



Legendary actress Sowcar Janaki no more

CHENNAI: Legendary actress Sowcar Janaki, one of the most respected artistes of Indian cinema, died on Friday due to age-related ailments. She was 94. Her trailblazing career spans seven decades of legacy defined by immense versatility. She has acted in over 400 movies in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam and was conferred the Padma Shri award in 2022.



Cops file FIR on pellet gun victim's complaint after Rahul's dharna



Why give kids eggs when we have pure-veg detergent?

PM pitches for India as global space hub

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called for wider use of space technologies to address everyday challenges and urged India's burgeoning private space industry to forge stronger partnerships with other sectors to create new opportunities.

Modi made the remarks during an interaction with the CEOs and founders of 20 space startups at Seva Teerth, where he reviewed the growth and emerging potential of India's private space ecosystem. According to a PMO release, the startups represented diverse areas of the space economy, including rocket and reusable semi-cryogenic launch vehicle development, avionics, satel-

CALLS FOR WIDER APPLICATION OF SPACE TECHNOLOGIES



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with CEOs and founders of 20 space startups at Seva Teerth in New Delhi on Friday

lites, advanced propulsion systems, space and defence intelligence, space-debris management and artificial intelligence-based hyperlocal weather and climate intelligence. The startup leaders briefed the Prime Minister on the rapid progress of the private space

industry and their efforts to develop advanced capabilities and technologies within India. They also highlighted the increasing interest from organisations around the world in adopting and leveraging technologies developed by Indian space companies. **Continued on Page 7**



CM to visit Anakapalli district today

HANS NEWS SERVICE

VISAKHAPATNAM: Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu is scheduled to tour Anakapalli district on Saturday to participate in a host of programmes. As part of his itinerary, the Chief Minister will visit A. Koduru village in K. Kotapadu mandal of Anakapalli to take part in the Swachh Andhra - Swarna Andhra programme. Five days later, Naidu is likely to visit Araku Valley to flag off the pilot project of 'Sanjeevani'. **Continued on Page 7**

National GST meeting

AP govt's AI-powered GST model draws wide attention

Legal-AI Officer Asst trained on GST laws, 22,000 judgments

- ▶ End-to-end AI system for tax admin
- ▶ Scrutiny detects Rs 743.43 cr revenue against Rs 365.75 cr under legacy process
- ▶ Seven states seek to study and replicate AP's model

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

ANDHRA Pradesh has successfully showcased its pioneering GST administration model, based on artificial intelligence (AI)



and machine learning (ML), at the sixth National Coordination Meeting held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Friday. The tech-driven model, appreciated widely, now has potential to emerge as a benchmark and replicable model for GST

administration across the country.

The meeting, chaired by the Union revenue secretary, was attended by the GST Council Secretariat, CBIC and senior tax officials from States and Union Territories.

Continued on Page 7

VIVEKA MURDER PROBE

ED adds money-laundering angle

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

THE Enforcement Directorate (ED) has widened and intensified its investigation into the murder of former minister YS Vivekananda Reddy, conducting searches at six locations in Hyderabad and Kadapa districts, as part of a separate probe into alleged money laundering linked to the

- ▶ Raids Kadapa MP Avinash Reddy's residences
- ▶ Rs 4 crore allegedly changed hands before the murder
- ▶ Five ED teams carried out searches in Kadapa dist, Hyd



case. The ED action assumes political significance as one of the searches was

conducted at the residence of YSRCP MP YS Avinash Reddy in Pulivendula and

Hyderabad. Officials reportedly seized documents from the premises.

The ED registered a separate case based on findings emerging from the investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the murder, including information that Rs 4 crore allegedly changed hands before the murder.

Continued on Page 7

NTA clarifies on Rs 200 answer key challenge fee

NEW DELHI: The National Testing Agency (NTA) has said that its 'answer key challenge' system is designed to be fair to all students, and rejected concerns about it being expensive. An NTA answer key challenge is an on-line process where candidates who take an exam (like JEE Main, NEET, or UGC NET) can object to errors in the provisional answer key.

Continued on Page 7

New H1B fee move clears White House review

NEW DELHI

A proposal from the Donald Trump administration that could raise or otherwise change fees for petitions for the H1B work programme has cleared a key White House regulatory review, bringing it closer to publication and implementation, reported the US-based outlet, Bloomberg Law. While details of the proposal are not available for public viewing yet, any increase or change

in H1B fees could hit Indian professionals hard, who accounted for a majority of all H1B approvals and renewals in 2025. According to the report, the proposal from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), identified as RIM 1615-AD20 was cleared by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) on Wednesday. This proposal will be published by the DHS publicly in the coming weeks.

Continued on Page 7

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BREZZA



Govt’s decisions for library development hailed

Chairman of the Zilla Grandhalaya Sanstha MS Baig says timely availability of financial resources will enable dist and rural libraries to improve services and infrastructure

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

MS Baig, chairman of the Zilla Grandhalaya Sanstha for the erstwhile Krishna district, has welcomed the Andhra Pradesh government’s initiatives to strengthen and modernise libraries across the State, particularly the proposed direct transfer of library cess funds to Grandhalaya Sanstha and the plan to establish libraries in all 175 Assembly constituencies.

Baig appreciated Education Minister Nara Lokesh for the key announcements made in the Assembly regarding the development of the



MS Baig, chairman of the Zilla Grandhalaya Sanstha

library sector. He described the decision to directly credit funds collected through the library cess into the accounts of Sanstha as a historic and welcome move.

He said the timely availability of financial resources would enable district and rural libraries to improve their services and infrastructure. The proposal to establish libraries in all 175 constituencies and upgrade facilities in places where libraries already exist would give a new direction to the library movement in Andhra Pradesh, he added.

According to Baig, modern and accessible libraries in every constitu-

ency would greatly benefit students, unemployed youth, competitive examination aspirants, readers and researchers.

Libraries, particularly in rural areas, play a crucial role in providing access to quality books, newspapers, magazines, digital resources and a peaceful environment for study.

The direct availability of library cess funds would allow all the Zilla Grandhalaya Sansthas to address local requirements and improve infrastructure, including library buildings, furniture, books, computers, digital facilities, drinking water, toilets and reading halls, he said.

Vijayawada aims to become model town for road safety

- District collector Dr G Lakshmisha unveils posters for the project
- The programme will focus on four key areas — Engineering, Enforcement, Education and Emergency Care
- Traffic regulations will be strictly enforced through zero-tolerance zones as part of the enforcement measures



Collector Dr G Lakshmisha releasing a poster on Friday

– Road Safety NGO as the implementing agency. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Lakshmisha said the project aims to reduce road accident deaths and injuries by 10 to 15 percent, while promoting responsible road behaviour among the public.

The programme will focus on four key areas — Engineering, Enforcement, Education and Emergency Care. Under the engineering component, infrastructure deficiencies at accident-prone black spots will be identified and rectified. Traffic regulations will be strictly enforced through zero-tolerance zones as part of the enforcement measures.

Under the education component, road safety awareness programmes will be conducted for nearly 70,000 students in 105 schools and 14 colleges. Special campaigns will focus on the importance of wearing helmets and seat belts, maintaining lane

discipline and ensuring pedestrian safety.

The emergency care component will focus on training first responders to provide timely first aid and assistance to accident victims. Dr Lakshmisha said coordinated efforts involving government departments, the police, private organisations, educational institutions, voluntary groups and other stakeholders were essential to reducing road accident fatalities and injuries. The project seeks to bring all concerned agencies onto a common platform and promote coordinated action to make Vijayawada safer for motorists, pedestrians and other road users.

Among those present were representatives of the Honda India Foundation, Vijayawada–NHAI Project Director Vidyasagar, TRAX – Road Safety NGO, Delhi, General Secretary Rajani Gandhi, Regional Programme Officer M Vasu and others.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

DISTRICT collector Dr G Lakshmisha on Friday called for the active participation of all stakeholders to transform Vijayawada into a model town for road safety, stating that the Ideal Town on Road Safety Project would play a key role in achieving this objective.

The collector unveiled posters for the project at the Collectorate on Friday. The initiative is being implemented with the support of the Transport and Police Departments, with the Honda India Foundation as the CSR partner and TRAX

MINISTER INSPECTS ANNAVARAM BUS STATION

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KAKINADA

TRANSPORT Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy inspected the RTC bus station at Annavaram on Friday and reviewed the facilities being provided to passengers. He went around the bus station and checked the basic amenities available for commuters.

He also interacted with passengers and sought their views on the implementation of the free bus travel scheme for women under the Stree Shakti scheme. Several women passengers expressed satisfaction over the implementation of the scheme and said it had been useful for them. At the same time, some women requested the minister to

increase the number of Pallevelugu and Express services and take steps to ensure that buses halt at all authorised stops. Responding to their requests, the minister directed RTC officials to take measures to provide better facilities and ensure that passengers do not face inconvenience at the bus station. Later, the minister had breakfast with



Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy inspecting the RTC bus station at Annavaram on Friday

RTC drivers, conductors and other staff at the bus station canteen. The RTC staff

brought several issues to his notice, which the minister discussed with them.

SPECIAL PUJAS PERFORMED

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GUNTUR

SPECIAL pujas were performed to Goddess Bhramaramba at Pedakakani temple on Friday on the occasion of auspicious Varalakshmi Vrutham. The deity was colourfully decorated with Pasupu Kommulu. A large number of devotees visited the temple and performed pujas seeking blessings of Goddess Bhramaramba to fulfil their wishes. Devotees believe that if they perform special pujas on the occasion of Varalakshmi Vrutham, they will be blessed with Aidavanam. Devasthanam authorities made necessary arrangements for the convenience of the devotees visiting the temple.

Similarly special pujas were performed to Goddess Lakshmidevi at Ashtalakshmi Temple in Arundelpet here. Special pujas were performed to Goddess Lakshmidevi with various flowers and Kumkum. Deity was colourfully



Women performing Varalakshmi Vratham at Ashtalakshmi temple in Guntur on Friday

decorated. Devotees visited the temple and performed the pujas seeking blessings of Goddess Lakshmidevi.

Similarly, special pujas were performed to Goddess Kalika Devi, Pratyangira Devi at Courtallam Peetham in Pattabhipuram here. Women devotees perform pujas to Goddess Vara Lakshmi at their houses.

Arrest of accused in TDR bond scam demanded

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KAKINADA

THE BJP has urged the State government to register criminal cases and arrest those held responsible in the alleged TDR bond scam in Kakinada, expressing surprise that no arrests have been made despite a Vigilance inquiry and the submission of a report to the Chief Secretary. In a letter

addressed to the Chief Secretary, BJP leaders alleged that TDR bonds worth around Rs 10,000 crore were issued across the State between 2019 and 2024 during the YSR Congress government in violation of rules. They alleged that in Kakinada alone, TDR bonds worth around Rs 500 crore were issued for acquisition of about 9.5 acres at Dummulapeta, allegedly benefiting private individuals.

The BJP alleged that the then Kakinada City MLA, municipal officials and revenue authorities had acted in collusion in the matter. The party said it had lodged complaints through registered post on February 3, 2024, with the then Chief Vigilance and Enforcement Department, Chief Secretary, Anti-Corruption Bureau, Town and Country Planning and Municipal Administra-

tion authorities, seeking an inquiry into the alleged irregularities. According to the BJP senior leader Duvvuri Subrahmanyam, the Vigilance Department subsequently conducted an inquiry and submitted its report to the present Chief Secretary on April 20, 2026. The party leaders questioned why criminal cases had not yet been registered against those found responsible. He

urged the Chief Secretary to initiate criminal proceedings immediately and take action against all those responsible for the alleged irregularities.

The complaint addressed to the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, State Municipal Administration Minister and Chief Secretary was signed by BJP Kakinada district president Bikkina Visweswara Rao, Civil Supplies Corporation director

Enimireddy Malakondayya, BJP State spokesperson Yarlalagadda Ram Kumar, senior leader Duvvuri Subrahmanyam and others. They questioned why the vigilance report did not hold the then RDO and members of the scrutiny committee responsible. They demanded that their role also be examined and that criminal cases be registered against them if found responsible.

Sowcar Janaki: A cinematic legacy with Rajahmundry roots

DEEKSHITULA SUBRAHMANYAM
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

THE passing of veteran actress Sowcar Janaki in Chennai on Friday has brought back memories of her close association with Rajamahendravaram, the city where she was born and grew up before embarking on a remarkable journey that made her one of the most respected actresses in South Indian cinema. Janaki died in Chennai at the age of 94 following age-related ailments, bringing the curtain down on a career spanning more than seven decades. She acted in nearly 400 films in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam and remained active in cinema and on stage for several generations.

For Rajamahendravaram, her story has a special significance. Born Sankaramanchi Janaki on December 12, 1931, she belonged to a Kannada-speaking Madhwa

Brahmin family. Her parents were T Venkoji Rao and Sachi Devi. Janaki was brought up in Rajahmundry, where her early years were shaped by the cultural atmosphere along the banks of the Godavari. They reside in the Papermill officers' colony at that time.

Her father, Venkoji Rao, was a paper industry specialist. He studied paper manufacturing and chemical engineering in England and later worked in the paper industry. His professional career brought the family to Rajahmundry, where Janaki spent her formative years. Her mother, Sachi Devi, hailed from Guwahati in Assam. Though the family had links with different parts of the country, Rajahmundry became an important part of Janaki's early life. According to sources, the family lived in the papermill officers' colony and an old building opposite the Gokavaram bus stand area in the city at

that time. The artistic atmosphere around the family gradually found expression in Janaki. She was drawn to performance from a young age and became associated with radio programmes before entering films. Her younger sister Krishna Kumari too went on to become a celebrated actress, making the family's connection with cinema even more remarkable.

Janaki entered the film industry in 1949, and her breakthrough came with the 1950 Telugu film Shavukaru, directed by LV Prasad. She played the female lead opposite NT Rama Rao. The success of the film gave her the name by which generations of film lovers came to know her, Sowcar Janaki.

According to veteran film actor and noted stage musician of Rajamahendravaram, Sripada Jith Mohan Mitra, Janaki's family left Rajamahendravaram for Calcutta in 1948, when she was around 17

years old. He said that she did not return to Rajamahendravaram later for film shootings or stage performances. He expressed his condolences for her. He praised that her contribution was not confined to cinema. She performed extensively on stage and was associated with radio in her early years. Her career spanned more than seven decades.

Her long career brought several honours, including the Kalaimamani award from the Tamil Nadu Government and the Padma Shri from the Government of India in 2022. Janaki's death has been mourned across the film industry, but in Rajamahendravaram the memories are especially personal. The city remembers not only a celebrated actress who went on to make her mark across South Indian cinema, but also the young girl who grew up along the banks of the Godavari before her name became part of Indian film history.

Vice-President to visit Eluru dist on Aug 24

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ELURU



VICE President of India C P Radhakrishnan will visit Eluru district on the August 24th. He will leave Delhi in a special flight

at 7.15 am and reach Gannavaram at 9.35 am. He will leave Gannavaram by road at 9.45 am and reach Gourmet Popcorn Factory in Musunuru at 10.45 am. He will participate in the launch of new popcorn seeds till 12.15 pm. Farmers will be felicitated. After that, he will leave Musunuru by road at 12.35 am and go to Gannavaram airport.



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Authorized Officer, Hiranandani Financial Services Private Limited

Mandal-level leadership to strengthen safe drinking water access

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

WHILE India has made significant investments in drinking water infrastructure, ensuring that safe water systems continue to function effectively requires more than infrastructure alone. Strong local ownership, coordination among departments and frontline workers, and effective accountability mechanisms are essential for translating policy into sustainable access to safe drinking water. In Andhra Pradesh, the mandal or block level is increasingly emerging as a crucial link between district administrations and Gram Panchayats. It is at this level that policies are translated into action, implementation challenges



Mandal-level workshop on Safe water for all and always at Vissannapet in NTR district on Friday

are identified, and locally relevant solutions can be developed.

Through the India Safe Water Programme, Evidence Action (EAI Advisors), in partnership with the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWS&S) Department and the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Depart-

ment, has been facilitating mandal-level workshops across 10 districts including Krishna, NTR, Kadapa, Annamayya, Vizianagaram, Bapatla, Parvathipuram, Eluru Palnadu and Bapatla of Andhra Pradesh.

Unlike conventional training programmes, these workshops bring together

government officials, water supply engineers, Panchayat representatives, ASHAs, Anganwadi Workers, ANMs and other frontline personnel. The objective is to collectively identify challenges affecting safe drinking water delivery and develop practical solutions suited to local conditions. The initiative highlights the importance of integrating water quality monitoring into regular mandal and Gram Panchayat review meetings rather than creating parallel systems. It also focuses on strengthening accountability for the operation and maintenance of In-Line Chlorination (ILC) devices, which play an important role in ensuring the safety of drinking water.

Frontline health and com-

munity workers, including ASHAs, Anganwadi Workers and ANMs, along with Panchayat representatives, have an equally important role in addressing misconceptions surrounding chlorinated water and building public confidence in safe water systems. "These mandal-level workshops reflect the Andhra Pradesh government's commitment to strengthening water quality governance right down to the last mile. By bringing together engineers, health workers and Panchayat representatives on one platform, the government is ensuring that operational challenges are resolved quickly," said Manoj Kumar M, AP Programme Lead, India Safe Water, EAI Advisors.

GVMC gears for ensuing municipal polls

- The state government decided to complete local body elections across Andhra Pradesh at the earliest
 - The town planning department had earlier released a draft proposal to increase the number of GVMC wards from the existing 98 to 120
 - Zonal Commissioners told to prepare polling station-wise electoral rolls and accurately record the number of voters attached to each polling station
- VASU POTNURU
VISAKHAPATNAM

THE Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) is gearing up for the ensuing municipal elections, with officials directed to keep all arrangements ready well in advance so that the poll exercise can be conducted smoothly soon after the notification is issued. However, uncertainty con-



A view of Visakhapatnam city

tinues over whether the elections will be held with the proposed 120 wards or the existing 98 wards, as the proposed delimitation is currently before the court. The state government decided to complete local body elections across Andhra Pradesh at the earliest, with the urban local body elections expected to be conducted first, followed by mandal and zilla parishad elections and subsequently gram panchayat polls. The government is reportedly aiming to complete the entire process by the end of October, with the elections also paving the way for receiving funds from the Central government. The government has further

decided that mayors and municipal chairpersons will be elected directly by the people. In line with the government's decision, GVMC authorities have intensified preparations for the municipal polls. The town planning department had earlier released a draft proposal to increase the number of GVMC wards from the existing 98 to 120 and invited objections and suggestions from the public. The process of receiving objections has already been completed and officials are compiling them to prepare a comprehensive report for submission to the municipal administration and urban development department.

The proposed delimitation, however, ran into legal hurdles after a Public Interest Litigation was filed in the High Court, resulting in a stay on the process. This has temporarily brought the ward reorganisation exercise to a halt. If the court clears the proposed delimitation, GVMC is likely to proceed with elections comprising 120 wards. If the existing arrangement continues, preparations will be made to conduct polls with the earlier 98 wards. To ensure there is no delay under either scenario, officials have been instructed to collect and update all essential electoral data for both the configurations. GVMC Commissioner

Ketan Garg directed officials to make advance preparations by determining the population, number of voters and polling stations for each of the proposed 120 wards, while simultaneously keeping similar details ready for the existing 98-ward arrangement. He stressed that the election machinery should be prepared to adapt to whichever ward structure is finally approved.

