



THE Hans India



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Aatmanirbhar Bharat on the Rise

₹38,400 Crore Record Defence Exports enhancing India's pride
5,500+ Defence Items Delisted from Imports, Boosting indigenous defence industry

12 Saal Vishwas ke, Vikas ke, Jan-Kalyan ke

Government of Bharat

WINDOWS



Mamata moves Kolkata HC against poll defeat in Bhabanipur

KOLKATA: Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday filed an election petition before the Calcutta High Court challenging the poll result in the Bhabanipur Assembly constituency, where she lost to Bharatiya Janata Party leader Suwendu Adhikari. Adhikari, West Bengal's first BJP Chief Minister, had defeated Banerjee by a margin of more than 15,100 votes.

LS Speaker to hear TMC factions before taking call

NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will hear the defected TMC MPs as also the faction led by Mamata Banerjee before deciding on giving recognition to the breakaway faction even as the NCPI, the party which the rebel faction will join, has named Jyoti-prakash Chatterji as its new president. One of the leading faces of the TMC rebel faction, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, on Tuesday claimed that the Nationalist Citizens Party of India (NCPI) has agreed to accept the joining of all the dissident Lok Sabha members of her party, whose numbers are likely to go up to 22 from the present 20. The Lok Sabha Speaker will hear the defected TMC MPs as well as the faction led by Mamata Banerjee before deciding on giving recognition to the breakaway faction, sources privy to the development said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

I'm as financially strong as the fifth largest party in the Lok Sabha. I, too, have ₹75 in my bank account

WITH HOARDERS RAKING IN MOOLAH

Fine rice prices zoom in TG in last 10 days

- ▶ Prices of fine rice varieties gone up by Rs 5 to Rs 7/kg
- ▶ Millers, big traders hoarding stocks
- ▶ Common people paying through their nose



HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD
EVEN as Telangana recorded the highest paddy production in the country, retail prices of fine rice shot up in recent days. Hoarding of rice stocks by millers and wholesalers to create artificial shortage of fine rice is putting a heavy burden on the common man. According to traders and retailers, prices have gone up by at least Rs 5 to Rs 7 per kilogram of fine rice varieties in the last 10

days. For instance, the price of Samba Masuri (BPT), a popular fine rice variety, shot up from Rs 62 per kg to Rs 68 per kg. It is said that millers hoarded two-year-old fine rice varieties. They are said to be selling them in the retail market at higher prices through wholesale dealers and retail agents. Some big traders have also reportedly hoarded those rice varieties which are in high demand to create artificial scarcity.

KHARIF READY TG draws action plan for smooth distribution of seeds & fertilisers

CM asks ministers, MPs to put pressure on Centre for urea
HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD: The Telangana government has drawn an action plan to ensure smooth distribution of seeds and fertilizers to farmers in the ensuing farming season. The government has also decided to mount pressure on the Union government for adequate urea supply from the Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited. At a high-level review of the Agriculture department on Tuesday, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy announced the constitution of an official committee, headed by the Secretary to Agriculture, to execute the action plan during the kharif season.

Revanth writes to Kishan for release of IRFC loan

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD
CHIEF Minister A Revanth Reddy appealed to Union Minister for Coal G Kishan Reddy to ensure that the sanctioned IRFC loan to Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-I is disbursed without further delay, and that Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-II receives all necessary approvals at the earliest. In an official letter to the Union Minister, the Chief Minister also requested to arrange a meeting with Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to discuss the release of the IRFC loan and metro rail expansion, along with the relevant agreement and supporting documents so that any concerns or issues can be clarified and the matter resolved expeditiously. The Chief Minister brought to the attention of Kishan Reddy that, as per the executed financing agreements, the first tranche of the loan from India Railway Finance Corporation Limited (IRFC) was scheduled for disbursement on June 15. Despite the state government fulfilling all conditions prec-



edent, and paying Rs 784.32 crore as the upfront fee demanded by it, IRFC has not made the disbursement. Revanth Reddy stated in the letter that he is ready to give clarification regarding the takeover transaction, the signed agreement, or the proposed Phase-II expansion, and will be available to meet personally at any convenient place and time. The Chief Minister said that the government complied with every requirement, executed every agreement, and fulfilled every condition demanded by the lender, making the state government entitled to expect timely disbursement.



IAF to develop indigenous kamikaze one-way attack drones

NEW DELHI: IAF has initiated a project to jointly develop indigenous long-range kamikaze drones with domestic industry partners, aiming to enhance self-reliance and gain greater control over future upgrades and modifications.

Gulf nations seek protection of maritime routes

DUBAI
THE Gulf countries, while welcoming the peace deal between the US and Iran, have called for protection of maritime routes and freedom of international navigation, including the uninterrupted flow of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. The UAE Foreign ministry said it affirms the importance of "prioritising dialogue and diplomacy, and adher-



ing to international law, in a manner that reinforces regional security and stability". It called for "full compliance" with the provisions of the agreement, ensuring an "immediate and comprehensive cessation" of hostilities, protection of maritime routes and freedom of international navigation, including the uninterrupted flow of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.

CM levelling false allegations against me: Kishan Reddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD
UNION Minister for Coal G Kishan Reddy launched a strong counterattack against Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, accusing him of making "false, baseless and politically motivated allegations" regarding the Hyderabad Metro Rail project. Addressing the media on Tuesday, he said the Chief

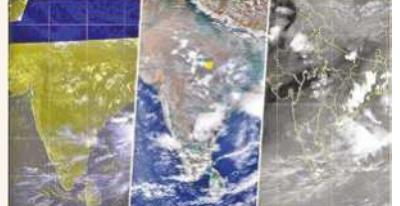


Minister was deliberately misleading the public for political gain and attempt-

ALMOST NO RAIN CLOUDS 3 satellites paint worrying monsoon picture for India

NEW DELHI
FRESH satellite imagery from European and American weather agencies has revealed an alarming picture of India's southwest monsoon, with cloud cover across large parts of the country appearing unusually sparse for mid-June, raising concerns about a prolonged rainfall deficit during a critical phase of the season.

Images captured on Tuesday by the European weather satellite Meteosat Indian Ocean Data Coverage (IODC), operated by EUMETSAT, NOAA's weather satellite, and Isro's Insat-3DS show vast stretches of central, western and peninsular India largely devoid of the dense cloud bands typically associated with an active monsoon. The images present a striking contrast to what meteorologists would normally expect nearly two weeks after the monsoon's onset



over Kerala. Instead of widespread moisture-laden clouds advancing across the subcontinent, much of India appears dry, with only scattered patches of convection visible over parts of the Bay of Bengal and eastern regions. Weather experts say the situation reflects a significant weakening of the monsoon circulation. Heat continues to dominate large parts of the country, while key atmospheric drivers that normally fuel the monsoon remain unusually weak. Among the biggest concerns is the absence of a strong Somali Jet, a powerful low-level wind current that transports enormous amounts of moisture from the equatorial Indian Ocean toward India during the monsoon season.

Telegram banned till June 22 post-NEET paper leak

NEW DELHI
THE Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has blocked messaging app Telegram in India till June 22, and a direction has been issued to the platform to disable the message editing feature in India till June 30. The move is on account of the NEET-UG 2026 retest that will be held on June 21. Welcoming the action against Telegram, the NTA said the move will go a long way in helping the Agency to conduct a safe and secure exam on June 21. "Throughout the period leading up to the present action, the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination

SOME FEATURES OF THE APP BLOCKED TILL JUNE 30



Centre (I4C), under the Ministry of Home Affairs, has served as the principal nodal agency coordinating the operational response to the Telegram-based fraud



and misinformation targeting NEET (UG) 2026 candidates. Acting on inputs received continuously from NTA, from state law-enforcement agencies, including the police

Google removes Telegram from Play Store, Apple may follow suit

NEW DELHI: Google has removed messaging app Telegram from its Play Store, and Apple is likely to follow suit in compliance with a government order, sources aware of the development said on Tuesday. The government has ordered Google and Apple to delist the Telegram app from their app stores till June 22 to check paper leaks during the upcoming re-examination of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG) on June 21.

ing to divert attention from his government's failures. Continued on Page 7

Lid off shady deals in GHMC Charninar transport section

Complaints filed seeking probe into tenders, fuel coupons and vehicle maintenance records

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

SERIOUS irregularities have allegedly come to light in the Transport Section of GHMC's Charninar Zone, with allegations of illegal tenders, fraudulent fuel coupon issuance, spare parts bills, and misuse of public funds.

Questions have also been raised over the continued posting of a computer operator in the same section for nearly two decades despite a recent large-scale transfer of the same post across GHMC.

Complaints regarding the alleged irregularities have reportedly been submitted to senior GHMC authorities, seeking a thorough investigation into the functioning of the department.

According to sources, irregularities were allegedly committed in awarding labour, security, festival and seasonal tenders. The sources further alleged that illegal bills were generated for spare parts, diesel consumption, and even scrap vehicle components.



Santosh Kumar to address global climate leaders in London

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

FOUNDER of the Green India Challenge, Chairman of Igniting Minds Organisation, and former Rajya Sabha MP Santosh Kumar will represent one of the world's largest citizen-led environmental movements at London Climate Action Week 2026, Europe's largest climate festival, through two high-profile engagements at Westminster.

On June 23, Santosh Kumar will co-host "Playing for the Planet," a parliamentary evening at the House of Lords, Palace of Westminster.

On June 24, Santosh Kumar will deliver the keynote address at the Climate & Sustainability Leadership Forum hosted by the Mayor of the London Borough of Redbridge at Redbridge Town Hall.

TG secures 90 lakh urea bags to ensure transparent distribution

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

AGRICULTURE and Co-operation Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao on Tuesday reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring transparent, timely, and farmer-friendly urea distribution, while also assuring full support to farmers facing adverse weather conditions.

So far, 4.06 lakh urea bags have been booked 13.22 lakh urea bags through the app, of which 11.18 lakh bags have already been delivered. To support farmers without smartphones, the government has launched a toll-free booking service, operational from 10 AM to 5 PM daily. Staff will complete the booking on behalf of farmers who call the helpline.



Tummala Nageswara Rao

Table with columns: S.No., Survey No., Type of Land, Name of the person interested, Boundaries, Verity, Number, Type, Plinth area. Includes details for various land parcels and owners.

Under section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land i.e., sale/purchase, etc., or create any encumbrances on such land from the date of publication of such notification without prior approval of the Collector.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION. Notice regarding construction work, including details on estimates, start dates, and contact information.

CYBERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION. Notice regarding procurement, including details on the work, estimated amount, and bid submission process.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA (Police Department). Notice regarding an open auction for disposal of unserviceable/condemned electrical, iron and plastic articles.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION. Tender notice for civil works, including details on the work, estimated amount, and bid submission process.

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY. Notice regarding tenders for various services, including advertising, maintenance, and supply of materials.

Multiple notices from South Central Railway regarding tenders for various services, including advertising, maintenance, and supply of materials.

CONG IN SIR ALERT DRIVE

Meenakshi, Mahesh to take part in prgs in two Assembly segments

TPCC accuses BJP of using SIR process for political gains

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

AICC In-charge General Secretary Meenakshi Natarajan and TPCC Chief B Mahesh Kumar Goud will participate in the training programmes for Booth Level Agents (BLAs) on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process. Both TPCC and AICC In-charge General Secretary will participate in the training programmes to be held in the constituencies where the party leadership is in trouble. The sources further said that already the party completed these training programmes in 105 assembly constituencies and it has to complete in the remaining constituencies.

However, the TPCC Chief B Mahesh Kumar Goud, while participating in the training programme on Tuesday in Sangareddy, said that the SIR process conducted in 2002 was transparent. However, he alleged that the current SIR process is being used to remove the votes of people who are unlikely to support the BJP.

He further alleged that the Election Commission has become a "stooge" of the BJP and claimed that a conspir-



acy is underway to conduct the SIR process in a manner that benefits communal parties.

"In West Bengal, 9.2 million (92 lakh) votes were illegally deleted under the guise of the SIR process. It would come as no surprise if the votes of Damodara Raja Narasimha, Jagga Reddy, or even my own were deleted during this SIR process. BLAs must play a crucial role in ensuring that our votes remain intact," he said.

Mahesh Kumar Goud stated that Health Minister Damodara Raja Narasimha was among the leaders who convinced Sonia Gandhi about the need to grant statehood to Telangana.

"Damodara taught me the basics of politics. Meenakshi Natarajan is one of the few honest individuals in this country. Her nomination was rejected without valid reason. The BJP lacks compassion. BJP leaders wish to remain in power indefinitely and behave like emperors," he said.

The TPCC Chief added that no one is opposed to any deity, but alleged that the BJP cannot garner votes without invoking the name of God.

"The slogan 'Jai Shri Ram' belongs to everyone. Jagga Reddy performs rituals and prayers many times throughout the year. However, we are not the ones seeking votes in the name of God. They promised two crore jobs annually but are instead eliminating existing jobs. No one else will save this country; we must save it ourselves. People do not vote based on religion," he said.

Mahesh Kumar Goud also alleged that Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan had claimed he did not eat for 10 days when Telangana was formed. He further alleged that the BJP is backing Pawan Kalyan, hence, he is acting according to the BJP's directions.

"We do not need your sympathy. The public is noticing your conspiracies," he said.

Responding to remarks made by Union Minister Kishan Reddy, Mahesh Kumar Goud said that Kishan Reddy had accused Chief Minister Revanth Reddy of making inappropriate statements.

"You can build the Sabarmati Riverfront, but when we propose cleaning the Musi River, you withhold funds. You do not provide answers. Union Minister Kishan Reddy must answer these questions.

On one side, the BJP, and on the other, the BRS, are unable to tolerate the development taking place in the state," he said.



Firefighters battle a massive blaze at an Ola Electric vehicle warehouse in Moosapet on Tuesday. Thick smoke and flames engulfed the facility, triggering panic among nearby residents.

Major blaze breaks out at EV warehouse; sparks panic in Moosapet area

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

A massive fire broke out at an Ola Electric vehicle warehouse in Janatha Nagar, located near the railway track in the Goods Shed area of Moosapet, Kukatpally, on Tuesday. The intense blaze

caused thick smoke and high flames to rise rapidly from the warehouse, making the dense smoke visible from a long distance. Due to the vehicle batteries blowing up and falling directly onto the road, a severe panic was created among nearby basthi residents.

After receiving information about the fire, firefighters reached the spot immediately and worked to bring the blaze under control. Initially, two fire engines were deployed at the spot. As the fire continued to spread across the facility and could not be contained, two more

fire engines were rushed to the scene. A total of four fire engines worked for about half an hour, spraying water and successfully bringing the flames under control.

Consequently, many residents moved to safer places away from the spot. Though multiple electric vehicles

were completely gutted in the incident, no loss of life has been reported so far. The police have registered a case and are investigating how the fire started alongside the circumstances surrounding the incident. The exact cause of the fire is yet to be determined.



BRS ramps up SIR awareness drive in the run-up to civic poll preps

KTR leads city outreach; Harish Rao focuses on rural constituencies under SIR campaign

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE BRS has almost completed the constituency wise meetings in the city and also in the rural areas creating awareness on the SIR (Special Intensive Revision) to the party cadres and also people.

While the party's Working President KT Rama Rao has been holding the meetings in the city, BRSLP Deputy Leader T Harish Rao taking the responsibilities of the rural constituencies.

The party had started the constituency wise meetings from the Serilingampally Assembly constituency and completed the exercise in majority of the constituencies except for the constituencies in the Old City.

While the meetings were to prepare the party leaders for the ensuing civic elections in the city, it turned into a mechanism to educate the cadres on the SIR exercise. The party primary agenda of these meetings was to educate the workers about the SIR activity, which is going to start from June 25 in Telangana.

The BRS working president KT Rama Rao has been cautioning the party cadre to be alert on the SIR exercise. In his successive meetings, the BRS leader asked the Booth Level Agents to keep an eye on the exercise.

He also wanted them to check the details of dead



voters and ensure they are deleted. Giving an example of the Jubilee Hills constituency, he wanted the agents to be alert on fictitious names.

BRSLP Deputy Leader Talasani Srinivas Yadav, who also had convened a few meetings, called upon party members to remain vigilant regarding the SIR programme.

He said that the right to vote is a constitutional privilege and warned that the SIR programme presents a potential risk of votes being illegally removed from the electoral rolls.

He noted that allegations and criticisms regarding the SIR programme were emerging from across the country. Citing the possibility of illegal vote removals, he called upon them to create public awareness to prevent such irregularities from occurring.

BRSLP Deputy Leader Harish Rao has been focusing on the rural constituencies.

He had visited Warangal a couple of days ago and on Tuesday he had a meeting with the Manakondur constituency.

