regional demonstrations following into mid-October).

The protests and rallies target the Election Commission of India (ECI) over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, following reports that millions of voters faced exclusion or list modifications.

The demands include the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, halting or reviewing the SIR process of voter lists, restoring the selection process for Election Commissioners based on the Supreme Court's committee model (comprising the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, and Chief Justice of India), and protecting Article 326 and citizens' universal adult suffrage. Opposition parties organised marches and protests aimed at the ECI and Parliament, demanding institutional transparency. In J&K, joint protests by the INDIA bloc (including Congress, NC, and PDP) took place in Srinagar and Baramulla, featuring rallies and effigy-burning demonstrations outside party offices.

Chandrababu Naidu betrayed Backward Classes over reservation: Jagan

AMARAVATI, OCT 9



YSR Congress Party President Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Friday accused Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu of betraying Backward Classes (BCs) on the promise of 34% reservation in local bodies.

The former Chief Minister said the Supreme Court's verdict exposed the deception. "Chandrababu Naidu, you are Mr 420 when it comes to making promises to people from every section and then cheating them," YS Jagan said in a post on X. "You promised 34% reservations for BCs in local bodies, lured them with that promise and betrayed them. The Supreme Court's verdict has now exposed this deception. Once again, you have been exposed as a cheater," the YSRCP President told Chandrababu Naidu.

"Your Super Six and Super Seven promises are another deception. Cancelling the schemes people received under our government was another. Leaving nearly Rs 9,000 crore due under Vidya Deevena and Vasathi Deevena is yet another grave betrayal," wrote YS Jagan.

"The manifesto you issued with 143 promises is the biggest deception of all. Your promise to provide 34% reservations to BCs was another big fraud. Mr Chandrababu, apologise to the BCs at least now," he added.\ The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed the state government plea challenging the Andhra Pradesh High Court ruling that struck down 34% reservation for BCs in local body elections. On October 1, the Andhra Pradesh High Court struck down two government orders providing 34 per cent reservation for BCs in local body elections, holding that the quota breached the 50 per cent ceiling on total reservations. The High Court observed that the aggregate reservation for all categories in local bodies should not exceed 50 per cent in accordance with the Supreme Court's guidelines. Chief Minister Naidu had announced the enhanced quota on August 18, stating that BCs would get 34 per cent reservation in rural local bodies and 33.33 per cent in urban local bodies.

YSR Congress Accuses Andhra CM of BC Betrayal After SC Verdict

AMARAVATI, OCT 9



YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leaders and former Ministers Chelluboyina Venugopala Krishna and Dharmana Prasada Rao said on Friday that the Supreme Court judgment on Backward Class (BC) reservations exposed the N. Chandrababu Naidu-led Andhra Pradesh government's betrayal of BCs by failing to provide 34 per cent reservation to them in local body elections. They said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu had promised 34 per cent reservation in the election manifesto despite being fully aware of the legal ceiling on reservations, but failed to complete the statutory and constitutional process required to protect the quota. Venugopala Krishna said the state government deliberately wasted time instead of creating a legally sustainable framework. He questioned why Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, despite being a key ally in the NDA government at the Centre, had not raised the issue strongly with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. "If special efforts could be made in Parliament to provide legal backing to Amaravati, why was the same commitment not shown for 34 per cent BC reservation?" he asked. He said that sending BC Ministers to Delhi to consult lawyers was not enough and that the state government should have exerted political pressure on the Centre for constitutional protection. He also rejected the state government's proposal to compensate BCs through party-level seat allocation, saying political tickets and statutory reservations were fundamentally different. He demanded that the state government complete the required legal process and conduct local body elections with 34 per cent BC reservation as promised. Dharmana Prasada Rao said the state government knew that aggregate reservations could not ordinarily cross the 50 per cent ceiling, yet issued orders that failed judicial scrutiny. He demanded an unconditional apology to BCs and called for a comprehensive empirical survey through a legally constituted commission rather than ad-hoc exercises or household data collection. Both leaders said that YSRCP Chief and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy had demonstrated political commitment to BC representation even when statutory reservation faced judicial limitations.

Tight security in Patna over CJP protest in Delhi; NDA leaders defend restrictions

Patna, Oct 10: Security has been tightened in Delhi ahead of a protest by the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP), which is demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. In Patna, the administration has also stepped up security amid concerns over possible marches and demonstrations. Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel have been deployed at Gandhi Maidan, while Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Bihar Police personnel have been stationed at J.P. Golambar. Barricades have been erected at several locations across the city, with police on alert to prevent any disruption to law and order. Meanwhile, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi criticised the protesters, alleging that previous demonstrations had involved clashes with police and attacks on journalists.

Win against money power: Vijay thanks voters after TVK shines in Tamil Nadu bypolls

Both TVK candidates had won their seats on AIADMK tickets in the April 2026 Assembly elections. They resigned their seats and joined the ruling TVK on May 25, necessitating the bypolls.



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay congratulated TVK's candidates in the Madurantakam and Dharapuram Assembly bypolls, describing the outcome as a victory against derogatory remarks about women, personal attacks and political betrayal. His message came as TVK's P Sathyabama won Dharapuram, defeating DMK's Suganya by over 9,000 votes, while K Maragatham Kumaravel widened her lead in Madurantakam. "This victory belongs neither to me, Vijay, as an individual, nor solely to the Tamizhaga Vettri Kazhagam. It is, entirely, a victory against the slanderous remarks made about women; a victory against the personal attacks conducted in a derogatory manner; and a victory against the betrayal of unblemished leaders and their cadres," he said. After the 18th round of counting in Madurantakam, Kumaravel led by 18,427 votes. She secured 64,578 votes, followed by DMK's I Paranthamen with 46,151 and AIADMK's S Kanithasampath with 40,731.Both TVK candidates had won their seats on AIADMK tickets in the April 2026 Assembly elections. They resigned their seats and joined the ruling TVK on May 25, necessitating the bypolls.

VIJAY HITS BACK AT RIVALS

Vijay said voters had rejected cash-for-votes allegations against TVK and answered those who mocked its two-day campaign. He claimed the party had secured support without paying for votes or using the "Thirumangalam or Erode East formula". The "Thirumangalam formula" refers to alleged organised cash distribution during the 2009 bypoll, including reports of money delivered in envelopes concealed in newspapers. The "Erode East formula" refers to allegations that voters were gathered at designated locations and offered cash, food and gifts during the 2023 bypoll. The candidates' switch from the AIADMK to TVK had dominated the campaign. AIADMK chief Edappadi K Palaniswami accused them of betraying voters, while DMK chief MK Stalin said their resignations had forced fresh elections. During the campaign, Vijay urged voters to reject what he called "evil forces" and "exhausted forces". He criticised Stalin's remarks about Sathyabama as demeaning to women and questioned the AIADMK's stance towards the DMK. In his congratulatory message, Vijay also accused the DMK of preventing TVK from campaigning across Tamil Nadu during the April Assembly elections, questioning what the outcome would have been had it been allowed to do so. "This is a victory for political civility. A victory for individual dignity. Above all, a victory for the people. A victory for the voters," he said. He thanked voters, alliance partners Congress, VCK, MMK and the Indian Union Muslim League, along with ministers and party workers who campaigned in both constituencies.

Dalit man falls at upper-caste men's feet for burial permission in Tamil Nadu

Two Dalit men in Erode were allegedly forced to fall at dominant caste men's feet to bury an elderly relative at a common ground. The state SC/ST commission has called it a human rights violation and sought action against those involved and officials present.



A viral video showing a Dalit man falling at the feet of a dominant caste man while police personnel remain present at the spot without intervening. In a shocking instance of caste-based humiliation in Tamil Nadu's Erode district, a Dalit man reportedly fell at the feet of dominant caste men to seek permission to bury an 80-year-old relative at a common burial ground, as police and revenue officials watched without intervening. The incident took place on October 5, when Chenni, an 80-year-old man who died of old age, was to be buried at the common burial ground in Perumpalli village in Erode district. Members of a dominant caste community allegedly opposed the burial, claiming that people belonging to the Dalit community could not be buried at the common burial ground. Chenni's family maintained that the burial ground was meant for everyone and that members of all communities had the right to use it. During the ensuing dispute, members of the dominant caste community reportedly demanded that the Dalit family members fall at their feet if they wanted to bury the deceased there. Two members of the Dalit community subsequently fell at the feet of men from the other community and worshipped them, according to the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Adi Dravidar and Scheduled Tribes. The incident took place in the presence of police and revenue officials, who were accused of remaining passive spectators instead of intervening to prevent the humiliation and ensure that the family could carry out the burial.

SC/ST COMMISSION SEEKS ACTION AGAINST OFFICIALS

Taking cognisance of the incident following media reports, video footage and complaints, the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Adi Dravidar and Scheduled Tribes issued a notice to the Erode District Collector and the SP, seeking action against those involved and a detailed report on the incident. In its notice issued under Section 9 of the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Adi Dravidar and Scheduled Tribes Act, 2021, the commission described the incident as a human rights violation. It said the police and revenue officials present at the spot should have intervened when members of the Dalit community were made to fall at the feet of people from the other community. The commission also flagged the alleged failure of the police to provide the necessary protection for the burial at the common ground. It noted that preventing the burial of Chenni's body was illegal and referred to Article 21 of the Constitution and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. The notice directed the Erode District Collector and the SP to take action under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act against the members of the other community involved in the incident and submit a detailed report by October 30, 2026.

EDITORIAL

A Shift from Enforcement to Trust: Decoding the 57th GST Council Reforms

When the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced in 2017, it promised a unified national market, a seamless input tax credit chain, and a streamlined digital tax architecture. Over the years, however, the day-to-day reality for many Indian businesses—particularly small enterprises and mid-sized traders—became bogged down by severe administrative friction, draconian criminalization threats, and arbitrary transit interceptions. The latest GST Council meeting marks a watershed moment in India's indirect tax regime. By prioritizing procedural ease, taxpayer trust, and proportional enforcement over punitive bureaucracy, the Council has laid the groundwork for a truly mature, automated, and growth-oriented GST framework.

The most headline-grabbing reform from the Council's latest deliberations is the deliberate dismantling of coercive enforcement measures. Tax officers will no longer possess discretionary powers to arrest taxpayers for routine administrative discrepancies, as arrests will now require judicial oversight or be strictly limited to severe, deliberate tax fraud. Furthermore, the monetary limit for initiating criminal prosecution has been quintupled from ₹1 crore to ₹5 crore, keeping genuine operational disputes and accounting oversights out of the criminal justice system, while standard fines for procedural lapses have been cut from ₹25,000 to ₹10,000. This decisive shift acknowledges a fundamental truth: a modern tax authority must rely on intelligent data analytics rather than fear-based policing.

Beyond criminal law reforms, the Council addressed long-standing structural bottlenecks that starved businesses of essential working capital. Reforms targeting working capital and refunds now mandate a 90% provisional sanction within just three days, while cutting acknowledgment windows down significantly. The expansion of the Input Tax Credit (ITC) base resolves long-standing industry complaints by removing blocked credits on essential operational costs such as employee health insurance, catering, and telecom infrastructure. Simultaneously, establishing a formal right to a personal hearing prior to blocking credit ledgers injects essential natural justice into a system where automated ledger blocks frequently froze legitimate businesses overnight. For small manufacturers, MSMEs, and e-commerce sellers, these decisions—alongside a prohibition on arbitrary transit stops without specific intelligence and single-point digital access—significantly reduce operational overheads and level the playing field.

While the Council's recommendations are commendable, their ultimate success hinges on swift and faithful implementation by central and state authorities. Legislative amendments to the Central GST Act and corresponding State GST Acts must be passed promptly, and tax notifications must reflect the non-adversarial intent of the Council. A policy is only as effective as its ground-level administration; state-level field officers must adopt the spirit of trust-based governance to ensure these reforms do not get bogged down in bureaucratic inertia. If implemented seamlessly, this shift toward a trust-based regime will boost business confidence, enhance voluntary tax compliance, and accelerate India's broader economic momentum.

LET'S POUR WATER FIRST

Let's pour some water gentle and clear,
"Why?" you ask then lend your ear.
A seed won't sprout on lifeless ground,
Just like hearts where love's not found.

Today we cry for things so small,
A word misplaced and tears will fall.
Storms arise from thoughts misread,
When trust is gone, and hope lies dead.

The roots of love are parched and dry,
Connections fade, as years go by.
So pour the water warm and kind,
For faith can heal the doubting mind.

Between two souls, let trust be grown,
Without it, we are lost, alone.
Each lock we fix, each guarded door,
Speaks of belief we hold no more.

Each street now hums a silent song,
Of hearts that ache to just belong.
Where trust is strong, peace starts to flow,
Like streams that spring from melting snow.

But when we doubt, and faith is thin,
The fights erupt, and none can win.
Revenge is just a wasted race,
While trust can lift the darkest face.

So let us pour not rain, but grace,
That brings back light to every place.
It soothes the soul, it clears the skies,
And makes the heavy spirits rise.

Let faith come first in all we say,
The guiding stream along our way.
For in its flow, new dreams take flight,
And every heart shines full and bright.

