



THE Hans India



Mbappe rewrites World Cup history
France talisman Kylian Mbappe has carved his name deeper into football history, becoming the youngest player to feature in 20 FIFA World Cup matches and the fastest to reach the milestone of 20 World Cup goals

India needs a political culture where facts should matter not propaganda
India's political system is both unique and complicated. Until the early 1990s, Parliament and state legislatures were known for serious debates, policy alternatives and constructive criticism. Over the years, however, political discourse has increasingly shifted from governance

Tech stocks lead charge as Sensex, Nifty extend winning run
Benchmark equity indices extended gains for a second straight session on Friday, with the Sensex rising 827 points and the Nifty climbing over 1 per cent, driven by strong buying in IT, banking and heavyweight stocks amid easing crude oil prices

'Lenin' review: A gripping rural drama
Lenin marks an important milestone in the career of Akhil Akkineni as it reunites the young hero with director Murali Kishor Abburu and comes backed by ManamEnterprises LLP and Sithara Entertainments.

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WINDOWS

16 IVP councillors join BJP in CM Rekha's presence

NEW DELHI: Sixteen councillors of the Indraprastha Vikas Party, a breakaway faction of the AAP, merged with the BJP on Friday in the presence of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Delhi BJP president Harsh Malhotra. Welcoming the Indraprastha Vikas Party (IVP) councillors into the BJP, Gupta said they took a big decision keeping in mind Delhi's development. "It's a good signal that will speed up development in their wards," Gupta told a press conference. "Development of the city is the top priority of the BJP government. The joining of the IVP councillors will further strengthen the BJP in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, and boost civic work in their municipal wards," she said.

Sexual assault bid: Teacher suspended

BALLIA : A teacher at a government primary school here has been suspended for allegedly attempting to commit unnatural sexual assault on a 14-year-old boy, an official of the Basic Education Department said on Friday. District Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) Manish Singh said that Ghulam Mustafa alias Pappu (50), a teacher at the government primary school in Sisotar village was suspended on Thursday. He said orders have been issued for a disciplinary inquiry into the matter. Strict action will be taken against the accused teacher after the inquiry report is received, he added. According to police, Mustafa called the boy to his house on July 5 on the pretext of some work. After luring the boy to his house, Mustafa locked the door and attempted to commit unnatural sexual assault on him.

68-year-old man killed by bear in Jammu

RAJOURI : An elderly man succumbed to injuries suffered in a bear attack in the upper reaches of Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district on Thursday, officials said. The incident took place at Dhok Jangwala, a high-altitude grazing area of remote Darhal area, where the man was staying with his family, they said. The deceased was identified as Mohammad Amin (68), a resident of Thandkote village in Darhal tehsil. According to family members, the bear was hiding in the bushes and suddenly attacked Amin, leaving him critically injured.

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One Nation One Election rollout possible by 2029: Panel chief

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE joint committee of Parliament examining the bills on simultaneous elections is working to create a mechanism that could make the 'One Nation, One Election' reform fully operational by the 2029 General Elections, its chairperson said on Friday.

99 per cent of civil society stakeholders consulted so far have backed the proposal, which aims to curb an estimated Rs 7 lakh crore economic loss caused by frequent polls

curb an estimated Rs 7 lakh crore economic loss caused by frequent polls. The committee began its deliberations in Goa on the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, with an interaction with Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and members of his cabinet, seeking their views on the challenges involved in

implementing simultaneous elections and ways to address them. "We had an informal interaction with the chief minister and cabinet ministers, who represent the people of Goa. We discussed how 'One Nation, One Election' can be implemented, what challenges exist and how they can be mitigated while maintaining a fine balance acceptable to all," Chaudhary said. He said that the committee has visited several states, including Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi, where it interacted with constitutional experts, civil society organisations, educationists and other stakeholders. An overwhelming majority of those consulted have supported the idea of simultaneous elections, said the BJP MP from Pali in Rajasthan. "We have found that almost 99 per cent of stakeholders, particularly from civil society



and various organisations, favour simultaneous elections. The effort now is to evolve a mechanism that is acceptable to all political parties," he said.

Oz visit strengthens bilateral ties, opens new avenues: PM

PM and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese launched the India-Australia Sports Collaboration Roadmap during a visit to the iconic MCG, marking a significant step towards expanding bilateral cooperation in sports, sports science, and infrastructure

MELBOURNE

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Friday expressed confidence that the outcomes of his visit to Australia have further strengthened bilateral ties and opened new avenues for cooperation across diverse sectors. PM Modi on Friday explained for New Zealand after concluding his three-day visit to Australia. Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, Australia's High Commissioner to India Philip Green and other



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese at the MCG

officials saw off PM Modi at the airport. "As my Australia visit concludes, I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Government and people of Australia as well as to PM Albanese for their warmth. The outcomes of this visit have further strengthened our partnership and opened new avenues for cooperation across diverse sectors. The momentum in the times to come will benefit our nation and the entire planet," PM Modi posted on X. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson

Ram temple donations row
SC to hear pleas seeking investigation on Monday



HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court will hear a batch of pleas seeking a fair and time-bound probe into the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya on July 13. On July 7, an Ayodhya court granted one-day police remand for three of the eight accused arrested in connection with the alleged theft of donations at the Ram temple. The court authorised the remand for Anukalp Mishra, Lavkush Mishra and

Abusive outburst: Litigant forcibly removed from SC

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

IN a dramatic turn of events, a litigant appearing in person was forcibly removed from the Supreme Court on Friday after he allegedly hurled abuses and threw his legal papers during the hearing of his petition challenging an Allahabad High Court order. The incident occurred before a partial working day bench comprising justices K V Viswanathan and Alok Aradhe. At the outset, the litigant adopted an unusually confrontational tone. "Mr judicial servant. I order you to order the registration of an FIR against the ACP Lunknow," the litigant, who was wearing a black coat without a lawyer's band, said while addressing the bench. "You are ordering me? You are ordering us?" asked a visibly surprised Justice Viswanathan. "That is all from my side. Everything is on record," the litigant said and hurled an unparliamentary abuse before allegedly throwing his case papers into the air.

Govt, WB launch orientation for Rs 8,300 crore clean air project

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Friday launched an orientation workshop for the proposed Rs 8,300-crore 'Clean Air, Healthy Delhi' programme, with Chief Minister Rekha Gupta saying the initiative reflects the government's long-term, science-based strategy to tackle air pollution. The seven-year programme, to be implemented between September 2026 and August 2033, will be financed through a 65 per cent loan from the World Bank, while the remaining 35 per cent will be borne by the Delhi govern-



ment. At the workshop, the World Bank formally handed over the confirmation of the Project Preparation Grant Facility to the Delhi government. Addressing officials from various departments, Gupta said improving air quality is a collective responsibility and required coordinated efforts

across agencies. 'Clean Air, Healthy Delhi' is not just a pollution-control programme but an investment in better health and a sustainable future, Gupta asserted. She said the government's strategy focuses on addressing pollution at its source, strengthening data-driven monitoring, ensuring effective enforcement through technology and promoting public participation. World Bank experts made presentations on financial management, procurement procedures, environmental and social safeguards, and institutional preparedness under the Programme for Results framework.

BJP's Bankipur assembly bypoll nominee withdraws candidature

PATNA: Bharatiya Janata Party's Bankipur assembly bypoll nominee Abhishek Kumar Sinha on Friday withdrew his candidature citing family reasons, a day after filing nomination. The saffron party had on Tuesday named the youth wing leader as its candidate for the bypoll in the assembly constituency in Bihar, which fell vacant following the resignation of BJP national president Nitin Nabin. The bypoll will be held on July 30, while counting of votes is scheduled for August 3. The last date for filing of nominations is July 13.

May get killed: Hasina to return to B'desh in Dec

DHAKA

BANGLADESH'S former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has announced that she, alongside other exiled leaders of the Awami League, intends to return to Bangladesh voluntarily around December, despite facing the stark prospect of arrest or death upon her arrival. In an interview with Reuters, the 78-year-old leader, who moved to India following a student-led uprising that unseated her administration in August 2024, stated that she plans to surrender before the judicial courts



upon her return. She further clarified that there has been no communication with the current authorities in Dhaka concerning the scheduled

homecoming. "They may arrest me on my return, they may even kill me," Sheikh Hasina told the news agency. "Still, I have to go." Expressing deep concern over the ongoing situation of her political supporters back home, the former Prime Minister emphasised her resolve to face the consequences on her home soil. "My party leaders and workers are being subjected to tremendous repression. If death comes, I want it to come on my own soil, where my parents are buried and where their blood was shed," she added.

Is there an Iranian plot to assassinate Donald Trump? Unclaimed airstrikes target Iran after US attacks, raising questions of who launched them



DUBAI

Israel has shared fresh intelligence with the United States alleging that Iran recently developed a new plan to assassinate US President Donald Trump, according to multiple media reports. The Wall Street Journal reported that Israel passed the intelligence to US officials this week. Concurrently, CNN, citing two sources familiar with the matter, reported that the warning was delivered this week and referred to a specific alleged

plot. While the exact details of the purported plan remain unclear, CNN reported that US agencies had not independently verified the intelligence or been tracking the alleged plot before Israel's warning. According to CNN, some US officials believe the Israeli intelligence may also be part of a broader effort by Israel to influence Trump's decision on whether to intensify American military action against Iran. One source told the broad-

caster that US intelligence has been monitoring a steady flow of threats against Trump in recent weeks, but described the Israeli warning as new because it referred to a specific alleged plan. The White House declined to comment directly on the reported intelligence, referring both The Wall Street Journal and CNN to remarks Trump made while speaking to reporters in Ankara, Turkey. A series of unclaimed airstrikes that hit Iran after the US said it finished its attacks

have again raised questions of who else may be targeting the Islamic Republic. The strikes Thursday, just as Iran prepared to bury the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, hit areas across southern Iran. The country's theocracy hasn't directly blamed anyone for the strikes, though one lawmaker issued a warning to the United Arab Emirates over allegedly providing support to the United States in its campaign against Iran.

Ex-DSP convicted in Khalra case not found at address in jail records

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HOSHIARPUR

FORMER Punjab Police DSP Jaspal Singh, a life convict in the 1995 abduction and murder of human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra who was released on bail in 2023, could not be found at the village address mentioned in the Nabha jail records, officials said on Friday. The verification followed a request from the prison authorities amid renewed

When the Punjab government did not receive any application from the home ministry, how can the chief minister sign any file or send it to the Governor?

public attention on the Khalra case after the release, and subsequent takedown, of the film 'Satluj' from ZEE5, which is based on the activist's life. Assistant Sub-Inspector Jaswinder Singh of Sadar police

said the jail authorities through an official communication sought to verify if Jaspal Singh was living at Manjhi village in Hoshiarpur district, as mentioned in his jail records. When police went to the



Jaswant Singh Khalra

village, the sarpanch and residents told them that Jaspal Singh was not living there, the ASI said. SHO Baljinder Singh Malhi said Jaspal Singh was released from the Nabha jail on interim bail on May 27, 2023, under a court order.

The verification established that he was not living at the address mentioned in the jail documents, he said. 'Satluj' starring Diljit Dosanjh Daljit as Khalra, which was earlier titled 'Punjab '95', was released

on ZEE5 on July 3 before being removed from the platform two days later. Directed by Honey Trehan, the film depicts Khalra's investigation into the "illegal" cremation of thousands of bodies claimed as "unidentified" by police during the militancy period in the state. Khalra was abducted from in front of his house in Amritsar in September 1995.

Punjab AAP media in-charge Baltej Pannu said that any application for premature

release in a CBI case is decided by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and not the Punjab government. Jaspal Singh's remission application was filed before the home ministry in 2017, which was rejected in 2018, after which the governor also rejected the plea, Pannu said. Another recommendation was forwarded to the home ministry in 2019, while similar applications of the other surviving co-convicts were rejected in 2023, he said.

Himachal rains: Schools shut in Sirmour, Solan

All teaching and non-teaching staff, however, were ordered to remain present at their respective institutes; two persons sustained injuries after stones fell from a hillside onto a moving vehicle in the Arki area

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA

FOLLOWING relentless rains in parts of Himachal Pradesh, all government and private educational institutions and Anganwadis remained shut in Sirmour and Solan districts on Friday, officials said. The MeT department in Shimla has forecast heavy rainfall in many parts of the state, cautioning against possible landslides, flash floods, uprooting of trees and road blockades.

According to separate orders issued by the deputy commissioners of Sirmour and Solan, Priyanka Verma and Manmohan Sharma, respectively, continuous rainfall is leading to obstruction of rural roads, increased risk of landslides and general



disruption of normal life, particularly in the rural and hilly areas. Such inclement weather conditions are likely to endanger the life and safety of students commuting to and from schools across the district, the orders said.

