

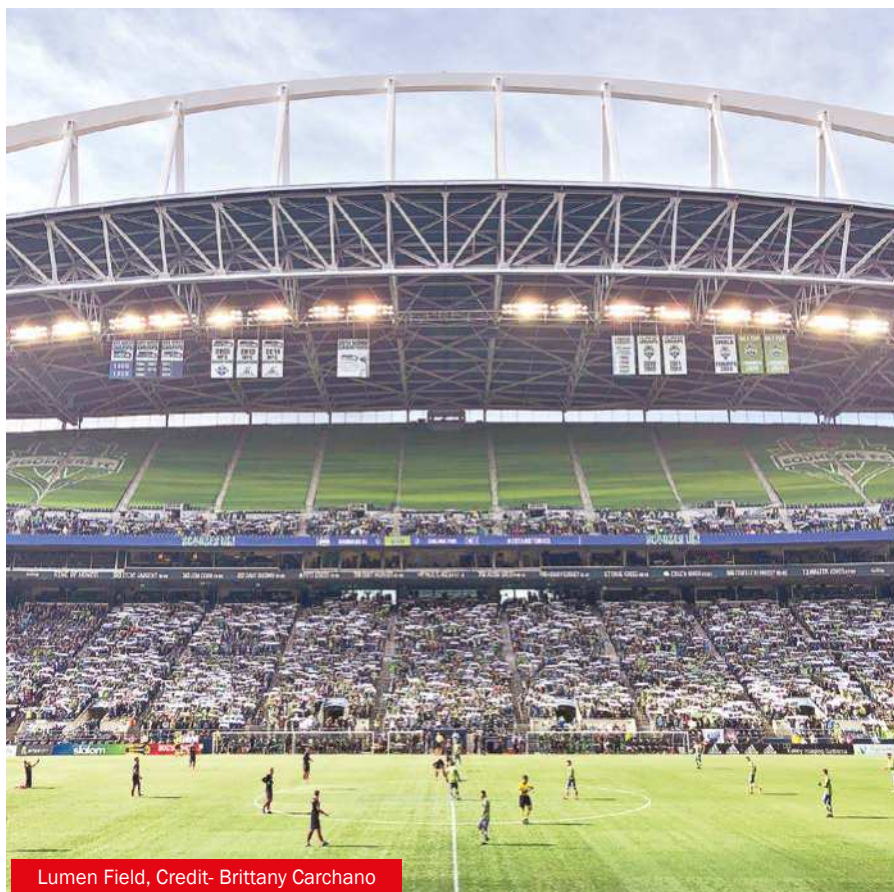
A guide to exploring Seattle during FIFA 2026: Sports, culture and sightseeing



City, Credit- David Newman



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



Lumen Field, Credit- Brittany Carchano

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

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

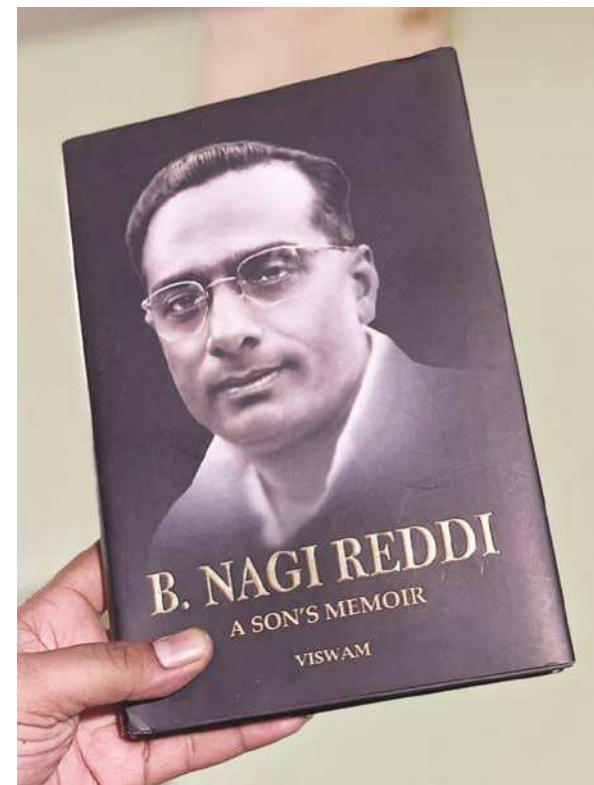
SUHAS SISTU

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 saangeet 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 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,



Chennai, Marina Beach

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, Hyderabadis are 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



Hyderabad, Tank Bund

the airport, train stations, and business areas such as Aalandur 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.