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

Behind Bars, Behind the Burden, The Lonely Story of Ajmer's Woman Jailor

When a custodian of the law breaks it, accountability is essential. But justice must be firm without losing its humanity

The irony is painful. A woman Jailor entrusted with protecting inmates has found herself behind bars in the very prison where she served. The Ajmer incident involving 37-year-old Divya Chaudhary is a serious breach of duty. Yet, beyond the legal violation lies a human story of a working mother struggling to reconcile professional responsibilities with domestic obligations and a larger question about the proportionality of punishment

According to reports, Chaudhary, posted at the women's reformatory within Ajmer Central Jail, attempted to take two inmates, a life convict and an undertrial, to her rented home, about eight kilometres away, for household chores and childcare. Despite objections from fellow staff, she allegedly proceeded with the plan, accompanied by a woman constable. The inmates reportedly returned within an hour or two, but a case was registered

There can be no justification for this conduct. Prisoners remain in judicial custody, and their movement cannot be dictated by an officer's personal needs. A Jailor is a custodian of the law and the court's trust. Taking inmates outside for domestic work compromises security, violates prison rules and constitutes a serious misuse of authority. Compassion cannot replace accountability.



Yet, accountability must be accompanied by proportionality

Divya reportedly lives in Ajmer, away from her husband, who is also a jailer posted in Kota. Her two daughters are very young. Managing a household, raising children without a partner's daily presence and discharging demanding duties in a prison environment can impose an enormous burden. Her circumstances do not excuse her decision, but they deserve consideration before society rushes to condemn the individual without examining the system

A more troubling question concerns her detention in the very jail where she worked. Could departmental suspension, a disciplinary inquiry and appropriate legal proceedings have served the immediate purpose? If arrest was considered necessary, could bail have been considered in accordance with the law? These are legitimate questions, although the answers depend on the applicable law, the allegations and the judicial assessment, not public sympathy alone

Arrest is not a declaration of guilt, and custody must not become an instrument of humiliation. If the woman officer posed no continuing threat, was unlikely to abscond and could cooperate with the investigation, her circumstances and the necessity of detention deserved careful consideration. Being lodged in her former workplace adds an unsettling dimension to the episode. The law must determine whether custody was justified, public outrage or official embarrassment should not determine it

The incident also raises institutional questions. Are women officers with young children provided adequate support? Are spouse postings considered wherever feasible? Do prisons offer childcare facilities, counselling and reasonable access to domestic support? If staff objections were overridden, why did security checks fail?

The right response is neither to excuse Divya because she is a mother nor to subject her to unnecessary indignity because she is an officer accused of wrongdoing. A fair investigation must establish responsibility, followed by proportionate legal and departmental action. The administration must also examine its own safeguards and staff welfare policies

Justice must punish wrongdoing, not manufacture humiliation. Divya must answer for her actions, but the system must also answer whether its response was necessary and proportionate. A prison administration entrusted with reforming inmates must demonstrate fairness, restraint and humanity towards its own employees as well

KV REDDY

SP Jails (Retd.)
Former President
All India Prison
Officers Association.

Digitising Fertiliser Subsidies for Sustainable Agriculture

The real objective is not merely to make fertilisers affordable, but to ensure their judicious and balanced use

Fertiliser subsidies have become a major financial burden on the Union Government. Global tensions, geopolitical conflicts, rising raw material costs and supply-chain disruptions could push that burden even higher. Fertiliser subsidy expenditure was approximately ₹1.77 lakh crore in 2025–26 and is estimated at around ₹1.71 lakh crore for 2026–27. Such substantial public spending raises two fundamental questions: Is the subsidy reaching the farmers who genuinely need it? And is the current pricing structure encouraging excessive fertiliser use?

The government subsidises fertilisers to keep them affordable for farmers. Urea receives the highest level of support. Farmers buy a 45-kg bag at a fixed retail price, while the government pays the difference between the actual cost and the price paid by the farmer. Di-ammonium phosphate (DAP), muriate of potash (MOP) and complex NPK fertilisers are covered under the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme. While this arrangement provides immediate relief, the sharp price imbalance among fertilisers has encouraged excessive dependence on urea and, in many cases, DAP, contributing to nutrient imbalances that threaten soil health and agricultural sustainability.



Against this backdrop, Telangana's initiative to digitise fertiliser sales assumes considerable importance. The State's experience with digital urea sales during the previous Yasangi (Rabi) season demonstrated how technology could improve the monitoring of supplies, stocks and transactions. Earlier, the absence of a comprehensive system to track individual purchases made it difficult to identify excessive buying, unauthorised stocking and resale. It also weakened the government's ability to estimate actual demand and ensure that fertilisers reached farmers who needed them.

Digital sales have begun to change this situation. Every transaction is recorded, purchase histories can be reviewed, stock movements can be monitored and irregular sales can be identified. Facilities such as advance booking and information about available stocks can also improve convenience for farmers. Greater transparency and traceability can help curb illegal stocking, black marketing and unauthorised diversion. This is not merely a technological upgrade; it is a step towards greater accountability in the use of public money and more efficient delivery of fertiliser subsidies.

According to officials, urea sales in Telangana have declined by approximately 35,000 tonnes this season compared with the corresponding Vanakalam (Kharif) season last year. This reduction should not be dismissed as merely a fall in sales. If it reflects a decline in excessive purchases, hoarding and unauthorised diversion, it could indicate more efficient distribution of subsidised fertiliser. Estimates suggest that the reduction could potentially lower Telangana's subsidy burden by approximately ₹210–233 crore.

However, this figure must be interpreted carefully. Lower sales do not automatically prove that actual fertiliser consumption has declined or that the entire reduction translates into savings for the exchequer. The outcome depends on whether the decline reflects the elimination of waste and diversion rather than shortages or reduced access for genuine farmers. Transparent data and independent verification are essential to establish the actual impact. Nevertheless, if similar systems are implemented effectively across the country, they could potentially save thousands of crores of rupees in public expenditure. Such resources could be redirected towards irrigation, agricultural infrastructure, research and farmer welfare.

Digital monitoring, however, cannot be the final destination. Tracking how much fertiliser is sold addresses only one part of the problem. The more important question is whether farmers are applying the right fertiliser, in the right quantity and at the right time. A digital transaction system can establish who purchased fertiliser, when it was purchased and in what quantity, but it cannot independently determine whether the product is suitable for a particular field. A farmer may purchase fertiliser through a transparent system and still apply excessive urea, insufficient potash or an unsuitable combination of nutrients. Digital records can improve accountability in distribution, but they cannot replace scientific advice at the farm level.

The success of subsidy reform should therefore not be measured solely by lower sales or reduced government expenditure. It must also be assessed in terms of stable crop yields, lower cultivation costs and improved soil fertility. A system that saves money by restricting access to fertilisers rather than eliminating waste and improving efficiency would fail to achieve its intended purpose.

Balanced application of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) is essential for sustainable crop production. An N:P:K consumption ratio of approximately 4:2:1 is often cited as a broad benchmark for balanced fertiliser use in India, although the ideal ratio varies according to soil conditions, crop requirements and local agronomic practices. In many parts of the country, excessive dependence on urea and DAP has disturbed this balance. Telangana is no exception. The State's N:P:K consumption ratio has been reported at around 12.6:4.8:1, indicating disproportionately high nitrogen use and particularly low potassium application.

The low retail price of urea offers farmers an immediate financial advantage. However, when its affordability encourages application beyond crop requirements, the long-term consequences can be damaging. Excess nitrogen can increase the susceptibility of certain crops to pests and diseases, potentially raising expenditure on pesticides and crop protection. It can also contribute to soil nutrient imbalances, water pollution and other environmental problems. The question is not whether subsidised urea benefits farmers in the short term, but whether excessive dependence on it is undermining the future of Indian agriculture.

There is a strong case for narrowing the price gap between urea and other fertilisers. A more rational pricing structure could encourage farmers to apply nutrients according to crop requirements rather than choosing fertilisers primarily on the basis of price. However, a sudden increase in urea prices would not be a solution by itself. It could impose an additional financial burden on farmers, particularly small and marginal cultivators. Without affordable alternatives, technical guidance and targeted support, higher prices could reduce fertiliser use without necessarily improving nutrient balance.

Pricing reforms must therefore be gradual, carefully designed and accompanied by practical support. Soil-test-based recommendations, incentives for balanced nutrient application, farmer education and targeted financial assistance should move forward together. The objective must be to improve fertiliser-use efficiency without compromising farm incomes or crop productivity.

The next phase of reform must connect digital sales data with scientific information about soil and crop requirements. Every field has distinct soil characteristics and nutrient needs. Fertiliser recommendations should therefore be based on soil-test results, crop type, expected yield and local agronomic conditions. Purchase histories can help identify unusual or excessive buying, but they should not become a rigid substitute for scientific judgment. Seasonal conditions, changes in cropping patterns and soil-test results must also be considered. The system should guide farmers rather than merely restrict them.

Integrating soil health data and scientifically validated fertiliser recommendations with digital sales platforms could make distribution more efficient and responsive to actual demand. It could also help governments identify areas with persistent nutrient deficiencies, design targeted incentives and evaluate whether subsidies are improving productivity and soil health. Soil testing, assessment of crop nutrient requirements, scientific recommendations, targeted support and digital sales must function as parts of a single, integrated system.

A sustainable fertiliser policy must prioritise transparency in distribution, rational pricing and scientific nutrient management. Digital transactions, reliable purchase records and stock monitoring can improve accountability. A gradual review of relative fertiliser prices, combined with stronger support for balanced nutrient application, can help correct incentives that encourage excessive dependence on urea. At the same time, soil testing, field-level advisory services, awareness programmes in local languages and regular evaluation must become integral to the subsidy system.

Telangana's digital fertiliser sales initiative is a welcome first step. Its long-term success will depend on integrating digital monitoring with soil testing, balanced nutrient management, farmer awareness, safeguards against excluding genuine beneficiaries and a careful review of fertiliser pricing policies. Farmers must receive the fertilisers they genuinely need, public subsidies must reach the fields where they can deliver the greatest benefit, and soil health must remain at the centre of agricultural policy.

Saving public money is important, but preserving fertile soil for future generations is equally, if not more, important. The real benefit to farmers does not lie in using the cheapest fertiliser; it lies in using the right fertiliser, in the right quantity, at the right time. That is the path from subsidy-driven consumption to scientifically managed agriculture, and from short-term relief to a secure and sustainable farming future.



YEEDULAPALLY RAVITEJA

Agricultural Extension Officer
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Manipur CM meets PM Modi in Delhi, discusses state-related issues

NEW DELHI/IMPHAL, OCT 10



Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Saturday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi and discussed various issues concerning the state, officials said. After meeting the Prime Minister, Chief Minister Khemchand Singh in a post on his official X account said: "It was a privilege to meet the Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji. His visionary leadership continues to inspire our commitment to building a peaceful, prosperous and Viksit Manipur as part of Viksit Bharat." The Manipur Chief Minister is in the national capital since October 10. Khemchand Singh separately held meetings with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari, and Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya in New Delhi and discussed various issues of the state. Both the Union Home Minister and other two Union Ministers told the Chief Minister that they would soon visit Manipur. Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday assured Chief Minister Khemchand Singh of the Centre's full support in restoring peace and ensuring progress in the state, as well as in fulfilling the aspirations of its people. A senior official of Chief Minister's Office (CMO) in Imphal said that the Home Minister also appreciated the sustained efforts of the state government to bring peace and normalcy in Manipur. Khemchand Singh on Thursday called on the Union Home Minister Shah at his official residence in New Delhi and during the meeting, the Chief Minister apprised him of the measures taken up by the state government for restoring peace and normalcy in the state. The Chief Minister told Union Minister Shah that the state government has succeeded in resuming the Imphal-Dimapur (Nagaland)-Guwahati bus service, which has brought much-needed relief to the common people. In a significant development, inter-state passenger bus services between Manipur, Assam and Nagaland resumed on August 21 after a gap of more than three years.

JNU sexual crime: Delhi BJP women ask Congress to expel its MP-cum-professor

NEW DELHI, OCT 10



The Delhi BJP Mahila Morcha staged a protest on Saturday to demand the expulsion from Congress and the arrest of MP and JNU Professor Angomcha Bimol Akoijam accused of sexual harassment of female students. A large number of Mahila Morcha workers gathered near the Laxmi Nagar Metro Station in East Delhi, and raised slogans against the MP.\ As soon as they began marching towards the Congress headquarters on Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg, the Delhi Police detained them after they had walked only a short distance and took them to Shakarpur Police Station, a Delhi BJP leader said. The protest was led by BJP Mahila Morcha National Secretary and Rajya Sabha MP Sangeeta Yadav and Delhi BJP General Secretary Yogita Singh, in the presence of State Vice President Sarika Jain, Mahila Morcha President Archana Gupta and In-charge Aarti Mehra. Rajya Sabha MP Sangeeta Yadav said, "We are standing here to defend the dignity of daughters. At a prestigious educational institution like JNU, a person accused of sexually harassing female students under the guise of being a professor, and who is also a Congress MP continues to move around freely."

"The Congress is the most glaring example of an 'anti-women' mindset. A party that cannot protect its daughters has no right to remain in power," she added. "We (BJP) demand his (Akoijam's) immediate expulsion from the party (Congress) and immediate arrest. The BJP Mahila Morcha will not remain silent. The slogan of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' will be meaningful only when those responsible are punished. Ensuring the safety of every daughter in Delhi is our responsibility," she said. Delhi BJP General Secretary Yogita Singh said that the Congress has always treated women merely as a vote bank. "A sitting MP is accused of sexually harassing female students at JNU, and the Congress is shielding him. The party should be ashamed," she added.

"How long will the dignity of our daughters continue to be violated? How long will the Congress protect its leaders accused of wrongdoing?" Yogita Singh asked.