An order to shut educational institutions in the Paonta subdivision of Sirmour district was issued late on Thursday. On Friday

morning, the SDMs of Nahan, Sangrah, Pachhad and Rajgarh subdivisions in the district issued similar orders to keep schools and colleges shut. All teaching and non-teaching staff, however, were ordered to remain present at their respective institutes, officials said. In Solan district, two persons sustained injuries after stones fell from a hillside onto a moving ve-

hicle in the Arki area. The injured have been admitted to a hospital in Kunihar for treatment, officials said. The Innova Crysta carrying five people was travelling on the Gambharpul-Sarli road when stones fell on it suddenly.

The owner of the car, Maher Chand, was among the injured. Similar incidents were reported from several locations along the Kalka-Shimla National Highway, leading to the closure of one lane. According to officials, rockfalls occurred between Wagnaghat and Kandaghat, and between Dharampur and Chakki Mod on the highway. The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has restricted traffic to a single lane as a precautionary measure, the officials said.

Venu questions PM's silence on Ram Temple donation theft

HANS NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN

CONGRESS General Secretary KC Venugopal on Friday questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence regarding the alleged theft of offerings and donations at the Ayodhya Ram Temple, demanding a Supreme Court-monitored probe into the matter.

Addressing a press conference here on the final day of his two-day visit to Uttarakhand, Venugopal said that for several years, the BJP, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) have been collecting donations in the name of the Ram Temple, and the trust authority has misappropriated that gold and money. The Congress leader said, "I have just one question: who is responsible for the theft of donations? The Ram Temple Trust was formed under the supervision of the prime minister. Why is he silent on this issue?" Demanding an investigation under the supervision of the



Supreme Court, Venugopal said that the party would raise this matter prominently in Parliament. Uttarakhand Congress General Secretary and party in-charge Kumari Selja, and state president Ganesh Godiyal were also present at the press conference. Referring to the assembly elections scheduled for early next year in Uttarakhand, Venugopal said he had reviewed the party's election preparedness over the past two days. During this period, he held meetings with

senior party leaders, the state political affairs committee, district Congress committee presidents, frontal organisations, departments, as well as incumbent and former MLAs.

He said, "I am happy to state that the party organisation and leaders in the state are ready to contest the election with full strength. All leaders in the state will fight together and win." After interacting with leaders in various meetings, Venugopal formed the impression that the people of the state

are opposed to the current government. He said that the BJP government has caused significant disappointment among the people over the last 10 years, and the Congress will make an all-out effort to capitalise on the prevailing anti-government sentiment in the state. He alleged that unemployment and the resulting migration are the biggest issues in the state, yet the BJP government has done "nothing" to address them over the past decade.

'SP, Cong allowed namaz at Hanumangarhi temple'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AYODHYA/BASTI

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday accused the Samajwadi Party and the Congress of disrespecting Hindu faith, alleging they had earlier allowed namaz to be offered at the Hanumangarhi temple in Ayodhya and demanded that they apologise for the "sin". Addressing a public meeting in Bikapur in Ayodhya after inaugurating and laying the foundation stone of 217 development projects worth over Rs 432 crore, Adityanath said those who now claim to speak for faith had committed a "sin" by allowing namaz to be offered on the steps of Hanumangarhi.

"They had namaz offered at Hanumangarhi. Can anyone imagine Hanuman Chalisa being recited inside Jama Masjid? Can any government or the Samajwadi Party or the Congress ever make that happen? If not, then why was this sin committed at Hanumangarhi? Who was responsible for it?" he said.

The chief minister was apparently referring to an incident from November 2003 when an attempt was made to offer namaz outside the Hanumangarhi, a temple dedicated to Lord Hanuman, but permission



was not granted by the local police. When asked about the namaz incident, former UP Director General of Police and BJP MP Brij Lal on Friday told PTI, "This is correct.

This incident dates back to November 2003 during the month of Ramadan." "Back then, the BSP government led by Mayawati had exited," Brijlal recalled suggesting that the entire 'namaz plan' was made during then Mulayam Singh Yadav government allegedly at the behest of "an officer with Samajwadi Party-Leftist leanings." "The plan was to hold roza ifaar after namaz. But this couldn't succeed as the then SSP Faizabad (now Ayodhya) Rajeev Sabharwal firmly said he won't allow this," Brijlal recalled. Following the opposition, namaz was finally offered at the Hanumangarhi mahant's residence adjacent to the temple.

"The original plan was to offer namaz right outside Hanumangarhi but police didn't allow it," Brij Lal stated.

Ayodhya's Bhadarsa town renamed Bharat Nagar

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AYODHYA

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday announced that the newly constituted Khiloni-Suchitaganj nagar panchayat in Ayodhya district would be renamed after Maa Jwala Ji, while the municipal town of Bhadarsa would henceforth be known as Bharat Nagar. Addressing a public meeting in Bikapur, Adityanath said the demand for renaming Khiloni-Suchitaganj had



been raised by local BJP MLA Amit Singh Chauhan.

"The MLA has requested that the Khiloni-Suchitaganj Nagar Panchayat be named after Maa Jwala Ji. I announce that it will be known as Maa Jwala Ji nagar panchayat," the chief minister said. Adityanath also announced the renaming of Bhadarsa, saying the town would now be known as Bharat Nagar, while the area associated with Bharat Kund would also be identified by that name. Taking a swipe at the Samajwadi

Party, he said, "You have recently seen the conduct of the Samajwadi Party's representatives in Bhadarsa. That reflects their true character. Bhadarsa will now be known as Bharat Nagar".

Bhadarsa was in news in 2024 for rape of a minor in which SP leader Moid Khan was arrested. Khan was set free by court even as his shopping complex was razed by bulldozers over alleged irregularities. The chief minister said the new name honours Bharat, the younger brother

of Lord Ram, whose devotion and sacrifice remain an enduring example. "Bharat spent 14 years near Bharat Kund while faithfully carrying out Lord Ram's command, with Lord Ram's 'padukas' symbolically ruling Ayodhya. It is difficult to find a brother like Bharat anywhere in the world," Adityanath said. He added that Ayodhya's cultural legacy is recognised across the country and said the renamed Bharat Nagar would be developed further as a nagar panchayat.

MP Cong chief's brother detained in drug seizure case

HANS NEWS SERVICE
INDORE

THE police in Indore arrested two men and seized about 11 grams of brown sugar besides detaining two others including Nana Patwari, the younger brother of Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Jitu Patwari, in connection with the case. The Congress leader claimed that it was a false case and accused of the ruling BJP of doing vendetta politics. The arrested men allegedly told police that they were going to deliver the drug to Nana Patwari and another person, an official said. "The Rajendra Nagar police arrested Irfan Khan alias Golu Chanderi and Sanjay



Kaushal alias Ronnie Bhai... 10.8 grams of brown sugar was recovered from their possession and an SUV was seized," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Narendra Rawat. A First Information Report was registered against them under the Narcotic Drugs

and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. During the preliminary interrogation, the two accused told police that they were going to deliver the brown sugar to Nana alias Kulbhushan Patwari and Manav Gangwani, the DCP claimed. -- PTI

Man beaten to death by lover's family in Kaushambi

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KAUSHAMBI

A 19-year-old man, who was in a relationship with a young woman here, was allegedly beaten to death by her family members when he went to meet her, police said on Friday. Three police teams have been constituted to arrest the accused, who are absconding since the incident, police said, adding that two suspects have been taken into custody for questioning. The incident took place in Mahua Khada village under Manjhanpur police station limits on Thursday night, they said. Manjhanpur Circle Officer Shivank Singh said Ram Badan Lodhi, a resident of



Osa village, lodged a complaint alleging that his distant relative Rakesh Lodhi had assaulted his son Shiv Prasad, leading to his death. According to the complaint, Rakesh Lodhi informed Ram Badan over phone that his son was assaulted. The victim's family members subsequently reached the accused's house and took the injured youth to the district hospital, but he succumbed to injuries on the way, the officer said. Police and

senior officials visited the spot after receiving information. Preliminary investigation has revealed that Shiv Prasad was apparently in a relationship with Rakesh Lodhi's daughter and had gone to meet her at her house on Thursday night. During this time he was assaulted, Singh said. He said the young woman also sustained injuries in the incident and has been admitted to the district hospital. Her condition is stable. The body has been sent for post-mortem, police said. Based on a complaint by the deceased's family, a murder case has been registered against Rakesh Lodhi and his family members. PTI COR KIS SMV SMV ARB ARB 07101616

'Akhilesh banned Kanwar Yatra while BJP welcomed devotees with petals'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BASTI

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday targeted Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, alleging that the previous government imposed restrictions on Hindu traditions, such as the Kanwar Yatra, while the BJP government welcomed kanwariyas with flower petals.

Addressing a gathering in Basti after inaugurating and laying the foundation

'I feel that, in the near future, the Samajwadi Party president, too, is waiting to wear saffron attire and join you in the Kanwar Yatra. He seems to be hoping for an invitation, so that he can also go and shower flower petals'

of 77 development projects worth over Rs 504 crore, Adityanath mocked Yadav, claiming that the SP chief is now "waiting to participate" in the very same Hindu event which his government had allegedly banned.

"When Shiv devotees, the kanwariyas, carry water from Saryu in Ayodhya to Bhadeshwar Nath Dham

(in Basti) to perform 'jal-abhishek' of Lord Shiva, we shower flowers upon them from a helicopter. But the (former) Samajwadi Party government had banned this 'Kanwar Yatra'."

"They used to say that the 'Kanwar Yatra' should not take place. They used to impose restrictions on Durga Puja, disallowed the

celebration of Shri Krishna Janmashtami, and banned the 84-Kosi Parikrama. Now, no one can impose such restrictions. No one can stop it now," he said. Taking a jibe at Yadav, the UP chief minister said, "I feel that, in the near future, the Samajwadi Party president, too, is waiting to wear saffron attire and join you

in the Kanwar Yatra. He seems to be hoping for an invitation, so that he can also go and shower flower petals." He also levelled serious allegations on the Samajwadi Party (SP), saying that whenever the Waqf Board designated a piece of land as a "graveyard", the SP members would displace the poor, Dalits, and the

marginalised people from that land. "Earlier, land was encroached upon in the name of graveyards, and the poor were harassed. If the Waqf Board declared a plot to be a graveyard or Waqf land, no one dared to object, and the Dalits, the poor, and the marginalised were uprooted. It was these SP people who carried out



such work," he said. Hitting out at other opposition parties as well, he said,

"This was the very 'contract' held by the SP, BSP, and Congress."

No free bus travel for women without Pink card from Aug 1

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

NEW Delhi: The Delhi government has asked women commuters to switch from the existing paper-based Pink Tickets to the NCMC-enabled Pink Saheli Smart Card before August 1, 2026, when the current ticket system will be phased out. From August 1 onwards, women will be able to avail the free bus travel facility in DTC buses only through

the Pink Saheli Smart Card. The government clarified that the free travel scheme is not being discontinued, but is being upgraded to a technology-driven system aimed at improving transparency, accountability and efficiency. The existing Pink Tickets will remain valid till July 31, giving commuters time to complete the transition.

Transport Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh appealed to eligible women to register for

Transport Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh appealed to eligible women to register for the smart card at the earliest, assuring that the benefit would continue uninterrupted

the smart card at the earliest, assuring that the benefit would continue uninterrupted. He said there was no need for panic or confusion, as the government was committed to ensuring that every eligible beneficiary continued to enjoy free travel.

According to the minister, nearly 15 lakh Pink Saheli Smart Cards have already been issued, with a majority of beneficiaries already using them for free travel. He reiterated that the scheme would remain operational on both DTC and Cluster buses.

"The free bus travel facility for Delhi's women will continue uninterrupted. We appeal to all eligible women to obtain their Pink Saheli Smart Card and avail its benefits with ease and convenience," Singh said. The minister also clarified that July 31 is not the final date for registration. While paper tickets will cease to be valid after that date, applications for new Pink Saheli Smart Cards will continue through designated DTC

depots, notified centres and special registration camps even after August 1. Officials said the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)-based system would help streamline beneficiary management, reduce dependence on paper tickets and improve monitoring of the scheme. The digital platform is expected to enhance transparency and make implementation more efficient while preventing misuse.



Gold appraiser held for Rs 3.81 cr loan fraud

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A gold appraiser of a non-banking financial company (NBFC) has been arrested for allegedly conspiring with others to create 683 fake gold loan accounts using forged documents and artificial gold ornaments to fraudulently obtain loans worth over Rs 3.81 crore, an official of the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) said on Friday.

The accused, Pankaj Kumar, was working as a gold appraiser with a private company and was arrested on July 7 following an investigation into the alleged fraud,



he said. According to the EOW, the case came to light after the company's internal audit detected large-scale irregularities in its gold loan portfolio.

"The audit found that nine packets of original pledged gold ornaments worth around Rs 14.11 lakh were missing. The audit further revealed that 683 fake gold loan accounts had been cre-

ated between 2022 and 2025 using forged KYC documents, fake customer identities and artificial gold ornaments. Based on these accounts, loans amounting to about Rs 3.81 crore were fraudulently disbursed," the statement of the EOW read.

