



Jagan asks YSRCP cadre to guard votes during SIR
He said the deletion of a genuine voter during the SIR process could be difficult to reverse and stressed the need for continuous vigilance at the grassroots level.

P4

Even hardened criminals are sure to get caught!

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.

P6

Solar energy key to protect Earth: Solanki

Former IIT Bombay professor and renowned "Solar Man of India" Dr Chetan Singh Solanki has called upon citizens to move beyond being mere consumers of energy and become energy producers to address the growing challenges of climate change.

P2

Building healthy habits early

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

P5

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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. The BJP leader had also defeated another TMC candidate in the Nandigram constituency, which he vacated on May 15. In 2021 as well, Banerjee had filed a similar petition after she lost to Adhikari in Nandigram by a margin of 1,956 votes.

LS Speaker to hear TMC factions before taking call

NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will hear the defeated 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 defeated 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.



Naidu pitches AP as semiconductor hub

- CM invites global chipmakers to invest in state
- Says semiconductor facility planned in Rayalaseema
- Focuses on high-tech manufacturing ecosystem in state
- GlobalFoundries, NXP, ASMPT take part in roundtable

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday invited global semiconductor companies to visit Andhra Pradesh within the next 30 days to explore investment opportunities, positioning the state as an emerging destination for semiconductor manufacturing and advanced technology industries.

Addressing the Semicon Ecosystem Roundtable Conference in Singapore, Naidu said Andhra Pradesh is adopting a "Speed of Doing Business" approach focused on faster approvals, efficient governance and investor-friendly policies.

He stated that India has emerged as one of the world's most attractive investment destinations and that Andhra Pradesh offers



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu at the Semicon Ecosystem Roundtable Conference in Singapore on Tuesday

a conducive ecosystem for global manufacturers.

The Chief Minister revealed that a semiconductor manufacturing facility is planned in the Rayalaseema region, strengthening the state's ambitions to build a comprehensive semiconductor ecosystem. He said Rayalaseema also offers significant opportunities in defence

manufacturing, aerospace, electronics, fighter aircraft components and automobile production.

Naidu said the state is committed to partnering with global companies to promote innovation, manufacturing excellence and sustainable industrial growth across the semiconductor value chain.

Continued on Page 7

WORLD CITIES SUMMIT

CM hardsells Amaravati to global investors

► Says the Greenfield capital offers global-scale investment opportunities

► Showcases Amaravati as global knowledge city, people-centric, net-zero capital

HANS NEWS SERVICE

AMARAVATI: Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday invited global investors to explore opportunities in Amaravati, presenting the capital city as a future-ready knowledge and innovation hub at the World Cities Summit in Singapore. Continued on Page 7

Modi-Trump meet set to spotlight G7 Summit

GLOBAL LEADERS GATHER IN FRANCE

NEW DELHI

A scheduled meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and United States President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in France is set to be one of the most closely watched diplomatic engagements of the week, as world leaders converge in the lakeside resort town of Evian amid growing geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainty, and mounting security challenges.

Modi arrived in France to participate in the 52nd G7 Summit, where discussions are expected to range from the war in Ukraine and the evolving situation in West Asia to global trade, energy security, and the future of international governance. His anticipated talks with Trump are likely to focus on bilateral trade, tariff issues, the global oil market, regional conflicts, and broader geopolitical developments that are reshaping international relations.

Continued on Page 7



PM Narendra Modi shakes hands with US President Donald Trump before the plenary session of the G7 summit in Evian-les-Bains, France, on Tuesday

FIRST IN 16 MONTHS...

THE GREAT HANDSHAKE!

Modi, Trump exchange pleasantries amid strained ties

Evian-les-Bains: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump exchanged pleasantries and held a brief conversation on Tuesday at a gathering of G7 leaders, marking their first in-person encounter in 16 months amid continuing strain in bilateral ties. Continued on Page 7

G7 allies scramble to put Ukraine back atop Trump's agenda P7



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 Commission 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. Continued on Page 7



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.

Continued on Page 7

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 adhering 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. Continued on Page 7

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.

Continued on Page 7

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. Continued on Page 7

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

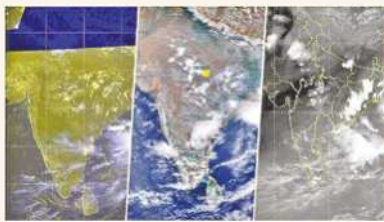
NEW DELHI

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.

Continued on Page 7

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



forces of Bihar, Gujarat and Rajasthan, and from its own continuous monitoring of public channels and platforms, I4C has secured the prompt take-down of a substantial

number of Telegram channels, groups and bots whose names and content openly advertised their fraudulent and misleading purpose," the NTA added.

Continued on Page 7

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.

Continued on Page 7

SOLAR ENERGY KEY TO PROTECT EARTH: SOLANKI

▶ Former IIT Bombay professor Dr Chetan Singh Solanki visits Godavari Global University (GGU)

▶ Urges people to adopt energy conservation practices and use electricity, water and other natural resources judiciously

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

FORMER IIT Bombay professor and renowned “Solar Man of India” Dr Chetan Singh Solanki has called upon citizens to move beyond being mere consumers of energy and become



Godavari Global University Chancellor KVV Satyanarayana Raju (Chaitanya Raju) felicitating Dr Chetan Singh Solanki

energy producers to address the growing challenges of climate change.

Dr Solanki visited Godavari Global University (GGU) on Tuesday as part of his nationwide “Energy

Swaraj Yatra.” He addressed students at an awareness seminar on “Climate Change – Challenges and Solutions,” organised by the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Solanki said that every activity undertaken by human beings contributes to carbon emissions and that the unlimited consumption

of limited natural resources poses a serious threat to the future of humanity. “

He urged people to adopt energy conservation practices and use electricity, water and other natural resources judiciously. A major attraction at the event was the “Climate Clock,” which displayed the remaining time before global temperatures

exceed the critical 1.5-degree Celsius threshold. The clock showed the countdown in years, days, hours, minutes and seconds, drawing considerable attention from participants.

Later, Dr Solanki met Godavari Global University Chancellor KVV Satyanarayana Raju (Chaitanya Raju) and Vice-Chancellor Dr U Chandrasekhar. During the meeting, he explained the objectives of the Energy Swaraj Yatra and the initiatives being undertaken across the country to promote environmental awareness. GGU Director Dr M Srinivasa Rao, Godavari Institute of Engineering and Technology (Autonomous) Principal Dr T Jaya Anand Kumar, Deans Dr MD Dhanaraju and Dr D Ravi Kishore, and Head of the Mechanical Engineering Department Dr V Subrahmanyam were present.

8 AP schools win national Swachh Vidyalaya awards

- ▶ Institutions recognised for excellence in sanitation, hygiene and environmental sustainability
- ▶ Each school to get Rs 1 lakh grant and national recognition certificate

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

EIGHT schools from Andhra Pradesh have won the prestigious Swachh Evam Harit Vidyalaya Rating (SHVR)-2025 awards, a national initiative of the Government of India that promotes safe water management, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and environmental sustainability in educational institutions.

Samagra Shiksha state project director (SPD) B Srinivasa Rao said only 191 schools from across the country received national recognition this year, making the state’s achievement a significant milestone.

The award-winning schools from the state are: Zilla Parishad High School, Thadikalapudi in Eluru district; Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), Hiramandalam in Srikakulam district; Municipal Primary School, Steamer Road in West Godavari district; Zilla Parishad High School, Malicherla in Vizianagaram district; KGBV, Anandapuram in Visakhapatnam district; Mandal Parishad Primary School, Lingampeta in Anapalli district; Mandal Par-



Zilla Parishad High School at Tadikalapudi of Kamavarupukota mandal in Eluru district, which won the National Swachh Evam Harit Vidyalaya Rating (SHVR)-2025 award

ishad Primary School, Jalumuru in Srikakulam district; and NATCO School of Learning, Ponnur in Guntur district. Each award-winning institution will receive a composite school grant of Rs 1 lakh, a national recognition certificate for excellence in cleanliness and green initiatives, and an opportunity for their headmasters to participate in exposure visits to leading institutions across the country.

Congratulating the schools, Srinivasa Rao said the institutions had set exemplary standards in sanitation and environmental sustainability and expressed confidence that they would inspire other schools across India to adopt eco-friendly and sustainable practices in education.

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH Roads & Buildings Department e-Procurement Tender Notice	
NIT No.35/MDR-Plan/CE MDRs/2026-27,	Dt. 12.06.2026
Online tenders are invited under e-procurement platform for 9 Nos. MDR-Plan works for Rs.2940.48 Lakhs in various Districts. Tenderers can download the tender schedules from e-market place i.e., www.aperecurement.gov.in from 17.06.2026, 3PM onwards.	
Sd/- Chief Engineer (R&B), MDRs, NABARD & NDB	
DIPR.R.O.No.: 20654/CL/ADVT/1/1/2021-22, Dt: 16.06.26	