"If Angomcha Bimol Akoijam is not arrested today, no other daughter will be safe tomorrow. Our struggle will continue from the streets to Parliament. We demand justice, not compromise," she said.

BJP Mahila Morcha General Secretary Archana Gupta said, "A Congress MP has been accused of harassing female students at JNU. This exposes the Congress party's double standards — speaking about women's empowerment on public platforms while allowing the exploitation of women within its ranks."

"We demand that the accused be expelled from the party and sent to jail. The BJP Mahila Morcha stands with every daughter. Break the silence and deliver justice," she added.

80 CJP Activists Detained Ahead of Pune SIR Protest





PUNE: (Oct 10): More than 80 Cockroach Janta Party activists were detained on Saturday after they gathered outside Lal Mahal in Pune to protest against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and the Election Commission, police said.

They had planned to take out a rally from Shaniwar Wada to the Collector's Office, though permission for this march was denied due to concerns over law and order and public peace, an official said.



Assam Rifles Seize Narcotics Worth Over ₹11.30 Crore in Tripura and Mizoram

Guwahati, October 10: Assam Rifles, under the Spear Corps, seized contraband worth over ₹11.30 crore in two separate anti-narcotics operations in the Northeast, according to the Indian Army. In Tripura's Khowai district, Assam Rifles, in coordination with the Customs Department, seized 501 kg of cannabis (ganja) valued at approximately ₹2.50 crore. In a separate operation in Mizoram's Champhai district, security personnel recovered 11 kg of methamphetamine tablets, estimated to be worth ₹8.80 crore. The operations underline ongoing efforts by security agencies to curb drug trafficking and prevent illegal narcotics from reaching communities, particularly young people.

Over 33,500 people submit Form-6 applications during special voter enrolment drive in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR: (OCT 10)

In all, 33,515 people submitted Form-6 applications for inclusion of their names in the electoral rolls during a three-day special enrolment drive in Odisha, an official said on Saturday. The drive was conducted from October 7 to 9 on the EC's directions to facilitate the enrolment of eligible voters left out during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) and young people who attained the age of 18 on October 1. The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) organised 26,446 special camps across the state to facilitate the submission of Form-6 applications, the official said.

Indian Railways Steps Up Cleanliness Drives at Major Stations Under Swachhata Pakhwada

GORAKHPUR, OCTOBER 10, 2026







As part of the 'Swachhata Pakhwada' campaign being observed across Indian Railways from October 1 to 15, 2026, various activities are being organized at the North Eastern Railway Headquarters in Gorakhpur and major stations across all three divisions to maintain a clean environment and improve passenger amenities.

As part of the initiative, on October 10, 2026, cleanliness drives were conducted at major stations in the Lucknow Division, including Gorakhpur, Gonda, Lucknow, Aishbagh, Basti, Khalilabad, Sitapur, and Mailani, as well as at other railway units, colonies, coaching depots, and locomotive sheds. Unwanted posters and banners were removed, and areas stained by gutkha spitting were cleaned. Stains caused by gutkha and paan masala were removed from foot overbridges, subways, platform walls, pillars, and staircases to ensure cleaner surroundings. Passengers were urged through the public announcement system to help maintain cleanliness at stations. They were also made aware of 'Swachh Rail' messages and signboards displayed at appropriate locations. In addition, drainage channels along the railway tracks were cleaned, and insecticidal powder was applied.

In the Varanasi Division, cleanliness drives were conducted at Banaras, Varanasi City, Bhatni Junction, Chhapra, Siwan, Deoria Sadar, Mau, Belthara Road, Salempur, Azamgarh, Ballia, Ghazipur City, and Prayagraj Rambagh stations. Under the campaign to remove unwanted posters, banners, and gutkha stains, waiting halls, foot overbridges, subways, platform walls, pillars, and staircases were thoroughly cleaned to eliminate stains caused by gutkha and paan masala. Passengers and members of the public were encouraged to maintain cleanliness through slogans such as "Clean Railways, Clean India" and "Let Us Take Another Step Towards Making Indian Railways Clean." Announcements were also made through station public address systems, urging passengers to cooperate in maintaining cleanliness on railway premises.

In the Izzatnagar Division, various cleanliness activities were organized at railway stations and premises to remove unauthorized posters and banners under the 'No Red and Yellow Spots' campaign. Special cleaning drives were conducted in high-footfall areas, including foot overbridge staircases, subways, and station entry and exit gates, to remove red and yellow stains caused by paan masala and gutkha.

Passengers and railway employees were made aware of the importance of avoiding spitting in public places and preventing littering. Cleanliness messages, including "Do Not Dirty the Premises by Spitting," were used to spread awareness. The use of 'Swachh Rail' messages and signboards at appropriate locations was also encouraged to promote greater awareness of cleanliness.

SIR process in Punjab is being conducted by state, says BJP

CHANDIGARH, OCT 10

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday launched a sharp attack on the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over its protest outside the Election Commission's office in New Delhi against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. Punjab BJP President Kewal Singh Dhillon has said the entire SIR process in Punjab was being conducted by the state government and that the Central government had no role in it. "Do Arvind Kejriwal and the Aam Aadmi Party no longer trust their own government?" Dhillon asked. He said it was surprising the Punjab government was conducting the SIR process itself and also staging a protest against it. Dhillon added that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and AAP Convener Arvind Kejriwal had repeatedly assured the public that no legitimate voter's name would be deleted from the electoral rolls in Punjab. "When the Chief Minister (Bhagwant Mann) and the party's (AAP) national convener (Arvind Kejriwal) have themselves given this assurance, what is the justification for staging a protest outside the Election Commission's office?" he asked. The State BJP President said the AAP government no longer had the courage to answer questions raised by the people. "The state government was under pressure over several serious issues, including pending dearness allowance (DA), the drug problem, gangster-related activities, deteriorating law and order, and Punjab's continuously rising debt." "Instead of answering these questions, the Aam Aadmi Party was attempting to divert public attention through protests and demonstrations," Dhillon said.

NFR enhances festive connectivity with four pairs of special trains

MALIGAON, 10 OCTOBER, 2026

To benefit passengers across Northeast, East and North India



Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has decided to provide additional travel options during the Puja, Diwali and Chhath festival season through four pairs of special trains serving the region. These services connect Narangi–Gorakhpur, Katihar–Sabaur, Firozpur Cantt. – Purnea and Bhagalpur–Katihar, benefiting passengers across the Northeast, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Chandigarh. By strengthening connectivity between the Northeast and eastern and northern parts of the country, these trains will facilitate convenient journeys to hometowns and help passengers celebrate the festivals with their families.

Train No. 05633 (Narangi–Gorakhpur) Weekly Festival Special will operate every Friday from 16th October to 27th November, 2026, departing from Narangi at 20:00 hours and reaching Gorakhpur at 21:40 hours on Saturday. In the return direction, Train No. 05634 (Gorakhpur–Narangi) Weekly Festival Special will operate every Sunday from 18th October to 29th November, 2026, departing from Gorakhpur at 01:10 hours and reaching Narangi at 03:00 hours on Monday. The service will operate for 7 trips in each direction with 22 coaches.

Train No. 05782 (Katihar–Sabaur) Puja Special Intercity Express commenced its service on 8th October, and will continue up to 30thNovember, 2026. It departs from Katihar every Thursday, Sunday and Monday at 16:50 hours and reaches Sabaur at 23:00 hours the same day. In the return direction, Train No. 05781 (Sabaur–Katihar) Puja Special Intercity Express commenced its service on 9th October and will continue up to 1st December, 2026. It departs from Sabaur every Friday, Monday and Tuesday at 04:50 hours and reaches Katihar at 10:55 hours the same day. The service will operate 24 trips in each direction with 22 coaches.

Train No. 04634 (Firozpur Cantt. - Purnea) Festival Special Express commenced its service on 8th October and will continue up to 26th November, 2026. It departs from Firozpur Cantt. every Thursday at 17:30 hours and reaches Purnea at 03:00 hours on Saturday. In the return direction, Train No. 04633 (Purnea–Firozpur Cantt.) Festival Special Express is scheduled to operate every Saturday from 10thOctober to 28th November, 2026, departing from Purnea at 06:00 hours and reaching Firozpur Cantt. at 16:35 hours on Sunday. The service will operate 8 trips in each direction with 18 coaches.

Train No. 03409 (Bhagalpur–Katihar) Special commenced its daily service on 7th October and will continue up to 30th November, 2026. It departs from Bhagalpur at 17:30 hours and reaches Katihar at 23:10 hours the same day. In the return direction, Train No. 03410 (Katihar–Bhagalpur) Special commenced its daily service on 8thOctober and will continue up to 1st December, 2026. It departs from Katihar at 06:35 hours and reaches Bhagalpur at 12:05 hours the same day. The service will operate 55 trips in each direction.

The details of stoppages and timings of these trains are available in IRCTC website and are also being notified in various newspapers and social media platforms of N. F. Railway. Passengers are requested to verify the details before undertaking their journey.

Lord Shri Ram and Radha-Krishna Tableaux Emerge as Major Attractions

City Resonates with Devotional Songs and Chants

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 10

The Shri Yog Vedanta Seva Samiti organized a grand Ram Naam Sankirtan procession in Chandigarh on Saturday. Held to mark the Self-Realization Day of Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu, the procession witnessed the participation of thousands of devotees from the Tricity and surrounding areas. Featuring religious tableaux, devotional songs, kirtans, and chants, the procession received a warm welcome at various locations along its route.

The procession commenced at 5 p.m. from Muni Ji Temple in Sector 23. Led in the presence of Shri Ramabhai Ji, a disciple of Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu, the procession passed through the markets of Sectors 23, 22, 21, 20, 30, and 29 before reaching Sai Baba Temple in Sector 29, where it concluded. Bhandara prasad was distributed afterward.

Children from the Bal Sanskar Kendra presented captivating tableaux depicting Lord Shri Ram, Lakshman, Mata Sita, and Shri Radha-Krishna. A beautifully decorated chariot was another major attraction of the procession. A sankirtan group aboard a large vehicle performed devotional songs and kirtans. Throughout the procession, the air resonated with chants of "Hari Om," "Hari Bol," and "Rama Rama," along with songs expressing devotion to the Guru and patriotism.

A large number of devotees, including women and children, participated in the procession. The devotees moved along the route singing devotional songs and performing kirtans. The procession was welcomed in the markets of Sectors 22 and 29, where sharbat (a refreshing sweet drink) and fruits were distributed among the devotees. Spiritual literature based on the discourses of Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu, along with prasad, was also distributed along the route. The organizers had arranged buses to facilitate the devotees.

Programme to Be Held at Syunk Ashram on October 16

Rajendra Singh, the Samiti's Media In-charge, informed that the Self-Realization Day celebrations will be held at Sant Shri Asharamji Ashram in Syunk on October 16, beginning at 12 noon. Bhandara prasad will be distributed after the programme. Buses will also operate from designated locations for the convenience of devotees.

PoGB should return to India's constitutional framework, says political activist

WASHINGTON



Senge Sering, a political activist from Pakistan-occupied Gilgit-Baltistan (PoGB), has said that Pakistan's continued occupation of the region is driven by its strategic location, water resources and land link with China, while Islamabad deliberately keeps the occupied territory deprived of political and constitutional rights.

Speaking to Strat News Global, Sering, founder of the Institute for Gilgit-Baltistan Studies in Washington, described PoGB as part of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. He said its strategic location, including its land link with China and the upper reaches of the Indus River system, makes it particularly important to Pakistan.

He argued that PoGB does not enjoy the same constitutional standing as Pakistan's four provinces and remains governed through arrangements dictated by Islamabad, calling it an "occupied area" and a "colony".

Sering said that growing political awareness in PoGB has fuelled stronger demands for rights and self-determination, with some activists now openly challenging Pakistan's presence and seeking independence. Drawing parallels with Balochistan, he said both regions have faced political marginalisation and exploitation of their natural resources. He also cited the experience of East Pakistan, arguing that Pakistan has historically struggled to accommodate diverse ethnic and linguistic identities.

Sering, however, said he viewed the independence of PoGB as an unlikely long-term outcome and argued that the region should ultimately come under India's constitutional framework while retaining its own cultural and political character. Referring to the prospect of an independent PoGB becoming a battleground for competing external interests, he told Strat News Global, "We will be this warzone forever."

According to Sering, integration with India could provide greater economic, military and political stability while preserving the region's linguistic and cultural identities.

He also contended that Pakistan's military has a vested political and economic interest in keeping the dispute in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) unresolved, making Islamabad reluctant to pursue a lasting settlement.

Looking ahead, Sering warned that Pakistan could face prolonged political and economic instability, with its peripheral regions, including Balochistan, PoGB and Pashtun areas, bearing the brunt.

He said rising unrest in Balochistan and shifting dynamics along Pakistan's western frontier could open greater political space for groups seeking autonomy or independence. For PoGB, he said the key question would be whether its people can secure greater political rights and control over their resources while safeguarding their cultural identity.

India's Electoral System Offers Lessons to Democracies

ABU DHABI

India's electoral achievement goes beyond conducting elections every five years, encompassing the management of an extensive democratic infrastructure, accommodating immense diversity, training election personnel, deploying technology and adapting to changing demographics, a report has stated.

For emerging democracies, India offers an example of how population size, geographical challenges and economic disparities need not stand in the way of regular, competitive elections. And for established democracies, its experience offers valuable lessons in logistical coordination, voter outreach and institutional adaptability, according to a report in UAE's 'Gulf Today' newspaper.