An FIR was registered at the EOW police station in August 2025, and further investigation was taken up.

During the investigation, police examined loan files, appraisal reports, KYC documents, audit records, bank statements and other financial records, besides recording statements of company officials and other witnesses.

Sonam Wangchuk's fast continues

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

BRAVING heavy rain and inclement weather, protesters of the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) continued their agitation at Jantar Mantar for the 21st consecutive day on Friday, pressing for comprehensive reforms in India's competitive examination and government recruitment system. The demonstrators remained steadfast despite the down-pour, raising slogans and demanding greater transparency, accountability and a time-bound recruitment process.

The protest has gained momentum with the sup-

Rain fails to halt Jantar Mantar protest as exam reform stir enters Day 21

port of social activist Sonam Wangchuk, whose indefinite hunger strike entered its 13th day. Organisers said the movement aims to draw attention to the hardships faced by lakhs of government job aspirants due to delayed examinations, postponed results, recurring paper leaks and the absence of a predictable recruitment calendar.

In an effort to broaden the campaign, CJP founder Abhijeet Deepke visited Mukherjee Nagar, one of



Delhi's largest coaching hubs for UPSC and SSC aspirants, on Thursday

night. During interactions with students, candidates spoke about the uncer-

tainty surrounding government recruitment and the emotional, financial and social challenges they face after spending years preparing for competitive examinations.

Many aspirants said repeated delays in examinations, late declaration of results, prolonged appointment processes, paper leaks and cancellation of tests have severely affected their careers and confidence in the system.

They urged the government to introduce a transparent, fair and fixed recruitment mechanism that ensures equal opportunities and timely appointments.

Shradha Walkar case

Aftab to take MA exam, hearing cancelled

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has allowed the cancellation of proceedings in the Shradha Walkar murder case on July 20 after accused Aftab Amin Poonawala informed that he would be appearing for his final MA Sociology examination at Tihar Jail on that day.

Additional Sessions Judge Hargurvarinder Singh Jaggi noted that Poonawala's examinations, conducted by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), are scheduled from July 11 to July 20 at the examination centre inside Central Jail No.



3, Tihar, where he is lodged as an undertrial prisoner.

In an order dated July 8, the court said, "Accused/ UTP Aaftab Amin Poon-

awala stated in his application that he is scheduled to appear for his M.A. Sociology last exam on July 20, 2026 from 02:00P.M. till

05:00P.M. at IGNOU Exam Centre located at Central Jail No. 03, Tihar. (date sheet of examination scheduled from July 11, 2026 till July 20, 2026)."

Poonawala had moved an application seeking exemption from physical production before the court on July 20, saying that his final examination would be held from 2 pm to 5 pm on that day.

Accepting the plea, the court cancelled the July 20 hearing and directed that prosecution evidence be recorded from July 21 onwards at 2 pm, while the remaining dates fixed earlier would continue.

Zoo welcomes 3 Asiatic lion cubs in rare repeat breeding

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

FRESH roars are set to echo through the Delhi zoo as Asiatic lioness Mahagauri has given birth to three cubs, adding a fresh chapter to the zoo's conservation efforts and marking a rare repeat breeding success after her earlier litter of five cubs last year, of which two survived.

The three Asiatic lion cubs were born on Tuesday at the National Zoological Park to the breeding pair of Mahagauri and Maheshwar. The newborns are currently kept with their mother in a secure maternity enclosure, zoo Director Sanjeet Kumar said. The official said the cubs are being provided a calm and undisturbed environment crucial for their early development,



with veterinary and animal care teams monitoring their health through CCTV surveillance and regular observation.

The successful breeding of Mahagauri and Maheshwar is considered significant as the pair had earlier produced two healthy cubs - Kartik and Karni - on April 27, 2025.

Mahagauri became the first lioness at the Delhi zoo since 2009 to conceive again

within around a year of giving birth, a rare occurrence in the facility's recent breeding history, Kumar said.

According to him, lion breeding at the zoo remained stable until 2009, with cubs born every few years. However, the programme witnessed a sharp decline thereafter, with births becoming increasingly infrequent and nearly coming to a standstill at one point.

Rajpal Yadav to go to jail, court upholds conviction



HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court on Friday upheld the conviction of Bollywood actor Rajpal Yadav in multiple cheque bounce cases, affirming the trial court's judgment and refusing to extend the benefit of probation in view of his conduct during the proceedings.

Justice Swarna Kanta Sharma dismissed Yadav's revision petitions and upheld the sentence awarded by the trial court under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act.

The High Court directed that the amount of Rs 2.25 crore already deposited before the Court and released to the complainant shall be adjusted while computing the liability payable by Yadav.

The Court further ordered that the actor shall undergo three months' imprisonment in each of the seven cheque bounce cases, with all the sentences running concurrently. It also directed him to pay the fine imposed by the trial court, observing that failure to pay the fine would entail six months' imprisonment. The Court granted Yadav two months' time to either comply with the judgment or avail of legal remedies before the appropriate forum.

Constitution of fee regulation panel

HC seeks govt stand on pvt schools' plea

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court on Friday sought the Delhi government's stand on pleas by private schools against a Directorate of Education circular to constitute the 'School Level Fee Regulation Committee' (SLFRC) in accordance with the latest fee regulation law. The applications form part of the petitions assailing the Delhi School Education (Transparency in Fixation and Regulation of Fees) Act, 2025 on grounds of it being malafide, biased, arbitrary and malicious in nature. A bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia issued notice on applications by the schools and asked the government to file its objections. The counsel for Action Committee Unaided Recognised Private Schools urged the court to protect them from any coercive action by the authori-



ties over failure to constitute the SLFRC. The bench said the main case was listed for hearing on July 20 and the petitioner can approach it if any adverse action is taken in the meantime. "If they precipitate, inform us. Wait till July 20," the court stated. The counsel for the petitioner submitted that despite the court putting in abeyance the government's February 1

mandate to private schools to constitute the SLFRC for the ongoing academic session, the authorities issued an "identical" circular on June 30. The circular "reiterates and resurrects" the very same directions to constitute the SLFRC and submit the proposals of fee for a block of three years, including the session 2026-27, the application by Action Committee said.

NHRC chief says helpline can aid victims of bonded labour

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

NHRC chairperson Justice V Ramasubramanian (ret'd) has urged officers to remain vigilant while dealing with cases of bonded labour and emphasised the need to launch a helpline so that labourers can seek help when needed. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on July 9 heard online 86 cases of alleged bonded labour in brick kilns across various districts of Haryana, the rights panel said on Friday.

Justice Ramasubramanian presided over the hearing that saw participation of several senior officials of the state government and various district magistrates in Haryana. He said in most of the cases, the records had "not been properly examined" by the government functionaries concerned. "Therefore, they did not have credible evidence to declare the labourers as bonded labourers," the rights panel said in a statement. The NHRC chief urged the officers to remain vigilant while dealing with cases of bonded labour.

BJP fields candidates in 11 MCD zones, key posts go to ex-IVP councillors

PURNA SINGH
NEW DELHI

THE Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Friday unveiled its candidates for the upcoming Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) Ward Committee and Standing Committee elections, fielding nominees in 11 of the city's 12 zones while opting out of the Karol Bagh Zone. The nominations, filed on the last day of the process, underline the party's strategy to strengthen its hold over the

civic body's administrative structure. A key feature of the BJP's candidate list is the prominent role assigned to councillors who recently joined the party from the Indraprastha Vikas Party (IVP). Several former IVP leaders have been nominated for the posts of chairperson, vice-chairperson and Standing Committee member, signalling the BJP's confidence in its newly expanded ranks. For the Narela Zone, the BJP has nominated Shanti Devi for chairperson, Divesh Ku-

Several former IVP leaders have been nominated for the posts of chairperson, vice-chairperson and Standing Committee member, signalling the BJP's confidence in its newly expanded ranks

mar for vice-chairperson and Pawan Kumar for the Standing Committee. In Keshavpuram, Vinita Behra, Meenu Goyal and Sushil have been fielded for the three posts respectively, while Suman Rana, Seema and Hemchand Goyal will contest from the Rohini Zone. In the Central Zone, the party has

nominated Sumi Bhati Chaudhary for chairperson, Praveen Kumar for vice-chairperson and Sunil Kumar Chadha for the Standing Committee. Jaiveer Singh Rana, Sushma Ravi and Shashi Yadav have been fielded in the Najafgarh Zone. For the West Zone, Harish Oberoi will contest for chairper-

son and Sunil Chadha for vice-chairperson. In the South Zone, Dharmveer Singh and Mamta Yadav have been nominated for chairperson and vice-chairperson respectively. The BJP has also named Pankaj Luthra and Brijesh Singh for chairperson and vice-chairperson in Shahdara North, while Yashpal, Raju Sachdeva and Munesh will contest the chairperson, vice-chairperson and Standing Committee posts respectively in Shahdara South.



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The executive, not judiciary, must crackdown on illegal structures

THE Supreme Court has rightly pulled up civic authorities over illegal and unsafe buildings in Delhi-NCR. Slamming the attitude of local officials, a bench of Justices A Manu and Justice R Mahadevan pointed out on Thursday that "only face-saving exercises are being done" to check the menace. The apex court warned officials that it would "attach personal responsibility" on all officials who fail to act against illegal buildings and their owners despite repeated judicial directions. It ordered the personal appearance of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi commissioner and the vice-chairman of the Gurugram Metropolitan Develop-

ment Authority (GMDA) in court. These orders may drill some sense of propriety in the hearts and minds of bureaucrats. It also constituted a team comprising two senior IIT professors, two draftsmen, and MCD officials to assess unauthorised constructions in Delhi's Saket, Lajpat Nagar, and Malviya Nagar localities. The panel has also been directed to submit its report to the court. So far, so good, but there are limits that the judiciary can and should travel. The kind of localities where people live, what kind of land that should be, what rules and regulations should govern that land, and so on are matters that the executive should take a call. More importantly,

if there are any violations, the wrongdoers must be dealt with accordingly. It is not the job of the judiciary to crack down on the land sharks, and illegal colonisers, among others. Evidently, our governance system has completely broken down, at least in the matter of colonising and housing. Instead of stopping unauthorised constructions that are mushrooming by the day, local officials are sometimes found to be hand in glove with the violators. For instance, a newspaper report showed that around 93 per cent of establishments inspected in Gurugram's ongoing fire safety drive were found deficient in mandatory fire safety measures. While judicial intervention may yield good

dividends, it cannot offer a long-term solution to the widespread problem. The judiciary cannot substitute for the executive; courts can issue directions, fix accountability, and ensure that authorities perform their statutory duties, but they cannot and should not directly undertake urban planning, enforcement, and governance. Sustainable reform requires civic agencies, development authorities, and state governments to act with integrity, efficiency, and transparency. Building regulations must be enforced uniformly, without political interference or selective implementation. The need of the hour is a mechanism which ensures that the

officials, who deliberately ignore violations or collude with builders, are penalised, and even thrown behind bars. At the same time, approval processes should be made more transparent and technology-driven so that illegal constructions can be detected at an early stage through satellite mapping, digital records, and regular inspections. Public awareness is also important; people shouldn't knowingly purchase unauthorised buildings. Judicial monitoring may serve as a catalyst for reform, but lasting change will come only when governance institutions function honestly, efficiently, and in accordance with law, ensuring that public safety is never compromised.

India needs a political culture where facts should matter not propaganda



INDIA'S political system is both unique and complicated. Until the early 1990s, Parliament and state legislatures were known for serious debates, policy alternatives and constructive criticism. Over the years, however, political discourse has increasingly shifted from governance to controversy-driven campaigns. Instead of using issues to push for institutional reforms, political parties now use them primarily as electoral weapons.

With Assembly elections due in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab in 2027, this trend has become even more evident. Rather than pursuing facts to their logical conclusion, almost every party appears focused on scoring political points. They raise an issue, embarrass the opponent and move on without ensuring lasting accountability.

The controversy surrounding Satluj, originally titled Punjab 95, has acquired political significance because Punjab goes to polls next year. The film is based on the life of human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khrala, who documented the alleged illegal cremations and extrajudicial killings during Punjab's insurgency in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The censor board did not clear the film as its producers refused to implement 127 cuts the board had suggested and instead it was screened on OTT platforms using the legal loopholes. Now on the directions of the government, it has been taken off from OTT platforms.

Enraged over this, the Shiromani Akali Dal has announced statewide screenings,

ELECTION SEASON; OUTRAGE SEASON

arguing that younger generations should know Punjab's history. Critics, however, contend that the film presents only one side of a deeply traumatic period. While it highlights alleged human rights violations by the police, it gives relatively little attention to the brutal violence unleashed by Khalistani militants.

Thousands of civilians, police personnel, public servants and political leaders were killed during the insurgency. Equally significant was the role of Punjab police officers such as K P S Gill, whose counter-insurgency campaign is widely credited with restoring normalcy. A historical narrative that omits either state excesses or terrorist violence cannot claim to present the complete truth.

