



Ayurveda and yoga restore balance

In an age dominated by stress, overstimulation, and lifestyle disorders, yoga expert, speaker, and author Anita Dua believes the world is gradually returning to an ancient truth – wellness cannot exist in fragments. For her, true health is the harmony of body, mind, and spirit.

WOMENIA

P5

'B Nagi Reddi: A Son's Memoir' – A heartfelt tribute to a visionary legend

B Nagi Reddi: A Son's Memoir is far more than a conventional biography. Written by B. Viswanatha Reddi, popularly known as Viswam, the book offers an emotionally rich and deeply researched account of the life of legendary filmmaker, publisher, and philanthropist B. Nagi Reddi.

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The real battle is within

In the present world many people consider survival and security as prime values. They argue that if a person does not survive, then what value the other values have for him. In a similar vein, they further argue that if a person lives in a state of constant insecurity.

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Nagarjuna gets emotional as 'Manam' completes 12 years

Veteran Telugu actor Nagarjuna turned emotional while reflecting on the special significance of May 23, a date deeply connected to both his personal and professional journey. The occasion became even more memorable as his cult classic family drama Manam completed 12 years.

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Cockroach party website taken down

NEW DELHI: The official website of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) has been taken down in the recent crackdown against the youth and Gen Z-led online movement after the party's official X handle was withheld. CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke said on Saturday that both his personal Instagram account and the party's Instagram account had also been "hacked".

The platform surfaced last week after a row over remarks linked to Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant during a court hearing on granting "senior" status to lawyers, referring to "youngsters" as "cockroaches" and "parasites". Later, the CJI said his remarks had been misquoted and that they were aimed at people entering the legal field with "fake and bogus degrees".

What started as an online

FOUNDER SLAMS GOVT'S 'DICTATORIAL BEHAVIOUR'

satire campaign later became a broader discussion of digital dissent and growing frustration among young people. Through memes and political commentary, the platform has raised issues such as unemployment, examination paper leaks and education.

On Saturday, Dipke said the party's "iconic website", cockroachjantaparty.org, had been taken down as part of the latest action against the movement. The founder said 10 lakh cockroaches had registered as members through the website, while 6 lakh cockroaches had signed a petition seeking the resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan



over alleged failures in the education system, particularly due to the NEET-UG 2026 'paper leak' controversy. "Why is the government so scared of cockroaches? But this dictatorial behaviour is opening the eyes of India's

youth. Our only crime is we were demanding a better future for ourselves. But you can't get rid of us that easily. We're working on a new home right now. Cockroaches never die," he wrote in a post on X. As of Saturday afternoon,

CJP crossed 22 million followers on Instagram. This put it well ahead of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has around 9.2 million followers on the Meta-owned platform, and the main opposition Congress party, which has around 13.4 million followers.

The party appeared after controversy broke out over CJI Surya Kant using the terms "parasites" and "cockroaches" while reprimanding a lawyer over his plea seeking senior designation. "There are youngsters like cockroaches, who don't get any employment or have any place in profession. Some of them become media, some of them become social media, RTI activists and other activists and

they start attacking everyone," the CJI said.

The CJI later said he had been misquoted and clarified that the remarks were aimed only at people entering the legal profession using "fake and bogus degrees".

The Cockroach Janta Party was formed a day after the CJI's remarks on May 15. It rapidly went viral and drew support from politicians, activists, artists and a large number of social media users across age groups.

Political leaders such as Trinamool Congress (TMC) leaders Mahua Moitra and Kirti Azad, along with Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav, have either interacted with or shown interest in the movement. Activists, including Prashant Bhushan and Anjali Bharadwaj, have also engaged with it.



US tightens green card rules

Applicants may now have to return home to apply



WASHINGTON

IN a major shift in US immigration policy, the administration of President Donald Trump has announced that many foreign nationals seeking permanent residency, or green cards, may now have to leave the United States and apply from their home countries.

The new policy, issued by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), marks one of the biggest changes to the green card process in more than six decades. The move has drawn criticism from immigration lawyers, aid organisations and policy analysts, who warn that it could disrupt the lives of millions of immigrants and their families.

Until now, many immigrants legally staying in the US could apply for a green card without leaving the country through a process known as "adjustment of status". Under the revised policy, USCIS officers have been instructed to decide on applications on a case-by-case basis and grant exceptions only in extraordinary circumstances.

DHS said the new approach was intended to prevent misuse of immigration loopholes. "An alien who is in the US temporarily and wants a

Green Card must return to their home country to apply," the department said in a statement.

The administration argues that the immigration system should function "as the law intended" rather than encouraging temporary visa holders to remain in the country while pursuing permanent residency.

According to analysts at the Cato Institute, more than one million immigrants in the US are currently waiting for green cards. The new rules could force many applicants to leave behind jobs, homes and families while their applications are processed overseas. Immigration experts say the change could particularly hurt mixed-status families, where some members are US citizens or permanent residents while others are on temporary visas. There is also uncertainty over how pending green card applications already filed inside the US will be treated.

Immigrant aid organisations strongly criticised the move. HIAS said the policy could endanger vulnerable people, including survivors of trafficking and abused children, by compelling them to return to countries they had fled. Critics also warned that the policy could worsen delays, as the US immigration system is already struggling with a large backlog of visa and residency applications.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio in New Delhi on Saturday

PM gets WH invite as he talks trade & security with Rubio

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday held crucial talks on security and trade with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who in turn extended him an invitation to the White House on behalf of Donald Trump.

The three-day visit to India by Rubio comes at a time when ties between India and the US under Trump 2.0 have continued to fluctuate amid trade and energy tensions, which have only deepened amid the Iran conflict.

US envoy Sergio Gorr, who joined Rubio for the meeting with PM Modi, said the talks also spanned the Indo-Pacific, where China has sought to assert its strength. India has always

been viewed by the US as a counterbalance to China in the crucial region.

"We had a productive discussion on ways to deepen US-India cooperation across security, trade, and critical technologies... India is a vital partner to the United States!" Gor tweeted. He also said that PM Modi was invited to the White House in the "near future". In the meeting, Rubio also pitched for US energy products, saying it had the potential to diversify India's energy supply.

It comes amid mounting concerns for India, which imports 80% of its crude oil needs, as the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz continues to affect energy flows.

US & Iran close to extending ceasefire by 60 days

TEHRAN: The ceasefire between US and Iran is likely to be extended by two more months, according to reports, citing mediators. The ceasefire has been in place since April 8 and reports of extending the truce comes amid fresh diplomatic push after mediator Pakistan's Army Chief Asim Munir met top Iranian leadership in Tehran over the weekend.

Earlier Asim Munir in Iran met with the top leadership, including President Masoud Pezeshkian, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi



and top Iranian negotiator and parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher

Ghalibaf. Pakistan army in a statement on Saturday said

Phogat gets HC relief to take part in Asian Games trials

NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court has given its nod to the participation of celebrated grappler Vinesh Phogat in the upcoming trials for the Asian Games, saying the Wrestling Federation of India's (WFI) selection policy is exclusionary for the lack of discretion to consider an iconic player like her, who is returning from a maternity break.

A bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia ordered that the selection trials, to be held on



May 30-31, shall be video-recorded by the WFI and an independent observer from the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) each shall also remain present.

"The appellant shall be permitted to participate in the selection trials for the Asian Games, 2026, which are scheduled for 30.05.2026 and

31.05.2026," the court said in its order passed on May 22 and uploaded on its website on Saturday.

"The policy and the circular are clearly exclusionary in nature as it does not give any discretion to Respondent No.1 (WFI) to consider iconic players like the appellant in view of the sabbatical taken on account of her maternity leave," it stated.

The court further observed that the grounds taken in the show-cause notice "appear to be pre-mediated and reopening the closed issues"

and that "it is necessary that the appellant is permitted to participate in the selection trials in the interest of the sport and justice".

The court passed the order on Phogat's appeal against the May 18 order of a single-judge bench, refusing her immediate relief on the issue of her participation in the selection trials. Phogat, a wrestler of international repute, was disqualified from the 50-kg category finals in the Paris Olympics in August 2024 for being 100 gm overweight in the morning weigh-in.

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We've always treated them like cockroaches...so why are they forming a political party now?

PARLIAMENT SECURITY BREACH

13,967-page 4th supplementary chargesheet filed in court

NEW DELHI

THE fourth supplementary chargesheet of 13,967 pages has been filed before a Delhi court in the 2023 Parliament security-breach case. Additional Sessions Judge Amit Bansal noted on Friday that the matter is listed for further arguments regarding the charges against accused Neelam Ranolia and Amol Dhanraj Shinde.

He said the investigating officer (IO) has filed the fourth supplementary chargesheet, consisting of 13,967 pages, against the accused under anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Indian Penal Code (IPC) provisions.

The court posted the matter for further proceedings, including a scrutiny of documents, on



May 29. On December 13, 2023, in a major security breach on the anniversary of the 2001 Parliament terror attack, two persons -- Sagar Sharma and Manoranjan D -- jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber from the visitors' gallery, unleashed a yellow smoke from canisters and shouted slogans, before being overpowered by some MPs and watch-and-ward staff.

Around the same time, two other accused -- Shinde and Ranolia -- also sprayed a coloured gas from canisters while shouting "tanashahi nahi chalegi" (dictatorship cannot go on) outside the Parliament premises.

Petro prices hiked again

NEW DELHI: Petrol and diesel prices were increased again on Saturday, marking the third hike in less than 10 days as global crude oil prices continue to surge amid the ongoing West Asia conflict and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz. Petrol prices were raised by up to 87 paise per litre, while diesel prices increased by as much as 91 paise per litre across major cities. In Delhi, petrol now costs Rs 99.51 per litre, up from Rs 98.64, while diesel prices rose from Rs 91.58 to Rs 92.49 per litre. Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) prices were also increased by Re 1 per kg, marking the third hike in less than 10 days. With the latest revision coming into effect immediately, CNG in Delhi will now cost Rs 81.09 per kg. Prices in Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad have risen to Rs



89.70 per kg, while Gurugram will see CNG priced at Rs 86.12 per kg. The latest hike follows a Rs 2 per kg increase announced on May 15 and another Re 1 per kg hike on May 17. With the latest revision, CNG prices in Delhi climbed to Rs 80.09 per kg, breaching the Rs 80-mark for the first time. The latest hikes come as India faces mounting pressure from soaring global crude oil prices triggered by the West Asia conflict and disruptions to shipping routes through the Strait of

Hormuz, one of the world's most critical oil transit chokepoints.

Expressing concerns over the issue, citizens, as well as the taxi drivers, raised concerns over the hike. The taxi drivers said that the increase in prices does not mean an increase in fares for them.

Delhi residents raised concerns over the increase in fuel prices, with no effective increase in income. Some held the government responsible for the hike and for dismissing the public concerns.

A local said, "It's affecting the middle class. Petrol prices are increasing. It's a loss. But what can we do? People who have work will have to use a car. People are carpooling as asked. But petrol is expensive. There is no alternative. Electric cars are so expensive."

Centre asks Delhi Gymkhana Club to vacate by June 5

NEW DELHI: The Centre has asked Gymkhana Club in Lutyens' Delhi to hand over the premises by June 5, citing that the 27.3-acre plot was required for "strengthening and securing defence infrastructure". The order, issued by the Land & Development Office (L&DO) under the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, stated that the premises, located in a highly sensitive and strategic area of Delhi, is critically required for the strengthening and securing of defence infrastructure and other vital public security purposes.

Nestled in the heart of Lutyens' Delhi, the sprawling Delhi Gymkhana Club stands adjacent to the prime minister's residence on Lok Kalyan Marg. In its letter to the club's secretary on May 22, the L&DO said the premises situated at 2, Safdarjung Road, were leased to the



Imperial Delhi Gymkhana Club Ltd (now known as Delhi Gymkhana Club Ltd) for the specific purpose of maintaining a social and sporting club.

The land is essential to fulfill urgent institutional needs, governance infrastructure and public-interest projects, integrated with the resumption of adjoining government lands, the L&DO said. "In exercise of the powers conferred under Clause 4 of the Lease Deed, the President of India, through the Land & Development Office, hereby determines the lease and orders re-entry of the aforesaid premises with immediate effect," it stated.



IAF aerobatic team to celebrate its 30th anniversary in Bidar

BENGALURU: The Suryakiran Aerobatic Team of the Indian Air Force will commemorate its 30th anniversary at Air Force Station Bidar on May 26, celebrating three glorious decades of breath-taking air displays across India and abroad, officials said on Saturday.

Popularly known as the “Ambassadors of the Indian Air Force”, the nine aircraft formation aerobatic team has inspired millions through professional flying in close formation encompassing thrilling manoeuvres at low levels, they said.

According to a statement issued by the defence wing of the press information bureau, the team, “Suryakiran” - meaning “Rays of the Sun” - was formed on May 27, 1996 at Air Force Station Bidar, initially flying the Kiran Mk-II aircraft.

In September 1996, the team made its public debut with a spectacular display in Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), marking the beginning of an inspiring journey in precision aerobatics.

Officials noted that over the past three decades, Suryakiran has conducted more than 800 breath-taking air displays, captivating audiences across India and abroad, including China, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates.

“Continuing its legacy of innovation and excellence, SKAT operates the iconic Red and White Hawk Mk-132 aircraft since 2015 in its signature nine-aircraft formation,” it said.

The team pilots undertake rigorous and intensive training to master complex aerobatic manoeuvres with flawless coordination, forming the foundation of their close formation flying, they said.

The 30th anniversary celebrations at Air Force Station Bidar will be a tribute to the spirit of the Indian Air Force and it will also honour all the members of the Suryakiran Aerobatic Team who have contributed towards making SKAT one of the finest aerobatic teams in the world, the statement added.

Mumbai, UP in final of Disability cricket tourney

BENGALURU: Mumbai and Uttar Pradesh booked their places in the final of the 5th Elite National Physical Disability Cricket Championship 2026 with contrasting victories. Mumbai produced a dominant all-round performance to defeat Maharashtra by 45 runs in the first semifinal on Friday.

Mumbai posted 152/8 with Aakash Patil scoring an unbeaten 41 off just 18 deliveries, including five fours and two sixes. In reply, Maharashtra were bowled out for 107 in 18 overs with Mumbai's Rohan Bhoir claiming 5/12, while Ravindra Sante took three wickets.

In the second semifinal, Uttar Pradesh clinched a tight four-wicket win over Haryana. Haryana were bowled out for 98 in 16.4 overs with Sadik claiming three crucial wickets. Kumar Rahul and Vintoo Yadav also chipped in with two wickets each. In reply, Uttar Pradesh chased down the target in 17 overs. The final will be held at the Sports Garden Cricket Ground here on Sunday.

Mob attacks two men inquiring alleged illegal cattle transport

BENGALURU

TWO persons were allegedly assaulted by a group of unidentified men during an inquiry into alleged illegal transportation and storage of cattle and camels in the outskirts of Bengaluru City, police said on Saturday.

The incident occurred late Friday night at Medimallasandra

village under the limits of Anugondanahalli Police Station, they said. Police said a case has been registered based on a complaint lodged by Sanjay Kulkarni, an honorary Animal Welfare Officer with the Animal Welfare Board of India.

According to the FIR, Kulkarni received information that over 20 camels and several cows had allegedly been kept

at Medimallasandra village for slaughter during the Bakrid festival.

Acting on the tip-off, Kulkarni, along with a volunteer identified as Manjunatha and four police personnel, visited the location around 2.15 am. However, by the time they reached the spot, the animals had allegedly been moved away, the complaint stated.

The complainant further

alleged that a group of people gathered at the spot and shouted at them. The team later proceeded to another location near a plywood factory in the village, where 10 cows were allegedly found being kept illegally behind the premises.

At the location, a large group of unidentified persons allegedly assaulted Kulkarni and the volunteer with fists, stones and

sharp weapons, causing injuries to the neck, face and head, it stated. Police personnel who accompanied them later shifted the injured to hospital for treatment.

Kulkarni, who is also associated with Gau Gyan Foundation, termed the incident “shocking” and demanded strict action against the culprits and immediate protection for

whistleblowers and animal welfare volunteers.

The NGO also sought a high-level independent investigation into the alleged cattle mafia nexus operating in the region and urged intervention by the Karnataka government, senior police authorities, the Animal Welfare Board of India and the judiciary to ensure immediate arrests and rescue of surviving animals.

As monsoon sowing begins...

Farmers struggle for seeds and diesel in Haveri

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HAVERI

FARMERS in Haveri district are facing severe hardship at the beginning of the monsoon season as shortages of sowing seeds and diesel have triggered chaos across several parts of the region. The situation has led to growing anger among farmers against the Agriculture Department and district administration.

While farmers are spending sleepless nights outside agriculture centres to secure soybean and groundnut seeds, tractor owners and cultivators are also struggling to obtain diesel required for land preparation activities.

At the agriculture centre in Tevaramellihalli village of Savanur taluk, hundreds of farmers have been waiting in long queues for the past two days to obtain sowing seeds. Farmers alleged that repeated network failures and delays by agriculture department officials are preventing timely distribution of seeds during the crucial sowing season.

Fearing that seed stocks may run out before their turn arrives, several farmers were forced to stay overnight outside the centre. Many were seen sleeping on



the roadside and waiting through the night in hopes of receiving seeds early in the morning.

The rush for seeds has resulted in heavy crowding and confusion at multiple centres across the district. Frustrated farmers accused the administration of failing to make adequate arrangements despite the onset of the monsoon season being predictable.

“We are wasting entire days standing in queues. If sowing is delayed, our crops and livelihood will suffer,” farmers complained while demanding immediate intervention from the government.

Alongside the seed crisis, farmers are also facing an

acute diesel shortage. Fuel prices have reportedly increased for the third time within just ten days, further adding to the burden on cultivators already struggling with rising agricultural costs.

The diesel shortage has particularly affected tractor operations needed for ploughing and land preparation. At several petrol bunks on the outskirts of Haveri, long queues of tractors and farmers carrying fuel cans were witnessed throughout the day.

Farmers alleged that many fuel stations are refusing to fill diesel in cans due to limited supply. As a result, even those willing to pay are unable to procure sufficient

fuel for agricultural operations.

The twin crises of seed shortages and diesel scarcity have created panic among farmers who fear losing valuable time during the sowing period. Many cultivators expressed helplessness and questioned how they could continue farming if essential agricultural inputs were unavailable during the most critical phase of cultivation.

The situation has sparked widespread resentment, with farmers urging the state government and district administration to immediately ensure adequate supply of seeds and fuel to avoid disruption to monsoon farming activities.

No Ebola cases in India, says Health Dept

BENGALURU

IN response to an Ebola outbreak in several African countries, the Karnataka Health Department on Friday advised individuals who have recently travelled to affected nations to undergo health monitoring and self-observation for 21 days after their return.

Clarifying that no Ebola cases have been reported in India at present, it said that, however, considering the volume of international travel and trade, the Health Department has undertaken precautionary preparedness measures.

The WHO declared the ongoing outbreak of Ebola disease (ED) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Uganda as a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern” (PHEIC) on May 17, 2026.

“The public is requested not to panic unnecessarily and to rely only on official information. Persons who have recently travelled to Ebola-affected countries should undergo health monitoring and self-observation for 21 days after returning to India,” the department said in a release.

Those with symptoms should immediately report to the nearest health facility, it said. Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) will undertake surveillance activities. The State Health Department is continuously monitoring



the situation and has taken all necessary precautionary and preparedness measures, it added.

According to the department, Ebola is a severe viral disease that may cause symptoms such as fever, weakness, muscle pain, sore throat, headache, vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach pain, rash, and red eyes.

The disease spreads through direct contact with the blood, organs, or body fluids of infected persons, or through contaminated materials such as bedding, clothes, and syringes. It added that healthcare workers and family members or close contacts of infected individuals are at higher risk.