कनारा बैंक Canara Bank		REGIONAL OFFICE PUBLIC NOTICE ANANTAPUR. PH : 93216 23002		
The under mentioned persons are hereby informed that they have failed to pay off the liability in the loan accounts despite giving multiple notices. They are therefore requested to pay off the liability and other charges and redeem the pledged securities on or before 23.07.2026 failing which the said securities will be sold by the Bank in public auction at the cost of the borrower as per Bank's procedure, without further notice, at the absolute discretion of the Bank.				
Sl No.	Date of Loan	Loan Number	Name and address of the borrower	Liability (Rs.)
ANANTAPUR SARADANAGAR BRANCH. Ph : 81061 14882				
1.	29-11-2025	180448037650	N. Papi Reddy, S/o N. Venkata Reddy, 5-303, Anantapur-515001	388000
2.	05-11-2025	180443287169	Kaluguri Narendra, S/o Kaluguri Narayanaswami, 1-113, Rappthadu, Anantapur-515722	65000
3.	08-10-2025	180437735134	H. Venkatesulu, S/o H. Lakshmana, Driver RDT Office, Anantapur-515001.	115000
4.	04-10-2025	164099412060	Kuruba Parimala, S/o K. Srinivasulu, D No.16-234 Sixteen Ward, Uma Nagar Anantapur-515001.	61991
5.	07-03-2026	164130596185	Ramana Chakala, S/o C Venkata Ramappa, House No. 6-61, Lenin Nagar Colony, Anantapur-515001	95000
6.	12-11-2025	164106939377	Ramana Chakala, S/o C Venkata Ramappa, House No. 6-61, Lenin Nagar Colony, Anantapur-515001	123000
ANANTHAPUR NEW TOWN BRANCH. Ph : 98855 87657				
7.	16-06-2025	180415042832	Gadde Saradamma, W/o G Kesava Reddy, 1-4-77, Anantapur-515722.	1072000
GONDIREDDIPALLE BRANCH. Ph : 99666 69473				
8.	03-11-2025	180442841185	Kondappagari Sainatha Reddy, S/o K. Eswar Reddy, 2-101-B, Gondireddypalli, Raptadu, Jayalakshimpuram, Anantapur-515722.	140000
HAMPAPURAM BRANCH. Ph : 63614 92078				
9.	20-03-2025	180397721200	Tadimarri Mohammad Ilyaz, S/o. Taddimarri Nabee Saab, 1-96, Gondireddypalli, Rappthadu, Anantapur-515722.	146000
10.	18-10-2025	180440315934	Janagonda Narayana, S/o Janagonda Chinna Thirumalaiah, Hampapuram, Raptadu Mandal, Anantapur-515722	100000
MANDALAHALLI BRANCH. Ph : 75691 29424				
11.	10-05-2023	180177668375	K A Padmavathi, W/o. K Suraj, Muthukur, Gudibanda, Sri Sathya Sai District-515271	210000
RAYADURG BRANCH. Ph : 91107 88129				
12.	28-03-2025	180399866482	Talari Anjineyulu, S/o T. Ajjappa, D No.6-113, Rayadurg, D. Hirehall, Anantapur-515865	40000
ROLLA BRANCH. Ph : 87622 62646				
13.	04-07-2025	164082802576	Balakrishna, S/o Thimmappa, 16-31 R, Vadra Hatti, Rolla, Anantapur-515321	73000
URAVAKONDA BRANCH. Ph : 82965 90098				
14.	15-11-2024	180359408740	U. Kistappa, S/o Anjiniyaya, Undabanda, Urvakonda,	50000
15.	15-11-2024	180359408765	Bormmanahal,	44000
16.	15-11-2024	180359410240	Ananthapur-515812	85000
VENKATAMPALLI BRANCH. Ph : 98489 54723				
17.	01-11-2025	180442606501	B. Jayapada, W/o. B. Shankar Naidu, No.6-65 Peravali Village, Bukkaraya Samudram, Singanamala Mandal, Anantapur-515701	200000
18.	01-11-2025	180442607107	B. Sudharshan, S/o B. Shankar Naidu, No.6-65, Peravali Village, Bukkaraya Samudram, Singanamala Mandal, Anantapur-515701	386000
19.	09-10-2025	180438085650		110000
20.	09-10-2025	180438087992		680000
21.	18-02-2026	180464381338		320000
22.	18-02-2026	180464488882		92000
Date : 17.06.2026, Place : Anantapur Sd/- Authorised Officer, Canara Bank				

PUBLIC NOTICE				
Notice is hereby given that our client intends to purchase/lease from the owners mentioned below, all that piece and parcel of lands comprised in various villages and Mandals of Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh:				
S.No.	Village	Mandal	Sy.No./ LP No.	Present Owner
1	Kurukunda	Alur	86	6 R Mallikarjuna Reddy S/o Krishna Reddy
2	Kurukunda	Alur	75-1	1.63 Pinjari Maabu S/o Pinjari Khasim Saab
3	Kurukunda	Alur	239	17.45 H.Thimma Reddy S/o Ragurami Reddy
4	Narnapuram	Adoni-2	163 (LP.No.643)	2.499 Ediga Gadilingappa S/o Siddaramappa
5	Narnapuram	Adoni-2	163 (LP.No.644)	2.499 Ediga Sekhar S/o Siddaramappa
6	Narnapuram	Adoni-2	163 (LP.No.494)	2.5 Ediga Venkata Ramana S/o E.Anjinaiah
			Total	32.578
The aforementioned owners have represented that their respective property mentioned above is free from all encumbrances, charges, liens and the owners have not entered into any agreements, Lease, MOUs, etc., qua the aforesaid property and there are no legal impediments etc., for them to sell/lease the same to our client, based on which our client has agreed to purchase/lease the aforesaid Property.				
All/ Any person(s)/ companies/ entities, authority, agency having any right, title, interest, mortgage, claim or demand into, upon or against the aforementioned Property or any part thereof, by way of inheritance, benefit, possession, sale, exchange, license, gift, lease, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, bequest, easement, development rights, partnership, joint venture, Decree or Order of any Court of Law, notice of acquisition or under any other agreement/understanding whatsoever are hereby required to make the same known in writing to the undersigned at the address specified herein below with supporting documentary evidence in original within 10 (Ten) days of issuance of this Public Notice, failing which the claim and/or objection, if any, shall be considered as waived/ abandoned and our client shall complete the transaction of the above referred Property without any reference to such claim or demand/ objection.				
Mr. Deepak Chowdhury/ Kaushik Pranav. D, Advocates (9885442266, 8125506521) Address: JSA Advocates & Solicitors, Plot No. 3918, Road No.81, Film Nagar Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad - 500096,Telangana, India. OR Plot No.3-B, LP No.31/1989, Sri Srinivasa Real Estate, Kasapuram Road, Guntakal, Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh- 515801.				
Publication Date:17.06.2026				

RTC to provide free travel for NEET-UG candidates

SPECIAL HELP DESKS AND ADDITIONAL BUS SERVICES WILL BE ARRANGED TO ENSURE TIMELY TRAVEL FOR STUDENTS

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) has made elaborate arrangements to facilitate hassle-free travel for students appearing for the NEET-UG re-examination scheduled to be held on June 21. Announcing the arrangements on Tuesday, APSRTC executive director (operations) Gadde Nageswara Rao said the corporation, in accordance with the directions of the state government, would provide free bus travel to all students appearing for the examination.

He said candidates can avail the facility by producing their NEET hall ticket while travelling from their place of residence to the examination centre and on the return journey after the examination. He said the free travel facility would be available in Express, Ultra Pallevlugu, Metro Express and City Ordinary bus services across the State.

To ensure students reach their examination centres on time, APSRTC has instructed all zones, regions and depots to operate adequate services on examination routes and from major traffic-generating points. Additional buses

will be deployed wherever necessary based on passenger demand.

Special help desks will be set up at major bus stations to guide students, while supervisory staff will monitor operations and arrange additional services wherever required. Strict instructions have also been issued to maintain punctual services, particularly in rural areas, and ensure that no scheduled services are cancelled on the examination day.

Nageswara Rao urged students and parents to plan their journeys in advance and make use of the free travel facility.

Kalyandurg govt hospital staff face Collector’s wrath during surprise check

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KALYANDURG

DISTRICT Collector O Anand and Kalyandurg MLA Amilineni Surendra Babu conducted a surprise inspection of the Kalyandurg Government Hospital on Tuesday to evaluate healthcare delivery. The duo inspected the maternity and female wards, seeking direct feedback from patients. While reviewing the establishment logs, they pulled up the hospital staff for serious attendance book irregularities, where only entry times were being recorded. Appreciating the clinic’s overall



Collector O Anand and MLA Amilineni Surendra Babu interacting with patients during a surprise inspection of the Government Hospital in Kalyandurg on Tuesday

cleanliness, Collector Anand identified the immediate need for an oxygen plant and promised its swift installation to boost emergency response times.

Transport dept seizes interstate buses and slaps ₹5.20 lakh fine for tax evasion

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

CLAMPING down heavily on tax evasion and passenger safety violations, the District Transport Department has seized two luxury tourist buses and booked cases against 30 other vehicles during a series of intensive surprise inspections conducted over the last 48 hours.

Fines and tax penalties totaling around ₹10.20 lakh were levied during the drive.

Executing orders from District Transport Officer (DTO) Korrapati Murali Mohan, an enforcement squad led by Motor Vehicle Inspector (MVI) Mohan Kumar intercepted a contract carriage operating from Kolkata to Bengaluru.

The luxury vehicle was



RTO officials along with police inspecting the documents of private buses in Tirupati on Tuesday

found plying through the district without paying the statutory All India Permit tax.

The RTO took the bus into custody and slapped the operator with a hefty ₹5,20,000 demand notice covering

pending taxes and compound penalties.

Simultaneously, the State Transport Control Room’s high-tech speed-monitoring grid detected an All India Tourist Permit sleeper bus speeding excessively on the

Hyderabad-Tirupati route.

Field inspectors tracked down and seized the vehicle immediately. DTO Murali Mohan confirmed that 10 over-speeding cases have been systematically filed under this digital tracking matrix so far. Alarmingly, during physical checks, officials discovered that several interstate operators had deliberately disconnected or tampered with their mandatory GPS tracking systems—a major statutory offence under the Central Motor Vehicle Rules. MVIs Subramanyam, Srinivas Rao, Aatika Naz, Ramana Naik, and Prasad Varma participated in the operations.

The DTO warned that special night-patrolling squads will continue to step up checks against errant private travel agencies.