He wanted the party leaders to actively participate in the upcoming Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. He explained that the process would involve door-to-door verification until July 25.

Family grouping based on earlier voter records would be undertaken. Booth Level Officers would conduct field verification. Citizens whose names are missing can submit supporting documents and seek inclusion.

Political parties have been officially included in the process and BRS Booth Level Agents should assist voters. He called upon party workers to ensure that no genuine voter, particularly BRS supporters and sympathisers, is left out of the electoral rolls.

He urged the leaders to remain united, strengthen

KTR condemns police action against job aspirants

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KTR strongly condemned the government for deploying police to lathi-charge unemployed youth and police job aspirants who were peacefully agitating for their legitimate demands and job recruitment in Dilukhannagar.

KTR lashed out, stating that chasing down aspirants who were protesting democratically and arresting them illegally is definitive proof of the Congress government's arrogance and authoritarianism. He questioned whether suppressing students and the unemployed using police forces was the Indiramma Praja Palana promised by the Congress party.

He noted that the government has remained entirely indifferent despite students in Hyderabad and across various universities staging numerous protests over several days demanding the issuance of job recruitment notifications.

KTR accused the Congress party of deceiving unemployed youth to gain power by making tall claims such as filling two lakh government jobs in a single year, issuing mega notifications, and releasing a job calendar, only to now dash their hopes.

He termed it completely unjust that the government is attempting to wash its hands of the matter by filling only 5,000 posts when over 20,000 police vacancies exist in the state.

He demanded the immediate release of a mega notification to fill 20,000 police constable posts as demanded by the unemployed, keeping in mind the future of candidates undergoing training at coaching centres whilst facing financial hardships. KTR condemned the illegal arrest of Unemployed JAC leaders and students in Dilukhannagar, demanding their unconditional and immediate release. He warned that if the government attempts to stifle voices using lathi, its days in power are numbered.

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Harish Rao takes a swipe at Cong over farmer dues, welfare scams

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

BRSLP Deputy Leader T Harish Rao on Tuesday alleged that the Congress government had failed on every major promise made to farmers, students, youth and weaker sections while burdening people with increased taxes and charges.

Former Minister and BRS Deputy Floor Leader Harish Rao participated in an extended-level party workers' meeting in Manakondur constituency, Rao said that the Congress government had replaced welfare schemes with scams and accused it of corruption in Civil Supplies, Singareni, power, land transactions and even welfare programmes in Gurukul institutions.

Referring to alleged irregularities in Gurukul institutions, Harish Rao said that tenders worth nearly Rs 1,200 crore for uniforms and shoes and Rs 800 crore for food supplies had been awarded under questionable circumstances. He remarked that even the ministers concerned appeared unaware of the details of tenders issued by their own departments.

Rao alleged that the gov-



ernment had effectively skipped three instalments of Rythu Bandhu assistance and claimed that farmers were owed nearly Rs 19,000 crore, including Rs 9,000 crore from one completely missed instalment, Rs 4,000 crore due to restricted payments in a subsequent season, and Rs 6,000 crore from limiting assistance to only two acres in the latest phase. He demanded the immediate release of all pending dues to farmers.

Criticising the proposed Rythu DISCOM, Harish Rao alleged that the move would undermine 24-hour free

power supply to agriculture. He said farmers currently face reduced power availability and warned that the proposed model could further limit supply to only a few daylight hours dependent on solar generation.

Harish Rao questioned the government's expenditure on new camp offices, infrastructure projects and other high-cost initiatives while claiming a lack of funds for welfare programmes. He alleged that public resources were being diverted away from farmers, students and weaker sections.

CM to inaugurate Telangana Public School in Arutla today

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE newly established Telangana Public School at Arutla in Ranga Reddy district is set to be inaugurated by the Chief Minister on Wednesday, marking a major milestone in the state's ongoing efforts to strengthen public education infrastructure. The State School Education Department issued detailed administrative instructions on Tuesday to ensure the seamless conduct of the high-profile event, following an official teleconference chaired by the Chief Secretary.

School Education Director and State Project Director SS E Naveen Nicolas stated that the Chief Minister will arrive at Arutla by helicopter at



9:30 AM, proceeding directly to the campus for the official inauguration ceremony. The department has enclosed a comprehensive, minute-to-minute programme outlining the movements and engagements of the Chief Minister during the scheduled visit. As part of this visit, the Chief Minister will tour several key facilities within the institution, including Constitution Park, dining halls, a modern kitchen, pre-primary and

primary classrooms, a library, innovation and science labs, sports areas, and indoor sports rooms.

A major highlight of the day's programme will be the launch of the Breakfast Scheme, during which the Chief Minister will join students for a meal between 10:00 AM and 10:15 AM. The schedule also includes an inspection of the high-school blocks, the computer laboratory, and various outdoor sports courts, followed closely by the Chief Minister's departure to the adjacent public meeting venue. The Chief Minister will address the public meeting, scheduled from 11:10 AM to 12:10 PM, to engage with local residents and educational stakeholders.

BRS resents Cantt Board move to evict Ambedkar hut dwellers

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

BRS leader Manne Krishank on Tuesday strongly condemned the actions of Secunderabad Cantonment Board officials for allegedly threatening poor families

residing in Ambedkar Huts to vacate their homes within just 15 days. The action was initiated without issuing prior notices, deploying bulldozers despite residents having lived there for nearly 40 years. Krishank met the local residents, who were gripped

by fear and anxiety after seeing officials arrive with heavy machinery for possible demolition activities, and listened to their concerns. He assured them that the BRS would stand firmly with the poor and provide all necessary assistance to pursue legal

remedies, including filing a petition in court and securing a stay order against any eviction or demolition.

Krishank stated that KTR was informed about the arrival of bulldozers and the situation faced by the residents, assuring that all pos-

sible legal support would be extended to the affected families. He noted it is unjust to throw families who have lived there for four decades onto the streets overnight, adding that demolishing homes without alternative rehabilitation goes against humanity.

He criticized the Congress Government, stating that nearly three years have passed since it assumed office, yet not a single Indiramma House has been constructed in Hyderabad.

Dy CM Bhatti assures phased clearance of contractors' dues

- Relief for small contractors
- Govt promises to clear pending payments
- Contractors get govt assurance
- Bills to be settled in phases
- Chalo Hyderabad put off

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

DEPUTY Chief Minister and Finance Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka stated that the people's government was responding to the issues of small civil contractors in the state with utmost empathy and will always stand by them. On Tuesday, representatives of the Builders Association of India and civil contractors met the Deputy Chief Minister at Praja Bhavan as a courtesy call. During the meeting,



A delegation of civil contractors and representatives of the Builders Association of India meets Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka at Praja Bhavan in Hyderabad on Tuesday, seeking clearance of pending bills

they requested the release of their pending dues, to which the Deputy Chief Minister responded positively.

On this occasion, Bhatti Vikramarka reminded them that the Finance Department has been ensuring continuous monthly payments, keeping in mind the difficulties faced by small contractors. He explained that the government is mov-

ing forward with a clear plan to clear pending dues and assured that all pending bills of small contractors in the state will be settled in a phased manner.

Earlier in the day, the contractors' representatives had held discussions with Roads and Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy. Later, they reached Praja Bhavan and briefed

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka on the outcome of those discussions. Meanwhile, Ravinder Reddy, State Chairman of the Builders Association of India, announced that they are satisfied with the positive assurance given by the Deputy Chief Minister regarding the clearance of pending bills.

He stated that the proposed Chalo Hyderabad

program scheduled for the 18th of this month has been postponed. On behalf of the association, he expressed special thanks to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, and Roads and Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy for their supportive and positive response toward resolving their issues.

ACB unearths ₹150-cr assets of survey officials Narahari

Raids his house, arrests him in disproportionate assets case

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday unearthed assets worth Rs 150 crore when it raided residential premises of Sunkari Narahari Rao, Deputy Director, Multi Zone-II, Survey & Land Records Department, Hyderabad. It has registered a disproportionate assets case against him and arrest him.

According to the ACB, the total value of assets detected so far is Rs 13.05 crore. However, the actual market value of the total assets could be around Rs 150 crore.

ACB officials conducted searches on Tuesday at the officer's residence and nine other locations linked to his relatives, benamis and associates. The accused allegedly acquired assets beyond his known sources of income through corrupt and illegal means during his service.

During the searches, officials found documents



relating to five open plots in Ranga Reddy district and 1.24 acres of agricultural land at Maheshwaram. They also detected a 2,500-square-foot residential flat at Puppulaguda, two 1,860-square-foot flats at Narsingi, and a 1,377-square-foot flat at Rajendranagar. In addition, officials identified a G+3 building in TNGOs Colony, Gachibowli, and a G+2 residential building at Chatrinaka.

The searches also led to the recovery of around Rs 1.54 crore cash, bank balances of Rs 2.29 crore,

fixed deposits worth Rs 5.04 crore, and about 1.3 kg of gold ornaments and eight kg of silver were found in the house. Officials also found two lockers in the name of the accused officer's wife, which will be opened during the investigation. A Kia Carens luxury car was also found in the searches.

Further verification of additional assets is in progress and the case is under investigation. The accused officer was produced before the Principal Special Judge for SPE and ACB Cases at Nampally for judicial remand.

CLP accuses BRS-BJP of having truck ahead of GHMC elections

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

GOVERNMENT Whip Vemula Veeresham on Tuesday alleged that the Bharat Rashtira Samithi and Bharatiya Janata Party were moving towards an alliance ahead of the upcoming Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections. Addressing the media at the CLP Media Centre, Veeresham claimed the BRS had indirectly helped the BJP win eight Lok Sabha seats in the recent parliamentary elections and was now preparing to join hands with the saffron party for the GHMC polls. He challenged BRS Working President KTR to publicly clarify whether there was

an understanding between the parties, whilst firmly denying any allegations of a secret pact involving Congress.

Veeresham alleged that Union Minister G Kishan Reddy and KTR were in regular contact, accusing both parties of working against local interests and shielding each other politically while creating hurdles for development initiatives. Referring to the Hyderabad Metro Rail project, Veeresham said Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had taken decisive steps to bring the Metro, valued at around Rs 30,000 crore, under government control.

He stated that the state government successfully secured a loan of Rs 13,000

crore at a low interest rate to facilitate the takeover and ensure long-term viability.

The Congress leader alleged that the Centre had deliberately obstructed the loan process due to the positive response the state government was receiving for the Metro initiative. He questioned why KTR was not holding the Central Government or Kishan Reddy accountable for delays in the second phase of the Metro expansion. Describing Hyderabad Metro as the city's lifeline, Veeresham said the state government remains committed to expanding the network for public convenience, urging people to reject anti-development politics.

Scholarship applications open for workers' children

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Government of India's Labour Welfare Organisation has invited online applications for educational scholarships for the children of Beedi, Mine, and Cine workers for the academic year 2026-27. The notification, issued by the Office of the Welfare Commissioner in Hyderabad, applies to students studying in Government and Government-recognised institutions across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

The scholarships cover children of Beedi Workers, Limestone and Dolomite Mine Workers, Iron Ore, Manganese Ore and Chrome Ore Mine Workers, Mica Mine Workers, and Cine Workers. Eligible students from Class I to X for Pre-Matric and Class

XI to Professional Degree courses for Post-Matric must apply through the National Scholarship Portal. The last date for Pre-Matric applications is 31 August 2026, whilst Post-Matric applications can be submitted until 31 October 2026.

Applicants may seek technical support through the NSP Helpdesk at 0120-6619540 or helpdesk@nsp.gov.in. For additional details, students may contact the Office of the Welfare Commissioner, Labour Welfare Organisation, Room No 54, Kendriya Sadan, Sultan Bazar, Koti, Hyderabad - 500001, Tel 040-29561297, Email wclwohyd@nic.in, or visit the nearest departmental dispensary. The Welfare Commissioner urged all eligible students, parents, and guardians to submit applications well before deadlines.

City admin fully geared up to tackle monsoon flooding

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TO review measures aimed at preventing water logging, urban flooding, and traffic disruptions across the Hyderabad City, a high-level coordination meeting was held at Malkam Cheruvu on Tuesday.

The review meeting was chaired by Government Advisor Sudarshan Reddy and attended by DGP CV Anand, Serilingampally MLA Arikepudi Gandhi, GHMC Commissioner RV Karnan, Cyberabad Municipal Commissioner Srujana, HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath, Cyberabad Police Commissioner Dr M Ramesh, senior officials from the Irrigation Depart-

ment, GHMC, HYDRAA, Police and other agencies concerned. The meeting was convened as per the directions of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and focused on both immediate and long-term solutions to recurring flood issues in the city.

Reviewing the preparedness measures, the DGP stressed that public safety and smooth traffic movement must remain the top priorities during the monsoon. He directed departments to identify waterlogging-prone locations in advance, strengthen flood mitigation measures, and ensure alternative traffic arrangements wherever necessary.

The DGP also instructed police personnel to maintain round-the-clock monitoring

in low-lying areas, flood-prone localities, major junctions and busy roads.

Following the meeting, special engineering teams conducted field inspections at Malkam Cheruvu, Khajaguda Lake, Mandikunta, Gurunath Cheruvu, Miyapur, Biodiversity Junction, Kondapur, and other vulnerable locations. The teams examined drainage systems, water flow channels, encroachments, and bottlenecks contributing to flooding and water stagnation.

CV Anand assured officials that the police department would provide all necessary support for flood mitigation works, including assistance in removing obstacles and managing traffic diversions.



Back to school after summer holidays: Helping children make a healthy start



Dr Vittal Kumar

THE summer holidays are over, and schools reopened with fresh energy and excitement. Children are eager to meet their friends, settle into new classrooms, and begin a new academic year. For parents, this is often a busy period filled with shopping for books, uniforms, and school supplies.

However, while preparing children for school, it is equally important to prepare them for a healthy transition from holiday mode to school routine. This year, the reopening of schools coincides with the monsoon season, a time when viral infections, allergies, stomach illnesses, and mosquito-borne diseases are commonly seen among children.

As a pediatrician, I often notice that the first few weeks after schools reopen

are when many children fall sick, largely because of changes in routine, lack of adequate sleep, unhealthy eating habits developed during vacations, and increased exposure to infections. Fortunately, a few simple precautions can help children stay healthy and enjoy the school year.

Returning to a healthy routine

Summer vacations often mean late nights, relaxed mornings, more screen time, and irregular meal schedules. While this break is important for children, getting back into a structured routine can take time.

One of the first things parents should focus on is restoring healthy sleep habits. Children who do not get enough sleep are more likely to feel tired, struggle to concentrate in class, and become more vulnerable to infections. School-going children generally need between eight and ten hours of sleep every night. A fixed bedtime and wake-up schedule can help them adjust more smoothly to school timings.

The importance of a good breakfast

Mornings are often rushed once school starts, but breakfast should never be skipped. It is the first source of energy for the day and plays an im-

portant role in concentration, memory, and overall performance in school.

A healthy breakfast does not have to be elaborate. Traditional home-cooked foods such as idli, dosa, upma, poha, eggs, milk, fruits, or whole-grain preparations can provide the nutrition children need. Lunch boxes should also contain balanced meals with a mix of proteins, vegetables, fruits, and healthy snacks.

Parents should try to limit packaged foods, sugary drinks, and excessive junk food, which can affect both nutrition and immunity.

Monsoon brings more infections

The rainy season is often associated with an increase in viral fevers, coughs, colds, sore throats, and stomach infections. Since children spend several hours together in classrooms and playgrounds, infections can spread quickly.

Simple habits can make a significant difference. Parents should encourage children to wash their hands before eating, after using the washroom, and after outdoor activities. Children should also be taught to cover their mouth while coughing or sneezing and avoid sharing water bottles whenever possible.

Good hygiene remains one of the most effective ways to prevent common infections.

Safe food and water are essential

Stomach infections are another common problem during the monsoon season. Contaminated food and water can lead to vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, and dehydration.

Children should carry clean drinking water from home and consume freshly prepared meals. Lunch boxes and water bottles should be cleaned thoroughly every day. Parents should also ensure that children stay adequately hydrated, even during cooler rainy days when they may not feel thirsty.

Stay alert to dengue

Dengue continues to be a major concern during the monsoon months. The disease is spread by mosquitoes that breed in stagnant water, often found around homes and residential areas.

Parents should regularly check for water accumulation in coolers, buckets, flower pots, and other containers. Children should be encouraged to wear clothing that covers their arms and legs, especially when playing outdoors.

Any persistent fever, severe body pain, unusual tiredness, or headache

should not be ignored and requires medical attention.

Children with allergies need extra care

Many children experience worsening allergies and respiratory problems during the rainy season. Increased humidity, dust, mold, and sudden weather changes can trigger symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, wheezing, and breathing difficulties.