The Commissioner instructed officials to carefully study all orders and guidelines issued by the state government and the State Election Commission and formulate a comprehensive plan for conducting the GVMC elections in accordance with the prescribed procedures. He directed the Chief City Planner and Zonal Commissioners to thoroughly examine the objections and grievances received in connection with the proposed expansion and delimitation of wards and consider appropriate action according to the rules.

The Zonal Commissioners have also been instructed to prepare polling station-wise electoral rolls and accurately record the number of voters attached to each polling station.

With the state government keen on completing the local body elections in the stipulated time frame, GVMC officials are now working on poll preparedness.

NSTL celebrates '57th Lab Raising Day' with gusto



Marking over five decades of dedicated service to the nation, Naval Science and Technological Laboratory celebrated its 57th Lab Raising Day in Visakhapatnam

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM

- Engaged in the development of underwater weapons, stealth technologies and advanced hydrodynamic technologies, NSTL has been addressing critical requirements of the Indian Navy
- Its sustained efforts in indigenous technology development have contributed significantly towards enhancing the operational capabilities and self-reliance of the Indian Navy

MARKING over five decades of dedicated service to the nation in defence research and technology development, the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL) celebrated its 57th Lab Raising Day.

Engaged in the development of underwater weapons, stealth technologies and advanced hydrodynamic technologies, NSTL has been addressing critical requirements of the Indian Navy. Its sustained efforts in indigenous technology development have contributed significantly towards enhancing the operational capabilities and self-reliance of the Indian Navy. With a strong focus on innovation, indigenisation and technological excellence, NSTL remains committed to developing and delivering cutting-edge and futuristic technologies, contributing to the vision of a self-reliant and technologically advanced Indian defence sector.

Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, Vice Admiral Sanjay Bhalla, who attended as chief guest, appreciated the NSTL team for its significant contribution towards strengthening indigenous capabilities in naval stealth and expressed confidence that the Indian Navy would continue to look towards NSTL for the development of more indigenous technologies and products.

In his address, Director

General of Naval Systems and Materials (NS&M) R. Balamuralikrishnan emphasised NSTL's responsibility to meet the requirements of the Indian Navy with high-quality indigenous technologies. He encouraged NSTL to mentor Indian industries in developing world-class products in line with global standards and highlighted the need for continuous technological upgradation.

Director of NSTL Abraham Varughese highlighted the laboratory's continued efforts in research and development, focusing on addressing the present and future requirements of the Indian Navy. He further emphasised NSTL's commitment to strengthening Aatmanirbhar Bharat by developing indigenous technologies and contributing towards self-reliance in naval warfare capabilities.

Marking the 57th Lab Raising Day celebrated on August 20th, personnel who completed 25 years of service were felicitated. Commendation awards were presented to employees, while special awards were conferred on personnel for their significant contributions during sea trials.

Ahead of BRICS meeting, GVMC pays special attention to city beautification

- GVMC Commissioner Ketan Garg inspects the beautification works from RK Beach to surrounding areas
- All departments asked to work in coordination to ensure a pleasant and memorable experience for delegates arriving from India and abroad

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM

IN view of the international BRICS Youth Ministers' Meeting-2026 to be held in Visakhapatnam, GVMC Commissioner Ketan Garg directed officials to further beautify the city and ensure that its cleanliness and aesthetic appeal are accentuated.

On Friday, along with additional commissioner P Nallanayya, chief engineer PVV Satyanarayana Raju, Chief Medical Officer of Health ENV Naresh Kumar, chief city planner A Prabhakar Rao and officials of various departments, the Commissioner inspected the beautification works from RK Beach to surrounding areas.

As the BRICS delegates are scheduled to visit



GVMC Commissioner Ketan Garg directs officials to further beautify in Visakhapatnam on Friday

various locations in the city and participate in a cycle rally, the Commissioner directed officials to complete road patchworks along major routes on priority and provide modern street lighting and attractive wall paintings wherever required. He instructed chief engineer PVV Satyanarayana Raju and officials concerned to enhance greenery along central medians,

beautify 14 junctions from Maddilapalem to Bheemili cross roads, arrange attractive plants along the SP camp office Road, and undertake tree trimming from Andhra University to Siripuram Junction.

The Commissioner further directed officials to ensure continuous sanitation along Beach Road, at major junctions, Thotlakonda, Visakha Museum and other

areas to be visited by the delegates. He instructed all departments to work in close coordination to ensure a pleasant and memorable experience for delegates arriving from India and abroad. As Visakhapatnam is hosting the prestigious international BRICS event, the GVMC is according special priority to cleanliness, greenery, lighting, roads and junction beautification.

Overseas buyers commend AP govt's initiative to provide global market access to MSMEs

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM

THE three-day International Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet (RBSM) that concluded in Visakhapatnam generated strong commercial interest, resulting in the signing of 88 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs).

Organised jointly by the Andhra Pradesh MSME Development Corporation (AP MSMEDC) and the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) Scheme, the event brought over 40 overseas buyers from 25 countries and over 250 MSMEs from across

Andhra Pradesh for structured one-to-one business meetings.

Several business discussions are at various stages of negotiation and are expected to translate into export orders following product evaluation, sample approval and further commercial follow-up.

The valedictory session was addressed by T Siva Sankara Rao, chairman, AP MSME Development Corporation, and K. Unnikrishnan, joint director general, FIEO. The valedictory session witnessed the exchange of MoUs between overseas buyers and participating MSMEs. The AP MSME DC chairman also interacted with buyers

and sellers to understand their experiences and explore future business prospects.

Addressing the session, the dignitaries highlighted the importance of sustained market-access initiatives in enabling MSMEs to understand international market requirements, improve product and packaging standards, establish direct connections with overseas buyers and integrate into global value chains.

Overseas buyers appreciated the diversity and quality of products presented by Andhra Pradesh enterprises. They expressed interest in continuing discussions with shortlisted suppliers and exploring long-term sourcing

partnerships.

Joint Director General, FIEO K. Unnikrishnan emphasised that the signing of MoUs marked the beginning of the business engagement process. He urged buyers and sellers to maintain regular communication, promptly exchange product specifications and samples and work towards converting commercially viable discussions into firm export orders.

The participating MSMEs represented a diverse range of sectors, including agricultural and processed food products, spices, rice, marine products, food ingredients, textiles, chemicals, engineering products and other value-added goods.



Dignitaries and delegates at the concluding ceremony of the International Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet in Visakhapatnam on Friday

POLICE ARREST A WOMAN IN FRAUD CASE

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM

POLICE arrested Musunuri Sowjanya, managing director of Flying Borders Consultancy, in connection with the case registered at Dwaraka Police Station.

During the investigation, it was revealed that the accused allegedly induced unemployed persons by promising overseas employment in countries such as the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Finland.

The consultancy collected substantial amounts from people as de-

posits for employment but failed to provide the promised services or repay the collected amounts. Dwaraka police informed that they recorded statements from several victims and collected relevant receipts, agreements and financial transaction details to crack the case.

During a search conducted at the accused's residential premises in Penamaluru, Krishna district, police seized several documents, bank records, electronic devices, cash, gold, silver articles and other material objects relevant to the investigation.

The investigation is continuing

to identify additional victims, verify the complete financial transactions and money trail, ascertain the total amount involved and establish the role of other persons connected with the consultancy. The arrested accused was produced before the court and sent to judicial remand.

Hans India Classifieds

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I, CHEEKATLA KEDARESWARI (New Name)
resident of F.No.9043, BLK-9, MVV CITY,
VISAKHAPATNAM -530041, A.P. Hence I have
changed my name from PENDYALA
KEDARESWARI (Old Name) to CHEEKATLA
KEDARESWARI (new name) W/o: PENDYALA
LAKSHMI PATHI. Hereafter My Surname is Known As
CHEEKATLA KEDARESWARI (New Name)
W/o PENDYALALAKSHMI PATHI
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Rs 221.67 cr health infra projects on anvil in state

- Tenders called for 12 projects to strengthen healthcare, AYUSH and medical education
- Six 50-bed integrated AYUSH hospitals and two medical colleges are among the key projects
- Chinturu CHC to be upgraded to a 100-bed hospital; new OPD block planned at Kakinada GGH

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE state government has initiated the tender process for 12 infrastructure projects worth an estimated Rs 221.67 crore to strengthen healthcare services, AYUSH facilities and medical education across the state.

Health, medical and family welfare minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav said in a statement here on Friday that the projects include the construction of six integrated AYUSH multi-specialty hospitals, two

medical colleges and additional facilities at existing institutions and infrastructure development at government hospitals.

Of the 12 works, 10 are related to the AYUSH sector, while two projects pertain to allopathic medical services, the Minister said.

Under the National AYUSH Mission (NAM), six 50-bed integrated AYUSH hospitals will be established at Tekkal in Srikakulam district at a cost of Rs 9.98 crore, Rampachodavaram in Polavaram district for Rs



10.57 crore, Nandigama in NTR district for ₹10.52 crore, Tenali in Guntur district for Rs 10.50 crore, Giddalur in Markapuram district for ₹10.58 crore and Tirupati district for Rs 9.99 crore.

The government will also construct a Government Unani Medical College at Proddatur in Kadapa district at an estimated cost of Rs 49 crore. Another Government Ayurvedic Medical College at

Dharmavaram in Sri Sathya Sai district will be established with an investment of Rs 49 crore.

At the Visakhapatnam Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS), a first floor will be constructed above the existing ground floor of the Government Naturopathy and Yoga College at a cost of Rs 9.37 crore. An additional floor and facilities for the clinical department will also

be developed at the 50-bed Integrated AYUSH Hospital in the same campus at a cost of Rs 3.04 crore.

In the allopathic healthcare sector, the 50-bed Community Health Centre at Chinturu will be upgraded into a 100-bed Area Hospital at an estimated cost of Rs 21.99 crore. A new Out-Patient Department (OPD) block will also be constructed at the Government General Hospital, Kakinada, at a cost of Rs 27.13 crore.

The Andhra Pradesh Medical Services and Infrastructure Development Corporation (APMSIDC) has initiated the tender process through e-procurement for the proposed works.

Satya Kumar Yadav said the projects reflect the coalition government's commitment to strengthening medical infrastructure and expanding access to quality healthcare and medical education across Andhra Pradesh.

APMDC bags top corporate bond honour

- Wins 'Best State Linked Issuer' for mobilising ₹9,000 cr via secured NCDs
- Award cites strong governance, compliance and financial management under state leadership
- Recognition credited to collective effort of APMDC teams, govt depts and market institutions

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation Limited (APMDC), a state-owned enterprise, has won the prestigious 'Best State Linked Issuer' award at the ASSOCHAM IX National Summit & Awards on Corporate Bond Market held in Mumbai recently.

The award recognises APMDC's successful mobilisation of Rs 9,000 crore through secured Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs) in the corporate bond market. The fund-raising exercise is considered a major milestone for a state government-linked



organisation.

APMDC credited the achievement to the leadership and guidance of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and thanked the state finance department, industries and commerce, mines and geology departments and other agencies for their support.

Under the leadership of APMDC managing director Praveen Kumar, the corporation successfully raised the funds with the support of the state government. The transaction demonstrated its financial management capabilities, regulatory compliance, corporate governance and systems for meeting debt repayment obligations.

The award selection involved a detailed assessment of governance, compliance, administration, innovation, business performance, strate-

gic initiatives, operational efficiency and overall contribution to industry growth.

After the initial evaluation by ASSOCHAM's Knowledge and Evaluation Partner, shortlisted nominations were examined by an independent seven-member jury comprising experts from the regulatory, financial and corporate sectors. APMDC said the recognition was the result of collective efforts by its board, employees, bankers, arrangers, credit rating agencies, debenture trustee, stock exchanges and other institutions.

The award marks an important milestone in APMDC's efforts to promote financial discipline, transparency, good governance and sustainable development of Andhra Pradesh's mineral sector.



Picture for representational purpose only

Search for missing fishermen intensifies

- Five ships, aircraft have been pressed into operation
- Alerts sent to Myanmar, Port Blair and Bangladesh coast

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

SEARCH operations for the seven Andhra Pradesh fishermen missing at sea continued on Friday, with the Indian Coast Guard deploying five ships, two Dornier aircraft and a helicopter to locate their boat.

Agriculture minister K Atchannaidu said the State government was maintaining constant coordination with the Coast Guard and Navy and would pursue every possible avenue to trace the fishermen and bring them back safely.

Atchannaidu said officials had spoken to Coast Guard Assistant Commanding Officer Ranjit Kumar to review the latest position. Coast

Guard officials informed them that an extensive search was continuing at sea, though the missing boat had not yet been located.

Information about the vessel has been shared with Coast Guard authorities in Myanmar, Port Blair and coastal areas bordering Bangladesh, with instructions to remain alert for any sighting or information regarding the boat.

The minister said the search would continue without interruption. Coast Guard officials had also assured the State that the officer taking charge after August 24 would continue the operation until the fishermen were traced. He reassured the families that the government was closely monitoring the search and coordinating with all available agencies.

He appealed to the families to remain courageous and not lose hope, assuring them that the search would continue through every possible avenue until the missing boat and fishermen are located.

TDP slams 11 YSRCP MLAs for skipping Assembly

- Chief whip Anjaneyulu accuses them of avoiding the Assembly for fear of facing the govt
- Says MLAs drawing salaries must attend the House and raise public issues on behalf of voters

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

GOVERNMENT chief whip and Vinukonda MLA G V Anjaneyulu strongly criticised 11 YSRCP MLAs for staying away from the Assembly sessions, alleging that they lacked the courage to face the House.

Questioning why elected representatives did not attend the Assembly to discuss public issues, Anjaneyulu said it



was unfair for MLAs to draw salaries while neglecting their responsibilities towards the people. He alleged that the YSRCP MLAs had "run away" from the Assembly because they were afraid to face the government. Speaking to the media at party headquarters in Mangalagiri, he criticised them for failing to come to the Assembly, which he described as a temple of democracy, and speak on behalf of the people. He said the four-day Assembly session witnessed meaningful discussions and continued for 25 hours and 15 minutes. A total of 103 members participated in the proceedings. Had the 11 YSRCP MLAs attended, they too

would have had an opportunity to raise public issues, he said. Anjaneyulu also took a dig at the YSRCP leadership over the DSC recruitment issue. He said Minister Nara Lokesh's presentation of facts in the Assembly had left YSRCP leaders embarrassed. He described it as ironic that a person who could not distinguish between the APPSC and DSC had served as Chief Minister for five years.

He alleged that YSRCP leaders were staying away to avoid answering questions over alleged irregularities in the APPSC during the previous government. He also accused them of creating disruptions in the Legislative Council. Anjaneyulu urged YSRCP MLAs to attend the House and participate in constructive debates on public issues, stressing that elected representatives have a responsibility to present their views before the Assembly.

BC empowerment possible only with TDP: Ravichandra

NELLORE: TDP senior leader, party district president and MLC Beeda Ravichandra asserted that the development and political empowerment of Backward Classes (BCs) is possible only under the TDP. Welcoming the state government's decision to provide 34 per cent reservation for BCs in rural areas and 33.3 per cent in urban areas, Ravichandra described it as a historic step. Addressing a press conference at the TDP office here on Friday, he said the decision was not merely about reservations but was aimed at ensuring social dignity and political empowerment for BC communities. Ravichandra said the TDP deserved credit for politically empowering BCs and challenged the YSRCP to a debate on its contribution to the community. He recalled that former Chief Minister and TDP founder N T Rama Rao had introduced reservations for BCs,

describing it as a pioneering initiative in the country. He said Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Education Minister Nara Lokesh were continuing NTR's legacy.

He noted that BC leaders had headed the TDP's State unit during the past 12 years. Referring to the Deputy Chief Minister's post, he said Pawan Kalyan was given the position based on the collective decision of the alliance partners. He alleged that the five Deputy Chief Ministers appointed by the previous YSRCP government had little real power. Ravichandra accused the YSRCP of obstructing BC reservations and alleged that nearly 16,800 BC leaders lost positions during its rule. He also claimed that around 70,000 backlog posts remained unfilled. He thanked Chandrababu Naidu for initiating the latest reservation measures.

Need to build strong talent ecosystem stressed

CII HR Future Bridge Summit 2026 calls for stronger Industry-Academia-Government collaboration to create a future-ready talent ecosystem

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE future of India's workforce will depend not merely on technological advancement but on the ability of industry, academia, government and society to work together to build a strong and future-ready talent ecosystem, said Dr Narayana Bharat Gupta, commissioner of higher education, Andhra Pradesh.

Addressing the CII Vijayawada HR Future Bridge Summit 2026 held here on Friday, Dr Gupta said India is witnessing an unprecedented transformation in the nature of work, driven by artificial intelligence, automation, digitisation and emerging technologies. While technology can automate processes and enhance productivity, people will continue to be central to innovation, trust, organisational culture and leadership.

Quoting the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report, he noted that significant changes are expected in the global employment landscape by 2030, with millions of jobs being created even as several existing roles and skills undergo transformation. "The future does not belong to the biggest organisations; it



Commissioner of higher education Dr Narayana Bharat Gupta addressing the CII HR Future Bridge Summit 2026 in Vijayawada on Friday

belongs to those who learn quickly," he said. Narendra Kumar Saranam, chairman of CII Andhra Pradesh in his address said that talent competitiveness is economic competitiveness. For Andhra Pradesh, the quality of our talent ecosystem will influence investment, innovation, productivity, entrepreneurship and the ability of our youth to participate confidently in national and global opportunities, he lamented.

Abhinav Kotagiri, chairman of CII Vijayawada in his welcome address said, the future of work is arriving faster than our traditional systems of education, hiring and workforce development were designed to respond.

Founder and chief strategist of The Strategist K Srinivas Rao set the context for the summit by emphasising the need for a collaborative ecosystem involving aca-

demia, industry, government and society.

ITC Limited vice president-HR P Veeraswamy emphasised that HR professionals can become genuine business partners only when they understand the business and demonstrate measurable value. Prof P Arulmozhi-varman, vice-chancellor, VIT-AP University and co-convenor, CII Andhra Pradesh Education, People Skills and Entrepreneurship Panel, said the conversation around education must move from employability to lifelong relevance and adaptability.

Anvesh Dasari, vice-chairman, CII Vijayawada Zone and director, Electronics Systems, Prof C S R K Prasad, vice-chancellor, JNTU-K; Prof G P Raja Sekhar, vice-chancellor, Andhra University and others also spoke in the summit.

Krea varsity to host regional partnership summit on Oct 26

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

A regional investment conference ahead of the CII Partnership Summit 2026 will be held at Krea University in Sri City on October 26, with a focus on attracting investment and showcasing the industrial potential of the region. As part of the preparations, MSME Development Corporation CEO M Viswa held a virtual meeting with Tirupati District Collector Dr S Venkateswar on Friday. The officials discussed arrangements for the Regional Partnership Summit, which will focus on sectors including tourism and allied areas, electronics, semiconductors and advanced materials, automotive, space and footwear.

The CEO directed officials



District collector Dr S Venkateswar

to set up 30 stalls at the summit to display products developed by MSMEs and startups associated with RTIH. A separate MSME programme will also be organised in Tirupati by September 10 as part of the preparations for the summit. The district administration has appointed the Project Directors of MEPMA and DRDA as nodal officers to coordinate the programmes and ensure their smooth

conduct.