Highlighting that preparedness measures have been strengthened in the state, the department said they include enhanced surveillance and monitoring of suspected cases under the IDSP, coordination with airports and Points of Entry (PoEs), and dedicated quarantine and isolation

facilities, along with referral ambulance services.

Other measures include training healthcare personnel, strengthening infection prevention and control measures, ensuring the availability of PPE, medicines, and laboratory facilities, and placing Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) on alert.

In Bengaluru, the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest Diseases (RGICD) has been identified as the isolation centre, and the Epidemic Diseases Hospital, Bengaluru, has been designated as the quarantine and treatment centre.

In Mangaluru, Srinivas Port Hospital, NMPA, has been identified as the quarantine centre, and the Wenlock District Hospital, Mangaluru, has been designated as the isolation and treatment centre.

Dedicated ambulance services have also been kept ready for transporting suspected patients to designated hospitals.

Govt hikes minimum wages by 60%; over 1 crore workers to benefit

BENGALURU

THE government issued a notification on Saturday increasing minimum wages for workers by an average of 60 per cent, a move expected to benefit more than one crore labourers across the state.

With the latest notification, Karnataka has become the third state in the country to issue such a revised minimum wage notification after Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.

Officials stated that the revision has been implemented in line with the Supreme Court guidelines laid down in the 1991 Reptakos Brett case, taking into account household expenditure patterns and rising living costs. Labour Minister Santosh S. Lad said



the revised minimum wage system would significantly benefit workers across the state.

“After deductions towards ESI and PF, many workers were left with very little take-home salary. Some had even fallen outside the BPL category. This wage revision will provide major relief to such workers. It is a revolutionary step aimed at improving the lives of labourers who contribute to nation-building,” he said.

The minister said extensive consultations had been held with labour unions, employers, experts, and legal professionals before finalising the notification. The revised wage structure, announced through the Labour Department, is aimed at providing financial relief to workers employed in the unorganised and specified sectors. The revision has been carried out in accordance with directions issued by the Supreme Court.

For the first time, all scheduled employments have been brought under a single notification. The government has also revised the earlier four-zone classification system into a three-zone structure for wage calculation.

Nitin Nabin to visit State for first time after taking charge as BJP chief

BENGALURU

STATE Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President B.Y. Vijayendra said on Saturday that Nitin Nabin will arrive in Bengaluru late evening on his first visit to the state after assuming charge as the party President.

Speaking to reporters at the state BJP office in Bengaluru, Vijayendra said that Nabin's visit would include meetings with senior party leaders, legislators, and party workers.

According to Vijayendra, the BJP President will visit former Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa's residence on Sunday morning for breakfast. He will later offer prayers at the Kadumalleshwara Temple before arriving at the state BJP headquarters, Jagannath Bhavan, at around 10 a.m.

The State BJP President said that Nabin will hold discussions with BJP MPs, MLAs, and Legislative Council members for nearly two hours and review the

To convene series of meetings



current political situation in the state. The BJP President will also participate in the party's core committee meeting and later attend a training camp being organised in Bengaluru North district.

“It is a matter of pride for us that the BJP President is participating in the training programme. His presence will inspire party workers,” Vijayendra said.

He also defended the Centre's decision to increase fuel prices, saying that the hike was necessitated by global developments and international market

conditions.

He said the Union government had increased fuel prices for the third time due to unavoidable circumstances arising out of the global situation.

“Because of global developments, the Central government has been compelled to increase fuel prices. Even though the government did not want to take such a step, it was forced to make a difficult decision,” he added.

He also targeted Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, recalling his earlier statement about reducing fuel prices in the state. “Siddaramaiah had earlier said that he would reduce fuel prices by Rs 10. Now, in the interest of the people of the state, he should reduce the state tax imposed on fuel,” Vijayendra said. Urging the Karnataka government to respond to the situation, the State BJP President said the Chief Minister should understand the prevailing global conditions and reduce the additional tax levied on petrol and diesel in the state.

Cong consolidating vote bank through appeasement politics: BJP

BENGALURU

STATE Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President and MLA B.Y. Vijayendra on Saturday accused the Congress government in the state of indulging in “appeasement politics” and attempting to strengthen its vote bank by favouring minorities.

Speaking to reporters at the state BJP office in Bengaluru, Vijayendra alleged that the Congress-led state government had crossed all limits of appeasement since coming to power.

“There have been continuous atrocities

against Hindus in the state. This (Congress) government is willing to go to any extent to appease minorities. The Cabinet's decision to withdraw the Aland riot case clearly shows that the Congress is trying to secure its vote bank instead of taking action against anti-national elements and those disturbing law and order,” he alleged.

He also claimed that the people of Karnataka were closely observing what he termed as “repeated insults to Hindus” by the Congress government. “As an Opposition party, we (BJP) will fight against these

policies. We will take to the streets and stage protests against the ‘anti-Hindu’ policies of the government,” Vijayendra said.

Responding to a question regarding the proposed cricket stadium project near Anekal, the State BJP President accused the Congress government of ignoring farmers' interests and engaging in what he described as a “real estate business”.

“The Congress government has no concern for farmers and does not understand their problems. Instead, it is involved in real estate dealings. During floods and

drought situations, the state government did not stand by farmers,” Vijayendra alleged.

He also criticised local representatives and Ministers in Karnataka for allegedly failing to listen to the grievances of people in the affected areas.

“There are thousands of acres of land available near Bengaluru airport where the stadium could have been constructed. Instead, the state government is acquiring fertile agricultural land in Anekal and repeatedly troubling farmers. BJP will stand firmly with farmers and will not allow their

interests to be ignored,” Vijayendra said.

On the issue of Rajya Sabha candidate selection, the State BJP President clarified that the party had not opposed the possibility of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda being sent to the Rajya Sabha.

“One seat is available and discussions are underway regarding candidate selection. BJP has not opposed sending Deve Gowda to the Rajya Sabha. Any decision in this regard will be taken by the national leadership. So far, no specific instructions have been received,” Vijayendra added.





Udupi Math opens three new spiritual learning centres

BENGALURU: Sri Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji of Udupi Sri Puttige Math inaugurated the Sri Puttige Suguna School for children of the Trimata Vipra community, the Sri Puttige Mahila Vidya Peetha for women, and the Sri Puttige Sandhya Vidya Peetha for men at the Sri Govardhan Kshetra branch in Basavanagudi, Bengaluru on Friday.

While performing the inauguration, he emphasised that spiritual education holds greater importance than modern education. He observed that people today are becoming increasingly outward-focused while turning internally weak and stunted.

The Swamiji stated that spiritual knowledge serves as the complete solution for a fulfilled life and that these institutions are highly essential to restore the prominence of spirituality in society. Bhadrakere Math's Sri Sri Vidyeshateertha Swamiji praised the women's vidya peetha as a revolutionary concept and stressed that proper family management based on Sanatan Dharma is crucial for nation-building, with women playing a vital role.

Karnataka Sanskrit University Vice Chancellor Ahilya Sharma expressed concern that nearly 40 percent of people might become averse to marriage in the future and urged society to act immediately. Karnataka Brahmin Development Council President Asagodu Jayasimha and Dr. K P Putturaya lauded the social concern shown by Sri Puttige Swamiji.

Brutal attack on Uber driver caught on camera

BENGALURU: An Uber cab driver suffered a severe beating on KH Road in Bengaluru on May 22 when another driver and his associates stopped the vehicle in the middle of the road. The attackers dragged the driver out of the cab and thrashed him violently.

A young woman stood nearby as the assault took place, but the gang showed no restraint while carrying out the deadly attack. The disturbing CCTV footage of the incident has gone viral on social media platforms. The event occurred under the Wilson Garden police station jurisdiction. Although no formal complaint has been registered so far, police have taken the matter seriously and visited the spot for inspection. Officers are now actively scanning footage from multiple CCTV cameras around KH Road to identify the vehicles involved and trace the culprits. Searches are underway to locate and apprehend the gang members responsible for the attack.

Police conduct special vehicle checking drive

BENGALURU: The North East Division of Bengaluru City Police carried out a special vehicle checking operation across multiple police station jurisdictions on the directions of the Commissioner of Police.

The drive covered the areas under Yelahanka New Town, Kodigehalli, Amruthahalli, and Yelahanka Police Stations. A total of 20 police officers and staff were deployed at various locations as part of preventive policing measures aimed at maintaining law and order and curbing criminal activities.

During the operation, authorities checked 143 vehicles, which included 97 two-wheelers, 24 three-wheelers, and other vehicles. Officers also verified 8 rowdy sheeters and 2 MOB offenders.

Upcoming Anekal cricket stadium to accommodate 80,000 spectators

WORTH RS 900-CR, IT IS COMING UP ON 100 ACRES BY 2029

HANS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU



A major milestone in Karnataka's sports infrastructure development was marked on Saturday as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar jointly laid the foundation stone for a massive international cricket stadium at Indlawadi village in Anekal taluk on the outskirts of Bengaluru.

The proposed stadium, which is being developed at an estimated cost of Rs 900 crore, is expected to become the second-largest international cricket stadium in the country with a seating capacity of nearly 80,000 spectators. The ambitious project is being undertaken by the Karnataka Housing Board across nearly 100 acres of land and is expected to be completed

within the next two to three years.

The groundbreaking ceremony was held amid much fanfare, with thousands of people and party workers gathering at the venue. Local MLA Anekal Shivanna welcomed the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister by presenting them with a symbolic silver mace as a

mark of honour and appreciation. The dignitaries were also greeted with massive apple garlands, traditional folk performances and ceremonial 'Poorna Kumbha' processions by women.

Several senior political leaders and officials attended the event, including Home Minister G. Parameashwara, MLA K.M. Shivalingegowda,

CM's legal advisor A.S. Ponanna and MLA Krishnappa.

Officials said the upcoming sports complex will feature world-class indoor, outdoor and aquatic facilities. The indoor sports arena will accommodate 11 major disciplines including badminton, basketball, volleyball, handball, table tennis, squash, kabaddi, kho-kho, judo, taek-

wondo, wrestling, fencing and weightlifting.

The project will also include an Olympic-size swimming pool, a high-diving pool, a separate practice pool, synthetic athletic tracks and courts for tennis, basketball and volleyball. Dedicated arenas for emerging sports like padel and pickleball are also planned.

Apart from sports facilities, the stadium complex will feature multilevel parking for more than 500 vehicles, commercial and retail outlets, sports equipment stores, food courts and modern accommodation facilities for players, coaches and staff. A helipad, public plaza and a large green zone are also part of the master plan. Speaking to the media, Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan said the demand for a stadium and educational infrastructure in



the region had been pending for several years. He added that the recent crowd management concerns witnessed

during IPL matches in Bengaluru highlighted the need for another large stadium on the city's outskirts.

'Hindu civilisation declined due to political subjugation'

BENGALURU

POLITICAL subjugation and internal shortcomings were among the major reasons for the decline of Hindu civilisation, UPSC Secretary Shashi Ranjan Kumar said on Saturday. While speaking at a dialogue event in Bengaluru on his book, "The Decline of Hindu Civilization: Lessons from the Past", he stressed that the concept of 'Anvikshaki', or critical inquiry, formed the foundation of Indian intellectual traditions.

The event was organised at Central College of Bangalore University by the Department of Communication, Bangalore University, the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of Dr Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University, the Karnataka State Journalism and Mass Communication Teachers Association, and the Indian Communication Congress.

India's history is not merely a chronicle of political transitions, but a continuous journey of exploration in knowledge, science, and philosophy, Kumar said.

Kumar said ancient India had achieved remarkable milestones in mathematics, astronomy, medicine and



philosophy, adding that Indian civilisation contributed the concept of "zero" to the world and understood negative numbers long before Arab mathematicians rejected them.

He said Indian science differed from Greek science in its emphasis on empirical observation and algorithmic procedures, whereas Greek science relied more on deductive reasoning and physical models.

Addressing the decline of Hindu civilisation, Kumar said the weakening of intellectual traditions resulted from both political domination and internal failings. "The rich intellectual traditions waned due to politi-

cal subjugation and internal flaws," the UPSC secretary said.

Strategic and technological thinking diminished in India after Kautilya's Arthashastra, causing the region to fall significantly behind the advancements of European science, he said.

He also observed that India's geographical advantages, including the protection offered by the Himalayas and fertile lands, reduced the drive among people to explore the outside world.

"The collapse of a civilisation is rarely the result of a single isolated event; rather, such tragedies occur due to the accumulation of numerous small, uncorrected mis-

takes," Kumar said.

He cautioned that declining construction quality and lack of attention to detail in modern India reflected a growing tendency to tolerate mediocrity instead of striving for excellence.

Kumar further said the present education system had failed to nurture a critical civilisational consciousness, making self-study essential for acquiring deeper historical understanding.

Vice-Chancellor of Bengaluru North University Prof B K Ravi and Vice-Chancellor of Dr Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University Prof Ramesh B also shared their views on the book.

Nikhil Kumaraswamy targets DKS over 'Cockroach Janata Party' remarks

Remarks made in response to statements made by DK Shivakumar during a recent Congress convention in Tumakuru, where the Deputy CM had reportedly mocked former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy for aspiring to become Chief Minister despite the party's reduced numbers in the Assembly

HANS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU

A fresh political war of words has erupted in Karnataka with JD(S) youth wing president Nikhil Kumaraswamy launching a sharp attack on Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar while sarcastically referring to the so-called "Cockroach Janata Party" (CJP), a phrase currently making rounds in political discussions. Speaking to reporters, Nikhil Kumaraswamy mocked DK Shivakumar and challenged him to prove his political strength by leading the "CJP" in Karnataka and winning 50 Assembly seats in the 2028 elections.

"I am not forcing DK Shivakumar to float a regional party. But a new party called Cockroach Party has emerged in the country. Let DK Shivakumar become the state president of that party and win 50 seats in Karnataka," Nikhil



said sarcastically.

The JD(S) leader accused DK Shivakumar of repeatedly mocking regional parties, particularly the Janata Dal (Secular), over its electoral strength. "Whenever DK Shivakumar speaks, he ridicules JD(S) saying the party has only 17 seats or one seat. He does not understand the struggles of regional parties. If he is so confident, let him contest under the CJP banner and show his strength," he said.

Nikhil's remarks came in response to statements made by DK Shivakumar during a recent Congress convention in Tumakuru, where the Deputy CM had reportedly mocked former Chief Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy for aspiring to become Chief Minister despite the party's reduced numbers in the Assembly.

Taking the attack further, Nikhil also took a swipe at Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, saying, "Standing at Freedom Park, Siddaramaiah may even release a T-shirt saying 'I am a cockroach. Looking at the cur-

rent state of Congress in Karnataka itself is worrying."

Responding to DK Shivakumar's earlier remark questioning "Who is Nikhil Kumaraswamy to question me?", the JD(S) youth leader said he had every right to question the government as a citizen of Karnataka. "I am a son of Karnataka soil. I have pride in the state's language, land and water. I pay taxes to this government, and therefore I have every right to question it," he asserted.

Nikhil further said that the people of Karnataka had given Congress 136 seats and the opportunity to form the government by making Siddaramaiah Chief Minister and DK Shivakumar Deputy Chief Minister. "I will continue to raise my voice on behalf of ordinary people of the state. Nobody can stop me," he added. The exchange marks yet another escalation in the growing political confrontation between Congress and JD(S) leaders ahead of future electoral battles in Karnataka.

Boxing coach booked under POCSO Act

BENGALURU

A 50-year-old boxing coach has been accused of sexually abusing a trainee in the city and threatening the family, police said on Saturday.

The First Information Report, lodged at Sampangiramanagar police station under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, names the coach and details alleged incidents dating from December 4, 2025, through May 22, 2026.

According to the FIR lodged by the 17-year-old girl's mother, on May 17, when her daughter went to Chennai for a boxing competition, the coach called her into his private room and misbehaved with her. The complainant also told police that the coach threatened her against revealing the matter to anyone. According to the FIR, the teenager has trained for about 10 years and began experiencing inappropriate conduct from the coach approximately four years ago, with the behaviour intensifying over the last five to six months.

Metro Rail between Bengaluru-Tumakuru DPR for before Cabinet soon: HM

BENGALURU

KARNATAKA Home Minister G Parameashwara on Saturday said that a DPR for the proposed Madavara (Bengaluru)-Tumakuru Metro Rail project would be placed before the Cabinet for discussion and further decision-making.

He was speaking to reporters after receiving the Detailed Project Report (DPR) report for the Madavara-Tumakuru Metro Rail project at Vidhana Soudha in the presence of Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, Home Department Additional Chief Secretary Tushar Girinath and senior officials of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRL). The distance between Madavara and Tumakuru Metro Rail

project is approximately 50 km. For a long time, efforts had been underway, Parameashwara, who is Tumakuru district in charge minister said, while explaining the progress of the project.

"The CM had earlier said that we would conduct a feasibility study and examine it. Accordingly, around Rs 3.5 crore was spent, and a Hyderabad-based company conducted the feasibility study and submitted it to the government. They strongly stated in the report that it could be done," he said.

The minister said discussions were subsequently held on preparing the DPR and a tender was floated through the metro authorities for the same. "They prepared the DPR, held discussions at their level, and submitted it to the



government today," he said. "The government is preparing a proposal to execute it under the PPP model. The estimated cost is around Rs 20,000 crore," Parameashwara said. He added that the report contains detailed aspects, including the number and location of stations and the alignment along the National Highway corridor. "It will be placed before the Cabinet, after which Expressions of Interest will be invited and tenders will be floated. The process will then begin. We do not yet know who will qualify or who will apply," he said.

High Court reduces jail term of driver from one year to one day

The convicted had rushed accident victim to hospital who succumbed to his injuries the next day

HANS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU

IN a significant observation on humanitarian conduct after road accidents, the High Court of Karnataka has reduced the jail sentence of a driver convicted in a fatal accident case after noting that he did not flee the spot and instead personally shifted the injured victim to hospital in his own car.

Justice V. Srishananda passed the order while hearing a petition filed by

Riyaz Ahmed, a resident of Pachhikere in Dakshina Kannada district. The court modified the one-year imprisonment imposed by a trial court to imprisonment till the rising of the court, effectively reducing the sentence to one day.

The High Court observed that immediately after the accident, the driver had acted responsibly by taking the victim to hospital instead of escaping from the scene. The court considered this conduct as a major mitigating factor while deciding



the quantum of punishment.

The bench also took note of the petitioner's personal circumstances. Records be-

fore the court revealed that Riyaz Ahmed himself later met with another accident and underwent surgery in which a rod was inserted

in his right leg. Due to his physical condition, he is reportedly unable to continue professional driving and is currently doing small jobs for survival.

During the hearing, the court suggested additional compensation for the victim's family as a condition for reducing the sentence. The family members of the deceased agreed to the proposal.

Accordingly, the court directed Riyaz Ahmed to pay an additional compensation of Rs 1 lakh to the wife

and son of the deceased. The amount must be paid in two equal instalments of Rs 50,000 each before June 30. The court further clarified that failure to pay the compensation within the stipulated time would automatically restore the earlier one-year jail sentence imposed by the lower court.

The case dates back to July 15, 2015, when Riyaz Ahmed was driving a car near Panambur Beach Road on National Highway-66 between Mangaluru and Udupi. His vehicle hit

a pedestrian identified as Anand Shetty.

Immediately after the accident, Riyaz and his son shifted the seriously injured Anand Shetty to hospital in the same vehicle. However, the victim succumbed to injuries the following day.

Earlier, a sessions court in Mangaluru had convicted Riyaz Ahmed and sentenced him to one year of simple imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 5,000. Challenging the order, he later approached the High Court seeking relief.