Parents of children with asthma should ensure that prescribed medications are available and taken regularly. Early medical consultation can help prevent complications and avoid emergency situations.

Don't ignore wet shoes and uniforms

A common but often overlooked issue during the monsoon is children remaining in wet clothes or shoes for long periods. Wet socks and footwear can lead to fungal infections and skin problems.

Parents can consider packing an extra pair of socks in the school bag and should encourage children to change into dry clothes as soon as they return home after getting wet in the rain.

Emotional well-being is equally important

The transition back to school is not only physical

but also emotional. While many children are excited to return, others may feel anxious about studies, examinations, new teachers, or adjusting to a new class.

Parents should spend time talking to their children, listening to their concerns, and encouraging them to share their experiences. A supportive environment at home helps children adapt more confidently to the new academic year.

Healthy children learn better

The start of a new school year is an ideal time for families to reinforce healthy habits. Adequate sleep, nutritious food, good hygiene, regular physical activity, and emotional support are all essential for a child's well-being.

Good health and good learning go hand in hand. By paying attention to a few simple measures, parents can help ensure fewer sick days, better attendance, and a happier school experience. A healthy child is better equipped to learn, grow, and make the most of every opportunity the new academic year brings.

By Dr Vittal Kumar Kesireddy, head of Department & Sr Consultant Pediatrician - Pediatrics & Neonatology

Dialysis: A lifeline for patients with kidney failure



Dr Ch Sashidar

KIDNEY diseases are emerging as a major health concern in India, primarily due to the increasing prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and unhealthy lifestyles. The kidneys play a vital role in filtering waste products, maintaining fluid balance, regulating blood pressure, and producing essential hormones. When kidney function declines significantly, harmful toxins and excess fluid accumulate in the body, leading to serious health complications.

Dialysis is a life-saving treatment for patients suffering from advanced kidney failure. It performs the essential functions of the kidneys by removing waste products, excess fluids, and maintaining electrolyte balance. While dialysis does not cure kidney disease, it helps patients lead healthier and longer lives until a kidney transplant becomes possible or as a long-term treatment option. There are two main types of dialysis: Hemodialysis and Peritoneal Dialysis. Hemodialysis involves filtering the patient's blood through a specialised machine, whereas

Peritoneal Dialysis uses the lining of the abdomen as a natural filter. The choice of treatment depends on the patient's medical condition, lifestyle, and doctor's recommendation.

Many patients ignore early warning signs of kidney disease such as swelling of the feet, reduced urine output, persistent fatigue, loss of appetite, high blood pressure and uncontrolled diabetes. Early diagnosis and timely treatment can slow the progression of kidney disease and delay the need for dialysis.

Patients undergoing dialysis should follow a balanced diet, take prescribed medications regularly, maintain fluid restrictions as advised, and attend dialysis sessions without interruption. Missing treatments can lead to serious complications, including heart problems and fluid overload.

Regular health check-ups are especially important for individuals with diabetes, hypertension, a family history of kidney disease, or those above 40 years of age. Simple blood and urine tests can help detect kidney disease at an early stage. With advances in nephrology care, modern dialysis services provide safer and more effective treatment options. Awareness, early detection, and proper medical care remain the key to protecting kidney health and improving patient outcomes, says Dr Ch Sashidar, consultant nephrologist, Apollo Hospitals, Secunderabad.

India must diversify fuel supply chains despite US-Iran MoU

THE memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the United States and Iran to mark the end of the war in West Asia has been greeted with more than a sigh of relief, all over. Stock markets have welcomed it including, in India whose half of crude imports pass through Strait of Hormuz. The Strait will be "completely open" from Friday, US President Donald Trump declared. It is "partially opened, already. However, there was 'hunting' in the area to ensure it was de-mined, he said. This is good news but demining the Strait is easier said than done. The US knows it. On June 2, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told a Senate Foreign Relations Committee that

Iran had "mined large segments of Hormuz—international waters." Shipping and maritime security experts told a prominent Israeli newspaper that ensuring the Strait of Hormuz is safe from mines could delay a return to normal shipping traffic by weeks.

Conventional minesweepers could be deployed along with state-of-the-art underwater drones, but it may take 40 to 50 days before many insurance, shipping, or oil companies are confident enough to sail through, according to experts. Further, there is still a great deal of uncertainty with the MoU, which is just the beginning of real negotiations. Given the recalcitrant attitude of the clerical regime and

hardliner jihadists in Iran, the talks getting derailed at any moment is a distinct possibility. For these people are fired by revolutionary fervour; in their scheme of things, getting nuclear weapons is not a strategic requirement but a doctrinaire imperative. It is to be seen if these people could be reined in by saner elements in Tehran. Then there is Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is sulking because of Trump's insistence to have a deal as quickly as possible. While he has not criticised the MoU, he is certainly not happy; he and his nation will like a regime change in Iran—or, at least, substantive degradation of its military might. To be sure, the degradation

of Iran's armed forces is quite substantive, but Tel Aviv wants more.

In other words, peace will prevail for some time in the Middle East, but it will be fragile. The success of the proposed negotiations will depend on whether Iran's leadership is willing to make meaningful concessions on its nuclear programme and regional activities. Hardliners within the Iranian establishment may view any compromise as a sign of weakness and seek to obstruct the process. At the same time, domestic political pressures in both the United States and Israel could limit the room for diplomatic manoeuvre. Any perceived violation of commitments, however minor, may

trigger renewed tensions. Israel, as we mentioned, remains unconvinced that diplomacy alone can neutralise what it sees as the Iranian threat. Worse, the problem is not just the divergence in objectives between Washington and Tel Aviv; it is also Trump's temperament and temper, which he loses very often. He even uses four-letter words in public—something no head of state or government has done in recent memory. Therefore, countries like India should not celebrate the MoU too much. It is a good start, but a start, nonetheless. To reduce our dependence on the Strait, we must earnestly start diversifying our fuel supply chains.

Even hardened criminals are sure to get caught!



RAVULAPATI SEETARAMA
MARAO

OUR ancestors used to talk about the ages. They said that in the Treta Yuga dharma stood on four legs, in Dwapara Yuga the number of legs decreased, and in Kali Yuga dharma almost lost its footing — elders would say this and people used to laugh. But looking at the crime-filled times that are spreading now, it feels as if our ancestors, with uncanny insight, were foretelling the future: "dharma will wither in the Kali Yuga." How true is that?

A reader going through newspapers would be left with no doubt that dharma has largely gone astray — it is a sickening, nauseating feeling. In one village, people who had regarded a poor man as a benevolent trustee were stunned when a police investigation revealed that he was a criminal who had been stealing the trust's assets; they were speechless and later felt they had no option but to cut him off completely. But an old man in that village, who was in the twilight of his life, did not show surprise—he muttered to himself, "It is the age of Kali," and accepted it.

In a small village of Uttar Pradesh, one Vikas Singh Thagor, known to be a modern Robin Hood, spent many years helping the poor as if it were a gift from God. He lovingly gave schoolbags to children who couldn't afford them. He helped the most disadvantaged in the village with money when they were in trouble. He even paid for luxury trips for his friends. Wherever he traveled, he flew and stayed in big hotels. For a man like that, how devastating it must have been to be caught in Manikanta Nagar colony in Vikarabad, and then after a police investigation that exposed him as Raju-Peda Double Roll—be forced to account for every penny? The poor villagers in UP and his friends must have been crushed by disappointment, while the police were elated at having caught a major thief.

Fate plays strange games. When a person's life is portrayed on film in a sensational way that makes theatre audiences gasp, and then people in real life encounter such a figure, the police warning that "this could be a fraud" becomes terrifying. When someone with a criminal past is finally caught, the old guard comforts that justice still moves forward.

In Telangana he posed as a labourer. Going from colony to colony pretending to be a worker, he noted which houses were locked. At night he looted many of those locked homes, and with the money he stole he



It always seems that police failures make the headlines — their successful work rarely does. In times like these, elders say, righteousness — whether small or great — inevitably endures. Scientific investigation is making tremendous inroads into the methods of hardened criminals.

returned to his village in UP and, without asking anyone, provided financial help to his friends, the poor and to children, living a life of luxury. That was Vikas Singh Thakur — who lost his freedom after he was trapped by the police. He confessed that he had stolen about 1.57 kg of gold, 2.56 kg of silver and cash totaling Rs 8.22 lakh. He began stealing at the age of 16 and built a notorious record: 34 cases in police books, which makes for a remarkable criminal history. Now, after Vikarabad police investigations, his number of thefts has risen to 61. In Sultanpur district,

four gold traders aided him, taking the stolen jewellery, giving him a share and even lending money when he needed it. He gave the gold to them through his mother. If a mother does not stop her son from stealing vegetables, she must bear some responsibility for the history that follows. This episode almost feels like a moral drama playing out in real life. The Vikarabad police and higher authorities must be commended for bringing Vikas Thakur's career to account.

In another incident, white-collared criminals who had expanded the marijuana trade all the way to Thailand

were arrested by the newly formed "Eagle Force" (a police unit), writing new pages in history! They used 300 vehicles, made 405 flight bookings, and spent lakhs on flights alone. They landed in Thailand with wine and water facilities, spent nearly Rs three crore, and were trying to set up a "Pattaya-style" nightclub in Kokapet area of Hyderabad when the police caught them during a sting! Forty people operate in this network. Many have been arrested. Hemang Pramod Kelsukar and Sudhanshu Pramod Kelsukar (both from Mumbai) were running the gang. Operating since around 2023, they had established links across Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, among other states, running this drug operation in a highly organized manner — until police surveillance exposed it. People are very pleased that Eagle Force and senior officers, through hard, painstaking work, successfully caught such big time criminals.

On the same page is the news that Dilshuknagar police caught international cannabis smugglers from Odisha while they were selling the drug. Ramesh Bandam and Nirmal Chhatrya were arrested. These are brazen, clever thefts — frauds carried out to deceive officials and cover their tracks — and this criminal experiment to trick authorities also makes the headlines in newspapers!

Cyberabad police warned people to be careful of such

criminals and revealed their tactics. Posing as employees of the Metropolitan Water Works, they were sending WhatsApp messages to residents in some areas saying that their water bill was unpaid and the connection would be disconnected — a ploy to extort money. Although the identities of those involved haven't been reported in the news, this warning makes it clear that Hyderabad residents must stay on guard. Any reader who goes through this page of varied crime reports can't help but exclaim, "Good heavens!" But learning that the police are making proper efforts to catch and control crime makes it worth sharing these details. It always seems that police failures make the headlines — their successful work rarely does. In times like these, elders say, righteousness — whether small or great — inevitably endures.

Scientific investigation is making tremendous inroads into the methods of hardened criminals. CC cameras, WhatsApp messages, telephonic conversations, and a watch on hardened criminals outside and inside jail see them as sitting ducks. Let people encourage not only Telangana police but the firmament in our country to continue similar efforts to ensure people lead happy lives, safe, and secure.

(The writer is a retired IPS officer, who has served as an Additional DGP of Andhra Pradesh)

LETTERS

RTI: System must deliver

PROPOS "21 years of RTI: Miles to go" (June 16). The Right to Information Act (RTI) completed 21 years as a pillar of Indian democracy. It has exposed corruption, tracked funds, and forced answers from public bodies. RTI helped citizens challenge opaque political funding and projects like electoral bonds. Yet the law is strained. Over 4.1 lakh appeals choke Information Commissions, and 2.4 lakh new cases came in a single year. States like Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh face the most delays. When authorities deny data, trust erodes. The Supreme Court recently called some RTI activism a business, dismissing an activist's bail plea in a road work case. Abuse must be curbed, but courts questioning motives risk chilling genuine queries. We need faster disposal, penalties for needless denial, and training for officials. Protecting whistleblowers and streamlining commissions will keep RTI strong. Transparency is not optional for governance. After two decades, the promise remains, but the system must deliver.

K Chidanand Kumar, Kollam

RTI and judicial interference

PROPOS of "21 years of RTI: Miles to go" (THI June 16). It's been 21 years since the promulgation of the Right to Information Act (RTI). It was a milestone ordinance meant to instil accountability and transparency in functioning of governments, service sectors, and availability of fundamental rights to citizens. However, judicial interference and governmental foot-dragging have undermined RTI. This is exemplified by 4.1 lakh appeals pending and 2.4 lakh cases registered for review before Information Commissions. The incident of the Supreme Court denying anticipatory bail to a 'RTI activist', for monitoring road construction in Punjab, exemplifies the beating RTI has received. If that person who was denied bail had paid the gargantuan road tax and vehicle registration fees, it is his prerogative to ascertain the progress of the road meant for his use.

Dr George Jacob, Kochi

Hail Indian army's move to end colonial-era customs

THE Indian army's recent introduction of new uniform regulations is commendable. These changes successfully shed vestigial colonial-era customs and embrace indigenous cultural aesthetics, while enhancing overall practicality and operational comfort for personnel across the board. Through these combined measures, the Indian army cultivates a distinct institutional identity rooted in India's own cultural fabric. Such measures reflect the army's continued commitment to ensuring that the institutions, traditions and spaces where soldiers live, train and serve increasingly embody India's own heroes, values and national legacy while preserving the professionalism and heritage of the force. These changes align the military's visual and ceremonial identity with contemporary sovereign Indian values, without compromising the dignity and discipline of the force. It is a proud moment for India that the visual landscape of the world's second-largest standing army is being fundamentally rewritten to project a modern and self-reliant nation.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, Chennai-210

Not a typical peace framework

This refers to "Peace on paper, war on the ground — The fatal flaw in the Iran deal" (THI, June 16). The article identifies the central weakness of the US-Iran agreement with precision. A MoU that defers every substantive issue — nuclear sequencing, sanctions relief, regional security — to a sixty-day negotiation window is not a peace framework. It is a postponement dressed as diplomacy. The Israeli variable alone makes durability doubtful. Israel was not a party to the negotiations, does not consider itself bound by the terms, and has demonstrated repeatedly that it will act independently when it perceives existential threats. For countries like India that have genuine economic stakes in West Asia's stability, this uncertainty will prove a costly affair. Cautious optimism is warranted but structural confidence is not.

K Sakunthala, Coimbatore-641671

A fine line between true morality and hypocrisy

IN an act of moral prudery, the NCERT 'appareled' the 'Dancing Girl' of Mohenjodaro (and disfigured her in the process) to spare Class 9 students the 'embarrassment' of having to look at her bare torso. NCERT officials have restored the palm-sized figurine to her original looks in the face of the flak from historians and educationalists. The modification misrepresenting the original artefact, if not reversed, would have denied the students the benefit of looking at the metallurgical marvel as it was conjured up about 4500 years ago. It is a must-see for students of the Indus Valley Civilization. Deriving aesthetic pleasure from human anatomy is not immoral or sinful to be so puritanical about it or take offence at it. For instance, Michelangelo's statue of David and sculptural works at the Khajuraho temple appeal to us as sentient beings. Desmond Morris' book 'The Naked Woman' is a study of the female body worth reading by everyone. It will disabuse us of outdated attitudes to nudity and sex. After all, there is a fine line between true morality and hypocrisy.

G David Milton, Maruthancode (TN)

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BENGALURU ONLINE

MLA adopts three girls after Bidar family tragedy

BIDAR: In a heartwarming gesture following a tragic incident that claimed the lives of two sisters, Aurad MLA Prabhu Chavan has announced that he will take responsibility for the future of the three surviving daughters of the affected family in Shembelli village of Bidar district. The decision came after the legislator visited the family, which has been struggling emotionally and financially since the tragedy. The incident occurred on June 7 when six members of the family allegedly fell seriously ill after consuming mangoes. The victims, including mother Indumati and her five daughters, suffered severe vomiting and diarrhoea and were rushed for treatment.

Read more at <https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

Man made tragedies-Lifetime trauma for victims' kin; protection for perpetrators

DR HYMA MOORTY

MAJOR man-made fire disasters—ranging from industrial accidents and city-wide bombings to catastrophic infrastructure failures have claimed several precious lives.

The Uphaar cinema tragedy was one of the worst fire disasters in recent Indian history. The fire started in the parking lot during the matinee screening of the movie 'Border' on June 13, 1977. Approximately, 59 people died of asphyxiation and 103 were seriously injured in the subsequent stampede. There is no record of how many succumbed eventually. The result was that one of the Ansal brothers (The hall's promoters) was sentenced to two years in jail. Justice delivered for so many deaths? This is the result of a 24-year legal battle fought by two grieving parents.

Seven newborns died and 12 were rescued following a fire at the baby care wing in New Born Hospital in East Delhi's Vivek Vihar. A massive fire broke out at the TRP Game Zone in Rajkot, claiming 33 lives, including nine under-16 children. Foreign nationals were among the 21 people who died in a blaze that ripped through a hotel in South Delhi's Malviya Nagar on June 3. At least 47 people were pulled out of the inferno and taken to nearby hospitals but how many of them will walk out of the hospitals remains uncertain.