The September 10 MSME programme is expected to bring together around 500 participants, including MSME promoters, startup founders and members of self-help groups. Officials from the concerned departments were asked to work in coordination and complete the preparations well in advance. The meeting was attended by GM-DIC G Chandrasekar, ZM-APIIC Vijay Bharat Reddy, Project Directors of DRDA and MEPMA and other officials.

The regional summit is part of a series of pre-summit conferences being organised across the state ahead of the main CII Partnership Summit 2026 scheduled to be held in Visakhapatnam during November 12-13.

Tenant farmers seek ₹2 L unsecured crop loans

- Appeal for unsecured KCC loans up to Rs 2 lakh for RMGs/JLGs with good repayment records
- RBI norms ignored despite permission for collateral-free loans; many farmers still stuck below Rs 1 lakh

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE Andhra Pradesh Tenant Farmers' Association has demanded that tenant farmers, Rythu Mitra Groups (RMGs) and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) with a good loan repayment record be provided unsecured crop loans of up to Rs 2 lakh through Kisan

Credit Cards. Association state committee secretary M Haribabu and Farmers' Association state president V Krishnaiah submitted a representation to agriculture department principal secretary B Rajasekhar, urging the government to intervene and ensure easier access to institutional credit for tenant farmers.

The association leaders said members of RMG and JLG groups were not receiving crop loans according to the prescribed scale of finance. They pointed out that despite Reserve Bank of India guidelines permitting unsecured agricultural loans up to Rs 2 lakh, the facility was allegedly not being implemented effectively in Andhra Pradesh.

According to the association, earlier guidelines allowed unsecured crop loans up to Rs 1 lakh.



Andhra Pradesh Tenant Farmers' Association leaders submit a memorandum to agriculture special chief secretary B Rajasekhar in Vijayawada on Friday

However, with the rising cost of cultivation, the scale of finance for various crops has increased. The association said the limit for agricultural loans without collateral requirements has also been enhanced from Rs 1.6 lakh to Rs 2 lakh.

The leaders argued that the benefits should be extended to all eligible tenant farmers. They expressed concern that even farmers and group members who regularly repay their bank loans were facing difficulties in obtaining crop loans

exceeding Rs 1 lakh.

Haribabu and Krishnaiah urged the agriculture department to hold discussions with State-Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) officials and ensure that eligible RMG and JLG members receive unsecured crop loans of up to Rs 2 lakh.

They further requested that farmers requiring higher credit limits should be provided crop loans of up to Rs 5 lakh, subject to the submission of necessary surities or guarantees.

Responding to the representation, agriculture special chief secretary Rajasekhar reportedly assured the association leaders that he would take up the matter with SLBC and bank officials and make efforts to facilitate the sanction of crop loans to eligible tenant farmers and group members.

Veteran singer Pranab Patnaik passes away

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

VETERAN Odia playback singer Pranab Patnaik died at a private hospital here on Friday, family sources said. He was 88. Patnaik, who had ruled the Odia music and film industry for over five decades, suddenly fell ill and was rushed to a private hospital, where he died. He is survived by wife Kasturi Patnaik and two sons.

Some of his popular songs include ‘Majhi Re’, ‘Mun Keun Sahare’, ‘Tuma Gaon Mahumachhi’, ‘Chala Ame Palajiba Sahar’, ‘Prema Tini Jati’ and ‘Smruti Tor Phere’. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, BJD president Naveen Patnaik and several other eminent personalities condoled his death.

In a post on X, Majhi said he was “deeply saddened” by the passing of the veteran vocalist, whose “soul-stirring voice” had enchanted Odisha. “This unparalleled musical maestro, adorned with numerous honours such as the Jayadev Award, the Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, and the State Film Award, has left an irreplaceable void in the world of Odia art and culture with his demise,” the Chief Minister said.



Majhi said Patnaik’s enchanting voice and timeless compositions would remain immortal in the hearts of Odias. “In this hour of grief, I extend my deepest condolences to the bereaved family members and countless admirers, while praying to Lord Sri Jagannath for the eternal peace of the departed soul. Om Shanti,” he said.

Naveen Patnaik said the veteran singer’s “sweet singing style” had made several Odia songs immortal in people’s hearts. “His contributions to enriching the music world will remain forever memorable. In this sorrowful time, I convey my deepest condolences to the bereaved family members

while praying for the eternal peace of the departed immortal soul,” the former chief minister said.

Senior politician Bijay Mohapatra also condoled Pranab Patnaik’s death and recalled his close association with the singer. Born on January 20, 1938, Pranab Patnaik drew inspiration from his father Lal Mohan Patnaik, a former Speaker of the Odisha Legislative Assembly. He received formal training in music under Guru Kunal Adinarayan before beginning his professional career.

Patnaik made his playback singing debut in 1958 with the Odia film ‘Maa’ and went on to lend his voice to more than 200 Odia films. He was

closely associated with the singing veterans and music directors such as Akshaya Mohanty, Shantanu Mahapatra, Balakrishna Das and Prafulla Kar.

Apart from playback singing, Patnaik contributed to Odissi music, folk, devotional and bhajan music, semi-classical compositions, traditional songs, Hindi geet and ghazals. He was also closely associated with All India Radio. He was honoured with several awards, including the Jayadev Puraskar, Balakrishna Das Memorial Award in 2023, Gangadhar Rath Memorial Award in 2017, Prafulla Kar Award in 2011, Big Odia Entertainment Award in 2010 and the Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for 1997-98.

He also sang a number of duets with renowned national singers including Vani Jairam, Hemlata, Usha Mangeshkar, Bhupinder Singh, S Janaki, P Susheela, Nirmal Mishra and Haimanti Shukla. He was honoured with the prestigious Jayadev Puraskar, Balakrishna Das Memorial Award (2023), Gangadhar Rath Memorial Award (2017), Prafulla Kar Award (2011), Big Odia Entertainment Award (2010) and the Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1997-98).

Odisha

Swami’s birthplace will become heritage village: CM

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

ODISHA Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday launched a scathing attack on the previous Biju Janata Dal (BJD)-led State government over its alleged failure, negligence and appeasement politics in connection with the brutal killing of Vishwa Hindu Parishad leader Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati in 2008, which had shocked the entire State. The Chief Minister made the remarks, while addressing a special programme held at Gurjang in Talcher area of Anugola district, on Friday to mark the birth centenary of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati. In his address, Majhi also alleged, “the disappearance of the reports and files of the Justice Mahapatra Commission and Justice Naidu Commission, constituted to investigate Swamiji’s murder, from Lok Seva Bhavan was a deliberate conspiracy to shield the perpetrators.” The Chief Minister also gave a firm assurance to the four-and-a-half crore people of Odisha, saying that every drop of Swamiji’s blood would get justice and that the truth would certainly be brought to light.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister announced that the Swamiji’s native village of Gurjang, associ-



ated with his memory, will be developed as a ‘Heritage Village’, while the Gurjang panchayat will be developed as a ‘Model Panchayat’.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said, “Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati was not merely an individual, but an embodiment of a great ideal, a divine institution and a radiant guide of Sanatan Dharma. In this modern era, he (Swamiji) renounced worldly comforts and lived in the remote and dense forests of Kandhamala, dedicated his life to the service of helpless tribal people.” Majhi also added that Swamiji established the Chakrapad and Jalespata ashrams and a Kanya Gurukul there, empowering tribal girls through Sanskrit education and values.

“The seeds of culture sown by him have now grown into a mighty tree, while the awareness he initiated against religious conversion has emerged across the State as an awakened Sanatani resolve. Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati is the ‘Guru, Granth and Garima’ (Teacher, Sacred Text and Pride) of our society,” Majhi said.

The Chief Minister called upon the Gen Z to reconnect with their roots, education, culture, Vedas, Sanskrit, cow protection and Sanatani traditions, and participate in nation-building with patriotism and courage.

He said honouring Swamiji’s unparalleled sacrifice and service, the State government had taken several important decisions, including renaming the ‘Phulbani

Government Medical College’ as the ‘Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati Medical College’ and sanctioning Rs 13 crore from the ‘Chief Minister’s Special Assistance’ (CMSA) fund for the development and heritage conservation of Swamiji’s workplace, the Jalespata Ashram, Ashram School and Kanyashram.

Of this, Rs 5 crore will be spent on constructing a 300-seat hostel for girl students, while Rs 3 crore will be spent on conserving the heritage site. A Mega River Lift project will also be implemented to ensure drinking water supply. Among others, Odisha Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy and former Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan also attended the event and addressed the gathering.

Odisha flood situation eases



HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

THE flood situation in six districts of Odisha eased on Friday as water levels in all major rivers, including Subarnarekha in worst-hit Baleswar district, remained below the danger mark amid no significant rainfall in the last 48 hours, officials said.

The Subarnarekha, which inundated the densely populated Baliapal, Bhograi and Jaleswar blocks of Baleswar and affected around 2.1 lakh people, was flowing below the danger level, they said. “The water level is receding at Rajghat. It was recorded at 9.75 metres against the danger level of 10.36 metres. The peak flood was witnessed in the Subarnarekha on August 20 when the water level reached 11.82 metres,” an official at the district emergency office said.

According to officials, around one lakh people were affected in Baliapal block, while the Subarnarekha floods impacted around 70,000 people in Bhograi and another 40,000 in Jaleswar. The water levels in two other major rivers, Jalaka and Budhabalanga, which caused severe flooding in Baleswar Sadar, Basta and Remuna blocks, were also below the danger mark, ruling out the possibility of further flooding in the areas, officials said. The district administra-

tion has intensified relief and rescue operations as around 100 villages remained marooned in Baleswar district. The second spell of floods since August 14 has affected more than 13 lakh people in six districts, while around five lakh people have been evacuated as a large number of villages were inundated, officials said. According to the office of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), the flood situation in the five other affected districts – Jajpur, Bhadrak, Kendrapada, Mayurbhanj and Kendujhar – remained stable due to the absence of significant rainfall in the last 48 hours.

However, the water level in the Baitarani river was on a rising trend, posing a threat to parts of Kendrapada and Jajpur districts, officials said. The district administrations were engaged in relief operations in these five districts, an official said, adding that in view of the flood situation and severe waterlogging, local authorities in Bhadrak and Jajpur districts have ordered closure of educational institutions on Friday as a precautionary measure.

The Meteorological Centre, Bhubaneswar, said the State recorded an average rainfall of 2.1 mm in the 24 hours till 8.30 am on Friday, against the normal rainfall of 10.4 mm for August 21.

Gajapati youth missing in Malaysia



SUNIL MOHAN PATNAIK
BRAHMAPUR

A 24-year-old youth from Gajapati district, who went to Malaysia in search of employment in March 2022, has been missing for two years since September 7, 2024, prompting Paralakhemundi MLA Rupesh Kumar Panigrahi to seek urgent intervention from External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar for tracing him.

Godani Rama Rao, son of Godani Venkata Rao of Madhusudanpur village under Gurandi police station, travelled to Malaysia on March 1, 2022, for employment after obtaining a visa from the passport issuing authority in Bhubaneswar.

According to his family, all communication with him stopped on September 7, 2024, and repeated efforts to ascertain his whereabouts have failed. Rama Rao’s last call from Malaysia was received by family members on September 7, 2024 through contact number 601176161796.

Concerned over the prolonged uncertainty surrounding the youth, MLA Panigrahi has written to the External Affairs Minister seeking an immediate inquiry through the Indian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur and the Ministry of External Affairs.

Tahsildar intercepted with Rs 5 lakh illicit cash

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

CONTINUING its crack-down on corrupt government officials, Odisha Vigilance sleuths on Thursday unearthed suspected ill gotten cash amounting to Rs 5 lakh after intercepting the vehicle of the Tahsildar cum Sub Registrar of Lathikata in Sundargarh district.

Acting on reliable information about the accused, Muralidhar Urmal, Tahsildar cum Sub Registrar of Lathikata, collecting large sums of cash from various sources, a Vigilance department team closely monitored his movements and activities.

On Thursday, a Vigilance team intercepted Urmal near Rajabasa Chhak in Lathikata while he was travelling in a hired official Scorpio vehicle from his office to his residence in Rourkela.

“During the interception, cash amounting to Rs 5 lakh was found in Urmal’s possession, for which he could not provide a satisfactory explanation. The entire amount, along with the Scorpio vehicle, has been seized,” Vigilance officials said.

Following the interception, officials launched simultaneous searches at three locations, including Urmal’s residential building in Rourkela, his ancestral house at Karamdih under Sundargarh Sadar police limits, and his office



chamber at the Lathikata Tahasil office in Sundargarh district. Police detained the accused for further interrogation.

In a separate case, Vigilance on Thursday apprehended Manoj Ranjan Nayak, Block Programme Manager (NHM) of Kujang Community Health Centre (CHC) in Jagatsinghpur district, for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 20,000 from a health staffer (Ashakarmi) working under the CHC by threatening to prepone her retirement based on her age as per Aadhaar card.

Based on the date of birth in her School Leaving Certificate (17.05.1966) submitted during her appointment, the ASHA worker had two more years of service left. However, citing a discrepancy in an Aadhaar

card issued later, Nayak allegedly threatened to terminate her services if she failed to pay the bribe.

Finding no other alternative, the complainant approached Vigilance authorities to report the harassment.

Acting on the complaint, a Vigilance team laid a trap on Thursday and caught Nayak red handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 20,000 from the complainant.

The team recovered and seized the entire tainted money from his possession. Following the trap, simultaneous searches were launched at Nayak’s residential house at Gopalpur (Rajnagarpatna) under Sadar police limits in Cuttack district and his office room at Kujang CHC in Jagatsinghpur district. The accused has been arrested.

Vande Mataram not a political bargaining chip: Majhi

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

ODISHA Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Thursday said Vande Mataram was not a “political bargaining chip” but the “soul of Bharat’s freedom struggle”, amid an ongoing row over the national song. Taking to social media, Majhi said the Congress Working Committee’s decision to limit the singing of Vande Mataram to only two stanzas was “deeply disappointing”.

“Vande Mataram is not a political bargaining chip. It is the soul of Bharat’s freedom struggle. The Congress Working Committee’s decision to limit the singing of Vande Mataram to only two stanzas is deeply disappointing. Vande Mataram belongs

to the history and spirit of Bharat.” He added that Vande Mataram is not Congress’ political property to edit, dilute or bargain with.

A song that inspired generations of freedom fighters cannot be reduced to vote-bank calculations or political convenience, Majhi said, adding that Vande Mataram will always remain the voice of Bharat. “The nation remembers. The nation has learnt. And the nation will not allow Congress to repeat the same politics again,” he said.

The CWC on Wednesday decided to abide by the 1937 resolution of its highest decision-making body on Vande Mataram, saying only two stanzas of the national song would be sung at all party events henceforth.

History-sheeter booked under NSA in Koraput

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KORAPUT

POLICE in Koraput district have booked a history-sheeter under the National Security Act (NSA), an officer said on Thursday. Invoking provisions under Section 3(2) of the National Security Act, the police booked Sanjay Suna, who has 25 criminal cases registered against him over the past 15 years across several police stations in the district, the officer said. Suna has cases registered against him for offences including attempt to murder, extortion, dacoity, robbery,

illegal use of firearms under the Arms Act and violations under the NDPS Act.

The cases have been registered in Jeypore Town, Jeypore Sadar, Borigumma, B Singhpur, Kotpad, Koraput Sadar and Nabarangpur police stations. SDPO Jeypore Archita Mittal said the preventive action was taken to prevent Suna from indulging in further criminal activities and ensure the safety and security of the public.

“Considering his criminal antecedents and his repeated involvement in serious offences

High-level panel formed to examine Satkosia relocation process

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR

THE Odisha government on Thursday constituted a high-level inquiry committee to examine various allegations surrounding the village relocation process in the Satkosia Tiger Reserve located in Anugola district.

Acting on a February 9 directive from the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC), the State government formed a five-member panel chaired by Arabinda Kumar Padhee, the Additional Chief Secretary of

Odisha Revenue and Disaster Management department.

As per a notification issued by the Forest, Environment and Climate Change department on August 17, the committee also includes Principal Secretary of Forest, Environment & Climate Change department Bhaskar Jyoti Sarma, Principal Secretary of Law department Papitra Mohan Samal, Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Odisha government for ST & SC Development, and Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department B Parameswaran.

In accordance with the OHRC order, the State government also selected retired IPS officer Anup Nayak, former member secretary of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) as an independent expert having knowledge of wildlife law, the Forest Rights Act, 2006, and rehabilitation policy. The committee has been entrusted with examining the entire village-wise relocation process relating to the Satkosia Tiger Reserve, except Raiguda village.

As part of its terms of reference, it will examine



and verify compliance with applicable statutory provisions, including the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the Forest Rights Act, 2006, and

relevant guidelines of the National Tiger Conservation Authority. The committee will also identify cases of wrongful inclusion or exclu-

sion of beneficiaries in the relocation process and assess the adequacy of compensation and rehabilitation provided to affected families.

As part of its terms of reference, it will also recommend appropriate corrective measures, including payment of differential compensation, restoration of rights and livelihood support, wherever warranted. The committee will also identify officers responsible for any procedural irregularities or violations and recommend appropriate departmental and criminal action, wherever necessary.

The committee has been directed to complete the inquiry and submit its detailed report to the State government within six weeks from the date of its constitution.

In its order delivered on February 9, the commission said that the relocation from a core or critical tiger habitat is governed by Section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, as amended, and the guidelines issued by the NTCA. The OHRC also noted that the relocation requires strict legal compliance, habitat assessment, settlement of rights under

the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, and informed consent of Gram Sabha. Relocation must be genuinely voluntary and based on a mutually agreed rehabilitation package.

However, the commission during the course of inquiry, found that the procedures and protocols prescribed by the NTCA, which are required to be followed in addition to the benefits offered by the State government for relocation of villages outside core and critical tiger habitats, were not followed in letter and spirit.

Build upon the success of Southern Zonal Council meeting

THE 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council in Mahabalipuram, under Union Home Minister Amit Shah, can be called successful to the extent that it has paved the way for further negotiations to thrash out interstate and federal issues. A major upshot was the assent of the two Telugu states to sort out the matters of the division. "Regarding issues concerning the division of assets and liabilities between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, both states agreed to resolve these matters in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs," a Central government release said. By and large, regional water disputes, parliamentary delimitation, and more devolution of federal funds dominated the meeting, which was attended

by Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu C Joseph Vijay, N Chandrababu Naidu (Andhra Pradesh along with, Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu), Karnataka's D K Shivakumar and Kerala's V D Satheesan, Lieutenant Governors of Puducherry K Kailashnathan and Andaman & Nicobar Islands Admiral D K Joshi (Retd.), and Lakshadweep Administrator Praful Patel. There was near unanimity about delimitation and on retaining the current proportion of southern states in the Lok Sabha, albeit with shades of difference. While Shivakumar urged the council to accept the 1971 census as the basis for delimitation and continue with the Lok Sabha's existing strength of 543 seats for

the next 25 years, Vijay insisted on an unambiguous legislative assurance from the Union government for their continuation of their percentage of representation in Parliament. Unsurprisingly, the two other Congress-ruled states Karnataka and Kerala, supported Shivakumar's stand. Sharing of river waters, however, was a divisive issue among southern states. Shivakumar elaborated upon the benefits of the Mekedatu dam on the Cauvery not just for his own state but also for farmers in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. It may be recalled that last month Vijay had sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention to ensure that no statutory or administrative approval was granted to the Mekedatu project unless it was con-

sistent with the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal's 2007 award and the Supreme Court's 2018 judgment. Satheesan also spoke about the said Mullaperiyar dam, which is resisted by Tamil Nadu. Vijay didn't appear adamant on the delimitation and river matters, but the Opposition in his state, led by DMK, is not slamming him for not protecting the interests of the state. This is a problem not just with Tamil Nadu but other states as well. When regionalism and sentimentalism blend, the concoction is often toxic. Even reasonable agreements are dubbed as 'sellout'. The Central government emphasised this very point. Shah said that protecting the interests of one's state is not wrong, but

if this results in states being deprived of water for years while it simply flows into the sea, then no actual interest is being served. He also said that linking major rivers, from the Brahmaputra to the Kaveri and Godavari, could ensure that India faces no water shortage for the next 100 years. Besides, the proposed interlinking would create multiple waterways that can provide a cost-effective and fuel-saving transportation system. Such interstate and Centre-state interactions should increase in frequency. They will not just make our federal structure stronger and more resilient but also give a boost to economic development and national integration. Moreover, this will help keep toxic regionalism in check.