VIKSIT BHARAT@2047 TG Guv urges youth to emerge as grassroots changemakers

- ▶ Social entrepreneur Bisathi Bharath presents his book *Changemaker: From Action to Impact*, documenting fifteen years of youth leadership starting from a remote Anantapur village
- ▶ Governor emphasized that the collective energy, volunteerism, and social responsibility of committed youth are critical to driving inclusive development across India



Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla interacting with MY Bharat representative and National Youth Awardee Bisathi Bharath during a meeting at Telangana Bhavan in New Delhi

and international platforms.

The publication highlights extensive interventions in youth empowerment, life skills education, career guidance, blood donation, and environmental conservation.

Briefing the Governor, Bharath explained how his community-driven initiatives have benefited thousands of young individuals across the country.

Warmly appreciating the efforts, Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla underscored the necessity of robust youth participation in nation-building.

He emphasized that the aspirations of a developed India by 2047 can only be realized when the country’s youth channel their talent into creating inclusive social progress.

The dialogue also explored strategies for leveraging volunteerism to tackle localized community challenges. The meeting was also attended by prominent youth icon Abhash Kumar Chowbey, adding further significance to the interaction centered on active citizenship.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ANANTAPUR/NEW DELHI

TELANGANA Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla has called upon the nation’s youth to emerge as proactive changemakers and lead India’s transition into a developed nation by 2047 through innovation, volunteerism, and social responsibility.

The Governor made these remarks during an interaction with Bisathi Bharath—a MY Bharat representative, National Youth Award recipient, and social entrepreneur hailing from Andhra Pradesh—at Telangana Bhavan in New Delhi.

On the occasion, Bharath presented his book, *Changemaker: From Action to Impact*, which chronicles his fifteen-year journey in grassroots social service, originating from a remote village in Anantapur district and expanding onto national

Govt relaxes TET rule for KGBV applicants

- ▶ Application deadline for principals, CRTs and PGTs extended to June 20

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

IN a major relief to aspiring teachers, the state government has relaxed the Andhra Pradesh Teacher Eligibility Test (APTET) requirement for candidates applying for various posts in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs).

Announcing the decision on Tuesday, Samagra Shiksha state project director (SPD) B Srinivasa Rao said candidates applying for the posts of principals, contract residential teachers (CRTs) and post graduate teachers (PGTs) in KGBVs need not possess TET qualification at the time of application.

The state project director also extended the last date for submission of applications from the original deadline to June 20, giving more time for eligible candidates to apply. He said that the original recruitment notification for filling vacancies in KGBVs was issued on May 25.

The state project director further clarified that candidates who have already submitted their applications under the earlier notification need not apply again, as their applications will remain valid. Under the revised recruitment guidelines, applicants without APTET qualification can participate in the selection process. However, candidates selected for the posts must qualify the APTET within one year from the date of joining service. Srinivasa Rao clarified that failure to obtain the TET qualification within the stipulated one-year period would result in automatic termination of service without prior notice.

Kurnool health wing launches direct toll-free line to fight female foeticide

- Citizens can report unauthorized ultrasound scans and illegal gender tracking on the dedicated toll-free line 1800 233 2447, with absolute informant identity protection
- The district health wing warned that diagnostic labs, technicians, or individuals advertising sex-selection services will be prosecuted under the PCPNDT Act, 1994

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

THE District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO), Kurnool, Dr Y Kameshwar Prasad on Tuesday announced the availability of a state-wide toll-free helpline number 1800 233 2447 to report violations under the Pre-Conception and Pre-



DMHO Dr Y Kameshwar Prasad speaking to the media in Kurnool on Tuesday

Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act. Speaking to the media, he said that the initiative aims to strengthen enforcement of laws prohibiting illegal sex determination and sex-selective practices. He emphasized that public participation is crucial for the effective implementation of the PCPNDT Act, 1994, which is designed to prevent gender-based discrimination before birth. He reiterated that the government remains firmly committed to protecting women's rights and eliminating gender bias in society. He stated that any form of prenatal sex determination, advertisement of such services, or promotion of sex selection is strictly illegal under the law.

Such practices not only violate legal provisions but also contribute to disturbing the natural sex ratio and reinforcing harmful social inequalities. He further warned against illegal activities such as unauthorized ultrasound or diagnostic centers conducting sex determination tests, promotional advertisements encouraging gender selection, and any other related unlawful practices. Citizens have been urged to immediately report such violations through the toll-free helpline. He added that the identity of informants will be kept strictly confidential, and all complaints will be thoroughly investigated by the concerned authorities, followed by appropriate legal action against offenders. Calling for collective responsibility, the DMHO appealed to all sections of society—including women's groups, youth organizations, medical professionals, elected representatives, and the general public—to support the strict implementation of the PCPNDT Act.

High-profile NDA conclave marks two years of coalition rule in AP

- Health Minister and BC Welfare Minister credit the governance milestone to the coordinated roadmap of Chief Minister Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan
- Police Parade Ground saw a powerful show of solidarity, drawing regional heavyweights including Hindupur MP BK Parthasarathi and several district MLAs
- Collector A Shyam Prasad reveals that Sri Sathya Sai district has secured enhanced funding under the Rayalaseema Horticulture Hub initiative to expand commercial fruit and mulberry farming
- Highlighting infrastructural milestones, the administration confirmed the active construction of 450 kilometers of cement concrete (CC) roads and 100 kilometers of bituminous (BT) blacktop road

HANS NEWS SERVICE
PUTTAPARTHI

TO commemorate the successful completion of two years of the NDA coalition government in Andhra Pradesh, a massive state-backed public meeting titled "Yella Nammakam" was celebrated with grandeur at

the Police Parade Ground in Puttaparthi on Tuesday. The event drew a galaxy of top political figures, including Medical and Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav, BC Welfare Minister Savitha, Hindupur MP BK Parthasarathi, and MLAs Palle Sindhura Reddy (Puttaparthi), Kandikunta Ven-



Ministers, public representatives and officials join beneficiaries during a programme marking two years of the coalition government's tenure at the Police Parade Ground in Puttaparthi on Tuesday

kata Prasad (Kadiri), Paritala Sunitha (Raphthadu), and MS Raju (Madakasira), alongside senior leaders Paritala Sriram and former minister Palle Raghunatha Reddy. Addressing the sea of beneficiaries and party workers, Minister Satya Kumar Yadav asserted that the administration had successfully fulfilled its core electoral manifestos and restored public confidence under the combined

leadership of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan. Minister Savitha added that the last two years signaled a complete structural overhaul in public grievance redressal, ensuring a secure environment free of law-and-order breaches. Detailing district-specific achievements, Sri Sathya Sai District Collector A Shyam Prasad and Joint Collector Mourya Bharadwaj high-

lighted that the region has been structurally integrated into the Rayalaseema Horticulture Hub project to aggressively expand sericulture and fruit plantation. On the infrastructure front, the Collector announced the completion of 450 kilometers of cement concrete (CC) roads and nearly 100 kilometers of bituminous (BT) blacktop highways across the district's rural sectors.

NDA partners convene for mega 'two years of progress' assembly



HANS NEWS SERVICE
PUTTAPARTHI

MLA Palle Sindhura Reddy and former minister Dr Palle Raghunatha Reddy anchored a massive victory celebration at the district headquarters on Tuesday, marking two years of alliance rule. The mega rally featured top NDA leaders, including Ministers Satya Kumar Yadav

and Savitha, MP Parthasarathi, District BJP President Sekhar, and Janasena leader Umesh. Speakers criticized the previous regime's destructive policies and highlighted the state's transition toward sustainable growth. District Collector Shyam Prasad and several regional MLAs attended the event, which showcased strong tri-party coordination.

Hundreds join MLA Sunitha for mass yoga session

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RAMAGIRI

EMPHASIZING that daily physical wellness is the only effective antidote to the pressures of modern life, Raphthadu MLA Paritala Sunitha on Tuesday called upon citizens across all age groups to make yoga an permanent, integral part of their morning routines. She made the remarks while participating as the chief guest at the special "Yoga-2026" programme, organized ahead of the 12th International Day of Yoga at the scenic premises of the Sri Tirumala Devara Venkateswara Swamy Temple near Nasanakota in Ramagiri mandal. The wellness campaign



Participants, including Raphthadu MLA Paritala Sunitha, performing yoga during the International Day of Yoga programme at the Sri Tirumala Devara Venkateswara Swamy Temple near Nasanakota in Ramagiri mandal on Tuesday

witnessed strong voluntary attendance, with local Telugu Desam Party (TDP) cadre, mandal revenue officials, and hundreds of rural residents joining the mass session. Setting a personal ex-

ample, the MLA rolled out a mat and performed a series of synchronized asanas alongside the participants. Addressing the congregation, Sunitha noted that modern lifestyles have become increasingly mechan-

ical, leaving individuals vulnerable to severe physical exhaustion and emotional stress. She stated that regular, uninterrupted yoga practice serves a dual purpose—optimizing physical stamina while restoring mental peace and emotional equilibrium. The legislator lamented that neglecting physical health under the pretext of busy work hours is directly causing chronic lifestyle disorders among the youth. Observing that the Union and State governments are heavily backing the wellness movement, she appealed to families to transform yoga into a daily household habit to build a healthier, more vibrant society.

TC Varun inducted in powerful 14-member state joining committee



HANS NEWS SERVICE
ANANTAPUR

THE political stature of Janasena Anantapur District President and AHUDA Chairman TC Varun continues to rise, with his appointment to the party's newly constituted State Joining Committee. Formed under the absolute direction of Janasena chief and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, the

14-member panel is tasked with inviting prominent opposition leaders, academicians, and social activists into the party. Varun's inclusion in this elite state-level body is seen as a reward for his organizational efficiency. Party cadre across the combined district celebrated the decision, predicting a wave of fresh inductions.