Tragically, most fire tragedies in the country happen either when greed takes over safety or the build-

By the time the CBI or ED book a case, he emerges as a popular real estate developer in Hyderabad. These guys roam in circles where 'getting away with it is a flex'. Shame does not work and conscience is something they don't have. You must hit at the things that they value most—money, freedom + status and the ability to do business, all over again. Seize assets before trial. Not after 10 years. Freeze bank accounts; attach properties, auction them to pay victims within 90 days can be good deterrents.



vent theft. Overcrowding beyond permitted capacity. Flammable material stored because "What are the odds"? The calculation is always: "Will I get caught?" and not "Will someone die?"

A person who has done something illegal is a criminal. One who is morally and ethically wrong is also a criminal. Thieves outwit systems. What is the punishment 'if' caught? A fine that is one per cent of a day's profit and the case drags for any number of years. The risk reward is broken again. Unethical behaviour pays. Safety doesn't. Officers personally should be made liable if structures cleared by them burn. Make owners criminally liable for deaths, not just fines. Charge them with culpable homicide not amounting to murder and straight away jail them for 10 years, if not

more. Property should be seized. These are hardened criminals; public shaming does not embarrass them at all. Jail is a 'business risk'. A twitter trend is just blabber. They are budgeted for it. Shut down in Rajkot and move to Surat is the modus operandi—a new name, new company but the same old illegal activities.

While anguished families of victims are in courts awaiting justice, the owner-perpetrator is inaugurating a new gaming zone, around the same time. No dearth of money results in getting a new identity, shifting base to a new city and enjoying new political protection. If there is a fire safety case against a person in Gujarat or Delhi, the 'viable' option for street-smart individuals is to set up a new establishment in the neighbouring state

Looking forward to engaging with world leaders: PM

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived at Evian, France, on Tuesday to attend the G7 Summit and exchange views with world leaders on key global issues. This is the 8th consecutive G7 Summit to which India has been invited. "Reached Evian, France, for the G7 Summit. Looking forward to engaging with world leaders and exchanging views on key global issues," Modi said in a post on X. He said that India "remains committed to

advancing collective efforts for a more sustainable and prosperous planet." PM Modi's attendance marks India's thirteenth participation at the G7 summit and indicates increasing global recognition of India's role in addressing peace, security, and environmental sustainability. At the G7 Summit, Modi is expected to discuss international cooperation, economic growth, artificial intelligence, and hold bilateral meetings with leaders on these crucial issues.

1st Indian LNG tanker Disha safely crosses Hormuz

NEW DELHI: A Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) carrier, Disha, safely transited through the Strait of Hormuz. It is the first Indian LNG tanker to cross the war-hit narrow shipping lane since the war in the Middle East broke out. The LNG carrier carrying 62,370 metric tons of LNG and managed by a Shipping Corporation of India-led consortium and chartered by Petronet LNG Ltd, is also one of the first commercial vessels to transit the Strait since the announcement of a preliminary ceasefire deal between the United States and Iran. Director in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Upesh Kumar Sharma, said the vessel is expected to arrive at Dahej in Gujarat on Thursday.

Deal to end war requires Israel to withdraw from Lebanon: Iran

DUBAI: Iran's top diplomat said Tuesday that the tentative deal to end the war with the United States would require Israel to withdraw from Lebanon - a condition Israel has already rejected and that could sink the agreement, leading to the resumption of all-out war. The deal, which is between the US and Iran, has not been made public, and officials have sometimes offered contradictory interpretations of what is in it.

Google removes Telegram from Play Store, Apple may follow suit

The nationwide examination is conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) for admission to undergraduate medical institutes. The agency cancelled the previous exam held on May 3 amid allegations of paper leak.

Gulf nations seek protection of maritime routes

Continued from P1

During the conflict, Iran effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow waterway used to ferry one-fifth of the global oil supplies, which is the only maritime route for several Gulf countries such as Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE.

Iran also carried out strikes against Gulf countries as they host US military bases, which were used to target the Islamic Republic.

In its statement, the UAE Foreign ministry urged respect for the sovereignty of states and the principles of good neighbourliness, and strict adherence to international law. All this, it said, could advance security, stability, and economic prosperity at both the regional and global levels. It also stressed the importance of "continuing negotiations in order to build on this progress and achieve sustainable outcomes".

Saudi Arabia also welcomed the US-Iran agreement and hoped "for achieving peace in a manner that enhances the security of the region and the world through a lasting agreement that takes into account the security interests of regional countries and upholds the principle of respect for the internal affairs of states."

The Foreign ministry reaffirmed Qatar's "full support" for all efforts and initiatives aimed at enhancing regional security and stability and reaching sustainable solutions to outstanding issues through dialogue and peaceful means. These, it said, should be done in accordance with the principles of international law and good neighbourliness, in a manner that contributes to opening "new horizons for co-operation, development, and prosperity, and serves the common interests of the peoples of the region and the world".

Doctor's prescription now mandatory for cough syrups

LOZENGES, PILLS, TABLETS FOR COUGH CONTINUE TO REMAIN ON LIST

NEW DELHI



THE Union Health Ministry has amended the rules to remove "syrups ... for cough" from Schedule K— the list of medicines exempted from the requirement of a prescription by a registered medical practitioner. Lozenges, pills or tablets for cough continue to remain on the list.

The Centre had released the draft guidelines, inviting stakeholder comments in December last year. The move came months after at least 22 children died in Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara district after consuming contaminated cough syrups.

At the same time, there were reports of children in Rajasthan dying after consuming cough syrups but in that case, they took syrups not meant for young children.

Now, you would not be able to go to your neighbourhood pharmacy to get a cough syrup if you need one. All cough syrups — including the addictive ones containing opioids such as codeine — will now require a doctor's prescription.

The move comes after a spate of cases of contaminated cough syrups — in India and other countries — leading to deaths of children, including the case in Madhya Pradesh.

The matter was discussed in a meeting of the apex drug regulator's Drug Consultative Committee in November last year, right after the case in Madhya Pradesh.

The committee of experts said: "DCC was apprised about the recent incidence due to contaminated cough syrup, and it was proposed that the exemption provided under ... Schedule K ... in respect of syrups for cough may be deleted. DCC deliberated the matter and approved the proposal."

The committee also looked at whether excipients other than propylene glycol and diethylene glycol — which is understood to be the source of the contaminants ethylene glycol and diethylene glycol — can be used for the manufacturing of syrups. Importantly, mandating prescriptions for cough syrups would ensure children do not end up taking formulations such as dextromethorphan — which is not meant for those under the age of four or six years — that can cause severe respiratory depression and death in them.

TG draws action plan for smooth distribution of seeds & fertilisers

Continued from P1

The comprehensive action plan would also include the measures to be taken for the procurement of harvested crops. Towards this, the Chief Minister instructed the authorities to adopt a transparent mechanism and maintain a complete understanding of registration of farmers details, estimation of crop yielding and paddy procurement.

The committee was entrusted with the responsibility of continuous monitoring of seed distribution, sowing of crops to the registration of farmers' details, recording of crop information, estimation of produce, and the final procurement process.

The CM directed the officials to take all necessary measures to ensure the smooth procurement of agricultural produce adhering to Minimum Support Prices (MSP) and quotas prescribed by the Central government. The Chief Minister stressed that an advanced action plan should be prepared to address issues such as unseasonal rains, weighing, transportation, storage, and marketing during the procurement period.

Modi-Trump meet set to spotlight G7 Summit

Continued from P1

The meeting comes at a particularly significant moment following Trump's announcement of an agreement with Iran aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz and easing tensions that had unsettled global energy markets. While details of the arrangement remain limited, the development is expected to feature prominently in summit discussions, with leaders seeking clarity on its implications for regional stability and global energy supplies. There is also considerable interest in whether Modi will raise concerns over the reported deaths of three Indian seafarers, al-

legedly killed during a United States naval attack on commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz. The incident has generated political debate in India and added another dimension to the forthcoming engagement between the two leaders. The two-day summit, hosted under France's rotating presidency of the G7, brings together leaders of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States, alongside representatives of the European Union. French President Emmanuel Macron has also invited several key partner nations, including India, Brazil, South Korea, Kenya, and Egypt,

reflecting the growing importance of emerging economies in addressing global challenges.

For India, Modi's participation underscores New Delhi's expanding role in international diplomacy. As one of the world's fastest-growing major economies and an increasingly influential voice of the Global South, India has become a key stakeholder in discussions on economic resilience, energy security, technological cooperation, and reform of multilateral institutions. The summit unfolds against the backdrop of continuing conflict in Ukraine. Despite ongoing diplomatic efforts, the war remains a major

source of instability, with fresh Russian attacks highlighting the persistence of hostilities. Support for Ukraine is expected to remain high on the agenda as G7 leaders assess the next phase of assistance to Kyiv. According to the French presidency, this year's summit will focus on resolving major geopolitical crises, strengthening support for Ukraine and its people, protecting children from emerging threats, including those in the digital sphere, combating organised crime and illicit financial networks, and developing new frameworks for global governance in a rapidly changing international environment.

The great shake hand!

Continued from P1

In Evian-les-Bains, the site of this year's G7 summit of the powerful grouping, Modi and Trump shared a warm handshake followed by a short conversation. A full bilateral sit-down is slated for Wednesday on the sidelines of the gathering. While details of their brief exchange were not known, the encounter sets the stage for their high stakes' talks.

Following US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's visit to India last month, the two sides are now looking at rebuilding the bilateral ties. The relations witnessed a major downturn after Wash-

ington imposed punitive tariffs on India and President Trump made controversial assertions regarding his role in de-escalating the India-Pakistan military clashes last May.

Over the next few months, the US President repeatedly and publicly claimed that he had resolved the military conflict between the two neighbours and saved millions of lives as it was heading toward a full-scale war. New Delhi stoutly maintained that the cessation of the hostilities was a result of talks between India and Pakistan, and the US involvement had nothing to do with it.

Massive quakes in China, Japan, Indonesia

NEW DELHI: Earthquakes were reported in parts of China, Japan and Indonesia on Tuesday, causing damage and injuries in some parts. The highest magnitude of 6.7 was in Indonesia's Sulawesi island, followed by magnitude 6.3 earthquake in the prefecture of Haixi in Qinghai, China, and magnitude 6 tremors near the east coast of Honshu in Japan. In China, at least one person was killed and four others injured, and in Indonesia, eight people were hurt after the earthquake. No casualties were reported in Japan.

G7 allies scramble to put Ukraine back atop Trump's agenda

Continued from P1

Evian-les-Bains: US allies at the Group of Seven summit of major industrialised democracies worked Tuesday to push the war in Ukraine back up the agenda of President Donald Trump after more than four years of fighting sparked by Russia's full-scale invasion.

The Iran conflict has in recent weeks overshadowed Ukraine but following his announcement of an agreement to end the 3 1/2-month-old

conflict in the Gulf, Trump said he now wants to focus on Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy joined G7 leaders for a morning working session.

Talks wrapped quickly, as leaders gathered for just 75 minutes. According to a French diplomat familiar with the talks, G7 leaders, including Trump, agreed to increase pressure on Russia, notably through sanctions targeting its oil and natural gas sectors.

IAF to develop indigenous kamikaze one-way attack drones

Continued from P1

The IAF has issued a limited tender enquiry to select Indian companies for the development of fixed-wing, one-way attack unmanned aerial systems (OWA-UAS), commonly known as kamikaze drones. The project will be coordinated by the Air Force's 5 Base Repair Depot (BRD) at Sulur, Coimbatore, which will act as the nodal agency. Unlike conventional acquisition programmes where the armed forces define requirements and industry develops the product, the IAF will play a direct role in the design and development process. The move is expected to give the service greater flexibility in tailoring the platform to evolving operational requirements. According to the technical requirements, the drone should be capable of operating at altitudes up to 16,000 feet, function in both day and night conditions, and carry a modular payload of at least 30 kg. The platform is expected to support multiple mission configurations, including precision-strike roles, airborne data relay functions and sensor-based missions.

The project also envisages a highly autonomous system capable of launch, waypoint navigation, loitering and mission execution with minimal human intervention.

Fine rice prices zoom in TG in last 10 days

Continued from P1

State Civil Supplies Department officials said that the demand for fine rice was increasing in view of the purchase by all sections from lower middle classes to the rich communities for their daily food requirements. Sonamasuri variety from Kurnool, Nizamabad, Bapatla and Karimnagar is in high demand.

Considering the fine rice as a staple and nutritious food, the government is also supplying it to the poorer sections through the Public Distribution System (PDS) at highly subsidized prices every month.

Incidentally, the demand for fine rice has gone up in the state ever since the state government launched the fine rice distribution scheme for white ration card holders. Millers and wholesale dealers are exploiting market demand by hoarding the stocks and creating artificial shortages. As a result, prices are going up as adequate stocks are not available in the open market.

Bhansal, owner of Adarsh retail shop in Kothapet in Hyderabad, told The Hans India that sales of fine rice increased by at least 40 per cent in the last one year. The wholesalers are supplying only a limited quantity of fine rice to the retailers even though demand has gone up phenomenally. "The available stocks of two-year-old fine rice, which is in high demand, are enough to meet the market requirements. It could be the main reason for rising prices at regular intervals," he said.

3 satellites paint worrying monsoon picture for India

Continued from P1

The accompanying cross-equatorial flow, another crucial component of the monsoon engine, has also remained weak. Satellite imagery highlights extensive dry air over the western Indian Ocean, visible as large brownish regions on moisture maps.

Meteorologists attribute this to widespread sinking air over the region, a phenomenon that suppresses cloud formation and limits the northward transport of moisture into the Arabian Sea.

The weakness of the Arabian Sea branch of the monsoon has become particularly evident. Normally, this branch delivers heavy rainfall to the west coast, central India and large agricultural regions across Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.

However, rainfall activity has remained patchy and below

normal in many of these areas.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has already warned of prolonged below-normal rainfall across the country's crucial "monsoon core zone" which includes central, western and peninsular India, regions that account for a substantial share of the nation's agricultural output.

There are, however, some encouraging signs on the horizon. Forecast models indicate that cross-equatorial winds may strengthen during the next two weeks. Meteorologists also expect the Somali Jet to intensify, potentially drawing larger amounts of moisture into the Arabian Sea and reviving monsoon activity over India.

Forecast guidance suggests humidity levels could begin increasing within the coming week, with a more significant monsoon revival possible toward the end of June.

Should Aadhaar use be restricted to ID proof: SC

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought responses from the Centre and state governments on a petition alleging that Aadhaar cards are being wrongly used as proof of citizenship, domicile and address.

The petition has asked the court to direct authorities to restrict the use of Aadhaar only to identity verification.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice V Mohan issued notices to the Centre, all states and Union Territories on the petition filed by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay.

The petition seeks directions to the Centre, state governments and the Election Com-

mission of India to ensure that Aadhaar is used only as proof of identity and not as proof of citizenship, domicile, address or date of birth. Section 9 of the Aadhaar Act clearly states that Aadhaar is not proof of citizenship or domicile. UIDAI's notification dated August 22, 2023, also clarified that Aadhaar is only proof of identity, not of citizenship, address, or date of birth. Aadhaar is being used as proof of age, citizenship, and residence in processes such as school admissions, property purchases, obtaining birth certificates, ration cards, and driving licenses. The petition claims that due to this, infiltrators and illegal immigrants are also obtaining other

documents based on Aadhaar.

The petitioner has also raised questions about the voter registration verification process. According to the petition, the document verification under Form-6 is not sufficient and can lead to the inclusion of names of people in the voter list who do not possess the necessary valid documents. The petition demands comprehensive reforms in the verification framework used in the electoral process.

Along with this, it suggests the formation of a high-level monitoring committee, which should include retired Supreme Court judges, cybersecurity experts, and forensic experts.

Telegram banned till June 22 post-NEET paper leak

Continued from P1

The NTA referred to the directions issued as "a measure of last resort, taken only after intermediate remedies, including the take-down action coordinated by I4C, had been pursued and had not produced, at the platform level, the response required to protect candidates in the run-up to the examination."

Channels on Telegram have been operating under names like: "PAPER LEAKED NEET"; "Re-NEET 2026"; "Private Mafia"; "REE NEET MAFFIA" — and have "demanded sums ranging from a few thousand to several lakhs of rupees from candidates and their families, in exchange for purported access to the re-examination paper", the NTA statement said, adding that these sort of promises are "in every instance, a fraud". Channels operating under self-descriptive names openly solicited desperate students and their families, demanding sums ranging

from a few thousand to several lakh rupees in exchange for purported access to the re-examination question paper.