HILTP web portal rolled out

The portal is dedicated to receiving applications from eligible industrial units seeking to avail benefits under the policy

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE State government launched Hyderabad Industrial Lands Transformation Policy (HILTP) Portal on Saturday. The government operationalised the HILTP Policy by issuing detailed implementation guidelines. IT and Industry D Sridhar Babu formally launched the dedicated online portal for receiving applications from eligible industrial units seeking to avail benefits under the policy. The policy has been formulated to facilitate the relocation of polluting industries situated in 21 Industrial Parks and

The policy has been formulated to facilitate the relocation of polluting industries situated in 21 industrial parks and standalone units within the Core Urban Region (CURE) of Hyderabad

standalone units within the Core Urban Region (CURE) of Hyderabad. As part of the implementation framework, the government, based on the recommendations of the Cabinet Sub-Committee, has approved the payment of an upfront development impact fee (DIF) of 10 per cent and consideration of existing SRO market rates for applicants submitting their applications on or before 30 June 2026. The newly launched digital portal enables eligible industrial unit holders to

submit, monitor, and track their applications online, reinforcing the government's commitment towards transparent, technology-driven, and citizen-centric governance. A dedicated support and grievance redressal mechanism has been established to assist applicants and departmental officials throughout the application process. Stakeholders may raise queries or report issues through a structured ticketing system.



SCB can collect transfer of property tax from June 1

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

IN a significant move aimed at improving revenue flow and speeding up development works, the Secunderabad Cantonment Board (SCB) has been authorised to directly collect transfer of property tax (TPT) through its online portal from June 1, reducing dependence on delayed state government disbursements. The decision comes in response to prolonged delays in the release of TPT dues by the State government, which officials say have adversely impacted developmental activities within the Cantonment Board limits due to inadequate funds. To address the issue, SCB officials, during a recent board meeting, resolved to directly collect TPT charges from property owners. Following the proposal, SCB Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Aravind Kumar reportedly



communicated with the Telangana Registration and Stamps department seeking necessary approvals. Subsequently, the Commissioner and Inspector General of the Registration and Stamps Department issued a GO, formally granting permission to implement the new system. Under the revised process, property owners must pay 5 per cent TPT directly through the SCB portal, while the remaining 6 percent registration charges on property transactions

will continue to be paid through the Integrated Grievance Redressal System (IGRS) portal. Until now, the government collected a total of 11 percent taxes and charges on property sale value, including the 5 per cent TPT component allocated to the Cantonment Board. Officials said that the new mechanism is also expected to help recover nearly Rs 73 crore in pending dues owed to the Board. Citizens must generate a fine through the SCB portal and submit the receipt during property registration.

Cong govt won't tolerate attempts to derail devpt, warns Sridhar Babu

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA IT and Industries Minister Duddulla Sridhar Babu on Saturday accused leaders of the Bharat Rashtia Samithi (BRS) of indulging in "blackmail politics" and attempting to obstruct the State government's developmental initiatives, particularly the proposed "Bharat Future City" project. Addressing a press conference at the CLP Media Hall in Hyderabad, Sridhar Babu said opposition parties should engage in constructive criticism instead of pursuing "destructive politics" that hinder the State's progress.

Says the pink part is resorting to 'blackmail & diversion politics' against th Future City' Project

The Minister alleged that senior BRS leaders, including T Harish Rao and KT Rama Rao, were unable to accept the party's electoral setbacks and were continuing to indulge in "cheap politics, diversion politics and blackmail politics." Referring to Harish Rao's recent remarks during his visit to the United States, Sridhar Babu said the BRS leader was "daydreaming" about returning to power and threatening to cancel



the "Bharat Future City" project if the party came back to office. "The people removed the BRS from power in the Assembly elections and gave the party zero seats in the Parliament elections. Yet they have failed to learn any lesson," he remarked. The Minister accused the BRS of earlier trying to obstruct the Musi River rejuvenation project and now conspiring against the Future City initiative. He asserted that the Congress government was moving ahead in line with the aspirations of the people and would not tolerate attempts to derail development.

16 die due to heatwave in State

Four persons died in Jayashankar Bhupalpally district, followed by three each in Warangal Urban, Karimnagar and Nizamabad and one each in Jogulamba Gadwal, Ranga Reddy and Suryapet

HYDERABAD

AS many as 16 people died due to heatwave conditions prevailing in the State during the current summer, informed Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy here on Saturday

The Minister who held a meeting with officials on the situation arising out of the heatwave, said the 16 deaths took place in seven districts of the State. Quoting reports received from district Collectors, he said four persons died in Jayashankar Bhupalpally district, followed by three each in Warangal Urban, Karimnagar and Nizamabad and one each in Jogulamba Gadwal, Ranga Reddy and Suryapet.

The government would provide an ex-gratia of Rs four lakh each to the kin of the deceased persons, he said, according to an official



Government will provide an ex-gratia of ₹4 lakh each to the kin of the deceased

release. The revenue minister directed officials to identify villages recording very high temperatures and send alerts about the heat through media, social media and other means to those villages. He said drinking water, butter milk, ORS packets should be made available at bus stations, markets, major roads and places where workers work in large numbers. Steps should be taken to prevent loss of life due to the heat, he said.

The minister urged that senior citizens, pregnant

women, children and unhealthy people should not venture out of their homes between 11 am and 4 pm. He instructed district Collectors to specially monitor heatwave conditions and government employees from mandal to village level should be on the field as part of heat-relief measures. Along with human life, the administration should arrange drinking water for animals and birds in the villages, he said. Citing reports from the Met department, Reddy said Karimnagar, Peddipally, Bhupalpally, Mulugu, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mahabubnagar, Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy district would witness severe heat conditions till May 26. He urged the district Collectors to take measures to provide relief to the people.

Let's ensure a Cong victory to make Rahul Gandhi as PM: Jagga Reddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) working president T Jagga Reddy on Saturday made a strong pitch for the Congress party's return to power at the national level, stating that the party must secure a decisive majority in the next Lok Sabha elections to see Rahul Gandhi as the Prime Minister of India.

Addressing the media at Gandhi Bhavan, Jagga Reddy said the Congress should aim to win more than 300 of the 543 parliamentary seats, and, if delimitation expands the number of constituencies, should target over 500 of the projected 850 seats.

Referring to a "Cockroach Janata Party" in his remarks, he urged the online group to use social media platforms to highlight what he described as the contrast between development during the Congress era and the present Modi government.

He said the intent behind the so-called "Cockroach movement" remained unclear and suggested that Rahul Gandhi should extend support to it, adding that clarity on the issue should come from the party's top

- We must ensure Cong wins over 300 of 543 Lok Sabha seats in next polls
- Rahul Gandhi's slogan, "Samvidhan Bachao" is of pivotal importance
- Indira Gandhi nationalised the banks, benefiting common people
- Rajiv Gandhi sowed seeds of IT revolution, lowered voting age to 18
- Cockroach Janata Party should highlight achievements of Cong era
- It should expose failures of Modi govt in last 12 years, says TPCC working president T Jagga Reddy



leadership.

Jagga Reddy described Rahul Gandhi's "Samvidhan Bachao" (Save the Constitution) campaign as "critical," saying the Constitution drafted by Dr BR Ambedkar acts as a protective framework for citizens, similar to the "Kavacha Kundalas" of Karna in the Mahabharata.

He said protecting constitutional values was central to the Congress party's ideology and to Rahul Gandhi's political message. The TPCC leader credited earlier Congress governments with shaping India's modern development. He said Indira Gandhi nationalised banks to expand financial access, while Rajiv Gandhi laid the foundation for the

Information Technology revolution and lowered the voting age to 18.

He also cited welfare initiatives under the Congress-led UPA government headed by Dr Manmohan Singh and Congress president Sonia Gandhi, including the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), which he said ensured employment security for rural households.

Jagga Reddy accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of misusing institutions and questioned the fairness of democratic processes, referring to the Election Commission while alleging erosion of electoral integrity. He also accused the BJP

of using religion in politics and failing to fulfill major promises, including large-scale job creation.

Jagga Reddy further cited rising national debt levels, claiming that public debt had increased significantly since 2014 and arguing that governance standards had declined under the present government.

Calling for strong electoral support for Congress, Jagga Reddy said a decisive mandate would help address issues such as Special Category Status and key infrastructure projects like Polavaram to Andhra Pradesh. He urged voters to exercise their franchise carefully and support what he described as constitutional and inclusive governance.

Jagga Reddy said he personally participates in religious traditions such as 'Sita Rama Kalyanam' but does not seek votes in the name of religion. He accused political opponents of misusing religious symbolism for electoral gain.

Reiterating his position, he said Rahul Gandhi should lead the country as Prime Minister and described the Congress party as a collective movement rather than a leader-centric organization.

He added that the outcome of the next general elections would determine whether India continues on its current path or returns to what he called constitutional governance under the Congress party.

Kishan hands over appointment letters to over 220 candidates

- Nationwide, 51,000 youth secured jobs across 47 locations in the 19th Rozgar Mela
- Since October 2022, over 12.5 lakh youth have been recruited into central government and PSU roles.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

UNION Minister Kishan Reddy described the initiative of providing employment to the youth as a "national mission" born out of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to empower youth and strengthen India's workforce.

Addressing the 19th Rozgar Mela as the chief guest on Saturday, he congratulated young job seekers, and handed over 220 candidates' appointment letters for central government positions.

The Minister noted that



the Rozgar Mela, launched on October 22, 2022, on the occasion of Diwali, has already transformed the lives of over 12 lakh young people across the country. With the latest round, the figure has crossed 12.5 lakh appointments in ministries and public sector undertakings. "Today, in 47 locations across India, 51,000 youths are receiving appointment letters. This is not just recruitment — it is empowerment," he said.

Reddy emphasised that the government's focus is

not limited to public sector jobs. Massive investments in infrastructure — highways, airports, railways, ports, housing, metro projects, renewable energy, and industrial corridors — are creating millions of private-sector opportunities. He pointed out that annual capital expenditure of Rs 12 lakh crore is driving rapid growth and generating employment at scale. "For every lakh crore invested, 14-15 lakh jobs are created directly and indirectly," he explained. Highlighting

the changing aspirations of India's youth, the Minister said that young people are increasingly embracing modern technologies alongside traditional courses.

Kishan Reddy urged the newly recruited employees to see themselves as partners in building Viksit Bharat 2047. "You are not just joining government service; you are becoming part of India's growth story. Work with honesty, creativity, and the spirit of Nation First, Family Next," he told the recruits.

Water Board MD inspects tanker filling stations

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

AMID rising water demand and concerns over uninterrupted supply during the summer season, Water Board Managing Director Ashok Reddy conducted a surprise inspection of the Tattikhana and Jubilee Hills tanker filling stations on Saturday, directing officials to ensure timely delivery and strict monitoring of tanker operations.

During the inspection, the MD reviewed the water tanker supply system in the respective command areas and undertook a detailed assessment of the tanker delivery mechanism. He closely examined the functioning of the filling stations and interacted with officials regarding the efficiency of tanker services being provided to consumers.

Ashok Reddy particularly focused on the timely distribution of tankers, operational standards, and whether supply systems were functioning in accordance with prescribed norms.

Ayurveda and yoga restore balance

ASKARI JAFFER

In an age dominated by stress, overstimulation, and lifestyle disorders, yoga expert, speaker, and author Anita Dua believes the world is gradually returning to an ancient truth — wellness cannot exist in fragments. For her, true health is the harmony of body, mind, and spirit, a balance that both Ayurveda and Yoga have advocated for centuries.

With over three decades of experience practising and teaching Yoga, Anita Dua has emerged as a strong voice for integrating traditional wisdom into modern life. A disciple of legendary yogacharya B K S Iyengar, she trained at the prestigious Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in the early 1990s. Her work today combines the therapeutic precision of Iyengar Yoga with the holistic principles of Ayurveda, encouraging people to rethink wellness beyond temporary fixes and fitness trends.

Her latest book, ‘Power of Ayurveda and Yoga,’ comes at a time when conversations around mental health, preventive healthcare, mindfulness, and holistic living are finding greater relevance across generations. According to Anita, the inspiration behind the book emerged from both personal experience and years of observing how disconnected people have become from their own natural rhythms.

“My yoga and pranayama practice of more than three decades has led me to a medicine-free life with a tranquil mind most of the time,” she says. “It proves that Yoga and Ayurvedic practices are not merely wellness tools — they are complete, time-tested systems of healthy living.”

For Anita, one of the greatest misconceptions surrounding these disciplines is the tendency to separate them. Yoga, she says, is often reduced to physical exercise, while Ayurveda is seen merely as herbal medicine. In reality, the two sciences complement one another deeply.

“Ayurveda is the science of life and longevity, while Yoga is the science of the

Yoga expert and author Anita Dua believes Ayurveda and Yoga are not separate wellness practices but deeply connected sciences of balanced living. In a fast-paced, overstimulated world, she advocates returning to natural rhythms, mindful discipline, and holistic healing for lasting well-being



mind,” she explains. “One prepares the body and lifestyle for balance, while the other steadies consciousness and emotional well-being.”

Drawing from the teachings of Sage Patanjali, Anita frequently refers to the Yoga Sutras to explain how Yoga was always intended to go far beyond physical postures.

Yogah citta-vritti-nirodhah

The sutra, she explains, describes Yoga as the calming of the fluctuations of the mind. According to Anita, the real transformation brought by Yoga and pranayama is gradual but deeply transformative. Better immunity, emotional stability, improved digestion, and mental clarity are simply natural outcomes of consistent practice.

“These are not quick-fix solutions. They require patience, discipline, and persistence,” she says

Anita also believes the

growing interest in Ayurveda and Yoga among younger audiences reflects a larger cultural shift, particularly after the pandemic. Increasingly, people are becoming aware of the importance of sleep, digestion, emotional balance, and daily routine.

“There is a visible shift towards natural living,” she says. “Young people today are more conscious about gut health, mindfulness, and reconnecting with nature.”

She points out that Ayurveda has always emphasized rhythm — waking early, eating meals at regular times, spending time outdoors, and maintaining balance between activity and rest. These practices, she believes, are becoming increasingly relevant in a world driven by speed and constant stimulation. One of the central themes in her book is the Ayurvedic understanding of disease as Prajnaparadha, or “a mistake of the intellect.”

Anita believes the concept



Anita Dua

perfectly describes modern lifestyles.

“We know what is unhealthy, yet we continue doing it. We sleep late scrolling through screens, eat irregularly, live under constant stress, and disconnect ourselves from nature,” she says.

According to Ayurveda, these repeated choices disturb the body’s balance, particularly Vata dosha, which governs the nervous system and mental activity. Over time, this imbalance manifests as anxiety, fatigue, digestive disorders, sleep disturbances, and chronic disease.

For Anita, healing begins not through extreme changes, but through conscious awareness and discipline.

“To wake up with the sun, eat mindfully, breathe deeply, move consciously, and create moments of silence — this is where healing begins,” she says.

Discipline, she believes, is where most people struggle today. Modern life constantly encourages distraction, overstimulation, and instant gratification, making consistency difficult even when awareness exists.

“We already know what creates imbalance. “The real challenge is maintaining discipline in everyday

life,” Anita explains. Yet she insists transformation does not require dramatic lifestyle overhauls. Small, sustainable practices — a few minutes of pranayama, timely meals, reducing screen exposure before sleep, spending time in nature — can gradually restore equilibrium.

“Yoga and Ayurveda are not asking us to withdraw from modern life. They are teaching us how to remain centred within it,” she says.

At the heart of Anita Dua’s philosophy is the belief that balance is humanity’s natural state. The body, mind, and emotions are designed to function in harmony, but modern lifestyles continuously pull individuals away from that alignment.

“Either we consciously slow down and reconnect with nature’s rhythm or eventually nature forces us to slow down through disease,” she says.

In many ways, ‘Power of Ayurveda and Yoga’ is not simply a book about wellness practices. It is an invitation to return to simplicity, rhythm, and self-awareness — ancient principles that Anita Dua believes may hold the answers to many of modern life’s deepest struggles.

Cruelty-free haircare: The rising demand for natural henna creams



CLELIA CECILIA ANGELON

Hair colouring decisions used to be fairly simple for most people. If the shade looked good and covered greys properly, that was enough. Very few consumers paid attention to ingredient lists or thought much about how frequently those products were being used. That has slowly started changing.

When the use of a particular product becomes routine, certain things start coming to light, such as irritation of the scalp or dryness of the hair after prolonged usage. This rising consciousness about choices related to daily haircare practices is one reason why natural henna creams are gaining more room within contemporary hair care regimes.

Cruelty-Free Beauty Is Becoming More Visible

Cruelty-free beauty is no longer something associated only with niche or alternative beauty spaces. People nowadays are much more conscious about how the products are manufactured, the testing methods used to produce those products, and the philosophy behind the brand itself.

Natural henna hair creams that combine Ayurveda with the biome of Brazilian plants blend naturally into this shift because they are rooted in plant-based ingredients and gentler-feeling haircare routines. Ingredients such as henna, aloe vera, hibiscus, and amla already feel familiar to many consumers looking for more balanced beauty choices. The addition of Brazilian botanical ingredients like guarana, açai, Brazilian nuts, and babassu oil further strengthens this combination by bringing together traditional Ayurvedic knowledge with the richness of Brazil’s natural biodiversity. These ingredients are increasingly associated with nourishment, scalp comfort, hydration, and softer-feeling hair, making them appealing for consumers seeking more mindful and long-term haircare solutions.

For most people, these changes are gradual. They are



not trying to build perfect routines overnight. They simply want products that feel better suited for long-term use.

People Are Getting Tired of Overly Harsh Haircare

A lot of consumers who colour their hair regularly eventually notice small changes. Hair starts feeling rougher than before. The scalp becomes uncomfortable more easily. Even washing routines begin feeling different after repeated colouring sessions. That experience is pushing many people towards gentler options.

Henna creams are increasingly becoming part of those conversations because they feel easier to include within long-term routines. Cream formats, especially, appeal to consumers who want convenience along with softer-feeling haircare. Conventional henna powder takes more effort to prepare, unlike creams, which are quicker and easier to use.

There is also familiarity attached to plant-based ingredients now. Henna, aloe vera, hibiscus, amla, and coconut-derived ingredients are no longer viewed as old-fashioned ingredients sitting quietly in traditional beauty spaces. They have become part of modern haircare discussions too.

Consumers today often prefer products that feel balanced rather than extremely aggressive. That does not mean they expect natural products to completely transform their hair overnight. Most people are simply looking for routines that feel easier to maintain

consistently.

Ingredient Awareness Is Quietly Changing the Industry

One interesting shift happening across beauty categories is how carefully consumers now read ingredient labels. Earlier, most people ignored formulation details unless they had severe scalp sensitivity. Today, ingredient awareness has become much more common. This is especially true for products people use again and again over long periods of time.

Many consumers now actively look for brands with formulations that avoid ammonia and related chemicals such as ethanalamine, diethanolamine, and triethanolamine, which are often associated with faster and stronger colour processing. Many brands are also becoming more selective about their ingredient choices, avoiding large numbers of substances that do not fit within their overall formulation approach.

What is interesting is that this shift often comes from experience more than trends. People notice when their scalp feels irritated repeatedly. They notice when hair starts feeling excessively dry after regular colouring. Eventually, those experiences influence purchasing decisions.

Haircare today feels less rushed than before. Consumers still want good colour results, of course, but they are thinking more carefully about what comes with those results too.

(The writer is a founder & CEO of Surya Brasil)

Shivaleeka Oberoi documents her pregnancy journey: ‘9 months in a blink of an eye’

Actress Shivaleeka Oberoi, who welcomed her first bundle of joy in April, shared a glimpse into her pregnancy journey through a heartfelt video montage.

Shivaleeka shared a video, which began with the words “Growing my greatest love.” The clip captured her baby bump’s evolution from five weeks to 38 weeks.