Anantapur administration unveils massive prosthetic support drive

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ANANTAPUR

IN a major humanitarian boost for persons with disabilities across the Rayalaseema region, District Collector and Magistrate O Anand launched "Project Cheyutha"—a specialized initiative to distribute advanced, functional LN-4 prosthetic hands to lower-income amputees completely free of cost. The launch took place at the Police Parade Ground on Tuesday, where the official poster was unveiled during a "Divyang" thematic wellness session. The mega-project is a collaborative venture executed by Rotary District



Collector O Anand and Joint Collector C Vishnu Charan unveil the "Project Cheyutha" poster during the launch of the free prosthetic hand distribution initiative at the Police Parade Ground in Anantapur on Tuesday

3150, the global LN-4 Hand Project, and the Andhra Pradesh State Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society. According to the official layout, a series of specialized fitting camps have been scheduled across the state. The drive will hit Guntur on August 2, Vizianagaram on

August 16, and culminate with a mega-camp in Anantapur on August 30, 2026. The programme caters to individuals aged four and older who have lost an upper limb below the shoulder, provided they maintain a residual limb length of at least four inches to anchor the device.

Anantapur MP attends dinner hosted by WB CM Suwendu Adhikari

ANANTAPUR : MP Ambika Lakshminarayana attended a formal dinner hosted by West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari at his official residence, alongside members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee.

During the visit, the Anantapur lawmaker congratulated Adhikari on making history as the first BJP Chief Minister of West Bengal. The Chief Minister greeted the parliamentarians individually, holding warm bilateral discussions on governance and presenting them with mementos.



Kalyandurg urban forest park set to open soon



HANS NEWS SERVICE
KALYANDURG

COLLECTOR O Anand and MLA Amilineni Surenndra Babu on Tuesday inspected the upcoming Urban Forest Park near Kalyandurg town to review its final readiness. The officials visited the bird aviaries, children's parks, and the 'Hill View Point.' Collector Anand di-

rected forest authorities to submit expenditure sheets for two eco-cottages under the 'Jee Ram Jee' scheme in July. MLA Surenndra Babu added that the government will be asked to develop separate tourist resorts on-site and confirmed that Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan will be approached to formally inaugurate the eco-tourism spot.

Kurnool fast-tracks massive preparations for Int'l Yoga Day

- SETKUR CEO announces that registration targets of 5.50 lakh citizens have been successfully locked in across the district ahead of International Yoga Day on June 21
- Following state directives, the administration has structured dedicated wellness sessions, including a mega-event for 1,000 municipal sanitation workers at the SCP Grounds on June 18
- As part of a unique tourism push, the district has already completed scenic mass-yoga sessions at iconic sites including Kondareddy Buruju, Orvakal Rock Garden, and the Jagannatha Gattu temple temple-lands
- Multi-tier competitive qualifiers have wrapped up from the village to the mandal level, with top regional yoga practitioners being actively forwarded to represent Kurnool in the upcoming state-level finals

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

EXTENSIVE arrangements are underway in Kurnool district to celebrate International Yoga Day in a

grand manner, with a target of mobilising 5.50 lakh participants for the 'Yoga Andhra' programme, said SETKUR CEO Venugopal on Tuesday. A special Yoga Andhra

Aims to mobilize 5.50 lakh citisens



Setkur CEO Venugopal participating in the Yoga Andhra programme organized at Kurnool on Tuesday

programme was organised on Tuesday at the premises of Sri Rupa Gangameswara Swamy temple located near Jagannatha Gattu on the outskirts of Kurnool. Addressing the event, SETKUR CEO Venugopal said that all preparations

have been completed to celebrate International Yoga Day on June 21 across the district on a massive scale. He noted that registration for participation has already been completed, targeting 5.50 lakh people across the district. He further stated that

11,500 master trainers have been specially trained and are currently imparting yoga training across various regions of the district. As part of tourism-oriented yoga activities, sessions have been successfully conducted with around 800 participants at prominent tourist locations such as Rock Garden and Kondareddy Buruju in Kurnool city. Yoga programmes are also being organised at major temples including Yaganti, Mantralayam, Peravali, Kalvabugga, and Jagannatha Gattu under the supervision of the Endowments Department Assistant Commissioner. Highlighting the coordination among departments, he said a special yoga programme with around 1,000 sanitation workers will be conducted on June 18 at the SCP Grounds as per state

government instructions. He attributed the successful implementation of Yoga Andhra initiatives in the district to the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the leadership of Nara Chandrababu Naidu, and the directions of the District Collector. Officials from all departments, from village to district level, are working in coordination to ensure the success of the programme. He added that various yoga competitions were conducted at village, panchayat, mandal, and district levels, and district-level winners are being sent to state-level competitions. The event concluded with expressions of gratitude to all officials and staff who contributed to the successful organisation of the programme at the spiritually serene Jagannatha Gattu environment.

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CHANGE OF NAME
I, SHAIK ABDUL HYE (Old Name) S/o. SHAIK MAHABOOB SAHEB, R/o.H.No:304, Hyder Chand Plaza, Near Vaddageri, Kurnool dist, AP, have Changed my name as **SHAIK ABDUL HAI** (New Name) S/o.SHAIK MAHABOOB SAHEB (Th_Rajasekar_Knl)

CHANGE OF NAME (ADDED SURNAME)
I, NOORUNNISA BEGUM (old name) W/o. SYED SHAKEEL AHMED, D.No.6-1-782-5, Kovur Nagar, Anantapur-515001, Anantapur Dt. A.P.State, I have added Surname SHAIK to my existing name NOORUNNISA BEGUM (old name) hence forth, I shall be known as **SHAIK NOORUNNISA BEGUM** (new name), for all transactions. (Th_Rajasekar_Knl)

CHANGE OF NAME
I, ADIANDHRA GANESH S/o A Venkataramudu, Resident of D.No. 3-377 Indira Nagar Bukkapatnam Sri Sathya Sai Dist AP 515144. I Have Changed my name from Adianndhra Ganesh (Old Name) to **SETTIPALLI GANESH** (New Name) hence forth my name will be called as **SETTIPALLI GANESH** for all purposes. (Th_Rajasekar_Knl)

CHANGE OF SURNAME
I, MADURU UPANISHATH (Old Name) W/o MADURU JAGADISH KUMAR REDDY, R/o.H.No.2-119, Brahmanakotkur, Nandyal District, Pin Code:518432, Andhra Pradesh have Change my Surname with Corrected spelling as **MADDURU UPANISHATH** (New Name) W/o **MADDURU JAGADISH KUMAR REDDY** (Th_Rajasekar-KNL)

CHANGE OF SURNAME
I, SYED HUSSAIN BEE (Old Name) W/o.SHAIK KHAJA HUSSAIN, R/o.H.No.9-33, Doddipadu (V), Kallur (M), Kurnool dist, AP, have Changed my surname & will henceforth be called as **SHAIK HUSSAIN BEE** (New Name) W/o.SHAIK KHAJA HUSSAIN (Th_Rajasekar-KNL)

CHANGE OF NAME
I, M S Vamsi Krishna S/O Maddipatla Sudhakarnaidu R/O H. No.12-1-76-26-A1, Teachers Colony, Revenue Ward No. 21, Hindupur, VTC: Hindupur, P.O. Hindupur, Dist. Sri Sathya Sai (Andhra Pradesh) - 515201 have changed the name of my minor son M Rishaan Krishna aged 5 years and he shall hereafter be known as **M RUCHITH RAM**. (Th_TM_RAO)

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Boya Rani W/O Diddikati Madhu Shankar Naidu R/O H. No. 3-85, Kodumur Road, Gorantla, VTC: Gorantla, P.O. Gorantla, Dist. Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh) have changed my name to **DIDDIKATI SUJANA** forever. (Th_TM_RAO)

CHANGE OF NAME & SURNAME
I, MADURU JAGADESH KUMAR REDDY (Old Name) S/o MADURU SRINIVASA REDDY, R/o.H.No.2-119, Brahmanakotkur, Nandyal District, Pin Code:518432, Andhra Pradesh have Change my Surname with Corrected spelling as **MADDURU JAGADISH KUMAR REDDY** (New Name) S/o **MADDURU SRINIVASA REDDY** (Th_Rajasekar-KNL)

CHANGE OF SURNAME
I, MADURU KARAN KUMAR REDDY (Old Name) S/o MADURU JAGADISH KUMAR REDDY, R/o.H.No.2-119, Brahmanakotkur, Nandyal District, Pin Code:518432, Andhra Pradesh have Change my Surname with Cor-rected spelling as **MADDURU KARAN KUMAR REDDY** (New Name) S/o **MADDURU JAGADISH KUMAR REDDY** (Th_Rajasekar-KNL)

CHANGE OF SURNAME
I, KOWSER PARVEEN SIDDOTAM (Old Name) W/o MULLA IMTIYAZ AHMAD, residing at # 25-99-C, Janachaitanya Nagar, Bukkarayasamudram -515701, Anantapur (Dist.), AP. Changing my name from **KOWSER PARVEEN SIDDOTAM** to **SHAIK KOWSER PARVEEN** (New Name). Hence for, I am being called as **SHAIK KOWSER PARVEEN** for all purposes (Th_RJP)

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Crime down 14% in two years of NDA rule: Anitha

- ▶ Home minister says Rs 247 cr saved from cyber fraud
 - ▶ 8,396 missing persons traced; 56,674 ganja cases registered under anti-drug drive
 - ▶ Emergency response time cut to under 10 minutes; over 6,000 police personnel recruited
- HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

HOME minister Vangalapudi Anitha on Tuesday said the NDA coalition government has achieved significant improvements in law and order, women's safety, cybercrime prevention and anti-drug enforcement during its first two years in office, with the state's overall crime rate declining by 14.1 per cent.

Addressing a press conference at the Secretariat, Anitha said the government has strengthened policing through the use of CCTV surveillance, drones, artificial intelligence-based analytics and digital monitoring systems, enabling faster crime detection and investigation.



Home minister Vangalapudi Anitha addresses a press conference along with officials at the Secretariat on Tuesday

Highlighting women's safety initiatives, the minister said over 11.15 lakh SOS alerts have been received through the Shakti app, with authorities responding promptly to emergency calls. She said dedicated women's protection mechanisms and technology-based safety systems have been established across the state.