LETTERS

Sowcar Janaki personified acting

VETERAN South Indian actress Sowcar Janaki passed away in Chennai at the age of 94 on Friday. Debuting in the Telugu film 'Shavukaru', her remarkable career spanned over seven decades, featuring more than 400 films across Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam cinema. Her 'Kavia Thalaivi' with Gemini Ganesh in the lead brought her name, which was cemented further in 'Bama Vijayam' and 'Ethir Neechal'. Janaki remained a major star throughout her film glittering career. Her death is a great loss to the film industry.

Gemini K Maniam, Coimbatore

Janaki deserved Dada Saheb Phalke

THE oldest living Telugu actress Sowcar Janaki, who breathed her last in Chennai on Friday, was born as Sankaramanchi Janaki. After the success of Telugu film "Shavukaru" (1950), she starred in popular hits like "Rojulu Maarayi", "Kanya Sulkam", "Dr Chakravarthi" and "Alam Chellelu" to name a few. It is a pity that the prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke was never conferred on her despite an extraordinary career.

Seshagiri Row Karry, Hyderabad-89

Corporal punishment has no place in society

THE tragic death of a six-year-old UKG student inside the classroom of a private school in Visakhapatnam after he was allegedly subjected to corporal punishment and harassment by the teacher deserves denunciation. It is a profound moral failure of our educational environment. Corporal punishment has no place in modern society. When the safety of a classroom is compromised, the trust of every parent is broken. The authorities must file a case against the culpable teacher and the complicit school management, ensuring that they are brought before the law swiftly.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, Chennai-210

Tragic death of UKG student

THE gruesome death of a six-year-old Upper Kindergarten student in a private school in Visakhapatnam sent shock waves across the state on Thursday. The boy was allegedly slapped and striped for not completing his homework. It has become a fad for private and corporate schools to give massive homework to even LKG and UKG kids. The victim belonged to a lower middle class family, and the father is a catering master. Many private schools engage the services of Anglo-Indian and Malayali teachers, who hardly have any professional training in child psychology. There is a compelling need to do away with burdening KG students with homework.

Pratapa Reddy Yaramala, Tiruvuru (AP)

Tech must 'mentor' new investors

WITH reference to "Tech should empower retail investors to avoid risks", (THI, Aug 21), digital investing has brought many first-time participants into the market, including those with limited financial knowledge. Brokerage applications should provide plain-language explanations, regional-language support and easy access to human assistance for decisions. Fraud prevention also deserves attention, particularly when fake investment advice circulates through messaging platforms. Technology will empower retail investors when it makes good decisions easier, mistakes less costly and fraudulent practices harder to execute.

K Sakunthala, Coimbatore-641016

Investors need grievance mechanism

WITH reference to "Tech should empower retail investors to avoid risks", (THI, Aug 21). Investors need a grievance mechanism. Brokers should maintain transparent records of orders, system alerts and execution times so disputes can be examined independently. A time-bound compensation framework may be considered for proven technological failures. Investors remain responsible for decisions they knowingly make. As trading grows, accountability must keep pace, accordingly. Investor confidence will be stronger when every participant knows where the responsibility lies when something goes wrong.

Durga Arunkumar, The Nilgiris-643101

Come up with regulatory framework

THE editorial "Tech should empower retail investors to avoid risks" rightly highlights the growing reliance of retail investors on tech-driven trading platforms. Easy digital onboarding, demat accounts and mobile applications have widened market participation, but convenience should not come at the cost of informed decision-making. Losses from futures and options show the need for investor education and risk awareness. SEBI and brokerage firms should ensure that tools, artificial intelligence and automated trading do not encourage speculative behaviour or create information asymmetry. Technology must empower investors, not expose them to manipulation, which can be achieved with a regulatory framework.

A C Vineeth Kumar, Thrissur-680651

thehansreader@gmail.com

BENGALURU ONLINE

ADB to provide Rs 1,750 cr for 500 KPS schools

BENGALURU: The ADB and the Karnataka government on Friday signed an agreement under which the multilateral agency will provide Rs 1,750 crore assistance for developing 500 government schools across the state as KPS.

The agreement was signed at Vidhana Soudha in the presence of Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and School Education and Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa. Under the project, the state government plans to invest Rs 2,500 crore over the next four years, till 2029-30, for developing the 500 Karnataka Public Schools (KPS). While the Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide Rs 1,750 crore, the state government will contribute Rs 750 crore. Schools with the potential to attract a larger number of students are being selected for upgradation as KPS institutions, with the objective of enabling each school to cater to at least 1,200 students.

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

Gen Z needs mentors, not political manipulators



FROM VOTE BANKS TO GEN Z: POLITICS WITHOUT PRINCIPLES

POLITICAL parties in India seem to believe that when you cannot convince the people, confuse them. That perhaps explains the contradictions in their positions on almost every issue. Whether it is Gen Z or Vande Mataram, their arguments often have neither head nor tail. To have a head or tail, however, you need a body—and that is precisely what appears to be missing from much of our political discourse.

Political parties seem to be in a hurry to chant the Gen Z mantra in the hope of attracting votes. It apparently does not matter to them whether Gen Z is moving in the right direction or heading down the wrong path. If we must hand over a country to Gen Z to rebuild, it means the generations before them have already destroyed it. The real responsibility should be to hand over a country ready to move forward, not one that needs to be rebuilt first.

It is shocking to see Gen Baby Boomers (61–80) and Gen X (45–61) constantly invoke Gen Z while forgetting that their real responsibility is to mentor, guide, and prepare the younger generation to take over the reins of the country. Instead, for the sake of a few votes, they support—or pretend to support—young people even when they violate the law. Worse, some of these older generations themselves violate the law and then shamelessly defend their actions.

For cheap publicity, some Gen X politicians and ac-

tivists indulge in theatrics, claim to speak for Gen Z and even make objectionable remarks against the Army. They seem to believe that invoking "Gen Z" gives them a licence to justify anything and everything. What is more disturbing is the manner the opposition parties attempt to defend such behaviour by linking it to unrelated political issues.

Take the recent incident in Ladakh. A woman tourist, apparently from Gen X, objected to a road blockade by Army personnel at a check post, questioning the manner in which the security personnel were handling the situation. She was heard shouting, "We are Gen Z," and saying that such behaviour would not be tolerated. She also reminded the personnel that they were paid from taxpayers' money.

This is not the first time that irresponsible remarks have been made against the Army. Far more objectionable comments were reportedly made during the politically charged agitation against the NEET paper-leak issue at Jantar Mantar on July 20. Those making such statements need to remember one basic fact: they can protest freely because the Army and other security forces protect the country's borders.

The Ladakh woman later apologised, apparently fearing legal consequences, saying frustration had driven her to behave that way. But an apology after crossing the line does not erase the act. It raises a larger question about character-building, parenting, and respect for the law. Increasingly, there appears to be a belief among sections of the younger generation that wealth, influence, or the lan-



Political parties appear increasingly willing to chase Gen Z votes rather than guide the generation that will inherit India. From defending irresponsible behaviour to politicising Vande Mataram, contradictions abound. The larger question is whether young Indians are being taught to respect the law, democratic institutions and national values—or to follow political convenience.

guage of "freedom" can place them above accountability.

Political parties, driven by electoral calculations, refuse to call a spade a spade. Instead, they try to defend the indefensible when the offender happens to belong to a constituency they hope to attract.

The same contradiction is visible in the opposition's stand on Vande Mataram. The Congress Working Committee's 1937 decision to restrict the song did not resolve the political issue then, yet some leaders continue to invoke that position today despite Parliament having taken a fresh position on the matter.

Having a difference of opinion with a law is perfectly legitimate. But declaring that one will not follow a law passed by Parliament raises a far more serious question. If lawmakers themselves refuse to follow the law, what message are they sending to Gen

Z? Do laws need to be obeyed only when one agrees with them? Does Parliament have value only when it does what a particular political party wants?

It was particularly unfortunate to hear Rahul Gandhi speak of singing "hamara version" of Vande Mataram. Once Parliament has prescribed a particular form, there cannot be competing political versions of the national song simply to suit political convenience. The issue has also been unnecessarily communalised. I have interacted with several Muslims in both the Telugu states and Gujarat in recent times, and none expressed objection to singing the full version of Vande Mataram. The Congress and its allies, which have raised such a hue and cry, should explain whether their objection is genuinely about religious sentiment or about electoral calculations.

The Congress's position

also raises questions about consistency. Karnataka's state song contains references to figures including Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Sage Kapila, Sage Patanjali, Sri Ramanuja, Guru Nanak, Swami Vivekananda and Gautama Buddha. Will the Congress, in keeping with its 1937 position, demand changes to that song? The River Krishna is mentioned in the state songs of both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Will those references also be removed?

It is time to stop selectively invoking the 1937 resolution. Congress leaders often point out that Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Rabindranath Tagore, Subhas Chandra Bose, and Jawaharlal Nehru accepted the decision to omit certain stanzas. But history is more complicated than that. Bose, for instance, was not initially in favour of the truncated version and accepted the decision under pressure. Several other prominent leaders like C Rajagopalachari, H V Kamath (1912–1982), a distinguished freedom fighter, journalist, parliamentarian and constitutionalist, and Ramananda Chatterjee expressed reservations.

Why, then, should one 1937 decision be treated as sacrosanct nearly nine decades later? During the freedom struggle, Vande Mataram was sung in its original form despite objections from the Muslim League. The Congress's later decision was essentially a political compromise of its time. Circumstances have changed. India has changed. Parliament has changed. Why should political parties remain trapped in a 90-year-old political calculation?

If opposition parties

genuinely believe that a law passed by Parliament is unconstitutional or wrong, they have every right to challenge it before the Supreme Court. That is the democratic way. Acting as though they are above Parliament or the Constitution is not.

The larger irony is that parties that constantly claim to be defenders of the Constitution sometimes hesitate to support provisions or reforms that are also rooted in the constitutional framework. If constitutional principles are to be respected, they cannot be selectively invoked only when politically convenient.

Political parties must understand that before being members of a community, a political constituency, or a generation, every citizen is an Indian. If someone does not wish to sing Vande Mataram, that is a personal choice. But there should be no attempt to prevent others from singing the full version, nor should its rendering be disrupted, as was reportedly seen at the AICC office in New Delhi.

And this brings us back to Gen Z—the generation that supposedly wants reforms in everything.

Here is the question they should ask themselves: Do we want to inherit a politics that teaches us to respect the law, debate it, and change it democratically? Or do we want a politics that teaches us to reject every rule that we dislike?

Do we want to be progressive or regressive?

The answer will determine not merely how Gen Z votes, but what kind of India it eventually inherits—and what kind of India it chooses to build.

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

Beginning of the end for archaic political psychosis

SATYAPAL MENON

PREDICTABLE are the ways that a dispensation under siege reacts to a backlash over its incapacities, improprieties, incapacities and insouciance. The Indian government - read as ruling political establishment at the Centre - has expectedly unleashed its proxy propaganda and vindictive blitzkrieg to transform the narrative related to Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) initiated upsurge against NEET scandal. Not unexpectedly, the fabrication division of the establishment is working overtime to manufacture disinformation against the non-violent and innovative agitation by the proactive youth of the country.

After succumbing to the demand of the youth and beating a hasty and clumsy retreat - consequent to the failure of suppressing the agitation through coercion and intimidation- the ruling political establishment- the National Democratic Alliance, specifically the BJP - is now in a retaliation mode. The latest reports indicate investigations into the antecedents of youth leaders and their linkages to political parties. Inevitably, the target and objective of the propaganda machinery of the establishment, and its machinations, is to create a narrative against political parties that are inimical to



its own agendas. News reports reflect that the besieged government is desperately attempting to portray the agitating youth as desperadoes sponsored and funded by political parties. To obfuscate the truth, stories are being planted to create the impression that the agitation was pre-planned and contrived and not a spontaneous response of anger and frustration.

Such interpretations and claims are convenient for the government, since the touted reason that it is politically sponsored - is more convenient than the latter cause and effect - that it is spontaneous and simultaneous outburst by the youth

of the country. It is not difficult to fathom the psychology of archaic mindset and dogmatic politicians holding the country's reins. It is not in tune with the needs, aspirations and ambitions of the youth in the country. It also reveals an irrational mindset, which views youth as malcontents and attempts to decimate dissent and discontent. While the ruling party is on a denial mode - see no truth, hear no truth, avoid inconvenient truth -- underestimating and undermining the undercurrents could prove to be counterproductive.

Threats by the government to investigate 'money trails', and imputa-

It is not difficult to fathom the psychology of archaic mindset and dogmatic politicians holding the country's reins. It is not in tune with the needs, aspirations and ambitions of the youth in the country. It also reveals an irrational mindset, which views youth as malcontents and attempts to decimate dissent and discontent.

tion of political funding, will eventually prove to be ridiculous and superfluous, since there is nothing illegal in providing monetary support to an apolitical outfit for its' fight against the NEET deception. In the aftermath of the agitation that shook and activated the conscience of the nation - specifically the youth - there were also reports pointing to devious means to muzzle and muffle the heightening clamour through pressure tactics. Despite successive defeats and depletion of its arsenal to subdue and stifle the agitation, the truth seems to be too bitter and unpalatable for the ruling party. According to reports, those who had displayed banners displaying critical and satirical

slogans against the government are being targetted and singled out for special treatment. Such vindictive actions are reflective of an incorrigible psychosis, impenetrable to reform. The perpetrators are perhaps nursing delusions that the uprising by the youth can be uprooted and ended through coercive tactics.

On the contrary, this could be the beginning of the end for oppressive and suppressive regimes. And, consequently, such an end will usher in the beginning and dawn of a new and reinvigorated era for the young generation and steered by the young generation.

(The writer is a senior journalist and media educator)

AEE recruitment exams from tomorrow

- The Computer-Based Test will be held in two shifts each day
- The morning session will be from 9 am to 12 noon, while the afternoon session will be from 2.30 pm to 5.30 pm

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE Computer-Based Test (CBT) for recruitment to the posts of Assistant Executive Engineer (Electrical) in Andhra Pradesh's state power

utilities will be conducted from August 23 to 27 with all arrangements in place to ensure a fair, transparent and rule-based examination process.

APCPDCL chairman and managing director P Pulla Reddy said the examinations would be conducted strictly in accordance with the prescribed guidelines and security protocols, ensuring equal opportunity for all eligible candidates.

The CBT examinations will be held in two shifts each day. The morning session will be conducted from 9 am to 12 noon, while the afternoon session will be held from 2.30 pm to 5.30 pm.

Candidates have been in-



structed to carry their original hall ticket along with any one valid photo identity proof, including an Aadhaar card, PAN card, voter ID, passport or driving licence.

As part of the security arrangements, candidates will undergo face verification and screening through metal detectors before entering the

examination centres. Mobile phones, smart watches, calculators, electronic devices, books, papers and other unauthorised materials will not be allowed inside the examination halls.

Pulla Reddy cautioned candidates against intermediaries or individuals making false promises of securing em-

ployment. He advised aspirants not to fall prey to such fraudulent claims and to rely only on official notifications and information issued by the concerned State power utilities. The APCPDCL CMD said the recruitment process would be conducted on the principles of fairness, transparency and merit, with strict adherence to the prescribed procedures.

"All necessary measures have been taken to ensure the smooth and transparent conduct of the examinations," he said, adding that the power utilities were committed to maintaining the integrity of the recruitment process and providing a level playing field for all eligible candidates.

Cops file FIR on pellet gun victim's complaint after Rahul's dharna

NEW DELHI

THE Delhi Police on Friday registered a first information report (FIR) in the case of 19-year-old Sahil Lochab, who allegedly suffered pellet injuries during the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) protest, hours after Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi staged a sit-in outside the Parliament Street Police Station. However, no individual has been named as an accused in the FIR.

As per the latest information, the police registered the FIR under Sections 118 and 125 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Section 118 deals with voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt using dangerous weapons or means, while Section 125 concerns acts endangering the life or personal safety of others.

The drama unfolded in the early hours of Friday when Gandhi and a few Congress leaders accompanied Lochab to the police station after the latter al-



Rahul Gandhi at the Parliament Street Police Station

leged that the Delhi Police had refused to register the FIR. They first went to the Connaught Place Police Station; however, after being informed that the New Delhi Deputy Commissioner of Police, Sachin Sharma, was at the Parliament Street Police Station, they soon reached the spot.

Visuals show that Gandhi, decked up in his white T-shirt and light-brown pants, walked into the police station, taking the officials by surprise. He first pressed the officials to register the complaint; however, as the officials refused, he began

his sit-in outside the police station. He also said that he would not end his sit-in until the officials agreed to register Lochab's complaint.

Three pellets were lodged in his (Lochab) eye, and 200 in his body. There are shells near his heart that cannot be touched. Delhi Police say they did not fire pellet guns. Who fired pellet guns if not cops? Police said they had orders from the top not to file an FIR on the complaint of the victim," Rahul told the media.

He also showed the metallic pellets recovered from the student's body.

CITING 'POLITICAL' ANGLE...

Centre denies permission for CM Revanth's US visit



Chief A Minister Revanth Reddy at the Oxford University, London, on Friday

- ▶ Trip to UK okayed; officials will proceed to America
- ▶ Revanth will take return flight from London on Aug 23

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE official TelanganaRising delegation, led by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, has been forced to cancel their visit to the United States of America (USA), after the Union Ministry of External Affairs, citing "political" angle, denied the CM permission to visit America.

The state government had sought the Centre's permission for trips to the UK and the US as per policy and protocol, but only the UK trip was approved.

The Centre informed the state government of the refusal of permission to visit America, after the official delegation had reached the UK.

Responding to the Centre's decision, the Chief Minister said: "The only purpose of the visit was to, as part of the New Education Policy of the Centre, bring the world's best institutions to India, to Telangana, to Hyderabad. They would have been an answer to our youth's aspirations to get education, skills, and training from the best Ivy League and top global institutions."

"I have always believed we should all think beyond politics and elections when it comes to nation building and future of the youth" he said. Although visibly shocked by the "political denial" of permission for him to further TelanganaRising and education, and to contribute to Viksit Bharat, Revanth Reddy has decided to comply with the Centre's decision and return to India from London, taking a flight back to Hyderabad, instead of proceeding to Boston, USA.