As expected, every political party has adopted a position shaped more by electoral calculations than historical balance.

The Akali Dal backs the film enthusiastically, seeing an opportunity to challenge the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government if it tries to stop the screening of the film. At the same time, it accuses the Centre of restricting its release. The AAP government has permitted private screenings but criticised attempts to remove the film from OTT platforms.

The Congress, uncomfortable because the events occurred largely during its tenure, has avoided endorsing statewide screenings and instead questioned the political use of the film. The BJP has opposed attempts to turn the film into an election campaign while accusing its rivals of presenting a selective interpretation of history.

Similarly, the alleged theft of donation money at the Ram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya offers another example of how India's political class has



As Uttar Pradesh and Punjab head towards Assembly elections, political parties are weaponising controversies instead of addressing governance. Whether it is "Chanda Chori" or the Satluj debate, accountability has become selective while controversies are amplified and pressing concerns of ordinary citizens are sidelined.

perfected the art of converting every public issue into an election narrative.

The Ram Janmabhoomi temple donation controversy, popularly dubbed "Chanda Chori", is a classic example.

The Samajwadi Party quickly transformed allegations of theft into a political attack on the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), the RSS, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It succeeded because the temple administration failed the first test of crisis management—speed and transparency.

Instead of responding decisively, the VHP initially stood firmly behind Ram Janmabhoomi Trust General Secretary Champat Rai and Trustee Anil Mishra despite mounting allegations. Although reports suggested that both had offered to resign, the organisation delayed accepting their

resignations, citing procedural formalities. The explanation convinced few.

In the digital era, emergency meetings can be convened within hours, if need be, virtually. A trust administering one of the country's most important religious institutions could easily have done the same. Every day's delay strengthened the opposition's allegation that damage control had taken precedence over accountability.

The investigation raised uncomfortable questions. The delay in registering an FIR, the absence of senior trust members among the accused despite prolonged questioning and the slow pace of visible action fuelled public suspicion. The FIR was reportedly filed only after the Special Investigation Team (SIT) submitted its preliminary findings.

The SIT has since arrested eight persons, recovered cash,

jewellery, gold and a vehicle, frozen multiple bank accounts and begun investigating whether stolen money was invested in the stock market. Investigators claim that nearly 70 instances of alleged theft took place within about 40 days. They also identified major violations of standard operating procedures, including inadequate frisking and poor CCTV surveillance.

Eventually, the trust accepted the resignations of Champat Rai and Anil Mishra and appointed a professional Chief Executive Officer. The VHP acknowledged serious lapses and promised institutional reforms. Yet the most important question remains unanswered: how much money has actually disappeared? Opposition estimates range from ₹200 crore to ₹2,000 crore, prompting demands for a CBI investigation under Supreme Court supervision. Politically, the controversy has undoubtedly dented the credibility of organisations associated with the Ram Temple movement. Whether it significantly affects the BJP's electoral prospects in Uttar Pradesh remains uncertain, but the opposition has already secured a powerful campaign issue.

If opposition parties genuinely believed financial irregularities had continued for years, why did they become vocal only as elections approached? Accountability loses much of its credibility when it follows the electoral calendar rather than public interest.

The same selective outrage is likely to surface in another controversy that the BJP is expected to use as a political counterattack.

The Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation, established after the Supreme Court's 2019 Ayodhya judgment to build the new Babri Masjid along with a hospital, library and com-

munity kitchen, has collected donations for several years. Allegations regarding financial irregularities have surfaced periodically, yet no official investigation or FIR has followed. The BJP is expected to highlight these allegations to blunt the impact of "Chanda Chori". The opposition, meanwhile, is unlikely to demand a court-monitored probe for fear of alienating sections of its political support base. This is not accountability; it is competitive hypocrisy.

One side demands transparency only from institutions associated with its opponents, while the other discovers concern for financial propriety only when politically convenient. Public trust becomes the biggest casualty.

The larger tragedy is that controversies over donations, films and historical narratives are likely to receive far greater attention during election campaigns than unemployment, education, healthcare, inflation, agriculture, investment or job creation. Electoral politics increasingly rewards emotional mobilisation rather than policy debate. India's democracy does not suffer from a shortage of controversies; it suffers from a shortage of consistency. Political parties demand transparency only from their opponents, defend institutions aligned with themselves and rediscover moral outrage whenever elections approach. Until this culture changes, controversies will continue to dominate campaigns while governance recedes into the background.

Ultimately, it is for the voter to judge governments and oppositions alike by the same standards rather than by the volume of their election-time rhetoric.

(The author is former Chief Editor of The Hans India)

LETTERS

Preparing careers for the AI era

THE article "Future of management careers in the era of AI" clearly brings out the objective of preparing students for lifelong learning, adaptability, resilience, and continuous learning in a rapidly changing technological environment. The experiences shared by graduates reveal that success depends not merely on academic qualifications but on the willingness to take on challenges, keep up with technological advancements, and be in pursuit of knowledge and professional excellence. The IT departments of organisations must step up by rolling out AI-driven training programmes, setting up innovation centres, carrying out ethical AI practices, and bringing in technologies that enhance productivity while protecting human dignity. IT firms should come up with flexible career pathways, back up employees through regular reskilling, mentorship, mental wellness initiatives, and transparent performance systems so that professionals can move ahead with confidence instead of fearing automation. Employees should reach out to mentors and industry experts to remain competitive in the evolving job market. Students must make the most of internships, research projects, hackathons, certifications, and networking opportunities, build up strong portfolios, and take part in collaborative learning to excel in the AI-driven IT sector. Both the government and IT firms should join hands to assure job security by expanding digital skill missions, strengthening industry-academia partnerships, providing AI transition support, and opening up new employment opportunities to bolster one's confidence levels.

Raju Kolluru, Kakinada

Govt must support US-based desi techies

APROPOS "Tight job mkt, salary cuts put US-returned desi techies in a spot" (THI July 10). It's no more a Sunday afternoon walk in the park for US-based desi techies, who're forced to return home due to AI-driven job layoffs, unfriendly US visa requirements, and unappetizing emoluments offered even by US-affiliated Global Capability Centers. The onus is on the Indian government to cushion the struggle of these unfortunates, who are mostly youngsters, and have been contributing to the national economy through remittances in their better days. The US-returned techies are ideally appointed without much red-tape, and the deserving offered promotions and salary hikes. Governmental support for startup firms should also ease the pain considerably for US-returned techies, who can contribute through expertise and experience.

Dr George Jacob, Kochi

Make it easy for techies heading home

THIS is further to "Tight job mkt, salary cuts put US-returned desi techies in a spot". The unpredictability of US immigration policy is the real problem here, more than any single rule change. Professionals plan years around visa timelines, mortgages and children's schooling, only to see the ground shift with a policy update. India cannot control American immigration decisions, but it can reduce the impact by making it easier for skilled professionals to reintegrate quickly, through faster credential recognition and streamlined re-entry into provident fund and tax systems. Reducing friction on return would at least soften the disruption these sudden policy shifts keep causing.

K Palaniyappan Muthukumar, Chennai-53

Displaced techies must eye emerging roles

THIS has reference to "Tight job mkt, salary cuts put US-returned desi techies in a spot". It is worth noting that this churn isn't only about visas; AI-led efficiency drives are genuinely shrinking headcount at major tech firms. Oracle, Cisco and Google's layoffs point to a structural shift, not a temporary slowdown. Indian professionals in the US and back home need to treat AI fluency as a core skill now, not an optional add-on. Companies and industry bodies should expand practical reskilling programmes so displaced techies can move into emerging roles like AI implementation and data governance, rather than competing for a shrinking pool of traditional coding jobs.

M Barathi, Bengaluru-560076

Drug racket through post offices is worrisome

THE recent bust of an inter-state drug network operating through post offices is seriously worrisome. Criminals are misusing public services to transport illegal substances across states. Such activities endanger the youth and threaten public safety. The police deserve appreciation for uncovering the racket. Authorities should strengthen parcel screening and monitoring systems to prevent similar incidents. Public awareness and cooperation are also essential in combating drug trafficking. If drugs travel freely, the future of our youth is held hostage.

Pranathi Krishna, Hyderabad

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Preserving TG's tribal glory, the Adya Kala way

DR MUCHUKOTA SURESH BABU

TELANGANA is home to a rich and diverse tribal heritage that has been preserved for centuries through music, dance, storytelling, handicrafts, and oral traditions. Communities such as Gonds, Koyas, Chenchus, Lambadas, and Thotis have nurtured unique cultural practices that reflect their close relationship with nature and their collective wisdom. However, rapid urbanisation, changing lifestyles, and the influence of modern entertainment have placed many of these traditions at extinction risk.

To preserve this invaluable heritage, eminent folklorist and cultural researcher Prof Jayadhir Thirumala Rao established Adya Kala, a unique museum and cultural initiative dedicated to documenting and showcasing Telangana's tribal and folk traditions. Built on more than four decades of field research, Adya Kala serves as a living archive of indigenous culture and a reminder of the importance of safeguarding cultural diversity.

The museum houses a remarkable collection of tribal and folk artifacts, including rare musical instruments, leather puppets, ancient manuscripts, handicrafts, ritual objects, agricultural tools, and household items. These exhibits offer insights into the everyday lives,

beliefs, and artistic expressions of tribal communities across Telangana. More importantly, they preserve traditions that are gradually fading from public memory.

One of the most significant components of Adya Kala is Adi Dhvani, a special exhibition dedicated to tribal and folk musical instruments. Combining live performances with rare instrument displays, the exhibition celebrates the musical heritage of indigenous communities and highlights the craftsmanship involved in creating these instruments.

Among the rare instruments showcased is the Kinnera, a multi-stringed folk veena traditionally made from bamboo and dried gourds. For generations, it was used by wandering bards to narrate community histories and folklore. The exhibition also features Thudum, a percussion instrument central to the traditions of the Gond and Koya tribes, and the Runja, an indigenous instrument associated with storytelling performances. Another important exhibit is the Kikri, a violin-like string instrument played by the Thoti community during rituals and devotional events.

These instruments are more than musical tools; they represent centuries of indigenous knowledge, artistic skill, and cultural identity. Crafted from



The significance of Adya Kala has been recognized nationally. Artifacts from its collection have been displayed at prestigious venues, including the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad and Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. "Janjatiya Darpan", a gallery developed by IGNCA, celebrates the shared cultural traditions of India's tribal communities. The inclusion of artifacts from Adya Kala highlights the national importance of Telangana's indigenous heritage. Adya Kala is not merely a museum; it is a cultural movement dedicated to preserving the voices, memories, and artistic traditions of tribal communities.

natural materials such as bamboo, gourds, wood, and animal hide, they reflect the deep ecological understanding of tribal artisans.

Telangana's tribal heritage extends beyond music. Traditional performances such as the Gussadi dance of the Raj Gonds, the Jamba Puranam accompanied by Kinnera, and Dakkali Kathas preserve history, mythology, and social

memory through oral storytelling. These art forms have long served as vehicles for transmitting knowledge and strengthening community bonds.

Despite their cultural significance, many of these traditions are in decline. Younger generations often seek alternative livelihoods because traditional arts no longer provide sustainable income. The availability of natural materials required for

instrument-making has also diminished due to environmental changes and urban expansion. In addition, television, cinema, and digital media have gradually replaced many traditional forms of entertainment, reducing opportunities for folk artists and storytellers.

Against this backdrop, Prof Thirumala Rao's work assumes immense significance. Over the past 45 years, he has travelled extensively through remote villages and tribal settlements, documenting oral traditions, collecting rare artifacts, and preserving endangered musical instruments. His efforts have ensured that invaluable aspects of Telangana's cultural heritage are not lost forever.

The significance of Adya Kala has been recognized nationally. Artifacts from its collection have been displayed at prestigious venues, including the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad and Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. A notable moment came when President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the "Janjatiya Darpan" Gallery at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Developed by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), the gallery celebrates the shared cultural traditions of India's tribal communities. The inclusion of artifacts from Adya Kala in this prestigious space highlights the national importance of Telangana's indigenous heritage.

Atchanna assures ample fertiliser supply for kharif

- Says 3.70 lakh MT urea and 0.90 lakh MT of DAP available; buffer stocks maintained across districts
- Dismisses shortage rumours, says daily monitoring will ensure uninterrupted supply to farmers



place to prevent any shortages for farmers.

By July 10, the state had 3.70 lakh metric tonnes of urea and 0.90 lakh metric tonnes of DAP available. The minister said in a statement district-wise buffer stocks have been stored in Markfed warehouses, with officials monitoring supplies daily and moving additional

fertiliser wherever needed. Currently, 3,69,646 metric tonnes of urea are in stock, covering nearly 85% of seasonal demand, while 85,683 metric tonnes of DAP meet about 64% of requirements. Fresh consignments continue to arrive, ensuring uninterrupted distribution.