"India's democracy is not merely an exercise in numbers. It is one of the modern world's most extraordinary administrative achievements. In a country of more than 1.4 billion people, with vast linguistic, geographical, cultural and economic diversity, conducting regular, competitive elections on such a scale is remarkable.

End Child Marriages and Invest in Girls' Rights



(On the occasion of "International Day of the Girl Child" on 11 October)

Protecting and empowering girls' rights is essential for building a fairer, stronger, and more sustainable future for all. Being a girl should never determine your dreams, your opportunities, or your future - yet for millions of girls worldwide, this is still not the reality. Too many girls are left behind, forced to face daily challenges that deny them their basic rights, limit their choices, and block their potential. Even in this digital age, girls continue to face discrimination, inequality, and harmful practices. From education gaps and gender based violence to child marriage and healthcare issues, these barriers are still holding girls back from leading the lives they deserve.

International Day of the Girl Child-2026:

The UN declared October 11 as "International Day of the Girl Child" in 2021 to promote gender equality, reduce child marriage, ensure access to quality education, and protect girls' rights. The theme of 2026 International Day of the Girl Child is "End Child Marriage and Invest in Girls' Rights" carries a strong global message. In this digital age, the world unites to recognise the power and potential of girls as change-makers, especially in times of crisis. Investing on girls is a high-impact strategy for achieving SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). When girls are educated and empowered, they become change agents in their families, communities, and nations.

The focus areas for girl empowerment are educational programs, promoting STEM for girls, health and menstrual hygiene, digital employment, leadership at all levels, climate action, crisis management, and building resilience. This year's theme remind the world that girls are change makers of today and the leaders of tomorrow. Let's protect their rights, invest in their education, promote leadership, and attain equality. Join in the global movement to celebrate and empower girls worldwide.

- Dr Burra Madhusudhan Reddy
9949700037.

India-US ties continue to gain momentum amid trade tensions

HONG KONG

The second visit to India this year by a senior US naval officer has raised hopes that growing defence ties between the two countries will remain insulated from trade tensions, a report has stated.

Admiral Samuel J Paparo, Commander of the United States Pacific Command (USPACOM), concluded his six-day official visit to India this week following engagements with senior Indian defence officials and other dignitaries. The talks follow Paparo's February visit to India and came amid Washington's consideration of additional tariffs on New Delhi over its Russian oil imports and the trade imbalance in India's favour, according to a report in Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post (SCMP) newspaper.

Srinivaasan Balakrishnan, Director of Strategic Engagements and Partnerships at the Delhi-based think tank 'Indic Researchers Forum', told SCMP, "Trade tensions will not break the India-US military relationship, but they can put a ceiling on it. India does not want a security partnership where economic coercion becomes a test of political loyalty."'The military channel will remain open, but trust deepens when both sides see each other as partners, not instruments," he added.

India and the US have further strengthened defence ties in recent years through expanded military exercises and enhanced maritime security coordination in the Indo-Pacific. Paparo's visit comes against the backdrop of a recent Washington meeting between US President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, during which the two sides sought to ease trade disputes without resolving their broader differences, the SCMP mentioned.

Your heroics place you in ranks of Indian troops who liberated Holy Land: Israel Prez writes to Capt Smit Machchhar

NEW DELHI



Israeli President Isaac Herzog on Saturday wrote to brave Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar, likening his heroics to those of the Indian troops who risked their lives over a century ago to liberate cities in the Holy Land, calling the Indian pilot a hero of Israel, India and all of humanity.

"Your heroics place you in the distinguished ranks of Indian troops, who risked their lives over 100 years ago to liberate cities in the Holy Land, forever becoming a part of Israel's history. You too, Captain Machchhar, will henceforth be a treasured part of our people's history, further amplifying the warmth and connection between the Republic of India and the State of Israel," Herzog wrote in a letter.

The Israeli President said the pilot had received the letter over the weekend.

"Captain Smit Machchhar, you are a hero of Israel, India, and all of humanity! In my letter to you, which you received over the weekend, I shared our prayers for your full and speedy recovery," Herzog posted on X.

"As I wrote in my letter, I look forward to welcoming you to Jerusalem once you regain your strength. On behalf of the people of Israel, I would be honoured to present you with Israel's highest recognition of civilian heroism, the Israeli Presidential Award for Civilian Heroism," he added.

In the letter, Herzog thanked the pilot for steering the aircraft to safety and said his actions showed the strength of his character.

"Your ability to find the strength to rise above the pain, to combat the immediate threat to your life, and to operate sound judgment demonstrates the strength of your character and the great valour you possess," he wrote.

Herzog announced on Friday that Captain Machchhar, who fought against the attacking co-pilot in a Flydubai aircraft and helped save 174 people onboard, will receive Israel's Presidential Award for Civilian Heroism, the country's highest bravery award for civilians, once he recovers.

"Alongside the Israeli heroes whom we honour today, we send our heartfelt wishes for the full and speedy recovery of Captain Smit Machchhar of India. Captain Machchhar's sheer courage and bravery and sound professionalism helped avert a catastrophe. Once he regains his strength, it will be my honour and privilege to award him, on behalf of the people of Israel, the State of Israel's Presidential Award for Civilian Heroism," Herzog said.

According to the United Arab Emirates probe, Hamam Al-Hammami, the co-pilot of the Dubai-Tel Aviv flydubai flight, attacked Indian pilot Captain Machchhar with the cockpit's crash axe in what the UAE authorities have described as a "terrorist attack".

Khalistan narrative exploits Sikh diaspora's identity concerns: Report

OTTAWA

Although a small faction, Khalistan sympathisers in the West often seek to portray Sikhs as a marginalised community in India, a narrative that stands in sharp contrast to the country's reality. India's ethos of equal opportunities has enabled people from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds to achieve remarkable success, a report has stated.

"A case in point is Ajay Banga, the current Head of the World Bank and former CEO of MasterCard. Born and educated in India, Banga's narrative is a testament to the possibilities that the nation provides to its citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliations. His endorsement of that he is the perfect 'Make in India' example resonates with the ethos of inclusivity and opportunity that India represents. There are many more such examples like Milkha Singh, Jiggs Kalra, ISRO scientist Harjot Singh Moga, and several others," according to a report in Khalsa Vox. The report noted that a considerable section of the Sikh diaspora, however, faces difficulties in preserving its distinct cultural and religious identity while assimilating into the societies of their adopted countries.

"This struggle often magnifies issues such as the Khalistan movement, which provides a rallying point around which a unique Sikh identity can coalesce. The diasporic discussion around Khalistan often transcends the political or territorial discourse, metamorphosing into a symbol of Sikh identity and unity," it added.

Politicians, recognising the powerful combination of identity and diasporic nostalgia, often use these sentiments to build a loyal support base, the report said, citing Canada's New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jagmeet Singh as a prime example. Beginning his political career with a relatively modest profile, it said, Singh has skilfully navigated the complexities of identity politics, drawing on his Sikh identity to build a substantial following.

Jordan's new freight rail network could emerge as key IMEC link

AMMAN

The strategic partnership between India, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Israel has demonstrated considerable resilience, with the recent Flydubai terrorist attack further underscoring the importance of cooperation among the three nations. It shows that the infrastructure connecting them is not just about trade, but also sits at the intersection of regional security, political architecture and economic resilience between India, the Gulf and the Mediterranean, a report has stated.

"For Amman, the stakes are even higher. Jordan cannot afford to become simply the territory through which sealed containers travel between Saudi Arabia and the Mediterranean. Its national interest lies in converting geography into dry ports, logistics, industry, employment and investment," Italian-Indian entrepreneur and analyst, Vas Shenoy, wrote in 'Ca□akya — The Indo Mediterranean Initiative'.

On October 5, Jordan's King Abdullah II and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan laid the foundation stone for the Aqaba-Shidiya-Ma'an railway. While the line is officially intended to transport phosphate and potash to the Red Sea, the project also marks the beginning of something Jordan has lacked for decades — a modern freight rail network that could eventually become a vital component of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), Shenoy opined.



Since IMEC was announced at the 2023 G20 Summit in New Delhi, maps of the corridor have depicted an almost natural route linking India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and Europe.

"The maritime connection between India and the UAE already exists. The Emirates have built Etihad Rail. Saudi Arabia has a rapidly expanding railway network. On the Mediterranean side, Israel's railway reaches Beit She'an, close to the Jordanian border, connecting it to Haifa. In between lies Jordan, without the railway continuity necessary to connect these systems," he mentioned.

"Amman was not among the signatories of the original IMEC memorandum in 2023. Jordan, however, given its position, is difficult to bypass. The most natural route between the Saudi and Israeli railway networks crosses Jordanian territory. Without that connection, the Middle Eastern railway component of IMEC remains incomplete," he noted. According to the expert, the Jordanian-Emirati project would connect Shidiya and Ghor Al-Safi with Aqaba and the proposed Ma'an dry port. He noted that for Amman, however, the project forms part of a wider railway network.

Major Houthi attack leaves dozens injured at Riyadh airport; West issues travel warning

Yemen's Houthis attacked Riyadh's international airport with a missile on Saturday, a diplomatic source told AFP, with dozens reported wounded and a witness describing "major panic" in the terminal.

One witness reported hearing an explosion while waiting to board a flight, and another said they saw a strike that left people wounded.

Doctors are being called to hospitals across Riyadh for a "serious emergency situation," a medical source told AFP, while Reuters reported that more than a dozen ambulances were seen rushing to the airport.

Saudi Arabia has been tightly controlling public information about Houthi attacks on its soil in recent weeks, leaving media and residents unclear as to the danger.

After Saturday's attack, the Riyadh airport urged passengers to contact their airlines directly and check their flight status before heading there.

The US, UK, Canadian, German and Spanish embassies in Saudi Arabia warned their citizens to avoid Riyadh's international airport after the attack.

Flight-tracking site flightradar24 showed all flights to Riyadh had either been diverted or cancelled, with only a helicopter hovering over the airport at one point.

The Saudi government's media office and the Saudi civil aviation authority did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the incident, amid a controlled state media campaign.

Riyadh is due to host two major energy and investment conferences this month. Organisers of those conferences said on Saturday they would go ahead as planned, and they sought to reassure attendees of their security.

Saturday's incident comes amid an escalation of missile strikes by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis on the kingdom. The airport has already been attacked twice this week, leaving four people dead and others wounded, and badly damaging an aircraft.

The Houthis have opened a new front in the Middle East war in which the United States and its ally Israel are arrayed against Iran.

Saudi Arabia supports Yemen's internationally recognised government and has been providing military support for its fight against the Houthis.

'Everyone was running'

"I was on gate 403" at the domestic terminal, a witness told AFP following Saturday's attack. "I saw 401 hit, I saw injured in front of my eyes. Everyone was running."

A source at a local hospital told AFP that five people were in intensive care after being wounded at the airport, saying "dozens of people were injured" in all.

The relative of one injured person said they had been wounded in the shoulders and arms by shattered glass, and had been taken to hospital. Three witnesses confirmed people being evacuated from the airport.

"Houthis are attacking civilian targets. Riyadh airport is a civilian target," the diplomatic source told AFP, saying the airport was hit by "a missile around 3:00 pm" (1200 GMT).

The airport was hit by deadly attacks claimed by Yemen's Houthis on Thursday, though the Iran-backed group did not announce any fresh strikes on the facility on Saturday.

The Houthis have repeatedly attacked Saudi airports, oil facilities and tankers after a truce in their long-running war with Yemen's Riyadh-backed government unravelled in July.

Admissions by Saudi authorities of strikes hitting civilian targets are relatively rare, with officials issuing few statements on Houthi attacks in recent weeks.

The scale and frequency of the recent strikes targeting Riyadh are unprecedented in the eight months of war that has spread across the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia leads an international coalition that supports Yemen's government militarily, and has found itself drawn deeper into its impoverished neighbour's civil war.

Both Riyadh and the Houthis have signalling a willingness to keep fighting rather than pursue diplomacy. Meanwhile, in Yemen, Saudi-supported government forces were advancing against the Houthis in areas they captured last month around the Bab al-Mandab strait, military sources told AFP.

The Yemeni government last week announced a counter-offensive aimed at retaking all areas held by the Houthis, after the group seized the country's entire western coastline in a lightning offensive.

The Houthis confirmed that government forces had attacked in the Bab al-Mandab area -- a key chokepoint for Red Sea oil and cargo shipping -- but they claimed to have repelled the assault.

Claims by the warring parties have been impossible to independently verify, with the situation moving fast on the ground and access for journalists difficult.

Western advisory

Spain's embassy, in a message on X, alerted nationals to a "new attack" by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis on the airport, where witnesses earlier told AFP an evacuation was ordered.

A diplomatic source separately told AFP that the Houthis had hit the airport with a missile around 1200 GMT.

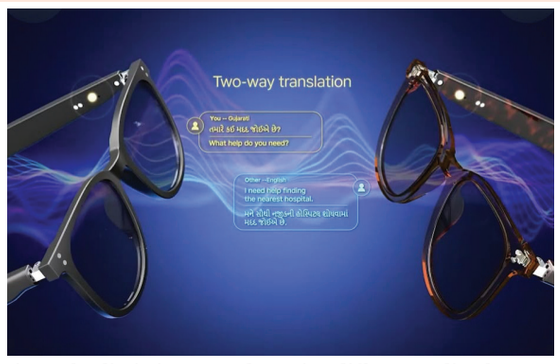
Canada's embassy said only that unspecified "ongoing military activity" was affecting Riyadh's international airport, while Germany's mission alluded only to "the current situation".