The video then showed her bump slowly growing as she documented her pregnancy journey with text overlays that read: “5 weeks, 8 weeks, 11 weeks, 20 weeks, 28 weeks, 38 weeks.”

She captioned the clip: “9 months in a blink of an eye. I was creating a life while life recreated me!”

On May 19, Shivaleeka and her filmmaker husband Abhishek Pathak revealed that they have named their newborn daughter Aarika, which symbolises grace, abundance, prosperity, and divine beauty.

Shivaleeka and Abhishek shared two pictures of themselves along with their “greatest blessing” in a collaborative post on Instagram.

The post was captioned: “Introducing our greatest blessing Aarika Pathak.

Aarika carries the essence of Goddess Lakshmi — symbolising grace, abundance, prosperity, and divine beauty.”

The post further read: “Born on 19.04.2026 the auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya, it all feels so beautifully and divinely connected — as if the universe planned it this way all along. She is everything we ever dreamed of and more. Grateful, blessed, and completely in love...all over again!”

The couple had announced in December last year that they are set to become parents for the first time on a post on social media, which read: “Our love story has found its sweetest verse — a tiny blessing is joining our universe (Baby angel, evil eye and Dizzy emojis) (sic).”

Abhishek and Shivaleeka first met during the shoot of their 2020 film “Khuda Hafiz”, which stars Vidhut Jammwal. They exchanged rings in July 2022 and finally got married in February 2023.

The couple got married in a private ceremony in Goa in the presence of their family and close friends, including actor Ajay Devgn.



Triptii Dimri says ‘Maa Behen’ reminded her of two women unfairly judged by society

Bollywood actress Triptii Dimri opened up about the emotional connection she felt with ‘Maa Behen’, revealing how two women, who were “unfairly judged” by society, from her childhood society, inspired her character.

The actress said during the trailer launch of the upcoming film “Maa Behen”, that the women were judged for being single and independent.

Triptii said at the trailer launch: “When sir narrated the story to me, I told him that there were two women in my society who were single, didn’t have parents, and were considered a little fashionable for those times. People would call them names.”

“As kids, we were told, ‘You can’t go to them, don’t be friends with them, don’t go near their house, it’s dangerous.’ That stayed with me somewhere. When ‘Maa Behen’ came along, it was the image of those two girls that I had in my mind.”

She added: “I was like, ‘I have to be a part of this film,’ because society judged them for no reason. If I could get a chance to apologise to them, I think this is my chance.”

On Saturday, she shared a string of images of herself from the trailer launch and showcased the whole “Maa Behen” drama.

“It was all smiles, fun and a whole lot of Maa Behen drama #MaaBehen trailer out now,” Triptii captioned the images on Instagram.

The chaotic crime-comedy ‘Maa Behen’ also stars Madhuri Dixit Nene. It will release on June 4 on Netflix.



Along with Triptii and Madhuri, the film also Dharna Durgaa, and Ravi Kishan in pivotal roles. They are joined by Geetanjali Kulkarni, Arunoday Singh, and Shardul Bhardwaj.

Premiering on June 4, at the heart of “Maa Behen” is Rekha, a mother

who’s already juggling enough until life throws her the ultimate curveball, a dead body in her kitchen. With her two daughters, Jaya, the responsible one, and Sushma, the wild card, this trio must think fast, lie faster, and somehow keep their nosy neighbors from sniffing out the truth.

Wealth without well-being: the paradox of India’s elderly

Tej Singh Kardam

IN India, senior citizens often find themselves in a paradoxical situation. Indians born in the pre-liberalisation era grew up in a time of scarcity and limited economic opportunities. In this situation their upbringing instilled a deep-seated habit of saving and an aversion to spending. For them, wealth accumulation was not just about financial security but also a means of pacifying their fears about their unknown future needs.

Despite possessing significant assets and savings, many lead frugal lives, unwilling to enjoy the wealth they have painstakingly accumulated. This has resulted in them ‘dying rich but not living rich’. This is particularly prevalent among older generations, who, despite being financially sound, feel insecure and choose to live with a cautious, conservative approach. While the younger generation is moving away from traditional investments like real estate and gold, the elderly remain emotionally attached to these assets.

Possible reasons as to why senior citizens tend to die rich rather than living rich:

Living modestly despite wealth:

Many senior citizens in India continue to live modestly despite being financially sound. They often prioritise frugality and self-denial, driven by concerns about potential medical expenses, longevity, and the need to support their children or grandchildren. This conservative approach can lead to an unnecessarily restricted lifestyle, where seniors deny themselves the comforts and experiences they could easily afford. The fear of outliving their

The biggest gift seniors can give their children is not a house or a gold chain but life well-lived. The irony is that many senior citizens live frugally, sacrificing pleasures, only to die wealthy. They were in a way, poor in life but rich in death. There is a need for senior citizens to focus on personal well-being and happiness.

savings, or the possibility of an unexpected medical emergency wiping out their wealth, often looms large in their minds.

Emotional factors:

Senior citizens have retained their emotional attachment to traditional investments. They often see real estate and gold as tangible assets that provide a sense of security, stability and returns in the form of rent. These assets hold sentimental value and are associated with memories and legacy. The older generation grew up in an era when these investments were the primary wealth-building tools, making it harder for them to break away from this mindset. In addition to emotional attachment, they tend to invest heavily in traditional assets - real estate and gold, viewing them as symbols of security and legacy. However, this emotional attachment makes these assets illiquid, leaving them unable to generate regular income for day-to-day comfort.

Invisible burdens-Inflation, healthcare and over-giving:

Beyond emotional letdowns, there is the real challenge of rising costs. Medical inflation in India is growing faster than general inflation. A single health emergency can wipe out years

of savings. Many senior citizens also deplete their retirement funds supporting their children’s education, business or weddings. While done with love, it can leave them financially vulnerable later in life.

Generational shift:

Younger generations today value mobility over inheritance, convenience over nostalgia. They are choosing apartments near work, rental flexibility and minimalist living over ancestral homes. The generational shift in financial thinking leaves many senior citizens feeling disconnected and even disappointed.

Changing trends and priorities:

The younger generation, in contrast to their elders, prefer simplicity and minimalism. The next generation are witnessing a significant shift in their investment preferences as well. They are moving away from traditional investments, which were once considered safe and reliable. Instead, they are exploring new avenues such as stock, mutual funds, income plans and even cryptocurrency. This shift can be attributed to various factors, including the desire for higher returns, ease of diversification and the influence of global investment trends.

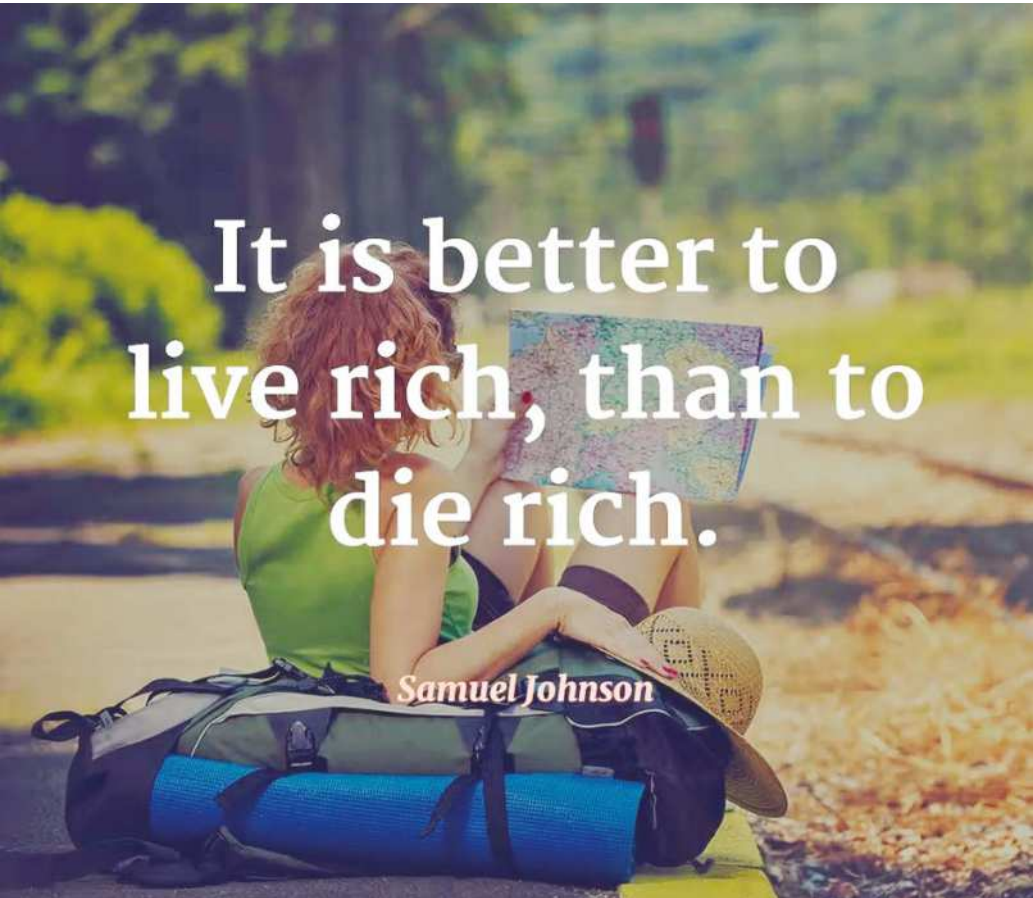
One such example of the

younger generation not being interested in traditional assets is of one senior citizen, who died aged 85. His wife had predeceased him. One son lives in London and the other in New Zealand. They have the nationality of those countries. Neither was interested in the house their father had built in his prime age.

The father had written a will before his death to give all the property equally to both his children. The sons did not have time to get all the property in their names and then sell it. Both made a power of attorney to sell the property in someone’s name. Thereafter the proceeds from the sale of the property were sent to their home country.

Benefits of financial planning:

It is important that senior citizens live life to the fullest and explore the reasons behind their emotional investments. It is high time they understand the changing taste and priorities of the younger generation and the rising costs faced by senior citizens. There is a need for the senior citizens to utilise a portion of their wealth for their own comfort and happiness. Going for financial planning like having a well-structured retirement plan can ensure that they have enough funds set-aside for emergencies and long-term



care, while allocating money for travel, leisure and other personal interests. The seniors should explore annuity plans; systematic withdrawal plans from mutual funds with a steady income stream without depleting their core assets. Ultimately, Indian senior citizens need to prioritise their own well-being and happiness, breaking free from the cycle of living economically to make the next generation rich.

Self-care and setting an example:

Retirement should be about fulfilment. Senior citizens should travel, pursue hobbies, attend cultural events, or just

enjoy quiet time with friends. These are not luxuries but are essential to a rich life. They should not forget the power of community like joining clubs, senior networks for emotional support, to combat loneliness and foster a sense of belonging. By prioritising their own well-being, embracing change, and spending meaningfully, they can rewrite what ageing looks like. They can prove that it’s possible to live rich - not just financially but emotionally and spiritually. The biggest gift seniors can give their children is not a house or a gold chain but life well-lived.

The irony is that many senior

citizens live frugally, sacrificing pleasures, only to die wealthy. They were in a way, poor in life but rich in death.

There is a need for senior citizens to focus on personal well-being and happiness, diversification into annuities, mutual funds, and income plans to balance financial security with comfort and enjoyment, in addition to balancing the children’s education etc.

Further they should break free from the habit of extreme thrift, enjoy the fruits of their hard work, and “live rich” rather than merely “die rich”.

(The writer is a retired IFS officer)

Homage to K S Gopal, the architect of sustainable development and agricultural innovation

His pioneering SWAR irrigation framework earned UNESCO laurels

VANAM JWALA
NARASIMHA RAO

DURING the 1990s, while serving as a faculty member at the Dr MCR HRD Institute, I was tasked with planning a training program on the ‘Role of NGOs in Rural Development.’ The singular, exceptional expert who immediately came to my mind, and whom numerous professional colleagues strongly recommended was KS Gopal. By then, he was steering the Hyderabad-based Centre for Environment Concerns (CEC).

Established in 1984 by a visionary group of activists, the CEC was dedicated to pioneering innovations, fresh ideas, and ‘next practices’ in the development sector. The broad areas of their operations encompassed poverty alleviation, rural development, environmental sustainability, and inclusive markets to enhance livelihoods.

Through these pillars, they aimed to regenerate natural resources in rain-fed, agriculturally backward dry land areas. The process they envisaged was driven by multi-disciplinary action research, field-level pilots, and a strategic mix of policy and practice advocacy. Against this dynamic backdrop, Gopal joined CEC as its director in 1993. Since joining, he spearheaded initiatives in participatory forest development, foreign funding research in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh, later in Telangana, and local cereal-based community grain banks. His expertise included environmental hotspots, civil society advocacy, soil en-

richment, organic agriculture, chemical-free forestry pest management etc. He also worked extensively on optimal utilisation of River Godavari waters.

Though he passed away at the age of 72 years, his vibrant energy remained undiminished until about six months prior to the tragic day. Since our first meeting, we have enjoyed a lifelong friendship. He was always the life of small gatherings with like-minded friends. He thoroughly enjoyed a social drink and a smoke, generously sharing joyful, unreserved moments with his closest companions.

Gopal left an indelible mark on everyone he touched, and his profound influence will stay with his friends, including me, forever.

Upon hearing the news of his passing on May 16, I visited his residence, offered condolences to his wife, before paying my last respects at the crematorium. Our bond was deeply academic. We shared ideas. Whenever we met, whether at Dr Utla Balaji’s house, my flat, Dr AP Ranga Rao’s residence (later Dr Bharat’s), or Sashi’s home, our discussions were invariably intense yet stimulating. They ranged broadly from politics to development, driven by Gopal’s passion.

We shared an intellectual ‘common ground,’ where Gopal was the undisputed leader. However, the ‘actual physical ground’ he chose once, for his groundbreaking ‘System of Water for Agriculture Rejuvenation (SWAR)’ irrigation experiment was a 1000-square-yard mini-farm near the Chilkoor Balaji temple. His pri-



He foresaw generic commodities transforming into branded ‘Farm-to-Fork’ (Farm-to-Table) products, moving directly, or with minimal steps, from a local farm to the consumer’s plate. However, he warned that this transformation would be aggressively driven by big players with deep pockets, smart information and communications technology systems, and remote management tools. He remarked that whoever commands the marketplace will ultimately dictate the future of our rural economy. Gopal cautioned that a handful of mega-corporations often end up controlling the entire value chain, squeezing farmers, intermediaries, and consumers alike

mary focus was always irrigation water efficiency, which he firmly believed was structurally linked to soil and plant root health.

The core concept was

delivering water directly to the root zone with minimal waste.

As a first-of-its-kind system, SWAR provided measured moisture to the roots, cutting water use by 50 per cent compared to standard drip irrigation for horticulture and agroforestry crops. He advocated precise moisture delivery tailored to different soils and crop cycles. When he casually mentioned this seven years ago, I offered our mini farm. Gopal self-funded the entire project, covering all installation and fertilizer expenses.

While I was working with Telangana’s first Chief Minister, K Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR’s), as his CPRO, Gopal in July 2019 discussed with me a CEC study on the effective use of water for Telangana’s prosperous agriculture. This coincided with KCR’s massive re-engineering of irrigation projects to ensure state-wide water supply. Gopal’s insights directly complemented KCR government’s plans to establish specialized crop colonies for efficient, high-quality agricultural service delivery.

In that context, Gopal presented a distinctive proposal: the Kharif season should focus on pulses, coarse cereals, millets, and fodder, boosting productivity through quality seeds, protective irrigation, and sustainable farming practices. Conversely, during Rabi, canal-fed flood irrigation could support crops like paddy, wheat, and cotton. Additionally, he favoured agro forestry to simultaneously enhance farmer incomes and restore local ecology.

Again, in June 2020, aligning with KCR’s initiatives, Gopal proposed the framework of ‘Right Interventions for Regulatory Farming.’

This concept emerged against the backdrop of 24/7 quality power supply, unprecedented paddy harvests, and landmark agricultural welfare schemes like Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bima. During this period, KCR suggested strategically converging MGNREGS with core farming operations to directly support landowners while simultaneously securing employment for agricultural labour.

Gopal, who contributed significantly to the evolution of MGNREGS, analysed that the Indian agricultural ecosystem was undergoing deep, structural shifts. These changes spanned procurement models, crop diversification, urban dietary demands, mechanization, and modern supply chains. In this rapidly evolving landscape, he focused on how to social-engineer and unleash human creativity toward building a more equitable rural economy. For him, the pathways and opportunities were always plenty.

He shared an insightful perspective regarding the Research and Innovation Circle Hyderabad (RICH). He envisioned RICH, designed to take lab research from Telangana’s top scientific institutions to the market, as a potent force multiplier. For him, this ecosystem could empower a vast number of young people to secure meaningful livelihoods while remaining deeply connected, with their feet and hearts, to the soil.

The strategic suggestions made by Gopal, which we so deeply debated, did not remain confined to our private conversations. Beyond

bringing his visionary ideas directly to the notice of the Chief Minister, who responded with a highly positive, considerate, and accommodating approach, I also documented them from time to time, extensively in detailed articles published across mainstream platforms to ensure they reached a wider audience.

When major agricultural reforms, including the ‘One Nation, One Market’ framework, amendments to the Essential Commodities Act, contract farming, and public-private partnerships for storage infrastructure were proposed in July 2020 under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, Gopal observed that the sector was on the cusp of a structural shift. He noted that traditional peasantry farming was rapidly giving way to corporate agri-business.

He opined that farmers could no longer rely on Minimum Support Price (MSP) or assured government procurement. Instead, the sector would transition into an era of customized production, dynamic price discovery, and nationally integrated markets dominated by large corporations, food chains, and exporters. He foresaw generic commodities transforming into branded ‘Farm-to-Fork’ (Farm-to-Table) products, moving directly, or with minimal steps, from a local farm to the consumer’s plate.

However, he warned that this transformation would be aggressively driven by big players with deep pockets, smart information and communications technology systems, and remote management

tools. He remarked that whoever commands the marketplace will ultimately dictate the future of our rural economy. Gopal cautioned that a handful of mega-corporations often end up controlling the entire value chain, squeezing farmers, intermediaries, and consumers alike.

He often said, ‘Markets are brutal, fierce battlegrounds. Their architecture decides who thrives, who benefits, and who is ultimately subjugated or decimated.’

To illustrate this grim reality, he shared a striking real-life story he personally encountered. In the academic and corporate realms, Gopal was a highly qualified management specialist, with MBA and a Diploma in International Trade. He shared his vast practical knowledge as a faculty member at ASCI and a ‘Scholar-in-Residence’ at TISS, eventually delivering guest lectures at world-renowned institutions like Oxford and York.

Gopal served on the EPTRI Governing Council and NIRD Research Council. He founded the IDL Rural Development Trust, co-founded the Deccan Development Society (DDS), and promoted communal harmony in Hyderabad. His pioneering SWAR irrigation framework won international accolades, including from UNESCO, leading to his frequent participation in high-level forums convened by the World Bank, UN, UNEP and FAO.

Gopal’s loss leaves a deep void. His revolutionary practical ideas nurture our soil.

Minister leads ‘Operation Clean Sweep’ sanitation drive in Dharmavaram

HANS NEWS SERVICE
DHARMAVARAM

HEALTH Minister and Dharmavaram MLA Y Sathya Kumar Yadav actively participated in the State government’s ‘Operation Clean Sweep’ sanitation drive on Saturday near Pothukunta Shiva Temple in Dharmavaram town.

Accompanied by Jana Sena Party State General Secretary Chilakam Madhusudhan Reddy, the Minister personally removed weeds along the roadside, cleaned the surroundings, and joined municipal workers and local residents in various sanitation activities. He also interacted with the public to raise awareness about the importance of maintaining public hygiene.