Atchanna also addressed a recent incident at Sankili Rythu Seva Kendra in Vizianagaram district. He explained that while initial demand was for 811 bags of urea, extra demand arose when farmers gathered in large numbers.

The government immediately arranged 444 additional bags from a nearby centre the same day. Distribution was streamlined with

token and queue systems, he added.

The minister said Vizianagaram district currently holds 9,987 metric tonnes of urea, including 4,850 tonnes as buffer stock.

He dismissed rumours of shortages as false propaganda driven by vested interests, urging farmers not to believe such claims.

"The government is fully alert. Farmers will not face any difficulties. Supplies are being monitored daily, and stocks are moved instantly wherever needed," Atchanna assured.

He reiterated that the administration is committed to farmer welfare and will continue transparent, timely fertiliser distribution across the state.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

AGRICULTURE minister K Atchanna on Friday said the government has ensured abundant fertiliser supplies for the ongoing kharif season, with buffer stocks in

YSRCP seeks one-month extension of SIR

- Party MLC Appi Reddy demands extension of the Special Intensive Revision, citing delays and procedural glitches
- Alleges that TDP leaders are pressuring officials and BLOs to upload voter data to the MyTDP app before submitting it to the EC
- Says his party has complained to the EC, plans legal action and seeks a probe into alleged irregularities and bogus voters



YSRCP MLC Lella Appi Reddy told media persons at the party central office in Tadepalli on Friday that the leaders of TDP are forcing the officials to first upload the data in the MyTDP app before sending it to the Election Commission office, and every effort is being put to heckle democracy, making the Election Commission redundant in the state.

He claimed that elected representatives, ministers and even personal assistants of the ruling party leaders are threatening Booth Level Officials (BLOs) to first upload the data in their party app before sending it to the Election Office, and when a BLO went to lodge a complaint at a police station, it was not accepted, and there was pressure not to go ahead with the complaint.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

YSRCP demanded that Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state be extended by one month.

The main opposition party cited glitches in the SIR to demand its extension by one month.

It also alleged that the coalition government is mounting pressure on officials and collecting data in advance.

"We have complained to the Election Commission on the irregularities and will again give a representation besides exploring legal options as well," he said.

The YSRCP leader said that the enumeration process has many irregularities which came to light at Atmakur, Tambalappalle and other places, and the official statement boasting of figures stands no ground.

"As our leader Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy had pointed out, every eligible voter should be given the opportunity to exercise the franchise, and as the process has been going on at a slow pace and the work at the ground level is not complete, we demand that the process be extended by one more month," said Appi Reddy.

The YSRCP MLC also demanded that the Election Commission use its discretionary powers and check the irregularities. TDP and Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu have been trying to use every opportunity for political gain even at the cost of democratic values, he alleged.

There are many duplicate votes to be weeded out, and the information is that in Kuppam (Chandrababu Naidu's constituency) itself there are 30,000 bogus votes, he added.

CII urges industry to tap FTA boom for global growth

- Says FTAs now drive trade, investment, digital commerce and global supply chains beyond traditional market access
- Experts urge Indian businesses, especially MSMEs, to leverage FTAs with the UAE, UK, EU, Australia and other key markets to boost exports



from India's expanding network of FTAs.

Sumanta Chaudhary said that with the multilateral trading system facing increasing challenges, FTAs have become the primary drivers of market access and international business expansion. He stressed that Indian businesses should understand the provisions and benefits of these agreements to enhance exports, improve competitiveness and integrate into global value chains.

The seminar focused on creating awareness among industry stakeholders on effectively utilising India's FTAs to tap international markets.

Experts noted that India's trade strategy has evolved from regional trade arrangements to comprehensive economic partnerships with countries across Europe, the Middle East and Oceania, covering not only trade in goods but also services, investments, digital commerce and sustainable supply chains.

In his opening remarks, Abhinav Kotagiri, chairman, CII Vijayawada Zone, said India is steadily expanding its trade partnerships with major global

economies. He noted that the country's recent and ongoing FTAs with the UAE, Australia, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), the UK, the European Union and other key markets reflect India's growing confidence and ambition in international trade.

Dr Murali Kallummal of the Centre for WTO Studies, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, highlighted that India's trade agreements with the UK, the European Union, UAE, Oman, Australia and New Zealand offer unprecedented opportunities for Indian businesses to diversify exports and access new markets.

Dr Anand Gopal, deputy director, Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), spoke of Andhra Pradesh's vast export potential, particularly in marine products. He said the state's long coastline, world-class ports and robust seafood processing ecosystem have positioned Andhra Pradesh as one of India's leading export hubs.

CII Vijayawada chapter chairman Abhinav Kotagiri addressing a seminar on FTAs in Vijayawada on Friday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

FREE Trade Agreements (FTAs) have evolved beyond conventional trade arrangements into strategic economic partnerships that encompass goods, services, investments, digital trade, sustainability, technology and resilient supply chains, and Indian industry must fully leverage them to expand its global footprint, said Sumanta Chaudhary, principal advisor, International Trade Policy, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

He was addressing a seminar on 'Growing Opportunities from Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)' organised by CII Vijayawada Zone on Friday.

The event brought together exporters, representatives of export promotion organisations, industry leaders, MSMEs, logistics service providers, trade professionals and policymakers to deliberate on the opportunities emerging

RAMAYAPATNAM PORT GETS SECOND EXTENSION

- Project completion deadline pushed to Dec 30 this year
- No penalty imposed on contractor despite second extension
- Land delays, cyclones and infrastructure hurdles cited for setback

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE state government granted a second extension of time (EoT) for the completion of the Rs 4,923-crore Ramayapatnam port project, pushing the deadline to December 30, 2026, without

levying liquidated damages on the contractor.

The project, entrusted to the joint venture of Navayuga Engineering Company Ltd (NECL) and Aurobindo Realty Ltd (ARIPL), was originally scheduled for completion by June 23, 2025.

A first extension had already been allowed until April 27, 2026. The latest decision followed a proposal from the Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board (APMB) chief executive, based on requests from the Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) contractor.

Special chief secretary (infrastructure & investment) M T Krishna Babu issued the government order (GO) on Friday, clarifying that no additional financial

burden would be entertained for granting the extension. The GO noted that revised administrative sanction for the port was accorded in February 2024, while technical sanction dates back to November 2020.

The contractor cited several reasons for delay, including non-handover of 38 acres of land critical for stackyard, internal roads, railway connectivity and utilities.

Other factors included delays in external infrastructure works such as power transmission and railway links, unforeseen dredging conditions, change in dredge disposal location, and local hindrances in Karlapalem and Salipeta villages. Force majeure condi-



tions (clause in contract that absolves both parties from liability in case of an extraordinary event like war or natural disaster) were also pointed to, including severe cyclones during the construction period and disruptions in fuel supply chains due to geopolitical tensions in West Asia.

The Tender Evaluation and EPC Committee

reviewed the submission and recommended the second extension, acknowledging delays in land acquisition and force majeure events.

The government accepted the recommendation, allowing the contractor time until December 2026 to complete the greenfield port project in Prakasam district, a key maritime gateway for Andhra Pradesh.

RTI lapses won't be tolerated, warns AP CIC

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

STATE chief information commissioner Sajja Srinivasa Rao made it clear that the provisions of Section 4(1)(b) of the Right to Information (RTI) Act must be implemented in every government office without exception, warning that any negligence in enforcing the law will not be tolerated.

He conducted surprise inspections at several government offices in Gollapudi in Vijayawada Rural on Friday to review the implementation of the RTI Act. He visited the office of the commissioner of the endowments department, Gollapudi gram panchayat office, Directorate of Prosecutions and the Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) office in Bandar Road.

During the inspections, he reviewed the implementation of RTI provisions, examined RTI registers, records, and the information systems maintained for citizens, and issued necessary instructions to the officials concerned.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief information commissioner said the inspections were aimed at assessing how effectively the RTI Act is being implemented in government offices.



State chief information commissioner Sajja Srinivasa Rao at the endowments commissioner office in Vijayawada on Friday

He noted that the commission has been receiving a large number of complaints in recent months alleging poor implementation of RTI rules in various government departments across the state. Among the common deficiencies identified were the absence of display boards carrying the details of Public Information Officers (PIOs) and First Appellate Authorities, and the failure to display job charts and citizen charters.

To address these shortcomings, the State Information Commission has launched a special monitoring drive. As part of the initiative, each

Information Commissioner has been assigned responsibility for two districts and directed to conduct surprise inspections of government offices.

Srinivasa Rao said the primary objective of these inspections is to improve awareness of the RTI Act and ensure its transparent and effective implementation. He warned that strict action would be taken under the law against officials if inspections reveal negligence, dereliction of duty, or violations of RTI provisions.

Endowments commissioner K Ramachandra Mohan briefed the chief information commissioner on the implementation of the RTI Act in the endowments department.

After examining the records and information presented by officials of the Gollapudi gram panchayat, Directorate of Prosecutions and APPSC, the chief information commissioner expressed satisfaction with the overall implementation.

APPSC chairman Prof C Shashidhar, secretary Pattamsetti Ravi Subhash, Gollapudi panchayat secretary Chintalamma, public information officer V S K Prasad of the endowments department, joint commissioner Ratna Raju and officials from the concerned departments were present during the inspections.

TELANGANA AIMS TO BECOME \$3-TRILLION ECONOMY: BHATTI

Farmers' welfare & women's empowerment top priorities

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

DEPUTY Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Friday said the Congress government was committed to transforming Telangana into a \$3-trillion economy by 2047, while simultaneously strengthening agriculture, empowering women and ensuring transparent governance.

Addressing the Rythu Ashirvada Sabha at Jagannathapuram in Chinthakani mandal of Khammam district, Bhatti said the government's vision extended beyond welfare programmes and focused on making Telangana globally competitive through sustained investments in agriculture, infrastructure, education and social development.

He said the government transferred Rs 9,000 crore under the Rythu Bharosa scheme into farmers' bank accounts within nine days, describing the exercise as a reflection of its commitment to the farming community. Agriculture, he said, was not merely an occupation but an integral part of Telangana's culture and way of life, adding that expenditure on farmers should be viewed as an investment in economic growth rather than as a subsidy. The Deputy Chief Minister said the State has spent over Rs 1.67 lakh crore on agriculture sector during the last two-and-a-half years. As many as 16.81 lakh farmers have been benefited from the latest round of investment support.

The government continued to provide free electric-



ity to the agriculture sector by bearing an annual subsidy of around Rs 14,000 crore.

Highlighting the government's focus on women's empowerment, Bhatti said interest-free loans worth Rs 67,000 crore has already been extended to women's self-help groups, while the credit ceiling

had been enhanced from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh.

He said the government was encouraging women entrepreneurs by providing opportunities in setting up petrol pumps, canteens and power projects, with the long-term objective of improving their economic independence.

He said the government increased diet charges in government educational institutions by 40 per cent and cosmetic charges by 200 per cent, while work was underway to establish 100 Young India Integrated Residential Schools with an estimated investment of Rs 200 crore. The government has also introduced a mid-day meal programme for intermediate students, he added.

Launching a political attack on the previous BRS government, Bhatti alleged that it pushed Telangana into a debt burden of Rs 8.21 lakh crore and criticised its handling of irrigation projects, particularly the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project. He claimed that the project's cost had escalated significantly and alleged financial irregularities in

its execution.

The Deputy Chief Minister contrasted Kaleshwaram with irrigation projects such as Nagarjuna Sagar, Srisaillam, Jurala, Sriram Sagar and Sri-pada Yellampalli, stating that projects built during Congress governments continued to benefit farmers for decades.

He also accused opposition leaders of spreading misinformation against the government through sections of the media and social media, and urged people not to be misled by what he described as false propaganda. Reiterating the government's long-term vision, Bhatti said the Congress administration would continue to protect public resources, maintain fiscal discipline and pursue inclusive development under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, Invites open e-tender for the under noted work:

1	Name of Work with its location:	Augmentation/Replacement of Catenary wire over Delhi Division (7th Phase)
2	Approx. Cost of work:	Rs. 1,80,29,018.38/-
3	Earnest Money Deposit:	Rs. 3,60,600/-
4	E-Tender Bid Online Submission Period:	21.07.2026 (00.00 Hrs.) to 04.08.2026 (15.00 Hrs.)
5	E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time:	04.08.2026 (15.00 hrs.)
6	Fund Allocation:	Capital (PH-36)
7	Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen:	www.irps.gov.in
No.: 09B-TRD-NDLS-2026-27 Dated: 09.07.2026 2371/26		
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE		

NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

The Divisional Engineer-IV, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work.

Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement System)		
1.	Name of work with its location:	1. Water proofing of joints of raft and walls of RCC Box joints, retaining wall and construction of road of LHS LC-16 on DLI-BTI section. (NIT 20-2026-27-W-IV). 2. Yard Improvement in DLI-BTI section in the Jurisdiction of DEN-IV/DLI. CTR-22.72 Tkm in loop lines (SQRS-16.18 Tkm and Manual-6.54 Tkm). TRR(P)-10.50 km, TTR-83 sets, Trap-34 sets, SEJ renewal-83 sets, manual deep screening-25.11 km, turnout deep screening-28 Nos. & deep screening of trap-13 Nos. (NIT 21-2026-27-W-IV).
2.	Approx. cost of work	(1) Rs. 2,86,95,014.58 (2) Rs. 8,27,03,792.67
3.	Earnest money	(1) Rs. 5,73,900.00 (2) Rs. 16,54,100.00
4.	Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender:	Bidding Start date for work no. Up to 15:00 hrs. On 21.07.2026 opening of e-Tender at 15:00 hrs. on 04.08.2026
5.	Website particulars, published e-tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded:	Above tender available on IRPS site i.e. www.irps.gov.in
No. 128-W/260/Tender Notice/NIT 20,21-26-27-W-IV Date: 10.07.2026		
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 2386/2026		



"Again, it was a disappointing one. Definitely, 158 wasn't the perfect total on the board. And eventually we saw how quickly they chased down (4th T20I against England). So I think we fell a bit short in terms of our execution. And, yeah, we saw that when we were changing the pace, when we were trying something else, they scored off those loose balls," - Shreyas Iyer

FIFA World Quarterfinals

French jinx haunts Morocco

Atlas Lions knocked out of WC for second time in row

FOXBOROUGH (US)

FRANCE did it to Morocco again at the World Cup.

For the second straight tournament, Morocco was ousted by the French 2-0 — this time in the quarterfinals at Gillette Stadium, four years after losing by the same score in the semifinals. With this win France marched into third successive Fifa World Cup last 4.

With very few attacking chances on Thursday, Morocco landed only one shot on goal, and that came in the 82nd minute while already trailing by two goals.

It was the same ending as in Qatar, when the Atlas Lions be-

came the first African team to reach the semifinals at a World Cup. "The future will be bright if we continue like this, but that doesn't mean we didn't want to win today. Of course, we wanted to win today," Morocco coach Mohamed Ouahbi said through a translator.

"We did everything we could to win, but we faced a very difficult opponent. It's a disappointment, of course, but we'll keep working for the future."

The Atlas Lions' best chance came when midfielder Azzedine Ounahi had a shot from the edge of the box but goalkeeper Mike Maignan made a diving stop, knocking the ball away and, essentially, ending the hopes of Morocco.

"They had no real forwards using their

speed in the wide areas," France coach Didier Deschamps said.

"We were possessing the ball, they had no way to be dangerous to us."

It wasn't like Morocco didn't make a hard push at this year's World Cup. They recruited talented 18-year-old Ayyoub Bouaddi, who could have been playing with France's youth teams. He was born in Senlis, an hour north of Paris, and after representing France in every age group possible, he switched allegiance.

"We know we represent more than just one country," Ouahbi said.

"We represent the Moroccan people, and many countries across Asia and Africa. Many people see themselves in this team, and we'll keep working to win titles in the future."

Morocco's best opportunity in the opening half came just before the halftime whistle when Achraf Hakimi sent a free kick from just outside the box past the right post. (AP)

Morocco's Achraf Hakimi is being consoled by France's Desire Doue after the former lost their World Cup quarterfinal match.



Mbappe rewrites World Cup history

27-yr-old becomes youngest to 20 matches, fastest to 20 goals

FOXBOROUGH

FRANCE talisman Kylian Mbappe has carved his name deeper into football history, becoming the youngest player to feature in 20 FIFA World Cup matches and the fastest to reach the milestone of 20 World Cup appearances.

The 27-year-old achieved the historic feat during France's 2-0 quarter-final victory over Morocco at the Boston Stadium, where he recovered from a first-half penalty miss to score in the 60th minute before setting up teammate Ousmane Dembele for the second. While Argentina's Lionel Messi is the outright record holder for FIFA World

Cup appearances with 30, Mbappe has become France's first-most capped player in the competition with 20 appearances. He is level with Hugo Lloris and ahead of Antoine Griezmann, Olivier Giroud and Raphael Varane.

With his eighth goal of the ongoing 2026 tournament,

Mbappe has now taken his overall World Cup tally to 20 goals in just 20 appearances across three editions (2018, 2022, and 2026), just one goal shy of equalling Messi (21) for the most goals scored in the history of the competition.

France's all-time leading goalscorer Kylian Mbappe has cemented his place among the greatest players in FIFA World Cup history across his appearances at three edi-

over Sweden at World Cup 2026, the 27-year-old Frenchman became the French player with the most wins in the tournament's history (15). His 16th triumph, against Paraguay, saw him draw level with Brazil's Cafu on the all-time list. Against Morocco in the quarter-final, he levelled with Miroslav Klose with 17 wins. Only Lionel Messi (20 wins) remains ahead of him.

With eight knockout-stage goals to his name before the 2026 tournament, Mbappe was level with Brazil's Leoni-das and Ronaldo. His brace against Sweden in France's 3-0 win in New Jersey took him clear at the top of the all-time ranking,

tions of the tournament.

He features prominently in numerous all-time rankings and boasts an impressive collection of individual records.

After France's 3-0 victory

before he extended the record to 11 goals with another against Paraguay and to 12 against Morocco.



All-time WC top scorers

- Lionel Messi (Argentina), 21
- Kylian Mbappé (France), 20
- Miroslav Klose (Germany), 16
- Ronaldo (Brazil), 15
- Harry Kane (England), 14
- Gerd Müller (Germany), 14
- Just Fontaine (France), 13
- Pelé (Brazil), 12
- Cristiano Ronaldo (Portugal), 11
- Jürgen Klinsmann (Germany), 11

Khammam end Hyderabad's run, storm into final

HYDERABAD

ANVITA Khammam Aces booked their place in the final of the Hyderabad Cricket Association's TG20 with a thrilling 10-run victory over Hyderabad E-Champions in Qualifier 1 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad on Thursday.

Powered by Mickil Jaiswal's unbeaten 76 and a disciplined bowling effort led by Sahendra Mallu (3/31) as well as Harshith Sai's disciplined final over, the Aces successfully defended 200 to hand Hyderabad E-Champions their first defeat of the tournament, ending

the league leaders' unbeaten run.

While Anvita Khammam Aces advance directly to the final to be held on Sunday, Hyderabad E-Champions will have another opportunity to qualify when they face EIPL & Evele Karimnagar Diamonds in Qualifier 2 on Friday, July 10, after the Diamonds defeated Ranga Reddy Risers by 75 runs in Thursday's Eliminator.

The unbeaten Mickil Jaiswal finished on 76 off 34, anchoring the innings with seven sixes and four boundaries, as the late assault helped the Aces pile on 113 runs in the final 10

overs to finish with a formidable 200/6.

For E-Champions Vaishnav fought till the very end, striking a six off Sahendra Mallu before adding a boundary in the final over off Harshith Sai. Akhil Rathod remained unbeaten on 8 off 4 and chipped in with a six in the closing stages. But E-Champions could only reach 190/8, falling 10 runs short despite Vaishnav's unbeaten effort.

Brief scores: Anvita Khammam Aces 200/6 in 20 overs (Mickil Jaiswal 76*, G Sai Krishna Reddy 40, Paras Raj 32, Akhil Rathod 2/33, Pranav Varma 1/32) beat Hy-



Hyderabad E-Champions 27, Pranav Varma 26, Ved Reddy 2/33, Sahendra Mallu 3/31 by 10 runs.

NMDC Hyd Marathon earns World Athletics' Silver Sustainability Award

HYDERABAD: The NMDC Hyderabad Marathon 2025, organised by the Hyderabad Runners Society, has become the first marathon in India to receive the prestigious World Athletics - Athletics for a Better World (ABW) Silver Standard. Valid for three years, this international recognition honours sporting events that create a meaningful positive impact on the environment, communities and society. In a significant global recognition, the NMDC Hyderabad Marathon 2025 has earned a place alongside some of the world's most prestigious athletics events for its sustainability initiatives. The marathon now stands in distinguished company with the Boston Marathon (USA), Generali Berliner Half Marathon (Germany), Golden Gala (Italy), Wanda Diamond League Xiamen (China), and BAUHAUS-Galan (Sweden)—events renowned not only for sporting excellence but also for their commitment to environmental responsibility. This achievement places Hyderabad on the global sustainability map of athletics and reinforces India's growing leadership in organising world-class sporting events that balance performance, community engagement and environmental stewardship. From Boston to Berlin, Rome to Hyderabad, the NMDC Hyderabad Marathon has demonstrated that Indian events can match global benchmarks in sustainability and responsible event management.

BRIEF SCORES

India 158/7 in 20 overs (Shreyas Iyer 80*, Shivam Dube 22; Jofra Archer 2-20, Josh Tongue 2-36) lost to England 159/1 in 13.5 overs (Harry Brook 79*, Phil Salt 59*) by 9 wickets

Doctor assault case

Shiv Sena corporator sent to police custody

A political colour has been given to this matter: Ramesh Mhatre's lawyer

KALYAN

A Kalyan court on Friday sent Shiv Sena Corporator Ramesh Mhatre to police custody till July 13 in connection with the case involving the assault on doctors and nurses at Dombivli's Shastri Nagar Hospital.

He was produced before the Kalyan Sessions Court earlier on Friday after being discharged from Thane Civil Hospital, where doctors declared him medically stable and fit for discharge.

Ramesh Mhatre's lawyer, MK Qazi, said, "A political



colour has been given to this matter. The police had sought five days' police custody, but we objected to it. The court has granted police custody till 13th July. We had filed an application stating that Ramesh Mhatre is a 73-year-old man

surviving on one Kidney, so he needs to be given medical treatment every 6 hours. The court has considered this application and directed the police to make medical treatment available to him if he experiences illness."

Mhatre was arrested on Wednesday under Sections 132 and 121(1) in connection with a case registered at Vishnunagar Police Station in Dombivli. Police said four accused have been arrested in the case so far.

On Thursday, a Kalyan court rejected Mhatre's plea seeking to be produced before the court through video conferencing. The court held that his appearance through video conferencing would not suffice, effectively requiring his physical production before the court for further proceedings.

When will ED freeze Ram temple funds: Derek O'Brien

AAP to launch signature campaign seeking strict punishment to culprits

NEW DELHI

TRINAMOOL Congress Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien on Friday questioned the Enforcement Directorate freezing three bank accounts of the party, asking when it would freeze "temple funds", in an apparent reference to the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya. "ED freezes TMC's 3 bank accounts with HDFC. When will ED freeze temple funds," O'Brien, Trinamool's national joint secretary, said in a post on X. The remarks came amid the opposition's demand for a judicial probe into the alleged financial irregularities in the Ram temple's donation manage-



ment system. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday said it has frozen three bank accounts of the Trinamool Congress (TMC), with deposits worth Rs 440 crore, under the anti-money laundering law following searches in an alleged funds misappropriation case. The central agency said in a statement that the orders were issued under Section 17 (1A) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). AAP national convener

Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said the party will launch a nation-wide signature campaign seeking strict punishment for the culprits in the Ram temple donations theft controversy, saying people have to come together and raise their voice in the matter. Kejriwal also accused the Centre of protecting those responsible for the alleged theft of donations at Ram temple in Ayodhya. "It is the duty of every Sanatan follower to ensure strict punishment for those responsible for donations theft at the Ram temple. We will launch a signature campaign in which every citizen will sign a letter addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi stating their appeal," Kejriwal said.



Mumbai-Pune rail disruption: 30 trains cancelled till July 17

MUMBAI: Rail connectivity on the Mumbai-Pune corridor will remain crippled till July 17, as the Central Railway has cancelled 30 long-distance and intercity trains, following landslides on the Bhor Ghat section, officials said on Friday.

Heavy, torrential downpours on July 6 triggered multiple landslides between Karjat and Lonavala stations, severely damaging all three railway lines. The landslides mainly occurred at the Thakurwadi and Monkey Hill cabins on the ghat section. While restoration work is underway on a war footing, difficult terrain and dangerous working conditions are delaying the full resumption of normal services, officials said. The Central Railway, in a release, said that it has cancelled 30 train services, including 14 daily trains, eight services on specified dates and eight special trains.

It announced the temporary cancellation of daily trains, including the Deccan Queen, Deccan Express, Intercity Express services between Mumbai and Pune, the CSMT-Hyderabad Express, Chennai Egmore Superfast Mail and the Hubballi-Dadar Express, from July 10 to July 17.



that granted him protection from coercive action.

HC orders Abhishek to give voice sample

KOLKATA

THE Calcutta High Court on Friday directed Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee to give his voice sample to a judicial magistrate on July 15 in a case over alleged

intimidatory statements he made during the West Bengal assembly election campaign.

Justice Saugata Bhattacharyya expressed his displeasure over Banerjee's delay in providing his voice sample and warned of advancing the

hearing of his plea seeking quashing of proceedings in the matter and recalling an order granting the MP protection from coercive action.