France's embassy on Friday urged French nationals to take "utmost care" in Saudi Arabia because of "strikes in recent days by the Houthis". It also warned French citizens not to record images of zones that were hit, nor share any online.

Look, Speak, Pay! Jio AI Glasses Bring UPI Payments to Your Eyes

Just look at a QR code, give a voice command and pay up to ₹5,000
Stay in the game: Jio AI Glasses bring live cricket commentary
Speak different Indian languages? Live translation helps bridge the gap

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 10, 2026





What if you could pay at a shop without ever pulling your phone out of your pocket? Just look at a QR code, give a voice command, and you're done. That's the idea behind one of the futuristic products Jio showcased at India Mobile Congress 2026. The company unveiled a range of personal AI wearables, including camera glasses, audio glasses and earphones. The showcased features include Scan & Pay, an AI voice assistant, support for multiple Indian languages, live translation, AI note-taking and live cricket commentary.

The standout feature is Scan & Pay. The camera glasses can scan a UPI QR code, while the user gives a voice command to initiate the payment. Once confirmed, the payment goes through. With UPI Circle, users can make payments of up to ₹5,000 per transaction. The limit is set under UPI Circle rules, not by Jio. The monthly limit stands at ₹15,000. Think about the steps this could save at a shop. No need to pull out your phone, unlock it, open a payment app and scan a QR code. Here, AI isn't just an assistant answering questions. It's technology that can act on your commands. Jio is looking to move AI beyond screens and keyboards, bringing it closer to everyday life through voice-based interactions. Live translation is another key feature of Jio AI Glasses. Two people speaking different Indian languages could understand each other with the help of wearable devices. You speak in your language, the other person speaks in theirs, and AI handles the translation. And there's more. AI note-taking is designed to capture important points during meetings, while live cricket commentary could help fans keep up with the match even when they're on the move. From office meetings to cricket action, the idea is simple: spend less time checking your phone. According to Jio, these wearables are designed to improve productivity, expand access to knowledge and make everyday tasks easier with AI. The focus is on voice and Indian languages, enabling users to interact with AI and digital services in their preferred language.

Jio's showcase offers a glimpse into what could be next for wearable technology. Smart glasses aren't new, but features such as UPI payments, Indian-language support, live translation, AI note-taking and cricket commentary bring the technology closer to the everyday needs of Indian users.

Doctors Say Heart Attacks and Brain Strokes Share Prevention Strategies

Open Heart' with Prof. Dr. V. S. Ramchandra Highlights the Role of Exercise, Lifestyle Changes and Early Intervention

HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 10, 2026



Heart attacks and brain strokes share several common risk factors, making preventive care, a healthy lifestyle and timely medical intervention essential, doctors said at an 'Open Heart' interactive session organised by Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals in Kondapur on Saturday.

Speaking at the interaction, *Prof. Dr. V. S. Ramchandra, Chairman* and Chief of Cardiology and Electrophysiology at Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals, emphasised the importance of regular physical activity in reducing cardiovascular risk and supporting recovery. He noted that conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, abnormal cholesterol levels, smoking, stress and physical inactivity can increase the risk of both heart attacks and strokes. Dr. Sajja Venkatesh , Consultant in Neurology and Neurovascular Intervention at Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals, Kondapur, highlighted that prevention is important for both heart attacks and brain strokes. He emphasised the need to identify and manage common risk factors, particularly high blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol, through regular health check-ups, appropriate medical care and sustained lifestyle changes. Dr. Sravan Peravali, Consultant Interventional Cardiologist, stressed that a balanced diet, regular exercise and maintaining physical fitness can help reduce the risk of heart disease. He cautioned people against ignoring seemingly minor symptoms, advising them to seek medical evaluation rather than dismissing warning signs. Doctors also highlighted the importance of recognising symptoms early and seeking emergency medical care without delay. Sudden chest discomfort, breathlessness or cold sweats may indicate a heart emergency, while sudden facial drooping, weakness or numbness on one side of the body, difficulty speaking or sudden loss of balance may signal a stroke. Both conditions require urgent medical attention. The doctors advised people to undergo periodic health assessments, follow prescribed treatment for existing conditions and avoid tobacco use. They also emphasised that exercise routines should be appropriate to an individual's health and physical condition, particularly for those recovering from a cardiac event or stroke. The 'Open Heart' interaction was organised as part of Sri Sri Holistic Hospitals' public health awareness initiative, coinciding with World Heart Day activities. The session aimed to encourage informed conversations about heart health, stroke prevention and the importance of acting early to reduce the risk of serious complications.

ED attaches Rs 54 crore property in Delhi's Maharani Bagh linked to Amrapali Group

NEW DELHI, OCT 10

The ED attached immovable property worth Rs 54.71 crore in Delhi's Maharani Bagh area in connection with a money laundering case involving the Amrapali Group and others, an official statement said on Saturday. The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Lucknow Zonal Office, provisionally attached the property bearing No. A-3 (New), Maharani Bagh, which stood in the name of Surbhaee Advertising, the official said in a statement. The ED investigation was initiated on the basis of 18 FIRs registered by UP Police and EOW, Delhi Police, under Sections 406, 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120-B of IPC, 1860, against the Amrapali Group of companies and its Directors/promoters, it said. It is alleged that the Amrapali Group launched several housing projects in Noida and Greater Noida and collected substantial amounts from homebuyers with the promise of delivering flats within 36 months, along with assured returns, the ED said. The projects, however, remained incomplete, and the homebuyers were neither handed possession nor received the refund. A forensic audit conducted in the matter found that homebuyers' funds exceeding Rs 5,000 crore had been diverted by the Amrapali Group, the ED said. Investigation revealed that homebuyers' funds were diverted to shell and group companies and siphoned off by the directors under the guise of professional fees, said the statement.

Milma Turnover Grows 15.09% to ₹2,560 Crore in H1 FY27

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Kerala Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (KCMMF), which markets its products under the brand Milma, has clocked a turnover of Rs 2,559.71 crores from the sale of liquid milk and other products in the first half of the financial year 2026-27. The turnover marked a growth of 15.09 per cent from the corresponding period in the previous year, it said in a statement here on Saturday. Milma's total turnover in the first half of 2025-26 period was Rs. 2,224.12 crores, it said.

Jitendra Singh Calls for Faster Industrial Innovation by 2047

NEW DELHI, OCT 10



Union Minister of State Dr Jitendra Singh on Saturday urged India's industry to come forward to accelerate innovation, translate scientific research into commercial ventures and scale up India's technological capabilities to achieve national objectives set for 2047 and strengthen India's strategic sovereignty.

Addressing 121st Annual Session of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) here, the minister emphasised the need to bring the government, industry, academia, research institutions and start-ups together to convert scientific capabilities into indigenous technologies, commercially viable enterprises and globally competitive solutions.

He said India's next phase of technological growth must move beyond adoption of technologies developed elsewhere towards creating indigenous solutions with global relevance.

"The expansion of the space ecosystem following policy reforms, alongside greater private-sector participation in strategic technology areas, demonstrates the opportunities that emerge when scientific capabilities are supported by an enabling policy environment and entrepreneurial initiative," he said.

Citing progress under National Quantum Mission, the minister said India had set eight-year target of achieving 2,000 kilometres of quantum-secure communication and had achieved 1,000-kilometre milestone in three years.

He also referred to growth of India's bioeconomy from around USD 10 billion in 2014 to approximately $196 billion with ambition to reach $300 billion by 2030.

He cited expansion of biotechnology start-up ecosystem as evidence of opportunities emerging in life sciences and advanced research, demonstrating potential of scientific innovation to generate new enterprises and create economic value.

Dr Singh stressed that industry engagement should begin at inception of research projects, enabling scientists to understand market requirements and develop solutions with clear pathway to commercial deployment.

Referring to the government's Research, Development and Innovation initiative, he said greater private-sector participation in R&D was essential to accelerate translation of scientific discoveries into commercial applications.

Therapy costs nearly Rs 2,000 a session.. Can your health insurance help?

Mental health treatment is legally entitled to insurance parity, but therapy claims often fail in practice. The gap usually lies in policy terms that cover hospitalisation or limited app counselling, not regular outpatient sessions.

A therapy session can cost Rs 2,000 or more. For someone seeing a therapist every week, that means spending at least Rs 8,000 a month and over Rs 1 lakh a year. It is a significant recurring expense, especially when the person is already paying an annual premium for health insurance. So, it is reasonable to expect the policy to help with these expenses. After all, under Section 21(4) of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, insurers are required to provide medical insurance for the treatment of mental illness on the same basis as physical illness. IRDAI has also directed insurers to comply with this requirement. But there is an important distinction between mental illness being covered under the rules and your insurer actually paying for your therapy sessions.

A policy may cover hospitalisation for mental illness without reimbursing regular outpatient therapy. Another may offer a limited number of counselling sessions through an app but not pay for appointments with a therapist of your choice. In other words, having mental health coverage does not necessarily mean every therapy session, psychiatric consultation or counselling appointment will be covered. "Parity in coverage, not an unlimited promise to pay for every form of care," says Saurabh Vijayvergia, Founder and CEO of CoverSure. The question, then, is not simply whether mental health is covered by health insurance. It is whether the policy you are paying for will help with the treatment you actually need.

MENTAL HEALTH COVERAGE IS MANDATORY. BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

The starting point is the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017. Section 21(4) requires insurers to provide medical insurance for the treatment of mental illness on the same basis as the treatment of physical illness. IRDAI directed insurers to comply in August 2018 and reiterated in October 2022 that insurance products must cover mental illness and comply with the Act. According to Vijayvergia, the regulator has also asked insurers to offer products for persons with mental illness, backed by underwriting policies that do not reject an application solely on that ground. "Mental illness cannot simply be excluded as a category from medical-expense cover," he says. That is an important protection for policyholders. Mental illness cannot simply be treated as a category that health insurance does not cover. However, the mandate should not be interpreted as a promise that every mental health expense will automatically be reimbursed. The type of policy, the treatment sought and the benefits purchased still matter. As Vijayvergia explains, "A hospitalisation policy does not automatically become an outpatient policy, and a fixed-benefit policy pays according to its specified benefit triggers rather than reimbursing every treatment bill." In other words, the requirement to cover mental illness does not automatically mean that a policyholder can submit bills for every therapy session and expect payment. The real question is what kind of mental healthcare the policy covers, under which benefit and subject to what conditions.

YOU NEED THERAPY. WILL YOUR INSURER PAY FOR IT?

Consider someone who has been attending therapy every week. The sessions cost Rs 1,500 each, and the expense is becoming difficult to manage. The person has health insurance and knows that mental illness is covered under the rules. Naturally, they want to know whether they can submit the bills to their insurer.

The answer depends on the policy.

"For many people, regular therapy is where recovery actually happens, so it helps to know exactly how a policy treats it," says Vijayvergia. He points out that for therapy outside a hospital, the policy needs an applicable outpatient benefit, a psychotherapy or counselling benefit, or a service benefit that provides eligible sessions. This could be included in the base policy, offered as an optional cover or provided through an employer's benefits package. There is another distinction that policyholders should not overlook: whether the insurer reimburses the cost of treatment or simply gives access to a limited service. "Check whether the benefit pays your chosen therapist's bills or only provides sessions through the insurer's own network or app," Vijayvergia says. "Those are materially different benefits."



LING AND PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT ARE NOT THE SAME BENEFIT

Another source of confusion is the assumption that all forms of mental healthcare fall under one insurance benefit. Mental healthcare can include assessment, diagnosis, treatment, care and rehabilitation for mental illness or suspected mental illness. Psychotherapy and clinical counselling are part of that care. Vijayvergia says therapy should not be dismissed as a wellness extra simply because it involves conversation rather than a prescription. However, whether an insurer pays for a particular service is a separate question. A hospitalisation policy may cover eligible inpatient treatment, while outpatient psychiatric consultations, medicines and psychotherapy depend on the relevant outpatient benefits. It is also important to distinguish clinical treatment from general wellbeing support. Some policies offer counselling for stress, parenting or relationship concerns as a separate service benefit, with eligibility conditions that differ from those for a medical-expense claim. "Neither a formal diagnosis nor a psychiatrist's referral should be described as a universal requirement for every counselling benefit," Vijayvergia says. For consumers, the takeaway is straightforward: do not assume that a policy offering counselling automatically covers clinical therapy, or that psychiatric consultations, prescribed medicines and psychotherapy all fall under the same limit. Check each benefit separately and understand what the insurer will pay for.

THERAPY, COUNSELTHE FINE PRINT THAT CAN LEAVE YOU PAYING THE BILL

Even when a policy includes mental health coverage, several conditions can affect how much a consumer can actually claim. The first is the setting in which treatment is provided. Does the policy cover hospital treatment, outpatient treatment or only a specified number of virtual counselling sessions? Next, look at the financial limits. These can include an annual allowance, a cap on the amount payable per session, a maximum number of sessions, co-payment requirements or a shared limit that also applies to other outpatient expenses. "A large hospitalisation sum insured tells you very little about what is available for regular therapy," Vijayvergia says. For instance, a policy may advertise a large overall sum insured but provide only a small outpatient allowance. Even if therapy is eligible, that allowance may be exhausted after a few sessions. The provider conditions matter just as much. A benefit may require treatment by an eligible professional, restrict access to approved providers, require bookings through an app or ask for supporting clinical records. Policyholders should also check waiting periods, including those applicable to disclosed pre-existing conditions.