The Chief Minister has instructed the officials to go ahead with the US trip and conclude all the MoUs and

Proposed prog not appropriate to CM's office: MEA

Clarifies denial of 'political clearance' for Revanth's US visit

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of External Affairs on Friday clarified that the proposed programme for Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's visit to the United States was not considered appropriate "to the office held and the purpose of the visit", and therefore political clearance was not granted. Responding to a question on Telangana Chief Minister being denied political clearance for his proposed US visit, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said visits by Chief Ministers and other dignitaries are assessed by the ministry before political clearance is accorded. "Let me say that the visits of Chief Ministers, as with other dignitaries, are assessed by the Ministry of External Affairs to accord political clearance. The programme proposed in such cases should be appropriate to the office held and the purpose of the visit. In this particular case regarding the United States, that was not so, and therefore the clearance was not given," Jaiswal said. He, however, clarified that political clearance had been granted for Revanth Reddy's visit to the United Kingdom. The MEA's response comes after Revanth Reddy, earlier in the day, claimed that the Centre had denied permission for his proposed visit to the US, forcing the Telangana Rising delegation to cancel the US leg of its tour. According to the Telangana Chief Minister's Office, the state government had sought Central clearance for the Chief Minister's proposed visits to the UK and the US, but permission was granted only for the UK leg. The CMO said the state government was informed about the denial of permission for the US visit after the official delegation had reached the UK. The Chief Minister's Office said Revanth Reddy will now return to Hyderabad from London on August 23 instead of travelling to Boston.

partnership agreements.

Revanth Reddy will continue, as per the scheduled program, his visits to and interactions with Oxford, Cambridge, London School of Economics, the London Business School, University of London, among others. He will also be meeting with top sports institutions and skilling leadership in the United Kingdom, and try to

formalise partnerships with Telangana. "My resolve and endeavour to make Hyderabad one of the top global cities, where any common Indian can get education and a certificates from Harvard and Oxford, or an MIT and LBS or LSE, is because while most leaders have wanted to send their children abroad, I want to bring the world's best to India," he observed.

NTA clarifies on Rs 200 answer key challenge fee

Continued from P1

The NTA has been under fire lately over issues ranging from NEET-UG paper leak to errors in the UGC-NET examinations.

"On the concern being raised that answer key challenges are 'too expensive': a quick clarification for candidates.

The answer key challenge system is designed to be fair to every student, not just the one who challenges," NTA said in a post on X. "One challenge, everyone benefits. If even a single candidate challenges a question, and the subject experts accept the challenge, the revised answer key applies to every candidate who wrote the exam," it said.

The NTA said that fee is charged for challenging an answer to discourage frivolous challenges and it is refunded if the challenge turns out to be right.

"The Rs 200/question is refunded to the candidate whose challenge is upheld. The fee exists to discourage frivolous challenges, not to profit from genuine ones," the agency said.

"So if you have identified a genuine error and raised it, if found correct will not only be refunded but one accurate challenge from any candidate can correct the record for lakhs of others," it added.

SPLIT WIDE OPEN

Sack & expel Surekha, chorus Cong legislators

Some demand action against Rajgopal Reddy, Chinna Reddy

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

INDICATING that the split in the Telangana unit of the Congress is wide open, Congress MLAs and MLCs on Friday demanded that the party high command must step in and remove Minister Konda Surekha from the Cabinet and expel her from the party as she had failed to condemn the unpalatable remarks made by her daughter, Konda Susmitha, against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. Some of the legislators also demanded immediate action against Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy and Telangana State Planning Board Vice-Chairman Dr G Chinna Reddy.

The demand follows recent remarks reportedly made by Susmitha against Chief Minister Revanth Reddy over ticket distribution in the next elections. Following furore within the party, Konda Surekha had appeared before the party disciplinary committee and clarified that she should not be held responsible for her daughter's remarks, considering that the remarks in question represented Susmitha's "personal" views.

Reacting to the issue, Government Whips Beerla Il-



Cong MLAs & MLCs at a meeting in Gandhi Bhavan in Hyd on Friday

laiah, Vemula Veeresham, and Venkat Balmoor, along with MLAs Revuri Prakash Reddy, Balu Naik, Chikkudu Vamshi Krishna, B. Manohar Reddy, G. Madhusudhan Reddy, Nayini Rajender Reddy, Gandra Satyanarayana, K. R. Nagaraju, K. Rajesh Reddy, Veerlapalli Shankar, Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy, Kunduru Jayaveer Reddy, B. Lakshma Reddy, Vedma Bhojju, Mandula Samel, and MLC Baswaraj Saraiah, strongly criticised Surekha. They said that if she had no connection with her daughter's remarks, she should have publicly condemned them. Government Whip Beerla Il-

laiah said criticism from opposition parties was expected, but criticism of the party leadership from within the Congress was unacceptable. He questioned the criticism directed at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, stat-

ing that the Chief Minister had worked hard to bring the Congress to power and had been consistently strengthening the party. Ilaiiah demanded that Konda Surekha respond to the remarks made by her daughter and criticised those making allegations against the Chief Minister. Ilaiiah said it was unfortunate that "some leaders within the party" were publicly criticising the Chief Minister and stressed the need to maintain discipline and unity within the Congress.

Government Whip Vemula Veeresham said Konda Surekha should have condemned her daughter's remarks if she was not associated with them. He alleged that Surekha's statements were causing embarrassment to the Congress party and recalled that she had faced criticism earlier over controversial remarks concerning an actress.

CM to visit Anakapalli district today

Continued from P1

The project aims to build robust health services in the tribal region, enhancing quality medical service for the tribals. According to sources, the Chief Minister is visiting Araku Valley on August 27 for the launch of the Sanjeevani.

Meanwhile, District Collector Vijaya Krishnan, Visakha Range IG Gopinath Jatti,

Superintendent of Police Tuhin Sinha along with other officials examined the arrangements made for the CM's visit on Saturday.

As many as 1,200 police personnel have been deployed for security purposes. The Chief Minister will land at the helipad opposite MPP School in A. Koduru before reaching the venue to participate in the Swachh Andhra - Swarna Andhra programme.

ED adds money-laundering angle

Continued from P1

The agency is examining the source of the money, the recipients, and the persons allegedly behind the transaction. Five ED teams reportedly carried out the searches simultaneously.

When officials reached

Avinash Reddy's Pulivendula residence in the morning, they found the house locked. They waited before summoning his uncle, Manohar Reddy, who opened the premises. Manohar Reddy said the officials examined documents relating to various

assets. The ED officials seized Rs 24 lakh unaccounted money from the premises of Avinash Reddy and seized keys of two bank lockers.

Searches were conducted also at the residences of Sunil Yadav and Devireddy Siva Shankar Reddy, both accused

in the Vivekananda Reddy murder case. Another search was carried out at the residence of Erra Gangi Reddy at T. Thummalapalli in Thondur mandal.

The ED also questioned Dr Chaitanya Reddy, son of Siva Shankar Reddy. He was reportedly summoned from Kadapa and questioned over allegations surrounding his

visit to Kadapa Jail, where he allegedly intimidated approver Dastagiri, then lodged there as a remand prisoner, under the pretext of conducting a medical camp.

Meanwhile, ED officials continued searches at two locations in Hyderabad, including Avinash Reddy's residence in the Open Skies gated community at Kokapet.

AP govt's AI-powered GST model draws wide attention

Continued from P1

Andhra Pradesh's presentation, titled "Use of AI/ML and Automation in GST Tax Administration - From Case Selection to Litigation," was included as a dedicated agenda item.

The Commercial Taxes Department explained how AI-based systems are being used for case selection and allocation, return scrutiny under Section 61, audit under Section 65, inspection under Section 67 and litigation before the First Appellate Authority, GST Appellate Tribunal and High Court.

The system integrates data from four sources and uses

19 analytical reports and a 35-parameter risk matrix to identify and classify cases before they reach officers. High-value cases are routed for additional scrutiny through statutory mechanisms.

The department also demonstrated its Legal-AI Officer Assistant, trained on GST laws and about 22,000 judgments from courts and tribunals. It has been extended across three litigation forums and is assisting officers with drafting instructions, para-wise remarks, and replies for more than 13,700 cases.

The department presented data comparing AI-assisted

operations with the earlier manual system. During six months of AI-driven return scrutiny, revenue detection reached Rs 743.43 crore, compared with Rs 365.75 crore during the comparable legacy period. Detection per case also rose sharply to Rs 27.63 lakh, against Rs 3.08 lakh under the earlier process.

The department stressed that AI does not replace statutory decision-making. It generates drafts and analytical inputs, while officers take decisions and digitally sign notices and orders, ensuring traceability.

The presentation received strong interest from partici-

pating States. Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Assam and Meghalaya have sought details of the system and are planning visits to Andhra Pradesh to study its architecture and workflow.

The Revenue Secretary commended AP's initiative as a model that other States could consider adopting. The state also outlined plans to extend AI to refund processing, registration monitoring, cancellation, recovery proceedings, revision and review petitions and advance rulings. It sought greater GSTN data and API support from the Centre to expand the system further.

New H1B fee move clears White House review

Continued from P1

The move comes as the Donald Trump Administration continues to overhaul the H1B programme from the ground up, a visa route that is heavily used by highly skilled Indian professionals looking to live and work in the US.

The DHS proposal concerns fees associated with H1B visa workers' petitions. But the proposal's precise provisions remain under wraps as the DHS has yet to publish the regulation. It is therefore not yet known how much the fees could increase, which H1B petition would be affected or when any changes will take effect.

PM pitches for India as global space hub

Continued from P1

The CEOs said the government's decision to open the space sector to private participation had generated considerable enthusiasm and created multiple new opportunities for entrepreneurs. They also appreciated the support extended by the government and spoke about growing collaboration within the industry.

Congratulations the entrepreneurs for entering and expanding in a relatively new area, Modi said the confidence demonstrated by private space companies had reinforced the vision behind opening the sector to private participation.

The Prime Minister

pointed out that several countries either lacked the resources to invest in space or were not inclined to make such investments, arguing that this provided India with a significant opportunity to strengthen its position in the global space industry.

He urged the companies to explore applications beyond their existing areas of work and focus on how space technologies could make people's lives easier. Modi also stressed the importance of closer cooperation between space companies and organisations working in other sectors.

Citing examples, he suggested that companies

developing technologies to tackle space debris could collaborate with environmental organisations to expand their applications. Similarly, space technology firms working in agriculture could partner with agricultural universities and government departments to help farmers take better-informed decisions and improve productivity.

Modi called for building an ecosystem in which India becomes a natural destination for global space-related innovation and investment. He said the country's space sector could become a "magnet" for global talent, companies and investment.



Why your scalp suffers more than your hair during monsoon



CLELIA CECILIA ANGELON

care it received earlier.

Monsoon humidity can leave hair dull, rough and difficult to manage, but the seasonal changes often affect the scalp first. Understanding how moisture, sweat and limited airflow influence scalp health can help make hair care more effective during the rainy months.

Why the Scalp Bears the Brunt of the Season

Humidity during the monsoon is rarely consistent. The air may remain damp and heavy on some days before becoming comparatively dry after rainfall. These fluctuations can affect the scalp's natural balance over time. Hair may appear flat by the afternoon or feel rough even after washing, while the underlying issue may actually begin at the roots.

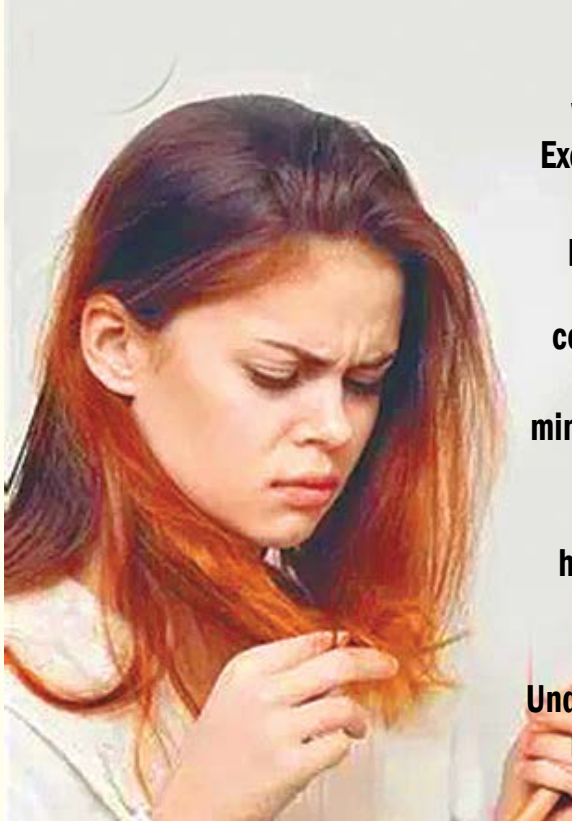
Warmth and moisture can also contribute to flaking and itchiness. Wet hair takes longer to dry during humid weather, whether it becomes soaked in the rain, damp after a shower or moist from sweat.

Tying hair up frequently to keep it away from the face and neck can further reduce airflow around the scalp.

These effects may not always be immediately visible. Because hair that has already grown cannot repair itself in the same way living skin can, the condition of the scalp and hair over time often reflects the

aloe vera is commonly used for its cooling and moisturising qualities. Ingredients such as amla, hibiscus and fenugreek have also traditionally featured in hair-care practices, particularly for maintaining scalp and hair condition.

Henna is another traditional ingredient associated with a cooling effect on the scalp. Some formulations combine it with botanical ingredients sourced from regions such as the Amazon, with the aim of supporting scalp comfort and balance



Rainy weather can change the way hair behaves, making everyday routines such as washing, drying and styling more important. Excess moisture, sweat and frequent exposure to rain can influence scalp comfort, while prolonged dampness may affect hair texture and manageability. A seasonal routine that considers cleansing frequency, drying habits, hairstyles and product ingredients can help minimise these concerns. Traditional botanical ingredients such as neem, amla, hibiscus and fenugreek continue to feature in many hair-care practices, while growing ingredient awareness is encouraging consumers to examine formulations more closely. Understanding these seasonal factors can help make monsoon hair care more informed and consistent



during humid weather. Ingredient awareness is another consideration when choosing hair-care products. Some formulations avoid ammonia and related chemicals such as ethanolamine, diethanolamine and triethanolamine, ingredients commonly used in certain hair-colouring products. Consumers are also increasingly paying attention to formulations that follow defined clean-ingredient standards and exclude potentially undesirable substances. However, natural or

plant-based ingredients are not automatically suitable for everyone. Individual scalp conditions, allergies and sensitivities should be considered when introducing any new product, particularly if irritation or persistent flaking is already present.

Care That Restores, Not Just Corrects

Monsoon hair care does not necessarily have to centre on repairing visible damage. Paying attention to scalp hygiene, allowing wet hair to dry properly and



avoiding prolonged dampness can help maintain comfort during the season.

A consistent routine that suits an individual's scalp and hair type can be more useful than frequently changing products in response to temporary concerns. Gentle cleansing, adequate drying and careful ingredient selection can support scalp health while reducing some of the problems commonly associated with humid weather.

The monsoon may challenge the scalp in subtle ways, but understanding those changes can make seasonal hair care more deliberate. Rather than reacting only when hair becomes visibly dull or rough, maintaining scalp health throughout the rainy season can help support healthier-looking hair as the weather changes.

(The author is Founder & CEO of Surya Brasil)

Manisha Koirala shares how her relationship with food has evolved

Actress Manisha Koirala, who was last seen in the streaming series 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar', has shared how her relationship with food has changed over the years. The actress took to her Instagram, and shared a picture of herself eating her meal, while trying to talk to the person holding the phone camera. She also penned a long note in the caption, and how her relationship with food has evolved, and how she has started listening to her body.

She wrote, "My relationship with food has changed over the years. From restriction and guilt to learning to nourish, enjoy and listen to my body. I no longer want to fight my body. I want to care for it, respect it and feel at home in it". Earlier, the actress celebrated her birthday with celebrations arranged by her parents. Recently, the actress' friend Sarosh Pradhan took to his Instagram, and shared a joint post with the actress. The post featured videos and a picture from the celebrations with happy faces of close friends and family of the actress ringing in her birthday.

The actress can be seen dressed casually in the videos and the picture, as she swings and enjoys every bit of her celebrations. He wrote in the caption, "Joy of Parents taking the initiative to organize Manisha's Birthday".

Sarosh Pradhan is actress' cycling partner. The actress has often attributed her diminishing fear of cycling in heavy



traffic. Manisha Koirala emerged as one of Hindi cinema's most acclaimed actresses of the 1990s. She has delivered memorable performances in 'Bombay', 'Khamoshi: The Musical', 'Dil Se', 'Gupt', and 'Company'. In 2012, she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and underwent extensive treatment in the United States, eventually recovering. She documented that journey in her memoir 'Healed: How Cancer Gave Me a New Life'. The actress later returned to acting, earning praise for 'Sanju' and 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar'.

Preity Zinta embraces a brand new 'Vibe' as she reflects on life

Actress Preity Zinta offered a glimpse of her new 'Vibe', sharing a picture as she took a moment to soak in the experience ahead for her upcoming film of the same name. Preity shared a selfie of herself on Instagram, where she is seen sporting chunky sunglasses paired with a black oversized T-shirt. In the image, the actress is seen looking at the lens as she posed for a photograph. "A moment to hold, a moment to reflect, a moment to take in life, as I dive into a brand new Vibe. Ting 1!" she wrote as the caption.

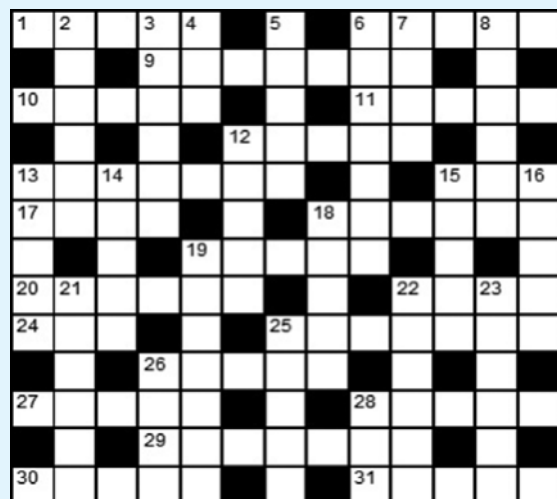
Vibe also stars Kunal Kemmu. The upcoming high-stakes action-comedy film is produced by Kunal Kemmu and Chirag Nihalani under the banner of Drongo Films. "Vibe" is expected to reach the audience on September 18 this year. The project marks the first venture for the production studio. The film is written and directed by Kunal Kemmu. Joining these two, Sparsh Shrivastava will play a crucial role in the movie, along with debutant Vanshika Dhir.