In his address, Sathya Kumar Yadav said the NDA coalition government, under Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief



Minister Y Sathya Kumar Yadav participating in ‘Operation Clean Sweep’ sanitation drive near Pothukunta Shiva Temple in Dharmavaram on Saturday

Minister Pawan Kalyan, is committed to building a clean and developed Andhra Pradesh through widespread public participation. He highlighted that large-scale cleanliness drives are being conducted every third Saturday under ‘Swachandhra – Swarna Andhra’ initiative.

He informed that Operation Clean Sweep is being implemented from May 22 to June 20 to intensify sanitation efforts across the State. The programme follows a structured approach: identification and clearance of red and yellow garbage spots in the first week, cleaning of

drains and canals in the second week, residential area drives in the third week, and commercial area focus in the fourth week. The initiative covers all 123 urban local bodies across the State.

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi’s famous words, ‘Cleanliness is next to Godliness,’

Sathya Kumar Yadav stressed that cleanliness is closely linked to public health, economic progress, and social responsibility. He praised the transformative impact of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Swachh Bharat Mission, launched on October 2, 2014, which led to the construction of nearly 12 crore household toilets and helped protect women’s dignity.

Citing World Bank estimates, the Minister noted that poor sanitation causes nearly 6% loss to the country’s GDP. He added that developing Open Defecation Free (ODF) areas has significantly improved public health and saved lives. He urged citizens to cooperate with municipal authorities and sanitation workers. He warned against dumping garbage and plastic waste into drains, which causes blockages and flooding during monsoons.



Minister TG Bharath Gupta along with Panyam MLA Gowru Cheritha Reddy and others at the foundation stone laying ceremony at Kurnool GGH on Saturday

Foundation laid for Vishram Sadan at Kurnool GGH

The facility being constructed at Rs 14.67 crore by Power Grid Corporation of India will provide accommodation for patients’ attendants

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

INDUSTRIES, Commerce and Food Processing Minister TG Bharath Gupta on Saturday laid foundation stone for a 150-bed ‘Vishram Sadan’ at Kurnool Government General Hospital (GGH), to be constructed at a cost of Rs 14.67 crore through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds from Power Grid Corporation of India.

The facility is being developed to provide accommodation for attendants and family members of patients visiting the hospital. Power Grid Corporation Chairman and Managing Director Vamsi Rama Mohan Burra, Panyam MLA Gowru Cheritha Reddy and senior officials participated in the bhoomi puja ceremony held at the hospital premises.

Minister Bharath said the government was committed to transforming Kurnool Government General Hospital into the leading healthcare institution in the State by providing corporate-level medical infrastructure and patient facilities. He urged the National Buildings Construction Corporation to complete Vishram Sadan within ten months, as all required approvals had already been obtained. He also appealed to Power Grid Corporation to continue extending support for the hospital’s future development needs.

Power Grid Corporation CMD Vamsi Rama Mohan Burra said the company had so far spent nearly Rs 100 crore on various CSR initiatives across the State. He recalled that the corporation had earlier funded CT scan facilities at Kurnool Govern-

ment Hospital.

Panyam MLA Gowru Charitha appreciated the contribution of Power Grid Corporation and stressed the need to complete the building at the earliest so that people from seven districts, along with patients from Telangana and Karnataka, could benefit from the facility.

Hospital Superintendent Dr Venkateswarlu noted that the lack of accommodation for attendants had long been a concern, hence allocated 60 cents of land for Vishram Sadan project.

A battery-operated transport vehicle worth Rs 6.35 lakh was also inaugurated, donated by Sneha Sri Welfare Society for cancer patients. Senior medical officials, Power Grid executives and members of the hospital development committee attended the event.

District officials travel in bus to promote fuel conservation

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NANDYAL

To promote fuel conservation, district officials in Nandyal collectively travelled in buses as part of the State government’s ‘One Month – Four Visit’ programme. The initiative was implemented during the public grievance redressal programme held in Allagadda Assembly constituency on Saturday.

District Collector G Raja Kumari, Joint Collector Suraj Dhanunjay and several district-level officers departed from PGRS premises at Nandyal Collectorate in specially arranged buses to at-

tend the programme. Instead of using their individual official vehicles, the officers travelled together in three buses.

Speaking on the occasion, Collector Raja Kumari said the initiative was undertaken in line with the directions of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu to create awareness among public about the need for fuel conservation. She observed that officials must lead by example before advising the public and stressed that collective travel by government departments could significantly reduce unnecessary fuel expenditure. The Collector explained that a special

plan had been prepared to ensure district, divisional, constituency, and mandal-level officers travel together for official visits under ‘One Month – Four Visit’ programme. She further stated that the same practice would continue during future inspections, meetings, and official tours across the district.

Raja Kumari appealed to public to avoid unnecessary travel, especially in view of the prevailing high temperatures and heatwave conditions. She advised citizens to limit vehicle usage during holidays and adopt fuel-saving practices in their daily lives.



Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar distributing appointment letters to selected candidates during Rozgar Mela programme in Guntakal on Saturday

120 youth secure central government jobs

Union Minister Bandi Sanjay distributes appointment letters at Guntakal Rozgar Mela

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GUNTAKAL
(ANANTAPUR DISTRICT)

UNION Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar distributed appointment letters to 120 selected candidates during Rozgar Mela held at Railway Prabhat Club in Guntakal on Saturday.

The event was part of a nationwide Rozgar Mela conducted simultaneously at 47 locations across India, where over 51,000 young people received appointment letters for various Central government departments. The programme began with the traditional lighting of the lamp, followed by a virtual address from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the newly recruited candidates.

Senior railway officials, including Guntakal Divisional Railway Manager Chandrasekhar Gupta, Additional Divisional Railway Manager BS Shivaprasad, and Divisional Personnel Officer HLN Prasad, were present.

Addressing the gathering, Bandi Sanjay described Rozgar Mela as one of the

largest employment drives initiated by the Central government under PM Modi’s leadership. The initiative aims to fill 10 lakh Central government positions, with nearly 12 lakh appointments already made in previous phases. In this latest round, more than 51,000 candidates received offer letters in a single day. The Minister urged the new appointees to work with dedication, integrity, and a spirit of public service. He advised the recruits to upgrade their skills through the iGOT Karmayogi online platform and actively contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Bandi Sanjay also assured continued Central support for infrastructure and welfare projects in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, including the Polavaram project and Amaravati development.

Of the 120 appointments in Guntakal, 93 candidates were selected as Assistant Loco Pilots, 13 received compassionate appointments in Railways, nine joined the Department of Posts, four were appointed in Bank of Baroda, and one joined Civil Aviation department.

‘Operation Clean Sweep’ launched to make Anantapur city clean

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ANANTAPUR

URBAN MLA Daggupati Prasad and district Collector O Anand launched ‘Operation Clean Sweep’ at Surya Nagar Road, the Fifth Circle Muster Point and the Gooty Road Bus Stop area in the city on Saturday. As part of the drive, the MLA and the Collector participated in sanitation activities at locations identified for open urination and inspected the action plan prepared for improving urban cleanliness across the city.

Addressing the media, MLA Daggupati Prasad said Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu had initiated the ‘Operation Clean Sweep’ programme to strengthen sanitation measures under Swarnandhra-Swachh Andhra initiative. He said the programme would be implemented over 30 days with a four-week special plan focus-

ing on cleaning roads, drains and market areas.

The MLA stated that the Collector had prepared a detailed action plan under which residents would be informed in advance about garbage collection timings and the staff responsible for waste collection in their respective areas. Public awareness programmes would also be conducted to ensure that residents hand over waste only during the designated collection hours. He said municipal staff, secretariat employees and local leaders would actively participate in the campaign, while sanitation activities across the city would be monitored through CCTV surveillance.

Collector Anand said that although some improvement had been observed in city sanitation over the last three months, a more structured and comprehensive strategy was necessary to maintain cleanli-

ness on a permanent basis.

The Collector said display boards would be installed in every colony containing details of garbage collection timings, names of sanitation workers, secretariat secretaries and sanitary inspectors responsible for the area. He also announced that GIS mapping and a dedicated control room system would be introduced to monitor sanitation operations effectively.

He urged residents to cooperate by handing over garbage only when collection vehicles arrive in their areas. In cases where garbage collection staff fail to visit, residents were advised to report the matter to the concerned secretariat secretary or sanitary inspector, and subsequently to the control room if necessary.

Municipal Commissioner Jaswanth Kumar, Swachh Andhra Corporation Director Bhavani Ravikumar, municipal staff, secretariat employees and local leaders participated in the programme.

Revenue officers vital for national security, trade facilitation: Union Minister

HANS NEWS SERVICE
PALASAMUDRAM
(SRI SATHYA SAI DISTRICT)

UNION Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said that indirect tax and customs officials play a crucial role in safeguarding national security and promoting ease of trade in the country.

He addressed the graduation ceremony of 76th batch of Indian Revenue Service (Customs & Indirect Taxes) officers held at National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN) in Palasamudram on Saturday. A total of 79 IRS (C&IT) officers successfully completed their training as part of the batch.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said services rendered by customs and indirect tax officials signifi-

cantly contribute to India’s growth and economic progress. He noted that the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is rapidly transforming into a modern technology-driven institution, with reforms such as faceless assessment, automation, digital compliance and data analytics enhancing transparency and efficiency in governance.

Chaudhary stressed the need for officers to remain vigilant and professionally competent in dealing with emerging challenges, including cyber-enabled financial crimes, illegal trade networks and smuggling activities. He urged the newly inducted officers to uphold the highest standards of integrity and professionalism while discharging their duties.

The Minister observed



Union Minister Pankaj Chaudhary at the passing out parade of the 76th batch of IRS (Customs & Indirect Taxes) officers in Palasamudram on Saturday

that integrity forms the foundation of public service and said the credibility of officers depends on their honesty and impartial conduct. He pointed out that every administrative decision taken by officials directly impacts traders and citizens; therefore, governance should not only be efficient but also sensitive and humane.

Encouraging the officers to adapt to the changing global environment, Chaudhary advised them to continuously update their knowledge and enhance their professional skills to achieve excellence in every responsibility entrusted to them.

Senior NACIN officials, Penukonda Revenue Divisional Officer Anand Kumar, Tahsildar Madhu Naik and other officials attended the programme.

Police conduct mega counselling drive

VANI MALLELA
TIRUPATI

IN a firm demonstration of law-and-order commitment, Tirupati district police organised a large-scale counselling programme for accused persons and petty offenders on Saturday.

The event, held at the police parade ground under the supervision of district Superintendent of Police L Subba Rayudu, saw the participation of around 451 individuals, including those listed in rowdy sheets, drug offenders, theft suspects, and accused in POCSO cases.

Addressing the gathering, SP L Subba Rayudu emphasised zero tolerance towards rowdiness, drug-related crimes, and offences against women and children. “Tirupati is a sacred place. We will not allow anyone to create fear among the public or tarnish its reputation,” he said.

He warned that once a rowdy sheet is opened, police will closely monitor every activity. Repeat offenders will face stringent measures, including invocation of the PD Act and city externment. He assured that police would fully support those willing to reform but would deal firmly with anyone disturbing public peace.

Officials also demonstrated a modern urine-testing technique capable of detecting drug consumption within five minutes and tracing usage history up to 30 days. Positive results will be used to trace and dismantle drug supply networks.

So far, the district has registered 257 NDPS cases and 184 POCSO cases. Thirteen rowdy-sheet individuals and 15 drug suppliers have already been booked under the PD Act and sent to jail.

Additional SPs Venkata Rao, Ravi Manoharachari, Srinivas, and Srinivas Rao were present.



‘Mahaprabhu Jagannath’ to launch ‘Sanatan Universe’ with grand pan-India animated film

Ele Animations Pvt. Ltd. is taking a major leap in Indian animation by transforming its hugely popular television property Jay Jagannath into a large-scale theatrical film titled Mahaprabhu Jagannath. The ambitious animated feature is planned for a massive pan-India release across more than 300 screens in Hindi, Odia, and Telugu through a strategic partnership with Cinepolis.

The film marks the official launch of the “Sanatan Universe,” an interconnected cultural and entertainment ecosystem envisioned by the studio.

Rooted deeply in Indian mythology, spirituality, and devotional storytelling, Mahaprabhu Jagannath aims to combine world-class animation with emotionally engaging narratives designed for audiences of all age groups.

The story explores the sacred legends and spiritual heritage surrounding Lord Jagannath, presenting timeless cultural



values through vibrant animation and child-friendly storytelling. While the visuals are crafted to attract younger viewers, the emotional depth and devotional themes are expected to resonate strongly with families as well.

Speaking about the project, producer Durga Prasad Dalai revealed that the overwhelming response to the Jay Jagannath television series inspired the team to expand the property into a cinematic

experience. According to him, the film is not just an entertainment venture but also an effort to introduce Indian heritage, mythology, and values to younger generations in a visually engaging format.

Dalai further explained that Mahaprabhu Jagannath is only the beginning of a much larger vision.

Through the Sanatan Universe initiative, Ele Animations plans to build an expansive mythology-based

entertainment ecosystem spanning films, television, devotional music, educational content, live-streaming platforms, and immersive experience destinations beginning in Puri.

The studio has already mapped out several upcoming projects within this universe. These include Mere Bhole, an animated children’s series inspired by Lord Shiva, along with interconnected stories centered around Lord Hanuman, Lord

Ganesha, Goddess Kali, and Goddess Durga. The company also intends to reinterpret the teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads through modern storytelling formats tailored for younger audiences.

Headquartered in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Ele Animations has steadily evolved into a globally recognized animation company since its inception in 2008. The studio currently delivers content across 36 countries and has earned recognition for blending Indian mythology with advanced storytelling technology and international production standards.

Industry observers believe Mahaprabhu Jagannath could become a landmark moment for Indian animated cinema by creating a mythology-driven franchise universe aimed at both domestic and global audiences.

With spiritual storytelling increasingly finding space in mainstream entertainment, the project is expected to strengthen India’s cultural presence in the global animation market.

Jackie Shroff reveals why Gen Z connects deeply with him



Veteran actor Jackie Shroff, who is gearing up for the release of his upcoming film The Great Grand Superhero, has opened up about the reason behind his growing popularity among Gen Z audiences. During the film’s promotions, the actor shared his thoughts on human connection, generation gaps, and why younger audiences continue to relate to his personality and energy.

Speaking alongside director Manish Saini, Jackie Shroff explained that his approach toward people has always remained open and accepting, regardless of age. According to the actor, he never limits his interactions based on generational differences and believes genuine human connection is built through openness and mutual curiosity.

Jackie said he keeps his energy open to everyone, whether they are children, youngsters, or elderly people. He added that by understanding others’ interests and perspectives,

people naturally begin connecting with him as well. The actor emphasized that conversations and relationships become meaningful only when individuals stop focusing on age barriers and start accepting each other as human beings.

The actor also reflected on his role in The Great Grand Superhero, revealing that the character feels extremely personal to him. The film revolves around a grandfather who shares a close friendship-like bond with his grandchild, a dynamic Jackie believes mirrors his real-life personality and outlook toward younger generations.

Jackie further revealed that one of the biggest reasons he agreed to do the film was the uniqueness of the concept. According to him, the idea of a “superhero grandfather” had rarely been explored in Hindi cinema before.

He also expressed complete trust in director Manish Saini, praising his filmmaking credibility and

achievements.

Sharing more about the emotional connection he felt with the story, Jackie explained that he naturally relates to children as equals rather than treating them differently because of age. He stated that he has never believed in the idea of a “generation gap” and prefers to interact with children and youngsters like friends.

The actor’s heartfelt comments have once again highlighted the authenticity and warmth that continue to make him popular across generations. Known for his grounded personality and relatable public image, Jackie Shroff has increasingly become a favorite among younger audiences through interviews, social media clips, and candid public appearances.

With The Great Grand Superhero, the veteran actor is expected to bring a refreshing emotional dynamic to the screen by blending humour, warmth, friendship, and family bonding into a unique superhero narrative.

Cannes calling: Sonali Doshi achieves major career milestone

Sonali Doshi marked a major milestone in her creative journey by making her debut appearance at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival 2026 as a co-producer of the Indo-American feature film Bombay Stories. Held from May 12 to May 23, the globally celebrated film festival became a landmark platform for Sonali as she represented Indian storytelling and culture on the international stage.

Directed by Rahhat Shah Kazmi and starring Mouni Roy in the lead role, Bombay Stories marked Sonali Doshi’s entry into film production after building a strong identity as a podcast host, music personality, and cultural curator. Her presence at Cannes reflected the growing influence of Indian creators in global entertainment and cross-cultural storytelling.

Based in Boston, USA, Sonali is the founder of Sonali’s Music Room, a digital cultural platform that gained popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially launched as a passion-driven initiative, the platform gradually evolved into a global space connecting Indian artists, musicians, and audiences across continents through conversations centered around music, art, and culture.

Over the years, Sonali has interacted with several renowned Indian musicians and cultural personalities, including Kailash Kher, Shivamani, Mahalakshmi Iyer, Vijay Prakash, Mame Khan, and Anup Jalota among others. Her platform also collaborated on media marketing partnerships for major live events featuring glob-



ally popular artists like A. R. Rahman, Arijit Singh, Shreya Ghoshal, Sonu Nigam, and Sunidhi Chauhan.

Speaking about her Cannes experience, Sonali described representing India at the festival as both emotional and meaningful. She stated that her journey has always revolved around storytelling, music, and build-

ing cultural bridges between India and international audiences, making her participation at Cannes feel like a natural progression.

Apart from her contributions to digital content and film production, Sonali has also earned recognition as a live event presenter and host across Boston and New York City. She notably hosted a

special independent concert by Anup Jalota under the banner of Sonali’s Music Room.

With her Cannes 2026 appearance, Sonali Doshi has further expanded her global presence as an Indian creative entrepreneur who successfully blends cinema, music, culture, and storytelling into a unified artistic vision.

Avinash Tiwary opens up about solo travelling

Avinash Tiwary has shared a deeply personal reflection on solitude, love, and self-discovery while enjoying a solo vacation in Koh Phangan, Thailand. The actor, known for his introspective social media posts, opened up about the emotional realities of travelling alone and how repeated solo journeys gradually became a “way of life” for him.

Currently vacationing in the scenic island destination famous for its Full Moon Party, wellness retreats, yoga culture, and digital nomad lifestyle, Avinash posted a series of pictures and videos on Instagram alongside an emotional note about his experiences with solo travel.

The actor revealed that this was around his tenth or twelfth solo trip, admitting he had stopped counting over time. According to him, what initially began as adventurous getaways slowly transformed into a lifestyle shaped by busy schedules, personal commitments, and the simple reality that he is often the only person consistently available to himself.

Reflecting on fleeting travel connections, Avinash described how people met during trips often become temporary companions before life and geography eventually separate them. Despite enjoying the vibrant atmosphere around him, he confessed to experiencing moments of complete solitude even while feeling emotionally fulfilled. The actor emphasized that solitude should not be confused with loneliness. He stated that he feels surrounded by immense love from family, friends, and even strangers he has encountered across the world. However, he pointed out that there are moments during travel when none of that love is physically present in the room, creating a unique emotional experience.

Avinash further shared that solo travel teaches a “strange truth” — a person can feel deeply loved and still stand entirely alone in a moment. He admitted that over time, travelling alone stopped being a deliberate



choice and naturally became part of his lifestyle as schedules rarely align with loved ones.

The actor concluded his heartfelt reflection by saying he does not necessarily see solitude as a problem needing a solution. Instead, he views it as an observation about modern life,

where happiness, freedom, love, and aloneness often coexist together.

On the professional front, Avinash Tiwary was recently seen in Ginny Weds Sunny 2, directed by Prasshant and co-starring Medha Shankr. The film serves as a spiritual sequel to Ginny Weds Sunny.