For example, a policy may provide a fixed number of virtual counselling sessions through an app. That can be useful, but it is not the same as reimbursing regular appointments with an independently chosen therapist. Similarly, treatment connected to an admissible hospitalisation may qualify under pre- or post-hospitalisation cover, subject to the treatment link, eligible expenses and the specified time window. That does not automatically provide continuing cover for unrelated outpatient therapy. This is why checking whether a policy covers mental illness is only the first step. Policyholders also need to establish whether the specific treatment they need is covered.

HOW TO CHECK YOUR POLICY IN FIVE MINUTES

You do not necessarily need to read every page of your policy document to begin understanding your coverage. But you do need to check the right sections. Vijayvergia suggests starting with the policy schedule to confirm the exact plan, variant and optional benefits purchased. Then look at the Customer Information Sheet, or CIS, which provides a summary of the policy's coverage, exclusions and financial limits. Next, search the detailed policy wording for terms such as "OPD", "outpatient", "psychotherapy", "psychologist", "counselling", "psychiatric", "mental illness" and "e-counselling". But finding one of these terms is not enough. Read the complete clause and its conditions. "You are looking for three answers: which service is covered, who can provide it, and how much the policy pays," he says. There is one more question to ask: does the policy reimburse the bills you submit, or does it only give you access to a specified number of sessions through its own platform or network? If the wording is unclear, ask the insurer for a written explanation. Vijayvergia suggests asking: "Will this policy pay for recurring outpatient psychotherapy with my chosen provider? Please identify the clause, limits, waiting period and documents required."

That is more useful than simply asking customer service whether mental health is covered. A broad yes may not tell you whether your particular therapy sessions qualify.

CAN YOUR CLAIM STILL BE REJECTED?

The fact that a policy covers mental illness does not automatically make every expense admissible.Vijayvergia identifies several situations in which a claim may be rejected or restricted: outpatient bills submitted under hospitalisation-only cover, an incomplete waiting period, an exhausted allowance, treatment outside the eligible provider or service conditions, or missing supporting records. Sometimes the claim may not be rejected entirely but may be restricted because an expense exceeds the applicable benefit limit or attracts a co-payment.If a claim is refused, ask the insurer to provide the precise contractual reason in writing."A denial simply because the treatment is for mental illness is very different from a denial because a particular outpatient expense falls outside the benefit purchased," he says.If the explanation does not appear justified, policyholders can use the insurer's grievance process and, subsequently, approach the Insurance Ombudsman where appropriate.

Autoimmune Diseases

Symptoms Women Should Not Ignore



Autoimmune diseases are among the most complex health conditions faced by millions of people around the world. They develop when the body's immune system, which is normally responsible for protecting us from infections and harmful substances, mistakenly begins attacking healthy cells, tissues or organs. More than 80 autoimmune diseases have been identified, including rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, multiple sclerosis, psoriasis, Hashimoto's thyroiditis and Sjögren's syndrome.

What makes autoimmune diseases particularly important for women's health is the striking gender imbalance. Women account for nearly 80% of people living with autoimmune diseases. Yet despite this disproportionately high burden, the early symptoms can be surprisingly easy to overlook. Persistent fatigue may be blamed on a busy lifestyle, joint pain on ageing or physical exertion, hair loss on hormonal changes, and difficulty concentrating on stress or lack of sleep.

For many women, the path to diagnosis can therefore be long and frustrating. Symptoms may come and go, affect different parts of the body and resemble those of several more common conditions. In some cases, women may visit multiple doctors before the underlying problem is identified.

Understanding why women are more vulnerable, recognising the warning signs and knowing when to seek medical help can make an important difference in managing these conditions.

Understanding Autoimmune Diseases

The immune system is one of the body's most important defence mechanisms. It constantly monitors the body for viruses, bacteria and other threats and activates a response when it detects something potentially harmful. Under normal circumstances, the immune system is able to distinguish between the body's own healthy tissues and foreign substances. Autoimmune disease occurs when this distinction breaks down. Instead of limiting its attack to harmful invaders, the immune system mistakenly targets healthy cells or tissues. The exact effect depends on which part of the body is affected. Some autoimmune diseases primarily involve one organ, while others can affect several organs and systems simultaneously. Rheumatoid arthritis, for example, primarily causes inflammation in the joints and can lead to pain, swelling and stiffness. Lupus can affect the skin, joints, kidneys, heart, lungs and nervous system. Multiple sclerosis affects the central nervous system, while Hashimoto's thyroiditis targets the thyroid gland. Sjögren's syndrome commonly affects the glands responsible for producing tears and saliva. Although these conditions are very different, they share the underlying problem of an abnormal immune response.

Why Women Are More Vulnerable

Scientists have not found a single explanation for why autoimmune diseases affect women much more frequently than men. Instead, evidence points towards an interaction between genetics, hormones, immune-system characteristics and environmental factors. One important difference is the way the immune systems of women and men respond. Women generally have stronger immune responses. This can provide advantages in fighting certain infections, but an especially active immune response may also increase the possibility of immune dysfunction. Hormones may also influence the immune system. Many autoimmune diseases first appear or become more noticeable during a woman's reproductive years, suggesting that hormonal changes could play a role in triggering or influencing disease activity. Genetic factors are another part of the picture. Some women may inherit a greater susceptibility to autoimmune disease without necessarily inheriting the disease itself. Environmental influences can then interact with that susceptibility. According to Dr. (Lt. Gen.) Ved Chaturvedi, senior consultant and professor in the Department of Rheumatology and Clinical Immunology at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, women's more active immune systems, along with hormonal, genetic and environmental influences, may contribute to their greater burden of autoimmune disease. However, researchers are still trying to understand precisely why these factors result in such a substantial difference between women and men.

The Role of Hormonal Changes

Hormones are believed to be an important factor in understanding autoimmune diseases in women. The immune system does not operate independently of the body's hormonal system. Hormonal changes can influence immune activity, which may partly explain why certain autoimmune diseases emerge or change during particular stages of a woman's life. The reproductive years are particularly significant. Puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth and menopause can all involve substantial hormonal changes. Some autoimmune conditions may develop during these periods or experience changes in activity.Pregnancy is especially complicated because the immune system undergoes significant adaptations to support both the mother and developing baby. Following childbirth, the body again experiences major hormonal and immune changes. For some women with an underlying autoimmune tendency, this period may coincide with the appearance or worsening of symptoms.However, hormones alone cannot explain autoimmune disease. They are just one component of a much larger biological picture involving genes, immune responses and environmental influences.

Symptoms Can Be Easy to Dismiss

One of the biggest problems with autoimmune diseases is that the first symptoms often appear ordinary. Almost everyone experiences fatigue at some point. Joint pain can follow physical activity or a long day at work. Hair loss can occur because of nutritional deficiencies or hormonal changes. Digestive problems can be linked to diet, infections or stress. The difficulty arises when these symptoms become persistent, repeatedly return or begin interfering with everyday life. A woman who feels exhausted every day despite getting enough sleep may assume she needs to slow down. Another may experience swollen joints and continue working because she believes the pain will eventually disappear. Someone experiencing recurring mouth ulcers, unusual rashes or unexplained fevers may treat each episode as an isolated problem. This tendency to normalise symptoms can delay medical attention.

Skin, Hair and Digestive Symptoms

Autoimmune diseases can affect the body in many ways, and some symptoms may appear unrelated at first. Skin rashes, unusual sensitivity to sunlight, recurring mouth ulcers and significant hair loss can occur with certain autoimmune conditions. Other women may experience persistent digestive problems, changes in bowel habits or unexplained abdominal discomfort. These symptoms do not necessarily indicate autoimmune disease. There are numerous other possible explanations, including infections, nutritional deficiencies, allergies, hormonal disorders and medication-related effects. What matters is the pattern. If symptoms repeatedly occur, last longer than expected or appear alongside other unexplained problems, they should be evaluated rather than continually dismissed.

Brain Fog and Unexplained Fevers

Some women with autoimmune conditions report what is commonly described as "brain fog". This can involve difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, mental fatigue or trouble finding the right words. Brain fog

Fatigue Is More Than Being Tired

Fatigue is among the most common complaints associated with autoimmune diseases, but it is also one of the easiest symptoms to overlook. Ordinary tiredness generally improves with rest. Persistent fatigue can feel different. A person may wake up after a full night's sleep and still feel exhausted. Simple activities such as shopping, cooking, working or climbing stairs may require significantly more effort than before. Fatigue can also affect concentration and emotional wellbeing. Women may describe feeling mentally slow, unable to focus or as though they are constantly operating without enough energy. Because modern life often involves work pressure, family responsibilities and insufficient sleep, it is tempting to attribute such exhaustion to lifestyle alone. But when fatigue persists without an obvious explanation or significantly changes daily functioning, it deserves medical attention.

Joint Pain and Stiffness Need Attention

Joint pain is another symptom that can easily be ignored, particularly when it begins gradually. Occasional joint discomfort is common, but persistent swelling, stiffness, warmth or pain may indicate inflammation. In certain autoimmune conditions, several joints may be affected at the same time. Morning stiffness can also provide an important clue. In inflammatory arthritis, stiffness may last for a considerable period after waking and gradually improve with movement. Women sometimes continue to push through joint pain because they have responsibilities that cannot easily be put aside. But repeatedly ignoring inflammation may allow an underlying condition to remain untreated. Persistent or recurring joint symptoms should therefore be discussed with a doctor rather than automatically being attributed to age, work or physical activity.

is not specific to autoimmune disease and can occur with sleep deprivation, stress, nutritional deficiencies and several other health conditions. Nevertheless, persistent cognitive changes accompanied by other symptoms deserve discussion with a healthcare professional. Unexplained or recurrent fevers can also be significant. A fever is normally a sign that the body is responding to an infection or another inflammatory process. When fever repeatedly occurs without an obvious cause, medical evaluation may be necessary.

Why Diagnosis Can Take Time

Diagnosing an autoimmune disease can be difficult because there is no universal test that identifies every autoimmune condition. Doctors must often piece together information from several sources. They may consider the patient's symptoms, medical history, family history and physical examination before deciding which investigations are appropriate. Blood tests can help identify inflammation, antibodies or other abnormalities, but test results need to be interpreted in the context of the patient's symptoms. Depending on the suspected condition, doctors may also recommend imaging studies or specialised investigations. Another challenge is that symptoms may change over time. A woman may feel relatively well during one appointment and experience significant symptoms several weeks later. Some autoimmune conditions also affect different parts of the body at different times. This can make the diagnostic journey frustrating for patients and doctors alike.

Keeping Track of Symptoms Can Help

Women experiencing unexplained symptoms can make medical consultations more useful by keeping a record of what they are experiencing.

Writing down when symptoms began, how long they lasted, how often they returned and whether anything appeared to trigger them can help reveal patterns. Recording changes in joint pain, fatigue, rashes, digestive problems, sleep and other symptoms can also provide valuable information. A symptom diary can be particularly useful when symptoms come and go. It can help ensure that important details are not forgotten during a short consultation. Family medical history is also worth discussing because certain autoimmune diseases can occur more frequently among relatives.

The Importance of Early Recognition

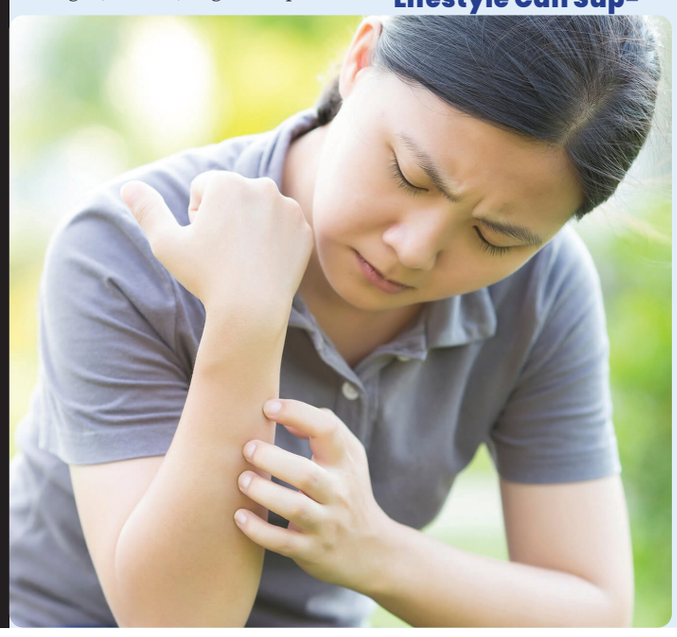
Early recognition does not mean that every unusual symptom should be treated as autoimmune disease. It means persistent symptoms should not automatically be dismissed.

Depending on the condition, uncontrolled inflammation can eventually damage tissues or organs. Early diagnosis can allow doctors to begin appropriate treatment, monitor disease activity and reduce the risk of complications. Treatment has changed considerably for many autoimmune diseases, and several conditions can now be managed effectively with appropriate medical care. The objective is generally not simply to suppress symptoms temporarily but to control disease activity and protect the patient's long-term health.