Under Operation Muskaan, police traced and reunited 8,396 missing persons, including children, women and elderly citizens, with their families. The government has also intensified action against crimes involving children, with 2,293 victims receiving

counselling and rehabilitation support.

Anitha said the state has launched an aggressive crackdown on narcotics and ganja cultivation through the EAGLE enforcement unit. According to the minister, authorities registered 56,674 ganja-related cases, initiated legal action against 2,366 individuals and seized assets worth more than Rs 4 crore.

In the cybercrime sector, she said coordinated efforts involving cyber war rooms, banks, telecom operators and the 1930 cyber helpline helped prevent losses of nearly Re 247 crore

to online fraudsters.

The minister said emergency response services have been significantly strengthened, reducing average response time from 30 minutes in 2024 to less than 10 minutes, while achieving a response efficiency rate of 97.47 per cent.

On police welfare, Anitha said the government recruited more than 6,000 police personnel, promoted 505 gazetted officers and increased the stipend for constable trainees from Rs 4,000 to Rs 7,500 per month.

She also said the government is modernising forensic infrastructure, with forensic examinations completed in 7,793 cases between January and May this year and strengthening prosecution systems to improve conviction rates.

According to the minister, courts delivered judgments in 279 major criminal cases, resulting in eight death sentences, three life imprisonment terms, 42 convictions carrying sentences of more than 20 years and 14 convictions carrying 14 year prison terms.

Anitha said the government's focus remains on technology-driven policing, public safety, police welfare and ensuring effective delivery of justice across the state.



MSME, SERP and NRI empowerment minister Kondapalli Srinivas, along with senior officials of the departments, speaks to the media at the Secretariat on Tuesday

MSME sector got ₹1.9 L-cr in two years: Srinivas

- ▶ MSME, SERP and NRI affairs minister says MSME parks, private industrial parks and revival policy have driven investment and job creation
 - ▶ Women SHGs provided Rs 63,000 cr bank linkage; 5 lakh new women entrepreneurs is target
 - ▶ Informs that APNRTS resolved 1,376 NRI grievances
 - ▶ Social security pensions cross Rs 33,000 cr annually
- HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE state government extended more than Rs 1.9 lakh crore in bank credit to the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector over the past two years while implementing a range of industrial reforms and entrepreneurship programmes aimed at boosting economic growth and employment, MSME, SERP and NRI empowerment minister Kondapalli Srinivas said on Tuesday.

Addressing a press confer-

ence on achievements of NDA coalition government in the past two years at the Secretariat, Srinivas said the government has identified MSMEs as a key driver of industrial expansion, investment attraction and job creation. Andhra Pradesh currently has around 55,000 micro enterprises, 8,000 small enterprises and over 1,000 medium enterprises. The sector comprises 49 per cent services, 28 per cent trade and 23 per cent manufacturing.

To strengthen industrial growth, the government has introduced more than 20 sector-specific policies covering textiles, food processing, electric mobility, clean energy, electronics, defence and aerospace, logistics, pharmaceuticals and medical devices. MSME parks are being developed across the state, and land has already been allotted to 792 industries, which are expected to generate more than 1.03 lakh jobs.

Srinivas said the Private Industrial Park Policy is expected to attract investments of over Rs 1,900 crore and create 16,500 jobs. A dedicated MSME revival policy has also been launched to support stressed units through restructuring and investment mobi-

lisation. In the past two years, MSMEs received more than Rs 22,448 crore in collateral-free loans under the CGTMSE scheme and over Rs 40,000 crore under the PM MUDRA programme.

The government has also established a Rs 100-crore Collateral-Free Loan Guarantee Fund and launched the Rs 300-crore Chief Minister Entrepreneurship Advancement Programme (CMAP), which is expected to generate more than 17,600 jobs.

The minister spoke of the government's focus on women's empowerment, noting that self-help groups received bank linkage support exceeding Rs 63,000 crore and over Rs 9,300 crore through the Sreenidhi credit system. The government created one lakh women entrepreneurs last year and aims to create another five lakh this year. The newly launched 'Swayam AP' brand will market products manufactured by women's self-help groups across the state.

Srinivas also said the state government continues to provide extensive welfare support through social security pensions and NRI assistance programmes, while advancing the NRT Icon Towers project in Amaravati.

SIR: ECI enables online submission of forms

- ▶ The Election Commission has enabled online filling and submission of enumeration forms under the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls.
 - ▶ Voters can complete the process online without waiting for a Booth Level Officer visit, provided their mobile number is linked to their voter ID and details match Aadhaar records
- HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

CHIEF electoral officer (CEO) Vivek Yadav on Tuesday said that the Election Commission of India (ECI) has enabled the facility to fill and submit enumeration forms online as part of the SIR. The ECI kicked off the enumeration period of the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral roll in the southern state on June 15, which will continue for a month until July 14. "ECI has enabled the facility for filling and submission of enumeration form online. Filling this form online allows to match elector record with the historical base roll without



Picture for representational purpose only

waiting for a Booth Level Officer (BLO) home visit," Yadav said in a press release. Before availing online submission of EF via eSign, Yadav said an elector must meet the prerequisites of mobile linkage and name matching. Under mobile linkage, he said an elector's mobile number must be linked to his Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC or voter ID card). Likewise, he said the spelling of the elector's name on EPIC must match exactly with his Aadhaar card. If there is a mismatch, the digital eSign will fail, and the elector will need to submit a physical form through his/her BLO, Yadav added.

Merely two years after the general elections in the state, which witnessed the simultaneous Parliamentary and Assembly polls, the ECI is undertaking the SIR with July 1, 2026 as the qualifying date. The exercise will cover nearly 4.16 crore electors across 28 districts and 175 Assembly Constituencies in Andhra Pradesh.

Gandikota project gains pace, phase-II tenders invited

- ▶ Rs 5,250-cr drinking water project being implemented in two phases
- PRADEEP VENNELAKANTI
TIRUPATI

ONE of the largest rural drinking water projects in Rayalaseema is gathering momentum. The state government is pushing ahead with a Rs 5,250-crore scheme to transport and treat water from the Gandikota reservoir for supply to drought-prone areas of Annamayya and Chittoor districts.

The 'Drinking Water Supply Scheme for Western Chittoor Region' aims to provide a permanent solution to the chronic drinking water shortage faced by the western parts of the erstwhile Chittoor district. The project will draw water from the Gandikota reservoir in YSR Kadapa district and supply it to seven Assembly constituencies spread across Annamayya and Chittoor districts.

The scheme is being implemented in two phases at a total estimated cost of over Rs 5,250 crore. While works under Phase-I are already in progress, the government has invited tenders for Phase-II, marking a significant step in the execution of the long-pending project.

Under Phase-I, the government sanctioned Rs 2,370 crore and commenced works in April 2025. The project is scheduled for completion by October 2027. Officials said works worth nearly Rs 90 crore have already been completed and construction activity is expected to pick up pace in the coming months. The first phase will provide drinking water to Rayachoti, Pileru and Thamballapalle Assembly constituencies.

For Phase-II, tenders worth Rs 2,886 crore have been invited. Online bids are being accepted from June 12 to June 27. Rural Water Supply Chief Engineer Hareram Naik issued



Gandikota reservoir in YSR Kadapa district

orders related to the tender process on June 5. After completion, the second phase will extend drinking water supply to Madanapalle, Punganur, Palamaner and Kuppam constituencies.

As part of the project, a balancing reservoir will be constructed at Gandikota. Water will then be conveyed through transmission pipelines to treatment facilities proposed in Gurramkonda mandal of Annamayya district. Separate water treatment plants are being established for the two phases.

The Phase-I water treatment plant, estimated to cost around Rs 300 crore, is already under construction. A second treatment facility will be taken up after the Phase-II contract is finalised. Each plant will have a treatment capacity of 75 million litres per day (MLD), taking the total capacity to 150 MLD. Officials said the project is expected to meet the drinking water needs of several lakh people across the beneficiary constituencies. The scheme is considered crucial for the western Chittoor region, which has long struggled with low rainfall, recurring droughts and excessive dependence on ground-water sources.

Jagan asks YSRCP cadre to guard votes during SIR

- ▶ Directs party constituency-coordinators to closely monitor and immediately report irregularities to election authorities
- HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP president Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed party constituency coordinators and regional in-charges to remain on high alert during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, describing the next four weeks as crucial for protecting genuine voters from deletion.

At a review meeting with senior party leaders at the YSRCP central office in Tadepalli, Jagan instructed coordinators to closely monitor the electoral roll revision process on a daily basis, immediately report irregularities to election authorities, and escalate unresolved issues to the party headquarters.

He said the deletion of a genuine voter during the SIR process could be difficult to reverse and stressed the need for continuous vigilance at the grassroots level.

Jagan alleged that the ruling government



was attempting to remove YSRCP supporters from electoral rolls through administrative means and claimed that efforts were being made to alter voter lists ahead of future elections. He urged constituency coordinators, Booth Level Agents and party workers to ensure that no genuine voter is removed from the rolls.

Calling voter protection the party's top organisational priority, Jagan directed the cadre to treat the electoral revision exercise as a mission to safeguard democratic rights and maintain constant field-level monitoring until the process is completed.

Naidu releases book on his visionary decisions

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu released a book CBN@361 Degrees-Polymath at a special event organised by the Kakatiya Cultural Association in Singapore on Tuesday. The Chief Minister presented the first copies of the book to Shilpak Ambule, High Commissioner of India to Singapore. The book was written by Shakamuri Srinivasa Prasad, chief editor of Repatikosam daily and translated into English by retired IAS officer K V Satyanarayana. The publication offers an in-depth analysis of the decisions taken by Chandrababu Naidu as a visionary leader across different phases of his public life and governance.