Nagarjuna gets emotional as 'Manam' completes 12 years

Veteran Telugu actor Nagarjuna turned emotional while reflecting on the special significance of May 23, a date deeply connected to both his personal and professional journey. The occasion became even more memorable as his cult classic family drama Manam completed 12 years since its release.

Celebrating the milestone, Annapurna Studios shared a heartfelt tribute on social media, describing Manam as more than just a film.

The production house called it "an emotion cherished by audiences," remembering the movie's timeless storytelling and emotional legacy.

The banner also highlighted how May 23 remains a landmark date in Nagarjuna's life. It was on the same day in 1986 that the actor first faced the camera as a lead hero for Vikram.

Years later, May 23 gained even greater emotional weight when Manam released as the final on-

screen appearance of legendary actor Akkineni Nageswara Rao.

Sharing his emotions on social media, Nagarjuna thanked fans for showering him with love and blessings over the years. He described Manam as a deeply personal film because it allowed him the rare privilege of sharing screen space with both his father ANR and his sons, making it a once-in-a-lifetime cinematic memory.

The actor also fondly recalled the release of Vikram, which marked the beginning of his journey in cinema and opened the doors for decades of stardom and audience affection.

He expressed gratitude to fans who have supported him throughout his career and hoped for many more memorable May 23 celebrations in the future.

Fondly referred to as Tollywood's "Celluloid Scientist," Nagarjuna has constantly reinvented himself across generations. From intense performances in Siva to



romantic classics like Geethanjali and entertainers including Manmadhudu, Hello Brother, and

Bangarraju, Nagarjuna continues to remain one of Telugu cinema's most stylish and enduring stars.

'Nanna Kutty' FL showcases intense father-daughter action drama

Versatile actor Vijay Antony is gearing up for another content-driven entertainer with his upcoming film Nanna Kutty, the Telugu version of the Tamil project Appa Kutty. Directed by Mu. Maran, the film is positioned as an emotional action drama centered on the powerful bond between a father and daughter.

The makers recently unveiled the first-look poster, instantly grabbing attention for its raw intensity and emotional depth. The poster features Vijay Antony in a bruised and bloodied avatar, with visible cuts and swelling across his face. Despite the injuries, his determined expression stands out, while a little girl resting on his shoulder subtly highlights the emotional core of the story.

Produced by Meera Vijay Antony and co-produced by Ramanjaneyulu Javvaji under the Sarvanth Ram Creations banner, Nanna Kutty is said to blend family emotions with gripping action and intense drama. The makers believe the film will connect with both mass audiences and family viewers.

The shooting formalities have already been completed, and the team is currently busy with post-production work. The makers are planning a grand theatrical release in August.

Apart from Vijay Antony, the film features a strong supporting cast including Preeti Asrani, Lithanya, Bhagavathi Perumal, Haripriya Isai, Aruvi Madhan, Chitra Lakshmanan, Sreeja Ravi, Vettai Muthukumar, Jensen Diwakar, Muruganatham, and Munnar Ramesh in important roles.



The technical team also adds weight to the project. Rajeev Raajendran handles cinematography, while Vijay Antony himself composes the music and takes charge as editor. Production design is managed by A Raja.

With its emotional storyline, action-packed narrative, and strong performances, Nanna Kutty is shaping up to be one of the notable family entertainers of the upcoming season.

'Ugly Story' team thanks audience for overwhelming response

Actor Nandu expressed happiness over the positive response received for his latest emotional thriller Ugly Story, which hit theatres recently and has been gaining strong word-of-mouth from audiences. The team held a thank you meet following the film's impressive reception, where the actor and makers shared their excitement about the movie's growing success.

Directed by Pranava Swaroop under the banner of Riya Jiya Productions, Ugly Story features cinematography by Sri Sai Kumar Dara, music by Shravan Bharadwaj, and editing by Srikanth Patnaik. The film is produced by Subhashini and Konda Lakshman, while Shivaji Raja, Ravi Teja

Mahadasyam, and Pragna Nayan played pivotal roles.

Speaking at the event, Nandu revealed that the film witnessed strong growth from evening shows on its release day itself. He thanked the media and audience for encouraging the movie and said the emotional support he received felt very personal. The actor described the project as one of the most important films in his career and admitted that some emotionally intense scenes were difficult to perform, but necessary for the story.

The actor also stated that his script selection process has evolved and that he now wants to focus more on emotionally strong stories suitable for family audiences. Nandu credited nearly "95 percent" of his

performance success to director Pranava Swaroop for shaping the character effectively.

Director Pranava Swaroop shared that the story was inspired by emotional realities seen in society and explored how people remain trapped in certain emotional phases despite changing circumstances. He added that Nandu was the perfect choice for the role and confirmed that his next film would also be emotion-driven.

Producer Bekkem Venugopal said the film's reception exceeded expectations and described Ugly Story as a major breakthrough that could mark the beginning of Nandu's successful second innings in Telugu cinema.



Pournami Entertainments releases surprise b'day poster for veteran actor Rahman

Veteran actor Rahman, known for his stylish screen presence across Telugu, Tamil, and Malayalam cinema, received a special surprise on his birthday as the makers of Production No.1 unveiled his first-look poster from the upcoming project. Released by Pournami Entertainments on May 23, the poster has already started creating buzz among movie lovers.

The newly released birthday poster introduces Rahman's character in a mysterious and elegant manner, hinting at a powerful role in the film. With his intense expression and commanding appearance, the actor once again showcases the charisma that has made him a favorite among audiences for decades. The makers have intentionally

kept details about the character under wraps, adding more curiosity around the project.

Rahman, who made his Telugu debut with Raga Leela in 1987, went on to impress audiences with notable films like Bharat Bandh, Priyathama, Billa, Simha, and D16. Over the years, he has built a strong fan base with his versatile performances and sophisticated on-screen style. The production house stated that this poster marks only the beginning of an exciting cinematic journey and promised that more updates regarding the film will be revealed soon. Though the makers have not yet disclosed complete details about the cast and storyline, the birthday poster has successfully generated anticipation around the film.

'Pandiraa' reveals how 'Parimala & Co' was wrapped up in just 45 days

Acclaimed filmmaker Pandiraj has opened up about the fast-paced shooting schedule of his upcoming Tamil entertainer Parimala & Co, revealing that the film was completed in just 45 days.

The director made the revelation during the film's pre-release event after veteran actress Urvashi praised the team for finishing the project in record time. She pointed out that while Malayalam films are usually known for short shooting schedules, Pandiraj managed to complete his Tamil film even faster.

Responding to the appreciation, Pandiraj clarified that the film was shot in 45 days, although the total could technically be considered around 60 days if double call-sheet schedules were counted separately.

He credited the achievement entirely to his cast and crew, especially the actors, whom he described as "one-take artistes."

According to the director, working with performers who deliver scenes efficiently naturally helped the production move at a brisk pace without compromising quality.

Parimala & Co, which marks Pandiraj's 12th directorial venture, is said to be a blend of thriller and comedy elements. The film stars Jayaram and Urvashi in lead roles and revolves



around a family and the unique personalities and problems faced by its members.

Industry sources reveal that the story begins in Chennai before shifting to locations such as Coimbatore and Palacode as the narrative progresses.

The film also features Santhosh Sobhan in a pivotal role alongside Sanchana Krishnamoorthy, Sandy, and Ananthika Sanalkumar. Popular

comedian Yogi Babu reportedly plays a lengthy and significant role throughout the film.

Director Mysskin will also be seen portraying a police officer, while comedians Singam Puli and Baks appear in important supporting roles. The film is jointly produced by Lyca Productions, Tamilkumaran Productions, and Pandiraj's Pasanga Productions.

'Sandigdham' will appeal to everyone: Director Parthasaradhi at trailer launch event

Upcoming suspense thriller Sandigdham is gearing up for its theatrical release on May 29, with the makers recently unveiling the film's trailer at a grand launch event. Produced by Sandhya Tiruveedhula under the Thirdha Creations banner and directed by Parthasaradhi Kommoju, the film has already generated decent buzz

through its posters and teaser.

The movie stars Nihal, Priya Deshpag, Kajal Tiwari, and Arjun CH in lead roles, while Naveenraj Sankarapu, known for Thera Chepa, appears as the antagonist.

The newly released trailer hints at a mystery-driven narrative packed with suspense and emotional twists.

Speaking at the trailer launch event,

director Parthasaradhi Kommoju thanked his wife and producer Sandhya Tiruveedhula for supporting him throughout the making process.

He said the entire cast and crew worked with dedication to bring the project to life and expressed confidence that Sandigdham would connect with audiences.

Lead actor Nihal revealed that the film

revolves around a unique concept and appreciated the producers for overcoming several challenges during production.

Actress Kajal Tiwari, meanwhile, shared that the team made her feel comfortable on set despite her limited Telugu fluency.

Actor Arjun CH thanked the makers for giving him an important character named Sathya, while music director

Gowtham Raviram stated that both the soundtrack and background score would stand out as major highlights of the film.

Naveenraj Sankarapu expressed confidence about the movie's output and mentioned that every actor delivered strong performances.

Supporting actors Anand and Chitti Babu also praised the hard work of the director and producer during the film's



journey. Technically, Sandigdham features cinematography by

Nandan Krishna and editing by Vishwan Raj DS. With suspense, mystery, and emotional

drama at its core, the film is aiming to attract thriller lovers when it hits theatres on May 29.



Weekend OTT blast: Here's what is streaming across platforms

SUHAS SISTU

N The OTT space continues to deliver an exciting mix of action thrillers, courtroom dramas, reality entertainment, and quirky comedies this week. Major streaming platforms including Netflix, JioHotstar, Amazon Prime Video, ETV WIN, and ZEE5 have rolled out fresh releases catering to audiences of every genre. From the unfiltered version of the blockbuster spy thriller Dhurandhar to the rustic Telugu comedy series Memu Coplam, viewers have plenty of binge-worthy options this weekend.

Netflix & Jio Hotstar

Dhurandhar- Part 1 (Raw & Undekha)

The blockbuster spy-thriller Dhurandhar (Part 1) is now streaming in a brand-new "Raw & Undekha" version on both Netflix and JioHotstar. After its initial OTT premiere on Netflix in January 2026, the makers unveiled the uncut and unfiltered edition offering audiences a more intense cinematic experience. The latest version features unmuted dialogues, raw action sequences, and a darker presentation compared to the previously edited release. Fans can stream the film in Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu audio options. The film boasts a stellar ensemble cast featuring Ranveer Singh, Akshaye Khanna, Sanjay Dutt, R. Madhavan, and Arjun Rampal.

Netflix

Ladies First

The satirical comedy Ladies First is now streaming exclusively on Netflix. Directed by Thea Sharrock, the film follows Damien Sachs, played by Sacha Baron Cohen, a wealthy and chauvinistic businessman who wakes up in a parallel universe ruled by women. As he struggles to survive in a matriarchal society, the film delivers sharp satire on gender roles and power dynamics. The movie also stars Rosamund Pike, Richard E. Grant, Emily Mortimer, and Charles



Dance in key roles.

Desi Bling Season 1

Desi Bling Season 1 is now streaming exclusively on Netflix. The lifestyle reality series serves as the official Indian spin-off of Dubai Bling and showcases the glamorous lives of wealthy Indian expats and billionaires living in Dubai. Packed with luxury yachts, designer fashion, lavish parties, and high-society rivalries, the show offers a peek into the extravagant lifestyles of the elite. Season 1 features 7-8 episodes and is available in Hindi, English, Tamil, and Telugu audio options. The cast includes Karan Kundra, Tejasswi Prakash, Rizwan Sajan, Satish and Tabinda Sanpal, Alizey and Lailli Mirza, along with Pamela Serena.

Amazon Prime Video

Gaayapadda Simham

The Telugu action-comedy drama Gaayapadda Simham is now streaming on Amazon Prime Video with multiple regional language options. Directed by Kasyap Sreenivas, the film stars Tharun Bhascker, Faria Abdullah, Maanasa Choudhary, and J. D. Chakravarthy, with an extended cameo by Sree Vishnu. Released on May 22, 2026, the satirical entertainer follows Darahas, a man deported from the United States within hours due to sudden immigration policy changes. Furious over his shattered dreams, he launches a bizarre revenge mission that leads to hilarious chaos involving cops and a feared mafia don

named Brutal Dharma.

Sathi Leelavathi

The romantic comedy Sathi Leelavathi is currently streaming in Prime Video. Starring Lavanya Tripathi and Dev Mohan in lead roles, the film revolves around Leelavathi, a successful filmmaker whose life takes an unexpected turn when her husband asks for a divorce. Determined to save her marriage, she creates a series of funny and emotional situations, leading to a light-hearted yet heartwarming journey filled with romance, misunderstandings, and humor. The film has been appreciated for its entertaining narrative and charming performances.

System

The intense courtroom drama System is now streaming on Amazon Prime Video. Directed by Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari and produced by Baweja Studios, the film stars Sonakshi Sinha as ambitious prosecutor Neha Rajvansh, alongside Jyothika as Sarika Rawat and Ashutosh Gowariker in a pivotal role. The story follows Neha's mission to win ten consecutive cases to secure a partnership at her father's law firm, but her alliance with a street-smart courtroom stenographer uncovers deep-rooted

RELEASES		
Platform	Title	Description
Netflix & JioHotstar	Dhurandhar – Part 1 (Raw & Undekha)	The blockbuster spy thriller is streaming in a new "Raw & Undekha" version featuring unmuted dialogues, raw action sequences, and darker visuals. The film stars Ranveer Singh, Akshaye Khanna, Sanjay Dutt, R. Madhavan, and Arjun Rampal.
Netflix	Ladies First	A satirical comedy directed by Thea Sharrock, following a chauvinistic businessman who wakes up in a parallel universe ruled by women, leading to humorous and socially relevant situations.
	Desi Bling Season 1	The Indian spin-off of Dubai Bling showcasing the lavish lifestyles, luxury parties, designer fashion, and rivalries among wealthy Indian expats living in Dubai.
Amazon Prime Video	Gaayapadda Simham	A Telugu action-comedy drama about a deported man whose shattered American dream pushes him into a bizarre revenge mission involving cops and a feared mafia don.
	Sathi Leelavathi	A romantic comedy revolving around a successful filmmaker trying to save her marriage after her husband asks for a divorce, resulting in emotional and humorous situations.
	System	A courtroom drama about an ambitious prosecutor who uncovers corruption and moral conflicts within the legal system while fighting to establish her career.
ETV Win	Uttutta Herolu	A Telugu crime-comedy thriller about four aspiring actors who resort to kidnapping for money and end up facing dangerous consequences involving a faction leader.
ZEE5	Memu Coplam	A rural Telugu crime-comedy web series about two clueless constables investigating the disappearance of a prized fighting rooster named "Salaar Raju."

corruption and moral dilemmas within the legal system. The film is available in Hindi with regional dubbed versions, including Telugu.

ETV WIN

Uttutta Herolu

The Telugu crime comedy thriller Uttutta Herolu is currently streaming on ETV WIN. Directed by Harsha Kodali, the film stars Mahesh Vitta, Thanu Konidela, Hara Srinivas, Walter Vinay, and Praveena Sony in key roles. The crime comedy follows four friends from the "Cult Gang" who dream of becoming film heroes. When their movie shoot gets stalled due to financial issues, they turn to kidnapping for quick money, only to land in bigger trouble after crossing paths with a dangerous faction leader named Rami Reddy. Packed with humor, crime, and chaotic twists, the film offers an entertaining thriller experience.

Zee5

Memu Coplam

The Telugu crime-comedy web series Memu Coplam is now streaming officially on ZEE5. The series



consists of six episodes and stars Naga Babu, Getup Srinu, and Ravi Teja Nannimala in key roles. The rural comedy-mystery revolves around two clueless village police constables who are assigned to investigate the strange disappearance of a prized fighting rooster named "Salaar Raju." Filled with hilarious misunderstandings, quirky village characters, and chaotic investigations, the series blends comedy and mystery in an entertaining rustic backdrop.

This week's OTT lineup offers something for every kind of viewer, from gritty spy thrillers and courtroom dramas to romantic entertainers and rustic Telugu comedies. While Dhurandhar – Part 1 (Raw & Undekha) stands out as the biggest attraction with its darker and more intense presentation, films like Gaayapadda Simham, System, and Sathi Leelavathi add variety across genres.



Meanwhile, shows like Desi Bling and Memu Coplam cater to audiences looking for reality drama and comedy-filled binge sessions. With major platforms competing aggressively through diverse content, OTT viewers are once again spoiled for choice this weekend.



'The Boroughs' Season 1 review: Slow and overstretched

The science-fiction mystery series The Boroughs attempts to blend emotional drama with supernatural suspense but ultimately ends up as a slow, exhausting watch that struggles to justify its eight-episode runtime. Despite featuring an impressive cast and backing from the creators of Stranger Things, the show never fully delivers on its intriguing premise and often gets trapped in repetitive storytelling and sluggish pacing.

Set inside a retirement township in New Mexico, the series follows

Samuel Cooper, played by Alfred Molina, a grieving widower trying to rebuild his life after losing his wife. Soon, mysterious incidents begin disturbing the elderly residents, leading to strange theories, paranoia, and supernatural clues. While the setup initially appears promising, the narrative quickly loses momentum as the show spends far too much time on character conversations and emotional monologues without moving the mystery forward in a meaningful way.

The biggest problem with The

Boroughs is its pacing. Several middle episodes feel unnecessarily stretched and overloaded with filler scenes that add very little to the central mystery. Instead of building suspense, the show repeatedly circles around the same emotional conflicts, making the viewing experience frustrating rather than engaging. The mystery surrounding the strange creature and cryptic clues like "The owl is in the wall" sounds interesting on paper, but the execution lacks tension and payoff.

The series also struggles tonally.

It wants to be a gripping sci-fi thriller while simultaneously exploring themes of ageing, loneliness, regret, and mortality. Unfortunately, neither aspect feels fully satisfying.

The emotional drama becomes overly heavy-handed at times, while the science-fiction elements never become exciting enough to compensate for the slow storytelling. The heavy inspiration from Stranger Things is obvious throughout the series, but The Boroughs lacks the energy, emotional impact, and gripping

momentum that made that show successful. The performances are perhaps the only redeeming aspect. Alfred Molina delivers a restrained and believable performance, while Geena Davis, Alfre Woodard, and Denis O'Hare do their best to elevate weak material. However, even strong performances cannot



completely save a series weighed down by uneven writing and repetitive scenes.

In the end, The Boroughs feels like a missed opportunity. What could have been a fresh and emotionally layered sci-fi mystery instead turns into a tedious and overlong drama that rarely manages to hold attention consistently.

Rating: 2/5

A guide to exploring Seattle during FIFA 2026: Sports, culture and sightseeing



City, Credit- David Newman



Waterfront Park Seattle-Photo by Hannah Te courtesy Friends of Waterfront Park

Seattle is set to experience a landmark year in 2026 as it becomes one of the host cities for FIFA World Cup 26™, transforming the city into a global hub of football, culture, and celebration. Known for its vibrant sports culture and walkable urban core, Seattle offers visitors a unique blend of high-energy matches, iconic landmarks, and immersive local experiences.

At the heart of the action is Lumen Field, known during events as Seattle Stadium. The venue will host six World Cup matches between June and July, including four group-stage fixtures featuring top international

teams such as the USA vs Australia on June 19 and Iran vs Egypt on June 26. The stadium sits in the city center, making it easily accessible for fans and turning the surrounding district into a festival-like atmosphere throughout the tournament.

Beyond the matches, Seattle will come alive with official fan celebration zones across locations like Seattle Center, Pacific Place, Waterfront Park, and SoDo's Victory Hall. These free public spaces will feature live match screenings, food stalls, entertainment, and community events starting June 11, creating a citywide festival of football.