Finding the Right Specialist

The type of specialist required depends on the symptoms and suspected condition. A rheumatologist may evaluate rheumatoid arthritis, lupus and several other systemic autoimmune diseases. An endocrinologist may be involved in autoimmune thyroid conditions. A dermatologist can assess autoimmune-related skin problems, while a gastroenterologist may investigate persistent digestive symptoms. Neurological symptoms may require assessment by a neurologist. In some situations, more than one specialist may become involved because autoimmune diseases can affect multiple organs. If symptoms continue despite an initial consultation and the underlying cause remains unclear, seeking a second opinion can also be reasonable.

Lifestyle Can Support, But Not Replace, Treatment



There is no universal diet or lifestyle programme that can cure autoimmune disease. However, healthy habits can support overall wellbeing and may help people cope with chronic conditions. Eating a balanced diet, getting adequate sleep and maintaining physical activity suited to one's health are important foundations. Stress management can also be useful. Chronic stress can affect sleep, energy and overall wellbeing, although it should not be used as an explanation for every unexplained symptom.

Women should also be cautious about restrictive diets and supplements marketed as "miracle cures". Autoimmune diseases are complex, and an approach that works for one person may not work for another. Some supplements can also interact with prescribed medicines. Medical treatment should therefore remain the foundation of disease management.

The Emotional Cost of Being Dismissed

The burden of autoimmune disease is not limited to physical symptoms. The uncertainty surrounding diagnosis can be emotionally exhausting.

A woman who repeatedly feels unwell but cannot explain why may begin questioning herself. She may wonder whether she is simply stressed, not sleeping enough or failing to manage her responsibilities. Being repeatedly told that symptoms are simply due to hormones, ageing or stress can make this experience even more difficult. This is why listening to patients is such an important part of healthcare. A patient's description of how symptoms affect everyday life can provide valuable information that cannot always be captured through a single test. Women should not feel that they are overreacting simply because their symptoms are difficult to measure or explain.

Moving Beyond the "Just Stress" Explanation

Women's symptoms have historically been vulnerable to being explained away as stress or hormonal changes. While stress and hormones can certainly influence health, they should not automatically become the final explanation when symptoms persist. A woman who repeatedly says that she does not feel like herself deserves to be heard.

Fatigue that changes someone's ability to work or manage daily responsibilities deserves attention. Pain that repeatedly returns deserves an explanation. Persistent rashes, unexplained fevers, recurring mouth ulcers or significant changes in health should not simply be accepted as an unavoidable part of being a woman. The objective is not to create unnecessary fear. It is to encourage appropriate awareness.

Southern Railway Athletes bring Home Five Medals from Asian Games 2026

- **Vithya Ramraj breaks P.T. Usha's 42-year-old national record in the 400m hurdles**
- **Baranica wins India's first-ever Asian Games medal in women's pole vault**
- **Rajesh contributed to the podium finish with a bronze medal in the men's 4x400m relay**
- **General Manager, Southern Railway appreciates the outstanding performance of the Sport Champions**





CHENNAI

Southern Railway's athletes have made the nation proud at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, winning five medals between them, including a new national record and a historic first for Indian athletics.

Vithya Ramraj, three medals and a national record

Ms. Vithya Ramraj, Commercial Clerk cum Ticketing Supervisor of Palakkad Division of Southern Railway and hailing from Meenakshipuram, Tamil Nadu, delivered a historic performance at the Asian Games by standing on the podium across three separate events:

Gold in the Women's 4‡400m Relay

Silver in the Mixed 4×400m Relay, alongside teammates Manu, Poovamma and Vishal

Bronze in the Women's 400m Hurdles

In the 400m hurdles, Ms. Vithya clocked 54.75 seconds, a new national record. The time surpasses the mark of 55.42 seconds set by the legendary P.T. Usha 42 years ago, a record that had stood as a benchmark for Indian women's athletics for over four decades.

Shri Subba Rao, General Manager, Southern Railway appreciated Ms Vithya Ramraj and lauded her outstanding achievement of setting a national record. Shri Ganesh, Principal Chief Electrical Engineer and President, Southern Railway Sports Association, also commended Ms Vithya on her remarkable accomplishment.

Baranica makes history in pole vault

Ms. Baranica Elangovan, Senior Clerk of Headquarters Personnel Branch from Mayiladuthurai, Tamil Nadu won the Bronze Medal in Women's Pole Vault. It is India's first-ever medal in this event at the Asian Games, a landmark moment for Indian athletics.

Rajesh Ramesh won Bronze Medal in the men's 4x400m Relay

Indian sprinter R. Rajesh, Commercial Clerk cum Ticketing Supervisor of Tiruchchirappalli Division delivered a standout performance at the 2026 Asian Games anchoring India to a podium finish with a bronze medal in the men's 4x400m relay. Running as the final runner for Team India alongside Vishal Thennarasu Kayalvizhi, Mohammed Ashfaq, and Dharmveer Choudhary, Rajesh delivered a fast run and a great baton handoff. His strong finish helped India secure a place on the winner's podium and brought pride to both the nation and Southern Railway!

The achievements of Ms. Vithya, Ms. Baranica & Mr. Rajesh reflect the strength of sporting talent within Southern Railway and Indian Railways, and the support given to athletes through the Southern Railway Sports Association (SRSA).

Southern Railway also commends its other contingent members who proudly represented the country at the Asian Games:

- Mr. Thowfeeq, Junior Clerk, Coaching Depot Office, Thiruvananthapuram North, Thiruvananthapuram Division
- Ms. Anamika K. A., Senior Clerk, Personnel Branch, Palakkad Division
- Ms. David, Senior Clerk, Mechanical Branch, Erode, Salem Division

Southern Railway extends its heartiest congratulations to all the athletes, their teammates, coaches, and support staff

Formula 1: Verstappen wins rain-hit Singapore Sprint as McLaren teammates collide

SINGAPORE



Max Verstappen mastered the tricky wet-to-dry conditions to win the Singapore Grand Prix Sprint on Saturday, while George Russell crashed out on the opening lap and a late collision between McLaren teammates Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri turned the battle for the podium on its head.

Verstappen started the race in first place, but immediately lost the lead to Russell of Mercedes, who had a rapid start on the slippery Marina Bay Street Circuit. Russell's race, however, came to a dramatic end at the last corner of the first lap when he lost control of his car and crashed into the concrete barriers.

Verstappen took the lead again and kept it during the Safety Car period, taking care of his intermediate tyres as the track slowly dried. The Red Bull driver managed to beat Lewis Hamilton of Ferrari to win the Sprint, which had been started after a heavy downpour had delayed the scheduled start by thirty minutes.

Hamilton came out second after carrying off a brilliant getaway which took him from sixth to third, and since Russell retired, it promoted him to the next position. His Ferrari teammate Charles Leclerc took third place on the podium.

It was in the final phase of the race that Norris tried to pass Piastri at corner five, but the two McLaren drivers collided, and both cars spun around, ruining their chances of finishing on the podium.

Kimi Antonelli, who was leading the championship, was able to finish in fourth place, beating Liam Lawson of Racing Bulls, Ollie Bearman of Haas and Nico Hulkenberg of Audi. Norris managed to recover and ended up in eighth position, with Piastri being classified 14th, one lap behind, after having lost ten positions in the incident. The race was delayed because of heavy rain, which had left standing water at various parts of the circuit, especially near Turns 2 and 3.

After the Medical Car had carried out its inspections, the FIA postponed the start and then sent the field around for formation laps before deciding on a standing start using intermediate tyres.

When the races started, Russell passed Verstappen through the first corner while Hamilton took over from Leclerc, Piastri and Norris to finish in third place. Hamilton's early lead, though, vanished after he crashed on the first lap.

Many other drivers also failed to complete the race. Sergio Perez and Lance Stroll crashed against each other while braking at corner 16, which caused the Aston Martin driver to retire right away, whereas Perez managed to get back to the pits. Isack Hadjar and Franco Colapinto also pulled in during the early laps.

There was another accident involving three cars, namely Alex Albon from Williams, Gabriel Bortoleto from Audi, and Valtteri Bottas from Cadillac, as a result of which both Bortoleto and Bottas had to retire; Albon managed to continue at first but then also retired late.

As the circuit dried, Verstappen slowly increased his lead over Hamilton, while Leclerc came ever more under pressure from the two McLaren drivers. The Ferrari driver said that his front tyres were very worn, but the changing conditions caused the drivers at the front not to change to slick tyres.

As a result of the collision involving McLaren, Leclerc was able to finish in third place, and Antonelli's fourth-place finish helped to consolidate his position in the championship race. Since Russell retired, he lost out on some valuable points and also fell further behind his Mercedes teammate.

Pierre Gasly came in ninth for Alpine, with Esteban Ocon from Haas, Fernando Alonso of Aston Martin, Carlos Sainz from Williams, and the rookie Arvid Lindblad from Racing Bulls following him.

Verstappen obtained the Sprint pole position in Friday's qualifying session, beating Russell, Leclerc and Piastri. The Dutchman was cleared of any grid penalty after a review of the yellow-flag incident that occurred in the first part of qualifying.

The stewards subsequently confirmed that no further action would be taken regarding Hamilton's alleged violation of the yellow flag rule during the Sprint, and the collision involving Albon, Bortoleto and Bottas was also to be reviewed after the race.

PGTI Tour: Shubhankar Sharma wins Kapil Dev Invitational Tour Championship by six strokes

GREATER NOIDA



Shubhankar Sharma closed with a three-under 69 to win the INR 2 crore Kapil Dev Invitational Tour Championship by six strokes at the Jaypee Greens Golf & Spa Resort in Greater Noida on Saturday.

The 30-year-old Chandigarh golfer (68-65-72-69), who began the final round with a two-shot advantage, made an eagle on the par-five 12th, three birdies and two bogeys to finish at 14-under

It was Shubhankar's second victory in as many appearances on the DP World PGTI this season. His previous triumph came at the Boulders Classic in April, where he ended an eight-year wait for a professional title. The two-time DP World Tour winner collected INR 30 lakh for his victory.

Italy's Michele Ortolani (72-70-65-73) and Bengaluru's Manoj S (70-71-66-73) shared second place at eight-under 280. Manoj S' joint runner-up finish earned him INR 16 lakh and jumped from 26th to 17th at INR 35,92,684 on the Race to DP World India Championship and booked his spot for next week's marquee event.

Bengaluru's Khalin Joshi (72-67-71-71), a four-time winner on the DP World PGTI this season, finished fourth at seven-under 281. He earned INR 9,99,600 and strengthened his hold on second place in the Race to DP World India Championship, taking his season earnings to INR 77,33,825.

Shubhankar began the final round with three early birdies but dropped a couple of bogeys in the middle of the round as Ortolani reduced his advantage. Shubhankar's bogey on the 10th tightened the contest before the leader responded emphatically. "I expected the lead to narrow unless I made a very fast start," Shubhankar said. "I made two early birdies, but I wasn't playing my best. Michele played extremely well, and then I made a poor bogey on the 10th. That was probably my worst shot of the day." The decisive moment arrived on the par-five 12th, where Shubhankar holed a putt from approximately 60 to 70 feet for eagle in gusty conditions.

"The eagle was a pleasant surprise and came at exactly the right moment," he said. "I had just bogeyed the 10th, and the lead had been reduced considerably. Holing a putt from that distance gave me a huge lift and brought the momentum back in my favour."

SHORT NEWS

APL Season 2

Mighty Marathas register easy win against Chola Chiefs to open account



HYDERABAD: After losing both their opening matches, Mighty Marathas came back in style to claim their first points in the second season of Archery Premier League (APL), beating Chola Chiefs comprehensively without dropping a single set in Hyderabad on Saturday. The Marathas, led by Mike Schloesser and anchored by Dhiraj Bommadevara under time pressure, beat Chiefs 6-0 for their first win of the tournament, while Chiefs have now suffered two defeats in three matches.Schloesser, nicknamed 'Mr. Perfect', lived up to the billing as he shot 10s with all six arrows for Marathas. Archery Premier League, the world's first franchise-based archery league, is initiated by the Archery Association of India and comprises six teams and a total of 48 archers, with 36 Indians and 12 elite international stars. The league, taking place at People's Plaza in Hyderabad.

ISL 2026/27: FC Goa fight back to hold Chennaiyin FC to 1-1 draw

FATORDA (GOA)



FC Goa and Chennaiyin FC played out a 1-1 draw in the second match of the Indian Super League (ISL) 2026-27 season at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Fatorda, Goa, on Saturday. Irfan Yadwad gave Chennaiyin FC the lead in the 64th minute before Chiki's headed equaliser in the 75th minute ensured FC Goa came away with a point in their season opener.

The first half saw both teams attempt to build from the back and work their way into the final third, but neither could find the breakthrough. The sides went into half-time goalless after a closely contested opening period.

Chennaiyin FC broke the deadlock in the 64th minute when Irfan Yadwad drove a right-footed effort into the far corner to put the visitors ahead. The visitors continued to search for a second goal, with Ramon Taque testing the FC Goa defence with a powerful effort towards the bottom-left corner from a tight angle on the right.

FC Goa responded by increasing the pressure on the Chennaiyin defence and came close to equalising in the 70th minute when Ramon unleashed a powerful curling effort from long range, only for the ball to strike the post. Udanta Singh also threatened, with his attempt rattling the crossbar as the hosts pushed for a goal.

FC Goa eventually found their breakthrough in the 75th minute. Following a foul on Udanta Singh in the attacking half, the Gaurs won a free kick, which Chiki converted with a well-directed header into the bottom-right corner to bring the scores level at 1-1.

The hosts continued to press for a winner, with Chiki attempting another effort from inside the box in the 79th minute. Chennaiyin FC also threatened at the other end, as Ramon rose to meet a cross from the left but sent his header over the crossbar with the goalkeeper off his line.