Speaking on the occasion, author Shakamuri Srinivasa Prasad said that Naidu's leadership style and decision-making reflect the vision-driven approach demonstrated by globally acclaimed leaders such as former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew and former



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu along with others releases 'CBN@361 Degrees-Polymath' in Singapore on Tuesday

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern.

He noted that Naidu's commitment to long-term planning, economic development and construction of Amaravati as a world-class capital city exemplifies this approach. Former AP RERA chairman Ramanath stated that the book brings to light several lesser-known aspects of Chandrababu Naidu's leadership and governance philosophy, drawing from observations and insights that are not widely known to the public.

During the event, the Kakatiya Cultural Association honoured Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu with the Global Polymath Award. The

Association also presented him with a commemorative silver coin released to mark the birth centenary of Singapore's founding leader, Lee Kuan Yew.

Representatives of the association announced that the book will soon be published in Telugu, Hindi and several other Indian languages. They also noted that the digital version of the earlier publication, Chandrababu X.O, had recorded over 8 million downloads.

Former AP RERA chairman Ramanath, K V Satyanarayana, Shankara Prasad and prominent members of Telugu community in Singapore participated.

APTRANSCO TO COMMISSION 24 PROJECTS WORTH Rs 3,507 Cr BY DEC

- ▶ Projects to add major capacity and strengthen state's power infrastructure
 - ▶ Vijayanand directs officials to expedite ongoing and upcoming transmission works
- HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

SPECIAL chief secretary to the Chief Minister K Vijayanand on Tuesday directed officials to ensure the timely completion and commissioning of 24 transmission projects being executed by APTRANSCO at an estimated cost of Rs 3,507 crore between June and December.

Reviewing the progress of various transmission projects at a meeting held at Viduyt Soudha in Vijayawada, Vijayanand said the government and APTRANSCO are committed to providing quality, reliable and uninterrupted power supply to agriculture, industries, com-



Special chief secretary to the Chief Minister K Vijayanand reviews the progress of APTRANSCO transmission projects during a meeting at Viduyt Soudha in Vijayawada on Tuesday

mercial establishments and domestic consumers.

He stressed the need to expedite the implementation of 400 kV, 220 kV and 132 kV transmission projects to meet the State's growing power demand and strengthen its transmission infrastructure.

During the meeting, officials informed him that APTRANSCO has already commissioned three 400 kV substations, eight 220 kV

substations and 21 substations of 132 kV capacity. Additionally 1,465 MVA of transformation capacity and 571 circuit kilometres of transmission lines added to the State grid, they said.

Also, they said a total of 68 transmission projects, involving an investment of Rs.5,279 crore, are currently under various stages of execution. Once completed, these projects would add 15,224.50 MVA of trans-

formation capacity and 1,828 circuit kilometres of transmission lines, they explained.

Vijayanand directed officials to closely monitor the works and complete them within the stipulated timelines while maintaining high-quality standards. He also noted that tenders have been floated for 29 new transmission projects, which are expected to create an additional transformation

capacity of 4,520 MVA and establish 700 circuit kilometres of transmission lines. Besides, 72 more projects are in the planning stage and tenders for these works are expected to be floated within the next three months.

Reviewing the action plan for the inauguration of the 24 completed transmission projects, Vijayanand said these projects would significantly improve grid stability, reduce transmission losses and support the industrial, agricultural and socio-economic development of the state. Reiterating APTRANSCO's commitment to meeting the state's future energy requirements, he said the utility is focused on building a robust, modern and future-ready transmission network capable of supporting Andhra Pradesh's long-term growth and development.

The meeting was attended by directors A K V Bhaskar, J V Rao, and Venkata Ramanamurthy, along with chief engineers and superintending engineers.



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.



Kuchi Sandeep



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.



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.

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 Mohenjo-daro (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, Aurd 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>



RAVULAPATI SEETARA-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 Sudhansh 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 Chhatriya 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)

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.

ers save money by going in for cheap wiring, blocked exits and illegal extra floors. A fire NOC costs less than a life, but compliance eats into profit.

All tragedies are pinned down to unethical behaviour and collusion of interested parties. It is rarely just the owner. Someone signs the fake fire safety certificate. Someone in the municipal fire department looks the other way in lieu of a bribe. Someone approves of an illegal commercial space in a residential area. The paper trail is clean; the building is not. Zero concern for lives is the greatest tragedy of our lives.

Emergency exits locked to ‘pre-



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

Pawan seeks Centre's aid for AP's Great Green Wall

- ▶ Deputy CM urges Central support for Great Green Wall, coastal protection and pollution-free Godavari
- ▶ Proposes expansion of tiger conservation camps, welfare measures for Forest Watchers, and Kumki elephants to tackle human-animal conflict.
- ▶ Bhupender Yadav assures priority clearances, cooperation, and visit to Andhra Pradesh on International Elephant Day

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

DEPUTY Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Tuesday sought Central assistance for Andhra Pradesh's Great Green Wall initiative and coastal conservation efforts along the state's 1,050 km coastline.

Meeting Union environment, forest and climate change minister Bhupender Yadav in Delhi, he also sought enhanced support under the Green India Mission and expeditious wildlife clearances for the Sontyam Road project in Visakhapatnam.

Pawan Kalyan said they discussed several key environmental and wildlife con-

servation initiatives concerning Andhra Pradesh.

The Deputy CM said he thanked the Central minister for the approval of the Aranyaram Common Facility Centre (training and research), which covers the units of HANUMAN - Animal Conflict Mitigation Centre, Great Green Wall Monitoring Centre, Forest Fire Command and Control Centre, and State Tiger Monitoring Centre.

He sought suggestions from the Central minister to keep the sacred Godavari free from municipal and industrial pollution.

Pawan Kalyan requested support for increasing the number of base camps in the NSTR region from the pre-



Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan with Union environment, forest and climate change minister Bhupender Yadav in Delhi on Tuesday

sent 90 to 150. This initiative will significantly strengthen wildlife protection, particularly tiger conservation, while also generating nearly 300 employment opportunities for local Chenchu youth as Forest Watchers, thereby combining conservation with sustainable livelihoods for indigenous communities.

He also requested support for the provision of motorcy-

cles and free ration facilities for these Forest Watchers to enhance their mobility, efficiency, and welfare while serving in remote forest areas. The Central minister responded positively.

Pawan Kalyan also discussed the need for trained Kumki elephants from Odisha to mitigate human-animal conflict in Parvatipuram district and requested to put

a word in for the induction of tigers from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh states to strengthen genetic diversity in Andhra Pradesh's tiger population.

During the discussions, Bhupender Yadav also spoke to Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and extended his support for facilitating these conservation efforts. Pawan Kalyan said that the Central minister assured full cooperation from the government and expressed his willingness to personally visit Andhra Pradesh on August 12, the International Elephant Day. He also assured that the necessary approvals and sanctions pertaining to these proposals would be taken forward on priority before his visit.

The Deputy CM said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, they remain committed to protecting forests, conserving wildlife, strengthening ecological security, and building a greener, more sustainable Andhra Pradesh for future generations.

SHOULD AADHAAR USE BE RESTRICTED TO ID PROOF: SC

Continued from page 1

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. The Supreme Court delivered a historic verdict on September 26, 2018. The court, by a 4:1 majority, deemed the Aadhaar Act constitutional, but struck down some provisions. The court stated that linking Aadhaar to bank accounts and mobile SIMs is not mandatory. Aadhaar is not mandatory for school admissions. However, the use of Aadhaar in government subsidies and welfare schemes is valid. The Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016, is the law under which the legal framework for the issuance of Aadhaar numbers, their use, data security, and the functioning of UIDAI was determined.

This law came into effect on March 26, 2016. The Act clarifies that Aadhaar is not proof of citizenship. Aadhaar only indicates that the person is a resident of India.

1st Indian LNG tanker Disha safely crosses Hormuz

Continued from page 1

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 Dahanu in Gujarat on Thursday.

IAF to develop indigenous kamikaze one-way attack drones

Continued from page 1

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 Sullur, 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 de-

sign 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.

3 satellites paint worrying monsoon picture for India

Continued from page 1

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.

CM hardsells Amaravati to global investors

Continued from page 1

Addressing the Leadership Plenary-2 session on the theme "Can Smart Cities Love Humans?", Naidu said Amaravati is being developed as a people-centric capital that combines technology, sustainability and high quality of life. He described the city as a "Knowledge City" where national and international educational institutions, digital infrastructure and a quantum computing ecosystem are being established.

The Chief Minister said Amaravati is being planned as a world-class capital with dedicated zones for knowledge, finance, sports, justice, tourism, healthcare and media. Built along a 21-km stretch of the Krishna River,

the city will feature inner and outer ring roads, iconic bridges, cycling and walking tracks, underground utilities, green energy systems and a Greenfield airport.

Naidu said the capital is being developed with a net-zero vision while ensuring equity, environmental sustainability and economic opportunities. He highlighted the land pooling model under which farmers voluntarily contributed 35,000 acres for the capital project and received developed plots in return.

Pitching Amaravati as an investment destination, the Chief Minister urged investors to bring innovative ideas and participate in the city's development. He said advanced digital infrastructure

and emerging technologies would give Amaravati a distinct identity among global cities.

Drawing parallels with the development of Cyberabad, Naidu said technology-driven urban development creates long-term wealth and economic growth. He noted that Cyberabad, built during his earlier tenure, has evolved into a major economic hub and a key revenue generator.

Following the summit session, Naidu visited technology and innovation exhibits, including the Singapore Pavilion, Innovators Alley and Google showcases, where he reviewed urban development models, startup innovations and technology-enabled governance solutions.

Google removes Telegram from Play Store, Apple may follow suit

Continued from page 1

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.