"Vibe" focuses on two inseparable friends whose ordinary lives suddenly turn into an unpredictable, high-energy adventure that pushes their survival instincts and friendship to the limit. "Batwara 1947" is a period drama film co-written and directed by Rajkumar Santoshi, and produced by



Aamir Khan under the banner of Aamir Khan Productions. Set in Lahore against the backdrop of the 1947 Partition of British India and the division of Punjab. The film stars Sunny Deol, Preity Zinta, Shabana Azmi, Karan Deol, Ali Fazal, Abhimanyu Singh, Khushi Hajare, Kanikka Kapur, Waaseem Rajput, and Isha Sandhir. The film is based on Asghar Wajahat's drama 'Jis Lahore Nai Vekhya, O Janya E Nai'. It was Zinta's comeback film after an eight-year hiatus.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 City in Gujarat (5)
- 6 Willow twig (5)
- 9 Physicians (7)
- 10 Direction indicator (5)
- 11 Certain to get or have (2,3)
- 12 Slacks material (5)
- 13 Rather old (7)
- 15 In the style of (1,2)
- 17 Changed colour (4)
- 18 South American animals resembling the camel (6)
- 19 Carousal (5)
- 20 Brings about (6)
- 22 TV sports letters (4)
- 24 Label (3)
- 25 Put out again (7)
- 26 Later than (5)
- 27 Shield (5)
- 28 Rub out (5)
- 29 Must (5,2)
- 30 Concur (5)
- 31 Fragrant (5)

DOWN

- 2 Indisciplined (6)
- 3 Much loved (6)
- 4 Tug (3)
- 5 Tingling - desirous (5)
- 6 Crease in the skin (7)
- 7 "Money __ object" (2,2)
- 8 Commotion (6)
- 12 Thunder sounds (5)
- 13 Court order (5)
- 14 Remove errors from (program) (5)
- 15 Gather hoard (5)
- 16 All together (2,3)
- 18 Mechanical bar (5)
- 19 Liberate (3,4)
- 21 Exclaiming in amazement, joy, or surprise (6)
- 22 A written deed placed in the custody of a third party (6)
- 23 Chase (6)
- 25 Prepared (5)
- 26 First-class (1-3)
- 28 UFO pilots (3)



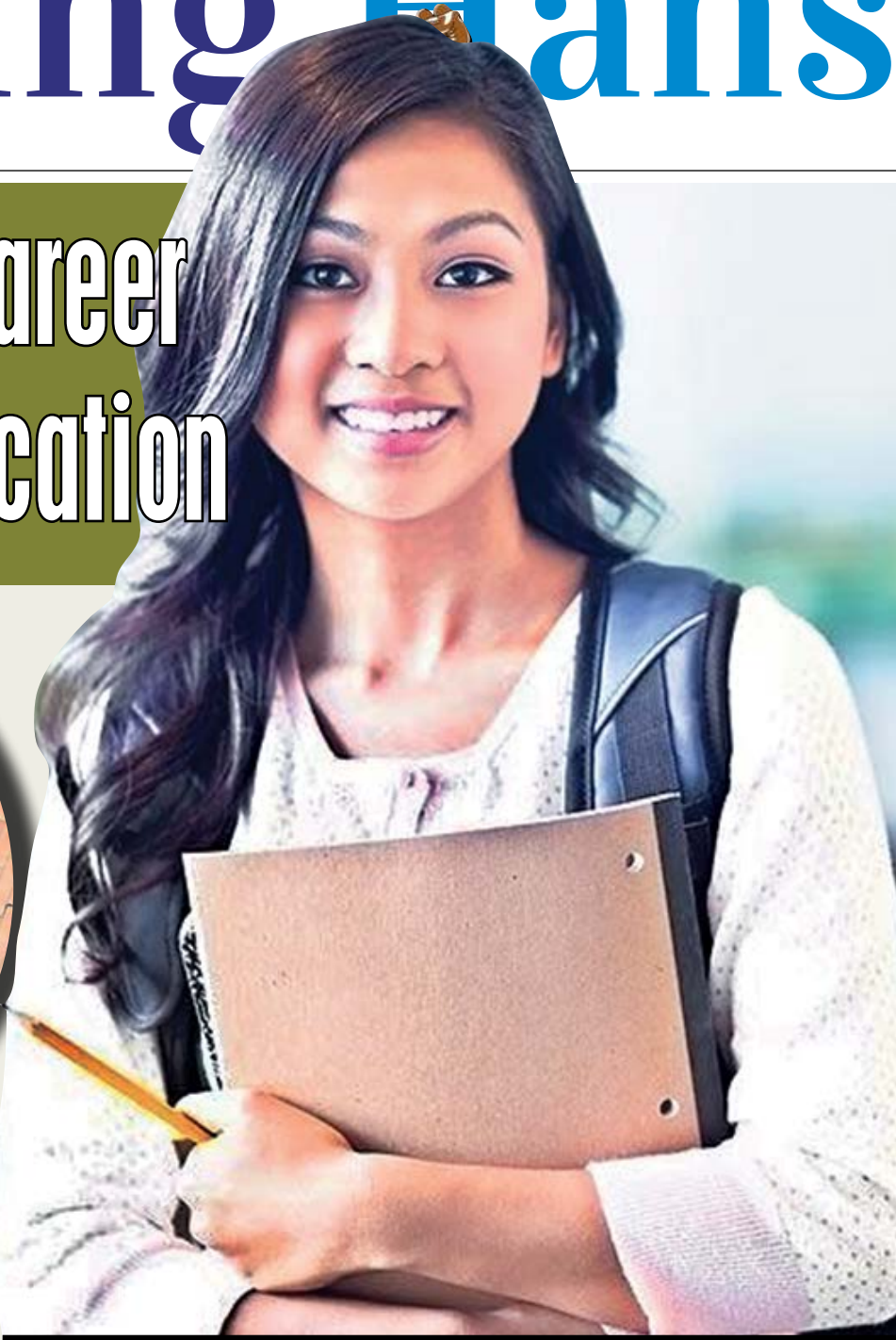
Solution to August 21

SUDOKU



Solution to August 21

Bridging academic learning and career readiness through professional education



With B.Com continuing to attract thousands of students, commerce education is increasingly being viewed as a pathway to careers in finance, banking and business. As employers place greater emphasis on practical skills, communication and problem-solving, students are looking beyond classroom learning. Industry exposure, internships, mentorship and professional qualifications can help bridge the gap between academic knowledge and workplace expectations, particularly in emerging areas such as FinTech, financial analytics and wealth management

RAMESH VISHWANATHAN

One of the most popular academic programs for students who want to work in business and finance is the commerce program. According to Degree Online Services Telangana (DOST), 42,000 undergraduate students have confirmed admission to the B.Com programme. Due to its increasing popularity relative to traditional streams, commerce has consistently accounted for 37% to 40% of admissions. Nearly 44.08 lakh students are enrolled in undergraduate commerce programs nationwide, with male students accounting for 52.8% of enrolment and female students 47.2%, according

to the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE). These numbers show that young Indians are more interested in pursuing jobs in business, finance, and related fields.

These figures reflect the growing interest among young Indians in pursuing careers in business, finance and related sectors. However, in an increasingly competitive job market, a degree alone is no longer enough. Employers today are looking for graduates who can apply their academic knowledge to solve real-world problems and adapt to evolving industry requirements.

The degree-to-career gap
A degree remains an



important starting point, but employment standards have changed over time. Today, recruiters are considering someone with more than just degree achievements: someone who can communicate effectively, solve problems, and apply their knowledge in real-world situations. This is particularly relevant for graduates in commerce. Careers in banking, wealth management, financial planning, FinTech, financial analytics, and corporate finance require specialised skills that go beyond classroom learning, even if their education gives them a strong foundation. This is where industry exposure becomes valuable. Internships, mentorship programmes and live projects help students understand workplace expectations,

develop practical skills and make more informed career choices. These experiences enable graduates to transition more confidently from the classroom to the workplace.

Professional Education as a Bridge to Industry

The financial services sector provides a good example of how professional education enhances academic learning. As household finances become more complex, financial decisions today extend beyond savings and investments to include retirement planning, insurance, tax planning, children's education and long-term wealth creation. This has increased the need for professionals who can take a holistic view of an individual's financial situation and provide in-

formed guidance.

This is where professional qualification becomes increasingly valuable. They help students apply what they learn in college while developing practical skills, ethical values and the ability to understand clients' financial needs. One such pathway is CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® certification, which provides specialised education in financial planning and helps learners develop the practical skills needed in the profession. It can prepare graduates for roles in areas such as financial planning, wealth management and investment advisory, while also strengthening their ability to make ethical, client-focused financial decisions. Professional qualifications

like these help students connect classroom learning with the practical demands of the workplace.

Preparing for a changing workplace

The transition from education to employment is becoming increasingly dynamic. Technology is reshaping financial services; new roles are emerging, and the skills required across professions are evolving.

This makes continuous learning increasingly important. Educational institutions can provide the academic foundation, while

industry exposure and professional development can help students understand changing workplace expectations and adapt to them.

For commerce students, the breadth of their education offers the flexibility to explore different career paths. The focus now should be on helping them make informed choices and develop the capabilities needed to grow within those careers.

Ultimately, academic and professional education work hand in hand. While professional learning provides practical

skills, ethical awareness and industry readiness, a university degree provides the theoretical foundation. Together, they prepare graduates not only to secure meaningful employment but also to adapt, grow and contribute confidently in an increasingly dynamic and competitive economy. As India continues to build a future-ready workforce, creating a strong bridge between classrooms and careers will be key to unlocking the full potential of India's youth.

(The author is CEO, FPSB India)

Student leaders take charge at Nasr school ceremony

Nasr School conducted its 61st Investiture Ceremony, formally marking the assumption of leadership responsibilities by the newly appointed student leaders for the academic year 2026-27. The ceremony was attended by chief guest Brigadier Manoj Kumar Sharma, along with Nawab Mir Khutubuddin Khan, Chairman, Nasr Education Society; Begum Salwa Khan, Director, Nasr Education Society; Mir Hafeezuddin Ahmed, CEO, Nasr Education Society and Principal, Nasr Boys School; Mir Jamaluddin Hammad, Executive Director-Finance, Nasr Education Society, and members of the school community. The programme began with the NCC Guard of Honour and a prayer by the school choir. The newly appointed student leaders took the oath, formally



accepting their responsibilities for the academic year. A ceremonial salute and March Past by the five Houses—Amethyst, Emerald, Ruby, Sapphire and Topaz—highlighted the importance of discipline, coordination and teamwork. The proceedings also included the presentation

of saplings to dignitaries, reflecting the school's emphasis on environmental responsibility.

Principal Mir Mohiuddin Mohammed said excellence was built through discipline and consistent effort. He emphasised that leadership and responsibility extend beyond achievement and

require individuals to contribute meaningfully to their communities. Brigadier Manoj Kumar Sharma, addressing the students, highlighted the importance of discipline, perseverance, responsibility and service. He encouraged students to approach their responsibilities with commitment and

a sense of purpose.

The ceremony also recognised student achievement through the presentation of cups and shields for excellence in academics, literary and cultural activities, marching and inter-house competitions. Topaz House was named Best House in literary and cultural events and also won the Best House award in the Patriotic Song Singing and Dance Competition.

Emerald House was declared the Best Marching Contingent.

Nawab Mir Khutubuddin Khan urged students to believe in themselves, pursue their aspirations with dedication and uphold values such as integrity, discipline, kindness and respect for diversity. The ceremony concluded with an emphasis on student leadership, responsibility, academic achievement and holistic development.

Today is National Surgical Oncologist Day

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF SURGICAL ONCOLOGISTS

Surgical oncologists play a specialised role in cancer care, combining advanced surgical expertise with detailed knowledge of tumour biology and cancer treatment. Their work often involves complex procedures aimed at removing cancerous tissue while preserving as much healthy tissue and normal function as possible. These specialists are involved at several stages of a patient's treatment journey. They may help diagnose certain cancers, assess whether a tumour can be surgically removed, plan treatment with other specialists and perform procedures ranging from biopsies to major cancer surgeries. Their decisions often require careful consideration of the tumour's location, stage and relationship with surrounding organs and tissues.

Modern cancer care increasingly relies on multidisciplinary teams. Surgical oncologists work alongside medical and radiation oncologists, radiologists, pathologists, nurses and other healthcare profes-



sionals to determine appropriate treatment strategies. In many cases, surgery may be combined with chemotherapy, radiation therapy, targeted treatment or immunotherapy. The field also demands continuous learning as surgical techniques and cancer treatments evolve. Advances in minimally invasive and robotic-assisted procedures, imaging and surgical planning are changing how some complex operations are performed.

IIT Hyderabad centre to advance steel research and innovation

Jindal Steel and the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IITH) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) focused on high-strength, value-added and value-engineered steel products and solutions at the IIT Hyderabad campus. The Centre will focus on developing and demonstrating advanced steel applications for infrastructure, engineering, construction and strategic industrial sectors. The initiative will bring together IITH's technical and

research capabilities with Jindal Steel's manufacturing, metallurgical and engineering expertise. The Centre will explore applications of advanced steel grades in buildings and bridges, penstocks and large-diameter pipes, defence, heavy equipment, power plants, refineries, transportation, heavy engineering and other industrial sectors. A key objective will be to support the wider adoption of high-strength and value-engineered steels by demonstrating their potential to reduce material consumption and structural weight, improve durability,



enable faster project execution and enhance lifecycle economics.

The Centre will serve as a hub for application development, technical demonstrations, training,

industry engagement and knowledge sharing. It will work with designers, consultants, engineers, fabricators, engineering, procurement and construction (EPC)

companies, equipment manufacturers and project developers to identify suitable applications and support the technical evaluation of advanced steel solutions.

Prof. B S Murty, Director, IIT Hyderabad, said the Centre would strengthen the institute's role in promoting advanced steel solutions across India's engineering, infrastructure

and industrial sectors. He added that the initiative would provide faculty and students opportunities to work with industry on real-world applications and explore how advanced steels can contribute to efficiency, performance and sustainability. V R Sharma, Managing Director, Jindal Steel, said the partnership would help expand the use of high-strength and value-engineered steel across infrastructure and industrial applications. He highlighted the combination of IITH's technical capabilities and Jindal Steel's manufacturing and engineering expertise

as a key element of the initiative. The collaboration will include application development programmes, workshops, symposia, industry-academia training and demonstration projects. It will also provide opportunities for student internships and placements, academic modules and other industry engagement initiatives. The Centre is expected to engage with industry stakeholders and end users to facilitate technical assessment and support the adoption of advanced steel solutions across various sectors.



We're really happy that we converted this win into this semifinal (BWF World Championships) and getting a medal, but it's not stopping yet. There are matches coming tomorrow also.
- Treesa Jolly

Sports Nation

BWF World Championships

Treesa-Gayatri duo stuns world No. 4, to enter semis

India assured of first medal in women's doubles in 15 years

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S women's doubles duo of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand have staged an upset at the BWF World Championships after handing a shock loss to the world no. 4 Chinese pair of Ji Yifan and Zhang Shuxian to enter the semifinals, confirming a medal for the country.

The Indians, coming from game down, registered a 16-21, 21-15, 21-13 win over the Chinese to become the second-ever pair to win a BWF World Championships medal in women's doubles. In 2011, Jwala Gutta and Ashwini Ponnappa won bronze, securing India's second-ever World Championships medal -- 28 years after the country's maiden medal in 1983 (Prakash Padukone's men's singles bronze).

The Indian duo looked vulnerable early on as Jia and Zhang raced to a 6-2 lead and kept their advantage through the opening game. Treesa and Gayatri gradually found their attacking rhythm, using their powerful smashes and sharper exchanges at the net to close the gap to 8-9.

The recovery, however, was not enough to prevent the Chinese to head into the breather with 11-8 advantage and eventually sealing the opening game 21-16.

The response in the second game was immediate. The Indians refused to allow their opponents the same control, matching them in



Satwik-Chirag pair loses in quarters

NEW DELHI: Star Indian men's doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty's dream of winning a third medal at the BWF World Championships ended with a straight-game loss to China's world No. 3 Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang in the quarterfinal here on Friday.

The world No. 5 Indians, who have won bronze medals at the 2022 and 2025 editions, lacked the required sharpness and crashed to an 18-21 9-21 loss in just 36 minutes against Wang and Liang, the Paris Olympics silver medalists.

The Indians had lost nine times and won four against the Chinese world No. 3 pair.

the longer rallies while defending under pressure as they earned a slender 11-10 advantage at the interval.

From there, Treesa and Gayatri grew increasingly assertive. The Indians opened a 17-14 lead before closing out the game 21-15 to force a decider.

In the decider, after an even start at 4-4, Treesa found the breakthrough with a powerful smash, and the Indians suddenly surged. Treesa's attack continued to cause damage for

the Chinese, and the Indians entered the interval with a commanding 11-5 lead.

After the change of sides, Jia and Zhang briefly attempted to revive their challenge, but the Indian earned three straight points to restore their momentum.

At 18-9, the Indians were within touching distance. A review after Zhang's shot was called out did little to alter the outcome, and two further errors from Chinese handed Treesa and Gayatri the decisive points.

U20 Wrestling Worlds

Kajal wins 2nd title in row; Tanu, Savita grab silver

BRATISLAVA (SLOVAKIA): Kajal Dhochak won her second consecutive U20 World title while Tanu Sharma and Savita settled for silver medals at the U20 Wrestling World Championship here.

Kajal, 18, won the 76kg title with a commanding 7-0 victory over China's Jingru Sun in the final. She had won the U20 World title in the 72kg last year.

Kajal is already graduating to the senior level, winning a gold medal at the Ranking Series event in Mongolia in June this year apart from winning a gold at the Budapest event in July. She also won the U20 Asian Championship in Pattaya.

In the 72kg category, Tanu put up a resilient fight in the gold medal match against Japan's Chisato Yoshida before losing 3-5.



In the 62kg division, Savita faced a formidable opponent in Japan's Sakura Onishi in the gold medal bout and lost by technical superiority (2-12).

Mansi Lather is in gold contention in 68kg event. She is up against China's Chenling Song in the final while Komal will fight it out with Spain Rosa Molina Rodriguez in the 59kg repechage round.

None of India's Greco Roman wrestler won a medal. The men's freestyle competition will begin later Friday and conclude on Sunday.

Hyderabad to host TPL season 8 from Dec 8-13

HYDERABAD: Tennis Premier League season 8 will be staged from December 8 to 13, 2026, at the LB Tennis Stadium in Hyderabad under the auspices of the All India Tennis Association and with the support of the Government of Telangana.

Eight franchise teams will compete in TPL's signature 25-point format, where every point matters, with the action live-streamed on JioHotstar, allowing fans across the country to follow the league as some of the world's top-ranked international players go head-to-head alongside India's leading tennis stars. The League will also see the presence of tennis icons Leander Paes and Sania Mirza, along with Bollywood personalities and team co-owners Rakul Preet Singh and Sonali Bendre Behl, who will be cheering on and supporting their respective teams.

For TPL, Hyderabad is more than just a new venue. It marks



the league's move into new markets, expanding its audience and building a stronger national footprint for professional tennis, with the TPL App already connecting the league to more than 400 affiliated academies across the country.

Hyderabad, with its strong sporting culture and growing tennis community, will provide the backdrop for Season 8 at the LB Tennis Stadium, one of India's largest dedicated tennis venues.

The stadium will host six days of high-intensity action as eight franchise teams -- GS

Delhi Aces, Hyderabad Strikers, Lucknow Blazers, Gurgaon Grand Slammers, Gujarat Panthers, Rajasthan Rangers, Kolkata Thunder Blades and Mumbai Royals compete in TPL's exciting 25-point format.

Sharing his excitement on the announcement, Kunal Thakkur, Co-Founder, Tennis Premier League, said "Season 8 is a landmark chapter for TPL, not just because we're bringing world-class tennis to Hyderabad for the first time, but because it's the first season where fans will see our partnership with Kia India come alive.