NTA has categorically stated that no such paper exists outside the secured examination chain, and that every such promise is, without exception, a fraud designed to extort money from anxious aspirants.

The modus operandi, as documented by NTA, works as follows: a channel administrator posts an innocuous message before the exam. After the exam is conducted and the actual question paper becomes publicly available, the administrator edits that old message to insert the real question paper — crucially, while retaining the original timestamp. The fabricated chat is then circulated virally as "proof" that the paper was leaked before the exam, causing public panic and undermining the credibility of the examination process.

Revanth writes to Kishan for release of IRFC loan

Continued from P1

The IRFC carried out due diligence and sanctioned the financing, whilst the state government provided sovereign-level repayment safeguards including a Direct Debit Mechanism by the RBI. The agreements were signed, Rs 1,461.47 crore was deposited into escrow, and Rs 784.32 crore was paid as an upfront fee. Although the drawdown date was June 15, the disbursement did not take place.

The state government has addressed concerns relating to operational integration of Metro Phase-I and Phase-II, requesting sanction for Phase-II as a 50:50 Joint Venture between the state and the union government.

However, in case that approval gets delayed, the state government has expressed its willingness to proceed with Phase-II through its own resources and institutional financing arrangements.

CM levelling false allegations against me: Kishan Reddy

Continued from P1

Responding to Revanth's remarks on Metro phases 1 and 2, the Union Minister clarified that the central government has already contributed Rs 1,250 crore to Phase 1, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated. He added that the Centre had agreed in principle to a 50:50 cost-sharing model for Metro Phase-2, a decision communicated during meetings involving the Urban Development Minister, the Chief Minister, and himself.

"We do not need certificates from Congress or Revanth Reddy. I am accountable to the people of Telangana," he said, adding that the Centre has been providing full support for national highways, railways, infrastructure projects, and other development works in the state.

On the IRFC loan issue, Kishan Reddy said the Chief Minister was again misrepresenting facts. "The state government itself signed the Rs13,500-crore agreement.

This is their decision. I never opposed it," he said, adding that he had spoken to the Union Urban Development Minister Manohar Lal Kattar.

According to him, Kattar had emphasised that Metro revenues must first be used for operations and maintenance, and only then for loan repayment. "The Chief Minister was advised on this, keeping in view the sustainability of the metro rail services. However, the state government did not agree," Kishan Reddy said, adding that all metros in the country follow the same standard procedures and that any differences over technical issues must be resolved through discussions, not political accusations.

Kishan Reddy accused the Chief Minister of attempting to shift blame. "Revanth Reddy is trying to divert attention from his failures. Even earlier, KCR delayed the metro rail project for three years, citing alignment changes. Today, Revanth is following the same pattern," he said.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



A separate and practical contingency plan should be developed for each vulnerable district ahead of for Kharif season with special attention to water conservation, moisture management, intercropping, and alternative crop patterns

Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Agriculture Minister



BIZ BRIEFS

Beautyverse by Amazon

Amazon India has announced the third edition of Beautyverse, its flagship beauty discovery event, scheduled for June 20 in Mumbai. Siddharth Bhagat, Director, Amazon India, said: "Last year, Beautyverse brought together over 1,400 attendees and brands who witnessed 1.6X growth in their business post the event. This year, we're bringing together over 2,000 attendees, 70 brands, India's biggest celebrities, more than 600 creators and Prime members."

GHR Infra's project in Hyd

GHR Infra has commenced Phase 1 handovers at GHR Callisto, its premium residential community in Kollur, marking a key milestone for the 1,190-apartment project in West Hyderabad. Spread across 8.3 acres, the IGBC pre-certified Gold-rated development comprises four towers and offers 2, 2.5, 3 and 4 BHK homes. The project features a 50,000 sq ft clubhouse, nearly 70 per cent open space, smart-home automation and sustainability-focused amenities, including EV charging stations and rainwater harvesting systems.

Isuzu unveils service camp

Isuzu Motors India has announced a nationwide 'ISUZU I-Care Pre-Monsoon Service Camp' for its D-MAX pick-up and SUV range from June 18-24. The initiative will offer customers a free 37-point vehicle check-up along with discounts on labour, parts, lubricants, roadside assistance, extended warranty and select service packages. The camp will be conducted across all authorised ISUZU service outlets nationwide, aiming to ensure preventive maintenance and a hassle-free driving experience during the monsoon season.

Hero, Salesforce collaborates

Salesforce, an agentic SCRM, announced its collaboration with Hero FinCorp, an NBFC, to revolutionise loan processing with Agentforce. Abhimanyu Munjal, MD, Hero FinCorp, said: "At Hero FinCorp, we are leveraging AI, data and digital innovation to transform the way customers access credit. As we continue to scale our business and expand financial inclusion across India, enhancing speed, efficiency and customer experience through technology remains a strategic priority."

JCB logs milestone

JCB India has produced and sold its 600,000th machine in the country, marking a significant milestone in its over four decades of operations in India. The milestone machine is a Backhoe Loader, one of the country's most widely used construction equipment models. Deepak Shetty, CEO, JCB India, said: "This milestone is much more than a number. It reflects the trust that customers have placed in JCB over several decades."

Telangana, AP among revenue deficit states: CAG

NEW DELHI

UTTAR Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Manipur, and 9 other states recorded surplus revenues in 2024-25, while the remaining 15 states had a deficit.

Eighteen states targeted revenue surplus, 3 states targeted revenue deficit, and 7 targeted zero revenue deficit in FY 2024-25, according to a report on 'State Finances 2024-25' released by Comptroller and Auditor General of India K Sanjay Murthy on Tuesday.

"In FY 2024-25, 15 states were revenue-deficient while the rest 13 states were revenue surplus," the report said.

Of the 18 states that targeted revenue surplus, 9 achieved the target, while Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh,

UP, Gujarat, Jharkhand, 10 other states recorded revenue surplus in FY25

Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Mizoram, and Telangana ended up being revenue deficit in 2024-25.

Seven states -- Goa, Jharkhand, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, and Uttar Pradesh -- targeted a zero-revenue deficit.

Among them, 4 states -- Goa, Jharkhand, Tripura, and Uttar Pradesh -- achieved a revenue surplus, whereas Punjab, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu ended the year with a revenue deficit.

Of the 15 states that were revenue-deficient in 2024-25, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Punjab and West Bengal received Finance Commission revenue deficit grants.

The report further said that if the indicative fiscal deficit target of 3 per cent of the GSDP, fixed by the Fifteenth Finance Commission for 2024-25, for states' fiscal consolidation path is considered, then 18 states were above the target.

The aggregate revenue deficit of 15 revenue-deficit states, without netting revenue surplus of 13 states, stood at Rs3,46,385 crore, which was 1.5 per cent of their combined GSDP. The net revenue deficit, after adjusting the revenue surplus in 13 states, stood at Rs2,19,041 crore, 0.68 per cent of the combined GSDP of all 28 states.

"I hope that the publica-

tion on State Finances 2024-25 will serve as a useful evidence-based resource for governments, researchers, policymakers and citizens, enabling a deeper understanding of state finances and supporting informed fiscal decision-making," CAG Murthy said.

The publication highlights the growing importance of states' own tax revenues, which accounted for 50 per cent of the combined total revenue receipts of Rs40.52 lakh crore across the 28 states in 2024-25.

State GST constituted more than 43 per cent of the combined states' own tax revenues. The combined budgetary expenditure of all

states stood at Rs 51.20 lakh crore in 2024-25, equivalent to 15.78 per cent of their combined GSDP.

The decadal trend shows that salaries, pensions and interest payments continue to constitute a major share of revenue expenditure.

In 2024-25, such committed expenditure exceeded 43 per cent of the combined revenue expenditure of the 28 states, with significant inter-state variation -- from 74 per cent in Nagaland to 29 per cent in Maharashtra.

As of March 31, 2025, the total liabilities of the states stood at Rs 90.51 lakh crore. All 28 states recorded a fiscal deficit.

A decadal analysis of defi-



COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA

cit parameters shows that states as a whole, during the period 2015-16 to 2024-25, remained in revenue and fiscal deficit. A substantial increase in revenue deficit took place in 2020-21, a year impacted by the Covid pandemic.

There has been a substantial increase in the fiscal defi-

cit in 2020-21 and 2024-25.

The states which witnessed a substantial increase in fiscal deficit in 2024-25 as compared to 2023-24 were Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Tripura and Uttarakhand.

OIL PRICES SET TO EASE AFTER US-IRAN DEAL

However, prices unlikely return to previous levels immediately: Analysts

NEW DELHI

CRUDE oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices are expected to moderate following signs of a potential US-Iran peace agreement and the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, although analysts cautioned that supply disruptions, damaged infrastructure and tight inventories could keep energy markets volatile for months.

The prospect of normalised shipping through the strategically important Strait of Hormuz has already triggered a sharp decline in geopolitical risk premiums, helping Brent crude retreat about 20 per cent from recent highs, while LNG benchmark prices have also softened.

"The potential reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, amid signs of de-escalation



in the West Asia conflict, has triggered a sharp decline in geopolitical risk premiums in energy markets," said Sehul Bhatt, Director, Crisil Intelligence. Bhatt said the decline in crude prices, coupled with recent increases in domestic fuel prices and reductions in excise duties, had largely offset under-recoveries on automobile fuels, easing pressure on petrol and diesel market-

ing margins.

"The cumulative under-recovery on petrol, diesel and liquefied petroleum gas during March-May 2026 is estimated at approximately Rs1 lakh crore. If the Indian crude basket remains below \$90 per barrel, under-recoveries are unlikely to increase materially from current levels," he said.

Lower crude prices would

also help reduce inflationary pressures, and India's energy import bill, Bhatt added, though he cautioned that it could take weeks or months for global oil and gas markets to fully normalise.

"While the risk of prolonged supply disruption has eased, it may take several weeks or months for crude oil and LNG markets to fully normalise," Bhatt said. "In the near term, uncertainties around the implementation of the peace deal could continue to drive volatility in energy markets."

Prashant Vasisht, Senior Vice President and Co-Group Head, Corporate Ratings at ICRA Ltd, said a successful US-Iran agreement would ease crude and gas prices, but a return to pre-conflict levels could take significantly longer.

PSU banks see sharp jump in green deposits FY26

Deploy funds for clean transport, renewable energy

MUMBAI

STATE-owned lenders witnessed a sharp surge in green deposit mobilisation in FY26 amid increased depositor awareness and the maturation of the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Green Deposit Framework, introduced in 2023. According to PTI's analysis of banks' Annual reports for 2025-26, eight state-owned lenders raised Rs 3,733.11 crore in FY26 through green deposits, compared to Rs 1,831.79 crore in the year-ago period.

The rise in green deposits reflects a growing focus among banks and depositors towards sustainable finance, with lenders increasingly linking their fundraising efforts with environmentally responsible lending, analysts said.

State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender,



er, raised Rs 317.39 crore through its green deposit products till March 2026, with outstanding green deposits recorded at Rs 218 crore as on March 31, 2026.

SBI garnered Rs 189.08 crore through green deposits in FY26, with the entire amount being deployed in clean transportation, particularly in green cars or electric vehicles, as per the Bank's Annual Report for 2025-26.

"The amount of green deposit raised has been utilised for financing the Green Car (EV) Loan portfolio," SBI said in its annual report.

The bank said its green car loan portfolio stood at Rs 3,587 crore as of March 31, 2026. Green deposit proceeds have been channelled into this portfolio to align the bank's liability mobilisation and asset deployment strategies.

Agentic AI summer camp at Meru Intl School

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

AI Ready School has concluded three batches of its flagship Agentic AI summer camp, a four-week immersive programme designed for students from Grades 7-9. Conducted in collaboration with Meru International School, the initiative introduced participants to the emerging field of Agentic Artificial Intelligence through structured, project-based learning. Students built AI-powered systems, created intelligent workflows, and developed real-world applications under expert mentorship, culminating in a showcase where they presented their projects to mentors, teachers, parents, and peers.

As Artificial Intelligence continues to reshape industries and workplaces, the need to equip students with future-ready skills is becoming increasingly important. While digital literacy is now a part of mainstream education, understanding how intelligent systems think, make decisions, and solve problems is emerging as a critical capability for the next generation. The Agentic AI Summer Camp was designed to help students move beyond using technology and begin creating AI-driven solutions.

Speaking on the successful completion of the programme, Chiranjeevi Maddala, Co-founder & CEO, AI Ready School, said, "The successful completion of three batches of the Agentic AI Summer Camp reinforces our belief that students are far more capable of understanding and applying advanced technologies than we often assume.

Primary markets lose steam in 2026

NEW DELHI: After a strong run in 2025, India's primary market witnessed a slowdown with 23 companies tapping the Initial Public Offering (IPO) route to mobilise over Rs 27,000 crore in 2026 so far, amid heightened volatility and macro uncertainty, according to a report released by Equirus Capital on Tuesday.

This came following a launch of 103 maiden public issues in 2025, together raising Rs 1.76 lakh crore. This fundraising figure far exceeded the Rs 1.6 lakh crore raised by 90 firms in



2024 and the Rs 49,436 crore garnered by 57 companies in 2023.

However, the IPO activity is showing signs of a major pickup as geopolitical tension eased with insurtech firm Turtlemint Fintech Solutions and Advit Jewels are scheduled to open on June 19 and June 23, respectively.

Additionally, the country's largest stock exchange NSE is expected to file its preliminary papers with Sebi this week. Further, quick commerce unicorn Zepto and the largest fund house SBI Mutual Funds plan to launch their public issues next month, people aware of the matter

Ltd, the operator of Cordelia Cruises, is also expected to come out with its maiden public offering this month. The public issues of insurtech firm Turtlemint Fintech Solutions and Advit Jewels are scheduled to open on June 19 and June 23, respectively.

Going by the report, IPO activity peaked sharply on September 25 with 25 issues, capitalising on buoyant markets and strong domestic inflows during that period.

said. In June, CMR Green Technologies and Hexagon Nutrition have already floated their IPOs.

Moreover, the pipeline remains robust and as of May 2026, with 236 mainboard IPO draft papers were in the pipeline, including 163 with valid Sebi's observations and 73 awaiting regulatory observations, according to Equirus Capital report.

Going by the report, IPO activity peaked sharply on September 25 with 25 issues, capitalising on buoyant markets and strong domestic inflows during that period.

Atria Renewable expands solar footprint

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

ATRIA Renewable Private Limited, a Bengaluru-based solar energy company, has announced the launch of its regional operations across Andhra Pradesh, starting with Mangalagiri and Vijayawada. This expansion reinforces the company's commitment to accelerating clean energy adoption across South India's fast-growing urban centres.

Atria Renewable specialises in bringing high-quality,

hassle-free rooftop solar to residential and commercial customers, completing most installations within a matter of hours, and providing customers with 24/7 real-time performance monitoring through its proprietary Namma Atria App. With every system backed by a 30-year warranty and five years of complimentary quarterly maintenance, the company has built its proposition around making the switch to solar as seamless and reliable as possible for Indian homes and businesses.

SpaceX nears Microsoft's valuation

NEW DELHI: Shares of Elon Musk-backed space and satellite company SpaceX continued their remarkable post-listing rally, with the stock trading above \$220 in overnight trading and pushing the company's market capitalisation close to tech giant Microsoft, a market commentary platform said on Tuesday.

In a post on X, The Kobeski Letter said SpaceX is now valued at less than \$100 billion below Microsoft, while the stock has gained about 63 per cent from its IPO price of \$135 per share since its market debut on June 12.

The rally has propelled the combined market capitalisation of SpaceX and Tesla to a record \$4.4 trillion, exceeding Apple's market value and approaching that of Google, according to the platform. It described the surge as un-

precedented, saying no initial public offering in history had witnessed a rally of such magnitude in such a short period. SpaceX raised a record \$85.7 billion after underwriters exercised the greenshoe overallotment option, making it one of the largest IPO fundraising exercises ever. In addition, the rally has significantly boosted Elon Musk's personal fortune, with Musk's net worth surpassing \$1.3 trillion, a level never before reached by an individual.

At that valuation, Musk's wealth exceeds the market capitalisation of all but 12 publicly listed companies worldwide, the platform noted. It further said that the combined value of SpaceX and Tesla now surpasses that of Apple, underscoring the scale of investor enthusiasm surrounding Musk's business empire.

Mkts rally for 3rd day on positive trends

The rally was broad-based, with notable gains in IT, realty, FMCG, and oil & gas sectors

MUMBAI: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty rose for the third consecutive day on Tuesday, propelled by a positive trend in global markets and softening crude oil prices following a peace deal between the US and Iran.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 544.15 points, or 0.71 per cent, to settle at 76,808.48 following gains in IT, select energy and banking stocks. Intraday, it surged 582.41 points, or 0.76 per cent, to 76,846.74. The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 135.25 points, or 0.57 per cent, to end at 23,989.15.