Seattle's sports identity



Lumen Field, Credit- Brittany Carchano

extends well beyond the World Cup. The city is home to teams like the Seahawks (NFL), Sounders FC, and Reign FC, with Seattle Mariners representing Major League Baseball at nearby T-Mobile Park. Game days across the city are marked by lively sports bars such as Flatstick Pub, Atlantic Crossing, and The George & Dragon Pub, where fans gather to watch global and local matches in a spirited atmosphere.

Between matches, visitors can explore the city's most iconic attractions. A must-visit is Pike Place Market, where fresh produce, artisan stalls, and historic charm define Seattle's food culture. Nearby, the

revitalized waterfront offers scenic views, public art, and attractions like the Seattle Great Wheel and immersive experiences along Overlook Walk.

At the cultural core of downtown lies Seattle Center, home to major landmarks including the Space Needle, the futuristic Chihuly Garden and Glass, and the interactive Museum of Pop Culture (MOPOP). Together, these sites showcase Seattle's mix of innovation, creativity, and entertainment.

For dining and nightlife, Pioneer Square offers refined options such as modern Indian cuisine and contemporary Pacific Northwest dining, along with theaters, concerts, and

performances at venues like Climate Pledge Arena and McCaw Hall.

Additional experiences include panoramic city views from Smith Tower, historical insights at the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, and cultural exploration at the Wing Luke Museum in Chinatown-International District. For a quieter escape, Capitol Hill offers Volunteer Park, the historic Water Tower observation deck, and the Seattle Asian Art Museum.

With its combination of world-class football, cultural depth, and scenic urban exploration, Seattle in 2026 promises an unforgettable experience for sports fans and travellers alike.

‘B Nagi Reddi: A Son’s Memoir’ – A heartfelt tribute to a visionary legend

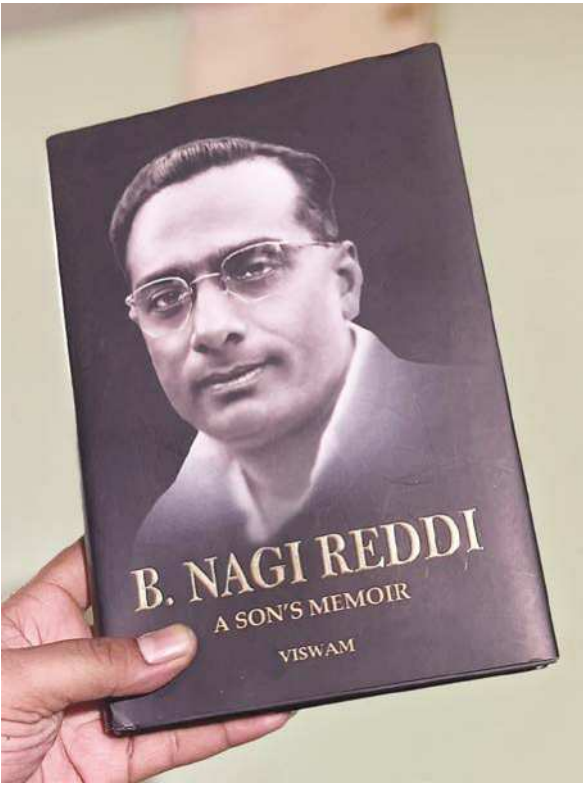
SUHAS SISTU

B Nagi Reddi: A Son's Memoir is far more than a conventional biography. Written by B. Viswanatha Reddi, popularly known as Viswam, the book offers an emotionally rich and deeply researched account of the life of legendary filmmaker, publisher, and philanthropist B. Nagi Reddi. Instead of glorifying the icon with exaggerated mythology, the memoir focuses on presenting a grounded and authentic portrait of a man who played a monumental role in shaping Indian cinema, publishing, and healthcare.

Structured across 37 chapters, the book traces Nagi Reddi's inspiring journey from a small village in Andhra Pradesh to becoming one of the most respected names in South Indian cinema. His story unfolds like one of the magical tales from Chandamama, the beloved children's magazine he co-founded alongside Chakrapani. The memoir beautifully captures how traditional values, discipline, and compassion became the foundation of his remarkable life.

One of the strongest aspects of the book is the way it expands beyond cinema. While readers get fascinating insights into the making of iconic films and the establishment of Vijaya Studios, the narrative also highlights Nagi Reddi's achievements as the founder of Vijaya Hospital and a pioneering force in Indian publishing. The book reveals how he successfully balanced creativity, entrepreneurship, and philanthropy without ever losing his humility.

The memoir also serves as an important historical document, chronicling the growth of Chennai and the South Indian film industry



during the second half of the 20th century. Through anecdotes shared by colleagues, employees, and close associates, readers gain a rare behind-the-scenes look at the evolution of filmmaking, magazine publishing, and business culture during that era.

Viswam's writing style remains crisp, factual, and emotionally sincere throughout the book. Rather than relying on dramatic embellishments, he allows real incidents and personal memories to speak for themselves. This restrained storytelling approach adds credibility and emotional depth to the narrative. The book consistently portrays Nagi Reddi as a "karma yogi" — a man who never claimed personal credit for his achievements and always acknowledged the contribution of his team members.

Another compelling

element is the insight into Viswam's own legacy. As the longtime publisher of Chandamama, he expanded the magazine into multiple languages, including Braille editions, helping generations of children connect with storytelling and culture. His contributions to publishing, social welfare, and public service further strengthen the memoir's emotional authenticity.

What makes B. Nagi Reddi: A Son's Memoir truly engaging is its ability to combine personal emotion with historical importance. It is not merely a tribute from a son to his father, but a valuable record of an extraordinary personality who left an unforgettable mark on Indian society. For readers interested in Indian cinema history, publishing, philanthropy, and inspiring real-life journeys, this memoir stands out as a must-read and deeply rewarding experience.

Magical fingers on the harmonium



Pandit Ratan Sharma with son Govind, granddaughters Jyothi and Devika

JAYWANT NAIDU

Pandit Ratan Sharma, lovingly known in music circles as the "Harmonium Master," carries a legacy that blends tradition, devotion, and generations of musical excellence. A proud mentor to his granddaughters Jyothi Sharma and Devika Sharma—both rising stars in the world of Indian music—he finds his greatest joy not in accolades, but in their achievements.

Recalling his formative years, Ratan Sharma speaks with reverence about his gurus. "My teacher in Ujjain, Guru Kaluram, was a Sarangi player who always said, 'Khane ke saath daal hona aur sangate ke saath taal hona'—there should be daal in food and rhythm in music," he reflects. Later, his journey took him to Mumbai, where he trained under Guru Mohan Singh, a respected name in the Hindi film recording circuit. "If my fingers move on the harmonium at this breathtaking speed, it is all due to his blessings," he



Pandit Ratan Sharma on his 70 year old Harmonium

says humbly. His vintage harmonium, first played in 1955, remains his most cherished companion. With visible wear on its wooden keys, it stands as a silent witness to decades of dedication. "Yeh mera saathi hai," he says fondly—this is my partner.

For Ratan Sharma, his greatest pride is his family's musical ascent. Jyothi Sharma has already made a mark as a finalist on Suron Ka Eklavya 22 (DD National), winner of the 6th edition Khazana Ghazal Festival,

recipient of the Yuva Pratibha Singing Talent Hunt 2023 by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, and finalist of the Asha Ki Asha International Talent Hunt. Her sister Devika Sharma is also emerging as a promising young artist with a bright future ahead.

The family's musical thread is further strengthened by his son Govind Sharma, a tabla player who also manages the performances and schedules of the young artistes, ensuring their talents reach wider audiences. Ratan Sharma's journey has also placed him alongside legends, having shared musical spaces with ghazal maestro Ghulam Ali and Vithal Rao. Today, he continues to dedicate his time to teaching students at his home near Kabutar Khana in Hyderabad. "It is my duty to teach the younger generation as a tribute to my gurus who gave me everything about music and life," he says, embodying the spirit of a true custodian of tradition—where every note played is a continuation of a timeless legacy.

Jasmine and Jetstreams: The calm of Chennai, the energy of Hyderabad

JYOTSNA HARISH

Here's a unique tale of two South Indian cities—Chennai and Hyderabad. Both attract talent and investments. Comparing them helps you see which city aligns with your vibes and supports your academic, career, and lifestyle goals.

The educational landscape of Chennai is built on tradition. It features prominent institutions such as IIT Madras, Anna University, Madras Christian College, and Ethiraj College for Women. These provide a strong base in engineering, arts, and research. Over 30 deemed universities add to this strength. The city has led in medical education through CMC Vellore, AIIMS, and private universities like SRM and VIT. Most schools follow the CBSE or a state board. There is a strong focus on coaching for JEE and NEET exams.

Meanwhile, Hyderabad has quickly closed the gap with Chennai. Institutions like IIT Hyderabad, BITS Pilani Hyderabad, IIIT Hyderabad, and ISB support research and startups. Mahindra, Woxsen, and NMIMS universities add to the city's educational landscape. IB, IGCSE, and CBSE International and national board schools are common in busy areas like HiTech City, Gachibowli, and Miyapur. These schools serve many IT families.

While Chennai still leads in research output,



Hyderabad has made inroads, particularly with industry-linked programs. Turning to healthcare and culture, Chennai stands out for hospitals such as Apollo, Fortis, GH, and Stanley, making it the city with the most hospitals in India. It attracts almost 45 per cent of India's medical tourists. Low-cost health care in facilities for heart, cancer, and transplant care is boosting the healthcare sector's popularity.

The city is also known for its beaches like Marina, Akkarai, and Besant Nagar. Chennai's classical arts scene is strong, thanks to sabhas that promote Carnatic music and Bharatanatyam dance. However, the city is less welcoming to speakers of other languages than Hyderabad, and languages such as Telugu, Malayalam, Hindi, Gujarati, and Bengali are mostly found in small areas. However, Chennai faces persistent urban challenges. These include flooding during the monsoon, water shortages in summer, and ageing drainage systems. Poor garbage segregation worsens these issues. The city's waste

management is inconsistent. This is seen in dump yards at Perungudi in the south and Kodungaiyur in the north.

Compared to Chennai, the city of pearls stands out for its efficient roads and cost-effectiveness. Commuting is easier thanks to the Outer Ring Road and wide main roads. Its water supply, sourced from the Godavari-Krishna projects, is more reliable than Chennai's, although certain areas in the Old City and northern suburbs still face pressure issues. Healthcare infrastructure is expanding, with major hospitals such as AIG, Yashoda, and KIMS.

Compared to residents of many other Indian cities, Hyderabad is generally more welcoming to speakers of other languages. One can hear Hindi, Telugu, Urdu, and English widely spoken. However, lake encroachment and traffic jams in HiTech City are becoming increasingly serious.

Looking more closely at transport, the Chennai Metro covers 54.1 km. It has two main lines, Blue and Green, and 41 stations. These connect the city to its suburbs, including



the airport, train stations, and business areas such as Alandur and Koyambedu. Phase II, a 118.9-km expansion, is underway but slow, causing traffic and road issues. Metro ridership is currently about 2.6 lakh daily, which is low for a big city.

Compared to Chennai and other major Indian cities, Hyderabad Metro Phase 1 runs on a 69.2 km network. It links key residential, business, and IT areas through three elevated lines: Red, Blue, and Green. It is India's largest public-private partnership metro. The metro serves about 4.7 lakh riders daily, making it a strong public transport option. Its main drawback is that it does not connect to the airport or the Old City.

Beyond infrastructure, the good mornings of Chennai are threaded with small rituals. Office-goers pause at roadside temples to touch brass bells and offer a quick prayer; flower vendors cluster near bus stops and railway stations, exchanging jasmine garlands for a few rupees; women tuck blooms into their hair, and men buy garlands for home altars. These gestures slow the city's

pace and bind people to place.

In contrast, Hyderabad's mornings emphasise efficiency, unlike more leisurely cities. People grab quick coffees, go for runs along the Outer Ring Road, and take the fast metro or shuttle to workplaces. While temples and flower sellers are present, most commuters focus on their schedules and reaching their destinations quickly. Unlike in some other cities, ritual stops are less common.

Bringing these aspects together, Chennai offers long-standing educational institutions, a strong healthcare system, and rich cultural traditions, but faces ongoing infrastructure and environmental challenges. In comparison, Hyderabad offers a dynamic, fast-growing environment in these areas, but each city has its trade-offs.

Each city will influence your daily routines, from how you start your morning to the small, meaningful habits you keep—like putting jasmine in your hair at sunrise or giving a quick nod to a colleague on the metro as the city moves around you.

The real battle is within



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR
NIKUNJ JI

In the present world many people consider survival and security as prime values. They argue that if a person does not survive, then what value the other values have for him. In a similar vein, they further argue that if a person lives in a state of constant insecurity and fear, then what is the charm, the joy, the fun or the zest in living? Because the quality of life of a man in fear is like that of a man in a state of suspended animation and it's not at all cherish able, relishable, enjoyable or valuable. On the other hand, there are other people who question the contention of the former kind of people. The questions they raise are that 'after all what is the purpose of survival?' & 'what is the goal of life?'. Further they ask 'what do we want to achieve by living or while living?'. They argue

that the difference between a human being and an animal is narrowed down to zero if man also, like other animals, is concerned primarily and mainly about his physical survival only. They feel that there should be some higher and nobler aim of human existence & that there should be something more worthy for humans to be achieved. Arguing thus, they ask: If personal survival is the main value, then why do military men endanger their own survival or sacrifice their life at the battle-front in order to keep intact the sovereignty of the nation? Again, why did the heroes of Indian Freedom Struggle happily embraced death for the sake of independence of their motherland? Why did kings in the olden times, give up their palaces and bodyguards and go to the forest in pursuit of truth, endangering their life, knowing well that there were tigers and lions there? With these questions in mind, they further argue that why should man have fear if he has moral and spiritual strength and has good relations with all the human beings? Because fear, they assert, arises from guilt-consciousness, suspicion or enmity. So, man should be free from these negativities rather than have additional negative tendencies or emotion, namely fear

Survival as the basic human value is contrasted with the need for higher moral and spiritual goals in life. It emphasizes overcoming fear and negativity through ethical living, self-control, and universal brotherhood to achieve true peace and happiness

because one's survival should normally be an assured thing if one's actions are in harmony with other beings, with the environment and with the moral and physical laws. Each one of us must understand a fact that our life and death, or survival and happiness, are governed by the law of Karma and if our karma is good, why should we fear? Because death will surely come to all on one fixed day; why should then we not sleep well night after night?

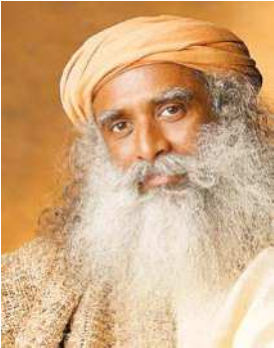
Today, what makes the world-situation peaceless is that mankind has not yet been able to realise the truth that the factors that lead nations to race for military superiority build-up of weapons and subjugation of other people and their territories are religious bigotry, scramble for power or spirit of revenge. Because of his lust for power, man cheats himself of happiness. It is a pity that he easily

forgets that the power of arms or money without the power to rule one's own mind is worse than evil. Also, man does not realise that the political power without the power to rule one's physical senses and without the intent to use power for human good, leads to turmoil. Remember! lasting happiness of the human race depends not on power to dominate others but on his mastery over his demoniac traits. So, the rub of the matter is that man needs to be reminded in an effective manner that if he does not kill the demons of hate, anger and war with the weapons of love and universal brotherhood, the demons would kill mankind.

(Writer is a spiritual educator and popular columnist for publications across India, USA, UK, Australia, South Africa, Canada & Mauritius. 9500+ Published Columns have been written by Him.)



Envy and compassion



SADHGURU

The fundamental nature of jealousy or envy is that you feel inadequate. Envy is: somebody has something that you would like to have or somebody has something more than what you have. If you are very blissful you would not be envious of anybody. Right now, somebody seems to have or you assume that they have something more than you and you feel less than them. So, envy can exist only if somebody else is there who is better than you. If you are here by yourself, envy cannot happen. But compassion is not like that. Compassion can happen even if nobody is here. Let us take away this understanding that compassion is some kind of sympathy or empathy or pity. Passion means total involvement with something. When we say passion, people are only thinking man-woman passion. No. When you are passionately involved with something, nothing else exists for you. Passion means unbridled involvement with something. It could be anything; you can sing passionately, you can dance passionately, you can do your gardening passionately, you can read a book passionately, or you can just walk passionately. So, it does not mean any specific activity as such nor does it mean any particular area of life. It is just that you have deep sense of involvement. Compassion means it is an all-encompassing passion. That means your passion is no more

Envy arises from comparison and a sense of inadequacy, which disappears in the absence of others to compare with. It contrasts this with compassion, described as a deep, all-encompassing, and non-discriminatory state of passionate involvement with all aspects of life



discriminatory. Whatever is in touch with you right now, you are deeply passionate with that. Whatever it is, if you look at something you are not just casually looking at anything; there is nothing like casual in your life. Everything is with total passion. You breathe with passion, you walk with passion, you live with passion; your very existence is with absolute involvement with everything. This is compassion. This has got nothing to do with anybody. Even if nobody is here you can live in great compassion. But if nobody is here, you cannot live enviously. You need somebody to cause that for you – you need help. So, you are sympathetic with them when they have fallen down but when they stand up you do not like it. It is from this basis that all

charity has come. Do not try to handle sympathy and compassion and all these things. Just develop unbridled passion towards everything. Do not understand passion as this person. Understand passion as anything that is in touch with you right now. The very cloth that you wear, the very air that you breathe, the very food that you eat, the very earth that you walk upon, just practice some passion. Just be passionate about everything. When it is unbridled, it is not entangling any more.