Khelo India Scheme a gamechanger: Jwala Gutta

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

TWO-time Olympian (2012 London and 2016 Rio) and former world championships medallist Jwala Gutta has described the revamped Khelo India Scheme (KIS) as a "gamechanger" with the potential to transform sports in India.

Speaking to the media on Friday, Gutta said, "I am a government product myself and without its support I would not have achieved whatever I have as a player. In its new avatar, the Khelo India Scheme looks extremely promising. With its thrust on grassroots development and sustainability, parents will feel very secure to send their

children to play a sport." She added, "The government has always been serious about boosting sports, but this will have a far-reaching impact and the reach will be enormous. I am happy to be associated with the scheme."

The 2026-31 scheme has an outlay of ₹29,054 crore, an eight-fold increase over the previous allocation, and aims to support 10 times more athletes. Its key focus areas include grassroots development, scientific talent identification, coaching, academics, infrastructure and sports technology.

S Hima Bindu, SAI deputy director, outlined the scheme's key pillars and its potential impact on Telangana. "The grassroots to Olym-



Jwala Gutta, former badminton world doubles champion and Olympian, Dr A Sonibala Devi, Vice-Chairperson & Managing Director of Sports Authority of Telangana, Vishnu Sudhakaran, Regional Director of Sports Authority of India, Bengaluru and S Hima Bindu Deputy Director, SAI during a media interaction on the revamped Khelo India Scheme in Hyderabad on Friday.

(Photo: Srinivas Setty)

pic excellence pathway has been well thought through. The scheme addresses gaps in the system and the formation of a coaches' board will help uplift the way a child plays sport. The academy structure will be bolstered

and there are adequate funds to boost infrastructure and sports technology," she said.

Telangana already has 33 notified Khelo India Centres, supporting more than 601 athletes through Past Champion Athletes.

Bikash selected for World Masters Athletics C'ships

HYDERABAD

BIKASH Karar, Chairman of Athletic Coaching

Academy, Hyderabad and a master athlete, has been selected to represent India at the World Masters Athletics Championships in Daegu, South Korea, from August 22 to September 3, 2026. Competing in the 50+ age group, he will participate in the 200m, 400m and 400m hurdles. Karar is trained by Prof. Rajesh Kumar, Senior Professor and Head, Department of Physical Education, Osmania University. He has previously represented India at Masters Championships in Finland, the US, France and Brazil.



SC grants freedom to 105-yr-old murder convict

NEW DELHI

A 105-year old murder convict will now be able to live as a free man after the Supreme Court on Friday, closed the case against him and waived the remaining period of his life sentence, taking into account his advanced age.

Born in 1920 in West Bengal's Malda district, Rasik Chandra Mondal was convicted in 1994 in the murder case and was in jail till November 29, 2024, when the top court granted him bail.

On Friday, a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Joyimalya Bagchi and V Mohana said that, having regard to the age of the petitioner, it was closing the case and waiving the remaining sentence, if any, in the matter.

Even if the life sentence is not over, he will not be taken back in custody, the CJI said and made the interim bail order of 2024 absolute and final.

"As an interim order, we direct that the petitioner,



Rasik Chandra Mondal, will be released on interim bail/parole during the pendency of the present writ petition, on terms and conditions to be fixed by the trial court," the court had said earlier. Mondal had age-related health issues, it had noted.

In 2018, the Calcutta high court dismissed Mondal's appeal challenging his conviction in the murder case. Later, he moved the apex court, which also dismissed his plea.

In 2020, Mondal, then 99 years old, moved a plea seeking premature release, citing his advanced age and age-related ailments. In May 2021, the apex court had issued notice to the West Bengal government in the matter.

22 Indians aboard two ships hijacked by pirates

NEW DELHI

TWO commercial vessels carrying a total of 22 Indian nationals have been hijacked by pirates in separate incidents off Yemen and Somalia, a senior shipping ministry official said on Friday. He said that according to the latest information, the Indian crew members are safe.

An Eritrea-flagged oil products tanker, M T Sibul 1, with 20 crew members -- 16 Indians, one Syrian national, one Sudanese national, one Iraqi national and one seafarer whose nationality is yet to be confirmed -- was hijacked by armed pirates in the Gulf of Aden, around 30 nautical miles off the coast of Yemen on August 20, the official told PTI.

"As reported by Recruitment and Placement Service Licence (RPSL) agency - S K S Krishni Marine Services



(Opc) Private Limited, six armed pirates are presently onboard the vessel and have taken control of the vessel," he said.

He said the RPSL has been advised to submit the incident report and subsequent periodic updates through the e-Navik online marine casualty reporting system for examination and record.

Another Cameroon-flagged cargo ship, LUTUF, with six Indians among its 10 crew members was hijacked

by pirates off Somalia's Puntland coast on August 17, the official said.

"The vessel is reported to have been boarded by eight pirates, armed with AK-47 type weapons and operating from two skiffs. "The crew initially mustered in the citadel. However, the pirates gained access and subsequently brought them to the bridge. The vessel is currently under pirate control. No injuries have been reported thus far," he said. (PTI)

Child killed in leopard attack in Rajasthan

JAIPUR: A three-year-old boy was killed after a leopard attacked him in Rajasthan's Sawai Madhopur district, forest officials said Friday.

Deputy Conservator of Forests of Ranthambore Tiger Reserve Manas Singh said the child, Dilkhush Bairwa, was playing in the courtyard of his house on Thursday when the leopard dragged him towards the forest.

Following the incident, the child's family members and villagers launched a search operation. A forest department team also joined the search after being alerted, the official said. The child was eventually found in an injured condition on a hill, Singh said. He was rushed to the district hospital, where doctors declared him dead, the official said.

The incident triggered anger among villagers, who later reached the Phalodi range office and staged a protest.

During the protest, a motorcycle kept at the range office was set on fire, officials said.

RSS chief to visit US, Canada, UK for centenary outreach

VISAKHAPATNAM

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat will visit the US, Canada and Britain as part of the Sangh's centenary-year global outreach programme, a senior Sangh functionary said on Friday.

Addressing a press conference after the three-day all India coordination meeting here, RSS Sah Sarkaryawah CR Mukunda said the foreign visit has three main objectives - presenting a factual and positive perspective on India, Hindu society and the RSS, conveying the message of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and increasing dialogue with mainstream society on the interests and rights of Hindus and people of Indian origin.

"Bhagwat will visit the US, Canada and Britain as part of the Sangh's centenary-year global outreach programme," Mukunda said.

He said Bhagwat would participate in the Universal Oneness programme in New York and community leader-



ship programmes in Toronto and London. The visit would also seek to address misconceptions and misinformation about India, Hindu society and the RSS prevalent in various parts of the world, Mukunda said.

The RSS chief would convey the message of global unity and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam given by India's sages and seers, he said. The outreach would also focus on dialogue with mainstream society in the three countries on the interests and rights of Hindus and people of Indian origin living around the world, he added.

Rashtrapati Bhavan does U-turn on B'desh PM's visit

NEW DELHI: A fresh communicate from the Rashtrapati Bhavan stated that the "press release issued on the subject 'No Change of Guard Ceremony this Saturday', which was issued on August 21, 2026, stands withdrawn." This came an hour after the President's house had announced the cancellation of the weekly ceremony for the full rehearsal of the welcome planned for the visiting Bangladesh Prime Minister. The withdrawn communicate had read: "The Change of Guard Ceremony at the Forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan will not take place this Saturday (August 22, 2026) due to the full rehearsal for the ceremonial welcome of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh."

Musk pitches Starlink for rural India amidst stalled launch

NEW DELHI

EVEN as the Elon Musk owned Starlink tries to unlock a stalled launch in India, the satellite internet service provider has again made a pitch as a public-service solution with particular focus on rural India. "Starlink would help the least served in India, especially in rural areas," wrote Elon Musk, in a post on X, earlier today. Starlink awaits final regulatory clearance from the Indian government, which would allow it to flip the switch on commercial operations in India.

Musk has a point. The latest Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) data points to a flat growth for



mobile and broadband connections in rural regions. In June 2026, urban India added 4.36 million subscribers (0.55% growth), while rural India added just 0.62 million subscribers (0.11% growth).

Secondly, rural tele-density of 60.89% at the end of June, compares unfavourably to 153.43% in urban areas, indicating that roughly 40% of the rural population still lacks individual mobile or fixed-line connectivity.

13-YR-OLD BOY RESCUED FROM BONDED LABOUR

MUMBAI: A 13-year-old boy was rescued from alleged bonded labour at a farm in Maharashtra's Jalna district, officials have said. Following inputs received by the District Legal Services Authority and the Child Helpline 1098, a raid was conducted at Chincholi village of Bhokardan tehsil on Wednesday, they said. According to officials, the boy told the authorities that he had been working at the farm for around one-and-a-half years, performing agricultural tasks, grazing goats, feeding and watering cattle and cleaning cow dung. The boy was allegedly forced to work at the farm against a Rs 40,000 advance taken by his father from the farm owner.

Parents die trying to stop son from suicide

MUMBAI

A couple and their 19-year-old son fell to their deaths from a hill while the parents attempted to stop the teenager from committing suicide in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district on Friday, police said.

The tragedy unfolded in the Tisgaon area under Waluj MIDC in the afternoon, an official said. According to the police, Kunal Chandgude (19) went up the hill around 10 am, allegedly intending to commit suicide following a dispute with his parents about wanting a mobile phone. The parents, Murlidhar (48) and Sangita Chandgude, residents of the Zalta Phata area of Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, arrived there to stop him.

An official said police and villagers tried to convince Kunal not to jump, and the fire brigade was also called in, and they tried to place a net below. But the teen kept changing his position. Even as his father tried to console and



convince him, Kunal jumped, and the father went after him, falling to his death. Horrified, the mother also jumped off the hill and died, the official said. The bodies were recovered by the police and were sent for further formalities, he added.

Nadda reviews country's H1N1 preparedness

NEW DELHI: Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare JP Nadda on Friday reviewed the prevailing situation and preparedness for H1N1 Influenza in the country with particular focus on the national capital. Delhi Health Minister D Panjaj Kumar Singh was also present in the meeting. According to a release, the Union Health Minister reviewed the national surveillance and epidemiological situation, IILI and SARI trends, testing and laboratory surveillance, and preparedness of healthcare facilities to manage seasonal influenza cases. Nadda emphasised the need for continued vigilance, robust surveillance and proactive preparedness, with close monitoring of influenza trends.

A crorepati, but still a middle-class homebuyer

In Hyderabad, ₹1 crore is increasingly the price of a new home rather than a luxury purchase

SRIKANTH GODAVARTHI
HYDERABAD

A few years ago, being a crorepati was a big deal. It still is for many. But Hyderabad's real estate prices have changed the meaning of that milestone, at least when it comes to buying a home.

Today, Rs 1 crore is no longer necessarily a luxury-home budget. In many established parts of the city, it is increasingly the money a middle-class buyer may need for a decent new apartment. Even with Rs 1 crore in hand, buyers may still have to make choices on size, location and amenities.

For those with a lower budget, the Rs 50-75 lakh segment has not disappeared. But it has increasingly moved towards emerging and peripheral areas.

"In Hyderabad, a new 2-BHK in the affordable to mid segment would typically start at around Rs 70-75 lakh in emerging locations, while in established and well-connected micro-markets, prices are increasingly closer to Rs 80 lakh to Rs 1 crore and above," said N Jaideep Reddy, President, Credai Hyderabad. "The Rs 1 crore to Rs 1.5 crore range has become increasingly common, particularly in the western corridor, where land values and development costs are significantly higher."

Where Rs 50-75 lakh still works

Reddy said buyers can still find new homes in this range in Bachupally, Kompally, Kapra, Medchal, Pocharam, Ghatkesar, Vijayawada Road near Ramoji Film City, Shamshabad, Kothur,



Patancheru and Mutangi, depending on the project and its stage of development. "In these markets, buyers can still find 2-BHK apartments, generally in the range of around 1,000-1,300 sq ft, although sizes vary considerably," he said. But the same budget buys less as the location gets closer to established employment centres. "In some projects, particularly closer to established employment corridors, the same budget may translate into a more compact 2-BHK or smaller configurations," Jaideep Reddy said. "The important point is that affordability at this price point increasingly depends on the buyer being flexible about location and distance from the established city centres."

Smaller homes, not cheaper homes

Rising costs are also changing the size and design of homes in the lower-ticket segment. "There has been a gradual shift towards more efficient and compact home configurations in the sub-Rs 75 lakh segment, largely reflecting the increase in land and construction costs,"

Jaideep Reddy said. "Developers are focusing on optimising layouts to provide functional homes within a particular price range rather than simply reducing specifications." There is no single figure for how much average home sizes have fallen over the past five years, he said, as the change varies across locations and projects. "However, the broader trend has been towards better space utilisation and more efficient layouts, with developers trying to balance apartment size, functionality and affordability."

A Rs 75-lakh home can become an Rs 85-lakh-plus purchase

The advertised price is only the starting point. Registration and government charges, parking where separately charged, maintenance or corpus deposits, amenity-related charges and interiors can push up the final bill. "The advertised price should not be treated as the final cost of ownership," Jaideep Reddy said. "For a property advertised at Rs 75 lakh, the final outlay can certainly cross Rs

80-85 lakh depending on the project, specifications, applicable taxes and the buyer's interior requirements." Once interiors are added, the actual amount can rise further, particularly for wardrobes, modular kitchens, lighting, electrical work and other basic fittings.

"Buyers should evaluate the total cost of acquisition rather than only the base apartment price," Reddy said.

Why Rs 1 crore is becoming common

The rise in land and construction costs is making low-ticket homes harder to deliver in established locations. "Land values have risen more sharply in established and high demand corridors such as Gachibowli, Financial District, Kokapet and Nanakramguda. Construction costs have also increased due to higher material, labour, logistics and other development related expenses," Reddy said. "There is no uniform proportion of land and construction costs that applies across Hyderabad. In established areas, land accounts

for a larger component of the overall project cost, while in emerging locations, construction and development costs form a relatively larger share."

Reddy said the shift towards higher-ticket homes is not simply developers chasing bigger margins. "There has been a visible shift in new residential supply towards higher ticket-size homes. However, this is not simply because developers are pursuing higher margins," he said. The Rs 50-75 lakh segment is increasingly being served through emerging locations, smaller configurations and projects by regional and local developers.

The EMI is only part of affordability

For a middle-class family working in HITEC City, Gachibowli or the Financial District, staying within Rs 50-75 lakh may mean moving farther away. Reddy said buyers may explore Bachupally, Kollur, parts of Tellapur, Kompally, Ghatkesar and Shamshabad, depending on the project and connectivity. But the lower



“The Rs 1 crore to Rs 1.5 crore range has become increasingly common, particularly in the western corridor, where land values and development costs are significantly higher”
-N Jaideep Reddy, President, Credai Hyderabad

purchase price can come with a higher daily cost. "A lower ticket size may come with a longer daily commute and higher transportation costs," Reddy said. "The overall affordability of a home should consequently be assessed by considering the EMI alongside the time and recurring cost involved in travelling to work." There is also no single income threshold for a Rs 75-lakh home.

"Affordability depends on the down payment, loan amount, interest rate, tenure and the buyer's existing financial commitments," Jaideep Reddy said.

"While incomes have grown, particularly across Hyderabad's technology, services and professional sectors, the pace of growth has varied across households."

For first-time buyers, he said, "building adequate savings for the down payment and maintaining a manageable EMI" is increasingly important.

What does affordable really mean?

Reddy believes a cheaper home is not automatically an affordable home. "A Rs 60-lakh home may be affordable relative to a Rs 1.5-crore home, but that does not automatically mean it is affordable for every middle-class household," he said. "The true affordability of a home is determined by a combination of its purchase price, apartment size, financing cost, registration and other charges, maintenance and, importantly, the cost and time involved in commuting." "What has changed is the geography and definition of affordability," Jaideep Reddy said. "A buyer with a Rs 50-75 lakh budget still has options, but may need to compromise on location, size or amenities." He said the longer-term answer is to increase housing supply across price points, improve connectivity between residential and employment centres, make land and development more efficient and reduce avoidable costs.

"Affordable housing should ultimately mean affordable ownership without an unsustainable EMI or an unreasonable daily commute," Reddy said. For Hyderabad's middle class, that is the new housing reality: Rs 50-75 lakh can still buy a new home, but Rs 1 crore is increasingly becoming the price of buying one without too many compromises.

Charminar BirlaNu's roofing solutions

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

CHARMINARBIRLANU, a high-quality fiber-cement and composite roofing solutions have announced that their products are being widely used across residential, commercial, and industrial structures

Vijay Lahoti, Business Head - Roofs, BirlaNu, said: "For decades, fibre cement roofing has traditionally been valued for its core attributes: strength and durability. Today, however, the category is undergoing a shift. Customers increasingly expect roofing solutions that combine long-term performance with lasting aesthetics."

Lahoti further said: "In India's residential and commercial markets, especially in high-rainfall regions—the ability to resist weathering, preserve surface finish, and minimize maintenance has become an important differentiator. These attributes are no longer optional; they are increasingly shaping specification and buying decisions."

According to the company: "The product also offers a smoother surface finish compared to conventional fibre cement options, a difference that is strikingly visible."

CORRIGENDUM

In the article titled "Modi Builders faces residents' ire over Silver Oak amenities, safety," published on August 15, Modi Properties was inadvertently mentioned as Modi Builders. The error is regretted.

BUSINESS

BIZ BRIEFS

Dubai Chambers signs two MoUs

Dubai Chambers has signed two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) during a high-level visit to Bengaluru to advance collaboration in Agentic AI, strengthen trade and investment between Dubai and India, and support business expansion. The MoU with NASSCOM establishes a framework for cooperation in Agentic AI and deeptech. It aims to support market access for Indian companies seeking to establish and expand in Dubai.

Active.in opens outlet

Active Green Products Pvt. Ltd., has inaugurated its second franchisee showroom in Andhra Pradesh at Seethammadhara, Visakhapatnam. Mudunuri Venkata Subba Raju, MD, Active Green Products, said: "For us, the showroom is not simply a place to display products. It is a space where customers can experience the quality, technology and possibilities of our solutions before they make an investment."

Danone unveils new flavours

Danone India has announced the launch of two new flavour sachets Vanilla and Chocolate, to its toddler nutrition drink, Dexogrow. Priyanka Verma, MD, Danone India, said: "Getting toddlers to enjoy something that's genuinely good for them can be a big battle for parents. With Vanilla and Chocolate flavours now part of the Dexogrow range, we want nutrition moments to feel less like a negotiation."

Centre rejects ethanol link to sugar price surge, blames millers

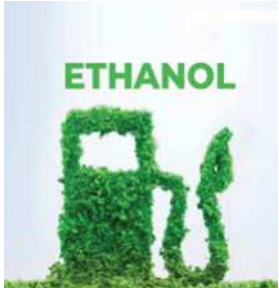
CENTRE SAYS AMPLE STOCKS ARE AVAILABLE AND WARNS AGAINST HOARDING, BLACK MARKETING AND UNJUSTIFIED EX-MILL PRICE HIKES

NEW DELHI

THE government on Friday rejected claims that diversion of sugar for ethanol production was driving a sharp rise in the price of the sweetener and instead blamed the industry for jacking up prices despite the country having sufficient stock to meet domestic demand.