During the day, it jumped 148.7 points, or 0.62 per cent, to 24,002.60. In three straight sessions, Sensex jumped 2,975.93 points, or 4 per cent, and the Nifty climbed 827.55 points, or 3.57 per cent. Foreign investors turning net buyers in Indian equities also



boosted the sentiment, according to experts.

Among the 30 Sensex firms, HCL Tech rose the most by 3.59 per cent a day after the IT major announced a Rs 1,427 crore investment in government-backed sovereign AI model developer Sarvam AI for a 10.46 per cent stake. Bajaj Finserv, NTPC, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Consultancy Services

and Bajaj Finance were also among the winners. Inter-Globe Aviation, UltraTech Cement, Maruti and Tata Steel were among the laggards.

"Domestic equity markets continued their recovery momentum, buoyed by growing optimism around a de-escalation in US-Iran tensions and softening crude oil prices. The rally was broad-

based, with notable gains in IT, realty, FMCG, and oil & gas sectors," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Broader markets also ended higher. The BSE MidCap Select index climbed 0.64 per cent and SmallCap Select index went up by 0.59 per cent. Sectorally, Realty jumped 2.27 per cent, Focused IT (1.72 per cent), IT (1.66 per cent), FMCG (1.12 per cent), Energy (1 per cent) and Oil & Gas (0.85 per cent). Metal, Commodities and Auto were among the laggards. A total of 2,368 stocks advanced, while 1,886 declined and 153 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) turned buyers on Monday, purchasing equities worth Rs 200.05 crore on net basis, according to exchange data.



NARAYANA, A PLACE WHERE ASPIRATIONS TURN INTO AIRS

From Olympiad gold to JEE Advanced AIR 5: The remarkable rise of Kuchi

HARI NARAYANAN
HYDERABAD

At 18, Kuchi Sandeep from Visakhapatnam has emerged as one of India's most promising young minds.

Kuchi secured an outstanding AIR 5 in JEE Advanced 2026 after earlier achieving AIR 37 in JEE Main 2026. A student of Narayana, Hyderabad, his achievement places him among the country's top engineering aspirants.

But Kuchi's success story extends far beyond competitive examinations. He had already earned international recognition by winning a gold medal at the International Chemistry Olympiad held in the UAE. He is now preparing to represent India once again at the upcoming International Chemistry Olympiad in Uzbekistan.

Aspiring to study Computer Science at IIT Bombay and build a career in technology, Kuchi believes the future belongs to innovation, while retaining a healthy perspective on the opportunities and challenges posed by artificial intelligence.

Q. Congratulations on securing AIR 5 in JEE Advanced. Before we talk about preparation and strategy, take us back to those crucial moments—the day before the results were announced, the day the results were declared, and the day after.

Kuchi: Those 3 days were a rollercoaster of emotions. My exam had gone well, I was expecting a decent result but every second was filled with mixed emotions—fear, excitement and anticipation. The moment results were announced I was overjoyed. It was a proud moment for my family and to be honest, I was very very proud of myself.

Q. The moment students open their JEE Advanced results is something they remember forever. What happened when you finally saw AIR 5 on the screen? What was your immediate reaction, and how did your family respond?

Kuchi: The moment I opened the results I was on cloud 9. It was a dream come true. A single digit all India rank was in itself a very proud moment for me, but top 5 was a cherry on the cake.

Q. When did you first begin to believe that securing a top rank in one of the toughest exams in the country was possible? Was there a particular moment when you felt, "Yes, I can do this"?

Kuchi: In the days before JEE Advanced I did really well on my mock tests. Combined with my previous Chemistry Olympiad selection it gave me the confidence that I could secure a top rank

Q. Narayana is often described as a place where aspirations turn into AIRs. How did you choose Narayana?

Kuchi: I visited the campus and I really liked the teachers there. I also felt the regular Narayana testing did help my JEE preparations.

Q. Many people assume that top rankers have their careers planned from childhood. Tell us about your journey. When did your serious JEE preparation actually begin, and how different was your experience from what people generally imagine?

Kuchi: I studied in a CBSE school before

Narayana. In Class 9th, I joined Narayana for the Junior Science Olympiad and I have been with them since. I began my journey by Olympiad preparation and started serious JEE prep in 11th grade. My journey was quite similar to what people imagine but a less intense version of it.

Q. JEE preparation is often described as a two-year marathon rather than a sprint. What did your daily routine look like during the most intense phase of preparation, and how did you maintain consistency over such a long period?

Kuchi: I made sure that I spent a considerable chunk of my day trying to solve

different kinds of problems from different sources. I also made sure I revised previous topics while reading new ones. I maintained consistency over a long period by treating each mock test I gave as the final exam which always made me give my best.

Q. There is a popular belief that students who secure top ranks study 14 to 16 hours a day. Was that your reality, or do you believe success is more about the quality of study rather than the quantity of hours?

Kuchi: I believe both are important. Quantity is important until one can ensure at least 8-10 hours of study but after that further increase in quantity will just worsen the quality. After reaching a minimum it is much more important to focus on quality of study.

Q. A journey as demanding as JEE preparation inevitably comes with moments of pressure, self-doubt, and frustration. Were there times when you felt overwhelmed, and how did you navigate those difficult phases?

Kuchi: Bad tests always made me feel down. I overcame it by looking back at my good test results and talking to my parents and teachers.

Q. Apart from the guidance of Narayana's teachers and mentors, family support often plays a crucial role behind the scenes. How important were your parents, family members, and friends during these two years of preparation?

Kuchi: My parents stayed with me throughout my JEE prep so I was able to come back home instead of a hostel which was helpful. Also, my parents gave me motivation whenever I did badly in tests.

Q. Many IIT graduates eventually choose careers in technology, entrepreneurship, research, or even the Civil Services. Have you thought about the path you would like to pursue in the long run, and what attracts you to that field?

Kuchi: I would like to pursue a career in technology. Modern technology is fascinating to me, I would like to be a part in discovering it.

Q. If engineering had not been your chosen path, what other career options would have interested you? Were there any subjects or professions outside engineering that genuinely appealed to you?

Kuchi: If I hadn't chosen engineering, I would have chosen research in chemistry.

Q. Now that you have secured a rank that gives you access to the country's finest institutes, which IIT and branch are you aiming for, and what makes that choice special for you?

Kuchi: IIT Bombay Computer Science. The field is rapidly growing and changing and therefore seems exciting.

Q. As someone preparing to enter the technology world at a time when Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming industries, what are your thoughts on AI? Do you see it primarily as an opportunity, or are there concerns that students should be mindful of?

Kuchi: It is both an opportunity and a concern. It will take over a lot of jobs which can easily be automated and don't require deep thinking but it will also make jobs easier.

Q. India will celebrate 100 years of Independence in 2047. Looking ahead to that milestone, what kind of technological future do you envision for the country? Do you think innovations such as flying cars and advanced urban mobility could become a reality in everyday life?

Kuchi: I think flying cars and all are still science fiction in the near future but I envision a future where most repetitive and boring tasks are automated.

Q. Finally, lakhs of students across India are currently preparing for JEE while dealing with pressure, uncertainty, and fear of failure. Having successfully completed this journey, what message would you like to share with them?

Kuchi: Work hard and stay focused so that you can achieve your dreams.



IIT Madras celebrates international graduates

The Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) celebrated the achievements of its international students during a special Degree Distribution Programme, where graduating scholars from across the world received degrees across postgraduate and doctoral programmes.

The event marked the successful completion of studies for international students enrolled in programmes including MTEch, MS, PhD, joint degrees and other international academic collaborations. Graduates representing several countries participated in the ceremony, highlighting the institute's growing global academic presence.

Addressing the gathering as chief guest, Vikram Misri, Foreign Secretary of India, congratulated the graduating students and encouraged them to apply the knowledge, skills and research experience gained at IIT Madras to address global challenges, particularly those affecting developing nations.

He urged students to use innovation and technology to contribute to sustainable development and problem-solving in an era of rapid technological transformation. Emphasising the importance of global cooperation, he noted that highly skilled graduates have an important role to play in addressing issues related to economic development, infrastructure, healthcare, education and climate resilience.

The ceremony also reflected India's growing role as an international higher education destination. Over the years, IIT Madras has expanded opportunities for students from different countries through scholarships, academic partnerships and dedicated international outreach initiatives.

The institute offers several support mechanisms for overseas students, including scholarships under the IIT Madras Global Engagement initiatives, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) programme, the Study in

India initiative and other international collaborations. These efforts have helped attract talented students from Asia, Africa and other regions.

Officials noted that international enrolment at IIT Madras has steadily increased in recent years, with strong participation from countries across the Global South. The institute has also strengthened global academic engagement through research collaborations, exchange programmes and international partnerships.

For many graduating students, the ceremony marked not only the completion of their academic journey but also the beginning of careers in research, industry, entrepreneurship and public service. The event underscored the growing importance of international education and the role of institutions such as IIT Madras in preparing graduates to contribute to global development through science, technology and innovation.

TODAY IS NATIONAL EAT YOUR VEGETABLES DAY

Honing healthy habits early

Vegetables are an important part of a balanced diet and play a key role in helping children grow strong and stay healthy. Packed with essential vitamins, minerals, fiber and antioxidants, vegetables provide the nutrients needed for healthy bones, muscles and overall development.

Eating a variety of vegetables every day can help improve immunity and protect children from common illnesses. Leafy greens, carrots, tomatoes, beans, peas and other colorful vegetables contain nutrients that support healthy eyesight, brain development and energy levels. They also aid digestion and help maintain

a healthy weight.

Health experts recommend including vegetables in every meal to ensure children receive a wide range of nutrients. Different colors of vegetables provide different benefits. For example, orange vegetables such as carrots and pumpkins are rich in vitamin A, while green vegetables like spinach and broccoli contain iron and calcium that are important for growth and strong bones.

Developing healthy eating habits at an early age can have long-term benefits. Parents and teachers can encourage children to eat vegetables by offering colorful salads, soups and healthy snacks. Involving children

in gardening or helping with simple meal preparation can also make them more interested in trying different vegetables.

Eating vegetables regularly not only helps children stay active and energetic but also supports concentration and learning. A nutritious diet, combined with regular physical activity and adequate sleep, contributes to overall health and well-being. By making vegetables a regular part of their meals, children can build healthy habits that will benefit them throughout their lives. Small changes in daily eating patterns can make a big difference in helping children grow into healthy and happy adults.



Kuchi Sandeep

After the game (against New Zealand) they said to us, 'you have to leave immediately. We've been asked to get on a plane and return to our camp in Tijuana, and we are really troubled by that. They are forcing us to go back early. They are making the situation more and more difficult, more hurdles, but we're not going to let that stop us from doing our best' - Amir Ghalenoi, Iran football team head coach



Cape Verde's veteran wall stands tall on WC debut

Vozinha, 40, makes seven saves to hold Spain's star-studded lineup to shocking 0-0 draw

R J RICO ATLANTA

IT took Cape Verde goalkeeper Vozinha all of his 40 years on Earth to make his World Cup debut. The long, long wait was worth every fleeting second. Vozinha recorded seven saves on Monday, holding Spain's star-studded lineup to a shocking 0-0 draw.

The veteran keeper was everywhere as the Spanish team and its fans became increasingly frustrated, despite dominating possession and unleashing 27 shots. Not even the second-half entrance of young superstar Lamine Yamal could crack the code to get past Vozinha and the Cape Verde defense.

As the final whistle blew, Vozinha hunched over near his net and cried before being embraced by his teammates. Cape Verde, in its first-ever World Cup match, had gotten a point against Spain, the 2010 champion and one of the tournament favorites this year.

Vozinha said he was overcome by emotions thinking about his loved ones who were unable to see his finest performance: his grandparents who had raised him, and his mother. His grandparents died a few years ago.

And his mother had been unable to gather the money in time to secure a visa to enter the US, Vozinha said. Cape Verde is among 50 countries



Cape Verde goalkeeper Vozinha makes a save during the World Cup match against Spain

whose citizens face bonds of up to \$15,000 to secure a US visa, part of President Donald Trump's broader crackdown on travelers from countries that officials said had high rates of visa overstays.

The Trump administration last month suspended the requirement for ticket-holders from Cape Verde and four other World Cup nations, but critics said it was too late for many fans. Vozinha's performance was a culmination of a career that didn't even start at the professional level until Vozinha made his debut at the age of 25 for Angolan club Progresso. Since then, he's had stops in Moldova, Cyprus, Slovakia and Portugal, where he currently plays for Chaves in the Portuguese second division. He joined the national team in 2012 and at times, Vozinha said, he thought about retiring from the national team, but he "continued

because of this dream."

"I work all my life for this, for this moment, for this dream," Vozinha said. "A lot of generations in the past (dreamed of) this day but they did not achieve. And now the dream comes true." The word "vozhinha" is Portuguese for "little grandmother," and the goalkeeper said he was given the nickname by older kids who would beat him on the soccer field and then laugh, saying he was going home to complain to his grandparents.

Years later, he took on the nickname after someone else on his club also had the same first name, Josimar. These days, Cape Verde defender Steven Moreira said he and his teammates like to tease Vozinha about his age. He said he was proud of the keeper, calling him a "big legend" who had a "crazy game" and showed that age doesn't matter.



Belgium's Romelu Lukaku celebrates with teammates after a self goal from Egypt earn a draw for the latter

Belgium settles for 1-1 draw with Egypt

SEATTLE: Romelu Lukaku's mere presence sparked an attack that led to Belgium's lone goal only seconds after he entered as a second-half substitute, helping his team earn a 1-1 draw with Egypt on Monday at the World Cup.

Lukaku came on in the 66th minute with Belgium trailing 1-0. He ran down the middle of the field and lurched to tap a cross from the right into the net, but Egypt defender Mohamed Hany did that instead, scoring an own-goal. The equalising goal came only 23 seconds after Lukaku came on the field. Emam Ashour had put the Egyptians ahead in the 19th minute with his first international goal. Ashour, a midfielder who was playing in his 30th game for his country, took advantage of a defensive breakdown to give Egypt only its second lead in World Cup match. The Egyptians, who are playing in their fourth World Cup, still have never won a game at the tournament. Belgium failed to advance past the group stage at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar and has not won any of its last three matches in the tournament. Egypt had numerous chances to increase its lead but could not put the Red Devils away. Lukaku and teammate Kevin De Bruyne also had an abundance of opportunities to take the lead. (AP)

RESULTS

- Spain 0 Cape Verde 0
- Belgium 1 Egypt 1
- Saudi Arabia 1 Uruguay 1
- Iran 2 New Zealand 2

Fixtures (in IST)

ON WEDNESDAY

- France vs Senegal 12:30 am at MetLife Stadium, East Rutherford, New Jersey
- Iraq vs Norway 3:30 am at Gillette Stadium, Foxborough, Massachusetts
- Argentina vs Algeria 6:30 am at GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium, Kansas City, Missouri
- Austria vs Jordan 9:30 am at Levi's Stadium, Santa Clara, California
- Portugal vs Congo DR 10:30 pm at NRG Stadium, Houston, Texas

ON THURSDAY

- England vs Croatia 1:30 am at AT&T Stadium, Arlington, Texas
- Ghana vs Panama 4:30 am at BMO Field, Toronto, Canada
- Uzbekistan vs Colombia 7:30 am at Estadio Banorte, Mexico City, Mexico
- Czechia vs South Africa 9:30 pm at Mercedes-Benz Stadium, Atlanta, Georgia

Gurucharan bags Brilliant Trophy Jrs online chess title

HYDERABAD: Gurucharan Bhole of Raviteja High School, Narayanpet, emerged champion of the Brilliant Trophy Juniors Online Chess Tournament, scoring an impressive 11 points from 12 rounds. The tournament, conducted online, witnessed participation from young chess talents across the country.

Ayaan Arora of New Delhi and Saw Jinson Samuel of Andaman & Nicobar Islands secured second and third places respectively, both finishing with 10.5 points from 12 rounds. Leeladitya Vardhan, Shanmukha Vasudeva, Anjan Goud Panasa, P Jillin Jeffin, Lopamudra Srivalli Aadya, Advitiya A G., and Laxmi Rishaank completed the top ten standings.

The event also featured age-category prizes for boys and girls in Under-15, Under-13, Under-11, Under-9 and Under-7 sections. Several promising young players showcased their skills, making the tournament a highly competitive and successful event.

The age category prize



winners are:Boys: Under-15: 1. Mohammed Shabbir Ahmed, 2. Preran Under-13: 1. M Adithya, 2. VSai Anirudh. Under-11: 1. Sacit Bara, 2. Arhant Reddy Swarna. Under-9: 1. Mohammed Sahir Ahmed, 2. T Easanth Under-7: 1. Vaidik Tanwar, 2. B Nithwik.