The court directed police authorities to ensure that Banerjee is not subjected to

egg-pelting or any other harassment when he appears before the jurisdictional court or the investigating agency. Justice Bhattacharyya said Banerjee's revision petition against a Bidhananagar court directing him to give his

voice sample before a magistrate in connection with the probe into the speech case was "dismissed as withdrawn" in view of the prayer by the MP's counsel.

The court directed the Lok Sabha MP to appear before

the judicial magistrate on July 15 at noon to record his voice sample. He was directed to cooperate with the probe and comply with notices by the investigating officer as mentioned in the high court's May 21 order



Homeowners flag structural, safety lapses in Jain Constructions project in Hyderabad

HOMEOWNERS OF JAINS BALAJI NILAYAM CASA WATERSIDE ALLEGE CONSTRUCTION DEFECTS, MISSING FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES

MALOTH KARTHIK
HYDERABAD

MEMBERS of the JBN Casa Waterside Flat Owners Mutually Aided Cooperative Maintenance Society Limited, comprising 520 families at the Jains Balaji Nilayam Casa Waterside project in Safilguda, Malkajgiri, are up in arms against alleged defects in the Jain Constructions project (RERA Project Regn. No. P0220002329), citing "unresolved construction defects, critical fire, lift and electrical safety risks, and substantial unpaid financial dues."

Mathew Jacob, a member of the society, has raised serious concerns over multiple construction defects, critical fire, lift and electrical safety risks, and substantial financial dues allegedly pending from Jain Constructions. He alleged that the society and several individual purchasers have sent repeated letters and notices, but the builder has taken no action. Therefore, the residents have brought the matter to the public's attention.

The society has engaged engineers and chartered accountants specialising in certifying completed projects after the issue of the Occupation Certificate. They have reportedly corroborated the claims, citing alleged non-compliance with the terms of the Agreement of Sale, the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, and the National Building Code of India.



The most serious concerns, according to the society, relate to life-safety systems that remain incomplete nearly three years after the issue of the Occupation Certificate. The society alleges that 65 fire-rated doors were not installed at critical exit points between the corridors and stairwells. This missing work, valued at approximately Rs 50 lakh, could affect safe evacuation during a fire and may require inspection and recertification by the concerned authorities.

The society further alleges that surge protection devices (SPD kits) for all 22 lifts were removed from the Bill of Materials. It estimates the value of these devices at Rs 7 lakh and says their absence exposes lift systems, including ARD systems, to malfunction during power surges, increasing the risk of residents being trapped during emergencies.

The society also alleges that the corpus belonging to homeowners has been withheld by the builder without justification. According to the society's latest notice sent to the builder under RERA provisions, Jain Constructions is required to pay an accumulated total of Rs 2.92 crore, in addition to a chartered engineer's rectification assessment of Rs 1.35 crore, with interest continuing to accrue until final settlement.

It is further alleged that the builder retained the corpus of Rs 4.94 crore for more than two years and three months after the Occupation Certificate without depositing it in a separate escrow account, as required. Jacob said that although most of the principal amount was returned after repeated follow-up, the remaining amount, along with statutory interest under RERA, calculated at SBI MCLR plus 2 per cent,

remains unpaid.

The society claims that the builder collected 12 months of prepaid maintenance charges but provided maintenance services for only 11 months. The remaining unutilised amount for one month should be refunded to the flat owners. This claim is based on an audit of the builder's expenses during the 11-month period, which found certain expenses to be inadmissible and inconsistent with the Agreement of Sale.

The society also noted that the final waterproofing work on all block terraces was left incomplete, resulting in continuous water leakage and seepage into the corridors below during rains. It further alleges that the structural expansion joints were not completed according to industry standards, leading to water leakage in the basement. The auditors have as-

sessed and certified the cost of rectifying these and other civil and structural defects at Rs 1.35 crore.

Gowri, the signatory to a complaint letter addressed to the builder, said, "Ours is the top-most 13th floor, which has continuous leakage due to incomplete terrace work left by the builder. We are NRIs settled in the USA, and we periodically come to India and stay here, sometimes working from home during longer visits. We are highly disappointed as the builder doesn't respond to or attend to these structural defects despite repeated follow-up."

"The safety and security of our families cannot be compromised. For more than two years, we have been living with the constant threat of fire and lift safety risks because of the builder's negligence," said Jacob.

Jacob expressed hope that the builder would take these issues seriously and resolve them.

Otherwise, he said, the society would have no option but to initiate legal proceedings before the Telangana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (TG RERA), the Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission and other appropriate judicial forums to enforce its rights and ensure residents' safety. Repeated attempts by *The Hans India* to reach the management of Jain Constructions did not yield any response. The management did not respond to calls or text messages.

Luxury demand keeps housing sales afloat; affordable segment slips

NEW DELHI

HOUSING sales rose slightly by 0.7 per cent to 1.71 lakh units during January-June 2026 across eight major cities as demand stabilised after four years of strong growth post-COVID pandemic, according to Knight Frank.

Premium homes, costing more than Rs 1 crore each, dominated the overall sales with 54 per cent, while the share of mid-income and affordable housing shrank to 46 per cent.

At a virtual press conference on Thursday, real estate consultant Knight Frank India released the housing sales data for January-June 2026, which showed that sales grew slightly to 1,71,471 units from 1,70,201 units in the year-ago period. Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai, Ahmedabad, and Kolkata are the eight primary residential markets tracked by the consultant.

Elaborating on the data, Knight Frank said that sales rose in all cities except Delhi-NCR, which saw a 7 per cent



decline annually.

Further, the consultant pointed out that the sales of affordable homes (below Rs 50 lakh) declined 15 per cent to 32,063 units during January-June from 37,796 units in the year-ago period. The affordable homes category accounted for 19 per cent of the overall sales. In the Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1 crore price bracket, the sales dipped 5 per cent to 46,490 units. The mid-income segment contributed 27 per cent to the total sales. Fresh supply (launches) of housing units rose 4 per cent to 1,87,350 units in the first six months of this year. "Following four years of broad-based recovery from the pandemic-induced trough of 2020, the near-flat sales

trajectory indicates that the dominant dynamic is now stabilisation rather than growth," the consultant observed. New supply at lower price points has remained constrained, resulting in a fall in sales of affordable and mid-income homes, Knight Frank said. "While growth has reduced following a steep recovery from pandemic lows, the market's underlying fundamentals remain firmly intact. Premium homes now account for more than half of all residential sales, reflecting rising household incomes, evolving buyer aspirations and growing confidence in long-term homeownership," said Shishir Bajjal, International Partner, CMD, Knight Frank India.

Hyderabad's office market leasing volume rises 29% in H1-2026: Knight Frank India

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD'S office market has recorded the highest first-half leasing volumes of 7.5 mn sft during H1 2026, according to Knight Frank India's latest report, India RealEstate: Residential and Office (January-June 2026) H1 2026. The leasing volumes increased 29 per cent YoY from 5.9 mn sft in H1 2025. The city logged average transacted rent increased



by 7 per cent to Rs80/sft per month. Global Capability Centres (GCCs) remained the largest occupier group, with space absorption of 3.4 mn sft, accounting for 45 per cent of total office leasing, up from 40 per cent a year ago. Office completions recorded a strong

supply of 3.0 mn sft, despite the substantial supply infusion, vacancy levels continued to tighten, declining by 296 basis points YoY to 11.5 per cent, reflecting city's healthy demand-supply dynamics.

The residential market also maintained a stable performance, with housing sales standing at 19,249 units, registering a modest 1 per cent YoY growth, while launches declined marginally by 2 per cent YoY to 20,466 units.

BIZ BRIEFS

WHISKAS expands cat food portfolio

WHISKAS, a cat food brand, unveiled its all-new Indian Fish Range, inspired by Rohu and Catla. The brand has also launched a campaign featuring Bollywood actress Mrunal Thakur using her voice for introducing WHISKAS first-of-its-kind range. Ayesha Huda, CMO, Mars Pet Nutrition, said: "Indian pet parenting is evolving rapidly, but many feeding habits are still shaped by what families have traditionally believed cats enjoy."

Chuppspots with PGBA

Chuppspots footwear, a D2C Open footwear brand, announced a year-long partnership with the P. Gopichand Badminton Academy (PGBA), a badminton institution, as its official footwear recovery partner. Pallela Gopichand, said: "Recovery is an essential part of every athlete's journey, yet it often doesn't receive the attention it deserves. Comfortable, supportive footwear plays a meaningful role in helping athletes recover between training sessions."

Sparx launches Chunky sole sandals

Sparx, a footwear brand introduced the new Sparx Chunky Sole Sandals—a collection designed for young consumers. To introduce the collection, Sparx has partnered with actor Chunky Pandey in a campaign. The collection pairs sculpted soles with construction, durable materials and versatile colourways. It features adjustable straps for enhanced cushioning and lightweight engineering make the sandals comfortable.

IKS Health strengthens US play with TruBridge buyout

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

IKS Health, a care enablement solutions provider, announced the completion of its previously announced acquisition of TruBridge Inc., a provider of healthcare technology including an electronic health record (EHR) and revenue cycle management solutions for rural and community hospitals.

Sachin K Gupta, Founder, IKS Health, said: "Through this market expansion, we are uniting capabilities that move us further toward our goal of a combined system of record and system of action workflow that uses explainable AI-driven and human-in-the-loop solutions to reduce administrative friction, ease financial pressures, and close critical gaps in patient care."

Chris Fowler, CEO of TruBridge, said: "We are pleased to partner with IKS Health, as we share a deep, long-term commitment to helping healthcare organizations run efficiently, strengthen their financial health, and empower clinicians to practice at the top of their license."

IT stocks shine as upbeat TCS outlook drives market higher

Improved demand outlook lift tech shares; Reliance and banks add momentum

MUMBAI

BENCHMARK equity indices extended gains for a second straight session on Friday, with the Sensex rising 827 points and the Nifty climbing over 1 per cent, driven by strong buying in IT, banking and heavy-weight stocks amid easing crude oil prices and positive global cues. The 30-share BSE Sensex advanced 827.57 points, or 1.08 per cent, to close at 77,569.39, while the NSE Nifty gained 244.10 points, or 1.02 per cent, to settle at 24,206.90.

Heavyweights Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Bharat Electronics, Axis Bank and Tata Steel led the rally. Investor sentiment improved after TCS reported a 4.61 per cent rise in June-



quarter net profit to Rs 13,349 crore and indicated that demand, affected by the West Asia crisis, is expected to improve in the current quarter.

Market participants were also encouraged by easing crude oil prices, with Brent crude shipping to around \$76 per barrel, reducing concerns over inflation and import costs. All sectoral indices ended in positive territory. Realty gained 3.4 per cent, followed by PSU Banks (3.26 per cent), IT (2.01 per cent), Metals (1.55 per cent)

and Services (1.5 per cent). Broader markets also remained firm, with midcap and smallcap indices rising up to 1.7 per cent.

Analysts said steady earnings, lower crude prices and stability in the rupee supported buying, though investors remain watchful of geopolitical developments and global market trends.

Market breadth was positive, with 2,883 stocks advancing against 1,377 declines on the BSE. Despite the two-day rebound, bench-

TCS earnings cheer boosts Infosys, HCL Tech, Wipro and TechM

NEW DELHI: Shares of TCS ended 1 per cent higher on Friday after the country's largest IT services company reported a 4.61 per cent increase in its June-quarter net profit, and guided towards an improvement in demand impacted by the West Asia crisis, returning in the ongoing quarter. The bellwether IT stock ended at Rs 2,069.05, up 1.04 per cent on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 4.11 per cent to Rs 2,132. At the NSE, shares of the firm ended 0.95 per cent higher at Rs 2,069. Intraday, shares of the company climbed 4 per cent to Rs 2,133.30. The company's market valuation climbed Rs 7,706.53 crore to Rs 7,48,600.40 crore. TCS on Thursday reported a 4.61 per cent increase in its June-quarter net profit to Rs 13,349 crore. Other IT stocks -- Infosys, HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra and Wipro -- also ended in positive territory, adding significantly to the market's rally. The BSE IT index jumped 2.01 per cent to end at 27,211.93.

mark indices ended the week marginally lower. The Sensex declined 194.52 points (0.25 per cent) during the week, while the Nifty slipped 63.95

points (0.26 per cent). Foreign institutional investors remained net sellers, offloading equities worth Rs 532.86 crore on Thursday.

Retail investors power MF growth as SIPs scale new peak

NEW DELHI

EQUITY-oriented mutual fund schemes attracted Rs 28,973 crore in June, a sharp surge of 26.5 per cent from the preceding month, driven by easing geopolitical tensions, expectations of supportive domestic macroeconomic conditions, and strong retail participation.

With this, net inflow into equity schemes reached to Rs 1.81 lakh crore in the first half of 2026, up 12 per cent from the Rs 1.61 lakh

crore garnered in the same period of 2025.

Moreover, monthly SIP contributions rose to Rs 31,781 crore during the month under review, up from Rs 30,954 crore in May, according to data released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) on Friday.