AP to host national launch of VB-G RAM G on July 1

NEW DELHI: Andhra Pradesh will host the national launch of rural livelihood scheme Viksit Bharat -- Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) on July 1, Union rural development minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Tuesday after a meeting with the state's Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan. The announcement was made at a meeting held here to review the implementation of rural development programmes and flagship schemes in Andhra Pradesh. According to an official statement, rural development ministers from all states and Union Territories will join the launch programme through video conferencing. Andhra Pradesh will showcase its model panchayats and zero-waste gram panchayats at the event, highlighting innovations in rural governance, sustainable development and community participation, the statement said.

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

Modi-Trump meet set to spotlight G7 Summit

Continued from page 1

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, allegedly 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.

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. While Israel is not a party to the agreement, it is part of the war: It joined the US in launching strikes on Iran on Feb. 28, and has since fought the Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon and seized large swaths of that country.

Gulf nations seek protection of maritime routes

Continued from page 1

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 cooperation, development, and prosperity, and serves the common interests of the peoples of the region and the world".

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

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. The diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity on ongoing talks in Evian, said G7 leaders held a "very fruitful" conversation on Ukraine.

Leaders also agreed on a common position to support Ukraine

by providing additional air defence capabilities and other means of protection, the diplomat said. As the US under Trump has cut back aid to Ukraine, France and its European allies are now the biggest providers of military and financial support to Kyiv.

In the French spa town close to the Swiss border, Trump downplayed the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on the US but lamented the death toll.

"The whole thing is ridiculous," Trump said. "So, yeah, I'm going to do whatever I can."

Doctor's prescription now mandatory for cough syrups

Continued from page 1

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 appraised 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 — 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.

Telegram banned till June 22 post-NEET paper leak

Continued from page 1

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 IAC, 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 MAFIAA" — 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.

The MeitY direction to disable the editing feature is designed to close this post-examination window of fabrication. NTA acknowledged in statement that the access restriction will affect lakhs of ordinary citizens who use Telegram for legitimate personal, educational, and professional purposes. The agency clarified that the block is strictly temporary, ending the day after the exam on June 22. The feature-level direction on message editing, which extends to June 30, does not affect the ability to send or receive new messages on the platform.

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 Dsouza 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 "Behenein," "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

everything our imagination allowed it to become," she said. Soha sees those same qualities come alive in her daughter, Inaaya.

"When Inaaya was born, I really wanted her to experience that same joy of creating her own little world, so starting with Elliott; I gave Elliott to her and now her favourite toy is stuffed animals. One day she is reading to them, she's cooking for them, she's teaching them

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 cinemas, 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.

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6 Paint solvent (5)

9 Gallery custodian (7)

10 Embellish (5)

11 Deprive of weapons (5)

12 Toothed wheels (5)

13 Let or allowed to fall (7)

15 Small spot (3)

17 Wild party (4)

18 False or insincere, as a prefix (6)

19 Intelligent (5)

20 Deserving (6)

22 Grows old (4)

24 Illuminated (3)

25 Nazi secret police (7)

26 Clear (5)

27 Reel (5)

28 Cheekiness (5)

29 Thor Heyerdahl's raft (3-4)

30 Beginning (5)

31 Worry (5)

DOWN

2 A soft felt hat (6)

3 Abrasion (6)

4 Light source (3)

5 Cooked in an oven (5)

6 Sightseer (7)

7 Vessels for ashes (4)

8 Spell (6)

12 Full of pathogens (5)

13 Prolong vowels (5)

14 Openly manifest (5)

15 Hindu goddess of war (5)

16 Trunk (5)

18 Plume or pride oneself (5)

19 Small onion (7)

21 Bottom of the crankcase (3,3)

22 Reach or gain (6)

23 Distinctive periods (6)

25 You receive them on your birthday? (5)

26 Prod (4)

28 Jamaican popular music (3)

Solution to June 16

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Solution to June 16

'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.



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-



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 depositors 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 lend-



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.

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 slated to launch their public issues this month. Further, Waterways Leisure Tourism

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.

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

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 Kobeissi 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. InterGlobe 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.

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 Ghalenoel, 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 "vozinha" 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 Tummapudi, 2. Kandepu Manasa. Under-13: 1. Saanvika Akarapu, 2. Parnita Under-11: 1.S K Sony, 2. Kandepu 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.

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.

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 Gurruva Reddy said notices would be sent to actors Venkatesh Daggubati and Vijay Deverakonda, former India cricketer Ambati Rayudu, and international players Tilak Varma

'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 CJP'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 CJP 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 CJP 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.

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 Kunal

KOLKATA: Two persons were arrested on Tuesday morning, allegedly for throwing eggs at Trinamool Congress MLA Kunal 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, Rajabhau Waze and Sanjay Patil --- attended the meeting in person, while Omprakash Rajee Nimalkar, Bhausaheb Wakchaure, 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.



IN BRIEF

Mega job fair to be held in Periyapatna on June 24

MYSURU : In a major boost for job seekers across Mysuru district, a mega job fair is set to be organized in Periyapatna under the leadership of Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar. The event is being jointly organized by the District Employment Exchange Office, Mysuru, and BGS Educational Institutions, Periyapatna.

The job fair aims to connect eligible youth with employment opportunities across various sectors and will be open to candidates free of cost. Organizers expect participation from numerous companies looking to recruit candidates with different educational qualifications.

The Mega Job Fair will be held on June 24, 2026 (Wednesday) from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm at BGS Educational Institutions, Abbur village, Periyapatna taluk in Mysuru district.

Candidates who have completed SSLC, PUC, ITI, Diploma, Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses are eligible to participate. The organizers have specified that applicants between 18 and 35 years of age can take advantage of the recruitment drive.

Officials said the event has been planned with the objective of providing employment opportunities to young men and women from Mysuru, Kodagu and neighbouring districts. Several private companies are expected to conduct interviews and shortlist suitable candidates on the spot.

Interested candidates are required to complete online registration through the designated Google Form before attending the fair. Participants have also been advised to carry multiple copies of their resumes, biodata and photocopies of educational certificates for verification and recruitment purposes. For further details regarding registration and participation, candidates can contact the organizers on 9036356862, 9964463361 or 8748984360. The organizers have urged eligible youth not to miss the opportunity, describing the event as an important platform for those seeking employment and career growth.

CM committed to Karnataka's growth: Biocon



BENGALURU: Biocon Founder and Executive Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw on Tuesday said Chief Minister D K Shivakumar is committed to the state's growth and expressed support for his vision to transform Bengaluru into a world-class city and Karnataka into a leading state. Speaking after a meeting of Bengaluru's honorary consuls with the Chief Minister, Mazumdar-Shaw said the group backed the Chief Minister's new initiatives required to develop Bengaluru into a world-class city.

"I think the Chief Minister is very committed to developing not just Bengaluru, but Karnataka, and making it both a world-class city and a leading state in the country," she told reporters here. Praising Shivakumar's commitment to infrastructure development, she cited projects such as the proposed tunnel road, elevated corridors, the Peripheral Ring Road (PRR), and improvements to the Outer Ring Road (ORR), for which a special budgetary allocation has been made.

RSS registration issue, 'strategy' against CM: BJP

BENGALURU

SENIOR BJP leader R Ashoka on Tuesday hit out at Home Minister Priyank Kharage over the RSS registration issue, claiming that it was his strategy to counter Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who is "daydreaming" that he alone will be the Congress' CM candidate in the 2028 assembly elections.

He also hit out at the rul-

ing party for raising questions regarding the Sangh's registration, its legal status and sources of funding. Terming Kharage's move as a "strategy" to quietly counter Shivakumar, who is "daydreaming" that he alone will be the CM candidate in the 2028 Assembly elections, Ashoka said, "In an attempt to curry favour by appealing fake Gandhi high command in Delhi and somehow

become the next chief ministerial candidate, Priyank Kharage has chosen to make the RSS a bogeyman."

He also called Kharage the most "utter flop" minister in Karnataka's history. "What moral authority does the Indian National Congress have to speak about the RSS when it has formed political alliances purely for the sake of power with an extremely divisive and anti-national

organisation like the Muslim League, which was responsible for the partition of the country, and is governing in two states through such alliances?" Ashoka questioned in a post on 'X'.

He alleged that when anti-national elements openly shouted "Pakistan Zindabad" slogans in front of the Vidhana Soudha, the sacred temple of democracy, Priyank Kharage chose to sit with his

eyes and ears closed, took no action against them, and arrogantly defended them. "Such is the integrity of Priyank Kharage."

"It is not only laughable but the height of shame that protectors of such anti-national thinking are questioning the legality and patriotism of the RSS, a nationalist organisation that has been serving Mother India selflessly and without expecta-



tions for the past hundred years," he added.

Kharage had formally sought an explanation from RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on the organisation's legal status and "sources of dona-

tions, contributions and income". In a letter to Bhagwat, the minister has asked the RSS to depute "authorised office-bearers" to explain the legal grounds on which it functions.

MLA adopts three girls after Bidar family tragedy

HANS NEWS SERVICE
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 consum-



ing mangoes. The victims, including mother Indumati and her five daughters, suffered severe vomiting and diarrhoea and were rushed for treatment.

As their condition worsened, they were shifted to a hospital in Hyderabad. How-

ever, two sisters, Bhavani (17) and Sandhyarani (14), succumbed to their illness on June 8 despite medical efforts. Another daughter, Vijayashree, continues to battle for her life and remains under treatment in a critical condition. A case regarding

the incident has been registered at the Narayanaguda Police Station in Hyderabad.

Following widespread attention to the family's plight, MLA Prabhu Chavan visited Shembelli village and met the grieving family members. During his visit, he offered condolences and announced that he would personally support the future of the remaining three daughters.

The MLA assured the family that he would bear the entire cost of the girls' education and also take responsibility for their marriages. In addition, he promised that a new house would be constructed for

the family through government assistance within the current year.

The announcement has drawn appreciation from local residents and social organizations, who described the move as a significant humanitarian gesture during a period of immense suffering for the family.