(Sadhguru is a Yogi, mystic, and Padma Vibhushan awardee, also known for his New York Times bestselling books. He founded Conscious Planet- Save Soil, the world's largest people's movement, impacting over 4 billion people)

The world is not enough when courage has no limits



SHIV RAJVANSHI

In every era of human history, progress has belonged to those who possessed the courage to challenge limits. Empires were built, discoveries were made, revolutions were ignited, and impossible dreams became reality because someone, somewhere, decided not to surrender to fear. The phrase “The World Is Not Enough If You Have the Courage” perfectly captures this spirit of limitless ambition and fearless determination. It is not simply a motivational line; it is a philosophy that defines the difference between those who merely exist and those who truly create impact. Courage is one of the rarest qualities in the modern world. In an age where people constantly seek comfort, security, and validation, courage demands something different the willingness to take risks, embrace uncertainty, and move forward despite fear. Most people wait for perfect timing, guaranteed success, or universal approval before taking action. Courageous individuals understand that perfect moments rarely exist. They create opportunities through belief, resilience, and action. The world often teaches people to think within boundaries. From childhood, individuals are conditioned to follow safe paths, avoid failure, and choose stability over passion. Society celebrates achievement but frequently discourages risk-taking. Yet, every extraordinary success story has emerged from someone refusing to



accept ordinary limitations. Whether it was inventors changing technology, entrepreneurs disrupting industries, athletes breaking records, or artists redefining creativity, courage has always been the driving force behind transformation. True courage is not the absence of fear. Fear is natural. Fear accompanies every major decision, every new beginning, and every uncertain journey. Courage simply means refusing to let fear control destiny. Some of the most successful people in the world have openly admitted that they faced rejection, uncertainty, and setbacks repeatedly. What separated them from others was their ability to continue moving forward when others stopped. Today's generation has access to opportunities unlike any previous era. Digital platforms, global connectivity, artificial intelligence, entrepreneurship, and innovation have opened doors that were unimaginable decades ago. A student from a small town can build a global business. A creator with a smartphone can influence millions. An entrepreneur with an idea can disrupt billion-dollar industries. Yet, despite these opportunities, many still hesitate because fear remains stronger than

ambition. The reality is that success has never belonged only to the most talented people. Talent without courage often remains hidden. Intelligence without action produces no impact. Courage transforms potential into achievement. A person willing to fail, learn, and rise again will always move ahead of someone who remains trapped in self-doubt. In professional life, courage has become more important than ever. Industries are evolving rapidly, careers are changing, and competition is global. Companies that succeed are led by individuals who are willing to innovate and take bold decisions. Startups that become industry leaders are founded by people who dared to challenge established systems. Leadership itself requires courage the courage to make difficult choices, stand by values, and lead through uncertainty. The same principle applies to personal growth. Many people spend years living according to societal expectations rather than their own aspirations. They suppress dreams because they fear judgment or failure. However, real fulfillment begins when individuals gather the courage to pursue authenticity. Courage allows people to embrace

who they truly are instead of becoming what society expects them to be. Some of the greatest battles are not fought publicly but internally. Self-doubt, insecurity, fear of rejection, and fear of failure silently prevent countless individuals from reaching their true potential. A courageous person is not someone who never struggles but someone who refuses to surrender to those struggles. Mental resilience, emotional strength, and self-belief are forms of courage that shape extraordinary lives. India today provides a powerful example of how courage can transform a nation's future. Across industries, Indian entrepreneurs, creators, athletes, and innovators are competing on global platforms with confidence and ambition. Young Indians are no longer confined by geographical or societal limitations. They are building startups, leading multinational companies, influencing digital culture, and creating worldwide recognition. This transformation is fueled not only by talent but by the courage to dream bigger. The rise of India's startup ecosystem itself is a story of courage. Thousands of young founders have chosen uncertain entrepreneurial journeys over traditional career security. Many failed

initially, yet continued building until success arrived. Their journeys prove that courage often matters more than immediate results. Every failure becomes a lesson, every setback becomes preparation, and every challenge becomes a stepping stone. Courage also has the power to inspire others. One brave decision can create a ripple effect that motivates entire communities. A teacher inspiring student to think independently, a social entrepreneur solving grassroots problems, or a public figure speaking honestly about challenges — all of these acts influence society positively. Courage is contagious. When people witness fearless action, they begin to believe in their own potential. Importantly, courage must be balanced with purpose. Fearless ambition without values can become destructive. True courage is not recklessness; it is purposeful determination guided by integrity and vision. It is about creating meaningful impact rather than chasing hollow success. The individuals who leave lasting legacies are those who combine boldness with responsibility. The phrase “The World Is Not Enough If You Have the Courage” ultimately reflects the limitless nature of human potential. A courageous mind cannot be confined by geography, circumstances, criticism, or temporary failure. The world itself becomes too small for individuals who dare to think beyond conventional boundaries. At the end of life, people rarely regret the risks they took. More often, they regret the opportunities they ignored, the dreams they postponed, and the fears they allowed to control them. Life is what transforms life from ordinary existence into meaningful experience. Because in the end, the world does not belong to those who wait it belongs to those who dare.



Books are a uniquely portable magic
- Stephen King

Art & Culture

Creative economy: Rural Bharat's next big business opportunity



PANDIRI HARSHA BHARGAVI

When discussions around Bharat's economic future take place, the spotlight usually falls on manufacturing, technology startups, semi-conductors, and digital infrastructure. Yet, one of the country's fastest-emerging business opportunities is taking shape far from urban corporate centres — in villages, artisan communities, cultural clusters, and rural enterprises.

The creative economy of Rural Bharat is steadily evolving into a serious economic force.

From handloom weaving in Varanasi and bamboo enterprises in the Northeast to spiritual tourism in temple towns and eco-conscious Panchgavya products, a new generation of entrepreneurs is transforming traditional knowledge into modern business models.

What was once categorised as "informal livelihood activity" is now becoming part of a scalable economy aligned with national priorities such as Atmanirbhar Bharat, Vocal for Local, sustainability, women-led development, and rural entrepreneurship.

As global markets increasingly value authenticity, sustainability, craftsmanship,

and cultural storytelling, Bharat's rural creative ecosystem possesses a natural competitive advantage.

A Sector Bigger Than It Appears

The creative economy is often narrowly associated with films, media, or entertainment. In the Bharatiya context, however, it spans a much wider ecosystem:

- handicrafts,
- handlooms,
- folk arts,
- local cuisine,
- wellness traditions,
- heritage tourism,
- eco-friendly products,
- cultural experiences,
- and indigenous knowledge systems.

Its economic footprint is substantial.

According to the Ministry of Textiles, Bharat's handicraft exports excluding hand-knotted carpets touched nearly ₹33,122 crore in 2024–25, compared to ₹20,082 crore in 2014–15. The growth reflects rising global demand for handmade and ethically sourced products.

At the same time, the MSME sector — where most creative enterprises operate — contributes around 30% of Bharat's GDP and over 45% of exports while generating large-scale employment opportunities at relatively low capital investment.

For policymakers and investors alike, this makes the creative economy particularly relevant for rural development.

Unlike large industries that require heavy infrastructure and urban concentration, creative enterprises are decentralised by nature. They thrive on local skills, local materials, and community participation.



Kutch: Where Craft Became Commerce

Few regions illustrate the business potential of the creative economy better than Kutch in Gujarat.

Once known primarily for drought and migration challenges, Kutch today has become an internationally recognised craft economy powered by embroidery, Ajrakh printing, weaving, Rogan art, and artisan-led tourism.

The turning point came after the 2001 earthquake, when rehabilitation efforts increasingly focused on livelihood restoration through cultural enterprise development.

Over time, artisans began connecting directly with:

- export markets,
- boutique fashion brands,
- tourism networks,
- exhibitions,
- and digital commerce platforms.

Today, many Kutch-based enterprises operate as globally visible brands while continuing to retain their local identity.

The region offers an important lesson for Bharat's rural economy: culture is more than merely heritage — it is commercial capital.

Experience Economy Comes to Rural Bharat

The next phase of growth in the creative economy has a larger share from experiences rather than products.

Consumer behaviour is changing rapidly. Travellers increasingly seek:

- heritage stays,
- craft workshops,
- local food experiences,
- spiritual tourism,
- folk performances,
- and immersive rural experiences.

This shift is creating a powerful "experience economy" where culture itself becomes monetisable.

Odisha's Raghurajpur village provides a compelling example. Famous for Pat-tachitra art and traditional performance practices, the village has evolved into a heritage tourism model where nearly every household participates in cultural enterprise activities.

Visitors do not simply buy products; they buy stories, interactions, and authenticity.

This model creates distributed economic benefits across artisans, guides, transport providers, food vendors, and local youth entrepreneurs.

From handloom clusters to cultural tourism, Bharat's villages are building a new growth economy rooted in creativity, identity and sustainability

Women Entrepreneurs Driving the Shift

One of the strongest growth drivers within the rural creative economy is women-led enterprise.

Across Bharat, women Self Help Groups and micro-enterprises are building businesses around:

- textiles,
- natural wellness products,
- handicrafts,
- food processing,
- eco-products,
- and local cultural services.

Digital commerce has accelerated this transformation dramatically.

Platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp Business, YouTube, and e-commerce marketplaces have reduced dependence on traditional intermediaries. Rural entrepreneurs can now directly access urban and international consumers with minimal infrastructure investment.

For Bharat, where increasing women's workforce participation remains a policy priority, the creative economy offers a scalable and culturally compatible pathway for entrepreneurship.

Sustainability Is Becoming a Market Advantage

Perhaps the most underestimated strength of Rural Bharat's creative economy is sustainability.

Traditional production systems often rely on:

- handmade processes,
- natural fibres,
- low-energy production,
- local sourcing,
- and recycled materials.

At a time when global consumers are shifting towards environmentally responsible products, Bharat's traditional sectors are naturally aligned with the sustainability economy.

Handloom products, bamboo crafts, terracotta items, herbal products, and Panchgavya-based enterprises increasingly appeal to eco-conscious consumers seeking alternatives to mass industrial production.

For exporters and impact investors, this creates significant premium-market opportunities.

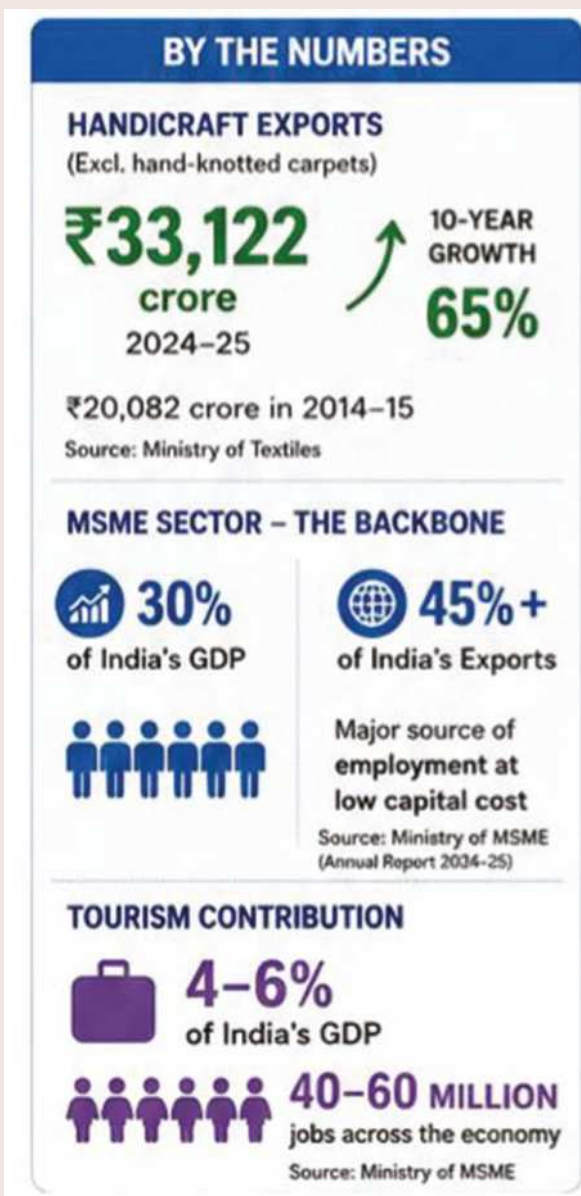
The Missing Piece: Business Ecosystem Support

Despite strong demand and cultural depth, the creative economy still faces structural limitations.

- Challenges include:
- weak branding,
 - fragmented supply chains,
 - limited access to finance,
 - inconsistent quality standards,
 - low digital literacy,
 - and insufficient design innovation.

Many artisans continue to remain trapped in low-value segments despite producing globally competitive products.

This is where startups,



incubators, design institutions, and investors can play a transformative role, if the local community is a business partner.

The next generation of rural entrepreneurship will require more than preservation. It will require:

- professionalisation,
- market intelligence,
- branding,
- storytelling,
- digital integration,
- and scalable business models.

Beyond Welfare Economics

Historically, rural crafts and cultural sectors were approached mainly through welfare and subsidy frameworks. That approach is no longer sufficient.

The creative economy must now be viewed as a strategic business sector

- capable of generating:
- employment,
 - exports,
 - tourism revenue,
 - sustainable enterprise growth,
 - and cultural soft power.

As automation and artificial intelligence disrupt conventional employment sectors globally, human creativity, cultural authenticity, and experiential value may become some of Bharat's strongest economic assets. The villages of Bharat are no longer just centres of agriculture. Increasingly, they are becoming centres of creativity-driven enterprise.

And in the coming decade, the creative economy may well emerge as one of Rural Bharat's most important business stories.

(The writer is a Creative Economy Expert)

Book review

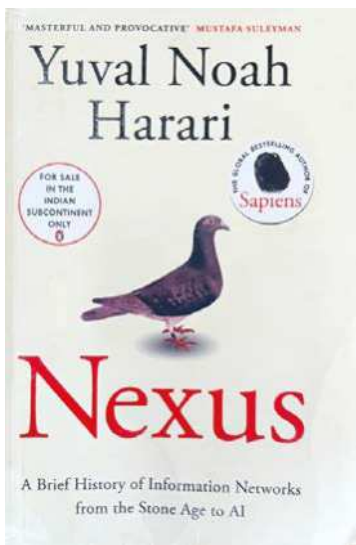
FUTURE OF INFORMATION EXPLOSION



ANANDESI NAGARAJU

In our current era, scientific and technological revolutions grant unprecedented access to information, making ideas and ideologies more impactful. The rise of global networks amplifies this, yet challenges our ability to discern lies and fake narratives. More information, as seen via smartphones, does not always mean more clarity—it can manipulate beliefs and behaviours by exploiting our personal data. This sets the context for historian Yuval Noah Harari's recent book "Nexus," which examines how information networks functioned from ancient times to Artificial Intelligence.

He defines information as something that creates new realities by connecting different points into a network. Sometimes networks can be connected without any attempt to represent reality, neither accurate nor erroneous, as when genetic information connects trillions of cells. He also distinguishes different kinds of information, saying, "Misinformation is an honest mistake, occurring when someone tries to represent reality but gets it wrong. Disinformation is a deliberate lie, occurring when someone consciously intends to distort our view of reality." He concludes that information sometimes represents real-



ity, and sometimes doesn't. However, it always connects and warns that if no additional steps are taken to tilt the balance in favour of truth, an increase in the amount and speed of information is likely to overwhelm the relatively rare and expensive truthful accounts with much more common and inexpensive types of information.

The advent of the printing press in the thirteenth century revolutionised information technology in printing books on a mass scale at affordable prices. Harari rightfully points out that the establishment of scientific institutions like the Royal Society in Europe initiated self-correcting mechanisms, not the technology of printing, that were the engine of the scientific revolution. While Newspapers, Radio, and television expanded the impact of mass media, the advent of social media platforms through smartphones unfathomably connected the global networking system.

He emphasises that the seed of the information revolution is the computer, which was invented in the 1940s,

and everything else, from the internet to Artificial Intelligence, is a by-product. A computer is capable of making decisions by itself, and it can create new ideas by itself. The decision-making power shifted from man to machine. Algorithms auto-play the same kind of stuff again and again, which reinforces the same tendency in the user rather than checking their biases. Now, computers can analyse, manipulate, and generate language, whether with words, sounds, images, or code symbols, tell stories, compose music, fashion images, produce videos, and even write their own code. He argues that the problem we face is not how to deprive computers of all creative potentialities, but rather how to use them in the right direction.

In feudalism, land was important. In capitalism, machines were important. In the present information era, economic power may be concentrated in a single software hub, as Amazon became the United States's biggest clothing retailer in 2021.

Harari also warns about the misuse of information technology by tech giants like Facebook, Amazon, Baidu, and Alibaba, which not only serve customers and follow government regulations, but also influence and shape the whims of voters and customers. He observes that totalitarian and self-proclaimed religious regimes choose to use modern information technology to centralise the flow of information and to strangle truth to maintain order. What holds human networks together tends to be fictional stories, especially stories about intersubjective things like gods, money, and nations. A politician, a movement, or a country might conceivably get ahead here and there with the help of lies and deception, but in the long term, that would be a self-defeating strategy. He cited Nazism and Marxism in the

garb of Stalinism as examples of mass insanity destroying societies.

He warns about another danger posed by bots, an automated software programme performing repetitive tasks over a network, often imitating human behaviour, to influence public opinion for political purposes by spreading fake news. It is estimated that more than 50% of web traffic is done by bots. Sometimes, the company's algorithm may systematically delete content that is against its political policy. He also warns about data colonialism, in which the control of the data of citizens of a country will be in the hands of a foreign software company, to dominate for political purposes. He gives an example of India, which banned the Chinese apps like TikTok, WeChat, and others, fearing psychological warfare, data colonialism, lack of cyberspace, and loss of privacy of people.

Harari concludes that the challenge posed by new computer networks is not simply technological, but political. He urges the development of democratic systems that help people and prevent concentrated control of information. Harari warns that powerful information technologies may divide humanity into separate cocoons, undermining a shared reality. Thus, the main argument is that the rise of information networks makes it crucial to defend truth and inclusive democratic values against manipulation and fragmentation.

Harari is not above his personal biases despite being an expert in information theory. He naively equates the situation in Palestine and Ukraine with the situation in Kashmir, like other pseudo liberals. He squarely blames Burmese Buddhist monks for the migration of the Rohingyas without analysing the Islamic fundamentalist forces in Burma.

Stories that stay with you

ASKARI JAFFER

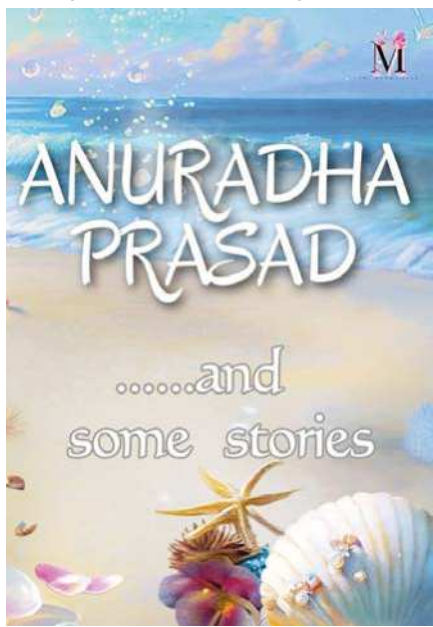
"A short story is a love affair; a novel is a marriage." Following Lorrie Moore's quote, "...and Some Stories" noted by Anuradha Prasad is a new love affair that is quickly garnering attention with a collection of stories that is turning complexities of real life into simple stories about inner and silent healing, discovery of oneself, and talks about the courage to rise above personal limitations. The book tackles deeply emotional and thought-provoking stories which are synonymous with Prasad's previous works that are deeply rooted in sensitive storytelling and realistic characters.

The seamless ability to connect with her readers is once again on show as Prasad presents stories that originate from familiar situations in a human being's life, while successfully tugging on the emotional heartstrings if the stories were to come to life. The book seems to be an intimate conversation with its readers, especially those who are searching for ways to find strength within themselves during the most challenging times in their lives.

Anuradha Prasad's writing style is elegant yet accessible for someone who has not read her previous works.

Similar to how she has spoken about her writing style in the past, the language used in the book follows suit as it flows smoothly, making the book an engaging read for both regular readers and newcomers to literary fiction. The author is not afraid to explore the psychology of her characters, and even gives readers a chance to understand not just their actions but also brings them face to face with their fears, insecurities, and motivations. While many of the themes in the stories have also appeared prominently in her earlier works.

Prasad also layers her stories with subtle social commentary, highlighting how society is often quick to judge individuals without understanding their circumstances and situations for how and why they do things in life. Some narratives explore emotional isolation, while others focus on relationships strained



by expectations and misunderstandings. She also manages to maintain a hopeful tone throughout the stories she tells, despite touching sensitive topics that deal with pain and struggle in an individual's day-to-day life. The stories are a reminder to people facing adversities that healing of one's soul and growth of character can happen in the most challenging and unlikely of times.

"...and Some Stories" is a book that is a rare gem of its time, one that talks about strength and celebrates people who have wanted to come out of their self-conscious shells as the author. Anuradha Prasad continues to find success in creating stories that are simple in structure yet can leave a reader feeling cathartic, truly connecting with her words. While the characters and stories will leave a seed of thought in the reader's mind, the short story collection also caters to people who can move and read on the go. The love affair with Prasad and her book leaves one experiencing a lingering sense of reflection and warmth, while also reminding readers that even ordinary lives hold extraordinary stories.

Indian single malt whiskies are rapidly transforming India from a historical whisky consumer into a premium global exporter. Premium liquor exports generate over \$400 million. By earning foreign exchange and beating global giants, distilleries are proving that "Made in India" premium spirits hold commanding power internationally, the company said.