Overall, the mutual fund industry's net outflow narrowed to Rs 52,949 crore in June from an outflow of Rs 64,131 crore in the preceding month. Consequently,

the industry's asset base rose to Rs 82.22 lakh crore at the end of June from Rs 81.6 lakh crore a month earlier.

According to the data, net inflows into equity schemes stood at Rs 28,973 crore in June, compared with Rs 22,908 crore in May, which was the lowest level in a year. The rebound indicates that investor confidence remains resilient despite ongoing global uncertainties and periodic market volatility.

Kiwi Indians power \$37.3 bn boost to NZ economy

NEW DELHI: INDIANS living in New Zealand made an outsized contribution to the country's economy equivalent to 8.6 per cent of gross domestic product in the year to March 2025, a report has said.

Indians added an estimated \$37.3 billion to the New Zealand GDP during the period, the report from New Zealand-based RNZ said, citing figures revealed by the Waitakere Indian Association. The study, supported by the Ministry of Ethnic Communities and the Indian High Commission, found the community supported 2,20,910 full time equivalent jobs during the



period. Nearly three quarters of the community's measured economic contribution came through Indian owned businesses. The defining characteristics of the Indian community - relatively young with higher qualification levels and a growing number who are self-employed - suggested its

economic contribution to the country will continue to grow.

Census and administrative data showed that 2,92,092 people of Indian heritage in New Zealand in 2023, made Indians the country's third largest ethnic group, constituting almost 6 per cent of the population. The small population share suggested Kiwi Indians make an outsized economic contribution relative to their population share.

"Kiwi Indian households contribute a further quarter through their consumption, while Indian international students and Indian visitors together make up the remain-

ing 2 percent," the report said, adding that only 34,000 Kiwi Indian businesses were present in FY24.

The Indian community contributed an estimated \$10 billion to the country's economy in 2019, which was roughly 3.3 per cent of total GDP at the time.

Pratima Namasivayam, chief executive of the Ministry of Ethnic Communities, said the findings showed a growing, highly qualified Indian community which is becoming increasingly entrepreneurial and making a significant impact across New Zealand's economy.



'Lenin' review: A gripping rural drama

SUHAS SISTU

LENIN marks an important milestone in the career of Akhil Akkineni as it reunites the young hero with director Murali Kishor Abburu and comes backed by ManamEnterprises LLP and Sithara Entertainments. Now let us see what Lenin delivers at box-office.

Story

Set in Bharathamma Mitta, a village in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor district, which has a belief that when blood falls on this region's sacred soil, it brings terrible drought to the place. The story revolves around Lenin who navigates through the lives of love, friendship, relations, sacrifices, betrayal and more as several mysteries unravel giving him a chance to overcome all odds and reassert his values.

Performances

Akhil Akkineni turns

in a career best performance as the rustic youth of the story. He is simply on fire throughout as one sees his body language, speech mannerisms and expressions ooze out of his character. Bhagyashri-Borse looks charming in the film. Pramod Panju makes a credible performance while Eshwari Rao, Shivaji and Brahmaji leave a lasting impression with their emotional quotient in the second half. Even Ramki and Sunil manage to hold their own in whichever role they have portrayed.

Technicalities

Murali Kishor Abburu should be commended for bringing forth such a novel concept based on mythology and folklore as it certainly sets Lenin apart from the usual potboilers one tends to see in Tollywood. Leon Britto captures the rustic



RATING: 3/5

charm of the village in all its glory with his stupendous camerawork while Thaman S's music blends in quite nicely. However, it is his background score that lifts the film to greater heights. The editing is crisp and quick, ensuring that the film holds one's attention throughout while the production values are top-notch.

Analysis

The highlight of Lenin is undoubtedly its fresh concept.

The film manages to immediately grab the attention of the viewer due to its unique village-centric premise which in itself ignites curios-

ity to delve deeper into the story being told.

The second half is without a doubt the best part of the film as it manages to keep the intrigue going with some interesting twists and turns while also showcasing a number of well-made emotional scenes and high-octane action sequences that keep the audience engrossed. The pre-climax and climax sequences are particularly noteworthy due to the sheer performances on screen as well as the effective make-up and Thaman S's rousing background score. Overall, Lenin is indeed a treat for the viewers as it manages to offer a befitting blend of performances, emotional quotient and mass appeal. Being a family entertainer, it is a must-watch for all audiences, especially those who enjoy watching commercial flicks in the Telugu language.

Dulquer Salmaan, Pooja Hegde's romantic entertainer locks 'Sri Sri' as title

THE makers of Dulquer Salmaan's highly anticipated romantic entertainer have revealed the film's title - Sri Sri along with an adorable first-look poster, which immediately fetched hearts of the movie buffs. Directed by a rookie filmmaker Ravi Nelakuditi, the romantic entertainer is produced by Sudhakar Cherukuri under his SLV Cinemas banner as their 10th production (SLV10) with Ishan Saksena as the co-producer.

With the tagline "Love Will Spark Again", Sri Sri narrates a charming tale of love and laughter that revolves around Dulquer Salmaan and Pooja Hegde's characters, who share screen space for the first time.

Both the actors are seen sitting on the compound wall having laughs in uniform, radiating nostalgia as it reflects the innocence of friendship with a touch of romance. Their cute on-screen sizzling chemistry has already gone viral.

The film also lays claim to a brilliant technical team comprising Anay Om Goswamy, GV Prakash Kumar, and AvinashKolla, who bring their creative minds to the table as the cinematographer, music composer, and production designer. In the meanwhile, Sri Sri is all set to hit the Pan India screens as it is gearing up to release in Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Kannada, and Malayalam languages, promising to be one of the most awaited romantic entertainers this year.



Aadi Sai Kumar's 'Sairabanu' first schedule wrapped

ON the back of a blockbuster hit Shambala, actor Aadi Sai Kumar announces his next venture titled Sairabanu that promises to be a fun-filled romantic entertainer. Produced by RazesDanda and directed by Phani Krishna Siriki, film's first schedule wraps successfully.

Presented by KrishnakanthParuchuri as the movie's co-producer and under the banner of Hasya Movies, the film stars Bandhavi Sridhar as the lead heroine was tagged with the caption "A Fun Filled Journey of Love, Faith & Destiny"

The film narrates an out-of-box love story between a Hindu and a Muslim girl that witnesses its shooting schedule in the beautiful locales of Hyderabad and

Rajahmundry. The recently concluded 15-day schedule went on floors in Hyderabad and was mostly shot in a soft-ware office set featuring Aadi Sai Kumar, Bandhavi Sridhar, Vennela Kishore and the rest of the cast.

Further, the makers also released a behind-the-scenes video, a glimpse of which indicates the excitement of the cast and crew as they shot some of the lively scenes of the film. With an array of talented technical crewmembers including cinematographer Raam Reddy, music composer Shekar Chandra, editor Chota K. Prasad and production designer Brahma Kadali, the film Sairabanu is now set to roll into its next shooting schedule and mark yet another exciting venture in Aadi Sai Kumar's career.



Roshan Kanakala's sci-fi entertainer gets a grand launch

ASCI-fi fantasy entertainer starring Roshan Kanakala and Gahazy had its grand pooja ceremony at Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple at Kakatiya hills recently. The film directed by debutant Vijay K Kamisetty, story

by legendary filmmaker VI Anand, who is known to roll out unique fantasy and sci-fi flicks.

Presented by Balaji Gutta, Koushik Reddy of Gutta productions in association with Kamalakar Film corporation. Hero Nikhil sound-

ed the clapboard for the muhurtham shot, while ace cameraman KK Senthil Kumar mounted the camera. VI Anand presented the script.

Besides Roshan Kanakala and Gahazy, the film stars Satya, Sudarshan, Ravi TejaNannimala, in promi-

nent roles. The music is composed by Sekhar Chandra, cinematography by AnveshVarla, editing by Chota K Prasad and Brahma Kadali has designed the production.

As the pre-production activities are picking up momentum, the regular shootings are awaited to start soon. The film's title, first look, and other related updates will be out soon, which surely will open a new window for the Telugu cinema audience.

Jayadeep Reddy Neerubavi: Tirupati software engineer makes it to Hollywood cinematography ranks

AN intriguing journey from Tirupati to Hollywood is keeping cinematographer Jayadeep Reddy Neerubavi in the limelight. This young Indo-American had given up a promising career in the software industry during the COVID-19 pandemic with no assurance of any job in the film industry.

Little did he know that his zeal and devotion would earn him a place in the American Society of Cinematographers' (ASC) Awards in 2025 and 2026. Jayadeep enrolled at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, to pursue a Master of Fine Arts in Cinematography. He opted shifting his career to cinematography.

The young and energetic cinematographer has since been working as the Director of Photography (DOP) for narrative, documentary, commercial, and music video films in and around Los Angeles.

Jayadeep Reddy has added multiple projects to his portfolio. Among them are the festival favorite short film The Goodbye, the bilingual action-comedy Kuttay Ki Dum, the adventure drama The Slayers, and the upcoming documentary, Project Life, which is produced by Homeboy Industries and the California Innocence Project.

Further, Jayadeep Reddy had the tremendous opportunity to work alongside renowned cinematographers Autumn DurandArkapaw, Darius Khondji, and Jessica Lee Gagné, as well as receive mentorship from visual effects and cinematography professional Amy Vincent, ASC, and cinematographer Scott Cunningham, ASC.

From being a small-time software engineer in Tirupati to making a name for himself in Hollywood, Jayadeep Reddy's journey is quite inspiring.



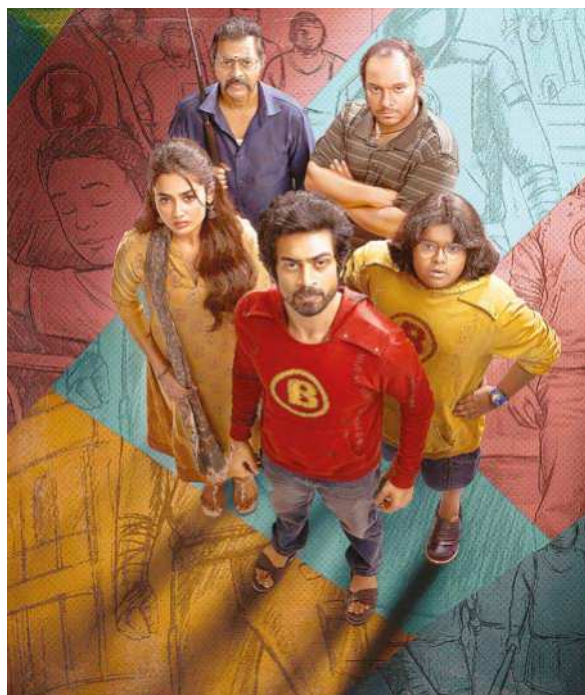
Super Hero Babu: Arjun Das' bilingual comes with fresh concept

SUPER Hero Babu, is one of the most awaited bilingual entertainers these days as the first-look character posters of the film went viral on social media. The first-look posters revealed a fresh concept and a new genre that would keep the audiences of all ages glued to their seats.

Arjun Das, who was seen in the rage of Telugu audiences with They Call Him OG makes his comeback as a hero after playing negative roles in multiple films. The film also stars Teju Ashwini as the lead heroine, while comedian Sandy Master plays the comic role

alongside him. Vignesh Venugopal, who makes his directorial debut with this film, mentored by a National Award-winning filmmaker and producer KS Sinish. The film is produced by Soldiers Film Factory, under the banner of Shanjan G of Redacted Studios, known for venturing into uncharted territory.

Furthermore, music composer Hesham Abdul Wahab has been hired to compose music for the film. The film is poised to deliver a treat to the viewers with its entertaining content, and offer a new perspective on the superhero genre.



'The India Story' team comes with powerful new poster

THE India Story team members gears up for the promo tour with the latest poster of the film that spotlights the socially relevant issue and a gripping courtroom drama. The movie, presented by Zee Studios in association with MIG Production & Studios, features Kajal Aggarwal and Shreyas Talpade, and releases worldwide on July 24, 2026, in Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil.

The new poster captures the lead pair in a chaotic vegetable market, as an an-

gry mob surrounds them pelting vegetables, as they unveil the truth onscreen. As they look visibly shaken by the situation, so does the angry mob. With the tagline "Slow Poison in Progress...", it underlines the film's central theme - the peril of pesticide farming and the danger it poses to the public at large. According to the director Chettan DK, who helmed The India Story, the poster represents the price the protagonist pays for unmasking the system of lies. "It is important to ques-

tion what we eat and what we believe in," he says on the film's social relevance.

Reportedly written and produced by Sagar B. Shinde, The India Story also boasts of an impressive technical team that includes cinematographer Nishant Bhagwat, music composer Mangesh Dhakde, editor Ashish Mhatre, lyricist Shakeel Azami and sound designer Anmol Bhav. Thanks to its timely theme and engaging narrative, the film has been gaining much attention prior to its release.