Both teams continued to look for a decisive goal in the closing stages, but neither could find a winner. FC Goa registered four corners compared to Chennaiyin FC's one as the hosts maintained their attacking intent in the second half.

The result sees FC Goa and Chennaiyin FC begin their ISL 2026-27 campaigns with a point each after an engaging encounter in Fatorda.

Chennai Lions' Gaganjeet Bhullar lifts Hyd Invitational title

HYDERABAD

Gaganjeet Bhullar of Chennai Lions GC claimed the title in the IGPL Krishna Invitational 2026 Hyderabad, bagging the champion's trophy and a winner's cheque of Rs 22.6 lakh at The Hyderabad Golf Club in Hyderabad on Saturday.

Bhullar, an Arjuna Awardee and record 11-time Asian Tour winner, entered the week as a four-time IGPL champion. After sharing the lead with Karandeep Kochhar of Punjab Raptors GC following the second round, Gaganjeet Bhullar went on to clinch the title at Hyderabad Golf Club with a total of 14-under-par 196. The victory marks his fifth IGPL title.

Karandeep Kochhar and C. Muniyappa finished tied for second, each receiving a cheque of twelve lakh seventy-five thousand rupees.



Sr Men National C'ships: Odisha, AP, J&K, Rajasthan win on opening day

JHANSI

Hockey Association of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Hockey Jammu & Kashmir secured easy wins while Arunachal and Rajasthan prevailed over fighting opponents on an opening day marked by one-sided scorelines, late drama and a goal-fest in Division 'B' in the 16th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship 2026, which began in Jhansi on Saturday.

In a Pool A match, Odisha set the tone for the tournament with an 18-1 rout of Hockey Uttarakhand. Aryan Xess and Sudeep Chirmako each scored four, with Xess finding the net in the 3rd and 4th quarters. Akash Soreng, Ajay Ekka, Anmol Ekka and Deepak Minz each scored twice, while Rohit Kullu, Ritik Lakra and Prasant Barla also scored. Vishal Kumar scored Uttarakhand's consolation goal in the 34th minute.

Also in the same pool, Chhattisgarh scored in every quarter except the first to secure an 8-0 thrashing of Assam, with Vishnu Yadav opening the account in the 4th minute. Sandeep Kumar (27', 40'), Tarun Yadav (32', 46') and Sonu Nishad (57', 60') each scored twice, and Karan Kumar Sahu also scored. Assam failed to score.

In Pool B, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu Hockey took control early through Nagendra Kumar (5', 36') and Kushal Bopaiah (11'), and Sunil Yadav (31') and Mohd Idris (48') added to the lead. Hari Rama (26') scored Goa's only goal in the 5-1 win.

Arunachal scored through Jay Prakash Patel (20'), Premdayal Giri (33'), Ujjwal (35') and Patcha Tharun Kumar (36'), with Abhinav Singh (55') also on the scoresheet. Telangana's goals came from Mohd Affan Khan (6') and R Aiyappa (41') as they went down 4-2.

In Division 'C', Andhra Pradesh scored steadily in their 8-0 rout of Gujarat in a Pool B match, with Hemanth Kumar Dodium Subramanyam scoring a hat-trick (26', 39', 49'). Nadiminti Akhil (43', 46'), Metta Sai Kumar (15'), Lekkala Hitesh Rao (31'), Manchala Bhanuprakash Reddy (41') and Shaik Mohammad Rafi (28') also scored.

In another Pool B match, Hockey Rajasthan prevailed over Bihar (BSSA) 3-2. Rajasthan held off a spirited Bihar side in a close contest. Captain Manish Choudhary scored twice late on (52', 58'), after Ankit Rawat (32') and Anurag Suthar (48') had scored. Jony Kumar (34') and Md Sidik (54') scored for Bihar.

China's Zheng scheduled to face top seed Sabalenka in Wuhan Open 2nd round

WUHAN



China's Zheng Qinwen could meet top seed Aryna Sabalenka in the second round of the Wuhan Open after the singles draw was revealed Saturday, while Wang Xiyu and Wang Xinyu were drawn against each other in an all-Chinese first-round match.

Zheng will open against American Ann Li, with Sabalenka awaiting the winner after receiving a first-round bye. Zheng has won just one of their nine previous meetings.

This week, Zheng Qinwen defeated Belgium's Elise Mertens 7-5, 6-2 here on Saturday to reach the China Open women's singles final for the first time, while home veteran Zhang Shuai and the Czech Republic's Katerina Siniakova advanced to the women's doubles final. Zheng, a wild card, broke 13th seed Mertens in the second game, but the Belgian broke back in the seventh to level at 4-4. After a tight finish to the opening set, Zheng prevailed 7-5 before taking control of the second to seal the victory. The result marked Zheng's best performance at the event and made her the first home player in tournament history to reach the singles final. The Wuhan Open is the final WTA 1000 event of the season. Sabalenka and second seed Jessica Pegula were drawn in opposite halves, with Iga Swiatek and Mirra Andreeva also in the field. The top eight seeds received first-round byes, reports Xinhua.

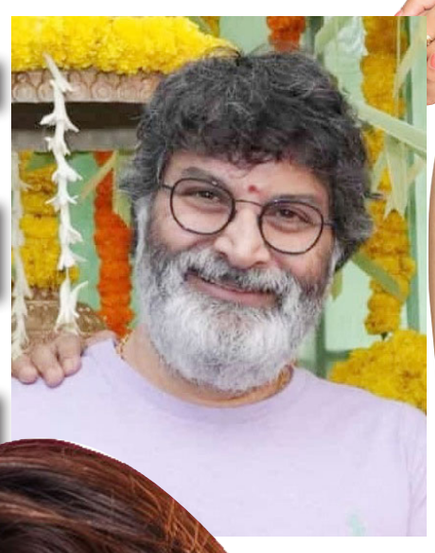
Four of the five Chinese players in the main draw landed in the top half alongside Sabalenka. Wild card Wang Xiyu, the Asian Games champion, leads Wang Xinyu 2-1 in their previous WTA meetings. The winner will next face American Iva Jovic or Slovakia's Mia Pohankova. Zhang Shuai, the 37-year-old veteran, will open against ninth seed Belinda Bencic of Switzerland, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion. Guo Hanyu is the only Chinese player in the bottom half and opens against Romania's Sorana Cirstea. Pegula, who also received a first-round bye, could next meet Latvia's Jelena Ostapenko.

Nivetha Shares First-Day Emotions



Actress Nivetha Thomas has begun shooting for her upcoming film 'Srimathi', marking the start of a new journey with a mix of excitement and nervous energy. Taking to social media ahead of her first day on the sets, the actress opened up about her feelings as she prepared to step into a new cinematic world. Sharing her thoughts, Nivetha described the experience as familiar yet refreshingly different. "Ready to enter a new world. It is a world I know, yet it feels new and powerful in its own way. There is always a certain nervous energy before the first day of shooting on a new set. It is not anxiety, but the excitement of beginning a film. A girl is off to shoot," she wrote. 'Srimathi' is being developed as a family drama and will premiere as a ZEE5 Telugu Original. The film is directed by Viswakh Khanderao and produced by Niranjan Reddy and Chaitanya Reddy under the Prime Show Entertainment banner, known for backing the blockbuster 'Hanuman'. The makers recently unveiled the film's first-look poster, generating curiosity among audiences. Nivetha last made a strong impression with the 2024 film '35 Chinna Katha Kaadu', which received a positive response. Her performance also earned her the Filmfare Award for Best Actress and the Gaddar Telangana State Film Award. Following that success, expectations are high for her next outing, with 'Srimathi' promising to showcase the actress in another interesting role.

Poonam Kaur Targets Trivikram Again





The ongoing controversy between actress Poonam Kaur and prominent filmmaker Trivikram Srinivas has resurfaced, with the actress making fresh and serious allegations against the director on social media. In her latest posts, Poonam directly named Trivikram and alleged that her family's vulnerabilities had been used to obtain certain statements from them under pressure. She also criticised what she described as his approach to handling difficult situations, claiming that people were kept at a distance when problems arose but approached again when they were needed. he actress questioned the silence of the Movie Artists Association (MAA) over the matter and demanded to know why the organisation had not questioned the filmmaker. "Who is MAA waiting for? Why is Trivikram not being questioned? How many more innocent lives must be destroyed?" she asked in her social media posts. Poonam had previously alleged that she had submitted a complaint to MAA through email but had received no response. Her latest remarks have once again triggered discussions within film industry circles and on social media. However, the exact circumstances that prompted her latest allegations remain unclear. Neither Trivikram Srinivas nor the Movie Artists Association has issued an official response to the latest claims so far.

Vijay Rejects Ticket Price Hikes



Actor Vijay Deverakonda has made his stance on movie ticket price hikes clear, stating that he would prefer to keep ticket prices affordable for audiences watching his films. Speaking to the media at Annapurna Studios on Saturday as part of the promotions for his upcoming film 'Ranabaali', the actor revealed that he would urge producers not to increase ticket prices as long as the decision remained within his control. Recalling his college days, Vijay explained how his personal experiences shaped his perspective on movie ticket pricing. "During my college days, my father used to give me ten rupees every day. I would save that money to watch films at IMAX. When ticket prices increased by Rs. 100 back then , I felt really upset. That is why I now tell producers not to increase ticket prices for my films. I am even willing to reduce my share of the profits if necessary," he said. However, the actor jokingly suggested that films directed by S. S. Rajamouli could be an exception to his rule. His remarks have drawn attention to the ongoing debate surrounding cinema ticket prices and accessibility for moviegoers. 'Ranabaali', directed by Rahul Sankrityan, is a period action drama scheduled to arrive in theatres on October 16, coinciding with the Dasara festive season. Set against the backdrop of the devastating Rayalaseema famine of 1876–78 during British rule, the film features Rashmika Mandanna s the female lead and Hollywood actor Arnold Vosloo in a pivotal antagonist role. Mythri Movie Makers is producing the 0000000000000000film, with music composed by Ajay–Atul.peaking about biopics, Vijay revealed that he had long been interested in portraying the life of Sathya Sai Baba. However, he eventually stepped away from the idea, feeling that he lacked the purity and sensitivity required to do justice to such a revered personality. The actor also described 'Ranabaali' as his most satisfying film since 'Pelli Choopulu'. He revealed that he had already watched the film two or three times and indicated that the censor formalities were expected to be completed by Monday. With its historical setting, intense action and festive release window, the film is one of Vijay's notable upcoming projects.

Mrunal Slams Body Shaming

Actress Mrunal Thakur has strongly criticised the growing trend of online trolling targeting celebrities, particularly female actors, over their personal lives, clothing choices and physical appearance. Extending her support to fellow actresses Katrina Kaif and Kriti Sanon, Mrunal stressed that everyone has the right to live life on their own terms and that nobody should be judged for their personal choices. During a recent interview as part of the promotions for her film 'Pooja Meri Jaan', Mrunal addressed the criticism faced by the two actresses. Katrina Kaif has been subjected to body-shaming over post-pregnancy physical changes, while Kriti Sanon faced criticism for her outfit in a jewellery advertisement. Mrunal pointed out that both actresses have made significant contributions to the film industry and earned recognition beyond Indian cinema. She questioned why people often focus on finding faults rather than appreciating their achievements and hard work. "We need to stop finding faults in everything. The way some people behave on social media makes it seem as though they have lost their minds," she remarked, expressing frustration over the increasingly harsh nature of online criticism. The actress also observed that while women were traditionally the primary targets of such attacks, men have increasingly begun facing similar treatment. Her comments highlight the growing concerns surrounding body-shaming, celebrity scrutiny and the impact of social media on public figures. Meanwhile, the jewellery advertisement featuring Kriti Sanon was reportedly withdrawn by the concerned brand following the controversy. Mrunal's remarks have once again brought attention to the need for greater sensitivity and respect towards celebrities and their personal choices.

Sree Vishnu Gets a Decent Start



King of Entertainment Sree Vishnu is known for his unique comic timing, and his latest outing, Comrade Kalyan, promises another entertaining ride. The film is attracting family audiences to theatres, with the first and second shows witnessing packed houses across several locations on its opening day. As per the makers, The movie grossed 4 Cr+ worldwide on its opening day. Interestingly, advance bookings for day 2 have already surpassed the opening-day numbers. Standard ticket pricing is another factor working in the film's favour, particularly among family audiences, while its entertainment quotient remains the major crowd-puller. The movie is also performing well overseas, grossing $100K+ on its opening day. More importantly, Comrade Kalyan is set to benefit from the Dasara holidays, which begin today, potentially boosting its box-office performance over the coming days.

Katrina Hits Back at Trolls



Bollywood actress Katrina Kaif believes people should not let online trolling affect their self-confidence. Responding indirectly to criticism about her post-pregnancy appearance, she said fearing criticism can prevent personal growth. Katrina emphasized self-acceptance, encouraging everyone to become their own cheerleader and take negative comments lightly.

Printed, Published, Edited and Owned by Pisati Janga Reddy, Printed at : Jayadurga Printers, Plot No.48, H.No.24114/ 3/1, Survey.No.551, Laxmi Narayana Nagar, Uppal, Medchal District, Telangana State.
Published at : Flat No.303A, Prajay Alakapuri Apartments, Road No.2, Green Hills Colony, Kothapet, Hyderabad 500035,Ranga Reddy District, Telangana State.
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