The Centre said it has asked States to take action against hoarding and black marketing of the sweetener and also start preparing for early start of the crushing season by mills, by around October 15. It is also considering reducing the stock that dealers can currently hold.

Briefing the media on sugar availability and prices, Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said the government has taken precaution-



ary measures by allowing imports of 10 lakh tonnes of sugar by October 31 and imposing stock-holding limits on dealers as well as bulk consumers such as soft-drink and ice-cream makers.

He asserted that there are ample sugar stocks in the country despite a fall in production to 306 lakh tonnes for the 2025-26 marketing year (October-September), down from earlier estimates of 343 lakh tonnes. Annual domestic sugar demand is

around 280-285 lakh tonnes.

The production has been affected by Red Rot and Top Borer disease in sugarcane, as well as waterlogging caused by excess rainfall, Chopra said.

Following the government's recent measures, the secretary said retail prices are expected to fall in the coming days. The all-India average retail price has shot up to Rs 56 per kg from Rs 48 per kg on July 20.

Chopra pointed out that ex-mill sugar prices have shot up to Rs 62 per kg from Rs 47-48 per kg in just about 7-10 days, and said this kind of hike is completely unjustified. On Friday, the secretary called representatives of the industry bodies ISMA and the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFSCF) and told them

that this sudden, sharp hike in ex-mill prices is "not acceptable". "It is incorrect to attribute the recent increase in sugar prices to diversion of sugar for ethanol production," Chopra said, adding that the diversification has improved the financial health of the sugar sector and also helped in timely payment to farmers. He said only 28 lakh tonnes of sugar have been diverted in the current 2025-26 marketing season. Only one-fourth of ethanol is now made from sugar and the rest from grains, mainly maize. "There has been this sharp increase in the prices of sugar in the recent past, and they have gone up from Rs 48 just about 15 days back to a level of Rs 56 now. It is important to clarify that this is not based on any fundamentals," Chopra said.

Gold, silver rally to multi-month highs on weak dollar

NEW DELHI

GOLD and silver prices surged to more than three-month high levels in the national capital on Friday, extending their gains for a second straight session as a weak US dollar and firm global trends drove investors towards precious metals.

The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 1,200 to Rs 1,63,500 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes), up from the previous close of Rs 1,62,300 per 10 grams, according to local traders.

The precious metal was



last quoted around these levels on May 19, when it had stood at Rs 1,63,600 per 10 grams.

Silver also mirrored the bullish trend, jumping Rs 5,000 to Rs 2,50,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all

taxes), its highest level in 15 weeks. The white metal had settled at Rs 2,45,000 per kg on Thursday and gained Rs 15,000 over the last two sessions.

It was last seen near these levels on May 4, when the price was quoted at Rs 2,49,500 per kilogram.

"Gold extended its rally on Friday's session and is heading for its third consecutive weekly gain, while silver also remained strong, supported by a weaker US dollar and falling longer-term Treasury bond yields," Gaurav Garg, Head of Research at Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Tata Motors raises prices as input costs, inflation bite

NEW DELHI: Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd will raise prices of its cars and SUVs by up to Rs 25,000 from September 1, 2026, citing rising input costs and sustained inflationary pressures.

The increase will cover the company's passenger vehicle portfolio, including internal combustion engine and electric models. The extent of the hike will vary across models and variants, the company said on Friday.

Tata Motors said it continues to absorb a significant portion of the increase in costs.

Govt rolls out ₹62,500-crore mobile manufacturing push

NEW DELHI: MOBILE phone companies, including electronics contract manufacturers, having a turnover of Rs 10,000 crore in FY26 will be eligible for benefits under the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme, the government said on Friday.

According to the guidelines of the Rs 62,500-crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) issued on Friday, mobile phone companies, including electronic manufacturing services (EMS) firms with 51 per cent Indian ownership, having a turnover of Rs 1,000 crore in FY26 will also be eligible for participation in the scheme. The MPMS is aimed at pro-



viding support in the form of production-linked incentives for manufacturing mobile phones in India.

"Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme is open officially from today (Friday). It will be effective from April 1, 2026," Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said. Under the guidelines, any existing brand will be required to meet the minimum threshold sales of Rs 5,000 crore every year over

and above the total sales of FY26 to be eligible for benefits under the scheme. This means, threshold sales over and above the FY26 turnover will be Rs 5,000 crore for the ongoing 2026-27 fiscal year, Rs 10,000 crore for FY28, Rs 15,000 crore for FY29, Rs 20,000 crore for FY30, and Rs 25,000 crore for FY31. Any new brand will become eligible for benefits under the scheme only after achieving total annual sales of Rs 10,000 crore in India. The incentive amount will be eligible sales in a financial year multiplied by the incentive rates - 2.75 per cent in FY27 and FY28, 2.5 per cent in FY29 and FY30, and 2.25 per cent in FY31.

Up to 10% Chinese stake rule unlocks ₹4,896-cr FDI pipeline

NEW DELHI

THE decision to allow overseas companies with up to 10 per cent Chinese shareholding to invest in India under the automatic route has begun to yield results, with 29 FDI proposals worth Rs 4,895.65 crore reported so far, an official said.

The investments span sectors including information technology, artificial intelligence, information and communication, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, data centres and transport services.

The proposals have been reported by investors or entities based in jurisdictions including Mauritius, the US, Korea, Japan, Singapore, Luxembourg and the Cayman Islands.

The Finance Ministry notified the changes under

FEMA on May 1, significantly easing the process for companies with limited Chinese or Hong Kong shareholding.

Under the revised framework, foreign companies having Chinese or Hong Kong shareholding of up to 10 per cent can invest in sectors where FDI is permitted under the automatic route, subject to applicable sectoral conditions.

The government said the move removes the requirement of prior approval in such cases, allowing investors to proceed through the automatic route while complying with reporting requirements. The reform is expected to provide greater certainty to investors, reduce transaction time and improve ease of doing business, the official said.

DGFT relaxes One Star Export House eligibility norms

NEW DELHI: The government on Friday relaxed the 'One Star Export House' eligibility condition for exporters by revising the specific international trade and financial performance norms in three consecutive fiscal years. Earlier, exporters were required to achieve specific export performance in all three preceding financial years to receive the 'Star Export House' status. Under the revised norms, export firms reporting the same in any two of the three preceding fiscals will be eligible to get this recognition. This change, however, does not apply to the gems and jewellery sector as that sector already has a separate two-year requirement under foreign trade policy (FTP) 2023. The directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) has amended a provision of the FTP "to allow granting of One Star Export House status to applicants (other than for the Gems and Jewellery sector) who possess export performance in any two out of the three preceding financial years subject to other provisions...".



Sowcar Janaki leaves behind rich south Indian legacy

SUHAS SISTU

SOWCAR Janaki is a unique figure in Indian cinema history who managed to act in more than seven decades of cinema, performing in over 400 films. From her

debut in 1950 to her recent work in the 2023 Telugu film Anni Manchi Sakunamule, Sowcar Janaki maintained her popularity among moviegoers for many years. The actress was born in Rajahmundry and started

her career by accident. She got married at the age of 16 and was pregnant while preparing for her matriculation exams. Before becoming an actor, she worked as a radio artist at All India Radio in Madras. This job allowed her to develop her acting skills, specifically her speech.

LV Prasad signed her to her first film, a Telugu-language Shavukaru. In the movie, she played the role of a moneylender's daughter, and thereafter, Sowcar became her screen name. Ever since her debut, Sowcar Janaki has starred in all the four languages of South

India. She made her debut in Tamil cinema in 1952 in the film Valayapathi and in Karnataka cinema in 1954 in the film Devakannika. She featured in the 1964 Malayalam film School Master, which marked her debut in Malayalam cinema. Right from her debut, Sowcar Janaki has starred in all south Indian language movies. By the late 1960s, she had become a star in all four South Indian film industries.

She has acted with all the leading actors of her time. In her stardom journey, she has also played comic roles apart from the dramatic roles.

However, what stands out from her stardom journey is her association with the film director K Balachander. Many of his films had female leads in the most progressive roles for women. Sowcar Janaki acted in several of his pictures, including Thamarai Nenjam, Iru Kodugal, and other films.

She acted in films like Cinema Paithiyam, Thee, Thillu Mullu, Vetri Vizha, which marked her new path. In addition to film work, in more than thirty plays, Sowcar Janaki played various roles. Moreover, in the 90s, she began appearing on

television. Even when she turned 80, she continued to act in films and take leading roles. According to rumors, her 400th film was the Tamil comedy Biskoth, in which she acted at the age of 88. In her last film Anni Manchi Sakunamule, Janaki played the role of a grandmother.

She was awarded many prestigious awards, including Kalaimamani, Nandi

Awards, and lifetime achievement. She was awarded Padma Shri by the Government of India in 2022, having celebrated her 90th birthday.

This legendary actress found her niche in the ever-changing Indian film industry. She acted in several Indian languages and remained popular.

Moreover, she portrayed

an equal number of comic and serious roles. Sowcar Janaki starred in Indian films, especially south Indian movies, had a great theater career, and acted in television shows. Therefore, she created a memorable and successful career that made her famous worldwide. Now, as the actress is no more, We miss you Sowcar Janaki.

STARS PAY TRIBUTE

The veteran actress Sowcar Janaki demise led to an outpour of condolences from the South Indian film industry. Several leading stars paid tribute to the departed soul, recalling her legendary work and contribution to the film industry. Tamil Nadu chief minister and actor Vijay expressed his shock and grief over the news of Janaki's death. He further added that her contribution to the film industry over the past seven decades is legendary. He also talked about several

awards such as Padma Shri, Kalaimamani, and Nandi which were received by the actress.

The legendary actor Kamal Haasan paid tribute to Janaki, saying that they have shared a long professional relationship, working together for almost four decades, starting with 'Paarthala Pasi Theerum'. He further called her an incredible talent in the south and worked closely with his guru K Balachander. On the other hand, Jr NTR and Chiranjeevi recounted their time spent with Janaki and

remembered her as one of the Indian cinema's legendary figures. The veteran actor's contribution to Indian cinema has been immense, with Chiranjeevi calling Janaki a natural. Radhika Sarathkumar, Prabhudeva, and Vishnu Manchu also paid emotional tributes to the late actress, calling her an extraordinary talent. Vishnu further expressed his grief in Telugu, referring to Janaki as a legendary personality whose work and elegance will inspire generations in the years to come.

'IRUMUDI' REVIEW: A powerful emotional film

SUHAS SISTU

AFTER a long interval, Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja is back with a film that prioritizes performances and emotional quotient over formulaic potboilers. Irumudi, a directorial venture from Shiva Nirvana, marks Ravi Teja's return to the big screen in style. Starring Priya Bhavani Shankar and Baby Nakshatra in prominent roles, the film combines a devotional angle with family drama and crime elements. More significantly, Irumudi delivers on its promise of being an entertaining showcase of the actor's prowess as a storyteller.

Story
Trinadh (Ravi Teja) is an Ayyappa Swamy devotee and owns a banana plantation in Polluru. He is deeply fond of his daughter Manemma. In fact, Manemma narrates every incident that occurs in her life to her father. But everything changes when she, along with other girls

from the village, goes to a nearby village for her studies. The developments lead Trinadh down a fateful path that eventually takes him on a rollercoaster ride of crime and family drama.

Performances
The highlight of Irumudi is undoubtedly Ravi Teja's performance. As the Mass Maharaja sheds off his larger than life image, the actor displays shades of a multi-talented hero that we have been seeing in rare screens in recent times. Ravi Teja's emotional

RATING: 4/5

range deserves immense applause as he manages to leave an indelible mark on the audiences' minds. The star's pairing with Baby Nakshatra is yet another strong aspect of the film, as both display realistic father-daughter bonding onscreen. Baby's

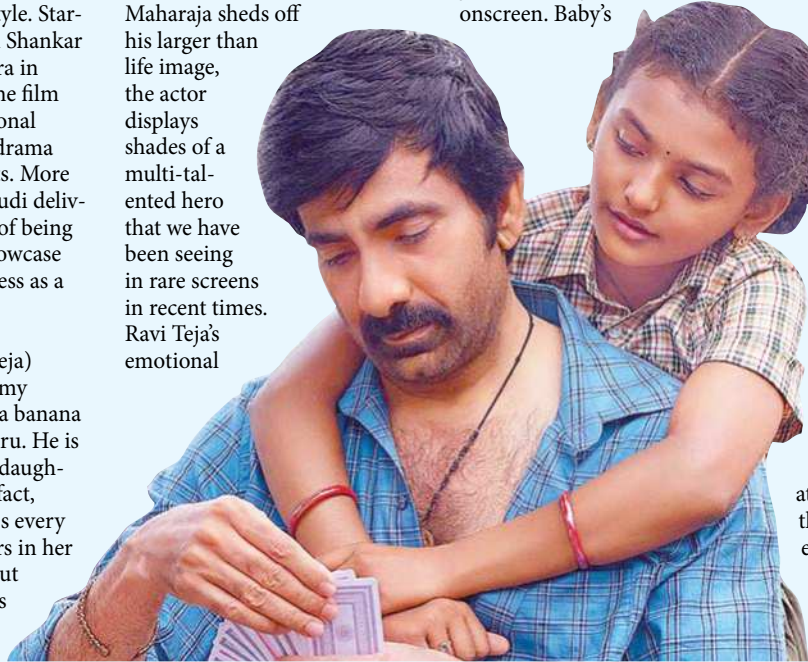
performance is indeed a standout as she manages to slip into the skin of her character and perform realistically throughout the film. In addition to Baby Nakshatra, Priya Bhavani Shankar, Sai Kumar, Ramesh Indira, and others have excelled in their respective roles.

Technicalities

Shiva Nirvana must be praised for delivering a film that does not veer towards commercialism. In fact, the Ninnu Kori director manages to keep the narrative engaging without deviating from the core theme. The film's emotional and intense sequences are beautifully portrayed, aided by GV

Prakash Kumar's music and background score. Similarly, cinematographer Vishnu Sharma captures the beauty of the locales, especially the hills of Sileru, to perfection. The other technical departments, including production design and editing, are equally impressive.

Analysis
The film's first-half runs on a slightly slower note. Also, the second half lacks in certain areas, which is apparent in the meandering narrative. Additionally, certain developments in the crime and mystery departments seem cliched and predictable. However, such drawbacks are negligible in the larger scheme of things. The father and daughter's equation is portrayed beautifully, as is the emotional quotient in the story. Irumudi is a feel-good film, which delivers what it promises to deliver. Ravi Teja is certainly back in the race with a stellar performance that has the potential to change the perception of him being only a mass entertainer.



A new singing talent hunt launched in Tamil Nadu



A SPIRING singers from Tamil Nadu are in for a great treat as Sony VIZHA and Sony LIV announced the launch of the first season of Tamil Idol. Music composer AR Rahman will be the super judge of the reality singing competition that will give vocal talents a chance to become playback and independent singers. Tamil Idol is a song competition that will enable young singers to gain exposure and help them make a mark in the playback and independent music industry. It will also enable the participants to perform alongside renowned music directors in a well-organized environment. The singing competition will commence in Velammal Vidyalaya Annexure, Mel Ayanambakkam, Chennai. Young vocal talents aged between 14 and 30 can audition for the reality singing competition that will offer a wide platform for budding singers to exhibit their singing prowess. Besides capturing the essence of the rich tradition and culture of Tamil music, Tamil Idol will also witness the evolution of music while showcasing the different styles of the young singers. The selected candidates will get an incredible opportunity to learn from the best in the business while performing on a big stage. Singers who wish to participate in the competition need to carry their original identity proof on the day of the audition and prepare their desired song repertoire. The young singing sensations can become playback singers if they give their best performance on the day of the final round.

'Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam' locks Sept 4 worldwide release

THE latest Telugu Political entertainer Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam is all set to release globally on September 4th. A press meet was organized recently to create awareness about the film which has a unique political entertainment theme.

The film 'Dharmasthala Niyojakavargam' is directed by Jai Jnana Prabha Thota and produced by Merum Bhaskar under the banner of Moving Dreams India Private Limited. The film stars Suman, Saikumar, Nataraj, Varun Sandesh and Vithika Sheru in lead roles.

The film promises to be political entertainer with an unique twist. The makers believe that the film will entertain the viewers with its theme and stellar cast on board. The film is all set to release across the Telugu states under PVR Cinemas Distribution.



NSV Productions' 'Village Stars' gets a grand launch

A Telugu entertainer named Village Stars' has launched in the presence of chief guest Sameer at the Venkateswara Veeranjanya Swamy Temple in Venkatagiri. The film which is set to mark the production house's debut in the Telugu film industry promises to present a different story line and a young energetic team.

Sameer who was the chief guest at the launch function wished the team all the best for their future projects. The actor also appreciated Narendra's work and said that they are going to see many more successful films from his team.

Starring as the lead pair is Narendra and Lilly Ballu.

The film also stars Srinivas, Syed Abzal, Vijay and others in crucial roles. Whereas, it is Narendra who is set to



make his directorial debut with this film, Nagoor NGR has been signed on for the story.

Narendra requested the people to support Village Stars movie. Hailing from Odisha, Lilly said that she is

elated to make her Telugu debut. She also thanked the viewers for giving her this wonderful opportunity. Jabardasth actor Vasu along with social activist Sampath and actor Radhakrishna also wished the team for their big debut.

Producer SKN launches 'Missing Meghana' teaser

THE teaser of the upcoming film 'Missing Meghana' was unveiled by the successful producer SKN, who added new momentum to the promotional race of the movie. The teaser offers an intriguing concept and has already received excellent feedback from the team and viewers.

The film is directed by Vachaspathi and produced by Panchumarthi Naresh Babu under the banners of First Copy Movies and KD & Co. It stars Ram Karthik,

Ammu Abhirami, Vaidika Senjalya, and Ankit Koyya in the lead roles and Goparaju Ramana, Vempa Kasi, Koushik, Mahipal, and others in the pivotal roles.

At the teaser launch, SKN appreciated the film's innovative concept, saying that modern viewers want fresh content and that Missing Meghana will gather more strength to become a big hit. The film's director, Vachaspathi, thanked the producer for believing in the project. He also thanked VV Vinayak for reveal-

ing the title motion poster and Suresh Babu for releasing the first single, Pilla Pilla Pilla.

Meanwhile, Ram Kartik was delighted by the fabulous response to the promotional campaign, and music director RR Dhruvan noted that the viral song and teaser have already created a great buzz about the film. Sam K Naidu and Dhruvan have created beautiful cinematography and music for Missing Meghana, which will soon captivate the viewers.



Telugu cinema gets major boost with Telangana govt's new GO

THE Telangana Government's latest Government Order (GO) has been received well by many for its intent to promote and safeguard the film industry by creating a healthy ecosystem for the movie makers and workers.

The new policy aims to create a regulated environment for premium films with enhanced ticket prices.

These price hikes will not be automatic and will have to be approved on a case-to-case basis by the government for eligible blockbuster films.

As per the circular, multiplexes and single screen theaters will have to keep 25 percent of the total seats in all categories for cheaper fares in all locations.

Moreover, the policy will allow five shows daily for any big-ticket release, which would help first-time and smaller filmmakers utilize the free slots on the same day.

The circular also proposes an idea for a welfare fund for cine workers. According to Active Telugu Film Producers Guild (ATFPG), the GO will motivate people to invest in films and take the Telugu film industry to greater heights.