Girls: Under-15: 1. Sri Lasya Tummupudi, 2. Kandeputi Manasa. Under-13: 1. Saanvika Akarapu, 2. Parnita Under-11: 1.S K Sony, 2. Kandeputi Karthika. Under-9: 1. Anshitha, 2. B Aira. Under-7: 1. B Nithwika, 2.Ishika Garlapati.

Gymkhana FC enter semis, beat Bolarum Sporting 2-0

HYDERABAD: Gymkhana FC secured a place in the semi-finals of the Bolarum Challenge Cup 2026 with a convincing 2-0 victory over hosts Bolarum Sporting in the tournament's second quarter-final match.

Bolarum Sporting made an energetic start and nearly opened the scoring in the 10th minute. Piyush delivered a precise cross to Sai Satya, but a timely intervention by a Gymkhana defender prevented the hosts from taking the lead.

Gymkhana FC gradually settled into the contest and broke the deadlock in the 20th minute of the first half. Jobin finished off a well-constructed attacking move to put his side ahead 1-0.

The visitors maintained control after the break and doubled their advantage in the 75th minute. Majid reacted quickest to a rebound after goalkeeper Likith made an initial save, calmly slotting the ball home to make it 2-0.

Bolarum Sporting continued to battle hard and created a late chance through Abhishek, but he was unable to find the target.

TCA THREATENS LEGAL ACTION OVER PROPOSED TG-20 LEAGUE



HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Telangana Cricket Association (TCA) has announced that it will issue legal notices to several film personalities, cricketers and Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) officials over their alleged association with the proposed

TG-20 League, which it claims lacks mandatory approval from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). TCA General Secretary Dharam Guruvu Reddy said notices would be sent to actors Venkatesh Daggubati and Vijay Deverakonda, former India cricketer Ambati Rayudu, and international players Tilak Varma

and Mohammed Siraj, among others. The association alleged that their endorsements could create a misleading impression that the tournament is officially recognized. The TCA also raised concerns over the role of the Court-appointed Single Member Committee headed by retired Justice P. Naveen Rao and questioned the legality of the league's governing structure and financial transactions.

Further, the association alleged political interference in cricket administration, irregularities in franchise ownership and marginalization of district-level players. It claimed that cricket was being used to advance commercial and political interests.

'People from RSS' behind attack on me: Dipke

JAIPUR

COCKROACH Janta Party founder Abhijeet Dipke on Tuesday alleged that "some people from RSS" were behind the attack on him a day earlier, claiming it was an attempt to shift focus away from the real issue and stifle the voice of students.

Dipke landed at the Nagpur airport on Tuesday morning, ahead of the BJP's protest scheduled at Samvidhan Square here later in the day to demand the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over last month's NEET (UG) paper leak issue.

The BJP founder was allegedly slapped multiple times by two men while supporters carried him on their shoulders during a protest in Jaipur on Monday. Two youths have been detained in connection with the incident.



Asked who he thinks was behind the attack on him, Dipke alleged, "There were some people belonging to RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh), and there is nothing new in it."

Whenever someone speaks against the government or their ideology, they do like this; there is nothing new in it, he claimed.

On claims that he has ties

with RSS and had met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dipke said, "Is that why they attacked me yesterday?"

He claimed the attack on him was an attempt to divert attention from the real issue and to suppress the students' voices.

"We will not deviate from our issues; you attack us as much as you want. We will do our protest peacefully

and democratically and not deviate from our main issue, which is about more than one crore students suffering injustice, and Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has to take responsibility for it," he said.

"These kind of attacks will keep happening, but I am not afraid. We walk on the path of (Mahatma) Gandhi ji and Ambedkar, and it is our satyagraha, we will keep going on peacefully," he asserted.

Dipke has appealed to Nagpur residents, including students and the youth, to gather at Samvidhan Square at 4 pm on Tuesday for a peaceful demonstration.

The BJP has been demanding Pradhan's resignation over the NEET (UG) paper leak scandal.

Elaborate security arrangements have been made ahead of the protest in Nagpur, officials said. PTI

'BJP failed' accountability test by not seeking Pradhan's exit'

NEW DELHI

CONGRESS president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday accused the BJP government of having completely failed the test of accountability by not asking Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan to resign following several exam irregularities.

He also criticised the government for putting curbs on the Telegram messaging app ahead of the NEET-UG 2026 re-exam on June 21, "The Modi government has temporarily blocked Telegram for the NEET exam re-test."

Modi ji should first demand the resignation of his Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who has blocked the futures of millions of youth," Kharge said in a post on X.

"Whether it's deploying the Indian Air Force, blocking Telegram, or catching small fish to protect the paper leak mafia - this is all something the Modi government has to do because in the last



10 years, 90 paper leaks have occurred, and 9 crore youth are suffering due to this fraud and corruption. How long will this government keep covering up its failures?" the Congress chief asked.

The Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha claimed that nearly half a dozen young people have been forced to take their own lives due to the exam irregularities.

"Modi ji doesn't utter a single word. There are countless candidates whose parents took loans to prepare them for recruitment exams over

years. And then, one after another, NEET, SSC, UGC-NET, CUET, and other exam papers get leaked," he said.

The situation, Kharge said, has reached such a point that so much fraud was carried out in the CBSE results that talented students had to expose this government.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will also be addressing a few student conventions across the country starting June 17 in Kota while seeking to unite the student community against the Modi government over the paper leaks.

Jharkhand: NDA MLAs moved to hotel ahead of RS polls

RANCHI: Legislators of the opposition NDA in Jharkhand were being moved to a hotel here days ahead of polls to two Rajya Sabha seats in Jharkhand, a source in the alliance said. Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly Babul Marandi said they will hold meetings to chalk out a strategy for the elections on June 18. Asking if the MLAs would stay at the hotel for two days, he said, "We will hold meetings." The BJP leader exuded confidence in the victory of the BJP-backed Independent candidate Parimal Nathwani in one of the two Rajya Sabha seats in the state.

A candidate is required to secure a minimum of 28 first-preference votes to emerge victorious. The BJP-led NDA does not have the numbers in the state assembly to make Nathwani a winner in the polls, unless there is cross-voting, a ruling party legislator said. In the Jharkhand Assembly, the INDIA bloc has 56 members, comprising 34 from the JMM, 16 from the Congress, four from the RJD and two from CPI(M) Liberation

NCPI names new chief; party gen secy 'has no idea'

KOLKATA: The Nationalist Citizens Party of India, which has been thrust into the spotlight after the Trinamool Congress rebel Lok Sabha faction's merger with it, has named Jyotiprakash Chatterji as its new president, according to Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, a key face of the dissident camp.

Ghosh Dastidar's statement came a day after NCPI founder Shewli Kundu told reporters that she had stepped down as the NCPI chief, triggering speculation that Ghosh Dastidar herself had taken charge of the party.

Amid TMC split, LS speaker gave Abhishek 2-hr notice

NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will hear the defected TMC MPs as well as the faction led by Mamata Banerjee before deciding on giving recognition to the breakaway faction, sources said. Meanwhile, sources from the Mamata-led TMC said that on Monday, its leader Abhishek Banerjee was called for a meeting with Birla at a two-hour notice when he was still being questioned by the ED. TMC sources said Banerjee got an email from the speaker's office at around

2 pm on Monday, asking him to meet Birla at 4 pm. Soon after, the speaker's office called party MP Kirti Azad and told him about the email. Azad, in response, informed the speaker's office that Banerjee was "committed to cooperating with all investigative agencies" and was cooperating with the investigation at the ED office in CGO complex in Kolkata, sources said. Later in the day, Azad also met the speaker to inform him about the email.

The sources added that Banerjee returned after questioning only around mid-



night. The communication came as around 20 TMC MPs announced they were merging with the little-known Nationalist Citizens Party of India (NCPI) and said they would later stake claim to be recognised as the "real TMC".

Earlier, sources from Parliament said Birla is likely to seek legal opinion on the defected leaders' demand to be recognised as a separate group after a proposed merger with the little-known Nationalist Citizens Party of India (NCPI).

Two held for throwing eggs at TMC MLA Kunjal

KOLKATA: Two persons were arrested on Tuesday morning, allegedly for throwing eggs at Trinamool Congress MLA Kunjal Ghosh outside party supreme Mamata Banerjee's residence here, a senior police officer said. Chandan Singh and Ravi Koyal were arrested following a complaint lodged by Ghosh late on Monday evening. "An FIR was registered immediately. One accused was detained in the night, and based on information gathered during his interrogation, the second accused was arrested on Tuesday morning," a senior police officer said.

Raut rejects Sena (UBT) MP defection buzz

MUMBAI

A day after Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Deshmukh met Shiv Sena minister Prataprao Jadhav, sparking speculation of a possible switch, Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said a "wrong picture was being painted" and asserted all parliamentarians remain firmly with the party.

Talking to reporters in New Delhi, Raut targeted the ruling BJP, accusing it of splitting parties and saying this was bad for the country's political health. "All Shiv Sena (UBT) MPs are together and will remain together," the



Rajya Sabha member said.

The Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) has downplayed the speculation of an "Operation Tiger" being afoot (by ruling Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde) to poach party MPs.

Notably, the mascot of the undivided Shiv Sena was a tiger drawn by party founder Bal Thackeray. Thackeray on Sunday called a meeting of

party MPs. Of the nine Lok Sabha members, only four --- Arvind Sawant, Anil Desai, Rajabhu Waze and Sanjay Patil --- attended the meeting in person, while Omprakash Raje Nimbalkar, Bhausaheb Wakchaur, Nagesh Bapurao Patil Ashtikar and Sanjay Deshmukh attended online.

Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Jadhav spoke to Thackeray over the phone, Raut said on Monday. The five MPs had cited different reasons to attend the meeting virtually.

Deshmukh, MP from Yavatmal-Washim, had said he skipped the meeting for family reasons.



How excessive heat damages hair and why henna creams can be a gentler alternative

Healthy hair doesn't lose its shine and strength overnight. Repeated exposure to excessive heat and harsh chemical treatments can gradually weaken hair fibers, leading to dryness, breakage, and fading colour over time



CLELIA CECILIA ANGELON

Hair damage rarely happens overnight. Dullness, dryness, loss of shine, breakage, and premature color fading are often the result of cumulative stress that builds up over time. One of the main contributors is frequent exposure to excessive heat, whether from intense sun exposure, blow dryers, flat irons, curling tools, or other heat sources. When hair is repeatedly subjected to high temperatures, its natural moisture content decreases, making the fiber more vulnerable to dryness, porosity, and reduced strength. In many cases, these effects are ampli-

fied when combined with repeated chemical treatments.

What Excessive Heat Does to Hair

The cuticle, the outer protective layer of the hair, helps retain moisture and preserve the integrity of the hair fiber. Frequent exposure to excessive heat can gradually compromise this protective barrier, leading to frizz, loss of shine, and increased fragility.

Heat styling tools used at very high temperatures can accelerate the evaporation of water from within the hair shaft, contributing to structural changes that weaken the fiber over time. For this reason, regular exposure to intense heat requires additional care to help maintain healthy-looking hair.

The Role of Chemical Coloring Processes

While heat contributes to hair wear and tear, one of the most significant factors associated with cumulative



damage in color-treated hair is the repeated use of alkaline agents commonly found in conventional hair color products.

Ingredients such as ammonia, ethanalamine, diethanolamine, and triethanolamine are used to open the cuticle and allow pigments to enter

or be lifted from the hair. While this process is effective for coloring, repeated exposure can increase porosity, contribute to dryness, and reduce the overall resilience of the hair fiber. Many consumers notice these effects through rougher texture, faster color fading, scalp sen-

sitivity, and a growing need for intensive conditioning and repair treatments.

How Henna Creams Work Differently

Henna creams offer a different approach to hair coloring. Rather than relying on aggressive alkaline



systems to alter the hair structure, henna deposits color in a gentler way that better respects the hair's natural integrity.

This characteristic can be especially beneficial for hair that is already exposed to frequent heat styling or has undergone multiple chemical treatments over time.

In addition, cream-based henna formulations have made the coloring pro-

cess more convenient by eliminating many of the preparation and application challenges traditionally associated with powdered henna, while preserving its plant-based origin.

A New Approach to Caring for Color-Treated Hair

Maintaining healthy hair involves multiple factors, but reducing excessive heat exposure and choosing gentler

coloring systems can make a meaningful difference in the appearance and condition of the hair over time.

As a result, more consumers are seeking alternatives that provide beautiful color without adding unnecessary chemical stress to the hair fiber. Henna creams represent one practical option for achieving that balance.

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

Nia Sharma shares unique take on how fame works today



Television actress Nia Sharma has shared a unique perspective on fame. She offered her thoughts on how stardom is perceived in today's fast-moving entertainment industry.

In her recent post, she compared the nature of modern fame to something instantly accessible and widely enjoyed. Taking to Instagram, the 'Naagin' actress posted her sultry video and wrote, "Fame today is like instant noodles. Everyone enjoys!" In the clip, Nia is seen dressed in a shimmering, stylish saree and striking different sultry poses for the camera. Notably, her 'Ek Hazaron Main Meri Behna Hai' co-star and dear friend Krystle D'Souza commented, "For 2 mins max."

In April, Nia Sharma and Krystle D'Souza, who are known for their

on-screen sisterly bond in 'Ek Hazaron Mein Meri Behna Hai,' were spotted enjoying a fun-filled long drive in Nia's luxury car. Krystle also took to her social media account and shared a light-hearted video of the duo having a great time during the ride. She captioned it as, "High on coffee and some careless whispers."

Nia often shares her videos and photos on social media.

On the work front, Nia is widely known for her performances in television shows such as "Behnein," "Ek Hazaron Mein Meri Behna Hai," "Meri Durga," and "Kaal - Ek Agnipariksha." In 2020, she participated in "Khatron Ke Khiladi: Made in India" and emerged as the winner. She has also appeared in popular web series including "Twisted" and "Jamai 2.0."

Soha Ali Khan talks about passing down her favourite childhood toy to daughter Inaaya

Soha Ali Khan has spoken about how her favourite toy, whom she lovingly named Elliott, shaped her childhood and also revealed that she passed it down to her daughter, Inaaya Naumi Kemmu, as the actress wanted her little one to experience the same joy of creating her own little world.

In a nostalgic video, Soha reflected on her favourite childhood companion, a stuffed toy dog named Elliott, and the countless adventures she created alongside her siblings, Saif Ali Khan and Saba Ali Khan.

Soha shared in the video: "One of my most favourite summer vacation memories is just sitting with Bhai, with my sister Apa and making up stories around Elliott. One of us would start the story, another would continue it, and third would add a twist; and by the end of the afternoon, Elliott had travelled the world, solved mysteries, and made the most unlikely friends."

The actress recalled how



her brother Saif Ali Khan would "hide clues around the house" and her sister Saba Ali Khan Pataudi "would draw up a treasure map."

She added: "And I would lead the investigation through Elliott. I remember entire afternoons just disappearing as we solved mysteries that basically existed only in our imaginations."

"It was never really about the toy itself. It was about

lessons," she shared. Soha said that watching her imagination take over is "honestly one of my favourite things."

The actress took to the caption section, where she mentioned that "a toy is never just a toy."

"It's an adventure waiting to happen - a window to imagination, create, and the beginning of some of our most cherished childhood memories. I watched my first #ToyStory movie with my family and the legacy has been such a big part of my childhood and growing up years!" She added: "As Disney and Pixar's Toy Story 5 releases in India, what I love most is that this new chapter not only reunites us with Woody, Buzz Lightyear, Jessie and the gang, but also asks a very important question for today's children and parents: how do we continue to nurture imagination in a world increasingly shaped by screens?"

Disney and Pixar's Toy Story 5 releases in India on June 19.