With the family still coping with the loss of two daughters and another child undergoing treatment, the support extended by the MLA is expected to provide much-needed relief and security. Authorities continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding the illness that led to the deaths.

Wife, lover among 9 arrested in insurance murder conspiracy



First case in the state in which forensic laboratory personnel were allegedly involved in manipulating scientific evidence in return for money

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BELAGAVI

POLICE in Belagavi district have cracked the murder of a former serviceman allegedly killed as part of a conspiracy to claim insurance benefits worth nearly Rs 2 crore, arresting nine persons, including the victim's wife and officials linked to a forensic laboratory.

The victim, identified as Sandeep Kalagouda Manjargi (46), a resident of Ghodageri village in Hukeri taluk, had insurance policies with HDFC and State Bank of India. According to police, the accused allegedly plotted to project his death as the result of a road accident in order to claim the insurance amount.

Belagavi Superintendent of Police K. Ramarajan said the investigation revealed that the victim's wife, Suma Manjargi, allegedly conspired with her alleged lover Pundalik Dombur and others to murder Sandeep and secure the insurance payout.

The arrested accused include Suma Manjargi, Pundalik Dombur, RMP doctor Basavaraj Bhasme, Food and Drug Administration employee Ashok Gujanal, forensic laboratory clerk Appasaheb Naik, Laboratory Assistant Channayya Advismamath, Senior Scientific Officer P.N. Nagaraj, and two associates of Pundalik, Sachin Selar and Rahul Jogi.

Police said Sandeep had sustained injuries after falling from a motorcycle on March 13 and was initially treated at a hospital in Hukeri before being shifted to a hospital in Ghataprabha. Investigators alleged that while he was undergoing treatment, Suma and Pundalik administered poison through a saline bottle and also gave him sleeping pills, resulting in his death on March 15.

Following the death, the accused allegedly attempted to portray the case as a natural death resulting from complications after a road accident and lodged a misleading complaint with the Yamakanamaradi police station.

During the investigation, police uncovered an alleged effort to suppress evidence by influencing the post-mortem and forensic examination process. According to the SP, the accused had allegedly enlisted the help of forensic laboratory personnel and others to ensure that traces of poison did not appear in the forensic report.

Ramarajan described it as the first case in the state in which forensic laboratory personnel were allegedly involved in manipulating scientific evidence in return for money. A case has been registered and all nine accused have been remanded to judicial custody. Further investigation is underway.

Kempegowda Jayanti to be celebrated at new Kempegowda Layout this year: CM

BENGALURU

KARNATAKA Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Tuesday announced that this year's Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Jayanti will be celebrated at the newly developed Kempegowda Layout on June 27. He said the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA), under the leadership of its chairman N A Haris, will plant 1.5 million saplings across the city and a newly constructed road in the layout will also be inaugurated on the occasion.

Shivakumar was speaking to the media after a preparatory meeting for the celebrations held at the Vidhana Soudha here. Nadaprabhu Kempegowda founded the city of Bengaluru. "As every year, a preparatory meeting was convened to discuss the celebrations. The event's framework was discussed with various organisations. Separate processions will arrive from the city's four Kempegowda towers," he said.

The chief minister said that

Ministers Ramalinga Reddy, Krishna Byre Gowda, K J George and Byrathi Suresh will be responsible for the four towers. Minister K H Muniyappa will oversee the programme at Kempegowda International Airport.

Preparatory work in parts of Bengaluru will be coordinated under the leadership of Minister Gowda, he said. Shivakumar said preparations are underway to establish a Town Planning College named after Kempegowda on the campus of Visvesvaraya Technological University. He said that Jayanti celebrations will be held in every Assembly constituency, and a grant of Rs 1 lakh will be released for each. "On another day, similar programmes will be organised in Bengaluru's 369 wards, with Rs 1 lakh being provided for each ward through the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA). The date for these ward-level events will be decided by Bengaluru city ministers. Several suggestions were received during the meeting," he added.

Bengaluru in-charge Minister holds first meeting with officials

BENGALURU

MINISTER Krishna Byre Gowda, who had delayed taking charge of the Greater Bengaluru Development portfolio citing "incomplete" allocation of key city-related departments, held his first meeting with top officials under the GBA limits on Tuesday.

Clarifying that he assumed charge following directions of Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and the Congress high command, he said he has informed the leadership that clarity regarding his responsibilities was essential to deliver the results.

Gowda, who took oath on June 3, was allotted the Greater Bengaluru Development portfolio. The minister was unhappy as the CM retained direct control over the city's two influential planning agencies—the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) and the Bengaluru Metropolitan Region Development Authority (BMRDA) -- and



therefore delayed assuming charge of the department.

He has been entrusted with the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and five city corporations under it, as well as the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) and Bengaluru Metro. The minister recently discussed his portfolio with Shivakumar and the Congress high command, including party General Secretary in-charge of Karnataka Ran-deep Singh Surjewala.

"Regarding the portfolio issue, I have shared my opinion with the Chief Minister and the party high command. To run the administration efficiently and provide results with accountability, there needs to be clarity. I have

brought this to the notice of the CM and the party leadership, they will decide on it," Gowda said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said his stand was that it was appropriate to take charge once there was clarity. "But the Chief Minister and the high command directed me to work assuming the charge, and they would decide on the matter in due course. Ultimately, I will have to respect their directions, so I have taken charge and have begun my work," he added.

Noting that the CM has decided as per his discretion, Gowda said, "I have requested him to rethink, but ultimately, as you know this matter is subject to the Chief Minister's discretion."

SIT officials injured as vehicle overturns while probing Dharmasthala case

The Dharmasthala case, which has triggered widespread attention across Karnataka, involves serious allegations of unnatural deaths and illegal burials. The SIT has been conducting an extensive probe, including site visits, excavations, and recording statements of many witnesses

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BELTHANGADY

A Multi-Utility Vehicle carrying a Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the controversial Dharmasthala mass burial allegations overturned after losing control in the Charmadi ghats on Tuesday, leaving all four occupants injured.

The team, led by SIT Superintendent of Police C.A. Seemon, was travelling from Belthangady to Chikkamagaluru when the accident occurred. They were on their way to meet senior officer Jitendra Kumar Dayama in connection with the sensitive investigation into claims of suspicious deaths and secret burials in the pilgrim centre of Dharmasthala.

According to preliminary reports, the vehicle veered off the road, rammed into an embankment and flipped over. The impact caused extensive damage to the car. The injured personnel include SIT SP C.A. Seemon, Inspector Kusumad-



har, Police Constable P.C. Manjunath, and the driver. All four were immediately shifted to a nearby hospital, where they are undergoing treatment. Their condition is stated to be stable.

The Dharmasthala case, which has triggered widespread attention across Karnataka, involves serious allegations of unnatural deaths and illegal burials. The SIT has been conducting an extensive probe, including site visits, ex-

cavations, and the recording of statements from multiple witnesses. Tuesday's road accident comes at a crucial phase of the investigation. Despite the setback, police sources indicated that the probe into the main case would continue without delay. A case has been registered at the Belthangady Traffic Police Station, and authorities have initiated an inquiry to ascertain the exact cause of the accident, including possibilities of mechani-

SHIROOR SEER CALLS FOR TRANSPARENT PROBE

HANS NEWS SERVICE
UDUPI

SHIROOR Mutt seer Sri Vedavardhana Teertha Swamiji on Tuesday urged authorities to conduct a comprehensive and impartial investigation into allegations surrounding Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala, saying that clarity on the matter was essential to maintain public confidence and protect the interests of devotees.

In a statement issued here, the seer said the allegations being discussed in the public domain had generated concern among followers of the renowned religious and charitable institution and warranted a fair examination by competent authorities. He said that while allegations and counter-allegations



were being widely debated, it was important that the truth emerged through a transparent legal process rather than through speculation or public opinion.

"An objective and unbiased inquiry is necessary to establish the facts. The investigation should determine the veracity of the allegations and also ascertain whether there has been any deliberate attempt to malign the institution through false information or vested interests," the seer said.

cal failure, road conditions or driver error.

The Charmadi Ghat section

is known for its sharp curves and steep gradients, making it prone to accidents, especially

during the monsoon season. This incident has once again highlighted concerns over the

safety of officials involved in high-profile and sensitive investigations in the state.



OTT deals crisis puts big-budget films under financial pressure

SUHAS SISTU

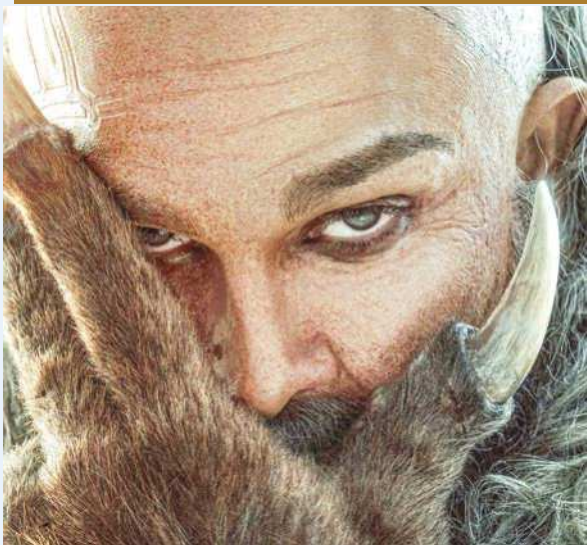
The Indian film industry is facing a new financial challenge as OTT deals, once considered a major source of revenue recovery, have witnessed a significant decline. Streaming platforms are reportedly reducing acquisition budgets, leaving producers of several big-budget films under mounting pressure.

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 disa-

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.



greements. 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 Karna 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 Karna'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.



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.

'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.

'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, Jordara Sujatha, Krishna Chaitanya, Deviyani Sharma, Abhinav Gomatam, and Pavanigangireddy. 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?