CROSSWORD

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24				25			
			26				
27					28		
			29				
30					31		

ACROSS

- Kick up ___ (1,4)
- Paint solvent (5)
- Gallery custodian (7)
- Embellish (5)
- Deprive of weapons (5)
- Toothed wheels (5)
- Let or allowed to fall (7)
- Small spot (3)
- Wild party (4)
- False or insincere, as a prefix (6)
- Intelligent (5)
- Deserving (6)
- Grows old (4)
- Illuminated (3)
- Nazi secret police (7)
- Clear (5)
- Reel (5)
- Cheekiness (5)
- Thor Heyerdahl's raft (3-4)
- Beginning (5)
- Worry (5)

DOWN

- A soft felt hat (6)
- Abrasion (6)
- Light source (3)
- Cooked in an oven (5)
- Sightseer (7)
- Vessels for ashes (4)
- Spell (6)
- Full of pathogens (5)
- Prolong vowels (5)
- Openly manifest (5)
- Hindu goddess of war (5)
- Trunk (5)
- Plume or pride oneself (5)
- Small onion (7)
- Bottom of the crankcase (3,3)
- Reach or gain (6)
- Distinctive periods (6)
- You receive them on your birthday? (5)
- Prod (4)
- Jamaican popular music (3)

Solution to June 16

SUDOKU

			7	9	8			
			6		3			9
			2			1		6
							9	5
8		9			6		3	1
2		3						
	2		7				4	
6					2		1	
					4	9	2	

Solution to June 16

6	2	9	1	4	7	8	3	5
1	8	3	6	9	5	4	7	2
7	4	5	8	2	3	6	1	9
9	3	6	7	8	4	2	5	1
2	1	8	3	5	9	7	6	4
5	7	4	2	6	1	3	9	8
3	6	2	9	1	8	5	4	7
4	9	7	5	3	2	1	8	6
8	5	1	4	7	6	9	2	3

'Western wear kinda gal' Zeenat Aman reveals Manish Malhotra's trick to make her comfortable in sarees

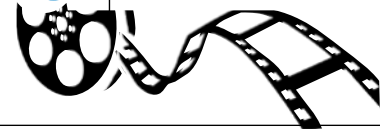
Veteran actress Zeenat Aman, who is often dubbed the queen of Instagram, has shared how celebrity fashion designer and producer Manish Malhotra ensured comfort for her on the sets of her film 'Bun Tikki'.

On Monday, the actress took to her Instagram, and shared a few pictures of herself wearing sarees on the sets of the film. The actress shared while she has a natural affinity for western styling, Manish ensured she feels comfortable wearing sarees. The trick was that Manish turned all sarees by making them ready to wear. She penned a long note in the caption as she wrote, "Shooting 'Bun Tikki' was such a sweet, endearing experience. Working on it showed me how much I have grown to appreciate gentle stories that unravel human intricacies without the "pow boom bang" aggression of masala formula flicks. My wardrobe for the



film was exquisite, and I felt reinvented in the saris @manishmalhotra05 designed for me. Now it's evident that I'm more of a western wear kinda gal, so Manish eased me back into traditional clothes by making each of these saris "ready to wear". Sheer genius". She further mentioned, "That made 12 hour shoot days and long hours of styling oh so comfortable. There is no doubt great beauty and legacy to draping a sari, but for those of us who don't

have the patience or skill, this is the ultimate hack. Ladies, have you tried wearing a sari in this style? Your thoughts?". Earlier, the actress took a trip down memory lane and reflected on how her return to the screen after the birth of her first son, Azaan, was possible only because of the support of her mother. She revealed she was going through a rough patch in her married life at the time and just wanted to escape her personal life.



OTT deals crisis puts big-budget films under financial pressure

SUHAS SISTU

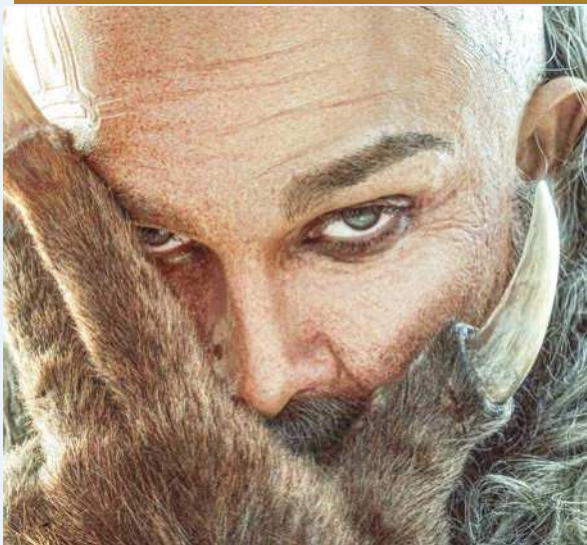
The Indian film industry is facing a new financial challenge as OTT deals, once considered a major source of revenue recovery, have witnessed a significant decline. Streaming platforms are reportedly reducing acquisition budgets, leaving producers of several big-budget films under mounting pressure.

Industry sources indicate that major upcoming projects, including Varanasi, Raaka, and Toxic, are finding it difficult to secure digital deals at their expected valuations. While producers have quoted premium prices for streaming rights, OTT platforms are reportedly offering less than one-third of those amounts, creating a substantial gap between expectations and market realities.

The slowdown has become a major concern because digital rights have played a crucial role in helping producers recover a significant portion of production investments in recent years. With production costs and star remunerations continuing to rise, filmmakers are now relying more heavily on theatrical collections to achieve profitability.

Several Telugu and Hindi films are reportedly yet to finalize their digital agreements due to pricing dis-

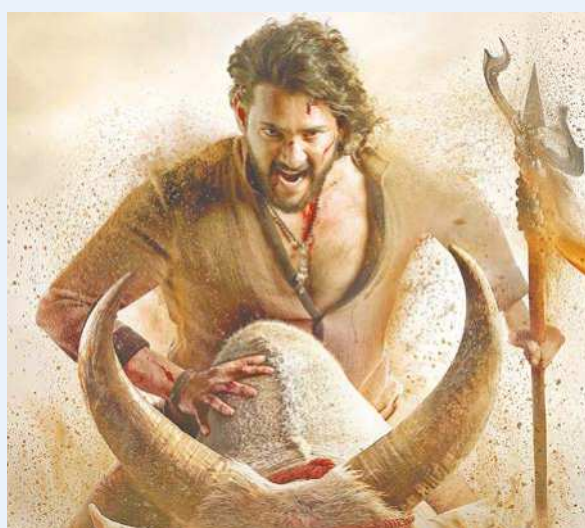
The sharp decline in OTT acquisition prices has created fresh challenges for film producers across India. With digital platforms significantly reducing their spending, several high-profile projects are struggling to close streaming deals, increasing dependence on theatrical performance for financial recovery.



agreements. Even some of the country's most anticipated projects are facing uncertainty in this area. Reports suggest that Shah Rukh Khan's King is yet to conclude its OTT deal, while films such as Vishwambara starring Chiranjeevi and Prabhas' Fauzi are also awaiting digital partners before key release-related decisions can be finalized. Industry insiders claim that many

streaming platforms have informed producers that their annual content acquisition budgets have already been allocated, making fresh negotiations increasingly difficult. This has led to growing anxiety among producers who have invested heavily in large-scale productions.

As the OTT market undergoes a correction phase, filmmakers are being forced to rethink recovery strate-



gies. For now, the success of many big-ticket films may depend largely on their theatrical performance, mark-

ing a significant shift from the OTT-driven business model that dominated the industry in recent years.

'Nagabandham' promises a grand visual spectacle: DOP Soundararajan

With its worldwide release scheduled for July 3, Nagabandham - The Secret Treasure is shaping up to be one of the most ambitious Telugu films of the year. Starring Virat Karni in the lead role and directed by Abhishek Nama, the epic adventure thriller has already created significant buzz through its promotional content. Now, cinematographer S. Soundararajan has shared fascinating insights into the making of the film, revealing the scale, research, and technical efforts that went into bringing the story to life.

According to Soundararajan, the film's biggest highlights are the visually stunning Anantha Padmanabha Swamy temple sequences and a grand climax designed to leave audiences mesmerized. He explained that extensive research was carried out before production began, with the director, art director, and cinematography team visiting several temples, including the famous Anantha Padmanabha Swamy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram, to study intricate architectural and cultural details.

The production team then recreated a fictional temple setting called "Srirangapuram," blending influences from iconic South Indian temples. Massive sets were constructed on a scale rarely seen in Telugu cinema, presenting one of the biggest challenges for the cinematography department. Soundararajan revealed that advanced drone technology and specialized camera equipment were used to capture the enormous sets in immersive single-shot sequences.

The cinematographer also praised director Abhishek Nama's vision, describing him as a filmmaker with exceptional clarity and storytelling ambition. He noted that the makers never compromised on quality, with certain sequences reportedly mounted on a massive budget to achieve the desired grandeur and realism.



Produced by Kishore Annapureddy and Nishita Nagireddy under the Nick Studios banner, Nagabandham also stars Nabha Natesh, Aishwarya Menon, Jagapathi Babu, Mahesh Manjrekar, and Rishabh Sawhney in pivotal roles.

Soundararajan further lauded lead actor Virat Karni's dedication, revealing that he performed demanding scenes in extreme weather conditions and remained committed despite health challenges during filming.

Blending mythology, fiction, adventure, and drama, Nagabandham aims to offer audiences a visually rich and spiritually immersive cinematic experience. With grand visuals, extensive VFX work, and a divine musical backdrop, the film is expected to deliver a unique theatrical spectacle when it arrives in cinemas on July 3.

'Odiyan' marks Dharma Productions' Malayalam debut; Prithviraj in lead

Dharma Productions is expanding its footprint into Malayalam cinema with the announcement of Odiyan - The Age of Illusion, an ambitious folklore horror thriller starring Prithviraj Sukumaran in the lead role. The project marks the first Malayalam production venture for the renowned Bollywood banner and brings together Dharma Productions and Prithviraj Productions for a prestigious collaboration. The film will be directed by acclaimed filmmaker Rahul Sadasivan, who earned widespread praise for his atmospheric horror dramas Bhoothakaalam and Bramayugam. Joining Prith-

viraj in a pivotal role is actress Manju Warrier, further elevating expectations surrounding the project.

The makers unveiled a striking announcement poster that immediately captured attention. Featuring a skeletal figure curled inside an ornate antique mirror, the artwork hints at a dark and mysterious narrative rooted in supernatural themes. The imagery reflects elements of black magic, ancient rituals, and shapeshifting folklore that form the foundation of the story.

Set in the 19th century, Odiyan - The Age of Illusion draws inspiration from Kerala's legendary Odiyan folklore. According to popular myths, Odiyans were feared shapeshifters believed to possess mysti-



cal powers, allowing them to transform into animals and move unseen under the cover of darkness. Known for his unique storytelling style, Rahul Sadasivan is expected to present the folklore through a gripping and immersive horror lens. The film is being produced by Karan Johar, Adar Poonawalla, Apoorva Mehta, and Supriya Menon. Mounted on a grand scale, the project

is planned as a multilingual release in Malayalam, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Hindi, enabling it to reach audiences across India. With a celebrated director, a strong cast, and a fascinating mythological backdrop, Odiyan - The Age of Illusion has already emerged as one of the most anticipated horror films in development.

Production is expected to begin shortly, with the makers targeting a theatrical release next year.

'GUNDE PELIPOTHONDHE' FROM 'SRINIVASA MANGAPURAM' HIGHLIGHTS FRESH ROMANCE

The makers of Srinivasa Mangapuram have unveiled the film's third single, Gunde Pelipothondhe, offering audiences a delightful glimpse into the romantic world crafted by director Ajay Bhupathi. The song, which celebrates the innocence and excitement of first love, has quickly caught the attention of music lovers with its melodious composition and vibrant visuals. Featuring debutant Jaya Krishna Ghattamaneni and actress Rasha Thadani, who is making her Telugu cinema debut, the track showcases the blossoming emotions of a young man enchanted by a girl who changes his world. Set against a picturesque temple backdrop, the song captures youthful affection, admiration, and the magical feeling of falling in love for the first time. Music composer GV Prakash Kumar delivers a soothing and enchanting melody that blends classical



influences with contemporary sounds. Complemented by Oscar-winning lyricist Chandrabose's heartfelt lyrics and Anurag Kulkarni's soulful vocals, the song creates an emotional and memorable listening experience. The elegant

flute passages, rich orchestration, and violin arrangements further elevate its appeal.

Visually, Gunde Pelipothondhe stands out with colorful frames and graceful choreography by Bhanu Master. Jaya Krishna Ghat-

tamaneni impresses with his natural screen presence, while Rasha Thadani brings charm and elegance to the screen. Their refreshing chemistry has emerged as one of the song's major highlights.

Directed by Ajay Bhupathi, who earned acclaim with Mangalavaaram, Srinivasa Mangapuram also features veteran actor Mohan Babu in a powerful antagonist role. Produced by P. Kiran and presented by Ashwini Dutt, the film is generating strong curiosity with each promotional release.

Backed by a talented technical team including cinematographer Jayakrishna ISC, editor Madhav Kumar Gulapati, production designer Sahi Suresh, and action choreographer Real Sathish, the film promises a blend of romance, emotion, and engaging storytelling. The makers are expected to announce the release date soon.



Pooja Hegde showcases fashion-forward style

Actress Pooja Hegde is enjoying a successful phase in her career as her latest Bollywood entertainer Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai continues to attract audiences in theatres. The romantic comedy, directed by David Dhawan, features Varun Dhawan, Mrunal Thakur, and Pooja Hegde in lead roles and has been generating positive buzz since its release on June 5. Amid the film's encouraging response, Pooja has also caught the attention of fans with her latest stunning photoshoot. The actress showcased her fashion-forward style in a graceful sage-green corset dress that perfectly blended elegance and contemporary glamour. The outfit featured delicate lace-trimmed layered hems, adding a soft and sophisticated touch to her overall appearance.

The photographs, captured during a night-time shoot, highlight Pooja's effortless charm and confidence. Her flowing jet-black hair, caught dramatically in the breeze, added a striking visual appeal to the images. Sparkling drop earrings and stylish stacked rings completed the look, enhancing the actress's refined fashion statement. Known for her versatility both on-screen and off-screen, Pooja continues to maintain a strong presence in the entertainment industry. Her latest appearance has received appreciation from fans on social media, with many praising her elegant styling and radiant look. With a successful film currently running in theatres and several anticipated ventures in the pipeline, Pooja Hegde appears to be enjoying one of the most promising phases of her career. Her combination of screen presence, fashion appeal, and consistent performances continues to make her one of the most sought-after actresses in Indian cinema.

'Save The Tigers Season 3' premiere creates buzz

The much-anticipated Save The Tigers Season 3 is all set to stream on JioHotstar from June 19, and the excitement surrounding the popular Telugu web series reached new heights with a grand premiere event held at AMB Cinemas in Hyderabad on Monday evening. The star-studded screening witnessed an overwhelming response from celebrities, media representatives, and special guests, turning the evening into a celebration of one of the most successful regional OTT franchises. The red-carpet event featured glamorous appearances, exclusive interactions, and a special screening that left attendees entertained and laughing throughout.

Several prominent personalities from the entertainment industry attended the premiere, including Sundeep Kishan, Kamakshi Bhaskarla, Rag Mayur, VJ Sunny, Kalyan Padala, Chaitanya Rao, Ven-



katesh Kakumanu, Karthik Ratnam, Aditya Mandala, Srinath Maganti, Mukku Avinash, Nirupam, and Kireeti Damaraju. The screening received an enthusiastic response, particularly for the performances of Priyadarshi, Vennela Kishore, Jordaa Sujatha, Krishna Chaitanya, Deviyani Sharma, Abhinav Gomatam, and Pavana Gangureddy. The new season revolves around the lives of three couples while introducing a fantasy element through a divine character portrayed by Vennela Kishore, adding a

fresh dimension to the narrative. Having emerged as one of the most-watched Telugu web series on OTT platforms, Save The Tigers earned widespread popularity through its relatable humor, quirky characters, and family-friendly entertainment. With Season 3 introducing a unique fantasy twist, expectations are soaring among fans eager to witness the next chapter of the beloved franchise.

The countdown has officially begun for what promises to be another entertaining and laughter-filled season.

Is Dhanush quietly preparing son Yatra for a grand debut?

The buzz around star kids entering the film industry never seems to fade, and the latest name creating excitement is Yatra, the son of Tamil superstar Dhanush. While the actor has repeatedly maintained that his son is still young and that there is no immediate plan to launch him, fresh industry gossip suggests that things might be moving faster than expected behind the scenes. According to reports doing the rounds in film circles, Yatra could be gearing up for his acting debut sooner than anyone imagined. Interestingly, the project is said to be backed by Dhanush himself, making it a special launch vehicle for his son. Though there has been no official confirmation, the speculation has gained momentum after reports claimed that pre-production work is already underway.

Adding more fuel to the rumours, sources suggest that filmmaker Rajkumar Periasamy is likely to direct the project, while popular composer GV Prakash could be on board to score the music. There is



also chatter that Yatra has already undergone a look test and that the makers are considering a formal launch event in the near future. What makes the gossip even more believable is Dhanush's recent decision to introduce his nephew Pavish to cinema through Nilavukku Enmel Ennadi Kobam. With the actor already encouraging young talent within his family, many believe Yatra's debut may only be a matter of time.

For now, fans are eagerly waiting for an official announcement. Until then, the question remains—will Yatra be the next star from the Dhanush family to step into the spotlight?